

Teachers, Arts Practice and Pedagogy

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What are possible overlaps between arts practice and school pedagogy? How is teacher subjectivity and pedagogy affected when teachers are inducted and engage with arts practice, in particular, theatre practices? We draw on research conducted into the Learning Performance Network (LPN), a project that involved school teachers working with The Royal Shakespeare Company and the University of Warwick. The aim of the commissioned research was to look at the effects on teacher development, particularly focusing on the active rehearsal room pedagogic techniques and ensemble methods of exploring Shakespearean text and performance teachers were introduced. The practices of working as an ensemble through rehearsal room pedagogy were central to the LPN. Our interest is in looking for possible shifts in teachers' subjectivity, their self-perception, through the process of the project. What affordances, limitations, accommodations and tensions are experienced by the teachers in transposing work from the rehearsal room to the classroom? To explain and understand the facilitations or limitations in teachers' practice, we draw on a range of cultural theories that provide different but complementary perspectives on aspects of subjectivity that include Vygotskian approaches to the psychology of art and acting, Raymond Williams's work on the dramatized society and Jacques Rancière's work on spectatorship and pedagogy. Data in the form of excerpts from field notes, taken in an introductory workshop in which teachers worked with theatre practitioners, and from transcribed interviews with participants in the project are used to provide evidence for a theoretical exploration of shifts in perspective, self-perception and pedagogic practice.

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'To work as ensemble is to learn and make art at the same time ... and I have seen with certainty that every single artist who has passed through this company is going to leave a different artist'

(Michael Boyd, former Artistic Director, RSC, from a video on the RSC website, now removed, <http://www.rsc.org.uk/about-us/ensemble/michael-boyd-ensemble-interview.aspx>, last accessed 29 August 2012)

'What we try to do in education is to create a pedagogy out of artistic practice...What is it that we do when we form a bridge between what that group of people are doing there at the heart of our company and what you are doing over here in a classroom context? Can we form a bridge between those two things and if we can what difference would it make?' (Jacqui O'Hanlon, Director of Education, RSC, from an interview, January 2010)

How the work of teachers and theatre practitioners might be bridged to create a pedagogy of artistic practice is our interest here. What happens when teachers move between the different spaces of the rehearsal room, the stage and the classroom? Might changes occur, not just to pedagogic practice, but also to how teachers see themselves and their role in the classroom? We are, in other words, interested in the possibility of shifts in professional subjectivity and how such shifts might facilitate changes in teachers' sense of what is possible in the classroom. As with all areas of human social activity, acting as a teacher or as a theatre practitioner involves socially organised physical activity that is never freely determined. Rather, particular practices are socially, culturally and historically located and shaped within specific institutional settings.

In thinking about domains of theatre and drama, the concept of physicality, 'bodyliness' is acknowledged as central to practice. In domains of education and schooling, ideas about the body and bodily engagement tend to be less prominent. Schools and classrooms are clearly 'bodied spaces' in which the social organisation of movement and arrangements of students and teachers as physical presences and co-presences in particular settings are central to the operation and discipline of the school institution. What happens, though, when teachers are introduced to pedagogies that explicitly promote creative physicality, and focus on the expressiveness of the body when working around text – in this case, canonical Shakespearean text – pedagogies that tend to disrupt the conventional spatial and relational discipline systems of classrooms? Are notions involved in teaching as practice shifted? Might teachers see themselves and their work differently?

Because we view bodily activity as intimately connected both with affect *and* intellect, we are interested in how ideas about pedagogic practice involves feeling as well as thinking and how physicality, thinking and feeling contribute to a sense of self, one's subjectivity. Researching into the interiorities of subjectivity is, of course, problematic. The recourse here is to forms and modes of action in social spaces, i.e. to the exteriorities of what is

said and done, and to view action through selected theoretical lenses and to subject it to interpretation.

