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Explicit Readings:
An Inquiry into Young Adults' Embodied Experience of Fictional Texts.

Carmel Sammut

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research explores the reading experience of two groups of young adults, aged between 16-18 years, as they interact with a short story, Graham Greene's "The End of the Party". A cognitive poetics (Tsur 1987, 1992; Stockwell 2002) approach is deployed to understand "what these readers do" and "how they do it" (Canning 2017) as they interact with this text. Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007), a sub theory of cognitive poetics, is applied to explore the conceptual boundary crossings that occurred as the participants projected their real-world beliefs and experiences onto the text, and in turn to examine the stylistic features that enhanced or inhibited these readerly-text dynamics.

The study takes a multimodal approach to investigate the real-time personal and textual exchanges that occurred as readers interacted with an entire short story rather than a text adapted to suit a laboratory experiment. This research focusses on that liminal space that is created as readers enter the world of the text and, in return, allow the text to exert its influence on them through its stylistic devices. Ultimately, the study emphasises how a cognitive poetics approach with its focus on both literary stylistics and how the personal and social backgrounds of the readers impact the reading experience, will prove beneficial for the teaching of literature in an educational setting.

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EPIGRAPH

Reader

As you sink into the words, into the ink
into the indelible stains
into the bare whiteness of the page
You lift the softness of the supple texture,
Smooth, under the rings of your fingertips
Each rivulet on the end is who you are
As ink, sinews and life unite
Human and Textual become one
As you summon each edge
As you turn each page
You drown into this linguistic world
Sprout new synaptic branches that
Blend with networks of memories
Entwine with an elusive phonetic landscape.

That's where you learn that now you are in
You will never get out
You will always have to come back
Lured by those black stains on the soft bleached whiteness
Hauntingly enticing your finger marks.

It is the there and the here
It is the not there and it is the not here
it is the Here-There.

It is who you are.
It is who you have become.

Carmel Sammut
March 2020

Chapter 1: Introduction

Positioning of Research: Theoretical Underpinnings

This empirical study takes a cognitive and linguistic approach to understand better the metacognitive processes of two groups of young adult readers as they interacted with a fictional literary text through a series of practical drama workshops and group discussions. It explores further any textual stylistic elements and externalises the participants' thinking process to understand better those features that enhance or diminish these young adults' engagement with a text during their reading experience.

Having worked for an extensive number of years both in the education sector and theatre, I have come to think that for students to have a better understanding of a fictional character they must emotionally engage to some extent with that character. The initial ideas for this research emerged a number of years ago and were expressed in a paper I had written as part of the requirements for a post-graduate certificate course in narrative research for which I was reading at the University of East of London between 2012-13. The insights derived from this course spurred my motivation to delve deeper in these reader-text interactions leading to this research's more in-depth explorations. At one instance in that paper, I had written that through this emotional connection, this understanding, words will stop being just ink stains on paper but will gain a meaning for the students. "I do believe that a certain element of becoming that fictional character momentarily - living the context, understanding where that fictional character comes from - is important for students' understanding and analysis. Students need to infer an understanding of the world of the text from their own world, because it is through this personal understanding that they need to

initially interact with the world of the book. Hochman (1985: 36) asserts that “[i]n my view, even the clues that we take in and use to construct an image of a person are virtually identical in literature and in life” (Sammut 2013: 5).

Still, this emotional engagement with fictional characters is also based on words, so it is important to think about what words mean to me and to my students in the external world. How do I/they unpack them as an actor/teacher/student to be able to make sense out of them? There are moments when reading can go on “autopilot” for many different reasons and students can perform “good enough reading”. One might understand what a word means but how that word creates that meaning is still to be made clear. Therefore, it is not only what words mean that is important but also how that meaning is made time after time. Students need to learn how to encounter texts and make meaning out of them. They must learn how to ‘act’ on words. The theories of Conceptual Blending, the notions of how readers make sense of what they read as they read, put forward by Fauconnier and Turner (2002) are an attempt to explain this cognitive-linguistic connection. Fauconnier and Turner (2002: 40) define mental spaces as “small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action ... They are interconnected and can be modified as thought and discourse unfold.”

Conceptual blending speaks of mental spaces that are created ‘on the fly’ (Fauconnier and Turner, 2002: 49, 81) in which information is organised. Even drama-in-education, or as it is also known process drama/theatre, addresses the importance of the space in between the students/actors and the fictional character they are creating. O’Toole (1992), Boal (1995), and Bolton (1998) discuss the notion of “metaxis” referring to the actor as seeing two worlds at the same time. In acting “as if” the students are not only aware of themselves as performers/fictional

characters but also of their own positioning within the real world. In keeping with this idea of the student/actor inhabiting two “worlds” mentally, Fauconnier and Turner (2002: 266) speak of “drama connectors” as they explain how “dramatic performances are deliberate blends of a living person with an identity. They give us a living person in one input and a different living person, an actor, in another. The person on stage is a blend of these two.” Similarly, when discussing the experience of readers as they empathise with literary characters, Coplan (2004: 143) explicates that readers “imaginatively experience” what the fictional characters are feeling although readers “maintain a clear sense of [their] own separate identity”. Learning occurs in that moment when students stretch themselves in thinking as someone else but framing that empathy/sympathy with their understanding of the external world.

Bakhtin's (1984: 134) words aptly describe this conception of the reading experience: “I live in a world of other's words”. He also emphasises that “the word lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context”. As is being argued, students need to contextualise. Years after his famously misunderstood “there is nothing outside the text”, Derrida (1988: 136) wrote that he should have worded this dictum as “there is nothing outside con(text)”. Derrida (1988) promotes the unique encounter of reader and text and clearly argues that the text should be understood in its own capacity and that of the reader.

Cognitive poetics, a term coined by Tsur (1987, 1992), has moved away from a broadly structuralist approach, as seen in ‘traditional’ stylistic analysis, in which the main aim was solely the close study of the text as an independent artefact. Cognitive poetics, in trying to understand and explore further readers' experience of fictional texts, has shifted the focus of literary theory onto the readers' role in the reading experience. Influenced by cognitive linguistics and cognitive psychology,

this theory combines the mental processes involved in the act of reading with the more scientific linguistic approach of understanding “the craft of literature” (Stockwell 2002: 1). Stockwell (2002: 2) in his introduction to cognitive poetics insists that “the object of investigation of this science is not the artifice of the literary text alone, or the reader alone, but the more natural process of reading when one is engaged with the other”.

Cognitive studies of literary texts are now stressing the human input of the reader involved in a “dialogic” (Maine 2015) process with the text. Maine (2015: 37) further elaborates this position when she argues that:

If the initiation of a dialogue is also seen as the creation of text by an author, then a dialogic reply can be taken as the reader’s response. The dialogic space between these events can be interpreted as Barthes’ (1974) ‘polysemic space’, the point at which many possible interpretations exist, thus making it a dialogic space of possibility. While the text cannot literally respond to the reader, it exists as a springboard or prompt for the reader’s response.

The term “dialogic” as used in this thesis is meant in the way Rosenblatt (1986: 122) defines her “transactional theory” – a “reciprocal, mutually defining relationship”, which means creating a two-way communication, a dialogue, a more engaged dynamic encounter, in her and this research’s case, between reader and text. The reader fills in the gaps created by the text and the reading experience turns into a rewriting venture; reading is not simply a decoding act. Allington (2005: 1) in this regard makes reference to “a cognitive psychological idea ... originally developed by Schank and Abelson (1977), that, for the purposes of text comprehension and other high-level processing tasks, the brain retrieves knowledge from long-term memory in the organised form of scripts or schemata.” The reader approaches the text with a set of mental schemas which are references established through gender, age, culture, religion and other psychosocial information pertaining to individuals and their life experiences.

These mental preconceptions or schemas, as originally proposed by Schank and Abelson (1977) can be reinforced or challenged. Cook (1994: 182) points out that "... literary texts, can be said to have the specific function of inducing schema challenge and, possibly, schema change in the reader." Indeed, readers engage or disengage from fictional characters depending on how these fictional creations fit into the readers' schemata. Allington (2005: 1) explains how schemas can be thought of "as knowledge of the real world (Habel 1986; Muske 1990; Cook 1994; Stockwell 2002) or of literature itself, for example governing readerly expectations of certain genres (Cook 1994; Semino 2001) or even giving structure to actual novels, poems, songs and films (Mills 1995; Steen 2002)".

Readers, as Emmott (1997: 75) clarifies, "draw on stored information from the preceding text (and general information)". This general information is usually information stored in memory and then retrieved as necessary. Schema theory in its pursuit to explore the mental representations created by humans to understand the world around them is also closely related to another methodological framework, Text World Theory. Devised by Werth (1999) and developed by other scholars including Gavins (2007), Text World Theory explains how readers create mental representations to understand and process discourse. "Text worlds are also deictic spaces ... these deictic and referential elements Werth calls world-building elements" (Gavins 2000: 20).

It is as if, momentarily, readers inhabit the character's fictional body and they indirectly experience the same cognitive and physical sensations. The Cartesian mind-body disconnection has been challenged through new cognitive approaches that argue that our knowledge of the world is embodied. As Lakoff and Johnson (1999: 266) observe, "there is no true separation of mind and body ... mind is part of

the very structure and fabric of our interactions with the world.” These words emphasise the importance of the diegetic component for a hermeneutical understanding of the lived experience that has clear implications for a dialogic relationship between reader and text. Rosenblatt (1978: 13) has shown the importance of the reader’s creative activity in making a text come to life. She compares reading to acting in a theatre performance:

We accept the fact that the actor infuses his [*sic*] own voice, his [*sic*] own body, his [*sic*] own gestures—in short his [*sic*] own interpretation—into the words of the text. Is he [*sic*] not simply carrying to its ultimate manifestation what each of us as readers of the text must do, even if, . . . we remain entirely silent?

Stanislavski (1989) makes an insightful observation that actors need to depend on their knowledge of real life when they are creating a fictional character.

Stanislavski’s reflections clearly resonate with Gerrig (1993: 17, 19) when he declares that readers need to be “transported into the narrative world” and “just like actors performing roles, they must give substance to the psychological lives of characters”.

However, the emotional connection with literary texts and more specifically fictional characters is an area that deserves further research. As Stockwell (2009a: 4) observes “it is surprising that emotion, feeling and aesthetics were not so prominent despite the discipline drawing on detailed stylistic analysis and cognitive psychology”. Much cognitive research on text engagement has been on a sentential level in unnatural laboratory settings with most texts being specifically developed and manufactured for the experiment. Natural reading of whole novels and short stories has only recently become an area of interest for further empirical exploration (Miall & Kuiken 1994; Swann & Allington 2009; Whiteley 2010, 2014, 2016a; Hyder 2016; Peplow et al. 2016; Canning 2017), and it is ironic because most people engage in that kind of reading in natural settings and in real life.

Empirical studies of the reading experience are only now turning to the study of emotions involved in the reader-text interaction. One of the earliest researchers to turn to the study of emotions applied to the study of narrative is Tan (1995). Reference should also be made to other researchers who have made the study of emotions in narrative central to their research: Miall (1985 to the present day), Gerrig (1993), Miall and Kuiken (2002), Scheinder (2001), De Vega, Leon, and Diaz (1996), Colm Hogan (2009, 2011), Keen (2007), Oatley (1992, 2006, 2011, 2012), Sklar (2013), Stockwell (2009a) and Whiteley (2010, 2014). Even Palmer (2004: 115) observes that “a good deal of work has been done within narrative on fictional consciousness ... very little has been done specifically on the emotions”. Empirical research into the emotional connection in narrative studies is still in its early days and is generally an area still neglected and avoided by most academics concerned with literary theory. This present research will add to the bank of knowledge in this area.

The Research Project

This research examines and explores the interactions of two different groups of young adults (16-18 years old) over a period of 5-6 months as they interacted with the short story written by Graham Geene, “The End of the Party”, through a series of theatre workshops aimed at eliciting the participants’ real time reactions as they worked through the text. The first group met between November 2016 and April 2017 for a series of fortnightly workshops that lasted an hour, while the second group met between January and early May 2018 for weekly workshops that lasted an hour and a half. Both groups went through the same practical exercises but were

formed from two different sets of participants although they were both in the same age group between 16-18 years old.

During the practical workshops in this research, the participants were constantly involved in the theatre activities that were focussed on different parts of the text every week. Every activity was followed by discussions about the process and the outcomes from the exercises. Some exercises were aimed at focussing on the stylistic features that the participants would have pointed out from their reading of the short story. These were stylistic features that participants had indicated as helping them have a better understanding of the story and the fictional characters. Participants were instructed to read the story privately at home before the beginning of the whole process, so they were bringing their private observations and interpretations to be shared among the group. The group served as a safe space for their interactions as I did not curtail any information that was elicited from the participants. I merely acted as a facilitator to help them understand the instructions of the exercises, to enhance the communication between the participants, and to take notes of those parts of the text that were mentioned during each session which could be utilised in the future workshop sessions through other exercises.

Hall (2009: 333) writes about a lacuna in studies about reading that refers to what this research is highlighting, a new territory, in that what becomes a focal point of exploration is neither the text nor the reader but the interaction between the two. This study allows the participants to externalise their thinking process at the meeting point between reader and text:

Arguably, what still remains to do for stylistics now is to develop models which do not stress reader at the expense of text or vice versa, but systematically develop accounts of readers making meaning in actual reading events fully respecting both terms of the equation and their mutual imbrication.

The workshops mimicked a lecture/class environment on a small scale, as the participants interacted with the text and helped each other gain a better understanding by voicing their observations or feedback on the tasks that they worked on. These workshop tasks were varied and involved creating scenes based on words from the text chosen by the participants, giving voice to interior thinking of fictional characters as they listened to parts of the text being read, writing their own dialogue or monologue inspired by fictional characters or situations from the text, and constructing physical statues (tableau) inspired by the literary texts.

All exercises were aimed at further revealing those elements within the text that attracted the participants' attention and their personal interpretations by having them verbalise their thinking. Furthermore, the group discussions led to a development of the participants' private readings of the text as they were allowed to air and be ready to defend their interpretations when challenged by the rest of the group. In this way, the participants were striving to make sense of the text as a community of readers. This is very much in keeping with what Stockwell (2007: 138) writes:

Schema theory, possible worlds theory and Text World Theory all suggested various ways to explain the fact that interpretative communities could share roughly consensual readings at the same time as individual readers could hold varying interpretations.

As this quote indicates it is important to appreciate that in a reading of a text, personal interpretations need to be valued as much as those accepted through a consensus within a group. The same literary text can give rise to different individual inferences based on resonances with personal experiences which may not always align with a generally accepted interpretation of a text. Therefore, both the personal and the communal interactions with the literary text needed to be given their due weighting in this research.

Keeping this in mind, apart from the workshops, all the participants were also interviewed through semi-structured questions at two stages of the research process: before the practical workshop began and then another time after the workshops were finished. The first set of questions were aimed at eliciting more information about the participants' reading habits, their favourite literary genre, if they had any, and whether they did most of their reading for leisure, or because it was imposed on them as part of their studies. This information was used to add another layer of information and to shed more light on elements that might enhance the reading experience of these participants.

In my experience as a lecturer, one of the main complaints of students of literature is that texts are imposed on them and that they are unable to immerse into the text because they feel that they cannot identify with texts, which at times tend to deal with issues that are beyond their young age (Guthrie 2008; Beach et al. 2016) . I wanted to find out if these young people liked to read for their own enjoyment if given the choice, or if they only read because their syllabus demanded it from them. This information would depict a richer picture of the participants' personal background that would then give me a better understanding of certain interpretations. This takes into consideration what Gavins (2013: 2-3) states in an interview when speaking about cognitive poetics:

The important thing about it [language] is that it's produced and received by real people and that cognitive linguistics isn't interested really in looking at language on a page, as something to be dissected and examined in a vacuum, it's interested in its real life manifestation and how it's negotiated and understood and how people in all their complexity feed into that. We look at people as cognitive human beings bringing their background experiences and knowledge and understanding with them and bringing it to bear on a piece of language before it's even happened.

Both sets of semi-structured interviews carried out in this research were intended to connect more with the participants as human beings and to use this information to

help illuminate further their contributions and how they shaped their meanings of the text and in turn to better understand the reasons for how the text influenced them.

As previously stated, this research project took a multimodal approach in its explorations to provide space for the participants' personal contributions. One such activity was The Visual Matrix method (Froggett et al. 2015), which will be explained in more detail in Chapter 5, that focussed on participants' reactions and insights to visual images and was used as an introductory session for the practical workshops. This exercise was intended to introduce the participants to the idea of self-disclosure and working more as a group. The Visual Matrix method is a non-textual approach based on a more group-oriented discussion of insights to visual stimuli. This visual exercise proved an excellent tool to engage the participants and enhance their sense of safety in verbalising their individual cognitive and emotional resonance with external stimuli, such as a fictional text, which was specifically the aim of this study.

Research Objectives

This study aims to shed a better light on these young adult readers' cognitive and affective connections as they engage with a fictional literary text while simultaneously keeping a rigorous stylistic/linguistic approach. In this way, this study focusses on discovering different ways of engaging students and their contexts with their reading experience. Classroom teaching of texts is oriented towards "efferent reading" (Rosenblatt 1978) that is mainly focussed on information giving to students. In this type of reading, students are not directly and personally engaged with the text as they tend to find it boring. As Guthrie (2008: 6) remarks that:

reading is mostly textbook driven, teacher controlled, and content centered. Insufficient attention is paid to students' needs for making choices (being in

control), showing competence (experiencing self-efficacy), and socially engaging with text (feeling related and belonging), all of which enable students to become motivated, engaged readers.

On the other hand, Nell (1988b) reported that students engaged in what he called “*ludic reading*’ (and what we could call involvement) reported an avid joy in reading books, gobbling up whatever fit their affinities for reading material” (Jetton & Dole 2004: 260). Since students may prefer to read for pleasure rather than for academic pursuits, the close reading of texts is thwarted at the level of emotion since students emotionally disengage from texts.

In this regard, this study reveals that students need to connect with their own lives before they can engage with the reading experience and that educators need to focus more on this personal background component in their literature classes. Since studies connected with reading show that readers make use of personal schemas to better understand text, it is envisaged that the narrative research component of this study will reveal how the students’ lived experiences aid engagement with reading and comprehension. This research “joins the contemporary cognitive-narratological debate on whether readers bring to bear on fictional characters the folk psychology that they apply to real people” (Caracciolo 2014: 29).

Another facet of this exploration is to put forward the idea that if students engage more in fictional role-playing activities based on the literary text under study, this will help externalise more their metacognitive reflections rather than interiorising them, and in turn, this will enhance text engagement and comprehension. Giving students opportunities to engage more in a dialogic approach of learning whereby they can verbalise more their thinking and engage in discussions will augment the possibility of creating space for them to extend, challenge and mould each other’s interpretations of a text.

This leads to another gap that this study addresses since very little work has primarily focussed on how reading emerges during conversations (Whiteley 2010, 2014, 2016; Peplow et al. 2016; Canning 2017). Much of the studies on reading have focussed on data retrieved through online readers' responses to literature which is done retrospectively. This study analyses the discourse that occurred in real-time with an entire short story rather than a text manipulated specifically for a laboratory experiment. This study contributes to the more recent turn of empirical investigations intended to capture more authentic readerly-text interactions as they occur and to further investigate how lecture room environments can influence the reading of a text.

Ultimately, my aim is to delve deeper into these cognitive, affective and linguistic connections with fictional texts in the hope of finding possibilities to enhance and improve the reading experience of young adults by exploring different ways how to make their interaction with texts a more positive experience.

Thesis Structure by Chapters

The following is a guide to the thesis chapters to help the readers make a better sense of its structure. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 includes a literature review of the salient theories and approaches that have been influential in explaining the role of the reader and that of the text in deriving meaning from the act of reading, and how this meaning is shaped in the interaction between the two. This literature review presents the developments that occurred as literary theory moved from explicating the reader-text connection as reflecting life or "mimesis" to totally eliminating the role of the readers' personal projections to concentrate solely on the text as a stylistic artefact. Attention is then given to the advent of cognitive studies

and its focus on the dynamic between readers and texts rather than on one or the other.

Chapter 3 comprises a reflexive piece of writing which outlines the reasons for my choice of using the methods and methodology that inform this research study. There will be a focus on the personal biases of the researcher which influenced this process. Qualitative research demands that the researcher takes a step back and acknowledges how the choices made and even how just the personal presence of the researcher can shape the outcome of the study.

Chapter 4 places the two groups' participants within their local reading demographic of Malta where these youths live and gives more information about their reading habits and interactions with fictional texts collected through the first set of semi-structured interviews.

More personal insights will be analysed in Chapter 5 as participants interact with visual images using the Visual Matrix method (Froggett et al. 2015). This chapter will give a detailed insight into the efficacy of this method to elicit more personal themes and projections as the members of the two groups interacted with images chosen specifically as they resonated with details and themes found in Graham Greene's "The End of the Party", the text chosen for further exploration in this research.

An analysis of the data yielded from the embodied theatre workshops will form the basis of chapters 6 and 7 which will be further enriched by extensively referencing the voices of the participants. The results are analysed through a thematic approach focussing on both how readers make sense of the text through their emotional, psychological and social projections and how certain stylistic features influenced the attention of these two groups of readers. Text World Theory

is used to shed light on these stylistic features that attracted and enhanced the readers' connection with the fictional literary text.

Chapter 8, which is the concluding chapter, discusses how this study contributes to research into the efficacy of stylistics as a set of tools to shed light on the reader-text dynamic and enrich the study of real-time discussions of readers as they interact with real texts. The chapter concludes by indicating how the teaching of literature in educational settings can profit from an approach that takes into account the emotional, psychological and social background of the students together with a stylistics approach to explore the mechanics of textual features. Furthermore, it highlights the study's limitations and suggests the way forward for further research in the area of readerly-text interaction.

The last part of the thesis includes various appendices that include: the full text of "The End of the Party"; the theatre exercises used during the practical workshops; some of the writings of the participants including monologues and letters written in role; a table which includes the researcher's analysis of the first two paragraphs of the short story using a Text World Theory approach, which is then placed alongside the participants' individual and group reactions for a comparative look at stylistic features that drew the readers' attention; and a glossary of terms used in Text World Theory and cognitive poetics to further enhance the readers' understanding of the analysis using these two approaches.

Chapter 2 – Theoretical Literature Review and Analytical Frameworks

Theoretical Perspectives on the Reader-Text Dynamic

A brief look at the theoretical literature that focusses on the interactions between readers and texts reveals that readerly emotions instigated by literary texts have always been considered as suspect and with no critical value for academic literary theory. In fact, academic literary theory has mainly focussed on “cultural history” and “literary scholarship” (Stockwell 2009a: 1). It is only recently that pragmatics and the role of the readers and their interactions with the text have come to the fore again. This chapter is not meant to be a comprehensive look at the broad history of literary theory, but it is a brief overview of the main tenets of some theories and school of thoughts that have addressed the dynamics of reader-text interactions.

Going back to Aristotle's theory of *mimesis* and the notion of *catharsis*, the issue of emotional connection with literature and drama has been an integral part of the process of understanding by the reader or spectator of the author/playwright's messages. This mirroring effect of character/spectator/reader underpins the didactic moralistic aim of classical drama as outlined by Aristotle. The sense of pity and fear felt by the spectators, as they watch the unfurling of the protagonist's tragic trajectory, encompasses the issue of sympathy (feeling for), in this case a sense of pity for the main fictional character's plight as the events unfold, and empathy (feeling with), the sense of fear that the spectators feel for the central fictional character. The audience should identify with this fear to undergo a sense of purification and refrain from committing any similar mistakes. With this regard, Oatley (1994: 66) writes that:

Aristotle's notion was that a play is not so much an imitation - it is a simulation of human actions. Actions are displayed by actors in the theatre and - more importantly - the play must run on the minds of the audience, as a computer simulation runs on a computer.

The arousal of feelings through literature with the intention of imparting a didactic message continued to persist and became more apparent by the 18th century with its penchant for melodramatic and emotionally effusive writings. The widespread recognition of the corruptive powers of readers' identification with the protagonists of sentimental novels in this century became more pronounced. Hume (1739/2011) speaks of sympathy as a process by which our external knowledge of the passions of others is transformed into an internal experience. Smith (1790: 1) writes of "changing places with the sufferer". Although both Smith (1790) and Hume (1739/2011) are writing about a form of empathy, the distinction between sympathy "feeling for" and empathy "feeling with" was still undefined. It was only in the 19th Century, when sympathy became associated with "fellow-feeling" in having communal interests and duties, making it a strong political force to push for alternative futures for society, and at the same time highlighting the difference between the two. Sympathy became more associated with a sense of camaraderie while empathy came to refer more to an individual sense of identification with another person. Although the term "*Einfühlung*" (Vischer 1837), "feeling oneself into", is attributed to the aesthetic theory of Lipps (1907), it was Titchener (1909) who coined the word "empathy" in translation. The term empathy was brought to the literary public's attention by Lee (1913), who through her research and publications made empathy a central focus of aesthetic experience.

Attention to emotional engagement in the reading experience dissipated in the beginning of the 20th Century, as appeals to emotions when considering critical appreciation of texts fell out of favour. One of the main attacks on the mirroring effect and the dangers of immersion in stories came from the theatre playwright and theoretician, Bertolt Brecht, when he introduced the concept of alienating effect

through his plays. The audience was not to be allowed to lose itself in the emotions of the fictional characters. In his plays the actors declared that they were pretending to be the fictional characters to prevent the audience from a sense of identification with the fictional characters and situations portrayed on stage. Brecht labelled this sense of distancing as “*Verfremdungseffekt*” similar to the effect of Shklovsky’s (1917) “defamiliarisation” in literary theory. Shklovsky (1917) defined “defamiliarization” as those stylistic features in a text that made language “strange” creating a distancing effect and made the reader see the familiar from a fresh perspective.

Focus now turned to the language and stylistic features of the text and these were to be studied for their own artistic qualities and ability to challenge the readers’ perceptions which had become automatised through repeated exposure to everyday life. After 1945, New Criticism came to the fore with the idea that meaning of texts is to be found in the functioning of the language within the texts themselves and not through any agency of the reader. Situating the meaning of the text in the reader was to commit “affective fallacy” and was “seen as opening a whole array of subjective or psychological interpretations of texts without a so-called ‘objective’ standard or norm against which such readings can be evaluated.” (Nolte 2012: 1). The text became an artefact devoid of any external influences, that is, both author and reader were removed from having the potential of exerting any influence on generating meaning from a text.

The perceived subjectivity of textual interpretation was also countered by the Russian Formalists who insisted that the literary effect of a text is determined only by the diction used and the literary devices utilised within its structure. Hence the terms “defamiliarization” and “foregrounding” (Shklovsky 1917; Havarnek 1932;

Mukarovsky 1932) became the cornerstone to attract the readers' attention within a literary work and the function of literature or art was to make the familiar and the habitual seem unfamiliar only through its words; to make readers look at the ordinary from an extraordinary fresh perspective.

As a reaction to this effacing of the human element of the writer and reader in the equation of meaning-making in literature, several new approaches sprang up towards the end of the 20th Century focussing more on a phenomenological dynamic between reader and text. The main influence was Husserl's (1900/1970) theory of consciousness with the idea that the "consciousness is always consciousness of something" (Earnshaw 2006: 127). When applied to literary interpretation Husserl's (1900/1970) theory spotlighted the importance of the reader's consciousness when applied to a text to give it meaning. Ingarden (1936/1980) developed Husserl's theory and "consider[ed] the literary work as fully dependent on the act of consciousness that functions over it." (Das 2014: 116). The literary text he considers has many "gaps", "blanks" and "spots" which despite being unconsciously filled in, form part of the readers' understanding of the literary work. Ingarden's (1936/1980) thinking paved the way to Reader-Response Theory or Reception Theory that had three main proponents: Fish (1980), Iser (1972) and Jauss (1982).

Jauss (1982) put forward his idea of the "horizon of expectation" which as Culler (1997: 122) elaborates means that:

The interpretation of words, should, therefore, focus not on the experience of an individual reader but on the history of a work's reception and its relation to the changing aesthetic norms and sets of expectations that allow it to be read in different eras.

Each culture within a period of time has its own set of expectations that will determine the meaning of a text. This approach therefore denies the universality of a text as its

meaning will change depending on the assumptions the readers are accustomed to in the historical timeframe they are living.

Moving away from this textual interpretation based on a historical framework, Iser (1972) focussed more on the dynamics of the reading act between the text and the individual reader. Although he did not exclude social and historical factors, he was more concerned about reading as an individual process. Iser (1972) places a lot of importance on the “gaps” and “negations” within a text that invite the reader to fill them with personal meaning; the text is completed in the act of reading. For Iser (1972), the reader’s experience of the text becomes the central concept of the reading experience.

Proposing a middle ground between Juass (1982) and Iser’s (1972) theories, Fish (1980) put forward the concept of “interpretive community” which denotes that meaning of a text does not depend on an individual reader but is formed from a public and conventional point of view. For Fish (1980: 11):

the act of recognising literature is not constrained by something in the text, nor does it issue from an independent and arbitrary will; rather, it proceeds from a collective decision as to what will count as literature, a decision that will be in force only so long a community of readers or believers continues to abide by it.

As is evident up to now, theoretical agreement and consensus as to whether meaning in interactions with a text is derived from the text alone, the individual reader, or a dynamic process between both has always proved to be problematic. Although this psychological projection of oneself into the world of the text has been explored by so many different researchers and theoreticians, not all agree as to the quality or intensity of this connection. Even presently, the pursuit of research considering how the personal, emotional, and social contribute to the connections between readers and texts in literary theory is seen as naïve by a number of academics of literary theory (Peplow et al. 2016). This is ironic as most of the reading done in the everyday world is not for

academic or literary scrutiny but is done more for the enjoyment of the readers' encounters with the text (Stockwell 2005).

Cognition and the Reading Experience

Over the years, several researchers have entered the debate as to the quality of this readerly connection with the text. Tan (1994) speaks of the sympathy felt between the reader and text; Scheff (1979) discusses the concept of the reader re-experiencing emotional memories; based on Freud's (1904) notion of identification, Stockwell (2009a) put forward the notion of identification in reader-text interactions. The commonality between all these assertions is that to various degrees there is a combination of linguistic knowledge and personal experience involved to explain the connection between readers and texts. In all the theories put forward to explain this emotional connection with texts (Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2002; Miall and Kuiken 2002; Oatley 1992; Mar et al. 2006), there is a reference to the external (reader) and internal (narrative) world: the deictic or pragmatic component of the readers' worlds, including the emotional, psychological, social and cultural components.

Complementary to this is the diegetic world of the text, also referred to as the storyworld (Herman 2009), which Oatley (1994: 57) further breaks down into: the "event structure" - the order as things happen in the imaginary world and the "discourse structure"- a selection of only a number of these events from the whole unfolding of the narrative plot. Oatley (1994: 55) explains this as:

Separating outside from inside there is what Goffman (1961) has called a semi-permeable membrane, that surrounds each kind of social interaction ... Goffman's metaphor of the membrane can be extended to reading ... For literary art, emotions from outside the membrane arise as a reader confronts a text: the pleasures of reading, the satisfaction of curiosity, surprises that render things unfamiliar. The emotions arising inside the world of the narrative include those evoked by the plot or by characters in the story

As Tan (1995) and Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994) explain, emotions have a selective role in that they influence readers in choosing information that is applicable to the present context and which signal which knowledge is to be “activated”. The references to the external and internal world of the narrative are made by different researchers, including Tan (1995) and Zwaan (1993) who speak about the artefact emotions (connected with genre, structure, author’s writing skills etc.) and fiction emotions (connected to character, plot, actions etc.). These F(iction)-emotions can be further divided into F(a)-ltercentric emotions and F(e)-gocentric emotions, with the former focussing on the emotions connected to the characters in fiction, while the latter focusses more on the emotions raised in the reader by the fictional world.

Fictional ego-centric emotions are closely linked to reasons why readers choose to immerse themselves in the storyworld in the first place. The following might be some of the reasons why readers might want to identify with the fictional characters’ aims and actions: the fictional characters are in a similar context as the reader; text might trigger primary emotions (happiness, fear, anger, or sadness, for example); and also, because the text might trigger certain memories. In fact, memory plays an integral part in much of the research carried out on emotions and literature. Emotional memories might be triggered in the reader by the thematic concerns of the narrative world (Scheff 1979). Emotional memories tend to appear more towards the beginning of the reading experience, while as the reader goes along in the narrative world; more spontaneous emotions tend to surface (Larsen and Seilman 1988).

The extent to which these emotions are prompted by cognition or whether it is the other way around is still an under-researched area. According to Miall and Kuiken (2002), neuroscience seems to offer some support about the primacy of feelings, and they outline four domains of literary feelings:

- (1) evaluative feelings - overall enjoyment, pleasure or satisfaction of reading
- (2) narrative feelings - these can include storyworld immersion, which is also referred to by Gavins (2007); is similar to the landscape of consciousness – the fictional characters' inner world (Bruner 1986), and also like fiction emotions (Kneepens & Zwaan 1994).
- (3) aesthetic feelings - response to the form – which echo artefact emotions (Tan 1994; Zwaan 1993); are similar to the landscape of action – the plot and external actions of fictional characters (Bruner 1986); also described as discourse structure (Oatley 1994)
- (4) self-modifying feelings - restructure of reader's understanding and also of self; similar to schema disruption and refreshment (Cook 1994).

Reader-text interaction involves a two-way model communication of text to reader

(mind/body/emotions) (bottom-up) and reader (mind/body/emotions) to text (top down). How much of what is going in the interaction between reader and text is

cognitive? How much is it affective? Keen (2007: 27) refers to Damasio (1999)

when she writes that “thinking and feeling are part of the same package.” Moreover,

Keen (2007: 27) asserts that for a number of scientists including the evolutionary psychologists Cosmides and Tooby (2000):

One cannot sensibly talk about emotion affecting cognition because ‘cognition’ refers to a language for describing all of the brain's operations, including emotions and reasoning.

Most models of text comprehension focus on the cognitive aspects of the reading

process and ignore personal processes. It is with the advent of approaches like

cognitive poetics (Tsur 1992; Stockwell 2002) and other cognitive-linguistic models

it inspired including Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) that both

emotions and cognition can begin to be addressed together when the readers’

experience of the text is under consideration. The reader becomes once more a

central focus in this interaction which is analysed from a linguistic, cognitive and

emotional perspective.

Schema Theory

As stated previously in this chapter, readers tend to approach texts with a set of preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and other prior knowledge from their life experiences which they project onto their reading experience. A theory that focusses mainly on further explicating the extent to which this prior knowledge plays an integral part in human interactions with their environment is schema theory which has already been mentioned in other parts of this thesis.

Schema theory is based on the work of the cognitive psychologist Bartlett (1932/1995), who explored how people accrue and adapt their understanding of their reality through their interactions with their physical and social environments. Bartlett (1932/1995) posited that this stored information is not a fixed storage in the mind but is in constant flux as a dynamic relationship between the individual knowledge and cultural practices. Edwards and Middleton (1987: 80) further elaborate on this when they write that:

Schemata in such a view (i.e., Bartlett's) are not knowledge structures stored in the brains or minds of individuals for the interpretation of experience, but functional properties of adaptations between persons and their physical and social environments.

Although Bartlett (1932/1995)'s research held much promise in explaining further the transactional nature of human understanding, ironically, it was not until the 1970s that schema theory gained more attention when research in artificial intelligence and cognition gained more importance. With the work of researchers like Minsky (1975), Schank and Abelson (1977), this area of study also gained traction in the field of cognitive psychology.

A concept that evolved from applying schema theory to artificial intelligence is that of "frame" which Minsky (1975) developed when he tried to mimick human cognition in a machine. Minsky (1975) built upon the idea that humans use generic

knowledge that they would have accrued through their previous life experiences to understand new situations. Generally the new information people come across would either confirm and/or match their previous knowledge (schema reinforcement – Cook 1994) or give new insights by challenging or adapting the old information (schema disruption or refreshing – Cook 1994). It is impossible that humans “store” all the knowledge from the information that is encountered, so conceptual “frames” are created which seem to have “slots” that are filled in with more specific details.

An example of such a frame could be the word “school” which instantly brings to mind a building, classes, corridors, doors, windows, playground and other elements related to this word. One can further continue to fill in this information with further slots like a specific classroom has a door, windows, chairs, tables, teacher’s desk, whiteboard and so on. This can be further broken down into more specific detail like “door” which brings to mind shape, material and other characteristics related to the mind concept of that word.

Other terms used in schema theory are “script” and “plan” which Schank and Abelson (1977) define as sequences of typical actions involved in a goal-oriented event. Adding to the frame of “school” above, for example, those familiar with this concept will be familiar with the following script: at a certain time the gates will open, children arrive at a specific time, they enter the school, they have an assembly, they go into the classrooms, then at intervals a bell will ring to denote a change in subject, a bell will ring to denote a break, lessons resume and finally all the students will leave school once it ends. What becomes evident in this information is that although many will be familiar with this kind of script, it can also be very specific to a kind of school, for example, early years and secondary school, since at sixth form level there are no bells to denote change and students come and go at different hours.

This script could also possibly denote differences in the education system between one country and another, for example, in some countries there is the system of boarding schools whereby students do not go home at the end of the day. Such an example indicates that cultural differences are intrinsic in the development of individual schemas. Stockwell (2003: 257) clarifies this point when he explains that:

Schemas are sociocultural products, since they are shared with other members of the community on the basis of a likely similar set of social experiences. One of the great advantages of schema theory is this capacity for encompassing both a social and an individual explanation of understanding. Different people might understand a situation or a text differently because of differences in their schematic knowledge, or because they belong to cultures and communities that schematize the situation or text in a different contextual way.

This point immediately delineates how schema theory can explain the way different readers can have: similar but also alternative views of the same text, how sometimes problems in text comprehension might not indicate an inability to read but the issue would lie in schema differences, and it also emphasises the importance of context for the correct interpretation of the new data that is incoming. Widmayer (2003: 1-2) makes a very important point in this regard when she writes:

... most schema theorists postulate that there is not just one body of knowledge available to learners at any given stage of development, but rather a network on context-specific bodies of knowledge that learners apply to specific situations. ... Situation-specific schema help to explain the difference between expert and novice interpretation of knowledge; experts, with more complex developed schema in a particular subject area can function better in any given domain than a novice with no schema or an inadequate schema to help them interpret and react to new information. Since these schemas are context specific, they are dependent on an individual's experience with and exposure to a subject area rather than simply "raw intelligence."

These words are crucial in the context of reader-text interaction in a classroom environment as will be illustrated in more depth in Chapters 6 and 7 when analysing the data garnered from this research project

As has been observed, "schemas", "frames", "plans" all represent the previous information that people utilise to fill in the gaps when encountering new

situations. The way in which schema theory explicates the transactional nature of human understanding when encountering new information, and the idea of the gap-filling involved for people to comprehend new information are concepts in this theory that underline its similarities to the readers' experience of encountering new texts. In fact, schema theory can be beneficial as an exploratory tool of the individual's experiences and motivations involved in the reading experience. Such information could yield more detail, for example, as to why readers identify or sympathise with certain characters by projecting their own discourse-world beliefs and experiences, or can even capture the reader's knowledge or expectations of a text genre which can be seen as a schema of a text-type (Cook 1994; Semino 2001).

Still, it is important to note that with the advent of more recent cognitive studies of narrative, the focus has now shifted more onto the interaction between readers and texts rather than on one or the other. As Emmott and Alexander (2016: 14) succinctly explain: "Schema theory is still viewed as important, but there has been a growing interest in how a reader needs to supplement general knowledge with the knowledge accumulated from the text itself." Although schema theory can shed light on the readers' input and projections onto the text (top-down) but it does not equally offer explanations of how the text characteristics exert influence on the readers (bottom-up). This observation leads us to another theoretical approach which has garnered much attention in cognitive studies of reader-text interactions which is Text World Theory. With regard to Text World Theory, Stockwell (2003: 260) observes that:

Most importantly, TWT [Text World Theory] describes the *text-driven* means by which the particular schematic knowledge required is specified out of all the potential knowledge of the reader. It must be said that TWT [Text World Theory] does this more convincingly than schema theory does.

This resurgent interest in the role played by both the reader and the text in the meaning-making process during the act of reading led the way to new perspectives that focussed more on the interaction between the two rather than one or the other.

Cognitive Poetics and Text World Theory

These new ways of thinking about literature allowed the space for the emergence of disciplines like cognitive poetics which is text driven but also considers reading as “grounded in our general cognitive capacities for making sense of the world” (Gavins & Steen 2003: 1). Cognitive poetics is mainly based on the notion that “meaning is embodied” (Stockwell 2007: 137). With its focus on a sentential level, cognitive poetics gives attention to how linguistic detail creates a sense of “resonance” (Stockwell 2009b: 27) in that the text has a long-term impact on readers. Cognitive poetics does not approach a text from an academic theoretical perspective only, but also considers the lay persons' experience of interacting with a text. Stockwell (2009b: 28) reiterates that “resonance is a feeling of the affective power of an encounter with a piece of literature”.

As more researchers took up cognitive poetics' perspectives about the reading process, this critical framework continued to expand into further cognitive-linguistic models like Text World Theory. Text World Theory is a sub-theory developed within cognitive poetics and has interdisciplinary roots including cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics. Text World Theory focusses on the sense of immersion or transportation (Gerrig 1993) into the narrative worlds and mental representations created by readers through the linguistic cues and the participants' knowledge and inferences (Werth 1999: 7). But more than that as Stockwell (2007: 3) asserts, the basis of cognitive poetics is “the notion that meaning

is embodied, and that mind and body are continuous” in that even the reading experience as a meaning-making event incorporates both cognition and emotion. In making sense of the text, readers make inferences to their own world experiences. Emotions can be provoked either by identification or disturbance to the expected schema. The Text World Theory approach expands on this cognitive poetics' stance in that it further unpacks the text on a stylistic level and gives prominence to those textual features that can possibly interact with the reader's real life experiences/knowledge and how these come together to explain the facilitation and/or challenges to literary emotional engagement.

Text World Theory maintains that textual features and structuring of texts have a high impact on the resonances that readers have in their interactions with the text (Stockwell 2002; Whiteley 2010). Such cognitive linguistic models recognise that readers' understandings of texts emerge from an interaction between the linguistic cues, for example, syntax, grammar and semantics and the “human situation of the embodied mind” (Stockwell 2009b: 27). Readers create mental representations based on their understanding of the text and their pre-existing knowledge from their interactions with the world. Participants bring to the text not only their linguistic understanding but also their mental preconceptions based on their social, cultural and propositional knowledge. Seilman (1990: 327) makes reference to the connection between a personal universe of the text and that of the reader:

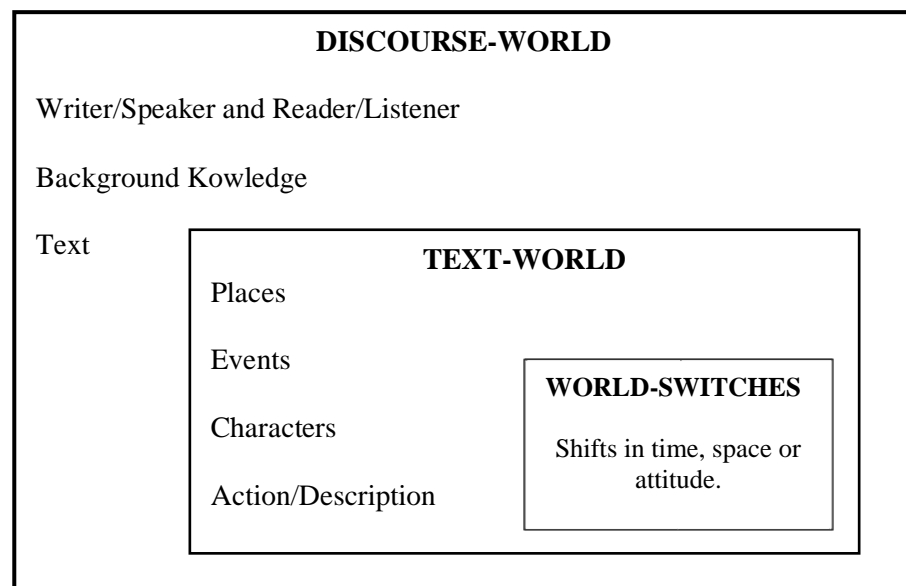
... conscious reminders while reading are indicative of a cognitive process of relating the universe of the text to the personal universe of the reader. Thus, conscious reminders while reading are considered accessory devices to an underlying process of understanding.

An understanding of a text always commences from the readers' deictic “here and now”; readers enter the world of the text from this “origo” (Bühler 1982). In turn,

these worlds are further developed with the new information provided by the text. Readers' emotional involvement with these worlds of the text depends on many elements such as the text's "world-building" features which give information about the time, space, objects and characters of the storyworld. Other textual cues include "function-advancing propositions" that push the events in the world of the text forward and can include "states, actions, events and processes" (Stockwell 2002: 137).

Text World Theory makes it possible to graphically map the text-worlds and the boundaries between them (Figure 1 below) created as readers interact with texts. According to this theory, the real world which the reader and the author inhabit is labelled as the "discourse-world". In most cases the reader and author are not physically present at the same time and place and thus this discourse-world is also considered as being "split" (Gavins 2007: 26). Stockwell (2002: 4-5) argues that discourse participants (readers) use "cognitive processes ... to negotiate everyday life ... [which] are the same we use when we are reading". As participants interact with characters (Werth 1999), or text-world enactors according to Gavins (2007), they will start their entry into the storyworlds.

Figure 1: Text World Theory Architecture – the mapping of the reader-text interaction (An adapted version of Giovanelli's (2010: 219) figure to include the term "world-switch" (Gavins 2005: 82))



Gerrig (1993) looks at the act of reading as a performative event in that the participants within the text-world join this make-believe world and suspend their discourse-world concept of real life to be able to immerse themselves in the storyworld. Although readers know that they are participating in a fictional world, the cognitive processes that they use to negotiate the everyday life are the same they use when reading. This observation is also echoed by Whiteley (2010: 59):

Because text-worlds have the potential to be richly detailed representations and are structurally similar to the discourse-world, it seems plausible that the enactors and events within them can interact with our appraisal processes and trigger emotional responses.

In its mappings of these readerly interactions, Text World Theory focusses on the process of interaction between readers and texts rather than just the end product of interpretation, and this is precisely where my research, including the practical theatre workshops with readers, is situated. With its focus on the text, on the one hand, it addresses a universal understanding of the textual features but at the same time, by including the personal background of the readers' worlds, it also includes an individual interpretation of the same text as this depends on the personal experiences, understanding, memories and knowledge of each specific reader. Common to all readers are the mental spaces created in interacting with the text and for allowing readers' goals and motivations in their emotional experience of the narrative.

These mental spaces have been addressed by different theoreticians in their seeking to understand how readers make sense of the world of the text: schemas and scripts (Schank & Abelson 1977), conceptual blending (Fauconnier & Turner 2002, 2008), contextual frame theory (Emmot 1997), and Palmer (2004: 5) goes as far as to state that "... narrative fiction is, in essence, the presentation of fictional mental functioning ... the study of the novel is the study of fictional mental functioning ..."

Text World Theory focusses on these mental processes which can be both participant accessible, that include observations done within the storyworld and/or about it, which can be verified and/or questioned by the discourse-world participants as they interact with the text. However, there are other mental spaces created within the storyworld which are character accessible only, in that these can only be verified by the fictional character and cannot be assessed for reliability by the readers as they interact with the text. Mostly, this would be information that can be reserved by the readers for later verification, if possible, at all.

These new mental spaces create shifts from the initial text-world and are referred to as sub-worlds by Werth (1999). Gavins (2005: 82) relabels sub-worlds as “world-switches” as she explains that Werth’s label seems to imply that there is a sense of inequality or subordination in the new worlds that are created within the initial text-world. In this thesis, sub-worlds will be referred to as world-switches.

These new mental spaces created within the text are not subordinate to the initial text-world but are “created as a result of some of departure from the text-world parameters initially established” (Gavins 2005: 81). More information about the individual sub-worlds or world-switches is given in a brief glossary dedicated to Text World Theory and cognitive poetics terms found in Appendix F.

Distinction between Text-worlds and Storyworlds

In speaking about this readers’ sense of entering into these worlds of the text and world-switches, it is important at this point to elaborate that in this thesis a distinction will be made between the terms “text-world” and “storyworld” following a further refinement put forward by Scott (2020). This elaboration is based on

Herman's (2009: 72-3) cognitive conception of storyworlds which she defines as:

... mental representations enabling interpreters to frame inferences about situations, characters and occurrences either explicitly mentioned in or implied by a narrative text or discourse. As such, storyworlds are mental models of the situations and events being recounted – of who did what to and with whom, when, where, why and in what manner.

Bearing this in mind, when reference is made to “storyworld” in this thesis, this term denotes the “larger-scale worlds that fictional texts build in their entirety” (Scott 2020: 93) while when referring more to micro-linguistic mapping of the “reader’s conceptual world-building processes at the level of sentence and paragraph” (ibid.) then the term “text-world” will be used.

Immersion and Entering the Storyworlds

An aspect of reading that this research alludes to is this sense of entering into the world/s of the text, a sense of immersion that readers experience once they get involved with a text. Since this sense of readerly immersion will be one of the focal points of this research, it is paramount to take a more in-depth look at the divergent perspectives that try to account for this crucial component in the reader-text dynamic. As we have seen the act of reading does not involve only a cognitive dimension, but it also depends on the readers' embodied experience in the world and to a certain extent is an embodied experience in itself. This notion of immersion has been the focus of many experiments concerning the act of reading and different researchers have used several terms to try to approximate a precise definition of this sensation of the narrative drawing the reader into its world.

Nell (1988a) captures this sensation in the word “lost” meaning that a reader loses oneself completely and momentarily forgets the surrounding reality. The word

“lost” poses a series of complications as it does not address the different levels of immersion that various readers tend to report feeling in their reading experience (Green & Brock 2000; Busselle & Bilandzic 2008; Segal 1995b; Wolf 2014). “Lost” also does not explain that experience of being simultaneously in and out of the world of the text. To further refine a definition of this interaction with the storyworld, Gerrig (1993) and Green and Brock (2000) have written about the possibility of stories “transporting” readers into their fictional environment. Green (2004: 248) further adds this definition to the notion of readerly immersion:

Transportation is defined as an integrative melding of attention, imagery, and feelings, focused on story events. Transportation, psychologically similar to flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) or absorption (Tellegen, 1982), is a form of experiential response to narratives (Prentice & Gerrig, 1999).

All references to this sensation of entering the fictional world indicate that meaning is made through this dynamic interaction between a reader and a text.

Terms such as “transportation” and “immersion” indicate that the text becomes a conceptual space that the reader is either led into or can inhabit; a text-space or a text-world. Readers are carried to that place or feel as if they are “sinking” into that world. These terms need a closer inspection and unpacking as they tend to be deceptive on the surface, in that they give the impression that although both reader and text are important, it is only the text which is doing the active work of luring the reader into its world while the former is merely a passive recipient. Rosenblatt (1978; 2005: xvi) had referred to this readerly-text interface in her “transactional theory”:

emphasizing the essentiality of both reader and text, in contrast to other theories that make one or the other determinate ... ‘Transaction’... permits emphasis on the to-and-fro, spiraling, nonlinear, continuously reciprocal influence of reader and text in the making of meaning. The meaning — the poem — ‘happens’ during the transaction between the reader and the signs on the page.

As already made clear, the aim of this research is to look in more detail at the quality of this reader-text interaction where both reader and text are intertwined in an alternating active and passive feedback loop, which does not merely involve a surface understanding of the words being read, but an appreciation of how words work together to create a meaning within context. Readers use their own understanding, their own socio-cultural experiences, to actively infer meaning from the text which can coincide with their world views or challenge them. This kind of “online judgement” (Hastie & Park 1986) that readers carry out while reading, will depend also on what they perceive as being real or not. Buselle and Bilandzic (2008: 256) continue to build on this argument in their writing:

Then, we build into our model two types of perceived realism: First, the extent to which stories or their components are similar to the actual world (“external realism”) and, second, plausibility and coherence within the narrative (“narrative realism”).

This external realism refers to how readers tend to look at their network of real-world information to match up with their understanding both of the word as used in context and to make sense of situations and characters presented in the fictional world. Readers use this outside reference to “inhibit” (Elfenbein 2018: 70) any information that does not contribute to push forward their understanding of what they are encountering in the storyworld

An example of “inhibition” can be seen in the processing of a sentence like “*The girl felt the ball was a dream as she danced the night away.*” Readers encountering the word “*ball*” at first will resort to their knowledge of the meaning of that word in their own life. “*Ball*” could refer both to (i) a spherical object used by children and adults to play games with, but it could also mean (ii) a social gathering where people are expected to dress up appropriately to indulge in the activity of dancing. As readers process each word that they encounter, they will have

to “inhibit” or discard or suppress the meaning that does not apply in that context. In this example, “*ball*” will be taken to have the second meaning rather than the first one because the readers increment their knowledge as they process more words in the sentences, and they encounter the words “*dream*” and more specifically “*dance*”.

Furthermore, readers will not only have a representation or visual image of the word “*ball*”, but they will identify with the word “*dream*” which tends to go beyond pictorial reconfigurations to establish its meaning but veers more towards an experiential dimension as one has to almost re-experience those feelings associated with dreams, which could be both positive or negative depending on the individual’s experience, but simultaneously everyone can experience that “other worldly” or “surreal” feel to the word.

Bernaerts et al. (2013) give three levels of how readers make meaning of and retain information from a text they have just read and how this influences their comprehension. Incoming text is first screened at a syntactical level checking for word order, grammatical expectations, and clause boundaries and this is known as the *Surface Structure*. Once no problems are encountered on this level then readers go on to attempt an understanding of the text on a *Text Base* level which is the semantic content or meaning of the text which leads to the third level of text recall, the *Situation Model*, where readers make inferences which are based on “readers’ expectations and knowledge” (Bernaerts et al. 2013: 29). Goldman et al. (1996); Bransford and Johnson (1972); Kintsch (1992) have all reported in their various research experiments that readers are more likely to understand and remember details at the Situation Model level than in any of the previous two levels.

Situation Model theories have also influenced the concepts of Text World

Theory as Whiteley (2010: 21) explains that:

Situation models represent the 'people, objects, locations, events and actions described in a text' (Zwaan 1999: 15) and are also rich worlds; for instance Zwaan (1999) and Zwaan et al (2001) suggest they are able to explain the phenomenon of 'vicarious experience' through language (2001: 73). In comparison with possible-worlds, mental and situation models have the potential to contain not only objects or individuals standing in relation to one another, but also more sensory aspects such as 'smell, taste, touch, memory, emotion and so on' (Gavins 2001: 48, Werth 1999: 37)

All research strongly indicates that to understand better and to get a more holistic picture of all the variables involved in the process of reading and understanding of a text, the dynamic involves not only a cognitive understanding of the text but that personal experiences are also a means through which readers infer this understanding.

Embodiment, Enactivism and Potential Space in the Act of Reading.

As we have seen up to now, words do not only evoke a representational cognitive image but demand a more complex "texture" or the "experienced quality of literature" (Stockwell 2009b: 44). Caracciolo (2017: 30) also refers to this quality of experience that goes beyond the cognitive:

Representation works by referencing to object-like entities (such as events, people and things), while experience is a complex texture created by people's biological make-up and past experiences; it has to do not just with *what* is experienced, but with *how*, with the ways in which people respond to the world.

The traditional view of language comprehension has been one where the focus has been only on the abstract understanding which happens on a cerebral level. For a long time since the 1950s the main idea behind word comprehension was the Amodal Symbol model where the brain was seen as a computer that retrieves data stored in its archival system without resorting to any experiential detail. It was understood that, for example, to recall the meaning of the word "apple", once the

propositional aspects have been “inputted” into the system, the brain would search and find connections like i) shape: spherical, ii) skin: different colours, iii) category: fruit, among others. What these aspects do not take into consideration are any experiences or memories that such a word can conjure – “qualia”: for example, the memory of how “sweet” an apple can taste, the sense of “heat” that can ensue when thinking of how an apple ripens, the texture of the apple’s skin which can all be part of the associations that a listener, or a reader can retrieve on encountering such a word.

To explore the full experience of the reader-text interaction, it is important to take into consideration not only the cognitive aspect of the language but also the fact that words can affect us beyond the cognitive and the semiotic. “In this way, readers’ imagination reflects the intertwining of representation and experience (via expression)” (Caracciolo 2017: 31). These “experiential traces” (Zwaan and Madden 2005; Zwaan 2008) seem to imply that language comprehension does not only happen on a syntactic or semantic level or through cognitive schemas (Schank and Abelson 1977) but a “remembering” with the whole body. Todres and Galvin (2008: 575) also succinctly argue about language being rooted in a lived experience:

Embodied interpretation is a body-based hermeneutics in which qualitative meanings are pursued by a back-and-forth movement between words and their felt complexity in the lived body. This movement between the whole of the felt complexity at any moment (that is ‘in the more’) and the part that ‘comes to language’ is a practice that keeps open the creative tension between words and the aliveness of what the words are about.

