

Revisiting Dorothy Heathcote's 'Twilight Role'

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Abstract

A two-year research study in an Australian primary school investigated the relationship between teacher interventions and student autonomy in two drama contexts. The findings revealed that a community of learning was more likely to create the conditions for self-directed learning than a weekly specialist drama lesson. Furthermore, teacher use of Heathcote's notion of twilight role, also called shadow role, increased in the extended time of the community setting. As a liminal teaching stance between instruction and full Teacher in Role, twilight role enables a transitional sign-reading space. Fearful that the sparse literature about twilight role signalled disaffection with the notion that I first encountered over 30 years ago, I found an opportunity to ask Heathcote directly. To my great delight and enlightenment, Heathcote described six functions of twilight role that I have interpreted through my research transcripts. I have found that the twilight introduced by Heathcote over 30 years ago has relevance for the over-prescribed teacher education of today. I hope to reopen the conversation about shadows and twilight realms.

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Learning is Personal

The passing of Dorothy Heathcote in October 2011 has revived memories of the open door to her classes at Newcastle University where she routinely welcomed British and overseas visitors. As one of those visitors from Gavin Bolton's course in Durham in the early 1980s I remember Dorothy's fascination with Goffman's notion of framing (1974). At that time, Heathcote and Bolton were both interested in the ways a teacher might 'take up a position' and frame drama to mediate real emotion from that experienced in role (see Heathcote, 1984 and Bolton, 1986). Heathcote's poetic notion of 'twilight role' was one of the subtle strategies that she was exploring to manage that shift from 'real' (explicit teacher) to role (Teacher in Role). I have regretted for some time that twilight role never gained the traction in literature that it deserved. In his biography of Heathcote, Bolton includes 'twilight role' amongst the language that has been difficult for Heathcote's students to digest (2003, p. 142). However elusive, 'twilight role' continues to be an enduring and useful notion, worthy of reconsideration.

In this paper I argue that the notion of twilight role is worth rekindling for today's educators, and as a liminal teacher stance (Turner, 1982), it has implications not only for drama teachers but as a way to think about reflection in action in wider contexts. Twilight role emerged as a key finding in a research study which investigated the relationship between teacher interventions and student autonomy in two drama teaching contexts (Moore, 2009). The transcripts and discourses that covered two years of reflective practitioner and narrative inquiry research will be used to isolate examples of twilight role against the functions which Heathcote recalled in 2008 over an informal conversation at a National Drama conference. I will start however, with an earlier conference: Bergen, 2001.

Liminal Spaces

The 5th International Drama and Education Association (IDEA) Congress was held in Bergen, Norway in 2001 to explore the theme: 'Playing Betwixt and Between'. Delegates gathered to unravel Victor Turner's notion of liminality to examine the interplays between fluid states of being – a particularly apt starting point for drama educators and practitioners. For Turner, a social anthropologist, the 'in-between' place that allows the transformative process from a particular social state to another (the transition from adolescence to adulthood, for example) affords a 'becoming' and a rare opportunity to be both serious and playful (1982, p. 85). Turner describes liminal social rites as rule-based, obligatory and functional whereas liminoid behaviours indicate the more subversive, voluntary and often re-authored forms of ludic activity (1982, pp. 27-33). Both liminal and liminoid experiences co-exist in the complex world of schools and can be applied to the many fixed rules and rituals of schooling as well as the transgressions found in play. Within that transition, there is often a reversal of social status. This marginal position allows for fluidity of roles, viewpoints and hierarchies. At the Congress there were echoes of Bakhtinian borderzones (2002) and 'leaderly' approaches (Haseman, 2002). Although it is not my intention to visit Turner's theories in depth, they have informed my understandings of teacher roles and of power relationships and have renewed my interest in Heathcote's liminal teacher stance, twilight or shadow role.