Our examination of artistic and pedagogic praxis draws on data gathered for a research project commissioned by Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) to evaluate the work of the Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) Learning Performance Network (LPN) as a model of continuing professional development (CPD). The LPN programme was initiated by the RSC working with the University of Warwick (UoW), a project designed to reach schools around England. Primary and secondary schools are invited to apply and, according to criteria set by the RSC, some are selected to be 'hub' schools for the project. 'Lead teachers', identified in each hub school are invited not only to be part of the practical project, but also to enrol on a postgraduate certificate tutored and validated by drama education staff at UoW. Hub schools work with RSC education practitioners and members of the theatre ensemble. Hub schools then recruit clusters of nearby schools. Initiating the project, lead teachers are first invited to a workshop weekend at Stratford-upon-Avon where they also see a Shakespeare production. Thereafter, theatre education practitioners travel to the hub schools where they lead workshops that include teachers from the various schools that made up the clusters. From then on, clusters work with students towards producing a Shakespeare play of their choice with some clusters' productions selected to be performed at the Courtyard Theatre in Stratford. Throughout, participating teachers gather various kinds of data using action and practitioner research methodology, supported by tutors from UoW, finally submitting assignments towards the postgraduate certificate.

The various partners – CCE, the RSC and the UoW – were interested in the implications of the project for teacher development. These included the acquisition and implementation of new pedagogical approaches, the potential effects and spread of such approaches across phases of schooling and areas of the curriculum, and the wider potential application of a model of CPD involving collaboration between prestigious arts organisations, university departments of education and school teachers (see Thomson, Hall, Thomas, Jones, & Franks, 2010). Our focus here, as we have indicated, is narrower – looking for detectable shifts in teachers' thinking, feeling and activity when they work with theatre practitioners in the interface between theatrical practice and pedagogical practice. Two key concepts embedded in the RSC's practice are central to this interface – *rehearsal room pedagogy* and *ensemble*.

In what follows, we draw on data collected in the form of field notes made in observation of practical, workshop sessions, along with excerpts of transcripts of interviews conducted with teachers participating in the LPN. Our methods, deriving from ethnography, are qualitative and interpretative. We are guided by readings of cultural theory, a multi-faceted field that in this case includes Lev Vygotsky's work on learning and development (1932/1997), the work of Raymond Williams on the place of drama in culture (1983/1974,

1972 & 1965), and Jacques Rancière, a philosopher whose interests span the domains of the arts and education (2009, 1991). Common to all three is a concern with human agency and creativity, an emphasis on socially organised activity and a focus on the making of meaning.

Vygotsky's emphasis on the social, cultural and historical formation of mind and action and his sustained interest in the relationship between the arts, and drama in particular, makes his work particularly appropriate to our purposes (see, e.g. 1971, 1989, 250-2; 1999, 237-244). Based on his thinking and wide-ranging scholarship, Vygotsky's explanations of individual learning and development emphasise the integral relationship between physical action, intellect and affect in social and cultural contexts. His is a holistic view that sees the formation of individual selves as intimately related to the social order and always located in culture, place and history. It is through a Vygotskian lens that we might capture a glimpse of the formation of teacher subjectivities in relation to exterior, material circumstances.

Raymond Williams's interests revolve around ways in which people work with and on various kinds of cultural texts shaped in and by particular periods of history and various social arrangements. Williams's oeuvre is wide-ranging, but here we draw from on one short text – 'Drama in a Dramatized Society' (taken from his inaugural lecture as Professor of Drama at Cambridge in 1974) – in which some of his key ideas are crystallised. Williams reflects on the changing nature of drama as cultural activity and how, especially through the mediation of television, drama has become 'habitual experience', with people being exposed to more drama in a week than 'most human beings would previously have seen in a lifetime' (1974/1983, 12). Williams characterises drama as means and material for the crystallisation of wider social and cultural aspects and conditions – it is by 'looking both ways, at a stage and a text, and at a society active' that Williams claims to be able to see 'some fundamental conventions which we group as society itself' (1974/1983, 20). Yet, to Williams's eyes drama does not present a generalised, dispassionate or disembodied view of society – rather, drama, represents 'a way of speaking and listening, a specific rhythm of particular consciousness' and 'a structure of feeling' (21).

