Vocal music teaching-learning practices in contemporary South African theatre: A case study

L Steyn Delport


orcid.org/0000-0003-4676-6135

Thesis accepted for the degree *Doctor of Philosophy in Visual and Performing Arts with Music* at the North-West University

Promoter: Prof JH Kruger

Graduation: June 2022
Student number: 31528309

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my promoter, Prof Jaco Kruger, without whom this project would not have been a success. His patience, guidance and continuous support have allowed this project to flourish and me to grow as an individual and an academic.

To the SATV participants, thank you for generously and enthusiastically allowing me to share in your vocal music teaching-learning experiences. Working with such inspiring young performing artists is an honour and privilege that I will never take for granted.

I extend my sincere gratitude to North-West University and Tshwane University of Technology for providing me with financial support to complete my study.

Thank you to my supportive colleagues at TUT, especially Elri, Hendri and Katlego, for teaching my subjects while I was on study leave.

Thank you to my caring, loving and supportive husband, family and friends, for your continuous encouragement, interest and understanding.

To my dogs, especially Vicuna, thank you for your companionship and comfort during the late-night research and writing process.

Abstract

This instrumental case study investigates the vocal music teaching-learning practices (TLPs) and experiences of selected performing arts graduates who are members of the South African Theatre Village (SATV) Company. Data was gathered by means of personal interviews and observations during rehearsals for the production *Flak my son* (2018) as well as literature related to historical and contemporary South African dramatic performance practices and institutional vocal music TLPs at Tshwane University of Technology.

Three themes emerged from the case study, namely lived experiences and practices of extracurricular musicing, institutional vocal music TLPs, and SATV vocal music TLPs. Theme one involves vocal musical TLPs in various community institutions, especially home, church and school. It also accounts for the influence of mass media. Theme two in turn integrates personal and group experiences of vocal music TLPs in programmes and coursework productions at TUT. Theme three concerns the strategies and techniques of vocal music TLPs in the SATV production *Flak my son* (2018).

Participants' experiences point to a combination of structured, technical outcomes-based Western practices and oral performance practices involving continuous, practical social learning. Singing as play and work emerges as essential sub-categories. The former involves a strong sense of communal identity as well as emotional and spiritual engagement. Work-singing, in contrast, involves unfamiliar technical requirements. It is perceived as restrictive and as inducing vulnerability and lack of confidence.

Wenger's Community of Practice (CoP) perspective on social learning and play provides an analytical framework to conceptualise the vocal TLPs of the SATV. The consequent integration of oral TLPs and the norms of CoP and play offer a strategy for more effective teaching-learning in tertiary educational environments.

Keywords:

Community of practice, contemporary theatre, performing arts, vocal music teaching-learning practices, theory of play

Table of contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of abbreviations

CoMP: Community of musical practice
CoP: Community of practice
SATV: South African Theatre Village
TLP(s): Teaching-learning practice(s)
TUT: Tshwane University of Technology

Explanation of terms

Children's theatre	A specialisation subject at TUT from second year to BTech level in National Accredited Technical Education Diploma drama qualifications. Children's theatre focuses on entertainment, puppetry and circus acts (TUT, 2018).
Coursework productions	The subject of "production" requires compulsory participation in a variety of productions from first year. Students take part in open auditions and are allowed to practically apply and interpret performance techniques studied in various classes (TUT, 2018). Other subjects, such as voice, educational theatre, children's theatre, physical theatre and applied directing, also provide students with the opportunity to take part in coursework showcases and shorter production projects.
Directing	At TUT, a compulsory subject in third year, and an elective in BTech, that focuses on various methods of directing, directing styles, preparation and presentation of a short excerpt from, or full-length play by student directors (TUT, 2018).
Educational theatre	At TUT, a specialisation subject from second year to BTech level. Educational theatre focuses on the function and role of theatre as "a training aid and developmental tool" and includes educational, developmental, and industrial theatre projects and facilitation (TUT, 2018).
Group singing (see *play-singing* and *work-singing*)	Unless indicated otherwise, group singing is not used here in a generic sense but refers to singing as play. Such singing contrasts with singing as work, which is associated with technical training at tertiary level. Group singing is generally regarded as a cohesive, socially-constructive practice.
Institutional vocal music TLPs	These are TLPs in TUT singing modules and student coursework productions.

Physical theatre	Compulsory movement training as part of the communication techniques subject group from first year to BTech level. This subject develops operations of the body through rhythm, time, space, dynamics, alignment and integration, mime, unarmed combat skills, choreography, mask work, dance, drama and expressionism (TUT, 2018). "Verve" is the name of the annual physical theatre performance showcases.
Play-singing (see *group singing* and *work-singing*)	Play-singing is associated with a sense of community, tradition and ritual that is voluntary, enjoyable and not limited by technical demands. Play-singing is emotionally engaging, and is described as having "vibe, soul, spirit" and "groundedness".
SATV	The South African Theatre Village is a production company comprising mostly young performing arts graduates and which aims to create new South African theatrical projects. They have presented numerous productions at the POPArt Theatre, South African State Theatre and National Arts Festival since 2017.
Singing class	At TUT, part of the communication techniques subject group during first year, and an elective from second year to BTech level, focusing on technical voice development and the presentation of songs in different styles (TUT, 2018).
Soundscaping	The soundscape is a sonic environment (Schafer, 1993:432). The term is often used in sound studies, described as an interdisciplinary field addressing "the aesthetic, ethical, social, material and political dimensions and functions of sound in social life […] encompassing music, the everyday sounds of the natural and built environment, noise, and silence" (Sturman, 2019:2024).
Strategies of vocal music learning	A method for obtaining a specific vocal music result that involves interacting and interdependent learning techniques.
Techniques of vocal music learning	A workable unit of engagement, such as specific vocal and technical exercises, that involves elements within a learning strategy.

Vocal explorations	An improvisation, collaboration and listening exercise where a vocalist provides an initial short, improvised melody, and other vocalists start contributing melodies, harmonies and rhythmic elements. During my observations of SATV rehearsals, vocal explorations lasted for up to 15 minutes before the director requested for them to be "closed off".
Voice class	At TUT, compulsory voice training as part of the communication techniques subject group from first year to BTech level. This subject develops optimal voice production and integration of the body for voice use in theatre. Voice techniques include breath control, articulation, projection and range of voice related to various performance styles, accents, character voices, basic microphone techniques and radio presentation (TUT, 2018).
Work-singing (see *group singing* and *play-singing*)	Work-singing involves predetermined outcome-based activities and technical proficiencies such as specific vocal technique, working with sheet music and formalised performances. Work-singing is perceived as cerebral, rather than emotional, and is associated with feelings of restriction, intimidation and discomfort.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the motivation and objectives of this study, as well as its basic method of investigation.

Performing arts students at TUT encounter the teaching-learning practices (TLPs) of Western vocal arts, musical theatre and drama. Although they arrive from diverse musical environments, most of them share basic knowledge and skills related to oral choral dance-song practices. These dance-songs encompass various genres which integrate verbal, musical and dramatic modes. Barber (1987:2) explains that in "these [integrated] forms the meaning […] is conveyed by all elements in combination". The latter are generally transmitted by rote teaching-learning, and proficiency in them is not acquired separately from social life.

The emerging self-evident challenge is that students may come to their tertiary educational encounter with experiences and needs that are not necessarily accounted for in the curriculum. Chikovore *et al*. (2012:304) indicate that teachers in South Africa struggle to accommodate cultural diversity in their classrooms and teaching methods, noting significant detachment between what is learnt "inside and outside of formal schooling". In particular, "[t]he study of African music is entangled in a multifaceted fundamental problem [namely] its conjoined nature with dance, costume and other surrogate or allied art forms" (Mapaya, 2014:2009).

In addition, oral TLPs usually involve experiential learning. Hence, performers gradually develop a variety of musical skills during general social experience, and they are exposed to particular choral dance-song genres before they are fully incorporated into performance groups. Carver and Thram (2012:13) explain fittingly that "children learn music by watching from the side-lines, and participating as they learn, rather than by taking formal lessons".

Ebewo (2017:2) argues that "South Africa boasts of a wealth of performance practices ranging from indigenous to modern". The musical component of many of these practices takes form as choral dance-songs, which not only often are commodified, but also are integral to social production in local communities (Carver & Thram, 2012; Chinouriri, 2013; Ebewo, 2017; Nzewi, 2005). Performance spaces and events include homes, schools, churches, social rituals and festivals ('traditional' and commodified), public protests, eisteddfods, music and sports competitions, and the mass media.

Ebewo (2017:2) describes performance as "a site for generating knowledge and philosophies that affect human beings within a cultural environment", whilst Wenger (2011:3) points out that "communities of practice have been around for as long as human beings have learned together. At home, at work, at

school, in our hobbies, we all belong to communities of practice." Basic performance forms are either presentational, involving 'informal' space and direct community engagement, or representational, which pertains to text-based stage or mass media productions with limited or no audience engagement. In all cases, performance practice involves "distinct action and embodied skill […] in the construction of socio-cultural realities as they affect communities" (Ebewo, 2017:2).

The theory of Community of Practice (CoP) provides an analytical perspective on socially integrated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991:40). Domain, community, and practice are the core elements of effective learning in CoPs (Mercieca, 2017:12). These communities develop a shared repertoire of resources over time, which includes learning experiences and problem-solving skills (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015:2).

Play also is a quality of CoP, and various recent scholars highlight its importance in learning (James, 2019; Walsh, 2018; Wheeler & Palmer, 2019; Wood, 2015). Play is also described as an activity that cultivates a strong sense of identity and belonging (Ghimisi, 2016; Sinfield *et al.*, 2019).

As a piano and flute learner, I was introduced to a Western 'classical' CoP, culminating in my membership of the West Rand Youth Orchestra and Pretoria Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. I am also a singer and have performed in church, school choirs, musicals and at eisteddfods. My first formal encounter with voice training occurred during my undergraduate years at the University of Pretoria and my postgraduate studies at TUT, where I am a singing lecturer in the Department of Performing Arts.
I argue that different social environments and practices could explain why some of my students often struggle to interpret, perform and embody their repertoire. It is as if they "spend too much time getting notes under control and leave the interpretation to be figured out later, which leads to 'an outer shell of accuracy' " (Pierce, 2010:xiii-xiv). As such, there is an apparent need to conceptualise the kind of training that could account for the TLPs of all involved in the educational encounter. Olaogun (2001:147) argues that theatre is prominently expressive of South Africa's postcolonial cultural rebirth. I argue here that the role of performing arts programmes in this rebirth may only be fully meaningful if it also accounts for autonomous TLPs.

The main purpose of this case study accordingly is to conceptualise the vocal music TLPs of members of the SATV, with a view towards implementing them in my TLP at TUT. My primary research question therefore is: How may the vocal music TLPs of members of the SATV be conceptualised? My secondary research questions are: 1) With what vocal musical TLPs did members of the SATV engage before their training at TUT? 2) What vocal musical TLPs did members of the SATV encounter during their training at TUT? 3) How may the vocal TLPs of the SATV shape my TLP at TUT?

1.1. Basic research method and design

My research design took form as a qualitative instrumental case study. This qualitative approach has enabled me to describe and understand the lived experiences of the SATV in a real-life setting (Bless *et al.,* 2017:338). This essentially entailed in-depth, on-site investigations into the general histories and vocal musical TLPs of participants and various institutions. As such, this investigation also shares qualities of an intrinsic case study, defined as a unique "case that has unusual interest in and of itself and needs to be described and detailed' (Creswell, 2013:98). At the same time, my investigation of the SATV has also been geared towards "facilitating our understanding of something else" (Baxter & Jack, 2008:549), namely how to conceptualise a TLP that will be meaningful to my students and me. In this regard, my approach is therefore geared towards understanding "a specific issue, problem, or concern", and it involves "a case of cases selected to best understand the problem" (Creswell, 2013:98).

Accordingly, I investigated a case bounded by time and place, and involving multiple sources of information. It involved the vocal musical TLPs of the SATV over two years. Information was primarily elicited from interviews and observations of TLPs in action, and was supplemented with data from my literature review. This facilitated and delimited my description and enabled me to identify certain relevant themes (Creswell, 2013:97).

1.2. Participants

Ten SATV members participated in my study. I conducted interviews with seven of them and observed three more during rehearsals of their production of *Flak my son*.

Table 1. List of participants (Interviews and observations)

	Name[1]	**Mother-tongue**	**Qualification programme**
1.	Denzel	Setswana and Sepedi	Drama
2.	James	Afrikaans	Drama
3.	Lee	Setswana	Drama
4.	Maps	Sepedi	Drama
5.	Moira	Afrikaans	Drama
6.	Mytho	Sepedi and Setswana	Drama
7.	Tjoki	Sesotho	Drama

[1] Pseudonyms

Table 2. List of participants (Observations only)

	Names	**Mother-tongue**	**Qualification programme**
1.	Marilyn	English	Drama
2.	Ingrid	Setswana	Musical Theatre
3.	John[2]	Setswana and Sepedi	None

I chose a sample of participants "that can be presumed to *represent* that population or body" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:147; emphasis in original). The SATV offers a suitably representative research population in the sense that they currently consist of sixteen members, fifteen of whom are recent drama or musical theatre graduates of TUT[3]. They accordingly had "relevant knowledge, interest and experience in relation to the case" (Rule & John, 2011:64), and this allowed me to observe how they integrated and manipulated various acquired TLPs. Additionally, given that the location of the investigation was not TUT, there were no constraints on participants in terms of its institutional practices and policies.

1.3. Data collection

Rehearsals of the SATV were recorded audio-visually, and my observations were documented. I collected additional data through semi-structured interviews, and consulted printed and electronic documents and audio-visual material (Gillham, 2000:20-22; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:145; Yin, 2009:99).

I followed guidelines and applied a level of standardisation for conducting successful interviews (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:149-152; Ritchie *et al.*, 2014:198-203; Rule & John, 2011:35; Yin, 2009:106-109) as well as observation protocols outlined by Merriam (2009:120-121) and Creswell (2007:134-138) to ensure good quality of collected data. Semi-structured interviews enabled me to "focus directly on the case topics" and "provide[d] perceived casual inferences and explanations" (Yin, 2009:102). Rule and John (2011:65) explain that this kind of interview "allows for more flexibility during data collection and creates space for the interviewer to pursue lines of enquiry stimulated by the interview". Participants were informed about the objectives of the study (Ritchie *et al*., 2014:187; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:151), and probing questions were used to elicit more "information, description or explanation" on particular emerging issues (Ritchie *et al.*, 2014:194).

[2] John is an established professional actor and only attended some rehearsals.
[3] The remaining member is a graduate of the University of Pretoria.

My strategy during the interviews was to make participants feel comfortable to share their views and experiences. They chose locations where they felt comfortable, and which were free from distractions and interruptions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:149). Interviews were conducted as "guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin, 2009:106).

1.4. Data analysis and validation strategies

My data analysis aimed to link objectives and conclusions, theorise my findings, determine the practical value of my research, and reflect on its limitations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:284-285). To analyse the large amount of collected data, I firstly familiarised myself with audio and audio-visual recordings, and case study notes. I converted all data to written form (Yin, 2009:129) to prepare and organise it for analysis (Rule & John, 2011:76).

My research questions guided analysis and interpretation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:208; Richie *et al*., 2003:221; Yin, 2009:128), a process that enabled the generation of themes that became "the core of interpreting the case" (Rule & John, 2011:78). Further engagement with these themes culminated in this case study report and moved "into higher levels of abstraction", where findings are discussed (Rule & John, 2011:79; Yin, 2009:164).

Leedy and Ormrod (2010:101) indicate that qualitative "researchers use a wide variety of approaches to support the validity of their findings" (also Creswell, 2007:244-257; Rule & John, 2011:114; Yin, 2009:40). Of these, the most common include (1) triangulation, which involves collecting data from multiple sources (in my case, principally interviews, observations and documents); (2) extensive time spent in contact with participants to build their trust, and to gain an in-depth perspective on a case (I know most of the participants from their training at TUT, and collected data over two years); (3) peer review undertaken by my promoter, the director of the SATV and colleagues at TUT; and (4) verification of data and findings in the final report by participants themselves (Rule & John, 2011:114).

1.5. Ethical considerations

My investigation adhered to the ethical principles set out by North-West University, and this enhances the credibility of results (Creswell, 2009:235). I obtained permission to study the SATV from its director. Participation in the study was voluntary and participants were asked to sign an informed consent form explaining the nature of my investigation (Saldaña, 2011:24; Wilkinson, 2015:203; Yin, 2011:44). All personal data and information obtained during this study are being held in the strictest confidence. Participants' names are kept confidential and are replaced by pseudonyms.

1.6. The structure of this report

This report is presented in five chapters organised around my research objectives. The current chapter discusses the motivation and research problem for this study. Chapter 2 discusses the research method and design in more detail. Chapter 3 describes the literature related to this study as well as theories of CoP and play. It provides an overview of pre-colonial teaching-learning and performance practices, their adaptation during the colonial era, the contemporaneous development of syncretic performance practices, and finally reviews the TLPs involved in the TUT curriculum. Chapter 4 offers a description of my data. Chapter five interprets the data and concludes with a reflection on my research findings.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the research design and methods used in this study. It firstly motivates and describes the applicable research design (2.2). Secondly, the strategy of inquiry is described within the specific design framework (2.3). Thirdly, I elaborate on data collection strategies and methods of analysis (2.4 and 2.5). Finally, I explain my role as a researcher (2.6) and describe the specific procedures implemented to ensure trustworthiness (2.7) and good ethical conduct (2.8).

2.2. Research design

My research design is qualitative and informed by an interpretive, constructivist paradigm. Qualitative researchers "are interested in the lived experiences of the individuals, groups and communities they study" (Bless *et al.,* 2017:338) and, consequently, in how people construct their world through these experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:6). Accordingly, my goal is to understand the lived experiences of vocal music TLPs of members of the SATV and how they utilise them when creating performances.

Qualitative research directs this study in terms of "research techniques (of data collection or data analysis) [and] an overreaching framework" (Braun & Clarke, 2013:4; round brackets in original). Qualitative research authors emphasise different characteristics to guide a study; however, many share common characteristics (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15). Consequently, this study follows a research design and adheres to research characteristics outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013:19-20), Bless *et al.* (2017:340), Creswell (2007:37-39; 2009:175), Merriam and Tisdell (2016:15) and Yin (2011:7-8). The characteristics that are elaborated on in this chapter include a focus on process, understanding, meaning (related to an interpretive paradigm), inductive reasoning, a richly descriptive product and the researcher as the main instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15).

2.2.1. The interpretive/constructivist paradigm

The interpretive paradigm forms part of the core of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007:3). The established conventions, beliefs and methods associated with this paradigm directed my research process (Braun & Clarke, 2013:4; Denzin & Lincoln, cited in Creswell, 2007:248). A critical characteristic of qualitative research is "the focus on process, understanding, and meaning" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15), which draws on an interpretive (or constructivist) paradigm (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:9). Furthermore, the interpretive perspective emphasises that researchers analyse meaning by

interpreting information, contexts, values, and ideas: "[T]hus researchers analyse the meaning people confer upon their own and others' actions" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2010:178).

The main goal of interpretive research is to understand the complexity and subjectivity of human experience (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:21; Loseke, 2013:24). Furthermore, the interpretive analysis assumes the perspective that reality is a social construct and that multiple interpretations of reality exist (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:9; Braun & Clarke, 2013:6). Each research participant may have unique perspectives and experiences arising from the world around them (Cohen *et al*., 2007:22). Thus, the interpretive paradigm guided my understanding of the circumstances that give rise to complex, individual and shared vocal musical experiences of research participants.

Furthermore, interpretive qualitative research recognises its self-reflective quality and my responsibility as a researcher to *interpret* and *represent* information (Creswell, 2007:248; my emphasis). For this reason, the value of subjectivity and reflexivity (Braun & Clarke, 2013:20) will be elaborated on in section 2.2.1.1.

2.2.1.1. Subjectivity and reflexivity

Loseke (2013:24) notes that an interpretive researcher's beliefs and preferences will influence how they interpret and construct meaning during the research process. Because the researcher is the main instrument for data collection and analysis, subjectivity and reflexivity are essential (Creswell, 2009:175; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15; Miles *et al.*, 2014:9). However, the researcher is not the only instrument – the research project is in fact "a joint product of researcher and researched" (Ashworth, 2015:20), since participants and researchers, respectively, "bring their own experiences, perspectives and values to the research" (Braun & Clarke, 2013:6).

Through conscious awareness, I utilised my subjectivity as a strength by being reflexive (Braun & Clarke, 2013:6; 37). I achieved reflexivity through a process of critical reflection about my role in producing knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2013:37) and through openly describing how my background and interests may have shaped my data collection and interpretation (Yardley, 2015:257). Saldaña (2011:22; brackets in original) accordingly explains that

> your autobiography and identity – life experiences, knowledge, training, emotions, values, attitudes, beliefs, gender, ethnicity, and so forth – influence and affect how you navigate through the enterprise and approach other important elements, such as the relationship between you and your participants and the analysis of your data. Who you are (or are becoming) determines to a large extent what and how you research.

By being reflexive, I continuously questioned my biases and perspectives rooted in my vocal music background, experiences and TLPs (Savin-Baden & Major, 2010:177). Therefore, I was aware that my vocal teaching-learning experiences before and during my tertiary education and my role as a singing and drama lecturer could influence this qualitative study during the data collection and interpretation process.

2.2.2. Inductive reasoning

Various authors refer to inductive reasoning and analysis as a central characteristic of qualitative research (Kumar, 2014:77; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15; Schwandt, 2007:149-147; Yin, 2011:94). Inductive reasoning mostly applies to cases where "there is a lack of theory or an existing theory fails to adequately explain the phenomenon" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:17). Loseke (2013:75; brackets in original) similarly explains that "while all research is (or at least should be) informed by the existing literature, there are instances when this literature does not contain sufficient information to allow clear operationalizations or researchers may want to look at something in a way that differs from what has been done in the past". Accordingly, Chapter 1 outlines the challenges and need to conceptualise vocal music TLPs rooted in the combination of pre-colonial and institutional TLPs involved in many South African performance practices. Inductive logic was therefore necessary, given the circumstances surrounding my inquiry.

Induction is a process of assessing evidence and accumulating knowledge (Saldaña, 2011:93). Mills *et al.* (2010:457) observe that "inductivism is an approach to logic whereby scientific laws are inferred from particular facts or observational evidence". Inductive reasoning allows meaning and conceptual generalisations to arise from data, without prior ideas of how concepts, hypotheses or theories might unfold (Loseke, 2013:19; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:17; Schwandt, 2007:146-147; Yin, 2011:94). Accordingly, I started the research process with a general idea of possible findings (Loseke, 2013:40) through observations in the field and interviews instead of testing existing or pre-determined hypotheses as with deductive reasoning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:17). Furthermore, these generalisations or findings in qualitative research are represented as "themes, categories, typologies, concepts, tentative hypotheses, and even theory about a particular aspect of practice" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:17) and will be discussed in more detail in section 2.5.

2.2.3. Rich description

The final strategy of qualitative research is rich descriptions of data. When conducting an initial investigation into any culture, it is essential to pay attention to, describe, and reflect on detail through reflection (Geertz, cited in Gillham, 2000:18). The merit of rich description lies in interpretation rather

than detailed reporting (Savin-Baden & Major, 2010:178; Schwandt, 2007:296). Yin (2011: 213) points out that rich description is successful when "the thickness of the description moves the interpretation away from researcher-centric perspectives, portraying instead the people, events, and actions within their locally meaningful contexts".

Rich description in qualitative research is achieved by studying a case in its real-life context (Robinson, cited in Cohen *et al*., 2007:254) and simultaneously reflecting the "complexity and contradictions of participants' stories of their lives" (Braun & Clarke, 2013:24). People's circumstances are believed to be critical when attempting to understand their lives and how they generate knowledge (Bless *et al*., 2017:339; Braun & Clarke, 2013:6; Yin, 2011:8). Braun and Clarke (2013:6; emphasis in original) explain that context in qualitative research refers to "the context of data *generation*" and "the broader socio-cultural and political context of the research". Furthermore, context also includes social, institutional, and environmental conditions (Yin, 2011:8), people's geographic location, family structures and occupation, and economic, political, and religious contexts (Bless *et al.*, 2017:339). Accordingly, the integration of TLPs by the SATV was observed during their rehearsal process and performances at the South African State Theatre (Cohen *et al*., 2007:253).

Thick descriptions enable a detailed understanding of a case (Mills *et al*., 2010:771) through the voices of participants and the researcher's observations, assessments and meanings thereof (Snape & Spencer, 2003:21; Lewis & Richie, 2003:268). Various data sources (Mills *et al*., 2010: 771) enabled a rich contextual description and understanding of my case (Yin, 2011:313). Furthermore, thick description balances "the researcher's selectivity and reflexive influences in reporting about the events" (Yin, 2011:313), allows transferability to other contexts (Snape & Spencer, 2003:21; Lewis & Richie, 2003:268), and "seeks to represent some broader social theme, relative to the prevailing research literature" (Yin, 2011:213).

2.3. Strategy of inquiry

I selected the case study as a strategy of inquiry for this study because of the focus on vocal music TLPs involved in South African performance practices, and the nature of my research questions. Case study research aims to answer *how* or *why* research questions, and focuses on contemporary occurrences (Yin, 2009:8) as well as holistic description and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:232; Yin, 2009:4).

My strategy of inquiry allowed a comprehensive description and analysis of the SATV as a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:37; Saldaña, 2011:8-9) involving people in a real-life context (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:253). Additionally, Hitchcock and Hudges (cited in Cohen *et al*., 2007:253) emphasise that case studies involve boundary delimitation requiring historical, environmental, organisational and

institutional considerations. The SATV, as my unit of analysis, thus allowed me to gain detailed insights of "actors, interactions, sentiments, and behaviours occurring for a specific process through time" (Woodside, 2010:6).

This investigation more specifically is an instrumental case study that shares qualities with an intrinsic case study. Stake (cited in Grandy, 2010:474) notes that "a case study can be both intrinsic and instrumental in nature" due to the researcher's multiple research interests. The main aim of instrumental and intrinsic case studies is "the opportunity to learn" (Mills *et al*., 2010:474). The purpose of the study is the main difference (Mills *et al*., 2010:473-474) because in an intrinsic case study the researcher's interest guides the case and is often experimental, as opposed to expanding on theory or enabling generalisation (Grandy, 2010:474).

Grandy (2010:474) indicates that in an instrumental case study, "the case itself is secondary to understanding a particular phenomenon". Consequently, instrumental case studies facilitate a general understanding of a case (Stake, 1995:3) that allows potential understanding of and application to other similar cases (Mills *et al*., 2010:473-474; Yin, 2011:310). As explained, the need for this case study originated from the desire to understand how vocal music TLPs of members of the SATV can be conceptualised for possible implementation in other drama and performance training contexts.

The objective of the qualitative case study was not to build an original theory (Saldaña, 2009:11-12), but to understand the meaning arising from the gathered data about vocal music TLPs. However, I acknowledge the influence and guidance of pre-existing theories in my research process (Saldaña, 2009:11-12).

2.4. Data collection

Data self-evidently is the basis of research (Yin, 2011:129), involving information found in the environment (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:105) which reveals "insightful awareness about the human condition" (Saldaña, 2011:26). Data provides information about a society that can be *sensed* (Loseke, 2013:15; emphasis in original) and collected through a process of questioning, observing and reviewing information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:105). Richie (2003:34) states that data involves "an 'enactment' of social behaviour in its own social setting, rather than a 'recounting' of it generated specifically for the research study". Therefore, data collection requires interacting with people in a real-world situation and the natural settings of a phenomenon (Richie, 2003:34; Yin, 2011:109). Accordingly, data collection involved close interaction between myself and the research participants, which allowed me to identify themes related to vocal music TLPs (Snape & Spencer, 2003:5).

Social research primarily captures data through reports on people's conversations and actions (Loseke, 2013:16) by means of multiple data sources, such as interviews, observations and documents (Creswell, 2009:178; Patton, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:105). This study's research questions guided and influenced the choice of data collection methods (Braun & Clarke, 2013:33; Creswell, 2009:178; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:106; Saldaña, 2011:32). Accordingly, participants, environments, documents and visual materials were specially selected to help me understand my problem as articulated in the research questions (Creswell, 2009:178).