Twilight Role

I was relieved when I saw 'twilight role' mentioned if even in passing in Bolton's tribute to Heathcote, in Dorothy Heathcote's Story (2003). It is the only place that I have managed to find the term in writing. John Carroll, a student of Heathcote's on three separate occasions, recalled the term with ease: "As far as I understand it, it was DH [sic] going into a temporary role using voice to exemplify some point but not making the fact she was in role explicit" (email correspondence, Aug. 17, 2007). This brief statement confirmed for me the transitional function of the role and alerted me to the fact that the shift was usually indicated by a change in vocal register.

Pam Howell and Brian Heap, drama educators and former students of Heathcote's, make incidental references to 'shadowy role' as a role that is not fully developed, claiming:

This serves, largely as a device which injects information into the drama so that it can develop further without needing to interrupt the action. It also provides the teacher with a means of activating the frame tension of the drama and the opportunity to model language and emotional engagement for the pupils. (2001, p. 98)

The images of twilight and shadows are appropriate to the liminal space that exists between the explicit teacher/instructor and the explicit teacher/actor or teacher-in-role. As early as 1976, Betty Jane Wagner wrote:

In addition to the two clear stances of teacher and of participant in role, Heathcote has a third stance which is deliberately not [as] clearly defined through verbal and nonverbal signals as are the other two. This stance we shall call *shadowy role*, a bland

and ambiguous projection that is so much like the teacher in personality and authority that the class often has no clue that it's a role. When Heathcote takes on a shadowy role, she defines for herself an interest, an attitude appropriate for the situation and she projects this clearly. At the same time, it is apparent that she is the teacher... If the class takes her into an area where she needs to go into role, she will signal this clearly and go from the shadowy role into an unambiguous one ... (Wagner, 1976, p. 132)

Wagner gives an example from Heathcote's work about the American Revolution. As the teacher she asks students to write their jobs on a 'blackboard'. Then "still half as teacher and without changing her tone or gestures, she asks, 'If I wanted to talk to all of you, where would I go?'" (p. 133).

It is significant that Howell and Heap and John Carroll both use public meetings as examples where they have found shadowy/twilight roles to be useful for signifying an imminent shift into a full role. Carroll has refined the function of an attitudinal shift in the use of twilight role:

Attitudinal role is a term I coined to describe a role that is only signed by change in voice and attitude, not characterization or visual signing. e.g., when students were in role at town meeting upset over planning decisions, they adopt the attitudinal role of upset resident. This allows them to enter the drama in a very role protected way, the single attitude allows them to contribute without demanding specific knowledge. (Carroll, email correspondence, 17 August 2007)

Attitudinal role for Carroll is a step closer to a full role than twilight role and resonates with an example offered by Bolton whereby the simple manner of changing the demeanour or style of questioning can indicate that "the social context has changed" (1999, p. 235).

In their book *Teaching Drama*, Morgan and Saxton list and describe how to vary status when adopting Teacher in Role. Included amongst the ten suggested roles that are available for teachers to adopt is one that supports Patrice Baldwin's view of a 'shadowy role' as a neutral questioner (2004, p. 187). Morgan and Saxton use the term, 'fringe role': "Here the teacher is in no specific role except of one who has the right to be there and to ask questions. It is used ... to help the class build background ..." (1987, p. 48). These authors identify the vagueness of fringe role as its particular advantage, in that the teacher "... appears to have no vested interest in the central dilemmas of the situation" (p. 49). They add that either the class or the teacher might determine an appropriate full role but often the specific 'who' is not required.

The images of twilight, fringes and shadows are not always used synonymously but they represent different facets of teacher artistry, each available as part of the repertoire for different purposes. These are some of the concepts that I struggled with as I pondered the relationship between twilight role and student autonomy while conducting my research with primary aged students in Melbourne, Victoria.