Philosopher Jacques Rancière develops a particular perspective on both art and pedagogy in which he posits new relationships between works of art and its audience intersecting with a view of teachers in a pedagogic relationship with learners. Pedagogic relationships and artist/spectator relationships are characterised and inflected by positions of relative power and powerlessness in which radical separations appear between the knowledgeable and the ignorant. Such relationships are enactments and material substantiations of relative positions. In order to grasp his thinking, it's worth quoting him at some length –

What our performances – be they teaching or playing, speaking, writing, making art or looking at it – verify is not our participation in a power embodied in the community. It is the capacity of anonymous people, the capacity that makes everyone equal to everyone else. This capacity is exercised through irreducible distances; it is exercised by an unpredictable interplay of associations and

dissociations. It is in the power of associating and dissociating that that the emancipation of the spectator consists – that is to say, the emancipation of each of us as a spectator. Being a spectator is not a passive condition that we should transform into activity... We also learn and teach, act and know, as spectators who all the time link what we see to what we have seen and said, done and dreamed ... Everywhere there are starting points, intersections and junctions that enable us to learn something new if we refuse, firstly, radical distance, secondly the distribution of roles, and thirdly the boundaries between territories ... We have to recognize the knowledge at work in the ignoramus and the activity peculiar to the spectator. Every spectator is already an actor in her story; every actor, every man of action, is the spectator of the same story. (2009, 17)

Here, Rancière draws forward the idea from *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991), that students are agents in their own learning, just as readers and spectators are players in the making of meaning. In translating such a view into practice, there is a refusal of the radical distance posited between privileged forms and positions (in this case, Shakespearean text), and interpreters of and audiences for such texts, whether they be theatre practitioners or teachers. What is demanded is recognition and valorization of performing, learning and spectatorship, as equal and active in the meaning making process. Applying Rancière's ideas help us untangle some of the complexities in the working relationships between theatre practitioners and teachers, and how teachers then work with their school students on Shakespeare. This is not simply about the acquisition of 'cultural capital', it is also about the tensions inherent in playing and playing with Shakespeare, in which players (students and teachers) derive their own sense of the place and meaning of Shakespearean texts. Such 'play' is situated within, and circumscribed by, the demands of a statutory national curriculum that is accompanied by a stringent regime of assessment.

Now to tether theory to practical activity and to the recorded reflections that our research elicited from teachers, students and theatre practitioners as they reflect on their experience of the LPN. We begin with a description, taken from detailed field notes, of an initiating session that took place on a weekend early in March 2010 with a cohort of teachers newly recruited to the LPN.

A group of twenty-five teachers and theatre professionals sit in a large circle in the middle of one of the RSC's rehearsal rooms in Stratford-Upon-Avon. It is the second day of a residential course for the teachers and they have spent the previous day in workshop activities in this same rehearsal room. Although there are no windows, it is a large, warmly lit and airy space, roughly the size of a main stage, with a high ceiling, a gallery painted matt black running round the upper level, a black rubberised floor, and with large, unvarnished pine panels lightening the space at floor level. A relatively new complex, it feels like a working drama space ought to feel, giving a slight resonance to the voice, smelling faintly of pinewood, rubber and theatre dust, and reverberating with physical activity that has taken place over time in the space.

The teachers are varied in age and background, some from primary schools, others secondary teachers of English and/or drama, and are contributing to a relaxed but clearly focused discussion. Leading the discussion is an RSC designer, who is talking energetically and enthusiastically about the design concepts behind the production of *Romeo and Juliet* the teachers have been to see the previous evening. The performance and the post-production discussion are part of the two-day course. The designer says he thinks the theme of the play 'boils down to people who don't fit the world'. Yet, he 'wants to reclaim something of the story

from *West Side Story* and Baz Luhrman's film version', but so that the play remains 'accessible and identifiable for modern youth'. His design is a sparse, white set. His speech is seasoned with questions of effect and affect – how did the teachers respond to the overall concept behind the production design? How did they feel about the costuming? The designer wonders whether the simplicity of the set design 'detracts from the sense of the story'. One teacher likes the 'simplicity' of the production, which they see as 'enough to carry the story.'