For this study, I established boundaries by implementing recognised research protocols for recording information (Creswell, 2009:178). I selected semi-structured interviews (2.4.1) as the primary data collection method, supported by recorded observations and secondary documents relating to SATV productions, such as performance reviews, press releases and published marketing materials (Creswell, 2009:178). Collected data from these sources was combined and examined as part of the data analysis process (see section 2.5). Additionally, I preserved the integrity of the information captured in the raw data because the collection was not rooted in "pre-existing categories – they [were] not pre-coded and categorised at the point of collection" (Braun & Clarke, 2013:33).

2.4.1. Semi-structured interviews

Many qualitative studies use interviews as the basic data collection tool (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:106; Saldaña, 2011:32; Yin, 2011:134). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants, which allowed me to elicit their perspectives and experiences, and to come to a detailed understanding of "deeply rooted or delicate phenomena or responses to complex systems, processes or experiences" (Richie, 2003:36-37). Also, interviews are necessary "when we are interested in past events that are impossible to replicate" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:108). Members of the SATV shared similar vocal TLPs as part of their institutional training. Because they came from diverse backgrounds and experiences regarding vocal TLPs, however, the need arose for semi-structured and open-ended interviews.

The interviews were guided by a list of basic questions (see addendum B), in which "neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions [was] determined ahead of time" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:110-111). The interview questions were formulated from this study's research questions (see Chapter 1) and they structured dialogue. They aimed to obtain basic biographical data from participants, while semi-structured, open-ended questions allowed free dialogue between me and the research participants (Yin, 2011:134). Merriam and Tisdell (2016:110-111) explain that semi-structured interviews "are more flexibly worded" and "allow the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic". Furthermore, the semi-structured interview

format encourages research participants to reflect on their experiences with limited pressure and suggestions from others (Bless *et al*., 2017:340)

I interviewed participants I thought could provide substantial information, and most effectively embody the cultural and social circumstances related to this investigation (Saldaña, 2011:33). All members of the SATV are all freelance performers and theatre makers from diverse social and cultural landscapes, who offered valuable perspectives on my case (Saldaña, 2011:33). Furthermore, I interviewed participants who were willing to participate, and they chose a time and location for the interview that suited them. I made a concerted effort to treat them with respect (Saldaña, 2011:33) and to create a safe and relaxed space for them to share their perspectives and experiences (Saldaña, 2011:39). Consequently, the interviews were conversational and allowed participants to answer and discuss their views and experiences in their own words (Yin, 2011:134-135). Creswell (2009:181) suggests conducting face-to-face interviews with six to eight interviewees, whilst Saldaña (2011:33) recommends that interviews continue until data saturation occurs. After interviewing seven SATV members, no new information emerged.

Interviews were recorded on two recording devices to safeguard the data for analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:131). I transcribed the interviews immediately afterwards, which offered an additional safeguard and insured my familiarity with the collected data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:44, 131-132).

2.4.2. Observations

In addition to conducting interviews, I also collected data through observations (Saldaña, 2011:46). Observations allow triangulation[4] and validation of emerging outcomes when combined with the data analysis of interviews and documents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:139).

Observations are different from interviews in two ways (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:137): Firstly, observations occur in an ordinary setting, where actions unfold naturally (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:137; Saldaña, 2011:46), as opposed to a location specially selected to conduct an interview. Secondly, observations allow a direct and immediate encounter with a phenomenon as it takes place (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:137; Yin, 2011:143), rather than a representation of the occurrence through other sources. Therefore, observations offered me an opportunity to "record and analyse behaviour and interactions as they occur[ed]" (Richie, 2003:35).

[4] Triangulation is a method of examining the validity of emerging conclusions from the collected data as part of the research process. This is typically achieved through using "multiple data sources, multiple investigators, multiple theoretical perspectives, and/or multiple methods" (Schwandt, 2007:297-298).

Observations are determined by "the theoretical framework, the problem, and the questions of interest" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:140). Accordingly, the research questions and adaptations of observation protocols outlined by Merriam (2009:120-121) and Creswell (2007:134-138) (see addendum A) directed my observational objectives. Furthermore, I was able to use my knowledge and skills to interpret my observations in addition to insight gathered during the interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:139). Observations were supplemented with video recordings and field notes.

Observations took place during the rehearsals and performances of the SATV production *Flak my son* that was showcased at the South African State Theatre from 20-28 October 2018 as part of the so-called Incubator Programme[5]. Various rehearsal venues and the main performance venue (Momentum Theatre – recently renamed Sibusiso Khwinana Theatre at the South African State Theatre) in Pretoria allowed observations to take place in a natural, real-life setting. Saldaña (2011:50) explains that the observation locations are not enough for data collection on its own; however, "it is most certainly a critical component for gathering good data". Furthermore, observations were useful to understand the combining of various vocal music TLPs. Merriam and Tisdell (2016:139) stress that an 'outsider' perspective allows an observer to "notice things that have become routine to the participants themselves, things that may lead to understanding the context".

2.5. Data analysis

Saldaña (2011:89) indicates that the purpose and result of data analysis is "to reveal to others through fresh insights what we've observed and discovered about the human condition". Qualitative researchers have a good idea of what the research problem is at the beginning of the research process. However, there are several ways to create meaning (Saldaña, 2011:26) and researchers will only realise the final product through data collection and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:197).

Saldaña (2011:93) observes that there is no standard way of analysing qualitative data. Furthermore, data analysis occurs from the beginning, based on "what the researcher brings with her to the inquiry, what she pays attention to and selects out of what she is hearing, seeing, and recording, and how the field texts are constructed" (Butler-Kisber, 2010:30). Therefore, data collection, analysis and reporting happened simultaneously during my research process (Butler-Kisber, 2010:30; Creswell, 2007:150; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:191; Spencer *et al.*, 2003:213).

[5] The Incubator Programme is an initiative of the Department of Arts and Culture as part of the South African State Theatre's Development Department (established in 2002). The Incubator platform assists various semi-professional, independent performing arts practitioners to showcase their work to larger audiences while simultaneously gaining exposure to the performing arts industry (The South African State Theatre, 2019).

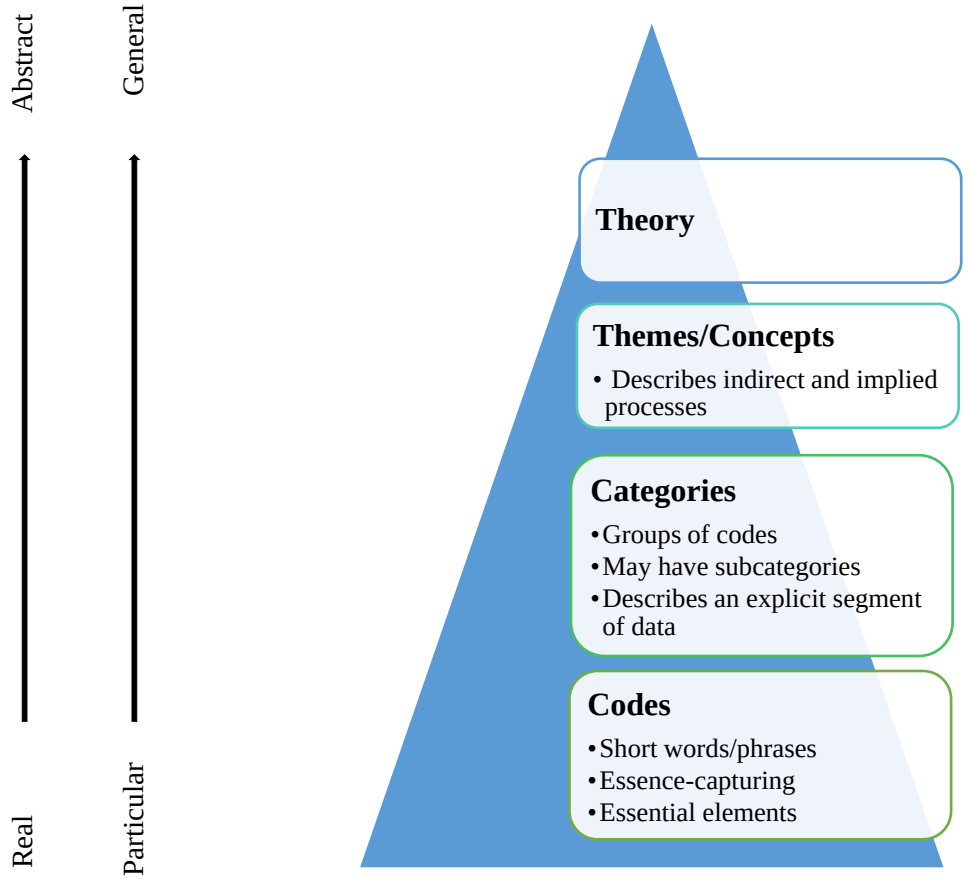
Data needs to be organised and prepared for analysis, coded and condensed into themes, and finally represented statistically or in a discussion (Creswell, 2007:146). Creswell (2007:150) emphasises the importance of organising data early in the analysis process, which includes converting data files to text and sorting data into systematic computer files. All files, including interview recordings, transcripts, observation videos and field note data, were continuously transferred to word documents and systematically saved according to data type, date, location and participant. Data files were organised to enable easy retrieval as needed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:223). Furthermore, I stored back-up data files on an external hard drive and various cloud computing platforms.

After organising and preparing the data for analysis, researchers need to gain a holistic view of the entire collected database (Creswell, 2007:150). Agar (cited in Creswell, 2007:150) suggests that researchers must read all transcripts multiple times as a whole "before breaking it into parts". Similarly, Richie *et al.* (2003:221) point out that familiarisation with data is a crucial activity early in the analysis process. Furthermore, a review of the research proposal and research objectives must guide the familiarisation process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:208; Richie *et al*., 2003:221). Throughout the data collection and analysis process, I always had a copy of the research purpose and questions at hand. This served as a reminder that the data analysis had to address my research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:202). Furthermore, I analysed all the accumulated data without analysis software.

2.5.1. Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis "is a form of pattern recognition within the data" (Fereday, 2006:82) and a "method for identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset" (Braun & Clarke, 2013:175). As previously mentioned, data collection and analysis coincide; however, at some point in the analysis process a researcher needs to look more closely at all collected data (Butler-Kisber, 2010:31). During this process, " 'chunks' of field texts are reassembled into more refined categories and are broken down into others, and these are assigned and reassigned names or codes" (Butler-Kisber, 2010:31). Figure 1, adapted from Saldaña (2009:8-13), illustrates the process from codes to possible theory in a simplified model:

Fig. 1. A streamlined codes-to-theory model for qualitative inquiry (Saldaña, 2009:8-13)



I assigned codes to chunks of data in the form of words and short phrases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:199; Saldaña, 2009:3). The codes depicted the core elements of the subject matter (Saldaña, 2009:3), consequently allowing me to ascribe meaning to the data relevant to my case study and research questions (Basit, 2003:144; Clarke *et al.*, 2015:230). Various codes repeated several times throughout the analysis process and therefore gave rise to "repetitive patterns of action and consistencies in human affairs as documented in the data" (Saldaña, 2009:5). Consequently, reviewing the encoded data allowed me to identify recurring patterns (Crabtree & Miller, cited in Fereday, 2006:89; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:206; Richie *et al.*, 2003:221). Furthermore, I rearranged the codes into more comprehensive categories to depict the repeating patterns arising from my interpretation of the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:206-208),

Ultimately, themes developed as "an outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection" (Saldaña, 2011:13). According to Saldaña (2009:13) themes describe indirect and inferred practices, as opposed to more apparent meanings and processes represented in categories.

Because there may be several ways to interpret the data collected from my case study, explanations arising from the interpreted themes had to be believable and convincing (Butler-Kisber, 2010:31). In this regard, categories and themes provided answers to the research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:210; Braun & Clarke, 2013:175) through an intuitive, but systematic manner, influenced by the purpose of my study, my training and knowledge on the subject matter, and the specific meanings and interpretations communicated by the research participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:211). Themes initially reflected the language and insights of the research participants before being replaced by "more abstract analytical constructions" (Spencer *et al.,* 2003:214).

2.6. My role as a researcher

Being the main instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:16), it was my responsibility to prepare for the data collection process. I needed to collect data "in the form of naturalistic verbal reports" (Smith, 2015:2), such as transcripts from interviews and field observations of members of the SATV, scrutinise the available literature that informs the design and context of the study, and analyse and present the findings arising from the collected data.

For Creswell (2009:177), the qualitative researcher shares intense experiences with the research participants, which leads to "a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues with the qualitative research process". Apart from ethical concerns (discussed in section 2.8), Braun and Clarke (2013:9) suggest that a competent qualitative researcher needs to develop various skills to accomplish a 'qualitative sensibility': "an orientation towards research […] within the qualitative paradigm". I relied on the skills set out by Braun and Clarke (2013:9-10) to achieve this sensibility:

- Curiosity about "process and meaning" allowed me to critically engage with, and question, the approaches to knowledge related to my case study;
- I was required to "reflect on, and step outside, [my] own cultural membership" to interpret the shared beliefs of the research participants on their vocal music TLPs;
- I had to develop an investigative awareness through attentively listening and observing participants during the data collection process;
- I had to be reflexive during the research process;
- "Good interactional skills" allowed me to build a trusting and empathetic relationship with the research participants.

I achieved further qualitative sensibility by familiarising myself with the selected research approach and gaining understanding of various data collection and analysis methods.

Furthermore, Creswell (2009:177) suggests that the researcher must be aware, and openly declare, their personal biases, beliefs and background that may influence the study. I am an alumnus drama student of TUT and completed my BTech Drama (2011) and MTech Drama (2014) degrees at the institution. I have been a voice and theory lecturer at TUT since 2015. This personal history, as well as my continued involvement in the drama programme at TUT, contributed insight to my research problem. I had engaged with most of the SATV members as students in theory classes at some point since I joined the institution and had one member as a voice student during her first and second year. I believe that my professional connection to TUT and prior interaction with some research participants as students in theory subjects, and one participant as a voice student, contributed valuable insight to this research report.

2.7. Trustworthiness

Reliability and validity are concepts related to the reproduction and precision of methods in a positivist quantitative paradigm (Saldaña, 2011:134). Braun and Clarke (2013:279; emphasis in original) argue that "some version of reliability *is* applicable" in qualitative research when applied to data collection and analysis methods. The concepts of credibility and trustworthiness are more suited for qualitative inquiries, however, because they do not pursue a 'neutral', 'bias-free', or 'objective' truth or reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:244; Saldaña, 2011:23).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016:xiv) note that "all researchers are concerned with producing valid and reliable findings". In other words, the research findings must accurately capture reality, even though there are multiple ways of interpreting data and meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2013:20). Furthermore, realities are ever-changing, and there are strategies or tests one can use to ensure the credibility of the research findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:244; Yin, 2009:40). Validation strategies enable researchers to convince readers that their results are demonstrated truthfully (Creswell, 2009:235).

Proposed strategies for validity include internal validity, reliability and external validity (Braun & Clarke, 2013:280; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:237-366; Yin, 2009:40). Internal validity determines whether the research findings are consistent with reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:242); reliability generally refers to the replicability of similar results if the study were to be repeated by other researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2013:279); and external validation shows whether the research findings of one case potentially apply to a broader population or other similar situations (Braun & Clarke, 2013:280; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:253).

Internal validity includes strategies such as crystallisation, member checking, adequate engagement, reflexivity (see 2.2.1.1) and peer review (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Richardson (cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:245-246) explains that postmodern research applies crystallisation rather than triangulation, because "we recognize that there are far more than three sides from which to approach the world". Additionally, I also used multiple data sources (see 2.4) to promote the internal validity of the case study I am representing (Grandy, 2010:474). I carried out member checking (also referred to as respondent validation) by asking continuous feedback from the research participants, conducting follow-up interviews and discussions to check my interpretation of the collected data.

Furthermore, the style of expression used by the research participants to explain their experiences with vocal music TLPs contributed to the truthful representation and description of the case (Patton, cited in Fereday, 2006:82), and participants were quoted directly in this report. I conducted interviews and carried out observations for approximately two years, after which saturation of data was reached (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:246). Constant feedback from my supervisor and discussions with colleagues familiar with the research field also ensured peer review of my work (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:259).

While positivist reliability generally does not apply to qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2013:279), reliability is relevant in qualitative research in terms of trustworthiness and dependability of data collection and analysis methods (McLeod, cited in Braun & Clarke, 2013:279). To ensure reliability of my chosen data collection and analysis methods, I kept comprehensive records of how I conducted the research and how I analysed the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:252). Furthermore, keeping detailed descriptions of the data collection and analysis processes allowed consistency throughout the research process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:252).

In terms of external validity, Merriam and Tisdell (2016:255) argue that "[e]very study, every case, every situation is theoretically an example of something else". Therefore, we can generally apply what we learn in specific situations to similar circumstances we encounter (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:255). Consequently, rich description (see 2.2.3) and maximum variation enhances the possibility of generalisation or transferability. Because qualitative research accumulates knowledge horizontally, it enriches and contributes to the body of knowledge and "our kit of conceptual tools" (Eisner, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:256). Therefore, external validity methods correlate with the purpose of the instrumental case study inquiry which facilitates a broad understanding of a particular case to possibly understand and apply findings to other similar cases (See 2.3).

2.8. Ethics

Cohen *et al.* (2007:51) explain that "ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data". Research should always be conducted according to the highest ethical standards with regards to participants, research communities and research practices (Braun & Clarke, 2013:61). Ethical practices ensure that the research causes no harm to the participants involved (Saldaña, 2011:24). Prior approval is therefore required from participants and various stakeholders (Saldaña, 2011:24; Wilkinson, 2015:203; Yin, 2011:44), such as affiliate universities and organisations. Accordingly, this research study was approved by the Basic Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at NWU, and I obtained permission to undertake my research with the SATV (addendum C).

Additionally, I obtained written, informed consent from all participating members of the SATV (addendum D). I approached each participant personally and thoroughly explained the nature of my research project (Cohen *et al*., 2007:53). I provided participants with a copy of my research proposal, answered all questions related to the study (Yin, 2011:47) and informed participants about my intended use of the data I would collect (Wilkinson, 2015:204). Each participant willingly decided to participate in my research, understanding the risks and ethical considerations associated with the research project (Cohen *et al*., 2007:52). Participants were eager and comfortable to participate in this study because most of them knew me from when they were students.

Yin (2011:46) emphasises the importance of guaranteeing discretion about the identities of research participants. Accordingly, the identities of all my participants are kept anonymous (Kumar, 2011:221) and I use pseudonyms selected by the respective participants themselves.

In addition to ethical concerns relating to research participants, Braun and Clarke (2013:61) caution that "textual data collection can raise ethical issues". It was therefore essential to make sound ethical decisions during the analysis and interpretation of data (Creswell, 2009:91). Furthermore, research results should be reported honestly and accurately (Braun & Clarke, 2013:61) – debriefing between myself and the participants allowed an ethical, and accurate, representation of the data (Creswell, 2009:91-92).

2.9. Summary

The qualitative research design applies to my research because I investigated the lived personal and share experiences of vocal music TLPs of each research. Therefore, I was able to interpret how vocal music training and experiences were applied in collective performance practice. My subjectivity and

reflexivity, as part of the interpretive paradigm, was especially relevant in my research because of my music and vocal teaching-learning experiences and my current occupation as a drama and singing lecturer.

Inductive reasoning is relevant to this inquiry because existing literature fails to satisfactorily explain the conceptualisation of the vocal music TLPs in question (see chapter 1 and chapter 3). Consequently, I carried out rich description of the phenomenon by studying participants in a real-life performative context. Furthermore, general histories and vocal music TLPs of the participants before and during their institutional training contributed to the rich description of the case. The use of various data sources also validated and reflected an interpretation of the complexities related to vocal music TLPs in the theatre-making process.

Semi-structured interviews allowed me to gain insight into particular information about vocal music experiences, perspectives and understandings of each research participant in a comfortable, confidential and conversational manner. Observations provided me with the opportunity to examine performance and rehearsal processes as they naturally occurred in a real-life setting. Furthermore, observations allowed an immediate encounter with the phenomenon that gave rise to valuable follow-up questions and conversations with the participants.

I describe codes and emerging themes, and present my findings narratively in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of my theoretical approach (3.2 and 3.3), which is based on the notion of communities of dramatic practice, which is informed by Wenger's familiar theory of CoP. As my discussion shows, South African dramatic practices align with this theory. This is evident in the second part of this chapter, which offers an overview of the nature and function of pre-colonial performance practice (3.4 and 3.5) and TLPs (3.6). The discussion gives insight into the collective embodiment of knowledge (specifically through memetics), and the socially integrated nature and aesthetics of performance practice. The discussion also focuses on the multimodal and improvisational nature of performance. Specific TLPs are reviewed, namely holistic and integrated learning, practical learning, and apprenticeship learning through imitation, improvisation and repetition. Thirdly, the chapter reviews dramatic practices since the colonial era (3.7) and discusses the retention and adaptation of various pre-colonial TLPs in syncretic theatre as well as the adoption of poor theatre style and the rise of alternative performance spaces and teaching-learning through the improvisational workshop technique. Finally, an overview of the curriculum and TLPs utilised at TUT is offered (3.8). This section provides an outline of historical and current curriculums and teaching-learning models and practices.

3.2. Community of practice

The theory of CoP was developed by Wenger and Lave while studying apprenticeship as a learning model (Lave & Wenger, 1991). It emerged from their frustration with "the asocial character of conventional learning" and its failure to suitably explain how people learn new knowledge and skills outside formal education and training (Fuller *et al.,* 2005:50). Wenger (2011:3) explains that communities of practice have been in existence "for as long as human beings have learned together" and that people belong to various communities in which learning takes place, such as at home, work, school and in hobby associations. In essence, CoP "is about being located in the social world", and it offers an analytical perspective on communal processes of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991:36, 40).

Wenger and Wenger-Trayner (2015:2) emphasise that not every community can be classified as a CoP, and that learning is merely one reason for interaction. Wenger (1998:4-5) has found that a social theory of learning must combine meaning, practice, community and identity to "characterize social participation as a process of learning and knowing" and to show that "learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities". Wenger and Wenger-Trayner (2015:2) accordingly identify three crucial characteristics of CoP, namely domain, community

and practice. Together, these interconnected characteristics "create a dynamic learning community" (Mercieca, 2017:12). Mercieca (2017:10) describes the domain as the origin of any CoP. These communities develop when a group of people regularly engages in collective learning and come to express collective identity (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015:1-2). Mercieca (2017:10) also highlights the importance of voluntary membership as quality of CoP.

Secondly, the essence of community resides in the "relationship and particular measures needed to be set in place to ensure that this is fostered" (Mercieca, 2017:11). Community and relationships develop through shared activities and information as well as discussion (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015:2). This enables members to build trust and mutual respect, thus producing an environment that allows them to comfortably ask questions and share experiences (Mercieca, 2017:11).

CoPs furthermore value collective competence through peer learning (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015:2). Authentic participation and membership in a CoP are dependent on providing guidance that enables implicit learning and the transfer of skills (Ghimisi, 2016:142), and Kenny (2016:11) concludes that in this regard there are varying levels of communal expertise in a shared learning environment. Participation is a process where new members may even become "master practitioners" (Zaffini, 2018:40). CoP enables the development of a shared repertoire of resources, such as "experiences, stories, tools, [and] ways of addressing recurring problems" over time and through sustained interaction (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015:2). Consequently, shared practices, gatherings and experiences evolve into "a particular, individual practice and collective identity". (Mercieca, 2017:11). Summarising the three defining features of a CoP, Mercieca (2017:11) contends that "the domain draws participants together, community sustains their fellowship and learning, and practice crystallizes these experiences and shared knowledge".

3.2.1. Communities of musical practice

Kenny (2016:18) describes musical participation as being "rooted in sociocultural processes where relationships, a sense of 'belonging' and collaboration" are important to participants, and explains that these experiences allow the negotiation of identities. The author addresses the "social process of musical learning" through the notion of Communities of Musical Practice (CoMP), a term most commonly used "when linking music with a 'community of practice' framework" (Kenny, 2016:1, 15). The author (Kenny, 2016:11) argues that a CoP outline suggests a lens for "conceptualising, understanding and analysing the development of music communities in practice".

Westvall and Aragão (2019:242) report that CoMP mainly involve musicians as practitioners and that the focus on collective musical activities is what distinguishes CoMP self-evidently from other kinds

of CoP. CoMP is a form of practice where "the activities (performing, dancing or listening) relate to the knowledge area (music), which unites the participants (the community)". CoMP accordingly involves three key elements, namely community, practice and musical processes and products (Kenny, 2016:16).

Kenny (2016:12) observes that "examining where music learning occurs and how it occurs has meant an increased focus on 'local' music or 'community music' research", and that "within the field of music education, there has been a growing concern in what Folkestad views as 'a general shift in focus – from teaching to learning, and consequently from teacher to learner' ". Westvall and Aragão (2019:243) emphasise that the process of collective learning is a core element of community music learning, and prioritise collective performance and peer learning over "traditional teacher-student knowledge transfer". Therefore, both CoP and CoMP value the continuous and collaborative processes involved in learning.

3.3. Play as a quality of CoP

Wheeler and Palmer (2019:124) make it clear that our response to fear leads to stress, anxiety and distrust, while our pleasure response stimulates curiosity, comfort, trust and happiness:

> Play involves creativity, imagination and freedom. Play requires an active, alert mind receptive to questions, observations and answers. Play is tolerant of false starts and dead ends. Play's value derives from the means more so than the ends. Play does not have prescribed goals or outcomes. Play is pleasurable. Play produces dopamine.

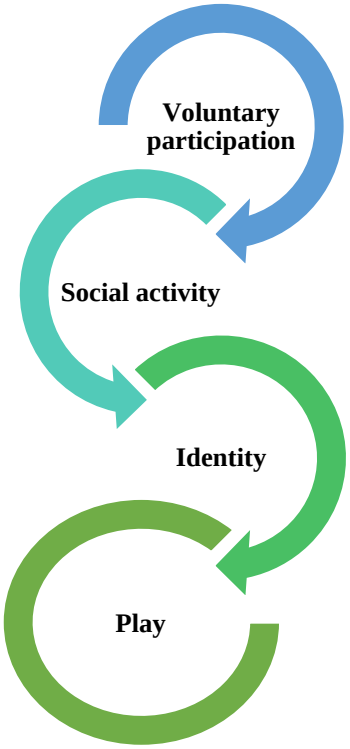
James (2019:10), in turn, observes that play provides endless creative possibilities for teaching-learning:

> We play in an infinitely greater variety of ways than is sometimes realised: solo or team, material and object-based, three dimensional, written, performative, structured, unstructured, rule-based, competitive, outdoor, virtual, free, purposeful, game-based, linguistic, silent, quiet, noisy, introvert and extrovert.

According to Wood (2015:15), the key element of playfulness is the focus on process rather than the final product or outcome, whilst Smith (2015:14) reflects on how students should "develop skills in creating their understanding through practical experience". Walsh (2018:331), in turn, observes that play can transform learning and "allow the sort of experimentation with skills and knowledge" that creates deeper understandings of concepts within a specific subject area. Similar to teaching-learning

in CoP, playing involves continuous practical and social learning. Figure 2 illustrates the integration of play and CoP, which is discussed in the sections below.

Fig. 2. The integration of play and CoP



Walsh (2018:331) states that "play tends to be a social activity"; and Sinfield *et al.* (2019:25) explain that collaborative play allows students to "be with others and place themselves and their assignments in meaningful contexts". Play cultivates a sense of identity and belonging in new and initially unfamiliar landscapes of practice. Ghimisi (2016:140) observes that finding a way to stimulate and encourage a feeling of belonging is a key principle of CoP development. According to Sinfield *et al.* (2019:25), "play is a reflection and recognition of the self". Similarly, Walsh (2018:331) highlights how play allows an ability "to see the world through the lens of ourselves as players", implying a sense of participation and belonging. Learning games can be used as a tool to "allow self-discovery of facts and processes, [and] simulations used to practice skills" (Walsh, 2018:334). Kenny (2016:132) suggests providing "inclusive group music-making opportunities where membership and participation are promoted" that combine "formal, nonformal and informal approaches to the teaching and learning of music".

Playfulness, according to Wood (2015:15), "is something that comes from within – it is a state of mind, a way of interacting with the world. It is something that emerges only when a culture of playfulness exists, when opportunities for playfulness are created and when playful approaches are rewarded". As

with voluntary participation in a CoP, it is therefore "important to recognize that people can choose not to 'play' " (Walsh, 2018:334). Wood (2015:15) also emphasises that a playful attitude "is not something that can be imposed on students, nor demanded of them", but should nevertheless be encouraged (also see Walsh, 2018:334). In addition, those who agree to participate are allowed "to make mistakes, often repeatedly, without being penalised. This is relatively unusual in education, which can be dominated by learning 'to the test', with value placed on knowledge only as far as it can be used to pass onto the next level of study" (Walsh, 2018:331).