The Research

My research set out to investigate the nature of my teaching interventions and their relationship to student autonomy in a primary school drama program. The independent, Years Prep–12 school at which I had worked for almost a decade set self-directed learning as a whole-school priority (Warner, 2006). The administrative focus aligned with a longstanding personal interest in strategies that enable student autonomy. I noted that writers agreed on certain indicators of autonomy. Most commonly cited were opportunities to build repertoire (Winston, 1998; Gallagher, 2003; Doll, 1993), construct identity (Bruner, 1990; Egan, 1998), gain mastery (Rogoff, 1995; Fleming, 2001; Greene, 2000) and share power (Heathcote, 1998; Neelands, 1996).

In the first year of the research, I collected audio and videotapes of drama lessons with one Year 4 class for two terms. Drama was offered as a weekly specialist program in a

converted multi-purpose room, which was appropriately called The Playhouse. The primary years' administration mandated that specialist teachers integrate lessons with class themes. The drama lessons in the first year of data collection explored the European settlement of Australia by pioneers and gold seekers. The research relied on a partnership with a Year 4 teacher who refused to settle for tokenistic integration and who accompanied her class to each drama session. We came to understand our teaching and learning relationship metaphorically as the floodlight and the spotlight (Moore, 2009). My colleague Sara cast the diffused, wide light over the Victorian goldfields with her students in her classroom setting, while I focused a more intense, defined light on the characters, their dilemmas and tensions when they came to drama in The Playhouse. Thus armed with the drama explorations and historical fictions, Sara (back in her class) would consolidate student understandings with discussions and journal tasks which included sketches, letters written in role and responses to ethical issues. I mention the lighting metaphor as a useful way to think about shadowy liminal space which teachers and students negotiated between the class floodlight and the drama spotlight. I will return to this image later in this paper.

After the first year of data collection, I chose three consecutive drama lessons that dealt with the murder of miner James Scobie on the goldfields of Ballarat, Victoria in 1852 (Boardman & Harvey, 1997) to examine my teacher interventions. The story became the case study for detailed analysis. I named and classified all my teacher interventions and the extent to which they set up the conditions for student autonomy or 'self-directed learning', the preferred term at my research site. I had intended to compare those results with the same year level and the same units of work in the following year. As it happened, a school restructure changed the parameters for what I had intended to be a comparative case study of two Year 4 groups in a specialist drama context.

The second year of research evolved from the reorganisation of the primary school into 'neighbourhoods'. Each teaching and learning team comprised two year levels, four classes and four teachers working collaboratively. Each classroom bordered a large centre area which could seat the community of 80 students. The Years 3 and 4 learning community was branded the History Centre with its emphasis on the stories and themes of colonial settlement. The two-year curriculum interlaced picture story texts with the broad themes of colonisation and sustainability and allowed year-long investigations of each. All units placed students inside the drama frames as (for example) the crew of the Endeavour, villagers along the Murray River or Chinese miners on the Victorian goldfields. Picture books like *The Rabbits* (Marsden & Tan, 2000), *The King's Fountain* (Alexander & Keats, 1971) and *The Sea People* (Muller & Steiner, 1982) were woven into class inquiries as appropriate 'counter stories' (Cahill, 2011) to the dominant culture. Within this new teaching context, my role shifted from the separated specialist to that of an 'embedded' drama teacher. For at least one full day each week Mantle of the Expert frames and strategies were employed as integrative learning models. The uninterrupted day allowed the community of teachers to negotiate whether the stage of our story called for a whole-group (floodlight) or drama specialist (spotlight) approach. Typically, students would start their day in their 'home groups' with their class teacher. This was often followed by a full communal session with all students and teachers, working in role in the drama world (e.g. the Victorian goldfields). The issues of the large group role sessions would subsequently be examined further with individual classes in drama workshops to focus (or spotlight) historical conditions using particular drama forms and conventions. When not scheduled in workshops, the students would continue with their responses to the large group role work through journal writing or sense-making tasks with their class teachers. Students frequently elected to share their 'shaped' drama workshop scenes with the entire community as a way to share their artistry and new knowledge of settlement life. Visitors to the History Centre on a story day might encounter students engaged in set building, community meetings ('in' and 'out of' role), hots-eating, journal tasks or a mime lesson.