At this point a Company director responsible for the production joins the discussion. He is considering the ways in which the set has to serve to enhance the main focus of the production. 'It's the RSC's mantra – bodies in space,' he says. The discussion shifts with the director's presence, seeming to become more familiar, more open and inclusive, as the two company members give a real sense of how the company works as an ensemble. They appear eager to listen to the teachers' responses to the production, taking the opportunity to garner some valuable, first-hand feedback.

Discussion continues for a few more minutes until two of the Company's actors appear. The designer takes his leave and the director greets the actors. Shifting from his relaxed position in the circle of chairs into action, he asks the teachers to open the circle into a horseshoe. He and the actors are to here to demonstrate, master class style, the rehearsal process. They work on the scene between Romeo and Friar Lawrence in which the Friar uses his powers of pacification and persuasion to convince Romeo to make a show of complying with the banishment order, to leave Verona and cool his mood. At one point the director calls for assistance from the teachers, their role being to brace themselves and push hard against both actors as they move towards each other, keeping the characters apart. It is an exercise designed to introduce the element of physical tension to match the inner tensions experienced by the characters and the tensions in their relationship.

One actor comments after the exercise, 'Obviously, we can't use it in the scene...we feel things in rehearsal that will settle in your body...on stage, we rely on things you don't have to think about.' A member of the RSC education team asks the actors whether they can apply to the production on stage the insights and feelings they work on in the rehearsal room. The actor responds that 'it makes it very live, riffing off each other, pulling up on someone else's performance...'

'So, that's ensemble?' asks a teacher.

The director joins in, 'We create together...for other companies, [acting] is a day job.'

He goes on to assert, 'This work sets you free, rather than binds you.'

When he was younger, he felt that Shakespeare wasn't for him.

Thinking about this, a teacher says, 'It's what happens in our own classrooms... building a relationship with the text from the ground up.'

Another teacher builds on this line of thought, 'It's just happened through the process [of the workshop activities]. I feel my own relationship with the text develop, to own the text but relinquish the authoritativeness.'

The director thinks that rehearsal room techniques, working as an ensemble is key.

'If it's not in the body, nourishing mind, body, intellect, imagination, it's academic.'

Returning to the teacher's earlier comment about developing his own relationship with the text, another teacher offers a comment about the effects of ensemble, exploratory work with students, 'It's like he said...layering, layering in our classrooms, a layering process, they're teaching us...'

After the session and lunch, comes the turn for all the teachers to be involved in practical workshop activities, extending the work they had done the previous day. (field notes, March 2010)

Immediately striking is the way in which the teachers are inducted into theatre practices within the broader field of artistic practice. The initial workshop for teachers enrolled in the

LPN takes place in a theatrical space, the RSC rehearsal room – a setting in which the teachers were acknowledged as physical, thinking and feeling agents and co-agents in a theatrical process. The location and workshop process materialises the ‘mantra’ of the RSC (then under the artistic directorship of Michael Boyd) of ‘bodies in space’. The discussion and work with the actors gives substance to the way that rehearsal room practices work, that they are not intended to transfer directly into production but are allowed to ‘settle in the body’. It is a particular *place*, a working theatrical place where ideas are translated into action, and exploratory physical work and reflective discussion are imbued with thought and feeling.

Initially, the teachers are addressed as an audience, assumed by the theatre professionals not to be a passive audience, but as Rancière advocates, as an active audience engaged with them in a co-constructive, meaning making process. Shakespearean text is viewed as living text – a theatrical text that, whilst retaining its canonical status, remains permeable, subject to interpretation and susceptible to current historical and cultural conditions. Teachers are encouraged to engage with the thinking and activity of theatre professionals, to shift between their perceptions as audience and the intentions of those involved in the production. After discussing the previous evening’s performance, the teachers are invited to observe and participate in a ‘master class’ that demonstrates something of the rehearsal room techniques employed by the Company. Such exploratory techniques are forms active learning that move learners towards a practical and substantiated notion of what ensemble work and rehearsal room pedagogy looks and *feels* like.

Towards the end of the morning session, teachers wonder about the issue of transfer between the rehearsal room and the stage. It moves them into reflecting on their own experience, its ‘layeredness’, and they move to consider the ways in which such work might transfer into their classroom practice. It becomes possible that student responses might teach the teachers something about Shakespearean text and performance.