This is different from what Fludernik (1996: 12) refers to as “experientiality” by which she means that the close imitation of real life in narratives is a quality of the narrative itself, and not to be found in the dynamics of the reader and the text.

This latter interaction has been discussed by different researchers and theoreticians who all give their own interpretation of the process: top-down – reader

to text (Goodman 1967; Smith 1971); bottom-up – text to reader (Gough 1972; LaBerge and Samuels 1974); outside-in (McCarthy 1999) and now a more corporeal approach with the reader no longer being seen as a Cartesian duality who applies only a bottom-up approach but brings his/her embodied experiences of the world to the text. In this way, one can refer to a passive/active processes which are involved in the reading process. At one instance it is the text which is working on the reader delivering information which the reader is processing. In another instance, it is the reader who is working on the text and allowing and inhibiting information depending on the reader's life background and experiences. As Arbib et al. (2014: 61) write: "We, instead, endorse the view that human communication is not a mere coding-decoding procedure; people use context to guide interpretation (Arbib & Hesse, 1986; Dessalles, 2008; Sperber & Wilson, 1986/95)."

In other words, readers bring in their knowledge and experiences of the outside world to makes sense of what they encounter in the text, and the text gives back information for the reader to move further along into its storyworld. Caracciolo (2017: 49) speaks of this cyclical input between readers and texts:

Stories dwell on this process of reciprocal exchange and transformation, since they can change us in the same breath as they build on our familiarity with the physical and socio-cultural world.

This indicates a sense of co-creation between the reader and the text in that the reader no longer remains passive and becomes not only an accomplice to the writer but in a way a writer himself/herself, filling in, what Iser (1972) refers to as the "blanks" or gaps in the text. Readers close these textual gaps with their own inferences based on their encounter with the words in the text and in turn derive meaning through their own understanding influenced by their lived experiences in the world. Stockwell (2012: 95) also alludes to this "feedback loop", in referring to a

circularity between the world of the text and that of the reader. This investment into the narrative seems not only to happen when one is reading but also when one is listening to a story. Richardson et al. (2018: 2-3) report how Silbert et al. (2014) used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to scan the brain of a volunteer speaking a 15-minute personal story:

... activation was not limited to regions of the brain classically related to language, but also involved emotional, sensory and motor systems consistent with the notion that at some level, the listener actually experiences the story.

Merleau-Ponty (1964: 42) writes that perception involves “lived bodiliness” and that “to perceive is to render oneself present to something through the body”. This ‘lived bodiliness’ is an integral developmental milestone to a sense of self as children grow up. The psychoanalyst Winnicott (1971, 2005) speaks of a “potential space” that is created when humans develop from an egocentric baby where everything is an extension of oneself, including their carers, to a realisation that there is a world outside themselves. As the child develops, a “transitional” object - could be a toy, a blanket or other object - will take the place of the carer creating a subject-object relationship which gradually prepares the way for fictional play. The transitional object in a way replaces the safety of the carer and in spite of the carer’s absence the child’s anxiety is still dissipated. A third reality is created by the transitional object that in-between state of the present/absent carer, a dialogic space in which the child can feel the presence of the other and yet is aware of their carer’s absence and can feel in control through the transitional object. The next step is for the child to delve deeper into this possibility of play; the control of the transitional object gives the child the power of being an active agent with the ability to interpret, transform objects and mediate between an inner reality and the external world without any sense of anxiety.

These perspectives resonate with Wittgenstein's (1958) theory of the imagination as an agent of action rather than just an internal visual animation with the self being a passive spectator. "This is well captured by the enactivist concept of experience as an embodied and interactive exploration of the world" (Medina 2013: 319). Gallagher and Lindgren (2015: 392-3) indicate the importance of the enactivist approach and delineate its origins as follows:

The concept of enactive cognition has become an important one in recent cognitive science. We can trace its origins to the work by Varela, Thompson, and Rosch, *The Embodied Mind* (1991), which draws on phenomenological resources, especially the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962).

If we are to accept that the reading act is one that brings together the reader on the one hand and the text on the other, we have to look closer at what the reader, as a participant in the world and in constant embodied interaction with it, will bring to the reading act and what the text, in its own turn, offers in this interaction, and the different ways how it acts upon the reader. We need to take a closer look at i) the tenets of embodiment and enactivism and how they shape the experience of the reader and affect the meaning process of the worlds of the text, ii) the text and those properties that can aid or hinder the "immersion" or this transaction.

Enactivism holds that meaning is derived from an embodied interaction with the world and this interaction is always context-bound. The premise of theories of embodiment is that cognitive processes are based on simulations of sensorimotor activities. This ties in with Noë's (2006) observation that we think of the world in terms of how it is "available" to us and we do not need to cognitively remember every detail of the world as these are easily retrieved by simple eye and body movements. Noë (2006: 103) puts forward the notion of "affordances", building upon the theory of Gibson (1979), that the environment encourages or inhibits certain explorations because of what we are allowed or inhibited from doing

depending on the object or the environment and the agent who is doing the perceiving:

It is precisely the way a ball, say, structures and limits one's hand movements that reveals the roundness of the ball. To learn how things are from how they look is to learn that the environment structures one's possibilities of movement and exploration. It is to discover the structure of sensorimotor contingencies.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980; 1989) extended these theories into the linguistic realm by exploring how our early bodily interactions with the world shape our thoughts which in turn influence our language use. They observed that our language is made up of metaphors that all originate from our sense of being active participants in our environment and this then shapes our understanding of our life experiences. One example that they give is the metaphor of "warm" and "warmth" that we tend to associate with the level of benevolence in terms of temperature because as babies and young children the bodily proximity with our carers gave us a good-feel factor and, therefore, we tend to regard people who react with kindness towards us as being the same. Burke (2005: 189) refers to Image Schemata or daily bodily awareness which he defines as:

Image schemata can be loosely described as being the recurring patterns of our everyday perceptual interactions and bodily experiences. For instance, whenever we stand up from a chair or sit down on it, or go into or out of a building or room we experience the image-schematic distinction between 'up and down' and 'in and out' respectively. Other image-schematic patterns are 'source-path-goal', 'balance', 'centre-periphery', and so forth.

These interactions with the environment seem to refer to a sense of simulation that occurs in our imagination, an enactment which imitates our daily embodied agency in the world and other people. Gibbs and Matlock (2008: 160) write that "people understand metaphors by creating an imaginative simulation of their bodies that mimics the events alluded to by the metaphor". Researchers like Glenberg et al. (2004) have found that when children were allowed to play with playset pieces that

were closely related to what they were reading, for example, farm animals, the children were able to remember more action-oriented sentences.

Simulation Theories

These observations lead to other highly debated and very controversial simulation theories like Mirror Neurons (Gallese & Goldman 1998) which extend the idea not only to interactions with objects, but also to other people. The Mirror Neurons theory proposes the idea that each time we perceive another person doing an action, then the same neurons that are fired when we do the action ourselves are activated. This means that momentarily we become mirrors, imitators, and actors in our mind of the same action. Gallese (2006) argues that the activation of mirror neurons constitutes a direct form of understanding of others from within, as it were an intentional attunement. Such theories are also backed up by direct studies on neuronal activities, like that of Hauk and Pulvermüller (2004), which have also scientifically proven that there is neurophysiological activation on the reading of action words related to “leg”, “arm”, and “face”. The conclusion is that this processing happens so quickly that it is not relayed back by readers because it happens below the level of conscious awareness (Miall 2009).

More simulation theories include Theory of Mind (Premack & Woodruff 1978) and Goldman's (2006) simulation and enactment imagination theories. These theories indicate humans' abilities to project themselves into other people's minds and hypothesise about other people's feelings and intended actions. This “as if” dynamic refers to the ability of projecting oneself in someone else's shoes through either a sense of empathy (feeling as) or sympathy (feeling for). Clay and Iacobini (2012: 317) extended this observation to implications related to sentences, describing actions, being read during an experiment:

When we read about a fictional character experiencing a powerful emotion, neural mechanisms of mirroring may re-evoked the neural representation of the facial gestures and bodily postures typically associated with that emotion, and trigger activity in emotional brain centres such that we end up experiencing the emotion associated with those facial gesture and bodily postures.

This simulation effect seems to concur with results from other studies like Zwann et al. (2001) and Zwaan, Standfield, and Yaxley (2002) which seem to indicate that readers tend to represent in their imagination the orientation or shape of an object which they would have just read about in a sentence. Participants tended to react correctly and in a shorter period when image and sentence coincided. As Hutto (2006: 520) succinctly puts it:

The kind of understanding ‘what-it-is-like’ to have such and such an experience requires responding in a way that is enactive, on-line and embodied or, alternatively, in a way that is re-enactive, off-line and imaginative—and still embodied. It involves undergoing and/or imagining experiences both of acting and of being acted upon.

This observation seems to echo Gerrig's (1993) observation, which has already been mentioned in this chapter, that reading in a way becomes a performative event, a concept that will be explained and researched in more depth throughout this thesis.

Experiential Reading as Performance

Building on Gerrig's (1993) concept, Marco Caracciolo (2017) brings forth his theory of narrative experientiality. Referring to Goldman's (2006) enactment imagination, Caracciolo (2017: 41) redefines it as an enactment consciousness: “it consists in empathizing with or mentally stimulating the experience that we attribute to a fictional character.” Herman (2011) seems to combine both, when he explicates that readers' engagement with fictional characters is similar to their engagement with people's minds.

It is essential to take a closer look at this sense of identification which tends to contribute to a sense of immersion and absorption in the fictional world. I have

now established that there are two parts to the reading transaction: the reader and the text, who from different ends come together to create this textual fictional world. It is doubtful to assert the idea that the consciousness of a reader can be totally immersed in a text to the extent of it completely becoming the consciousness of a fictional character. Researchers like Elfenbein (2018) and Oatley (2002) look upon the reader as a writer making sense of the text in their own way and, therefore, it is “his or her own version of the story” (Oatley 2002: 43).

The reader here is seen as being in control and constantly monitoring incoming textual information and making inferences, not always through a sense of identification or agreement, but envisaged to be an absorbed and active agent of meaning making. I strongly believe that although readers can become absorbed in a storyworld, they never cease to be conscious of who and where they are. This is in keeping with Caracciolo's (2017: 49) reasoning that consciousness enactment always involves what he calls consciousness attribution in that in enacting a fictional character's experience readers imaginatively “try it on” without completely giving up their third-person perspective “since the character always remains *another* subject.” Van Manen (1977), Burns (2003), Csordas (2008), in their different studies insist that our embodied subjectivity is always engaged with the “other” and this is how we form our intentions, expectations, and identity: “I understand myself on the basis of thoughts, feelings, and actions deciphered directly in the experience of others” (Csordas 2008: 112).

Louise M. Rosenblatt (1978) has shown the importance of the reader's creative activity in making a text come to life. As has been stated previously, Rosenblatt (1978) compares reading to acting in a drama. Her comparison echoes Gerrig's (1993) performance theory which considers the reading act as a form of

performance, with the readers like actors who enter the storyworld and infuse it with their own emotions, facts, and understanding of the discourse-world. Gerrig (1993: 61) cites Iser (1978) as also endowing reading with the “quality of performance” by referring to how authors leave gaps in their texts which then the reader fills in. This seems to be in line with Gallagher, Ntelioglou and Wessels’ (2013: 18) thinking when they look at these authorial gaps creating a space for the reader to come in: “When close reading is positioned as an inter-section between authorial intent and background knowledge, a legitimate space is created ...”. This way of thinking can be extended to any creative process with the artist, in this case the author, presenting the reader with this potential transitional object which creates an intermediate space between the world of the reader (discourse-world) and the world of the text (storyworld). Praglin (2006: 5), using Winnicott’s (1971) terms, points out the universality of art which speaks through widely recognised symbols:

The artist creates and recreates unconscious processes and presents these in a manner which resonate with our shared sense of symbols. By articulating these shared symbols, the artist invites us into this intermediate area of experiencing.

This potential space between a reader and text is usually not verbalized in silent reading and this was one of the aims of this research: to be able to give voice to what is going on in participants’ minds as they came into direct contact with the text. Readers are present in the discourse-world as they interact with the text and yet simultaneously the text through various stylistic devices invites them into its world; as suggested by Deictic Shift Theory (Segal 1995a), readers switch to the time and location of the narrative.

The Reader and the Fictional Other – Potential/Liminal Space

Still in spite of these readers' deictic shifts, as will be further observed through the discussion of the findings of this research, the sense of presence in these storyworlds is not total. It is a virtual presence as the reader still needs to keep an observer's distance to create meaning from this interaction: "To fuse or merge with another person is not to encounter him or her: one cannot encounter something that one is" (Cooper 2003: 10). In this sense, the reader creates an element of dialogue with the text and becomes an accomplice to the author's creative act, in that the reader also becomes a writer. As Bakhtin (1981: 365) writes, literature and language are in constant dialogue with what came before them, language does not exist in a vacuum, and this dynamic relation goes on endlessly:

What is realized in the novel is the process of coming to know one's own language as it is perceived in someone else's language, coming to know one's own belief system in someone else's system.

This intermediate potential space is a site of intersection which is of utmost importance as it is a meeting point between the self of the reader and his/her world and the fictional characters and their world. It is a liminal space, an in-between site that occupies the moment of the reader's self within the discourse-world and the fictional other within the world of the text. It is a space that has potential to disturb, reframe, push forward the readers' reality and transforming it into something new; a space of learning and new boundaries. Basseler (2015: 95) explains the concept of cognitive liminality:

In a sense, the notion of cognitive liminality [...] may therefore serve as a conceptual metaphor for what Peter Swirski calls the "informational transfer between real life and narrative make-believe, and the cognitive mechanisms behind such a transfer."

This is a metacognitive space or as Palmer (2004) labels it “intermentality” where two minds meet through the textual features. Sorlin (2020: 5) also explains this double consciousness when pointing out that:

There is, in fact, as Phelan (2018: 113) highlights, a double consciousness that is activated when reading a piece of fiction, one that implies the reader ‘projecting herself’ into the position of an invisible observer within the storyworld, ‘thus taking the character and events as real’, and a second consciousness involving the authorial audience that brings about ‘the awareness not only that the characters and events are invented but also that they have been invented for some reason’. The actual audience may be brought either to willingly suspend disbelief, on the one hand, as they are transported into the realm of fiction or, on the other hand, to perceive the layered constructedness of fiction ...

This process is very reminiscent of what Schechner (1985: 110) observes is the actors’ experience during the rehearsal process:

During workshops-rehearsals performers play with words, things, and actions, some of which are “me” and some “not me.” By the end of the process the “dance goes into the body.” So Olivier is not Hamlet, but he is also not not Hamlet.

Schechner (1985) then equates this with Stanislavski’s (1989) “as if” notion of how an actor prepares for giving life to his character on stage. Schechner (1985: 102) writes that like Stanislavski (1989) he is of the opinion that “[i]t is during workshops-rehearsals that the “if” is used as a way of researching ... everything that will sooner or later be fixed in the performance text”. For both these theatre directors the rehearsal/workshop space becomes the active space to make more explicit that potential space between the actor, the “me”, and the character, “not me” becoming the “not not me”, in what Boal (1995: 43) later refers as “metaxis” when explaining how an actor inhabits two worlds at the same time – “[t]he participant shares and belongs to these two autonomous worlds; their reality and the image of their reality, which she herself has created.” Schechner (1985: 110) emphasises that in the theatre workshop space “choice and virtuality remain activated side by side” in an act of “double-sided subjectivity” (Göthberg et al. 2018: 248). This process is very similar to that of the reader engaging with a text although the readerly interaction is usually

carried out on an implicit level during solitary reading. As Balling (2016: 43) delineates “[m]any reading experiences are rarely articulated and communicated to others but stay with the reader as a silent subjective experience.” Even when the reader-text interaction takes on a more social dimension, for example, when it happens in a group environment inside a classroom, “readers with a high degree of reflexivity express difficulties with putting their reading experiences into words” (Balling 2016: 49).

Through the practical workshops utilised in this research process, this “potential space” between the reader and the text is made more explicit and the participants’ thinking as they interact with the literary world is verbalised. The research process takes the form of a group environment which approaches the classroom dynamics of a group of readers as they encounter the text to further analyse and understand what might enable and/or hinder a deeper connection with these storyworlds that the literary characters inhabit.

In the next chapter the methods and approaches used to aid participants in externalising this sense of “in-between” immersion are put forward. This research process will take an embodied approach to explore further how these two groups of young adults extrapolate meaning from the text and it is intended to cast a light on a different approach that might enable educators to better understand the reader-text dynamic and to facilitate further the bridging between these two worlds.

Chapter 3 – Methodology – Finding ‘I’, ‘me’ and ‘myself’ while analysing the methods and approaches used in this research process.

This chapter will elaborate on my motives behind the choices of methods and methodology utilised during this exploratory process. It is a personal statement of those possible biases, which might have influenced this process, I need to make explicit as part of my qualitative study. It involves a stepping back from this journey to take a critical look at the different milestones and pitfalls encountered along the way. It acknowledges the assessment that Giltrow (2005: 209-10) makes about qualitative research in that:

... you're aware of being part of the process, that it's impossible to be 'a disembodied researcher', and that your choices of method—even your presence—can and do shape the outcomes of your research. The 'subjective research' approach also exposes the relevant social, political, and cultural elements that make up everyone's experience.

It is therefore important to reveal my background as a researcher and elaborate on those elements that pushed forward my curiosity and passion to inquire further about this reader and text collaboration. I will also elaborate on how my personal experiences as a theatre actor/educator and my lecturing on English literature at sixth form level have informed certain choices made with regard to the methodology adopted in this research. Moreover, I will also place this research's participants within the education context of which they form part to expand upon the need for such empirical explorations in reader text interactions within the educational field in Malta.

My Background as an Educator

The idea for this research emerged from my daily interactions with young adults in my lecturing on English literature. It is a constant struggle to entice students to relate to a text that they feel they cannot comprehend because it is far removed from their

personal life experiences. In my twenty-one years of teaching at sixth-form level, I have repeatedly heard students complain that literary texts on their syllabi are imposed on them and that the subject-matters of such texts are beyond them as they are distant from their real-life knowledge and experiences. This perception is also backed up by researchers including Ivey and Broaddus (2001), Gee (2001) and Moss and Hedershot (2002), and Hailey Reed et al. (2004: 268) with the latter observing “that personal choice was closely related to positive reading experiences. Most students preferred free reading periods, in which they selected their own reading materials ...”. I was never satisfied with the fact that the relationship that most students have with literary texts set on their English literature syllabi is merely a quest of remembering detail by rote just to pass their examinations which as Cushing (2018: 8) so rightly observes “has seen a rise in a ‘teaching to the test’ pedagogy, where meaningful explorations of literature are often replaced with activities focused on assessment objectives, timed exam question drills and teacher-led explanations.” I wanted the students to discover the pleasures that can be derived from breathing life into the fictional characters and the worlds of the literary text. I wanted them to enjoy literature as much as I do.

During my Advanced English literature classes, even if the students had read the novel, set for their exam, beforehand, or at least the previously assigned part for home, most students always wait for me to summarise the plot, to talk about fictional characters, and to explicate the themes. It is always a few, too few, who voice their opinions in the classroom. This is the frustration that kindled this present research: my desire to enable students to connect with the words on the page, to bring them alive and to make them real for them. Glenberg et al. (2011: 29) also make a similar observation about the quality of reading that happens in educational settings:

In this case, reading becomes a meaningless exercise in word calling, much like trying to read a text in a language one does not understand. Oakhill et al. (2003) demonstrate that a non-negligible proportion of students successfully decode but with little comprehension. That is, reading aloud sentences composed of words in the child's vocabulary does not guarantee comprehension.

Students may have become complacent about words because they are so used to seeing them printed on pages that at times the connection with their meaning is fleeting or even elusive. Words are taken for granted; the printed text becomes opaque and obscure. Students become immune to the words in books, especially, when a book is another academic chore in a vast syllabus to be studied. One even wonders if they do choose to read literary texts in their leisure time.

This notion of word transparency, the fact that words lose their effect emerges from the observation that books have a similar format. They are usually printed in black ink on white paper, and somehow, they become impenetrable to readers. Kuijpers (2014: 154) agrees with this view:

Print exposure was found to have a negative significant effect on the relationship between text and storyworld absorption when using popular textual devices. Meaning that when readers' print exposure is high, their storyworld absorption scores are generally low. Readers who have had high print exposure experience more storyworld absorption in texts that make use of deviation.

Lanham (1993: 81) reflected on how the advent of computers made readers look "at" the text and then look "through" the text, which he defines as "bi-stable oscillation". What he is implying is that modern technology has made people look "afresh" at what they are presented on the screen because of its multimodal presentation. With the introduction of websites and other technological advances, readers are no longer exposed to information through texts but also through visual and audible presentations.

Gibbons (2012: 114-5) further extends this argument when she reflects on multimodal novels, such as Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* (2000) and Steve Tomasula's *VAS: An Opera in Flatland: A Novel* (2004), which "disturb" the

readers' complacency when faced with familiar text formats by "complicat[ing] the relationship of the concrete to the imaginary, since in contrast to traditional Western literary forms, they are not transparent. They are 'opaque', bearing self-conscious graphic designs that draw attention to their materiality." This multimodality has created a sense of "defamiliarisation"; a new way of looking at something that one is used to observing in everyday circumstances. Freeman (2002: 24) voices this need to draw attention to the otherwise unconscious processes involved in the understanding of words that readers might otherwise take for granted:

Language becomes transparent to its meaning only when I have mastered its secrets. When I try to read a text in a foreign language I do not know well, I must pay attention to its physical forms and characteristics in order to tease out its meaning. In the case of art, and for my particular purposes, poetry, "meaning" emerges from the accoutrements of its expressions that have been embodied in — incorporated into — the forms of the language in which it is couched. To understand a poem, I must learn to read these embodied characteristics. The cognitive processes which are not apparent to me when I read a text transparent to me must be brought to the conscious mind to read one that is opaque.

This mode of thinking resonated with my own concerns of finding new ways through which students could not gloss over the reading material but look at it again and engage their "personal imaginative realm" (Forceville 2006) to help go "through" into the storyworld. In this regard, Text World Theory seemed to offer a way to explore further the role that words play in literary engagement as it specifically draws attention to how language functions to evoke readers' imaginative understanding. As Gibbons (2012: 35) explains, this approach "implicitly treats language as a facilitator to literary experience, the printed words functioning as a sort of portal into the imagined world of the novel, that is, into the text-world itself."

The majority of these students are competent readers and in fact, would freely admit that they like to read, especially about subjects that they are passionate about. Considering that they do enjoy reading then some questions that follow would be: what keeps them from engaging with set texts? What kind of books do they read

for pleasure? Why are certain fictional characters meaningful to them while others simply do not resonate? Is it simply a case of identification? Or is it possible that the style of writing can influence their sense of immersion into the text? Ivey and Broaddus (2001: 353-4) have found that:

Even avid, proficient young adolescent readers who excel in the instruction express dissatisfaction with assigned reading and writing that does not match their interests or purposes ... there is often a mismatch between what students want to learn and the content requirements of schools ... young adolescents may not be able to reconcile school reading and writing with their out-of-school reading and writing. Students who are resistant to school reading may read purposefully and strategically outside of school in materials they find interesting.

This discrepancy between young adults' choice of reading material and academic literary texts is highlighted in the selection of set texts found on students' English literature examinations syllabi. The novels on academic literature syllabi in Malta are chosen by a syllabus board made up of lecturers that represent each sixth form college in Malta. There are several institutions in Malta at sixth form level: Gian Frangisk Abela Junior College (where I lecture), Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary, St. Martin's College, St. Edward's College, De La Salle and St. Aloysius College, the latter four are private or Church-run institutions. Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary is a government-run educational institution while the Junior College is partially subsidised by the Government but is independently monitored by the University of Malta.

The Junior College is a preparation ground for students who, after a two-year course at this educational institution, will sit for the Matriculation and Secondary Examinations Certificate (MATSEC) exams to enrol into degree programmes at the University of Malta. Students are between 16-18 years of age on average but there are older students who fail to pass their exams and are allowed to remain in the programme until they achieve a pass mark. Students who choose the English MATSEC Advanced Level course have two novels set on their syllabus. Presently

these are “The Handmaid’s Tale” (1998) by Margaret Atwood and “Wuthering Heights” (1847) by Emily Brontë. The latter is a novel which the majority of students are finding too difficult and off-putting because of its complex and sometimes archaic language. This is a novel which many students label as boring because it deals with matters beyond their “physical, mental, emotional, social, and psychological facets” (Lesesne 2003: 53). As Hailey Reed et al. (2004: 267) observe:

The paradox here lies in the fact that at a time when individuals could be gaining a greater sense of control and autonomy through the development of more complex, multiple identities/self-concepts across domains, they are given less and less control over many aspects of their lives, including what it means to be literate and to experience literacy.

This is very much in keeping with the stance of educational institutions’ setup, not only in Maltese schools, but it also seems to be the reality of many young people attending educational institutions in other countries (Maine & Waller 2011; Hinchman & Appleman 2017). Bearing this in mind, it will be beneficial at this point to take a closer look at the official parameters within which teachers, like me, who teach literature at a sixth form level have to operate.

In Malta, as in other countries, educators are expected to function within several levels of officially set parameters. The Education Department in Malta issues its own vision of the needs and skills that schools must impart to students with the main aim that these youths will become the efficient and functioning citizens of tomorrow’s society. At the moment, the Education Department sets its vision for the Maltese academic sector through the National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2012) which is presently in a state of flux as a reshuffle in the system of assessment methods is about to be launched which gives the findings of this study more impetus and significance. This envisioned modification in the way students will be assessed

in Maltese schools will be explained further in the concluding chapter of this thesis as it will complement the further implications of this study.

As has already been mentioned, further to the NCF, teachers in Malta also have to consider the syllabus content that they are expected to teach since the ultimate aim is for students to successfully pass the exams set by the Matriculation and Secondary Examinations Certificate Board (MATSEC) through the Secondary Examinations Certificate (SEC) equivalent to Ordinary Level examinations and MATSEC which is equivalent to Advanced Level examinations. Each subject, including English Literature, has two boards, one which sets the content and aims that the individual educator must follow and impart to students and another committee that sets the papers for these national exams on an annual basis. Contents of this syllabus tend to be very prescriptive, and the focus is the imparting of knowledge of rudimentary reading and writing skills but not necessarily critical exploration of literary texts. The final SEC examinations, at the end of Form 5, and MATSEC examinations at the end of a two-year course are the focal point of the educational institutions. The target is to pass through these summative forms of assessment rather than a genuine connection with literary texts.

Satariano (2015: 275) insists that in research among Maltese teachers, “[s]tudent-centred learning was not indicated as an area of importance” due to the exam-oriented education system. Tests and exams were considered crucial because they were an incentive for students to study. This conclusion seems to be backed by other local research done by Grima and Chetcuti (2003) and Buhagiar and Murphy (2008) who also point out that when educators give individual feedback to students, instead of this formative assessment proving to be a way of enhancing the students’ performance through feedback and critical self-evaluation, the main concern is

whether a pass grade was obtained by the students in the set tasks. Both in the teachers' and students' mentality, education is equated with the ability of reproducing knowledge imparted in class aimed at a pass mark in an ultimate exam as they get lost "in what Ball (2003) calls the 'performativity agenda' and Goodwyn (2012) calls the 'assessment regime'" (Cushing 2018: 8). Summative assessment proves to be the gateway to further education regardless of whether students are improving and broadening their critical faculties.

Moreover, the MATSEC English literature syllabus board's choice of texts tends to impose the "conventional canon of 'great literature' on all students" (Smith & Wilhelm 2002: 13). This perspective seems to be pervasive not only in Europe but also in North America, a view that is backed by Steen and Gavins (2003: 2) when they write about "the standard academic practice of producing yet another interpretation of a text from the canon". Researchers like Stallworth, Gibbons and Fauber (2006: 479) have concluded that "[m]any teachers subscribe to the notion that good literature is classic literature—traditionalist texts that have withstood the test of time." Usually these are books that students tend to find outdated and that deal with subjects that are distant from their reality making it much harder to engage with such choice of literature.

Apart from the choice of textbooks and the summative assessments at the end of the course, sixth form educators have the added burden of the ongoing formative/continuous assessments towards which most of their teaching is geared. These assessments are set at a school or departmental level and are, yet a further framework outlined at the beginning of each year, within which educators must base their teaching. In the case of the Malta University Junior College, students are constantly working under the pressure of getting pass marks in three tri-monthly

assessments and an end-of-year exam to be promoted between the first and second year of their two-year sixth form course. Ultimately, at the end of these two years they will also have to gain a pass mark in the MATSEC written exam consisting of three papers all to be completed in an average of 3 hours per paper. These graded assessments and exams are the focus of the teaching and dictate not only the content of the coursework, but also the manner in which it is taught.

In my experience, the style of teaching that goes on in many literature classrooms at sixth form institutions is backed up by the following description that Wolf (2014: 68) outlines:

The exchange of knowledge in our classrooms too often flows in one direction only, dispersed unidirectionally from the teacher to the student. As a result, students may have little opportunity to “bring to life what is hidden under the words” or to filter themselves through the information given them. The result is too often work that is not “truly productive.”

Researchers like Todorov (2009) seem to share the same opinion of Zyngier and Fialhom (2010: 19) that “a large faction of professors of literature has contributed to extinguishing the flame ... tried to convey the idea that literary reading belongs to the small circle of the selected few ...”.

This type of one-way communication is in fact not only reflected in the type of instruction imparted by teachers during the seminars and lectures conducted at my college, but also in the seating position visible in the classrooms. All chairs and tables are in rows facing the teacher's desk and chair which both are on a platform setting the instructor in a superior position and as the focal point in the room. Educators insist that they do not have time for group work, multimodal teaching, or any form of deviating from the lecture form of teaching as this would be considered a waste of time in the very fast pace of the demands that such a packed syllabus imposes.

Even during seminars with smaller groups of students, where the atmosphere is intended to be more intimate, interactive and supposedly having more space for individual voices, the outcome is usually students who are waiting for their lecturer to give them notes and a full explanation of what to look for in a novel or poem. This is understandable when one considers that these students have been geared since they were enrolled into the education system, at the age of 4 or 5 years, that the aim of going to school was to attain a pass mark in their final examinations until they ultimately attain their lucrative dream career. Hughes (2009: 21-22) speaks of her experience at school in the same manner indicating that students do not need to think for themselves, let alone engage with a text, since their only concern is to pass the examinations set at the end of their course:

Our teachers encouraged us to find the specific meaning in the text, placed there by the author, whether intentionally or not. There was one meaning that could be uncovered and we were trained to do so. Often we didn't need to search for meaning at all because the 'correct' meaning was served up to us by the teacher; all we needed to do was listen and regurgitate the answers in our essays.

I have been teaching at the Gian Frangisk Abela Junior College since 1999, which makes it my twenty-first year there. Invariably, as has been previously stated in this chapter, one of the major obstacles that students encounter is not that they are unable to make meaning from words on a semantic or a syntactic level. Students understand the words, they can make sense of the sentences, but when it comes for them to extrapolate a deeper level of analysis, they tend to have difficulty in connecting with the text at a level which is beyond the literal. They are unable and/or reluctant to make the leap into a more analytical approach to the text as they are constantly awaiting the input of the voice of experience and expertise. Wilhelm (2016: 61) highlights this issue when observing that "... students who *do* know that reading is

producing meaning have gone underground to harbor and nurture their secret. School has forced them to be secretive.”

Students tend to feel that they are being quizzed to deliver the right answer about texts with which they are unable to interact because they are unfamiliar to them and hold no affinity to their life experiences. This observation highlights the power disequilibrium that exists between expert/lecturer and the student. Such an approach does not allow for any dialogue to occur and immediately silences the students' voices with the implication that starting from their personal interactions with the texts holds no academic value.

Over the years my desire to understand more the process of how students can engage with a text continued to push me into further research. I wanted to analyse different means to enable students to externalise their internal cogitations as they are in the process of relating to a text. Some questions continued to emerge for me: What can aid students to immerse themselves more into the world of a text and enable them to understand it better? How can I, as lecturer, engage with their thinking in a more tangible way as to make them verbalise their thinking? Is there some way to aid them into talking about their understanding of the text?

Gentilucci and McKeown (2007: 138) state that, “[r]eading is a covert process actively controlled by readers to create meaning from text, and the practice of readers ‘thinking about their thinking’ while engaged in the reading process is known as *metacognition*.” How can I externalise their metacognition, their thinking about thinking, and make them challenge and utilise their own thinking to understand and connect better with a text? How can I make the reading process more tangible and concrete so that they can analyse it critically and extend their mode of

thinking? How can I start where they are and push their thinking and understanding further?

My Background in Theatre

Apart from being a lecturer in English I have extensive training both at a theoretical and practical level in theatre. I am presently a part-time freelance actor involved in theatre, television and film in the local artistic scene. Although I do not practise this art on a full-time basis, I still consider my approach to it as being that of a professional. Apart from studying mainstream theatre techniques, I have also been involved in the use of theatre as an instruction tool and a means of social change on several occasions. I have acted and devised many drama-in-education projects and theatre productions intended to promote social consciousness and social justice. I was also a teacher of drama for a number of years at different local theatre schools where I taught theatre skills in the evenings. I have participated and led theatre workshops and masterclasses locally and abroad over the years. I am presently leading an undergraduate study unit at the University of Malta about the uses of theatre with young people with a special focus on Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed techniques.

My background in theatre was another reason which pushed me into exploring further the personal interactions with literary texts. In fact, the first impetus for this research was more of a desire to understand better how certain words can elicit such intense personal reactions. The parallels between actors extrapolating information from and connecting emotionally with theatre scripts, and readers immersed in the act of reading, were enticing me to further research this connection between readers and text. The idea of connecting these two passions of

mine, literature and theatre, spurred me onto this research, but I was lost as to where to commence.

It was only when I came across articles about cognitive poetics and Text World Theory that I finally realised that it is possible to research further into the interaction between the actual text and the readers' personal backgrounds. Stockwell (2002: 2) explains how this approach to textual analysis does not only take into consideration "the artifice of the literary text alone, or the reader alone, but the more natural process of reading when one is engaged with the other." In addition, Joanna Gavins (2007: 8) explains that

Text World Theory is a model of human language processing which is based on the notions of mental representation found in Cognitive Psychology and which shares the experientialist principles of Cognitive Linguistics . . . It is a discourse framework . . . concerned not just with how a particular text is constructed but how the context surrounding that text influences its production and reception.

These words resonated with my own interactions with theatre scripts, in needing to bring words to "life" essentially. Since fictional characters on stage are "born" from words, I always find myself going through the process of understanding what the playwright intends or what a character is meant to feel when uttering specific words. Time and time again apart from my research into the role written in a theatre script, on a human level, I have to depend on my own understanding of the words, which in turn depends on my experiences and knowledge of the world. A stage role only develops after the "me" enters into the world of the "other", but I remain "me" at the same time.

The similarity in this potential metaphorical space between actors and stage characters and readers and texts has already been discussed in the Introduction and Chapter 2 of this thesis. This connection between readers engaged with fictional texts and theatre actors will continue to be re-affirmed and elaborated throughout

various sections in the rest of this study. As has already been explained in Chapter 2 when elaborating on embodiment and the reading experience, it is good to emphasise that theatre is a good way of connecting the cognitive and corporeal understandings of texts as will be made more evident through this study.

Rationale for Practical Workshop Sessions.

Following the above reasoning, I opted to harness the power of theatre-inspired practical workshops (Appendix E) and incorporate them as an integral part of this research into the cognitive and embodied connections of young adults with fictional literary texts. Moreover, the practical workshops were meant to act as a safe and a more natural environment where participants could experiment with embodying fictional characters that they encounter within the literary text chosen for this exploratory investigation. The practical workshops included group-building activities using drama to enhance trust and group bonding between participants. These activities encourage more genuine self-disclosure while offering the possibility of using a more embodied approach to the reading experience. I wanted to explore if once participants became further immersed in their experience of embodying fictional characters, they would be in a better position to experience more interaction with the text. Concurrently, I wanted to investigate if speaking as these characters they would externally verbalise any insights both about the characters and their own process of interacting with them. The entertaining aspect of these drama workshops was also intended to move away from a laboratory environment where participants would feel that they are being tested. I saw my role during these workshops as being more of a guide rather than in any way being that of a gatekeeper who decides between the right

or wrong answers; my role was to facilitate further exploration rather than to censor it.

Spolin (1963: 4), who has written extensively about her method of theatre improvisation, insists that “the language and attitudes of authoritarianism must be constantly scourged if the total personality is to emerge ...” which is similar to what Drinko (2013: 22) believes that:

... if the actor is focussing on her physical surroundings, her fellow actors, ... and the rules of the game then she has no time to revert to self-consciousness. She actually might experience moments of being “in the zone”.

This essentially echoes what this research is intending to study: that is to reveal and explore how the participants will experience and immerse themselves into the storyworld and its fictional characters. I wanted to give voice to their thoughts and feelings as they grappled with the world and fictional characters of the text. I was interested in exploring their “doing-thinking” (Nelson 2013) in real time as they went through these embodied engagements with the text. Practice as research focusses on the subjective experience of participants and has similarities to research through the arts as aptly explained by Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2014: 28):

Arts-related research also offers opportunities to explore an issue or question, yet rather than seeking to explain, or search for answers, it may more importantly offer potential to disrupt, open up, provoke, or present the phenomenon in a ‘dislocated form’ (Smith & Dean, 2010). The focus is on looking afresh at a phenomenon; to ‘unflatten’ it (Sousanis, 2013); to examine and portray the iterative relationships between the issue, the context, the researcher and the participants, through creative multi-dimensional work.

This creative multi-dimensional work was a very exciting option for me as I wanted to involve the participants in various embodied ways which would engage them physically, cognitively and linguistically in this process of interacting with this literary text.

Throughout the whole process, the practical theatre workshops were always divided into two parts. The first part of each workshop was dedicated to theatre warm-

up and group-building activities which were aimed at strengthening the trust between the group members, focussing on lessening the participants' sense of self-consciousness, and taking away the attention from having the text as the main emphasis of the sessions. This first part usually lasted between 20-30 minutes depending on the time allotted for the whole session.

The second part of the workshop was always based on improvisations that revolved around excerpts from the text. These exercises at times concentrated on purely having participants recreating scenes from the text or at other instances taking on the role of fictional characters from the text and interacting with others as these fictional characters. Other instances included the group looking closely at some literary qualities of the text for example the use of repetition, punctuation and other literary devices that struck the group as being important in their understanding of the world of the text. This is very much in line with what has already been explained as being the focus of cognitive poetics since this approach considers not only how the individual background of each participants hinders or aids in their understanding of a text but also how certain textual qualities or stylistic devices tend to influence most readers while interacting with texts. Although cognitive poetics has been applied before to theatre scripts and fictional characters by researchers like Culpeper (2001), McIntyre (2005), and Cruickshank and Lahey (2010), their explorations were more focussed on the finished product as a script or staged production rather than on the process of working on a literary text through practical workshops.

These theatre and process drama activities became a way of externalising the silent cognitive activities that go on during the reading process. As Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2014: 50) write, "artistic approaches evoke emotion and metaphoric meaning and reveal unspoken and unintentional understandings that otherwise may

remain hidden (Butler-Kisber 2008; Davis & Butler-Kisber 1999; Markus 2007)", as has already been stated in this thesis, these exercises were intended to take away the focus from the reading process itself and lessen the self-consciousness usually related with laboratory-led investigations. The arts used as a research method, as Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2014: 136) explain, can be a means to an end:

Arts-related phenomenology is based on Heidegger's (rather than Husserl's) conceptualization of phenomenology, where the focus is on shedding light on taken for granted experiences that then enable researchers to create meaning and develop understanding. Heidegger focused on the hermeneutic circle, where the researcher moves from understanding the particular to having a sense of the whole, and then returns to the particular within an iterative cycle, which aims at developing a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Hart (2006: 47) contradicts the structural and formalist approach to literary reading and interpretation and refers to the phenomenological aspect of the act of reading when she observes "the *performance* of a narrative actively belies textuality in the Derridean sense, revealing the strength of any story's deep alliance to the phenomenal in which it is embedded." Through the practical workshops, it was intended that similar to how students in a classroom work together through different mediums, the participants in these workshops would also work together using similar dynamics.

The difference in this research project would be to have students freely interact in a more embodied way with a text and to reveal what they are thinking in real time. As Alderson-Day et al. (2017: 99) note "phenomenological data on the reading experience in the words of readers themselves is surprisingly lacking." Rather than looking for the right answer, as is usually the intention in an educational setting, what was being explored were all those different elements that helped students make a connection and have a better understanding of the text. Through their verbalisations it was also intended to have a clearer picture of whether it was stylistic elements in the text, the participants' personal context, and/or other features that can enhance a deeper understanding and connection with fictional characters and the storyworld.

Rationale for Semi-Structured Interviews

Therefore, always keeping in mind that the personal plays such an important part in the meaning making process when readers interact with texts, I wanted to create more of an individual contact with the research participants. I devised a series of questions for semi-structured interviews. These questions (Appendix C) were an entry point to explore participants' choice of texts, create a conversation about fictional characters that they identify with, and further understand their relationship with books. The interview is an event in itself that affects the outcome of the stories and information gathered during the interaction between interviewer and interviewee. Riessman (2008: 105) looks at the interview as a performative event that "requires close reading of contexts, including the influence of the investigator, setting, and social circumstances on the production and interpretation of narrative".

Through my readings into the subject, discussions with my supervisors, and my own reflections, I opted for this research to be a case study with a multimodal interdisciplinary approach, a form of "bricolage" (Denzin & Lincoln 2000). As Creswell (2007: 73) explains, case study research is:

A qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case *description* and case-based themes.

This clearly connects with one of the aims of this research which is based on finding multiple points of contact with the participants to understand better the extent to which this personal dimension affected the readerly interaction with the text.

After the interview questions were approved by both the University of Malta and the University of Kent's Ethics Research Committees, these semi-structured interviews were held with each participant at the start of the process and after the last session of the practical theatre workshops was over. The interviews were digitally

recorded and then transcribed at a later stage. The identities of the participants were anonymised to further enhance the confidentiality of the members in the research process.

Rationale for Choice of Text

The next step to consider in this research was the choice of text to be used for further exploration of this reader-text interaction. Stockwell (2009a) notes that practically all empirical research on text engagement has been carried out on a sentential level in unnatural laboratory settings with most texts being specifically developed and manufactured for the experiment. As has been previously stated, natural reading of whole novels and short stories only recently become an area of study and it is ironic because most people engage in that kind of reading in natural settings and in real life. I wanted to move away from the artificiality of experiments in laboratory settings and made the choice to work with a text in its entirety. Another condition I wanted to fulfil was that this text would be similar to the ones that the students find in their literature examination syllabi as explained earlier in this chapter. In this way the practical sessions would be closer to their classroom reality since this research intended to have a wider reaching effect by extrapolating from its findings how to improve the teaching of literary texts in educational settings. Keeping this reasoning in mind, Graham Greene's "The End of the Party" (Appendix A) was ultimately chosen as the literary text to explore through the practical sessions.

Summary of "The End of the Party"

I think it is appropriate here to introduce this short story and go into some detail about it for the sake of those who might not be familiar with it; the full text of

the story is to be found in Appendix A. Graham Greene wrote “The End of the Party” in 1929. It is the story of twin brothers, Peter and Francis Morton, with Peter being born a few minutes before his younger brother. The story is mainly told through free indirect speech, whereby the voice of the narrator and that of the fictional character become one through a third-person narration that slips in and out of the fictional character’s consciousness. In this story the narrator’s voice keeps unobtrusively oscillating between Peter and Francis’ point of views for the desired effect. It is a deceptively ordinary story; in fact, it can easily be categorised as a piece of Victorian realistic writing with a twist of the Gothic tradition that elevates it to a story of horror and suspense. This is the story of an older twin brother who is always there to support his younger sibling for whom he feels constantly responsible.

The story opens with Peter suddenly waking up realizing that it was “January the fifth” and the reader is left wondering what is worrying Peter for him to have woken up so suddenly. In line with the Gothic literary tradition, this story has the typical gloomy weather with glimpses of flashing lightning and grey rain weather outside. The weather outside seems to be reminiscent of the gloomy interior of these two children’s lives who live in the shadow of the adults in their story.

As Jaëck and Schmitt (2016: 7) point out, that typical of Gothic stories, this short story fits in:

... the long tradition of Gothic stories about doubles: the open charge against adults’ deafness to the children’s voices and the efforts of the text to make them heard cover another classical, more disquieting and uncanny subtext, that explores Peter’s ambivalence towards his younger twin brother.

In fact, this story centres around this notion of duality, in this case not only embodied in the twin brothers but also in the double motifs of the story including the chiaro/scuro effect of constant references to light and darkness of the interior and exterior Victorian environments, the sense of weakness and strength personified by

Francis and Peter respectively, the child and adult views of the world that the story explores.

Francis is the “other” of the story, a weaker, dependent and vulnerable mirror image of Peter with whom he shares his sleeping quarters. As the story develops, Greene deceptively interjects references to the telepathic connection between the twin brothers. The reader is allowed to believe that there is a supernatural explanation, a sort of sixth sense that allows the two boys to communicate with each other without talking and to access each other’s thinking. Through Peter’s interior ruminations about Francis and “instinct of protection towards the other who was afraid of so many things.” (Greene 1954: 192) a sense of a superior attitude is felt behind the pleasant façade that the older brother presents.

It is Peter who wakes up Francis because he knows that his younger brother is having a bad dream. Through the repeated date references of “the fifth of January”, the reader is made to believe that the day on which the narrative begins is memorable. In the beginning the significance of this date is left vague but through Peter’s positive memories of party games, balloons and gifts, it becomes clear that Francis is strangely afraid of going to a family acquaintance’s party at the Henne-Falcon’s house. The source of Francis’ fear are two older girls Mabel Warren and Joyce who the boy feels torture him through their mocking stares and insensitive jeers. Moreover, the game of hide-and-seek played in the darkness at the end of each party is his worst nightmare. This game is the climax of each birthday party at the Henne-Falcon’s house, which typical of the Gothic narrative becomes this almost haunted mansion with “impenetrable walls (physical or psychological) to heighten the victim’s sense of hopeless isolation ...” (Saliba 1980: 27-28).

The story takes on a breathless tense forward pace to an inevitable climax with Greene's use of foreshadowing, repetition, gaps in the story and elliptical time shifts that create a dizzying sensation of moving forward and backwards in time.

The younger twin, Francis, is emasculated by all the women in his life: his Nurse, Mother, the older girls with their "pigtailed" and "masculine stride" (Greene 1954: 193). He is further devoiced by his older brother, Peter, who despite all his good intentions hinders Francis from developing into his manhood. Peter constantly comes to Francis' support by speaking for him, telling him what he is thinking even to the extent of deciding for him. What is interesting is that because Greene focalises the narrative mainly from Peter's perspective, the readers are "primed" (Emmott 1997: 123) to always look away from the older brother focussing attention on the younger sibling. Peter's attention to Francis is used as a constant foregrounding stylistic device by the author so that when at the end, the reader realises that Francis is dead but the fear inside Peter is still going on, there is a moment of epiphany. That is the point when all is revealed, that ultimately, Peter was not only projecting his fear onto Francis but actually "retroject[ing]" (Jaëck & Schmitt 2016: 7) it back onto himself by dismissing it as his brother's fear and not as his own.

The story moves at a fast speed filled with gaps of vague hints or omitted information, references to seconds and minutes going by quickly, use of ellipsis and time slipping by from one paragraph to the next which add to the sense of suspense and a terrifying escalation to the fatal twist at the end. After various attempts at stalling from going to the birthday party by pretending that he has a cold, Francis is forced by the adults to attend. Once at the house the pace becomes frantic with the climactic ending being the much-expected game of hide-and-seek in the dark at the Henne-Falcon's house. Peter tries to save his brother for the last

time by telling the host to not play the game, but the other children all turn on Francis by calling him names like “cowardy-cowardy custard” (Greene 1954: 198).

The atmosphere in the last part of the story is thick with darkness, fear, and a sense of oppression. As the kids hide in the pitch-black shadows, Peter seeks to comfort his brother, who he is sure must be petrified. Unfortunately, the moment that he succeeds in finding him, is the moment that he will destroy his brother. As Peter's hand touches his brother Francis, the latter reaches a fatal level of fear and his heart collapses. As the light is switched on and the darkness dissipates, the horrible truth is revealed and the story ends with Mrs Henne-Falcon's scream as she comes across Peter holding his dead brother's hand, shocked not by the fact that his brother is dead but by the realisation that the fear and anxious beating of the heart did not stop but still went on. In spite of having destroyed the flawed mirror image of himself, Peter cannot escape anymore from the fact that the fear he had been feeling all along was not that of his brother but his own.

“The End of the Party” was chosen for this research process because of several factors that make it an ideal text which can be used in its entirety. First of all, because of its brevity, the story was not fragmented as is the case with “textoids” (Laszlo 1999: 25) which are texts that are manufactured intentionally for reading experiments carried out under laboratory conditions. As Whiteley (2010: 86-7) writes there is

a distinction between “experimental” and “naturalistic” studies of literary reading and [I] argue for the importance of the latter (Swann and Allington 2009: 248; see also Hall 2008; Hunt 1996). “Experimental” studies are those which seek to isolate and test a pre-specified element of interpretational activity. Swann and Allington note that the need for experimental control leads to a focus on “rather artificial reading behaviour” (2009: 248) using short or manipulated texts in laboratory-style conditions.

Whiteley's (2010) observations are further corroborated by empirical researchers like Stockwell (2009a:12) who are more in favour of research that explores the

natural reading habits of everyday readers:

Those studies which rely solely on single-method empirical testing are most prone to the distorting effects of the observer's paradox. Psychologically based studies and informant-based investigations of literary reading tend to use literary excerpts rather than full texts, so the contextual and even the natural co-textual experience is compromised.

Stockwell's (2009) point is further substantiated by other studies like Miall (2004),

Nell (1988a), Fischer et al. (2007) and also Lazslo (1999: 25) when he writes that:

... comprehension of literature, as opposed to the comprehension of short laboratory texts, is a kind of 'long-term comprehension', not only because it takes place when reading a longer text, but also because it involves an extension, beyond and after the understanding of the 'objective' meaning of a situation, into the personally felt, holistic and non-discursive phenomenal experiences.

Moreover, as it has already been explained, the story revolves around the motif of duality which resonates perfectly with the double nature that readers have when interacting with the text. As Birkets (1994: 78) observes, "the self is suspended in the medium of language, the particles of identity hovering in the magnetic current of another's expression ...". It is in this dual nature that readers using information from their personal background together with the textual features create this almost in-between state between imagination and reality. Although there is "willing suspension of disbelief" (Coleridge 1817), Miall (2006: 91) argues that readers in encountering the fictional character might have an unexpected shift as their worldview is challenged:

... character is not us, and does not share our experience. Thus in addition to the close interest evoked by our reading, we may also experience a decentering, a shift away from attending to the our daily concerns.

This leads to the next reason why this story was earmarked as a text for this research.

"The End of the Party" is mainly told through free indirect speech which gives access to the interior states of fictional characters. The story is mainly narrated through the direct thoughts of the two young boys, Peter and Francis, which makes this story ideal to explore how readers can engage with fictional characters and the

experience of this engagement with a fictional text. The readers can directly access the internal states of the fictional characters and this enhances the opportunity of connection or disconnection with these thoughts as they occur. There is this sense of duality which seems to reflect the duality of the reader and the fictional characters.

Finally, one last reason for choosing this text is because one of this research's aims is also to explore the different interactions with a text which is imposed on the participants as happens in their educational institutions. "The End of the Party" was in fact part of a collection of short stories written by Graham Greene, *Twenty-One Short Stories* (Greene 1954), which was on the MATSEC syllabus for English in the past. Although many of the themes in the narrative are familiar with the participants - bullying, dependence, adult/youth view, fear of new surroundings among others - the 19th century British setting, era, and mentality would be mainly foreign to the participants, although they might have been exposed to it in forms of visual media like television or films. Still, it is a reality that the participants are not British and are young adults so the idea of a live-in nanny and the middle to upper class mentality exhibited by most fictional characters, even some games and expressions mentioned in the story, might come across as distancing devices for them. This is something that I was aware of and in fact wanted so as to see how these young readers would interact with such a text describing such an unfamiliar world.

Recruitment of Participants

The final component of this research was the recruitment of the participants who would willingly allow me to journey with them through this exploratory process. The participant cohort chosen for this research was made up of thirteen male and female young adults who were in the age range of between 16-18 years old. All participants taking part in this project were able to read, speak and

understand English very well. English is one of the two official languages in Malta and students are immersed in instruction in both English and Maltese from a very early age. English is taught as a subject alongside Maltese from the moment children are enrolled into schools from when they are about four or five years old. Most of the teaching instructions carried out in classrooms in Maltese schools is in English and therefore although the latter is not their mother tongue many adolescents tend to codeswitch between English and Maltese even in their daily conversations. As will be further elaborated in Chapter 4, all the participants in this research had passed their Secondary Education Certificate examination in English language which they would have sat for when they had finished their secondary level education before moving on to sixth form and other educational institutions.

The first group of participants (2016-17), six females and one male, were recruited from the Department of English at the Gian Frangisk Abela Junior College where I am a senior lecturer. None of these participants formed part of the student groups that I lectured during that academic year. The recruitment was done through several means: advertising the project through flyers (Appendix M), my speaking to students during lectures, and recommendations by other lecturers in my department. As was previously indicated, the students who attend this college are 16-18-year olds and all have passed their Secondary Examinations Certificate (SEC), which is equivalent to an Ordinary Level examination, in English Language but not necessarily in English Literature. The English Department caters for students studying English language and literature in preparation for their MATSEC Advanced Level and Intermediate exams leading to these students' entry into the University of Malta. Their familiarity with the English language and age made them suitable participants since this study's focus was young adults' interactions with fictional texts. The practical

sessions were carried out as part of the extra-curricular activities that are encouraged at the Junior College and were over and above the students' time-table load. I am here now giving them pseudonyms and will refer to them with these names throughout the thesis: Anita, Martha, Tina, Becky, Mickey, Berta and Lisa. They attended 1-hour sessions on a fortnightly basis for a period of 5-6 months between November 2016 and April 2017.

The following year (2018) I held another series of workshops with a second group. This group was made up of three male and three female young adults, also in the 16-18 age range. These participants belonged to a local drama school and came from diverse academic backgrounds (some were students at academic institutions and others attended a vocational college). These young people all had passed their Ordinary Level examinations (SEC) in English language and were competent both in the writing and speaking of English. As the sessions proceeded, this group used to code-switch between Maltese and English in their responses although instruction was carried out in English. This group attended a 1 hour 30 minutes weekly session between January and May 2018. I will refer to them with the following pseudonyms throughout the thesis: Nick, Mark, Clint, Mandy, Denise and Miriam.

As has already been stated, ethics approval was sought for this study both from the University of Kent and the University of Malta's Research Ethics Committees and the research did not commence before approval was given (Appendix J). Consent (Appendix K) and Information (Appendix L) sheets were given to the participants and these were duly returned signed by a parent or guardian given permission to these young adults to participate in the research.

Researcher's Expectations and Fears in the Research Process

After finishing the interviews and workshops with the first group, I had a preliminary glimpse as to what I could expect from the group of participants in the following year, although one must bear in mind that no two groups are the same regardless of the similarity in the process. Obviously, the first process was a good learning experience that put me in a better position to fine tune my thoughts for any future research. Undeniably, I had my own anxieties at different stages: as I prepared to carry out these interviews and workshops, during the process and even after.

My main fear was that the questions that I had prepared would not generate enough information and would not be suitable for my participants. As the research progressed, I was asking myself whether the participants were being truthful in their self-disclosures and how relevant this information would be to my research questions. Admittedly the research questions went through a lot of development and changes since I started off my initial readings around the subject and my preliminary proposal for this PhD project. My proposed intentions were to research the emotional connection between young adult readers and fictional characters but through my readings, research and also the first set of workshop sessions, I soon realised that in fact the readerly interactions were happening with the entire narrative world and not solely with the fictional characters. A more enactive theoretical approach was needed to cater for the holistic experience of these young adults as they interacted with the text. The research became more focussed on that in-between space that involved the participants as themselves in the discourse-world and their projections on the world of the text. I needed to delve deeper into this potential liminal space and have the participants verbalise those internal cogitations as they were in that zone which would specifically yield more information about this reader-text dynamic.

Another fear I had was that my role as a lecturer would interfere during the interviews. I needed to bear in mind to constantly “background” my position as “the expert” and try to be more of a facilitator rather than as a researcher eliciting the right information. During the interviews and workshops, I found myself being prompted by the interviewees’ contributions and sometimes wondering whether asking a question was going to be beneficial or if it would taint my data. The fact that the interviews were shorter than expected became a major worry for me because I felt that maybe I had not prepared the right questions. I was getting frustrated since the participants did not volunteer any stories and found myself, at times, during the interview trying to push them into telling me a story. I soon found out that if interviewees do not want to give information then they will not; no matter what.