Students became used to multiple teacher–student learning configurations from traditional models, to whole-community gatherings as well as versions ‘betwixt and between’. From the full day modelling of teacher and students working ‘in role’ the generalist teachers easily continued to work ‘in role’ on days where I was teaching elsewhere. Moreover, the physical nature of the community with four external classrooms and a large centre area enabled an actual and a metaphoric ‘flow’ from class work to drama work and between generalist teachers and the drama specialist. The centre area, in the second year of the research study, was a well-used public space as well as our drama space. Malaguzzi, a Reggio Emilia educator, reflects on space and the importance of a *piazza* in ‘reggio’ schools:

The piazza does more than extend the classrooms, for it encourages many different encounters and activities and we assign [many] purposes to it. For us it represents the main square of the Italian city ... a place of continuous passage, where the quality of the exchange becomes more intense, whether among children or adults. The more they meet the more ideas circulate among adults and children. We might say the *piazza* is a place where ideas arrive and depart. (in Gandini, 1998, p. 165)

It is perhaps inevitable that when changes to space, timetable and team-teaching approaches are introduced in a community setting, that teaching and learning practices will also change. In comparing my drama interventions in the weekly sessions of The Playhouse with the role experiences and workshops conducted over a full day in the History Centre, the following key findings became evident:

- power relationships are more likely to be shared or overturned
- student authorship over content and form increases
- teachers make greater use of liminal or ‘twilight roles’ (Moore, 2009)

The first two findings relate to the way that students took ownership of their historical dramas and either resisted or subverted teachers’ attempts to steer or ‘wrap up’ a Sydney settlement story under Governor Bligh. The third finding propelled me to re-examine the sparse landscape of ‘twilight’ role in drama or to discover why it might have faded from use. The findings are not exclusive to drama or the primary sector. I did not anticipate while writing up my findings that I would have the good fortune to ask Dorothy Heathcote herself about twilight role.

Returning to Durham

After 25 years away from Durham, I found an opportunity to speak to Dorothy Heathcote at the National Drama conference (*Mind, Body, Spirit*) in 2008. Fearful that I was embarking on an outmoded investigation, I asked directly whether she had discarded the notion of twilight role for some reason. I was relieved to hear that twilight role did not in any way fall out of favour or fashion. She recalled that her interest in signing, framing and the early days of Mantle of the Expert diverted her attention. Although twilight role had been subsumed by Teacher in Role over time, Heathcote spontaneously listed six functions for its specific use in the course of a short conversation. She included:

- hypothetical voice
- seeking information or an interest
- delaying or suspending action
- conveying an attitude
- moving the fiction forward into the ‘we’ stage
- storytelling within action (private conversation, 8 April 2008).

Heathcote’s twilight role functions reinforce Carroll’s signing of a social shift. In other words the teacher operating in a ‘teaching role’ (instructing, questioning, clarifying) might hover in

a ‘becoming’ function before shifting fully into ‘teacher-in-role’. She might invite participants to engage with the drama attitudinally.

When analysing and categorising my interventions from transcripts, I became aware of three main teacher roles that emerged through the discourse analyses. They were Teacher/instructor (called Capital T teacher), Carer (pastoral role) and Teacher/artist (Teacher in Role, shaper, director, author and narrator). The narrator or storyteller is a role I particularly favour and which can operate as a twilight role in some circumstances. I turn now to excerpts of video transcripts from my case studies to offer brief examples of the twilight role interventions which exemplify the functions identified by Heathcote. The examples are taken from both The Playhouse and History Centre settings and are drawn from various historical narratives.

Signing the Shift

Hypothetical Voice

The class teacher prepares students for the formal procession onto the Endeavour (a ship mapped out in the community space with rope and props). A student as Captain Cook asks the (expert) crew to repeat a mariners’ oath. The drama teacher plans to adopt a second-in-command role although she has not as yet assumed this role. Altering her tone slightly, she asks:

Should we practice the oath before we have to do it for the Captain?