In one of Vygotsky’s later pieces, ‘On the Problem of the Psychology of the Actor’s Creative Work’ (1932/1997), he develops the idea from earlier writing that ‘art is the social technique of emotion’ (1971, 249). In the later piece, he works on the problem, or paradox, of how actors represent on stage emotion that they do not feel but yet evoke emotional responses from an audience. From the outset, he stresses that the work of the actor cannot simply be understood as a matter of individual psychology, or that the art comes about through a universally applied technique, but that ‘different forms of the actor’s creative work ... changes from epoch to epoch and from theatre to theatre’ (1932/1997, 239). The problem has to be understood and find ‘resolution’ in the ‘historical approach to the psychology of the actor’ (*ibid.*). Further, he claims that the portrayal and evocation of emotion cannot be said to rely on the ‘direct interference of our will’, but rather that ‘the path is much more tortuous and ... more like coaxing than direct arousal of the required feeling.’ It can only be understood, therefore, as an indirect process, one that

creates 'a complex system of ideas, concepts, and images of which emotions is a part' (243).

What emerges from this is that ensemble and rehearsal room pedagogy have to be understood in their historical context and that the RSC as an experimental, ensemble company is rooted in its foundation. This is something that Michael Boyd as Artistic Director revives and reasserts. Vygotsky ends his piece by stating the historical approach to understanding the psychology of the actor's work 'serves as a transitional stage from psychology to ideology' (244). So, the RSC's adherence to the principles of ensemble and rehearsal room pedagogy can be seen as an ideological move, one that reflects a particular perception of theatre's relationship with wider culture, its audiences and educational responsibilities.

The perception is that audiences are active, and that interactive educational work is seen as a means through which audiences might experience a reciprocal relationship with the Company and its work. An assumption integral to the LPN project is that the affordances for transfer between the rehearsal room, the professional stage, the classroom and the school hall stage. Our contention here is that such an ideological position is only made possible by the prevalence of the cultural historical conditions that Williams pointed to in the early 1970s: the 'dramatized society' and the ways in which drama has become 'habitual experience' (1983/1974).

That experience such as that represented here has to be seen as working 'indirectly', through 'coaxing' rather than through a direct intervention of the will is the second point we draw from Vygotsky's starting position. The RSC rehearsal room as a setting for the initiation of the project for these teachers, then the move within the setting from spectatorship to increasing involvement in active rehearsal, exercises and playing Shakespeare appear to work through the indirect means of elicitation and evocation. It is an ideology founded on the experience of the whole person, of thinking, feeling 'bodies in space' and how active experience 'settles in the body'. Finally, the enactment and working through of discussion and practical exercise represent complex activities, ones in which ideas, concepts and imagination are bound up with action, representation and sensation. Towards the end of this morning workshop session, a teacher comments, 'I feel my own relationship with the text develop'. Whether this is a comment that represents a feeling located in this particular time and place, or whether it is something that persists and lives on in the teacher is unknowable, although it does appear to indicate a shift in subjectivity.

Notions of indirectness and complexity in Vygotsky's understanding of the psychology of the actor's creative work chime with Rancière's idea about the 'unpredictable interplay of associations and dissociations' (op. cit.). The idea of overcoming the gaps between the ignorant and the knowledgeable, or between performers and audiences, is reflected in the RSC's workshop with teachers. There is a sense that teachers and theatre practitioners are

involved in a joint enterprise: one which acknowledges both the theatre people's knowledge of Shakespeare and that the audience also owns particular forms of knowledge. Towards the end of the session, one teacher is moved to pursue such an idea further, to apply the notion of reciprocal learning and teaching between students and teachers when she says, 'It's like he said...layering, layering in our classrooms, a layering process, they're teaching us...', which is reminiscent of Rancière's insight that 'every spectator is already an actor in their own story.'