I must admit that because I was becoming more aware of what kind of responses, I would be getting from one interview to the next, this might have influenced the way I might have worded some of the questions in subsequent interviews. Obviously, the whole process is dependent so much on the subjectivity both of participants and interviewer, as Riessman (2008) declares, “the investigator becomes an active presence in the text” (105) which makes these interviews and workshops unique in so many ways.

This self-reflexive chapter is intended as another means to make transparent the “decision trail” (Long & Johnson 2000: 35) on my part as a researcher. The different methods used throughout the whole study, the fact that there were two separate groups which underwent the same process, the interviews, journal entries, discussions, and the practise-based research offer a form of methodological triangulation. Triangulation according to Guion (2002:1) is “a method used by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies.” Another form

of credibility check was that I consulted with participants about the interview transcripts and their analysis to ensure that they agree with the observations made and conclusions drawn; this is what Maxwell (1992) refers to as “interpretative validity”. The raw data presented by the participants also presents an opportunity not only to find connections between what is observed by the different participants and thus provide, as Bazerman (2013) labels them, “intertextual readings” but also “intratextual readings” in that correlations can be found within the data provided by one participant in the various forms mentioned already above.

It is intended that this research will shed more light on the reading process and the interactions of young adults with fictional literary worlds. My intention as an educator is to try and understand better how starting from the point where the students are in their lives, they can be helped to connect better with the written text. The following chapters will give a more personal glimpse of the participants and discuss the data yielded through the exploration of the two groups that were recruited to form part of this research process. In the next chapter the participants' responses in the first interview will aid in placing these young adults within the reading demographic of their age cohort in Malta. This will be done to give a wider picture of the reading trends in Malta and how far these participants can be seen as fitting into their age group within these trends. All this information will also benefit the discussion of their processes as they interacted with the short story as it will help to give further insight as to what might help or hinder their readerly interactions.

Chapter 4 – Framing the Research Process in the Local Context

Background to the Participants and their Reading Habits

Before moving on with the analysis of the information that emerged from the practical embodied workshops with the participants, it will be beneficial to also examine closely the reading habits and the level of involvement that the participants feel they have with the literature that they read. Since one of the aims of this research is to explore in more depth the reading experience of these young adults and what might aid them to connect more with the written word, it is crucial that we also hear their views and voices about their reading habits and preferences, even outside the academic environment.

It makes sense that we look beyond these participants' academic reading trends if we want to further explore what makes them decide to opt for interacting with literature. Many of these young adults are very competent readers, and as Allington (2001) points out, their lack of interest in engaging with texts is more a question of what Mikulecky (1978: 1) labels as "aliteracy". Aliteracy is a deficit in motivation to read, rather than an inability to do so (Nippold, Duthie & Larsen 2005; Smith et al. 2012). The reasons for this readerly apathy could be many but Botzakis and Hall (2010: 134) point out:

... reading ability is based on specific activities, such as story recall or identifying main ideas, details, and word or passage meaning, which are themselves discrete skills. These discrete skills have been determined over time to be correlative or indicative of reading ability, and measuring certain of them are the basis of determining reading ability and disability (Mueller, 2001). Statistical analyses of reading disabled people have shown that reading disabilities tend to be correlative with race and social class (Blanchett, 2006; Coutinho, Oswald, & Best, 2002) and that aspect begs the question of how much socio-cultural characteristics define what reading should be and how well people read.

This quote elucidates other complexities involved in the reader-text interaction which may not always be immediately evident or visible to educators in a classroom.

For various reasons, educators are not always privy to students' personal backgrounds and tend to assess students based on socially acceptable maxims that might not reflect all the students' realities. As has already been discussed in the previous chapter, assessments of students' understanding of texts are mainly based on verbo-centric activities and readers' abilities to identify words and their use in linguistic contexts. Students are expected to enjoy sitting down and actively engage with texts only through written means and by listening to "experts" speaking to them about the meaning and enjoyment they should derive from literary texts.

Unfortunately, this does not take into consideration the diverse, not always advantageous, realities that these young people have to contend with on a daily basis.

Apart from the socio-economic backgrounds of the students, which might mean that they do not have equal access to resources such as books, technology and adequate stimulation because of unstable personal backgrounds, there are other adolescents who as Goldfus (2012: 56) explains

... are not succeeding in school. Many have been diagnosed as having dyslexia, a reading disability, some have been assessed as being unable to sit still and concentrate; others still cannot process the material in class. All can be called, 'struggling adolescent learners' (Lenski and Lewis, 2008). How to address the needs of these learners, many of whom cannot read fluently remains "one of the most complex problems in education today" (ibid: 1). These adolescents have built up a self-image of failure. This is noticeable, even in children as young as five, but it is a particular problem with older children whose awareness of their lack of success is intensified by the advent of puberty and other teenage anxieties.

This was also the reality of some of the participants taking part in this research.

These participants' conditions included Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia and a milder form of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) which all fall under the term "neurodiversity" (Blume 1998; Singer 1999) that "encompasses a range of developmental, neurological conditions and represents those who are, in some way, 'atypical' and who experience the cognitive and sensory world in a 'different' way" (Hendrickx 2010: 9). Indeed, awareness of such

conditions has increased in education settings, and mitigation measures are in place in schools for younger students, but still these conditions may not be divulged when these students change schools once they reach adolescence. Many young people are very aware of the social stigma that unfortunately these conditions tend to carry with them and are terrified of being labelled “stupid” or “slow” although this is definitely not the case. Consequently, for various reasons, educators might not realise that some students in their lecture rooms dislike reading not because they are apathetic or disinterested, but because the ways they are expected to process this linguistic information pose problems for them. Similar to what happens in a number of classroom scenarios, these diverse neurological conditions only came to light in this research at a later stage of the workshop process when the participants felt more comfortable to disclose to the group the difficulties they encounter in their interactions with texts. In Chapter 7 there is a more in-depth discussion of the neurodiverse conditions that some of this research's participants spoke about and how the multi-sensory approach to literary texts that this research process took was another contribution of this study to understand further the complexities involved in reader-text interactions, especially, in education settings.

As has been indicated in the methodology section of this thesis the two groups of participants in this research came from diverse backgrounds and although the members of Group 1 (2016-17) all attended the Gian Frangisk Abela Junior College they all came from different socio-economic backgrounds and family backgrounds. Group 2 (2018) were an eclectic group as although they were students enrolled in various local educational institutions, it was their passion for theatre which brought them together in this drama group. The members of Group 2's priority in this process was not the reading process but more the practical theatre

workshops which they felt would be beneficial in their insights to character building for future theatre roles. In fact, this second group made for an interesting contribution to this research in that they were the typical young people who would appear not to have been interested in reading as an activity out of their own free will, unless of course that reading material was a stage script.

The two groups were an ideal choice for this research as they were typical young adults that usually form part of the student groups to be found in English literature classes in the local pre-university colleges which meant they had the reading competence but not always the willingness to engage in literary reading. As has been explained in Chapter 3 all participants were competent in reading, speaking and writing in English as they were exposed to it from an early age once enrolled in an educational institution in Malta. Moreover, they would all have experienced having literary texts being enforced upon them through a syllabus that they had to follow as they all had sat for their ordinary level examinations in English.

In order to reveal more of the reading habits of these participants, a first semi-structured interview was held with each participant at the beginning of this research process, even before the practical workshops began. I met each participant in a convenient place and at a mutually agreed time and asked them a series of questions (Appendix C) allowing them to have their voices heard. As Hinchman and Appleman (2017: 14) observe:

For far too long, our research has too narrowly defined adolescent literacy as school-sponsored, school-located performances of traditional reading and writing tasks designed by classroom teachers to fulfill specific curricular objectives. Often, these acts of literacy are judged and measured by decontextualized standardized tests. With the scholars whose work we present here, we believe that adolescents perform literacy in a wide variety of contexts, in dramatically varying modes, for multiple purposes, and with different audiences in mind.

One of the contributions of this research is its qualitative approach, which gives space to the voices of young adult students to be heard through these participants. It is to be admitted that considering this qualitative nature of the research and the small number of participants, one cannot arrive at generalisations but “the products of this research are closer in function to deep conversation and insightful dialogue than they are to error-free conclusions.” (Knowles & Cole 2015: 8). Insights into the world of the participants can highlight the way to further research in this endeavour to understand better what entices young adults in their reading and for that, we need to go beyond the page into their lives. As Stockwell (2002: 4) observes:

It seems to me that it is important to reconnect the different readings of literary texts between the academic and the everyday ... The key to understanding issues of literary value and status and meaning lies in being able to have a clear view of text and context, circumstances and uses, knowledge and beliefs.

Moreover, because they formed part of a group it was still important to see them as individuals and get a picture of who they are before they and their reactions are naturally subsumed by the dynamics of their respective group. This in itself is another interesting research focus which not only is similar to the situation in which many students find themselves in classrooms, but also might yield possibilities as to how literary texts can be approached and made more palatable to reluctant students.

Peplow et al. (2016) have explored the discourse of diverse reading groups within multiple contexts varying from informal meetings between lay persons who met on a regular basis to discuss books they enjoyed reading. The researchers compared these informal groups' choice of books and conversations with the style of reading and analysis done within an institutional context. Based on the researchers' observations, it was pointed out that there are differences in the register used between members of informal reading groups from those in academic contexts, in that the former tend to speak about fictional characters in books as if they were real

people with whom they can empathise or sympathise. In discussing books as a group, there is also an element of collaboration in their interpretations of the text, in that they tend to be influenced by each other's observations and their conversations are more likely not to have one person specifically leading but speakers tend to have equal opportunity to voice their thoughts. However, it is significant to consider the influences on the dynamics of these groups from external contexts, especially the roles that these group members might have within the community and that might invest them with an expert position in the conversation.

From a Text World Theory perspective, when we look closely at what happens within these reading groups, one can observe that there is a boundary crossing that occurs between the discourse-world (the world in which the reader is accessing the text or processing the discourse) and the storyworld (the fictional world of the text). These personal projections become the main interpretative approach to text of these reading groups' participants. Their analyses tend to be based on a sense of identification/transportation/immersion into the storyworld, which Peplow et al. (2016: 170) refer to as a kind of "cross-world mapping" in which readers 'project' into the text-worlds they create". This point will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7 of this thesis as these are some of the interpretative dynamics observed in these two groups participating in this research process.

In using theatre/drama exercises (Appendix E) in the practical workshops, a semi-informal environment was created where the same dynamics mentioned above could be observed while, simultaneously, my presence, although being as minimally intrusive as possible, and avoiding any censoring to participants' responses, gave

these groups still an approximate institutional structure as Drew and Heritage (1992: 224-5) summarise in the following group features:

1. Institutional interaction involves special constraints on what will be treated as allowable contributions to the business at hand.
2. Institutional talk is associated with inferential frameworks and procedures that are particular to specific institutional contexts.
3. Institutional interaction normally involves the participants in specific goal orientations which are tied to their institution-relevant identities: doctor and patient, teacher and pupil, etc.

The fact that the ultimate aim of this study was to work with a specific author and short story meant that there was still a goal-orientation within the practical workshops. Although participants were allowed freedom with their creativity, these workshops were still tied to their interpretations and understandings of one particular short story.

Reading as an activity is also dependent and controlled by societal rules that influence what is acceptable or not to read and how one should read it (Purcell-Gates et al. 2006). In turn, these general rules affect the individual not only on the level of choice of reading material but also in the way one is expected to speak about reading. In academic circles it is unacceptable to have any personal references to the fictional characters as being real and/or the storyworld is seen in any way in terms of the discourse-world (Stockwell 2005; Whiteley 2010; Peplow et al. 2016; Caracciolo 2016). From a literary theory perspective, any textual criticism cannot be based on what Peplow et al. (2016: 92) explain as mimetic reading (Phelan 2005) which

involves readers judging text-world characters and plot elements according to their expectations of how people should behave and how these events are likely to transpire in reality.

Nevertheless, as we have seen in Chapter 2 of this thesis, meaning is not relayed only through what is found in the text but also in how readers understand that text; it is in the interaction between the two that an interpretation is generated. Therefore, it

is crucial that one looks at the participants/readers in this process and their relationship with reading as an activity and how this relationship with literature will affect their participation within the group reading of the text. Keeping this in mind, we shall now proceed to a thematic analysis of the participants' responses in this first semi-structured interview.

Situating the Participants within the Reading Demographic of Malta

In 2016, a Cultural Participation Survey was carried out on a random stratified representative sample (1, 500) drawn from the 2011 Population and Housing census of the Maltese population (360, 335) by the National Statistics Office, Malta and the Arts Council which included the reading habits of the participants. 13% of this gross sample fell within the 16-24-years category, which is within the age range of the participants of this research. Looking closer at this age range category within the 12 months preceding the survey, there were 37.4% who had read no books, 11.9% managed to finish one book, and 50.6% had finished more than one book. When considering the young adults in the post-secondary/non-tertiary education/tertiary or higher category, in which this research's participants fall: 31% read no books, 13.7% finished one book, and 55.3% read more than one book. The types of books which are included in these percentages are as follows: 13.6% were academic books while the rest included a variety of genres of which included Mystery/Thriller/Horror (17%), Romance (12.9%), History and Politics (4.6%) and Science Fiction and Fantasy (15%) which are pertinent to the responses of the participants in this research.

The above statistics are in-keeping with the responses elicited from this research's participants with a number of them indicating that they are avid readers

(60 %) while others admitted that they had not read a book (40%) in a long time unless it was related to their syllabus. As expected, more participants revealed that they used to read for pleasure when they were younger but that they had less available time for this ludic reading now that they were at an advanced stage of academic commitments.

Anita: I haven't actually read much books last year, mostly due to my studying interference ... but fiction ... I would ... a book per 2 weeks up to first six months and then a book per week for the rest of it.

Martha: I used to read books more often than I am reading now ... all the books I am reading now are more about my studies and are more realistic.

Nick: in a year ... four books ... fiction ... but then I read articles ... just in general.

Mandy: I wish I had more time to read as I love to read but, unfortunately, with my studies and school and other activities, I do not have much time.

Denise: Yes I am a reader of fiction, earlier years I always picked up fictional books ... before, I used to read a lot.

Becky: ... since I have school I don't have much time to read.

Lisa: I actually made a list of how many books I read once a year and I had read about 70 books.

When it comes to genres of books, it is interesting to note that a number of participants did prefer to read fiction, mainly fantasy, romance and mystery:

Lisa: I very much like the books aimed at young adults ... such as murder stories, horror stories ... a bit of romance, a bit of adventure, and a bit of humour that is very important.

They also viewed reading these types of fiction as a means of escaping everyday reality.

Although reading was a form of reality evasion, these young adults still admitted that they wanted their reading not to be very far from their own

understanding of real-life experiences and for the fantasy/science fiction to be still rooted in the discourse-world and people. Participants mentioned that when the fiction becomes too distant from real life then they stop believing in the storyworld and they disconnect from their reading. This observation leads one to conclude that in their reading these youths were still looking for a “mimetic effect” (Phelan 2005: 20) in that their literary interpretations “involve an audience’s interest in the characters as possible people and in the narrative world as like our own”.

Mimetic Identification with Fictional Characters

This need for identification is evident in the way they speak about their preferences for the main fictional character of the genre of books that they like to read. A number of participants opted for a young girl or boy protagonist who would be relatively close to their age and who turns out to either be a hero regardless of whether they become famous or remain unsung:

Anita: Because I, I am quite ordinary ... I ... I blend quite a bit in the crowd ... I would like a heroine or a hero who did not choose to stand out, but they do.

Miriam: Yes, because it's like, it makes you feel that an ordinary person which meant nothing can suddenly become someone. Everyone respects, everyone respects him/her as he is not ordinary ... or someone who makes a difference.

Clint: I connect with the character that makes careless decisions thinking they are going to achieve something, thinking they are going to do something for the better of things to be the hero, but they end up taking the wrong decision and it's not beneficial at all ... and that is something that I do.

Mandy: I could relate to them a lot and there were some instances where the characters were experiencing something that I had experienced before.

Mickey: I think there must be a realistic appeal to the person. If it's all about vampires and fairies, not really my type. I prefer that

even so; it is something that may occur. If we do not abide by our rules this will happen, for example.” (Mickey)

These respondents' words can lead us to understand why students may withdraw from the literature presented to them in a classroom when they find texts that they cannot identify with. Hinchman and Appleman (2107: 163) point out that it would be good if educators and authorities in the education sector ask the question: “For *whom* is literature being taught?”. Duke (1997: 34) was already insisting on the discrepancies that exist between how students interpret literature and the way this is carried out in class:

In the teaching of literature, we have inexorably divorced the reader from the reading experience. We have denied him the very heart of the reading process. We ask the reader to forget half, three-quarters, or even sometimes, all of his personal experience in relation to a work when he comes into a classroom. This forces the reader to step onto “firm ground”, where we can discuss and examine the work from a safe distance. Such action is dictated by the assumption that in this way we can all share the same experience in the work and thus have a better understanding of it.

This is further corroborated by Long (1992: 110) when she writes that “collective and institutional processes shape reading practices by authoritatively defining what is worth reading and how to read it.” The situation has not changed up to the present day as is evident in the work of several researchers including Ivey and Broaddus (2001); Barry, Huebsch and Burhop, (2008); Smith and Sculli (2011); Manuel and Carter (2015); Redmond (2015); Wilhelm (2016) who all agree that adolescents are more motivated to read if they are allowed to participate in the choice of texts that they have to study or read.

One of the questions in the interview dealt with the participants' attitudes towards texts that they had to read because they had either formed part of their literature syllabi while they were at secondary school, or in the case of some of them for their MATSEC literature examinations. Some of the respondents chose to focus on a specific text with which they, and many other students following the same

course, found a deep-seated disconnection with and that was Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* – a text found for a number of years on the MATSEC literature syllabus up to the academic year 2017-18.

Succinctly, this novel deals with the moral and physical tribulations that a middle-aged man, Scobie, goes through as a police officer in Sierra Leone during WWII. Scobie is a late-convert to Roman Catholicism riddled with a guilty conscience as he deals with life and people through a self-imposed sense of pity and responsibility. He has fallen out of love with his wife and embarks on a love-affair with a 20-year-old woman. An internal spiritual battle ensues in which he grapples with his conscience over his obligations to his wife and lover which ultimately lead to his suicide as he gives up on God ever finding mercy on him.

Students studying this imposed text abhorred the pessimism in this book which was widely disconnected with their experience on so many levels: age, mentality, geography and era. Following are some of the participant's responses not only about this novel but also about literary texts which they are made to read and with which they feel distant:

Lisa: *Because there is a person who always feels like degraded by society but then turns out to, like, he faces the challenges and becomes like and wins over the, that is the book I want to read. Not about the ones that were already in high status and stayed there. Or the depressing ones that they life treated unfairly and became nothing.*

Tina: *For example, 'The Heart of the Matter', the main character Scobie, I really don't like his character because of all this pity and responsibility. I really can't get him. And it's not his age ... it's his feelings ... he is insipid and pathetic, and I disconnect from him.*

Mickey: *I think there is a limit to the difference from you for identification. He has to be somewhat similar to you and your reality although being a bit different from you is good but not too much. We have not reached that age [referring to Scobie being middle aged] yet you are presenting me with a book that*

is so unlike what I am going through ... would a 19 or 20-year-old go through this, in reality?

Miriam: You are challenged to think differently yes ... but not when it is too over-stretched or distant from your own reality ... then I somehow lose interest.

Mark: It's not the age of the character really but more the emotions and their reality. If it is too different from being realistic, at least as I understand it, then I disconnect.

An overall imposition of “a” general reading of a text, the choice of which has been enforced on students, denies an individual understanding which might bring a new meaning to the literature at hand. Such mono-directional approach rejects Gee’s (2001: 136) recommendation that literacy should be understood broadly as involving a number of cerebral and linguistic processes within the framework of a socio-cultural interaction. This means that language takes on an individual and circumstantial interpretation and that “we cannot see the text, nor the reader, in isolation” (Rowlison 2013: 3) which a teacher-imposed interpretation refutes as it accepts that meaning lies only in the text.

This need for young adult readers’ sense of identification situates the reading act within a social constructivist (Vygotsky 1978) perspective in that it emphasises the interaction between text and reader as a form of identity construction. Social constructivists (Vygotsky 1978) promote the idea that there are multiple constructions of reality based on an individual’s understanding and interpretation of that reality through their interactions with others and the world. As has already been discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, this could be further applied to the act of reading, as readers construct themselves and project their ideal self as they interact with the words; the text constructs them and they construct meaning to the text. Guthrie (2008: 10) insists that students need to find a connection with their own lives in the texts that they encounter:

Students have extremely high needs for relevance. A relevant text is intrinsically motivating because it is “related to me.” Students need to be able to apply their prior knowledge and their previous experience to texts they encounter. They want to know how a text, or a subject matter relates to their real world and their prior learning.)

Erikson (1984) proposes that the main mission of adolescence is the working out of a sense of self, gaining a sense of identity as they explore who they are and who they want to become. Many researchers agree that affinity with a fictional person is induced by the degree a reader sees oneself as similar to the fictional character (Slater and Rouner 2002; Cohen 2006; Brown 2015) and this is reflected in the following participants comments:

Anita: It mostly has to do with personal experiences ...so basically, I write ... and my protagonist, she's defined by me, and usually I choose female protagonists right from my point of view, my perspective.

Denise: Because both male and females they have the same problems, it's not because he's male it makes a difference ... it's like I passed through the same adventures, and more realistic life ... It's like I was part of the book and I felt for them.

Berta: Yes, because the character is so relatable to me ... it is as if I could speak to her. So, she could guide me ... She went through things ... knows the consequences of what she did. So maybe if I were to do a similar decision, I could ask for her advice.

Still, these participants insisted that regardless of the gender of the fictional character and slight differences in personality, the elements that are more important are the fictional character's emotions, interactions, and experiences. If the latter are believable and allow for a certain level of identification through sympathy for or emotional engagement with the fictional character, then these young adults will enjoy reading the fictional character's narrative. The important thing is that they care for the fictional character and whether similar or not they will still manage to derive pleasure and come away from the text with new insights about their own life

experiences. The connection with these fictional characters, which these young adults are very aware are unreal and linguistically constructed, can be so strong that participants admit to feeling happy, worried or in fear of what might happen to these fictional beings:

- Tina: The most I connected with was his friend because she was stubborn, [Participant is talking about the book 'Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief'], I will try to listen to her ideas because I do not believe in the thing it does not mean that she is wrong and mine is right ... No [I do not disconnect] I think it makes it interesting because I get to know new characters.*
- Mickey: The challenge of understanding a character that is different from you, which you cannot completely identify with, also encourages you to read.*
- Nick: The thing is, it's not the character that I want to come alive ... it's the bond between the two characters that I would like to become alive.)*
- Anita: A fictional character that is coming to mind ... she was a girl, a teenager just like me but a different character ... she was still real for me.*
- Mandy: There was this book "The Winter Folly" by Lulu Taylor, it's my favourite book ... it was so clear and vivid that I could relate to them a lot and there were some instances where the characters were experiencing something that I had experienced before.*
- Mark: I felt for him. I am an older sibling as well. So, I could understand that he was going to be protective. That he wanted to save his brother. I felt empathy for him but at the same time I was admiring him.*

What is becoming evident is that participants project themselves onto the character. Their understanding and connection with the literary text is based on an understanding through their own life experiences. There is a boundary crossing between the discourse-world (the world of the reader-author) and the storyworld (the world of the text and its characters). A liminal space is created where the participants are still themselves, but yet can see themselves as the fictional character at the same

time, very much in line with what Peplow et al. (2016: 37) define as *psychological projection*:

thought to underlie sensations of immersion, identification, empathy and sympathy and explain[s] how readers experience genuine emotions in response to fictional events, as well as how fictional events can influence readers' real lives (Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009a; Whiteley 2011a, 2014)

This mental space between text and reader is exactly what this research set out to further explore and will be dealt with in more depth when analysing the outcome of the practical workshops.

Participants also spoke about how fiction impacted their everyday life and their way of thinking, as Peplow et al. (2016) have indicated in their research.

Although literary texts are fictional, they still made these young people ponder some real deep issues in their lives and perhaps gave them alternative perspectives to deal with some challenges that were going on in their own real lives and world:

Becky: I think yes, maybe I saw the war in a different perspective. It wasn't just the world war. No there were people involved. There were lives. There were humans." – (participant was talking about Michael Morpurgo's 'Private Peaceful')

Mickey: [these books] they made me more open-minded maybe ...

Denise: It makes you look at the general situation differently, like for example when you are watching the news on TV and see the politicians speaking ... you say this is all propaganda ... these are not the real themes that are happening.

Mandy: What really struck me was 'The Fault In Our Stars' ... it got me thinking that like life is short and you have to live to the full and do whatever makes you happy at that because in the end we are all just the same and we are all going to end up in the same place.

Clint: It does help in ... imagination ... in alternatives ... for example the father in 'How To Kill A Mockingbird' ... I actually started thinking how I could actually maybe steal from his way of thinking ... so yes it did impact my way of thinking.

Literary features, like suspense and mystery, were mentioned a number of times by the participants as creating a sense of connection and immersion. Many of these young people preferred fiction that had a thrilling element which made them feel worried or afraid for and with the fictional character. These observations concur with Gerrig's (1993) and Jacobs' (2015: 8) views that suspense is one of the powerful techniques that appeals to readers in their textual interactions:

Thus, texts that offer familiar, easy-to-process spatial aspects, a clear or surprising chain of events providing a good deal of "what happens next?" suspense (cf. Oatley's, 1994 "Grisham effect"), and, perhaps most importantly, convincing depictions of the inner life of the protagonists (e.g., intentions, emotions, mental conflicts) can drag readers easily into the "text world", making them forget the "real" environment around them.

This assessment seems to echo the sentiments expressed by the following participants:

Mickey: I do feel the suspense. Also, since in the span of eight books you have the same three characters, you develop some of connection. So, one of the characters is injured you feel worried to a certain extent.

Lisa: Yes, and you have to remember that 'Game of Thrones' is still an ongoing book, so it's not, it's not a finished series, you cannot go through the first book and skim through the last book and see where it is going. So, there is an ongoing fear and anticipation of what's going to happen.

This sense of real worry about the fate of fictional characters seems to indicate that participants become engaged with the fictional world of the characters to an extent that they feel the need to know the outcome.

Mental Imagery During Reading

Another question which is related to this engagement with the fictional world and sense of transportation (Green & Brock 2000; Gerrig 1993; Nell 1988a) into the text focusses on the mental pictures that participants create while they are reading.

Through their responses, these young people revealed that all of them created mental images of fictional characters, locations, and other details in the storyworld but to varying degrees. Some of the responses suggest that while certain individuals see fleeting non-defined mental glimpses, others are able to depict vibrant, although still momentary, pictures inspired by the text at hand.

Imagery from literature stems from the combination of the reader's personal background experiences, the triggering of the sum of the emotive, intellectual, cultural and sociological baggage that one brings to the text, and on the other hand the set of culturally accepted and linguistic symbols set on paper that make up the text. Readers do not make a conscious effort at conjuring up these mental depictions, but they happen spontaneously and indeterminately as they "hover on the threshold of consciousness and cannot be remembered in total once the reading is completed." (Brosch 2018: 137)

It is no wonder that some of these participants feel that they see only shadows and traits of an image and they tend to endow these pictures with their own expectations. Burke (2008: 61) tends to link these images with readers' personal memories in the following explanation:

it is highly plausible that the elementary base for this kind of visual input comes from our emotive and somatically infused long-term memory. As a result, the kind of imagery that gets channelled is likely to be grounded in the indistinct, unconscious remembrance of past events, past locations and past loved ones.

Iser (1978: 137) continues to insist that "in reading literary texts, we always have to form mental images". With new MRI imaging, neuroscientists have discovered that reading or listening to literature "primarily involve the visual areas of the brain" (Burke 2008: 42), hence the feeling that readers are actually seeing these mental pictures even if for a fleeting moment:

- Denise:* I see pieces, bits and pieces, and I would rather that these, for instance, if the hero is beautiful, if he is like hot, in the book it would give you descriptions for example, such cold eyes, such pale skin, such sharp and defined bones. They do not come clearly as they should in my head and I enjoy that, the fact that, it's not complete clear image where he can be anything.
- Nick:* I don't get clear-cut images ... just glimpses.
- Miriam:* just glimpses ... not clear at all
- Mark:* They're like shady but with bursts of colours when there is something exciting going on ... rarely do I see characters clearly ... but if he's handsome, well then, he would be tall and thin. He would not be fat.)
- Clint:* I mean, sometimes when I see the first name, I already have a picture in my mind of how I want them to look. Sometimes when there is a description, I sometimes ignore it.
- Tina:* But sometimes in the book it tells you he has brown hair but, in my imagination, he's got blonde hair. Sometimes I do change the characters.

Thus, literary imagery is a very subjective interpretation not of seeing something as it is actually described, but more of a sensation of subconscious access to “a thinking how it should look like” (Ryle 1968: 255). Iser (1978: 38) refers to gaps that the readers fill in their interaction of the text – “the actual content of these mental images will be coloured by the reader's existing stock of experience”, hence the disappointment when readers watch film adaptations of books that they have read:

- Denise:* I will have high expectations of it as a good book. So, for example, in Harry Potter, I pictured Severus Snape as completely different. He was so different. And even Jay in Cassandra Claire's book. So different. My version I preferred it so much more. So, I was so disappointed.
- Lisa:* I did that mistake once with 'The Best of Me' and from then on I decided that whenever there is a book, I read the book and not watch the film. Or if I see the film then I do not read the book. If I read the book and then watch the film, I'm sure I will be disappointed.
- Mark:* You get disappointed because you expect certain things still to happen in the film as you read them and saw them in the book

but then they do not happen ... I'm very critical about that. Certain adaptations, I did not like or at least I did not feel that they made justice.

Considering that as Iser (1978: 157) insists “the significance of the work, then, does not lie in the meaning sealed within a text but in the fact that the meaning brings out what had been previously sealed within us”, as educators it is a must that we give significance to the preferences of these young adults rather than insisting on the canonical views of the classical texts that might not be so appealing to the younger generation. Moreover, some of the respondents admitted that the older they get, the more they are becoming attracted to factual reading rather than fiction.

Educators' motivations for teaching literature need further thought and discussion to make sure that the ones who are benefitting from this engagement with literary texts are the adolescents. Bearing this in mind, classes need to be more student-centred rather than focussed on information giving by the educator. In fact, there is a misguided notion that because these young adults do not want to read the texts imposed on them in class then they dislike reading. Educators need to become aware that the concept of what constitutes reading is changing and the concept of multiliteracies – (different forms of literacy apart from the paper format) is becoming more and more of a reality.

These youths do not necessarily read literature only in traditional ink and paper books format. Some mentioned online access to literary texts which they tend to prefer to read. The types of literature available electronically are various and, for example, can include: i) texts written online by teenagers themselves which could take the form of hypertext or hyperfiction with narratives being built digitally by multiple authors providing links to various websites, blogs and other online scenarios ii) interactive fiction which are immersive stories that tend to be enhanced

by pictures, movie clips and other digital audio and visual aids iii) text novels that take the shape of literature developed through sms text messages iv) digital poetry also known as e-poetry, and v) virtual reality storytelling which is three dimensional immersive storytelling (Naji et al. 2019). One particular respondent mentioned her preference for fan fiction which is available online through YouTube:

Berta: For fan fiction, I like to watch YouTube. I managed to find a website box related to these youtubers or celebrities ... fan fiction is fan made ... it is fans who write the literature ... they write a fictional story about the youtubers that they follow ... some of these youtubers would be into gaming, comic or other forms of channels on YouTube ... their followers then write stories about them.

As educators we have to accept that we have entered a digital era where teenagers are being flooded with literature in various forms of digital multimedia which is freely and readily available online. The appeal of such multimodal forms of literature has already been discussed in Chapter 3 and if these offer alternative reading incentives then they should be encouraged. Motivation to read, as is becoming apparent from these respondents and other research, tends to be tied to personal choice and that enforced reading material leads to lack of interest and an erroneous conclusion that these young adults dislike literature. Evidently, students tend to take a more of a personal-centred approach to reading as they tend to look for resonances between literature and their personal life experiences, rather than an analytic focus more where information is based on author, plot, characters, themes, which as Maley (1989) explains, encourages literary texts being seen as aesthetically patterned artefacts. The majority of students are exposed to “teaching to the test’ pedagogy, where meaningful explorations of literature are often replaced with activities focused on assessment objectives, timed exam question drills and teacher-led explanations” (Cushing 2018: 8).

While obviously it is understandable that for an exam-oriented education system the latter takes precedence, students tend to withdraw from texts because they feel that there is no personal connection with the text that is being analysed. Widdowson (1978: 247) argues that a literary critical approach will lead to “a pseudo-competence” whereby the students learn to manipulate a “lego-vocabulary of critical terms, without understanding, to repeat them only for examination purposes”. A better understanding of what students want from their literature classes will lead to a teaching slant that takes both the personal and the academic into consideration and make for a better reader-text interaction among students. Another focus for this research is to put forward a more embodied student-centred exploration of literature and utilise the personal to act as a bridge to a more text-oriented focus.

The following chapters will offer an in-depth thematic analysis of these readerly-text interactions as I explore further the participants' discourse and their group dynamics as they proceeded through these practical workshops. Participants were not discouraged in any way from coming up with their own personal resonances with the text. These practical workshops in combination with cognitive poetics with its micro linguistic and deictic approach and Text World Theory with its focus on “entire texts and the worlds that they create in the minds of readers” (Stockwell 2002: 137) provided a better understanding of how these readers immersed themselves in this fictional world. The process of how readers project themselves and their personal experiences into the storyworld echoes some theatre methods which actors utilise to interact with a script as they breathe life into a character and his/her world, and therefore provides the reason for the inclusion of the practice-as-research workshops in this project. The practical workshops in this research stem from the possible insights that they can offer on the act of reading as

they allow for further exploration of the similarities between the internal processes readers undergo as they interact with a text, and actors as they prepare to give life to a role on stage. Goldstein, Wu and Winner (2009: 118) also make this connection when they observe that:

Actors are in many ways are like fiction readers ... actors must reflect about the minds of others, but perhaps do so more intensively since they must become another character over months of rehearsal and performance. Actors think deeply about the motivations, beliefs, and value systems of the characters they enact, and then must make these internal states come alive through the way the words are spoken and the bodily and facial expressions accompanying the words.

On many levels, readers/actors are creating metaphorical mental spaces in which they are connecting their own personal experiences with those of the fictional character and situations suggested by the text and through this dynamic they co-construct and co-participate in the storyworld.

Most of the theatre workshops that are part of the practical side of this research are in fact based on the embodiment of these emotions that stem from the participants' interactions with the text, in this case Graham Greene's "The End of the Party". It is hoped that this research will not only explore the reader-text relationship at a discourse-world level but also the readers' emotional experience of the text-world entities and their inter-connections. The participants will not only explore their own emotional resonance with the text but also give voice through various embodied explorations to their understanding of the emotions expressed and experienced by the fictional characters in the text. The research intends to also explore any readers' projections that arise from their interactions with the text through the various exercises and explorations used throughout this research process. This will be the focus of the next three chapters, Chapters 5, 6, and 7, which will give a detailed analysis of the data yielded through these practical workshops.

Chapter 5 delves into the personal reactions the participants exchanged during the Visual Matrix exercise (Froggett et al. 2015) which proved to be an excellent non-textual introduction to ease participants into feeling safe about externalising their thinking in a group and also gave insight into their personality and way of thinking about issues related to the text although they had not read the short story yet. The participants' input during the Visual Matrix further enlightened these youths' individual personal insights and projections onto the text that occurred throughout the practical workshops.

Chapters 6 and 7 include the main thematic elements that emerged from the practical embodied workshops that were used during this research process with the two groups of participants. I will present the salient themes that emerged from my observations of each group of participants as they tried to make sense and connect with the fictional characters and story of a fictional text written by Graham Greene entitled "The End of the Party". I will voice my observations and create a conversation with the participants' responses, writings and embodied responses to this text. It is intended that this autoethnographic approach will lead to a better understanding of what aided these young participants to engage with and better understand this text and in turn aid in providing guidelines for a more "embodied" pedagogical approach that teachers can utilise to enhance their students' grasp of texts in the classrooms.

The reason for sub dividing the data collected from the practical workshops into three chapters is that there was a gradual build up for the participants to become familiar with each other and the text of the short story before any attempts at more in-depth interactions with the storyworld were made. The main themes that emerged from the research process can be divided into two categories: i) stylistic and textual

elements that attracted participants' attention and that they chose to focus on, to help them grapple with a better comprehension of the story line and fictional characters and ii) the personal reactions to the text which resonated with or challenged the participants' world view and which either enhanced or interrupted their understanding of the storyworld and its inhabitants. As has already been suggested before and as Giovanelli (2016: 195) elaborates, a Text World Theory approach will offer the opportunity to delve deeper into both these categories since:

It has a focus on the contextual aspects of communication as well as the textual. In recognising the interplay between the two, it promotes the recognition of both and the downplaying of neither.

This is precisely the structure of the following analysis as I will examine salient moments from these workshops to elicit the different ways these participants interacted and made sense of the text.

This exploration will follow the two groups that I met separately in 2016-17 and 2018 and will look closer at the discourse generated as the members in each group interacted not only with the text, but also with each other as they discussed and challenged their and others' interpretations. Through these practical theatre exercises and the ensuing discussions, I will explore how these participants became co-authors and co-participants in the storyworld as they crossed the boundary between the split "discourse-world" (since the participants and the real author are separated both temporally and spatially) and projected themselves into the world of the narrative through their insights, their creative writing, discussions of visual images, and by embodying fictional characters through role-play to further enhance and externalise their interpretation and understanding of the fictional world.

Chapter 5 - The Visual Matrix

As has been discussed up to now, to further understand the reading experience of these young adults as they entered into the storyworld, the focus could not rest solely on them as readers or the possibilities the text as a literary artefact yielded, but on opportunities to explore further the interactions between the two. The complex dynamics that could aid and/or hinder these interactions have already been discussed in the previous chapters of this research. One of the main stumbling blocks mentioned is the difficulty that some young adult readers encounter in verbalising their understanding of a text created in this usually internalised “potential space” between reader and text. Keeping in mind this difficulty that students usually have in reacting to words, I decided to use the Visual Matrix method (Froggett et al. 2015) as an initial stimulus to allow participants to freely discuss themes, images, personal connections that might emerge as a reaction to a number of pictures (Appendix D) that I presented them with.

The Visual Matrix was developed by a group of researchers, Froggett et al., at the University of Lancaster in 2015 and is a psychosocial exploratory exercise that is built on the premise that it reveals how “personal, cultural and structural aspects of any social phenomena interact” (Froggett et al. 2015: 44). Participants are presented with visual stimuli related to the subject under research and are allowed to express any reaction they might have had to those visual stimuli. As Froggett et al. (2015: 1) explain:

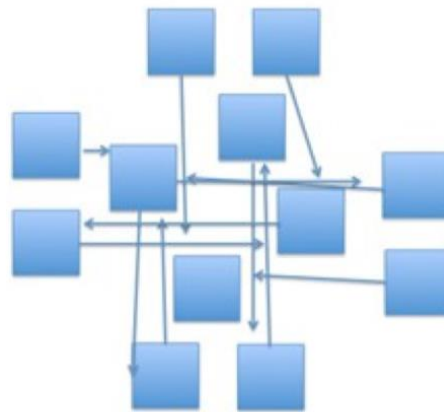
The visual matrix is a method for researching shared experience, stimulated by sensory material relevant to a research question. It is led by imagery, visualization and affect, which in the matrix take precedence over discourse. The method enables the symbolization of imaginative and emotional material, which might not otherwise be articulated and allows ‘unthought’ dimensions of experience to emerge into consciousness in a participatory setting.

The Visual Matrix is a research tool that is based on personal reactions to visual stimuli which are usually related to the subject area that is being explored. The advantage of the Visual Matrix is its ability to allow a group of people who do not know each other to speak freely about whatever is inspired by the visual prompts. In the case of this research, I felt that this would provide an ideal non-text-based activity which would allow the participants to “enter” into the interpretative space by allowing them to roam freely and interact with images rather than words. In keeping with the focus of this research I wanted to find multiple entry points into the storyworld which allowed these young adults to safely express themselves without being censored and feeling threatened that their interpretation is in any way off the mark. In addition, the Visual Matrix was also another way to have a form of personal profiling about the participants since their interactions with the pictures would give insight into their emotional and cognitive processes as they reacted to the visual images. The visual images chosen were loosely related to images and themes mentioned in the short story, “The End of the Party”.

It is important to point out that at this stage the participants had not yet read the short story and they could not project any knowledge of this narrative onto the pictures. This exercise was in no way “priming” the participants to think in a certain way, since this exercise was never presented as being connected with the short story. If any connections were going to be made by the participants to reflections raised by the Visual Matrix, they would be only in hindsight. The Visual Matrix exercise was meant to get participants used to thinking on their feet, interacting freely as a group, voicing their thoughts and giving more insight into salient issues that the visual images triggered in them.

Another important point is that the seating position suggested by the Visual Matrix is also part of the sense of safety and lack of self-consciousness that participants experience. After having viewed the visual material provided by the researcher, the participants are seated in a “snowflake” position (Figure 2 below) where no participant is facing directly another member of the group, the chairs are placed in such a way that people face into the space in-between the other two seats directly in front of them. In this way, participants feel less threatened to speak.

Figure 2: The “snowflake”: Squares represent chairs / Arrows the participants' gazes. (Froggett et al. 2015: 6)



Participants are encouraged to build on each other's interactions and to permit the conversation to flow naturally without anyone taking the lead or trying to structure the conversation. The Visual Matrix works differently from traditional focus groups as it avoids opinion and judgement and generates free association of ideas and emotions that lead to richer responses.

Froggett et al. (2015) explain that the theoretical underpinnings of Visual Matrix bring together three different theoretical traditions, those of Lorenzer (1986), Winnicott (1971), and Deleuze and Guattari (1988). The theory of the cultural

analyst Lorenzer (1986) purports how individuals and groups interact with, or appropriate common cultural resources, according to their particular nature. In addition, it contains a theory of how societal-collective unconscious processes are manifested through cultural material. Lorenzer (1986) explains how the unconscious experience of the world becomes manifest in the understanding of the interactions between the subjects with their own personal, cognitive, emotional, cultural experience of the world and the external reality that they encounter; individuals cannot be taken outside their social context.

According to Lorenzer (1986) meaning is created in the space between the self and the outside world and is expressed in this intermediate position. This is similar to Winnicott's Transitional Space (1971), as referred to in Chapter 2, that is when a growing infant grasps the notion of an external world through the recognition of transitional objects which denote the initial phases of recognising objects and reality outside the self. This "not-me" concept is manifested in the child's imaginary play with objects endowing them with properties beyond their reality, for example, a chair becomes a ship; the "as-if" moment. Froggett et al. (2015: 16) discuss further this space and the potential it offers:

A working matrix also operates as a "potential space" (WINNICOTT, 2005 [1971]) where an idea can be explored without asking where it came from or who it belongs to. The potential space exists in-between subjective experience and the cultural realm. WINNICOTT describes it as the space of play, the crucible of creativity, and, in adult life, the location of culture. The potential space gives rise to transitional phenomena, neither internal nor external, personal or social, but simultaneously all of these things. It is a space where thoughts and images feel as if they belong to the self as well as to others.

Cognitive studies researchers (Clark & Chalmers 1998; Hurley 1998; Clark 2008) define this as a form of extended cognition whereby knowledge is "seen as an emergent property of interactions [with the subject's environment] rather than a property limited or bounded inside an agent's brain." (Santibáñez 2018: 541). This is

one of the reasons why the Visual Matrix was also chosen as an exploratory method, since its approach is very much in-keeping with the central research focus of this thesis which explores more closely that space in between the self in the discourse-world and the self in the storyworld as a potential space where learning and transformation occurs.

The free-floating associative nature of the Visual Matrix allows the participants to express any personal reaction to the visual stimuli provided and therefore discourages a rigid linear turn-taking to express ideas. Instead, it allows for a flexible space where participants' voices do not have a beginning and an end or any hierarchy leading to just one opinion or someone's voice being considered above the rest. In this manner, the final outcome is a multiplicity of voices that belong to the group as a whole rather than to individual participants as part of a group. It is not the separate voices, but the multilayers created which are ultimately analysed. Frogget et al. (2015) elucidate how the various responses of participants in the Visual Matrix intertwine and resonate with each other to lead to new insights and further exploration. This endless interweaving of ideas is very similar to the rhizome theory of Deleuze and Guattari (1988) that speaks about data representation that has no beginning and an end but multiple intertwined offshoots that in themselves can be broken off to find new life somewhere else. An example of this rhizome theory is the World Wide Web which has no central locus but keeps on growing from one hyperlink to the next. In the Visual Matrix "individual utterances are shared and interweave with others in the matrix, contributing to the whole collage" (Froggett et al 2015: 28) which are all incorporated in the final presentation of material.

The Visual Matrix Method – A Three-Part Exercise

Part One

The Visual Matrix exercise has three parts to it. Initially, a series of 17 pictures (Appendix D) were chosen by me. The pictures were found from several sources including the internet, magazines and books. The pictures were printed in colour and blown up to A4 size and laminated. The pictures were chosen because they reflected incidents, themes, subjects and other possible connections to Graham Greene's shorty story "The End of the Party", but no reference was made to this at any point during this exercise. Both groups of participants taking part in 2016/7 and those of 2018 were shown the same set of pictures. The pictures were stuck to the wall at eye level for all participants to be able to take a closer look at them. The participants were instructed to walk around and look at the pictures for about 10 minutes and to acknowledge silently any form of reaction that came to them on looking at these visual stimuli. Participants were not to interact with each other in any way. I did not comment about any of the pictures but simply allowed the participants to roam freely from one picture to another as if they were at an art gallery.

Part Two

After this first stage, the participants were then asked to sit down in chairs which had been placed in the "snowflake" position (Figure 2 - page 115). In this position, the chairs are placed in such a manner that the participants have minimal eye contact. Participants speak "into" the space rather than talking to each other. Everyone is allowed to react to other participants' words and there is no turn taking; rather participants speak when they feel the need. I sat among the participants so as to lessen my position as the "expert" and although I led the session, participants did

not see me as the focal point and therefore did not always have to address me in particular.

The only moment that I took the lead was when I introduced this part of the exercise by indicating to the participants that at this point, they could verbalise any thoughts, images, emotions, and other impressions that might occur to them. I instructed them not to censor any contributions but to simply speak, listen and react to anything which the others said. Moreover, I set the pace to the session by self-disclosing a personal incident that one of the pictures triggered in my memory. The originators of the Visual Matrix do encourage the researchers to model initial responses rather than trying to explain verbally the different possible ways that the participants could respond to the visual stimuli. I wanted to model the participants' responses rather than just explain to them what they could possibly say. In fact, my contribution set the ball rolling for participants to contribute their own responses. As has already been stated, the "snowflake" seating position does not allow for anyone to take the focal point of the group.

Part Three

The third and final part of this Visual Matrix included all participants sitting in a circle and reflecting on the experience of this workshop and expressing this reflection in any form that they desired. Once again participants were allowed to express themselves in whatever manner that they wanted. This part was the only section that varied between the 2016-17 group and that of 2018. Because of their school's time-table constraints, the first group had more limited time available for the workshop sessions. We only met for an hour on a fortnightly basis and this did not allow for a long time of discussion and the possibility of allowing participants to express themselves in different ways as I did with the 2018 group. In fact, this meant

that with the first group (2016-17), we only had time for a brief brainstorming session with participants suggesting words that defined their impression after this experience. These words were written on a board and everybody could react to the words as they were being written and their reactions were audio recorded. With the second group (2018) there was more time for them to have a short session where they had individual time to express their reflections in any form that they chose. Some opted to express themselves through poetry, other participants came up with some short meaningful expressions, while others decided to simply write down their reflections.

As stated previously in this chapter, the pictures were chosen because they reflected some connection with the literary text that participants would eventually work on through the workshops. Even with the participants not having any prior knowledge of the text, I wanted to create a preliminary conversation between the group members, the researcher and the intended literary text. The Visual Matrix served this purpose perfectly as Froggett et al. (2015: 1) describe:

It [*the Visual Matrix*] is particularly useful for enabling people to express experiences they find difficult to put into words. The dominance of powerful voices or expert discourse is generally avoided.

The participants' thoughts or reactions were not censored in any way. Their comments were allowed to resonate with the other participants who were invited to respond in any way. The Visual Matrix creates a third space: i) what the participants bring to the pictures; ii) what the pictures evoke in them and iii) their interaction with each other's interactions. This is a very similar dynamic that occurs between a reader and a text and the liminal space in-between.

Another benefit of the Visual Matrix method is that it allows participants a certain element of safety in that they are in a group environment and are reacting to a

visual stimulus without being the centre of attention. Another reason for using this exercise was to not only generate initial connections with Graham Greene's "The End of the Party", albeit unknown to the group members, but also to make the young participants feel more comfortable with being part and speaking in front of a group. Enhancing articulation of implicit thoughts is another benefit of this activity which Froggett et al. (2015: 1) explain:

The method enables the symbolization of imaginative and emotional material, which might not otherwise be articulated and allows "unthought" dimensions of experience to emerge into consciousness in a participatory setting.

This is precisely another reason why The Visual Matrix method was specifically chosen to be an additional means of contact with the personal experiences of the participants. Its ability to make the implicit more explicit is similar to the potential that the theatre/drama activities possess as has already been discussed in depth in other parts of this thesis, more specifically in Chapter 3.

The ability for the visual images to touch the sentiments of several participants from the first group of 2016-17 were expressed in their confidential online journals. Both groups were instructed to keep an online feedback journal about the whole process. The journal was confidential, and it was only seen by the individual participant and the researcher. Here are some insights that a number of participants wrote in their journal:

Anita: I realised how a picture, even if I didn't take any of them myself, can bring so much memories and experiences to mind. The black and white pictures reminded me of negative experiences and the colourful ones inspired thoughts ... The seating was very effective because it helped me to think clearly without having to look at someone in the eye.

Nick: I enjoyed the part where we sat down and just said whatever comes to mind regarding the pictures on the wall. It amazed me how differently the other students thought about the same pictures. I enjoyed myself and

I would like to see what will happen in the coming weeks.

Becky: Many of the students spoke their mind and discussed with each other the type emotions and reaction felt whilst analysing the picture. The part of the session that stood out for me was the feedback given by the students and how they differed from each other or agreed with each other, seeing the different perspectives of each student.

As has been stated previously, I had not at any point volunteered any information about the pictures or the intention behind this exercise. The participants were allowed to roam freely and to absorb what they wanted from these pictures. The participants had not as yet read the story “The End of the Party” and so could not have been influenced by its narrative. These reactions are a testament to the effectiveness of this exercise which proved to be an excellent way through which the participants could, without realising, connect with the main themes and fictional character emotions to be found in the short story that the whole research process revolved around. Although the participants had not as yet read the story, through the exercise of the Visual Matrix, many important issues and emotions that were later elicited by this narrative were evoked by the responses given in reaction to the series of pictures presented to the students.

Group Dynamics during The Visual Matrix

As was previously explained, the first group was made of the Gian Frangisk Abela Junior College students and they participated for over a period of about 6 months between 2016-17. These participants barely knew each other, except for maybe sharing the same classes for some subjects and seeing each other in the college corridors. This was quite a challenging exercise for them and in fact there were a lot of initial awkward silences and lengthy turn taking in speaking. Despite

this, they still came up with a lot of interesting contributions which mainly resonated with themselves and their experiences of the world. This reminded me a lot of the group dynamics in classrooms and how much as pedagogues we take for granted once we enter a classroom as we expect students to express their opinions without acknowledging that they barely know each other. I do believe that one of the strengths of this research is that it created a natural classroom dynamic with the researcher trying to consciously not take the expert position but to allow students to contribute freely. As a researcher, I acted more as a guide to allow participants to be themselves and permit them freedom in their interactions with the literature.

This point links with another research gap that this thesis addresses: the scarcity of reflection available on the process of using arts-based methods to carry out academic research. As Coemans and Hannes (2017: 30) point out:

Attention in reporting therefore needs a shift from a focus on content to a focus on potential process related benefits and harms in order to help researchers understand this emergent field and learn from other colleagues.

In fact, when focussing on the process of this research, it revealed that we as educators need to let go of the idea that when students enter a classroom, they have entered into familiar territory where they feel at “home” and so expect them to divest themselves of who they are outside that education environment. Bolton (1976: 47), reminds us that in drama:

The meaning is created from an oscillation between some feature or features of the actual present and the memory bank-of feelings, which as we have seen, are both personal and universal.

It is interesting to note that the responses from the Visual Matrix, which will be analysed in this chapter, tend to indicate that participants constantly resort to familiar personal and group experiences to expand on their understanding of certain images that were not so immediately clear as to their meaning. Personal and community

experience, disposition, and life history produce the interaction forms through which the encounter with the wider culture takes place.

Participants, especially those from Group 2 (2018) repeatedly referred to theatre projects that they had done together, especially one in particular entitled “Il-Maghżulin” (The Chosen Ones) to further elicit approval as to their understanding of the pictures. This seemed not only to enable them to transmit their own understanding of the images but also to encourage them to talk more as they had the group’s approval:

- Clint:* *The one with the girl like this (Appendix D Picture 2) ... it reminded me of the sketch we did together ... do you remember?*
- Miriam:* *I saw the candle (Appendix D picture1) ... it reminded me of Il-Maghżulin (The Chosen Ones) ... ”*
- Mandy:* *The play that we had done*
- Clint:* *Yes, it was today a year ago*
- Denise:* *True, it (Appendix D picture11) reminded me of that (mental hospital) too ... me in The Chosen Ones ... I was losing my mind ... in reality I truly was at that time ...*

This group feeling gives the impression that the final observations belong to the whole group and not to one individual, which aids in more communication and interaction between the members. Participants expressed ideas which were floated for approval and then were picked up by the other members to further expand and elaborate and so ultimately the whole group gave their view on the initial response.

Personal Narratives and Fears

After the initial awkwardness and with the help of my contribution, participants in both groups started to slowly voice their own impressions. The narratives take on a very personal and emotional stance since the Matrix allows for

uncensored idea to emerge. Froggett et al. (2015: 28) observe that through the Visual Matrix “participants tend to reveal their relation to the artwork through memories, stories, and ideas.” which is very similar to what Rosenblatt (1978: 30-1) observes about the process of reading

The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs... and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination enter into the reader's relationship with the text.

The Visual Matrix is another means of externalising this very intimate interaction between artefact and individual within a group setting, resonating with the aim of this research to externalise the implicit dynamics between text and young adults in their journey of understanding of the written word.

In both groups, pictures used in the Visual Matrix echoed with personal narratives and fears that in turn, although at this stage unknown to the participants, could lead to a direct understanding of certain fictional characters' emotions found in Graham Greene's “The End of the Party”. The Visual Matrix's strength lies in its ability to enable “people to express experiences they find difficult to put into words.” (Froggett et al. 2014: 1). Participants from both groups spoke of personal events:

Tina: I try to focus on other images, but my attention always goes to it (Appendix D picture 11). It reminds of my phobia. I suffer from claustrophobia. And that reminds me of one experience when I was in the lift and the lift stopped and the lights went out because the lift was operated by a card and it could not read the card without electricity, so the lights went out. And I thought I was going to be stuck there forever.

Mickey: I really like the one with the eyes in the hands (Appendix D picture 13) because it reminds me of how when you try not to see something but at the end of the day you have to see it and it reminds me of OCD. You're trying to escape it. There are different stages of OCD and I have one, I am trying to escape from it, but I can't.

Miriam: *It looks very disorganized (Appendix D picture 16), not very neat and it is very frustrating. You cannot recognize what is what and what is not.*

As has already been observed in the second group, that of 2018, a lot of the personal narratives were related to their shared experiences of being part of a drama group together for a very long time. In fact, this second group started using their previous group experiences as a reference point to denote their sense of belonging. It seemed that within the group there was no need to share personal narratives or incidents because they knew each other very well while in the first group it became almost like an act of bonding to reveal some personal incident to show the others who they really were.

Somehow, the Visual Matrix helped these students overcome a certain self-consciousness in that although they were narrating personally related episodes, they became interconnected with the group's bigger and wider observations and thus lost their vulnerability. As Froggett et al. (2015: 4) observe: "Ideas may originate in the participants' life historical experiences, but they take on character and meaning in juxtaposition with other elements in the shared whole." Significantly a lot of the personal concerns and fears expressed, like the sense of claustrophobia and the reference to needing to face your fears at the end of the day are directly to be found in the short story that the participants were going to be reading as part of this research as indicated already. The above anecdotes would have been an excellent segue should an educator teaching "The End of the Party" wanted to discuss the main fictional character's - Francis, the younger brother - fear of dark, enclosed places and his need to take a stand at the end of the day.