The question is ambiguous enough for the teacher to shift into instructor (Capital T teacher) or the role of a fellow-seaman (TiR), depending on the confidence of the student response. The question exists in the liminal space that allows for judgement regarding student readiness to enter into role. It also suggests the oath has to be right for the occasion. Student responses inform the next step.

Seeking Information or Registering an Interest

A miner named Scobie has been killed on the Victorian goldfields. Suspicion rests on the Eureka Hotel owner who is a friend of the troopers. Students who have been working in role for some time as goldseekers have been creating scenes which place them near the scene of the murder. The drama teacher is testing the water:

Okay what I am getting from you is ... different people have had different experiences of James Scobie. The students nod. The teacher turns to a boy who (in role) has been implicated in the violence on the goldfields. There is a shift in body language and volume. *And you consider yourself falsely accused?* He answers quietly, *Yes.*

In this instance, the question is clearly asked by the (twilight) teacher to the student (role) and aligns with Carroll’s transitional function through a change of attitude. Using the actor’s tools for a different purpose, the final question signals an invitation into the intrigue of the drama world while raising the stakes for all participants.

Delaying or Suspending Action

Students are busy in groups working through the details of their upcoming testimonies for the Scobie Hearing. My reflective notes on the videoed lesson reveal:

I busied myself creating the sparse imagery for the judge’s table and placed the gavel and a few papers on the rostrum. I sat down ‘as some sort of clerk role’ and surveyed the student scene-making as a ‘morphed’ character who is clearly not quite their teacher, nor a complete stranger either.

Thinking about this moment in my analysis, I question whether role signing in action alone still qualifies as ‘twilight role’. I conclude for my purposes in the drama, that it does.

I like this moment because it arises phoenix-like from the ashes of the moment. The shadowy 'clerk' is useful in that she can shift from a legal entity into Teacher mode effortlessly as needed. What makes it somewhat different from 'twilight' role as it is currently (if infrequently) discussed, is the fact that the slight shift of character is signed through gesture and positioning rather than through a change of vocal register. While I feel comfortable including this non-verbal action under the umbrella of twilight role, I am intrigued by its additional foreshadowing function. The silent preparations for the impending court scene allow time to assess the degree of support that might be needed before the judge's arrival and keep the options open until such time that the community find it is pressed into action. In any event the clerk exists in the space between the full role of the Scobie hearing, and the teacher/clarifier of processes, each only a step away. Twilight role positions the teacher at the borders of possibility and allows the fine tuning of expertise or support that may be needed within the real/role continuum. The clerk role modelled a formality and status while offering inside knowledge of court processes.

Conveying an Attitude

The drama teacher begins the class by asking students what they recall from the previous drama lesson. They have prepared their 'testimonies' for the Hearing and most seem to empathise with the miner Scobie. She is aware that students in role on the goldfields have been treated harshly by troopers and administrators. She adopts a gruffer tone and says:

I don't know if Scobie had enemies but a lot of people seem to think that Mr Bentley (the hotel owner) got acquitted because he had friends in high places ... You guys know what it's like to be persecuted and harassed by the commissioner. The students respond in role with their experiences of injustice.

It is not immediately apparent whether the first sentence has been spoken by the teacher or by a role. The tone indicates an understanding of the miners' predicaments as well as the serious business to follow. The judge will not be entirely terrifying.

Moving the Fiction Forward into the 'We' Stage

The students are busy in role as freed convict settlers and they are establishing their lives in Sydney Town and setting up homesteads, dairies and land offices. Having finished my instructions as teacher...

I drifted amongst them asking tentative questions about their hopes for the future. I was working on my transition from teacher to Governor Bligh's housekeeper, a role I hope will allow me to build trust and ask questions that they might not otherwise grant freely.