3.3.1. Play in higher education

Lea (2009:180) posits that

> the university is no longer the traditional bastion of knowledge, defined by either its disciplinary boundaries or its physical campus, colleges and buildings. It is against this backdrop that researchers in the field of teaching and learning in higher education are drawing upon the concept of communities of practice in order to inform practitioners, both university lecturers and staff developers, about new ways of understanding their students' learning.

James (2019:2) indicates that the idea of play divides tertiary educators and that "[d]iscussions of play within a university setting provokes strong emotions, often tightly tied to a sense of professional credibility, our academic identity and what we consider our role in higher education to be" (James, 2019:14). She also argues that "the matter of purpose versus freedom" may separate lecturers and students because play "is not really an appropriate form of pedagogy in higher education" (James, 2019:11).

Walsh (2018:332) illustrates the impact of educational settings as follows:

> [I]f we walk into a lecture theatre with fixed tiered seating, and see someone at the front with slides ready, we are likely to see it through a frame akin to a Victorian, didactic mode of teaching. We expect to sit still and silent for a set amount of time and be fed information from the expert at the front. Creativity and conversation will seem alien to the frame, clashing with the behavior that the group would expect from each other in that situation.

Walsh (2018:333-334; emphasis in original) argues that "playing in an educational setting can be seen as acting against the normative *frame* of that social setting" and suggests five ways to encourage play

in education, namely introductory or orientation tasks, environmental invitations to play, structural invitations to play, pedagogical invitations to play, and finally, not allowing people to play.

Introducing initial playful activities "helps to socially construct the idea that Higher Education is a place to play and experiment with ideas, rather than to sit back and receive 'facts' from an expert" (Walsh, 1998:333). Furthermore, Walsh (2018:334) suggests that "assessment itself should be as flexible as possible, introduce creative exercises that promote critical thinking about topics, rather than examinations that may promote a rigidity of learning". Lecturers have a responsibility to facilitate creative learning activities, and Printy (2018:198, 217) argues that "teachers have some latitude in selecting instructional strategies". While they may "base decisions on their own belief and learning experiences" (Printy, 2008:198, 217), they need to accept that "we learn as we practice. We learn through dialogue with each other. We learn when we reflect and share our successes and especially our failures" (MacHillivray, 2017:27). Pedagogically, this implies a practical and collaborative teaching-learning approach.

This also supports the belief that play needs to be encouraged and not enforced. The goal is to "foster positive values and attitudes" and build sustainable skills towards musical engagements (Kenny, 2016:132). Walsh (2018:335) emphasises the importance of changing learners' view of expected behaviour as soon as possible: "Approaches that influence how learners view that environment from the start, as well as throughout a course can introduce play in a way that would be difficult or impossible as 'one off' or occasional activities, as we need to build a playful frame for Higher Education for play to be seen as acceptable to learners."

Harris and Spencer (2015:9; brackets in original) suggest making space in the curriculum for "creative risk-taking" that will allow students to "experience a more open (inter-disciplinary) process of (autonomous or collaborative) decision-making and perhaps even feel the exhilaration of a (relatively) unbounded learning environment". Furthermore, a creative risk-taking environment allows opportunity for student creativity and imagination.

3.4. The nature and functions of pre-colonial performance practice: An overview

Over the last decade, many scholarly publications have contributed to the study of African oral expressive forms, but Finnegan (2016:29) remarks that "the facts are scattered and uneven, often buried in inaccessible journals". Understanding the dramatic oral TLPs of pre-colonial origin similarly is impeded by lack of documentation, especially on the socially integrated quality of their learning, the complex nature of relations of artistic production (involving the social, economic and political matrix of performance), and the commercial utilisation of oral dramatic practices.

3.4.1. Dramatic performance as collective activity

Sefa Dei (2000:124) states that in many African thought systems "the ontological viewpoint stresses that to understand reality is to have a complete or holistic view of society". The goal of these thought systems is to ultimately achieve "a balance between different areas of life which does not separate intellectual, social, political, economic, psychological and spiritual forms of human life from each other" (Tuwe, 2015). Such integration also involves environmental conditions (Sefa Dei, 2000:119; Tuwe, 2015).

Chinyowa (2000:89) describes basic social relations by means of the metaphor of an onion: the centre represents the individual, and each layer signifies the individual's "surroundings, the immediate family, the extended family, the community and the larger society". He further explains that participating in communal activities enables individuals to realise their social commitments, privileges, and duties.

Performing arts in African communities are fundamentally classified as collective activities (Finnegan, 2016:16; Lebaka, 2018:83, 96; Nasseem, 2003:226; Sefa Dei, 2000:124; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2006:60). South African populations value their oral performance practices because it characterises them "as a particular human group with a shared destiny" (Ebewo, 2017:3). In Venda culture, for example, an enduring "basic function of music is to reinforce, or relate people more closely to certain experiences which have come to have meaning in their social life". Blacking (1976:51) believes that

> [t]he music of *tshikona* [the bamboo-pipe dance] expresses the value of the largest social group to which a Venda can really feel he belongs. Its performance involves the largest number of people, and its music incorporates the largest number of tones in any single piece of Venda music involving more than one or two players. […] *Tshikona* is valuable and beautiful to the Venda, not only because of the quantity of people and tones involved, but because of the quality of the relationships that must be established between people and tones whenever it is performed.

Zenenga (2015:243) argues that "within the African context, the human body is regarded as an archive due to its capacity to embody knowledge" and therefore plays an integral role in performance. In essence, embodied knowledge contributes to a community's shared repertoire, developed over time. Peterson (2000:78) emphasises that "the body as a performative tool was foregrounded" in indigenous Zulu performance practices "within the multi-dimensionality of indigenous dramatic traditions". This explains why "drama is one of the arts disciplines that is very close to the core of the people's culture" (Ebewo, 2011:116).

Blacking (1986a:299) postulates that "each music system has its own body of theory, which is understood by its performers, acquired partly by learning and partly by osmosis, and passed on from generation to generation". This process involves memetics. Memetics is a recent theory of cultural evolution that describes cultural knowledge and its replication (Davis, 2007:596-597). Memes are the ideas we use to construct our lives (Walker, 2004:170) and they enable the transmission of culture (Dawkins, 2014). Walker (2004:170) furthermore observes that "the meme is Dawkins's cultural equivalent of the gene, and the vehicle for the transmission of ideas and cultural items such as songs, poems, phrases, pictures, images, etc., over long periods".

3.4.2. Performing norms and values

Aesthetics, from the Greek word *aisthetikos*, refer to culturally defined notions of propriety rooted in sense perception. The aesthetics of music determine what makes it sound good to the people who participate in it and what makes the music distinctively their own (Carver & Thram, 2012:11). Fish (cited in Zarrilli *et al*., 2006:129) explains that meaning in art is created by an interpretive community within a specific moment in history. Nketia (cited in Adedeji, 2006:5) is of the opinion that the aesthetic principles of the indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba people "are not primarily based on beauty or 'music for art's sake' but on functionality and 'music for life's sake' ". This also applies to dramatic performance in indigenous Southern African cultures: for example, in Sotho (Wells, 1994:11), Swazi (Rycroft, 1986:316), Tswana (Johnston, 1986:376) and Venda cultures (Blacking, 1986b:441), choral dance-songs are classified according to specific social functions. Singing as part of special occasions, ceremonies and celebrations in Zulu culture "communicate experience and register historical developments" (Peterson, 2000:77-78). Carver and Thram (2012:15) note that almost any occasion can incorporate choral dance-songs, for example during funerals, circumcision ceremonies, healing, cattle herding, festivities, and rain-making.

Music and dance in Africa have always served as a core mode of communication that enables "socialisation, education, historical and cultural documentation, physical and psychological therapy and entertainment" (Amegago, 2009:170). Performance in oral communities merges various cultural domains and functions as both entertainment and "powerful educational tool" (Koplan *et al*., 2006:34). Dramatic performance is often essentially oral and Chinyowa (2001:18) accordingly considers performance genres such as storytelling, dance-songs, drama and poetry to "play an intrinsic role in human pedagogy". According to Ebewo (2017:4) "in many Southern African countries, young people usually gather in the evening to listen to fictional stories narrated by women, while men narrate war and historical stories, and those that promote indigenous knowledge systems". Storytelling topics also include themes about "intellectual, sexual and moral socialization and also […] give instruction in

practical skills" (Epskamp, 1992:7). Dederen (2012:72) similarly comments that Southern African children's stories are

> at once aesthetic and functional; fantasy and reality. They provide light-hearted entertainment and by the same token moralise earnestly. They are neither a-temporal nor historical in any absolute sense. They express living culture and passive remembrance. They generate social change as well as continuity. They reflect social life and comment on it.

Pedi musical arts thus also "provide a stimulus for members of society to examine and address unpleasant facets of daily life within the context of positive cultural values and participation through singing, clapping and dancing, rather than just passive listening" (Lebaka, 2018:97). Kruger (2004:5) has found that Tshivenda *ngano* song stories entertain and educate, and address topics such as "prejudice, avarice, social corruption and death" as well as "values like humility, dignity and perseverance, while rejecting arrogance, laziness and materialism". Kruger (2000:78) explains furthermore that Venda *mitambo* dance theatre (defined as "games" or "amusements") involves a "perception of playfulness" and correlates with the "Sesotho category of games, *lipapali.* According to Coplan (1987:31), "*Lipapali* is derived from the verb *ho bapalla* (to play)". He explains that games are metaphors "of socially constructed understandings, aurally reordered models of social reality" and that "for the Sotho, skill in performance demonstrates effective knowledge of a game" (Coplan, 1987:31).

Given the above-mentioned nature and functions of performance art, participation in a community's musical arts is usually a social requirement from childhood (Chinouriri, 2013:111). In other words, dramatic performance is a general rather than a professional skill. All those attending a particular social event, therefore, play an active role. When a baby is born in Pedi culture, for example, an elder will recite praise poetry in honour of the child and other family members will join in the praises by improvising poetry, singing and dancing (Lebaka, 2018:65).

3.5. The basic nature of performance practice

Kruger (2014:72) gives an account of how, in *ngano* song story performances, "responsorial chanting and singing is a distinguishing feature of […] performance". The role allocation of participants links with the use of such interactive techniques. Audience involvement could include the expectation to make verbal contributions such as "spontaneous exclamations, actual questions, echoing of the speaker's words, emotional reaction to the development of yet another parallel and repetitious episode" and singing choruses of songs that are part of the narration (Finnegan, 2016:374). Furthermore, song stories in local cultures also engage the 'audience' in performance through rhythmic clapping, movement, chanting and singing (Herrington, 1988; Kruger, 2014; Scheub, 1975, 2005). Kruger

(2014:72) adds that such "interactive expressive technique is aimed at a variety of strategic social objectives: it organises statuses, helps to negotiate alliances and promotes amiability and reconciliation". Nguni *ntsomi* song stories are described as less reflective or analytical than highly imaginative, evocative and participatory. It is not possible "to separate theme, idea, from the artistic elements of the work" and the audience accordingly responds, "not to surface and much-told plots and simple messages, but to a *total* performance" (Scheub, 1975:14, 16, 86, 170; my emphasis).

3.5.1. Multimodality

Sanders and Albers (2010:1) argue that "literacy is no longer confined to communication through reading and writing of traditional printed texts". Various factors influence the way people use different modes to communicate, such as "what tools are available to them in a given situation […] their interests, their facility with given modes, and the purposes of their communication" (Heydon & O'Neill, 2014:2). Multimodal literacies incorporate "multiple modes that work together in interactive, dynamic, and integrative ways to communicate the maker's intentions" (Sanders & Albers, 2010:4-5).

Dramatic performance in African societies is mostly multimodal in its integration of dance, drama, vocal and instrumental music: "All combine to form the core of African ritual theatre's signifying system" (Chinyowa, 2000:93). Zenenga (2015:236, 241) explains similarly that most African performance traditions can be classified as "total theatre"[6]. In other words, the integration of "theatre, music, dance and other creative artistic modes" forms part of the "aesthetic paradigm in African performance practices" and articulates "multiple levels of meaning and emotion" (Zenenga, 2015:241).

Kruger (2000:20) reports that, in many Venda and peri-urban communities, expressive cultural forms "usually combine instrumental and vocal musical sound, dance movement and dramatic action". During *mitambo* Venda dance theatre, the dramatic action "unfolds along the continuums of dance movement and non-dance movement, and miming and acting" (Kruger, 2000:77). Kruger (2000:20) further notes that "The communicative functions of these respective elements are unique and complementary at the same time. The unique communicative power of dance theatre is recognised in its cultural categorisation as well as in performance practice."

Mapaya (2014:2013) explains similarly that "what constitutes a song is performance", whilst Kruger and Le Roux (2007:16) observe that songs and chants in Tshivenda song stories "are not only integral to dramatic presentation, but also to unfolding plots". Scheub (1975:4) similarly shows that Nguni song

[6] Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* possibly inspired various works of theatre practitioners such as Artaud, Brecht, Piscator, Brooks and Schechner, to name a few, which parallel the total theatre concept utilised in many African performance practices (Zenenga, 2015:240).

stories are “a synthesis of verbal narrative, body movement, vocal dramatics, and song,” arguing that any analysis of them must, therefore, address all elements of production.

3.5.2. Improvisation

Improvisation is at the root of indigenous theatre in South Africa (Coplan, 1986:151). Jones (1993:236) argues that “improvisation is connected to an African sense of time which gives primacy to now” and that “improvisation is the performance mode best suited to this worldview”, whilst Carver and Thram (2012:15) notes that “[i]n community based performance, music is always in the process of being created on some level which means that variation and improvisation are continually present in performance”. Improvisation therefore involves both social and musical domains.

Blacking (1986b:507; brackets added) maintains that in Venda music, “variations in quality, quantity, dynamics (and) duration of performance” are influenced by changes in social situations, and Nzewi (2007:11) similarly notes that duration and content in indigenous African performance are not fixed. Therefore, variation is integral to socially integrated practices and articulates adaptation and improvisation. Variation is dependent on the knowledge, experience and preferences of individuals. Storytellers, for example, remember, interpret and perform a story in diverse ways (Kruger, 2014:65). Hence, variation through improvisation can only occur if one has prior knowledge and experience of musical patterns and performance conventions. *Lifela*, for example, is an improvisational and socially integrated performance genre of migrant mine workers from Lesotho. A good *lifela* performer must be able to “go on for a long time without stopping, and without repeating himself” (Coplan, 1988:363). Accordingly, the prior knowledge, experiences and skills a performer has, shapes his performance.

Finnegan (2016:10) stresses that the opportunity for improvisation in dramatic performances in oral communities is almost always available. Improvisation is therefore not only utilised by performers but also by the ‘audience’, whose participation plays a role in constructing the performance. Finnegan (2016:12-13) furthermore points out that “there is no escape for the oral artist from a face-to-face confrontation with his audience, and this is something which he can exploit as well as be influenced by”. Blacking (1986a:295) observes that “although performances of Black African music may appear spontaneous […] performers and audiences alike are careful listeners, and wrong notes and faltering, or irregular drumming, are immediately criticized. Improvisation follows certain patterns, and it is the sequence chosen and appropriateness of the selection which provide novelty and excitement.”

Finnegan (2016:12) reports that improvisations remain within current conventions while allowing “some degree of individual freedom”, and Blacking (1986b:503-506) also describes how some general rules of Venda music include variations in metre and rhythm for different kinds of music (within a

rudimentary and constant tempo), new metrical patterns "created by combining or subdividing existing patterns", song embellishment through "expanding its basic structure" and improvisational variations in melody and harmony that "emphasize the existing tonal and harmonic progression". Improvisation thus becomes "a highly sensitive and reactive way of rearranging known vocabulary in the needs and mood of the moment" (Martin, 2004:103). The known musical vocabulary, or knowledge accumulated through various teaching-learning practices, becomes a rich pool of resources to be used during performance.

3.6. Teaching-learning practices

3.6.1. Socially integrated teaching-learning

As explained in terms of CoP, all cultures utilise a form of integrated social learning that speaks to the needs of society, community and culture. Printy (2008:189) regards learning in CoP as "a reciprocal process" where "[t]he learning that results from participation feeds back into the community and impacts subsequent participation".

The dramatic construction of oral communities and the multimodality that merges daily activities and dramatic practices are essential to oral TLPs. Rodney (1982:239) reflects on what he considers to be outstanding qualities of integrated learning in older indigenous African education, namely "its close links with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense; its collective nature; its many-sidedness, and its progressive development in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional and mental development of the child". This process evolves from an early age, involving storytelling that requires people "to sit in a circle and participate in the chants [and] in the songs" (Mhlope, cited in Ebewo, 2017:4). As explained above, storytelling is a good example of socially integrated learning in world communities, and Epskamp (1992:12) likewise describes "stories, riddles, proverbs, taboos, folklore, games, simulation and drama" as techniques used for playful, indirect social learning in many oral communities. Oral TLPs rarely rely on "abstract models, laboratories, or hypothetical situations for training or testing. An experiment is carried out in the real situation" (Epskamp, 1992:12). Similarly, Lave and Wenger (1991:34) state that "abstract representations are meaningless unless they can be made specific to the situation at hand". Therefore, teaching-learning occur continuously by means of practices and techniques like participation, imitation, repetition and improvisation.

Participation is a fundamental characteristic of the presentational performance style that characterises much African oral performance. Presentational performance in oral communities foregrounds socially integrated teaching-learning and total performance by focusing on performer and community. Kruger (2014:64) details how in Venda *ngano* narratives, 'audiences' participate and contribute to the plot in

the performance through chanting in a call-and-response manner and by singing the chorus sections of stories that contain songs. The call-and-response structure can be learned quickly so that participants can easily join in (Carver & Thram, 2012:20). Subsequently, dramatic interaction can also be classified as social interaction.

Sefa Dei (2000:124) claim that practice and experience constitute the foundation of knowledge in African thought systems. Similarly, performance "is something that you *do* rather than something that you [formally] *learn*" (Carver & Thram, 2012:13; my emphasis and brackets). Separating performance modes goes against the fundamental principles of music-making in many African communities, which is constructed "holistically, without attention being given to its theory in the conventional sense" (Carver & Thram, 2012:13). Correlating with the theory of CoP (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015:2), practical learning is a lifelong process, since environments and circumstances constantly evolve, and communities are constantly renegotiating their collective and individual identities. Time limitations can therefore seldom be stipulated to acquire specific knowledge and skills[7].

Cantellano (cited by Sefa Dei, 2000:114) identifies three kinds of knowledge in many African communities: traditional knowledge (transmitted orally between generations), empirical knowledge (acquired through observations and the environment) and revealed knowledge (realised through spiritual beliefs and practices like dreams, visions and intuition). Empirical knowledge is rooted in natural and cultural environments, while community members with similar spiritual beliefs share revealed knowledge. So, for instance, the songs and skills of Zambian *ingomba*[8] court musicians, correlate with spiritual beliefs and practices: an *ingomba* could be presented with songs by a deceased *ingomba* in a dream or during a trance on a drum (Epskamp, 1992:95; for a similar practice among the Venda, see Kruger,1999/2000, 2001).

In all cases, meaning is culture-specific and must be acquired. Some meanings are restricted to certain persons and events such as ritual leaders and initiation and religious rituals. The power of the initiation instructor and storyteller often resides in esoteric knowledge. Expert Sesotho *lifela* musicians reorder material used in past performances "combined with original passages composed on the spot" (Coplan, 1987:417). An outstanding composer and performer needs to display "knowledge drawn from a variety of Sotho cultural domains", and inspiration from various life experiences could "lift a relative amateur to victory over less original veterans" (Coplan, 1987:13). *Lifela* are influenced by performance skills taught as part of initiation, through the guidance of a poet by elder relatives or neighbours, or exposure to performances in mines, where a master (*kheleke*) might recognise potential in a youngster and offer

[7] The obvious exception is initiation music that must be learnt within a specific period.
[8] *Ingomba* and *abafwalwa* are court musicians that are in service of kings and the political hierarchy in *Bemba* society in Zambia (Epskamp, 1992:93-94).

to become his teacher (*ngaka*) (Coplan, 1987:13). According to Epskamp (1992:14) such apprenticeship learning in oral communities involves farming, hunting, crafting and performing arts, while Lave and Wenger (2011:68) mention that

> apprentices have the opportunity to see community practice in its complexity early on and have a broader idea of what it is about than just the particular tasks in which they are engaged or that are most easily observable. This appears to be central to processes of learning in apprenticeship.

Ebron (2002:41) notes that musical knowledge in African communities "often results from practice-based apprenticeship that help generate an understanding of 'local' ways of being". It is therefore important to note that not all musical transmission is 'spontaneous', but that teaching is formally planned and executed in some instances, as in initiation schools. During Pedi culture initiation rituals, boys and girls receive instructions mainly through songs (Huskisson, 1986:348). Male *likoma* songs, part of the sacred *koma* teachings in Sesotho culture, "are taught to the new initiates by elder graduates of the school". These songs give "instruction in all aspects of adult life", involve self-praise and construct adult identities (Wells, 1994:41). During apprenticeship learning, the apprentice develops "acute observation and an assessment of the properties of resources, materials and tools he is working with. The basis of this observation is sensory perception" (Epskamp, 1992:14). Hauptfleisch (2007) describes local ritual performances (such as initiation rituals) as "very formally structured and hav[ing] a strong mimetic content". As a result, oral TLPs during apprenticeship learning often involve practical learning through imitation.

El-Zanfaly (2015:89-90) describes imitation, iteration and improvisation as overlapping layers of an embodied learning process. During an experimental laser-cutting workshop, for instance, students were instructed firstly to build a model bridge by imitating an existing model. Secondly, they were required to build several iterations of the same project. Eventually, "students were able to improvise and make almost anything they had in mind using the laser cutter" (El-Zanfaly, 2015:88-89). Imitation enabled El-Zanfaly's students to copy "an object while analysing and processing many aspects of the object". Iteration "involves making copies and variations of the artefact with changes" while the improvisational stage involves "creating something new or spontaneously altering the object" (El-Zanfaly, 2015:89). The knowledge and skills acquired through participation and practice become part of what a community considers to be common knowledge (Biakolo, 2003:13-14). Imitation and repetition therefore generate knowledge that later enables and contributes to improvisation.

The process of practical musical-dramatic learning through imitation occurs through "listening, watching and doing: observation, imitation and practice" (Epskamp, 1992:12). Such mimesis is "always an attempt to reduplicate some aspect of reality in action" (Donald, 2006:16). The use of mimesis is

clearly evident in storytelling, especially when performers portray animal characters. A performer uses gestures, facial and bodily expressions and mimicry to convey characterisation and meaning when telling stories, as opposed to conveying meaning through writing only (Finnegan, 2016:7). Finnegan (2016:373) has found that mimicry as part of African dramatic practices is often humorous and satirical and that there is a clear attempt to copy animal sounds. The southern 'Bushmen' often used body paint, animal skins and horns when imitating animal characters during storytelling (Finnegan, 2016:488).

Skills and knowledge that are initially introduced and learnt through imitation continue to develop through repetition. Amegago (2009:168) explains that repetition in African music and dance allows performers and audience members to "absorb and retain the performance components and acquire the necessary skills through time". Similarly, Tuwe (2015) notes that the use of repetition in storytelling makes it easier "to understand and recall the stories from memory". The element of repetition in cyclic music is the basis of audience participation (Carver & Thram, 2012:20). Kruger (2004:7) comments that "Venda songs mostly have a cyclic form" and that "all songs, with the exception of story songs, may be repeated as many times as desired".

Pre-colonial performance practices thus involve multiple modes – usually taking form as choral dance-songs and drama – that produce culture and society. They articulate qualities of CoP: They involve worldviews, norms and values, and express and shape social ideals and identities. This takes form as a lifelong process of indirect as well as direct teaching-learning involving imitation, repetition and improvisation.

3.7. Dramatic practices since the colonial era

The impact of colonialism on indigenous performance practices is well known. Ebewo (2017:12) remarks that "during the colonial era […] the performing arts playing field in South Africa changed considerably. Indigenous performances were subdued, while formalised theatre in the European fashion emerged." Initiation schools, once primary sites of social production, were suppressed by missionary activity (Kirkaldy, 2005). Graver (1999:4) explains that European dramatic forms were taught in missionary schools and urban cultural clubs. The first small groups of evangelists struggled to convert adults. "Communities of practice resist prescription" (Buysse *et al.*, 2003; Wenger, cited in Printy, 2008:192-193), and certain evangelists therefore "turned their attention to the children, teaching them all the songs and stories which they knew" (Kirkaldy, 2005:43). These narratives and other performance practices introduced by missionaries all transmitted Christian values (Ramugondo, 2009).[9] Sefa Dei and

[9] Ramugondo (2009:98) discusses the Christian Wayfarers movement for girls, and quotes an elderly interviewee as explaining that "What I remember is that we did not swim. We also did not climb trees. We went up there to sing. Ours was to sing and dance. All that was done there was under Jesus's bidding […] We would be singing

Asgharzadeh (2006:57) describe education as "an effective socializing agent that was assigned the task of imposition of the colonial identity, colonial culture, language and religion on African peoples at the expense of African knowledges, languages, cultures, history, way of life etc".

However, precolonial oral performance practices and elements remain recognisable in contemporary dramatic performance, and Zenenga (2015:239) argues that "the persistence of the oral text in contemporary African theatre practices is a conscious aesthetic choice". Ebewo (2017:158) shows that the oral nature of African culture makes the use of theatre to convey many types of messages easily understandable, considering that "the majority of mothers are illiterate": this is significant in the light of Newman (2018), who indicates that more than three million South Africans remain illiterate, whilst the South African Government (2018) notes that "[l]iteracy for all – children, youth and adults – is still an unaccomplished goal and ever moving target". As such, oral traditions remain particularly active in contemporary South Africa.

Civallero (2007) depicts oral practices as "a living, ancient art, enjoyed by everybody, literate and illiterate, because nobody needs previous education for getting it", whilst Jones (1993:235) concludes that improvisation is an important oral technique and survival tool, because "learning to improvise in a hostile environment over which one has little control becomes a survival tool of the highest order". During the political protests of the apartheid era, for example, song lyrics were improvised and slightly altered to avoid censorship or arrest (Schumann, 2008:17-18, 27). Performance practices became an important tool to communicate social issues of the time to larger communities and audience groups.

Mkosi (2006:151) indicates that forms of oral "traditional indigenous education" still exist among certain South African oral populations today and is still practised in some way, regardless of Western education systems. Kruger (2014:14) notes that "indigenous knowledge systems, also embedded in artistic performance, remain important in Africa, although now for a very different reason: they are instrumental to the autonomous negotiation of identities in a globalising world". So, for example, Knowles (2010: 4-5) explains intercultural theatre and performance as "a site for continuing renegotiation of cultural values and the reconstitution of individual and community identities and subject positions".

Historical syncretic theatre utilised "the performance forms of both European and indigenous cultures in a creative recombination of their respective elements, without slavish adherence to one tradition or the other" (Balme, 1999:2). Notably, Gibson Kente merged dance, mime, singing and performer-

---

only Christian songs, also dancing. In the mornings, as soon as we woke up, we would drill […] Everything we did as Jesus ordered."

audience interaction with Western theatrical conventions (Herrington, 1988:77): this was a self-evident manifestation of multi-modality and the 'total' performances of pre-colonial life.

With reference to music in townships, Coplan (2007:268) suggests that "live jazz and black musical forms took refuge in township musical theatre and simultaneously flourished under the weight of censorship from apartheid's Publications Control Board", and Balme (1999:14-15) likewise describes township musical theatre as one of the most successful syncretic theatre styles that became "uniquely South African" and an "international phenomenon". Zakes Mda (cited in Van Heerden, 2011:104) observes that white playwrights mostly "ventured into using African ritual on the theatrical stage", and that "Blacks still hold these rituals in awe". Although Balme warns against exoticism (using "indigenous cultural texts for their surface appeal, but with no regard to their cultural semantics"),[10] syncretism was a "major development in twentieth-century theatre" (Balme, 1999:5, 24).