A further observation to be made at this stage is that a lot of the references to the emotions made by participants of both groups were given an embodied dimension, for example, dreams and achieving what you want in life:

Anita: The one of the dreams (Appendix D picture 9) reminded me that it is a long way ... it is really a long way to get your dream because you are like in a well and trying to reach the dream

Mandy: I like the one of the roads (Appendix D picture 5), for me shows determination, the vision to go somewhere to and at the same time two roads, and even if you do not where you're going, there is a possibility to choose

The sense of entrapment and claustrophobia is also embodied, and was not only mentioned by members of the 2016/7 group as has already been indicated above by the personal incident of the lift (see Tina's story on page 120), but also by the 2018 group:

Nick: It reminded me of the Bhurka

Clint: It reminded me of the word "help" ... truth be told something from a mental hospital

Denise: Trapped in a bubble (Appendix D picture 14) ... like in a light bulb ... in reality not in a light bulb but in a jar ... very similar to overprotecting someone

The sense of entrapment conjures up images of a mental hospital and being "trapped in a light bulb", which is the Maltese expression (*izzommu f'bozza*) used to mean that someone is being very over-protected. The reference to the "Bhurka", the traditional covering from head to toe that Muslim women wear, is very revealing. Within this group's interpretation it became a symbol of oppression. This association has a wider socio-cultural connection with the strongly held anti-Muslim sentiments that our local community has and into which these young people have been socialised. Malta being officially a Roman Catholic country and with a very bloody history associated with the Great Siege of 1565 against the Turks, still feels very

strong patriotic sentiments that are expressed in these anti-Muslim views, especially where the subjugation of women is concerned. The image of the Bhurka gave rise to another closely linked theme that was mentioned by both groups, that of dystopia:

Lisa: I like the picture with the three clocks, it reminds me of dystopia, there is supposed to be progress in our mentality but in reality, it's not making things progress we are not moving forward, instead of we are always moving backwards, we are trying to, it's like showing the side that we are progressing but all around us is darkness.

The references to feeling trapped and trying to fight to move forward were echoed by one of the participants in the group of 2018 which makes it significant on two counts. Frogget et al. (2015: 1) explain: “[t]he visual matrix departs from the assumption that experience of an artwork involves a complex intertwining of personal taste, disposition and biography with a cultural world that is shared with others.” Certain themes, emotions, images seem to evolve out of some sort of common consciousness that emerges from a shared exposure to similar cultural, emotional, education and social values. All participants were Maltese youths born and bred on a small island, who have been exposed to a similar education system, accustomed to similar cultural values and had close socialisation patterns. There is a sense of belonging and identity in feeling that my stories, my emotions, my images, my thoughts resonate with those who I deem are similar to me and a group I feel a sense of belonging to. This resonates with what Peplow et al. (2016: 14) observe in their exploration of readers forming part of reading groups and how these “illustrate the role of literary reading in the performance of individual and group relationships, stances and identities.”

This sense of group identity and belonging is reflected in the narrative that Nick from the group of 2018 created out of all the pictures that were presented to the group. I want to clarify that a narrative did not intentionally exist when the visual

stimuli were chosen by me, but Nick spontaneously developed one. This is essentially how Nick interconnected all 17 images as he walked the whole group through the following:

Nick: We were a group of people who were free ... we had fun all the time and then they trapped us ... I started to see the hope in the darkness because they were giving me free stuff. Then I realised that I needed to get out but my friends were too scared, so I was alone but still studying to plan my escape ... I started planning my escape while dreaming and spending nights thinking how to escape ... I started working ... I was seeing ... I was finally seeing the end ... I was happy to see the end and that is freedom

This is very reminiscent of what Connelly and Clandinin (2006: 477) observe:

People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful.

The narrative made sense of all the 17 pictures and it is a story of hope and a fight for freedom which is found in many modern young adult dystopian/post-apocalyptic novels and movies. The central hero who is a common person suddenly discovers that s/he is trapped in a system and needs to fight for their freedom. This narrative also resonated with other members of the 2018 group:

Berta: Anita's story reminded me of a novel ... The Handmaid's Tale ...

Becky: Yes, it reminded me of that too ...

These comments were in keeping with observations made by Mandy:

Mandy: I like the picture, the orange picture with the three clocks, it reminds me of dystopia

These references seem to indicate that there are some narratives which become part of the scripts or schemas (Schank and Abelson 1977) and which Stockwell (2003: 255) so clearly defines as:

essentially the context that someone needs to make sense of individual experiences, events, parts of situations or elements of language [which] is stored in background

memory as an associative network of knowledge. In the course of experiencing an event or making sense of a situation, a schema is dynamically produced, which can be modelled as a sort of script based on similar situations encountered previously.

For example, the picture of the candle (Appendix D picture 1) reminded some of light and darkness and then Clint from the 2018 group interjected with “It reminded me of Harry Potter”. The same went for (Appendix D picture 13) the one with the eyes in the hands which reminded Clint and Mandy from the 2018 group of the book that they were studying as part of their MATSEC syllabus for Maltese, *Il-Ħarsa ta' Rużann*, (*Rużann's Glance*):

Nick: (amongst a lot of assenting voices) *Her blue eyes her looks*

Researcher: *What was the main gist of the novel?*

Clint: *A novel without any sense*

Mason (2014: 189) refers to these intertextual echoes as “narrative schemas” which “include any information we attach to that narrative” that “contains all the various information we have built up from reading and hearing about it.” Schemas tend to be very idiosyncratic since as Stockwell (2003: 269) points out: “schemas belong to readers, not texts.” This form of narrative resonance seems to be a transmedia phenomenon as not only literature is indicated by the young adult participants, but their conversation is replete with references to movies that they had watched which were triggered in their memory through the visual stimuli or a comment made by another member in the group. Most particularly there was Clint from the 2018 group whose interventions are mainly references to movies:

Clint: *It is reminding me of Stuart Little ... have you ever seen Stuart? ... there would be a falcon and it comes down for him ...” (laughs heartily)*

In fact, Clint tended to dismiss literature a lot and his references tended also to avoid any emotional interjections, but his imagery was mainly movie related:

Clint: The hands (Appendix D picture 11) ... they remind me of the Titanic ... Does not Rose put her hands like this?

Clint's interjections seem to set off other participants to think along the same lines:

Denise: It reminded me of the Wizard of Oz (Appendix D picture 5) ... the new one that just came out

Clint, Mandy, Denise: It reminded me of Quo Vadis

Nick: It reminds me of Sia

Researcher: The singer?

Nick: Because she looks like the girl who dances for her ... (Appendix D picture 2)

Miriam: But Sia's videos are like that trapping thing but at the end she is freed

The movie references were not limited to the 2018 group but also were apparent in the 2016/7 group:

Mark: ... it's like a Charlie Chaplin movie ... the expression on the face is very dramatic ... " (Appendix D picture 10)

Mandy: The one with the eyes in the hands (Appendix D picture 13) ... I don't know why but it reminds me of a film called Pan's Labyrinth. And there is a creature which has his eyes on the palm of his hands, and he places them on his face, and it is very weird, it is very disturbing.

It seems that it is easier for the participants to express themselves through these analogies with movies, which stands also as a testimony to the power of visual media over young people's minds. Looking at some of the responses it becomes evident that young people tend to use more visual imagery to express more complex emotions like fear, confusion, dramatic tension which otherwise might be too difficult for them to express. They use movie titles because they assume that a lot of people would have watched a specific movie and would then be able to share or at least recognise the type of emotion that they are trying to explain or express.

Complex emotions also surfaced during this Visual Matrix exercise when participants from both groups came across the party pictures (Appendix D pictures 4, 16, and 17). It was significant to note that instead of them having a positive reaction to these pictures, some of the participants expressed discomfort at the memories that these elicited. It seems that parties were not always a positive experience for them:

Mandy: Could it be ... that you have a party ... you automatically imply a group ... but she feels she does not fit in ...

Berta: I'm also struck by the other pictures of the sweets there, the social awkwardness that I used to feel as a child going to parties and not fitting in not being accepted and not knowing what is going to happen or whether I'm going to have fun, so that stood out for me because like they don't fit in with the rest.

Ultimately, the Visual Matrix exercise proved to be the ideal icebreaker needed for the whole process as the richness of the two groups' reactions provided ample material to not only offer an entry into the storyworld of the short story but also an initial safe bonding experience for the groups. The participants felt that they were not judged, and this enabled them to relax and participate further. Indeed, looking at the main themes that emerged from both groups and collected at the end of both the 2016-17 and 2018 session, one can see echoes resonating with the main themes of "The End of the Party": light/darkness, life/death, playtime, do not let your brain take over, negativity, entrapment, scared, isolation among others. In fact, Denise from the 2018 group managed to encapsulate the main thinking behind both groups in a short poem that she wrote when members of the groups were allowed to express themselves freely about the experience, they had in going through the Visual Matrix workshop:

*Encased in a glass jar
While people wait
For us to grow up and
Become adults
And
Forget Our Dreams*

*Hoping to Escape
We look at the Future
Where no time exists
And Everyone can simply dream.*

*We try to see a light
Even on the darkest day
We dream of glittering lights
Of sweets; of rich comforting food
But reality calls back
Encased in a glass jar
Lacking freedom; we cannot escape
From here
And see another reality.*

Considering that as teachers of literature we usually labour so hard to bring across themes, images and other details related to a text and find resistance from students to our efforts of teaching it to them, such results from fully immersive exercises like the Visual Matrix are encouraging. Having students freely express themselves and with some even writing their own poetry which echoes the text they are meant to explore certainly provides a case for an alternative approach to reach the students. The Visual Matrix has the benefit to reveal where a group of students are coming from as far as their intellectual understanding and level of insight, it enables the teacher to meet the students at their level of thinking and prepare them for more in-depth exploration of other textual features. Such detailed analysis of more profound embodied interactions with the text will be the focus of the next two chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 6 – Entering and Experiencing the Text

Icebreakers, Warm-ups and Trust Exercises

All practical theatre workshop sessions started off with half an hour to forty-five minutes dedicated to activities that were totally unrelated to the short story under focus in the rest of the session. This first part of the session was packed with icebreakers, warm-ups and trust exercises (Appendix E). I felt the need for the group to get to know each other and bond more to lessen the sense of self-consciousness and enhance more exploration and participation. This is another factor that is not taken into consideration in certain academic environments. These young adult students are thrown into the deep end as they find themselves in new groups within classrooms, sometimes even moving from a single-sex environment to a co-ed one at a stage in their life when being overtly self-conscious is one of the hurdles that they have to overcome. These youths are not only dealing with an academic transition with the expectations that their analytic skills and response to literature make a sudden leap in depth and refinement, but personal issues come into play too. Unfortunately, this personal inhibition and self-inflicted censorship is not always due to any lack in their academic acumen but is more a question of not wanting to give the wrong impression to their new class companions. Many students are afraid of class participation for various reasons including the possibility of incorrect answers, being afraid of not meeting the educator's expectations, or even of coming across as being too studious and the risk of this making them unpopular with the others.

The need for these preliminary connecting activities was more apparent with the first group of participants (2016-17) as they were not used to such trust-building exercises since they did not have any theatre/drama experience. At first some of

them felt awkward with the physical proximity and level of interdependence that these warm-ups demanded. The second group (2018) of participants were drama students and therefore were more used to working together and already trusted each other enough to be vulnerable in their interactions.

Following are some reactions of the participants which are taken from an online journal that each participant kept as they went through the research process. This online journal was only viewed by me and the specific participant as it could only be accessed by a randomly assigned password known only to us. In this journal group members could leave their reactions to anything that was related to the research process. A lot of the comments from the first group were related to these trust-building activities and I am reproducing some of these below to illustrate the importance that the participants felt that these exercises had, and also how they positively influenced their increased participation and contributions in the group:

Martha: Due to the trust exercises that [name of researcher] planned for us, I got to get to know the people I never talked to, better. I felt it broke the awkwardness there was between us and although all of us were still wary to trust one another, by the end of the session, I felt that we had already become a bit more comfortable with each other. Even when it came to discuss the story, I personally didn't feel as shy as I did the first time. I felt more comfortable with expressing my opinion and disagreeing where I felt it didn't apply to me.

Becky: I found the trust exercises the most difficult, it's not because I don't trust people, but the fact bothers me that I have to rely on someone I know very little about, to not let me fall on the floor. The session was not the first time that I have been in a similar situation where we had to do these exercises and since I found myself being very uncomfortable in those exercises, till this day I am still not comfortable ... I am somewhat proud of myself for being able to sort of do the trust exercises. The eye contact exercises were no problem as in order for me to communicate easily I tend to keep eye contact with the person I am talking to. Overall, I enjoyed myself in the session and I think I am willing to try new things or similar exercises, but I think it depends on either the mood I'm in or if I am comfortable enough.

- Berta: This session was just as entertaining as the last one. The theatre workshops were my favourite part of the session, and I started to realise how important it is to build trust with the people you work with. However, I find it hard to express my opinion of the story or express what affected me.*
- Lisa: During this session, which also was my first, we explored various team building activities that lead us to trust each other more. At first, I was a little apprehensive but as time went by, I grew more comfortable.*
- Mickey: Last Tuesday's session was very interesting and fun. I didn't expect to have the kind of theatre workshops that we had. It was an unusual yet an entertaining way to build trust. I wouldn't mind having them again during another session! These workshops are a very enjoyable way to learn literature and make new friends. The way that we are learning literature is very different from the way that we are used to - which is also a bonus. We can express ourselves freely, and we are not constrained with one or two explanations/analysis only.*

It is very easy to forget the personal dynamics in an educational setting where the focus is the imparting of knowledge at a very fast pace to cover the syllabus. All participants indicated that these exercises were beneficial to them since they did not know each other. In their online logs there were a lot of references to feeling of unease and discomfort in having to rely on each other for support. Educators tend to complain about lack of participation and response on the part of the students which they tend to attribute to a lack of students' interest in their studies. Some of the above responses truly indicate that within an educational institution the personal is sacrificed to the academic to the detriment of learning and facilitation of students' interactions in the lectures. It is important to take into account students' lack of self-confidence and their feeling of awkwardness especially in adolescence.

This awkwardness that might hinder these young people's interaction in class does not limit itself to appearing too clever or the fear of giving wrong answers, but it could also include body awareness. Young people are highly sensitive about their appearance and most of them would prefer to be "invisible" in a room than to draw

attention to their physical selves, especially if they do not feel comfortable inside their own skin (Mikkilä et al. 2003; Etkoff et al. 2006; Lovegrove and Ramsey 2005; Florin et al. 2011). It is this concern with the impression that they are leaving on others that could possibly obstruct their involvement in class, not only on an academic level but even on a personal and social one. All participants were positive about these ice-breaking activities and certain that these had enabled them to open up more in front of the others as they became less self-conscious of their body and more confident in speaking in front of the others. This in turn allowed them to be vulnerable to opposing views during their discussions:

Anita: I found myself in the beginning feeling really awkward when you told us to warm up ... I have this thing I don't know how to move my body in a way that does not embarrass me or make me feel self-conscious and I think everyone else in the workshop feels the same ... but all these sessions I can actually see changes in myself ... now I am no longer so self-conscious of my body like I was in the beginning ... these friends ... these people who started the workshop we were all awkward ... we did not speak to each other ... it was really awkward because we do not have the confidence ... we did not ... but now I am enjoying it ... I always wanted to act out the movement, the emotions the other characters are doing ... I wouldn't mind attending more of these sessions.

Martha: I think the beginning exercises in the session were really helpful because once I started getting used to the people, I could say my opinion more comfortably ... more comfortable in expressing my opinion ... I think it is important to get to know each other to speak.

The benefit of these ice-breaking exercises at the beginning of each session was that once the research was under way, the participants were in a better position to respond to the text and to interact directly with it during the rest of the process. They were helped to feel more comfortable with each other and to trust that they were safe and not judged while participating and contributing during the whole process and this led to more active and direct interjections from their part.

At the end of the first session of these practical workshops during which the group members had participated in the Visual Matrix as discussed in the previous chapter, the participants were presented with the text of the short story, Graham Greene's "The End of the Party". They were asked to read it on their own at home, in preparation for the following session. A copy of Plutchik's (1980) Emotion Wheel (Appendix B) was provided with the text, and this was intended to help the participants with the identification and labelling of these emotions. This emotion wheel was also to act as a standardisation tool for the participants when they were labelling the emotions elicited by the text while they read it on their own. Plutchik's Emotion Wheel contains the eight basic emotions of joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger and anticipation but it then expands them to include more variations of these primary emotions. Each participant was instructed to read the story and use different colour markers to highlight those words, lines, and paragraphs that resonated with them emotionally or stood out for them in any other way. They were to highlight any responses and any emotions according to the colours of the Emotion Wheel. In this way, participants all had the same range of emotion labels at their disposal.

Participants were asked to keep a record in the margins of the story of those elements and passages in the story which elicited strong reactions, be they negative or positive, and where they, as readers, felt they had become immersed in the text (ample blank space was provided on each side of the printed text for participants to write down notes). They were also asked to keep record of any fictional characters from the text that left any impact on them. They were informed that during the following meeting, they would be using these observations in a discussion with the researcher.

The short story, "The End of the Party", is mainly narrated through a third-person narrator focalisation but switches many times to the elder twin brother Peter's perspective, and fleetingly into that of his brother Francis' internal world, through free indirect speech. The term "focalisation" is a highly contested term within the realm of narratology, and which was introduced by Genette (1972, 1980) as a reformulation of point of view. Genette (1972, 1980) puts forward three types of focalisation: i) zero focalisation - an omniscient narrator who is all-knowing; ii) internal focalisation - a more restricted form of narration revealing only what a specific character knows; and iii) external focalisation - where the narrator exposes less than the character knows. In the case of "The End of the Party", readers are primarily allowed to delve into Peter's inner worlds through his emotions and thoughts and he becomes the main "internal focaliser" of the story in those instances. In a way the presence of a third-person narrator is deceptive as the slipping into Peter's viewpoint, and therefore a more limited point of view, is not always immediately apparent since the character's speaking or thinking are intertwined with those of the narrator. These changes become more tangible when viewed from a Text World Theory perspective as these deictic shifts or world-switches (Gavins 2007) can even be mapped out visually as will be demonstrated and explained in more detail at a later stage in this chapter.

What is of more interest in this research, other than the individual reading, is the possibility of Text World Theory to also cater for more universal readings of a text since it allows for the analysis of any discourse as it appears in its context. As Canning (2017: 172) observes about her own research with a group of readers in a Belfast prison:

During the shared reading situation of the ... reading group, text-worlds are jointly negotiated by multiple discourse-world participants, and those co-constructed text-worlds feed back into the discourse situation. This latter type of reading has not yet received attention in applications of Text World Theory.

With this in mind, I thought it would be beneficial that I would attempt a personal analysis through a Text World Theory approach of lines 1-47 of Graham Greene's "The End of the Party" (Appendix A – Full text and Appendix G – Full table with analyses). This initial attempt at analysing parts of the texts was intended to locate those features which I felt will probably create this sense of resonance with the participants in these workshops. As Stockwell (2002: 5) writes:

Cognitive Poetics have the potential to offer a unified explanation of both individual interpretations as well as interpretations that are shared by a group, community or culture.

My preliminary individual analysis was not intended to be shared with the participants in the project so as to avoid influencing their interpretations and connections with the texts. My textual analysis was used only to check whether there were indeed similarities between any words or stylistic devices in the text that I highlighted and those indicated by participants in their individual and/or group readings. I need to stress that only those words and stylistic devices indicated by the participants were later utilised as part of the workshops to further explore the group members' embodied understanding of these textual elements. My personal analyses are only meant to further elucidate how a cognitive poetics approach could cater for possible individual and universal readings of a text by seeing whether some elements in the text tend to create these individual/universal readings.

The environment formed in these practical workshops was very similar to a classroom situation with the difference that each group was made up of a smaller number of students and with the premise that I was not going to enforce my readings, interpretations and expectations of the text onto them. I was trying to allow

as much as possible space for what Giovanelli and Mason (2015: 42) refer to as

“authentic reading”:

reading that is born out of an individual's own process of unmediated interpretation. That is, for a student to engage in authentic reading, they must have space to interpret the text, to experience it for themselves. If interpretation is imposed on a student, the resultant reading is likely not to be authentic, but manufactured.

I was careful not to provide any “pre-figuring” (Giovanelli and Mason 2015: 46) information about the short story or about the author before we started working on the text that could influence the participants' reading or interpretation. I had made sure also that themes or associations with the text that had emerged during the Visual Matrix exercise were not divulged to the students before this preliminary individual reading of the short story to further assure that no influence was exerted on their private reading of the text at home.

In their reading at home, students were allowed to write anything that they noted in the margins of the text and to look at emotions, if any, that emerged as they were reading on their own. Although there were instances when I chose which parts of the story to work on during a particular activity and/or during a particular session, I allowed their observations to come through without enforcing a direction as to their comments about what they were reading. The only form of direction that I imposed was that although an aesthetic form of reading was allowed, when the participants deviated too far into their own personal jokes or unrelated remarks, I made sure to draw their focus back to the activity at hand or back to the text.

Group Reactions - Listening to a Part of the Story Being Read

In one of the first sessions, I introduced the idea of reading part of the short story to the group, “The End of the Party”, more specifically lines 1-47 (Appendix A) and instructed the participants to voice loudly anything that listening to these

lines triggered in them. The initial part of the text was chosen as a focal point for the first practical workshops for several reasons. Primarily this is the part of the narrative that the reader will encounter when reading the short story and it sets the mood and gives the context to the rest of the story. According to Rabinowitz (2002: 300) beginnings like endings of a narrative tend to have a “privileged position”.

Cuddy-Keane (2008: 96) notes that:

For readers, beginning a book means entering into an unknown, alien space, and most studies of narrative beginnings consequently focus on techniques for providing an introduction or initiating the reader (immediately or gradually) into both story and discourse in the text's first words.

Moreover, bearing in mind that most of these young people related to texts mainly in the classroom and because one of the foci of this research is to understand better how to enable more connections between these young adults and the reading of literature, I wanted to encourage their reactions to the text within the group members.

This was another safe entry into the world of the text because participants were encouraged by each other's reactions to externally verbalise those internal reactions which during an individual silent reading will be mere glimpses at a low threshold of awareness and might not be attended to by the reader. Moreover, because this reading was being done in a group, it would reveal how the dynamics within the group members would affect individual interpretation.

Text World Theory Mappings and Analysis of the First Two Paragraphs of “The End of the Party”

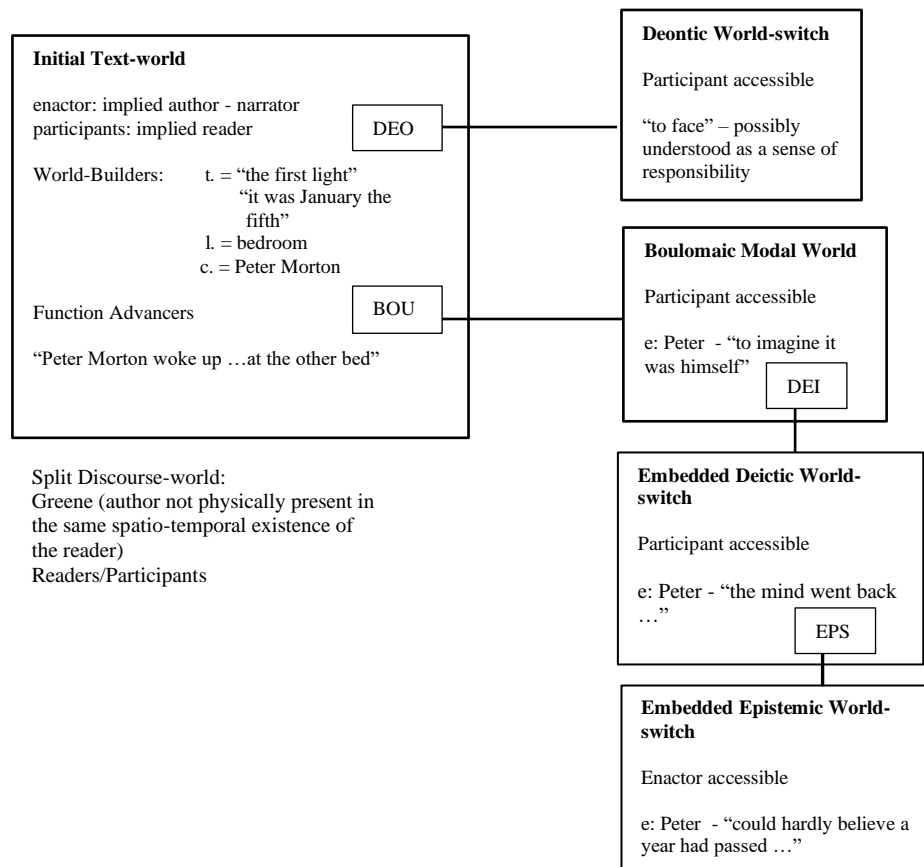
For the sake of this analysis, I will be only looking at parts from the first two paragraphs that attracted the participants' attention in their individual reading and again as they listened to my reading as a group. Furthermore, for the sake of clarity, I am here reproducing the first two paragraphs from “The End of the Party”:

(1) PETER MORTON woke with a start to face the first light. (2) Rain tapped against the glass. (3) It was January the fifth.

(4) He looked across a table on which a night-light had guttered into a pool of water, at the other bed. (5) Francis Morton was still asleep, and Peter lay down again with his eyes on his brother. (6) It amused him to imagine it was himself whom he watched, the same hair, the same eyes, the same lips and line of cheek. (7) But the thought palled, and the mind went back to the fact which lent the day importance. (8) It was the fifth of January. (9) He could hardly believe a year had passed since Mrs Henne-Falcon had given her last children's party.

A closer look at the above excerpts from the text using a Text World Theory approach yields information about the several world-switches that occur in such a short span of time and within the Peter's stream of thoughts as he shifts in looking from the present moment to other instances in the past of the story which are significant and resonate with the main episodes that occur later in the storyworld. It is also very interesting to note how focalisation drifts innocuously from narrator to Peter's thoughts without breaking the flow of the sentence and this change in perspective is not immediately evident. On the next page one can find a graphic representation of the mappings of the world-switches observed in the above excerpt in line with a Text World Theory analytic approach:

Figure 3: Text World Theory Mappings of the first Two Paragraphs of "The End of the Party"



Giovanelli (2016: 193) elaborates that these Text World Theory visual mappings of the text world-switches make it easier to explain such abstract permutations:

The diagrammatic aspect of the Text World Theory emphasises how meanings are primarily derived from spatial and physical imagery (Holme 2012) and is a prototypical *virtual embodied learning activity* (Giovanelli, 2014). Text World Theory's diagrams can support the teaching of the complexity that results from spatial, temporal and point of view world-switches in texts.

Such graphic representations of the mechanics of the language, how it works to create the storyworld, and possibly influence the readers' understanding of the text make it easier for an educator to raise students' awareness to how it is not only the reader who exerts his/her understanding onto the text, but it is the text itself that also exerts its influence back. Through a Text World Theory approach, students can appreciate literature not only for its aesthetic value, but they also understand better how it is created and in turn how meaning is affected by the "nuts and bolts" of the way sentences are constructed. Text World Theory does not allow literature to remain a cerebral abstract exercise but visually shows how on a microlinguistic level the storyworld and its fictional characters are linguistically constructed. These visual mappings enable an educator to guide better students in a classroom as to how certain texts invite the readers into the inner worlds of the fictional characters and their fictional interactions and environments.

In the case of "The End of the Party", for example, the story initiates with a third-person focalisation introducing one of the twin boys, Peter Morton. The fictional character is given prominence as his first and last name are the very first words that the reader comes across. The first and last name act as "attractors" (Stockwell 2002) (Appendix F) and a certain formality is established by mentioning both, and readers are primed to look at this first fictional character with interest. At a later point in the narrative, his brother, Francis Morton, is also introduced in the

same manner which becomes more significant as the story develops since the boys are twins and their similarity is further emphasised not only through their looks but also through the shared common last name “Morton”. The deceptive difference between the twins' characters is emphasised through the variance of their first names Francis and Peter.

It can be seen that there is already a world-switch in narrative time with the use of the past tense in the verb “woke” which shifts from the text-world enactor's completed action of sleeping and draws us into his present main text-world where the prepositional phrase “with a start” (functioning as an adverb) establishes an intriguing mood as it implies that something unexpected happened to wake up Peter. It is a collocation – “with a start” – a much used expression indicating that his sleep has been disturbed. The infinitive verb “to face” for some readers can create a deontic modal world, where a sense of obligation or duty is expressed that introduces us to the first glimmers of Peter's sense of responsibility in life. His first thought on waking up is a sense of expectation that there will be challenges and that he is prepared to deal with them head on. “First light” is a temporal world builder giving a clear indication that it is early morning. Through a series of world builders (scene setters – see glossary in Appendix F) and function advancers (elements that propel the story forward – see glossary in Appendix F), the story is told through the eyes of the third-person omniscient narrator till line 6 in the second paragraph where the focalisation changes into an epistemic inner world. This is a mental inner world created by Peter's desire that he is very similar to his brother Francis emphasised through the repeated use of adjective “same” which acts also as an instance of foregrounding. The reference to that day's date – “January the fifth” initially seems to be world-building information but with the later repetitions of the same phrase it

triggers a modal shift (temporal in this instance) as it pushes Peter into remembering an occurrence in the previous year.

As is evident from just these two paragraphs, a Text World Theory approach fully concentrates “on *how* a text expresses what it says, to reach a fuller understanding of *what* it says and *why*” (McRae & Vethamani 1999: iv). It is very interesting and revealing to explore what words, images and other elements enabled the participants to engage and make sense of this new text-world, and how much in fact they grasp in their readings compared to a more thorough expert reading - mine in this case. My reading was also another way how to explore further the possibility of literary elements within a text that could lead to more universal interpretations. This connected with the possibility that Text World Theory purports to offer to that of catering both for individual and universal readings of a text. I will go into more detail about this point in the next section of this chapter.

One of the aims of this research is to use the participants' voices and an embodied cognitive view combined with a Text World Theory approach, to help delineate a more dialogic approach that considers both the students' more lay and mimetic approach to a text and the teacher's knowledgeable stance. Mason and Giovanelli (2017: 19) raise “some important questions about the difference between studying literature and learning about texts.” Stockwell (2013: 264) makes a distinction between “readers” and “analysts” when he explains that:

Sometimes I am reading and sometimes I am analysing reading; it is physically, conceptually and in principle impossible to do both at the same time ... The world as a mental representation that I need to build when I am reading is a relatively direct one, in contrast with the framing world which I need to build in order to watch myself as a reader one world-level down from where I am as an analyst. Reader and analyst exist at different ontological levels, one containing the other, and one watching the other. The relationship is one-way: the analyst is aware of the reader, but the reader is not aware of the analyst above – as soon as I the reader think of the analytical level, I stop being a reader and become me the analyst.

Analysing involves closer critical knowledge as to how the language is being utilised to create meaning while learning about texts involves more a collection of factual information garnered about themes, characters and plot with the intention of revealing how much one is knowledgeable about the text rather than how it creates its effects on the reader.

Tabulated Analysis of Group Reactions to a Part of the Text

In order to create a clearer picture of some of the different responses to the text that emerged during this research, I tabulated these reactions into a table that puts them alongside each other for easier access and analysis. A further look at Table 1 (pages 148-50), which contains my preliminary Text World Theory analysis of the short story in the first column, clearly reveals the similarities and differences between my interpretation of the text and that of the students. I am only reproducing part of this table on the next two pages for the purpose of analysis but the whole table can be found in Appendix G.

Obviously with my background knowledge about the historical, biographical and literary critical matters connected to the short story, it is not surprising that my analysis of the text is richer than that of the participants as they did not have access to this information. In educational settings, “[t]here is a danger that this kind of knowledge can in itself be used to downplay or override students’ initial responses ... so that these are marginalised in favour of stronger teacher reading” (Giovanelli and Mason 2015: 46). In order to avoid this pitfall, I carried out this textual analysis on my own and before starting the process with the students. My personal textual analysis was never revealed to the participants to avoid any influence from my part on their interpretations of the short story. Columns 2 and 4 contain the comments

that the participants from the two different groups wrote in the margins of the story when they read the short story alone at home.

Table 1: Partial table of analyses of “The End of the Party” – Attention attractors for researcher and participants. (Full table of analyses is found in Appendix G)				
“The End of the Party” Text – Text World Theory Approach – Analysis done by researcher previous to the practical session but not shared with participants.	<u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during their individual reading of the story. (First Group - 2016/7)</u>	<u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during a group reading of sections of the story (First Group - 2016/7)</u>	<u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during their individual reading of the story. (Second Group - 2018)</u>	<u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during a group reading of sections of the story (Second Group - 2018)</u>
line 1 - The use of the surname Morton is an attractor (Stockwell 2002), i.e. it draws attention to itself in that it is unusual to introduce a character including the surname in such an initial position. A certain formality is established. There is an emphasis on the full identity of the fictional character.				

<p>The adjective “first” draws attention to the fact that it is very early morning – World Builder.</p>				
<p>“woke” – verb in simple past-tense establishes a completed action indicating its opposite that the character was sleeping</p>				
<p>“with a start”- the prepositional phrase functioning as an adverb – establishes the mood that something woke Peter all of a sudden. It is a collocation – a much used expression indicating that someone is stressed or else their sleep has been disturbed. Accessing readers’ scripts something disturbing the character’s sleep – a sense of unease.</p>	<p>Anita felt a sense of anticipation at the word “start”</p>	<p>Berta felt a sense of dread as something is bothering the character.</p>	<p>Clint – could it be a sense of shock?</p>	<p>Nick felt something was not right – “start”</p> <p>Clint – asks could this be waking with a sense of shock?</p> <p>Denise – a sense of fear?</p>
<p>“to face” – a verb in the infinitive following the verb “woke” – it seems that even at this early hour Peter is ready to challenge what lies ahead. Woke up almost predetermined from before to accept anything that comes his way. Continues to add to the general feeling of unease but also indicates a sense of determination.</p>				

<p>Line 2 - A shift in attention from the inside to the outside. Reader's attention is taken to the outside. Weather is grey and overcast. Gives a sense of protection from the cold, grey and wet weather outside to the inside. World-Builder – setting. Background. Looking at the overall gloomy outcome of the story, this could be considered as pathetic fallacy. The dark weather matches the darkness inside the characters and story.</p>	<p>Becky felt a sense of curiosity at rain tapping – something is going to happen – pathetic fallacy(?)</p>	<p>Curiosity (Lisa).</p>		
<p>Line 3 - Another deictic shift – this time from spatial to temporal - A strange reference to the date – factual – something significant is going to happen on that date. It has been long awaited.</p>	<p>Anita and Berta - A sense of foreboding – why date – definite – something happened - suspense</p>	<p>Berta bothered by the reference to the date so early on. Anita felt dread as the mention of the date gives her an impression that something important happened and connected with the previous inference from Line 1 of “woke up with a start” gives the impression that something is worrying the character related to this date.</p>	<p>Nick – refers to the definite tone – “it was” – as if it should be significant. Clint – also curious about this date Mandy – worrying sensation.</p>	<p>Clint is curious about the mentioning of the date Mandy also notices the reference to the date but unclear as to what it supposed to mean. Miriam refers to date too but not sure what to feel.</p>
<p>Line 4 - Readers follow Peter's visual perception as he looks across the table – attention is shifted from Peter onto the space.</p>				

Columns, 3 and 5, contain the comments that the participants made during the first exercise that I carried out with the group as part of the practical workshops. During this activity I read the first two paragraphs of the short story aloud and the participants reacted by voicing out loud any reaction that they had while listening to

the narrative. This was an introductory exercise intended primarily to get some real time reactions from the participants to the reading of the short story. Moreover, it was intended to ease the participants into voicing their thoughts and reactions within a group dynamic. Lastly this exercise resembled the lecture room environment to which these students were accustomed. These students would have been used to the idea of sitting down and listening to someone reading an excerpt from the book that they would have to study for their exam and then they would be expected to react to what they would have heard to initiate a discussion usually orchestrated by the teacher/expert.

The participants' responses given in Table 1 (pages 148-50), indicate the different types of connections that group members made with the text. The primary interactions involved the participants' reactions on the level of emotional engagement with the fictional characters and narrative, which included involvement with the setting and other story building features that enabled the participants to make sense of the story and that pushed the narrative forward as they read. As has been pointed out before, and as expected, there were a lot of personal mimetic projections into the world of the text as the readers mirrored their personal life experiences from the discourse-world onto the storyworld.

At this instance of the story, the element of suspense and the intentional gaps left by the fictional characters and narrator in the narrative led the participants to be interested in reading further. Moreover, one must note that certain stylistic features like the use of repetition, unusual images and unexpected revelations by fictional characters attracted the young adult readers' attention which led them to delve deeper into the world of the narrative. As predicted in my analysis such stylistic features resonated with the participants because they are intended as attractors to the

reader's attention. I will now take a closer look at the participants' responses in the light of these observations.

As I had indicated through my individual text analysis, from a Text World Theory perspective, line 1 immediately interested the participants, more specifically the words "woke up with a start" with some of the participants expressing what Kuiken, Miall and Sikora (2004) refer to as "aesthetic" and "narrative" feelings. This explains that certain stylistic features do indeed implicate readers on an affective level while they are reading on their own as the following observations indicate:

Anita: I do not know why but those words 'with a start' made me immediately feel a sense of dread, as if there was a sense of worry ...

Clint: Could it be "he woke" because something shocked him?

This was then further corroborated by other participants during the group reading.

Obviously, we need to take into consideration that participants would have influenced each other in this communal reading since while listening to someone else's reaction one can easily be swayed into the same line of thinking, especially if the participants had not thought about it or the word does not have the same connotations for them. This in itself is still an interesting phenomenon to observe and can lead to an insightful discussion when it occurs in a classroom. Rather than imposing one expert view, it is beneficial to allow such dialogue to give students space not only to voice their opinion but to feel empowered that their contributions might possibly form part of a myriad of interpretations that could be equally valid as much as those of the educator.

If one compares columns 2 to 3 and 4 to 5 in sample Table 1 (pages 148-50), it is obvious that more responses were given by the participants while they were listening as group to me reading the story when matched to their written feedback

while reading the story on their own. The reasons for this could possibly be either because they were influenced by the others' remarks or because while listening to me, they were revisiting the text. This is what Mason and Giovanelli (2017: 320) refer to as an "accreted [developed] narrative schema" – a storing of the "individual's version" of a text in a "bank of knowledge" which makes their insights about a text richer. Mason and Giovanelli (2017: 320) go on to make a comparison between a first-time reading of a text by readers and a more informed interpretation when they write that:

a first-time reader's schema [which] is skeletal or non-existent. In this way, students reading a set text accrete their narrative schemas as they go from both their direct experience of reading but also the 'discourse *about* the text' (Mason 2016, 167, Emphasis in original) that they are exposed to via teacher and peer discussion.

Mason and Giovanelli's (2017) observations are reflected in the following interjections by the other participants during my reading in the group which were volunteered when they presented their comments while reading the text on their own:

Nick: *I did feel from the very first sentence that something was not right*

Mandy: *Thinking about it, is it a sense of fear that he feels?*

Mickey: *That "woke up with a start" makes me a bit anxious*

Berta: *A sudden jolt*

Certain references also triggered personal schemas from the discourse-world of the participants, and it became very clear that they were trying to make sense of what they were reading through their own personal experiences in the discourse-world. A sense of identification with the sense of responsibility that Peter felt towards his brother surfaced repeatedly in the comments that the members of both groups made during the discussion that followed the reading. This sense of

responsibility also had been mentioned by some of the participants in the Visual Matrix exercise and it did not come as a surprise that it would be mentioned again during these more practical activities focussing in more depth on the text. Personal involvement with a narrative occurs for various reasons as Louwerse and Kuiken (2014: 170) explain, for example:

Personal involvement may be directly influenced by the setting, characters, and events that constitute the narrative world. Such involvement may be modulated by narrative structure (e.g., the narrative turns that provide suspense; Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1981) or specific narrative elements (e.g., the character morality that enables empathy; Zillman, 1994).

As discussions in the groups progressed it became evident that the participants were primarily connecting with the fictional characters through emotional engagement, as several of their comments indicate that they immediately connected with Peter's sense of responsibility towards his brother:

Anita: When I have a friend or family, it's like there is this urge to look out for them ... I was reminded of that when I read of one looking at the other ... observing him

Mark: Responsibility kept coming up over and over again

Martha: But there is still this sense of responsibility ... although I am not a twin ... I am the elder of two siblings and I still feel that responsibility

Tina: The same thing resonated with me. The sense of responsibility ... Yes with my friends. Because I don't have any siblings as well. And sometimes I feel if there is something going on, like I feel better urge to be responsible or to help them out in any way I can.

Bearing in mind that the story is mainly focalised from Peter's perspective it is no wonder that the participants were feeling burdened by this obsessive sense of responsibility and duty on his part towards his brother. The participants were allowed to freely discuss any personal reactions to the text without any agenda on my part except that participants' comments were always to be focussed on the text.

Feedback Loop/Bi-Directionality in Reading Texts

The discussion about the sense of responsibility took on a more personal twist for some of the group members. At one instance, for example, one of the participants reflected upon Peter's role as a boy and a male in society who has taken on a very caring part in this relationship with his younger brother. The conversation that ensued about social macho male stereotyping deserves to be reproduced here at length because it does shed light on the implications that a dialogic approach has on the teaching of literature. When the expert/teacher does not prefigure the direction of the learning and what is to be learnt, it is very revealing how these young adults are able to elicit certain information from the text that not even the researcher, in this case, had thought of while reading the text. A closer look at the transcribed conversation below shows how, subsequent to her comment, other female participants from the same group joined in her conversation and supported her point of view. Following is the conversation in full that emerged after the communal reading we had in the group:

- Martha:* *Not feeling manly, but I thought. Does it make a difference that they are boys and not girls? Because boys tend to think differently, usually when boys think of ...*
- Researcher:* *Can you be more specific? What do you exactly mean by that?*
- Anita:* *Because it's like Peter has these maternal instincts*
- Tina:* *Men have a sense of responsibility that this is something I may be wrong about that, but there is a sense that, the man has to bring the food to the table, the one to be responsible if anything happens to them and the family, so there is a certain instinct ...*
- Researcher:* *Do you still feel that this is present in modern society? The idea of man bringing the food ... we have a majority of girls here. Do you all still feel that? That there is an instinctive reaction to the fact that women are more maternal and protective while the men are more responsible to bring the food home?*

Anita: Yes, personally, I would love to grow up to be a housewife, but in today's society it is almost impossible to rely on one person, but you have to rely on two persons as well. But it is a woman's instinct, some don't have it, but some, even men can do it obviously, and even women can be responsible and be a tough parent, but it is like women are more caring they can relate more to problems, they can connect more with their children, for example. I still think it is the same in the present.

Researcher: It is interesting to take a look at the female characters in this story then. Very interesting what you said but I am not going to comment about it. I want you to read the whole story and you as women, more particularly, to look at the female characters and explore further your interactions and reactions to them

Mickey: I mean look at Joyce, she seems to be really independent like she walks alone while Francis still needs his Nurse to accompany him.

Although the battle between the two genders – male/female – is very evident in the story as Francis feels bullied by two elder girls, Joyce and Mabel Warren, who emasculate him with their sneering sarcasm, the point that this female participant was making gave it a different slant. She went beyond the text back into her real life, accessed her socio-cultural beliefs and applied them to the text to make sense of what she was reading. This cyclical process (text – reader – discourse-world – reader – text) in turn gave her a new perspective on these issues in her real life, enriching not only her understanding of the storyworld but also of the discourse-world. This is exactly what Stockwell (2009a) talks about when he refers to a “feedback loop” between reader and text and which Canning (2017: 174) elaborates on when she writes:

that through the concept of ‘projection’, resulting text- worlds can be incremented back into the discourse-world, thus functioning bi-directionally, potentially reifying discourse-world knowledge.

This cyclical reflective process in an individual reading would have occurred in a silent manner and this slipping in and out from the storyworld would have gone unnoticed to any external observer. In the case of this research this process became

externalised and verbalised by the participant. These were the readerly processes and awareness that this research was aiming to elicit and explore.

Participants were becoming more conscious of the space that exists between themselves and the discourse-world, the fictional characters and the storyworld, and how their knowledge was being transformed through making sense of what they were reading. Allowing this female participant's voice to come through during the session, did not only add another dimension to the significance of the twin sibling relationship in the storyworld but also clearly indicated that such student-centred discussions about literature reveal the level of in-depth engagement with a text that students are capable of and how they can prove to be catalysts for each other's thinking.

Using the students' own interest to fuel their research into comparing the views on society's expectations of women could have derived a wealth of information. The difference from other teacher/expert-led education situations would have been that the ideas originated from the students and not the teacher. In this case, just to illustrate how this research can feed into and be useful for an educational environment, a teacher with a New Historicism literary theory approach could easily have taken over this conversation and led the class into discovering more the historical context in which it was written and how women are being depicted in this short story. This time it would have been instigated by the students' interest and insights into the world of the text using their own understanding of their discourse-world.

Another dimension of the siblings' relationship that came to the fore was also the fact that the main fictional characters were twins. A number of participants focussed on this specific connection and went back to their personal beliefs in the

discourse-world and turned to the widespread folk myth that there is a telepathic connection between twin siblings.

Martha: The fact that I am too, that I have such a responsibility especially that I am a twin myself ... sort of that twin connection ... although mine is not so intense because we are not identical ... but although there is not this bond ... I still feel responsible.

Mickey: The fact that they are twins ... in normal siblings, like me and my sister, we do think like that ... but this was different stronger ... a stronger strange bond.

Nick: Their twin connection is creepy

Mark: Can you imagine like having someone in your head?

Nick: Yes, exactly my thoughts

This supernatural connection is one of these elements that is foregrounded in the text which plays upon the expected reaction of the reader and enforcing one to think that something extraordinary is going on or is going to happen in the narrative. The repeated references to Peter knowing what Francis was dreaming, the surreal imagery of a huge bird swooping, grey skies outside and the rain falling, all have a hint of the gothic elements of supernatural ghostly stories. The build-up of such fictional characteristics gives the reader the illusion that there is something beyond the normal in the connection of these twins. This element of suspense hooked the participants in wanting to know more what will happen in the rest of the story. This element of suspense, Kukkonen (2012) suggests:

might be thought of as the result of readers' difficulties in assessing how likely a given event is to occur, and that heightened suspense in turn results in heightened immersion because the reader engages in a search for clues to try to establish probabilities

This succinctly explains how the participants became immersed further in the narrative as they came across certain stylistic and plot features like the repeated references to a specific date, "January the fifth", and the hinting of something disturbing happening to Francis on that date the previous year during a children's

party, with the ominous suggestion it could be repeated on that same evening in the storyworld. Adding to this, there was also the insistence on the similarity and mental connection that existed between Peter and Francis with Peter's repeated use of the adjective "same", the recurring frightening imagery of the swooping big bird, and Francis' insistence that he "will die" which were all repeatedly mentioned by the participants at various stages during the discussions. All these elements became foregrounded in the text as they pushed the narrative forward, and each are worth further analysis as to how they aided a sense of immersion into the storyworld for the participants.

The Use of Stylistic Features as Foregrounding Devices

A foregrounding device in this text is the metaphor of the big bird swooping which is a very powerful visual image that demands further unpacking from a cognitive studies perspective. This is also where a cognitive poetics interpretation proves to be beneficial as it draws attention to how the language is being utilised to create such vivid imagery and in turn how the reader projects a personal interpretation to try and generate a meaning to the encountered text. The flexibility of cognitive poetics offers a space to take into consideration how the presence of such literary devices, such as metaphors, tend to add to the literary effect of a text and draw the attention of readers who tend to take longer to decipher the meanings behind symbolism, imagery, and repetition among other stylistic features. From a cognitive linguistics perspective for the readers to make sense of the implications of this bird image, they need to make use of "frames" (Semino et al. 2018: 627) which tend:

to be defined as a portion of background knowledge that (i) concerns a particular aspect of the world, (ii) generates expectations and inferences in communication and action ...

This concept of “frame” is further utilised by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to explain their conceptual theory of how metaphors work and are understood. Metaphors tend to concretise the abstract by mapping two different domains which are usually the i) the “source” domain, the concrete aspect, in this case the image of the swooping bird, onto ii) the “target” domain, the abstract aspect, the sense of fear and entrapment. For participants to understand this symbol of the bird within the context, they have to refer to their real (discourse) world knowledge of a big bird and the potential harm that it could inflict through the hunter/prey “frame” in that the bird is seen as huge bird of prey, implying that the bird could possibly be a metaphor for the fear making both Francis and Peter its victims. Without this prior real-world knowledge being applied to the storyworld none of the participants would have picked on the sense of dread and terror being implied. The bird is a terrifying image and a symbol that is repeatedly referred to in the narrative:

To Peter Morton the whole room seemed to darken, and he had the impression of a great bird swooping. (14)

‘You dreamed of a big bird.’ (24)

It was his third failure, and again he saw a great bird darken his brother’s face with its wings (132)

This symbol works only within the context of the story as the connection between what the bird represents becomes evident within the understanding of the fear and the sense of immediate claustrophobic effect of entrapment brought on by the references to the nightmare that Peter is imagining Francis having. This capturing of Peter’s consciousness through a more tangible and visual vehicle is very much in line with what Cohn (1978) coins as “psycho-analogy” and Caracciolo (2013b: 61) labels as “phenomenological metaphors” which he states, “create the illusion that

readers are given an almost unmediated access to the conscious experience of the focalizing character, thus experiencing the storyworld *through* his or her consciousness.” Moreover, the constant allusion to darkness with its appalling implications continues to increase the sense of dread. A more frightening image is conjured with the implication of the bird’s wings being also reminiscent of an angel of death hovering over Francis as a foreshadowing of his fatal death in the dark at the end of the narrative.

All participants picked upon the repeated use of this bird image and there were different reactions that indicated that some of them simply were puzzled by the reference to the big bird and did not directly connect with a particular meaning while others understood on a deeper level and it filled them with a sense of dread.

Caracciolo (2013a: 94) confirms this through his writing: “All in all, it is the close connection between perception, enactment (simulative) imagination, and language understanding that accounts for the experientiality of reading.” Many of the participants spoke of the overwhelming dread and fear that the bird instilled in them:

- Anita:* *The bird, the darkness, the feeling of fear, the dream, all surreal*
- Mickey:* *There is a sense of helplessness ... the bird can attack any time*
- Berta:* *Nature in this story seems against the characters ... dark clouds outside ... the rain ... the tapping on the window ... all come together to form a feeling of fear ... like a horror movie*
- Nick:* *Why big bird?*
- Clint:* *That bird must mean something ... the use of repetition*
- Denise:* *Bird mentioned again*
- Miriam:* *You know ... Mrs Henne-Falcon ... that's two birds ... and the bird image repeated ... hmmm*
- Mandy:* *Yes, Yes ... like an eagle ... but then the hen is a Mother bird*

Miriam: True ... I did not think of that ... that's terrifying ... her name ... I did not notice that

It is very significant that Miriam and Mandy picked on the metaphoric significance of “hen” (maternal instincts) and “falcon” (bird of prey) to further illustrate the image of the swooping bird. For them, once again using their “frames” from their discourse-world knowledge about these birds, they came to the conclusion that the woman’s last name, Mrs Henne-Falcon, indicated her contradictory nature which is another integral theme (leitmotif) in this text - that of the females supposedly being maternal but instead are cold, bullying and unapproachable. Both participants’ reflection signifies that they were interacting already with the text at a deeper level. The microlinguistic approach of cognitive poetics in a literature class allows both students and teacher to concretely grasp how language is being utilised to create a deeper sense of immersion and interaction during the reading experience.

These participants’ interjections give a clear picture that even if not all the participants grasp the meaning of what the bird stands for (later on it transpires that the bird is a foreshadowing of death at Mrs Henne-Falcon’s house) they still had their attention drawn to it because of the use of repetition which foregrounded the image of the bird in their memory. Stockwell (2002: 14) also refers to the use of repetition as another foregrounding device when he observes that “[f]oregrounding within the text can be achieved by a variety of devices such as repetition ... the use of creative metaphor, and so on”.

Sanford and Emmott (2012) and Stockwell (2002, 2009a) define foregrounding as those elements in a text that draw attention to themselves while the rest of the textual elements recede into the background. Leech and Short (2007: 106) give a list of these stylistic devices that authors might use to attract attention through their writing and also include “Punctuation devices: for instance, unusual

punctuation or a lack of the usual punctuation.”. In fact, Leech and Short (2007: 173) go into great detail as to how:

we may assume that written prose has an implicit, ‘unspoken’ intonation, of which punctuation marks are written indicators’. This certainly seems to be what many writers on prose style have in mind when they discuss the ‘rhythm of prose’.

Keeping in mind that the above stylisticians have given prominence to certain textual and stylistic features such as the use of repetition and punctuation to delineate their importance for the reader and because as noted above, participants focussed a lot on the use of both in this specific story, I chose to explore further the use of these stylistic devices through a more embodied approach. I opted to use physical exercises to further explore whether and how participants will react to these stylistic devices and what further insights will be elicited once they physically start interacting with the text.

“Walking Through the Punctuation” Exercise - Method

Working with a part of the short story (Appendix A - lines 1-17), students were instructed to read the text out loud to themselves, and to change direction at the punctuation marks. In the first round, they had to change direction of their movement only at the full stops while in the second round they had to change direction of their movement at every punctuation mark. The third time round they were to read the sentences and imagine themselves turning in their imagination. This was an attempt to find a way how to actually physicalise the punctuation to heighten their awareness to its use and effect in a text, for example, creating world-switches from the main world of the text or varying the reading rhythm that can infuse the meaning of the sentences to be read with tension or calmness.

Punctuation is usually something that is overlooked in silent reading, but it is very important as it could even indicate the tone in which the text might be read. Text World Theory, as has already been indicated, tends to favour an embodied mode of learning as it focusses on a holistic sense of experientiality in the reading experience. This “physicalising” of the punctuation breaks in the text was intended to heighten the participants’ awareness of how the structuring of a text can influence the way readers understand and engage with it. This is very much in-keeping with the literary awareness that Zyngier (1999: 31) proposes when she suggests:

in order to develop autonomous readers, a programme in Literary Awareness should precede literary studies. By Literary Awareness I mean the process by means of which students perceive the effects produced through the verbal patterning and the creative manipulation of language, before they can build substantiated readings of a text.

The use of punctuation was also tied to Peter’s focalisation and enabled a representation of his fragmented train of thoughts. His point of view in the story gives a limited perspective on the unfolding of the narrative and many possibilities are hinted at but are never explicitly verified or even stated. The fact that a lot of information is given through free indirect speech from his perspective creates a lot of gaps in the text.

Readers do not know how far to trust or rely on Peter’s perspective as this is limited. From a Text World Theory perspective these “gaps” in the narrative are only “enactor-accessible” (Gavins 2007: 77) (Glossary - Appendix F) which means that the information is seen only from one specific fictional character’s perspective: Peter’s point of view. This point of view cannot be verified by the participants/readers either from the discourse-world or the storyworld as it is that of only one text-world enactor who might ultimately be unreliable. This point has other implications for the interpretation of the narrative since several researchers (Black,

Truner, & Bower 1979; Gernsbacher, Goldsmith, & Robertson 1992; Harris & Martin 1999; Rall & Harris 2000) have all revealed through their studies that readers tend to take on the stance of the fictional character through whose main point of view the story is being told and tend to be immersed more into the story from that fictional character's perspective.

“Walking through the Punctuation” - Post-Exercise Discussion and Outcome Analysis

During the post-exercise discussion, after using this walking-through-punctuation exercise with the first group (2016-17), many of the group members felt that this exercise was not beneficial for them to further understand the text at hand. They mentioned that they were distracted by the constant movement and rather than focussing on the text they had concentrated more on the physical changes in direction. They complained that the exercise left them dizzy with all the turns that the text had. In fact, some students even mentioned that this exercise fragmented the text too much:

Researcher: So, the fact that you are focussing on changing in the punctuation did it make it look at the text in a new way?

Anita: You see it in fragments

Researcher: You see it in fragments. How does that work?

Anita: So, the sentence when it should make sense. Let's say the verb it is indicating one single sentence. But when you are reading it in fragments. Because the punctuation basically makes it and fragments it, you are basically using any punctuation as a full-stop and so in a way everything changes.

I felt disappointed because I thought that this exercise would benefit the students since it would make them aware of the changes in the direction of thought and attention of the fictional characters. Moreover, Text World Theory holds that punctuation marks are also extremely important as textual demarcations of sub-

worlds, which in this thesis are referred to as world-switches (Gavins 2005) or deictic shifts within the text. The notion of sub-worlds or world-switches is described in detail in the method section of this thesis but Stockwell (2002: 140) summarises:

Deictic sub-worlds include flashbacks, as well as flashforwards, and any other departure from the current situation, such as the world within direct speech, or any view onto another scene (a character watching a play, talking on the telephone, watching television, and so on). Shifts into deictic sub-worlds involve a variation in one or more world-building elements, most usually shifts in time and location.

I wanted the participants to become aware of these shifts in the thoughts of the main fictional characters and how they were being made to think like Peter because the main perspective in the narrative was his.