I am hoping my low-status 'fringe' role will help me learn about their lives. A teacher or a stranger might ask: 'Will your shop open soon?' The questions function as portals to settlers' concerns and dilemmas and sow seeds for potential community tensions. Ultimately I succeed in my goal to become 'one of them' when I become unemployed and need the help of the more experienced settlers. The timing and pace of the transition from confident teacher to the helpless housekeeper Maud was gradual and allowed me to intervene without 'requiring a specific "who"' (Morgan & Saxton, 1987, p. 48).

Storytelling within Action

The students have been meeting to discuss their progress in becoming settlers of the new settlement of Sydney town. Practicalities such as tools, materials and safety are discussed. With a slight change in vocal register and demeanour, I advise the gathered 'citizens' to stay watchful of the stern Governor Bligh (a class teacher in role) who will be reporting on every detail of our settlement. Students begin their work as the drama teacher states: 'I've heard unsettling stories about that man.' In this case, the twilight role functions to empower students to share their experiences and their stories of injustice with support.

The function of storytelling within the action was not one that Heathcote originally included in the original list of the way that twilight role functions. Because I am particularly fond of the teacher/narrator stance, I specifically asked if she would also include the teacher/narrator to the five functions which she cited so fluently. Heathcote agreed that the teacher as a storyteller might indeed be a function of twilight role but only when the teacher was working *within the action*. The example given above is as close as I was able to locate from the transcripts of my study. I have therefore added ‘Storytelling within action’ as a sixth function of twilight role. When narrating from outside the fictional frame, Heathcote preferred the precision of narrational role.

Narrational Role

I have mentioned that the teacher/narrator role is one that I find particularly useful. It often functions well in conjunction with other teacher roles. My transcript analyses show that I have employed narrational role (outside the fictional frame) as a way of linking disparate group scenes, highlighting key themes, elevating language and maintaining continuity, to name a few. But most useful is the storytelling voice to overlay the ‘we-ness’ of community concerns. When groups in The Playhouse recounted their connections to the murdered James Scobie, we became the people that knew ‘something’, however insignificant, about the man or the circumstances of his death.

However differently narrational role and storytelling within action might potentially function, they both rest in the liminal space where the option of stepping fully into teacher/instructor or teacher-in-role exist. For that reason I would locate both in the diffuse floodlight where real or role drama processes can be negotiated and would be inclined to include teacher/narrator (outside the fictional frame) as a seventh function of the twilight or shadowy realms.

The Relationship between Twilight Role and Autonomy

The withholding or delay of expertise combined with time to consider decisions in and out of role allowed student agency to advance while teacher agency retreated (Moore, 2009).

As previously mentioned, teacher identities such as the explicit teacher, the carer and the artist came to the forefront as a significant finding. The teacher/instructor (the ‘capital T’ teacher) prevailed in The Playhouse as a result of my self-inflicted pressure ‘to get something done’ in a limited amount of time. The carer interestingly emerged equally in both contexts. The artist in the History Centre had the luxury of planning with colleagues, playing with ideas and options, performing or modelling roles (actor, director, author, stage manager) and reflecting on them for further conscious use. There was more time for the ‘flow’ of the playful, exploratory stage of trial and error. Students were aware of teacher fumbling and missteps in role – a licence to risk and fail as they watched our mutual forgiveness and humour.

This reversal of power was one of the important findings that came into relief while researching my own drama practice and to a large extent it came about from setting up and occupying a liminal teaching space using Heathcote’s poetic but almost discarded notion of twilight role.

In the History Centre students had time to layer their multiple roles in drama workshops and with their class teachers for the better part of a semester. They had explored Dreamtime stories to dispel the notion of ‘terra nullius’. They had invested in their characters as part of Cook’s crew and as convicts. They were connected to a historical continuity, to the physical ‘set’ building and to families to whom their trials were related by letter. They had had to earn their freedom, apply for businesses and complete journal tasks to ‘advance in the drama game’. Each stage created its own tensions and problematised interactions, whether with soldiers, governors or even housekeepers. The lives of settlers was incredibly bureaucratic, yet their efforts fulfilling. They were forced to ‘read’ the signs and symbols of

teachers as high- and low-status members of the emerging community and the ways they interacted with each other both ‘in role’ and ‘out of role’. As their confidence with the processes grew, so did their mastery in managing their learning and their progress through the story.