During the 1920s in Africa "local content was contained within North American minstrel, English music hall, and Hollywood imitations" (Knowles, 2010:9). Knowles (2010:9) further notes that "in Africa and India in the early twentieth century, theatrical interculturalism developed primarily in response to, and as a result of, colonialism". Twentieth-century South African urban theatrical events similarly were often organised by whites and supported by black groups with varying, even conflicting interests (Hutchinson, 2003:5). Between the 1950s and 1970s, various forms of multi-racial theatres and groups emerged, as opposed to the types of theatre funded by performing arts councils (Hutchinson, 2003:5). Graver (1999:6) accordingly reports that

> the township music and dance, recent British drama, Broadway hits, European avant-garde performances, and labour activists' skits […] had been instrumental in establishing a distinctively South African theatrical vocabulary and allowing separate forms of South African drama to borrow from each other to enrich their particular modes of expression.

The Bareti Players' musical, *King Kong* (1959), merged township jazz and European style musical theatre (Hauptfleisch, 2007; Van Heerden, 2011). Well-known musicals of the time include *Ipi Tombi* (1974), *Lulu-wena* (1976), *Meropa* (1974) and *Kwa-Sulu* (1972). Performances by Esau Mtetwa's Lucky Stars in the 1920s and 1930s were also attended by white audiences, despite the use of isiZulu: translation was not necessary to create a theatrical experience because of the "African qualities of visibility and imagery, vitalized by the performers' sense of cultural authenticity" (Coplan, 1986:162).

[10] Cultural semantics refer to signs and symbols that represent culture-specific meaning, purpose, and collective identity. Accordingly, Balme (1999:5) classifies costumes, masks, dances and songs as cultural semantics and cautions that when recording these elements outside the "original textuality" in western aesthetics performance frameworks, "they are no longer texts in a semiotic sense, but merely signs, floating signifiers of otherness."

English language theatre was, in any case, becoming multilingual through its incorporation of Afrikaans, Setswana, 'Tsotsitaal' and isiZulu as illustrated in the plays compiled in Graver (1999). This process received impetus as a consequence of the push towards democracy. From the 1960s onwards, African musical elements were often incorporated into the performing arts as a means of making "subtle political statements" (Schumann, 2008:27).

The development of syncretic theatrical forms continued in the combination of "'African', 'European', 'American,' 'Eastern,' and other styles to create the distinctive South African theatre and performance forms which emerged in the last two decades of the twentieth century" (Hauptfleisch, 2006:182). This influenced the rise of Afrikaans theatre and the works of native artists such as Herbert Dhlomo, Fatime Dike, Maishe Maponyane, Matsemela Manaka and Gibson Kente, who "started composing plays using Euro-American frames of reference" (Ebewo, 2017:12). In addition, imported films, images, themes and styles (mainly from Europe and America) had "innumerable specific effects on the style and form of indigenous popular art," in particular affecting a "constant process of syncretic construction" (Barber, 1987:25).

The increasing commercialisation of theatre did not mean the latter had become divorced from local communal experiences. It not only continued to express "the rhythm of everyday life" (Ebewo, 2017:14-15) but also creatively engaged historical genres and practices. Lave and Wenger (1991:34) remark in their discussion of CoP that "the generality of any form of knowledge always lies in the power to renegotiate the meaning of the past and future in constructing the meaning of present circumstances". The variety of performances and entertainment forms embraced by South Africans also include political rallies and protests, music and choral performances during competitions and church services, carnivals and street events (Ebewo, 2017:14). Molebatsi and d'Abdon (2008:171) show similarly that various forms of poetic expression, including praise poetry, featured prominently in the development of urban South Africa since the late 19th century, and that various young jazz musicians do not see poetry and music as separate entities. In addition, praise poetry still features at political events, sports matches and in advertisements (Kaschula, 1999:62, 67-68; Westley, 2002:154-155).

A practice related to local conditions and aesthetics is that of poor theatre.[11] Coplan (2007:383) describes the performance of *Esuthwini* (directed by Oscar Motsikoe and influenced by Ngobeni Ngema) at the Market theatre in 2005, as resembling Grotowski's poor theatre. The production focused on "the physicality of the theatre: the body as the stage" and the use of movement and sound (Coplan,

[11] Jerzy Grotowski was a Polish director and founder of the Laboratory Theatre of Wroclaw in Poland. Poor theatre "emerges as a result of a process of reduction, with the theatre performance cleansed of all unnecessary elements" (The Grotowski Institute, 2012). Also see Barba, E., ed. 2002. *Towards a poor theatre: Jerzy Grotowski*. New York: Routledge.

2007:383). Coplan (2007:385) explains that performance techniques rooted in pre-colonial dramatic practices continue to survive and that this type of "movement theatre" in productions such as "Esuthwini" "can capture both audiences who are not used to literary theatre, and those who do not understand the languages used in the plays".

Mark Fleishman (cited in Coplan, 2007:285) argues that "the physical body in South African theatre is a source of primary meaning which constantly challenges the hegemony of the written word in the meaning making system". This type of performance correlates with the transmission of knowledge through memetics and embodied knowledge. Lave and Wenger (1991:33) similarly argue in terms of CoP that placed learning emphasises on "comprehensive understanding involving the whole person rather than 'receiving' a body of factual knowledge about the world; on activity in and with the world; and on the view that agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other". Kente, who was very active during the founding years of township musical theatre, also recognised this theatre form as "ideally suited to an indigenous African urban theatre" and that it is a "multi-channelled mode of representation [that] is certainly more visually evocative and noisily joyful than the usual western play" (Coplan, 2007:384).

South African urban theatre is produced in alternative and independent performance spaces where controversial local work is showcased, including the Baxter Theatre (University of Cape Town) and the Market Theatre (Johannesburg). Theatres like these are geared towards developing all forms of drama and reaching out to "non-traditional audiences" (Graver, 1999:6). Pinto and Mann (2016) cite the Department of Arts and Culture which has identified "more than 160 community art centres in operation, about 12 large-scale arts and culture festivals, and over 100 active theatre venues". Various drama festivals such as the Sasol and Standard Bank Schools Festivals are also introduced to learners in schools (Ebewo, 2017:202-203).

In addition to these theatrical spaces, a "vibrant" arts festival circuit has developed where many independent practitioners showcase innovative work (Van Heerden, 2011:88). Hauptfleisch (2006:183-184) maintains that South African arts festivals revived three old African traditions: market-day gatherings (creating a sense of community that speaks to pre-colonial practices), celebrations linked to commemorative days (based on indigenous rituals), and touring theatre companies (resembling touring theatre companies between 1880-920). Hauptfleisch (2006:182; brackets in original) argues furthermore that many festivals strive "towards some kind of cultural identity and/or cohesion" in some way by either continuing or resurrecting "old and established 'traditional' (also indigenous) practices, or newly (custom) created enterprises". Furthermore, Ebewo (2017:203) notes that major events at the Grahamstown festival aim to include "professional and amateur drama presentations". In other words,

festivals provide platforms to showcase pre-colonial and syncretic performance practices, but, they also "privilege commercial work" (Hauptfleisch, 2006:183).

3.7.1. Teaching-learning practices: The workshop technique

The historiography of urban theatre shows growing concern with the so-called workshop method, which aimed at integrating "African qualities of imagery, visibility and improvisation into contemporary western theatre" (Coplan, 1986:166). So, for example, the improvisation workshop technique was introduced by Barney Simon during the 1960s after working with theatre director Joan Littlewood in Britain and with the director, actor and writer Joseph Chaikin in America (Graver, 1999:5), while the Junction Avenue Theatre Company started creating workshopped plays in 1979 (Coplan, 1986:173-174).

Panday (2004:15) points out that the workshop theatre technique includes observation and improvisation (similar to pre-colonial performance practices): "Writers went out and observed people, conducted interviews and researched topics. […] From the material collated the actors improvised scenes. From the improvised scenes, the group of actors and writers selected the most appropriate ones". Van Heerden (2011:104-105) describes an example of the workshop technique during three productions directed by Brett Bailey: *iMumbo Jumbo* (1997), *Ipi Zombi* (1998) and *The Prophet* (1999). Showing respect to Xhosa culture and cast members, Bailey "submerged himself in Xhosa culture, ritual, history, mythology and symbolism" (Van Heerden, 2011:104). Furthermore, the 41 cast members, including practicing healers, started each rehearsal with a 10-15-minute trance ritual, which "allowed the complexities of his subject matter to surface in a way that could echo the new South Africa" (Van Heerden, 2011:105). This correlates with Balme's explanation that in syncretic theatre "cultural texts retain their integrity as bearers of precisely defined cultural meaning" (1999:5).

The workshop technique contributed to shaping South African theatre and was similar to the often-spontaneous nature of local community drama. Graver (1999:5) mentions that this technique "allowed the ensemble of actors, rather than the playwright, to dominate the creation of performance" As such, this practice, too, integrated local and Western dramatic conventions. The improvisational nature of the workshop technique allows performers to utilise and re-arrange known performative knowledge and experiences (from oral performance practice) within the required theatrical framework (mainly Western dramatic structures). However, Ebewo (2017:206) explains that, because of apartheid, workshopped and devised theatre was encouraged, and consequently "many found it difficult to cultivate the culture of playwrighting".

Coplan (2007:390) notes that township musical theatre impresarios such as Gibson Kente and Sam Mhangwane played an important role in mentoring and training the first generation of actors that dominated black theatre and television during the 1990s. This correlates with apprenticeship training utilised as part of pre-colonial teaching-learning practices and is in line with CoP. Lave and Wenger (1991:31) explain that "the uses of 'apprenticeship' in cognitive and educational research were largely metaphorical, even though apprenticeship as an actual educational form had a long and varied train of historically and culturally specific realizations". At the same time, many contemporary festivals allow learners to engage with "professional theatre work" and offer hands-on workshops with "recognised professional artists" (Ebewo, 2017:203). This echoes the type of practical and apprenticeship learning utilised by Gibson Kente and Sam Mhangwane during the era of township musicals.

Ravengai (2011:36) refers to natural, biological and "cultural bodies" in the context of poor theatre, and asks "how actor trainers empower actors with respect to their cultural bodies". Coplan (2007:389-390) notes that "theatrical training is crucial" for this type of movement theatre, which is characterised as "a kind of unarguable situational moralism on social issues" and which could merely become "held together and indeed made bearable by engaging pot-pourris of overly earnest dance and song" (Coplan, 2007:389).

Coplan (2007:390) further notes "a gap in mentorship and training in black theatre" after Kente's decline, and that new talent now mostly emerge from "high school drama groups, community theatre run by dedicated local artists, college and art schools […] university drama departments [and] professional companies trolling for talent". Coplan (2007:390) argues that "connecting and integrating these centres of development" has not been successful. Therefore, a lacuna is evident in teaching-learning dramatic practices. Consequently, this emphasises the potential roles and responsibilities of institutional training in the performing arts.

3.8. Curriculum and TLPs at TUT

3.8.1. Curriculum

Students who enrolled for tertiary education at TUT in specialised fields in performing arts until 2019 had a choice between drama, musical theatre and vocal art (in the Department of Drama and Film and the Department of Performing Arts respectively). I have been responsible for teaching singing to drama students since 2015, and musical theatre students phasing out from the previous curriculum since 2020.

The admission requirements for drama and musical theatre did not include any 'formal' (or western) musical training or experience. Admission for drama applicants involved a practical audition and

interview. Prior musical training rooted in Western practices was a pre-requisite for vocal art and admission was dependent on an audition, interview and a rudimentary music theory test (TUT, 2018). In 2020 a new curriculum and Diploma in Performing Arts (with a broader focus on Africanisation, inter and multidisciplinary performance practices) were implemented, with specialisations in music (which includes vocal art and instrumental music) and theatre arts and design (which combines previously separated drama, musical theatre and entertainment technology training[12]).

Green (2012:212) notes that music teaching is rapidly changing because popular music has become part of, and influences, teaching-learning in current music curricula. Sheperd (2012:240) similarly expresses the opinion that the changes in music teaching at universities link with

> a wide range of disciplines outside music, such as sociology, anthropology, and communication; the increasing and sustained influence of ethnomusicology, a discipline for which existing and interacting with the people whose music is being studied have been a central and defining methodology; and major changes within the historically more conservative disciplines of academic music.

Green (2002:213) indicates that "many further and higher educational courses are highly vocational in nature" and need to prepare students for the professional performance industry, where commercial performances follow 'Western' conventions. Furthermore, the current musical theatre industry still favours commercial Western-style musicals (De Beer, 2015). The curriculum at TUT also followed this tradition. First-year drama students attended the singing class as a group and mainly engaged in ensemble singing. Students needed to audition to continue with singing as a specialisation subject (approximately 12 students were selected to continue into the second and third year). Second-year students sang in smaller ensemble groups. Third-year students mainly focused on solo singing and learning from sheet music to prepare them for the performance industry.

Since vocal training is an integral part of vocal art and musical theatre programmes, various practical and theoretical subjects related to vocal training and music formed part of the previous curriculum (TUT, 2018). Musical theatre students were taught theoretical subjects such as arts history and musical theatre studies. Students in the drama programme studied African and South African drama in theory subjects, which provided a general overview of dramatic practices from pre-colonial times to the present. Oral interpretation subjects (specifically in second and third year) offered students a theoretical

[12] Entertainment technology trains students in the technical areas of theatre and performance, such as décor, costume, properties, make-up, sound, lighting and textile design (TUT, 2018).

overview of various types of prose, poetry (including praise-poetry) and storytelling (including the oral genres of South Africa).

3.8.2. Teaching-learning models and practices

The vocal TLPs in all three the above-mentioned fields of study mainly follow Western models. Emphasis is placed on vocal skills and techniques (pertaining to singing as a professional rather than general skill) and singing, dancing and acting as distinct areas of specialisation.

Green (2012:211) argues that most non-Western music is learnt "outside, and even in contradistinction to, institutionalized education, employing quite different learning methods to those of Western formal music pedagogy". In a sense, performative skills learnt as part of institutional training becomes something to 'learn' first and 'do' later. Such classroom activities and rehearsals relate to abstract teaching-learning models, laboratories and hypothetical situations (Epskamp, 1992:12) in which knowledge and skills are developed in a specific way over a particular period of time. This contrasts with the African pre-colonial approach to time, which gives primacy to improvisation and the 'now' (Jones, 1993:236).

The teaching-learning challenge that these approaches involve is articulated in Dargie's (1996:30-31) description of his own Western music learning experiences as "Music theory → instrumental technique → performance of music → reward for achievement = certificate". Dargie (1996:31) explains that Western education systems use 'abstractions' of music and combine them to create music theory. In Dargie's work on Xhosa music learning (similar to multimodal and socially integrated dramatic TLPs) this method of teaching is shown to be ineffective, because the Xhosa people are "used to learning songs as a whole, taking in the whole song as a *Gestalt*, a total experience, not something abstracted into essential elements" (Dargie, 1996:40). Deer and Dal Vera (2008:xxxvii-xxviii) similarly indicate that musical theatre students are trained to sing, dance and act separately, and eventually have to merge the three fields in performance. This also applies to performance teaching practices at TUT. Musical and performance elements are separated into various modules during institutional training and later combined during assessment or performance. Therefore, TLPs that fragment song, dance and drama do not align with the conventions of oral transmission.

Green (2002:204) warns that "it would be impossible to entirely replicate informal peer-educated and group learning practices" as part of institutional music training. A lecturer mostly supervises institutional training, and teaching-learning activities are goal orientated and pre-determined, and culminate in assessment (Green, 2002:204). Vocal performances in literate performance practices, such as musical theatre, vocal art and drama, usually rely on performing songs that are given to a performer

as part of a formal script, are composed by a designated composer, and rarely involve the performer in the creative process. Therefore, performers are excluded from the creative process by prescribed repertoire. Students' choice of performance material is limited during institutional training, and the content and nature of Western learning material and strategies do not favour oral learning methods. Students are mostly required to work with existing, pre-selected songs from a specific genre as opposed to music in oral communities that are always in the process of being recreated through improvisation. Similarly, audience participation is extremely limited during performances across the three programmes at TUT. Students are mostly taught to 'forget' the audience, fully engage with an imaginary world, and only make direct contact with other performers on stage (McGaw, 1980:142). This correlates with the representational theatre style, where the main aim is to pretend that the stage curtains open onto a real place, therefore, representing "reality in its fullness" (Kerndale, 1960:254).

In contrast to precolonial practice, as well as the theory of CoP, the emphasis during vocal training is furthermore placed on teaching students individually and in select groups. Green (2002:201) argues that 'formal' music education tends to "recognise and reward only certain aspects of musical ability […], aiding the appearance that only a minority of human beings have musical ability". This emphasises the development of professional vocal skills of particular individuals as opposed to developing singing as a general skill through collective participation. What is also not often realised, is the performative construction of identities and a sense of belonging. Pitts (2005:13) describes a scenario where students perceive the idea of being a 'musician' from an educational perspective as a value-laden term and that

> […They] were tentative about their own right to claim such a title. Western education systems must hold some responsibility for this tendency to privilege expertise and employability over engagement and enthusiasm, but recording industries and performance traditions too have established a clear division between 'professional' and 'amateur' performers which makes many active music-makers feel excluded from an inner circle of experts.

Techniques of imitation, repetition and improvisation of pre-colonial origin are utilised in TLPs at TUT. However, students arrive with differing experiences, skills and concepts. Partti (2014:14) hence explains that the "contemporary music classroom in general education is often a hybrid of many memberships in various communities of practice, as students 'maintain many social ties, possibly over considerable distances', and intentionally or accidentally bring these ties into the classroom". In a media interview, staff members from TUT said that first-year students "arrive on campus with their own expectations and very little of the basic knowledge" about specific vocal music performance genres and that they "have to start from scratch" (De Beer, 2015). This questions the value of students' prior musical experiences, and Lea (2009:184) explains that they feel excluded when they "struggle to engage in the unfamiliar discourses or literacy practices of the academy".

Vocal skills and techniques are typically demonstrated to students by lecturers. During singing classes at TUT, students imitate what is demonstrated by lecturers, and develop these skills through practising (repeating) exercises regularly in class and as homework. In this way they start to build a "skills inventory" (Deer & Dal Vera, 2008:379), or known vocabulary, related to what they learn during their time at the institution. This inventory is expanded by students' use of online platforms to explore vocal music skills and styles, and imitate popular artists. Partti (2014:7-8) explains that "youngsters may develop into professional musicians through solitary and peer-directed, often trial and error-based, learning, and use listening and the copying of recordings as essential tools in constructing their own musicianship". Partti (2014:3) further claims that technology

> has had a significant impact on the culture of music making and learning in many parts of the world. Music software and hardware make it possible for almost anyone to create their own music regardless of their instrumental training or formal and explicit knowledge of music theory. Also, rapidly-growing online communities offer a platform for the distribution of one's own music to others

I argue that an important difference between oral and institutional TLPs is the time spent on developing skills and preparing for performances and assessments. Institutional training is restricted by timetables and programme duration, as opposed to the kind of lifelong, socially integrated learning that often characterises local community life. This has direct bearing on improvisation, which only becomes a common and comfortable skill over time. Jones (1993:236) notes that, during an experimental student production incorporating Yoruba-based dramatic structures and improvisation at the University of Texas, students who were not as familiar with improvisation struggled to develop the necessary skills over a six-week rehearsal period. Improvisational skills are inculcated over a much longer period in oral communal settings than institutional schedules usually allow.

Teaching vocal skills and performance in the drama programme seemed to present more challenges than in the vocal art and musical theatre programmes. Relatively few teaching hours were devoted to singing on first-year level. Singing was compulsory for all students at this level, who were required to spend no less than 60 hours on this subject. The allocated time for singing in the second year was 30 hours per year (1 hour per week). The teaching time further decreased for third-year singing students (30 mins per week/15 hours per year). Vocal teaching hours even further decreased in the new curriculum: singing is no longer a subject for theatre art and design students (previously, drama and musical theatre students) but is now incorporated into the musical theatre subject (previously a separate qualification). Therefore, incorporating and adapting older oral performance practices to contemporary institutional practices is self-evident.

3.8.3. Practice-based teaching-learning

The theory components introduced in oral interpretation are explored practically in the prose and poetry acting modules. However, many TUT students usually struggle with theory subjects, which also makes the application of theoretical concepts in practical subjects challenging. The challenges in theory subjects are also directly influenced by South Africa's literacy levels, as noted earlier. The kind of learning involved in various acting modules is at the core of compulsory participation in departmental and coursework productions. Drama students are required to take part in at least one production per year – this includes departmental productions, student-directed productions during the Rostrum Roulette Festival (showcasing third-year directing projects), DirActions Festival (showcasing BTech directing projects) and the National Arts Festival (NAF) student production. Participants create their performances during student-directed productions in the drama programme; however, they are required to work with existing texts and only limited freedom is given in relation to text adaptation, collaboration with the cast and merging previously acquired and institutional TLPs. Popular choices amongst student directors are plays that include protest songs from the apartheid era such as *Asinamali, Bopha!, Children of Asazi, Woza Albert!* and *Sizwe Bansi is dead*. Furthermore, the influence of indigenous performance practices is evident in the improvisational nature of many songs that are constantly improvised and varied in length during rehearsals and performances. Because the length of many of these songs is not fixed, singing may shape the duration and even structure of a performance.

Additionally, performance opportunities arise from coursework productions in educational theatre, children's theatre, directing, voice and physical theatre modules. Coursework productions often combine theatre games, physical theatre, soundscaping and ensemble singing. Singing during coursework productions often allows more input from students and less guidance from lecturers. In alignment with the principles of CoP, students rely on teaching vocal music elements to each other through peer learning, collaboration and improvisation during these projects. Becker (cited in Lave, 1991:78) remarks that "children in school learn best what the school does not teach". Willis (cited in Lave, 1991:78) in turn notes that they "form ad hoc communities of practice mostly outside the classroom". Since not all drama students are required to take singing, CoPs form spontaneously when students engage in peer learning during coursework productions. Partti (2014:7, citing Wenger) explains that "musical learning, whether taking place in the solitude of a studio or in a group with co-musicians, is assumed to always be intertwined with others, as our practices, languages, artefacts and worldviews reflect our social relations and utilize images and perspectives that we understand through co-participation in the shared practices of social communities".

Ghimisi (2016:144) explains fittingly that a "community of practice helps interaction and knowledge sharing, but inappropriate implementation can lead to failure". While some CoP characteristics develop during peer learning in coursework productions, students may also cultivate potentially harmful habits that could impact their vocal health and quality. Blacking's (1986b:427) description of Venda performance aesthetics applies widely in South Africa: a good performer is usually expected to sing and dance with "great vigour and energy, precision and virtuosity", and people mostly prefer to experience "dynamic, almost destructive performances"; "[a] person may sing so well that he 'nearly bursts his diaphragm' and dance so that he 'digs a hole in the ground', 'licks the clouds', or leaps so high that 'three people can crawl underneath him' ". Singing in many student productions is thus executed very loudly, and this habit may be harmful, resulting in students 'losing' their voice before actual performances. In contrast, Western training places great emphasis on developing vocal technique and healthy vocal habits, while avoiding tension, yelling, vocal overuse and improper technique that could damage the voice (Hodges & Sebald, 2011:295).

3.9. Conclusion and summary

Performance in pre-colonial South Africa historically fulfilled essential functions. Singing and dancing was incorporated into communal events and certain daily tasks, such as pounding. The aesthetics of vocal and performance practices foregrounded "music for life's sake", and were influenced by natural and social environments. Performance functioned as both entertainment and educational tool.

CoP characteristics were integral to historical vocal music TLPs. Continuous, socially integrated practical learning emerged from shared interests, values and norms, and negotiated meaning, identity and a sense of belonging. Participation was at the core of holistic teaching-learning and was directed at the communal production of society and culture. Peer learning has also been a prominent teaching-learning practice since pre-colonial times, and remains relevant. Interactive techniques strategically involve the audience, as is especially noticeable in ad hoc communities of practice observed during institutional training.

Institutional TLPs at TUT remain characterised mainly by Western theatrical and performance conventions: these focus on teaching skills, theories and knowledge, which precede the combination and embodiment of performative elements. Institutional training is career-oriented and takes place within relatively confined time limits as opposed to lifelong TLPs in many oral communities. However, students take advantage of coursework productions to engage with previously acquired TLPs and performance experiences (fig. 3). The latter are characterised by the experiential, oral rote teaching-learning of integrated verbal, musical and dramatic modes.

Fig. 3. Oral and institutional TLP continuum in student-directed projects

Oral TLPs	Resemble CoP norms	Social identity expressed visibly through communal participation and collective embodiment	Socially integrated learning and multimodal performance practices	Practical learning while doing	Singing as basic social requirement	Lifelong TLP
						
Formal & informal student institutional TLPs	Forms ad hoc COPs outside the classroom environment	Social identity expressed virtually by performers through individual and ensemble learning	Performance elements taught separately	Learn first, do later	Singing as professional requirement	Accelerated, focused, career oriented TLPs

This chapter points to continuity between historical and contemporary theatrical practice, identifying the ongoing artistic production of life by means of the selective engagement with older performance genres and cultural resources. This is unpacked by means of descriptions of the TLPs of the SATV in chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 4: DATA DESCRIPTION

4.1. Introduction: Emergent themes

Data for this case study was captured from interviews with seven members of the SATV theatre group (Denzel, James, Lee, Maps, Moira, Mytho, Tjoki), observations of three additional SATV members (Marilyn, Ingrid and John[13]) as well as the rehearsals process and production of *Flak my son*. Distinctive codes describing the case study were identified and categorised. Continuous reviewing, reflecting, re-coding and re-categorising allowed me to identify three themes, namely lived and observed experiences of extracurricular, institutional and SATV vocal music TLPs respectively. These themes are described in 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 respectively.

4.2. Theme 1: Extracurricular vocal music TLPs

Theme one involves extracurricular music TLPs and comprises two categories: the first describes continuous learning through social integration at home, school and church, and the second involves mass media influence.

4.2.1. School, private lessons, camps, church and home

Most prior, extracurricular TLPs of the SATV involved orality and socially-integrated group singing. Participants *indirectly* learnt to sing through observation, imitation, repetition, peer learning and practical learning. Imitation was a common shared learning strategy. Repetition after mastering material or technique ensured refinement, with a view towards performance. Participation in these practices was voluntary or compulsory, always involved the production of community, and had a lasting effect on future experiences of singing.

4.2.1.1. School

Participants explained that singing during school assemblies occurred on a weekly or daily basis. Denzel mentioned how “every morning we all needed to sing, doesn’t matter what happened”. Similarly, Lee explained: “Every morning, when the bell rings, you know there’s a parade, you have to go sing, sing, sing, pray, you go to class.” Furthermore, singing during school assemblies mostly involved Christian hymns. Denzel recalled singing the well-known “Our Father who art in heaven,” and

[13] Pseudonyms

Lee commented that they usually sang before the morning assembly prayer. Mytho indicated that she "used to be the girl who would come up with the hymns" during assemblies.

Participants also reflected on learning from their peers. When I asked Denzel how he learnt to sing in school, he explained: "Everybody kind of knew it because the other grades knew it. So, you were kind of forced to know it. You catch on so that you also know it like everybody else." Moira described a similar singing experience from school: "Others would come up with things […] If I started a song, or a hymn, then everybody would hear what I was saying, and what kind of a hymn I was coming up with. It wouldn't take time for them to join in." Lee remarked how "I'd sing from school going home, making beats and things like that. People [his cousins] would join, and it just goes."

Denzel and Tjoki strongly expressed their displeasure at singing during school assemblies. Tjoki described how "in school, we sang in the hall, in the assembly: boring!" Denzel in turn stated: "I was forced to sing in primary school. A teacher made us sing. [Imitating the teacher]: 'Everybody can sing!' I still remember."

Maps, Denzel, Lee, Tjoki and James were members of a school choir. They recalled working with a conductor, piano accompaniment, sheet music and occasionally competing in school choir competitions. Furthermore, participants often were members of school choirs for a lengthy period. James and Tjoki were choir members in primary school, Denzel and Lee periodically sang in school choirs until high school, and Maps responded: "I was always in the choir."

Participants learnt from and imitated teachers and choir conductors. Lee said that the school choir teacher "knew how to read the notes, and then they just say 'you say [singing the solfa scale] doh-re-mi-fa-sol', and then you just follow." Maps explained how singing in the school choir was "my first encounter of music that had, like, notes." Similarly, Lee indicated that "we worked with sheet music, but we didn't know how to read the notes."

James similarly imitated his school choir teacher and explained that "we had a teacher who used the piano and would say, 'OK, we will sing on this note. Can everybody sing on this note?' " Maps vaguely recalled doing some warm-up exercises in the school choir, saying: "We started with the [singing the solfa scale] 'do, do-re-mi'. I think that was his way of warming up our voices. Then, I didn't *really* understand those things. I just – when you start singing, and you demonstrate to me by singing – I understood that way." James was also a choir member, but laughingly indicated: "I don't think I can *actually* sing."