Then suddenly, another participant made a further comment:

Berta: It's different from sitting down and reading, I couldn't focus on the words. Because my mind was more focussing on the punctuation, you did not stop at the punctuation, but you are looking for the next punctuation mark. When you are reading and not thinking you don't even pay attention to the punctuation.

Part of the advantage of choosing this embodied exploratory approach was its iterative process in that it allowed the space to pause, reflect and adjust, adapt or even change course completely. This comment made me aware that obviously this exercise was foregrounding the punctuation for the participants and this was unsettling for them as it was making them look at the text structure from a fresh perspective. The fact that they embodied the punctuation made them lose concentration on the words because their attention become heightened to its fragmentary nature. The embodied approach further heightened and concretised through the dizzying physical sensations how punctuation can affect meaning in the reading experience. This exercise made physical an aspect of the reading experience that usually would remain on a subconscious level. In a way, the exercise was

unsettling the participants because it was defamiliarizing an aspect of the text that readers usually take for granted and might even overlook in their silent reading. It might not have made sense for them on the first reading and this somehow detracted my attention from the effectiveness of this exercise in already bringing to the fore the fragmentary nature of the paragraphs being utilised. I need to emphasise that with the first group I was testing out some of these exercises as I had never previously tried them with any other students. I too was learning the nuances of these practical exercises and their efficacy.

The participants repeated the exercise, and the students were requested to be aware once again of every punctuation mark and were to turn slightly at commas and to stop and change walking direction completely on a full stop. This time I stressed that they should not be hyper vigilant for the punctuation marks but to read the text at a normal pace and with a slightly higher voice and to change direction according to the instructions but to allow themselves the space to read at their own pace and to simply naturally just change direction once they arrive to the punctuation mark.

With this second round, suddenly, there was a shift in the participants' perspectives. Something changed, and it could possibly be the fact that they were re-reading the text but now with a different agenda. The participants' responses further emphasised a deeper understanding of the text very much in keeping with what Kuijpers and Hakemulder (2017: 620) observe when they write that:

Some literary scholars even argue that a distinctive aspect of literariness seems to be that it typically emerges over time rather than on first reading and that it is the result of an interaction between reader and text (Dixon, Bortolussi, Twilley, & Leung, 1993; Hakemulder, 2004, 2008b; Zyngier, van Peer, & Hakemulder, 2007).

This is exactly what happened with the participants in both groups. Obviously, when this exercise was repeated a year after with the second group (2018), I was ready for any negative initial reactions to this exercise, although I made sure that I did not lead

this second group differently from the first one in any way, but allowed them to react and voice their feedback:

Nick: It [the text] has a lot of [and here he made a lot of circling gestures with his finger]

Researcher: A lot of what?

Nick: A lot of changes in direction ... it made me dizzy

Researcher: True

Nick: There are a lot of commas and full stops ... wow ... now I realise.

The embodied movement heightened the sensation of movement in the text, something that they had not been sensitive to before, and the physical changes in direction were essentially acting as a foregrounding of the foregrounded stylistic feature in the text. This embodied exercise was enabling the participants to “see” and “feel” these “fragmentary memories” (Appendix A - line 182) of the fictional characters and their way of thinking. This exercise externalised the mechanics of the words and how they worked together to form parts of sentences and to impart meaning. Toolan (2016: 44) writes about the use of punctuation in a text, in his case the full stop, as being “analogous” to footsteps walking along a road as both reader and walker are going through a process “step by step” and “it might be that that there is a basis in embodied cognition for our preference for them”. He elaborates that:

The reading of a long written text is one such complex process, and our bodily experience of walking encourages us by analogy to cope with it by negotiating it phase by phase; the full stops mark one reliable level of phasing or ‘stepping’, and one of our foundational abilities is that of traversing such phasal boundaries, and integrating distinct segments, which sometimes have few overt indications of relatedness.

Once the participants comprehended that the change in direction was a way to a means, literally to a meaning, then they allowed themselves to understand what they were reading and allowed their body to indicate when there was a change in thought

being signposted by the punctuation. Following are some of their responses once the exercise was done for the second time:

Tina: Now I know what this exercise means ... oh my ... there are so many changes and ... no wonder it is dizzying ... it helped me visualise it... I was moving because it was like with each comma and full stop, I now know he is going into a new thought...

Researcher: Exactly

Tina: And I guess he is changing track ... changing his focus

Mickey: First he was describing what he was thinking. The environment, then he starts speaking about the death of this person ... the possible death ... he feels responsible for that death ... for the bad dream ... I think rereading the story helped me focus more and now I could understand ... ah yes here comes another turn because he is thinking differently.

Lisa: Now it helped me understand the text better because I paused every time and it's like I ... it gave me a pause to know what I just read ... I wouldn't have done that when reading ... it's like now I am much more aware of the punctuation.

Becky: Yes ... of what it is doing ... why it is there.

The answers being given were all very encouraging as students became more aware of the changes not only on the level of emotional engagement with the fictional character's preoccupations, but they were also linking these to the language effects on a stylistic level which otherwise in class would have had to be pointed out by an expert, usually the teacher. Even when theoretically explained, these nuances are usually difficult for students to grasp and after going through this exercise, they were coming up with such observations themselves and on their own, like, for example:

Mandy: You see the difference in the sentences ... Many times, when the character of Peter is relaxed, you walk along and never turn ... when he becomes anxious you start to realise that the sentences become very short and you are changing direction constantly.

This was a significant comment which really indicated at what depth the participants were interacting with the text on a stylistic level no longer only at a mimetic one.

The fact that they “walked through” the text meant that there was an element of metacognition as they were reflecting on their actions and making sense of the information that was being transmitted to them through this structure not on a semantic level but on a syntactical level. This depth of insight is further apparent in how they expressed themselves:

Researcher: Did any of the words stand out for you?

Clint: There is that part where he repeats the same eyes, the same hair. Since there are a lot of commas you end up emphasising on that ... and I became more conscious of the tone being used ... the tone in which I am reading it in.

Denise: Yes. I started to realise that there can be a change in tone ... It's like an internal dialogue ... between the thoughts and feelings.

Mark: I noticed this line ... Fifth of January ... because he had already mentioned that it was the 5th January ...

Martha: I did notice the fact that at first it was fifth of January and then it became January the Fifth. How the words change ... since I had read the first part. I had noticed he had mentioned the date, so I paused several times while I was reading ... I was noticing the change ...

Mickey: I have to agree with Berta it is the repetition of the “same”, “same”

Lisa: The repetition of January 5th

It was becoming more evident that such an embodied cognitive stylistic approach to reading was allowing for more participant-driven insights rather than information imposed upon them by an external expert. Indeed, as Giovanelli (2016: 113) clearly indicates, “Text World Theory has the potential to develop students’ skills and metacognition (Flavell 1976) in relation to the reading process”.

Some participants were also referring to the extent that this exercise made them visualise the change in tone, in that they could hear themselves inside their

head uttering how the words were to be said, which obviously was based on their interpretation of the text. Still, it was becoming more evident that although they all had an individual reaction to what they had read and how it should be read, there were still some commonalities like the use of repetition which they all focussed on. As Stockwell (2013: 263) observes: "It seems better to think of the complex act of meaning-making as a combination between textual imposition (textual patterns do impose preferred and dispreferred interpretation) and readerly disposition."

The stylistic elements of foregrounding were strong enough to make them stand out and show the possibility that certain stylistic devices can be utilised to have a more universal appeal to readers of the same the text. Such conclusion is also corroborated by Van Peer et al. (2007: 7) when they observe that:

the affective value foregrounding passages have for readers: they are read significantly more slowly and enhance aesthetic appreciation, they influence readers' perceptions of the world, and they are evaluated more highly on a second reading. In all these studies, moreover, readers' personalities played only a marginal role, confirming van Peer's earlier findings: apparently foregrounding devices operate partly independently of reader characteristics.

That these foregrounding stylistic devices within "The End of the Party" were influencing the participants is clear in that they were becoming aware of different tones that they could infuse into the words which meant that they were now no longer just reading for understanding but were introducing an affective level to their interaction with the texts. The participants were becoming attuned also to the possibility of changes in thought and emotions of the fictional characters, which in turn were colouring their understanding of possible shifts and switches in the fictional characters' internal worlds.

This embodied approach made it possible for the participants to grasp and understand the world-switches occurring in this particular instance of the text by making them take a closer look at how the language was being used in the text.

These were the initial glimmers of participants looking at the internal world-switches of fictional characters within the storyworld. To further enquire about how the sense of movement might have influenced their reading of the text, I asked the participants to read the same passage again but this time with no movement at all, just finding a place in quiet on their own and read the text keeping in mind to mentally change direction once they meet a punctuation. This third reading shed a lot of light on the fact that by previously physically moving through the text the participants were made to see it “anew” since they had to read and physically change direction rather than sit and analyse it mentally. The embodied approach had heightened their awareness of certain textual shifts which alluded to changes in the fictional characters' thoughts and emotions. Following is a brief conversation that group had after this third round at reading:

Researcher: Did the fact that you were previously moving make a difference?

Anita: It did

Becky: It did ... it made me think how the train of thought of the characters is not cohesive ... it jumps from one thing to another ... constantly changing ... it's dizzying

Anita: What do you mean cohesive?

Becky: It does not flow ... it's fragmentary ... now wonder we saw fragments ... because it is in fragments.

Researcher: So how did the movement help you in this?

Mickey: Because probably I would have picked on certain things while reading but I would not have become aware of them ... there are changes I would have missed.

Lisa: It all makes sense to me now ... those dizzying turns ... it's the changes in thought and attention and focus

I felt it was interesting to follow up on these “changes” and “dizzying turns” that they were mentioning because they were signalling the participants' awareness to certain text-world shifts because of their embodied involvement. In fact, it became obvious that these changes were the fictional characters' world-switches, which have

already been visually indicated through the Text World Theory visual map (Figure 3 - page 143). After “walking through” the text, the participants had now suddenly become very aware of these shifts in the text. In this case, at times, this meant there were also modifications in the narrative perspective which in turn could possibly have affected how readers felt about what was going on in the narrative. Following are some of the participants' voices verbalising these changes:

- Clint:* *In my case when he starts 'he looked across at David' and then turns back into the room, then when he starts describing his brother, he starts thinking about the day, then he starts thinking to himself and then when he starts talking about Peter, then starts thinking about the weather and he switches from the present to the past ...*
- Denise:* *I saw the moment when he looks at his brother, then 5th January the date of the party, the fear, the waking up and when the room darkens and when he switches to the present to tell his brother about the dream.*
- Becky:* *I feel if we are going to assume that January the 5th is when the situation happened ... it's like Peter was so traumatised that he is not making a distinction between what happened then and what is happening now ... It's like he is uncertain in which reality he is living.*
- Martha:* *It's like this internal fear is so overwhelming that it is like he is constantly living in the fear ... Francis says that he is afraid and so people look down on him for that ... Peter is scared that if expresses his fear he will be treated the same ... so he puts on this very strong exterior ...*
- Researcher:* *Amazing stuff ... the changes you are mentioning are very similar to each other ... so in the text there are some features which are going to be picked up universally by readers while others appeal individually. Mark these changes in your story .. let's write these things we are mentioning ... this sense of fear ... the fear of expressing fear ... sense of protection Sense of anxiety ... sense of responsibility ... dread.*

Although they were not “expert” readers, they were yielding analytical information as their words indicated so much insight even on a stylistic level. Once the participants became aware of these world-switches in the fictional characters and the text, they began making more sense of what was happening in the narrative.

Martha's comment is a clear indication that her understanding was based on Peter's internal fear and how he was embarrassed to express it for fear of being ridiculed like his brother. She also was suspecting that Peter's sense of responsibility could be a camouflage for how he was really feeling inside.

Such an embodied approach had unpacked and externalised the participants' thinking and made it tangible to themselves and everyone else in the group. Moreover, on the level of self-disclosure, once given space to experiment and be really involved in their own learning, the participants were more forthcoming to express their opinions because they owned what they learnt, and they were ready to share it in the group.

Boundary Crossings Between Discourse-world and Storyworld.

Once participants had become aware that the punctuation was a way in which a text could indicate a change in the interior world of a fictional character or even a development in the main storyworld, the next step in the research was to find means to elaborate more on their explorations of what Young (1987) termed as "edgework". This term refers to the boundary crossing that readers do "by crossing somehow the world boundary between the realms of the actual and the possible" (Doležel 1998: 20) and which Segal (1995b) and McIntyre (2006) then adapted and referred to as world-switches or deictic shifts within the fictional world.

The following embodied exercises were aimed to have the participants directly experience these boundary crossings in an almost physical way and to have them living in this state of "metaxis" between the discourse-world and the storyworld, enabling them to verbalise what Vytogsky (1978) terms as "inner speech", aiding them to externalise their metacognition (Flavell 1976), and find new

insights in this liminal space (Turner 1969) that is created between the reader and the text.

Liminality is a concept that Turner (1969) borrowed from anthropology, more precisely from Van Gennep (1960 [1909]), which “refers to any ‘betwixt and between’ position or object’ and “to understand the human reactions to liminal experiences: the way in which personality was shaped by liminality, the sudden foregrounding of agency, and the sometimes dramatic tying together of thought and experience.” (Thomassen 2009: 14, 16). As stated in Chapter 2, this sense of readerly projection into the storyworld is reminiscent of the sense of play that Winnicott (1971: 2) writes about and insists creates a “potential space”- “an intermediate area between the subjective and that which is objectively perceived ... an area of experiencing to which inner reality and external life both contribute”. Furthermore, all these embodied exercises in this research will enable the students to become active creators of their own learning as it is their direct interaction with the text that will enable them to “make conceptual knowledge explicit” (Giovanelli 2015: 54).

Fictional Characters' Consciousness and Direct Speech

As a mode of entry into this “in-between” conceptual space and a more embodied access into the possibility of the fictional character’s interior world, the next exercise focussed on the first brief dialogue between the twin sibling in “The End of the Party” (Appendix A - lines 12-45). The use of direct speech in reading studies has drawn a lot of attention as to the dynamics it activates, especially during silent reading. Researchers like Barsalou (1999; 2008) have proposed that direct speech tends to influence readers more than indirect speech and that it creates a sensation of “inner speech” as readers tend to mentally reproduce the verbal

utterances of fictional characters as they read them based on their life experiences. This is validated by studies (Abramson 2007; Alexander & Nygaard 2008; Kurby, Magliano, & Rapp 2009) which also have concluded that direct speech tends to switch on an internal voice in the reader which is also backed up on a neurological level by Yao, Bellin, and Scheepers (2011: 3151) who observe that: “readers are more likely to mentally simulate or spontaneously imagine aspects of the reported speaker’s voice during silent reading of direct speech as opposed to meaning-equivalent indirect speech.” Moreover, the use of Direct speech in texts has also been highlighted by Text World Theory because it creates a shift from the matrix (main) world of the text as it switches into the present tense away from the tense of the main text-world which is usually the narrative past. Werth (1999: 221) elaborates on his premise that direct speech within the text is world-forming since “its main effect is to change the basic time signature of the text- world, for example by injecting some Present Tense utterances into a Past Tense narrative”.

“Voices in the Head” Exercise - Method

Through the next exercise I wanted to further explore the effect of direct speech used in “The End of the Party” on the participants’ understanding of the text. The intention was to directly discover if indeed they become aware of any inner world shifts of the fictional characters. The participants were instructed to form groups of four and to watch each other and then to give feedback in a general group discussion after all the group members would have participated in this exercise. Two of the members of this subgroup read the first dialogue that appears in this short story (Appendix A - lines 12-45) and the two other members stood one on each side behind the two speakers.

The exercise had two parts: in the first part, the two participants reading the dialogue took on the roles of Peter and Francis respectively, and the ones behind them took on the inner voice of these two same fictional characters, in that the participant standing behind the sitting Peter was Peter's internal voice and was to speak out anything that came to mind once they heard Peter's words in the dialogue; the other two participants were to do the same for the fictional character of Francis. Each participant had a chance to take on the role of the inner voice of Peter or Francis. A further development on this exercise involved the same setup but this time round, the inner voice of Peter was to respond to the words said by Francis in the dialogue and the other participant would give voice to the thoughts of Francis as he reacted to Peter's words.

Initial reactions by the participants during the first attempt at this exercise were obviously that of hesitation and delayed responses. One must bear in mind that the Group 1 (2016-17) was made up of participants who barely had any acting experience and therefore found it a difficult to set the ball rolling on this exercise, something which Group 2 (2018) was less hesitant about because they were used to taking on roles since they attended a drama school.

“Voices in the Head” - Post-Exercise Discussion and Outcome Analysis

An issue to debate in such exercises is the extent to which the responses belonged to the fictional character and/or to the participant. This observation is not worrying at all because as we have already seen in this research much of what readers explicate from a text is based on their own understandings which tend to be framed within the socio-cultural context that they come from. This activity was an attempt at eliciting explicitly what goes on implicitly through readers' minds as they

interact with a text as they physically project themselves into the fictional world.

Caracciolo (2017: 119) concludes that this readerly projection into the storyworld is more of a virtual presence, “an illusion founded on the sense that we could be there.”

This was essentially what Tina realised as she went through these exercises and which she eloquently verbalised in one of our discussions after this exercise. She was reflecting on the myriad of responses that the participants had given while reacting to the dialogue from the narrative. The variety of interpretations clearly indicated that readers might be looking at the same text but that their understanding might vary depending on real life experiences and knowledge:

- Tina: I think our reactions differ according to our personalities ... because*
- Researcher: You are different readers ...*
- Tina: Because still we are trying to get into the character and express our thoughts as the character but still, I feel that my reactions they are my reactions and not the character's*
- Researcher: Could it be that this is what happens when you are reading?*
- Tina: Mhmmm ... true ... sometimes even if a character acts well and I don't agree with their actions I ... I am still going to disagree with him in my head or view them negatively because I personally disagree with his decisions no matter how good the intentions were ...*
- Researcher: That's exactly it, isn't it? ... You never lose track of yourself ... regardless of how immersed you are in the world of the book ... you are understanding it from your perspective ... here basically you are repeating the same process but speaking out loud ...*
- Tina: Now ... wow ... that's true ... that's true ... because it is still me, but it is partly the character too ... wow ...*

In this regard, Whiteley (2010: 123) comes up with a very similar observation:

Text World Theory concept of identification (Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2005a, 2009a), which is defined as a form of metaphorical mapping between the discourse participant's “self-aware personality” and a text-world enactor (Stockwell 2009a: 138). Identification is an act of comparison, self-awareness and recognition on the part of the discourse-world participant (Stockwell 2009a: 138).

This very much resonates with Tina's words when she interjects that throughout these exercises, they are constantly being themselves while simultaneously

projecting their own thinking into the storyworld and hypothesising what or how the fictional character (text-world enactor) might think, speak or act. Basseler (2015: 95) seems to agree with this idea that literature is a thought-provoking enterprise as he insists that “literary texts can create a liminal space, a threshold in which our preconceptions of the world are questioned, augmented, and often changed with lasting effects.” Tina’s insights indicate that a lot of deep-seated thinking was happening while role-playing as the fictional characters. The participants were actually embodying the fictional characters’ words, having to think as the fictional characters and how they speak, having to think about the fictional characters’ thoughts behind those words, and then ultimately having to externalise those thoughts. This exercise made the participants more aware of the thought processes present in silent reading and made them more tangible, enough for them to not only conceptualise these thoughts but be able to feel, reflect, and ultimately discuss them. This is how Nick succinctly explained this process to the other members when they were finding it difficult to conceptualise what they should be doing exactly in the exercise:

Nick: So, you have a boyfriend and he wants to go out with his friends and on the inside, you are thinking ‘What the hell? Go out with your friends? What are you thinking?’ but because you want to make him happy you tell him ‘Of course my dear’. What you are thinking inside might not always be the same as what you say on the outside.

Ultimately, in such a concise manner, Nick was empathising with the fictional characters, putting himself in their situation. Through his personal experience he was able to explain the dichotomy of these fictional characters’ internal thinking which could very well be different from what they actually are saying in the text. Indeed, the embodied component of this exercise, by having participants voice the internal worlds of the fictional characters, was sensitising certain participants to their ability

to project themselves into the storyworld and be able to perceive what was happening in the narrative from multiple perspectives. Therefore, this collaboration between the discourse-world participants' thinking and the text-world enactor's words enabled them to challenge the dominant point of view being imposed on the narrative through the focalisation from Peter's perspective. In this way they penetrated the surface "good and responsible elder brother" image that Peter was projecting to understand that there was more going on in this fictional character's psychology.

Not only were these participants' responses indicating that their main entry point into the text depended a lot on their experiences in the real or discourse-world and a sense of emotional engagement, but also that if allowed to mentor each other and to discuss between themselves, students can empower each other to delve deeper, see different perspectives and are capable of expressing their thoughts at a level that they all could understand. Nick's answer also hints at the world-switches, those internal changes in thoughts, perceptions, attention, that can be hidden behind a fictional character's utterance.

Such dialogic discussions where students not only learn but are able to direct each other to further insights and understanding are possible when the students are directly engaged in their own learning and form significant connections with the literature that they are reading. These inner world-switches are very hard to explain because they are abstract conceptual permutations created by the text. Through these embodied exercises the participants were forced to externalise their thinking which in turn made them more aware of these textual dynamics. It was Martha who drew the attention of the group to these subtleties:

Martha: *There's so much happening between the lines ... they're saying things to sound genuine but in reality, they are not saying what they really want to say ...*

Researcher: *Why do you say that?*

Becky: *Exactly ... they're avoiding their real feelings ... I think Francis wants to hear that someone else understands, maybe also afraid, but maybe because of pride or ego from Peter's behalf, he is not saying it ...*

Mandy: *I was lost in the beginning ... but you know now ... this exercise is deep ... so many thoughts going through my head ... through the character's heads ... who would have thought ... it's like Peter is afraid too but he is not showing it ...*

Denise: *It's like we are walking in their minds and you know you turn corners and say now that's a new thought ... it's like the walking exercise we did before ...*

Direct speech creates a contrast with the reported speech of this short story in that it takes the readers directly into the moment and creates “a temporal world-switch” (Gavins 2001: 249; Gavins 2007: 50). Furthermore, this exercise can be directly linked to how Herman (2002: 16-7) explains how these storyworlds are created:

More than reconstructed timelines and inventories of existents, storyworlds are mentally and emotionally projected environments in which interpreters are called upon to live out complex blends of cognitive and imaginative response, encompassing sympathy, the drawing of causal inferences, identification, evaluation, suspense, and so on.

In a way, the readers become co-writers, co-creators, and co-participants alongside the fictional characters of the storyworld. Oatley (2003: 166) tends to think of the reading experience in a similar way: “[i]n reading, we assimilate what we read to the schemata of what we already know. The more we know the more we understand, and we project what we know to construct a world suggested by the text.” The juxtaposition of the information derived from the text and the readers' expectations and desires give different shades to the meaning of words depending on who is reading them, which is exactly what Tina had previously said in our discussion:

Tina: Mhmmm ... true ... sometimes even if a character acts well and I don't agree with their actions I ... I am still going to disagree with him in my head or view them negatively because I personally disagree with his decisions no matter how good the intentions were ...

This tends to give the discourse-world participants space to question and form their own opinion about what they are reading. It is therefore worthwhile to take a closer look at the participants' responses in the light of this sense of participation in these storyworlds. It is interesting to examine how they are forming an opinion and therefore an interpretation not only through what they are reading but also by accessing their real-world beliefs, experiences and understanding as is made clear in the following interventions:

Tina: You would think Francis is protecting him ... That he is dependent on Peter but then when you are like trying to imagine that you are instead of him it is actually quite the opposite ...

Anita: I think it is their own feelings. Because they are twins, they are in sync and they are mixing things.

Tina: It's like Peter although he was born before Francis, it does not give him any power over him, but he feels protective of him to kind of hide his own fear so that it there is someone scared of something, I protect her or him to hide my feelings. I know this word but in Italian ... diminuire ...

Researcher: To diminish

Tina: Yes, to lessen my own fear

Anita: I see Peter in a different perspective now that I have caught a glimpse of his thoughts, before I thought simply Francis was the weak one and the coward and Peter is the one who is rational because he was responsible obviously. I liked Peter but now after this exercise, I find Peter as being overbearing. Peter like the other adults wants to control Francis who he treats as a child. Peter patronises Francis and tries to guide Francis and his life ... I now find Peter as being more sarcastic, darker and so more realistic. He is the annoyed brother.

As we proceeded forward into this journey it was becoming very evident that the participants were forming very strong opinions about the fictional characters and

events in the story. They were no longer looking at the text in a fragmented manner but were using the knowledge of the whole text to make sense of the parts. They had an overview of the whole situation and were helping each other to fill in the blanks and join the dots.

The comments showed that the participants had got the twist at the end of the story and they were clarifying this to each other. While some still thought that it was a question of a twin telepathic connection, which made Peter see and feel what Francis is seeing and feeling, other participants were starting to realise that Peter knew everything about Francis because he was merely projecting his own interior world onto his brother. Peter could not cope with the shame that he too was afraid like his younger brother, Francis, who was widely considered as a weakling. Such responses were emphasising that meaning-making in literary reading did not lie solely in the reader nor in the text independently but in a merging of the two and that “the reading of fiction remains a paradoxical experience, half in our real world of everyday life and half outside it” (Miall 2008: 101).

Through this more embodied approach the boundary crossings between the discourse-world and the storyworld were becoming more apparent to the participants. With minimal intervention on my part, merely to give instructions to the activities and pushing them forward with clarifications when needed, the participants were finding their own way into the world of the text. Allowed to discuss on their own they came up with many insights into the mechanics of the language and as to how these influenced their experience as readers and as participants in the storyworld. Some stylistic elements seemed to draw the participants' attention more than others to enable them to have a sense of immersion and to interact in more depth with the text. A dialogue was created among the participants in both groups in

that they were building on each other's insights and using their own experiences to understand better the enactors' reality in the storyworld.

These boundary crossings and sense of immersion became the foci of the next phase of embodied activities within the rest of the practical workshops as part of this research. The focus now shifted to finding ways of aiding participants to verbalise more their metacognitive processes as they found themselves more and more caught in this in-between kind of experience that Miall (2008) points out in the reference above. The following chapter will concentrate more on exploring the participants' voices as they expressed their insights and reflections when they engaged in exercises that involved them more directly into the storyworld but as yet allowed them space to think as themselves in the discourse-world.

Chapter 7 – Entering the Liminal Space

This chapter will continue to build on the investigations of this research project as it further studies the complex dynamics involved in these multi-layered interactions between the participants and the text. Since as has been discussed in the previous chapter this encounter with fictional texts was putting the readers in that “in-between” state (Miall 2008), the rest of the practical workshops were focussed on creating a more direct sense of immersion into the storyworld while trying to capture the participants' observations and reactions to the fictional characters. Moreover, this chapter will also focus on how these embodied practical activities complement Text World Theory and vice versa to reflect on and elucidate further the otherwise silent and internal readers' projections that occur during a reader-text interaction.

From the previous discussions, what was becoming vividly apparent is that when these young adult readers stopped thinking about the text simply as words on paper and became directly involved in co-constructing their understanding, their contributions to the group became more detailed and gained insightful depth. Participants felt in control and empowered rather than just passive recipients of knowledge that they did not always control and understand. They owned the meaning-making process as they made the text their own by “breaking” through the opacity of the printed word which put them in a better position to understand and discuss the text and its features.

Several researchers have explored these readerly projections into the storyworld (Kuiken et al. 2004; Lahey 2005; Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009a; Whiteley 2010; Peplow et al. 2016; Canning 2017; Kim & Scott 2018). Bortolussi and Dixon (2003: 101) refer to this involvement of the reader with the storyworld as

“transparency” as they explain that “[a] character is transparent to the extent that readers believe that they understand the character and his or her feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.” Such understanding or transparency tends to occur when “readers use their own knowledge and experience to construct narratorial implicatures” (Bortolussi and Dixon 2003:106) since the information provided by the narrative is implicit rather than explicit. This ties in with what Fludernik (1996: 9) defines as a “quasi-mimetic evocation of real-life experience” when she is explaining the experiential nature of narrative texts. Somehow, it seems that Fludernik (1996) continues to build upon Gerrig’s (1993: 27) approach when he writes that “we continually draw inferences and exhibit participatory responses in everyday life. In some respects, our real world is as much constructed as any narrative world”. Gerrig (2013) further believes that it seems readers feel like they have participated in the storyworld if this has become transparent enough for them to understand, and Jacovina and Gerrig (2010: 753) clarify this further when they argue that:

In fact, we argue that the content of readers’ responses to narrative events ... parallel the responses they would have were they to watch the same events unfold in the real world (Gerrig, 1993; Gerrig & Jacovina, 2009). We call these mental responses *participatory responses*.

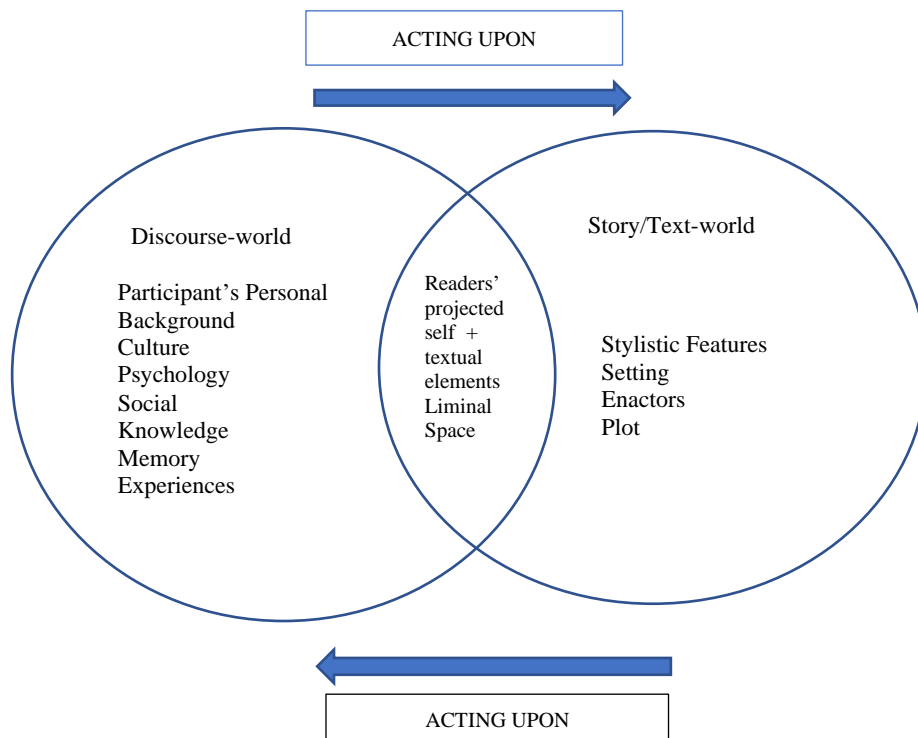
One might therefore conclude from these observations that a reader is always interacting with the text from his/her level of perception and experiences. This further validates the idea that each reader will bring to and take from the text different interpretations and revelations. Furthermore, being a reader is very similar to being a performer on stage whereby the actor is applying his knowledge or perceptions of the discourse-world on to the world of the script. The actor like the reader is only half-immersed into the world of the role being portrayed, in that both are formulating ideas, drawing conclusions, feeling for fictional characters, interpreting situations depending on the textual information being imparted but at the

same time doing this from a very personal stance. Caracciolo (2016: 119) speaks of the virtual body of the reader in a similar manner:

My argument rests on this assumption. In short, simulation and mental imagery are embodied; they are deeply rooted in our real body. And even when the reader is required to make a “deictic shift” (that is, to imagine another world with a different set of space-time coordinates), the reader brings along a virtual counterpart of his or her real body ... readers can never be actually transported to them.

Momentarily, the readers, like actors, inhabit this fictional first-person perspective which is constructed by several different levels of interaction between the readers in the discourse-world with their cultural, psychological, social and embodied experiences and the textual elements that they encounter in the fictional world. This interface creates this conceptual middle-ground, this liminal space whereby the readers act upon the text and arrive to a meaning from their own understanding and the text acts upon the readers with the new information that it imposes upon them. The following figure might visually explain this interaction and further explain the complexity of the dynamic between readers and texts:

Figure 4: Dynamic between Discourse-world Participant (Reader) and Story/Text-world



Fictional First-Person Perspective

The next series of practical embodied activities in the workshops were aimed at exploring further what happens when readers interact with fictional characters as directed by the words of the text. As has been indicated earlier, some of the participants mentioned that they are able to imagine fictional characters as if they were real persons and that they tend to project their own wishes and needs onto the fictional characters. Some also mentioned that they felt as if tiptoeing into the storyworld either as observers as Becky put it “watching silently from the corner”, or else as journeying along with the fictional characters. Becky’s feelings seem to echo Whiteley’s (2011, 2016b: 510) description of “deictic projection” (Bühler 1982; Segal 1995a) to refer to those moments when:

a reader maps their embodied sense of space and location from discourse-world to text-world, aligning themselves with the spatio-temporal perspective in the text. This is thought to create sensations of immersion in the text-world.

Indeed, these boundary crossings between the discourse-world and storyworld were enhancing the sense of the participants’ involvement with the text as has become clear through previous explorations in this research. Always allowing this process to be guided by the participants’ input and having the objective to further illuminate this reader-text interaction, I decided to propose to them that they take the fictional first-person perspective of the storyworld characters through a writing activity in role.

“Writing Four Letters” Exercise - Method

I suggested that the participants were to write a series of letters filled with demands and answers from a chosen character’s perspective. I wrote down all the fictional characters involved in the “The End of the Party” on A4 pieces of paper and stuck them on the wall - Peter, Francis, Nurse, Mother, Joyce, Mabel Warren and

Mrs Henne-Falcon. The names were randomly placed in different spaces on the wall around the room. I informed the participants that there were piles of four blank sheets and a pen next to them in six different spaces on the ground of the room we were working in. They had to go around the room and silently choose one of the fictional characters that they wanted and then at my signal to proceed to one pile of papers. Then, they were to write down a demand from the perspective of the chosen fictional character aimed at another fictional character of their choice.

After having finished writing, they were to fold the paper and place it on the ground next to the pile of papers. They were given five minutes each time to think and write as the fictional character and then at the end of the stipulated time and at my signal they were to walk again silently around the room. Once I gave the signal again, they were to go a pile of papers that they had not visited before and while reading the demand, they were to take on the role of the character to whom the request was addressed. As the new character they were to answer to the demand as they pleased but were to add a new request by the new character that they had taken on. This procedure went on until all the four sheets in the six spaces were filled in and folded on top of each other. In this manner participants had a chance at taking on the perspective of different fictional characters. Although the time limit of five minutes might appear too short, it was intentionally brief so as to avoid overthinking on the participants' part and have more spontaneous character projections in the demands written on the papers. The demands that the students, as the fictional characters, wrote on the sheets of paper during the exercise could have been related to the story or not, as I wanted to allow space to see if the participants might project beyond the confines of the narrative further illuminating their understanding and personal engagement with the written word.

Readers' Focus on Secondary Fictional characters

On a closer look at the data yielded from this exercise, there are some salient observations that can be made. Most participants in both groups focussed on the minor/secondary fictional characters, mainly the characters of the Nurse, Mother and Mrs Henne-Falcon. These characters were an interesting choice since rather than just being drawn to the main fictional characters, as expected, the participants of both groups were equally drawn to the secondary fictional characters. This is in contrast with Stockwell's (2009a: 109) observation that:

Characters that are directly presented (where the reader is faced with the direct viewpoint of or on the character) are likely to generate a closer connection than characters which are presented indirectly, where the readerly gaze is averted or distracted by other prominent features or other characters.

Although the text does not give a lot of information about them, these secondary fictional characters were still intriguing for the participants to make sense of them on their own. In fact, conversations between the Mother and Francis, Nurse and the Mother, Mrs Henne-Falcon and Peter were present in both groups. I am reproducing some of these conversations at length here to reveal the extent to which these participants were forming their interpretation of the secondary fictional characters. It is important to note that these were not defined at all in the short story except for glimpses of them in brief encounters with the main fictional characters and passing references to them by the narrator:

Letters between Francis and Mother

Correspondence 1

Francis to Mother: *Make me pancakes with chocolate and baby marshmallows*

Mother to Francis: *Dear Francis, listen to you spoilt brat I have no time for your demands. Be a dear and go to the party. There's everything there. If not, then too bad. From your loving Mother.*

Francis to Mother: Mother everything is not there, I do not want to go to the party, besides, even if I wanted to go I am unable to get out of bed. Can you put yourself in my shoes for once? Can't it be the way I want and not the way you want? Try to act like a Mother and understand. Francis.

Mother to Francis: When you change your attitude maybe I will change my mind. Do not dare insult me. If you had asked me nicely, I would have thought about it but now you will have to go even if you have a high fever. That's fine with me. Mother.

Correspondence 2

Francis to Mother: Dear Mother, I love you, but I wish that you don't make me to go to the party

Mother to Francis: To my crumb cake Francis ... my dear I would have not let you not go but I have already told Mrs Henne-Falcon that you are going. But I am sure you will have fun. Much love your mama.

Francis to Mother: Mother if you say that I have to go, I will. But I am scared that Mabel Warren and Joyce will be near me. I have this gut feeling but I will try to have fun. Can you please make some time for us as we barely see you around and we miss you?

Mother to Francis: Dear Francis, your continuous whining is not manly. Don't mope around. You shall go to the party like a nice boy. I am stressed with work. I cannot make any more time than I already give you. I miss you too. I request that you tell Peter your doubts. He will convince you to go to the party for sure. I shall see you when I get you from the party. Love mum.

Letters between Nurse and Mother

Correspondence 3

Nurse to Mother: I need to ask you why Francis seems to be so troubled these past days I am getting worried that something bad is happening to him as he doesn't even want to go to the party. Do you have any suggestions why this may be?

Mother to Nurse: He is just a little boy, he had bad dreams and nightmares could do much to a boy like Francis. Do not worry too much, it is just a phase. I am sure he will go to the party just the same. He will always have Peter next to him. I will talk to Peter.

Nurse to Mother: Like you've said that children are children they must not be believed. As you have said not to worry. You should go out take some fresh air with the children, it will be beneficial

Mother to Nurse: You have no right to lecture me how to raise my children

Correspondence 4

Mother to Nurse: I know that I have not been around lately. I hope you are doing well. I am trying to come home early, but I cannot seem to shake off the amount of work that I have. The stress is huge and trying to maintain a household and two kids is frightening me. Can you do me a favour? Inform me how the kids are and how they are doing at school. Please also tell me how they are going on with their lives. Is Francis still scared of the dark? I don't want him to whine about the party and hide-and-seek again. Make sure that Peter takes care of him like always. Make sure that they grow up maturely.

Nurse to Mother: Dear Ms Norton – the kids are doing quite well, both in school and in their lives. Yes, Francis is still afraid of the dark and Peter is doing his utmost best to take care of him. He will soon be going to the party with Peter. Can you do me a favour, can you at least try to come home early.

Mother to Nurse: Thank you so much for looking after them and keeping me updated but unfortunately, I will not be able to come home. I am kindly asking you to continue taking care of them. Can you do that for me?

Nurse to Mother: I don't think they want to go to the party.

“Writing Four Letters” – Post-Exercise Discussion and Outcome Analysis

The letters in **Correspondence 1** (pages 190-1) and **Correspondence 3** (pages 191-2) were written by participants in Group 1 (2016/7) and those in **Correspondence 2** (page 191) and **Correspondence 4** (page 192) were written by Group 2 (2018). As is immediately evident, keeping in mind that these two groups were a year apart, the fictional characters chosen to correspond with each other were similar. It was obvious that Francis featured a lot in their correspondences since the

short story's internal focalisation tends to make him the reader's main concern. Francis is constantly viewed from his twin brother and other fictional characters' perspectives and rarely does the reader see Francis' perspective.

An interesting fact is that the secondary fictional characters of the Mother and the Nurse garnered a lot of attention and raised a lot of discussion. The participants of both groups chose to elaborate on these fictional characters and formulate their own interpretation based on their own understanding of how the Nurse and the Mother would have acted and spoken. Since I had not provided them with any background to the story, such as the era in which it was set, any biographical information about the author, and other pertinent information s would usually happen in a literature class, the students were free to project their own understandings of these fictional characters. Whiteley (2011, 2014, 2016b: 510) discusses these perspective-taking projections and explains that readers “use cues in the text to imaginatively reconstruct the minds of text-world characters; their worldview, attitudes, emotions, goals and so on (Palmer 2004; Stockwell 2009a; Zunshine 2006).”

These perspective-taking projections, which occurred through the boundary crossings between the discourse-world and the storyworld are evident in this activity. The participants had the fictional characters speak in modern jargon and provided reasons for the Mother's absence in the children's life which very much reflected these participants' contemporary life. One notices, for example, Francis' childishness reflected in his demand for “hot chocolate with marshmallows” and in the Mother calling him “crumb cake”, which still has a very British middle-class ring to it. These perspective taking exercises were indicating that the participants were projecting their own mode of thinking on them and were treating them like real

people. Gavins (2007: 42-3) explains that readers will assume that these storyworld characters are:

living, breathing, thinking entity with the same kinds of emotions and reactions as any real-world human being. Again, this is the result of my psychological projection into a text-world which, because of the essentially analogue nature of mental representation, I assume to operate in the same way as my real world until the text tells me otherwise.

These rewriting exercises gave a space for certain moments which the participants felt were missing in the story and probably reflected their personal attitude to the situation had they been going through it in real life. One such instance is the confrontation that Francis has in **Correspondence 1** (pages 190-1) above, which does not feature in the text and which can be compared with the more passive response Francis has in **Correspondence 2** (page 191) above. There are also the references to the Mother having to be out of the house and her tardiness being explained by her having to work late (**Correspondence 4** on page 192). This would not have been the case in Greene's story since it is situated in a middle to upper class household in 1930s England and the Mother probably does not work but is absent because child-minding would have been considered as the Nurse's job. The participants probably projected the Mother's more modern concern for her career as being more important than child-minding from their own social and possible personal life experiences. Still, regardless of the modern allusions, the underlying stilted relationship, the coldness of the Mother, and the unemotional logic of the Nurse are all to be found in the text itself.

The observation that readers are intrigued by fictional characters that are not well defined and implicate personal understanding and projection to fill in the gaps, was also researched by Bortolussi and Dixon (2003) in an empirical test they conducted. In their study, the researchers provided their subjects with short character information as presented in a short story, Alice Munro's "The Office", but they

adapted the information to have two versions of the same passage: one was the original with its implicit character information with readers having to input their own projections. The second adapted version was the same character description but presented in a more explicit manner in that the reader did not need to add any personal projections. The readers were presented with these introductions in the following variations: one group read the implicit version only, another group was presented with the explicit version only, a third group went over the explicit version first followed by a reading of the implicit one, and the last group did the opposite of that, in they were given the implicit and then the explicit version. Bortolussi and Dixon (2003: 106-7) concluded that:

The results were in accord with the hypothesis that transparency is produced when readers use their own knowledge and experience to construct narratorial implicatures. In particular, transparency was greater when participants read the implicit preamble (either first or alone) rather than the explicit version. Our interpretation is that the implicit preamble leads readers to generate a variety of implicatures that are not needed in the explicit version, and, as a consequence, readers have a greater opportunity to attribute their own experience to the narrator.

They further insisted that regardless of the explicit preamble that the participants were provided with, ultimately what counted for their understanding and identification with the fictional character were the projections and gap filling the readers did for themselves. As Sklar (2013: 11) argues, apart from relatives, friends and people we really know, we tend to have fragmentary information about people we do not know in real life and we tend to fill in the gaps with:

... hunches, ideas, feelings, or impressions based on our experiences with people ... other relatively intuitive factors. Put simply, that which allows us to form a mental image of a "complete" human being out of the fictional fragments that are provided is precisely our own experience with people. We fill in, I contend, largely with information provided by our experience in "real life." In this respect, we respond to characters that are primarily "real" in their essences, however much the focus for our reflection has been "made up" by an author.

When looking at the present research in the light of the above quote, the use of role playing and the writing that ensued from the fictional first-person stance made this interaction between self and fictional character more apparent and available for further scrutiny. This brings us back to a point which has already been mentioned in Chapter 2, the concept of what Palmer (2004) calls “intermentality” which is basically the metaphor of one mind moving into another (Stockwell 2009a).

Stockwell (2009a: 108) builds upon Palmer’s cognitive poetics stance when he insists that:

the governing feature of fiction of any sort is the reader’s construction of alternate minds, in the forms of author, imagined author, narrator, various characters, and even group or generalised minds such as in gossip, public opinion, common morals or the expressions of any other body of people (see also Palmer 2005, 2007)

By acting upon and within the text, these participants did not remain as spectators looking at the text from the outside, but they became participants, co-writers and co-creators in the storyworld. As Wright (1998: 112-3) cogently observes:

the reader/writer distinction is no longer valid because making sense of the sign system implicates both: each is caught in a net of signs, is up against language. Reading, writing and criticism are part of a continuum whereby readers write in the act of reading and writers are shown to read in the act of writing.

The participants’ stance as co-authors while writing their own interpretation of the text creates a continuum between the subjectivity of the reader and the text as an external medium, and somehow a new blend is created which does not belong to either but somehow to the two at the same time. It is strongly indicated that a lot of thinking is going on within this split consciousness, in this liminal space, which confirms what is being observed in this research: there is a conceptual space created between reader and text wherein there is a blend between the readers and the fictional characters. In this blend there are many permutations with the readers moulding the fictional character from their own experiences and at times entering the storyworld as the fictional character and sometimes co-participants/observers. Duffy

(2014: 93) describes this conceptual domain cross-fertilisation as being reminiscent of Turner and Faccounier's notions of conceptual blending to create a new blended space where new learning occurs

That movement (or conceptual mapping) from third-person acquisition (so-and-so did this on thus-and-such a date) to first-person (in role) creation (I did this on that date) is not only the creation of the 'dramatic frame' (Sawyer (2003), 41) but represents the blending of information, experience, empathy, emotion and insights from input space 1 (the curriculum) and input space 2 (the child's individual experiences in family and as a citizen). This generative process – the blended space – is co-created, embodied, negotiated moment to moment, refined, deepened and problematised all within the playing of the classroom fiction ...

Similarly, Gibbons (2016) when speaking on how audience participation in immersive theatre experiences blurs the boundaries between the discourse-world and the staged fictional world, expands on Gavins' (2007; 2013) introduction of "blended worlds" in Text World Theory. Gibbons (2016: 174) explains how audience members in these immersive theatre experiences use "elements of the discourse-world and text-world as input spaces that merge to create the blended-world" which enables them to physically explore these fictional worlds without breaking the illusion of being both "inside" and "outside" simultaneously. In this regard, this research is revealing how participants/readers also inhabit "blended worlds" which include this merger created from the discourse-world participants (reader), text-world enactors (fictional characters), and the text informing each other. The knowledge of the discourse-world participants infuses and impacts the information that they utilise from the text to exteriorise text-world enactor's identity. In turn, the reality and identity of the text-world enactor can influence with new ideas or change or adapt the information of discourse-world participants. It is a two-way communication that feeds upon each other and is creating a locus for learning and consolidation of what has been learnt. It is a form of "metaxis" (Boal 1995) – the ability to hold both worlds in the mind "at the same time and to flicker between

the two” (Saxton & Miller, 2006: 17). As Tina pointed out in the post-writing activities discussions:

Tina: I think 5 mins was not enough to get into a character to write from their point of view, so it is a mix of mine and everyone else's

As Berta added:

Berta: I think in this exercise we became one with the character ... we saw things from their perspective ... it's like we see their world but with our eyes too.

This led to the participants' worry about giving different interpretations to the same fictional character as revealed in the same discussions and in their last interviews held individually with each participant after the whole process:

Anita: The only thing which I think is wrong in this exercise is that the way I will interpret this character will be different from the way someone else will interpret it.

Tina: It's funny because we all have different interpretations of the same character.

Mandy: It helped because you do not have a fixed point of view on the character and you have variety to make you think ... and you get to choose the character's reality ... to fill in the grey areas.

Nick: I think this exercise really shocked me ... the fact that we can form such vivid and accurate imagery of them in the book

Mark: Writing the character in your own words and then compare with the text and then either leave it as it is but make it your own. That way it really helps ... it makes it alive.

Clint: For example, the way the second person wrote about Francis is different from the way the fourth person wrote the character ... the second one was more “bro” kind of style.

Denise: But it's obvious because you are the second writer, and you are a boy, and I am the fourth writer, and I am girl ... we write differently

The latter observation of Denise came as a surprise even to me as I had not taken the influence of gender differences on the readers' attitude towards the fictional characters into consideration. Her comment does reveal another dimension to the

reading experience which could be the focus of further empirical research: gender differences and how they influence immersion into the fictional world and the connection with fictional characters.

Coming back to the above participants' mixed reactions to multiple interpretations of the same fictional characters, one can find a number of encouraging insights albeit stated in a worried, perplexed, or surprised tone. The participants were voicing their ability to perceive how the personal affects the interpretation of the narrative and that ultimately meaning is the product not only of the text but of the interaction of the latter with the reader. At the same time, they are still afraid that a variation in interpretation is erroneous and surprised at the revelation that a multiplicity of interpretations can co-exist. These varied negative reactions are a legacy of an educator-imposed education system where literary criticism is composed of only one truth and that the task of the reader is simply to get at that. This expert position and the impact of an exam-oriented system of education deny the personal interactions with the text which certainly are part of the reading process as this research is clearly revealing. Another result of this expert imposition is the silencing of the voices of these young adult readers as they grapple with fictional characters and experiences which might be distant and different from their own.

The richness of the post-exercises' discussions reveal how when young adult readers enter a dialogic relationship with their own learning, they can put forward very insightful contributions to the understanding of a text at hand. Moreover, it becomes apparent that a more embodied and practical approach to entering the world of the text physically, emotionally and psychologically contributes to a more first-hand experientiality of the storyworld. Caracciolo (2011: 120) speaks about fictional

texts inviting the readers to project their virtual self into its world. Considering that one cannot completely be immersed into it, he makes it very clear that the link between real life and the fictional is very close since:

The comprehension of a narrative text grants us virtual access to the fictional world it constructs; but given the structural resemblance between our virtual access to the real world and our virtual access to fictional worlds, our reconstruction of narrative space will be mediated by the same cognitive strategies we adopt to apprehend real space.

This first-hand personal experience or emotional engagement with fictional characters was always seen as being naïve and unworthy of academic study by literary theoreticians up to the twentieth century, with exceptions like A. C. Bradley who in his literary analysis of Shakespeare's plays discusses the characters as if they were 'real' human beings that we come to know through the plays (Masters 2017: 84). Still, the participants in this research are revealing through their discussions how their understanding is always influenced by their personal immersion in the real world; the discourse-world. More importantly a closer look at their insights during the post-activities discussions reveal that their input is not only limited to the psychological interpretation of characters but that there are also glimmers of observations about stylistic devices and their effect on the reader. In keeping with this observation, Polvinen and Sklar (2019: 12) write that "[t]he reading of fiction is an activity ... that allows readers to be mimetically and synthetically engaged with the bodies and minds of characters, as well as with the structures of the written artefact."

Some of the participants' observations indicate theoretical considerations that, in my experience, literature teachers would be at pains in bringing across to their students and which are usually only assimilated over time. Practically applying themselves through a fictional first-person perspective enabled the participants to verbalise these stylistic nuances themselves without any prompting on my part. This

happened, for example, more prominently with the fictional character of the Mother, who as Lisa pointed out is depersonalised by the author since she is not even given a first name but is identified by her role. Lisa felt, and the others agreed with her, that readers are meant to feel distant from her because they cannot even identify her:

Anita: And in some way the character isn't even mentioned quite often ... it's there that's the Mother ... she's there

Tina: She's there but she has no ...

Berta: There's no connection

Tina: He didn't even call her mum; he calls her Mother sounding ... sounding very false ... very formal ... no connection

Berta: She is very unemotional ...

Lisa: I think this why he [author] did not give her a name ... because a name would be personal ... would be kind of personalising ... getting more ... like to get to know the Mother even more ... but i think ... Francis especially feels so distant from his Mother that it's like he [author] doesn't even want us to know her by name.

Lisa's astute stylistic comment came as a pleasant surprise to me as a teacher of literature as I usually would have to highlight such a literary technical point to students myself. This also resonates with **Correspondences 1 and 2** (pages 190-1) written by the participants and which all refer to the fictional character of the Mother as "Mother" never in the diminutive more intimate terms such as "mum" or "mummy" which is indicative that these young adult readers had picked up on the formal relationship between her and the children.

Authorial Choices and their Influence on the Reader

Lisa's comment makes it clear that some authorial choices are there to influence readers' attitudes towards specific fictional characters. Comparatively, and again without any feedback or insights on my part, one observes that from

Correspondences 3 and 4 (pages 191-2) the relationship that surfaces from the participants' writings of the dialogues between the Nurse and the Mother, is of a different nature from that with the children. The participants had picked on the disparity between adult-to-adult relationships and the adult to child relationships in the story with the latter being more markedly distant and colder. The following is what the participants had to say in their discussion:

Mandy: *They are like two bickering sisters ...*

Denise: *They seem to be closer than the Nurse and the children
or the Mother and the children*

A closer look at the kind of vocabulary used in **Correspondences 3 and 4** (pages 191-2) indicates that the participants projected a very modern style of interaction between the Mother and the Nurse. Although the latter is still respectful and there is a certain condescending attitude verging on the arrogant from the Mother, the Nurse speaks in a manner which would not have been acceptable for her post in the time in which the story is situated. Despite this modern slant, what is important is that the closer connection between the adults, as compared to that with the children, does come across more emphatically. This difference is very salient for the development of the story as the refusal of the adults to listen to what they term as a child's petty fears and anxieties turns out to have fatal consequences in the end.

This led to a further observation by Nick about authorial choices and manipulation of the readers' emotions, in this case Greene's choice of having a child die at the end, which in his opinion added to the impact of the twist at the ending of the story. I feel this is such an important insight as it goes beyond the narrative and into a more technical level of authorial choices and the implications that these have on the story and ultimately, the readers. I am reproducing the full interaction between the participants on this topic:

- Denise:* The fact also that the characters are children ... it makes it creepier and darker
- Nick:* In fact, throughout the story you think it is something silly ... I mean this kid who is afraid of the dark ... this is childish ... how bad can it be? The problem is really insignificant but then you come to this moment and you say wow!! Then it was more than childish fear and it was important because it killed him ...
- Denise:* Because in the beginning fear of the dark, it is something humdrum, it something we read about so much that it becomes insignificant, a joke but then in the end
- Nick:* Something else that makes the story not boring is that it features young people with the mindset of adults ... they are more mature than their age ... I mean if it had been two adults who are afraid of the dark it would have been ridiculous ... I mean you would write it off as them being cowards ... but then because it is just a child without wanting you pity him ...
- Mandy:* Yes, you empathise with him
- Nick:* You see poor kid ... he does not realise that there is nothing to fear in the dark and then bamm ... he dies in the dark
- R:* So, what are you saying?
- Nick:* The author did this intentionally ... at least I think so

Such insightful technical observations were also unexpected, and I was questioning whether it was the more hands-on practical approach that made Nick realise this deep insightful literary observation or maybe the fact that we had worked on the text over a number of sessions which had made the difference. It was Clint who answered my question when he said:

- Clint:* To be honest, when I first read the story, I did not like it. I found it boring. But now that we are working on it and the way we are working on it, I feel that I am more involved in it and I like it
- Anita:* In crit class ... in the very beginning I was a bit frustrated with teachers ... I was wondering why won't they give us a list ... if you see punctuation it means fragmentation ... if you see repetition it means emphasis ... I kind of wanted to be spoonfed and because it is really is difficult to express my own emotions. Now, through this exercise I can really in some way find these words for my frustration, for my anger, for what the text is bringing towards me and it did really make me understand much better to have my kind of ... thoughts proven to a point in reality for instance in the fragmentation exercise ... we are

reading out loud ... we are stopping ... we are turning ... it really helped me understand ... it really made me think wow this how it actually feels, this is why teachers won't tell us ... because it is something you have to feel for yourself

Anita's words during her last interview became very revealing as to the power of having a more practical and experiential approach to working with texts and fiction, a form of embodied pedagogical cognitive stylistics. Allowing the reader to externalise and verbalise the thinking process as they encounter the text enhances a metacognitive process through a more embodied approach which does not need a lot of theoretical explanation on the part of the educator as the participants experience and witness the information for themselves.

Tina: If in the classroom there would be this way of teaching ... not really teaching ... but I call more helping ... more of helping the students to understand for themselves because you didn't tell us what to think ... we came up with the ideas ourselves ... I do think that these exercises can be adapted to the classroom ... students would find the learning or studying the novel easier, better and less boring for sure.

Tina's observations were corroborated by other participants' responses during the last semi-structured interviews that were carried out at the end of the process.