Their established ‘enterprise’ combined with the ‘sacking’ of my vulnerable character Maud generated a reason for students to ‘use their expertise’ in a way that raised their status, responded to a need, and consolidated their learning.

It is characteristic of the mantle of the expert approach that it involves pupils in classroom tasks – reading, sorting information, writing, arts and crafts, science, math and so on – just the kinds of activity they are typically invited to engage in by all teachers everywhere ... Because students are to be in role in a fictional context, they will bring a sense of responsibility to their learning, with the result that the teacher is able, through the drama, to make greater demands on the students than if this alternative trigger to learning were missing. (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995, p. 46)

When Maud (TiR) was publicly sacked outside their busy shops, students did not hesitate to take up the challenge of her predicament. My reflective notes burst with satisfaction over the day’s work:

I was taken to the bank and shown how to open an account, and create credit and debit columns, offered jobs in the dairy and the bakery and was given astute advice as to how to choose a small block of land for a hut. I was in the middle of a monopoly game which everyone else knew how to play. If this had been a legitimate assessment designed to relay life in the Sydney settlement in a variety of learning styles, it could not have been more successful. (Reflective memo, June 17, 2002)

The planting of seeds that were so tentative in the first episode became fruitful. My ‘acting’ offer for bystanders to put right Maud’s public humiliation was genuine. Indeed, if the witnesses had chosen to ignore her sad predicament, that particular strand of the story would have been dropped. The mental shift that I was seeking from students was that of ‘me’ the shop owner, to ‘we’ the community with a problem.

The student autonomy that was more evident in the History Centre than in The Playhouse evolved from administrative and structural changes designed to line up with theories of self-directed learning. The significant changes of timetable, physical space and collaborative teaching impacted on student–teacher relationships, empowerment and engagement. The increased use of liminal spaces emerged as a finding because the learning design reframed teacher roles and notably revitalised twilight role. The pressure ‘to get something done’ in 50 minute lessons was lifted in favour of negotiated curriculum and sign-reading. The impact was felt both inside and outside our drama worlds. The full research study details the fuller findings of the specialist and the community contexts (Moore, 2009).

The Big Picture

Heathcote was fond of the word ‘implications’. It carries the heavy responsibility of decisions made at crossroads. The implications of this research for me extend beyond this very particular research study where I reconnected with ‘twilight role’. Most importantly, the twilight metaphor reminds us that teacher judgement in liminal spaces recognises ‘curriculum as lived’ (Aoki, 2005; Neelands, 2000) at a time when pre-service teachers are offered false security through planning designs and professional standards. With twilight role, both support and handover of responsibility are within arm’s reach. It is the gaps and grey areas that lend themselves to student input, self-direction and co-authorship. The twilight realm values sign-reading in the moment, over planned action. For teachers positioned in the harsh glare of transparency and accountability, I am arguing for a softer focus of withholding judgement, reflection in action and negotiation. It is interesting to discover that Anne Bogart, an American theatre director, supports the notion of space from which art can flourish, saying: “I

soften by field of vision in order to make room for something to occur” (Bogart, 2007, p. 49). What do teachers in liminal spaces say? ‘Is there a way...’, ‘ Why don’t you try it?’, ‘How could we find out ...?’, ‘Is that what you intended?’ and of course, ‘I wonder...’.

Peter Brook’s seminal book, *The Empty Space* was first published in 1968. He believed when an actor entered a space, anything could happen. Space can be magical, alchemical and transformative when the imagination plays an active role. Twilight role pays attention to possibility, both physically and metaphorically and as such, ‘...like the space of a doorway between rooms, it lacks concrete definition because even though it conveys something from its previous stage, it has not yet become the new one (Bogart, 2007, p. 72).

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