Denzel and Maps felt that singing in their respective school choirs enhanced their prestige. Maps expressed her feelings when she encountered sheet music: “I was like, ooh the notes – the [singing a solfa octave] ‘doh-doh’– this was like, this is serious. Now we’re going *places*!” Denzel similarly described the competitive nature of his high school choir, explaining that “the singing was big, like, we used to compete with schools like the Draken’ boys, Drakensberg. So, when you were singing, you were *singing*. It’s wasn’t like play-play.”

School revue performances combined singing, dancing, and acting. James mentioned that the music selection “usually consisted of pop music. We would listen to a mixture of golden oldies, classical and movies soundtrack songs.” He further commented that “it was not necessarily proper singing-singing. It was more group singing that was recorded. It was an enjoyable experience.”

School choir membership was not compulsory. However, Denzel and Tjoki felt forced to participate. Denzel explained: “I was forced to sing in pre-primary, uhm, the operative word being *forced*… ‘cause I knew I wasn’t a singer. […] In high school, I was forced to, after school, do the choir thing.” Tjoki similarly sang in the school choir “only because my mom forced things to happen. So, me just saying that my friend is doing something, not that I’m actually saying that I want to do it. And then that’s just how I got to be in the school choir. I was not interested, because I knew that I can’t sing. Why am I, like, being forced to do this?” Clearly, at times there was pressure from teachers, parents and peers to participate in school choirs.

Denzel responded that he wanted to sing in extracurricular school, but that he was discouraged from doing so: “I wanted to. I thought I could sing […], but I remember once as I was singing, Michael (the choir conductor) looking… ‘that voice in here …’ and he found me, and he was like ‘you, shut-up.’ Ever since then, that’s when I stopped singing.” Mytho’s friends and classmates similarly told her that she wasn’t a good singer and told her to “‘stop doing that [singing]’. I think this is the reason why I opted for singing. […] I was like, you know what, I’m gonna show these ones.” In contrast to Denzel’s experience, this incident motivated Mytho to develop her singing skills during her institutional training.

4.2.1.2. Private lessons and camps

Moira was the only participant who received extramural singing lessons from a vocal coach. She learnt “traditional warm-ups and ear exercises and breathing exercises” and had to learn repertoire selected by the coach. She described her extreme stage fright when she had to take part in a casual singing performance in high school: “It was rough, ‘cause I was so nervous, and now I know what being nervous does to your body because I’ve studied drama, but back then I couldn’t understand why the sound wasn’t coming out. […] You know when you’re nervous, and you just close up here? That happened.”

Lee participated in an arts camp as part of a cultural outreach programme and told me: "They came to our school. Yes, so that's where I started to learn things like vocal training, you understand, projection, you understand, articulation. I was doing grade 11, that's when I was introduced to drama and performance art formally." James was a member of the Voortrekkers in primary school and participated in the school revue from primary to high school. He explained: "We used to sing folk songs or traditional songs and the national anthem at the Voortrekkers[14]. It was very informal most of the times. We just did it outside [in the open air]."

4.2.1.3. Church and other religious settings

All participants had a Christian upbringing and attended church with their families. Denzel explained that his first memory of singing was in church: "We were always going to a service where there was singing. […] From when I could, like, recognise and remember sound, I just remember it in my church." Lee also indicated that he "used to sing in church. Not sing as like a church choir, just like everybody sings." Mytho reflected on her singing participation in church: "It wasn't like a choir in church. Like I would just start a song. When they say 'somebody start a song', that somebody would be me. 'Can we have a song, or can we have a hymn?' I would be that somebody who started a song. I would just jump in." Maps remembered singing in church with "music books, like a songbook. We had those." Moira sang with the church youth group as a teenager. She led singing during services, especially during Christmas. She explained that "those who want to participate, participate, and there's a musical leader who helps. […] It was a lot of fun." Moira also explained how the conductor at church "would show, and then you just do what they do, like copy-cat teaching." However, Moira lost interest after her teenage years. James laughingly remarked that he never sang in church.

Maps and Mytho reflected on the integration of singing in ritual practices. Mytho noted that her family

> are Christians, but we also believe in ancestors. And we still do traditional ceremonies, *Rapathla*[15]. We do praise to the ancestors every now and again. Especially if there's like a ceremony, maybe like a wedding, we always praise our tradition. Always. And, also, in funerals. Like, at the cemetery. 'Cause how we do it at home, like, we have like youth, elders, and then you all have to like start a song. Somewhere in between the proceedings of the burial. So, once again, I would just start a song.

[14] Die Voortrekkers is a cultural organisation, specifically aimed at empowering Afrikaans culture. Involvement in adventurous activities and camps include developing camaraderie and leadership skills underpinned by Christian values (Die Voortrekkers, 2020).
[15] Mytho explained that *go pathla* means slaughtering an animal to appease the ancestors. *Raphatlha* means "we slaughtered."

Maps mentioned how she goes into a trance state through vocal performance and explained that

> I go to "alpha". "Alpha", it's getting vibrations, body vibrations, you know. Our African people call it "now I'm going into a trance". I go to a trance through voice. So now I lose myself, my voices, my whatever, my mind and now, it's inner beings singing, or whatever, making that sounds. Like my body's no longer in control, like, my inner being is in control of that.

Maps also voiced her interest and training in expressive movement[16] guided by what she called her "spiritual mother". Expressive movement can also incorporate the use of sound. After discovering expressive movement training in 2017, she reflected that "our body knows best how to express that, not our mind. Our minds always segregate us – how to act or how to do things. Also because of what we read and the news when we see, and then it goes to your mind, you start analysing it. I don't want to analyse things. I want to just feel and leave."

4.2.1.4. At home

Singing with family members was a daily casual activity, especially at family gatherings during holidays and traditional ceremonies. Lee remembered how "when I was growing up, we used to sing gospel songs with my grandmother just before we went to sleep." Mytho's mother used to play music from *Sarafina!* and Mango Groove, and they would casually dance and sing together.

Lee struggled to recall a particular song, but he remembered how "I used to sing it with my granny. That's the one that I forgot. And we used to sing it all the time." Maps explained that she sang a lot with her father, who

> used to sing a lot. We would sing and when he's chilling with his friends, and then I would sit in his lap, and I would start singing and start songs and, you know, we'd sing like church songs and choir songs. Like it was just, someone would start a song in the house, and then all of us would start singing while we are sitting in the kitchen. There's a stove, like we make fire in the stove, and you know we're chilling there and sharing.

Participants frequently imitated family members, but also reflected on apprenticeship learning. In instances where vocal music teaching was a formally planned activity, apprenticeship learning took

[16] Expressive movement is a dance practice used as a meditation tool "to enable greater authentic presence and freedom" and to "enhance physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health" (Expressive movement, 2020).

place. As explained in chapter 3, not all knowledge and skills transmissions in oral cultures happen spontaneously. In some instances, teaching is officially planned and involves observation, imitation and practical learning.

Lee, Mytho, Denzel and Maps laughingly indicated that they casually sang at home with family members, therefore reflecting on vocal music experiences that involved positive social interaction. Mytho remarked how she listened to, and learnt to sing, from her grandmother, and that "even today when my grandmother is working, maybe cooking something, she sings. Especially in the early hours, 'cause she wakes up very early. That's the first thing that she does. Or hums something." Mytho also described continuous social learning when she stated that "with my grandmother singing, like you hear it, but you don't pay much attention to it. You pay much (more) attention to the words than the singing itself."

Tjoki, Denzel and Moira felt uncomfortable singing with family and expressed a lack of confidence in their singing abilities. Denzel laughingly remarked: "The problem is I grew up in a – not the problem, it's not a problem – but I grew up in a singing family. My dad used to sing. My mom doesn't sing much. She can sing at church, but she's not a singer. I guess that's who I take after." Denzel felt that his brother is one of the 'talented' singers in the family: "My little brother sings. So, when we sang, he went to notes I think, and I was like, 'That ain't me', even when I tried."

Moira explained how her father always "played a lot of guitar, and my mom enjoyed singing as well. So, it was kind of like a little musical thing, but it was never serious. Like, it was always just for fun and just for whatever, not to be perfect, not to be anything." Moira further indicated that her parents "used to say I can sing. My gran used to say I can sing. I think when I became a teenager, I no longer believed them." She wanted to overcome her fear of singing by recording songs with her brother, and explained that "it was nerve-wracking because now it was a mic, and it was my brother, and I don't wanna be like vulnerable in front of my brother. It was harder than I thought."

Tjoki reflected on her experience with singing at family gatherings during school holidays and complained how they "would always have these family gatherings where like they would always tell the kids 'Sing, sing, sing.' Like, them forcing us to sing. And I was always, like, 'uhm, singing?', like, you know, I'm at the back where I can't be seen, or I can't be heard."

Maps, Lee, and Mytho described socially integrated singing with family members as having "a vibe" and "speaking to the soul". Therefore, there seems to be contradictory experiences with interactive singing practices. Maps insisted that her family "shared singing more than conversations. We didn't talk about issues, really, but then, singing, like, united us." She continued to reflect on what her father

taught her about singing and explained how "he would tell me that 'when you sing', when I sing, 'it has to come from the soul, from the heart'. Even if you're singing a song, and you're making a lot of mistakes. But if you're singing from your soul, the song's going to be felt more than when you know the words."

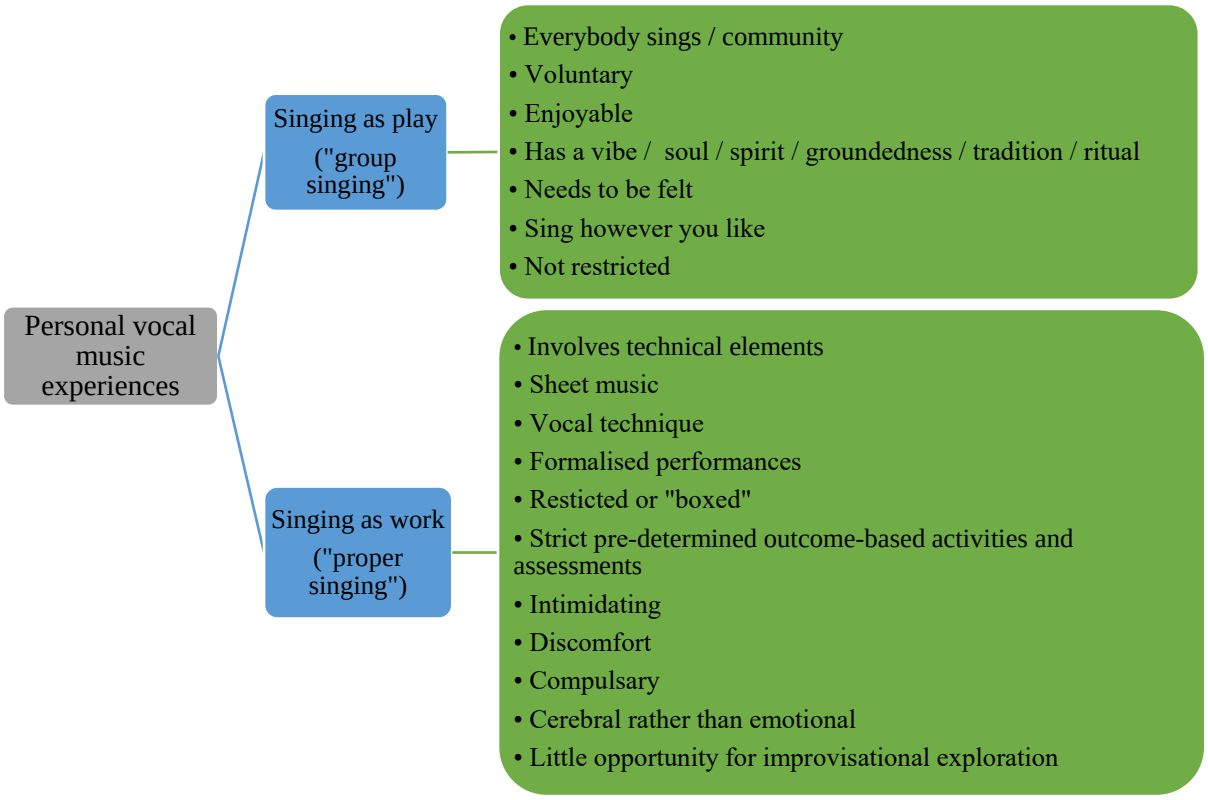
Lee likewise pointed out that "African-grounded, rooted music" is music that "speaks to the soul", and that singing at home had a certain "vibe": "Where I come from, when you say, 'singing', there's a vibe about it." He further explained that singing that focuses too much on technicalities, vocal exercises and piano accompaniment doesn't have "that vibe", because "it felt like it was more boxed. I don't know if I make sense. You see, with us, the singing is not boxed. You can sing anything, however you like."

Mytho experienced "the soulful African sound" as something unique: "I learnt that I'm a spiritual person and that a lot of things that I'm interested in, even in theatre now, I enjoy more black and African type of theatre than Shakespeare [laughing]. It's not restricted, and it's earthy, if that makes sense? It's grounded. And that's what I love about it."

4.2.1.5. Singing as play and work

Participants shared various, sometimes contradictory experiences of vocal musical practices in school, church, ritual practices and with family members. Two subcategories emerged from the participants' personal experiences, namely "group singing" (singing as play) and "proper singing" (singing as work), illustrated in figure 4.

Fig. 4. Singing as play and work



Experiences with singing as play appear to be less intimidating for participants, as it is socially integrated, voluntary and associated with the feeling that "everybody can sing". This cultivates a strong sense of community and enjoyment that engages participants on emotional and spiritual levels. Singing as play occurred during school assemblies, church services, revue performances and in cultural organisations such as the Voortrekkers (in the case of James), and singing with family members.

In contrast, participants seemed to engage with "work-singing" on a cerebral, rather than emotional level. Singing as work felt restrictive, intimidating and induced vulnerability and lack of confidence because of unfamiliar technical requirements such as working with sheet music, developing rudimentary vocal techniques, strict outcome-based activities and little freedom to improvise. Formalised and competitive performances were imbued with an aura of prestige, and the inability to meet their requirements conversely induced feelings of inferiority.

4.2.2. Mass media

Participants reported that they listen to music and viewed music videos to imitate and learn from their favourite artists. Tjoki, Mytho and Denzel made specific comments about imitating, and wanting to sound like popular artists. Denzel laughingly indicated: "Everybody thinks they're John Legend." Maps

commented: “I was fascinated by peers who knew how to sing a Beyoncé song from a to z, you know, word for word. And I was, like, I thought they were very smart.”

Tjoki responded that she used to love the midnight music television show *Turn it on*:

> At 12, midnight, they play this other music, and then they’d write like the lyrics, and there was no PVR then, there was no Explora[17] to pause. I would sit down and write the lyrics so quickly. Before I sleep, I would practise those lyrics, try and sing like whoever, if it’s Beyoncé, if it’s anybody, try imitating that person so badly.

Tjoki would also download and learn music that her teachers played in class. She excitedly stated how she would “download the song and try and sing like that”.

Mytho indicated that there were not many extracurricular or school activities in which to participate where she grew up: “You go to school, you study, you go home. No extra-curriculums and those kinds of things.” Consequently, she had wanted to be on television since she was in grade 4. She also described how her brother always listened to songs on the radio and how she “would sing along to the songs of Brandy and Luther Vandross. I think it started there. Wanting to sound like Brandy.”

Moira explained how she

> always loved music. I was brought up on music and films – that’s what I did with my time. ‘Cause where I grew up there was no mall, there was no cinema, there was no bowling alley, there was just the Blockbuster video place, and we bought – my parents bought – a lot of discs, so I would listen to music, or watch movies. […] So that was what I did for years of my life without even knowing that I’m gaining experience or growing or whatever.

The mass media also influenced Moira’s extracurricular singing lessons. Her vocal coach would play her videos and recordings of songs and performances such as “Somewhere over the rainbow”, “Favourite things”, and songs by Enya, “and apply them for practise”. The vocal coach would also show her videos of opera performances. She would protest that she “can’t do that”, and the vocal coach would respond, “Yes you can.”

[17] The DSTV Explora is a decoder with PVR (personal video recorder) functions that enables viewers to record, pause and rewind television shows.

James, in turn, explained how the school revue group had to learn songs by listening to "a mixture of golden oldies, classical and movies soundtrack songs". The group would then practise these songs after school and then pre-record the vocal tracks for the revue performance. James and Lee furthermore indicated that listening and viewing inspires practical exploration and sparks creativity for possible improvisation. Lee said that listening to music

> inspires me a lot. Most of the time, my creativities come from that. I don't know if I make sense. So, most of the time when I listen to music, creativity just kicks in. I start thinking of shows and movement pieces, and you know, I start seeing myself singing for a huge crowd and things like that.

James mentioned that he always had music on "playlists, CDs, USBs – anything I could find that can play music, iPod whatever. I prefer all types of music, because you don't know what you can experience from listening to different cultural music, or folk music, or classical music."

The influence of the mass media in vocal music teaching-learning emerged prominently during interviews with various participants. Similar to continuous learning practices associated with group singing, participants would listen to and imitate the music and vocal qualities of popular artists. Furthermore, various participants listened to vocal music to spark inspiration for potential improvisational explorations.

4.3. Theme 2: Institutional vocal music TLPs

Institutional vocal music TLPs involve three categories, namely personal experiences, and strategies and techniques of vocal music learning. The first category encompasses participants' personal experiences with vocal music TLPs in the singing subject and singing practices in student coursework productions. Category two involves apprenticeship and peer learning as structured vocal music learning strategies within institutional vocal music TLPs. The final category encompasses specific vocal music techniques that serve required singing outcomes. such as formal performance or institutional assessment.

4.3.1. Personal experiences

Many participants had little 'formal' musical tuition. Although some indirectly had rudimentary knowledge of the sol-fa system, many had little experience of sol-fa applications or music notation. Consequently, working with sheet music made most feel intimidated and uncomfortable. Lee

commented: “Even now, I don’t know how to read the notes.” Tjoki stated that she needed to choose a song with sheet music for singing examinations and explained that “you must have a song that you will do. That always used to freak me out, because I am first year, I can’t read the notes!” James would have preferred a more practical approach to singing and indicated that he “would [have] liked to have had a more hands-on approach [that] guided the students more holistically because there were a lot of students who have no background in music”.

Moira, Tjoki, James and Denzel lacked confidence in their singing abilities and insisted that they “can’t sing” several times during their respective interviews. Denzel remarked that he didn’t answer when the lecturer asked, “are there people who can sing?” because he thought that he could not sing. Reference was also made to lack of confidence in 4.2, which explains extracurricular vocal musical practices and the notion of singing as work.

Moira reflected on her lack of confidence to sing solo: “I don’t have a problem singing in groups ‘cause I feel that no one is looking at me, everyone is minding their own business. […] I feel like had there been preparation for that throughout the year, I would have been more comfortable.” In contrast, Tjoki was very irritated when she learnt that singing was a compulsory subject as part of her institutional drama training: “It just brought back that thing that ‘Aaah, really! I’m gonna sing again? I can’t sing!’ ”

Maps reflected on her experience of peer learning and group work in her first year, responding that when “we were doing singing for voice, and now we’re meeting different people from different places who have different ideas and who have learnt music in a deeper form, and now we are placed in a group, and then we have to create”. She explained how she was used to singing by herself. Also, group members always corrected her singing because they wanted to sound like Whitney Houston, once again pointing to mass media influence. Her singing group wanted their singing to be “perfect” and “the whole time they would talk and talk, and I’m, like, ‘I don’t wanna sit and talk’… ‘No, we need to plan’… ‘Nah, plan? I will just sit here; I will be ready. When you are *singing*, I will sing’.”

All participants felt that there was not enough time to develop proper singing techniques and skills due to timetable restrictions. They had one weekly singing class for six months or a year. James felt: “We didn’t reach that full potential because it was just a semester subject,” and that “it was so rushed for me that I couldn’t really grasp everything that was given to us.” Similarly, Lee explained that “It was like, OK, we are singing, and it was like ‘pah-pah’, then done, and then we’re done. Where’s the rest?” Moira also felt “a bit disappointed because I know that I wasn’t near my full potential.”

Maps, James and Lee indicated that they explored their voices more in voice classes than singing classes. Maps emphasised how "doing voice class, y-buzzing and all that – remember I said something was missing in my voice – now my voice was opening up. And I was amazed at how I can sing."

James remarked that techniques he learnt in voice class helped with singing because

> they linked together, and voice helped me in the way to be more aware of my voice and how to use my voice and how to express myself in that way. And also, to understand song better in a production setting and how to incorporate it in a drama way, but also in a music scene way.

Lee noted that he did similar exercises in voice and singing, but voice classes allowed him to explore: "I love to explore. For me, I believe sound can come from anywhere."

Maps also reflected on the benefit of using recordings as a technique of learning in voice class: "We recorded our voices, and it's like, 'No, this is not how my voice sounds when I'm listening to me.' And then, but then, when you develop your voice, whatever you hear now, you hear it and you feel it."

As indicated, participants experienced singing classes as restrictive due to the focus on vocal technique and strict pre-determined outcome-based activities and assessments. James reflected on the possibility of exploring singing as part of the drama course: "It was interesting because, especially now, studying drama, this is a new aspect. Maybe I could delve into it and use it to my advantage. But, uhm, it came short." Lee mentioned that he was excited about singing at first because "when you look at the course outline, and you see singing, you like, 'Yay, we're going to sing!' And then when you do the thing practically, like, 'Oh, OK, this is the singing they're talking about'. […] it was pointless to take singing."

Several participants described singing classes as being "too technical", which made them feel "boxed" and "restricted". This correlates with the notion of singing as work (described in 4.2). Lee explained: "The technicalities that we were taught in TUT […] For me it felt like it was more boxed. I don't know if I make sense. I felt like it was a bit restrictive on us." Maps insisted that "I don't do technical. Technical doesn't work for me. I don't *feel* technical."

Consequently, singing classes allowed little opportunity for improvisational exploration. James and Maps felt that the singing classes could have followed a more "hands-on" and holistic approach to allow opportunities for improvisation and practice-based learning.

Solo assessments and singing auditions also unsettled some participants. Moira explained that during a solo audition in singing class, "it was very uncomfortable for me. […] We did an ear exercise, which is fine because I have a fairly good ear, and then a song, and then you're out. And it's short, it's like one minute. One minute, gone!" James similarly pointed out that during his audition "we had to sing notes, variations of different notes and scales and then just a phrase from a song and that was it because we were a lot of students. Again, quantity or quality." Tjoki also felt uncomfortable during singing examinations because she was "put on the spot."

Lee indicated his discomfort with the selected European-influenced repertoire and with the fact that "we sang [singing:] 'There's a fire, starting in my heart …' and [singing:] '*libera me domine de morte …*' Hence, I'm saying it feels like we are boxed." Denzel noted that "what you sing by yourself, you bring your choices, and she'd (the lecturer) be like 'no, it's not you'. I had to work with sheet music." James also explained that he did not have an input in choosing repertoire and felt like "there was no leeway for us to actually explore the whole singing genre". Maps informed me that if she wanted to sing something in class, she "needed to have the notes for it so that they can do it with the piano. Like, I'm going to feel trapped."

Most personal experience with institutional TLPs involved unsatisfactory student-lecturer interaction. All participants had different part-time singing lecturers, and I was also informed of this when I was appointed as the singing lecturer in 2015. James said: "We had a substitute teacher that wasn't present most of the time," whilst Moira indicated: "We had different teachers and the pianist couldn't keep the beat." She also felt that the lecturers didn't take singing seriously. Maps remembered her singing lecturer as "some guy … it was a guy who did piano. I don't remember his name."

James, Tjoki, Maps, Lee and Moira reported that they did not connect with their respective lecturers. In general, participants described lecturers as being "too strict" and felt that they "expected too much from students". James remembered that the lecturer "had a very superior sense in the way he taught the class and how he'd want certain things to happen. And he just expected too much of us in a certain way that we couldn't deliver in the short amount of time."

Moira was very uncomfortable with the lectures and found the lecturer "very intimidating at the time". Tjoki reflected on her dislike for her singing lecturer: "The teacher that was teaching us, the lecturer back then: no! […] There was some lady, she was so beautiful, but we didn't get her." She further explained how the lecturer did not engage with the students and stated that "as a teacher, you can see that there are certain students that are not paying attention. Draw them in. She didn't do that. She let you be. You have those [who say], 'OK, no, stay there. We'll see you in the exam.' You know basically

you're gonna fail." Moira felt that the lecturer who facilitated the singing auditions was "very intimidating at the time."

Maps felt that the lecturer's approach was a bit more "freestyle than technical because he would like say, we must sing it and then maybe you will add that … No, maybe put some movement into it, add other things, like maybe sounds." However, in the end, she still felt that the singing was too technical. She nevertheless indicated that

> I won't lie, I learnt something. I'm so used to singing by myself. I think I was so used to that, and it affected me somehow. I couldn't, I would sing, and then I wouldn't give other students a chance to back us, because I didn't trust that someone else would back me, the way that I feel. And for me, it's important to have that foundation of singing. Even if you're adding other elements, but if you have that, solid base, yes.

In contrast, Denzel and Mytho experienced encouraging student-lecturer interactions. Lecturers encouraged and helped them to build their confidence. Denzel commented that the lecturer "gave me the confidence to think that, even if I thought I couldn't sing, she made me believe that I could sing". Both participants felt that they learnt valuable techniques and skills that they can apply in professional performance, such as knowing their vocal ranges and capabilities, proper breathing and healthy vocal habits. Denzel: "I've got a solid base. I don't have to worry about 'can I' or 'can I not'? When you 'ask can you sing, what are you looking for?', somebody goes: 'I want somebody to belt, like a soprano in the middle of the play', and I go, 'That's not me', you know."

Mytho also experienced that she was able to successfully apply various vocal techniques and skills by consciously assessing her bodily responses and by "listening to my body. I started paying attention to what is going on in me, instead of what somebody else is saying." Consequently, both she and Denzel enjoyed singing classes. She continued with singing in her second year, while Denzel decided not to continue with singing.

4.3.2. Strategies of vocal music learning

Singing classes followed a formal structure aligned with predetermined outcomes, assessments and technical activities (4.3.3). Teaching-learning in singing classes relied mainly on peer and apprenticeship learning. A singing lecturer facilitated classes, and group work incorporated peer learning and guidance from the lecturer. James explained that "we had practical classes where the lecturers gave us music and would divide us into certain groups, like the tenors or other singers. Then we would sing the songs with piano, and then they would help us, like say, 'try lower' or 'try higher'."

Since the focus in student productions and non-musical coursework is not on vocal music learning, there is less input and guidance in this regard from the respective subject lecturers. However, as explained in my overview of TUT programmes (chapter 3), other coursework subjects and productions – such as children's theatre, educational theatre, physical theatre, directing and voice – allowed varying degrees of input from students.

Participants often relied on oral strategies learnt before enrolling for tertiary training. Lee indicated that he taught songs to his cast members during his directing project: "I teach songs the way I was taught back in the days, which is, let's say everybody sings with their own voices and then you just listen." Tjoki implied that she relied on previously learnt TLPs, when she referred to the frequent use of African, strike or protest songs as genres included in student productions.

Coursework productions often included collaboration as a rehearsal and creative strategy, allowing input from student directors and cast members. James explained how collaboration unfolded during student productions and how in

> some productions it was the director who had the input. In other cases, it was a group discussion and like a workshop type vibe where we would sit together and compile the whole thing together. It was a more hands-on approach than in the class, 'cause we did more practical exercises before we got to the real material. So, in that sense, you get a better structure of what you want musically, and that's what I liked. I now understand how to incorporate music or song in a certain way to enhance a production.

Collaboration between cast members encouraged improvisation, or play, as a strategy of learning when singing during coursework productions. Lee described such singing as being less restrictive than the singing in singing classes, because "you can just start playing, then you come together, you do voice warm-up, and then 'let's sing and play around with it'." Mytho, in turn, remarked that before a student production, the cast would always start with singing "just to get in the spirit of working together."

James mentioned that he had to find creative ways to incorporate singing in his directing project. This necessarily took form as improvisation and collaboration with his cast members because of the learning limitations he experienced during singing classes. He explained: "With the limitations that we had in that year, you just had to adapt and improvise to a certain degree to see, OK, I can just go to a certain extent with this, and that will be it. So, yes, I just tried to do things to the best of my abilities." He also commented that collaboration was a directing strategy to create musical and vocal elements in his student productions, because

> I feel that we all need to work as a group because we're all in it together. So, the show relies on everybody to put in their effort. There's people that's there with abilities and beautiful brains that can give good advice or creative ideas. So why not merge? Why not create a workshop where everybody can put their input in, and we can create a beautiful product?