These interviews were revealing as to how this dialogic process was allowing space for the young participants to arrive to their own conclusions through their own reflections as they participated in the world of the narrative. These insights were not only on a phenomenological level or just simply a series of empathic personal projections on the emotions and psychology of the fictional characters, but they were very much in keeping with the thinking of the Text World Theory approach. This embodied practical interaction with the text led participants to also delve deeper on a microlinguistic level and realise how language can be utilised by the author to affect the readers and how choice and syntax play an important role hermeneutically as becomes apparent in the following responses:

Miriam: Yes, yes. Precisely, before I used to read a script just to read it and learn the words like a parrot but now, I realise that behind every word there is a reason behind it ... you need to elaborate on that thought ... the thought behind words ...yes obviously, the choice of words and how they are placed ...

Berta: That words have a significant meaning and when you are reading you are imagining the picture and with words you can elaborate more if you extract the meaning from them.

Lisa: Now I am more aware of certain things even the pauses a character takes, pauses and ... even the build of the sentences .. it is different for each character.

Researcher: Sentences? You mean the length of sentences?

Lisa: Yes ... even the words ... not all characters use the same words

Researcher: Exactly

Lisa: Some use complex vocabulary ...

Researcher: So, before you did not really seem to be aware of this?

Lisa: Exactly

Martha: Yes, I think ... even when I am reading ... I go into more detail ... I take more notice of the words how they are placed ... now it is not just reading for the sake of the story.

These insights are quite inspiring and revelatory for an educator who has been teaching literary criticism for the past 20 years as this level of textual appreciation would usually be beyond students of the same age as these participants. Normally, students would certainly be unable to verbalise such metatextual reflection let alone discuss it so cogently.

These responses were approaching what Horner (2011: 5) refers to as “meta-textual awareness of the organization and structure of text”. More specifically in this case he indicates a “meta linguistic awareness” with their comments about the word order and choice and their effects on the reader, which he sees are all indication of expert readers who are capable of going beyond mere word decoding. All these activities were directed at working on and with the text and as Pope (1995: 1) observes:

The best way to understand how a text works, I argue, is to change it: to play around with it, to intervene in it in some way (large or small), and then to try to account for the exact effect of what you have done. In practice – not just in theory – we have the option of making changes at all levels, from the merest nuance of punctuation or intonation to total recasting in terms of genre, time, place, participants and medium.

In keeping with this playful experimentation, the next phase of the practical workshops focussed more on this fictional first-person projection of the participants into the text using two techniques used in process drama which are i) monologue writing and ii) improvised dialogue based on the fictional characters from Greene's "The End of the Party". But, before I proceed to analyse the monologues and the personal projections that are apparent in the written end-results, it is interesting to note that another very personal dynamic came into play which interfered with some of these young adult's confidence and their input to the sessions and as they disclosed, their willingness to read.

Neurodiversity and Interactions with Texts

Once the participants became more confident and relaxed within the group, their self-disclosures became more frequent and relevant to the creative process, revealing personal insecurities, obsessions, and challenges they encountered in their learning environment. At times, these personal issues came to light when mentioned, in a light tone, verging on self-deprecation, by the participants as they were working together or individually. At other times, these conditions were revealed during the post-activity discussions. I will mention only a couple of these here, as examples of how certain personal dynamics are not given due importance in class because the educator might not be made aware of them or else because they are not deemed important enough to be considered as possibly challenging to the students' absorption of facts. In a number of instances, students who are going through these situations are labelled lazy, passive, unintelligent, or not forthcoming in their

participation in class rather than seen as opportunities to explore alternative modes of information processing.

Such examples include Nick who after some sessions openly discussed how he has to deal on a daily basis with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) which in his case was diagnosed but nothing was done to follow it up officially. It was apparent from the very beginning that Nick had a short attention span and could not control his need to move about the room. He had difficulty focussing on the instructions and to follow them completely through and he admitted to hating reading because his mind tended to lose focus on the words. The tendency was that while reading he ended up thinking about other things than what was on the paper. He admitted that since these workshop activities urged him to be active, he enjoyed them a lot and was able to participate and extract the maximum benefit from the rewriting exercises and his ability to discuss and verbalise his thoughts:

Nick: Of course, the part that I hated was when we had to read ... I hate reading ...

Researcher: No wonder your contributions are always one liners

Nick: Yes, it is my ADHD, it's a problem, it interferes with my focus

Mark: Even I hate reading because I have a problem too

Researcher: So, do these types of activities help you in that regard? If you had to be in class would this type of exercise help you understand the story better?

Mark: Hands-on methods are better for me ... I am not sure ... but maybe my Dyslexia might have something to do with it. That is why sometimes I misread some books because of my dyslexia.

Researcher: So how does this process really help you in that regard?

Mark: Because first of all these workshops are fun ... very much fun ... When I read the text, I always get stuck but here I just scan and skim it and find some detail which gives me a little idea of the character and then I let myself play around with that and fill in and move about the room because you allow me to do that

Researcher: So, the moving helps in your thinking

Mark: Yes

Nick: Yes, yes, yes ... I need to move around too to work!

Nick's words reinforce the observations that Leveroy (2013: 28) makes in her research on neurodiverse theatre actors and their interactions with theatre scripts when she writes that such atypical readers tend to "respond well to embodied, multi-sensory practice and indeed a number of mainstream and alternative intervention models believe that learning is best accomplished when it is embodied."

Proprioception or the body's needs to find balance and ground itself within in its own environment might be easily disregarded as it possibly could be overlooked as having anything to do with learning abilities of students. According to the American Diagnostic and Statistics Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) (2013), in students who have ADHD, this sense of physical balance, which is part of children's development gained over time through play and other physical experimentation with their surroundings, is not functioning adequately. They need to constantly keep moving to feel that their body is properly grounded to the extent that in any moment that they stop moving, they feel that their body is out of keel or disappearing. In fact, people with ADHD tend to have problems falling asleep as the moment they close their eyes they cannot feel their body anymore and it is very disorientating for them. Such neurological disorientation does also interfere with the reading capabilities and the abstract conceptual demands that fictional texts require to allow for literary immersion. One can request attention to detail that typical reading tasks demand from students with ADHD but what they really want to and need to do is to move their body to regain their sense of balance.

Another neurodiverse condition, as highlighted above by Mark, is dyslexia which the participant felt interfered with his reading abilities. Lyons et al (2003: 2) define dyslexia as:

... a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterised by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and

decoding abilities ... consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge

In a top-down approach that is typically involved in sedentary classroom reading activities, the expectations are exact pronunciation, precise meanings and correct phonological decoding. Apart from just highlighting reading difficulties without offering alternatives, using only such linguistically based approaches can have serious implications for students' self-esteem and their socialising patterns (Goldfus 2012). As Barden (2009: 294) observes, "[t]he technical difficulties with word decoding and reading comprehension, which occur despite average or better intelligence and appropriate teaching, are often accompanied by a range of academic, behavioral, and social problems including heightened stress, lack of motivation, and low confidence and self-esteem." Although early diagnosis is improving and the stigma attached to such conditions is lessening there are still students, like Mark and Nick, who although diagnosed did not do anything about their situations for fear of being shamed or appearing less than normal because of having these conditions. Dyslexia like ADHD tends to pose challenges with the activity of reading and predisposes some students to a lack of interest in involving themselves in any type of activities related to the reading of fiction. Although it is not the purpose of this thesis to address reading disorders in depth, it is still important to point out how the personal does interfere with the dynamic between reader and text.

In fact, another condition which was flagged during this research process was more of a psychological compulsion, but which still affected one of the participant's performance during these workshops. This situation first came to light when Denise had to think on her feet during the exercise of the voices in the head, where the participants had to respond to lines of dialogue from the story and think there and

then what the fictional character might be thinking. She became frustrated because she was constantly not finding anything to say. At first, she mentioned that it was the story that was not inspiring her and for her it was a bit of a confusing exercise as it made her panic.

Denise: For me these exercises ... they tense me up and confuse me ... thinking as someone else is difficult for me ... I mean personally even deciding about something, it takes me a very long ... maybe I am slow (she laughs)

Denise tried to jokingly point at herself as being mentally slow and obviously make light of something that was really frustrating and hindering her learning and her interaction with the text. Initially, I told her that it might be because this exercise demanded her to think on her feet and it required a speaking effort in contrast to a written one. A couple of sessions later we came to a monologue exercise that I will be discussing in more depth later on in this chapter of the thesis. Denise, like the other participants, was allowed some time to come up with a monologue from the perspective of one of the fictional characters. She was allowed to focus on anything or any fictional character within the storyworld while trying to capture through her writing the essence of this fictional character as she envisaged them in this fictitious world.

After a few minutes, Denise, who is a drama student and therefore is supposed to have experience working with role-taking exercises, raised her hand. I asked her what she wanted, and she emphatically said:

Denise: I can't ... I can't do this ... I am finding it difficult

Mandy: But it's really enjoyable ... I like thinking and writing as someone else

Denise: But you like writing a lot and even the flair in your writing is there ... I mean even your handwriting it is like a painting ... unlike me ... I find it very difficult ... I find it very difficult to think ...

- Researcher:* But is it because you need to think or to think as someone else ... with someone else's mind?
- Denise:* Both ... I find it difficult to think spontaneously ... I need time to think ... but that is me ... in everything
- Researcher:* So it is not this exercise? But because you are like that ... it is who you are ... or it is who you see yourself as?
- Denise:* I am a bit slow ... (laughs)
- Researcher:* You mention that again ... don't say it as if it is something negative ... it means you function differently
- Denise:* I am like that ... I stop myself ... I constantly think that what I do I have to do perfectly ... that what I am thinking is wrong and will be criticised ... I need it to be just so
- Researcher:* Just right ... just perfect
- Denise:* Yes ... my OCD ... I know I am a perfectionist ... in everything

Denise ultimately was convinced to go back to her writing and was given ample time to finish her monologue which one can read in Appendix I together with other sample monologues by participants from both groups. Ultimately, her monologue was as successful as the others, but her initial reaction was to block herself because she perceived her work as not being good enough as her state of anxiety escalated with every word she wrote. She felt that the others were all better than her, as is evident in her retort to Mandy and that they were going to judge her as being slow and stupid. In fact, she always joked about the term "slow" as if it was acceptable to laugh it off and hide behind her self-imposed label.

In a classroom environment, many times such situations cause students to lose interest and not participate repeatedly because they censor themselves and consider their contributions as being inferior and would prefer to "disappear" in the back rows rather than brave the situation and participate in class. In turn this lack of participation will be easily labelled as being laziness or sheer apathy and worse as the student being a special case or maybe unintelligent. In reality, as Armstrong (2012: 9) points out that "instead of regarding these students as suffering from deficit, disease, or dysfunction, neurodiversity suggests that we speak about their

strengths.” This indeed was the case of this research process which was highlighting that fact that to fully experience the pleasure of reading and to understand a text a reader does not need to necessarily take a linear approach which is usually involved in sedentary text decoding with the main focus being the garnering of facts rather than a fuller experience of reader-text interaction. Such multi-sensory approaches that this research project was offering to the participants proved to be beneficial in highlighting that such embodied methods enabled atypical learners such as Nick, Mark and Denise to focus more on the “‘life behind the words’ and the subtext which may be particularly suited to learners with such [neurodiverse] characteristics.” (Leveroy 2013: 35)

Rewriting the Text – Engaging Readers’ Consciousness

A look at the monologues that all the participants produced in this penultimate session of the workshops, which has already been referred to during the discussion about Denise’s sense of perfection in the previous section, indicate a thorough understanding of fictional characters, including the secondary ones. The choice of experimenting with a fictional first-person perspective through role-plays was instigated by the idea that this perspective is how readers enter into the storyworld as has already been indicated previously in this thesis and how readers resemble theatre performers. Noice (1991: 420-1) explains:

We do things in reverse in the theater. We get the script which is . . . at the end of the thought process; we . . . go back and find out what the thought was . . . the impulse that created the thought that created the words.

This was the intention behind the monologue exercise as previously indicated, that is to allow the participants to grapple more directly with the text not only to further their understanding of fictional characters and enable their emotive sympathy or

emotional engagement by walking in their shoes, so to say, but also for them to take a closer look at stylistic devices and how these can affect how readers perceive fictional characters. In other words, as Caracciolo (2014: 30) observes, “fictional minds are the result of stylistic and narrative techniques that invite readers to attribute experiences and mental processes to nonexistent beings, engaging with and reacting to them in various ways.”

“Monologue Writing” - Method

Now that the participants were all familiar with the text since so much work had been done during the sessions, it was thought appropriate that they should try to empathise more closely with the fictional characters by having them look through the story and find words they associated with the fictional characters. These words were recorded by me and then transferred to sticky notes which were placed around the room together with the names or titles of the fictional characters. Participants were then given time, about 15-20 minutes to write a short monologue from the perspective of any fictional character that they chose regardless of whether the participant's gender matched the fictional character's gender and integrate within the speech any 4 of the words that were stuck on the walls around the room.

Emmott (1997: 118) likens this experience of filling the textual spaces by the readers to make sense of fictional characters, especially secondary fictional characters about whom not a lot of information is usually given, to a blind person trying to find their way by the little signals received from and encountered in the environment. “Like a blind person” she explains, “the reader receives only intermittent signals of the presence of the characters from the text and must therefore monitor the fictional context mentally.” Caracciolo (2013a: 83) expands on this idea

to not only include the use of the readers' imagination and the projection of their consciousness stimulated by the information provided by the text, but in its absence, in these gaps, so to say, "I would argue that the absence of fictional consciousnesses ... lays bare the workings of the reader's own consciousness" because "narrative experientiality always implies the *reader's* consciousness".

"Monologue Writing" – Post-Exercise Discussion and Outcome Analysis

As intended through the monologues written from a fictional first-person stance, this "reader's consciousness" became more strikingly apparent. These personal interpretations were further laid bare in the discussions that ensued after the monologues were read out loud to the rest of the group and the rest reacted to what they heard role-playing as any other fictional character from the short story, even as an alter-ego of the same fictional character. A sort of "hot-seating" session developed with the participant who was enacting the fictional character being the focus. Following are two of the monologues with the fictional characters of the Mother and Mrs Henne-Falcon, two secondary fictional characters that garnered much attention and heated debate among the participants. Three different monologues centred around the fictional character of the Mother, and all seemed to transmit her sense of distance:

Mother: He has to grow up ... I can never relax with these kids. I know he was crying, so I went to his room and he rubbed his eyes and he told me that he was feeling sick. I'm not stupid ... why is he not telling me what's going on ... is he just seeking attention? I don't understand him. Maybe he is only pitying himself. If he is not going to talk to me, I am the one who's looking like the bad guy. But what more can I do? Keep chasing after him to open up to me? He just pushes people away, so we are not going to keep chasing after him. He doesn't want to open up ... he won't. I will tell Peter to look out for him, At least I tried.

One factor that is immediately noticeable is the style of language used in these monologues. The diction is quite modern, but it still echoes the distance and the sense of helplessness the Mother felt when faced with Francis. The shocked reactions of some of the participants to the Mothers' cold reaction in her speech, were very indicative of personal schemas that they had formed in their personal life of how a Mother should act and feel towards her offspring - how to be maternal. The generalised perspective is that being maternal meant that you protected your offspring by offering warmth and support. Similar to what Long (2003: 145) observes about reading groups, the ensuing comments from the participants tended "to articulate or even discover who they are: their values, their aspirations, and their stance toward the dilemmas of their worlds."

- Berta (as Nurse): Oh my God!*
- Anita (as Mrs Henne-Falcon): That's quite cold for a Mother to speak that way ... it's your own child you are talking about ...*
- Tina (as the Mother): Yes, but what can I do more than this? And I've tried ... he doesn't want to ... to open up*
- Berta (as Nurse): I take care of your children really ...*
- Becky (also as Mother): But the Mother has to provide for them ... I can't provide for them ... I give the money to the Nurse ... I am the boss.*
- Lisa (as Mrs Henne-Falcon): I have to agree with you ... too many children ... we deserve rest.*
- Anita (as Mrs Henne-Falcon): But look at me ... even though you are the Mother ... I am throwing these children a party ... I am making sure that they enjoy themselves on their birthday.*
- Tina (as the Mother): And Francis is really leaning forward to it (sarcastic) ... you see ... he is so ungrateful ... just a weakling.*
- Anita (as Mrs Henne-Falcon): That's very harsh coming from his own Mother ... I am an outsider, and I haven't even told you how weak he is, and you have already ... in some ways betrayed him.*
- Tina (as the Mother): But I am trying to make Peter tell me what is going on if Francis won't speak.*

- Berta (as Nurse): Peter is his saviour and his hero while he should obey*
- Tina (as the Mother): Peter always fights his battles for him. He needs ...*
- Anita (as Mrs Henne-Falcon): He needs to let loose ... Why don't you go in and deal with this as a Mother? You're the Mother at the end of the day he is your son ... he is a part of ... a part of the image that represents you ... if you thought having children was a hassle you should have thought about it in the first place ...now deal with it.*

The primary thing to be noticed is that participants were free to choose any fictional character they wanted. Most of the group members went for Mrs Henne-Falcon, the Mother and the Nurse. It seems that these secondary fictional characters, were more interesting as the participants could insert their own interpretations and agendas of these fictional characters since there was not much information to go by about them from the short story. These fictional characters seemed to have intrigued them the most and the different shades that the participants gave them are a clear indication of their own interpretations of these fictional characters.

Despite the dissimilarities in the interpretations there were still core similarities in the portrayals of the same fictional character: the distance of the Mother, the diplomatic concern of the Nurse and the busy-body meddling of Mrs Henne-Falcon. Ultimately, the textual references to the fictional characters were still at the core of their interpretation and although there was freedom to their characterisation it was still bound within the context of the literary text. As Phelan (2005: 47-8) contends meaning arises from “the feedback loop among authorial agency, textual phenomena, and reader response” but still goes on to admit that there would be “many gaps between author’s intentions and readers’ conclusions about these intentions”.

These conclusions can be influenced by many factors including the reader's own personal life as is the case for Anita and her reactions during the above dialogue. Anita took on Mrs Henne-Falcon's character and through her she imposed her own expectations and intentions about the Mother's character. She became highly agitated during the workshop and very judgmental towards the Mother's lack of involvement with the children and the coldness in her attitude. Looking back at her first interview before the process began, it is interesting to note that she had referred to her own life and how she felt her parents were intrusive and controlling. Anita divulged that:

Anita: So basically, I write. And any of my protagonists, she's defined by me, and usually I choose female protagonists right from my point of view, my perspective. There is definitely a theme where you know, there is parental, where parents, there are issues with the parents. In my life, my parents are very controlling, very manipulative and all they want to do is control me to the point of (uncomfortable pause) you know they control my single, my every single breath taken. But all they show me is indifference, where they don't care what happens to me, what I think, they don't think my problems are real problems, and so I just try to take this theme and place it into my protagonists.

Anita's words during her first interview clearly indicate the root of her anger and vicious attacks, disguised as Ms Henne-Falcon's character, and it is of no wonder that they were directed at the fictional character of the Mother. Anita (as Mrs Henne-Falcon) accused the Mother of neglecting her children and not trying to understand them. Anita insisted that the Mother was "parentifying" Peter by making him take on the role of a parent instead of doing her job. Anita's ultimate accusation was that if the Mother had not wanted children, she should not have had them in the first place. Anita had found a way through Mrs Henne-Falcon to safely vent her personal anger at her own parents, although still in-keeping within the confines of the storyworld and making sense within the framework of the depicted fictional characters. Holland (1968: 277-78) tends to explain that such dynamics occur:

Because the character satisfies a need for us. The language and action of the play [or narrative] build up certain needs and feelings in us, and the characters act out objectively certain ways of managing those needs and feelings. Thus, our so-called "identification" with a literary character is actually a complicated mixture of projection and introjection, of taking in from the character certain drives and defenses that are really objectively "out there" and of putting into him [sic] feelings that are really our own, "in here".

The same observations about readerly projections and interpretations can be applied to the depiction of Mrs Henne-Falcon by Clint from the second group. In Mrs Henne-Falcon's case, it was her bumbling nature that came across. As Clint put it "I always assumed that she was fat!" and "I always saw her as a bumbling bubbly kind of person". This was reflected in his monologue for her fictional character:

Mrs Henne-Falcon: Oh gosh, I'm so looking forward to my yearly party tonight! (sniff) For Heaven's sakes I'm already smelling that birthday cake I've got in the oven. I bet that sweet child Francis will adore my cake ... (thinks for a bit) ... Well, he has always enjoyed my cooking so why not? Oh, particularly my lovely sausage rolls. Oh, and as soon as he arrives, I better tell him that there's nothing to fear in the dark as he seems quite afraid of it. Come to think of it, I better switch off the lights right away so that we can start playing hide-and-seek as soon as the party starts (switches off lights)

Whiteley (2010) builds upon Gerrig's (1993) theory of participatory responses (p-responses) when she points out certain reactions by readers to the storyworld that mimic those they would have to situations in real life. These responses might not be instigated by the text itself but by the readers' own personal experiences where they to find themselves in the same circumstances. Through her research, Whiteley (2010: 176) has introduced the term "participation-worlds" which she (Whiteley 2016b: 516) defines as "mental representations created by the reader (or hearer) during discourse processing, which are not part of the communicated text-worlds but which both reflect and reinforce participant's involvement in the discourse." Readers project their own "unrealized hopes, desires, and fears regarding narrative events" (Whiteley 2010: 176-77) onto the text and thus they create hypothetical situations based on their personal experiences in the discourse-world. For example, in this

regard one can mention the references to food associated with Mrs Henne-Falcon as a form of comfort. There is no connection between food and emotional comfort in the text, but this association was a projection by Clint who also envisaged Mrs Henne-Falcon as being a big a person with a rotund stature and bubbly disposition:

Clint: ...but the fact that Mrs Henne-Falcon, I see her as if she is a very happy go lucky person, I do not know if that comes from the fact that one of my classmates described her like that or whether it is in the text itself.

As has been mentioned previously, such projections are probably the result of personal schemas which are informed by Clint's or the other participants' own experiences in the discourse-world. Clint had made the connection between using food as a sign of making a person feel at ease. This participant fell back on the stereotype of the overeating, chubby, bubbly and busybody elderly lady that is to be found in literature and in society. Since these are not responses that can be attributed to any textual features or form part of the storyworld, Whiteley (2010: 176) seems to imply that at present Text World Theory cannot yet justify these world-switches and she proposes that:

these hypothetical worlds be called "participation-worlds" in accordance with Gerrig's notion of participatory response. This means that they are mental representations created by the hearer or reader during discourse-processing which are not part of the communicated text-worlds, but which both reflect and reinforce participant's involvement in the discourse.

Certainly, the participants were having mental representations of these fictional characters and how they would act and speak that went beyond the text. Interestingly enough, another element that the participants pointed out during the discussions was the fact that once one took on this fictional first-person stance, they became more aware how the story was being told from that fictional character's perspective, for example, how their attitude towards a fictional character changed once they saw the story from their perspective. For the participants, it became clearer how definitely

the readers' views of situations and characters in a narrative can change depending from whose perspective it was being told.

Clark (2007) agrees that such rewriting activities are certainly beneficial to make students aware of the power of point of view and how authors can exploit this technique to elicit or instil sympathy/empathy or the opposite with specific fictional characters. Clearly, some participants became sensitised to this stylistic device:

Anita: I realised no one is the bad guy if the story is told from their perspective ... they all have their own stories and they don't see themselves as being bad ... If it is from the Mother's perspective then she is the perfect Mother, she has nothing wrong ... if it is from the children's perspective then she is a bad Mother ... she doesn't really care. So in some ways it is really ... playing around with perspective.

Miriam: I have a wider context of how one should interact with a character and I can understand more the author's thoughts about a character and even interpret them in a different context not always from one point of view ... I always had an emotional attachment with the character especially if the story is good but physically when we did these exercises, I could literally put myself in their shoes ... no one is a minor character from now on ... I will ask why did the author include him or her?

Mandy: It helped because you do not have fixed point of view on the character and you have a variety to make you think ... and to choose the character's reality ... you have the grey areas ... depending on whose perspective you are seeing it form

Mark: I think, I could see through the character's perspective ... Peter and Francis, I could see the difference between them yet the similarities and I could see the Nurse which at first when you read the story ... you wouldn't think she is so important but without her the story would not be the same ... we see through the characters' perspectives and how they reason ... in a way for example the Mother you don't give her fault if that is how she was raised ... she thinks she is doing the right thing ... teaching her kids how to be strong.

Miriam: Yes ... because I mean ... not everyone is the same, everyone has their idiolect, so I think it makes you more aware of who that character is, the way they think, the way they speak.

These participants' interjections positively show the benefits of directly engaging with a text through various creative forms of rewriting, perspective taking, and other dialogic exercise that "de and re-centr[e] texts in a number of contexts, forms and with attention to a number of potential voices, previously covert or textually denied" (Giovanelli 2010: 218).

As indicated previously, all activities and group dynamics were intended to mimic a classroom/lecture room situation with the difference that these workshops had a more enactive practical approach to them to enhance the possibility of making the internal metacognitive processes more visible and external. In addition, such workshops not only aimed to challenge the disembodied approach to learning that is salient in lecture rooms, especially in post-secondary institutions which these young participants attended, but also the "verbocentric dogmatism" (Eco 1976: 228) that tends to reign supreme in the same education system. I wanted to experiment a bit with other ways than written or spoken mediums as I had done with the Visual Matrix exercise in the beginning.

Tableau as a form of Text World Theory Exploration of Story's Endings.

"Two Salient Moments Tableaux" - Method

This time instead of using visual images as a form of extended cognition "tool" to further the participant's storyworld exploration, I wanted to use their own bodies to create images as a medium to enter further into the fictional realm and also to enable them to externalise more their understanding. I decided to use the tableau form which involved the participants dividing into two groups and working together to decide on capturing two moments from the story which they felt remained with them, or struck them more particularly than others, or they felt were representative of

the whole narrative. They then represented this in the form of a statue or still picture which the other participants could look at, walk around, touch and observe as if they were at a museum or art gallery.

Working on the tableau engaged the participants in each group in a dialogue which externalised their understanding of the story and forced to them to verbalise their reasons for choosing to focus on those two particular scenes from the narrative. In this way the tableau also had a social function of getting students to work together, visually externalise their understanding of the text, challenge their own and others' ideas, debate a point of view until finally through an act of "transmediation" (Suhor 1984) they translated the textual medium and captured it into one still image through their bodies. This was not only just a transformation of one sign system into another but it "increase[d] students' opportunities to engage in generative and reflective thinking because learners must invent connections between the two sign systems". (Siegel 1995: 455)

Further to forming the tableau the participants were instructed that while one set of participants were in position as part of the tableau, the others were to go around and look at the frozen participants closely just as if they were visitors at a museum looking at a statue. They were to try and guess from which part of the narrative the moment was taken. Once they tried to guess and gave their opinion, they moved closer to the statue. At any instance they were allowed to touch the statues forming the tableau and any statue that was touched was to utter one statement taken from that moment in the text. Once they had established the moment, the viewers could then have one last look at the tableau and "fix" any of the statues that they felt were not portraying the fictional character/moment correctly in their opinion. Once the group of viewers agreed on all positions, the tableau spoke

the statements in the right order to bring the scene momentarily alive. Once one set was done then it was the turn of the statues of the tableau to become viewers and the viewers to form the new tableau and the process was repeated.

The tableau visually portrayed the two moments that the group had decided upon, together, were the most salient from the story. Interestingly, both groups (2016-17 and 2018) chose the ending of the story as being one of the most important moments in the narrative. The other two moments were the beginning of the story with Francis being asleep and Peter visualising the big bird swooping on to him, (Group 1 - 2016-17), and the moment that Francis pretended to be sick so that he would not go to the party (Group 2 - 2018). The viewers could literally walk through the moment and into the storyworld, they could literally switch through each fictional character's inner world at that moment in time as they could see what was happening and hear the inner voice of the fictional character as each statue was touched.

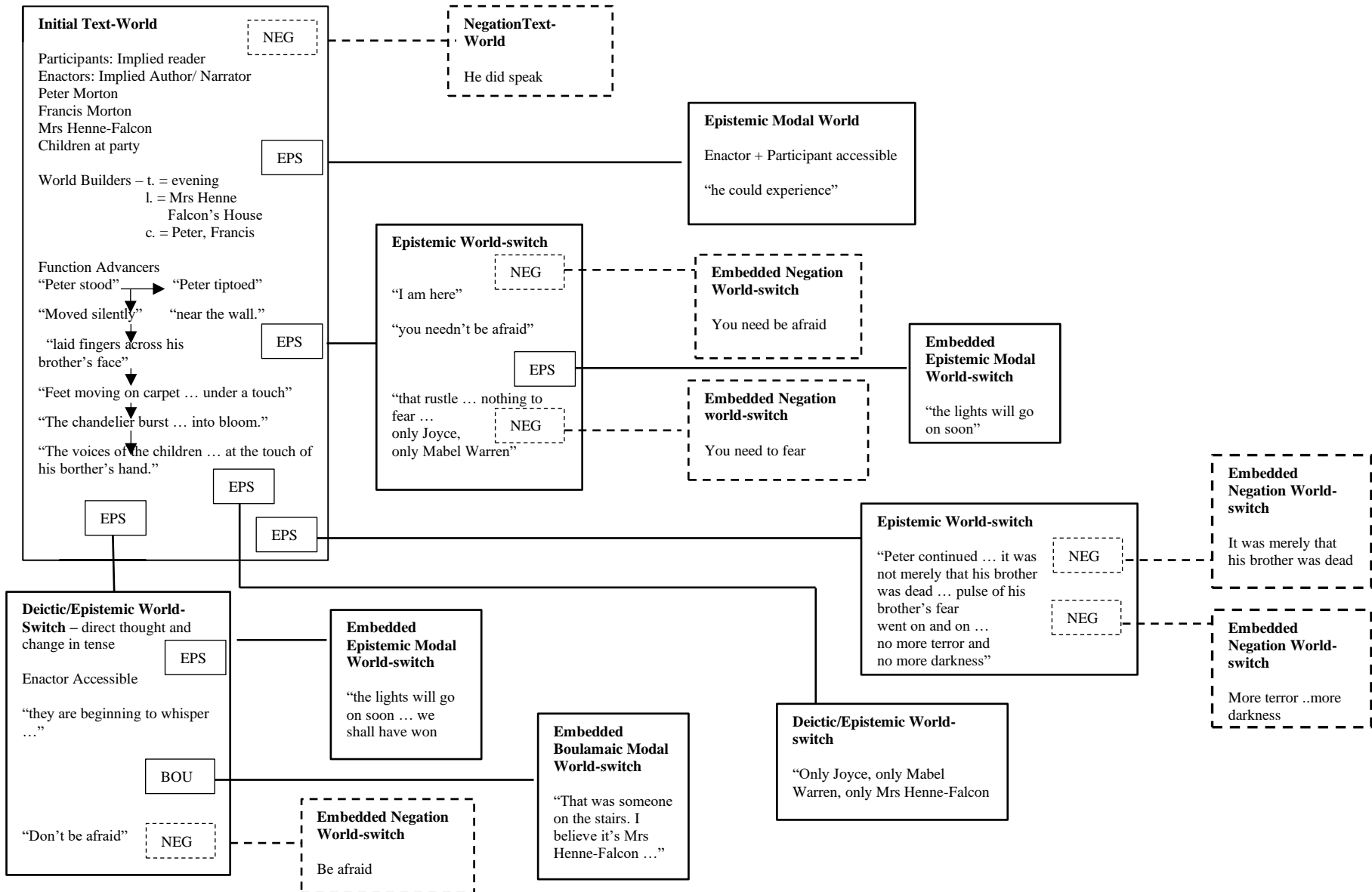
The tableau is very much in keeping with the world-switches that have been mentioned previously in relation to the Text World Theory approach. On pages 219-20 there is a graphic representation of the world-switches occurring in the last two paragraphs of the story which was a moment chosen by the two groups as being a crucial point in the narrative. The fact that both groups chose this moment may indicate the universality of the foregrounding of this moment to the readers of this short story.

Mappings of Text-world Switches – Ending of Short Story

A look at Figure 5 (page 225) will visually indicate the contrast that existed between what was going on around the twin boys while they waited in the darkness

for the game of hide-and-seek to come to an end and the escalating sense of desperation inside of them. Here, I will go into detail into these text-world switches as these explanations will illustrate how the participants embodied these abstract shifts through the next workshop exercise that will be discussed in more depth after this section. It becomes very apparent that the interior world-switches that are focalised in the narrative are Peter's thoughts which is clearly indicated through the negation of "he [Francis] did not speak", Peter is doing all the thinking, Francis' inner-world thoughts or words do not feature at all. The readers hear Peter's thoughts as he meanders from frantic panic in not being able to find Francis in the dark to realising how terrorised his brother must be. Through the use of negation "You needn't be afraid" and "There is nothing to fear", Peter tries to deny the fear that he feels by constantly projecting it onto his brother. Peter sincerely believes that these negative emotions exist only in his brother.

Figure 5 – Text World Theory Mappings of the last two paragraphs from Graham Greene’s “The End of the Party”.



The figure with these Text World Theory mappings on the previous page visibly shows how much is going on on an abstract level inside Peter's mind when on the surface he has to be silent and calm because he feels this overwhelming need to protect Francis which he has to do silently otherwise they will be caught in the game of hide-and-seek. Through the repeated use of the negative form, Peter negates the existence of the darkness and fear around him/them. There are a lot of embedded inner world-switches which denote the frenzied pace with which Peter's thoughts were changing, "I am here", "Don't be afraid" and the repetition of "only" as a soothing tone is created to calm Francis, even if these words are uttered only in Peter's mind. Attention is never deflected from these world-switches of Peter's interior monologue except for his awareness of his surroundings in the pitch darkness.

Information is withheld from the reader mimicking Peter's blindness in the dark and maximising the suspense through lack of knowledge of what might happen at any moment, piquing the readers' curiosity as to the possible outcome. The approaching voices, the faint footsteps and other muffled sounds are all utilized by the narrator to a terrifying effect. The ultimate surprise comes at the very end of the story when through a combination of world-switches between the sudden stop of the direct voices of the children, followed by the screams of Mrs Henne-Falcon and the children as we follow their eyes through the narrator's voice to behold Peter holding Francis' hand tightly in his own. The terrifying moment escalates as Peter does not cease holding the hand of his lifeless brother who had died out of fear of darkness.

Another rapid world-switch occurs here through a series of negations "no more terror and no more darkness" with the surprising contrasting world-switch through the repeated "his brother's pulse went on and on" and Peter's puzzling

“obscure self-pity” indicating the twist at the end of the story: it was slowly dawning on Peter that the fear he had always projected on his brother had been his own fear all along. His hand touching that of Francis in the dark had released his brother from that same terror in which he was now trapped without the previous possibility of escape by denying in it himself and projecting on the now dead Francis.

All participants were shocked at the fact that Francis died at the end; they were not expecting it. Hidalgo-Downing (2020: 152) observes that “surprise is successful if there is a balance between the anticipation of possible outcomes and the defeat of the reader’s expectations regarding such outcomes (Prince 2003: 96; Toolan 2009, 2016)”. Participants knew that something negative will happen to Francis during the party as this is clearly foreshadowed from the beginning of the story with the repeated references to the date – 5th January. Tension escalates from the moment that the Nurse hands the boys over to Mrs Henne-Falcon and the story moves at a very rapid pace towards the tragic ending. The readers expect something negative will happen just not to the extent that Greene takes it.

The ending of this story makes the reader revisit the whole story and review some conclusions made throughout, mainly the fact that Francis was the one to be portrayed as a weakling while Peter was seen as the protector of his little brother. In Text World Theory terms this could be understood as what Gavins (2007: 141-42) refers to as “world repair” or “world replacement” since the new information or readers’ incremented knowledge makes them rethink their perspectives on some character/s or situation/s within the storyworld. In this case, the ending of the story forces the reader to understand that Peter too was as weak as his brother and that the fear he felt was not a question of a supernatural twin connection but merely the fact that he was feeling his own fear but negating it. In a way, the roles of the brothers

are reversed by the ending in that now the reader understands that Francis ironically was protecting Peter because he was acting as a distraction to his older twin brother from facing the fear within himself. Rabinowitz (2002), Prince (2003) and Toolan (2016) all speak about the importance of the endings of narratives which they all see as attracting a lot of attention from the readers since there is a feeling of tying up the different threads even the ending might be open. Moreover, endings tend to make the readers think of the whole story, there is a sort of revisiting of the narrative as Rabinowitz (1987: 162) asserts:

because, by the general rule of conclusive endings, readers are invited to revise their understanding of the beginning of the text so that the ending, which at first seems a surprise, turns out to be in fact prefigured.

This is precisely what the participants experienced through their tableaux. Primarily the participants lived through the moment of the ending leading to some reflections that could only be gained through this embodied refiguration of the text that enabled the participants to link their reading comprehension to their own personal experiences.

“Two Salient Moments Tableaux” – Post-Exercise Discussion and Outcome Analysis

One such example of this embodied reflection came when, once her silent representation of Peter holding his dead brother had finished, Mandy exclaimed in horror. Her group had portrayed this moment in the style of Michelangelo's “La Pieta”, the famous sculpture depicting the figure of Mary, Mother of Jesus, holding her dead son in her lap. The fact that the participants linked the death of Francis with such an iconic depiction of suffering is already a reflection of how their own understanding, ideas and values related to the notion of this negative emotion and how they projected this on the text without the latter ever hinting to it. This can be

cited as an example of the process of “self-implication” or “identification” (Whiteley 2014, 2016b: 510) where the participant’s sense of self is “involved in the mappings between discourse-world” and storyworld resulting in very “close emotionally significant connections between readers and text-world entities (see Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009a; Whiteley 2014).

Mandy was shocked by the proximity of the other participant’s “lifeless” body to her own as she held him in her arms. Through her embodied awareness in the tableau, she projected herself into the mind of Peter at the moment when Peter realised that he was holding his brother’s hand. Like Peter, Mandy was holding the other participant’s hand and supine body, who was now “dead” and she imagined herself as young child holding a lifeless body of her younger sibling. This sudden metacognitive moment made her appreciate the horror of the situation – she came in touch with Peter’s fear, and understood it, with the result that it impacted her personally – she emotionally, psychologically, and physically experienced “the feedback loop” (Stockwell 2009a: 95) which “alludes to such circularity ... from the text-world to the discourse-world in the production of ‘empathy’ that ‘indicates a shift back ... towards a realignment of [a] readerly stance’” (Canning 2017: 174). In fact, Mandy exclaimed immediately:

Mandy: The thing is that when you read it, it does not affect you but now doing it physically ... actually having someone lying in your hands and you know that that is your brother and he is dead, it suddenly just hit me!! I mean I could feel her body, her breathing going up and down ... so can you imagine an 8 or 9-year-old feeling that and then suddenly that movement, that breathing stops. And it’s like you realise how in shock he was, that he did not realise that his brother had stopped breathing ... he still felt his brother’s heart beat going on ... so he was denying so much ...

Mark: It is such a crucial moment ...

Research: Why is it so crucial? What emerges for you in that moment?

Mandy: It becomes obvious that Peter is the one who is afraid ... or at least he is afraid too ...it's like you become aware how you do not know to what extent a person can be afraid ... I mean people will tell you what is there to be afraid of in the dark? But you do not know how afraid you can be until you go through it yourself.

Miriam: And one other thing it is terrifying thinking you are there in the dark. I mean I know that we were acting, and these are my friends but the fact that I was there, part of the tableau and they were walking around me, it was like Francis there in the dark and thinking that Mabel Warren or Joyce could be creeping up on him to do him harm ... it is terrifying for me let alone for him.

The tableau became an extended tool of cognition for the participants. Through it they could inhabit the storyworld which in turn made them reflect and experience the moment which previously was just merely opaque text depicting a foreign reality for them.

Embodiment and Text World Theory

The tableaux and the other practical exercises manage to capture exactly how this embodied approach informs Text World Theory and the insights it yields on the rich textured dynamic of reader-text interaction. This embodied approach concretises and externalises the various internal abstract dynamics of the boundary crossings.

Whiteley (2016b: 510) observes:

Sensations of immersion and emotional involvement are thought to arise from the various ways in which readers transgress this ontological boundary, psychologically projecting into the text-worlds they create (Kuiken et al. 2004; Lahey 2005; Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009a; Whiteley 2010).

Further strengthening this argument of how these multimodal embodied projections enhance the concepts that Text World Theory puts forward about readerly projections and boundary crossings is Gibbons' (2010: 304) observation that “[c]rucially, this process forges a concretised form of trans-world projection for the reader, an embodied connection between participant and enactor” and “accounts for

the reader's self-awareness and heightened involvement with the book as object, as narrative and as literary experience ... Experientially, the reader has a sense of being situated somewhere in-between their own reality and the storyworld". This is precisely the sensation that the tableau images created for some of the participants as their trans-world projections were captured and externalised as was discussed above in the case of Mandy.

Completely resonating with the conclusions being drawn from this present research and scaffolding on Gerrig's (1993: 2) notion of the reading act as "performing the narrative" (See Chapter 2), Gibbons (2010: 305) elaborates that:

The figured trans-world itself can be seen as vital to this effect, since although text- and discourse-world maintain their ontological separation, the readerly impression of enactive participation augments the blurring of the boundary or, in other words, the membrane itself. The discourse-world and the text-world are distinct worlds in ontological terms, yet by dramatising the reader's relationship with the book through performance ... making the boundary itself seem almost indistinguishable. The reader ... through subjective and corporeal resonance, in this intermedial space s/he seems to actively explore it.

This research is clearly revealing how the text by itself does not make readers immerse themselves into its world. The text needs the readers' input from their own experiences and understanding of the discourse-world to come alive in their mind and for them to interact with it. This exactly what Stockwell (2009a: 106) emphasises in his reflection on the dynamic between stylistic devices and readers:

Literature is the complex artistic extension of our everyday linguistic and cognitive capacities. Literary genres and registers are assigned a global value – as comic, as novelistic, as lyric, as lament, or as literary, and so on – and this general frame does affect the way in which the work itself is experienced. But aside from this general assignment, readers do not suddenly become non-human beings when confronted by the literary.

It is clearly a combination of these two parts which makes the narrative and fictional characters come alive and for the readers to decide to allow the fiction to lure them into its world. It was not merely a question of identification with fictional characters that became apparent and aided the participants to understand better the text.

Another factor that became more visible for them were the stylistic devices used to draw their attention to certain images, atmosphere and themes which became more tangible for them. As has already been indicated, another scene that the participants decided to depict was the beginning of the story when Francis was asleep, and Peter was looking at him and imagining them being so similar until the image of a swooping big dark bird makes him wake up his twin brother from his nightmare.

Already from the first few paragraphs of the story there is constant reference to the dark, the fear of the dark, Francis' hand across his mouth and the reference to the imaginary bird all come together to instil this sense of dread. The importance of beginnings, like endings, of stories has already been highlighted in another part of this thesis but will now be revisited through the comments of the participants after they discussed this still image that one of the groups recreated as a tableau. I am going to reproduce a large part of the discussion here as the comments of the participants are very revealing and self-explanatory:

- Berta:* *I think we need to fix Peter's hand ... it is too relaxed*
- Researcher:* *Why the hand? Is there something about the hand?*
- Anita:* *The hand flung over the face ... and the hand that Peter was holding at "The End of the Party" ... it is Francis' hand ... and the author points out with use of the "same, the same" ... repetition ...*
- Tina:* *It's fascinating that she remembered that detail*
- Researcher:* *It came back to you when you saw them?*
- Anita:* *It's just that part the same eyes, the same hair, when I read it ... that really caught me, so it is just imprinted on me ...*
- Researcher:* *Those words ...*
- Anita:* *Those words conjured up a position were Francis and Peter are having this interaction and I simply cannot forget it ...*

These insights did not stop here, the tableau opened the participants' eyes to the power of foregrounding stylistic devices in the short story especially the use of repetition. In the narrative Greene seems to weave the motifs of "twins" and "death"

by using a lot of repetitions and constantly echoing the same images, diction, children's games and also familiar colloquial expressions that direct the reader's attention and constantly haunt him with a feeling of impending doom. Such repetitions include variations on the word "dark", "darkness", "the dark" and lack of light; images of birds and bats with dark big wings; the sound of the hearbeats; the sameness of the twins and their extraordinary connections; hide-and-seek in the dark and the harmless childish party games; and finally, the constant taunting through expressions like "cowardy, cowardy, custard". These are spread throughout the narrative creating a tapestry of connections which seem to echo but are not directly linked together until the end when suddenly with Francis' death they all start making sense.

These dark references include the swooping image of the bird in the beginning and which appears again at the end and is suddenly transformed into a bat with emphasis always on the wings like some sort of angel of death foretelling the child's demise. Toolan (2016: 28) insists that the use of repetition and the withholding of information are devices that arrest the narrative from moving forward too quickly and also create a space for the reader to fill in the gaps. This is how suspense and curiosity are aroused and how the narrative is held back from "advancing to a new situation, perhaps a crisis and a resolution" too quickly or too slowly.

The use of repetition, especially the references to the big bird swooping and the hands imagery in the short story, did not slip by the participants' attention as is evident in this following interaction which I have reproduced at length as it is so revealing and insightful:

- Tina: Basically, you choose what you are going to represent by the events that struck you the most ... the bird scene was the first scene and then he mentions it again at the end.*
- Researcher: The bird was something that remained in your mind ...*
- Lisa: The bird struck me and even the hand*
- Tina: Even the hand true ... it was very vivid in my imagination*
- Researcher: Can you elaborate on that?*
- Tina: The writer kind of creates this image that is that image which sets free the reader's imagination kind of ... it is like the starting point of the journey but and then you always go back to that starting point*
- Researcher: So, you are saying in a story it seems as if there are certain things which you always go back to*
- Tina: Like events that stand out*
- Mickey: Our image was an interpretation of the fear of the bird but more so what their group did was the hand ... it was not clear at first but then suddenly it all made sense ... the hand in the beginning across Francis' mouth and the hands at the end the cause of Francis' death ... wow*
- Researcher: The hand came up again*
- Mickey: I mean the image of the hand was symbol!*
- Tina: And it's funny how we didn't even see the movie and yet we know what it was going to look like ...*
- Researcher: Like you could see the characters?*
- Berta: It is like when you read a book you don't remember every single scene but there are a few scenes in which you connected with the characters and personally I chose the one where Francis dies because first of all it was confusing ... I didn't really expect that he will die, and I could connect to his like fear ... I could relate to his fear and also to Peter's and it shows how these two scenes make up the story and they were the two most prominent scenes*
- Tina: And we didn't even plan on linking ... linking the two scenes and yet they showed death and we showed the fear of death ...*
- Researcher: And if you think about it ... you showed the beginning, and they showed the end*
- Tina: Wow true ... they did show the ending*

The participants were echoing what Torgovnick (1981: 3-4) emphasises when she points out:

It is difficult to recall *all* of a work after a completed reading, but climactic moments, dramatic scenes, and beginnings and endings remain in the memory and decisively shape our sense of a novel as a whole.

Another important contribution of this research is the analysis of readers' response to story endings which came alive through the power of the embodied approach of tableau. Indeed, this more enactive approach to readers' response seems to underline the fact that the participants enjoyed both their stance of "readers" and "analysts" (Stockwell 2013: 264) when allowed to participate in their own learning and given the tools of involvement into the world of the narrative and the ability to dare experiment with the textual stylistics. Hidalgo Downing (2020: 146) points out that "with hardly any research on readers' responses to narrative development and story endings (for exceptions, see Sanford and Emmott 2012; Toolan 2016)", there needs to be more empirical research done in this area, and this thesis is another step in that direction.

It is also important to posit at this point that it appears that if the main intention of an activity is not just didactic, but it also has an added dimension of problem solving and it instils a sense of safety derived from the enjoyment of playing as another character, then it eases participants' crossings between real life and fiction by allowing them to blend the information that the text gives them with their own experiences. Their focus on the input of the other participants not as themselves but as fictional characters lessened not only their self-consciousness but enabled them to go beyond themselves and yield new pertinent information that was then further challenged, corroborated or adapted by the rest of the group.

These embodied exercises, in terms of a Text World Theory approach, also made the participants more aware of the boundary crossings between the discourse-world and the text/storyworlds which can also be envisaged through the detailed visual mappings as shown in other parts of the discussion in this research.

Participants became more aware of the inner cogitations within fictional characters'

thinking and actions together with those world-switches that are created by situations in the narrative. They could project themselves inside the text and become co-participants and, at times, co-authors too. These two stances made them utilise the textual material to reflect upon stylistic elements and the development of fictional characters, even the secondary ones. This enactive cognitive stylistic approach proved to be a more dynamic entry into the interaction between reader and text.

This research further emphasises that young people need a more hands-on, practical approach to literature and that ultimately, they can derive pleasure from their learning if they feel that they are in control of it. Hutto (2005: 52) strongly believes in this enactivist approach which can be extended to the learning experience in that there needs to be more focus on this experientiality of literature as is revealed in his following words:

The only way to understand 'what-it-is-like' to have an experience is to actually undergo it or re-imagine undergoing it. Gaining insight into the phenomenal character of particular kinds of experience requires practical engagements, not theoretical insights. The kind of understanding we seek when we want to know 'what-it-is-like' to have such and such an experience requires responding in a way that is enactive, on-line and embodied or, alternatively, in a way that is re-enactive, off-line and imaginative – and still embodied. It involves undergoing and/or imagining experiences both of acting and of being acted upon.

This research revealed that educators' willingness and passion to teach is not enough to entice reluctant youths to turn to literature and enjoy it. A more successful approach to entice young people to interact with literature should include: a more embodied and hands-on approach to work with the text, discussions about fictional characters as if they are real human beings, awareness of the students' point of departure in their understanding (their deictic *origo* in the discourse-world) and an understanding of those personal elements that interfere with their attraction to reading even before they decide to attempt reading.

A dialogic interaction between educator and students is paramount, finding a balance between allowing the learners space to experiment, discover and interact with a text without infusing it with a sacred awe of being untouchable because it is a classic. Concurrently, one also understands the need for guidance from a more experienced expert reader (teacher) who raises the awareness and gives the necessary technical information to ease this textual exploration necessary for reading done in lecture/classrooms. Hanauer (2001: 108) puts this succinctly in the following observation:

The reading process involves an interaction between the reader, the reader's accumulative knowledge of the reading process, the specific text that is being read and the physical, psychological and social context within which the text appears.

This research has revealed that meaning making is a two-way dynamic process involving a bottom-up and a top-down interaction between reader and text. Further empirical exploration in the area of personal emotive interactions and how these affect the reception and shape the understanding of texts needs to be encouraged.

The case of readers as projected participants in the fictional world cannot be disregarded any further by academic researchers who deem this subjective form of reading as being beneath the rigour of literary theory. It is a reality that these young participants understand a text better if they can make sense out of it through their own experiences and these need to be further investigated empirically to bolster the dwindling investment in literature that is the experience of so many young students. More empirical research into the discourse of young participants as they interact with fiction is the way forward to better understand the direction that we as educators need to take to guide and instil interest. This will be the focus of the next and final chapter of this thesis.

Chapter 8 – Conclusions

This concluding chapter sums up the salient findings that have been put forward in this thesis after having observed the two groups of participants during the months that I accompanied them in these workshops. In addition, it will discuss some of the limitations of the data and make suggestions for how these might be addressed and expanded upon in future research. The potential of this study to be applied in the education sector will also be explored. This exploratory project was mainly concerned with an in-depth qualitative analysis of the complex experience of young adults as they interacted with an entire literary text in real time using a multimodal, embodied, and cognitive stylistics approach. The main research's aim was to find the diverse elements in this reader-text interaction that enabled or hindered these young adult readers in deriving meaning from a literary text. These research participants' insights involved not only "extra-textual data" (Swann & Allington 2009: 247), such as personal projections onto the narrative, but also delved deeper into the mechanics of the language and how this in turn influenced their reactions to and entry into the storyworld.

This exploratory project threw a spotlight onto that usually implicit conceptual liminal space created between reader and text in a cyclical interaction between the information garnered by the reader in the discourse-world (the real-life experiences and knowledge that all individuals bring to the reading experience) and the micro-linguistic building blocks that create the storyworld which guide the reader into its depths to construct meaning. Another focus of this exploratory process was to make explicit the unspoken metacognitive reflections which usually occur silently when readers project themselves into the storyworld in the reading process. These metacognitive reflections were externalised through the multimodal approach that

this research took which included directly working on the literary text using several embodied activities including drama group work.

The Contributions of this Research

This study makes several contributions to empirical research on real-time reader-text interactions. One contribution of this study is that it is the first, to my knowledge, to use a cognitive poetics approach to analyse Graham Greene's "The End of the Party". This short story was not tampered with in any way but was used in its entirety.

Moreover, the qualitative approach of this research is in sharp contrast with more rigid directions given in such laboratory experiments (and lecture rooms), and participants in this exploratory process were allowed total freedom in their reactions. Consequently, the group dynamics, contributions, and conversations flowed with a certain naturalness that would happen were they participating in a less laboratory-like environment or, for example, in a literary appreciation group or book club, where more informal conversations about literature tend to occur. Therefore, this project provided the possibility to explore and analyse in further detail the discourse of the two groups of young adults and how in their conversations they developed their own critical voices.

Eriksson Barajas and Aronsson (2009: 283) insist that "very little work has primarily focused on how reading emerges during conversations (but see Allington 2007; Eriksson 2002; Eriksson Barajas 2008; Eriksson and Aronsson 2004, 2005)." More recently, researchers like Peplow et al. (2016), Canning (2017) and Whiteley and Canning (2017) have also contributed to the academic explorations in this area. My research project contributes further empirical evidence as to how the effects of

stylistic forms influence readers and how these are articulated in their conversations about literature. Therefore, this study further adds to what Whiteley and Canning (2017: 72) posit needs to be the focus of future stylistic research, that is:

work in which reader response is studied formally through the collection and analysis of 'extra-textual' datasets (Swann and Allington, 2009: 247) that capture aspects of readers' behaviours, interpretations or evaluations in response to particular literary works (and in specific contexts).

This qualitative exploration creates a "thick description" (Ryle 1949; Geertz 1973) of the complex readers-text interactions with a particular text occurring in a group environment.

The embodied activities in the practical workshop highlighted and analysed what occurs in the moment when the discourse-world participants' life experiences and knowledge intertwine with the fictional narrative space and characters that the text provided. These embodied exercises complement and elucidate the tenets of cognitive poetics in that they make more palpable "how when we read, we get from the words on the page to the meanings in our heads" (Leech & Short 2007: 87). The embodied aspect allowed the participants to show and verbalise their otherwise abstract and tacit interactions with the text and revealed as Balling (2016: 49) writes that "the reading experience is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also phenomenological and psychological phenomenon that besides cognitive, rational, conceived experiences includes sensuous and unconscious layers of meaning." This aspect proved extremely beneficial in the case of some participants who had difficulties with typical verbal processing of texts and through these embodied exercises were still able to form "a different, but still intentional, relationship with the lived world during tasks which involve the use of the written word" (Philpott 2000: 29). In this regard, the embodied exercises provided a meeting point between

text and reader and showed how words on the page play an important part in the readers' experiences of the text, which is another aim of cognitive poetics.

In these practical workshops the main foci became the readers and the text and the interactions between them. The multimodal approaches used in the practical workshops aided the participants to “represent what they know, feel, and think about what they know – and help them talk.” (Burnard 2002: 2). The participants' “know-that” was embodied, transformed and externalised through these practical workshops into their “know-how” (May 2015: 68). These embodied interactions laid bare the reflections and personal connections that the participants had with the language which is what cognitive poetics does as Sadeghi Esfehni (2012: 315) explains:

Since “literary texts are the products of cognizing minds and their interpretations are the products of other cognizing minds”, Cognitive Poetics could be considered as a powerful tool for making explicit “reasoning processes” like metaphor as the spirit of language and poem, which is a linguistics art. Furthermore, this approach is believed to clarify “the structure and content of literary texts” (Freeman, 2000, p. 253) by some conceptual mapping levels.

The practical workshops yielded in-depth information of these participants' interactions as they engaged with and experienced the text through several embodied activities which enhanced their “orientation ... by bringing certain features that are available in the text to [their] awareness” (Sadeghi Esfehni 2012: 315).

This study is an example of how stylistics can be applied without losing focus of multiple readers' responses to the same text. Whiteley (2016a) points out that a lot of research applying a cognitive poetics approach tends to be written from an expert analyst's perspective based on an interpretation of an implied ideal reader. This study enriches the potential of stylistic scholarship by “looking at the actual responses of real readers to literary texts” (Peplow & Carter 2014: 441). In doing this, it adds to the evidence that cognitive poetics can cater for both the convergent and divergent views of the same literary text. Gibbons and Whiteley (2018: 301)

observe that reader-response research, such as this study, can further explorations in stylistics by contributing further reflections on the “workings of reading and interpretation” especially the different inferences generated in readerly interactions with texts.

The present study certainly contributed to research further cognitive poetics' ability “to bring into view, by relating the structures of the work of art, including the literary text, to their presumed or observed psychological effects on the recipient, including the reader” (Gavins & Steen 2003: 1). In this regard the embodied approach of these workshops gave the participants the ability to directly interact with the text and verbalise their metacognitive abilities to not only pinpoint stylistic devices like imagery, metaphors, and other literary elements but also to denote how these foregrounding devices were affecting their understanding of the text. Text World Theory was providing the conceptual tools needed to understand the readerly projections occurring as readers meet text and the multimodal nature of the practical exercises was allowing them an embodied experience of what Herman (1994) refers to as “double deixis” – being in and out of the discourse-world and storyworld at the same time. In their embodied explorations of the text, participants were allowed to give a personal response to the imaginative and aesthetic dimensions of this literary experience. In a way, the reading experience became an event in the readers' lives by embodying the “edgework” and directly experiencing the blurring of boundary crossings between the discourse-world and storyworld that Text World Theory holds are at the heart of the immersive experience born from the convergence of text and reader.

The embodied textual explorations of these workshops were in keeping with the visual nature of Text World Theory which is evident in the graphic mappings of

the world-switches and boundary crossings that form part of this approach. These visual mappings complemented the embodied “entering” into the texts and aided students/participants to understand more concretely the mental operations – spatial switches, temporal shifts and alterations in point-of view (Giovanelli 2010) - that are active during the act of reading. Text World Theory together with these multimodal embodied activities allowed for a dialogue to emerge on different levels: i) between the participants in the discourse-world during their group discussions; ii) between the “participants” in the discourse-world and “enactors” in the storyworld as the group members interacted with the text; iii) within the participants themselves as they become “participant-enactor” in their border crossings between discourse-world and storyworld when they were in role; and iv) as “participant-enactors” in the storyworld when they interacted in roles in the group activities. These several dialogues and their embodied interactions gave space for their metacognitive thinking to be verbalised and “allowed for visible signs of learning” (Franks 2014: 201) as was revealed in the various contributions of the group members throughout the research process.

Through this exploratory project the human dimension and the textual were both given their due importance and the reading process became more of a lived experience. Participants became more mindful of how their own social, psychological, emotional, cultural resources affect their interactions with the text and how this in turn influences, encourages and constrains their understanding of it. The participants were placed in a position where through a dialogic relationship with themselves, the others in the group, and the text they could become more aware of their process-driven thinking and how they were negotiating meaning internally and externally as they directly interacted with the text and each other. Certainly, these

embodied “entries” into the storyworld were allowing for what Franks (2014: 201) describes as “visible surfaces ... to ‘fix’ moments of learning”. In this way a more “textured” (Stockwell 2009a: 44) literary experience was created and as the research initially set out to do, it gave voice to the participants’ metacognition (Flavell 1976) and developed their metalinguistic skills (Giovanelli 2016: 197).

Another positive affordance that Text World Theory offered to this research is that the participants’ background was taken into consideration and never denied. On the contrary as Giovanelli (2016: 207) reiterates “it makes this context an explicit part of the “understanding of the relationship that exists between readers as active makers of meaning and the text as a stimulus and constraint on the kinds of knowledge that can be drawn on.” This is an important point since personal projections were certainly the main entry point into the storyworld for these young adults and many of the participants were projecting their thinking, their life experiences and other personal issues in order to gain an understanding of fictional characters and situations in this short story. That was always their starting point, and this is a reality that cannot be avoided any further by literary critics and theorists. As this study clearly indicates, the personal should become of major concern in future empirical studies, especially within pedagogical contexts, to further understand the nuances of this reader-text dynamic as will be discussed further on in this chapter.

Limitations of the Research

After having seen the contributions of this research, it is important to now look at the limitations of this project. One must accept that in such explorations of the reading process where so many complex cognitive processes are occurring in these reader-text dynamics, there will be limitations inherent in the process and it is

important that these are acknowledged here. The small sample of participants and the qualitative nature of this study meant that the insights drawn are exclusive to these two groups interacting with a specific text style and within the respective contexts that these connections occurred. However, these case studies yield a richness of data and allow for further articulation of the dynamics involved in such an elusive activity which the act of reading tends to be. The intention of this research was more of an elucidatory nature intended to highlight future research possibilities into reader-text interactions which will be discussed in a later section of this chapter. The multiplicity of voices and individual insights put forward through this research are in keeping with some tenets of cognitive poetics to focus on the “felt qualities of mental life” (Brône and Vandaele 2009: 2) and to offer explanations for the individual and universal readings of a literary text. This study reaffirms Whiteley’s (2016: 100) views that cognitive poetics “is fundamentally concerned with context – that is, it regards human minds as embodied and embedded in complex physical, social, and cultural situations.”

An additional possible drawback in this study was that my presence during the research process could also have influenced the dynamics of the groups’ conversations about the text. My presence would have certainly affected the focus of the discussions since my emphasis always revolved around a more analytic approach, although, as has been stressed before, I never passed any judgement on the responses but allowed the participants’ discussions to flow freely. I was careful not to point out any textual devices or elements which the participants did not freely yield in their observations. This limitation can be linked to the “observer’s paradox” that Stockwell (2009a: 11) elaborates on when he writes that since “the object of analysis (literary reading) is itself a form of consciousness. As soon as you raise any

aspect of this object to analytical and conscious awareness, you alter its state irreparably.” Admittedly, there was an element of control and direction from my part as far as the instructions for the activities were involved. However, these exercises were devised in such a way as to allow freedom in the choice of fictional characters, selection of parts of the texts to focus on, and the creative contributions in written and spoken form were never restricted in any way. In addition, in pointing out this limitation, it is also important to note that the research’s intention was to observe these two groups in an environment that approached that of an educational setting, which indeed was the case for this research project.

With hindsight, considering the number of personal projections that manifested during the research process, it would have been interesting and perhaps beneficial if some form of more in-depth personal profiling exercise had been carried out, including an empathy disposition measuring tool, with the participants prior to commencing the workshop process. This information might have provided more insight into the reasons why certain perspectives were taken during the roleplaying exercises. Indeed, this would have given me more perspective on individual reactions to the text but considering that in a real situation the educators are not privy to a lot of information about students in their class/lectures, it would not have benefitted my conclusions to have such detailed information about each participant. I wanted to enter this experience and interact with these readers in as much an unbiased manner as possible to allow them to voice their experiences of meeting with the text and as much as possible allow them a communal interaction similar to what they would have had in any educational setting. Having said this, the first set of semi-structured interviews and to an extent the Visual Matrix exercise did give a lot

of information on the reading habits of the participants and some glimmers of personal details.

Applications of this Research

This research delved deeper into the real-fictional/reader-text conceptual space and considered the implications this can yield to illuminate further the instruction of literature in educational settings. This research's contributions focus on those elements that can enhance students' experiences as they interact with fictional texts in their lecture rooms. The research strongly indicated that a more embodied approach together with an embodied cognitive stylistics approach to the teaching of literature are of benefit both to the students and the teacher in the context of teaching literature.

Future applications of this research will prove very valuable considering the changes to the methods of assessment and systems of teaching which are gradually being implemented by the Education Department in Malta. This vision was already outlined in the National Curriculum Framework 2012 (NFC 2012) and places a lot of emphasis on moving away from a central focus on summative assessments to more formative and continuous methods of evaluating students' progress. Over the past five years considerable attention and work has been dedicated to the development of the Learning Outcomes Framework (LOF). These LOFs provide learning targets intended to guide educators in formulating different ways to effect continuous assessments that will ultimately serve as a complement to the Secondary Examinations Certificate (SEC) and MATSEC exams. The LOFs are intended to empower students by emphasising a multimodal approach to tasks set as assessments which recognise and address different forms of learning. These LOFs also accentuate

a more student-centred and dialogic approach to teaching, giving more attention to the personal through the implementation of “I can” statements that each learning outcome is articulated in.

The LOFs' aims complement the 21st Century Skills that the Malta government is placing at the core of its education and employment aims for future students and workers. Some of the skills outlined include literacy, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration. These changes are projected to be applied by all schools in Malta starting from the academic year 2020-21. These changes in the education system of Malta highlight the future implications of this research project since observations and conclusions drawn from its explorations are intended to inform further the teaching of literary texts in educational settings and to promote more dialogic student-oriented methods of instruction.

Based on the observations that have emerged in this research, I propose that a pedagogy based on embodied pedagogical cognitive stylistics with a more dialogic constructivist approach should be a way forward for the teaching of literature within this new educational environment being proposed by the Education Department in Malta. In agreement with Giovanelli (2016: 216-17) I suggest that:

A stylistics-based pedagogy encourages an approach that is sensitive to language and context and enables students to understand how a text operates rather than just explain what it is that it does ... [eliminating the] danger that much of the conscious understanding of how texts operate is lost in favour of a focus on what texts are about.

Literary teaching should have more of this stylistic focus without neglecting the importance of the personal emotional, psychological and social experiences of the reader. The participants role-taking during certain activities further enhanced their understanding of the fictional characters, plot and messages imparted from the

narrative. Through these embodied activities the participants enacted their knowledge and concepts making “the tacit ... explicit through critical reflection” (Nelson 2013: 37). The findings of this research highlight the need for more activities that have readers take on fictional roles and to externalise the thinking that goes on in this intersection between the personal and the fictional. This observation is further corroborated by Peplow et al. (2016).

This research reveals an important truth: that educators need to understand that the personal can no longer be neglected if a love and understanding of literature is to be stimulated in students. These psychological projections are to be encouraged and then utilised to further readers' interactions with the text. Students are to be empowered to take on a more active role in their learning and become more active creators of their own knowledge. A dialogic or more engaged relationship between students and educator needs to be nurtured whereby the expert acts more as a guide rather than the sole fountain of knowledge. As Dombey (2010: 118) suggests, “teachers should be encouraged to be both more adventurous and trusting of their students' capacity to engage with important issues and challenging ideas”.

A balance needs to be sought whereby readers/students are encouraged to critically question and have more freedom in their interpretations of literary texts. Through a playful approach to the mechanics of the language, students should become more responsible for the construction of the meanings they derive from literary texts. Such a constructivist pedagogy will open a space for “learners [to] use their experiences to actively construct understanding that makes sense to them, rather than acquiring understanding by having it presented in an already organized fashion” (Yule 2017: 279).

Being so actively engaged, not only do they participate in their own learning, but are also involved in a group effort of influencing, challenging, and re-enforcing each other's interpretations. More activities should get the whole group more immersed through direct interactions with the text and not treating it as a complex artefact that is impenetrable unless an expert is at hand to decode its cypher. Students should be encouraged to experiment as Pope (2003: 184) clearly indicates that at present there is "not a general atmosphere conducive ... to textual study as 'praxis'".

This research showed that when students were allowed direct access to the text and were able to re-invent, re-create and re-write it, they did this remaining faithful to the original spirit and context of the same text. It was evident that although they gave their monologues, dialogues, and letters their own voice by using contemporary diction, referring to modern interpretations of roles (like the mother going out to work) and projecting their own life experiences onto them, they still were very faithful to the parameters of the narrative's world. This indicated that students were still engaged with the text and keeping it as a focal point in spite of experimenting with it.

This research encourages more hands-on activities with an embodied pedagogical cognitive stylistics approach enabling the students to become more sensitive as to how the language in the text is being utilised to deliver suspense, create a sense of foreshadowing, attract the readers' attention to salient points and even emotionally affecting their interpretation by moving them closer or distancing them from fictional characters.

As this study indicates, once the participants are given permission to experiment with the text, then they came closer to it since in having to make it their own, they have to study it closely. For example, in writing monologues from a first-

person perspective they have to experience not only the fictional character's world and emotions but also the linguistic building blocks with which it was built. This is very much in agreement with Giovanelli (2010: 218) when he observes that "being student-centred and process-driven, textual intervention encourages critical literary awareness." This seems to be a fair summary of the aims of all educators teaching literature in an educational setting.

Many of the activities used in these workshops can be utilised and adapted within the sedentary confines of a lecture room and drama experience on the part of the educator is not necessary. The key finding that comes across from this research is that there should be more focus on a further interactive, embodied and personal immersive experience of the text. Such activities could include whenever possible a more embodied approach to literary teaching involving the students in practical activities similar to the ones that have been applied in this exploratory project: writing exercises from the perspective of different fictional characters, encouraging students to engage in dialogues as fictional characters – taking on the fictional first-person stance, hold more group discussions about texts, focus on micro-linguistic elements such as the use of punctuation as possible demarcation of fictional characters' interior worlds, and making them more aware of the their personal projections onto the text. This awareness can then be utilised to further explore how the text is also projecting its influences on them to enhance a more active reading of its storyworld.

Implications for Future Research

More research should be encouraged in observing more of these group readerly interactions in a natural setting, especially focussing on the dynamics in class and

lecture rooms with specific attention on student interactions. It became clear how participants in this study were influencing each other as was revealed in the heated discussions that ensued after the activities, the increased input manifested between the comments written during their private reading at home, and their collaborative remarks while they worked in the groups (Appendix G). Further exploration in this area of how participants influence each other will certainly yield beneficial information into how students can help each other in their literary interactions and empower them to take control of their own learning.

Overall, this research indicates the need for further empirical explorations to test the effectiveness of these practical workshops in natural education environments. I tend to agree with Giovanelli (2016: 190) when he concludes that little attention has been given to the potential of Text World Theory as “*teacher-oriented*, as a resource for the teacher.” Such research certainly highlights how cognitive science and stylistics might benefit teachers to better “consider ways that students interact and position themselves in classroom activities, and project themselves into fictional worlds” (Giovanelli 2016: 193). It would be interesting to investigate further how such practical activities utilised in this research can be adapted to the more sedentary environment and still retain that “thinking with” effect that these activities certainly provided. Another consideration could be for teachers to investigate these same activities with different text styles and see if similar results are achieved.

This research emphasises the need for explorations that allow for more students' voices to be heard in the context of student-oriented education giving less privilege to the expert mode of instruction. This exploratory process evidently reveals that once students are allowed to investigate, discuss, challenge and be creative then they act as very empowering examples for each other. Learning and

understanding of literary texts become less of a didactic imparting of knowledge from a learned professional and more of a negotiation between the students' understanding with all their schematic knowledge based on the real-life experiences and how this is used to grapple with the linguistic dimension of the literary text. In moving with the pace of the students' revelations and insights, this research emphasises the need for more studies that "focus on alternative interpretations of texts by different groups of readers, highlighting the co-constructed nature of meaning and the importance of readers' backgrounds and experiences" (Giovannelli 2013: 197-8).

It will be of additional interest to look at students in other reading environments and communities to create a comparative investigation as to how they interact and respond to literature when they are in a more relaxed atmosphere and when the texts are of their choice rather than imposed upon them. In fact, it will be beneficial to also investigate the type of literature that intrigues these young readers and how this could inform the type literature chosen to be on their exam syllabi.

Conclusion

It is evident that literary-appreciation teaching in education institutions at present is very text oriented with analysis based on more of a series of guesses as to what the author wanted to impart rather than on critical personal engagement with literary texts. Literature is seen more in the lines of ambiguous artefacts that need a special language to be deconstructed. As this study has argued throughout, a pedagogy rooted in embodied pedagogical cognitive stylistics and a dialogic student-centred approach should be encouraged. The effects of such an approach on literary meaning, understanding and teaching should be the focus of more empirical

investigation. Placing the students as more “active participants” whose “personal informed responses” are founded on their knowledge of how language works. As Skjerdingsstad and Oterholm (2016: 119) put it, these approaches allow a learning context where each student “perceives the book as a palpable construction that opens up a literary world in which literature becomes an accessible place: a place where the reading “I” can enter”.

Further research should focus on the outcome of a more dialogic approach to the teaching of literature. There should be a more student-centred approach based on dialogue between students themselves and the educator giving more space to analyse the discourse used in such an interactive group environment. Further research should be encouraged in how these personal projections impinge onto the text and in turn how the text, on a micro linguistic level, affects the way a reader can enter its worlds. It is timely that readers be given a more central role in academic literary theory research rather than presenting literary reading as such an obscure process. This thesis has demonstrated the importance and potentiality of finding a balanced dialogue between an expert-directed reading of a text and a more experiential readerly appreciation of the multi-layered worlds of the text.

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APPENDIX A

“The End of the Party” – Greene, G. (1954). *Twenty-One Short Stories*. UK: Vintage Press.

(1) PETER MORTON woke with a start to face the first light. (2) Rain tapped against the glass. (3) It was January the fifth.

(4) He looked across a table on which a night-light had guttered into a pool of water, at the other bed. (5) Francis Morton was still asleep, and Peter lay down again with his eyes on his brother. (6) It amused him to imagine it was himself whom he watched, the same hair, the same eyes, the same lips and line of cheek. (7) But the thought palled, and the mind went back to the fact which lent the day importance. (8) It was the fifth of January. (9) He could hardly believe a year had passed since Mrs Henne-Falcon had given her last children's party.

(10) Francis turned suddenly upon his back and threw an arm across his face, blocking his mouth. (11) Peter's heart began to beat fast, not with pleasure now but with uneasiness. (12) He sat up and called across the table, 'Wake up.' (13) Francis's shoulders shook and he waved a clenched fist in the air, but his eyes remained closed. (14) To Peter Morton the whole room seemed to darken, and he had the impression of a great bird swooping. (15) He cried again, 'Wake up,' and once more there was silver light and the touch of rain on the windows. (16) Francis rubbed his eyes. (17) 'Did you call out?' he asked. (18) 'You are having a bad dream,' Peter said. (19) Already experience had taught him how far their minds reflected each other. (20) But he was the elder, by a matter of minutes, and that brief extra interval of light, while his brother still struggled in pain and darkness, had

given him self-reliance and an instinct of protection towards the other who was afraid of so many things.

(21) 'I dreamed that I was dead,' Francis said.

(22) 'What was it like?' Peter asked.

(23) 'I can't remember,' Francis said.

(24) 'You dreamed of a big bird.'

(25) 'Did I?'

(26) The two lay silent in bed facing each other, the same green eyes, the same nose tilting at the tip, the same firm lips, and the same premature modelling of the chin.

(27) The fifth of January, Peter thought again, his mind drifting idly from the image of cakes to the prizes which might be won. (28) Egg-

and-spoon races, spearing apples in basins of water, blind man's buff.

(29) 'I don't want to go,' Francis said suddenly. (30) 'I suppose Joyce will

be there . . . Mabel Warren.' (31) Hateful to him, the thought of a party

shared with those two. (32) They were older than he. (33) Joyce was

eleven and Mabel Warren thirteen. (34) The long pigtails swung

superciliously to a masculine stride. (35) Their sex humiliated him, as they

watched him fumble with his egg, from under lowered scornful lids. (36)

And last year . . . he turned his face away from Peter, his cheeks scarlet.

(37) 'What's the matter?' Peter asked.

(38) 'Oh, nothing. (39) I don't think I'm well. (40) I've got a cold. I

oughtn't to go to the party.' (41) Peter was puzzled. (42) 'But Francis, is

it a bad cold?'

(43) 'It will be a bad cold if I go to the party. (44) Perhaps I shall die.'

(45) 'Then you mustn't go,' Peter said, prepared to solve all difficulties with one plain sentence, and Francis let his nerves relax, ready to leave everything to Peter. (46) But though he was grateful he did not turn his face towards his brother. (47) His cheeks still bore the badge of a shameful memory, of the game of hide-and-seek last year in the darkened house, and of how he had screamed when Mabel Warren put her hand suddenly upon his arm. (48) He had not heard her coming. (49) Girls were like that. (50) Their shoes never squeaked. (51) No boards whined under the tread. (52) They slunk like cats on padded claws. (53) When the nurse came in with hot water Francis lay tranquil leaving everything to Peter. (54) Peter said, 'Nurse, Francis has got a cold.' (55) The tall starched woman laid the towels across the cans and said, without turning, 'The washing won't be back till tomorrow. (56) You must lend him some of your handkerchiefs.'

(57) 'But, Nurse,' Peter asked, 'hadn't he better stay in bed?'

(58) 'We'll take him for a good walk this morning,' the nurse said.

(59) 'Wind'll blow away the germs. Get up now, both of you,' and she closed the door behind her.

(60) 'I'm sorry,' Peter said. (61) 'Why don't you just stay in bed? (62) I'll tell mother you felt too ill to get up.' (63) But rebellion against destiny was not in Francis's power. (64) If he stayed in bed they would come up and tap his chest and put a thermometer in his mouth and look at his tongue, and they would discover he was malingering. (65) It was true he felt ill, a sick empty sensation in his stomach and a rapidly beating

heart, but he knew the cause was only fear, fear of the party, fear of being made to hide by himself in the dark, unaccompanied by Peter and with no nightlight to make a blessed breach.

(66) 'No, I'll get up,' he said, and then with sudden desperation, 'But I won't go to Mrs Henne-Falcon's party. (67) I swear on the Bible I won't.'

(68) Now surely all would be well, he thought. (69) God would not allow him to break so solemn an oath. (70) He would show him a way. (71) There was all the morning before him and all the afternoon until four o'clock. (72) No need to worry when the grass was still crisp with the early frost. (73) Anything might happen. (74) He might cut himself or break his leg or really catch a bad cold. (75) God would manage somehow.

(76) He had such confidence in God that when at breakfast his mother said, 'I hear you have a cold, Francis,' he made light of it. (77) 'We should have heard more about it,' his mother said with irony, 'if there was not a party this evening,' and Francis smiled, amazed and daunted by her ignorance of him.

(78) His happiness would have lasted longer if, out for a walk that morning, he had not met Joyce. (79) He was alone with his nurse, for Peter had leave to finish a rabbit-hutch in the woodshed. (80) If Peter had been there he would have cared less; the nurse was Peter's nurse also, but now it was as though she were employed only for his sake, because he could not be trusted to go for a walk alone. (81) Joyce was only two years older and she was by herself.

(82) She came striding towards them, pigtails flapping. (83) She glanced scornfully at Francis and spoke with ostentation to the nurse. (84) 'Hello, Nurse. Are you bringing Francis to the party this evening? Mabel and I

are coming.' (85) And she was off again down the street in the direction of Mabel Warren's home, consciously alone and self-sufficient in the long empty road. 'Such a nice girl,' the nurse said. (86) But Francis was silent, feeling again the jump-jump of his heart, realizing how soon the hour of the party would arrive. (87) God had done nothing for him, and the minutes flew.

(88) They flew too quickly to plan any evasion, or even to prepare his heart for the coming ordeal. (89) Panic nearly overcame him when, all unready, he found himself standing on the doorstep, with coat-collar turned up against a cold wind, and the nurse's electric torch making a short trail through the darkness. (90) Behind him were the lights of the hall and the sound of a servant laying the table for dinner, which his mother and father would eat alone. (91) He was nearly overcome by the desire to run back into the house and call out to his mother that he would not go to the party, that he dared not go. (92) They could not make him go. (93) He could almost hear himself saying those final words, breaking down for ever the barrier of ignorance which saved his mind from his parents' knowledge. (94) 'I'm afraid of going. I won't go. I daren't go. (95) They'll make me hide in the dark, and I'm afraid of the dark. (96) I'll scream and scream and scream.' (97) He could see the expression of amazement on his mother's face, and then the cold confidence of a grown-up's retort.

(98) 'Don't be silly. (99) You must go. (100) We've accepted Mrs Henne-Falcon's invitation.' (101) But they couldn't make him go; hesitating on the doorstep while the nurse's feet crunched across the frost-covered grass to the gate, he knew that. (102) He would answer: 'You can say I'm ill. I won't go. (103) I'm afraid of the dark.' (104) And his mother: 'Don't be silly.

(105) You know there's nothing to be afraid of in the dark.' (106) But he knew the falsity of that reasoning; he knew how they taught also that there was nothing to fear in death, and how fearfully they avoided the idea of it.

(107) But they couldn't make him go to the party. (108) 'I'll scream. I'll scream.'

(109) 'Francis, come along.' (110) He heard the nurse's voice across the dimly phosphorescent lawn and saw the yellow circle of her torch wheel from tree to shrub.

(111) 'I'm coming,' he called with despair; he couldn't bring himself to lay bare his last secrets and end reserve between his mother and himself, for there was still in the last resort a further appeal possible to Mrs Henne-Falcon. (112) He comforted himself with that, as he advanced steadily across the hall, very small, towards her enormous bulk. (113) His heart beat unevenly, but he had control now over his voice, as he said with meticulous accent, 'Good evening, Mrs Henne-Falcon. (114) It was very good of you to ask me to your party.' (115) With his strained face lifted towards the curve of her breasts, and his polite set speech, he was like an old withered man. (116) As a twin he was in many ways an only child. (117) To address Peter was to speak to his own image in a mirror, an image a little altered by a flaw in the glass, so as to throw back less a likeness of what he was than of what he wished to be, what he would be without his unreasoning fear of darkness, footsteps of strangers, the flight of bats in dusk-filled gardens.

(118) 'Sweet child,' said Mrs Henne-Falcon absent-mindedly, before, with a wave of her arms, as though the children were a flock of chickens, she whirled them into her set programme of entertainments: egg-and-spoon races,

three-legged races, the spearing of apples, games which held for Francis nothing worse than humiliation. (119) And in the frequent intervals when nothing was required of him and he could stand alone in corners as far removed as possible from Mabel Warren's scornful gaze, he was able to plan how he might avoid the approaching terror of the dark. (120) He knew there was nothing to fear until after tea, and not until he was sitting down in a pool of yellow radiance cast by the ten candles on Colin Henne-Falcon's birthday cake did he become fully conscious of the imminence of what he feared. (121) He heard Joyce's high voice down the table, 'After tea we are going to play hide-and-seek in the dark.'

(122) 'Oh, no,' Peter said, watching Francis's troubled face, 'don't let's. We play that every year.'

(123) 'But it's in the programme,' cried Mabel Warren. (124) 'I saw it myself. (125) I looked over Mrs Henne-Falcon's shoulder. (126) Five o'clock tea. (127) A quarter to six to half past, hide and seek in the dark. (128) It's all written down in the programme.'

(129) Peter did not argue, for if hide and seek had been inserted in Mrs Henne-Falcon's programme, nothing which he could say would avert it. (130) He asked for another piece of birthday cake and sipped his tea slowly.

(131) Perhaps it might be possible to delay the game for a quarter of an hour, allow Francis at least a few extra minutes to form a plan, but even in that Peter failed, for children were already leaving the table in twos and threes. (132) It was his third failure, and again he saw a great bird darken his brother's face with its wings. (133) But he upbraided himself silently for his folly, and finished his cake encouraged by the memory of that adult

refrain, 'There's nothing to fear in the dark.' (134) The last to leave the table, the brothers came together to the hall to meet the mustering and impatient eyes of Mrs Henne-Falcon.

(135) 'And now,' she said, 'we will play hide and seek in the dark.'

(136) Peter watched his brother and saw the lips tighten. (137) Francis, he knew, had feared this moment from the beginning of the party, had tried to meet it with courage and had abandoned the attempt. (138) He must have prayed for cunning to evade the game, which was now welcomed with cries of excitement by all the other children. (139) 'Oh, do let's.' (140) 'We must pick sides.' (141) 'Is any of the house out of bounds?' (142) 'Where shall home be?'

(143) 'I think,' said Francis Morton, approaching Mrs Henne-Falcon, his eyes focussed unwaveringly on her exuberant breasts, 'it will be no use my playing. (144) My nurse will be calling for me very soon.'

(145) 'Oh, but your nurse can wait, Francis,' said Mrs Henne-Falcon, while she clapped her hands together to summon to her side a few children who were already straying up the wide staircase to upper floors. (146) 'Your mother will never mind.'

(147) That had been the limit of Francis's cunning. (148) He had refused to believe that so well prepared an excuse could fail. (149) All that he could say now, still in the precise tone which other children hated, thinking it a symbol of conceit, was, 'I think I had better not play.' (150) He stood motionless, retaining, though afraid, unmoved features. (151) But the knowledge of his terror, or the reflection of the terror itself, reached his brother's brain. (152) For the moment, Peter Morton could have

cried aloud with the fear of bright lights going out, leaving him alone in an island of dark surrounded by the gentle lappings of strange footsteps. (153) Then he remembered that the fear was not his own, but his brother's. (154) He said impulsively to Mrs Henne-Falcon, 'Please, I don't think Francis should play. (155) The dark makes him jump so.' (156) They were the wrong words. (157) Six children began to sing, 'Cowardy cowardy custard,' turning torturing faces with the vacancy of wide sunflowers towards Francis Morton.

(158) Without looking at his brother, Francis said, 'Of course I'll play. I'm not afraid, I only thought . . .'

(159) But he was already forgotten by his human tormentors. (160) The children scrambled round Mrs Henne-Falcon, their shrill voices pecking at her with questions and suggestions. (161) 'Yes, anywhere in the house. (162) We will turn out all the lights. Yes, you can hide in the cupboards. (163) You must stay hidden as long as you can. (164) There will be no home.'

(165) Peter stood apart, ashamed of the clumsy manner in which he had tried to help his brother. (166) Now he could feel, creeping in at the corners of his brain, all Francis's resentment of his championing. (167) Several children ran upstairs, and the lights on the top floor went out. (168) Darkness came down like the wings of a bat and settled on the landing. (169) Others began to put out the lights at the edge of the hall, till the children were all gathered in the central radiance of the chandelier, while the bats squatted round on hooded wings and waited for that, too, to be extinguished.

(170) 'You and Francis are on the hiding side,' a tall girl said, and then the light was gone, and the carpet wavered under his feet with the sibilance of footfalls, like small cold draughts, creeping away into corners.

(171) 'Where's Francis?' he wondered. (172) 'If I join him he'll be less frightened of all these sounds.' (173) 'These sounds' were the casing of silence: the squeak of a loose board, the cautious closing of a cupboard door, the whine of a finger drawn along polished wood.

(174) Peter stood in the centre of the dark deserted floor, not listening but waiting for the idea of his brother's whereabouts to enter his brain. (175) But Francis crouched with fingers on his ears, eyes uselessly closed, mind numbed against impressions, and only a sense of strain could cross the gap of dark. (176) Then a voice called 'Coming', and as though his brother's self-possession had been shattered by the sudden cry, Peter Morton jumped with his fear. (177) But it was not his own fear. (178) What in his brother was a burning panic was in him an altruistic emotion that left the reason unimpaired. (179) 'Where, if I were Francis, should I hide?' (180) And because he was, if not Francis himself, at least a mirror to him, the answer was immediate. (181) 'Between the oak bookcase on the left of the study door, and the leather settee.' (182) Between the twins there could be no jargon of telepathy. (183) They had been together in the womb, and they could not be parted. (184) Peter Morton tiptoed towards Francis's hiding-place. (185) Occasionally a board rattled, and because he feared to be caught by one of the soft questers through the dark, he bent and untied his laces. (186) A tag struck the floor and the metallic sound set a host of cautious feet moving in his direction. (187) But by that time he was

in his stockings and would have laughed inwardly at the pursuit had not the noise of someone stumbling on his abandoned shoes made his heart trip.

(188) No more boards revealed Peter Morton's progress. (189) On stockinged feet he moved silently and unerringly towards his object.

(190) Instinct told him he was near the wall, and, extending a hand, he laid the fingers across his brother's face.

(191) Francis did not cry out, but the leap of his own heart revealed to

Peter

a proportion of Francis's terror. (192) 'It's all right,' he whispered, feeling down the squatting figure until he captured a clenched hand. (193) 'It's only me. I'll stay with you.' (194) And grasping the other tightly, he listened to the cascade of whispers his utterance had caused to fall. (195) A hand touched the book-case close to Peter's head and he was aware of how Francis's fear continued in spite of his presence. (196) It was less intense, more bearable, he hoped, but it remained. (197) He knew that it was his brother's fear and not his own that he experienced. (198) The dark to him was only an absence of light; the groping hand that of a familiar child. (199) Patiently he waited to be found.

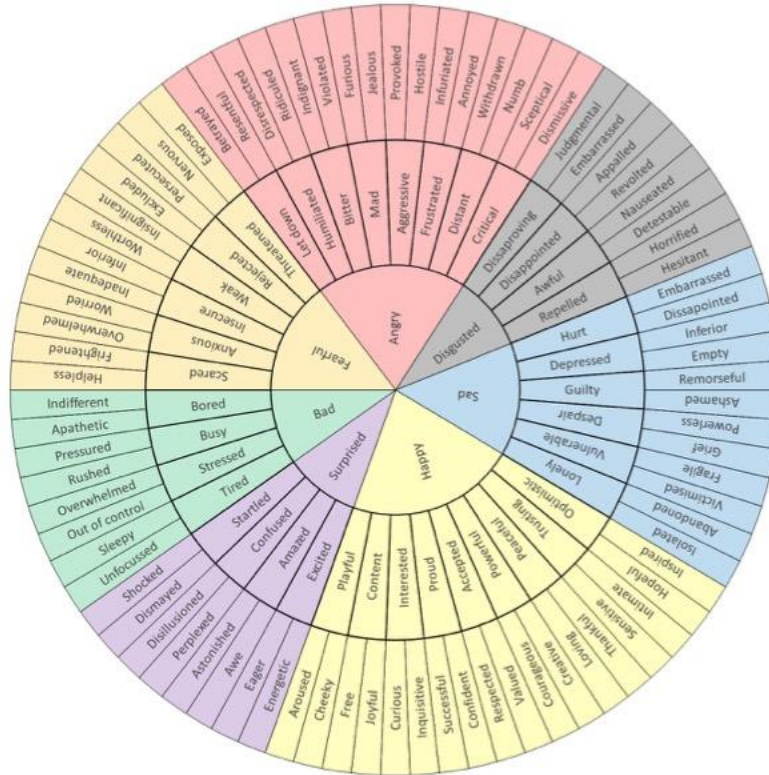
(200) He did not speak again, for between Francis and himself was the most intimate communion. (201) By way of joined hands thought could flow more swiftly than lips could shape themselves round words. (202) He could experience the whole progress of his brother's emotion, from the leap of panic at the unexpected contact to the steady pulse of fear, which now went on and on with the regularity of a heart-beat. (203) Peter Morton thought with intensity, 'I am here. (204) You needn't be afraid. (205) The lights will go on again soon. (206) That rustle, that movement is nothing to fear. (207) Only

Joyce, only Mabel Warren.' (208) He bombarded the drooping form with thoughts of safety, but he was conscious that the fear continued. (209) 'They are beginning to whisper together. (210) They are tired of looking for us. (211) The lights will go on soon. (212) We shall have won. (213) Don't be afraid. (214) That was someone on the stairs. (215) I believe it's Mrs Henne-Falcon. (216) Listen. (217) They are feeling for the lights.' (218) Feet moving on a carpet, hands brushing a wall, a curtain pulled apart, a clicking handle, the opening of a cupboard door. (219) In the case above their heads a loose book shifted under a touch. (220) 'Only Joyce, only Mabel Warren, only Mrs Henne-Falcon,' a crescendo of reassuring thought before the chandelier burst, like a fruit-tree, into bloom.

(221) The voices of the children rose shrilly into the radiance. (222) 'Where's Peter?' (223) 'Have you looked upstairs?' (224) 'Where's Francis?' but they were silenced again by Mrs Henne-Falcon's scream. (225) But she was not the first to notice Francis Morton's stillness, where he had collapsed against the wall at the touch of his brother's hand. (226) Peter continued to hold the clenched fingers in an arid and puzzled grief. (227) It was not merely that his brother was dead. (228) His brain, too young to realize the full paradox, wondered with an obscure self-pity why it was that the pulse of his brother's fear went on and on, when Francis was now where he had always been told there was no more terror and no more darkness. 129

APPENDIX B

Plutchik's (1980) Emotional Wheel



Appendix C

First Semi-Structured Interview

1. How do you feel about reading books? If you try and think back in your life, would you say you have a connection with books? How many fiction books would you say you have read in the last year?
2. Can you tell me more about this connection? If not, why do you think you haven't had a connection?
3. What kind of books do you feel you have a connection with? Can you tell me about these books?
4. Any particular images that you see when reading? Do you see images as you are reading?
5. Any characters from books, which you would imagine alive or want to have come to life? Can you tell me why you want them to be part of real life?
6. Do you think there has been any special character, which you remember or identified with from any of the books that you read? Can you tell me about this character?
7. In what situations did you ever feel worried, afraid or happy for this character?
8. Can you tell me more about your connection with that character? Have these fictional characters impacted your life in any way. If yes, how?
9. With regard to film adaptations of your favourite books, do you feel you connect better with the same characters in the film version? Can you speak further about this connection or lack of it? Do these film adaptations influence the reading of your book?

10. Can you tell me more about whether fictional characters influence your choice in books/reading habits? In what ways does the fact that you identify with a character in fiction encourage you to read? OR What difference does this identification make to your reading experience?

Second Semi-Structured Interview

1. Now that you have been through the whole process, what are your reflections on your emotional connections with fictional characters?
2. Would you say that this process has made you more conscious of how you can emotionally and physically connect with fictional characters? Can you comment about whether this experience will affect your approach to reading fiction from this moment on?
3. Did you notice if emotionally and physically connecting with fictional characters helped your understanding of the text? In what way/s?
4. Can you possibly elaborate about whether this approach will help in your understanding of fictional texts in the classroom?

APPENDIX D

Visual Images used in The Visual Matrix Exercise

1



2



3



4



5



6



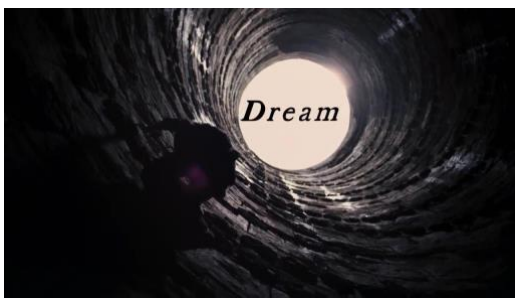
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APPENDIX E

All of these exercises are available in various drama/theatre manuals and books which are found in a reference/source list at the end of Appendix E, after the last session. It is not necessary to have any previous drama training to apply these exercises in the literature classes as they are self-explanatory, and the aim is not to train the students as actors but to enhance their interactions with texts.

Drama Exercises.

Workshop 2

Ice-Breaking games, Trust exercises, First Discussion of Short Story

Name Circle

Aim: Participants will learn each other's names and something that they love as a form of ice-breaking game.

1. Each member says their name once.
2. Then first participant will say his/her name.
3. Next participant will repeat that person's name and their own.
4. Next participant will repeat those two names and their own.
5. And the group will continue in that way till the last person.
6. The process is repeated the other way.

Extension: Each person will say their name and 1 thing that they love and another that they hate. The next person will repeat that name and those two objects/situations etc. The following person will repeat those names and the respective objects/situations etc.

Walk, Run, Jump and Freeze.

Aim: Exercise is intended for participants to warm up and also to start a group bonding process by having fun together.

1. Participants start milling around.
2. They first start walking casually around the space.

3. Then they run.
4. Then they walk.
5. Once Freeze is called, participants must stop in their motion.
6. Anyone caught moving will remain frozen until someone crawls between their legs and they are freed again.
7. Game continues as a warmup and ice-breaker.

Magnets: Pull and Push

Aim: First attempt at feeling less self-conscious about each other by initiating a harmless physical contact game. Also, an attempt at strengthening the physical connection between participants.

1. Working as a group. The participants imagine that there is a magnet which is pulling and repelling each member depending on the instructor's word.
2. "Pull" each member will get stuck physically to another member from a part of the body that they feel comfortable with.
3. "Push" each member needs to find another member and they need to stay away from them as the magnet is repelling them from each other.
4. "Pull" and "Push" are uttered periodically. Another instruction that can be introduced is that every time the members get stuck together, they have to choose a different part of the body to

Grandma's Footsteps.

Aim: A sense of fun and relaxation as they play this entertaining exercise.

1. One participant is chosen and gives back to the rest of the group.
2. The remaining participants line up a distance away from the one giving them his/her back.

3. Once the word "Go" has been uttered, participants in line start moving towards the person with his/her back to them.
4. The person with his/her back turned to the group can suddenly turn and if they see anyone moving, they will point to them.
5. The person caught moving will replace the person and the game starts again.

Session Three

Warm-Up Exercise

Warming Up Exercises – Moving through space without touching each other.

Increasing and decreasing pace. Freezing into statues according to emotions.

Trust Exercises

The Lift

A player lies on the floor with the group surrounding her or him. Each member of the group is responsible for lifting a part of that player's body. The group lifts the player gradually up over their heads and around the room. Rotate players until all have participated.

The Chair

Participants split into two groups. One standing up. Chair in front of them. Other member of pair sitting down. Member sitting down stands up. Members in front of chair steps two steps forward and close their eyes. They will be asked to step back two steps with eyes closed towards the chair. They have to sit down with eyes closed trusting that the other member has left the chair there.

The Blind Circle

The group forms a tight circle around a player in the centre, whose eyes are closed, and feet are together. Participants in the circle pass the player in the centre around

while she or he completely relaxes and allows the group to move her or him. Rotate until all have participated in the centre.

Robot moves –

Participant A is a robot while participant B is a human with a remote control. Participant B will close eyes and Participant A will control participant B by touching shoulder blades and stopping the robot by touching between shoulder blades. Left shoulder blade robot moves left, right shoulder blade moving right. Robot trusts that human will not allow him to crash into others.

Literature Part

Focussing on beginning two paragraphs from story

Aim: This exercise will help students look afresh at the rhythms created through punctuation in a text. Part of the meaning of a text, according to Text World Theory, lies also in the style in which it is written. Participants will physically change direction at certain punctuation marks in a text which can denote a change in thought, a change in plot direction, and other important points. These exercises are developed and adapted from exercises found in Houseman, B. (2011). *Tackling Text [and Subtext]*, pp. 37-46.

Discovering the rhythm of thoughts in a text

- Copy of the passage in hand, start walking purposefully round the room reading out the text.
- Treat each sentence as a separate journey, so that you start walking as you start the sentence and keep walking without pause, ignoring all punctuation marks until you reach a full stop.
- Then, stop to have a sense of having completed the journey of that sentence.

- Then, start off in another direction with the next sentence and again keep walking until you come to the next full stop.
- As you walk, have a sense of someone in front of you to whom you are talking and really want to communicate with.
- Discuss the changes in rhythm and beats and how these might add to the emotions imparted by the text e.g. short sentences inducing a sense of urgency.

Discovering the internal rhythm of each thought and the emotional tone of the text

- Walk again as you speak the text: this time change direction at every punctuation mark, including the full stops, without stopping at any point.
- As before, it is important to have a sense of purpose, of forward motion and not to amble and rush.
- Always have a sense of speaking to someone with a purpose.
- Keeping moving the whole time and only stop when you reach the end of the passage.
- Discuss with other participants any feelings that arise, changes in thought and how these can be connected with new mental spaces being created within the text.

Excerpt from Graham Greene's "The End of the Party" to be used for the practical exercises

(1) PETER MORTON woke with a start to face the first light. (2) Rain tapped against the glass. (3) It was January the fifth.

(4) He looked across a table on which a night-light had guttered into a pool of water, at the other bed. (5) Francis Morton was still asleep, and Peter lay down again with his eyes on his brother. (6) It amused him to imagine it was himself whom he watched, the same hair, the same eyes, the same lips and line of cheek. (7) But the thought palled, and the mind went back to the fact which lent the day importance. (8) It was the fifth of January.

(9) He could hardly believe a year had passed since Mrs Henne-Falcon had given her last children's party.

(10) Francis turned suddenly upon his back and threw an arm across his face, blocking his mouth. (11) Peter's heart began to beat fast, not with pleasure now but with uneasiness. (12) He sat up and called across the table, 'Wake up.' (13) Francis's shoulders shook and he waved a clenched fist in the air, but his eyes remained closed. (14) To Peter Morton the whole room seemed to darken, and he had the impression of a great bird swooping.

(15) He cried again, 'Wake up,' and once more there was silver light and the touch of rain on the windows. (16) Francis rubbed his eyes. (17) 'Did you call out?' he asked.

Sessions 4 and 5

The exercises in the 4th session were repeated in the 5th session since many participants were unable to make the 4th session. In order to have the reactions of the full group I decided to repeat the same exercises.

First Part – Warmms and Ice-Breakers

Aim: Exercises 1 to 4 will help participants be more comfortable with each other and to aid more self-disclosure when analysing the short story.

Exercise 1: Stuck in the Mud

Aim: This is a quite a well-known game that isn't necessarily related to acting; however, it is a lot of fun and gets students moving and in a good mood.

1. Choose one person to be "tagger" or "up" (the person who tags people).
2. If you are tagged you must stay still and outstretch your legs and arms, like in a star jump.
3. The goal is for the taggers to have the whole group stationary (stuck in the mud).

4. Those who are not taggers can free the others who are stuck by going under their legs.
5. End the game when either the taggers have got everyone or you can see your students starting to tire.
6. Let a few different students be taggers.

Exercise 2: Cooperation Game

Aim: Play co-operation games, particularly those in which there are physical problems to be solved. These are crucial for building a sense of ensemble.

1. In groups of five or more, move to the four corners of the room. Get the participants in each group to knot themselves up in a ridiculous position. For example, they must all hold one individual's ankles and at the same time link arms with a neighbour. Then, without breaking their position and contact, they must move to the opposite corner of the room.
2. Cross the room without losing physical contact with the group, but this time only one person is allowed to move at a time.
3. Cross the room with two people not being allowed to touch the ground and with the rest of the group not using their arms to carry these individuals.
4. Move together as a group without touching, so that from the outside you can't tell who's leading.
5. Simply ask the group to walk in space. Frequently the group ends up walking in a circle, or dispersing as two individuals take different decisions simultaneously.

Exercise 3: The Blind Run

Aim: The aim for trust exercises is to continue building a safe environment in which participants will become comfortable with each other and therefore will be more

willing to self-disclose in the discussion parts and to cooperate in the group exercises.

The group lines up across one end of a large room. One blindfolded player runs towards the line of people. The others gently catch and stop the player as she or he gets to them. Rotate until all have participated as runners.

Exercise 4: Interrupting – Concentration

1. Three chairs with one in the middle and one on each side of it.
2. Participant sits in the middle and thinks of a story – dream, personal incident, a short narrative etc.
3. The aim of the exercise is to get the participant to tell the story with the other two participants on either side trying to interrupt the narrative.
4. Important that the ones on the side never touch the one in the middle.
5. They can do anything they want to try and interrupt.

Exercise 5: Intention Work (Using the story's excerpt found at the end of these exercises):

1. Actors read their scene and decide what the other character is doing to them. For example if they feel that the other character is “putting them down” or “being condescending” they would add the line, “You’re being condescending to me, aren’t you?” after EACH line of the dialogue in their scene.
2. When the entire exercise is finished they are asked what discoveries they made in the scene or with their relationship with the other actor in the scene.

Exercise 6: Reacting to reading

Aim: To get students to personally react to a text when they hear it out loud. This is what happens in class when excerpts from novels are read to students and they are

expected to react. The only difference, which is crucial and significant, is that in this exercise students are not looking for the usual semantic meaning of words but how these words make them emotional react, if in reality they do. The important aim is to find those stylistic triggers in the text and by looking at it not from the usual word-meaning approach but more on a visceral and physical reaction to the text, it is hoped for this to lead to a different understanding.

1. Using an excerpt (see following pages) from “The End of the Party” – participants work in pairs. They will record each other using a personal phone. This recording will be emailed to me later.
2. One participant will read the excerpt to the other.
3. While the other participant is reading – the second participant will give state anything that comes to their head while listening to the excerpt. Emotions, reactions etc.
4. The process is reversed.

A short discussion will ensue.

Exercise 7: Voice inside the head.

Aim: Participants will become more aware of their position between the discourse-world and the text-world. They will be able to verbalise what they think is the character's internal thinking behind the speech. In verbalizing this they will become aware more of the internal worlds of the characters and their motivations behind certain actions and words. This exercise is adapted from Gibson, R. (1998)

Discovering Shakespeare's Language.

1. Participants to divide themselves into a group of 4.
2. Only the dialogue parts will be read from the same excerpt (see below)
3. Two participants will read the dialogue to each other as if having the characters' conversation.
4. The other two will stand each behind one of the talking participants
5. After each part of dialogue, the person standing up will utter the speaker's thoughts and feelings as they occur to them.
6. The process will be repeated with the participants exchanging places.

A discussion will ensue.

Excerpt from “End of the Party” used in this session

(10) Francis turned suddenly upon his back and threw an arm across his face, blocking his mouth. (11) Peter's heart began to beat fast, not with pleasure now but with uneasiness. (12) He sat up and called across the table, 'Wake up.' (13) Francis's shoulders shook and he waved a clenched fist in the air, but his eyes remained closed. (14) To Peter Morton the whole room seemed to darken, and he had the impression of a great bird swooping. (15) He cried again, 'Wake up,' and once more there was silver light and the touch of rain on the windows. (16) Francis rubbed his eyes. (17) 'Did you call out?' he asked.

(18) 'You are having a bad dream,' Peter said. (19) Already experience had taught him how far their minds reflected each other. (20) But he was the elder, by a matter of minutes, and that brief extra interval of light, while his brother still struggled in pain and darkness, had given him self-reliance and an instinct of protection towards the other who was afraid of so many things.

(21) 'I dreamed that I was dead,' Francis said.

(22) 'What was it like?' Peter asked.

(23) 'I can't remember,' Francis said.

(24) 'You dreamed of a big bird.'

(25) 'Did I?'

(26) The two lay silent in bed facing each other, the same green eyes, the same nose tilting at the tip, the same firm lips, and the same premature modelling of the chin. (27) The fifth of January, Peter thought again, his mind drifting idly from the image of cakes to the prizes which might be

won. (28) Egg-and-spoon races, spearing apples in basins of water, blind man's buff.

(29) 'I don't want to go,' Francis said suddenly. (30) 'I suppose Joyce will be there . . . Mabel Warren.' (31) Hateful to him, the thought of a party shared with those two. (32) They were older than he. (33) Joyce was eleven and Mabel Warren thirteen. (34) The long pigtails swung superciliously to a masculine stride. (35) Their sex humiliated him, as they watched him fumble with his egg, from under lowered scornful lids. (36) And last year . . . he turned his face away from Peter, his cheeks scarlet.

(37) 'What's the matter?' Peter asked.

(38) 'Oh, nothing. (39) I don't think I'm well. (40) I've got a cold. I oughtn't to go to the party.' (41) Peter was puzzled. (42) 'But Francis, is it a bad cold?'

(43) 'It will be a bad cold if I go to the party. (44) Perhaps I shall die.'

(45) 'Then you mustn't go,' Peter said, prepared to solve all difficulties with one plain sentence, and Francis let his nerves relax, ready to leave everything to Peter. (46) But though he was grateful he did not turn his face towards his brother. (47) His cheeks still bore the badge of a shameful memory, of the game of hide and seek last year in the darkened house.

Session 6

Moving through Space

Participants begin to walk around the room. The facilitator calls out physical states – such as a shift in tempo, heaviness, lightness, larger, smaller, tightness, jerkiness, bubbles, traveling through a cloud, etc. – and the players respond with their bodies as they move around the space.

Clay Game

Three players come forward and face the group in a neutral position. Three other players are 'sculptors' who take one player each and sculpt their bodies and faces. After a few minutes, the facilitator asks the statues to come alive as characters reflecting their new body changes.

Statues

The players work in pairs, positioned back to back. The facilitator calls out a word, feeling, issue, etc. (e.g., love, hate, joy, or sex). Then the facilitator counts to three. On three, the partners turn and instantly create a statue that expresses that word and freeze.

Affect the Player

The players divide into pairs. Each player is directed to elicit a specific feeling or set of feelings from his or her partner, but neither player is aware of the objective of the other (e.g., Player A makes Partner B feel confused, Player B makes Partner A feel elated). Players may be directed to elicit two different emotions from their partner. This exercise is most often done without talking, although actions, sounds, or gibberish may be used. The players are instructed to strongly and actively pursue their objective, while allowing themselves to be affected by the actions of their partner.

Writing Letters

Aim: The aim is two-fold. Firstly, the exercise encourages players to explore the way in which words inform characterisation.

Secondly, it is an ideal opportunity to explore the importance of raising the stakes in storytelling.

Before you begin, set the same number of piles of paper around the room as there are players. There should be four sheets in each pile. Each player needs a pen.

Ask all the players to walk around the space, walking with purpose and energy.

When you say 'Stop!', they must walk to a pile of paper and sit next to it. **Now ask them to 'Begin writing!' They have five minutes to conceive of a scenario and write a persuasive letter from one character to another.**

The letter writer might ask for something specific, for a favour or for something more abstract, for advice or to be part of a scheme of some kind. They must write in vocabulary and using phrasing suited to their choice of character, considering age, education, formality, persuasive tactics, etc. For example, Francis write to Peter to help him not go to the party.

Characters could include: Joyce, the Nurse, Mother, Mabel Warren, Mrs Henne-Falcon.

After five minutes say 'Stop!' (give the group a thirty-second warning).

Everyone should fold up their letters, as if ready to post, write the addressee's name on the outside and then leave it on top of the pile. They must then jump up and walk around the space again until you shout 'Stop!' At this point they must go to the pile nearest them and read the letter they find there.

After adequate reading time, ask them to 'Begin writing!'

They have five minutes to write a response, in character, to the letter they have found.

For example, if Francis writes to Peter asking him to help him in not going to the party then Peter might tell him that he will help him but he has to promise not to leave him alone in the dark.

After five minutes repeat the process, until four letters have been written.

In the third round, the player writes back as the first character (Francis), raising the stakes again.

Once all four letters have been written you can either share them with the group, reading them out as if a conversation, or converting them into a script. Alternatively, you can split into groups to dramatise the stories.

Session 7

Pass the Squeeze

Work as a team to pass a squeeze from person to person around the circle.

Start in a Drama circle and ask students to hold hands.

Tell students you are going to send a squeeze around the circle, and then go on to squeeze the persons hand to your right. The squeeze should then find its way all around the circle.

Once the students are comfortable with this, add a rhythm to the squeeze and see if it's the same rhythm that is returned.

Depending on circle size, a squeeze could be sent around in both directions. This makes it quite a challenge for the person who gets 2 squeezes and has to pass them both on. Also you could add in more complex rhythms.

The Clapping Circle

1. Have the group form a circle. They must kneel or lie flat on their stomach and have their hands in front of them.
2. Have each student interchange their hands so that the space in front of them contains not only one of their hands but someone else's. So, that pattern should be: your own hand, hand of person on your left, your own hand, hand of person on your right.

3. The teacher leads the group by having each person tapping their hand on the ground in a clockwise direction. Then repeat but in an anti-clockwise direction.
4. Up the competition by allowing the students to control which direction the tap moves in by adding in a double tap to change the direction.
5. If students are too slow or pick their hand up to tap out of turn, they are out and must remove their hand from the circle.
6. The last two students in are the winners.

Two Truths One Lie

1. Form a circle.
2. Each person must then tell the group two things that are true about themselves and one thing that is not true about themselves.
3. Try to get the students to mix up the truths and lies because otherwise it will be obvious to pick which one is the lie!

Character Monologue

Aim:

Choose one of the following characters

Mother

Nurse

Mabel Warren

Joyce

Mrs Henne-Falcon

Peter

Francis

Words that have been chosen by participants from the story on previous sessions.

These words are written on post-it notes and stuck to the walls of the acting space.

Participants go round the room and choose any four words – that they feel are related to this character.

Each participant will write a short monologue about your main feelings connected to the circumstances or another character in the story. Use the story and go beyond.

You need to include these 4 words which you have picked up in this monologue.

Staying in character – read the monologue to another character as a scene – how does this monologue affect the other character? The other character needs to react at any point to what is being said.

Session 8

Go Stop Clap Jump

Aim: A fun body warm up but with a need for a lot of attention.

An excellent listen and focus exercise. There are four commands (Go, Stop, Clap, Jump) and four obvious actions (When you hear Go, you move forward. When you hear Stop, you stop. When you hear Clap, you clap your hands. When you hear Jump, you jump up.) Once everyone has mastered these commands, invert the associated action. (i.e. When you hear Go, you stop. When you hear Stop, you move forward. When you hear Clap, you jump. When you hear Jump, you clap.) Actors have to focus to match the command with the action. To make it harder, scramble the actions further (e.g. When you hear Go, clap. When you hear Clap, stop, etc.)

Clap Wave: The goal of this exercise is to send a continuous clap wave around the circle. The first person turns to the actor on their right, makes eye contact and tries to clap in unison with that person. The second person turns to the actor on their right, makes eye contact and tries to clap in unison with that person. Everyone has to be ready to make eye contact, and clap, keeping the rhythm of the clap going. How quickly can the group send the wave around the circle?

There is only one liar

Aim: First of all, this exercise is meant to give the group some fun but also food for thought. One's perceptions are not always correct and what appears to be one thing can be another. This is very similar to the use of unreliable narrators, twists in the plot, and gaps in narration to give an element of surprise. Moreover, participants start to realise how easily they can be manipulated in thinking one thing when in fact reality is another.

A psychological but fun group dynamics game from Augusto Boal. There should be no talking until the exercise is over. The group sits or stands in a circle and closes their eyes. The leader tells them that one person will be selected by a tap on the shoulder. The leader walks around the whole circle, then asks the group to open their eyes. The group members must look around and try to guess who was chosen.

They are asked to remember who they decided upon but not to reveal it at this point. The game is repeated. When everybody has finished looking round, the leader asks them, on the count of three, without talking, to point at the person they thought was chosen the first time. Everybody points. Now, they do the same again for the second time.

Afterwards, members are asked what it was that led them to choose a particular person, for example, the facial expression that person had. Then, on a signal, they are asked to put up their hands if they were touched the first time. They discover that no one was touched the first time. They are asked to do the same for the second time.

The group discover that they were all touched the second time. There is only one liar – the workshop leader!

Making scenes

1. Participants are split into two groups

2. In each group, participants are to choose one episode from the story, and they are to construct a tableau representing this moment.
3. They are given about 10 minutes to discuss and then construct the tableaux together.
4. Once they have discussed, each member will step out of the tableaux and look at the others once all are happy with what they have constructed then they should sit down as a signal that they are ready.
5. Each group will have the time to observe the other group's tableau. They will first talk about any emotional reactions they have to the scene or individual characters. Then they can try to guess from which part of the story it is taken.
6. As a next part of this exercise. Each participant can touch each individual in the tableau and once they have been touched each character can speak in terms of the character they have chosen to be in that scene.
7. Finally, each onlooker will have the chance to "fix" the scene to how they think or how they have seen it in their head when they read the story.
8. A discussion will follow.

This being the final session, some time will be left towards the end of the session for participants to speak about what they will take away with them from this experience.

Theatre/Drama Books/Manuals/Websites where these and other similar exercises can be found:

Books

Berry, C. (2001). *Text in Action*. UK: Ebury Publishing.

Boal, A. (2002). *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. UK: Routledge.

Gibson, R. (1998). *Discovering Shakespeare's Language*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

Houseman, B. (2008). *Tackling Text [and Subtext]: A Step by Step Guide for Actors*. UK: Nick Hern Books.

Swale, J. (2009). *Drama Games for Classrooms and Workshops*. UK: Nick Hern Books.

Swale, J. (2012). *Drama Games for Devising*. UK: Nick Hern Books.

Swale, J. (2016). *Drama Games for Rehearsal*. UK: Nick Hern Books.

Websites

<https://www.uiltexas.org/files/sac/Theatre-RehearsalWORKSHOP.pdf>

<https://www.theatrefolk.com/blog/improv-games-for-collaboration/>

<http://lft.ee/admin/upload/files/Theatre-Based%20Techniques%20for%20Peer%20Education%20eng.pdf>

https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cie_capstones/11/?utm_source=scholarworks.umass.edu%252Fcie_capstones%252F11&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages

Manual

<https://pdfslide.us/documents/complicite-teachers-pack.html>

APPENDIX F

Glossary

Text World Theory Terms

The following terms are mainly based on Joanna Gavins's work on Text World Theory which she evolved from the work of Werth (1999).

Discourse-world

The discourse-world in which face to face communication takes place. It includes the participants, source and target, in this case author and reader including their physical context and personal and cultural experiences that they utilise to interpret the discourse. In the case of readers interacting with a text, this world is usually considered as being "split" as the two participants are not in the same spatio-temporal context when the event takes place.

Text-world

The interaction between reader and text creates a mental space (text-world) which is built up from the linguistic cues that the reader encounters and the interpretations drawn based on the readers' knowledge and experiences.

Word Building Elements

All references to time, space, objects, characters present in the text-world. These are usually "marked through tensed verbs, prepositions, adverbs, noun phrases, pronouns and instances of deixis." (Cushing & Giovanelli, 2019: 206).

Function Advancing Elements

Those actions, states, processes and events within the text-world that push the narrative forward. These are typically verbs.

Sub Worlds/World-Switches

New worlds which are created by some form of departure from the initial text-world. Gavins (2005) puts forward the idea of world-switches, taken from narrative frame-switches (Emmott 1997) rather than sub-worlds as the latter might give the impression that these newly created mental spaces are in any way inferior to the initial text-world. These shifts can be character accessible, in that they are created by characters within the text-world and whose reliability cannot be verified by participants (readers). On the other hand, these new mental spaces can be participant accessible in that the information can be discussed between the participants and verified by them.

Deictic World Switch

Any changes in time, location and character focus in the original text-world. These shifts can only be created by the characters and also include the use i) direct speech ii) shifts in tense iii) direct thought (Gavins 2001). The extrafictional voice (narrator/implied author) cannot create these shifts as any changes put forward in this regard are still considered to be part of the original text-world.

Attitudinal World Switch

(Want) worlds – Include all linguistic expressions of desires, wishes, hopes and dreams. Predicates can include want, wish, hope and more.

(Belief) worlds – Speaker's confidence or lack of confidence in the truth of a particular proposition. Introduced by predicates like know, think, believe and others.

(Intend) worlds – Speaker's attitude to a degree of obligation. Introduced predicates like may, should, necessary and others.

Modal Worlds

Deontic Modal World – This world is very similar to the intend world and expressed through modal auxiliaries like may, should and must; adjectival and participial constructions such as it is necessary, you are obliged, you are forbidden. Setting up a future world built through intentions.

Boulamaic Modal World – This world is very similar to the attitudinal want world. Adjectival and participial constructions include hopefully, it is hoped that, it is good that.

Epistemic Modal World – This world is very similar to the attitudinal belief world. Adjectival constructions that can be used include it is certain that, it is sure that and it is doubtful that. Adverbs can also be used including maybe, perhaps, possibly, certainly, definitely and others. Another form of modality in this world could include *perception modality*, usually visual. This can be expressed through it is clear that, it is apparent that and it is obvious that and also modal adverbs such clearly, apparently, obviously.

Toggling – When moving or shifting from one text-world to another.

NOTE: For more detailed information about Text World Theory Terms look at Gavins, J. (2007). *Text World Theory: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press from which this list was adapted.

Cognitive Poetics Terms

Attention Attractors: Can be a stylistic pattern but mainly is a conceptual effect that draw or distract the readers' attention. The more an attractor is foregrounded (given attention) the more it distracts the readers' attention. For example, polarity can create an attractor when the equivalent opposites occur (brightness and dimness, noise and quiet, motion and stasis)

Foreground: When through different techniques such as repetition, ambiguity, metaphor, tone and other stylistic devices, an event, circumstance, concept in a literary text is seen afresh from a new perspective. The object is defamiliarised in that what appears to be familiar is now strange so that it can be newly brought to the readers' attention.

Negation: When something is denied, for example no fear instead of courage, it creates a lacuna, an absence, a space that draws attention to itself.

Neglect: Elements which are no longer drawing attention, have been backgrounded and are no longer prominent.

Occlusion: When a new attractor takes the focus from a previous focal point.

Resonance – Certain powerful texts have a long-term impact on readers' memories

NOTE: For more detailed information about Cognitive Poetics Terms look at Stockwell, P. (2002). *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction*. London: Routledge from which this list was adapted.

Appendix G

Full table of analyses of “The End of the Party” – Attention attractors for researcher and participants

The following Table has **five** columns which contain the following information:

- i) The **first column** from the left-hand side is the researcher's analyses of lines 1-47 (Appendix A) using a Text World Theory approach.
- ii) The **second column** from the left-hand side contains the reactions of the participants of Group 1 (2016-17) as they read lines 1-47 (Appendix A) on their own in their private time (these reactions were indicated by participants in the margins of the numbered story).
- iii) The **third column** from the left-hand side contains the reactions of the same participants as they heard me read lines 1-47 (Appendix A) during one of the practical sessions (their reactions were audio recorded and later transcribed by me).
- iv) The **fourth column** from the left-hand-side contains the private reactions of Group 2 (2018) to lines 1-47 (Appendix A) on their own in their private time (these reactions were indicated by participants in the margins of the numbered story).
- v) The **fifth column** are the reactions of the same group as they listened to me reading lines 1-47 (Appendix A) during a practical session. (their reactions were audio recorded and later transcribed by me).

<p>“The End of the Party” Text – Text World Theory Approach – <u>Analysis done by researcher previous to the practical session but not shared with participants.</u></p>	<p><u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during their individual reading of the story. (First Group - 2016/7)</u></p>	<p><u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during a group reading of sections of the story (First Group - 2016/7)</u></p>	<p><u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during their individual reading of the story. (Second Group - 2018)</u></p>	<p><u>Comments by participants with regard to emotions and other reactions they had during a group reading of sections of the story (Second Group - 2018)</u></p>
<p>line 1 - The use of the surname Morton is an attractor (Stockwell 2002), i.e. it draws attention to itself in that it is unusual to introduce a character including the surname in such an initial position. A certain formality is established. There is an emphasis on the full identity of the fictional character.</p>				
<p>The adjective “first” draws attention to the fact that it is very early morning – World Builder.</p>				
<p>“woke” – verb in simple past-tense establishes a completed action indicating its opposite that the character was sleeping</p>				
<p>“with a start”- the prepositional phrase functioning as an adverb – establishes the mood that something woke Peter all of a sudden. It is a collocation – a much used expression indicating that someone is stressed or else their sleep has been disturbed. Accessing readers’ scripts something</p>	<p>Anita felt a sense of anticipation at the word “start”</p>	<p>Berta felt a sense of dread as something is bothering the character.</p>	<p>Clint – could it be a sense of shock?</p>	<p>Nick felt something was not right – “start” Clint – asks could this be waking with a sense of shock? Denise – a sense of fear?</p>

<p>disturbing the character's sleep – a sense of unease.</p>				
<p>“to face” – a verb in the infinitive following the verb “woke” – it seems that even at this early hour Peter is ready to challenge what lies ahead. Woke up almost predetermined from before to accept anything that comes his way. Continues to add to the general feeling of unease but also indicates a sense of determination.</p>				
<p>Line 2 - A deictic spatial shift from the inside to the outside. Reader's attention is taken to the outside. Weather is grey and overcast. Gives a sense of protection from the cold, grey and wet weather outside to the inside. World-Builder – setting. Background. Looking at the overall gloomy outcome of the story, this could be considered as pathetic fallacy. The dark weather matches the darkness inside the characters and story.</p>	<p>Becky felt a sense of curiosity at rain tapping – something is going to happen – pathetic fallacy(?)</p>	<p>Curiosity (Miriam).</p>		
<p>Line 3 - Another deictic shift – this time from spatial to temporal - A strange reference to the date – factual – something significant is going to happen on that date. It has been long awaited.</p>	<p>Nick and Berta - A sense of foreboding – why date – definite – something happened - suspense</p>	<p>Berta bothered by the reference to the date so early on. Anita felt dread as the mention of the date gives her an impression that something important happened and connected with the previous inference from Line 1 of “woke up with a start” gives the impression that</p>	<p>Anita – refers to the definite tone – “it was” – as if it should be significant. Clint – also curious about this date Mandy – worrying sensation.</p>	<p>Clint is curious about the mentioning of the date Mandy also notices the reference to the date but unclear as to what it supposed to mean. Miriam refers to date too but not sure what to feel.</p>

		something is worrying the character related to this date.		
Line 4 - Readers follow Peter's visual perception as he looks across the table – attention is shifted from Peter onto the space.				
Readers follow his eyes to a melted candle across the table – “guttered”.	Anita – got a sense of fear from the sound of the melting candle Berta – also noticed the sound of the melting candle that gives an eerie noise.			Mandy and Miriam noticed the sound of the candle but focussed on the fact that the candle must have been lit during the night – fear of darkness.
The verb “across” gives a feeling of space – also a sense of trajectory, a movement. Once again, the reference to the night-light – oxymoron – contrast that will be constantly referred to in the rest of the story.				
Darkness (fear) Light (absence of fear) “the other bed” – now is foregrounded through Peter's perception which gives a new-found attention to the reader although participants do not know if there is someone in the other bed.				
Line 5 - The name switch Francis Morton – “surname” now becomes foregrounded as the similarity between the two enactors is evident. The surname				

<p>indicates blood relations – not clear about kinship yet until the last noun in the sentence “brother”. Peter’s gaze keeps Francis foregrounded as we look at him through Peter’s eyes. Peter’s gaze does not leave his brother which keeps reader focussed completely on him.</p> <p>Tense shift – deictic shift – Peter lay down – break from the narrative past</p>				
<p>Line 6 – Boulamaic Modal World-switch Shift – Peter’s thoughts create a world-switch which is important for the rest of the text. Peter imagines he is Francis. Readers’ mirror schemas is triggered – Peter is looking into his mirror image where his desire to be his brother is very evident.</p>	<p>Tina – “amused” must be something positive – brotherly bond – he wants to be his brother or sees similarities which do not displease him.</p>			<p>Clint noticed the change in focus onto Francis.</p> <p>Mandy felt a sense of peace as he was focussing on Francis not himself – “amuse”⁴</p> <p>Denise also noticed the change in focus.</p>
<p>Repetition of the adjective “same” – 3 times – foregrounding through repetition.</p>	<p>5 out of 7 participants all focussed on the use of repetition – emphasis, importance on similarity.</p>		<p>3 out of 6 participants focussed on the repetition “same” – the language attracted their attention.</p>	
<p>Line 7 - A new deictic world-switch is created by Peter’s direct thought – participants enter into his mind – verb “palled” – became paler but the verbal form of the noun “pall” which also refers to the piece of material laid out on coffins. Mental schema of funerals</p>				

and death which acts as a foreshadowing of the ending of the story.				
The sense of dread – the fact which lent the day importance – the relative clause defines the noun “fact” with its determining article – the fact is yet unknown – readers’ curiosity is piqued.				Nick felt anxiety here because of the repetition of the date
Line 8 - It was the fifth of January. Syntactical shift but echoes sentence 3 – the focal point now becomes numeral – it is the day which is important. The use repetition maintains this date as a focal point, it does not allow it to deteriorate and thus readers/participants will obviously wonder about what is going to happen.	Anita – feels a sense of tension at the repetition of the date. Participant realised that her sense of unease stemmed from the lack of information at this stage; a narrative lacuna exists to raise the suspense.		Nick noticed the repetition in date reference Clint noticed the repetition of the date reference Mandy noticed repetition Miriam noticed the repetition in date reference	
Line 9 – Another Deictic Shift – going back into the past through memory.			Mandy is curious about what might have happened	
A repeated reference to a time frame but now adding the new information “last year”. This could also be a case of priming (Emmott, 1987) whereby both the enactors in the discourse-world and the text-world are being “primed” to focus on the same character, action, and other important detail through the text itself.	Tina is curious as to why the children’s party should be such a cause of concern. Seems main feeling is that of suspense since things are being hinted at			
World builders – the reference to “Mrs Henne-				

Flacon" whose surname is an attractor since it combines the oxymoron of Protector "Henne" and Hunter "Falcon" and the reference to the children's party.				
Both act as adding information but intriguing in that both contain a sense of innocence and goodness but at the same time an underlying sense of danger.				
Line 10 – Deictic shift back to the main text-world with Francis' movement but always seen from Peter's point of view.				
The adverb "suddenly" foregrounds Francis' action.		Tina felt confusion		Denise felt fearful
"threw his arm across" – visual trajectory which also act as a foregrounding movement as readers see the hand moving through Peter's point of view and focussing on Francis' face.	Anita – felt more fear stemming from this action	Martha - felt fear Lisa could see the movement of the arm	Clint felt foreboding Mandy felt anxiety and worry Miriam felt anxious and worried	
"blocking" – negative implications that can be inferred from the rest of the story which seems to be symbolic of Francis' reluctance to speak up for himself.				
Line 11 – Deictic World Shift – moving back to Peter's internal agitated state –	All participants felt a sense of fear and tension at these words.	Berta – started feeling a sense of protection each time Peter's name was mentioned.	All participants felt a sense of fear and tension at these words.	Mandy feels fear, and Denise feels anxious

increasing tension and suspense in narrative.				
Triggering schemas of “heart beating fast” through which readers can infer an excited state.	All participants picked on this negative diction and felt an unpleasant sense of discomfort.	Becky – could imagine the beating of the heart Anita and Tina – anxiety	All participants picked on this negative diction and felt an unpleasant sense of discomfort.	Mandy – fear Denise - anxiety
“not with pleasure” – negated Deictic shift – negating the positive makes it a more powerful statement which is further emphasised through the repetition of the negative diction “uneasiness”.	See above	Becky – the word ‘uneasiness’ meant anxiety Anita – same word meant fear	See above Clint added a sense of uneasiness here.	See above
Line 12 – “He sat up” – Function advancer pushing forward the narrative with Peter’s movement, an attempt to wake Francis up; another protective stance. Shifting into the main text-world.				
“called across” use of the preposition to direct readers’ attention to Francis who is always Peter’s focal point, priming readers’ attention on the brother and deflecting it from Peter.				
“Wake up” – Deictic World-switch shift through the direct speech. Moving into Peter’s internal world-switch of concern for his brother wanting him to wake up from the nightmare.	Anita felt Peter’s sense of responsibility that he needed to wake up his brother.			

Line 13 - Another shift to the main text-world, always through Peter's focalisation.		Lisa – a sense of fear.	Nick sense of fear mounting Clint also felt something bad	
“shoulders shook” – past verb indicating agitation which seems to echo that of Peter's beating heart.		Anita – sense of trouble Lisa – can visually see the fist	was about to happen Mandy anxiety and worry	
“waved a clenched fist in the air” – schema of the fist indicating violence – fighting something off – certainly readers can infer the disturbing nightmare that Francis is having or at least that he is trying to fight off.	Lisa – feelings of helplessness	Anita - trouble Tina - feels anger Participants 7 – the fist can be seen clearly	Denise - fearful	
“but his eyes remained closed” – he fights in his sleep – Deictic world-switch shift into Francis dream world.				
Line 14 – Back to the main text-world through the omniscient narrator's observations into Peter Morton's internal world.	Anita sense of foreboding	Tina sensed sadness. Anita and 6 sensed fear.		
“seemed to darken” – an epistemic world-switch shift – schema trigger “darkness” something negative is going to happen, colour association with negativity.		Berta sensed fear	Nick - room darkens, big bird swooping both meant fear. All participants picked on the words “darken”. and “big bird swooping” feeling something bad was going to happen	Nick - fear
“impression of big bird swooping” – another epistemic world-switch which triggers another schema of a bird of prey which can be	Anita fear through the imagery – birds and darkness are dreadful Tina – a sense of helplessness	Martha – fear Becky – puzzled by image of big bird – why?	See above	Clint – curiosity – why big bird? Mandy – fear – image of big bird instils fear.

<p>inferred from the verb “swooping” – which does not have a tense and gives an impression of a continuous motion through its “-ing” ending.</p>	<p>Berta focussed on the images of nature and felt that it seems that nature was against the protagonist as this image was linked with the rain falling outside an tapping on the window sill</p>			
<p>Line 15 - Epistemic world-switch shift using the direct speech with the repeated word “wake up” which indicates his ongoing concern with Francis.</p>	<p>Anita wrote that she does not really feel anything for Francis at this point. She feels Francis has not featured enough for her to care.</p>	<p>Anita saw this as a world builder as it reflects Peter’s internal panic rising. Tina – fear is rising.</p>	<p>Mark – sensing urgency and panic Mandy - Why is Peter so afraid?</p>	<p>Nick – sense of urgency Miriam – fear for the other – sense of responsibility</p>
<p>More word builders – “silver-light”, “touch of rain” which gives the setting a tinge of gothic typical scenes with stormy weather denoting something ominous about to happen.</p>	<p>Lisa – a sense of fear that even nature seems to be dark and against main characters.</p>	<p>Anita – simply saw this as morning is dawning Tina sensed sadness in the rain – pathetic fallacy</p>		
<p>Line 16 – Shift back to the main text-world through Francis’ action of “rubbed his eyes”. Also acts as a function advancer as the narrative continues with the awakening of Francis.</p>	<p>Anita could see Francis – first glimpse of motion on his part.</p>	<p>Berta sensed tiredness</p>	<p>All participants except for Mark and Mandy saw a change in focus to Francis.</p>	<p>All participants now saw Francis for the first time – focus shift.</p>
<p>Line 17 – Epistemic world-switch shift through Francis’ first direct words. Focus is now on Francis.</p>	<p>Mickey – Francis’ voice – new interaction Berta – curiosity as to how Francis will react.</p>		<p>Nick, Clint, Denise noticed that Francis spoke for the first time</p>	<p>All participants reacted to Francis’ voice – a new character has come into the story.</p>
<p>Line 18 Immediate epistemic world-switch shift into Peter’s assertion that Francis is having a bad dream. An interesting suggestion by Peter</p>	<p>Tina caught a glimpse of Peter’s innerworld and saw how trapped he felt Anita – twins connection</p>	<p>Tina, Mickey, Becky, Berta – how can he know about Francis’ dream – twin connection – confused</p>	<p>Nick, Mark, Mandy, Miriam noticed that the negative diction and the sense of fear on Peter’s part</p>	<p>Nick and Denise – confused by Peter’s words.</p>

<p>as he implies that he knows what Francis was dreaming. There seems to be a suggestion of the “twin” schema again regarding a telepathic link between the two. This suggestion of the supernatural is interesting as it could be a deliberate attempt of trying to hide the twist at the end by implying that there is a special bond between the twin brothers.</p>	<p>Becky is perplexed at how Peter knows that Francis was having a bad dream</p>			
<p>“You are” – a boulemic epistemic world-switch shift by Peter’s belief and tense shift.</p>				
<p>“bad” – negative diction again regarding the nightmare.</p>				
<p>Line 19 – Shift into the main text-world through the extra fictional voice of the narrator. It is also an epistemic world-switch through Peter’s belief that he knows Francis mind as experience had taught him that they think in a similar fashion.</p>	<p>Anita – felt a sense of vulnerability and despair.</p>	<p>All participants picked on a supernatural element as in telepathy</p>	<p>Nick, Clint, Mandy, Miriam – twins – connection between them.</p>	<p>Mandy felt this reference as being creepy</p>
<p>Line 20 – extra fictional voice gives more world building information about children’s age. Flashback to the children’s birth – deictic world-switch shift into Peter’s memory of their birth and the struggle that was evident then. Moreover, it links to Peter’s feeling of responsibility as he is the elder of the two, even</p>	<p>All participants picked upon a sense of responsibility that is almost genetically imposed on Peter</p> <p>Anita senses superiority</p> <p>Lisa feels helplessness on Francis’ part</p>	<p>Lisa sense of responsibility</p> <p>Tina so sad</p> <p>Anita senses melodrama and sense of arrogance on Peter’s part</p> <p>Mickey feels pain</p>	<p>All participants noticed the word “elder” and immediately concluded that Peter’s fear came from his sense of responsibility</p> <p>Clint – diction gave a sense of superiority on Peter’s part</p>	<p>Nick felt Peter’s faithfulness – sense responsibility</p>

though by a few minutes.				
<p>“had given him self-reliance and instinct of protection towards the other who was afraid of so many things.” – an epistemic world-switch in Peter’s belief that he is stronger than Francis and that he is his protector</p> <p>Although there is use of the narrative past tense, the situation mentioned also applies to the current situation.</p>				
<p>Line 21 – Epistemic world-switch shift through Francis’ direct speech. It is quite a startling confession for such a young boy to say that he was dreaming about death.</p>	<p>Anita was surprised at this question but after reading the whole story, participant realised that this was a form of foreshadowing</p> <p>Becky also noticed the strangeness in this sentence</p>	<p>Clint feels curiosity – “who dreams of being dead?”</p>	<p>All participants were curious about these words of Francis.</p>	<p>Denise felt this as being creepy – who dreams of being dead</p>
<p>Line 22 - Deictic world-switch shift through Peter’s direct speech which shows his concern and wanting to know more about Francis’ fears.</p>				
<p>Line 23 – Epistemic world-switch shift through Francis’ direct speech. Negated world-switch where Francis denies information to Peter as he does not remember the dream.</p>				
<p>Line 24 – Epistemic world-switch shift but into Francis internal state</p>	<p>Anita – repetition picked up – sense of fear</p>	<p>All participants realised that the big bird is mentioned again</p>	<p>Mark, Mandy, Denise, and Miriam - again picked on the image of the big</p>	<p>All participants noticed the repetition.</p>

<p>created by Peter's words, especially his use of the pronoun "you". Adds to the mysteriousness of the situation when considering that Peter knows what Francis was dreaming about. This continues to emphasize the "twin" schema – the idea that twins are connected somehow through supernatural means like telepathy. This can be a deceptive device on the part of the author to create the illusion that the twins are telepathically connected but Peter is projecting his fear on Francis. This device is necessary for the twist at the end.</p>			<p>bird – repetition – why mentioned again?</p>	
<p>Line 25 – Francis' deictic world-switch shift. Francis is totally dependent on Peter's opinion, he even asks him to confirm what he was dreaming.</p>				
<p>Line 26 – Back to text-world through the extra fiction voice. Repetition of "same" four times which links back to LINE 6. This a foregrounding device which emphasises the physical similarity between the children. The "twin" schema which refers to the expectation that twins look the same to further emphasise their connection.</p>	<p>Anita insisted that the sameness in physical features seems to emphasise the difference in the twins' psychology although it emphasises their same physical features.</p>	<p>Berta – saw this repetition but although Peter is insisting they are the same in reality they are so different</p>	<p>Nick, Clint, and Mandy noticed the repetition of the word "same" and focussed on the fact that they were twins – maybe a supernatural connection again</p>	<p>All participants noticed this time round the repetition of the repetition.</p>
<p>Line 27 - The date is repeated as a foregrounding</p>	<p>Anita finds the repetition of the date instils a</p>	<p>All participants noticed the</p>	<p>All participants by now became curious about the</p>	<p>All participants noticed obviously</p>

<p>device to emphasise the importance and to enhance discourse-world enactors' recall of what happened the previous year at the party. Peter creates this deictic world-switch since only textual enactors can do this and he takes the discourse-world enactors into the world of the party. Children Parties' schemas – cakes, prizes, games etc.</p>	<p>feeling of tension and sadness at this point.</p>	<p>repetition of the date</p>	<p>repetition of the date in different forms – something about it made them curious.</p>	<p>the repetition of the date.</p>
<p>Line 28 – Still in the same world-switch – more party descriptions. Peter seems to have positive memories of the games played during parties. This schema is culture bound as the games mentioned are typical games played by British children. Probably people from a foreign culture would not understand these references.</p>	<p>Anita – noticed the games which are typically associated with sports day at her school</p>	<p>Anita noted that although the sentence is positive – the context emphasises Francis' discomfort. Clint – blind man buff as a game makes her uncomfortable as she cannot see</p>	<p>Nick, Clint, Mandy, Miriam – positive games – sense of fun at children's party.</p>	
<p>Line 29 – A sudden deictic world-switch shift through Francis' use of direct speech. Boulamic attitudinal world-switch negated – Future possibility of attending the party is negated through "don't want".</p>	<p>Anita finds a direct juxtaposition between Peter's previous line about games and fun and the next sudden words of Francis indicating his reluctant to go to the party. The feeling of fear is emphasised in this contrast.</p>	<p>Participants were confused as to why Francis didn't want to go.</p>	<p>Clint, Mandy, Denise, Miriam – all were surprised that as a child he does not want to go – sense of confusion.</p>	<p>Participants were made aware of the Francis' despair in his direct speech "I don't want to go"</p>
<p>Line 30 - Epistemic world-switch where based on memories of Francis – his greatest fear that</p>				

Mabel Warren and Joyce will be present at the party based on the previous years' experiences. Fear inferred by not wanting to go to the party.				
Line 31 – Shift back to main text-world. Use of Free Indirect Speech creates a world-switch into Francis' thinking confirming the inference from the previous line that the boy does not like the party because of them.	Anita – found “hateful” as a powerful potent word Clint – now can make sense of the previous line Becky – could feel the dismay	All participants picked upon a subtext of bullying here	Mandy and Denise are sad that boy can't enjoy the party.	
Line 32 – Same world-switch. World builders giving information that girls were older than him.	Lisa saw this focus on the difference in age as normal for a boy of Francis' age.	See above	Nick – the fact that girls are older instils a sense of pity as Francis is seen as a bit pathetic	Sense of pity is elicited from the participants.
Line 33 – Same world-switch. Age of girls is given – World Building information.				
Line 34 - More world building information. Still in Francis' world-switch.				
“Pigtails” - schema creating image of young girls.				
“masculine stride” – gender references indicating that the girls are not feminine – also a reflection of Francis' weakness as ironically, he is male and he is afraid of the girl's masculine stride.	Anita, Tina, Berta and Lisa – all picked on a sense of weakness on Francis' part – he is a boy and sees girls as being masculine		Clint, Denise, Miriam - all felt Francis fear of the girls and a sense of embarrassment	All participants expressed a sense of disgust at the fear the young boy showed.
The dichotomy of the pigtails and the masculine stride is evident throughout the whole narrative in the dualities				

<p>created in the text by the constant references to “darkness/light”; “fear/strength”; “male/female”, among other contrasts created in the narrative.</p>				
<p>Line 35 – Same Deictic world-switch shift as Francis continues to think about the girls. Ironically, he thinks that, using Free Indirect Speech, “their sex humiliated him” which is not exactly true since he had asserted in the previous line that they had masculine traits. It means that Francis is scared by everyone regardless of their sex.</p>	<p>Anita – is unsure of believing Francis’ conclusions about the girls since he is biased against them and the information is unreliable.</p> <p>Clint – confirms their conclusion of line 34 – that Francis is weak</p> <p>Lisa feels pity</p>	<p>Participants Anita, Tina, Lisa reconfirmed their feeling of pity and at the same time scorn at a boy allowing the girls to bully him</p>	<p>Clint, Denise and Miriam confirmed this sense of embarrassment and felt uncomfortable at the boy’s reaction.</p>	<p>All participants felt there is not much of an age difference especially from one of the girls – should stand up for himself.</p>
<p>Line 36 – Deictic world-switch shift into the previous year. Something happened but the ellipsis (...) seem to infer that Francis is too ashamed to even remember exactly what happened, let alone talk about it.</p>			<p>Mandy senses shame and embarrassment</p> <p>All participants now focussed on the date – “last year” – something surely happened here – they felt that this will become important – foreshadowing.</p>	
<p>Line 37 – Deictic world-switch shift through Peter’s direct speech – again indicating Peter’s ongoing concern with Francis.</p>	<p>All participants felt Francis’ uncomfortableness and there is a mixture of pity and anger</p>	<p>Same reactions as when they read the book alone are expressed.</p>	<p>see above</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Line 38 – Deictic world-switch through Francis’ direct speech – Negated – “nothing” indicating his lack of desire to communicate and closing Peter out of this world-switch.</p>				
<p>Line 39 – Negated epistemic world-</p>				

<p>switch – illness is inferred by denying the positive “other” of being well. Becoming more and more evident that Greene builds a lot of his text-worlds on negation which creates more emphasis through contrast.</p>				
<p>Line 40 – Epistemic world-switch shift. Firm belief (although readers can infer that this is an excuse on Francis’ part to avoid going to party) that he is sick. Negated Deonticworld-switch is further created through Francis’ negated desire to go to the party, he still firmly believes he should not be present at the party.</p>	<p>Anita – connected lines 38-40 – suspicious if Francis is inventing the cold</p> <p>Clint – puzzled – is Francis really sick? Lisa and Berta – are sure that it is an excuse</p>	<p>Anita feels tension</p> <p>Becky and Mickey become aware that it might be an excuse – a sense of surprise</p>	<p>Participants Nick, Mark, Denise and Miriam – are certain that this is an excuse.</p> <p>Clint, Mandy – could be a happy coincidence.</p>	<p>All participants react with a sense of certainty that it is an excuse.</p>
<p>Line 41 – Deictic world-switch into Peter’s internal world denoting his confusion at Francis world which confirms the readers’ inference at in line 40 that Peter doubts that Francis is sick through the reference to his state of mind being “puzzled”.</p>	<p>Lisa feels fear</p>	<p>Participants feel a sense of anticipation</p>	<p>Mark felt the confusion in Peter</p>	<p>Participants think that Peter knows it is an excuse and is puzzled as how to answer.</p>
<p>Line 42 – Deictic world-switch shift through Peter’s direct speech. He still shows his support despite his puzzlement by inquiring if the cold is bad. He does not indicate that he is confused.</p>	<p>All participants – sense of Peter’s concern</p>	<p>All participants - sense of Peter’s concern</p>	<p>All participants – sense of Peter’s concern</p>	<p>All participants – sense of Peter’s concern</p>

<p>Line 43 – Epistemic world-switch shift – based on a modality that if Francis goes to the party that the cold will be very bad. Readers can infer that the cold is directly related to Francis attending the party or not which becomes more of an excuse than not.</p>	<p>Anita feels Francis vulnerability, fragility and fear.</p>			
<p>Line 44 – Attitudinal world-switch shift in that Francis believes that he could die. This is also foreshadowing but intended to be an inferred as another exaggeration on Francis' part. This then will reinforce the surprising twist at the end when Francis will really die because of fear.</p>	<p>Anita feels it overdramatic and loses sense of concern felt in previous line</p> <p>Tina feels disbelief and confirms Francis is exaggerating</p> <p>Berta feels also disbelief as this is an exaggeration</p>	<p>All participants smile or laugh as they feel this is an exaggeration.</p>	<p>All Participants picked on a sense of exaggeration</p>	<p>All participants feel a sense of melodrama</p>
<p>Line 45 – Epistemic world-switch shift through Peter's direct speech and belief that Francis should not go to the party. It is a negated world-switch where future possibility of attending the party is eliminated as a quick solution provided by Peter to support his brother.</p>	<p>Anita feels Peter's paternalistic attitude at the same time Francis' frustration.</p>	<p>Tina sense relaxation</p> <p>Anita is frustrated at Francis but senses his shame.</p>	<p>Nick -feels angry that Peter solves Francis' problem so quickly</p> <p>Clint – feels Francis too weak – feels concern</p> <p>Mandy and Miriam – feel a sense of relief</p>	<p>All participants feel that Peter is too paternalistic and overprotective.</p>
<p>Deictic world-switch shift through tense change to denote how Peter's words had an instant effect on Francis – “let his nerves relax” and “ready to leave everything to Peter.” – Francis abdicates any sense of responsibility as to taking a stand</p>				

<p>and allows Peter to take care of him.</p>				
<p>Line 46 – A deictic world-switch shift into Francis internal thoughts with a sudden shift to the main text-world by Francis refusal to look at his brother. Is it shame? Or something else? Seems to show his humiliation and frustration at having to always allow his brother to take over.</p>	<p>Anita feels the shame</p> <p>Tina – feels Peter is too overprotective</p> <p>Lisa – Francis still feels shame - overprotected</p>	<p>All participants – sense of shame</p>	<p>All participants – sense of shame</p>	<p>All participants – sense of shame.</p>
<p>Line 47 – A sudden shift from the main text-world to a deictic world-switch where Francis direct thoughts reveal the humiliation he suffered because of his fear while playing during the previous year's party.</p>	<p>Lisa feels reluctance on Francis' part</p> <p>Berta sympathises with Francis' shame</p> <p>Tina feels the mystery and fear</p>	<p>Participants referred to birthday party and the references by Peter</p>	<p>All participants picked on "last year" again – really becoming certain that something related to this will happen</p>	<p>All participants are sure this is a form of foreshadowing.</p>

Appendix H

These are excerpts from the “Voice in the Head” exercise which is analysed in depth in Chapter 6. These participants’ reactions were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher at a later stage. A comparison can be made between the reactions of Group 1 and Group 2 to indicate how participants reacted differently although they were listening to the same lines from the text.

Group 1 – 2016-7

(18) ‘You are having a bad dream,’ (I am really very protective of my brother ... I really would like to understand what is going on) (I realise that it is a difficult time but I already know what you are feeling)

21) ‘I dreamed that I was dead,’ (I am really afraid, I did not want to wake up this morning, I don’t want to get out of bed) (I feel very anxious but I don’t know how to react to anything and it’s dreadful)

(22) ‘What was it like?’ (tell me so I can understand you more) (tell me so that I can actually understand what is going on and I can help you)

(23) ‘I can’t remember,’ (I really don’t want to talk about it because I am feeling really scared and and feeling embarrassed) (I don’t want to talk about it and I can’t think very well and I don’t want to react to this so I’m just going to fake)

(24) ‘You dreamed of a big bird.’ (at the end of the day we are twins and I really know what is going on in your mind. And what is going on in your mind is going on in my mind) (I know what you are going through but I want you to explain to me so that you will feel better about it)

(25) ‘Did I?’ (are you sure that you know what I’m thinking because I feel that sometimes you are different) (I don’t want to talk about it. I want to be evasive)

(37) ‘What’s the matter?’

(38) ‘Oh, nothing. (39) I don’t think I’m well. (40) I’ve got a cold. I oughtn’t to go to the party.’ (I am trying to find an excuse not to go to the party) (if you are so worried about me then I’m going to use this to my advantage because I’m very very scared and I do not want to actually face the situation and so if I can make you believe that I am very unwell maybe I could forget about this)

(42) 'But Francis, is it a bad cold?' (I know that you are pretending to be sick so as you don't go to the party but I will try to protect you so that you would not know how much this will affect you) (honestly I don't think that you should worry this much because I will be with you)

(43) 'It will be a bad cold if I go to the party. (44) Perhaps I shall die.' (I am so scared, so scared and petrified) (I have to insist that I am going to be terrible be terribly unwell because I just don't want to go to the party)

(45) 'Then you mustn't go,' (I will help you convince our mother so that you won't go) (then I understand this and I will support you)

Group 2 - 2018

(18) 'You are having a bad dream,' (how would you know that? (said in a frustrated tone)(already already knows what I am feeling but at the same time it does not feel too bad because I feel he wants to protect)

(21) 'I dreamed that I was dead,' (Always always always over dramatizing) (your exaggerating)

(22) 'What was it like?' (you always want to know everything about me) (what was it like? What was it like? If you know that I was having a bad dream why are you asking me why was it like?)

(23) I can't remember (can't you just stop it and let me be?)(You have just had the dream, how can you not remember?)

(24) 'You dreamed of a big bird.' (how would you know what I was dreaming? I did not even tell you. As twins can't you just give me some individualism where I can tell you things before you assume that you know) (So why did you ask me? Why did you ask you what I am dreaming about if you knew?)

(25) 'Did I?' (I don't get this) (You should know the answer)

(37) 'What's the matter?' (

(38) 'Oh, nothing. (39) I don't think I'm well. (40) I've got a cold. I oughtn't to go to the party.' (Really? Is that why you really do not want to go to the party?) (you are probably just trying to find an excuse to not go to the party)

(42) 'But Francis, is it a bad cold?' (you always want to be my parent. Do not always assume that you know everything about me)(you tell me you always know what I am thinking and what I am feeling)

(43) 'It will be a bad cold if I go to the party. (44) Perhaps I shall die.' (oh my god I can't stand this any more.) (participant was speechless)

(45) 'Then you mustn't go,' (whether I'd go or not I don't think that you should be the person to tell you what to do)

APPENDIX I

Examples of Monologues written by Participants During Workshops.

Ms. Henne - Falcon

what a beautiful day for a party. It seems to me that I couldn't have chosen a better date. Hopefully the weather will hold and it won't rain. I must check on all of the party preparations and see that the cake is ready. soon the guests will arrive, and I hope everyone comes, even the twins Peter and Francis (although sometimes they do drive me mad). In fact, last year when their nurse dropped them off at the party, their final words were that I should keep them away from Jayce because they were arguing. That did not even make sense. Hopefully this year will be different.

rain

final words

-MOTHER

Francis puzzles me. He seems to grow younger by the hour instead of older. His fears are increasing. He doesn't want to do anything without his twin. I blame it on Peter. He fights all his battles which is wrong. Sometimes Francis has to solve his own problems alone. That's how he'll become a man. I don't want a weakling as a child. Yet it seems as if he's hiding secrets from me. Ever since ~~he~~ I mentioned to him that he and Peter will be attending the party of Mabel and Joyce, his attitude completely changed. It's as if he fears those two angels. Quite pathetic really. I'll try to make Peter tell me what's going on if Francis won't speak up.

twin

Secrets

My work is quite tedious and difficult. Taking care of two young boys makes me feel tired at the end of the day. They do get on my nerves but I'd have to remain polite or else I'd lose my job. I do like their mother, but the children have ² different personalities which at the end of the day, leave me puzzled. Peter is always very protective of Francis. He thinks he is all-knowing and superior just because he is a few minutes older than him. In reality, I am the one who is superior, the one to whom they should obey. Francis thinks that Peter is his saviour, ready to do anything for him and capable of anything. They are quite difficult to care for, and Francis has just come up with an excuse that he's sick. We all know that he just doesn't want to go to the party, but he needs to learn.

→ Nurse

Puzzled

polite

Helle - Falcon

It's so strange, these children these days. They were having such fun last year... well, every one but Francis. I wonder why that child cried. He showed up again for the party just now. So polite, so earnest... he's here he must have had fun last year. Maybe he was feeling overwhelmed by happiness but...

I'll just dismiss this whole thing... I have enough on my mind already... I hope the caterer arrived on time... oh dear me, what are these children doing now?

I really need a rest... I'm so glad Blind man Buff is coming up next. I need to encourage them to play and take the next twenty minutes as a break for myself

~~Miss~~

Helle - Falcon

cried

party

I can never relax with these kids. I know he was crying and so I went to his room, he rubbed his eyes and told me that he was feeling sick. I'm not stupid. Why is he not telling me what's going on? Is he just seeking for attention? ~~[I think he's not going to talk to me I'll look like the bad guy. But what shall I do? Keep chasing him to open up to me?] ~~to open~~ I don't understand him. Maybe he's only pitying himself.~~
 If he's not going to talk to me, I'm the one who'll look like the bad guy. But what more can I do? Keep chasing after him to open up to me? I'll tell Peter to check on him. At least I tried.

never relax

rubbed his eyes

Mother's Pov

Goodness it seems like this phase will take more time than anticipated. Everybody is telling me to keep strong and watch out for Francis but it is becoming too much for me. Thankf~~less~~^{ly} Peter helps out and looks out for Francis I've been having dreams lately. Last night I dreamed about darkness overtaking me. ~~and~~ I dreamt that I was in a black hole just like the one Francis seems to be in, but the thing is that it was an eternal black hole, with no way out. ~~Inside Francis~~ Francis can get help but he is just very stubborn and doesn't want any help. In the dream I saw myself falling and falling and drifting away farther from reality. I ~~don't~~ know if this is just because of the worrying and stressful situation or not but it was a dark filled path and I do not want to relive that.

Should I talk to my child about this, and tell him to accept the help he is being offered or should I keep this bottled up inside?

darkness

dreamed

Analysis

I used to tell Francis that life is a game. A game which you have to play, not knowing what is going to happen. Just like when we used to play hide and seek at Ms. Henne Falcon's party. We just had to hide in a dark, shadowy place until we got caught. Darkness worried him, darkness consumed his memories and turned them into forgotten, lost dreams. In fact, I used to tell Francis that he was having a bad dream so that he won't get scared. It was too much for him. I think that is why we are twins, same hair, same lips, same eyes so that he won't feel alone in this vicious world. I felt the need to protect him.

Today, I visited Francis in the psych ward number 6. I cannot stand seeing him so miserable just because he was too scared to live life.

Mr. Henne Falcon

Monologue:

Oh gosh, I'm so looking forward to my yeary party tonight! (**Sniff**) Heaven`s sakes I`m already smelling that birthday cake I`ve got in the oven. I bet that sweet child Francis will adore my cake...(**Thinks for a bit**) Well, he have always enjoyed my cooking so why not? Oh and as soon as he arrives, I better tell him that there`s nothing to fear in the dark as he seems quite afraid of it. Come to think of it, I better switch off the lights right away so that we can start playing hide and seek as soon as the party starts! (**Switch off lights**)

Key Words:

- Birthday Cake
- Hide and Seek
- Nothing to fear in the Dark
- Sweet Child

Biography:

Mr. Henne Falcon is a middle-aged widow man living alone in his huge house with his cat Mango. As he has no children, he has a special bond with the kids that live on his street but little does he know that some children find him as a weird and weary man that lives in a haunted house. Since his wife died, he has dedicated his life to cooking and throwing parties for the kids...well he has nothing to do apart from that. His sense of fashion is very classic and quirky, with his glasses that covers half of his face and that bow tie he always wear around his neck...oh and let`s not forget his precious apron to not get his clothes dirty while he`s in the kitchen!

Francis Francis

~~It was January the fifth~~ ~~my memory~~
 went back to that day without knowing

Shivers went down my spine as I ^{looked at} the calendar it was January the fifth. I still can't believe a year passed from the day I faked my own death. I still dream of my brother calling my name. I miss him. ~~The word party for me changed completely~~ its meaning is now death and loss. After that day the word party changed completely from a which symb

Shivers went down my spine as I looked at the calendar. It was January the fifth again. I am still in disbelief "I faked my own death." "wow" I still remember waking up next to my brother ~~and~~ after he calls my name I always would say the same thing "did you call out?" I miss him. After last year the word party for me changed completely. From a word that ~~was~~ symbolized fun and games now it symbolizes fear and death. I want to go back but I can't. ~~stop~~

Francis Francis

Christine: No man, I won't! I can't. I can't go in the dark anymore. I know it's already been a year, but I still have nightmares about it.

Malcolm:

Christine: Mother wants me to see a psychologist, something about feeling no more terror and seeing no more darkness in my life.

Malcolm:

Christine: You're all expecting me to just move on, continue living my life as if Francis isn't dead. As if I didn't hold my twin's dead body in my arms. As if I can't feel the pulse of his fear still going on and on.

Malcolm:

Christine: I got to go. I think someone knocked on the door. I'll text the rest. I don't want them to know I'm here. I'm not ready to face the nanny. Or mother. Especially her.

PETER.

Christine
Gabea

* woke me up in it.

/on phone 1.

[No man, I won't! ~~I honestly can't~~... I can't go in the dark anymore I know it's already been a year, ~~but it still feels like it was yesterday~~. I still have nightmares about it.] *Mother wants me to see a psychologist... something about feeling no more terror and seeing no more darkness in my life.] A bad dream.

You're all expecting me to ^{just} move on, continue living my life as if Francis isn't dead. As if I didn't hold my twin's dead body in my arms. As if I can't ~~still~~ feel the pulse of his fear still going on and on. → party was tomorrow.

[I'm going to hang up, I think someone knocked on the door. I'll text the rest.]

/Huff, throw ^{an} arm across ^{my} face, go away from 'door'!

I don't want them to know I'm here. I'm not ready to face the nanny. Or mother. Especially her. /scuff/.

They keep asking if I'm okay, or try to make me eat.

I just want to see Francis again.

Go without me to Henne-Falcon's house, I'll just sleep. Maybe he'll still be alive in my dreams.

Peter.

Christine Goble

no more can't

I ~~can't~~ go into the dark anymore. It's been a year, but it haunts me like it was yesterday, I still have nightmares about it; [Mother wants me to see a psychologist] so I would feel no more terror ^{as if} [and see no more darkness in my life, but that can never happen. How] can I move on from Francis' death? He was my twin, my other half, ...


The pulse of his fear still goes on and on even till today, especially in Mrs. Henne-Falcon's house, and more so in the dark. (Someone knocked on the door, ~~it~~?)
[I threw an aim across my face] not yet ready to face people, especially the nanny, or my mother... They keep asking if I'm okay, and to eat...

What I'd give to see ~~him~~ Francis again...

Maybe he'll still be alive in my dreams, I'll just sleep for now.

APPENDIX J

Ethics Committee Approval

From: Daiva Nacyte D.Nacyte@kent.ac.uk 
Subject: Ethical Approval: "Researching the cognitive and emotional interaction of young adults with fictional texts in their reading experience" (Ref 0011617)
Date: 14 October 2016 at 14:51
To: Carmel Sammut carmel.sammut@um.edu.mt
Cc: Melissa Trimmingham M.F.Trimingham@kent.ac.uk, Helen Brooks H.E.M.Brooks@kent.ac.uk, Andrew MacGregor A.N.MacGregor@kent.ac.uk

Dear Carmelo

I am pleased to tell you that your project "Researching the cognitive and emotional interaction of young adults with fictional texts in their reading experience" (Ref 0011617) received ethical approval from the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Advisory Group for Human Participants on 14 October 2016. The attached documents are the final approved versions and should be the only ones used.

Please note that it is essential that you:

1. Comply with the Data Protection Act of 1998
2. Comply throughout the conduct of the study with good research practice standards
3. Refer any amendment of the protocol to the Humanities Research Ethics Advisory Group

If you are intending to work unaccompanied with children or with vulnerable adults, you will need to apply for a DBS check (*formerly known as CRB*).

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Best wishes
Daiva

Miss Daiva Nacyte
Administrative Co-ordinator - Faculties Support Office University of Kent, Room 25, The Marlowe Building, Canterbury, CT2 7NR

T: 01227 82(4252) | W: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/fso/>



University of
Malta a...617.pdf



V1 Checklist
0011617.pdf



V1 Consent
Form 0...617.pdf



V1 Full
Applica...617.pdf



V1 PIS
0011617.pdf



V1 Questions for
intervie...617.pdf



V1 Research
Propos...617.pdf



V1 Theatre Flyer
0011617.pdf


Acts 28 / 2015

To be completed by Faculty Research Ethics Committee

We have examined the above proposal and advise

Acceptance **Refusal** **Conditional acceptance**

For the following reason/s:


Signature  Date 2-12-2015

To be completed by University Research Ethics Committee

We have examined the above proposal and grant

Acceptance **Refusal** **Conditional acceptance**

For the following reason/s:

Signature  Date 21/3/2016

APPENDIX K

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM



Title of project:

Participant Identification Number for this project:

- I the undersigned voluntarily agree to take part in the study on how readers cognitively and emotionally interact with fictional texts.
- I have read and understood the Information Sheet provided. I have been given a full explanation by the investigator of the nature, purpose, location and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood the advice and information given as a result.
- I agree to comply with any instruction given to me during the study and to co-operate fully with the investigator. I shall inform him immediately if I suffer any deterioration of any kind in my well-being, or experience any unexpected or unusual symptoms.
- I consent to my personal data, as outlined in the accompanying information sheet, being used for the research project detailed in the information sheet, and agree that data collected may be shared with other researchers or interested parties. I understand that all personal data relating to volunteers is held and processed in the strictest confidence, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) (UK) and with the Data Protection Act (2001) Malta.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to justify my decision and without prejudice.
- I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study.

If you accept to participate in this research, please fill in your personal details below and sign this consent letter.

Name of Participant: _____

Email: _____

Mobile: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Date: _____

I thank you for taking the time to read this consent letter and hope you will be able to participate in this research. Should you need to contact me I can be reached either through email at carmel.sammut@um.edu.mt or by phone on 99473564.

Carmel Sammut (Researcher)
Department of English
University of Malta
Junior College

Dr Melissa Trimmingham (Supervisor)
School of Arts
University of Kent
Canterbury, UK

Copies:

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher site file; 1 (original) to be kept in main file

APPENDIX L

Information Sheet



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear student,

Here is some information about a theatre project that I would like to invite you to be a part of. If you accept this invitation you will be participating in series of fun theatre workshops, free of charge, with a group of other students from this college. While meeting new people, making new friends, and having fun you would also be helping me explore further how young adult readers connect with fictional texts. This research is part of my PhD research at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. For the purpose of this project, I am looking to form a group of 16-18-year-old male and female participants, who can fluently read and speak in English.

If you accept to participate, you will form part of a group of students who will meet regularly once a week for theatre workshops that will last from 1-2 hours between November 2016 and February 2017. At the end of these workshops we will put up a theatre performance from a number of scenes that we would have worked on together, based on parts from a fictional text you would have read at the beginning of this project. I want to inform you that these workshop sessions will be videotaped and parts will also be used by me for further analysis as part of the final PhD thesis findings. The whole process will take a period of three to four months which will be structured around the academic calendar of the school.

Apart from the theatre workshops, I would also like to meet you individually to discuss more in depth about your personal connections with the literary text that we will be working on. The questions are meant to find out more how you are feeling in the process, any personal reactions to the text, your experiences of reading fiction and generally what happens when you really enjoy or hate a character or any aspect of a fictional text.

This first individual discussion will happen at the beginning of the project, there will be a second individual meeting towards the middle of the process and a closing individual discussion at the end. These individual meetings will take place at a mutually agreed location. These informal discussions will be digitally recorded and then transcribed at a later stage. Each meeting will be about 1-hour long or less.

Finally, if you agree to be involved in this project, you will be asked to keep a confidential online personal reflective journal throughout the whole process, wherein you can input any personal reactions to the whole project. You will have a personal password to access your online journal. I promise that you will not take more than 10 minutes each week to complete your writing.

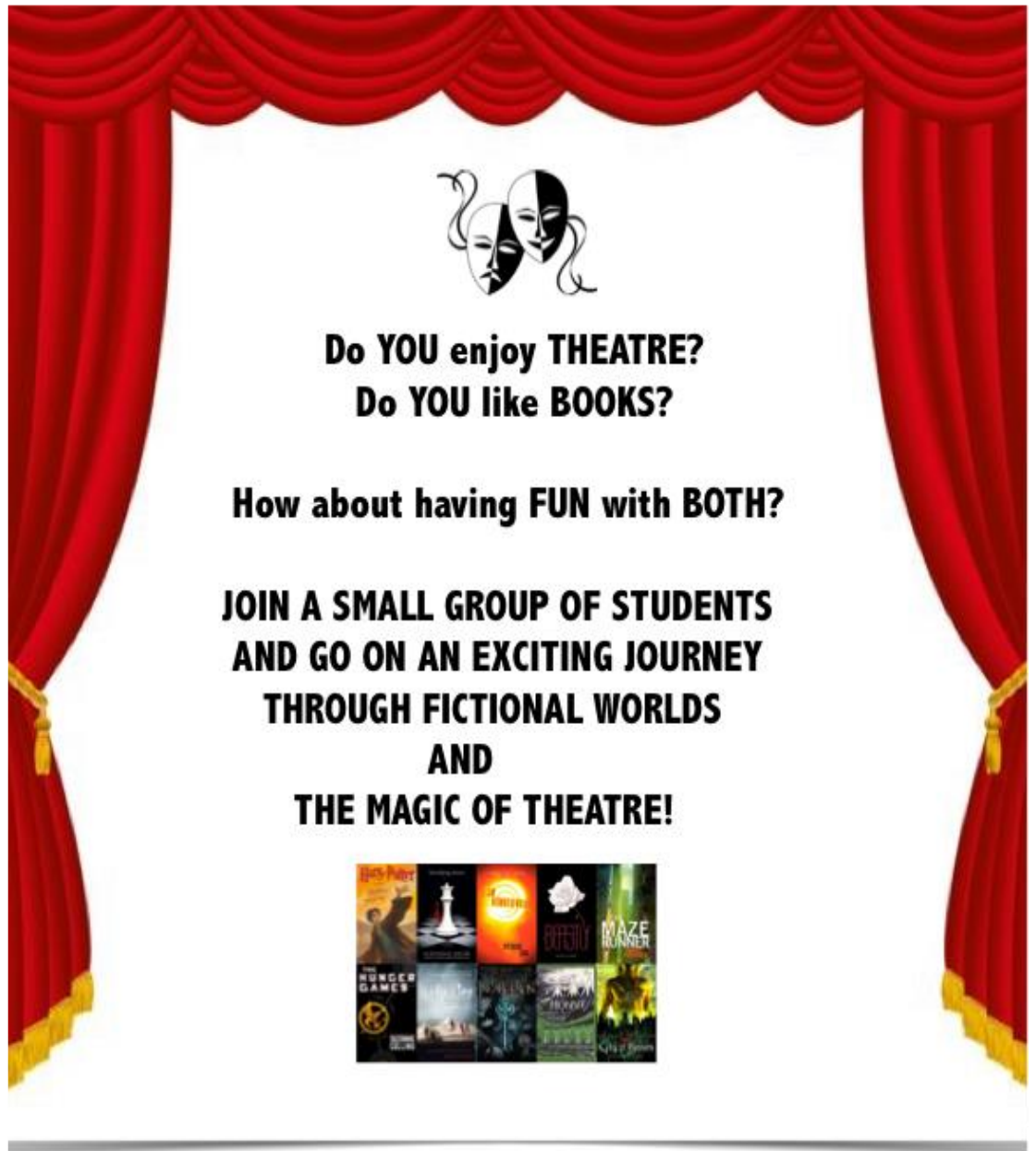
During the whole process, you will probably reflect further on your reading preferences and also will explore different ways to interact with fictional texts. You might also find that making connections with your personal experiences while reading might aid in your recall of that text.

If you think that you will be interested in joining this venture, then I will need you and your parents/guardians to sign the attached consent form. In signing the consent form you are agreeing that:

- You will attend regularly to the weekly workshops and the ensuing rehearsal times until the mutually agreed performance date.
- That you will complete tasks assigned from one week to the next closely connected with the reading of the text.
- That you will duly fill in and keep up to date the online personal reflective journal after each session.
- That you will fully participate in and allow video and audio recordings of the workshop sessions.

APPENDIX M


Recruitment Flyer



**Do YOU enjoy THEATRE?
Do YOU like BOOKS?**

How about having FUN with BOTH?

**JOIN A SMALL GROUP OF STUDENTS
AND GO ON AN EXCITING JOURNEY
THROUGH FICTIONAL WORLDS
AND
THE MAGIC OF THEATRE!**



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY CONTACT:
MR CARMEL SAMMUT
ROOM 305 tel. 2590307
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH or email at
carmel.sammut@um.edu.mt**