Although tightly tied to Shakespearean text, the open and exploratory nature of rehearsal room pedagogy and the promise of ensemble working are offered as possibilities of practice for the classroom. New positions and possibilities for action appeared to open up to the teachers. Some indications of shifts in perspective and practice are evident in the interview data we gathered from teachers who had come through the whole LPN process. At the stage of the LPN when they were involved in devising workshops with their students, sometimes assisted by RSC education practitioners, it was clear that some of the teachers had the production of the play in mind, and, at the same time, were critically reflecting on the whole process through action research, guided through the research and writing up by university teachers. Below, the Headteacher of a Primary School reflects on how she and her colleagues worked to make their own bridge between the rehearsal room and the school –

So we focused on certain parts of [*Hamlet*] where the ghost appears on the battlements and the children were acting that out and being soldiers and standing guard and ... we did lots of things to create the atmosphere. We timetabled the hall so that they could go in there and ... we blanked all the windows off so that it was dark and we've got a big screen and we had on the screen a picture of a castle in moonlight... We got the atmosphere and then the children acted out being a guard and being cold and rubbing their hands and hearing the wolves howl. We did lots of work on soundscapes to create the atmosphere and then we had the bit where [a character] arrives ... who has actually seen the ghost of the old king Hamlet and rushes off to tell Hamlet's friend what he's seen.

The emphasis on the creation of atmosphere through setting (the castle image and blacked-out windows), action (rubbing of hands to indicate the coldness of the night) and sound (the soundscape of howling wolves) is an instantiation of the principle of 'bodies in space' with its emphasis on the senses. That which is *felt* is, in itself, a setting for that which is thought and understood, by both teachers and children. At the same time, there is clear evidence of the transference of a particular, historically shaped set of techniques from the rehearsal room to the school hall, translating theatrical ideology into educational practice. The multi-sensory aspect of the work evokes a sense of place, history and action. It is a complex and indirect way of arousing feeling in the children participating in the drama. In what follows below, it becomes apparent that one motivation for this work is strongly related to this teacher's sense of the pragmatic purposes of schooling.

We then said to the children that we wanted them to go straight away to their diary and write this down in their diary before they forget. And so, in silence, the children just went straight away to the side of the hall where we had positioned the books and, still in character, they wrote a description of the experience that

they'd just had. And we felt that that was some of the best writing that they'd done because it just came from such a powerful experience, it was very immediate and they were still in role. So they did some really fantastic descriptions...

Here the teacher conveys the way in which she perceives that the 'powerful experience', the sensory experience of the children, builds a momentum which drives the children to write in role, releasing them into writing. In her use of superlatives, the teacher conveys a sense of wonder at the children's engagement and ability to write 'fantastic descriptions'. It is possible to see the intertwining of the developmental histories of the teacher and her pedagogy alongside the children's development through dramatic experience into writing.

Right through school we knew that this was something powerful and we would like to continue with it. Writing is one of the things that our children struggle with and they are reluctant writers but we didn't have to say any more to them for that and there was no other information given to them about subordinate clauses and the list of things that they have to try and get into their sentences. But those things were apparent in their writing. Because they'd had that stimulus, they were digging deep for vocabulary and ways of phrasing it that would express the experience that they'd just had.

(Primary Headteacher)

Even in transcript, the Headteacher's enthusiasm about the 'powerful' experience is palpable. There is something revelatory in that the experience of the drama seems even to reach into the children's ability to navigate complexities of syntax grammar and to provide them with the ability and will to 'dig deep' for words of description. From her point of view, it seems that the drama work has settled in the children's bodies, minds and feelings, and this ineffable experience releases them into writing and she comes to recognise what they know. At the same time, she sees how rehearsal room techniques helped students, not only through motivating them to write, but also, in the flow established by the embodied experience, to grasp appropriate lexis and syntax.

Another Primary teacher commented on how work with an RSC education practitioner had 'opened [her] eyes to teaching English skills and drama skills in a whole new way.'