Other participants also reflected on ensemble singing and peer learning as a learning strategy during coursework productions. Moira noted that during productions "it was very chilled, because again it was always in groups, I never had a solo in production," and that "you learnt a lot by doing ensemble work in productions." Tjoki stated that during productions, "like, we sang a lot, we sang a lot." She mentioned that students would ask friends to send voice notes on how to learn songs: "They would send it, then we would listen, go back home, and listen to the song." Maps reflected on peer learning by stating that "I learned from different people. I think it was nice." Moira explained how singing in productions was "less intimidating because it was in a group" and "everyone was still trying to find their way." Significantly, James thought that group discussions and practical explorations in productions with cast members were more helpful than the techniques he learnt in singing classes.

Mytho observed how educational and children's theatre coursework regularly merged singing, games and movement: "In educational theatre, we do a whole lot of games, and you know when you're jumping, and you're using your vocals." She also reflected on being part of the children's theatre production *Kgosi Tau,* in which the cast performed singing, dancing and storytelling. Tjoki described her experience with incorporating singing into physical theatre by saying that "it's funny how a song can inspire you to actually move". Maps also indicated that she was asked to sing in various Verve physical theatre performances and explained that "I've been singing in Verves. They'll call me: 'I want you to sing'." Maps also felt that combining singing and poetry made her a better actress, because "like now [you are] falling in love with words and singing. The combination of it. And I think that made me connect to acting, to me as an actor."

Lee and James also frequently used soundscaping to enhance action aesthetically during their respective directing projects. Lee experienced soundscaping as a part of music and explained that

> in a sense, I feel, like, for me, I believe sound can come from anywhere. You understand? Sound can come from anywhere. If doing the [tongue clicks], and [imitating animal sounds], you see? Such things, for me, you are exploring with the voice. And then there's another beat that I like to make [clicking sounds].

James indicated that he was exposed to soundscaping in productions and that "there were a few productions that I played in where we used soundscaping, or there were musical elements in the production that I was introduced to." He further indicated that he used soundscaping in his directing projects "to create the feel and vibe of the show".

Tjoki talked about how everyone would go outside the theatre after productions to sing "without worrying about supervision from a lecturer", a practice similar to extracurricular socially integrated singing. She remembered that students "would ask you: 'Come and join', and you go, like, 'No, I can't sing!', and they're like, 'We don't care. Even if you can't sing, or if you can, just join. We just want that ensemble, that arts campus vibe." This also correlates with the 'singing vibe' described by Maps, Lee and Mytho earlier. Tjoki further explained that "even if you don't know the songs, just chip in, like add, ad-lib, whatever. Just as long as you sing." Tjoki's comments further highlight peer learning through collaboration and improvisation during coursework productions.

Fig. 5. Institutional strategies of learning

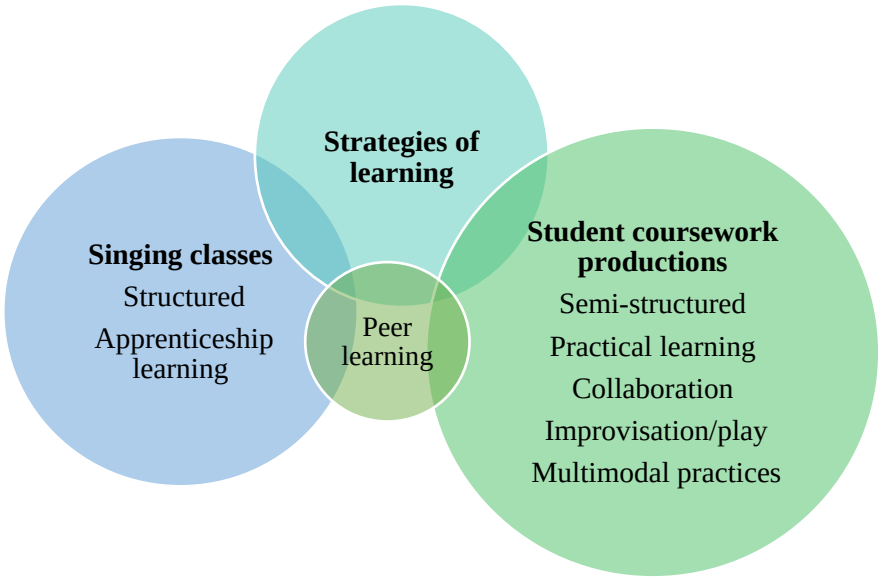


Figure 5 is a visual summary of institutional strategies of learning. Participants reflected on the difference in learning strategies in singing classes and student coursework productions. Strategies of learning involved a range of teaching-learning actions aimed at a specific outcome within the singing curriculum. Various learning strategies were applied during singing classes and student coursework productions, such as structured apprenticeship learning, semi-structured practical learning, peer learning, collaboration, improvisation and multimodal performance practices. Singing classes were facilitated by a lecturer, a form of apprenticeship learning. Some peer learning took place during singing classes but played a more significant role during student coursework productions where there was less

singing facilitation from a lecturer, and which followed a more semi-structured format. Consequently, students mostly relied on practical, peer learning, collaboration and improvisation to achieve the production outcomes. Many student productions were multimodal and combined theatre games, physical theatre, soundscaping and ensemble singing.

4.3.3. Techniques of vocal music learning

Institutional methods in formal singing classes are influenced mainly by European performance and theatrical conventions, and vocal skills are taught separately from other performative elements.

Lee clarified "the technicalities that we were taught in TUT for singing was just the vowels, the vocal exercises which you do in voice class as well. That's about it." James and Maps reflected on the use of vocal exercises to determine their vocal range, Moira noted doing listening exercises, and Tjoki and James recalled singing scales. Denzel commented on learning proper breathing techniques and how he "realised a while back that the way I was forced to breathe to sing was not the correct way. But the person who was teaching me made me believe it's the correct way." Mytho elaborated on how correct posture and breathing helped her with singing: "For the first time, I didn't feel insecure about anything, and I didn't feel that I was doing anything wrong."

Repertoire followed American and European conventions and TLPs, and all songs were learnt from sheet music. James, Denzel, Lee and Maps cited "mostly modern songs" chosen by the lecturer: "Seasons of love" from the musical *Rent*, songs from the musical *Cats*, songs by Frank Sinatra, "Rolling in the deep" by Adele, "*Libera me, Domine*", and "I wanna dance with somebody" by Whitney Houston. Only Mytho made mention of the use of local repertoire from the South African singer-songwriter Zonke Dikana: "I remember we even created this song, it was a Zonke song, and how we made that song fun." She further described creating a singing mash-up programme, where her singing group had to choose two songs to merge for examination: "We had to, like bring ourselves into the song. And then as a group, we would all come with our own parts. […] We had to deconstruct the song and then put it back together. I enjoyed that."

Fig. 6. Vocal music techniques in singing classes

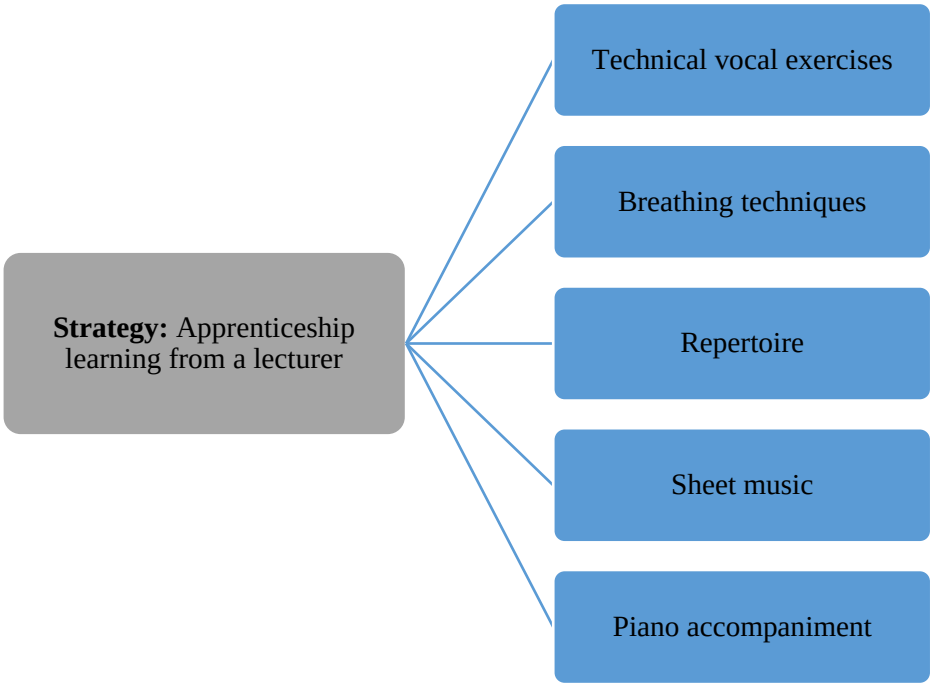


Figure 6 illustrates the vocal music learning techniques applied during singing classes. These classes focused on teaching vocal techniques involving warm-up and technical exercises, and ensemble singing (only some participants were required to sing solos). Predetermined activities included working with sheet music, piano accompaniment and prescribed repertoire. The strategies used to create the mash-up involved guidance from the lecturer, but also incorporated collaboration, improvisation, and peer learning similar to older oral TLPs.

4.4. Theme 3: SATV vocal music TLPs

4.4.1 Introduction: The prevalence of singing

Singing is a compulsory performance element in many professional productions, including those by the SATV. Tjoki remarked that "you can't avoid singing in a performing arts profession." Many participants indicated their involvement in productions where they were required to sing, including the production *Flak my son*, in which Maps, Marilyn, Ingrid, Denzel and Lee sang and did soundscaping. Lee described singing in educational theatre productions with the company Stagefright and stated that "during rehearsals, you decide to sing, and then he (the director) listens to the songs, and he's like, 'I love that tune. How do we add it to this script?' "

Maps reflected on vocal elements, physical theatre practices and poetry during street theatre performances at yearly Pride events in support of the LGBTI[18] community. She explained how "when we come up with the concept, and then we now are working on that concept, I just, something comes up, like a sound that I need to create and it always blends in with what we are doing." Moira indicated that she was required to sing in the production *Malibongwe* at the State Theatre. Moira and Tjoki were cast members in a production of *Three sisters* at the South African State Theatre's Vavasati Festival in 2018, where some vocal music elements were incorporated. Mytho described singing in another SATV production, *Nina*, at the National Arts Festival in 2018: and said: "I was one of the people who came up with those melodies." Mytho was also invited to live singing and jamming events in Mabopane, Shoshanguve, where she "featured with others for, like, three weeks".

Singing clearly is an important required skill for a performer in a professional context and in SATV productions. Theme three accordingly involves SATV vocal music TLPs, and comprises three categories, namely vocal music TLPs: challenges and lived experiences, and strategies and techniques of vocal music learning in a professional context.

4.4.2. Vocal music learning: Challenges and lived experiences

This discussion pertains to the production of *Flak my son* at the South African State Theatre (20-28 October 2018; addendum E). This multimodal production combined an adaptation of the classic Greek text *Medea* (Euripides) with Sepedi choral dance-music, soundscaping, physical theatre choreography, praise poetry, and multimedia vocal recordings, video recordings and projections. Performers struggled to understand the director's vision because she was unfamiliar with singing terminology. I observed how Maps and Marilyn expressed their persistent attempts to understand Moira's vision and instructions by stating "I'm still confused", "I want you to explain", and "We want to understand you". Constant conversations between the director and cast members eventually improved understanding and streamlined the collaborative and improvisational process.

[18] Pride, also referred to as Gay Pride, is an annual event in honour of the Stonewall Inn riots in June 1969 in New York City, where the LGB community resisted police harassment (Baume, 2020). Since then, Pride is celebrated in many countries by the LGBTQIA+ community and its supporters (Baume, 2020). Various LGB acronyms (including LGBTI) has evolved over the years to LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transsexual/ transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, + other members) to include the varied human sexual identities and gender orientations (Metzger, 2020; Redd, 2021).

I observed that Denzel, Lee, Marilyn and Moira were hesitant to contribute to focused vocal explorations. These explorations came across as personal, careful and even reticent. Rehearsals started with focus and vocal exploration exercises. They involved the production of repetitive, improvised melodies, harmonies, rhythms and sounds from all participants sitting in a circle, mostly with their eyes closed. No lyrics were incorporated. The director instructed cast members to "play" with vocal sounds, and each member contributed sounds of their choice simultaneously.

Vocal music was essentially created by cast members in ensemble form (lasting 10-12 minutes per item), but also involved a duet between witch characters (a three-minute, structured piece). There were five vocal musical items during the show: a preshow sequence consisting of soundscaping, songs comprising short repetitive melodies and harmonies, a repetition of the preshow sequence, the witches' duet and a final dream sequence that consisted of songs with longer melodic phrases, more extensive harmonies, physical theatre choreography (as opposed to dance choreography in choral dance-songs) and praise poetry.

I also observed how SATV cast members would casually sing various songs (not related to songs in the production, involving song as play) during breaks in rehearsals, similar to socialising between productions when participants were drama students. During one of the rehearsals, one cast member celebrated a birthday, and everybody happily joined in singing "Happy Birthday". Afterwards, Marilyn commented that "Happy Birthday is supposed to be off-key", and Denzel explained that the "Happy Birthday" song is like struggle songs and that "singing it in the same key makes no sense." In other words, singing in 'different keys' refers to diverse styles and performance practices influenced by local norms. This correlates with the notion of socially integrated group singing explained in 4.2. The finding that all cast members were comfortable singing "Happy Birthday", but were hesitant to sing during vocal explorations, further suggests a differential conceptualisation of singing as work and play.

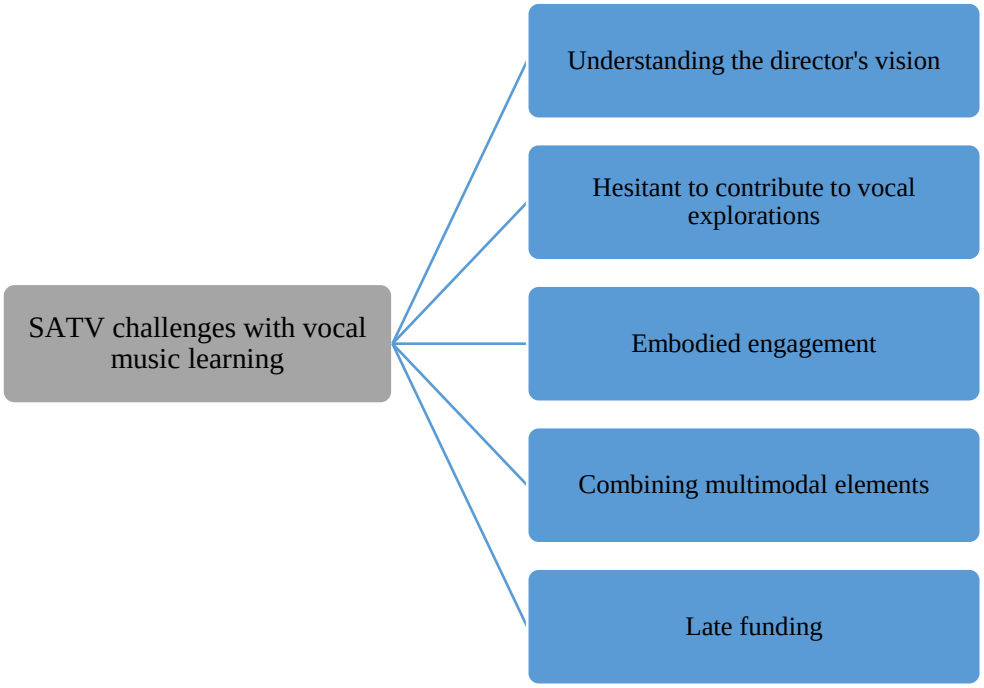
The rehearsal space was mostly empty, except for mirrors on the walls and soft mats on the floor, therefore centralising the body as the primary tool for expression and exploration. I observed that there was little physical embodiment of vocal explorations during rehearsals. Singing occurred mostly while sitting down, and vocal explorations ended without further discussion or reflection. Cast members would separate to work on individual scenes and activities. Consequently, singing was fragmented and isolated from the total rehearsal, and musical characterisation, songs and physical theatre movements were mostly rehearsed separately. These fragmented rehearsal processes correlate with distinct subject classes during institutional training, as opposed to experiences during coursework productions.

Maps embodied the songs more than Ingrid. Her vocal quality and sound expressed the ugliness of the witch character. Her vocal explorations often became trance-like, and it seemed like the music

consumed her entire body. Ingrid's sound was 'prettier', but she was less creative in terms of characterisation and embodiment. John[19] delivered a praise poem loudly and energetically over the vocals of Maps and Ingrid, foregrounding the cultural aesthetics of the genre. Denzel indicated that "the body just remembers what it remembers" and that when he is tired, he reverts to previously learnt (often harmful) singing habits.

Funds allocated by the Incubator programme at the State Theatre were received late, and this created many challenges regarding the production set and costumes. Cast members were psychologically affected because of delayed remuneration, resulting in the show almost being cancelled. There consequently were various challenges during the final dress rehearsal. I observed how Moira tried to bring all production elements together the evening before the first performance. Because of time constraints imposed by the State Theatre, the cast and crew were only able to run the whole show once before the opening. They were unable to rehearse with the full set and animated projections. In addition, the wings and flats obstructed general vocal production and singing, especially the melody and sound effects made off-stage by Marilyn, Lee and John. The wings also blocked the view of the action on stage. Maps, Ingrid, Marilyn and John were therefore uncertain about when to start and stop singing.

Fig. 7. SATV challenges with vocal music learning



[19] John is an established professional actor and was a special guest performer in *Flak my son*. Consequently, he was not required to attend all rehearsals.

Figure 7 summarises the challenges of vocal music learning within the SATV. Problems with understanding the director's vision was mostly resolved through continuous practical engagement, participation, collaboration and improvisation (resembling oral performance practice). Institutional TLPs influenced participants' ability and confidence to make contributions to vocal explorations because they were not confident singers. Furthermore, participants faced challenges to embody performance and to merge multimodal elements because they were mostly treated as separate entities. Finally, funding that was received late, added psychological strain during the vocal music learning process.

4.4.3. Strategies of vocal music learning

The importance of creating a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere during rehearsals was clear. All cast members appeared very contented, friendly towards each other, and welcomed my presence as observer. Moira always made an effort to keep the rehearsals light-hearted. However, all participants were exceptionally focused and committed during scene runs. Improvisation and collaboration were prominent learning strategies during the rehearsals. Proceedings started with physical, vocal and focus warm-up exercises. The latter took place in a seated circle. The director started with a short, improvised melody, and participants had to contribute improvised melodies, harmonies and rhythmic patterns.

During various vocal explorations, each participant carefully listened and added vocal elements to the exploration. Ingrid tended to use more clean and clear vocals in line with institutional training. Maps tended to use more raw, ritualistic and almost tortured vocals. Lee, Denzel and Marilyn were more comfortable with adding sound effects, tongue clicks and animal-like sounds. Moira mostly hummed softly. The director continuously instructed cast members to "play" with songs, sounds and ideas during the rehearsal process.

The vocal musical performance generally resembled pre-colonial oral TLPs. It involved improvisation, semi-structured vocal explorations, a cyclic musical structure and multilingual expression. Initial vocal explorations and semi-structured improvisations were based on inputs from the director and collaboration between cast members. Repetitions of most of the vocal sequences varied in length, given their improvisational nature.

I observed similarities with the workshop technique (integrating African and European dramatic practices) that allowed for collaboration and improvisation between the director and performers. In fact, the ensemble shaped the performance more than the director. The latter used terminology rooted in

institutional TLPs to initiate physical explorations, such as contact improvisation and the Surrealistic style, while the cast provided constant mutual support through conversation and explanation.

The director gave participants much artistic and interpretive freedom before offering guidance and direction. She gave contextual overviews of her vision and stated, "That's my offering. What you do with that offering is up to you." She remarked to Maps and Ingrid that "You are both musicians, and I trust you to figure out this part." Vocal music components and their duration mostly depended on Maps's improvised melody. They correlate with pre-colonial performance practices (specifically repeated vocal patterns), and seemed to incorporate ritualistic aesthetics that created an almost spiritual atmosphere. Maps even commented that "it sounds like we are communicating with our ancestors" (see fig. 4).

Moira explained that musical collaboration was a learning experience for her as a director. In particular,

> the song where the father sees the son again – that sound that Ingrid made – I will never forget how powerful that was […] So it's in the details, things that I can carry with me and apply again in the future. It contributes to my (technical) language, 'cause now I can say, "try this" to the next person, and contribute something nice.

I observed how Moira made an exceptional effort during discussions to familiarise herself with each cast member's cultural customs, including praise poetry, as well as the poetic and symbolic qualities of African languages, especially Sepedi, which became the production's co-language. Moira's strategy enabled participants to make valuable performative contributions, and fostered mutual respect and inclusivity. After a read-through of the script, all participants joined in an unplanned discussion on praise poetry, clan names and how some elements needed to be incorporated into the show for the story to make sense, specifically the meaning behind the father-son relationship in Sepedi culture.

Mass media also played a role in the SATV's learning strategy. Maps and Ingrid struggled to devise the witch's song, and the director suggested that they use an existing song for inspiration, taking "Rolling in the deep" by Adele as an example. Maps and Ingrid accordingly discussed musical theatre and the musical "Chicago", specifically the vocal aesthetics linked with the character Roxy Heart, when trying to determine the style and feel they wanted in the song. Ingrid explained that "we almost wanted it to be like, conversational. Like it's a conversation, but it's, like, groovy, jazzy-like. We are grooving to something that's really sad." Furthermore, Lee indicated that he valued cultural influences in new popular music and explained that "recently, the previous 5-10 years, you know you can hear some music that we know. It was sung by our ancestors and being incorporated into things now. It's circulating."

Thus, learning strategies observed during SATV rehearsals mostly resembled the strategies of extracurricular vocal performance, as well as institutional coursework productions, specifically collaboration, improvisation, the workshop technique and accounting for the mass media. Improvisation and collaboration were particularly dominant, while mass media influence was also evident in style and characterisation. Other significant learning strategies involved creating a comfortable work environment and a sense of mutual respect and cultural inclusivity. Consciously creating and maintaining a comfortable working environment significantly enhanced the success of all learning strategies. As in extracurricular vocal music TLPs and experiences, there seemed to be a distinction, even a disconnect, between singing as play and singing as work.

4.4.4. Techniques of vocal music learning

Techniques of vocal music learning applied as part of learning strategies mostly involved repetition, imitation, ensemble singing and the use of audio recordings. Little embodied engagement with multimodal performance elements and warm-up exercises resembled the TLPs of institutional singing classes.

Performers were responsible for their own physical and vocal warm-up exercises. I observed that all cast members mainly relied on basic exercises for the speaking voice to enhance breath control for projection and articulation, and none did any vocal musical warm-up. Singing involved short repetitive melodic and rhythmic phrases. Maps, Marilyn and Ingrid were able to devise different harmonies for the vocal explorations quickly and also managed to create more variations of previously established phrases and melodies. Furthermore, repetition refined vocal sections until participants and director were satisfied.

Soundscaping involved the combination of vocal music and everyday sounds, such as tongue clicks, hand claps and foot stomping. Lee, Marilyn and Denzel used soundscaping the most.

I observed the legacy of institutional vocal music training during the witch's song. In particular, the song eventually developed a set structure. There was little embodied exploration, and a focus on vocal technique derived from institutional singing practices. Furthermore, the song combined English and Sepedi lyrics. The Sepedi lyrics seemed to be easier to devise than the English verses. Other vocal musical items were more flexible and improvisational. This was determined by audience readiness during the pre-set vocal musical performance which continued until all were seated, and on the duration of various actions and scenes.

The use of cell phone recordings seemed to be an essential teaching-learning tool in the rehearsal and improvisation process. The use of such recordings related to the exploitation of media resources. Moira recorded most of the vocal group explorations for documentation and reflection purposes so that cast members could "listen to it again" before the next day's vocal exploration. I also observed that cast members shared recordings of vocal explorations on the cast WhatsApp group after every rehearsal for everyone to reflect and work on separately.

Marilyn listened to the audio recordings frequently to learn the melodies. She used her phone to record the core melodies so that everyone could improvise on them. Maps and Ingrid listened to the recordings repeatedly to devise different harmonies. During the creation of the witch's song, Maps and Ingrid made recordings of its basic structure. Maps explained how

> it's good for me to record some of my sounds because I forget. But then I, when I repeat it over and over, I remember it. That's why I don't to create, like, longer verses of songs. I just create one thing and I, I can add other songs, or sing it differently, but then I just stick with one line.

Some participants regularly posted audio and video clips of the rehearsal on social media for marketing purposes. Moira provided cast members with specific instructions on what to post on social media, and when. Moira also explained the importance of making recordings to create a professional online portfolio: "If I can build a repertoire of songs that I can audition or maybe record and put on YouTube. 'Cause I also have a YouTube channel where I just wanna post my performances and things." Ingrid posted her audio blogs on Facebook and her YouTube channel, where she documents her experiences as a "millennial entertainer and performer".

To summarise, prominent techniques of vocal music learning included repetition, imitation, ensemble singing and the use of audio recordings. Repetition of vocal explorations and short melodies, and collaboration developed the production repertoire. Repetition was further applied to refine the end product. Imitation and soundscaping were used as teaching-learning techniques as cast members imitated each other, and added environmental sounds and effects. Audio recordings, in turn, contributed to imitation and the replication of improvised material. Most of the vocal music was devised and performed by the entire cast (in line with group singing practices), with the exception of the witch's song, which was devised by only two cast members in consultation with the director (overlapping with institutional practice).

4.5. Validation strategies

As part of my validation strategy, the preceding discussions were shared with all participants via e-mail to establish their accuracy. Participant were asked the following three questions: 1) *Are these your experiences with vocal music TLPs?* 2) *Have you been understood and interpreted correctly?* 3) *Is there anything you would like to add?* Participants responded affirmatively to questions one and two and indicated that they did not have anything to add.

4.6. Chapter summary

Data from interviews and observations crystalises into three themes, namely lived and observed experiences of extracurricular, institutional and SATV vocal music TLPs respectively.

Theme one comprises two categories: extracurricular vocal music experiences and practices, and the mass media. Two significant subcategories in turn emerged from the first category, namely singing as play ("group singing") and singing as work ("proper singing"). Theme two comprises three categories: lived experiences, and strategies and techniques of vocal music learning. Three categories emerged from theme three, namely challenges and lived experiences, and strategies and techniques of vocal music learning.

Participants reflected on extracurricular vocal music experiences during private lessons, and at school, camps, church and home. They associated practices of singing as play with socially integrated performance, where everybody is usually comfortable and willing to participate. Singing as play include continuous, practical teaching-learning involving observation, imitation, repetition and peer support. Singing as work is associated with formalised teaching-learning, assessment, apprenticeship learning from a teacher, vocal coach or choir conductor, technical vocal requirements, and frequent feelings of discomfort and vulnerability.

Mass media influences featured prominently as part of extracurricular TLPs. Most participants listened to and imitated the style and vocal qualities of popular artists on television, radio and music streaming platforms. Furthermore, listening to vocal music through mass media also initiated inspiration for improvisational explorations. As with group singing practices, participants learnt to sing through repetition and imitation, at times adopting unhealthy vocal habits.

Institutional vocal music TLPs were mostly experienced as unpleasant because of the perceived intimidating nature of institutional tuition as well as unfamiliar technical vocal practices. European and

American repertoire made participants feel restricted, and interaction with singing lecturers often involved negative teaching-learning experiences.

Strategies of vocal music learning were different for singing classes and coursework productions. Singing classes involved a lecturer-facilitated apprenticeship learning strategy involving 'proper' singing practices. In turn, learning strategies applied during coursework productions were mostly student-driven, and resembled more familiar group singing practices such as peer collaboration and improvisation. Furthermore, the multimodal nature of various coursework productions allowed participants to integrate singing practices with theatre games, physical theatre, soundscaping and ensemble singing.

Techniques of learning coursework productions included learning through imitation, repetition and ensemble singing. The use of voice warm-up exercises and soundscaping were noticeable techniques. Formalised techniques of vocal music learning characterised singing classes. They included technical vocal exercises, effective breathing techniques, prescribed repertoire, sheet music and piano accompaniment, and resembled European vocal learning techniques. Furthermore, these techniques are similar to techniques used in certain extracurricular work-singing spaces.

SATV cast members shared various challenges during the production process. Limited musical vocabulary made it difficult for them to understanding the director's musical vision. Members were hesitant to contribute to improvisational vocal explorations and displayed preference for socially integrated and informal play-singing. Performance elements were mostly rehearsed separately, which impeded their final integration. Lastly, funding that was received late created additional psychological stress for cast members.

SATV strategies of learning are mostly a legacy of pre-colonial oral performance practices and the workshop technique. Strategies of learning included practical and peer learning, collaboration, improvisation, and multimodal performance. Furthermore, cast members identified a comfortable teaching-learning environment as an important learning prerequisite.

SATV cast members applied various vocal teaching-learning techniques mostly associated with group singing practices during rehearsals, such as repetition, imitation and soundscaping, ensemble singing, and the use of audio recordings. They mainly relied on vocal techniques learnt during institutional voice training, rather than vocal musical training. Therefore, the application of techniques of vocal musical learning utilised during institutional singing classes was limited in coursework production or by the SATV.

The themes identified in this chapter are interpreted and integrated with relevant literature in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DATA INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter offers an overview of the preceding chapters, interprets their findings, and suggests areas for further research.

5.1 Overview of preceding chapters

Chapter 1 discusses the research problem and poses the main research question, namely: How may the vocal music TLPs of members of the SATV be conceptualised? Three secondary questions derive from this: 1) What vocal musical TLPs did members of the SATV experience before their training at TUT? 2) What vocal musical TLPs did members of the SATV encounter during their training at TUT? 3) How may the vocal TLPs of the SATV shape my TLP at TUT?

I briefly compare my experience of Western vocal music TLPs in dominant use at TUT, as well as their periodic merger with TLPs of communal choral dance-songs. I explain that students experience difficulties embodying Western vocal music skills and repertoire, at times reverting to their prior musical knowledge during various instances of teaching-learning. This speaks to South Africa's range of social environments, performance practices and learning strategies within and outside formal schooling.

Chapter 2 outlines the research method and design used to answer the research questions. My investigation took form as an instrumental case study involving interviews with seven members of the SATV, as well as observations of teaching-learning practices at TUT and during SATV rehearsals. Reflection on my TLPs as a singing lecturer, the lived experiences of SATV participants and my observations during rehearsals contributed valuable insight to this study.

Chapter 3 outlines my theoretical approach, which is informed by CoP, a theory that offers insight into social learning environments and practices. I also apply this theory to elaborate on the integration of CoP and play, also within higher education. Play emerges as an important CoP quality and an essential element of learning.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of pre-colonial teaching-learning and performance practices. I explain the nature, function and TLPs of oral performance. Secondly, the chapter discusses the evolution during the colonial era of syncretic and poor theatre, alternative performance practices and the improvisational workshop technique. This chapter finally reviews teaching-learning models and practices involved in the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma and current TUT curriculum. Vocal music TLPs are shown to involve aspects of practice-based teaching-learning but mainly reflect Western vocal

music performance influences and conventions. Institutional TLPs illustrate the continuity between historical cultural resources and contemporary theatrical practices, especially in relation to the integration of oral and institutional TLPs in student-directed work.

The process of conducting and transcribing interviews, observing rehearsals and codifying the resulting data took place over a period of two years. Three emergent themes are discussed in chapter 4, namely lived and observed experiences of extracurricular, institutional and SATV vocal music TLPs respectively. Singing as play and work emerged as a particularly meaningful sub-category.

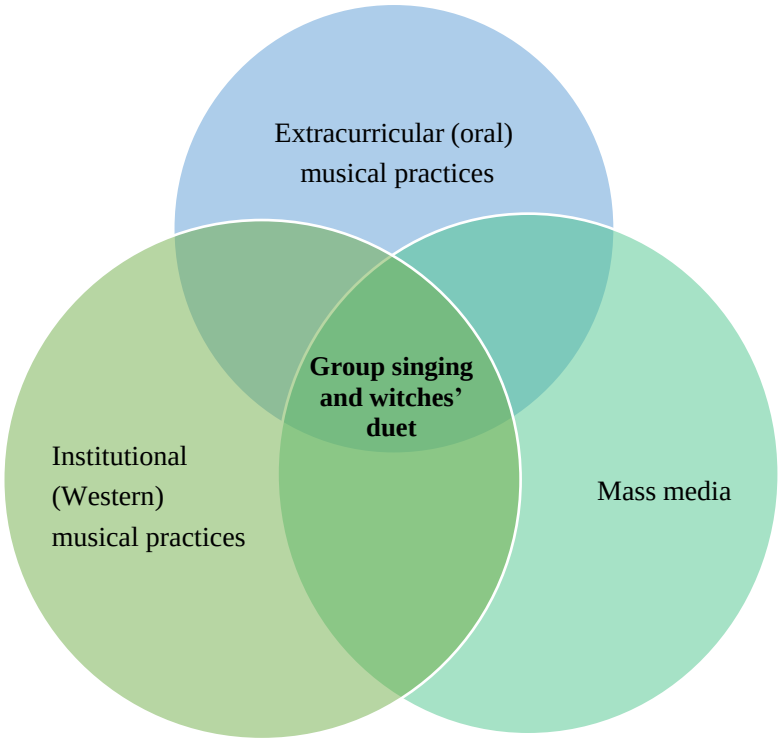
Chapter 5 interprets the data described in chapter 4 and concludes my thesis. I initially present a summary of the vocal music TLPs utilised by the SATV (5.2). This is followed by an explanation of those teaching-learning methods that align with the theory of CoP as well as play (5.3). Suggestions regarding the promotion of CoP and play as part of an effective teaching-learning environment are then offered in section 5.4. Finally, a summary, conclusion and suggestions for further research are presented (5.5 and 5.6).

5.2. Vocal music TLPs of the SATV

5.2.1. Rehearsals of *Flak my son*

TLPs pointing to the continuation and value of socially integrated, practical learning methods emerged from the data across all three themes. As noted in chapter 2, oral performance practices are valued by many South African communities. They are collaborative, construct group identity and enable performers to achieve particular objectives. Figure 8 summarises the teaching-learning domains utilised by the SATV.

Fig. 8. SATV domains of teaching-learning



SATV participants and cast members demonstrated the continuation and influence of older oral TLPs, which had developed in syncretic commercial theatre since the colonial era, and whose style had been adopted by them. Vocal music TLPs of the SATV thus show preference for older conventions, involving continuous practical and socially integrated learning through participation, apprenticeship learning and peer learning.

The integration of TLPs encountered during extracurricular and institutional training was especially evident in the duet between the witch characters. Here, I observed an engagement with a fixed verse and chorus structure so familiar in popular music, and a clear concern with specific technical considerations and vocal aesthetics.

Additionally, cast members made use of cell phone recordings to facilitate improvisation. It was clear that voice recordings were an essential teaching-learning tool in the production process. The recordings were shared with all cast members, who were thus enabled to learn, reflect on, and continue to work on vocal music content after rehearsals. Voice recordings allowed for repetition and improvisation during the learning process.

5.2.2. The challenges of institutional TLPs

The SATV cast experienced challenges related to institutional vocal music TLPs during rehearsals. Certain performance elements were conceptualised and rehearsed separately from one another, such as the witches' duet, the practices of physical theatre as well as multimedia sequences, which were only introduced during the final dress rehearsal, thus leading to challenges during the actual performance (4.4.1). This practice and its outcomes were also evident during institutional training, which was curtailed by academic time limitations (3.8).

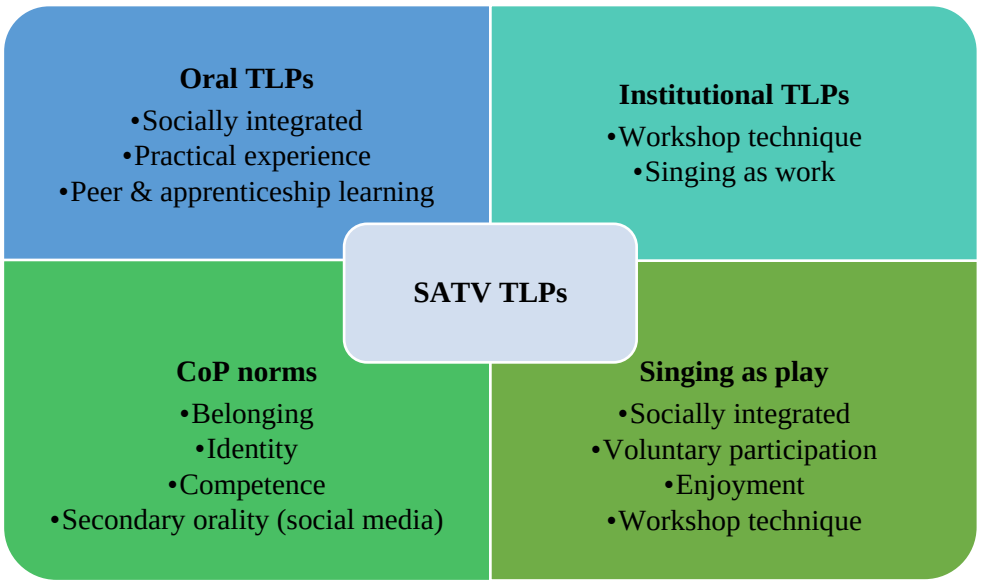
Furthermore, cast members relied on techniques acquired during institutional voice training. These techniques developed the speaking voice for performance, including breath control, articulation, projection, character voices and accents rather than the singing voice. Participants indicated that they had more opportunity to improvise and explore their voices during dramatic voice training than singing classes. As indicated, the influence and experiences of these dramatic voice classes are evident in SATV TLPs. So, for example, cast members mainly utilised warm-up exercises for the speaking rather than singing voice.

5.3. Oral and literary practices, CoP norms and play

Certain interviewees were apprehensive about participating in 'official' vocal music rehearsals, being more comfortable with 'casual' singing. The witches' duet, ensemble songs and discussions between cast members during rehearsals articulated a distinction between "proper singing" (singing as work) and "group singing" (singing as play), a perspective that emerges as categories in chapter 4.

The contrasting nature of singing as work and singing as play clearly points to the need for reconceptualising established institutional vocal teaching-learning strategies. It is self-evident that effective teaching-learning experiences result from particular, cultivated environments. It is clear that the SATV had evolved into a CoP that served common interests and collective social and professional identity. TLPs in the SATV are characterised by the integration of older oral TLPs, institutional TLPs, CoP norms and the notion of singing as play (fig. 9).

Fig. 9. The integration in SATV TLP of oral practices, institutional practices CoP norms, and singing as play



Cast members joined the SATV after graduating with their respective drama or performing arts qualifications. The director is the founder of this group. Mercieca (2017:12) explains that "through connecting people who might not otherwise interact with each other, new and stimulating learning can occur, which may help participants to improve their classroom practice". The SATV harnesses various shared TLPs from their performing arts training, while the diversity of cultural experiences and backgrounds allows cast members to make individual creative contributions.

5.3.1. Belonging, identity and competence

SATV members indicated that their previous productions also were cooperative projects. Mercieca (2017:12) argues that "as personal stories and experiences are shared" within a collective context, "mutual trust and respect is generated". The SATV thus expresses the integration of belonging, shared identity and competence, which is a core quality of CoP and group singing. Conversely, challenges associated with work-singing in certain extracurricular and institutional settings arise because this integration is not achieved. Wenger-Trayner (cited in Mercieca, 2017:15) explains how a landscape metaphor (community and culture as space; see 3.3) "ensures that we pay attention to boundaries, to our multi-membership in different communities and to the challenges we face as our personal trajectories take us through multiple communities". Students pursuing unfamiliar landscapes of practice are in fact reconceptualising notions of belonging and identity.

Competence is dependent on "knowledge defined and negotiated" within the landscapes of practice (Mercieca, 2017:15). The uncertainties surrounding work-singing raises self-doubt about competence and self-image. Artistic skill is a sign of personal and social competence, and this may explain why certain participants displayed a sense of vulnerability. They described unpleasant critique from peers or educators about their singing abilities during institutional as well as extracurricular singing activities. They struggled to build positive relationships and trust in these settings, which shaped their attitude to vocal music teaching and learning.

Nerantzi (2015:44) explains in terms of CoP that

> when we are positive about each other as human beings, accept and respect individuality and show empathy, we are less critical about things we normally disapprove. At the same time, we seem to become more open to receiving criticism as this is then seen as a caring behaviour and we look after each other.

Several participants indicated that they felt forced to participate in singing activities. Singing as work in particular was associated with a feeling of coercion and added to their troubled engagement with belonging, identity and competence. As explained in chapter 3.2, voluntary membership strongly resists prescription and is an important quality of CoP. In some instances, pressure to participate during work-singing events impacted negatively on participants, and they expressed anxiety and uncertainty about them. They also explained that they even felt coerced and uncomfortable in certain vocal music practices at home and school. Play-singing, on the other hand, is voluntary and fun, and the association of this practice with enjoyment is evident across all themes.

Only two participants indicated their ability to apply acquired singing techniques and skills in professional performances. Mytho's explanation that creating a singing mash-up programme (4.3.3) by choosing and combining two songs for a singing assessment, and "making the song fun" during singing classes, also correlates with the norms of CoP and learning as play. Singing assessment allowed collaboration between students and the lecturer, who collectively chose songs. Assessment also featured the merging of students' prior and institutional singing knowledge and interpretations, resulting in shared knowledge and meaning for both parties. Mytho consequently indicated that it was an enjoyable experience and that she still applies vocal music techniques learnt at university in her professional singing performances.

The SATV as CoP is marked by mutual respect and cultural inclusivity despite the various origins and skills of members. Cast members feel accepted and comfortable to explore creative possibilities and interpretations within the working environment created by the director. Input regarding individual and

group cultural customs and performance practices is respectfully welcomed in rehearsals from all cast members and, where unfamiliar, elicited curiosity. Following the workshop technique (3.7), *Flak my son* involved cultural integrity and relevance. Consequently, the combination of meaning, practice, community and identity in the SATV CoP contributed to effective ways of learning (Wenger, 1998:4-5).

The SATV CoP also involves media platforms, therefore extending their physical collaboration and oral practices to a virtual domain. Members constantly share selected rehearsal videos and vocal recordings on social media. This speaks to the theory of secondary orality originally applied to communication through telephone, radio and television (Ong, cited in Venturini, 2010). Venturini (2010) observes that secondary orality through electronic media involves a "return to pre-modern forms of sociality" and may promote a certain sense of closeness and community. Wenger (2011:6) explains in terms of CoP that the internet has "extended the reach of our interactions beyond the geographical limitations of traditional communities, but the increase in flow of information does not obviate the need for community. In fact, it expands the possibilities for community and calls for new kinds of communities based on shared practice."

Partti (2014:14) suggests that performers need to develop "musical versatility and the adoption of technological, social and business skills" to establish a relationship between industry needs and musical training. A participant made specific reference to being a "millennial entertainer and performer", implying citizenship of an online community through platforms such as personal blogs, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Another participant also expressed the desire to improve her online presence on YouTube.

5.3.2. Work and play

Various participants make clear distinctions between the notions of group or play-singing. Wheeler and Palmer (2019:124) explain that "at the most basic, primitive level, our brains are wired to respond to fear and pleasure. Fear makes us hide from things, run from them, and avoid them. It makes us anxious, stressed and distrustful. Fear is counterproductive to learning." Therefore, coercion and uncertainty (outlined in chapter 4 and above) create boundaries that make participants feel excluded. James (2019:5) describes possible consequences of not playing as part of learning, which resembles similar challenges associated with work-singing. The effects of not playing are described as "colourless, tasteless, emotionless learning", and "not talking, not moving, not feeling", implying disconnected and meaningless attempts at learning.

SATV members generally share a love and appreciation for play-singing and indicated that they wanted to improve their skills. However, they emphasise that experiences with TLPs in some extracurricular and institutional work-singing classes were unpleasant. They experienced them especially during institutional singing classes and even when singing in a school choir, individual lessons and in front of family and friends. Singing in a family and other communal contexts, therefore, could involve both work and play-singing experiences. Sinfield *et al.* (2019:30) suggest that learning spaces need to be made playful, engaging and productive to allow learners "to begin the learning journey from where they are".

As explained in chapter 4, singing as work involved perceptions of strict technical training, solo singing, and more formalised performance, with clear distinction between actors and audience. Participants also describe this kind of singing as restrictive and involving feelings of doubt and exposure.

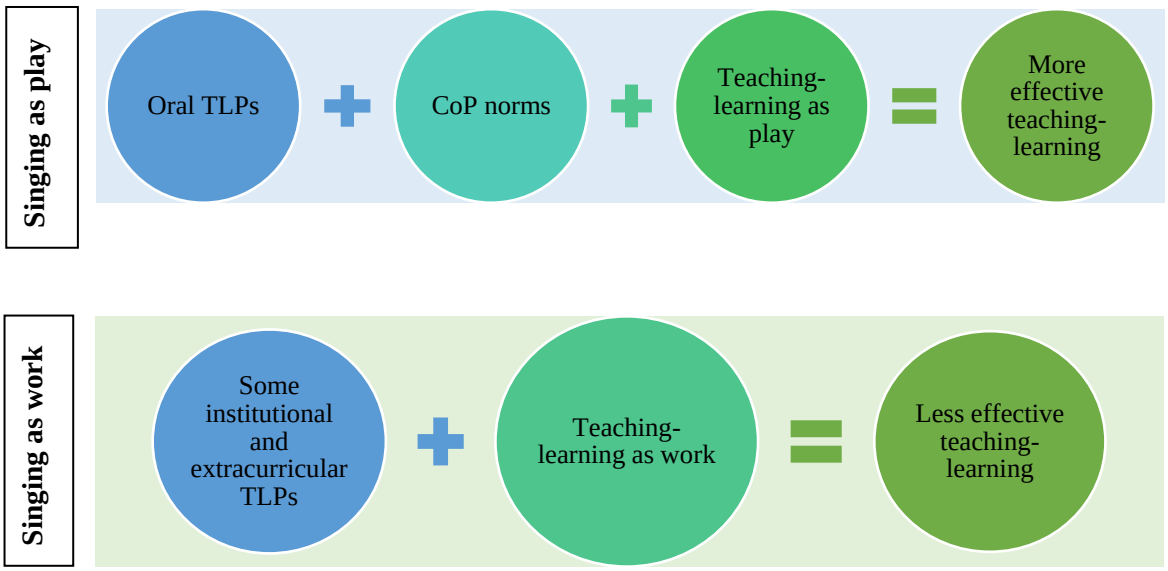
On the other hand, group or play-singing generally give rise to feelings of enjoyment amongst participants. Wheeler and Palmer (2019:124) explain that pleasure "makes us curious, want to come closer, and seek out. It makes us happy, content and trusting". Participants describe play-singing as a non-restrictive social activity mostly involving family, church and school assemblies. Such singing involves participation, enjoyment, spontaneity and improvisation. Here, anybody can sing as they like, as long as it is "felt on a deeper, meaningful level" as in the case of an interviewee who enjoyed casually singing with family during Christmas holidays.

Play allows a measure of freedom to explore a space not shaped by entrenched, prescribed criteria. During rehearsals of *Flak my son*, the director specifically instructed cast members to "play" with melodies and harmonies and to improvise. Lee correspondingly emphasises his love for play and improvisation from a young age. James explained that participation and collaboration allowed for a "workshop type vibe" (3.7). The workshop technique succeeded in demonstrating respect for different cultures during the rehearsal process and final performance, as illustrated by participants' accounts of joining informal communities of practice (3.8.3) outside the classroom.

5.4. Promoting an effective teaching-learning environment

As discussed in 5.2, oral TLPs, CoP norms and the theory of play provide valuable insight into the practices of the SATV. It was also pointed out in 3.3 that play is a quality of CoP that arises from my data, and CoP norms are generally evident in oral TLPs. Therefore, the combination of oral TLPs and play within a CoP harbours good potential for creating effective teaching-learning environments (fig. 10).

Fig. 10. Oral TLPs, CoP norms and learning as play and work



5.4.1. Encouraging oral TLPs and norms of CoP and play

As indicated in 3.3.1, play is not often an accepted TLP in higher learning. Institutional singing classes have limited contact time, which may determine vocal music teaching-learning strategies (3.8). Nerantzi (2015:48) accordingly argues that "the duration of a course or unit plays a significant role in building community". The development of trust and the fostering of playfulness require an extended period, and Lea (2009:182) argues that teachers have to "rely increasingly upon learners charting their own voyages through the learning process" because of strict time limitations.

Classroom settings can be intimidating. As noted in 3.6.1, oral TLPs are generally conceived as socially constructive play, as opposed to the conventionally competitive, socially differentiating 'work' qualities of the institutional classroom. Classroom settings must be reconceptualised as spaces that encourage learning through participation and cultivate a sense of belonging. Many SATV participants struggled to connect with their singing lecturers and referred to the appointment of various part-time singing lecturers, which inhibited a sense of community in the classroom.

A culture of playfulness is my personal professional goal (3.3): the attitude that play is normal or expected must be *intentionally* established early in educational encounters. There are various opportunities for establishing initial playful tasks during first-year orientation activities and initial contact classes. Activities that generate an enjoyable and collaborative relationship between lecturer

and students should become essential teaching-learning moments. Furthermore, it could be beneficial for senior students to visit formal classes to share their experiences with first-year students.

Learning outcomes and objectives should be discussed and clarified early in singing modules, and students should be encouraged to identify and align their personal goals with those of the modules. If outcomes and objectives are discussed in an open and supportive manner – instead of taking on a product or outcome-driven focus – opportunities will be created for self-reflection and negotiation of each student's identity in the learning process (Wood, 2015:15). This also encourages continuous practical learning.

Pedagogical invitations to play could lead to dedicated moments of non-threatening collaboration and reflection between the lecturer and students. In this way, opportunities can be created for students to feel acknowledged, and create a sense of collaboration and inclusion in their teaching-learning process. This will also provide an opportunity to evaluate vocal skills learnt prior to institutional training and identify ways to improve personal and institutionally-required vocal musical skills.

Lecturers' attitude towards teaching-learning sets the tone and example for students in their teaching-learning environment. It seems counterproductive to expect students to have fun with learning when lecturers do not set an example. Bogart (2007:93) dedicates an entire chapter to attitude, and states that

> the attitude you choose at any moment predetermines the quality and success of your endeavor. Cultivate attitude. Be purposeful and conscious in choosing the appropriate attitude for each and every occasion […]. Attitude, like attention, is one of the few things in life that one can control and be responsible for.

Clearly, there should be a balance between an inviting and playful attitude in the teaching environment, while maintaining professional boundaries and working towards a mutual respect between students and their lecturer.

5.4.1.1. New media

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, online learning and resources have become an indispensable part of the curriculum and will most likely influence how we conduct teaching-learning in future. Partti (2014:3) infers that technology

> has had a significant impact on the culture of music making and learning in many parts of the world. Music software and hardware make it possible for almost anyone to create their own

> music regardless of their instrumental training or formal and explicit knowledge of music theory. Also, rapidly-growing online communities offer a platform for the distribution of one's own music to others.

Similarly, Lea (2009:182) is of the opinion that online technology diminishes contact between students and lecturers, and leads to students taking more responsibility for their learning. Online tuition provides various opportunities for "alternative voices which could bring new ways of understanding learning, or a lens to help us make sense of these ever-changing environments" (Lea, 2009:182).

My students' first encounter with the TUT learning environment is through the online learning management platform. I have experienced the value of sharing credible online resources on media platforms with which students are already familiar, such as Pinterest and YouTube. This creates a sense of competence among students. In addition, TUT rolled out myTUTor on the Brightspace LMS[20] in 2021. The platform provides a modern, user-friendly and collaborative online teaching-learning environment and makes fun and exciting teaching-learning tools a priority.

The SATV CoP also extended to an online domain (5.3.1), and participants indicated that media platforms influenced their vocal music teaching-learning prior to and during institutional training. Therefore, participation in the activities of online CoP could further enhance and support vocal music teaching-learning, and internet resources should be utilised as an extension of institutional teaching-learning.

5.5. Summary and conclusion

The theories of CoP and play provide a useful analytical view of the conditions required for effective teaching-learning. This practice develops in the course of continuous, collective learning by those who share common interests, values and norms, and negotiate meaning, identity and a sense of belonging during the course of actions centring around play and enjoyment.

These characteristics are evident in historical vocal music TLPs in South Africa, and they remain at the core of much contemporary community theatre whose aesthetics are rooted in a view of art for the sake of life. Knowledge is embodied and socially transmitted through spiritual inspiration, rote learning and, importantly, improvisation: artistic creativity is adaptive behaviour. Participation lies at the core of cultural transmission, and performing is viewed as a social rather than professional skill. Those

[20] Brightspace software is a cloud-based learning management system product from D2L (Desire to Learn) that allow instructors to design interactive, modern and mobile friendly interactive courses and assessments for online and blended learning (D2L, 2021).

attending performance events may engage with performers and become co-creators by means of various modes of participation. Accordingly, call-and-response dance-songs remain a basic cultural and performative resource in contemporary life.

These qualities are expressed in contemporary domains such as total and workshop theatre which integrate various performance modes, especially acting, singing and dancing. They too prioritise improvisation which involves the ongoing recombination of cultural memes, musical motifs and artistic techniques. It is hardly possible to teach improvisation as a separate performance entity, as it involves adaptive social behaviour and artistic skills within transforming environments.

Ancient, multimodal oral performance practices in South Africa have come to merge with literary forms. As this case study of the SATV shows, contemporary theatrical practice allows for collaboration between writers, directors and cast members. Such merging of genres and cultural practices has become an enduring feature of much local theatrical production. To some extent it also characterises drama programmes at TUT. Oral TLPs are evident in coursework productions and even 'technical' singing modules. However, certain important questions about the nature of institutional training and the empowerment of the cultural body of the performer require consideration. The dominant teaching-learning approach and curriculum at TUT remains characterised mainly by Western theatrical and performance conventions. Certain skills, theories and knowledge must be mastered before students are allowed to integrate and embody performative elements practically. Vocal practices are taught as a specialised skill and are usually separated from other performative elements such as dance and acting. Insecurities among members of the SATV regarding vocal music TLPs accordingly often relate to the culture of work-singing, which induces feelings of coercion, incompetence, discomfort and social exclusion. In addition, institutional TLPs generally exclude opportunities for improvisation and play. Furthermore, training is constrained by time limits, as opposed to lifelong teaching-learning in many oral communities. Finally, the TLPs of the SATV dovetail with the nature and products of online music platforms, a teaching-learning resource that requires comprehensive exploitation in institutional programmes.

The multimodal, socially integrated nature of African oral performance has significant implications for contemporary theatrical TLPs. In particular, it points to the need for a holistic approach, a notion that I return to repeatedly in this thesis. Aligning the vocal music TLPs of the SATV with tertiary vocal music teaching-learning requires environments shaped by CoP. Playful teaching-learning experiences could effect continuity between various landscapes of practice within institutional drama programmes – but this learning strategy can only be effective in settings marked by trust, mutual respect, shared goals and a sense of belonging.

5.6. Further research

Various implications for institutional vocal music teaching-learning arise from my case study, but fall outside its limits. The following suggestions are made for further research:

1. The continued influence of older oral creative and performative norms is evident in many extracurricular teaching-learning and performance settings. Consequently, research should focus on precisely how lecturers may utilise and adapt them for institutional teaching-learning.

2. The influence of mass media platforms suggests a need to further research their role in the emergence of online CoMP.

3. The creation of effective and supportive teaching-learning environments is indispensable. Research is required into the way this axiom could merge with the objectives of tertiary vocal music training as well as the needs of performing arts industry.

Bibliography

Adedeji, O. 2006. Aesthetics and practices in indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba of Africa. In: Mans, M., ed. *Centering on African practice in musical arts education*. Cape Town: African Minds. pp. 3-16.

Amegago, M. 2009. Aesthetics of African music and dance revisited: a case of Ewe music and dance. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, 15(1):160-176.

Ashworth, P. 2015. Conceptual foundations of qualitative psychology. In: Smith, J.A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: a practical guide to research methods*. 3rd ed. London: Sage. pp. 4-24.

Balme, C.B. 1999. *Decolonizing the stage: theatrical syncretism and post-colonial drama*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barba, E., ed. 2002. *Towards a poor theatre: Jerzy Grotowski*. New York: Routledge.

Barber, K. 1987. Popular arts in Africa. *African Studies Review*, 30(3):1-78.

Basit, T. 2003. Manual or electronic? The role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational Research*, 45(2):143-154.

Baume, M. 2020. *What is pride month and the history of pride? THEM.*, 25 June. https://www.them.us/story/the-complete-history-of-pride Date of access: 14 Feb. 2022.