She goes on:

The level of skill from the RSC was just phenomenal and you get this higher level thinking applied to children which you always think is impossible but it's actually not impossible. I think [the RSC] had an expectation that the children were going to understand the text and actually it didn't matter what the language was like. There was no reason why these children shouldn't understand the text so it was a very high expectation from the start supported by a really good breakdown of teaching a text

(Primary Classroom Teacher)

The comment at the end of this extract, 'a good breakdown of teaching a text' is ambiguous. The first reading is that the teacher is aware of how curriculum requirements and the demands of assessment impinge on teaching and learning. But understood another way, she is perhaps pointing to ways in which such openness to children's readings might work across the curriculum and yet still meet curricular demands. It is a realisation that echoes the comment in the workshop about layering. Again, there is something in the RSC's expectation that the students would understand that is reminiscent

of Rancière's notion about overcoming the gap of ignorance between students and teachers.

An experienced secondary school English teacher and head of department told us that she became familiar with some of the RSC's active techniques when she was training to become a teacher, but it is not something that she had followed through in her classroom practice. In what follows, there is evidence that she is thinking about how the work of the LPN has affected her work.

This project has enabled me to see how, even within an English classroom that's relatively cramped and full of tables you can still create that environment that happens in rehearsals

In her mind, perceptions of place and pedagogy are articulated. It is possible to (re)create 'rehearsal rooms' in cramped, classroom spaces as long as students and teacher can adopt attitudes of openness demanded in the rehearsal process. The 'environment' is as mental as it is material, as social as it is individual.

I've seen the growth of students particularly in their confidence and how they are able to engage so much more easily with the language of the script. And the enthusiasm with which they do this because they love to act and even the shyest of people like to have a role in the classroom and it's just blossomed for me and I'm now taking those methods and incorporating them into other English lessons with poetry and other fictional texts.

Two related ideas emerge here – that physical engagement in rehearsal room pedagogies is closely connected with affect, both for the teacher and the students. Further, that for the teacher and students alike, energy and momentum flow out of the activities. The energy feeds the feeling that rehearsal room pedagogy might go beyond the learning of Shakespeare and reach into the teaching of poetry and prose fiction. Finally, it is clear from what the teacher says below, that her sense of herself as a teacher, her subjectivity, has been deeply affected by engagement in the LPN project.

So it's been a huge thing for me to experience and I think it's made a massive difference to how I feel about my job and how I feel about walking into the classroom and being a bit braver than I was before. I've realised that I personally have much more to offer and it's opened up a whole new sort of prospect in terms of my professional development
(Secondary Head of English)

An interview with students in the same school gives some sense of the ways in which their teachers' adoption of rehearsal room pedagogy affected their learning

Well we're doing *Romeo & Juliet* at the moment in English and they sort of gave me a speaking part and I had to say it and I actually knew the language that I was speaking and so I could get more into the character that I had to think about and so it was more like drama than English.

There is, of course, an irony that the study of Shakespeare in English should feel more like drama than English to this student – it is indicative of the canonical authority of Shakespearean text in a heavily tested, prescribed curriculum. Drama, on the other hand, remains a curriculum area permeable to students' experiences and interpretations, subject to the possible disruptions of 'bodies in space.' Notable in the next example is the way in which the student makes the connections between acting, speaking and 'character' as an embodied concept. Surfacing next is a sense of articulation between physical activity and the collective action of ensemble work

It's more physical stuff. It's not really script. You start in groups and you just go on from that.

Finally, a student confirmed the teacher's sense of herself and how her pedagogic practice had shifted to incorporate more physical activity and how, through active rehearsal room techniques and ensemble methods of working, she is seeing students as more active participants in the pedagogic process.

And in English it's changed a lot because we are doing 'Much Ado About Nothing' and, I think, maybe a couple of years ago we would have just sat down and talked about it but now we're actually doing exercises and being characters and understanding it together and doing more drama type work.

(Secondary school students)

Marked in all these testimonies is the shift towards active and experiential teaching and learning. Consistently, there is also a sense of a shift in teacher/student relations, a sense of reciprocity and co-learning, one in which action is more fully articulated with thinking and feeling. If Williams's 'dramatized society' provides the wider setting for such activities, for teachers, the shift in what is possible is clearly related to their general experience of the LPN and specifically related to the embodied experience of the rehearsal room. Instead of approaching Shakespeare as hallowed text, the LPN approaches permit teachers to engage actively and interactively with text and performance. Shakespearean text shifts from its static canonical status as an examination text towards being a living and active text that represents particular 'structures of feeling.'

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