Baxter, P. & Jack, S. 2008. Qualitative case study methodology: study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4):544-559.

Biakolo, E. 2003. Categories of cross-cultural cognition and the African condition. In: Coetzee, P.H. & Roux, A.P.J., eds. *The African philosophy reader*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. pp. 9-19.

Blacking, J.A.R. 1986a. Some principles of composition in the indigenous music of South Africa. In: Malan, J.P., ed. *South African Music Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. pp. 294-301.

Blacking, J.A.R. 1986b. Music of the Venda-speaking people. In: Malan, J.P., ed. *South African Music Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. pp. 418-508.

Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C. & Sithole, S.L. 2017. *Fundamentals of social research methods: an African perspective*. 5th ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Bogart, A. 2007. *And then, you act: making art in an unpredictable world*. New York: Routledge.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2013. *Successful qualitative research: a practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage.

D2L (Desire to learn). 2021. *Brightspace*. https://www.softwareadvice.com/au/lms/brightspace-lms-profile/ Date of access: 24 May 2021.

Butler-Kisber, L. 2010. *Qualitative inquiry: thematic, narrative and arts-informed perspectives*. London: Sage.

Buysse, V., Sparkman, K.L. & Westley, P.W. 2003. Communities of practice: connecting what we know with what we do. *Exceptional Children*, 69(3):263-277.

Carver, M. & Thram, D., eds. 2012. *Understanding African music*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University.

Chikovore, J., Makusha, T., Muzvidziwa, I. & Richter, L. 2012. Children's learning in the diverse sociocultural context of South Africa. *Childhood Education*, 55(5):304-608.

Chinouriri, B. 2013. Drawing from indigenous knowledge systems: creativity and performance in Shona contemporary music. In: Ebewo, P., Stevens, I. & Sirayi, M., eds. *Africa and beyond arts and sustainable development*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. pp. 109-121.

Chinyowa, K.C. 2000. More than mere story-telling: the pedagogical significance of African ritual theatre. *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, 20(2):87-96.

Chinyowa, K.C. 2001. The Sarungano and Shona storytelling: an African theatrical paradigm. *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, 21(1):18-30.

Civallero, E. 2007. Traditional games, music and oral tradition: intangible tools in multicultural libraries. Paper delivered at the IFLA satellite meeting conference on innovative multicultural library services, Pretoria. https://www.academia.edu/10431073/Traditional_games_music_and_oral_tradition_Intangible_tools_in_multicultural_libraries Date of access: 1 Jan. 2019.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2007. *Research methods in education*. 6th ed. New York: Routledge.

Coplan, D.B. 1986. Ideology and tradition in South African black popular theatre. *The Journal of the African Folklore Society*, 99(392):151-176.

Coplan, D.B. 1987. Eloquent knowledge: Lesotho migrants' songs and the anthropology of experience. *American Ethnologist*, 14(3):413-433.

Coplan, D.B. 1988. Musical understanding: the ethnoaesthetics of migrant workers' poetic song in Lesotho. *Ethnomusicology*, 32(3):337-368.

Coplan, D. 2007. *In township tonight! South Africa's black city music and theatre*. 2nd ed. Sunnyside: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd.

Creswell, J.W. 2007. *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches*. 2nd ed. California: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. 2013. *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Dargie, D. 1996. African methods of music education: some reflections. *African Music*, 7(3):30-43.

Davis, C.B. 2007. Cultural evolution and performance genres: memetics in theatre history and performance studies. *Theatre Journal*, 59(4):595-614).

Dawkins, R. 2014, 18 Feb. *Richard Dawkins | Memes | Oxford Union*. [YouTube video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BVpEoQ4T2M Date of access: 30 Apr. 2019.

De Beer, D. 2015. *Great 'expectations' for musical stars*. *IOL*, 18 June. https://www.iol.co.za/entertainment/whats-on/joburg/great-expectations-for-musical-stars-1873181 Date of access: 25 Jan. 2019.

Dederen, J-M. 2012. *Between women: the subtle voice of femininity in children's stories*. http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/tvl.v49i2.6 Date of access: 15 Feb. 2019.

Deer, J. & Dal Vera, R. 2008. *Acting in musical theatre: a comprehensive course*. Oxon: Routledge.

Die Voortrekkers. 2020. *Welkom by die Voortrekkers.* https://voortrekkers.co.za/ Date of access: 18 Aug. 2020.

Donald, M. 2006. Art and cognitive evolution. In: Turner, M., ed. *The artful mind: cognitive science and the riddle of human creativity*. New York: Oxford University Press. pp.3-20.

Ebewo, P. 2011. Transformation and the drama studies curriculum in South Africa: a survey of selected universities. In: Igweonu, K. & Hauptfleisch, T., eds. *Trends in twenty-first century African theatre and performance*. New York: The International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR). pp. 113-138.

Ebewo, P. 2017. *Explorations in Southern African drama, theatre and performance*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Ebron, P.A. 2002. *Performing Africa*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

El-Zanfalay, D. 2015. [I^3] Imitation, iteration and improvisation: embodied interaction in making and learning. *Design Studies*, 41:79-109.

Epskamp, K. 1992. *Learning by performing arts from indigenous to endogenous cultural development*. The Hague: Centre for the Study of Education in Developing Countries (CESO).

Expressive Movement. 2020. *Expressive movement.* http://expressivemovement.co.za/about/expressive-movement/ Date of access: 18 Aug. 2020.

Fereday, J. 2006. Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: a hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1):80-92.

Finnegan, R. 2016. *Oral literature in Africa*. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers.

Fuller. A., Hodkinson, H., Hodkinson, P. & Unwin, L. 2005. Learning as peripheral participation in communities of practice: a reassessment of key concepts in workplace learning. *British Educational Research Journal*, 31(1):49-68.

Ghimisi, S. 2016. The role of community of practice in higher education. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov,* 9(58):139-144).

Gillham, B. 2000. *Case study research methods*. London: Continuum.

Grandy, G. 2010. Instrumental case study. In: Mills, A.J., Durepos, G. & Wiebe, E., eds. *Encyclopedia of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. pp. 474-475.

Graver, D. 1999. *Drama for a new South Africa: seven plays*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Green, L. 2002. *How popular musicians learn: a way ahead for music education*. Surrey: Ashgate.

Green, L. 2012. Music education, cultural capital, and social group identity. In: Clayton, M., Herbert, T. & Middleton, R., eds. *The cultural study of music a critical introduction.* 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. pp. 206-216.

Harris, D. & Spencer, M. 2015. *On being feral*. https://www.creativeacademic.uk/magazine.html Date of access: 15 Nov. 2020.

Hauptfleisch, T. 2006. Everything identity: festivals in South Africa and the search for cultural identity. *New Theatre Quarterly*, 22(2):181-198.

Hauptfleisch, T. 2007. *The shaping of South African theatre: an overview of major trends*. https://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_majortrends_2007.pdf Date of access: 17 Jul. 2018.

Herrington, S. 1988. *Performance polemics in a plural society: South African theatre in transition*. Durban: University of Natal. (Thesis – PhD).

Heydon, R. & O'Neill, S. 2014. Songs in our hearts: the affordances and constraints of an intergenerational multimodal arts curriculum. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 15(16), http://www.ijea.org/v15n16/

Hodges, D.A. & Sebald, D.C. 2011. *Music in the human experience: an introduction to music psychology*. New York: Routledge.

Huskisson, Y. 1986. Music of the Pedi (Northern Sotho). In: Malan, J.P., ed. *South African Music Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. pp. 345-374.

Hutchinson, Y. 2003. Barney Simon: brokering cultural interventions. *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 13(3):4-15.

James, A. 2019. Making a case for the playful university. In: James, A. & Nerantzi, C., eds. *The power of play in higher education: creativity in tertiary learning*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 1-22.

Johnston, T. 1986. Notes on the music of the Tswana. In: Malan, J.P., ed. *South African Music Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. pp. 281-418.

Jones, L.J. 1993. Improvisation as a performance strategy for African-based theatre. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 13:233-251.

Kaschula, R.H. 1999. Imbongi and griot: toward a comparative analysis of oral poetics in southern and west Africa. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 12(1):55-76.

Kenny, A. 2016. *Communities of musical practice*. London: Routledge.

Kerndale, G.R. 1960. Style, stylation and the styles of acting. *Educational Theatre Journal*, 12(4):251-261.

Kirkaldy, A. 2005. *Capturing the soul: the Vhavenda and the missionaries, 1870-1900*. Pretoria: Protea Publishers.

Knowles, R. 2010. *Theatre & interculturalism*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Koplan, M., Cook, C.E. & Steiger, J. 2006. Using theatre to stage instructional and organisational transformation. *Change: the Magazine of Higher Learning*, 38(2):32-39.

Kruger, J. 1999/2000. Of heroes and madmen: Venda *zwilombe*, part I. *South African Journal of Musicology*, 19/20:15-32.

Kruger, J. 2000. Mitambo: Venda dance theatre. *South African Theatre Journal*, 14(1):73-96.

Kruger, J. 2001. Of wizards and madmen: Venda *zwilombe*, part II. *South African Journal of Musicology*, 21:1-18.

Kruger, J., ed. 2004. *Venda ḽashu: Tshivenda songs, musical games and song stories*. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Kruger, J., ed. 2014. *The girls in the baobab: Venda stories from the Limpopo valley*. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Kruger, J. & Le Roux, I., eds. 2007. *The flamboyant rooster and other Tshivenda song stories*. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Kumar, R. 2011. *Research methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Kumar, R. 2014. *Research methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners*. 4th ed. London: Sage.

Lave, J. 1991. Situated learning in communities of practice. In: Lave, J. & Wenger, E.W. *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 63-82.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E.W. 1991. *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lea, M.R. 2009. 'Communities of practice' in higher education: useful heuristic or educational model? In: Barton, D. & Tusting, K., eds. *Beyond communities of practice: language, power and social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 180-197.

Lebaka, M.E.K. 2018. The cultural identity of the Pedi people as reflected in their musical arts. In: Mugovhani, G., Seda, O. & Sirayi, M., eds. *The strategic repositioning of arts, culture and heritage in the 21st century*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. pp. 82-100.

Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. 2010. *Practical research planning and design*. Boston: Pearson.

Lewis, J. & Richie, J. 2003. Generalisations from qualitative research. In: Richie, J. & Lewis, J., eds. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage. pp. 263-286.

Loseke, D.R. 2013. *Methodological thinking: basic principles of social research design*. Los Angeles: Sage.

MacHillivray, A.E. 2017. Social learning in higher education: a clash of cultures? In: McDonald, J & Carter-Steel, A., eds. *Communities of practice: facilitating social learning in higher education*. Singapore: Springer. pp. 27-46.

Mapaya, M.G. 2014. The study of indigenous African music and lessons from ordinary language philosophy. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20):2007-2014.

Martin, J. 2004. *The intercultural performance handbook*. London: Routledge.

McGaw, C. 1980. *Acting is believing: a basic method*. 4th ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Mercieca, B. 2017. What is a community of practice. In: McDonald, J & Carter-Steel, A., eds. *Communities of practice: facilitating social learning in higher education*. Singapore: Springer. pp. 3-25.

Merriam, S.B. 2009. *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Merriam, S.B. & Tisdell, E.J. 2016. *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. 4th ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Metzger, L. 2020. *The LGBTQIA+ acronym and its history*. *Iowa State Daily*, 26 Jan. https://www.iowastatedaily.com/news/iowa-state-university-ames-community-lgbtqia-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer-questioning-intersex-asexual-plus-community-acronym-chnaged-over-time-history-lgbtqqip2saa/article_4ae4db18-4051-11ea-a531-33f0749ff025.html Date of access: 14 Feb. 2022.

Miles, M.B., Huberman, A.M., & Saldaña, J. 2014. *Qualitative data analysis: a methods sourcebook*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Mills, A.J., Durepos, G. & Wiebe, E., eds. 2010. *Encyclopedia of case study research*. Vol 1 & 2. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mkosi, N. 2006. International financial institutions and education in South Africa. In: Abdi, A.A., Puplampu, K.P. & Sefa Dei, G.J., eds. *African education and globalization critical perspectives*. Oxford: Lexington Books. pp. 151-164.

Molebatsi, N. & d'Abdon, R. 2008. From poetry to floetry: music's influence in the spoken word art of young South Africa. *Muziki*, 4(2):171-177.

Nasseem, S. 2003. African heritage and contemporary life. In: Coetzee, P.H. & Roux, A.P.J., eds. *The African philosophy reader*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. pp. 259-272.

Nerantzi, C. 2015. *A playground model for creative professional development*. https://www.creativeacademic.uk/magazine.html Date of access: 15 Nov. 2020.

Newman, L. 2018. Poor literacy levels still a concern in SA. *IOL*, 23 Apr. https://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/poor-literacy-levels-still-a-concern-in-sa-14601496 Date of access: 8 May 2019.

Nzewi, M. 2005. *Learning the musical arts in contemporary Africa informed by indigenous knowledge systems*. Vol. 1. Cape Town: African minds.

Olaogun, M. 2001. A rebirth in African theatre? *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 35(1):147-157.

Panday, S. 2004. *Singing for the fatherland: four African protest plays*. Kwazulu-Natal: University of KwaZulu-Natal. (Thesis – MA).

Partti, H. 2014. Cosmopolitan musicianship under construction: digital musicians illuminating emerging values in music education. *International Journal of Music Education*, 32(1):3-18.

Peterson, B. 2000. *Monarchs, missionaries & African intellectuals: African theatre and the unmaking of colonial marginality*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Pierce, A. 2010. *Depicting musical performance through movement*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Pinto, G. & Mann, D. 2016. *To see or not to see: South African theatre, who even cares?* https://10and5.com/2016/03/30/to-see-or-not-to-see-south-african-theatre-who-even-cares/ Date of access: 13 Aug. 2018.

Pitts, S. 2005. *Valuing musical participation*. Aldershot: Ashgate

Printy, S.M. 2008. Leadership for teacher learning: a community of practice perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly.* 44(2):187-226.

Ramugondo, E. L. 2009. *Intergenerational shifts and continuities in children's play within a rural Venda family in the early 20th and 21st centuries*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town. (Thesis – PhD).

Ravengai, S. 2011. The dilemma of the African body as a site of performance in the context of western training. In: Igweonu, K. & Hauptfleisch, T., eds. *Trends in twenty-first century African theatre and performance*. New York: IFTR (International Federation for Theatre Research). pp. 35-60.

Redd, K. 2021. *Words matter: a guide to LGBTQIA+ terminology*. *ABC10*, 28 June. https://www.abc10.com/article/news/community/race-and-culture/a-guide-to-lgbtqia-terminology/103-5bf813a9-16e7-4a02-a591-c7de40dc7335 Date of access: 14 Feb. 2022.

Richie, J. 2003. The application of qualitative research methods to social research. In: Richie, J. & Lewis, J., eds. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage. pp. 24-46.

Richie, J., Spencer, L. & O'Connor, W. 2003. Carrying out qualitative analysis. In: Richie, J. & Lewis, J., eds. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage. pp. 219-262.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. & Ormston, R., eds. 2014. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students & researchers*. London: Sage.

Rodney, W. 1982. *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press.

Rule, P. & John, V. 2011. *Your guide to case study research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik publishers.

Rycroft, D.K. 1986. Zulu and Swazi music. In: Malan, J.P., ed. *South African Music Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. pp. 314-344.

Saldaña, J. 2009. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London: Sage.

Saldaña, J. 2011. *Fundamentals of qualitative research: understanding qualitative research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sanders, J. & Albers, P. 2010. *Multimodal literacies: an introduction*. Vol 3. Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Savin-Baden, M. & Major, C.H. 2010. Glossary. In: Savin-Baden, M. & Major, C.H., eds. *New approaches to qualitative research: wisdom and uncertainty*. New York: Routledge. pp. 174-178.

Scheub, H. 1975. *The Xhosa ntsomi*. London: Oxford University Press.

Schumann, A. 2008. The beat that beat apartheid: the role of music in the resistance against apartheid in South Africa. *Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien,* 14(8):17-39.

Schwandt, T.A. 2007. *The SAGE dictionary of qualitative inquiry*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Sefa Dei, G.J. 2000. Rethinking the role of indigenous knowledges in the academy. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 4(2):111-132.

Sefa Dei, G.J. & Asgharzadeh, A. 2006. Indigenous knowledge and globalization: an African perspective. In: Abdi, A.A., Puplampu, K.P. & Sefa Dei, G.J., eds. *African education and globalization critical perspectives*. Lanham: Lexington Books. pp. 53-78.

Schafer, R.M. 1993. *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the turning of the world*. Vermont: Destiny Books.

Sheperd, J. 2012. Music and social categories. In: Clayton, M., Herbert, T. & Middleton, R., eds. *The cultural study of music: a critical introduction.* 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. pp. 239-248.

Sinfield, S., Burns, T. & Abegglen, S. 2019. Exploration: becoming playful: the power of a ludic module. In: James, A. & Nerantzi, C., eds. *The power of play in higher education: creativity in tertiary learning*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 23-32.

Smith, D. 2015. *Play: the path to rediscovery*. https://www.creativeacademic.uk/magazine.html Date of access: 15 Nov. 2020.

Snape, D. & Spencer, L. 2003. The foundations of qualitative research. In: Richie, J. & Lewis, J., eds. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage. pp. 1-23.

South African Government. 2018. *International literacy day 2019.* https://www.gov.za/InternationalLiteracyDay2019 Date of access: 8 May 2019.

Spencer, L., Richie, J. & O'Connor, W. 2003. Analysis: practices, principles and processes. In: Richie, J. & Lewis, J., eds. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage. pp. 199-218.

Stake, R.E. 1995. *The art of case study research*. London: Sage.

Stuman, J., ed. 2019. *The SAGE International encyclopedia of music and culture*. London: Sage.

The Grotowski Institute. 2012. *Poor theatre.* http://www.grotowski.net/en/encyclopedia/poor-theatre Date of access: 28 Jun. 2019.

The South African State Theatre. 2019. *Development initiatives* http://www.statetheatre.co.za/About/Development-Initiatives Date of access: 15 Oct. 2019.

TUT (Tshwane University of Technology). 2018. *Prospectus*. https://www.tut.ac.za/study-at-tut/i-want-to-study/what-to-study/prospectus?Year=2018 Date of access: 15 Jun. 2018.

Tuwe, K. 2015. The African oral tradition paradigm of storytelling as a methodological framework: employment experiences for African communities in New Zeeland. Paper presented at the 38th African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) Conference, Deakin University, Melbourne. https://www.ecald.com/assets/Resources/Tuwe-African-Storytelling-Research-Method.pdf Date of access: 1 Jan. 2019.

Van Heerden, J. 2011. Beyond the miracle: trends in South African theatre and performance after 1994. In: Igweonu, K. & Hauptfleisch, T., eds. *Trends in twenty-first century African theatre and performance*. New York: Rodopi. pp. 85-112.

Venturini, T. 2010. *Secondary orality (or second orality)*. http://mediaresearchhub.ssrc.org/icdc-content-folder/second-orality Date of access: 15 Aug. 2021.

Walker, R. 2004. Cultural memes, innate proclivities and musical behaviour: a case study of the western traditions. *Phycology of Music*, 32(2):153-190.

Walsh, A. 2018. *Giving permission to play in higher education*. Paper delivered at the 4th International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAd'18), Val`encia. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326503555_Giving_Permission_to_Play_in_Higher_Education Date of access: 9 Feb. 2021.

Wells, R.E. 1994. *An introduction to the music of the Basotho*. Lesotho: Morija museum and archives.

Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger. E. 2011. *Communities of practice: a brief introduction*. https://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/ Date of access: 15 Oct. 2020.

Wenger, E. & Wenger-Trayner, B. 2015. *Communities of practice: a brief overview of the concepts and its uses*. https://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/ Date of access: 15 Oct. 2020.

Westley, D.M. 2002. A selected bibliography of Southern Bantu praise poetry. *Research in African Literature*, 33(1):153-177.

Westvall, M. & Aragão, P. 2019. Communities of musical practice: transformative context for intercultural communication. *El Oído Pensante*, 7(1):236-250.

Wheeler, L. & Palmer, M. 2019. Exploration: dopamine and the hard work of learning science. In: James, A. & Nerantzi, C., eds. *The power of play in higher education: creativity in tertiary learning*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 123-130.

Wilkinson, S. 2015. Focus groups. In: Smith, J.A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: a practical guide to research methods*. 3rd ed. London: Sage. pp. 199-221.

Wood, A. 2015. *The science learning perspective on play*. https://www.creativeacademic.uk/magazine.html Date of access: 15 Nov. 2020.

Woodside, A.G. 2010. *Case study research: theory, methods, practice*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Yardley, L. 2015. Demonstrating validity in qualitative psychology. In: Smith, J.A., ed. *Qualitative psychology: a practical guide to research methods*. 3rd ed. London: Sage. pp. 257-272.

Yin, R.K. 2009. *Case study research design and methods*. London: Sage.

Yin, R.K. 2011. *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Zaffini, E.J. 2018. Communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation: a literature review. *National Association for Music Education*, 36(3):38-43.

Zarrilli, P.B., McConachie, B., Williams, G.J. & Sorgenfrei, C.F., eds. 2006. *Theatre histories: an introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Zenenga, P. 2015. The total theatre aesthetic paradigm in African theatre. In: George-Graves, N., ed. *The Oxford handbook of dance and theatre*. Oxford: Oxford University press. pp. 236-251.

Addendum A: Observation protocol (Creswell, 2007 and Merriam, 2009)

Activity date:	
Activity location:	
Length of activity:	
Description of activity:	
Descriptive notes	**Reflective notes**
Physical setting/location: (Physical environment, context, available objects, resources, technologies in the setting?)	
Participants: (Who is in the scene, how many people, and their roles, relevant characteristics of the participants, ways in which the people in this setting organize themselves?)	
Activities and interactions: (What is going on, definable sequence of activities, how do the people interact with the activity and with one another, norms, rule or structure of activities and interactions, activity duration, typical or unusual activity)	
Conversation: (Content of conversations, who speaks to whom, who listens, silences and nonverbal behaviour.)	
Subtle factors: (Informal and unplanned activities, symbolic and connotative meanings of words, nonverbal communication such as dress and physical space, unobtrusive measures such as physical clues, 'What does not happen')	
My own behaviour: (How is your role, whether as an observer or an intimate participant, affecting the scene you are observing? What do you say and do? In addition, what thoughts are you having about what is going on?)	

Addendum B: Semi-structured interview protocol

Biographical information questions:

1. When and where were you born and raised?

2. Tell me about your family: mother-tongue, education, occupation, religion, etc.

Vocal experience questions:

3. Tell me about your first experience with singing and performance.

4. (a) Describe your singing and performance experiences before going to university (at home, school, church, in your community, competitions, festivals, rituals, mass media etc.).

   (b) How did you learn music and how to perform it (interpretation and technique) before coming to university? (Who were your teachers and what teaching-learning strategies did they employ? Did you learn from people other than your teachers? Did you learn from mass-media?)

5. Explain your learning experiences with singing during your studies at university. (Describe specific challenges you experienced in your teaching environment in relation to vocal learning and performing).

6. How do you think vocal practices form part of the theatre you make today and how all your teaching-learning experiences with singing and performance influence you as a performer since leaving university?

Addendum C: Permission from CEO: South African Theatre Village

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOMKAMPUS
P/Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520
Tel: 018-299-1111/2222
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

School of Music & Conservatoire
Tel: 018 299 1705
E-mail: stenaco2003@yahoo.com
Cell no: 0604221857.

Ms M Denysschen

CEO: South African Theatre Village

Pretoria

Dear Ms Denysschen

Permission to conduct research into the South African Theatre Village

I hereby request your permission to conduct research among members of the South African Theatre Village for the purposes of my doctoral programme in visual and performing arts under the supervision of Prof. J. Kruger at North-West University.

I intend interviewing members on their teaching-learning practices and observing rehearsals. They will have access to the processed data and will be allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. I undertake to keep the identity of members anonymous and respect the integrity of the South African Theatre Village.

Yours faithfully

Addendum D: Consent to participate in research

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOMKAMPUS

P/Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520
Tel: 018-299-1111/2222
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

School of Music & Conservatoire
Tel: 018 299 1705
E-mail: stenaco2003@yahoo.com
Cell no: 0604221857.

Dear _____

Consent to participate in research

This form requires your consent to participate in an investigation into the musical teaching-learning experiences of members of the South African Theatre Village for the purposes of my PhD dissertation at the School of Music at North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). My supervisor is Prof. J. Kruger.

I will be collecting data by interviewing you individually and by observing and video recording your rehearsals. The interviews will be captured in audio format on a recording device.

You will remain anonymous. I undertake to respect your privacy, dignity and personal views at all times, as well as your right to provide information voluntarily.

You will be free to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with me, the School of Music or North-West University.

At your request, I will provide you with a copy of my research proposal as well as my final draft report. You will be provided with a copy of this consent form.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Leandi Steyn Delport

I consent to participate in the study in accordance with the stipulations stated above.

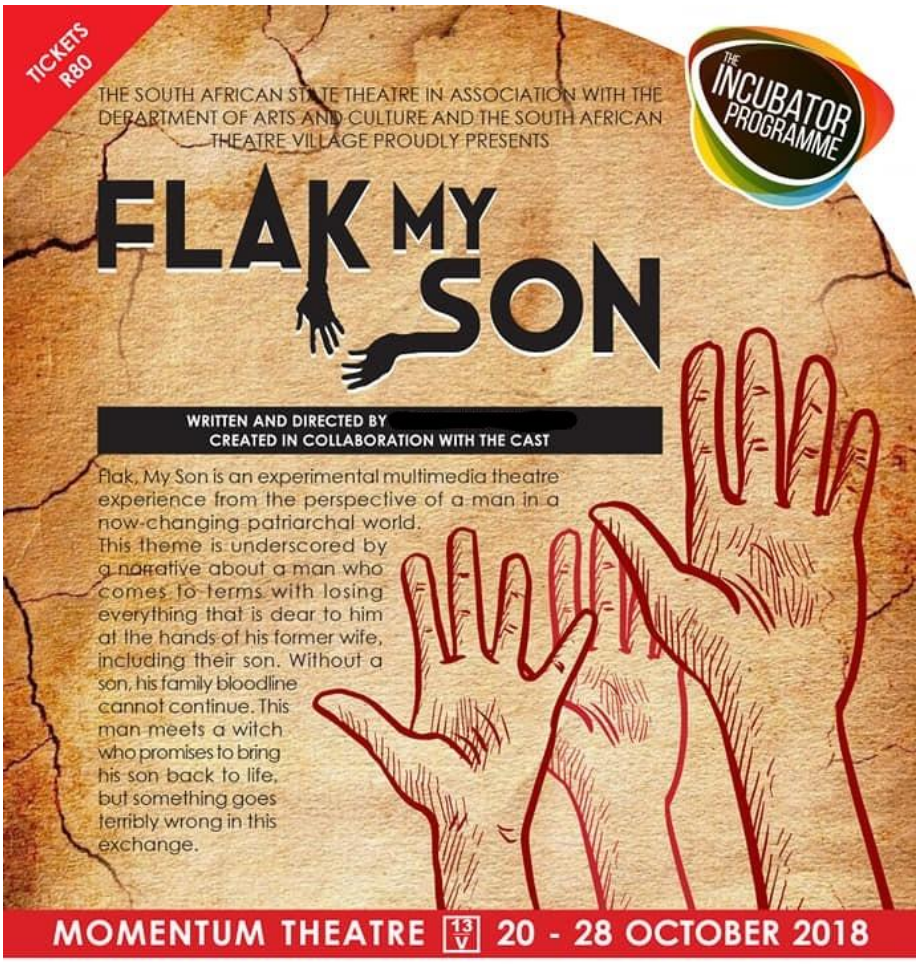
Signed on this ..... day of ..... at Pretoria.

Signature of participant: _____

Addendum E: Description of *Flak my son*: (2018)

Flak my son was a production inspired by the story of *Medea* by Euripides. It suggested the possible story of the character Jason, after Medea takes vengeance and murders their two children and his new wife. *Flak my son* played at the South African State Theatre in Pretoria from 20 to 28 October 2018.

The following pamphlet was distributed on social media platforms to promote the production:



STATE THEATRE
an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

Computicket

LIKE US THE SOUTH AFRICAN STATE THEATRE
WWW.STATETHEATRE.CO.ZA | 012 392 4000
FOLLOW US @SASTATETHEATRE SASTPTOWN

arts & culture
Department: Arts and Culture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA