

DRAMA AND WRITING
IN THE ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM:
AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF THE USE OF DRAMA
TO PROMOTE WRITING IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM.

VOLUME I: THE TEXT

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ABSTRACT	8
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	9
CHAPTER ONE: L2 WRITING AND LEARNING IN CONTEXT	11
1.1. Introduction	11
1.2. L2 writing through Vygotsky and drama	14
1.2.1. The promise of the tripartite relationship	14
1.2.2. Textual and intertextual contexts	23
1.2.3. Educational considerations	26
1.2.4. The forgotten dimension: imagination	30
1.2.5. Observations	32
1.3. The Problem: L2 Writing in Portugal	33
2. CHAPTER TWO: WRITING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE	39
2.1. Introduction	39
2.2. Terminology	39
2.3. Brief historical overview	40
2.4. A framework for investigating L2 writing	43
2.4.1. Learner-language	46
2.4.2. Learner-external	49
2.4.3. Learner-internal	53
2.4.4. Focus on the language learner	57
2.5. Towards an integrated theory of L2 writing	59
3. CHAPTER THREE: THE VYGOTSKIAN PROMISE	60
3.1. Introduction	60
3.2. Foreign language learning and the role of language in thinking and internalisation	61
3.3. Foreign language learning and the role of writing as a secondary symbol system	68

3.4.	Learning, development, instruction and the interpretation of ZPD	71
3.5.	Imagination, creativity and the emotions	76
3.6.	Revisiting Vygotskian thought	81
4.	CHAPTER FOUR: THE RESEARCH PROCESS	83
4.1.	Designing the project: initial decisions	83
4.1.1.	A mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches	84
4.2.	The focus of the study and hypotheses	85
4.3.	Method	86
4.3.1.	Setting	86
4.3.2.	Subjects	87
4.3.3.	Defining the Drama Medium	88
4.4.	Data collection	90
4.4.1.	Visual and audio data	90
4.4.2.	Written texts	91
4.4.3.	The question of case studies	92
4.4.4.	Test results	92
4.4.5.	Questionnaires	93
4.4.6.	Control of variables	95
4.4.7.	Follow-up Interviews	96
4.4.8.	Journals	97
4.5.	Data Analysis	97
4.5.1.	Introduction	97
4.5.2.	Initial steps: general patterns	99
4.5.3.	Frames of analysis	100
4.5.3.1.	Linguistic analysis of texts	101
4.5.3.2.	Social semiotic reading of texts	103
4.6.	Analyses as Complementary and Mutually Constituting Processes	104
4.7.	Soundness of the Project	106
5.	CHAPTER FIVE: WRITING BEFORE AND AFTER DRAMA	108
5.1	Drama as a shared language of action	108

5.2.	Overview of the writing	111
5.2.1.	Did drama influence the written texts?	112
5.2.1.1.	Writing before the workshops	112
5.2.1.2.	Initial observations	118
5.2.1.3.	Writing after the workshops	119
5.2.1.4.	Comparison of texts	126
5.2.2.	Quantitative observations	129
5.2.2.1.	Discussion	129
5.2.2.2.	Pre-test and Post-test	130
5.2.2.3.	Questionnaires	140
6.	CHAPTER SIX: THE DRAMA / WRITING PROCESS THROUGH TRANSFORMATION AND CHARACTER	147
6.1.	The notion of transformational processes	147
6.2.	Opening up the process	149
6.2.1.	Ana Margarida as the Prophetess	151
6.2.1.1.	The spoken text	151
6.2.1.2.	The written text	153
6.2.2.	Emergent questions	161
6.3.	Transformation and Character	163
6.3.1.	Transformations of the character of Robert in <i>Old Age</i>	164
6.3.2.	Role-taking and transformation of character	168
6.3.3.	Transformation and personal invention	172
6.3.4.	Transformation and artefacts	173
7.	CHAPTER SEVEN: TRANSFORMATION THROUGH STORY AND CULTURAL HISTORIES	176
7.1.	Transformation and Story	176
7.1.1.	Transformation and narrative links	176
7.1.2.	Transformation and embodied narrative	182
7.2.	Transformation and cultural histories	189
7.2.1.	Student writers and their cultural histories: cultural frames of reference	190
7.2.2.	Student writers and their personal histories: personal frames of reference	198
7.3.	Multiple transformational processes within a single text: Barbara's story	200

8.	CHAPTER EIGHT: DRAMA AND WRITING AS A LINGUISTIC PROCESS	206
8.1.	Deepening an understanding through writing: Ana Margarida's writing	208
8.2.	Writing competencies	209
8.3.	The drama/language medium	211
8.3.1.	The power of writing in role	212
8.4.	Realisations at the micro level	214
8.4.1.	Writing unleashes creative capabilities	214
8.4.1.1.	Lexis	214
8.4.1.2.	The power of the fictional as firing the imagination	216
8.4.1.3.	Writing as an exploratory device leading to new structures.	217
8.4.2.	Language as the mediator of experience	218
8.4.2.1.	Changes in situational mode.	218
8.4.2.2.	Playing with ideas leads to playing with language.	221
8.5.	Realisations at the macro level	222
8.5.1.	Appropriacy and audience	223
8.6.	Learning as a linguistic process	227
9.	CHAPTER NINE: INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS	229
9.1	Introduction	229
9.2.	Interpretative summary	229
9.3.	Discussion	241
9.3.1.	The Vygotskian lens	241
9.3.2.	L2 writing as a lens on Vygotsky	245
9.4.	Educational implications and final remarks	249
	REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY	252

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Framework for investigating L2 acquisition (from Ellis, 1994 p.18).....	44
Figure 2:	Framework for investigating L2 writing	45
Figure 3:	Pretest marks compared to posttest marks (all students).....	132
Figure 4:	T-test results per class.....	134
Figure 5:	Student classification before project.....	135
Figure 6:	Student classification after project.....	135
Figure 7:	Student classification before and after project per class.	137
Figure 8:	Writing apprehension before and after project in overview and bargraphs.....	143
Figure 9:	Scene in Emigration.....	182

LIST OF TABLES

Table I:	Student population.....	87
Table II:	Student marks and categories	132
Table III:	T-test: comparison post- and pretest results.....	133
Table IV:	Student classification pre- and posttest	138
Table V:	Change in category pre- and posttest.....	139
Table VI:	Change in categories.....	139
Table VII:	Writing apprehension pre- and post project.....	141
Table VIII:	Positive attitude towards drama/writing relationship.....	146
Table IX:	Workshops with and without central character	163
Table X:	Examples of different writing assignments per workshop	164
Table XI:	Examples of transformation of drama text Old Age into written text OA.069.2	167
Table XII:	Transformations from drama text to written text in Old Age with reference to Robert's character.....	169
Table XIII:	Significance of package in drama text:	172
Table XIV:	Transformation of package in written text:.....	173
Table XV:	Transformation of the significance of the black box with reference to character	174
Table XVI:	Transformation of the significance of the judges hammer with reference to character.....	174
Table XVII:	Transformation of the significance of the court clock with reference to character	174
Table XVIII:	Transformations of the story of the emigrant in Emigration.	177
Table XIX:	Transformations from drama text to written text with reference to the story of Robert in Old Age	177
Table XX:	Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text OA.080.....	178
Table XXI:	Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text OA.082.1	178
Table XXII:	Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text Emig.050.....	179
Table XXIII:	Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text Emig 016.2.....	180
Table XXIV:	Transformation of visual images with relation to the creation of new stories.....	181
Table XXV:	Transformations of emotions and feelings from the drama into the writing in order to develop an atmosphere for the story	186
Table XXVI:	Examples of quotes from written texts in Emigrant regarding religious beliefs.....	194

Table XXVII: Recurring features of writing competencies.....	210
Table XXVIII: Metaphoric processes and the imagination.....	216
Table XXIX: Transformations of linguistic ability via metaphorical story-making in Delta X and TimeTravel.....	216
Table XXX: Changes in mode in written texts.....	219
Table XXXI: Changes in mode through the same text.....	219
Table XXXII: Types of language use in situational mode.....	220
Table XXXIII: Examples of language use in situational mode.....	221

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores issues in the development of foreign language writing abilities in a Portuguese setting. The study is based on a research project carried out in 1993 in three University classrooms, where the author was teaching. It investigates what happens when educational drama is brought into the EFL classroom as part of a teaching programme with a view to improving writing abilities.

Set in a Vygotskian framework, educational drama is used as a mediating device to attend to a whole set of factors not usually salient in L2 writing. The study covers all 108 students majoring in EFL at that time. The students were proficient in both oral work and grammar exercises but had difficulties writing in English. Two obligatory drama workshops were carried out in English with each group of students during their second term of study and all written work carried out during the term stemmed from the workshops.

Large amounts of data were analysed by qualitative and quantitative methods. Writing assignments pre/post drama workshops were collected. Drama workshops were monitored via audio and video recording. Questionnaires were given to the students during the pre and post data collection periods to measure writing apprehension.

Student writing was found to improve significantly in both content and grammatical fluency in a relatively short period of time. Drawing on linguistic and social semiotic analyses, the project examines the nature of the different written texts produced in this particular educational environment and the interaction between the use of drama and the writing process itself through the concept of transformation. In terms of a larger Vygotskian framework it looks at the role of thinking in learning, development and instruction in a way which bridges difficult conceptual phases in foreign language teaching.

Key words: EFL, foreign languages, writing, Vygotsky, drama, Social Semiotics, transformation

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CHAPTER ONE: L2 WRITING AND LEARNING IN CONTEXT

1.1. INTRODUCTION

“Our lives are enmeshed with story: we exist through the tales we tell of ourselves.”

Warren (1994)

The tale of this research project draws together work from different traditions, selectively rather than eclectically. Specifically it explores issues in the development of writing abilities in English as a foreign language¹ in the University classroom in Portugal. On a more general, theoretical level it examines the use of drama in the foreign language² classroom against the background of a Vygotskian agenda.

In this chapter I seek to clarify the importance of this special educational environment, placing social origins and contexts on a common plane with linguistic matters. My objective is to provide the reasoning behind the tale to follow. Discussion will focus on the two major areas of research that are central to an understanding of this project, L2 writing and Vygotskian theory. Specific reference will be made to the promise offered by working through educational drama: to the way in which it can not only facilitate the language roles Vygotsky describes, but also realise what is needed in L2 terms with regard to writing.

Assuming a view of language as discourse and social process, this project sees drama as a medium within which to learn, as a dimension of teaching language. Rather than figuring in its own right, drama provides a place where students can find a basis for and explore their own stories and those of others, in order to find their own tale to tell. What begins to come into perspective is the total picture of the learner and the benefits of reinserting the *person* into L2 language and literacy. The argument will reflect on the need to consider agency and motivation as well as linguistic skills, two issues that come to the fore when both drama and the larger framework of a cultural-historical³ account of the mind are considered. The following two chapters review the theoretical background in more detail.

¹ Sometimes referred to as EFL.

² Here, for ease of reference referred to as Language 2 – L2.

³ The terms are used loosely, but in general, following Wertsch, del Río and Alvarez (1995a) I use the term ‘cultural-historical’ to refer to the heritage of Vygotsky and ‘sociocultural’ to the way in which this heritage has been used (in their terms, following Leontiev (1978), ‘appropriated’) in contemporary debates (see also Cole, 1995; 1995b p.6).

With the term "drama" I refer to *educational* drama which has been used almost exclusively for native language (L1) concerns to create a learning environment which is different to the norm. When drama is introduced into the L2 classroom it usually revolves around drama games, role play or simulation. As will be discussed later, these exercises use drama as a didactic tool rather than as a medium within which to work.

Models of educational drama encompass play as pleasure, self-confidence, the making of signs rather than the using of signs. The various views held by educational drama practitioners, who work under such names as process drama, drama-in-education, the politics of performance, critical pedagogy etc., are not diametrically opposite and generally have similar focuses, if for different purposes (see Courtney, 1974 4th ed., p25-30 still a good overview). As Maxine Greene puts it (Greene, 1996) "the focus is no longer on the object (the so called 'art work', the 'text') but on the transaction between the living human being and what is to be grasped, what is to be learned."

Traditionally in Britain it has been drama in education, now sometimes called process drama, which has been most influential. Through the building of a fictional world, a safe environment is created in which students, by being "as if", investigate and find solutions to the problems this dramatic environment presents. Practitioners emphasise the power of drama to seek universal truths and understandings (Bolton, 1984; Neelands, 1984). Drama is seen to oppose chaos and bring social order. It is the process of finding a frame through which to make connections, to change understandings and to find truths to do with human nature and its consequences (O'Neill, 1995). Thus drama is a group statement, a place where meaning is negotiated, a "door into knowledge" (Bolton, 1992, p.115), or a prism that refracts stereotypical understanding (Bolton, 1984, p.185). Practitioners have agreed that the critical pivot is some kind of tension created within the drama. By dealing with this tension students rehearse future roles and values (Wagner, 1995). Drama is thus seen as the bridge to abstract thinking (Neelands, 1992a).

My use of the term educational drama is particular and refers to the way in which I think drama should be used in the L2 classroom. Whilst based on the original ideas of Bolton and Heathcote it seeks to move further, embracing the work of O'Toole on contexts, some of Neelands' work on drama and writing and parts of the teachings of Boal's activist theatre.

O'Toole is one of the present day practitioners who has published the way in which he has moved on from traditional thinking (1992). It was he who pointed out that the negotiability of drama is limited, that meanings are partially shared and not fully externalised and that all of the participants are to some degree creating their own meanings. He emphasises that some practitioners may achieve exactly the opposite of what they intend to do. He also points out that "if art is concerned with identity and community, then it must be concerned with power and

control - interaction in context defines not only social but personal identity." (idem). O'Toole writes about the importance of context, arguing that in any dramatic event there is more than one context, some negotiable, some unchangeable and all interdependent. Not only the real context and the fictional context are important. Also of importance are the context of the setting (where the drama takes place) and the context of the medium ("the makers of the drama and where and when it happens – an agreement to use the (often unyielding) space for fiction") (idem p.50-53).

Empirical work on the drama/writing relationship is sparse (see Neelands, Booth, & Ziegler, 1993, for discussion) but drama's positive role in developing L1 literacy is frequently referred to (for example Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod, & Rosen, 1975; Britton, 1970). As both practitioner and academic Neelands has demonstrated that writing can be an integral part of school classroom drama through what he has called imagined experience (Neelands, 1992a; Neelands, 1992b). He emphasises the way in which drama can be enhanced by writing during the drama process (see also Winston, 1996). He also advocates getting students to appraise or reflect on the drama process. Neelands, Booth and Ziegler carried out a research project on drama-influenced writing in schools in Canada (Neelands, 1992b; Neelands et al., 1993) in which writing formed an integral part of drama time. This project provides valuable insights, several of which informed this project: drama creates strong investment in writing; it develops empathy and perspective; there is a clearer purpose for the writing; content is given equal weight to form; there are opportunities for both personal and collaborative response. The power of Neeland's work lies in the attention given to context, audience and purpose. However whilst noting Vygotsky's links between imagination, play and literacy he does not seek to examine the nature of the link between these and the drama. Unlike him however I do not seek for, nor do I believe in, universal truths. Whereas he sees drama as the bridge to the abstract world (Neelands, 1992a p.14), I would argue for their fusion. By linking the cognitive, affective and body language, drama permits students to explore key areas of human existence which are otherwise classed as abstract and inaccessible. Furthermore, when writing is viewed from a Vygotskian perspective, as a secondary symbol system, it gains a significant role in the whole learning process, as further discussion will indicate.

Boal favours involving the audience in the construction of the drama event, pressing for open rather than closed questions; he does not seek resolutions. The role of the leader is proleptic rather than controlling/demanding. Students are active participants, invited to think, form ideas and analyse situations. Drama is thus not a tool but a playful vehicle of learning and collective thinking; play is used to discover identity and feelings about contradictions and unexpected situations. It is this side of Boal's work that I would like to harness to educational drama, its transformative potential, its ability to make its participants think and challenge accepted viewpoints. I am not suggesting political activism, merely the opening up of the term 'meaning-

making” which can so easily become the remaking of the teacher’s meanings for her approval. Students need to become the owners of their discourse. To quote Bakhtin (1981, p.259):

“ In language there is no world or form left that would be neutral or would belong to no-one: all of language turns out to be scattered, permeated with intentions, accented. For the consciousness that lives in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but a concrete heterological opinion of the world. Every word gives off the scent of a profession, a genre, a current, a party, a particular work, a particular man, a generation, an era, a day and an hour. Every word smells of the context and contexts in which it has lived its intense social life: all words and all forms are inhabited by intentions. In the word, contextual harmonies (of the genre, of the current, of the individual) are unavoidable.”

I am interested in drama and writing in L2. The type of drama I use is a mixture of improvisation and forum theatre, incorporating the work mentioned above. In the following discussion its specific nature will become clear. In chapter four, 4.3.3, this is discussed in more detail as the methodology of the project and contents of the workshops come into focus.

When I speak of “writing” I refer to written texts composed in role⁴, a continuation of the drama but subsequent to it (Robbie, 1995). Barrs speaks convincingly of the positive benefits of writing in role (Barrs, 1988), its powers and potentials. I seek to build on her findings that drama, through the Vygotskian link of imagination and action “gives access to linguistic resources that might never otherwise be tapped” and introduce writing of this kind into L2.

1.2. L2 WRITING THROUGH VYGOTSKY AND DRAMA

“ A focus on languages, without deeper connections being made, without a shift of recognition towards difference as fundamental, without a shift of awareness into culture and history, will again leave conceptions of language and learning shorn of a fully social account.”

Burgess (1988, p.160)

1.2.1. THE PROMISE OF THE TRIPARTITE RELATIONSHIP

A social view of language necessitates accepting that writing is not seen as a solitary exercise in which writer, pen and paper are the only components. Where Vygotskian sociocultural theory takes the social view of language further is in the role it assigns to speech. For Vygotsky it is when speech becomes internalised, that learning occurs. Strange, one may say, to deal with speech when the subject is writing. Yet when one thinks of brainstorming or class discussion as a way of starting ideas flowing with regard to essay writing, this is what Vygotsky was

⁴ See appendix 2.2 for glossary of drama terms

advocating. Talking and interacting with someone else often gives a writer ideas, or helps her⁵ to ascertain exactly what she wants to say. Also former conversations and interactions become part of the written text, the process is not linear.

Educational drama functions by creating improvisational situations where students work through problems or challenges either given to them or posed by themselves. Different kinds of interaction take place as the learners take charge of the learning process, learning from everything around them as well as from the teacher. Spoken text is an integral part of any drama session. Out of role, learners negotiate how to carry out the drama. This can take place in two ways (1) in groups or pairs by working on the dramatic activity in hand and (2) as a class by discussing in a circle at different periods in a workshop what has happened in the drama so far and where they wish it to go. These parts of the session are not only to recapitulate past events and create new ones, they allow for the brainstorming of the ideas to be engaged with in the subsequent writing assignments.

Essentially students work in teams (for practical as well as pedagogical reasons) ranging in size from two to however many students there are in the class. Still images and improvised scenes usually involve small groups, other activities such as hot seating or forum theatre work better as a class venture. There is also time for individual work which students may be invited to share with the class. The aim is to use different tasks with different focuses to solicit both personal expression and group negotiation.

Following Boal's teachings on forum theatre (for example 1979; 1992), drama in the L2 classroom can be used to allow students to test various ideas, approaching the subject from different viewpoints. Those not involved in the scene are "spect-actors" suggesting and trying out alternative solutions to the problem in hand, through the use of different spoken and/or bodily texts. Drama is thus used to stimulate debate, to engage with the cognitive processes necessary for the writing to follow. Once students are used to the drama medium, at the end of a workshop it is also possible to let students discuss what type of writing they wish to do. In role spoken interaction takes place as learners improvise and negotiate the characters' reactions and the direction the situation is to take.

An interesting and useful parallel can be drawn with Britton's participant and spectator roles (1975; 1970). The students are both involved in the drama (participants) and observers of the drama in their discussions (spectators), the medium within which their meanings are made. If the students are requested to write in role after the drama they will both be writing as part of the

⁵ I use the feminine to refer to students of both genders except when one particular male student is in focus, basically because most of my students were female.

drama and as spectators of the drama and the drama event. If the writing requested of them is expressive, the centre of Britton's matrix, then they should be able to work towards either end of Britton's spectrum, depending on the task in question. Thus the writing/drama relationship is extremely promising, as it will work with language from both positions.

The types of language use that can be involved in these processes are numerous: to name a few - negotiating, analysing, organising, selecting, informing, questioning, interviewing, answering, sequencing, reporting, accusing, denying, defending, explaining, presenting an argument. Drama can be channelled to give maximum exposure to all kinds of language although, unlike in role-play and simulation exercises, it is not stylised or pre-constructed, it unfolds as in real life. The discovery/practice of how to use the L2 in such situations forms a good solid basis for the writing to follow.

Learners use other types of social process in a drama session, e.g. movement, still image and gesture are employed to work out the nature of the character in question, the "whys and wherefores" of his actions. Through drawing and the making of maps, brochures, pamphlets and models they create the drama world. As this thesis will argue, drama is not only a medium in which to work, it is, in Vygotskian terms, a mediatory process.

The concept of mediation will be central to the project to follow as both language and drama are examined as mediational means. The notion of mediation argues that human action in general and mental functioning in particular are characterised by "the use of socioculturally evolved tools or mediational means" (Wertsch & Ramirez, 1994 p.14). Mediation, in this thesis, refers to the use of a means or medium in the sense of an intervening thing through which a force acts or an effect is produced. In the educational environment for example the learner initially uses or makes her own, the competencies and/or psychological functions of her peers and/or the teacher. In the L2 classroom it is common to use drawings or artefacts as mediatory instruments to allow the learner to re-present reality (Alvarez, 1990 p.105). By this I refer to, for example, cartoons used to indicate the content of a story to be written by the learner. What is unique about the drama process is the number of different mediational means that can be introduced to help the student learn the word or concept in question: drawings, texts, visual images, songs, movement etc. Where these differ from the usual means used in L2 is that they are left wide open for the students to use creatively in ways that mean something to them as a person or a character. They do not prescribe the way reality should be re-presented. When examining children's play Vygotsky uses the example of the stick as a horse, a pivot around which thought and play interact (1978 p.98). Meaning predominates as the meaning of "horse" is detached from the real horse. In the same way, when drama enters the L2 classroom, mediation becomes a mediatory process as meanings engage with creativity, affecting thought processes. This will be a central concept in the activities which unfold.

Drama mediates meanings made in the drama and raises the level of students' thought. Alvarez and del Rio write of the way in which different supports can be used to progressively take the learner away from reality, such as the use of a puppet to represent a character, then the videoing of that event so that the student can look back on and reflect the way language is used, comparing and improving on the learning event (Alvarez & del Rio, 1990 p.121). In drama this is achieved by drawing back into a circle, stopping the drama and discussing events that have happened. It also occurs through forum theatre, as other people improvise the same scene in different ways, sometimes through different orders of symbolism in different modes, to see a different outcome.

As students become involved in processes to which they relate, these (intrinsic, rather than extrinsic) forces motivate their writing. Furthermore as later discussion will show the writing process itself mediates meanings. The movement is therefore from action to communication to metacognition (Alvarez, 1990 p.60). As writers begin to use discourse more consciously, working with words and concepts in the same way as they previously worked with other modes, writing mediates the meanings which are made. L2 often talks of the importance of learning to use a language correctly. This project will show that it is when language is made a dynamic, connecting with thought processes, that it really takes off.

One of the problematic issues for L2 writing is that, with a necessary emphasis on grammar, it frequently becomes an ideologically neutral exercise. The student has conflicting instructions: to be creative but to conform to the rules of grammar. By linking drama to writing and emphasising content rather than structure, the aim is to make writing more fluent. Writing, instead, needs to become a reflection of the living nature of writing as it occurs in society today, rather than grammatically correct paragraphs which say nothing, for language is embedded in social practice (Kalman, 1994 p.161). As Vygotsky taught, we are both the subject and object of our learning, we learn from interacting in the social world then use that knowledge in the world (Vygotsky, 1978). As Kalman puts it, "our experience is internalised and then displayed in the world as knowledge" (op.cit. p.162). The meaning and force of writing is attained not by the rote learning of phrases but by having something to say. What it is that is "said" is the result of the intertwining of the connections between the students and their multiple social worlds, the interrelated web of their social/cultural experiences. As pointed out by Sperling and Woodlief (1997 p.206) in the conversational process, students can construct understandings of how writing is purposeful, communicative and intellectually meaningful to themselves and others. Drama can be seen to mediate this initial structuring of the writing. Thus:

L2 writing is a social process as well as an individual process: language and thought are social in origin. Through interaction and speech with others, ideas are born.

If literacy is an interactive social-cognitive process, the individual's cognitive processes also enter the equation. Writing is a complex issue which requires certain input from the writer as well as the social context in which it is born. In L2 it also requires what is called learner-language input (Ellis, 1994 p.156), an ability to access certain foreign structures. This is the part which is usually recognised. However, the writing of real discourse, in any language, also involves intellectual reasoning based on the writer's intentions and agency (Kress, 1996). This, in Vygotskian terms, is the use and formation of concepts. In the Vygotskian picture, this process cannot be divorced from the social and cultural contexts which provide the motivating force.

Research has shown that the types of cognitive strategy that intervene in L2 writing tasks are various (Riazi, 1997, pp.122-128) ranging from the thinking processes in dealing with a topic to meta-cognitive strategies dealing with planning and evaluating, what Heathcote would call "from complete involvement and identification to involvement with detachment" (Wagner, 1979, p.226). It has been pointed out (Yau, 1991, p.268) that the learner's linguistic ability in the L2 may lag far behind her conceptual capacity. However my concern is not with what types of strategy are used nor the level of cognitive/linguistic ability but the fact that a greater awareness of the cognitive issues involved could lead us to find out more about L2 writing. I am not concerned with mere topical knowledge but with the constructive, interactive process of writing. Through writing in role, thinking is returned to the writing process as the writer reflects on the occurrences in the drama and analyses how she sees the issue, both as herself and as the character. In the same way as Boal's forum theatre removes the stereotype, the correct answer from the drama, drama used for writing in L2 returns thinking to writing. Mental processes return when writers change their perception of writing from the use of structure to a series of dynamic and interactive cognitive processes, full of internal connections. For thought is an expression of humanity. Hence:

If language shapes mental processes, L2 writing involves cognition. If language is the social means of thought, writing is a psychological tool, not the learning of verbal definitions.

As Vygotsky himself stated (1987a p.249) word meanings do change and evolve. They create and re-create other meanings in the same way that writers construct and reconstruct their representations of the world. Words also change when used in different contexts, what Voloscinov (1973 p.81) would call multiaccentuality. By using the L2 exclusively throughout a drama workshop students acquire an awareness of not only the mechanics of the language but also its sociolinguistic and sociocultural nature. If a drama workshop is built up of numerous small events (improvisations, forum theatre, interviews, still images, rituals, hotseating sessions, writing in role for example), the beauty is that each particular activity teaches different students different things at the same time. Verbal and non-verbal processes interact in the creation of

distinct meanings and competencies, which may develop further as time progresses. For example, artefacts or objects can change in significance as the drama progresses. Bolton (1992) gives the example of a shopping bag, which early on in a drama signalled "mother". Subsequent to the mother leaving home, it represented the severance from her family and her past role as domestic drudge in the family.

Consciousness raising and strategic competence both gain importance when emphasis is placed on dealing with the dramatic situation in question. In this sense the drama medium can be likened to immersion or to the year abroad that some students are lucky to have as part of their course. Once students gain the confidence to try out new expressions by speaking, the hope is that they will experiment with them in their writing.

Process writing follows the way in which the written text unfolds. Educational drama maps the unfolding of the ideas behind it, ideas that would be explored on paper in early drafts in a classroom where drama were not used. With a focus on the language learner the discovery and transformation of the author's ideas come to the fore. Thus as in Nunan's learner-centeredness (1995a), the learner reflects on and, where feasible, takes charge of her own learning processes. Central to the developmental process as a whole is this fact that the learner is agent in her own learning. In the drama the learner creates different kinds of texts (drama texts, spoken texts, bodily texts, written texts) in accordance with her own, or the group's interests or wishes. Drama gives the language a purpose and allows students to tackle issues in ways sensitive to their own cultural differences. Drama then is not for the practice of phrases or vocabulary as in role-play, but for exploring something in which the learner is interested, involved and thus motivated.

There is a degree of agency from the part of the teacher, which also needs to be recognised, since it is her considerations that run behind everything that is done in the workshop. By making different mediums and activities accessible to the learners, the teacher is surreptitiously able to open the way to new discoveries by, for example, introducing unfamiliar dramatic forms. However, the student is never fixed in a singular position. She can construct and reconstruct meaning in any way she wishes. This provides good experience for the writing process where the writer is in charge of her own text.

In the telling of her story, there is a need to make choices like the educator in her classroom. These choices affect the picture she makes for other people in the same way as the choices we make in the educational setting influence the learning that takes place. Just as the storyteller decides to repeat one part of her story over and over again so that it will remain with her listeners, or the Caribbean storyteller gets the listeners to participate in the chanting or singing of the chorus of the story, so the drama student creates and participates in recurring images both

literal and metaphorical in order to generate meaning. The multiple meanings made by both participants and audience come from the active construction of the understanding of these events. As the student uses different ways of making meaning over and over again in increasingly demanding situations she becomes more proficient in their use. Language learning takes place.

So growth and development (as speakers and writers of the L2) become essential to the whole learning process. This means that L2 is not seen as something that one has or has not acquired, as in "I have done the simple past" approach. Its knowledge is seen as something that grows at times abruptly, at times smoothly. Writing a description might come easily to some, slowly to others, better one day than another in accordance with the topic or disposition of the writer. Writing after drama can create an on-going dialogue between the learner and the social processes of the drama, which swings back and forth as different topics, come into focus.

It is time to see foreign language learning as more than the acquiring of a skill, a place where students can act on as well as through their knowledge. In contradiction to Kraschen's view that input is of central importance (1987), a Vygotskian approach teaches that the use of language is what lets the student establish a relationship with the object of her learning. One way in which this can be best done is through improvisation, forum theatre and an unscripted lack of drills approach, which involve interactions as near to real life as possible. The student needs to be able to negotiate her personal and collaborative meanings through experiencing what it is to use the foreign language code, in both spoken and written texts. This is where drama moves on from the importance of input to the importance of the active meaning making and individual expression of the learner. As Voloscinov points out (1973 p.70) words are "peopled", dealing with events, time and actions. An account of learning needs to take the person as well as the system into account. In short,

L2 writing is a developmental process: it is not a linear process and is not simply acquired. Development is situated in activity. The student is agent in her own learning.

"Writing is a vital intellectual tool, not just because it allows information to be stored but also because it enables a different kind of thinking to take place" (Perera, 1984). If the writer is agent in her own learning process and cognitive processes are involved as well as social processes, writing becomes the means and place where all are synthesised. When a student writes, information is not only gathered but evaluated and reworked, for reason is not distinct from understanding. Each particular learner makes her own relations, her own choices and value-judgements, located in a particular time and space, but at one and the same time always one among and in interaction with others. Thus critical thinking as advocated by Pally for example

(1997) is a part of the drama/writing process, and the writing process itself has a large part to play.

How and why this happens and how we can devise educational environments to promote this are questions which come to the fore. Vygotskian theory may be able to provide us with some of the answers.

Central to Vygotsky's theory is the view that social relations underlie mental processes: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level and later, on the individual level; first *between* people (*interpsychological*), and then *inside* the child (*intrapsychological*)" (1978 p.57), the process he calls internalisation. This means that language is only one aspect of a much larger concept of socially engendered joint activity, something which is not always remembered in L2. For in the emphasis on the language side of things, the language/thought relationship is placed in the background. Yet as Vygotsky points out, "the internalisation of socially rooted and historically developed activities is the distinguishing feature of human psychology" (*ibid.*, p.59). It is something that will be central to the project to follow.

The term *internalisation* has been the subject of great discussion in post-Vygotskian theory as both the nature of the process and the term itself have been, and indeed still are, debated (see Arieivitch & Van der Veer, 1995; Elbers, Maier, Hoekstra, & Hoogsteder, 1992; Engestrom, 1998; Leontiev, 1981; Rogoff, 1990; Smolka & Pino, 1998; Thommen, 1994; Wertsch & Stone, 1985; Zinchenko, 1998 amongst others). This thesis presupposes the importance of internalisation in language learning, focussing in particular on the role of writing and the role of drama in the internalisation process. In this view internalisation is not viewed as the transferral of knowledge between two planes, one internal and one external. In the oft quoted words of Leontiev: "the process of internalisation is not the transferral of an external activity to a pre-existing, internal plane of consciousness: it is the process in which this internal plane is formed" (1981 p.57).

Following Arieivitch and van der Veer (1995) I use the term to refer to "a specifically human form of subjectivation of new knowledge and skills", the transition from "physical object-dependent problem solving" to "physical object-independent problem solving" (Stetsenko & Arieivitch, 1997 p.169).). It is a process of knowledge construction through action and interaction, the building of a personal understanding. As Elbers has referenced with relation to children (1994b p.222), important to the process are two themes: " the child's appropriation of the existing culture and the transfer of the cultural experience from one generation to the other ... [and (2)] the child's construction of meaning in his or her life". In L2 terms the learner needs to be an agent in her own learning, learning which results from the special kind of understanding reached as a result of:

- (1) social (drama) practices between learner, peers and teacher; and
- (2) writing: reflecting on and developing comprehension of the activity(ies) of which the learner was a part.

Such an approach requires teachers to reconsider the interactive formation and functioning of mental processes within L2. It requires them to reach beyond the transmission model to a relational, contextualised account of L2 development. L2 then is not about practising skills, about an internal process "in the head", it is about constructing, changing and negotiation, leading to understanding and psychological inquiry.

Part of this internalisation process is the use of the foreign language to think with. It is important to remember that the objective is to get the learner to THINK and react in the foreign language. I always know when I am beginning to really grasp the workings of a foreign language when I find that I think or dream in it. In Vygotskian terms the internalisation process goes from external speech, via egocentric speech, to inner speech, which is very different to speech for others. It is neither necessarily grammatical nor formed of complete utterances. It is speech "in note form", abbreviated so that the child "begins to be capable of carrying out mental operations more subtle than anything he or she can put into words" (Britton, 1987 p.24), one of the stages on the way to thought itself. In the drama process students are forced to work in the foreign language. They construct texts with words and with their bodies, communicating with others and thinking to themselves. There is no time for translation. If when parts of the drama events and conversations are internalised, this takes place in the foreign language, the learner is part of the way to working completely in the foreign language, for according to Vygotsky it is in inner speech that we categorise and synthesise our lives. Later in the writing these multi-layered thoughts that were condensed into inner speech, various words with emotive or subjective or significant connotations, can be consciously unfolded in the writing process as the writer steps outside the drama process and reflects. Thus inner speech in this sense can be seen to relate to the personal responses to the drama event. It is freed from the conventional word-meanings and becomes the place where meanings are generated.

Thus initially, guided by perception, the learner engages with language through movement, the use of artefacts (which are visual and palpable), through interaction with her peers and the teacher. The shared, social activity is just the beginning of the learning process which only fully occurs when the learning activity is internalised. Language is therefore an interpsychological process. Subsequently, through writing, which acts a mediator (an intermediate procedure and/or stimuli means), language learning becomes an individual, intrapsychological process. In her own way, in accordance with her own interests, the learner applies and restructures the cognitive and the social through the production of written text. Writing is not merely used for communication but as a psychological tool, a complex developmental activity, a means of

formulating understandings of the social context of the drama and the language used in the drama process.

First this happens by the learner's remembering of events and actions with which she has engaged socially and emotionally, things which have become internalised. The written text then becomes a medium through which the context of writing is negotiated rather than the joining of structures and meanings prescribed by grammar and cultural norms. It engages with concepts. This would suggest writing is not to do with linguistic forms *per se* nor the joining of learnt phrases (a content subject) but rather a form of interaction between the social and the individual (a constructive process). Thus the conscious domination of the language leads to thought: thought about language(s) and about meaning(s), since L2 is not about designing communicative tasks or lists of words to be learnt by the student. On the contrary, English is something which is constructed, a medium within which to work and to learn about learning and culture (Alvarez & del Rio, 1990 p.103).

What is special about the drama/writing relationship is that the drama workshop is compiled of several related but different activities requiring the use of different modes to access different meanings. As students actively engage with different parts of the drama process there are a series of internalisations both consecutive and simultaneous resulting from activities which become significant to the participants. In the writing this process continues, as the writer is able to both step back and view the process and re-engage with moments of particular significance.

When teaching acknowledges the Vygotskian view that what happens in the classroom drama is internalised by each participant, the reasons for introducing drama into L2 writing become obvious. If a character's life, feelings and emotions are explored through drama, writing in role as that person will occur as the result of the various internalisations of the drama processes and the indication is that these internalisation processes will feed the writing to follow. We can say:

L2 writing is a tool of internalisation: a dialectic, cognitive process with the learner as agent. The learner thus takes charge of her own psychological processes.

1.2.2. TEXTUAL AND INTERTEXTUAL CONTEXTS

L2 writing is not only a result of an inner dialogue with the drama activities. It is also a mixture of cultural and social influences together with knowledge of any other language the writer may have, including her mother tongue. All of these revolve around the learner who participates in the event. In Terry Threadgold's well-cited words (she speaks of theatre rehearsal but her words are fully applicable to educational drama) (1992, p.3):

“ the whole process (...) foreground(s) the centrality of the body to the business of making meanings, the fact that texts only mean as embodied and enacted texts, that text and context cannot be formalised as separate, that they exist as a semiotic chain of events, enacted on and through bodies, in which meanings are made now in one media now in another, and then superimposed upon and embedded within one another”.

Actually being part of the drama makes the writing process much easier, for once someone has experienced and seen something it is much easier for her to write about it than when coming to it cold. No two students writing in the same role produce the same text; a dramatic character changes once it gains a different body and different experiences. Thus what I shall call the embodied text, the physical involvement in the learning process, has a large part to play in the process. Volosinov remarks, when discussing inner speech (1973 p. 14) that “consciousness could have developed only by having at its disposal material that was pliable and expressible by bodily means”. He argues the position that no cultural sign exists in isolation, that “every ideological refraction of existence (...) is accompanied by ideological refraction in word”. In this way he connects the human subject, who is essentially first and foremost a body, with language.

Even stories from experience are multiply inscribed by outside influences that are always seeping into personal stories. L2 writing after drama involves not only the drama texts in their many manifestations but the writer’s personal and cultural history and her perception of her audience(s). Where these meet is inside the writer’s head before and during the writing process as the learner makes her own meanings of her experiences. This means that:

L2 writing is an intertextual event: it involves (internal) interaction with other kinds of texts, audiences and languages.

Students find out by using language in different ways in a drama session that certain words or expressions cannot be translated literally. A Dutch friend of mine recently translated a “bicycle with little motor on the side” (for which we do not have a translation in English as they don’t exist) as a “moustache-bike” which is the literal translation. The English person to whom she was speaking had no idea what she was talking about – the Dutch person with her who also spoke English well, laughed until she cried. Provided there are students of differing abilities, awareness of language/translation problems are easily brought to the fore.

Cultural norms can also be explored with help from the teacher, raising awareness of rather than imposing cultural values (Kramsch, 1987; Schleppegrell, 1997; Sperling & Woodlief, 1997; Weinstein, 1997). People in the Mediterranean are much more physical than the British for example. Using forum theatre to develop a scene using different types of body language can evidence to the learners the different ways in which actions can be perceived. For example it is unusual for men to not hold hands in Britain unless they are homosexual. In Turkey however it

is quite usual for male friends to hold hands. In Spain and Portugal they would not hold hands but they are certainly more physical than the British. The teacher can guide the students to explore different ways of relating.

In the same way, when writing, students find that certain genres of writing are culture-specific. Formal letters in English are usually relatively short, clear and to the point. In Portugal they are elaborate, intricate works of art. By for example introducing written artefacts, or requesting specific kinds of writing, comparisons can be made. Thus when a teacher wishes to build on abilities in the L1, the type of writing asked of the student should be considered very carefully. Drama workshops can be structured with these points in mind, to either include or avoid the issues.

Whether the ability to write an essay in L1 transfers to L2 is a debatable issue (see Valdes, Haro, & Paz Echevarriarza, 1992, for discussion). What can be seen in drama is that knowledge of one's native language or other foreign languages, influences and helps one's knowledge of the target language. The two languages are not learnt in the same way. For example, totally different time schemes come into play with regard to attention paid to the formation of ideas or language, or the willingness to take risks with linguistic expression.

When Vygotsky wrote about L1 and L2 he was referring specifically to concepts, to the fact that knowledge of the concept of "kind" or "hot" or "round" had already been learnt. However with adults this idea needs to be taken further. Whilst certain concepts cannot be translated from language to language, most of them can in essence. They do however change with different cultures or cultural histories. My concept of being hungry is not the same as that of the person who is homeless and unemployed, which is again different from that of a child in the Third World. Signs and language do indeed reflect society, its values and its culture. Vygotsky views writing as a secondary symbol system. In this respect it is no different from any other sign: it is shaped by society and in turn helps to shape it. Writing is in this way transformative.

Anyone who has tried to do a word by word literal translation of a text will realise that the process does not work, especially with writing. Students who write their essay in their native language and translate it into the foreign language are almost always spotted. The aim of the educator is to get the student to think and, to borrow Britton's phrase (1983), "shape at the point of utterance" in the target language. In drama workshops, which are conducted solely in the L2, translation is not an option. Strict time limits are given for activities which means that there is no time for translation, be it verbal or written.

In mother tongue situations speech comes before writing. In L2 however, the writing process usually accompanies the oral process; there is a tendency to expect rather than teach L2 writing

skills. Drama goes back to L1, to speech (and movement) before writing. Writing may be part of the drama process but it is never the major part of the equation. Drama draws on different kinds of knowledges; it is impossible to restrict meaning making to the foreign language and its structures. We therefore note, as Vygotsky does, that:

L1 and L2 interrelate: knowledge of one influences the other. L2 is not mere translation.

The importance of writing for a “real” audience has been established by the research work of the Britton and the London Research Team on their work into L1 in schools (1975). The problem of how to create a “real” audience is however, still one to be solved.

Drama practitioners have long been promoting the fact that drama provides an audience for writing (Barrs, 1988; Neelands, 1992b; Winston, 1996). This stems from the fact that students are not acting, they are “trying out the person’s skin” in order to explore their feelings and actions. The only times that attention is paid to performing for an audience is in (1) the elaboration of still images where learners use their bodies to convey the feelings or attitudes or actions of the character in question or (2) in forum theatre where the audience participates. This is very different to acting out a part, performing for others. So while the students are aware they are in a fictitious world, this for the time in question becomes real. As Esslin remarks, “drama is unique in that it creates fiction with real human beings” (1987 p.29).

In drama the students are encouraged to battle with meanings: the students discover an arena in which they make a difference, a fact they value and retain. The taking of a role gives a genuine need to communicate and when something is at stake their input is dedicated and pertinent. The writer may be writing about a fictional experience but if she was there and took part it is no ordinary fiction, she is still reflecting and writing a self-narrative. This is one of the special features of the drama fictive medium: students work creatively and cognitively with reality and fiction together, Bolton and Boal’s metaxis. The drama persona and the writer’s persona shift and overlap, a real exchange of views takes place instead of just “writing for the teacher.” When the emphasis is on the process and not the project, the learning becomes a joint act of discovery. Drama then inserts the human aspect into the writing, which gives it real purpose. In the Bakhtinian sense, words become lived utterances.

1.2.3. EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Drama, when properly designed and carefully structured marginalises no-one. What is special to drama is its creation of a group spirit. Everyone works together for a purpose, engaged with the topic rather than in competition with each other. All too often it is assumed that each learner has the same level of learning, be it literacy or grammar (Rockwell, 1994a p.156). Each learner

brings different things to the experience. By treating students as real people and not as language machines, each with the same level of knowledge, the emphasis is placed on understanding and increased empathy, an awareness of others and their points of view. By working together students are aware of other ways of doing and other ways of saying. There is always more than one producer of any drama text and any code can be used to make it: metaphor, dress, time space, visual images, modelling, song, dance, symbols, body language etc. So if one student is unable to say what she needs to say she communicates by gesture or drawing for example, the other student provides the words and the first student learns from that, building on what has been said. Thus although drama relies principally on spoken language and bodily expression, the boundaries are not linguistic. The drama medium gives the learners the opportunity to focus on content, meaning and social interaction, without necessarily excluding the linguistic dimension.

In drama workshops the teacher's role is, by necessity, a proleptic one, never one of correction. When there is a group problem it is easy for the teacher to intervene and guide the students towards understanding. In the middle of the drama she can intercede in role, provide stimuli in numerous forms such as a letter, an announcement or by introducing a new turn of the situation, or by simply stopping and asking the students step out of role and discuss how far they have got. In Heathcote manner she can upgrade language or use incorrect language in a correct manner without students being consciously aware she is doing so (Johnson & O'Neill, 1984 p.58-59; Wagner, 1985). When students are working out their drama activities she is always available for each group or individual providing whatever help they need. In this sense it is much easier for her than in the usual classroom situation as talking to and monitoring each student individually is possible.

None of this is new to any drama practitioner. However, when viewed through the eyes of social cultural psychology, these observations gain further significance.

If the learning process in drama is essentially a collaborative one, it provides the students with tools to reach an understanding of the connectedness of language and social/historical practice. Moreover, the problems usually posed when working within Vygotskian pedagogy, namely how to ascertain each student's zone of proximal development⁶ (ZPD) and how to deal with 30 students' ZPD at the same time, fade into insignificance in the drama classroom. The students have maximum "drama/exploration" time and all the assistance from teacher and peers that could be required, since the elements of competition and "failure" do not exist in the drama

⁶ The Vygotskian term zone of proximal development, or more familiarly ZPD, refers to the difference between the actual development of the learner and his potential level of development with the help of an adult or more capable peer. See also Chapter 2 ; 2.4.2. and Chapter 3; 3.4.

medium. Hence the problems found with writing groups that do not co-operate or share ideas do not apply. Dominance by extrovert students can be an issue, although the interest and motivation of the most introvert students normally makes them shine, in many cases more than the extroverts, whatever their level of L2. Care should be taken to select groups by random processes so that students of all levels work together. When turning to writing after drama the writer goes to task having already had maximum exposure to the issue she is to write about. The promise is that the discussion and the negotiation in the drama process will spur the imagination to consider different ways of reading the same event. In short:

It is through the directed help of others, through ZPD that the social, collective and developmental processes flourish. Since drama facilitates working in ZPD for each and every student it is an important educational medium.

The nature of discourse in the drama process has already been emphasised at the beginning of this chapter. This cannot be divorced from the other factors that interact in the learning process. What drama brings into the educational context is not only a medium in which the oral prevails and the proleptic role of teacher is facilitated. It also provides fun, which is not always easy to find in a classroom. As the learners work in co-operation with their peers in short drama tasks they use all kinds of communicative resources, bouncing ideas off one another rather than receiving forced instruction. As the process engages with the affect this motivates them to write. They need to find a way to express and communicate, so they need to understand.

Much of the fun in the drama situation comes from its essence as play, which is central to the Vygotskian picture. Due to the involvement created in the drama processes, learners tend to forget they are in a learning context. They learn willingly as a variety of exciting developments take place in a world removed from their own. Vygotsky tells of the way in which a child, in play, knows how to do things but does not know that he knows. He points out the paradoxes that (1) the child operates with "an alienated meaning in a real situation"; (2) she adopts the line of least resistance but learns to follow the line of greatest resistance by subordinating herself to rules (Vygotsky, 1978 p.99). In drama the situation is the same. Students work with metaxis, the real and the imaginary, within the boundaries of the workshop and within the rules of the drama task in hand. They are required to produce specific texts within specific time limits and moreover, the consensus of the whole group is required for an idea or event to carry through to the next phase. So learners are not left to be completely free, they have to work within the rules, but as Vygotsky puts it, rules which become the "strongest impulse". Rules have to be kept to unless negotiated otherwise.

“Just as operating with meaning of things leads to abstract thought, we find that the development of will, the ability to make conscious choices, occurs when the child operates with the meaning of actions” (Vygotsky, 1978 p.101).

By representing and taking a role learners become aware of those roles and their implications. In drama, by allowing the negotiation and challenging of meanings, stereotypical copying of roles is replaced by the making of meanings and the creation of culture (Elbers, 1994b p.227). Emotions are salient. Fear, anger, sorrow, laughter, puzzlement, for instance, can all form part of the process. These create emotional investment in the drama and making of meaning. As will be discussed later, emotion also forms a part of language learning.

Vygotsky sees instruction at school as a continuation of pretend play in the pre-school child (1967). It is play that is seen to create ZPD. Drama is special in that it is instrumental in creating a time and space where each student's ZPD can be worked on simultaneously. As student form groups and work together to produce a dramatic or written text, each student works jointly with others in order to reach maximum effect. As each student brings something different to the process others learn from them and contribute in whatever way they can, be it through affect, narrative or drama. Motivation is created through the learning task itself. The learning process is whole rather than fragmented into watching (video), listening (audio), the practising of skills (CD-Rom). It is contextualised in culturally and historically defined contexts yet removed from reality through the imaginary process. There is no one standard, no right or wrong, students just take things as far as they want.

As chapter three will discuss in more detail, Vygotsky's teachings about the importance of play and fantasy and their link to the imagination are very important for L2 writing. When creative and imaginary processes enter writing, writing is seen as a process of discovery rather than of memory. It is creativity within the context of language use that allows language to change. Widdowson gives the example of a native speaker faced with a sentence in isolation. Her tendency will be to place it in context as an instance of use⁷. The L2 learner finds problems because she tends to think of the sentence in terms of usage (1978). The educational process has to keep pace with the way in which word meanings evolve in society and not get trapped within the rigid conventions of rules and regulations. Students need to be allowed to negotiate.

Halliday describes the development of a range of personal/social functions, which then stimulate the development of forms of language, what he calls “learning to mean”. As explained by Goodman and Goodman (1990, p.231):

⁷ Widdowson distinguishes between usage, “to manifest our knowledge of the language system of English”, and use, “to use our knowledge of the language system in order to achieve some kind of communicative purpose”(Widdowson, 1978 Chapter 1).

“as learners experience the wide variety of functions and forms of language, they internalize the way their society uses language to represent meaning. So they are learning language at the same time they are using language for learning. They are also learning about language.”

What is important is that all these kinds of language learning must be simultaneous. Drama is a way to allow all three kinds of learning at the same time in an environment that is as authentic, natural and contextualised as possible. For learning does not only just occur at chosen moments, students also learn in the world at large. If school is not the whole story, what Vygotsky calls the more spontaneous (everyday) learning environments outside school need to enter the classroom, something which drama facilitates. This was especially important in my project as my students had no year of study abroad as other Universities do. There was a need for L2 to be linked to the demands imposed by the use of the very language which was the object of instruction.

Central to the present argument is the major role played by writing in growth and development. If writing can be part of a process in which all kinds of learning are fostered, literacy becomes social practice. If the individual, the internal and the mental are social in origin, good writing originates from and is constituted in the kind of educational environment created by educational drama.

1.2.4. THE FORGOTTEN DIMENSION: IMAGINATION

*“If
you will
practice being fictional
for a while, you will understand
that fictional characters are
sometimes more real than
people with bodies
and heartbeats”*

Richard Bach (1977)

Imagination is not the first thing that comes to mind when speaking of L2, as the need is to produce text that is fluent and coherent rather than imaginative. However this project will suggest that it may be that imagination has a greater part to play in L2 writing than may have been recognised. If Vygotsky's teachings are correct, imagination and development are inextricably linked.

For Vygotsky, imagination has its origins in action. In educational drama the imagination is engaged through fictional story making - in action. As pointed out by Wertsch and Ramirez, the notion of action implies that "meaning and sociocultural situatedness" are inherently involved (1994 p.15). Writing in role can be seen as writing stories from experience, as an interpretative device, a way of combining experience into an intelligible structure, so that it can be viewed and turned around in the mind. It also engages imaginative powers. No-one responds to the same stimuli, no-one tells the same story twice. Stories provide links, what Bruner calls "anchoring the world" (1994 p.14), namely "giving meaning to words and knowing and recounting what we know." In a learning environment stories are valuable because they give both the time and the space for students to actively construct meanings out of their past events, allowing them to access countless possibilities - for possibilities are the essence of good stories.

Writing that infuses the writer through and through with who she is or what she is writing about is the kind of writing that results from storymaking. To quote Burgess: "Perhaps it is only through story that language, culture and difference can be seen concretely and not abstractly, fully grasped as shaping and shaped by experience" (1988, p.161). Thus there is a constant dialogic process between the action (play) and the imagination as the learner searches for meanings to be made both in and through drama and in and through language. The opportunity to look at something through another perspective and try it out permits the learner to also look through her own perspective and question that. The fictional event not only teaches about ambiguities, it gives the student an opportunity to think about them. The power of the fictional "being" serves to fire the imagination. I agree with Nicholson that students should be encouraged to see drama as "offering the potential not simply to reflect reality but to rewrite it" (Nicholson, 1995 p.36).

As Britton points out (1970, p.14) everyone's representation of the world differs, none of us are cameras. By encouraging students to experiment with different ways of telling an imaginary story they are allowed to learn that often it is not what you tell but how you tell it that matters. Both drama and writing become exploratory devices, investigating rather than copying reality.

Thus rather than being taught sub-skills, the students are allowed to find out for themselves how written language functions: they not only learn the system, but how to make use of it. Writing becomes independent thinking and writing in role takes on the meaning of taking a particular stance as a writer as the student learns how to find her own voice among the many voices⁸.

Bruner reminds us (1994, p.187)

⁸ The term voice is derived from the work of Mikhail Bakhtin (1986). For Bakhtin a voice always has a particular intonation or accentuation which reflects the values behind the consciousness of the person speaking. When you listen to the voice of the other that voice is refracted. Thus what occurs is a reaccentuation of the original voice. Text is seen as essentially heteroglossic, as made from dialogic practices and thus speaking in many voices.

“Narrative is more than a way of knowing: it is a way of knowing that we know something and that we have a right to know. It is not necessarily knowing that is filled with certainty but it is at the very least knowing we have the right to puzzle over situations in a quest for understanding (...). Locating our own stories then is key.”

If the imagination is a central part of seeing things in another perspective and educational drama is about the interaction of the imagination with ourselves, others and our life histories, then critical reflection is the natural outcome. If memories are elevated to a level of critical consciousness, this space for analytical thinking is important in the educational arena. In L2 writing it is specifically significant when the students' experiences are to be seen as sources of new knowledge. Writing becomes more than an exercise in accuracy, it regains the powers with which it was invested by Vygotsky.

The age-old argument of giving the student a safe arena in which to work, an area in which they are another character, a fictional character, does work: an atmosphere of confidence and encouragement can be nothing but productive. Educational drama works on motivation through the emotions, by bringing real feelings into the classroom. Personal knowledge, intuition and experience interact - no one knows better than we do what it is that we feel, since knowing who we are and where we are going depends on what we have done and how we feel about the world. If we are emotionally involved our motivation cannot be lacking. Emotions and values underlie our cognitive processes.

The idea is that the interest generated by the drama carries over into the writing. Once a student realises she is progressing and producing a text that works, her confidence grows and she begins to find the writing process enjoyable. The fact that the writing requires cognitive input on her part is different to the norm where the position to be taken is dictated by the L2 textbook. Thus real writing rather than fake writing is asked for, which serves as a motivational stimulus for the student who becomes aware that written language is a means of achieving meaning and self-expression. Creativity occurs, as her locus of evaluation becomes herself rather than the teacher.

1.2.5. OBSERVATIONS

What emerges from this initial taste of drama and Vygotskian theory is their ability to reinsert the person into L2 writing. If we recognise that writing is a means by which students shape themselves (Chorny, 1980, p.1) and that meaning is always in a state of change, this would suggest that a linear approach to teaching writing would not be the most proficient. It is necessary to recognise that writing in L2 is tightly bound up with the action of bringing different knowledges into a text, culturally and socially rather than structurally organised. Its uniqueness in the different appropriation of time to idea development and language with regard to L1 and the different motivational stimuli involved make it a subject in its own right.

I recall that every autumn term our first French essay was always "What I did in my school holidays". I had it so polished that I could almost recite it by heart. The teacher was not really interested in my experiences, she was interested in my fluency in French. Had this been the only writing to which I was introduced I would never have learnt its powers nor been able to produce the type of essay I later produced.

Drama brings back the human potential into learning and into writing. The underlying nature of writing as a human activity, as a means of discovery of oneself or the world around suggests that by attempting to make sense of the drama/the world, the students learn not only about language but about writing and about humanity itself:

Drama brings back the natural side of language learning.

1.3. THE PROBLEM: L2 WRITING IN PORTUGAL

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the Season of Light, it was the Season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way."

Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities, Book 1, Chapter 1

When I graduated from University in modern languages, I didn't know what I wanted to with my qualifications. I knew, however, that I wanted to use them, so I sat examinations to be a simultaneous interpreter. To my amazement my conceptions of the task were erroneous. I found it easy and frustrating. I was no more than a telephone receiver, relaying a message that I did not necessarily agree with. Unable to hear what I was saying because of the headphones over my ears, I felt like a machine, not a human being. I decided instead to be a translator of text. Then, I thought, I would be able to play with words and nuances on the page. However the words were never mine, they always belonged to someone else. I felt I had so much to say, but was unable to say it. The only time I felt realised was in writing children's stories in my free time.

In 1991 I was a founding member of the EFL department in the newly formed Arts faculty at the Universidade do Algarve in Southern Portugal. I wanted to be around people who had something to say and to contribute something of my own. As a recently formed faculty in what had always been a science University it was to take us time to attract students. Initially the influx of students

was extremely mixed. Together with competent local students were students from far and wide who could not achieve the grades necessary for entrance to the well-known Universities. The possibilities of linking a university degree to teacher training without having to go to another college also attracted a number of enthusiastic students. Early days were difficult, with five books on the English shelf in the library it was a struggle to be taken seriously. Nevertheless, a closely working enthusiastic team in languages and literatures, we grew to know our students and the Portuguese academic environment. Most of our students had attained between 35% and 45% in the national entrance examination, which was alarmingly low. However they were highly motivated and eager to learn.

What I found was that the pupils had a lot to say but nothing to *write*. The potential was there but it lay dormant. How was I to convince these students that it was better to sit at home and write rather than walk on the beach and eat ice cream? I wanted to introduce them to the complexities and the wonders of writing. As someone used to working in various languages I knew that each language had its beauty, each its peculiarities and that one of the most enjoyable ways of exploring them was on the written page. L2 learning did not have to be about grammar and exercises. It could be about ways of seeing the world and ways of conveying them to others.

The M.A. in English and Portuguese Language and Literature (teacher training) is a five year course. In years one and two the students have four hours of English language per week. Didactics is only introduced in year four and teaching practice in year five. It was compulsory to find a course book with which to work and we decided upon *The Nelson Proficiency Course* (Morris & Stanton, 1990) which was at the level the students were supposed to be at but which we needed to supplement with our own material. During the first year a clear pattern emerged. Our students were competent orally and learned quickly with regard to grammar and comprehension exercises. However when it came to writing, all previous instruction was forgotten in the search for a grammatically correct sentence, whatever the meaning.

Writing in the foreign language classroom is often relegated to homework, an afterthought. Students churn out the same pleasantries in the search for grammatical accuracy. Our students were not used to their own ideas being valued. Brought up throughout the school system as vessels into which the liquid of knowledge was poured and which they then reproduced to the letter, EFL in the Universidade do Algarve came as a shock.

At school level this problem may not be to the fore but at University level, students are required more and more to write and to write competently and coherently. In a system where half of the final mark for the year is allocated to written composition, the problem is rather more acute.

This posed us as educators with a rather grave problem. If our students were to succeed we had to make some serious changes, especially with regard to writing abilities. As future educators they were required to attain a high standard of written proficiency not only for academic purposes but for their future professions.

I studied the books we had to use for our classes and other EFL textbooks on the market, coming to the conclusion that EFL writing exercises had nothing to do with writing for pleasure or writing out of one's own interest. Lame structures were provided of how to produce an essay, cardboard cartoon pictures assigned the fate of characters, impossible situations were given as problems to solve. In short, the writing being asked of the students insulted their intelligence. No wonder they had nothing to say.

A project on autobiography was started to see if this would engage with cognitive and affective processes but with a history of concentrating on surface features, the students did not really react. The problem was deeper than we had first thought. In discussions with my colleagues in the Portuguese department I discovered that this was an *English* problem, not a general language problem. Essays in L2 had become a different genre to those in L1

I started by looking at my own connections with writing, what it was that had interested me in it and then broached how it is that students learn foreign languages; writing in foreign languages; writing in general. I pondered over why I had felt so much more at ease in the Hispanic Studies department rather than the French department as an undergraduate, over the distinct teaching methods used in each language; how it was that my languages had progressed so much whilst living and studying in countries where they were spoken.

I kept coming across the name of Vygotsky in my reading and turned to his writings. They connected immediately with who I am and the way I see things. His teachings sparked off different kinds of thoughts about how people learn and the role that writing plays in that learning.

When I cannot think or write I do something practical, mostly I dance. The rhythm, emotion and expression of Flamenco seem to relax and release the thoughts imprisoned in some far away part of my brain⁹. I seem to remember things by literally doing and "being". Just as the dancer needs to know the steps, she also needs to practise. In the same way the writer needs not only to know the workings of a language but to practise putting them together in different ways and

⁹ Recently, a research project with my colleague Bernie Warren investigating movement and thought, linking action through Tai Chi Chuan and Qigong to the Shakespearean sonnet, has shown that language skills can be engaged through a physical approach to language (Robbie & Warren, 1996).

different situations. By doing so, by writing, our feelings, our ideas, gain their own being. I needed to find ways to make the students want to write and above all, get them writing.

With a love of drama, which I studied as an undergraduate, I wondered whether bringing drama into the educational programme in some way would not only serve as a motivational stimulus but also as a (physical) means of engaging with ideas and concepts related to topics about which students were required to write. I wanted to bring the person back into the classroom, to use action and movement, since doing something rather than thinking about it leads to a different kind of knowledge. I wanted to connect with the Vygotskian idea of the privileged position of speech and dramatic play," to start from outside in," opening the doors of the mind through language, action and imaginative processes.

Almost instinctively I began to introduce drama activities into my classroom. There was little time for real experiment but there was enough to show that the inclusion of drama in the classes had more than slight potential. The students lent themselves easily to drama, being open and outgoing and quite proficient orally. Students also seemed more willing to tackle the writing problem after a lesson that included drama. With a particular interest in the teaching of writing, the idea of drama workshops from which all the writing assignments would be set emerged. Commencing from the fact that the drama/writing relationship has never been theorised in the EFL context, my research project was born. I sought to encompass foreign language considerations within the making of meaning through the dramatic medium, taking the learning of a language beyond the linguistic, allowing the students to concentrate on understanding and social interaction.

For if writing is essentially to make meaning(s), writing in the foreign language classroom needs to be about thinking rather than arranging (Flower & Hayes, 1977). Furthermore, to give power and significance to the writing act itself it needs to be both purposeful and affective. When students are active participants, making their own links and doing their own interpretative work, the writing act gains the power and significance it has outside the classroom. Beginning with the familiar, starting "where they are", students should be allowed to be more spontaneous and encouraged to form concepts, not just to write a letter to the railway station for a train timetable. Self-development, writing to learn as opposed to learning to "write", the ability to express oneself in a different language and another culture is not the norm in the foreign language classroom. If writing in the L2 classroom is to be linked to social and interpersonal objectives, if different and diverse ideas are to be encouraged and playing with form and content allowed, the teaching methods need to change. Only when cognitive engagement takes place can concept formation occur. I hoped that by linking Vygotsky and the insights of cultural historical theory with my own use of drama, this would happen.

By using drama as a medium within which to work different possibilities, different ways of seeing the situation enter the classroom. Agatha Christie's world, a contingent, safe world where all is resolved at the end is banished from the classroom. Raymond Chandler is more acceptable: the crime is resolved but never ends there because Marlow resolves a crime in a world of unresolved crime. My dramas rip open the singular position by showing the meaning-event as dynamic/performative, incapable of being fixed. The drama event is not seen as authentic or as a means of self-expression. It is more akin to Borges' "Ficciones", a momentary stopping of the world filled with labyrinths and choice and people's attitudes to things. Just as Borges says that the mirror changes the nature of what is reflected (you can look in the mirror and see the back of your head), my drama sessions require the use of different mirrors, they demand that different readings be open for scrutiny rather than identity, as imaginative fictions rather than representations of universal truth.

Merged together with the interrogations involving play and realit(ies) are the foreign language considerations and final year examinations. These are part, but only part of the writing. When the students turn to their writing they can access the knowledge they have acquired during the drama to reach their own individual and cultural perceptions which by definition are at the same time multi-voiced. I see the drama-event as giving the students the creative and critical tools with which to work.

As Freire and Giroux say, to be literate is not simply to know but to participate reflectively; to learn the limits and particularities of specific language, cultures and experiences in terms of both the positive and negative impacts they have (Freire & Giroux, 1989). Just as Benjamin (1970) looks at people's everyday lives to see the epoch, the students, by exploring multiple experiences in a drama situation, can seek to develop a deeper understanding of the culture whose values are not always the same as theirs. In Latin America Marquez and Carpentier¹⁰ use their "realismo magico"¹¹ to explore changing ideologies and in Marquez's own words provide "a poetic representation of reality", fusing external reality with internal psychological reality. In

¹⁰ see for example *El Otono del Patriarca* and *Recurso del Metodo* respectively

¹¹"Realismo magico" (magical realism) is a literary method that is used by both Garcia Marquez and Alejo Carpentier. The co-existence of different cultures is the basis of magical realism, which must take in mental as well as physical natures of experience. For them, to address oneself only to the external reality is to miss the defining elements of real experience. Culture is as important as any other element. In the context of Latin America, culture has different dimension to any other, it offers a different range of experience to that of Europe. This is exemplified clearly in Carpentier's "El Recurso del Metodo" where a Latin-American Dictator strives to be a Parisian gentleman – but he is an ingrained Latin American part of the environment. He may desire to be seen in terms of someone who lives by civilised laws but every time things get out of hand he resorts to slaughter. The culture which is composed of the struggle between the culture of Europe and the culture of Latin America is one in which other dimensions of experience – which may be mythical – explode in on other experience. For example: Mexico City in the book is drawn as a deliberate imitation of Paris; the Dictator is an amalgam of various experiences; the language is set out deliberately to be Latin American; the whole experience is Latin Americanised. History for Carpentier is a history of ideas and a history of cultures.

Portugal I sought to use drama to embody what these writers did on the page, make the students FEEL the culture. Where I depart from their work is with the questioning of fixed culture, the added dimension of multiple realities and multiple inscriptions, self- interrogation and the challenging of cultural values.

I thus set up a research project to investigate the nature of the drama/writing connection, within a Vygotskian framework, a process which is documented in chapter four.

What follows in chapter two is an overview of the ways in which L2 writing has been theorised by researchers so far. It examines the contrasting attitudes and approaches to research in L2 writing, establishing a framework within which they can be studied. The emphasis shifts from learner language and the written product, through to process and the learner herself.

Chapter three examines issues in Vygotskian psychology and the way they have been interpreted in greater depth. It begins the task of working towards a synthesis of these approaches, grouped around four powerful concepts that have been made available in Vygotskian thought:

- (1) Foreign language learning and the role of language in thinking and internalisation;
- (2) Foreign language learning and the role of writing as a secondary symbol system;
- (3) Learning development, instruction and the interpretation of ZPD;
- (4) Imagination, creativity and the emotions.

Taken together with the introductory chapter they provide the theoretical background for the research project which follows, supporting the view that both drama and L2 writing in this study can best be seen in terms of a sociocultural approach.

2. CHAPTER TWO: WRITING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The place we assign to writing in the foreign language classroom depends on our own theoretical and pedagogical viewpoints. Central to our positions are two major issues: first, our understanding of what it is to write in another (some would say any) language; and second our assumptions regarding knowledge(s), thought and language learning. It is the nature of these understandings and relationships that has forged the divergent directions that foreign/second language writing theories and research have taken over the past decade.

In this chapter I will propose and employ a framework for looking at the various approaches within the field of foreign/second language writing (hereafter L2 writing). So far there is no accepted framework of observation to which the different approaches belong. I shall propose a framework built on the work of Rod Ellis in L2 acquisition (1994) to offer points of entry to work already done and give insight into both what is and what is not entailed in each approach. My purpose is not to give an exhaustive overview or synthesis¹², but rather to explain what each approach has to offer theories of L2 writing by looking at the work of some of the main figures, concentrating on their approach to the two abovementioned central issues. Subsequently I will consider the implications and interactions of these different directions. Contrary to Silva (1990) who suggests that the "merry-go round of approaches" is "unproductive", I will proffer a way to move forward in both theory and practice towards a more comprehensive, dynamic approach. This approach integrates two main goals of theorists (for example: Kramsch, 1987): entry into the literacy of the foreign language and its sociocultural demands.

2.2. TERMINOLOGY

The terms L2 writing and L2 acquisition will refer to the learning of English by non-native speakers. Frequently there is a distinction made between learning and acquisition where *learning* refers to the conscious learning of explicit rules and *acquisition* to the internalisation of language rules and information (for example Kraschen, 1981). Following Gass (1990 p.34) I do not maintain this distinction for the purposes of this discussion since, whatever their differences, both processes are necessary in L2 writing development.

¹² For overviews and history see (Kroll, 1990; Raimes, 1987; Raimes, 1991; Silva, 1990; Silva, 1993; Zamel, 1987) for survey of research see (Krapels, 1990) and for bibliographies see (Schechter & Harklau, 1991; Tannacito, 1995).

Globally L2 acquisition and L2 writing will refer to theories of both (1) English as a foreign language (EFL) and (2) English as a second language (ESL). The former relates to the teaching of English in non-English speaking countries such as Portugal or Japan. The latter refers to the teaching of English in a country where the language plays an institutional or social role in the community, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Nigeria or Zambia. In ESL this use of the term "second" to refer to English, be it a second, third or even fourth language is unfortunate in many settings when perhaps "additional language" would avoid possible derogatory overtones (see Ellis, 1994 p.11). Yet, whilst there are obvious differences regarding the social and academic contexts, the type of pupil and classroom, both types of student have as their aim to become proficient writers in a language other than their own. To date the distinction between them has been blurred in the relevant literature (Santos, 1992 p.9), although there is a call for research into languages other than English (see for example Henry, 1996; Johns, 1990, p.24)]. Pennycook in his discussions of EIL (English as an International Language), a "particular and predominant way of articulating the position of English in the world" (a political understanding of discourse) (1994, p. 104) emphasises the problems of the distinctions in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong or India (1994, p.297). These issues, whilst noted, will not be pursued here. My intention is to look at what it is that has been found out about L2 writing so far.

2.3. BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

It is only over the past two decades that L2 acquisition research has become a field in its own right. However, L2 teaching began about a century ago¹³, the foundation of the Modern Language Association of Great Britain taking place in 1892, following that of the U.S.A. in 1883. Furthermore, it was back in 1904 that the English translation of Otto Jespersen's "How to Teach a Foreign Language" was published, "one of the most widely read books on language teaching this century" (Stern, 1983 p.99). Early work in the 1920's centred around Harold Palmer's "The Principles of Language Study" in which he is cited to have come "closest among earlier writers to the concept of language pedagogy based on theoretical disciplines" (Stern, 1983, op cit. p.100). Research into L2 pedagogy began properly in the 1940's, led by work in the English Language Institute in the University of Michigan. As L2 pedagogy was based on linguistic research, it led to an emphasis on linguistic competence. During the post-war period what came to be known as the 'American Army Method' also became prominent, in which the advantages of intensive language training and a focus on oral skills were emphasised. L2 pedagogy made new discoveries as research journals and Language Associations were formed (both *CILT* - Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, UK and *TESOL* - Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages, U.S.A. were founded in 1966).

In the 1950's the audio-visual approach (audio-lingual in U.S.A.) was introduced with the work of Nelson Brooks and Edward Stack. Books were replaced by tape recorders, language laboratories and slide projectors. Decontextualised drills and stimulus/response repetition and reinforcement exercises were used to teach the four skills, of which writing was the last. However, it was only in 1961 that the first language laboratory was established in an educational institution in Great Britain - the Ealing Technical College.

It was Chomsky's work that shook the Skinnerian theories of language learning upon which this approach was based. His 1966 address to language teachers at the Northeast Conference marked the point where pedagogues began to take note and listen and question their methods. By 1970, as Stern comments, "uncertainty" in L2 pedagogy was rife (1983 p.108). Chomsky's version of linguistic competence related to sentence-level grammatical competence. However it did pave the way for later developments (Savignon, 1987 p.236).

It was as a reaction to Chomsky's work in L1 that new pedagogical methods developed in L2. The Silent Way, Community Language Learning and Suggestopaedia all attracted attention. Not unexpectedly they created hot debate with advocates of the "drills approach". However it was the work of applied linguists in Britain, especially Candlin, Widdowson and Wilkins that became most influential and long-lasting. Their work was based on that in discourse analysis, speech act theory, linguistics and sociolinguistics in L1. It led to the publishing of the syllabuses for the *Threshold Level*, namely the lowest level at which language competence(s) could be attained, by the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (Coste started with the French version in 1976, then Slagter elaborated the Spanish in 1979, van Ek did the English version in 1980 and Baldegger et. al. the German in 1981). The branch of pedagogy called English for Special Purposes (ESP) also stems from this period.

From the mid 1970's the overriding emphasis was on *communicative* competence which originates mainly from the work in L1 of Hymes (see for example 1972) but which has also been traced back to the work of Wittgenstein (1953), Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) (see Wringe, 1996 p 229). In contrast to Chomsky, Dell Hymes presented the notion that language is a social rather than a purely intellectual ability, placing importance on contextual features which influence the communicative event. Language is thus seen as a communicative event taking place in a particular setting with a particular topic, channel, code and message-form, to borrow his own terms. Thus speech communities and speech events, involving the speaker /listener become as important as the structures used to communicate. In L2 the subsequent emphasis on communicative abilities (Munby, 1978; Widdowson, 1978; Wilkins, 1976) shifted the focus from

¹³ For a good historical review of L2 pedagogy see Stern (1983 pp. 75-116). For L2 theory see (Wringe, 1996).

correct language *usage* to language *use*, namely from the way language is manifested to the way it is realised in communication. L2 then became divided into “areas of experience”, namely language functions, the four skills (of which writing was one) and different topics and situations in which they are used. This raised pertinent questions as to what “knowing” a language might entail and spurred research into different kinds of language syllabus design.

The work of James Britton in the 1970's in L1 (for example 1970) has also had great impact on L2. Influenced by Vygotsky and Halliday, Britton brings cognitive, social and developmental issues into language learning. He argues that we use language as a means of “organising our representation of the world” and looks specifically at the role of speech in learning. Accordingly, individual expression and learning processes come to the fore. In L2 this has led theorists and pedagogues to look at the language/thought relationship and at process as well as structure. Britton's work with the London Writing Research Team (1975) has drawn attention to the importance of audience and the need for students to have a purpose when writing. This has also filtered into L2 and research is still continuing in this area (for example Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996).

In recent years, learners' individual differences have come particularly to the fore in L2. It is usual to speak of *strategies* used by language learners as the “sets of cognitive resources which readers draw on in attempting to make sense of texts” (Wallace, 1992a p.82) (see also Donato & McCormick, 1994; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Skehen, 1991). This broad term is used to cover both general approaches and specific actions or techniques used by learners, divided by O'Malley and Chamot into the metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective (Chamot, 1987). Central to this approach is the learner as agent in her own learning process as opposed to the learner as the acquirer of the abstract entity called language. Thus both audience and social context become important.

Since 1970, this disparate nature of L2 theory and practice together with the different didactic models which have arisen (see Dakowska, 1996; and Hatch, 1983 for discussion and overview) has given rise to numerous kinds of L2 research, each based on different assumptions regarding language and learning. Particularly influential work has been carried out by Kraschen in ESL. He has taken L2 theory further with regard to communicative approaches with his hypotheses regarding language learning, in particular his monitor and input hypotheses (1981; 1987). Focus has thus been placed on an array of different conceptions and priorities about the importance of input, language, structure and explanation, the importance of L1 and social context as well as form, whilst matters such as motivation, memory and personality have received little attention. However, theory has not always reached L2 pedagogy.

In the classroom the old audio-visual techniques have almost completely disappeared. Language laboratories still exist but their efficiency is suspect (Green, 1975; see also research quoted in Wringe, 1996 p.231). They were first replaced by video courses. More recently Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has superseded them. CD-ROM courses, which attempt to immerse the learner in the foreign land, take her through a series of virtually real events in which she hears and imitates native speakers whilst testing herself against the computer. In this innovative developmental period, CALL seems to still be searching for its own theoretical direction, mixing drills with communicative competence. Research and interest in this method is growing rapidly. Nevertheless, although widely used by adult learners at home, CALL is still seen as a luxury in most classrooms.

From this brief historical background we can see that L2 acquisition is an enormous and complex field of enquiry. Within this, my concern is with one particular part: writing. It was in the 1980's that L2 professionals began to concentrate on L2 writing, perhaps due to the occurrence of the so-called "Writing Revolution" in L1 in the United States. For the most part, discussion relies on ESL research and it is to the research on writing in ESL and their relatively new journal, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, founded in 1992, that L2 writing theorists and/or pedagogues turn for work in the field, as it is here that the main body of work on L2 writing as a discipline in its own right is to be found. Naturally, our views on the separate but interrelated field of research and pedagogy, L2 acquisition, also come into play, implicitly or explicitly, as the case may be and it is important to bear in mind the general directions this has taken. Accordingly as theories in L2 acquisition have progressed, focus has been displaced from the audio-visual, the skills or the communicative approaches to an emphasis on what Silva has coined "the elements of L2 writing" (1990) : the writers, the readers, the texts and particular contexts. It is this shift that has led to lively, and sometimes contentious, debate (see Susser, 1994).

2.4. A FRAMEWORK FOR INVESTIGATING L2 WRITING

Ellis' framework for investigating L2 acquisition (1994, p. 18) classifies the different directions research has taken, allowing for their overlap and interaction. It is this dynamic quality that makes it so efficient and particularly useful for adaptation. The framework is reproduced below in Figure 1

Figure 1: Framework for investigating L2 acquisition (from Ellis, 1994 p.18)

Focus on learning		Focus on the Learner	
Description	Explanation		
Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
<i>Characteristics of Learner language</i>	<i>Leamer-external factors</i>	<i>Leamer-internal mechanisms</i>	<i>The language learner</i>
Errors	social context	L1 transfer	General factors e.g. Motivation
Acquisition orders and developmental sequences	input and interaction	learning processes	Learner strategies
variability		communication strategies	
pragmatic features		knowledge of linguistic universals	

This framework shows clearly and concisely the way in which classification moves from a focus on the learning event and accounts of the basic units of language structure, to a focus on the language learner herself and what it is that promotes success in language learning. It maps the way in which different theoretical traditions inform each area in accordance with their views on written text, context, thought and language. It does not view research as necessarily fitting into reductive, static categories. Rather, it makes sense of L2 acquisition as a group of theoretical stances that, taken together, form a complex debate regarding theory and practice; theories which often generate new ones in their process of interaction. Thus the framework looks not only at the approaches themselves but also at the ways in which knowledges are made, as dialogic practices. Therefore the areas in the framework can be seen as different points of entry to the phases in an overall understanding of language acquisition in which none is mutually exclusive. In his writings Ellis seeks to explore the implications and results of these interactions (Ellis, 1994 p.19). As he himself points out, a full explanation of L2 acquisition would need to take into account these different layers and how they interrelate.

My treatment of L2 writing is based on a view of language as both a realisation and a construction/transformation of discourse processes and texts. Underlying and essential to this notion is an integrative and dynamic conception of L2 writing which challenges some of the conventional boundaries between language structure and learner development.

I have adapted Ellis' framework to show the different areas of investigation in L2 writing which are influenced by the broad theoretical underpinnings of L2 acquisition in general. This can be

seen in Figure 2. The figures are not totally interchangeable, as my framework is a reworking of the original. However the general moves are the same, a continuum moving from a focus on learning to the language learner, from a description of learners' abilities to an explanation of how learners develop that knowledge, how they use it and what factors cause variation in individual learners.

Figure 2: Framework for investigating L2 writing

Focus on learning		Focus on the Learner	
Description	Explanation		
Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4
<i>Characteristics of learner language</i>	<i>Leamer-external factors</i>	<i>Leamer-internal mechanisms</i>	<i>The language learner</i>
product text-based research role of language textual considerations accuracy structural features	critical literacy transformative pedagogy audience genre/text type socio-cognitive accounts writing as a social act role of instruction peer feedback	L1/L2 transfer learning processes written text features cognitive accounts language awareness	L1/L2 differences individual learner differences composing processes motivation learner strategies

Although focus on L2 writing as an independent area of specialisation only properly began in the 1980s, "writing", in its various forms, has been a component of L2 acquisition from its conception. It is thus natural that L2 writing has moved along the same continuum as L2 acquisition and it is here that Ellis' framework of classification is useful. Furthermore, in the same way, L2 writing is full of interrelationships between the different traditions. So, although not necessarily exactly the same as in L2 acquisition, the areas in the framework for L2 writing are seen as fluid and overlapping, as part of a network of interrelationships.

I cannot review the totality of the work in each area within this space. Instead, within each area I shall examine what is particular (and what is common) to each approach. I shall select a few examples of research which illustrate the main aspects of the L2 writing traditions with regard to written text, context and language. My aim is to (1) show the way that L2 writing research has been shaped by the different interests, focuses and interrelationships of researchers coming from different intellectual traditions and (2) use my adapted framework as a means of looking at

what has been achieved in the study of L2 writing so far. This will provide the backdrop for the theoretical position which informs this thesis.

In area 1 I shall look at L2 writing research oriented to the linguistic perspective, which regards writing as a means of producing language for the practice of grammatical structure and fluency. In area 2 I turn to learner/external factors, in particular the influence of social context and attention to audience. With the emphasis on language as social text, research in the area of critical literacy will also be examined. In area 3 learner/internal or cognitive accounts come into focus. Also important here is the role of L1 and the role of instruction/feedback. Area 4 turns to the language learner, individual differences realised in learner strategies and an emphasis on writing processes.

2.4.1. LEARNER-LANGUAGE

“Writing without structure accomplishes as little as writing a mock structure... [Students] need structure, they need models to practice, they need to improve even mechanical skills...”

Rodrigues, 1985 quoted in Horowitz (1986b)

Traditions that see writing principally as the production of written text as the ability to produce correct grammatical structures were the first to influence L2 writing. Product or text-based research (for example Connor, 1987a; Hinds, 1987) corresponds most closely to the current-traditional paradigm in L1 (Richard Young, 1978), from which some of its theories originally stem. The oldest of all the product-oriented approaches, which began with the audio-lingual methods of the 60s, continues to emphasise grammatical form, valuing writing for its reinforcement of grammar rules (Qi, 1994). Composition tasks are controlled and skills in the manipulation of linguistic form are fostered (Byrd & Galligane, 1990). Subsequently, Kaplan's famous “doodles article”, representing English thought patterns as “dominantly linear”, led to an emphasis on rhetorical form (1966; 1987). More recently the work of Reid, Connor and Johns, based on the form-dominated approach, has focused on textual features of discourse where, for example, the number of pronouns in a written text are counted and results compared for learners from different cultures (see Connor, 1990; and Reid, 1990, for a summary of research).

The recognition that L2 students, like any others, have precise (pragmatic) objectives and set examinations to pass within a short time scale has led to a further development, what Raimes calls “field-specific instruction” (Raimes, 1991, p411). This instruction is basically content-

based since it originates from ESL/EAP¹⁴. By concentrating on linguistic and rhetorical form, it puts the emphasis on the need to pass examinations and consideration of the academic audience (Reid, 1989). To this end it chooses to reject the process strategies of revising and editing and creative writing, criticised so severely by Horowitz (1986a; 1986b) for failing to take into account the realities of having to write a L2 essay under time pressure. Instead it advocates explicit grammar instruction and modelling. A student who is comfortable with managing the “form”, is seen to be more able to concentrate on the “content” of the writing assignment (Reid, 1983, p.152). Note that “content” usually refers to the academic subject matter of the field the ESL/EAP student is studying. However, as Nunan has pointed out, the learners do thus become aware of the goals and content of the curriculum, learning programme or pedagogical materials (1995b, p.136). In EFL situations, content is more likely to be lacking and emphasis placed on the solidification of grammar instruction through “fluency practice”.

An approach focusing on learner language therefore values structuring input and controlling output. Writing is checked for variables such as length, control of topic areas, mechanical accuracy, functional ability, complexity, comprehensibility, expression of temporal sequences, organisation, vocabulary, stylistics etc. With such emphasis placed on the workings of the system, attention is drawn to errors. Critics cringe at what they call the “effect of the red pen” (Semke, 1984), claiming that as long as product is the only object of study, nothing will be learnt about the strategies, difficulties and constraints that affect this product (Zamel, 1983a, p.154). They feel that a writer who is concerned with only one level of discourse will “transform significance, voice and purpose into unrecognisable background information” (Miller (1928;231) quoted in Zamel, 1983a). Counter-critics say that learners just do not have time to go through the process procedures advocated (see for example Raimes, 1983 ; Raimes, 1985; Raimes, 1991; Zamel, 1983b) and that time should be spent on the formal linguistic features of text together with certain pragmatic aims such as the teaching of illocutionary acts. They deem the process approach a “Romantic notion of untrammelled self-expression or creativity” (Scott, 1997). Hence each view of L2 writing is based on a radically different set of assumptions and the debate is as lively as ever it was in 1986 with Horowitz’s famous first criticism of the “process movement” (1986a).

Obviously there has been a reaction to learner-language work not only by the advocates of process methods but by theorists from other traditions. Nunan, for example, insists on the need to explore the ‘organic, nonlinear relationships between language forms and communicative functions’ or in Halliday’s (1985) terms to explore the relationships between what language is and what language does (1995b, p.154). He also advocates the creation of learning

¹⁴ English for Academic Purposes

environments where learners have opportunities to articulate and try out the way in which language works. Context thus becomes important.

Other theories and practices have now entered the picture and in particular researchers in this area are against the political goals of those who take a sociopolitical stance for whom writing is socially constructed. These positions will be discussed in the next section.

The learner language area is not however exclusive of all the others. In her search for a comprehensive theory of L2 writing Connor promotes the view that product approaches actually do consider several parts of the composing process. She argues that the written product should be taken into account for analysis of process to be complete (1987b). However, those who do not subscribe to this approach criticise learner language most for its rigidity for its exclusion of any type of process work, or attention to sociocultural or ideological matters. Cognitive theorists criticise its lack of recognition of 1) cognitive styles 2) the cognitive, affective or social aspects of composing and 3) the variety of instructional approaches.

Selinker's work on interlanguage (1969; 1972; 1984; 1992), which refers to the special mental grammars that learners construct during their language learning process, is based on rule-governing principles. Thus even errors are rule-governed. Research on interlanguage has provided data relating to language transfer and L2 learner strategies. "Learner strategies" (in a broader sense than first defined by Selinker) has thus become part of L2 vocabulary and work on the mental processes involved in L2 acquisition is taking place. Interlanguage research has therefore findings which describe how learners use an L2. The problem is that interlanguage still has to find out about writing. So far it has concentrated on speech acts and has to the main ignored writing. This is one particular area where writing research is called for and where a written product would provide easily quantifiable data.

What is particular to research on learner-language is the production of this quantifiable data from which conclusions can be statistically drawn. The results of error analyses have informed researchers of such things as the transfer of errors from L1 to L2, or the type of error inherent in texts of students of differing levels of ability or of different age groups. As noted by Ellis (1994, p.21), one of the most important findings in L2 acquisition to date is the existence of developmental sequences, namely that the acquisition of a grammar occurs in stages. Research on product-oriented writing has been instrumental in this finding. Product-oriented research has also permitted researchers to explore the nature of variability in language learning.

Moreover, one thing is certain: as Santos has pointed out (1992, p.1), the product paradigm is the method that still predominates in the classroom, whatever the theories dictate.

2.4.2. LEARNER-EXTERNAL

"We do not experience language in isolation ... but always in relation to a scenario, some background or persons and actions and events from which the things that are said derive their meaning."

Halliday (1978)

"Any effort to write about the self or reality always comes in relation to previous texts."

Faigley (1986, p.536).

Views and versions of literacy, which take into concern the learner-external relationship, consider the importance of context and audience as well as text and language. Whilst the process/product debate has focused on classroom and institutional matters, social theories have related literacy practices in the classroom to the way they are perceived and used both in the institution and in society at large. With the introduction of Hallidayan grammar into language work, focus has shifted from the letter and the word to the whole written text and to that text within various sociocultural contexts. Work in L1 known as critical language awareness, taking theoretical inspiration from work undertaken by Hodge and Kress (Fowler, 1981; Fowler & al., 1979; Hodge & Kress, 1993), Fairclough (1989; 1992) and Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), has created an intellectual climate which permits a view of literacy based on ideology and discourse as social practice. These ideas are slowly filtering into L2 in research focused on contextual and societal issues of writing.

One branch of the work is known as critical literacy (not to be confused with critical *thinking*, which is defined differently by EAP, cognitive psychology and transformative pedagogy). Exponents of critical literacy criticise communicative classrooms for "chatting" about trivial issues and a case is made for L2 to promote more serious, elaborated discussions of texts. Wallace's work on reading interweaves the personal and the sociocultural (see for example 1992b). It argues for an awareness of literacy practices that is mediated by wider sociocultural values and attitudes (Wallace, 1992a p.83). Interpretative features are introduced to analyse different discourses; readers relate texts to their own particular but historically situated experiences and to wider social literacy practices.

Strict advocates of critical literacy criticise the process movement for 1) emphasis on the individual (and individual voice) 2) emphasis on expression before communication and 3) its concern that strict rules and conventions may be inhibiting to students and, in the process

restrict their capabilities for using the language (Carter, 1997, p.38). Rather, it sees social processes as shaping the personal. Thus work in this sector directly confronts issues of interpretation of texts, since if discourse is seen in varying degrees to be defined and controlled by the social institutions within which it is embedded, there is no one way in which meanings can be read. At the moment the emphasis is on reading and work on L2 writing is still in its early stages and so far I know of no published work on writing. However, due to the growing interest in this area and the reading/writing relationship I expect L2 writing research to be available in the near future.

Researchers in the "Research and Practice in Adult Literacy Group" at Lancaster University, including Clark, Ivanic and Barton, have promoted their own view of critical language awareness (CLA) which they call consciousness-raising about the writing process (Clark & Ivanic, 1991). This however is slightly different in orientation. Whilst this method focuses on the development of the writer's sense of personal worth through critical awareness of the writing process, critical literacy concentrates on the different ways of using a text. CLA allows the writer to shift from writer to reader for the purpose of critique, when the writer deems necessary or interesting; not as a matter of course.

A second tradition, known by different names but which I shall call transformative pedagogy, has been inspired by the work of Freire (for example 1970; 1978; 1991; 1997). The main strand of Freirian thought to enter L2 acquisition is the use of dialogic inquiry through what is called problem posing. Transformative pedagogy assumes that (1) language use is embedded in context-specific social practices and (2) educators should help students explore the personal implications, and socio-political consequences of a text, theme or piece of knowledge (Schleppegrell, 1997 p 70).

As pointed out by Pally (1997), this approach has been used for teaching basic writers (Shor, 1980; Shor, 1992), for teaching ESL (Auerbach, 1992; Auerbach & Burgess, 1985; Graman, 1988) and for training foreign language teachers (Bailey, 1996). By Pally (op. cit.) it has been linked to study of sustained content study (studying one area over time) with relation to both speech and writing. She links it to the areas of EAP and cognitive psychology, through what is defined as critical thinking, in order to "heighten student awareness of the interdependence between writing and discourse communities" (ibid., p. 301). Students thus practise different ways of organising their work, compare it to their L1 and note the advantages and limitations of different versions. Those who promote transformative pedagogy therefore see literacy as more than social practice, they see it as concerning power relations (Benesch, 1993; Severino, 1993). They believe students need to be given a chance to consider what they write and how it reflects their beliefs (McKay, 1993, p.73).

The main criticism of this type of work is the politicisation of content. There are those who believe that literacy goals can only be achieved by addressing power issues in the larger social structure (see for discussion Auerbach, 1986; McKay, 1993; Pierce, 1989) and others who believe that concerns that are so politically orientated do not belong in theories of language acquisition (Christie, 1993; Johns, 1995) as students are often inexperienced both linguistically and politically. However, although there is discussion around some of the critical branches of this pedagogy, this does not mean that social matters are not central to language. Knowledge of language is constructed in social discourse and interaction. Language is dependent upon social meanings and relationships and cannot be separated from them.

A less controversial branch of the learner-external relationship is the writer's attention to audience. The emphasis on communicative competence in L2 acquisition and influence of Britton's work has led L2 writing theorists to consider the importance of attention to audience and purpose (Reid & Kroll, 1995). However there has been some contention as to what exactly an audience or a purposeful writing assignment is. This debate is an important one as it is generally agreed that when a writer has a clear sense of audience and purpose, writing becomes much simpler and its full communicative potential is reached (Intaraprawat & Steffensen, 1995 p.253-4). Recent work on different discourse communities has made the concept of audience more sophisticated as L2 writers are seen to be learning the conventions of a particular discourse community as well as the conventions of the language itself (ibid., p.255).

The genre movement in L1 has influenced L2 writing, perhaps because it is writing centred (Reppen, 1994). Mainly in response to the process movement's lack of emphasis on form, a genre approach looks at the learner-external relationship, focusing on teaching students how to write in the genres that they have to use both inside and outside the classroom. Its aim is to provide learners from all countries and backgrounds with the power conferred with control of the language's important genres. In denying the creative aspect of writing, this method is diametrically opposed to the process movement. Despite being linked to L1 critical literacy in parts of Australia through notions of social justice (Morgan, 1997 p.59), it is not strictly allied to a social view of language in L2. Most followers of critical literacy do not believe in the claims made by genre theorists regarding the "sociopolitical empowerment" gained through the knowledge and use of genre forms. They see genres as static forms, the use of which requires obedience rather than thought, thus denying empowerment in the way claimed. They do not like the way it rejects writers as the source of both subject matter and ideas. More important to them is the particular text in the particular situation written by a particular person rather than in a particular text type or genre (see Weinstein, 1997; Weinstein-Shr, 1991, in which learners' lives are seen as central to the fabric of language and literacy work). They are as interested in listening to the silences as much as to what is said. Input in the form of assumptions and beliefs are just as important as the linguistic form.

The last broad approach is one that considers the reciprocal, “mutually constructive” relationship between (1) written discourse and social context and (2) social and cognitive accounts of writing. Advocates of this position see writers as either mentally constructing the social contexts of which their writing is embedded (see for example Rafoth, 1988; Rafoth & Rubin, 1988; Rubin, 1988) or as internalising the social before putting it on paper (for example Lantolf & Appel, 1994b). Researchers and theorists in these traditions recognise the range of social practices that can inform L2 texts (McKay, 1993), accepting that they are culturally influenced and are interested in the different factors that are involved in the creation of written text.

This approach is best illustrated in L2 by two very different branches of research. Firstly there is the work on writing in the community by Barton and Ivanic. Members of the critical awareness movement, they look at writing as part of a whole rather than an isolated event (1991). For them writing involves different writing practices in different community and institutional settings. In this way writing is not seen as some unitary, solitary skill but as a connection between the writer and the work, in a way that is specific not only to the writer but to the context within which she is writing and the culture to which she belongs; a result of collaborative processes (ibid.). There is therefore no definition of an expert writer as this varies across communities. Secondly there is the work on social-cognitive issues, particularly those who link parts of Vygotskian social-cognitive theory to L2 ((for example Donato & McCormick, 1994). A social-cognitive account of L2 acquisition looks at the relationships formed between educators and learners, from early childhood through adolescence to adulthood. With regard to writing, it examines the way in which contexts, instruction and different kinds of collaboration shape not only students' writing but also their learning and thinking.

Vygotsky claimed that there was a relationship between external activity with others and the development of higher mental processes. Consciousness for Vygotsky therefore derives from social life, the locus of control beginning outside the learner. The main bulk of L2 research has centred around the importance of instruction and the learner's zone of proximal development (ZPD): the level of difference between achievement on one's own and achievement with the assistance of a more capable individual (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Berthoud-Papandropoulou & Kilcher, 1996; Cazden, 1981; Donato & Adair-Hauk, 1992; Elbaz, 1981; Kontos & Nicholas, 1986; Nyikos & Hashimoto, 1997). Adoption of this viewpoint necessarily has repercussions for writing instruction, specifically with respect to interactive and developmental practices (Au, 1990; Donato, 1994; Oxford, 1997; Zebrowski, 1983). Furthermore, if linguistic competence has its source in social existence rather than in “cerebral abstract processes in the head”, then the social context of the L2 classroom is a crucial part of L2 (Donato & Adair-Hauk, 1992; Frawley & Lantolf, 1985; Goodman & Goodman, 1990).

There is an abundance of research linking the writers' immediate audience and social context, especially peer review (Belcher, 1988; Cannilao, 1991; De Guerrero & Villamil, 1994; Mangelsdorf, Roen, & Taylor, 1990; Roen, 1989; Zhang, 1995) and teacher feedback (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Aly, 1992; Arndt, 1993; Barnes, 1984; Pennington, 1991; Semke, 1984). In their 1992 paper Nelson and Murphy discuss the idealisation of writing groups and expose the fact that some students can be over critical in their comments and others too shy to take part (1992). They stress that the social dimension of different types of writing group should not be forgotten. In 1996 Nelson undertook a study with Carson to evidence whether writing is a socially constructed act as well as a cognitive one. By investigating the nature of peer response group interaction they found that Chinese students prefer to keep the group a happy one than to say exactly what they think about other group members' writing (Carson & Nelson, 1996). As argued in former work (Carson & Nelson, 1994; Nelson & Carson, 1995), they point to the particular nature of groups in U.S. and Chinese classrooms. They contrast loyalty within the group to hostility to those outside the group. Similar results have been found in research on journal writing - that it is not often as straightforward as may first appear (Holmes & Moulton, 1995). Other research has investigated what type of instruction helps L2 writers (Rees-Miller, 1993). Greenia (1992) discusses the lack of L2 writing instruction and suggests a new curriculum design, others advocate writing workshops and writing groups (Gee, 1996; Nelson & Murphy, 1992), Kramsch emphasises interaction (1987), and Nunan the closing of the gap between writing and instruction (Nunan, 1995a).

The results of these studies cry out for more and larger-scale studies to take place. As with contrastive rhetoric studies, unfortunately, and as recognised by the researchers, these types of study have limited generalisability due to their small scale. They do however draw attention to the way in which cultural and social variables can change the nature of the writing task.

2.4.3. LEARNER-INTERNAL

"Learning about language is not the internalisation of a definable body of knowledge but the on-going investigation of a dynamic phenomenon."

Borg (1994)

"Deprived of thought, the word is dead."

Vygotsky (1987a)

L1 transfer refers to the incorporation of features of the L1 into the knowledge systems of the L2 that the learner is trying to build (Ellis, 1994 p.29). Initially studies of writing on L1/L2 transfer began with Kaplan's work on contrastive rhetoric (1966). Research work still flourishes, covering both L1/L2 composing processes and L1/L2 written text features (Connor, 1996) (Connor & Kaplan, 1987; Leki, 1991). Work in linguistics and discourse analysis has taken contrastive rhetoric beyond organisational structures. However, questions are still largely unanswered with respect to (1) whether writers should or should not use any of their L1 when composing, (2) whether effective or ineffective writing strategies are transferred from L1 to L2 or (3) if the topic or context influences the process (see for discussion Carson, 1992; Eisterhold, 1990; Friedlander, 1990; and Selinker, 1969).

In contrast to the socio-cognitive accounts of language discussed previously, which are also relevant to this section, mentalist accounts of language learning see linguistic knowledge as a separate cognitive faculty independent of the other cognitive systems involved in the use of this knowledge. In L2 writing both mentalist and socio-cognitive traditions, see it as important to investigate the L1/L2 relationship but differ in their emphases. Debate between the two areas has not been absent. Followers of social-cognitive orientations criticise mentalist orientations for conceiving of the L2 learner as a "deficient communicator struggling to overcome an underdeveloped L2 competence, striving to reach the target competence of an idealised native speaker" (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p.285).

Cummings' interdependence hypothesis is based on the view that learners possess a common underlying proficiency. L1 is seen as an important resource rather than a hindrance (1989). Other researchers point to the salient differences between the two kinds of writing - strategically, linguistically and rhetorically (see Riazi, 1997, for discussion; Silva, 1993, for empirical research). Recent research in writing has questioned in what aspects and to what extent L1 theories are applicable to L2 research and instruction (Freedle, 1985; Ringbom, 1987; Zhang, 1995). In the same vein Johns in a JSLW's argument with Santos (Johns, 1993, p.86; Santos, 1992) argues for the uniqueness of L2 writing: "we are different, in many ways, from our L1 counterparts and our differences should shape our views". The findings regarding the L1/L2 relationship differ. Whilst Carson and Kuehn suggest that writing ability in L1 and L2 are relational (1992), Moragne e Silva points to differences in different composing skills (1991). Valdes raises questions as to whether transfer takes place when different types of texts are

written, such as those requiring cultural authenticity (1992, p.348), whereas Reid draws attention to the cognitive differences that come into play between different kinds of writers, advanced and novice (Reid, 1983). Lavin-Crerand's study finds that L1 literacy skills do not have an effect on L2 writing skills, although L2 proficiency does (1992). The nature of L1/L2 transfer thus remains under debate, the principal point of difference being the fine line between literacy and language skills. As pointed out by Eisterhold (1990, p.96) if skills are transferred it needs to be ascertained exactly what kind of skills they are.

Matsuda's recent work has proposed a new model of L2 writing based on a less static theory of contrastive rhetoric (1997). Arguing for the need to consider the writer's agency, he criticises contrastive rhetoric for its prescriptive nature of teaching. He calls for a view of L2 writing where writing is considered "in its own dynamic context, which is created as a result of the encounter of the writer and the reader - an encounter mediated through text" (1997, p.52). Text is thus a "virtual world" where the writing context is negotiated rather than defined. For him L1 influences rather than determines. Importance is given to a notion of a shared discourse community. His view is that the writer's background does not determine the text. He suggests the writer should be aware of the reader's background in comparison to her own and to the different types of discourse involved. This work opens up the work on contrastive rhetoric considerably, taking it beyond a focus on organisational structures to the complexity of interacting factors and decision-making processes inherent in L2 writing. Matsuda's request that discourse analysis and qualitative analysis of the writing process be linked could well be the direction new research should take (see also Connor, 1990; Donato & Adair-Hauck, 1992; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Hall, 1997; Liddicoat, 1997; Long, 1997).

Other salient features of work on L2 writing in this area relate to composing processes. Uzawa (1996) finds it to be a "what-next approach" whereas Smith (1994) finds a whole range of mental processes that are involved. Huang (1991) (JSLW review of research 1993 p.176), discussing the relationship between translation and writing and the role and impact of translation on the L2 writing curriculum, concludes that L1-L2 translation can play a positive role.

Language Awareness (LAW), is "a form of "consciousness raising", using metalanguage to help explain aspects of the language code in the language classroom", a method drawing attention to the similarities between L2 and L1. This is distinct to linguistic awareness, which refers to the ability to match spoken and written utterances with knowledge of the language. (Masny, 1997, p.105). LAW calls for richer and thicker descriptions of the writing/cognition relationship (ibid.). It asks the question whether or not heightened LAW necessarily leads to improved language proficiency. Research suggests that collaborative settings involving teachers and students in

interactive reading/writing activities best promote L2 language learning (Kowal & Swain, 1994) (Devitt, 1997) and that the relationship between language awareness and linguistic awareness is complex. As with other traditions the role of the teacher is of paramount importance. LAW also calls for an investigation of the relationships between learning and thinking. There has been research into awareness of cognitive styles (Jones, 1993) which indicates the ideal language learner is the flexible and mobile learner and there is some evidence that awareness does help learning. However more research is needed.

LAW criticises the communicative approach for paying too much attention to communication at the expense of grammatical form. The criticism is that learners are prepared for a limited range of oral situations but not for the unknown. Little calls for a re-assessment of the role of L2 writing (1997). He insists on the development of learner autonomy and for the need for L2 writing tasks to be both communicative and reflective. In his view, writing should be at the centre of the learning process. He presses for (1) the involvement of learners in negotiating and evaluating the learning process and (2) the learning of English by using English to gradually develop LAW in the psycholinguistic sense. Essential to this are communicative and writing tasks which, from the very beginning, mediate between these two aspects of learning (1997 p.103).

Internal processes involve cognitive processes. The designing and assessing of writing assignments (Reid & Kroll, 1995), teachers' conceptions of L2 writing instruction (Cumming, 1993; Shi & Cumming, 1995; Winer, 1992), the type of feedback given (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994) and the relationship between cognitive and linguistic ability (Yau, 1991) have all been salient features in recent work on instruction and cognition. General findings have been that L2 writing is, to all intents and purposes, an interactive social-cognitive process necessitating the interaction of the individual's cognitive processes and social/contextual factors in different ways (see Riazi, 1997, re L2 writing for academic disciplines). Jones (1993) calls for learners' awareness of their own particular cognitive learning styles, so that they gain insight into how a language is learned and then perhaps put that knowledge to use. Whether writing is an instrument to learn, by which we shape ourselves and our cognitive growth, is a question posed in the following theoretical area in the table, where the language learner herself comes into focus (Chorny, 1980). It will suffice here to mention that cognitive growth is, in relation to this section, also a part of the work on audience and voice (Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996; Reid & Kroll, 1995) in which writing is seen to be influenced by the specific contexts of which it is a part and the audience for whom it is designed.

Other studies have ranged from the effects of peer tutoring (August, 1987; Cumming & So, 1996) to the types of cognitive composing strategies used by the writers (Riazi, 1997). As mentioned before, Interlanguage theory has still not looked at L2 writing. There has been little research on metacognition, or the impact of cognitive models on writing tasks. One exception is

Devine, Railey and Boshoff's study (1993) which found that different cognitive models in L1 and L2 writing led writers to perform differently, thus suggesting that cognitive models play an important part in performance.

2.4.4. FOCUS ON THE LANGUAGE LEARNER

"It is one thing to be able to ask for the salt; it is quite another to be able to form concepts. "

Raimes (1979)

"Of course, learning to speak and write a language is learning precisely what is and what is not sayable and writable. And that, eventually, becomes the learning of what is and what is not thinkable."

Kress (1994)

Alongside the other three approaches, a further shift has been to think about the learner rather than the learning of a language, involving the insights of social psychology as well as linguistics. This emphasis on the language *learner* rather than learner *language* has important repercussions. Essentially, there is a dramatic swing from the salience of characteristics which are universal to a whole range of variables. Matters that have been singled out are individual learner differences, the rate of learner development and the different strategies learners use to acquire their foreign language abilities. The main idea is that there is no single way to characterise either the L2 writer or L2 writing. Discussion revolves around not only what these various issues are but also whether the strategies, investments and attitudes of good language learners can be taught to others. Work in this area has centred more on pedagogy than theory, specifically looking at the learner differences and how they affect writing processes.

With regard to the L1/L2 relationship, the recent emphasis of researchers who look at the language learner has been on the distinct nature of L2 writing (Raimes, 1987; Silva, 1993 p,657; Zhang, 1995 p,218) and the need for L2 researchers and practitioners to theorise their discipline separately, learning from rather than simply adapting L1 theories. General findings have proven that a lack of competence in L2 writing results more from a lack of competence in composing strategies rather than from a lack of linguistic competence (Krapels, 1990 p.49) and that these composing strategies are similar to those of L1 writers (Zamel, 1983b). This necessarily has led to a questioning of the ways in which writing is taught in the L2 classroom and has led specifically to what is called process writing.

As pointed out by critics (for example Faigley, 1986), the conceptions of writing as a process differ between one theorist and another. It helps to distinguish between three distinct uses of the word "process" (Susser, 1994, p.32). "Process" can be used to designate: 1) the act of writing itself 2) writing pedagogies and 3) a theory or theories of writing. Like Susser I challenge the fact that "process" is the name of a writing *theory*. Following his reasoning I shall use the term *writing process* to refer to the act of writing and *process writing* or *process orientation* to refer to process-based writing pedagogies.

Process writing is generally characterised by a recursive procedure of prewriting, drafting, evaluating and revising (Zhang, 1995; p.209). The essence is that as learners write, both ideas and language are reformulated and regenerated, as a response to the reader (Raimes, 1985; Susser, 1994; Zamel, 1983b; Zhang, 1995). Theoretically this means that writing is not seen as linear or as the mechanical controlling of linguistic structures. It deals with what it is that each writer brings to the text. In Britton's terminology it gives importance to shaping at the point of utterance (1983).

Process writing pedagogies arose in the late 1970s basically as a reaction to the product-oriented pedagogies. It built on the ideas that began with Britton's work on language and learning (1979; 1975; 1970) and Emig's famous 1971 case study. Zamel and Raimes were the initial figures (Raimes, 1979; Zamel, 1976). Since that time a whole body of research has developed around an attention to the learner's learning processes. Thus, the type of feedback that best helps students (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Antonek, McCormick, & Donato, 1997; August, 1987; Carson & Nelson, 1994; Carson & Nelson, 1996; Cumming & So, 1996; Raimes, 1985; Riazi, 1997; Uzawa, 1996; Weinstein, 1997; Zhang, 1995), composing strategies (Liskin-Gasparro, 1996; Mitchell & Martin, 1997; Oxford & Nykos, 1997; Weinstein, 1997; Zamel, 1983b) and motivation (Dornyei, 1994; Gardner & F., 1994; Oxford, 1994; Oxford & Nykos, 1997) have all become the subjects of research.

Whilst early studies sought to describe all aspects of L2 writing processes (Chelala, 1981, Zamel, 1982), later research has focused on 1) specific aspects of the composing process (particularly its recursive nature) and 2) specific types of writer (see Krapels, 1990 for a good historical overview of process research). As pointed out by Krapels (1990) analysis criteria from L1 was adopted, in particular the coding schemes and categories used by Perl (1978), Faigley and Witte (1981) and Pianko (1979).

Criticism of this stance revolves around the emphasis on developing voice in place of role, audience and community (Johns, 1995 p.181), its lack of contact with the social nature of language, its inherent conflicts and different discourses (Giroux in Faigley, 1986 p531 p.534)

and its link with expressive writing (Schreiner, 1997 p.102-3). Krapels points out that universal notions of composing (rather than similarities or differences) have not been dealt with (1990), but then this would be to ignore the theories that underlie this approach. Defenders insist on the need to examine learner differences, calling for a closing of "the gap in relation to experiential content, learning process and language content" (Nunan, 1995a), for process to bridge the divide between teaching and learning.

Recent research has focused on learner strategies. Variations in learner strategy and situational characteristics are observed in order to see how teachers can best help students. Linked to Selinker's work on interlanguage, research has to date concentrated on interaction between learners, namely speech samples. Writing has only been seen as the "end product". As discussed in area 1, strategies in writing have yet to be researched.

2.5. TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED THEORY OF L2 WRITING

From this overview of L2 writing it is possible to see how prolific and valuable research has been in the short period in which L2 has become a field in its own right. Such work provides a solid base for further inquiry. As pointed out by Krapels (1990 p.51) there may be a lack of comparability across the research since the designs are so different, which in turn affects generalisability, but nevertheless substantial work has been achieved.

In my framework (Figure 2) I have pursued four lines of this research moving from learner language and the product, through learner-external factors and learner-internal mechanisms to the language learner and composing processes. I view these different approaches as phases in an overall understanding of L2 writing, the multiple inscriptions of writing. Hence although the various areas of L2 writing leave us with a general view of multiplicity, they do provide a good overview and vantage point from which to consider L2 writing. The areas in the framework can be seen as different layers in the writing dynamic.

The next chapter will suggest that it is possible to maintain all four perspectives of writing by setting writing in the context of sociocultural theory. The values of such an approach will be discussed and Vygotsky's writings on writing, language learning and development elucidated. The different concepts that arise from viewing writing from the perspective of this other discipline are potent and promising. They are what fired me to draw up my research project in the way expounded in chapter four.

3. CHAPTER THREE: THE VYGOTSKIAN PROMISE

3.1. INTRODUCTION

By studying writing's most hidden features we discover its most obvious. Central to writing and easily overlooked in L2 where linguistic considerations necessarily come to the fore, is the fact that it is essentially a human activity. As we have seen in the previous chapter our understanding of L2 writing can be illustrated in various ways; as the emphasis shifts from learner language and the objective product through to process and the learner, whether perceived externally or internally or as a person with a whole background of attitude and strategy.

The promise of Vygotskian theory lies in the realigning of such perceptions about both learning a language and coming to write it, within the larger framework of a cultural-historical account of mind. I would propose that such a move might put scientific questions about learning a language in touch with issues regarding the place of language learning in development. The promise in which both pedagogues and theorists can share is the reinsertion of the person into what has become one of the most difficult areas of L2; bringing into perspective the total picture of the learner in which skilled linguistic performance at one end of the spectrum both springs from and nourishes a wider pattern of development.

Vygotsky wrote specifically on many of the central topics of this thesis. Since his interests are centrally shaped by issues regarding thinking processes (*myschlenie*) and language in general and by the project of establishing a new psychology, his comments come in various forms and there is variation in the degree to which they are developed with issues of foreign language learning in mind. This has created a problem of extrapolation and explication for those like me who are interested in the potential of a Vygotskian perspective in foreign language teaching and in the kind of work which the relationship might generate. In this chapter I shall seek to cover this problem in my own way and also draw on work with similar interests in Vygotskian thought which has been developing in the L2 field.

Vygotsky's own particular "bête noir" was the division of an object under study into separate elements studied in isolation (del Rio & Alvarez, 1995 p.385; 1934/1986). When Vygotsky writes directly about foreign language learning, what it shows us is the need for recovering the full sense of the conceptual basis, which underpins language learning. For Vygotsky recognises that words are part of a wider mental exploration and thus that learners do not approach a target

language in an abstract manner; their learning needs to be placed against the background of an ongoing exploration and fixing of experience.

As well as this central orientation in his approach, other aspects of his thinking are relevant. Important in Vygotsky's work is the development of writing as a central theme in wider mental development, the analysis of the role played by this second symbol system and the endeavour to establish instruction on a proper basis. Whilst this work has mother tongue learners centrally in mind, the role which he claims for writing has powerful lessons, should we heed them in L2 instruction. Another theme which, as we have seen, has been widely taken up in the L2 community, concerns the place of ZPD and the widely different interpretations that have been made of this well illustrate the problems with which his thinking has left us. Lastly, in his later writings Vygotsky returned to the problems of the imagination, creativity and the emotions, which had occupied him earlier. My prescience is that this is an area which may come to have profound implications for our work as L2 teachers.

In the previous chapter I set out an overall classification of L2 approaches to writing. In this chapter I shall begin the task of working towards a synthesis grouped around the powerful concepts that have been made available in Vygotskian thought. My aims are not purely theoretical. I also seek to develop a framework for the collection and analysis of project data, building not only on Vygotsky's writings, but on the questions and challenges posed by his work.

3.2. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN THINKING AND INTERNALISATION

"Let no one say that I have said nothing new ... I had as soon it [be] said that I used words employed before ... words differently arranged have a different meaning, and meanings differently arranged have different effects"

Pascal (1995)

"Words themselves are innocuous; it is the consensus that gives them true power"

Naylor (1992)

In Vygotskian theory language is more than a tool of knowledge: it shapes and influences the behaviour of others (Vila, 1996). Vygotsky believed that linguistic activity is the means through which we develop higher, mental processes; that through language the mind engages in that

which is specifically human (see also Brockmeier, 1996; Vygotsky, 1934/1986). Clearly, language is not merely a reflection of mental activity, it is a means for engaging in social and cognitive activity. This relationship between the social interactive and higher mental processes is central to his writings. So is the linguistic mediation of both types of process. Unfortunately, whilst Vygotsky's views of language as a mediating mental activity have been recognised by L2 (Donato & McCormick, 1994) and there have recently been studies pressing for a general sociocultural approach (Hall, 1997; Platt & Troudi, 1997), the projects still require to be followed through. What I would like to suggest that L2 can learn from Vygotsky is that together with awareness of the system can reside the objective of *making writing a tool for thought*.

Following Potebnya, Vygotsky believed that language shapes mental processes in fundamental ways, that "ideas are not expressed but born in language" (Van der Veer & Van Ijzendoorn, 1985). In his own terminology, language is a *symbolic tool*, which not only mediates inter-psychological activity but also intra-personal cognitive activity. Whilst trying to avoid a marked inside/outside dichotomy, the major *deus ex machina* in Vygotsky's system is how it is that a culture's symbolic tools, through social interaction, manage to get from "outside" into our "inside" repertory of thought (see Bruner, 1997), the process he calls internalisation (Vygotsky, 1978).

The notion of internalisation and conceptualisation of the relationship between external and internal activity has given rise to much critical reflection and a deepening and expanding of investigations which I shall not go into here (Arievitch & Van der Veer, 1995; Elbers, 1994; Engeström, 1998; Griffin & Cole, 1984; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1996; Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff, 1995b; Santamaria, 1998; Smolka & Pino, 1998; Still & Costall, 1991; Wertsch, 1993; Wertsch, 1998; Wertsch & Stone, 1985; Zinchenko, 1998). I believe that recognition of the "inter-to-intra" process reflects important features of language learning brought out in this thesis. I do not believe Vygotsky was concerned with some kind of Cartesian dualism between mind and body but with a particularly human notion of development and knowledge acquisition (Arievitch & Van der Veer, 1995, p.116). Like Elbers I see the central issue to be not whether there is a boundary between internal or external, or whether the term should be replaced by another, but whether it is a constructive process "which generates individually unique but nevertheless socio-cultural new knowledge" (Elbers, 1994 p.253). The part played by the learner in the process of knowledge construction will be central in this thesis, for personal experiences become meaningful through the use of social signs. It is in this way that social meanings become intrasubjective and knowledge is transformed (Rosa & Valsiner, 1994 p.17).

All concepts are seen to develop through language use and joint activity. When a child learns to read and write this is seen as a preparation for what Vygotsky called scientific concepts (*nauchnoe ponuyatie*), the development of rational understanding (Vygotsky, 1987a). Vygotsky believed that the most important function of language for cognitive development is that it allows

us to master scientific concepts. Since these are seen to be first acquired at school others have called these schooled or academic concepts (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990; Moll, 1989).

I am directly concerned with how cognitive processes link in with L2 writing and consequently in Vygotsky's writings on the interconnectedness and interdependency of scientific and everyday concepts. From personal experience it is when the foreign language learnt in the classroom is taken out into the world at large that the learner begins to make real sense of it, linking the scientific and the everyday. When a student spends a study year abroad or an extended period in the country whose language she is learning, this is when particular understandings are reached.

Different kinds of lesson can be learnt. I can recall my first day of my student study year abroad in Spain, in a small village where no-one spoke a word of English, asking for a tin of worms (*guisanos*) instead of peas (*guisantes*). It was quite a while before I was able to explain myself correctly. Whilst this error only provoked laughter, other similar situations may have not. It is this type of experience, authentic and spontaneous language learning, that makes sense of the non-spontaneous and which needs to be a part of the whole experience of knowledge of the language. Other types of lesson can only be learnt through time and through extended contact with the L2 community or by finding some way of introducing the "everyday" into the classroom environment.

Within the Vygotskian story, everyday concepts are learnt through speech and scientific concepts are learnt through instruction, of which writing plays an important part. A learner's perceptions of what it is to be in the environment of the foreign language are transformed by the interaction of both types of concept. It is in this sense that in a Vygotskian framework, classrooms should place constant emphasis on creating *meaning* and not skills, *talking about* rather than just explaining language, Bruner's "reflective intervention" (Bruner, 1986).

Vygotsky considers the differences between learning L1 and L2:

" Learning a foreign language is profoundly different from learning a native language. This is partly because a set of fully formed and developed word meanings already exists in the former case. These word meanings are simply translated into the foreign language. In other words, this is partly a function of the relative maturity of the native language itself. It is also partially a function of the fact that the foreign language is learned under entirely different internal and external conditions, of the fact that the conditions that characterise the learning process differ profoundly from those that characterise the learning of the native language. Different developmental paths, followed under different conditions, cannot lead to identical results..."

He then points to the fact that when a language learner learns to write in a foreign language, conscious awareness of L1 and of both languages as systems come into focus:

"... Nonetheless, the profound differences between these processes must not divert us from the fact that they are both aspects of speech development. The processes involved in the development of written speech are a third variant of this unified process of language development; it repeats neither of the two processes of speech development mentioned up to this point. All three of these processes, the learning of the native language, the learning of foreign languages and the development of written speech interact with each other in complex ways. This reflects their mutual membership in a single class of genetic processes and the internal unity of these processes. . . . Less obvious and less well known is the fact that the foreign language influences the development of the child's native language... His conscious awareness of linguistic forms and the level of his abstraction of linguistic phenomena increases..."

(Vygotsky, 1987a p.179)

Although L2 learning is very different today in comparison with that in Soviet education at the time in which Vygotsky was writing, his comments are still highly relevant. In the West today, L2 is still mostly rooted in provisions in linguistics rather than in an overall account of cognition. Some interest has been shown in introspective methods and in the study of mental processes in L2 acquisition (see Cohen & Hosenfield, 1981; Cohen, 1991; Fearch & Kasper, 1987; Grotjahn, 1987; Grotjahn, 1991), but little importance has been attached to language learning as formation of the mind.

Foreign language researchers have taken note of the dimension of consciousness and cognition in the language learning process, as is shown in the studies of learner strategies (Chamot & Kuuper, 1989; Gilette, 1994; John-Steiner, 1985; O'Malley, Chamost, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, & Kupper, 1985; Sutter, 1987). However, as Gilette has made clear (1994 p.211), attempts to train ineffective language learners to adopt specific strategies identified among effective learners have been less than successful. She is right to question whether learning strategies in themselves can provide an explanation for foreign language achievement (see also Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). Her suggestion that lack of success may be due to the fact that researchers mostly ignore the learners' motivation and personal histories could well be true. However, the work of other researchers who do take these points into consideration, whilst pressing for the need to see language development as an integral part of education (for example Levine, 1993), needs to be developed further. Some researchers have pointed to the fact that too little attention has been paid to learner's intrapsychological strategies in L2 learning (De Guerrero, 1994; Frawley & Lantolf, 1985; Lantolf & Appel, 1994a; Lantolf & Appel, 1994b), but again the emphasis is, by and large, on the strategies part of the equation.

As proposed earlier, language learning needs to be part of a much broader picture. This is borne out by the fact that the issue of the "translation" of word meanings is a tricky subject. My first Dutch word was "gezellig" which is almost always translated as "cosy". A house can be cosy, an

evening could be cosy or agreeable, a chat might be called cosy, although not always with the meaning of gezellig, but what about a person or a letter? These can both be “gezellig” - nice, warm or friendly perhaps but not really cosy. This suggests that students need to be aware of word meanings (*znachenis*) and word sense (*smysl*) as well as forms. To quote Smolka (1994 p.81), “Words’ do not simply go inward and become internalised. Their multiple meanings circulate as signifying processes, embedded in social practices, transcend words.” “Gezellig” is an adjective only someone who understands Dutch culture can really grasp hold of, full of the kinds of nuance best learnt in the FL context of everyday life. Hence knowledge of the cultural context of the language, the subtext and intertext, is an essential part of the process.

Advertisers play on this fact. They use expressions which have double meanings or relate to recent events to draw in, amuse or shock the reader. Take for example a recent advertisement for Whiskas Cat food, aimed at cats with urinary problems. The cat is portrayed as embarrassed, not because he has a medical problem but because he doesn’t like the promoter and the reader “talking about his bits and pieces”. A foreigner may not get the message, either because he doesn’t know the idiomatic phrase or because he doesn’t understand the British don’t like talking about such things. Even when he does he might not always find it funny. Heineken, a Dutch beer company, frequently use culture in their advertisements in Holland to refer to current events (they use the national colour orange, or retired famous Dutch football players in their commercials). Unless the reader or listener is aware of recent events in Holland or Dutch culture in general, the advertisements will miss their mark.

Whilst, as Vygotsky explains, most general concepts are easily translatable there are always a few that are not, particularly when different cultures are concerned. The Portuguese and Spanish have difficulties with our verbs “to make” and “to do” since the meanings are covered by one verb in their languages (*fazer/hacer* respectively). The reverse situation occurs when we learn theirs and find out that there are two verbs for our verb “to be”: *ser* and *estar*. It is quite difficult at first for a native speaker of English to adjust to the fact that if someone says they are happy using the verb “*estar*” they are referring to a temporary state in the time in question (I am happy – now) and if they use “*ser*” they mean they are always happy, namely of a happy disposition. It can get more complicated. If we want to say *sugar* is sweet we need to use “*ser*” (sweet being an inherent characteristic), whereas if we want to say the *coffee* is sweet (an accidental quality – sugar has been added) we need to use “*estar*”. Thus “to be” in Spanish or Portuguese distinguishes between the concept of an inherent characteristic and a temporary characteristic in a manner unfamiliar to the native English speaker. Consciousness of the system leads to other perceptions. In Spanish *ser* listo means to be *clever*, but *estar* listo means to be *ready* (prepared), and so on.

The point I am making is that inextricably bound up with a foreign language is its culture, its ways of thinking about issues such as time, space and quantity. Language learning is a content subject as well as a skill. It takes a new knowledge of concepts for the foreign student of English to understand that you don't buy "a bread" but "a loaf of bread". In the same way it is difficult for us to find that Spanish and Portuguese verbs have the same roots but that past time is divided up differently in the two cultures, so the tenses do not translate. Broughton et al. put it succinctly: "By learning a foreign language we see our own in perspective, we recognise that there are other ways of thinking, other ways of emphasis ... English ... embodies a generalised English view" (Broughton, 1978 p.11).

Important for Vygotsky is the way in which L2 uses the semantics of L1 as its foundation (the learner already knows what it is to be clever or to be ready). For Vygotsky concept development, both everyday (spontaneous) and scientific/academic (non-spontaneous) belongs to the semantic aspect of language. Thus whilst the learning of a foreign language is seen as a nonspontaneous process, success in theorising foreign language learning requires a study of the whole intellectual process involved.

This means that Vygotsky's picture of two different, albeit interrelated groups of concepts becomes very relevant. His teaching that scientific concepts, far from being learnt as ready-made knowledges, undergo substantial development (see Kozulin, 1996 p.107 for discussion) points to the fact that understanding is not something that happens because of what a speaker or a text says: the listener or reader has a crucial part to play in the process (Anderson & Lynch, 1988) as an active agent and participant. Understanding does not just happen. As Lave and Wagner point out, "internalisation is too easily construed as an unproblematic process of absorbing the given, as a matter of transmission and assimilation" (1996 p.143). Understanding and experience are in constant interaction, in Lave and Wenger's terms "mutually constitutive" (1996 p.146), in a dialectic, cognitive, reflective process in which language plays a main part. Furthermore, working behind and with language is the often forgotten driving force called motivation. For as Vygotsky taught "mastering mature conceptual thinking is not confined to the cognitive domain but will at the same time lead to mature aesthetic reactions and a more refined emotional life" (Van der Veer, 1997 p.6).

As previously discussed, the biggest contribution made so far by the Vygotskian/L2 relationship has been with regard to ZPD, which points to "the interdependence of the process of development and the socially provided resources for that development" (Valsiner, 1988 p.145). This brings into consideration not only the acquisition of scientific concepts but also matters regarding the learners' individual achievement, their potential for future development and the proleptic role of the instructor or peers. For as Valsiner points out (Valsiner, 1988), the effectiveness of instruction is dependent upon its timing relative to the learner's state of action

and thinking, which is, of course dependent on the learner's previous level of development. Donato and Adair-Hauck's 1992 study (1992) looks at the teacher's role, placing their observations within the broader context of the role of discourse in cognitive growth as developed by Vygotsky. Their study explores the way in which proleptic instruction involves consciousness raising and thus individual linguistic awareness. The main point is that if Vygotsky is right about the reciprocal role of the student/teacher relationship, traditional classrooms do not promote the development of the higher mental processes, including metalinguistic awareness (ibid., p.84). A strong case is made for teachers to consider the importance of assistance and the need to involve the learner in the learning process. Also mentioned, although not explored, is the critical role given to discourse by Vygotsky as the medium through which development is achieved.

Let me draw attention to the fact that with a change of emphasis there is also a change of terminology. It becomes important not to speak of L2 acquisition but of *learning* and *development*. A distinction is assumed between learning (teacher and student in active collaboration) and development (the student's development of concepts in the educational process - one of the forces of ZPD). It is wise to remember at this point that for Vygotsky development is not smooth and linear, but marked by disjunction. Furthermore, it is sometimes forgotten that Vygotskian psychology teaches that if language development as opposed to "acquisition" is coveted, each learner is treated as instrumental in her own learning process, within the context of ZPD and social interaction. This is one part of Vygotsky's writings that I will be taking further.

Vygotsky's fundamental thesis is that the higher mental functions are socially formed and culturally transmitted. This suggests that the learning of L2, which includes writing, can only be understood as part of a social, collaborative and developmental process. Central to this is the role played by instruction (in this project, teaching). According to Vygotsky it is through internal activity that the connection between the social or practical activity and cognitive processes is made; spontaneous and non-spontaneous concepts have an internal relationship. As Glassman puts it: "Meanings do not give rise to thought, they mediate it" (1996). Language is hence seen as man's most important tool, that which makes him specifically human. It is the interplay, the means through which the outward inter-psychological relations become the inner intra-psychological functions. Whether the internalisation (or as some prefer to call it, appropriation) process happens in sequence or simultaneously, what is important here is the direction from external to internal always involving the active agent and cultural tools, in this particular case, learners and language respectively. Crucial is the part played by the many voices (in the Bakhtinian sense), the multiple challenges from the social and physical surroundings in which language is situated, for cultural tools are not isolated agents, they are always employed in terms of mediated action.

3.3. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND THE ROLE OF WRITING AS A SECONDARY SYMBOL SYSTEM

“Only by understanding the entire history of sign development in the child and the place of writing in it can we approach a correct solution of the psychology of writing.”

Vygotsky (1978 p.106)

“... Jesus invented speech, and teachers invented writing ...”

One of Dietzsch's pupil responses in (Dietzsch, 1994)

Emig argues, of L1, that it is the act of writing that shapes ideas and relationships amongst those ideas (1977). And as we have seen, whatever the language, concepts are not like dates or information that can be memorised. Like Moffet, Britton and Perl, Vygotsky suggests that writing is a way of bringing into the world ideas that are embryonic, half-conscious and implicit until brought onto the page. For him, human cognitive development is based on language. It is this that distinguishes us from other beings.

Unfortunately Vygotsky's study (with Luria) on the social history of the written language is, to date, only available in Russian (Vygotski & Luria, 1930). However commentators on the text point to his tracing of eidetic images, mediated through short-term memory processes, to writing as we know it (Schneuwly, 1992 p.52). This would tie in with both his writings on the pre-history of written language (1978) and the imagination and creativity of the adolescent (1994a). Writing in L1 was assigned a special place by Vygotsky: as the learning of a secondary symbol system it became the critical turning point in the cultural development of the child (1989; 1977). By this he is referring to the time when a child learns that the drawing on the page represents another object, totally different to that which is drawn (in our language, a letter or group of letters of the alphabet). In the same way that I argue for the teaching of writing as language (meaning making) and not grammar structures, Vygotsky emphasises that writing should be taught as the learning of a language, written *language* as opposed to *letters*. Writing for him then is more than a source of linguistic construction, more than a social construction, it is the “transformation of the relationship of the subject with his own process of linguistic production” (Schneuwly, 1992 p.55). It is a symbol system involving, like all others, context, memory and motivation. As a conscious activity it also involves reflection and deliberate representation, through inner speech and thought processes. As put by de Lima, it is by analysing the process of acquisition of written language that we can study “the subject's interaction with social others and with the world, an interaction that is mediated by symbols” (de Lima, 1994 p.173).

In L2, as previously explained, writing is still often taught as a motor skill rather than as a complex cultural activity, a mode of thinking. As Vygotsky himself points out, for the young child to think is to recall but for the adolescent, to recall is a means to think (Vygotsky, 1978 p.51). Consequently the relationship of language (Vygotsky would say the word¹⁶) to reality is not just the translation of a definition, it is the formation of concepts through which the learner takes charge of his own cognitive processes. Thought is not expressed in a word but completed in it (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991 p.361). Writing inserts purpose and meaning, a fact that we should not lose sight of in L2. Should words used in the foreign language be allowed to acquire their meaning on the page as well as in social interaction, cognitive effects may be realised. Writing is all too often seen as the production of a piece of text, which is a sum of crafted and constructed linguistic items. However, knowledge of the topic, particular discourses and particular audiences need to be considered. In Vygotskian terminology, language is a psychological as well as a symbolic tool.

I would suggest that in L2 there is a need for the student to move beyond description or modelling to writing more akin to that in L1, to Britton's "shaping at the point of utterance" (1983). Why is it that we say "I need to get my thoughts on paper"? Surely it is because it is the process of writing that gives them their shape. Perl explains (1983, p.48):

* In the process of writing, we begin with what is inchoate and end with something that is tangible. In order to do so, we both discover and construct what we mean. Yet the term "discovery" ought not lead us to think that meaning exists fully formed inside of us and that all we need to do is dig deep enough to release it. In writing, meaning cannot be discovered the way we discover an object on an archaeological dig. In writing, meaning is crafted and constructed. It involves us in a process of coming-into-being. Once we have worked at shaping, through language, what is there inchoately, we can look at what we have written to see if it adequately captures what we intended. Often at this moment discovery occurs. We see something new in our writing that comes upon us as a surprise. We see in our words a further structuring of the sense we began with and we recognise that in those words we have discovered something new about ourselves and our topic."

This is not to say that writing is a magical process, that there is one process that works for everybody. For some, writing is a monumental effort, for some pure enjoyment and for most of us it changes from day to day. The romantic notion of giving a student an interesting subject which inspires her so that she goes home, sits down and the writing flows is no longer an

¹⁶ Vygotsky considered word meaning (slovo) as the basic unit for the analysis of consciousness (Vygotsky, 1978). Recent discussions of Vygotskian theory have moved beyond the narrower emphasis on word (Daniels, 1996a; Rogoff, 1990; Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993; Wertsch, 1991), Gallimore and Tharp claiming that "slovo" can also be translated by discourse (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990 p.192-3). Whilst Vygotsky probably did mean "word" as we know it, this thesis follows other sociocultural research, developing Vygotsky's ideas by looking at utterance, text and discourse as units of analysis within language as a specifically human tool which should not be studied in an isolated environment.

accepted one. We do need to give our students subjects with which they can identify, but there is more to it than that. So far L2 writing instructors do not seem to have worked out what that is. What is certain however is that writing is at the heart of reflection as we seek to compose our thoughts in a way understandable to others and of course, ourselves.

Researchers have compared the Vygotskian teacher in the Vygotskian classroom to Freire, to the teacher as liberator (Goodman & Goodman, 1990; Moll, 1990b) and indeed the process is very powerful. Freire however teaches the student to learn from past experience (1970; 1978; 1991; 1997). Vygotsky deals with the present. If the full potential of the Vygotskian perspective can be harnessed and extended, students can become creators rather than decipherers (at the worst, regurgitators) of meaning. Language is never simply the dead purveyor of fixed and permanently established meanings. It is always continuously reconstructed and remade. Writing, when approached from a Vygotskian perspective, can become responsible, independent thinking, not the sum of separately taught sub-skills or merely communicating but a contextualised, purposive activity, a means of stating who we are.

One of the challenges for writers is their reader/audience, the kind of social relationship that can also be described in terms of cognition. To quote Spivey (1997 p.133):

“ Writers think about their readers and their readers' cognition, they anticipate readers understandings and they are engaged with their audience even if the audience is quite distant and abstract. When writing for their readers, people use knowledge built through prior experience in reading texts by others and producing texts of their own.”

There are the intertextual connections made by writers, remembering or reconstructing texts; the connections made to help the audience understand the message; the mental and the textual. In the same way that the Vygotskian perspective foresees a strong dialectic connection between social activity (mediated by cultural tools such as writing) and one's individual intellectual activity, applying this perspective leads to the recognition that there is an interplay between understanding and textual representation (Tolchinsky, 1992). Writers think about what they are going to write and then write it whilst they think further. Social transactions are both *mediating* and *mediated*. Different kinds of knowledges are called on in the construction of a text, not only knowledge of structures; intertextuality is a social construction. As Dixon and Green point out, writing is not only a text, but also an instance of discourse practice and social practice (1998). Hence, writing, as it has become obvious, is far from a simple process. Meaning is found in the text itself, not in the words used to form it.

Language is deemed by Vygotsky to be the cornerstone of interaction. The interaction referred to is this dialogic transition from outward, interpsychological relations to inner, intrapsychological reasoning. From this there is a specific message to be learnt: that which foreign language learning entails, namely linguistic, semantic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural processes, all require cognitive processes. Whilst as Van der Veer rightly points out (Van der Veer, 1994 p.298), within the cognitive domain people can be “surprisingly inconsistent”, human cognitive development is frequently the forgotten part of language learning, especially in L2.

Furthermore, writing is a key tool in the development of individual cognition, situated both culturally and historically. The collective and the individual cannot be separated, since they mutually constitute each other. It becomes apparent that whilst thought has a social/external origin, language *is* the social means of thought. The link with L2 writing now becomes more obvious: both language and writing fundamentally restructure our thinking. And as the following section will show, the correct kind of learning environment will enhance the process.

3.4. LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT, INSTRUCTION AND THE INTERPRETATION OF ZPD

The type of learning environment of which a learner is a part has immediate bearing on her development. As teachers we are aware of this, yet when we are involved in our everyday practice it is not always easy to stand back and look at what we are doing. I recall with horror a comment from a student in her journal in my first year of teaching:

“ When you say: ‘Good morning girls. Today we have lots of work to do ...’, I feel lazy because this little sentence makes me imagine the Spring Cleaning in my house”.

I wonder how many teachers are really aware of the effect their remarks have on their students. Feedback can be even more powerful. In my first year as an undergraduate reading English literature I was an avid consumer of Wordsworth. When our first course essay came along - on Wordsworth - I attacked it with relish, working way into the night all week through until I handed it over with pride. I still remember my emotions at receiving it back, covered in red comments, comments that insulted me to the core. Remarks varied from “Where did you get this from?” to “Work of this calibre is obviously plagiarism”. Never more did I return to our tutorial sessions, I was too afraid to face this person who had become so incensed at my writing that his pen had carved deep marks in the paper. Little did he know it was not plagiarism. I was just, at that time, too timid to react. Literature was ironically the only exam for which I did not receive an exemption that year. Passing with distinction made my day, yet I wonder if the teacher even noticed.

Feedback has always been a concern of the educator. Researchers on feedback come to the conclusions that feedback is most effective when sensitive to the individual learner's ZPD (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). As pointed out by Bernstein (in Daniels, 1996a p. xvii) this raises fundamental questions as to what counts as "developmental facilitation" at each different stage of the learner's maturation. For even the youngest, most naive child does not start from zero and students can vary a great deal in the knowledge(s) they bring to the classroom (see Hoyne & Mildes, 1994 for individual writer differences). Van der Veer and Valsiner (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1994 p.6) rightly warn that it is easy to idealise situations, to visualise an educational utopia; other researchers ponder over the various meanings that have been given to ZPD after Vygotsky's death (see Lave & Wenger, 1996 p.144 for discussion), all of which imply different implications in the classroom (Daniels, 1996b). Bruner puts it nicely when he says that for him the two best forms of education are nursery school and graduate school since both deal with different forms of getting ideas. "The rest is so dull, so formal. Things are structured so much there's nothing left for me to do" (1998). What is important for us as educators is that students not only learn through collaboration with others but that they differ in the way they learn and the speed with which they learn.

Hoel sees ZPD as a horizontal plane on different levels, where different zones interweave, the student requiring different kinds of support in each of the zones: those relating to theme, genre or syntax for example (1997 p.1). This may be relatively clear with regard to writing (although levels would depend on our particular notion of what is involved in writing) but how, in a general picture of development, can these levels be determined? I think that in a true Vygotskian picture there would be more emphasis on the socially, culturally and historically mediated nature of experience and less on divisions.

Del Rio and Álvarez speak of ZPD as "a double frontier area inside the skin (potential) and outside (proximal)" (1995; 1997). I quote from their 1995 paper with regard to their discussion of psychological development (1995 p.392):

" ... for Vygotsky, psychological development followed a double but inseparable path ...

(1) the zone of potential development, as a frontier area of the potential for psychological functional development, individual and internal (This is the ZPD that psychologists usually consider.)

(2) the zone of proximal development, as a physical and spatial area, as well as a social and instrumental one, in which this development is produced externally in the ambit of mediations accessible to the subject. This is the ZPD that anthropologists, sociologists, and cultural and environmental professionals in general would appreciate, but the first "version" of the ZPD ... has invaded the space for the two, and we think that, outside psychology, the ZPD is seen as a 'psychological artefact'."

Writing from a different theoretical tradition, as a foreign language researcher/pedagogue, my findings are similar, if not slightly more promising. I would not agree that ZPD is seen as a purely psychological artefact within my area. Nevertheless, whilst the role of teacher or peer is realised in L2, the importance with which ZPD conferred seems to stop there, with the emphasis on the social aspect of the relationship. Two things therefore seem to be missing: (1) the full import of the educational context and sociocultural space, namely its *mediatory* nature, is buried under emphasis on the role of the helper/facilitator; (2) the learner's contribution to the process, the *interactive* and *collaborative* parts of the process are lacking. Focussing on writing as one of the four skills or as the reinforcement of communicative exercises destroys the essence of writing as described in the Vygotskian project. This thesis will suggest that recognition of the two abovementioned points will in turn throw more light on both the social (co-constructive) and cognitive dimensions of the writing process.

Moll (1990a) points out the fact that the educator should not only be aware of individual ZPDs but of collective interpretative zones as part of a teaching system. He sees Vygotsky's original definition of the ZPD as over-restrictive, proposing an alternative model, consistent with Vygotsky's thinking, but with more emphasis on the students as consciously applying what they are learning to deal with. He stresses the need for students to be "collaborators in knowledge making as well as conscious recipients of knowledge transmission" (Moll, 1990a p.167). For the ZPD is defined not before the lesson (in the case of education) but during the interaction between the participants (Calil, 1994; Forman & C.B., 1985; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

In L2, research does call for teachers to reassess their beliefs and assumptions concerning the role of social interaction in L2 development. Donato in his work on scaffolding (1994 p.36), recognises the fundamental differences between a view of social interaction as (1) development situated in activity (Vygotsky) and (2) an opportunity to supply linguistic input (EFL) (Kraschen, 1985). His study supports the opinion that if the role of learners in social interaction were to change, they could not only expand their own knowledge of a second language but also extend that of their peers.

Vygotsky's teachings on the social origin of language and thought have led to L2 research on peer revision. In the Vygotskian framework (1) collaborative interaction leads to independent intellectual functioning and (2) concept formation is productive, not reproductive¹⁷. One illustration of this is peer revision where students collaborate in an exercise which is discussed and negotiated jointly and which each student internalises to eventually be used independently. De Guerrero and Villamil caution that competition should be kept out of the equation and

¹⁷ Whilst Vygotsky focused on the adult-child or more capable peer-child relationship, post-Vygotskian research has emphasised that peers may be less skilled in some activities but helpful in others (Elbers, 1994; Luque, 1994; Rogoff, 1990).

suggest that perhaps three rather than two students should work together to avoid this possibility (1994). Peer collaboration is seen as beneficial since it provides opportunities for dialogic interaction within a "community of equals" where students learn lessons about control. These researchers point out that this learning of strategic behaviour is beneficial for L2 writing. Research in L1, using small response groups and modelling for writing, corroborates this view (Hoel, 1997).

This work therefore supports Vygotsky's claim that learners can rise above their personal potential with the right kind of help or instruction. However the physical/spatial part of the picture, the cultural side and human agency seem to me to be underestimated. The strategic competence¹⁸ acquired would be one of the most important parts of the equation for Vygotsky. He believed that each person should have the space to do things their own way, to learn to make mistakes and move on in their own direction as part of historical production. He also taught the importance of physical action, of trying things out for oneself by doing them, by participating. These forms of understanding and experience are dialogic in nature, mutually constitutive and, moreover, essential to the whole picture. In my view, following Vygotsky, the emphasis should be on the educational procedure as mediator and not as the aim *per se*. The dialectic between teaching and learning should be maintained; language, learning and thinking are dynamically interrelated (Levine, 1993 p.210).

Vygotsky argues for a definition of development as qualitative and not quantitative, his objective being to understand the present and not forecast the future, a present full of collaborative meaning-making and not the sending or receiving of fixed messages (Bruner, 1997). This is the type of learning that L2 teachers are seeking but failing to access. Therefore, contrary to the common view of communication as the exchange of information, all too often assumed in L2, the individual needs and wishes of the learners themselves as agents in their own learning, also need to be taken into consideration. Vygotskian theory emphasises that the initial move for engaging in any activity is what determines its outcome, just as Kress and Hodge argue that all signs are motivated (Hodge & Kress, 1988). No amount of cognitive prowess or well thought out strategies will suffice if the learner is not interested. As Lantolf and Appel put it (1994b p.5) "development does not proceed solely or even primarily as the unfolding of inborn faculties but as the transformation of these innately specified processes once they intertwine with socioculturally determined factors." Central in the process is the learner herself (Elbers, 1993; Elbers, 1994).

The need for joint, collective activity is recognised by researchers. Educational work on peer interaction is not unusual and its importance to cognitive development has already been

ascertained (Donato, 1994; Forman & C.B., 1985; Teberosky, 1990; Tudge, 1990). In fact L2 pedagogy does recognise the importance of peer interaction via group work, but fails to endorse the nature of learning as explained by Vygotsky and studies based on his theories. It focuses instead on the chance to communicate and exchange *structures*, in the same way that role play practices rather than creates language. So, a real community of discourse where there is constructive discussion and a free-play of ideas, which is essential if authentic rather than stylised learning is to take place, does not occur. In Vygotsky's model of language learning however, co-operation or social interaction is the source of all specifically human processes (Van der Veer, 1986). Accordingly, when the Vygotskian ZPD comes into focus, not only are students more interested and thus motivated, but through (motivated) interaction with other learners the students are able to both access and produce terms and linguistic constructions that would not be possible were they working autonomously, what Cazden, discussing language and cognitive development, calls "performance before competence" (Bernicot, 1992; see also Berthoud-Papandropoulou & Kilcher, 1996; 1981). Hence, simulation or practice in language does not suffice. The learners have to be fully engaged in the learning process in order to reap its full benefit.

The work of del Río and Álvarez is for me the only study so far that has started to open up the true Vygotskian picture in foreign language (FL) instruction by presenting it as a *cultural tool* rather than *school content*, as the *learning process* rather than the *result* (Alvarez, 1990; Alvarez & del Río, 1990). This recognition of the learners' stages of socio-cultural development, which do not only occur within the boundaries of school, is precisely what Vygotsky was advocating. He did not support a reductionist stance in which schooling was the sole educational agent, which is what so many studies seem to suggest. Del Río and Álvarez design an educational program for FL instruction in which the learner is immersed in the FL in different ways according to his age. They develop it with particular reference to pre-schooling, basing what they call their "cultural design" on Vygotsky's teaching that mental activities need a scene which is initially a physical environment and that FL learning needs to be intrinsically linked to the demands imposed by the use of the language being taught (op cit.1990; op cit. 1990). Thus they begin to bring back the diachronic and synchronic aspects of Vygotsky's teachings.

Also essential to their (and any Vygotskian) project is the L1/FL relationship (Levine, 1993). These researchers point out that problems of interference or inhibition depend on the level of domination of L1. In their study of pre-schooling, children are still learning their L1. With adult learners the case is modified, the advance in language ability leading to the posing of very different questions. These concern (1) the part the conscious learning of other languages plays in L2 acquisition; (2) the interaction between the various languages spoken by the learner and

¹⁸ I use strategic competence to mean the ability to use communicative strategies to compensate for gaps in the

his skills in the same; (3) exactly what kinds of concepts and skills it is that learners bring from L1; (4) whether (3) facilitates or hinders the learning process. So the researchers are correct in that both age and the level of L1 or other languages come into play. More research is needed however for learners in the other stages of their project and beyond.

Other factors also form an important part of ZPD. For example I would add to their list reflection and analysis plus the conscious awareness of the educational process itself. Also, whilst the studies mentioned do note the importance of discourse in the process and state that cognitive processes take place, they go no further.

Central to projects which are Vygotskian in nature, is the need for the activity taking place to be as real as possible. This is something that L2 pedagogues have been grappling with since the introduction of the communicative approach. Despite the numerous attempts to bring "real life" into the classroom, no method so far has been deemed fully successful. Whether it be through role play, video or CD-ROM, learning is always somehow stylised. The types of immersion advocated by del Río and Álvarez, namely the mixture of informal education (contextualised) and formal education (de-contextualised) which achieve this sense of "reality" are not always viable, especially with secondary or University students. It is however essential to a Vygotskian reading of education that everyday and scientific concepts be seen as interconnected and interdependent. This thesis proposes a way in which these teachings may be implemented in the L2 classroom.

My view is that if L2 studies were to move the focus slightly to consider the value given by Vygotsky to speech (to direct or mediate), to play (to create ZPD, to give time and space) and to the learners' use of knowledges of various types and their integral relations, the effects of instruction in ZPD may be rather different. These are points which will be taken up throughout this thesis.

3.5. IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY AND THE EMOTIONS

"When I like a subject my mind starts working right away, my pen makes it work, but if I dislike it I crash into a deep coma that keeps me still in a frozen ice-cube"

Cláudia

“ The interior life is often stupid. Its egoism blinds it and deafens it; its imagination spins out ignorant tales, fascinated. It fancies that the western wind blows on the Self, and leaves fall at the feet of the Self for a reason, and people are watching. A mind risks real ignorance for the sometimes paltry prose of an imagination enriched. The trick of reason is to get the imagination to seize the actual world - if only from time to time. “

Dillard (1992)

Vygotsky perceived development as being closely linked to the imagination, creativity and the emotions. For the child these are to be found in play, the purveyor of pleasure and action, a place where “the unrealizable desires” could be “realized” (Vygotsky, 1978 p.93). Play is seen as the imaginary, illusory world where, contrary to the real world, action is subordinated to meaning. Imagination is part of the life of the adolescent and represents ‘ a specifically human form of conscious activity’ (ibid., p.93), it is play without action.

In his later writings, dealing specifically with adolescents, Vygotsky explains his theory that when imagination grapples with concepts, it leads to creativity (1994a). The example is given of Cassirer’s patient who could not say a sentence describing the weather as bad when it was good. The message is that the patient was unable to free himself from the influence of the actual situation due to his distorted higher intellectual functions, he had in other words a “zero point of imagination and creativity”. This example is used to show that development of fantasy is therefore linked to concept formation.

As discussed in chapter one, imagination has not seemed the first priority in L2 issues, as we obviously need the learners to discover the workings and styles of the language itself rather than engage in flights of fantasy. However, if we consider Vygotsky’s teachings on the role of imagination and play in cognitive processes and the development of ideas, it could be more important than has been thought. Vygotsky sees play/fantasy as a leading factor in development, the pathway to cognitive thinking. Within these imaginative circumstances the learner adopts the line of least resistance, a fact which feeds motivation, enjoyment and thus confidence, which is important in the educational process.

Examples of children learning through play are numerous. I myself learnt to spell and read before I went to school because my mother used to create play situations with letters made from sweets. It was extra fun because when I spelt a word or phrase correctly, it could be eaten. Reading was so easy at primary school because of those play situations, which were part of my home life. Actions and fun had connected with concepts and perhaps even sowed the seeds of my fascination with the written word.

Adult examples are subtler. At home I am probably most creative and imaginative in the kitchen, combining tastes, textures and colours in what for me is a fun, even a play situation. Behind the creativity also lie questions of cost and nutrition and lessons learnt from cookery books or my own previous disasters. Each one nourishes and develops the other. Cookery for me is about endless combinations and not following the book. At the same time it is governed by scientific rules, practicalities and the tastes/cultural background (even demands) of the consumers. However, without creativity and imagination it becomes the reproduction of a set recipe from one culture, exactly the same every single time; the following of ready-made steps rather than the engagement with cognitive, creative processes.

Vygotsky makes the point that just as internal and external action are inseparable, imagination, interpretation and will are the internal processes carried out by external action (1978 p.100). In play/fantasy and the imagination *meaning* comes to the fore, something, which, as we have seen, is necessary, but often sadly placed in the background in L2. If writing is to be a complex cultural activity it should embrace the meanings of which it is part and by which it is made. When a student is allowed the freedom to imagine and be creative, thinking is enriched. Videos and role play exercises have brought back some of the play aspect into L2 learning, but they fail to call on the imagination, especially when it comes to writing. They are more about practising than creating. As Vygotsky himself puts it:

“Thought ... is not born of other thoughts. Thought has its origins in the motivating sphere of consciousness, a sphere that includes our inclinations and needs, our interest and impulses, and our affect and emotion. The affective and volitional tendency stands behind thought. Only here do we find the answer to the final “why” in the analysis of thinking.”

(1987a p.282)

Bruner’s work with trainee teachers in America is a good example of what Vygotsky is describing. She uses narrative in the form of popular culture, fiction and films about teaching and learning, to train her students to become teachers by what she calls “dislocating the boundaries of theoretical discourse” (1994 p.16). Thus narrative is not just seen as representation or imaginative play that leads to making sense of the fictive world.

“Embodied narrative seems to be much more than the articulation of what is understood, more than the framing and understanding of one’s experiences, more than play with words ... narrative may be best characterised as expressed uncertainty; on the other hand, I would suggest no model exemplifies the range of narrative possibilities because no rendering of any such model can capture the infinite range of human possibilities”

(Brunner, 1994 p.18).

Narrative, for Brunner, engages with the imagination in order to make her teachers critical thinkers, to open up discursive accounts of classroom practice, extending and questioning their vision(s) of the world. She may not place her work within a Vygotskian framework, but it clearly illustrates the role given by Vygotsky to imagination and creativity.

Important for Vygotsky's discussion of fantasy are eidetic images, the visual, sensory representations conjured up by the learner in the imaginary process, which replace the artefacts used in child's play. The learner is seen to make emotional, subjective connections and associations between things which are established by her active and visual experiences (1994b p.222). Take the example of a film on domestic violence. If a viewer has not experienced this herself it is pure fantasy with which she may or may not engage. If she has, she may sometimes be objective and watch the film as if it were a documentary, either agreeing that such things can or do happen, or rejecting them as a bad portrayal of reality. If however the director makes her identify be it through the use of visual images, music or techniques such as hearing someone climb the stairs slowly, the effect can be quite traumatic, as bad memories, sensations or images are recalled by the viewer.

Vygotsky's belief is that the disappearance of eidetic images in the learner's mind means that they have begun to serve the imagination. They no longer provide a "support" for memory but move into fantasy. When they disappear completely, it marks the transition to thinking in concepts and abstract thinking has taken over. This transition is seen as an illustration of man's creative ability and marks the beginning of abstract thinking in the adolescent. Fantasy thus not only satisfies the emotions but leads to thinking for oneself. The viewer thus oscillates between the intellectual and the emotional response.

Certain language supports draw on the use of tangible images but in a way that stunts the imagination, leaving little room for fantasy. I refer to the use of cartoons or pictures in language courses used to stimulate writing. Our use of such images illustrates Vygotsky's basic idea that "all higher mental processes involve arbitrary or conventional stimuli-means" (Van der Veer, in preparation), what he calls cultural development. It is also closely linked to desires and emotions, in the way that different images evoke different kinds of emotions. Thus the learner's social cultural surroundings are tightly bound up with his affective as well as his cognitive processes (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991 p.358).

Vygotsky wrote of the association between emotional facts and the imagination. Different emotions stimulate different types of idea, indeed for Vygotsky they activate ideas. According to Vygotsky it is in the creative imagination that emotional and intellectual aspects of behaviour achieve their synthesis. The images may be unreal but the feelings are not. I used to have to sleep with a night-light as a child, as I was scared to be in the dark. What I didn't tell my mother

at first was that, as I saw it, I was visited by a silent but scary misty figure in a black cloak as soon as the light went out. Months later she discovered, by chance, that there was a reflection of my toy panda in the mirror whenever the light was put out. The reflection looked like the figure that frightened me. The figure was not real but the fear certainly was. Vygotsky uses the same type of example (the coat on the hook) to show that fear when experienced as imagination is real, opposed to fear in fantasy, in which there is "no real sensation" (1971 p.210; 1987c p.347). Imagination requires the ability to think in concepts in order to become intellectualised (to look objectively at the object on the hook or in the mirror) (1994a p.269), it then becomes an "integral aspect of realistic thinking" (1987c p.349).

Central to this picture is wilful, voluntary action. Motives, inclinations, incentives and emotions are closely tied into the complete picture. Motivation is the driving force for internalisation and creative thought; no meaningful action can exist without a motive (Vygotsky, 1987a) (see also Glassman, 1996 p.324). Human activity is thus seen as social, as historically developed in activity.

A few studies touch on issues of motivation but do not develop it in any great detail (Alvarez, 1990; Dornyei, 1994; Gardner & F., 1994; Oxford, 1994). Motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, has always been an issue in the classroom, whatever the subject. Where Vygotsky's writings can be helpful is in the place that motivation plays when linked to creativity. While it is true that most adults learn another language for reasons other than to be creative, the aim is to become fluent. Fluency, as opposed to an over-concern with accuracy, can add true pleasure to the writing process and thus build confidence. Directivity is therefore constructed from emotion and voluntary action and in the process linked to cognitive, intellectual processes. So, emotion is for Vygotsky essentially a social and cultural construction, upon which one's identity is constructed (see del Rio & Alvarez, 1995 p.387 for discussion). Motivated action and agency are directive functions and creativity and memory cognitive functions. Where the two combine is in the cultural development of emotion through play, a specifically human form of development.

Intrinsic motivation comes not only from the improving of one's grasp of a language but also from the pleasure of finding that a learning method/process works (Zwaans, 1998). In this sense monotony becomes fun. For Vygotsky conscious reflection was always seen as leading to development. If this reflection were to be linked to the greatest source of fun in learning, play/fantasy, surely the implications for the classroom would be exciting. Through using writing in play/imaginary situations and playing with writing perhaps these teachings can be "opened up for consideration" (Bruner, 1976; McLane, 1990).

Vygotsky's later, more controversial, writings promote the fact that affect lies behind intelligence, that we only completely understand thought through motivation. Davydov too, just before his

death, was beginning to explore the sphere of needs and emotions, which as he points out, cannot be considered separately (1998). He works with actions, emotions and motives as parts of thinking activity. Like Vygotsky he relates creativity and imagination to the intelligence, stating that emotions are more fundamental than thought. Whereas Leont'ev says that actions are connected with needs and emotions, Davydov says that actions stem from motives. What is important is that the students who engage emotionally and are highly motivated do seem to produce better and more prolific work. However whether motivation is "the most secret internal plane of verbal thinking" (Glassman, 1996), whether conceptual thinking is confined to the cognitive domain is something that has to be left to psychology or to activity theory to discover (see Van der Veer, 1994 p.296 for discussion). For as Daniels points out (1993), Vygotsky did not provide all of the answers, there is still much to be done.

3.6. REVISITING VYGOTSKIAN THOUGHT

"Thought is not only mediated externally by signs. It is mediated internally by meanings."

Vygotsky (1987a p.282)

"Language is a means for understanding oneself."

Potebnya A. A., 1922 in (Vygotsky, 1994b p.243)

As indicated in the previous discussion, in order to see the real connections between Vygotskian thought and L2 writing it is necessary to take a broader view, shifting the lens from left to right then drawing back to take a unified view. It is no longer enough to talk of product or process, of linguistic or sociocultural competence. It is time to look more deeply into the social, cognitive and historical aspects of writing.

Any writer knows that in the course of composing a piece of writing the focus, the purpose and even the audience can change. Writing needs to be situated in development rather than performance. The ability to write depends not only on linguistic competence but on knowledge of discourse(s) and audience(s), what Rogoff calls "social cognition" (1990). When writers make connections they perform cognitive processes, recalling prior texts and experiences, "shaping at the point of utterance", revising scrupulously or just letting the words flow. Cognitive and social processes interact and interrelate in what is a complex and ongoing process, often beginning

long before the pen touches paper. Whilst this is often recognised in L1, it is not so often seen in L2. L2 might benefit were it to remember the *writing* part of foreign language writing.

Admittedly, foreign language issues can interrupt the process. Sometimes conscious use of linguistic and cognitive strategies is required. This language awareness, or decontextualising process can in turn, as discussed, be beneficial, integrating knowledge and motivation. Clearly the task of internalising a new language is a complex one. I have emphasised that it relies on maximum exposure to and active/motivated involvement in the target language. This external activity is internalised in simultaneous and overlapping processes before it is externalised in the form of words upon the page. Essential is the proleptic guidance of others. Central to the whole process is the interpersonal contact with others and the shifting development of the languages spoken by the learner. In other words, crucial to the issue is the way in which writing leads to the shaping of our learners as human beings, as motivated agents in their own learning process who learn from everything around them.

The ways in which this can be achieved are various and depend on particular students in particular circumstances. Classrooms always have limitations be it of time, funds, space or curriculum requirements. How indeed can the Vygotskian project be brought to bear on L2 writing?

The next chapter will discuss the setting up of the research project underlying this thesis, bringing Vygotsky into the L2 classroom to place a focus on writing through the use of drama. It uses educational drama to link the extra-linguistic to the linguistic through play, fantasy and ZPD. The aim is to link the acquisition of knowledge and skills in writing to the everyday context in which they are produced, bringing Vygotsky's general theories into FL learning. Thus by using educational drama as both a cognitive and spontaneous learning process, the goal is to create a framework for the negotiation of social meaning, through fictive, affective, interactive processes, in order to investigate the context(s) and processes of that learning. For "by creating a context for the activity which the student recognises we activate her knowledge of that context" (Coll, 1983 (my translation)) and, in the process, hopefully call up her other knowledges, including those of writing competencies.

The emphasis will be on the nature of the different texts produced in this particular educational environment and the interaction between the use of drama and the writing process itself. For if language and cognitive processes are always in a state of change and negotiation, they should be studied in the process of those changes: if language learning is a historical event, it should be studied in the history of its making. In terms of a larger Vygotskian framework it looks at the role of thinking in learning, development and instruction in a way which bridges difficult conceptual phases in L2 teaching.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: THE RESEARCH PROCESS

4.1. DESIGNING THE PROJECT: INITIAL DECISIONS

In the second semester of 1993 (March to June inclusive) I was to take over the teaching of both first and second year EFL language classes. Instruction using traditional methods was not producing any inspiring improvement in student essay writing during the course of the first semester. Grammar and oral abilities were not a problem, but writing assignments continued to be both feared and unsuccessful. Together with my colleague who was teaching the course first semester, I decided that March was an ideal time to implement my research project. My initial question was what would happen to both the writing and the learning process when drama was introduced into the classroom as part of the educational programme with a view to improving writing.

Assuming that Vygotsky was right, that "words fundamentally restructure our thinking and perception " (Van der Veer, 1994 p.295) it became important to me not just to document what happened in the study but to look at the role of writing itself. I wanted to capture not only what was new about the drama process and the way in which it might link to the Vygotskian idea of ZPD and language as development, but to seek to understand the interactions taking place. For the Vygotskian aim is to understand, not to predict (Lantolf & Appel, 1994a p.23), to understand the inner workings and dynamics as the processes unfold.

Language was thus to be accorded a key role, as the culturally and historically constituted basis of symbolic systems, the means of linking individual and social, and the route to the theorising of the medium as well as the outcome of research processes (Gubrium & Silverman, 1989; Parker, 1992).

Underlying the research was also my framework of L2 writing and theories of the nature of language learning. Writing models have to date concentrated on disparate parts, on "segments of complex reality" (Riazi, 1997 p.106). This thesis proposes instead that there is a need to identify the key elements involved in L2 writing and also look at the interactive process between them. Placing them in a sociocultural framework could facilitate this.

These theoretical underpinnings influenced many of the decisions that had to be made when designing the study as well as subsequent features regarding the data.

4.1.1. A MIX OF QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES

The nature of the research problem was instrumental in the choice of methods for the study. There was no research linking Vygotsky, L2 writing and drama on which to establish unilateral (directional) hypotheses, rather a need to develop L2 writing within the framework of cultural-historical theory, as socioculturally situated practice. Other studies had looked at language learning and development through the ZPD, but I wanted to focus on the nature of the students' (prospective) development, the role of writing and the introduction of imaginative, creative and affective processes via the drama. Thus a design exploratory in nature was required.

Cultural-historical theory implies a qualitative approach involving thick description (Vygotsky, 1978 p.14). Vygotsky taught that to study something historically is to study it in the process of change (Vygotsky, 1978 p.65) and it is precisely the nature of this change that interests me. The writing my students were producing prior to the project was devoid of thinking. As discussed, it was Vygotsky's writings on concept formation and the importance of words as:

“the means by which the adolescent takes charge of his own psychological processes and with whose aid he masters the flow of his own psychological processes and directs their activity for the purpose of solving the problems he is faced with “

(1994b p.212)

that led me to look at the role of writing and the specific connection between writing and concept formation. Bearing in mind that the various uses of written language are largely mediated through oral interaction (Rockwell, 1994b p.149) there was a need for the investigation of L2 literacy practices as embedded in the social world rather than the grammar book.

As daughter of a detective I was brought up to always ask the seven-fold question: who, what, when, where, why, how and to whom? As an educator I was interested in setting up a project which would contribute to teaching and learning development, hence particularly interested in the “how” and “why” parts of the equation. I was attracted by the interpretative nature of qualitative research because it would allow me to search for relationships within a rich body of data, looking at process and meaning rather than outcomes or products (Merriam, 1988). I liked the idea that the data are mediated through the researcher herself rather than through instruments of measurement. Moreover the nature of drama is such that it does not lend itself easily to quantitative approaches.

However, for a full picture I also needed to answer the "what", namely what happened to exam results and student anxieties as a result of the study. As educator of these learners I was naturally interested in whether the marks rose or fell and whether their views of writing changed. This was best ascertained via measurement scales. Therefore I also included quantitative methods in order to provide as complete a picture as possible. Marks before and after the implication of the educational programme were statistically compared; and beginning of term/end of term questionnaires were used to measure writing apprehension and attitude to writing and (end of term) drama. For as Valsiner points out (1989 p.292) methodologies need to be "structural-dynamic" in nature in order to deal with the constantly changing nature of developmental phenomena.

4.2. THE FOCUS OF THE STUDY AND HYPOTHESES

This research project seeks to ascertain whether introducing drama into the foreign language classroom as part of an educational programme will help redress the balance of oral and written skills. The principal aims are to ascertain (1) the character of the written texts generated and (2) whether the introduction of these new methods changes the nature and value of the learning process. Should there be changes I am interested in the character of the changes and the reasons behind them. Underlying the research is the assumption that working within a Vygotskian framework will lead to development. The project seeks to delve into depth into the complexities and processes of the learning environment.

My purpose is furthermore to explore and evaluate, using both qualitative and quantitative methods, whether the introduction of educational drama into the course stimulates and/or aids writing proficiency. I am also interested in possible changes in student apprehension and attitude to writing.

Put more formally, using Brown (1988):

Based on the previous research regarding the use of a Vygotskian framework for language learning, two directional hypotheses are formulated:

H₁: *The introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom will change the nature of the writing process.*

H₂: *The introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom will have an effect on the writing apprehension of the students.*

Since the drama/writing relationship has not been theorised in the EFL context , one nondirectional hypothesis was formulated:

H_3 : *There is a relationship between the introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom and L2 writing proficiency;*

and one null hypothesis:

H_0 : *There is no relationship between the introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom and L2 writing proficiency.*

4.3. METHOD

4.3.1. SETTING

Students were informed before the semester started that a research project linking writing and drama would take place in which they were to be involved. We called it "focus on writing".

Each drama session lasted from roughly 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. with breaks for coffee and lunch. This was to allow the students time to build up their own fictional world and become completely involved in the topic. It was also to allow different views and versions of the drama to emerge since there was no one way to do anything and no one way to resolve it.

The usual classrooms had to be used for the workshops since it was impossible to give a workshop in the amphitheatres as there were only tiny stages. A stage would also have created "performance for the audience", something I sought to avoid. Unfortunately that term we had just moved from temporary installations into permanent installations and the rooms were smaller. This was a problem as they had not only to provide room for movement and the formation of working groups, but there had to be room for the furniture stacked at the back. Thus I arranged for us to use the old installations which, as the term progressed, became increasingly difficult as another faculty had taken them over and access was reduced. This meant that in one particular case, that of the second years, the second workshop was later in the term than I would have liked. It would however have been detrimental to the drama and thus the project had I used one of the rooms in the new building.

4.3.2. SUBJECTS

The subjects consist of three groups covering the whole student population taking the M.A. in English (EFL) and Portuguese at the Universidade do Algarve, in the 1992-93 academic session (n= 127). All students in the study were Portuguese in nationality and were training to be teachers of EFL and Portuguese. The sample-sizes of the three groups of students were determined by the natural grouping into classes for the population. Students who did not take part in both tests or who were consistently absent during the research programme because of illness, work or family obligations were excluded from the quantitative analysis.

The subject profile is summarised in the following table:

Table 1: Student population

Year of Study	Class	Male	Female	Total
First	I/1	5	45	50
First	I/2	5	43	48
Second	II	3	26	29
Total		13	114	127

The choice to investigate these students within their classroom environment, as their teacher, had implications for the rest of the project:

1. As students of the M.A. course in teacher training they had an acknowledged level of competency in English; this would allow all workshops to be carried out in English only.
2. As majors in EFL and Portuguese they had an interest in languages and language teaching. All had carried out a semester of German and most had studied French at secondary school.
3. They needed to improve their own L2 writing in order not only to pass their examinations but also to further their own careers.
4. The project could be fully integrated into their education programme. This meant all students would be required to attend because all writing assignments that term would result from the workshops.
5. As teacher/researcher I had to be aware of the possibility of bias and take the necessary steps.
6. The nature of the classrooms (size, proximity to other classrooms for noise etc.) did not facilitate the project.

4.3.3. DEFINING THE DRAMA MEDIUM

As briefly discussed in the opening chapter, I choose to call the type of drama used in the project *educational drama*. Drama in this thesis is not used as an art form, indivisible from theatre (Hornbrook, 1991) ; it is also more than a road to some undefined notion of “meaning-making” and/or “development” (Neelands, 1984); it is a medium within which to challenge and question, to experiment and start again, to produce and remake meanings.

In L2, different types of “drama” have been introduced into the classroom. However drama is a wide term and it is traditionally, in L2, used to refer to games, role-play and simulation (Maley & Duff, 1982 2nd edition). I rejected all of these methods as unsuitable.

Drama games were not applicable in this context as they are based on the following of rules and would not allow students to address the subjects of the essays they were to be set and evaluated upon at the end of the year. Production rather than transmission of meanings was my aim. I sought to take the focus away from stereotypical and repetitive exchanges. Instead, creativity and understanding, multiple meaning making through fictional role and improvisation were foregrounded.

Consequently neither was role-play as used in foreign language classrooms sufficient for my aims. This is principally because it sets the students in different but very stylised situations, easily becoming a game to disguise drilling. Whilst definitely an improvement on the skills/drills approach or the language laboratory, the student is told what to do or strings together given grammatical structures instead of being left to explore issues, events and relationships for herself. She is, we might say, “trapped within the sentence”. The emphasis lies on *what* happened rather than *why* it happened, *how* it happened or *to whom*. Teaching aims revolve around linguistic reinforcement, observation and criticism of various interpretations of the situation. My need was to let the students think for themselves and react to and question situations in accordance with their own terms of reference rather than to accept the elementary “a single to Kings Cross please” approach. Why the character was making the journey, what he was like and what he was going to do are the questions I needed to broach. I did not want puppets, I wanted real people.

Assuming that to be competent in a foreign language does not just mean to know its features and structures, but to be able to participate within the foreign language and its culture, discovering and respecting its limitations and peculiarities, role-play would also have created difficulties:

1. students are not free to voice their own opinions;
2. it is individualistic, non-cooperative and extremely subject specific, since when the emphasis is placed either on practising grammatical constructions, the learning becomes teacher-centred or language-centred rather than student-centred, anaphoric rather than deictic;
3. it is difficult to involve everyone.

So whilst role-play exercises can be useful in the classroom, they were not adequate for the purposes of this study. I needed to provide opportunities for the students to be able to think for themselves in the foreign language situation and in dimensions other than the linguistic. By letting them reach their own understandings through drama, I hoped to give them both the confidence to write and an opportunity to formulate ideas about which to write.

For this very reason the third tradition, simulation, was also not an option. Simulation was rejected because:

1. it assigns personalities and roles to participants and gives them a problem to solve;
2. it is chosen to match the language level of the students. In this sense it becomes merely a vehicle for practising what has been learnt, often turning into a long and tedious exercise;
3. students assume the emotions and understandings of others and not themselves;
4. students' powers are limited and controlled. Positions are constructed for the students, which may distort rather than reinforce what they know. In my dramas it was the students themselves who compiled pamphlets for and against drugs in accordance with their own standards. In a simulation everything would be stipulated, down to the size;
5. there is no group discussion during the session, only debriefing afterwards;
6. students can be wrong, disloyal to the role given to them for portrayal, which leaves little room for motivation. In educational drama the students can experiment with textual choices and construct their own position and still always be right. Again the emphasis is on practice and not discovery: "since simulations are language in action they reveal what really has been learned at a practical level" (Jones, 1982 p.18).

The teacher is also at the mercy of the instruction cards which direct the whole operation and often only practice will show whether the instructions are too complicated or too few, by which time it is too late to turn back. Such a task-based approach is more suited to a skills-based course, which mine was not.

Therefore I turned to the models of educational drama and forum theatre as explained in chapter one. However, to ensure that drama was the medium within which the students made meanings about the world, their fictional characters and their real selves as well as language and particularly English, it was necessary to re-think the drama process. Thus basing my work

on that of O'Toole (1992), Neelands (1984; 1990; 1992a; 1992b) and Boal (1979; 1992), I sought to encompass the considerations of L2 and sociocultural psychology within education through the dramatic medium, taking the learning of a language beyond the linguistic, to include the whole person in the social world (Lave & Wenger, 1996 p.146).

Two workshops for each set of students were to provide the writing for the whole term. This meant there were further considerations. Care had to be taken to give emphasis to both the cognitive and the affective which although not mutually exclusive are both in danger of dominating. The focus had to be diverted from the fact that the students were working exclusively in a foreign language: no overt correction of incorrect English usage took place. My aim was to facilitate the discovery of a shared language of action through imaginative play, human presence and story in which the role of the teacher was proleptic and supportive rather than didactic. Thus I sought to get in touch with those issues deemed of importance by Vygotsky in the quest to further development, to "use the natural features of pupils' lives to build an educational context out of what they have natural access to and out of what they already know and can do, rather than to continue with methodologies that deny them these natural learning "aids" (Levine, 1993 p.192).

I devised workshops that could, at the choice of the participants, take different directions. Hence it was always impossible to structure a whole workshop from beginning to end although it was possible to surreptitiously push it in a certain direction. I would commence each workshop in a different way designed to interest the students and engage them both imaginatively and creatively. From that point onwards, as teacher or participant, I was able to stipulate or suggest dramatic ways in which the theme might be explored in order for them to find different ways of approaching or the problem. The aim was, beginning from social meaning making, to recreate the objective subjectively, letting participants find their own readings of what was happening.

Appendices 3.1 to 3.6 summarise not only the procedures of the workshops but the educational objectives and techniques involved. These are also discussed in Chapter 5.1. Appendix 2.2 explains the drama terminology used.

4.4. DATA COLLECTION

4.4.1. VISUAL AND AUDIO DATA

Drama workshops were recorded by video camera and audio tape. This was important since as action researcher I was an integral part of the drama and not always able to observe what was occurring at each and every moment. The collection of both visual and audio data captured

what happened objectively (Marshall & Rossman, 1989 p.85). Also since so much happened in a day-long session it avoided any misinterpretation at a later date. In the drama medium film is particularly useful as it documents non-verbal action and communication (Hockings, 1975). The accuracy of the data recording also meant I could give full attention to the drama session and not think about matters external to the drama such as the data collection process, which was firmly in the hands of my colleague. Should either of the recording systems fail (as did happen at the end of one session), there was always another back up.

Measures were taken to avoid interference and disruption as much as possible, so that the drama was not affected. Both recording devices were operated by the students' teacher in semester one with whom they were at ease. The students were less worried by the visual recording than the audio. I therefore purchased two PZM (Pressure Zone Microphone) microphones which are like small floppy disks and give complete freedom of movement, particularly suited to recording large groups. They can be placed flat or hung on the wall. They not only have high quality but are easily hidden and not as obvious as a standard microphone. As there was a lot of action as well as talking during the sessions it was important that the sounds reflected did not interfere with the recording.

The video recordings have since served another purpose. The second year students asked if they could see the video recordings of their drama sessions as part of their course in didactics three years later. They were the source of lively discussion.

4.4.2. WRITTEN TEXTS

As the focus of the project is on writing, the bulk of the data was provided by written texts. This led to a large amount of data. Writing assignments were allocated at the end of the drama session and in subsequent classroom sessions where further writing took place. Writing was to be conducted in role. In some cases the role taken was the role played by the student in the workshop, but in most cases the role was that of the principal character of the drama that day. Thus the writer may not have taken the role in question but most of the session had been dedicated to dealing with some problem or challenge related to the character in question.

Different text types were requested from the student. Initially the writing concentrated on diary entries, letters and articles as the students were asked to adopt and investigate the ideas, feelings, attitudes and actions of an important character in the drama. In subsequent sessions pamphlets, brochures, newspapers and magazine articles were compiled in writing groups. Initially I chose the writing assignment, but in the second drama session students themselves were allowed to suggest a writing assignment which was then proposed to the class for voting. In some cases students had two different assignments to choose from.

4.4.3. THE QUESTION OF CASE STUDIES

I considered whether to select and particularly follow the work of students from different abilities, to characterise and chronicle events (Marshall & Rossman, 1989) and give in-depth examination of the process in particular cases (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). However, I decided against this because:

1. to limit myself to a small limited sample of particular students in particular contexts would be to miss out on the richness of the project; I needed more variety and more examples to look for emerging patterns; this left me free to focus on any drama event and any written text;
2. interactions were the essence of the drama process it would be necessary to look at both or all the people involved in a drama scene, not one person who was a case study;
3. it would have been impossible to monitor each case study via audio recording as a) groups in drama are formed by random and b) not all case study students would form part of the same group. It would also have been impractical and in the circumstances, technically impossible.

Instead, as patterns emerged I was free to cross-check them across the full range of abilities in all of the workshops.

4.4.4. TEST RESULTS

For monitoring of student proficiency prior and post drama workshops the official test marks of the University tests were used.

Three tests are given to students each academic year. One test was given to the students upon entry into the class. In order to help my project the second test was given in March at the commencement of semester two, before the research project was implemented. The third test was given in June at the end of the semester in the post drama period.

For the purposes of base-line data the marks of the essay in test 2 were used. For the purposes of exit data the marks of the essay in test 3 were used.

The marks of the test in semester one were used together with those of test 2 to divide the students into high, medium or low achievers.

Within each year, each test was marked at the same level. It should be noted that essay writing was 50% of the total mark of these tests. The other 50% were allocated to grammar exercises. This reminds us that drama is not to be seen as a miracle cure but as part of an ongoing educational programme that also includes grammar instruction.

Students who did not (1) complete both prior and post tests or (2) frequent both drama sessions were eliminated from the quantitative calculations, as documented in Chapter 5 section 2.2.

The marking schemes used were those approved by the department of modern languages and literatures at the University, part of the departmental programme. They are based on the British Council marking scheme and can be found in appendices 9.1 and 9.2.

As their teacher it was my job to grade the tests. All texts were marked blind. To avoid any chance of possible bias they were also all double marked by my colleague in the EFL department as an inter-rater reliability measure.

4.4.5. QUESTIONNAIRES

"An attitude statement is a single sentence that expresses a point of view, a belief, a preference, a judgement, an emotional feeling, a position for or against something."

(Oppenheim, 1992 p.168)

As educator of the students I was interested in more than test results. I was specifically interested in:

1. general writing apprehension;
2. student views on their difficulties in language in L2 writing;
3. the importance they gave to writing ;
4. initial writing strategies ;
5. their views of the drama/writing relationship.

I decided to administer questionnaires to the whole population pre and post drama in order to measure these points. A sample copy of the questionnaires can be found in appendices 9.4 and 9.5.

One reason that researchers use questionnaires is to " learn about the distribution of a characteristic or set of characteristics or a set of attitudes or beliefs". (Marshall & Rossman,

1989 p.83). Following Myers (p.117-118) and Daly and Miller (1975b p.245-246) I devised two questionnaires including an instrument proven to be a dependable instrument for writing apprehension. This was composed of attitude statements followed by a five point Likert scale which is specifically suited to study attitude patterning (Oppenheim, 1992 p.189). The Likert scale offers a scale of 5 (running from "strongly agree" through to "strongly disagree") on which learners place themselves on an attitude continuum for each statement (ibid., p.195). The reliability¹⁹ of this scale is good since a coefficient of .85 is often achieved (ibid., p.200).

In using questionnaires the researcher relies on the honesty and accuracy of the responses of the participants. One method to verify that the questions are answered honestly and to avoid the Hawthorne effect²⁰, the Halo effect²¹ or subject expectancy²², is to reverse questions, or repeat questions in a different format. These can then be checked against each other. This is the method used in the Daly and Miller scale. I also worded the questions differently in the post-drama questionnaire to avoid students feeling they were repeating what they had done at the beginning of term.

The first questionnaire was compulsory as it also contained an initial section to determine their ability and language background as mentioned in 4.4.6. The second questionnaire was voluntary.

Writing apprehension is a construct which refers to "a person's predisposition to undertake or avoid writing tasks". From a theoretical perspective, writing apprehension runs along a continuum from complete lack of absence to debilitating presence." (Daly, Vangelisti, & Witte, 1988 p.147). It was important for me to investigate writing apprehension in my classroom since previous research has shown that it is related to students' writing performance (Daly & Miller, 1975a; Daly & Shamo, 1978; Faigley, Daly, & Witte, 1981). Furthermore as Daly, Vangelisti and Witte rightly point out it is not only in the classroom that students learn to write but that they also develop their feelings or attitudes about the act of writing itself (1988 p.148). Research has been carried out as to the role played by the ways in which writing is taught and the ways in which teachers teach writing (Daly et al., 1988), which suggests that there are relationships between the psychological and social dimensions of writing in classroom contexts. Thus I was interested if, in a Vygotskian framework, which pays attention to both, writing apprehension would change.

¹⁹ Reliability is the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances (Kirk & L., 1986 p.20)

²⁰ Namely, that the subjects were so pleased at being included in a study that the results of the investigation are more closely related to pleasure than to anything that actually occurs in the research (Brown, 1988 p.32).

²¹ Namely, the tendency to respond positively to a person they like (Brown, 1988 p.33).

²² The natural tendency of people to want to please or "help" the researcher (Brown, 1988 p.34).

Writing apprehension has not yet been a focus of L2 research. Emphasis has focused rather on anxiety about learning the foreign language itself, using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) (see also Ganschow & Sparks, 1996 for discussion). I decided to use Daly and Miller's scale not only because of its reliability, but because the statements seemed pertinent to my project. It was thus given to the students, in different forms, at the beginning and end of the term.

In order to get to know my students better, the sections on difficulties in English, the role of writing and organisational preferences were added in the pre-data questionnaire. In the post-data collection questionnaire attitudes to the drama/writing relationship, the place of writing (class/home) and teacher evaluation of writing were measured.

4.4.6. CONTROL OF VARIABLES

In any research study it is important to consider variables. Following Brown (1988 p.8) I use *variable* to refer to "what we can observe or quantify of the human characteristics of abilities involved", as different from *construct*, namely "the actual characteristic or ability that it represents in human beings". (e.g. the actual human ability as represented by the University test scores). A variable is thus "an observed or quantified representation of a construct which is the actual underlying human characteristic or ability in question" (ibid., p.9).

Before the study I was interested to know:

1. each student's level of writing proficiency as measured by the university test in semester one of that academic year;
2. each student's L2 background: namely
 - 2.1. whether the student had spent extended periods of time (more than 6 weeks) in an English speaking country;
 - 2.2. whether the student had carried out any extra course in L2 writing;
 - 2.3. whether the student had one or more parents or guardians who were native English speakers.

Point 1 was easily obtained from the University records. Together with the pre-data collection test it allowed me to divide students into high, average and low achievers. I wanted to see whether the level of ability was a variable, whether students of differing abilities reacted in the same way to the new educational programme.

Point 2 lists possible variables in student L2 background that could have had an influence on class work. For example, if a student were to have outside help with L2 writing it would, most possibly, affect L2 writing improvement. I decided to prefix these questions to the pre-data questionnaire on writing apprehension (appendix 9.4), which I asked students to complete in class time to assure a full response .

However, it is important to remember that drama was part of a general educational programme and not the only form of instruction and, with the exception of 2.2., these variables would also have been present in the first semester. It was therefore decided to monitor any students who answered yes to any parts of question 2, but not to exclude them from the calculations.

4.4.7. FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

"Typically qualitative in-depth interviews are much more like conversations than formal, structured interviews. The researcher explores a few general topics to help uncover the participant's meaning perspective, but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures the responses. This, in fact, is an assumption fundamental to qualitative research - the participant's perspective on the social phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it."

(Marshall & Rossman, 1989 p.82)

The students whose written texts were selected for analysis were interviewed after the drama sessions to clarify and complement both the writing and the questionnaire. Whilst aware that in many interview situations subjective rather than objective responses are forthcoming (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindhall, 1994 p.50), semi-structured interviews were used as "a conversation with a purpose" (Kahn & Cannell, 1957 p.149):

- 1) to allow for immediate follow-up questions; e.g. clarify gaps and questions about the writing;
- 2) to confirm that my readings of the student's participation were concordant with her own;
- 3) to obtain feedback on the drama session.

The duration of the interview was between 15-20 minutes. All interviews were carried out by myself and were recorded on audiotape. They usually took place outside on campus so that the students would feel at ease. Generally the interview concentrated on the three points above or their own personal histories. I strove not to put words or conclusions in their mouth in order to verify my own. This was initially much harder than I had thought, but became much easier with practice. The design was helpful as it allowed for new questions to be introduced, for particular answers to be expanded and also for me to question them.

4.4.8. JOURNALS

Students were invited to keep a journal with regard to their writing in English and their drama workshops:

1. in order to obtain feedback on the drama sessions and writing assignments;
2. to get the students to use L2 writing as part of their lives as well as for teacher/peer evaluation;
3. to help combat writing apprehension.

Students in year one were copious in their writings and this proved extremely time-consuming for me, as well as rewarding, as I replied to each journal entry as quickly as possible in order to keep the dialogue moving. Students in year two, at their wish, only handed in their journals at the end of the year. Entries were few and in general consisted of two entries, one after each workshop. In subsequent interview it resulted that their workload was heavy that semester and they had not given much importance to the task.

I decided not to use the journals as presentable data for reasons of confidentiality and ethics and due to the fact that many entries discussed class matters. However some quotes are used at the beginning of chapters, with the permission of the students. I did nevertheless heed the comments of year one in the preparation of the second drama sessions.

4.5. DATA ANALYSIS

*"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"
 "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat
 "It doesn't really matter where," said Alice.
 "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat"*

Lewis Carroll (1865/1946)

4.5.1. INTRODUCTION

What "analysis" means is complex and debated amongst qualitative researchers (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996 p.10). My procedure and view of the qualitative research process is summed up by Ely et al.'s reworking of Tesch's overview (Tesch, 1990 p.95-97) (Ely, Vinz, Anzul, & Downing, 1997 p.163-4):

1. *Analysis is not the last phase in the research process; it is concurrent with data collection or cyclic. It was during the data collection that systems of analysis began to emerge, as connections were made and repeated.*

2. *The analysis process is systematic and comprehensive but not rigid.* Interpretation was seen as a process, a process which continued as the methods of analysis were tried out and developed with particular reference to the study.
3. *Attending to data includes a reflective activity that results in a set of analytical notes that guide the process.* The data were so profuse that notes were essential. The video and audio recordings and transcriptions were invaluable but they did not eliminate the need to take notes (Patton, 1990 2nd edn. p.344).
4. *Data are "segmented" i.e. divided into relevant and meaningful "units" yet the connection to the whole is maintained. No analysis of data is meaningful except in its cultural context.* Research is part of the social world (Hammersley, 1996 p.163). Due to the physical, interactive nature of the drama environment, the writing and its analysis could not be severed from the process. The data was analysed rather through layers of understanding within thick description, which provides for the fact that isolated movements or utterances mean nothing without taking into account the total cultural context or episode within which they are embedded (Geertz, 1973).
5. *The data segments are categorised according to an organising system that is predominantly derived from the data themselves.* The different connections between the drama and the writing dictated the categories of the units of analysis with regard to transformations.
6. *Comparisons of all kinds are evident throughout the report.* Patterns in the data were verified by looking at the work of students of different levels of ability within the same class and at the different workshops across the spectrum.
7. *Categories for sorting out segments are flexible.* As the categories of analysis were developed they were seen to overlap and interact as parts of a dynamic.
8. *Weaving, forming, shaping quantitative data during analysis is an eclectic activity: there is not one 'right' way.* The drama/writing relationship was viewed from different disciplines in order to describe it more fully, in multiple ways, creating layered stories about both process and event. Ely et al. (1997 p.52) liken qualitative research to a good movie which

"engages viewers, involves them in considering what the director has chosen to spotlight, leaves them open to create other plot possibilities, to wonder what was not shown and to analyse the presentation..."

... A good movie is an experiment in forms and while it nests within a history of other cinematic forms, the director creates new ways of showing, of moving the plot ahead, of juxtaposing events, characters and sequences... *we have been thinking of qualitative research writing as still photography for too long*" (my italics).

9. *The procedures are neither "scientific" nor "mechanistic": qualitative analysis is "intellectual craftsmanship (Mills, 1959), the researcher is a bricoleur.* In the words of Ely et al. (1997 p.49) : "Qualitative researchers work on the edge of awareness, looking both outside and inward for sources of potential translation of event into meaning." The process was one of building a systematic system of layers of analysis rather than implementing one, " about learning ways of going about it and using what one can along the way". (Bruner, 1998).
10. *The result of the analysis is some type of synthesis.* Whilst different forms of analysis were used to condense the data into analysable units, the nature of the project only makes sense when they are drawn together as different layers of the same picture.

4.5.2. INITIAL STEPS: GENERAL PATTERNS

"Data analysis is the process of bringing order and structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is a messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative and fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat. Qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships among categories of data; it builds grounded theory".

(Marshall & Rossman, 1989 p.112)

The key problem caused by having so much data was how to go about organising it and setting up an interpretation to study it. The first stage was two-fold: (1) to watch the video recordings over and over and over again and (2) listen to the audiotapes (which I did everywhere from the tube to the gym). I was looking for patterns, connections, development. It was time-consuming, but necessary if the link between the drama and the writing was to be ascertained. In the long run it was extremely productive.

The next step was to (1) take notes on particular scenes and themes in the videos and (2) transcribe those parts of the audio tapes which I thought important (3) compare new findings to my field notes. If Vygotsky were correct, the ideas and concepts in the writing would be evidenced in the speech and social interaction.

The following stage was to find some sorting and categorising system for the written texts. This was quite an informal process in which I sought to generate concepts and themes. I found out in

this stage that I had to be systematic and highly disciplined or I would flounder. I started to look for patterns between the visual and audio data and the written data. My files were organised and reorganised in several different ways during this process. At the back of my mind nudged the question whether the Vygotskian view of language, writing and development held true.

I found it easier to first copy-type the written texts so they were all in the same format. Eventually certain themes emerged. Initially these became the categories into which I divided the data, marked by different coloured highlighter pens on photocopies of the written texts and transcripts for clarity and coherence. The process was not just a case of dividing, indexing, sorting or retrieving data but about conceptualising what had happened, finding what Tesch (1990 p.121) calls "pools of meaning" At first the categories numbered nineteen: too many. I discovered I was mixing looking at a) language and b) the drama/writing relationship. There was a need to stand back and look at the data as a whole as well as looking at its constituent parts. I then decided that the best way to handle it was through general points of inquiry and to develop more detailed frames of analysis which could relate to the linguistic and social semiotic. This initially brought me down to four main themes (1) range and form (2) storytelling and personal/group histories (3) metaphoric processes (4) play and reality(ies). Although these later changed as the theory began to inform the data and vice versa, these initial themes are still central to the thesis.

When I found themes in the writing I went back to the drama to find out whether there were any things there that had led to the written text being formed in such a way. When a dramatic activity seemed to hold promising data I looked to find connections in the writing.

At the same time I was also following the work of different students, plotting their progress. I was interested to see whether high, average and low achievers reacted in the same way to the new medium; to see if the same patterns held true for different levels of development. I was looking for the typical and the unusual, whichever would better illustrate the processes and results. My aim was to thoroughly understand rather than generalise or particularise(Stake, 1995 p.9). And of course, the journals continued.

4.5.3. FRAMES OF ANALYSIS

"A Chinese Master is remembered for giving the following advice: It is not enough to consider the carp alone; but to consider the reed against which he brushes each morning, the stone under which he hides and the ripple of the water as he searches for food. The carp is an entity which has the power to affect and be affected by the world."

Quoted in (Ely et al., 1997 p.381)

Different levels of complexity were explored as I approached the data from numerous directions. In the search for the correct frame of analysis I returned to my theory, for theory dictates what questions asked and which categories are likely to emerge in the analysis. I ultimately discovered that in this case there seemed to be no "right way", no single frame of analysis would suffice my needs.

The need to employ multiple, interrelated levels of analysis is a hallmark of sociocultural research (Rogoff, 1995a; Wertsch, Del Rio, & Alvarez, 1995a; Wertsch & Ramirez, 1994). As pointed out by Wertsch, there is a need for interdisciplinary thinking (1995a p.30), something which is inherent to a thesis linking L2 writing, drama and Vygotsky. Once I had realised this, a pattern of general categories of analyses emerged on different levels. For reasons of clarity these will be presented here separately. However they must be taken together with the quantitative analysis and seen as parts of a whole.

4.5.3.1. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TEXTS

EFL MARKING

As a foreign language teacher I was interested in the language and in the writing. I started to look at the written texts themselves in more detail. Initially, treating the writing as part of my classroom activities, I looked at the writing through the eye of a foreign language teacher, focusing on fluency and the use of grammar. I found it important to begin with the analysis that was required of me as educator of these students, drawing attention to the features that would be highlighted in class discussion, at examinations and upon which the students were assessed. All marks are recorded in appendix 9.3 beside the students identified by number.

This analysis was a useful starting point. It did not however help to place the writing in its social, cultural and historical context. The theory behind the project was propelling me to ask questions that could not be answered by this analysis. I had to search for the missing link. This led me to seek for ways in which to supplement these findings, ways to use the data to think with.

LANGUAGE, CONTEXT AND WRITTEN TEXT

It is not usual for teachers of foreign languages to engage in Hallidayan analysis of texts. However, I felt that it would make a distinct contribution to this project as it entails a "both/and" perspective, rather than an 'either this or that' category standpoint (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 p.45). As such, points can belong to different categories at the same time rather than one on a continuum.

Since the focus of the study is on the drama/writing relationship, the context of situation is particularly relevant to the analysis. It allows the reader to track how the immediate environment engages with the writing, via division into field, tenor and mode (Halliday, 1978 p.33; Halliday & Hasan, 1985 p.12). Therefore I decided to carry out a situational description for each text in focus whilst tracking the connections between the drama and the writing. These can be found in appendices 5.1 to 5.33 and should be read together with the text in question as a descriptive tool.

Discussion necessarily goes further to embrace the wider background, the context of culture and intertextuality in order to form a more evaluative analysis. The context of culture is important as it is upon the interaction between this and the contexts of situation and text that meaning depends. Texts are constantly interpreted in accordance with the cultural frame of the writer and their own personal cultural assumptions (Leckie-Tarry, 1995 p.215). In this study the constant interaction of situation and culture proves that meanings are not contained within the words and structures of a language, in this case, English. Meaning resides in their use (Halliday, 1978 p.28).

“Language is the ability to “mean” in the situation types, or social contexts, that are generated by the culture”

(Halliday, 1978 p.34).

When meanings become abstracted from the context of situation prominence is given to the other relationships, resulting in a heteroglossic text, which works simultaneously on various levels. The intertextual nature of the texts is conceived of in the Bakhtinian sense as being dynamically and dialectically conceived.

I decided not to look at the semantic relations of the text as evidenced through cohesion. This is because the focus of the study examines the drama/writing relationship rather than ascertaining what level the writer has reached in her writing. The difference of level reached is ascertained by methods usual to EFL and the linguistic environment of the text itself is examined with relation to features observed in the examination procedure (lexis/register/text type/structure etc.) as documented above.

A more general commentary, which allows me to provide a more evaluative analysis, draws on the general background of Halliday and Fairclough. This links the texts to the social practice of which they are a part, looking at different discourses within the same text. By combining intertextual analysis with linguistic analysis I follow Fairclough (1995 p.212) in the attempt to break down the “form versus content’ distinction. This viewpoint assumes that meanings are not only to be found in language, but that language also shapes the way we see the world. The

detailed Hallidayan analysis in the appendices combines with Fairclough through the commentary on the texts in the data chapters to provide an interpretation of the concrete. However, much more was happening in the process. I needed to take the analysis further.

4.5.3.2. SOCIAL SEMIOTIC READING OF TEXTS

Data analysis concentrates on the drama/writing relationship by reference to the written texts in two different ways. First it looks at the written texts, tracing their roots back to the drama sessions; secondly it looks at the content of the written texts in more detail. I have drawn on conceptual emphases within the teachings of social semiotics to illuminate the nature of the development and choices in the construction of these written texts. In particular I recognise the multi-modality of texts and draw upon and extend the concept of transformation

In their book "Social Semiotics" (1988), Hodge and Kress develop an original way of looking at text. Departing from the point that "no single code can be successfully studied or fully understood in isolation" they see communication as "a process, not as a disembodied set of meanings or texts".

"Social semiotics is primarily concerned with human semiosis as an inherently social phenomenon in its sources, functions, contexts and effects. It is also concerned with the social meanings constructed through the full range of semiotic forms, through semiotic texts and semiotic practices, in all kinds of human society at all periods of human history."

(Hodge & Kress, 1988 p.261)

A social semiotic approach stresses that signs/messages are always multi-modal, that no sign/message ever exists in a single medium. This is obvious in drama. Gesture, facial expression, body language, movement or lack of movement all form part of the picture. They also form part of strategic competence in foreign language learning. Actions can supplement lack of vocabulary for example. But the same idea can be applied to writing, for example the choice of paper, whether typed or handwritten, choice of font, of pen, of colour of ink, all tell the reader something about the text. More obvious is the inclusion of drawings or pictures and the nature of these representations.

I have used social semiotic analysis in the general interpretation of the written texts, drawing on the insights about physical representation. I do not explicitly develop an analysis of the different media (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), rather use the concept to look carefully at the scripts and relate them to the drama and the students own histories.

I also draw on a second set of ideas from social semiotics, those of transformation and motivated signs.

“The interest of the makers of the representation/sign at the moment of the making of the sign, lead them to choose an aspect, or bundle of aspects, of the object to be represented, as being criterial at the moment, for the representation of an object, and they then choose the most plausible, the most apt available form for its representation.”

(Kress, 1996, p. 224)

When signs are seen as motivated, meaning is not “acquired” but “made”, writers are agents in the writing process and the producing of the message expressed therein. This production of signs is also transformative and cognitive work. The writer is agent, subjectively and intersubjectively, namely within and arising from the socially and culturally available resources and her understandings of them. The writer is constantly productive, transformative.

“ Individual users of language ... are users and (re)makers of that system of representation, out of their social and cultural histories and present positions, and out of their affective dispositions , their interests at the point of making signs...”

... The individual’s semiotic work is cognitive work. It is transformative work in the context if a constant “reading” of the relevant aspects of the semiotic environment. The context, so called, is semiotically speaking, a rich texture of signs in different semiotic modes, which is constantly read by an individual in terms of constantly revised organisations of relevance.”

(Kress, 1996, p. 247)

Whilst the Hallidayan analysis took me from sentence to utterance, telling me more about the writing, social semiotics gave me the tools with which to link the meanings made in the different situations in different modes, connecting the drama and the writing. It helped me look at the multiple layers of meaning in each written text in an attempt to understand them as written by persons-in-activity (Lave & Wenger, 1996 p.145).

4.6. ANALYSES AS COMPLEMENTARY AND MUTUALLY CONSTITUTING PROCESSES

“ I conceive of planes of focus not as separate or hierarchical, but as simply involving different grains of focus with the whole sociocultural activity. To understand each requires the involvement of the others. Distinguishing them serves the function of clarifying the plane of focus that may be chosen for one or another discussion of processes in the whole activity, holding the other planes of focus in the background but not separated.”

(Rogoff, 1995a p.141-2).

“Research is not a neat linear progression of understanding: rather at any one time ongoing work is likely to involve a number of issues, which may well be at different stages in the cycle. The theory that is developed from the material gained then guides, to an extent, the subsequent collection of material which in turn refines the ideas and develops the theory.”

(Banister et al., 1994 p.145)

I made the decision to opt for multiple interpretations that stemmed from my own background and reading of the process, what Bruner calls “narrativising our worlds, our experiences and our identities” (1994 p.18). Analysis was essentially a case of interpretation within the teachings of Vygotsky. I was looking for analytic instruments to read the data, ones which were compatible with Vygotskian development of semiotic systems. I wanted to look at the uniqueness and the complexity of the educational process and its embeddedness and interaction with its environment.

A lot of time was spent just reading through the texts over and over again and thinking about not only the different segments and categories but also their relationship to the whole project. Where specific scenes or activities seemed to be influential in the drama/writing relationship it was important to see how different people had taken these up in their writing. This became essential as the analysis process proceeded during both pre/post the educational programme and the themes/transformations became increasingly important. As particular scenes and themes were plotted I also wanted to see the writing produced by both those students involved and those not.

Essential to this process was my own journal, my ongoing narrative of the things that I saw as important. In keeping with Vygotsky’s teaching, often the writing process helped me to clarify what was going on in my head.

By following how the theme had transformed into a drama text, and a drama text into a written text, this began to generate an original means of using Kress’s transformation. Patterns began to emerge and different types of transformation were plotted to evidence (1) what it was that was of interest to the writer and (2) what it was she took from the drama and from her own personal histories in order to create her written text. These finally became narrowed down to one main category (1) transformation and character and two sub-categories (2) transformation and story and (3) transformation and cultural histories.

I developed a system in which the written text, its situational analysis and textual analyses work in conjunction with the transformations, which were more easily shown through the use of tables. The situational analyses and transformations are put in appendices for ease of reference,

together with the full version of the student texts. Hence the linguistic analyses and social semiotic analyses complement each other, providing different views of the same texts

At the end of the data collection period I was provided with all the data for the quantitative analysis. I enlisted the help of my parents who patiently coded and categorised my questionnaires by hand, in accordance with my instructions, so that the data were ready to be inserted into the computer for comparison. Entering the data was a long process but once it was in the computer, results appeared quite quickly.

The test results also became available and these were also introduced into the computer for purposes of comparison of test results at the beginning and end of term.

An essential part of the analysis was the writing process itself. There was a phase of "going beyond" the data to develop ideas, namely generalising and theorising while constantly returning to it. For the interpretation sought to supplement the Vygotskian emphasis on development of sign and active use of language in learning through more specific analytic frames of reference. Thus I needed to make sense of the data not only in the sense of what happened but what it meant in the terms of sociocultural theory. "The validity of research is much enhanced by systematic use of feedback loops and by going around the research cycle several times" (Reason & Rowan, 1981 p.247). The writing forced me to be explicit and engage with my ideas, to be creative as well as intellectual and move conceptually from my own research to a more abstract level (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996 p.143).

4.7. SOUNDNESS OF THE PROJECT

" Validity is a goal rather than a product; it is never something that can be proven or taken for granted. Validity is also relative: it has to be assessed in relationship to the purposes and circumstances of the research, rather than being a context-independent property of methods or conclusions."

(Maxwell, 1992)

All researchers have to answer the question as to whether the conclusions are valid, whether they might have "gone wrong". Without wanting to give too much importance to the quantity-quality divide (I prefer to see one method appropriate in different situations, depending on analytical and theoretical considerations) (Potter, 1996 p.139)), matters of validity do differ between the different methods used to collect and analyse the data, methods which must be seen as parts of a whole.

I use the term “validity” not to apply to some objective truth but, following Maxwell (1996 p.87), to refer to “the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation or other sort of account”.

Quantitative research methods lend themselves to questions of validity, which arise when planning the project. For clarity of method they are discussed in section 5.2.2 on data analysis. I refer to matters such as statistical control, control of extraneous variables, the use of tests of proven reliability and the design of questionnaires to eliminate the Hawthorne or Halo effect or subject expectancy. In part of course, the questionnaire results are read qualitatively, within the thesis as a whole. Thus except with the statistics, division is never complete.

In qualitative research, as pointed out by Maxwell (ibid.), researchers rarely have recourse to strategies for control, rather address the threats as they arise in the study. I took specific measures to counter validity threats relating to both collection and analysis of data. I also tried to avoid researcher bias and ethical issues. The steps taken are documented at a practical level, showing how particular threats were dealt with in the context of the project itself, in appendix 4 .

Internal generalisation has also been sought, namely the generalisability within the setting and group, through the analysis procedures and method. External generalisability is not however an aim of this project. I seek instead to look at a particular learning environment that has not been explored before in L2. This project is thus not representative of a larger population, but refers to specific students in a specific setting. However where it can permit comparison to other studies is in the type of learning environment, with regard to projects within a Vygotskian framework. The rich data and thick description allow readers to transfer the information to other settings and determine whether the findings can be transferred (Creswell, 1998 p.203). Thus it sets out the beginnings of a theory of how L2 writing can best be taught, how the Vygotskian notion of development via thinking, the imagination and emotions enable students to tackle writing more confidently and more competently.

⁴ By definition studies are never absolute. They must instead be viewed in relative terms – relative to probability, relative to other studies, relative to theoretical frameworks, but most of all, relative to you and your experiences in teaching language.”

(Brown, 1988 p.203)

5. CHAPTER FIVE: WRITING BEFORE AND AFTER DRAMA

For a thorough understanding of the writing it is not enough to look at decontextualised written texts. Assuming that to be able to write is not simply to know something, but to know how to reflect upon that knowledge and how to produce text with an awareness of cultural and social limits, it is essential that the student texts to be studied are located within the actual drama sessions themselves. Only then can the reader be shown the impact of the sessions upon the language produced, what characteristics have shaped the discourse and how this affects the way issues are organised linguistically. Thus initially I will return to the drama scene, this time at a more practical level, before turning to the writing itself.

Detailed descriptions of each workshop can be found in appendix 3.

5.1. DRAMA AS A SHARED LANGUAGE OF ACTION

Although the workshops differed in emphasis, they shared some important common denominators and, naturally, a common aim. Each drama session commenced with an appeal to the imagination of the students. Stimuli such as an unfinished written text, a piece of string, an artefact to be unwrapped or the placing of the students in role as experts²³ or as characters in a narrative were used to commence the drama. Care was then taken to build up a fictional context with which the students could identify and which they themselves negotiated and formed. In the *Sibyl* a model was made of the kingdom; in *The Key To Success* each high achiever imagined what her room was like, walked into it to see their initial reaction and wrote a letter to their secretary making up some excuse for their absence; in *Time Travel* the students, in role, created the travel bureau and its zones; in *Old Age* a long time was spent building and getting into the skin of the old lady and her son; in *Emigration* the elderly lady's situation was developed in detail before the students themselves became the emigrants; in *Delta X* the whole potential of the drug was explored through different semiotic modes before the researchers set out to find out where it was made.

These general ideas came from drama as used in L1, although L2 considerations dictated things such as the "English only" rule and, with sensitive intervention, the facilitating of opportunities for the students to try out and validate their own ideas in which language itself was not an issue. I introduced artefacts to provide something tangible for the participants to build their own ideas upon: sepia photographs, roman coins, an ancient trunk, for example. The scrolls in the *Sibyl*

²³ See appendix 2.2 for drama terminology

were all written in different handwriting in various coloured faded inks on old pieces of parchment which had been burnt, torn or made wet to obscure the writing. Importantly, the students were able to reject or accept them as part of their story. I noted that in the early stages these artefacts were essential to their improvisations. Later they were no longer central, but attributive. I cannot help but remember Vygotsky's teachings on the transitional and developmental nature of play and the child's use of a stick as a horse (1978 p.98). In the same way as the child sees mentally the stick standing behind the word "horse" the artefacts initially helped the students grasp onto their words.

As one of the primary means of expression, spoken text played a large part. Initially when the students were deciding what to do in their groups a few Portuguese words were heard, but with time and intense involvement it was soon left behind. The noise level was loud and it was evident that the students were engaging in real conversation/argument rather than in classroom talk. This was indeed my aim, to make the students not only work but also begin to think in English, as they would need to do later in their writing. Student reactions to the discussions out of role were positive, one pointing out that they were exciting because anything could emerge and everyone had a chance to voice/share their views without fear of reproach or ridicule. Care was taken to make these parts of the workshop long enough for sharing viewpoints but brief enough so as not to lose the magic and continuity of the drama. These breaks were not pre-scheduled, they occurred whenever discussion seemed beneficial. Students seemed oblivious to the fact these took place in a foreign language. Negotiation was essential as it was highly unlikely and certainly undesirable that 42 students had the same opinion.

There was always some writing in role, to fulfil a specific purpose since my time with the students was limited. I wanted to give the students maximum "drama/exploration" time without emphasising writing. Thus most of the extensive writing which took place in role occurred outside drama time. Several of the artefacts introduced were written text. These came from sources which would be taxing enough for them to want to decipher them: in the *Sibyl* the texts for the scrolls came from Shakespeare, the Bible and Churchill's letters; the texts used for *Delta X* came from a medical book written for doctors about Cannabis. Employing the mantle of the expert approach, as scientists or archaeologists searching for the correct answer from authentic materials which did not insult their intelligence, learners would compile a written report to be read out in meeting to their colleagues. It is to be noticed that frequently less-abled students took the role of informant: English was no longer seen as the main problem. By working with written texts I hoped the students would absorb new vocabulary, whilst gaining confidence by tackling difficult texts, something of which they did not, for once, complain.

Writing assignments varied greatly. In *Time Travel*, whilst some students set up the offices and respective time zones, including files, reports, the tea rota and shopping lists, others compiled a

letter persuading Time Travel to accept their proposal to go back in time; in the *Sybil* the contents of one of the scrolls were written. Writing could thus be the signing of an oath of allegiance, the writing of a letter, a certificate or the simple adding of an adjective to a list of the main character's characteristics that the student could refer to during the course of the session. Sometimes writing was directed by myself, in or out of role, at others left to student discretion, in accordance with the structure of the workshop in question. Writing skills focused on expediency rather than grammatical accuracy, although as the level of personal and group involvement was high, great care was taken with both style and register. Errors were not made salient. The importance lay in the connection between the form (the writing) with social place and purpose (drama), where everyone could contribute. The sharing of ways of reading or furthering the work was always encouraged, with an emphasis on discovery.

Visual stimuli/responses were used to encourage different kinds of connection. In *The Key to Success* a list of attributes was made and a big cardboard key and the black box of knowledge lay in the centre of the floor to remind the high achievers of their aims. In *Old Age* artefacts belonging to Miriam lay in the centre of the circle and the students wrote in prose or verse the importance of the article washed up, placing their text ritualistically beside the artefact in question. Building on Vygotsky's writing about visual conceptions and eidetic pictures (1994a), the aim was to engage the imaginative fantasy of the students.

As the stronger students included the weaker in their tasks, a group spirit was created. This was particularly gratifying with the second years who had previously been divided into small cliques rather than forming a solid class group. At the break of the first drama session I found them in the refectory, all sitting together in a circle round a table (a sight that I had never seen), using a mars bar as a microphone and reporting as both a news reporter and as the characters in the drama what it was that had happened so far. They were oblivious to everyone around them. The enthusiasm and commitment was stimulating, here was a Portuguese echo of the workshop.

In short, my central aim was to integrate all the language activities so that they became a unified whole, real human activity based on human presence, human nature and inductive learning in contexts where the language was not artificial, not a case of knowing special skills. Using language carefully but not consciously, students were unaware that they were commenting, criticising or deciding, accessing tacit knowledge as the need arose.

As I turn to the writing my findings will not only show how the wish to communicate provided a spring-board to language development, they will also show exciting revelations regarding the nature of this written text, its dependence on the context in which it appears and on a host of prior texts, verbal and non-verbal. Just as self-narrative always occurs socially and not in

isolation, so writing from drama is multiply inscribed with the meta-scripts of the drama and its experiences, where students can and indeed do reconstruct texts in diverse ways.

5.2. OVERVIEW OF THE WRITING

As teacher/researcher interested in learning through language, the written texts themselves as a separate entity are not the focal point of my study. Specifically important to me are the drama/writing processes themselves, namely the link/relationship between the educational processes/texts and the composers. It is only by discussion of these relationships that I as researcher can pinpoint how role and text shape the meaning event(s) in the students' personal stories, the site of inter(re)action between the personal/social and the psychological.

In order to commence engagement with the multiplicity of meanings, I will start this multiple inscribed journey where it began, by looking at the writing produced before the workshops. This initial overview is brief but important; (1) it serves as an example of the level of work I was first given and elucidates the problems that I was faced with as their educator; (2) the compositions provide an important bench-mark with regard to those produced subsequent to drama. The purpose of this overview is to show that the written texts produced after drama are significantly different from those written before, allowing me to concentrate at length on the questions how and why this came to be.

In order to cover the range of ability I shall look at excerpts from two compositions²⁴ from three students in each class whom I have selected as typical examples of high, average and low achievers with regard to their writing in English. The full texts can be found in appendices 8.1 – 8.104. The first essay in each case was written the week before the first drama workshop, the second afterwards, covering a period of *two to three weeks* in each case.

I shall introduce each student and give an excerpt from each written piece. Each text has a reference number, which is consistent throughout the project²⁵. The marking grid will follow the excerpts for the student in question as used for evaluation, adapted from the original to conform to the extract²⁶. The first column relates mainly to grammatical errors, the second to more qualitative, holistic comments.

²⁴ The spelling and presentation are faithful to the original.

²⁵ As explained in appendix 1, "P" stands for "Prior to drama". The letters "OA" refer to the workshop on Old Age; "Sib" refers to the drama on the Sibyl and "DX" to the drama on Delta X." etc. The number refers to the student number. A full list of student numbers are given with the marks in appendix 9.3.

²⁶ See appendices 9.1 and 9.2 for criteria and marking scheme

5.2.1. DID DRAMA INFLUENCE THE WRITTEN TEXTS?

5.2.1.1. WRITING BEFORE THE WORKSHOPS

Year one had been studying autobiography in the first term and it was hoped that writing from experience would facilitate the task. They were, prior to any drama work, given the following written assignment:

- *write an autobiographical essay or entry in your diary about an event that marked your identity or your past.*

CLASS ONE:

One of the top students, Denice, was lively in class, often leading the conversation. Her conversation and debate work was stimulating and thought provoking. Her academic ability way above average but she usually wrote very tame pieces, which showed none of her abilities except grammatical accuracy using simple syntax.

Excerpt (Text P.018)²⁷:

" After collecting my luggage I caught a taxi to the hotel. I was dying to have a shower and rest for a while. I had to sleep over in Germany because my flight to Sydney left only on the next day.

I walked up to the reception desk, showed my ticket and the hotel reservation. The lady went into a small room and started talking to someone.

Sometime after the lady and a 40 year-old man came out and looked at me. I knew something was wrong. They asked me something in German and I said I didn't understand. I told them that I spoke English because doubt they would speak portuguese. The man came closer to me and said:

I am sorry but your room has been occupied last night. Mr Gorbachev and family arrived and we just couldn't..."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
12	Vocabulary: simple; small range. Tenses: odd lapse. Sentence structure: very simple. Short paragraphs. Occasional native-speaker-type phrases. Prepositions: one error. Punctuation and spelling: very accurate. Direct speech does not add anything. Register: appropriate.	Simple narrative structure. Unadventurous. Imaginative but stereotypical and unbelievable. Text type- more narrative than diary form.

²⁷ Texts are reproduced with the errors/spelling/layout as in the original. Full texts can be found in appendix 8.

Maria-Janina was very competent orally and participated in all class activities. She had to work to pay her student fees and was more mature than many in the class. Her arguments and comments in discussions were searching; her grammar exercises were often faultless; her written work seemed to have been done by a stranger.

Excerpt (Text P.030):

“On the first days of January, I visited the Nottingham town. I went to several shops, museums, a castle which I unfortunately forgot which one etc. Nottingham is a very historic town and therefore very interesting to visit. Later in the week I went to Derby to visit some friends and yesterday I spent the day in London.”

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
10.5	Vocabulary: limited. Occasional error. Tenses: One error. Sentence Structure: Little variation but attempt at different structures. Prepositions: occasional error. Grammar: articles, word order, relative clauses. Punctuation and spelling: careless errors with both. Register: simplified; stilted.	Division into diary entries - attempt at authenticity. Little content in each entry or as a whole. Some entries credible, others less so. Lacking in depth and development. Run-of-the-mill.

Marlena was one of the younger members of the class, a genial, active participant in all activities, full of ideas and enthusiasm. In her speech she had few problems with grammar and often chattered incessantly in English. Her comprehension work was average but her written work often left much to be desired.

Excerpt (Text P.029):

“In all my life I had never passed through a situation like I did in February 1988. It was a hard time for me.

In that morning I did everything like on the other days, and I couldn't imagine what is going to happen to me...

... After she had done the first cigarette I realised that it was drug. I had never smoked drug before. I was passing through a time of insecurity. I hesitated for a while, but I wasn't strong enough to get out of that bedroom, and leave it all behind.”

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
8	Vocabulary: very limited and several errors. Tenses: severe problems with past continuous and compound tenses. Sentence Structure: attempts different structures. Prepositions: one error. Punctuation and spelling: several mistakes. Grammar: double negative/articles. Register: appropriate.	Narrative of past event written in diary. Content appropriate to diary, but lacking expression. Initial feelings expressed in limited manner. Potential for much greater development. Honest and credible.

Writing was therefore marked by problems with grammar, content and fluency. They were missing the panache to be found in their other work.

I was dismayed to find class two was much the same.

CLASS TWO:

Claudina was an identical twin who also had her twin sister in her class with her. She was very creative and stimulating, frequently making her presence known through pertinent comments. Although extremely sloppy in her presentation and struggling with certain linguistic constructions, it was always evident Claudina had tried to put forward her own thoughts and ideas in her work.

Excerpt (Text P.069):

"Nobody can be a blank space in our society, everybody has to deal with the creation of an image. If it's a hard process for a single person, imagine what is it like for twins. I'm a twin sister and I find funny things, even pathetic ones, that are in every people's heads...

... It's unbelievable, but nowadays exist these conceptions, like they existed fifty years ago. It's almost like an ancient legend that doesn't changes with time.

It's hard to be acknowledged seperatly, twins are two people (in my case) that are "throwen" into a mixer and the final produce is one blended mass."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
11	Vocabulary: adventurous Tenses: occasional errors with tense and form. Sentence Structure: word order shaky. Attempts sophisticated forms, but not always successful. Grammar: relative clauses, articles, phrasing. Prepositions: one mistake Punctuation : good. Spelling: poor. Register: appropriate.	Beginning of a good essay but full potential not realised. Stops short. Thought-provoking. Credible. Imaginative.

Barbara was a very shy student and generally played a passive role in class, sitting near the back. However her oral ability was above average, when she would share it. Her accent was impeccable and once encouraged to contribute she could easily hold her own, despite her lack of self-confidence. Her written work always appeared rushed, full of careless errors that she failed to show in her grammar exercises.

Excerpt (Text P.060):

“ About 6 a.m. the phone ringed, it was a baby boy.

I couldn't be more excited, I held my favourite teddy bear, and washed my teeth (wich I rarely did) to met my young broder.

In the way to the hospital sitting in the back seat I read over and over again, the enormous list of baby names I had done for months. I chosed Pedro...

... Although the ugly puppy, was the center of atencions at home. It was frustrating, having to share my toys with him, wich he ruined (not my teddy, he is mine) he always dines first, and treason! He had the right to take a place that was bellonging to me from the past seven years. the right to sleep with my parents. ”

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
8	Lack of control/numerous errors. Vocabulary: average. Errors with usage. Tenses: Numerous errors with type and form. Sentence Structure: Attempts at different and complex sentence types. One paragraph particularly confused. Not aided by bad punctuation. Direct speech: 1st - superfluous; 2nd, well used. Prepositions: several mistakes. Spelling: very careless mistakes. Register: appropriate, lively.	Credible. Text type: narrative. Good use of structure. Some vivid description in parts. Task well realised but marred by careless grammar.

Nuno was an introvert inside the EFL classroom but certainly not outside. His academic ability in English language was below average. He was however a regular attendee who tried very hard and always contributed something to each session.

Excerpt (Text P.085):

“Dear Simon

Here I am once again talking to you. Has been for so many time that I don't seat here at my desk, but some thing happen and I can not take it with importance. You know that me and my friends are in a sport contest and today we played the last game. It's some how important because we didn't won the first place. It's not that, but I'm happy because I remembered something that happen some years ago. ”

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
5.5	Vocabulary: limited. Tenses: frequent errors with tense type and form. Sentence Structure: word order; confused in places. Prepositions: two errors. Grammar: shaky in parts. Punctuation and spelling: both numerous errors. Register: very colloquial in places.	Credible. Task reasonably attempted. Detail/description lacking. Logical sequencing. Text type: diary - gives diary name.

Thus, in brief summary these texts were of much the same calibre as those in class one : lacking in content and high in grammatical errors, texts devoid of the thinking I knew they were capable of. I had hoped to find year two somewhat different.

CLASS THREE

Year two, for the purposes of this project class three, were given the following homework assignment prior to their first drama session:

- write a piece of creative writing (description, narrative, short story or poem) about an event or moment in your life which aroused strong feelings about, or highlighted the pressures or pleasures of being male or female.

Guilhermina was a quiet and studious student. Her work was always well presented and grammatically sound but the content was generally mundane. She did not play a very active part in class activities, but her language exercises were competently performed.

Excerpt (Text P.112):

“ My own feeling is that both male and female have advantages and disadvantages. Nevertheless, I dare say that I am fond of having been born female. This feeling always arises in me whenever I think about the probability of having a child of my own. Not now, of course...
... The mother stays at home with her baby during at least some weeks. The father works. The mother goes to the doctor with her baby. The father is at work. OK, sometimes they both go to the doctor but “a mother is always a mother”. ’

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
12	Vocabulary: repetitive; unadventurous. Tenses: no mistakes. Sentence Structure: quite ambitious. Prepositions: no mistakes. Grammar: clumsy phrasing at times. Punctuation and spelling. Register: flows but not always naturally. Too colloquial at times. Pretentious at others.	Thoughtful but stereotypical. Argument underdeveloped.

Ana Carina was a vivacious and orally competent student. The centre of every discussion, her discussion of comprehension work was particularly enlightening and bursting with original ideas. Her written work was unpredictable and use of grammar at times shaky with careless slips.

Excerpt (Text P.104):

"It was a perfect day. It was round 7 o'clock in the evening and there was hardly a soul in there. I almost felt like if I were in a desert island. I had the whole beach to myself. Suddenly coming from nowhere someone taped in my shoulder:

"Sorry, could you give me some light?" I hadn't yet turned myself to see who it was but I felt that something was going to happen...

... He didn't answer he just glanced at me and finally he kissed me, there were no words but I can assure you that I went as red as a beetroot and I think I almost fainted. He was as calm as the brise, just hold me in his arms."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
10	Vocabulary: Unadventurous. Tenses: several errors with type and form. Sentence Structure: simple structures. Prepositions: frequent errors. Grammar: comparisons; word order. Punctuation and spelling. Careless errors. Register: appropriate register interrupted by colloquialism and set phrases.	Adopts "Mills & Boon" narrative style. Is this conscious? Appropriate to task. Good start but inconsistent. Content/story lacking. Stereotypical. Unlikely story - is this really autobiographical?

Gonçalo was the quietest member of class and lacking in self-confidence. His ideas were sound but his weak language ability all round often let him down. Nevertheless like all the students in this group he was conscientious and almost always managed to scrape through.

Excerpt (Text P.115)

“Most of the times, when we are parsing hours doing nothing we start thinking and facing the real truth, the reality, what has happened with us, the things we have done and the good and bad times we spend on the past and the good and the bad that will come on a near future. This poem is from one of my periods of reflexion, trying to face reality. It's untitled.”

(poem that follows are actually lyrics to a song by Sting)

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
5	Re: first paragraph: very weak. Numerous errors of many kinds in five lines. Vocabulary: little effort. Tenses: one mistake Sentence Structure: Only 3 sentences. First far too long and confused. Clumsy phrasing. Prepositions: 3 mistakes Punctuation: numerous errors with commas. Spelling: full of careless errors Register: insufficient Poem: = song from Sting	Passes song lyrics off as his own poem. Introductory paragraph does not fully introduce what is to follow.

5.2.1.2. INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

My first step was to look at the texts as the EFL educator. I immediately noticed the lack of fluency and profusion of grammatical errors. There were problems with the construction of sentences as well as with tenses and vocabulary; no advanced language was attempted, even the more promising students staying within safe syntactical boundaries, often inaccurately. Careless lapses also pointed to the lack of attention to detail and the often hurried, uneasy nature of the writing. I wondered whether the problem lay in the writing event or elsewhere. If all sets of students were having the same problems there had to be some common cause. My insistence as teacher that I valued content/ideas/critical inquiry just as much as grammatical accuracy and that I preferred them to experiment with language, even if it meant getting it wrong, had fallen on deaf ears.

Secondly not only was the work lacking in originality, but personal meanings, self-reflection and the expression/generation of ideas were notably absent. Even when the grammar was correct the majority of the essays appeared to be the mere stringing together of sentences, squiggles on the page in order to fill it up. There was no indication of the writer being an active participant in the text; only fleeting links with emotion or intellect. This was the “saying something about nothing in order to practice something else” approach that most L2 teachers fear. If Voloscinov is right that “word is a two-sided act” (1973 Chapter 2) then this type of writing has something to say about the type of instruction that had been ingrained in the students. They have been taught to edit, model and imitate instead of write.

Thirdly and very importantly these problems were consistent, with varying degrees, across the levels of ability and across the years. Whatever the readings of the event, the results were synonymous; the writing ability of these students who were to be language teachers after three years of language at University was well below the required standard. If fifty percent of their final mark was to be allocated to written work, something had to be done.

What gave me hope was the knowledge of their other abilities in both L2 and L1. Writing potential was simmering beneath the surface but had been drowned in an over- preoccupation with structures.

5.2.1.3. WRITING AFTER THE WORKSHOPS

Two to three weeks later, after the first drama session, the new batch of essays showed how necessary it was to investigate the drama/writing relationship. Profound changes had taken place in the writing at all levels in an amazingly short period of time. I will now turn to excerpts of these first essays by the same students whose work has been already quoted. As before I will approach them as I did initially, as their L2 teacher.

CLASS ONE.

DELTA X:

The workshop on Delta X arose because the students in class one requested a workshop on drugs, subsequent to several bales of hashish having been washed ashore on a local beach and I myself having found some bales wedged between the rocks, when scuba diving. Since we were looking at present day problems this was possible and Delta X was born. In their fictional world, in role as a Government Representative, I gave them the following problem: Delta X, the drug that makes people's wishes come true, was on sale on the black market, although it had been withdrawn from production several years previously. In role as leading scientists they had been asked by the government to investigate the dangers and consequences of the drug. Written reports were presented at a meeting of the scientists. The consequences and powers of the drug were subsequently explored. For example, a phial of blue liquid was placed in the circle of students and they imagined what they would wish for were they one of the villagers in the place where Delta X was made. Having drawn or written their wish they then rose and lay their wishes beside the phial. The consequences of the wishes made were then discussed. The students decided to go back in time to discover where, when, why and how the drug was originally made. Part of the class created the kingdom where the drug had been originally discovered, whilst a research party was formed of experts who prepared and actually carried out

a journey into the past to discover what they could about the drug and the people on the island where it was made.

The following homework assignment was given subsequent to the workshop:

- Get Real is a T.V. programme investigating unusual real-life stories. They have found out about the secret drug "Delta X" and have invited you, the scientist, to appear on the programme. Write the entry in your diary the day before you appear "live" on T.V."

The three students whose work we have looked at prior to the drama, all showed completely different approaches to this assignment, two weeks later. Each had their own readings of the drama and produced academically improved work.

Denice

Excerpt (Text DX.018.1):

"Tomorrow I have only 24 hours from now to decide whether or not to go, I must say that I discovered the drug accidentally while working on a different research. How can I tell them and make believe that it is true, that I went in a time capsule back to the year 1732 where the drug was really invented? They will probably think I am mentally ill. For sure they won't believe that Einstein gave me the formula, that I actually talked to him and saw him make Delta X. How can I explain that people from an island in the Indian Ocean drank Delta X? That all their problems were solved and that they lived happily. Delta X was a solution to their problems but it won't be to ours..."

... I am now walking towards the small bottle on the small table, I'm holding my diary and I'm still writing in it. I'm getting closer and closer. I'm now holding Delta X. I'm looking at it, the light blue colour of it makes me remember the sea... I'm now taking the top off...I've stopped writing... I'm taking Delta X with me forever..."

(He took Delta X but left behind his diary...)"

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
15	Vocabulary: adequate. Tenses: 2 mistakes. Sentence Structure: varied; Prepositions: 1 error. A little interference from native language. Punctuation and spelling: good. Register: appropriate, natural style.	Good use of text type. Sets diary format and keeps to it until the end then extends to narrative form. Faithful to drama workshop. Reasoning and taking workshop further. Not original but carries it off.

Maria-Janina

Excerpt (Text DX.030):

"I am absolutely convinced that I have made the best discovery of the century and perhaps, the best discovery of all times and I want to share it with the whole world, but I am alone against a whole crowd of people who, for several reasons wants to stop me from going ahead. I must be really strong and I only pray that God helps me in order not to give up.

Delta X, if used in a reasonable way, can help the Man Kind to achieve the paradise on earth, that paradise that was a God's promise in the ancient days. And I am the one, God have chosen to reveal the secret of happiness to the whole world. I can not disappoint him! I am a scientist, not a messenger or a saint sent by God but in a certain way I can compare my self to Jesus Christ, because he also discovered that there was something more than earthly life, he discovered that love and tolerance between men was something very important. I haven't made any miracle like he did, I have the advantage of living in the XX century surrounded by all kinds of science and technology instruments that can be used to improve the relations between men. And I am not going to make the world a better place to live on."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
13	Vocabulary :attempt to upgrade. Not always successful. Tenses: one error. Sentence Structure: adventurous and different. Prepositions: 3 errors. Grammar: errors with articles and relative clauses. Punctuation fine. Spelling 1 mistake. Register: Apart from one colloquial slip, appropriate, although at times reads like an appeal for justice rather than a diary.	Interpretative, original and ambitious. Links drama world to real world. Real thinking going on.

Marlena

Excerpt (Text DX.029):

" A part of me wants to go there and tell people about the danger of this drug and tell them what harms it can cause to Human kind, but another part of me tells me that, since now on, I will be in a great danger. The dealers will not leave me alone, they will try to kill me or they will make me go back there again and say that the "Delta X" is a good thing because it makes our dreams come true.

Sometimes I think about that too. And if I am a 100 percent against drugs I wonder if, for some people, it wouldn't be a solution. Some people have nothing in life: no family; no friends; no money; no job. If they can have a life, the life they wanted and they dreamed about all their lives, why shouldn't they try it? Even if they die, but at least they have "lived" for a while.

As a psychiatrist..."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
10.5	Vocabulary: adequate Tenses: 4 mistakes but several difficult tenses correctly used. Sentence Structure: Adventurous and differing structures achieved. Last paragraph a bit confused. Prepositions: one error. Punctuation: plays with it. Spelling: two mistakes. Register: appropriate. Profusion of errors.	Faithful to text type. Thoughtful and structured. Develops drama situation and role as psychiatrist. Could be taken further. Reasoning.

After such an improvement I was interested to see what would happen in the other classes.

CLASS TWO:

Class two, in their workshop on the subject of Old Age, constructed their own story with the initial stimulus of a piece of string (it's a necklace, it's a snake etc.). All its imaginary assets became objects in a verbal picture drawn of an old lady, sitting alone in the country. It was from this initial picture that the drama commenced. Beginning with the old lady herself, who was named Miriam, the focus of the workshop slowly changed, at the wish of the students, to her son Robert, who was no longer in contact with her. The son/family relationship was explored through the hotseating of different people who had played important roles in the past history of Robert and Miriam and a picture was drawn of a handsome, egotistical bachelor, a famous artist and sculptor by day and devious gambler by night whose greatest passions were sailing and earning money. He completely ignored his ill and ailing mother. His life, character and values were explored through drama. Sympathies definitely went to the mother and Robert was drawn as a loathsome character. The drama ended with a Heathcote-type coffin and each person, separately, in role as Robert, paid his last respects to his mother. The scene was very vivid and ritualistic. Several of the students shed real tears and Robert's reactions varied from deep remorse to drunken incoherence or passive acceptance.

Class two was given the following homework assignment subsequent to this workshop:

- Write the letter Robert never wrote to his mother.

Claudina

Excerpt (Text OA.069.1):

I'm in prison, I'm feeling lonely and blue. But even though I'm being limited to this small and dark cell at the same time my psychological self has been travelling through all my memories and past experiences. I've been thinking a lot. It's ironic, I can resume my hole life in just a phew lines: I've searched high and low for ways to get more and more money, expanding my greediness towards many other people... Today I'm addressing you, appealing for love and support..."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
12	Vocabulary: some advanced. Tenses: mixes past and present. Sentence Structure: different structures attempted. Prepositions: no mistakes. Punctuation: OK. Spelling: several mistakes. Spelt as said. Register: appropriate	Personal reworking of drama - reverses waiting situation .Robert - mother. Attention to form: box shape, shaded, typed. Attention to structure Plays with text type: - makes a narrative out of diary.

Barbara

Excerpt (Text OA.069):

" I see you in the garden.

Balancing back and forward in the old rocking chair, which I have no memory from whom you have inherited it; with Marigolds in your lap.

Now, you are in the warm kitchen; I can still feel the marvelous apple perfume in the air; the Marigolds were left in the large rectangular wooden table, waiting for the hands that will gently place them in a beautiful jar.

Dear Mary, those flowers were named after you: and I haven't seen one for twelve years.

Do you still put them in the center of the table, mother? Perhaps not. Julie told me you prefer roses or gardenias now!

I know why; marigolds make you remember... '

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
16	Vocabulary: carefully chosen, especially adjectives. Tenses: one mistake. Sentence Structure: problems with relative clauses but some complicated structures attempted and achieved. Prepositions: one error. Punctuation: plays with it. Spelling: odd lapse. Register: natural and appropriate.	Personal reworking of drama situation. Attention to detail. Imaginative and creative. Clear structure. Playing with the text type (letter) - almost poetic. Attention to form and layout.

Nuno

Excerpt (Text OA.085.):

" It's only when we are apart that we get to know how much we miss people. And how I miss you! Most of all, I miss that wise lady who was there for me each time I was sad and lonely. It's somehow embarrassing to say this after being so far from each other, but I never knew when it was the right moment to say it.

I think that moment has arrived and it's time to pronounce the fact I'm sorry. I don't know if it's enough or if it's the right word, but please do believe that I am deeply sorry for all the trouble I caused you.

I think that I have been inside of a strange dream in which I was never able to make difference between right and wrong. Finally I woked and when I looked around me I realised that I've been sleeping over a mountain of unaccountable lies."

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
11	Vocabulary: a few errors. Tenses: 3 errors. Sentence Structure: some difficulties with phrasing and word order. Prepositions: 3 errors Punctuation and spelling: fine. Register: appropriate, sincere.	Logical and searching. Sincere tone. Emphasis on feelings. Attention to text type: letter form.

Thus again I was given three very different texts, all showing not only grammatical improvement but thoughtful and thought provoking writing full of imagery and original ideas.

CLASS THREE:

Class three's drama was based around the story of the Greek Sibyl, whereby she visits the King and offers him her scrolls of knowledge in exchange for that which he most values. Each time he vacillates further scrolls are burnt until only three remain. In this workshop the students investigated the nature of the kingdom, its ruler and its people. Through still image they drew an imaginary picture of the kingdom which they then created in model form. In role as archaeologists they decided whether certain objects belonged to it. As peasants they visited the Sibyl to ask for help regarding their despotic king. To discover what the king was really like and where his values lay they used forum theatre to explore what happened when the Sibyl visited the King for the second time. After coming to a decision they concluded by writing the contents of one of the scrolls²⁸.

Their homework assignment was:

- Write the King's journal entry the day before the Sibyl returns with the last three scrolls.

Guilhermina

Excerpt (Text Sib.112):

“ My bosom and faithful friend, here I am once more revealing my inner feelings to you. I cannot trust my counselors for all they want is to take advantage of their positions in the Court. Unfortunately although they are as impertinent as leeches, I must feed them in order to keep up the traditions, besides, some times they make me laugh. As for you, you are different. Indeed, you are my best and only confident! So, please help me to solve the problem I have on my hands.

As you know I have been extremely disturbed for the last few days due to the situation created by the Sibyl of our kingdom.”

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
14	Vocabulary: elevated; invents own simile. Tenses: 2 problems with form. Sentence Structure: different structures used. Reads fluently. Prepositions: no errors. Punctuation and spelling: no errors. Register: assumes superior role.	Power/powerless dichotomy. Assumes role and builds on drama. Inventive and creative. Plays with text type: talks to diary.

Ana Carina

Excerpt (Text Sib. 104):

“The 8th day after the New Moon, in the 343 years after the Gods gave birth to this kingdom.

My one and truly friend, today I must confess to you my fears. I the omnipotent King Tarquin, the most powerful person ever known in this and in the surrounding kingdoms, I am afraid. I am afraid, today, of something that can decide my destiny.

Here I undress my soul before you hoping to have some kind of revelation about this worrying problem.”

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
15	Vocabulary: adventurous - undress my soul - errors made when L1 ²⁹ interferes. Tenses: no errors. Sentence Structure: advanced. Prepositions: no errors. Grammar: 2 double negatives. Punctuation and spelling: correct. Register: attention to adopt register of King.	Content loyal to drama situation - takes it further. Plays with date as does with register. Plays with ending as if a narrative.

²⁸ Full summary in appendix 3.5.

Gonçalo

Excerpt (Text Sib.115)

26th of April, 116 (year of God)

Dear diary,

Today I faced one of the most difficult episodes of my life. Therefore I should have no other means than to confess myself.

I was laid down on my bed when a strange face appeared to me. I noticed that the sky was all covered by clouds. The image spoke to me with a smooth voice. I didn't understand, but my body froze immediately. The only thing that came up to my mind was that I was facing the dark side, the evil side of darkness. I called my Guards, my counsellors and nobody answered me. I was really frightened.

The image remained for a few moments, I have no idea how long, staring at me and she whispered: "Keep doing your job and soon you'll join our side." "

Mark	Language/Register	Content/Text type
13	Vocabulary: adequate. Tenses: 2 errors with form. Sentence Structure: advanced structures. Prepositions: 2 errors. Punctuation and spelling: a few lapses Register: adopts superior register of King.	Original and imaginative. Builds on drama situation whilst remaining true to story. Brings in a moral. Text type: plays with diary form: date; signs as king.

5.2.1.4. COMPARISON OF TEXTS

The texts produced after the drama will be discussed at a linguistic level in chapter eight. However I would like to draw attention briefly to a few salient points. Marks aside, it is clearly apparent from even the first snippets of the written text quoted that, in comparison to the earlier work, something different is happening.

From a grammatical point of view there are fewer errors and although there are several that need correcting these are of a markedly different nature to those found in the writing prior to the drama sessions. Severe problems with the present and past continuous are no longer to be found. Instead complicated structures and tenses are attempted, mostly correctly. There is language consciousness in the way that more complex vocabulary is used with attention to register. The short sentences and co-ordinating conjunctions are replaced by more sophisticated use of language – relative pronouns, embedded sentences, fronting, a profusion of

²⁹ Native language

carefully chosen adjectives etc. Each student shows she is aware of the text type she is writing in or playing with by use of both language and structure.

Moreover there is attention to content as well as structure. There is what I shall call "human presence". There is particular attention to detail and a profusion of imagery. Mental processes memories and feelings are explored through the senses through the vivid use of metaphor and description. In short, these texts are creative and original, involving both emotion and intellect. Something significant obviously occurred within these drama sessions so that real thought took place when the pen crossed the paper, because this writing is searching, it is the "writing as a discovery process" that Britton advocated (1983).

When I look at the texts through the researcher's eyes I see that the students are beginning to take control, within the boundaries of what they know and can express. Each student has written her own personal reworkings of the drama story/experience searching critically and reflectively for her own meanings. Different voices and identities have become interwoven in the self-analytical nature of the texts. They are heteroglossic texts (Bakhtin, 1986), embodied texts filled with many voices and voiced utterances.

Vygotsky advocated that a concept cannot be taught by memory-work or drilling; that it is "a complex and genuine act of thought". In accordance with Vygotsky's findings, I will argue in this thesis that as the students tried for more complex understanding, so their writing became more intricate, connecting with other mental processes and changes in consciousness to which the ability to write contributes.

What resources did the students have at their fingertips with which to do this? They had linguistic resources, the grammatical rules they have learnt and practised throughout their educational careers. They also had their own learning experience prior to the drama event and that of the drama itself. By extending their circle of knowledge - historically, socially and culturally - by reaching out to understand new ideas, they are extending their perceptions of the "meaning potential" to borrow Halliday's phrase, reaching out to Vygotsky's outer zone of development.

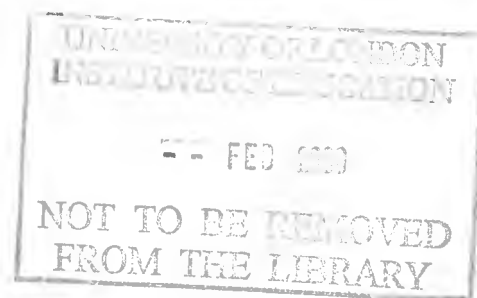
A closer look at the texts in chapter seven will show that the physicality and immediacy that the reader of these latter texts senses is obtained by different means: transformations of the visual; the use of non-linguistic means of making meaning, such as the use of specific type fonts; drawings; illustrations; descriptions; narrations; poems. There is profusion rather than a lack of detail. Rephrasings and rethinking continue throughout and there is obvious commitment rather than a shunning of the task. Subsequent analysis will plot how the students are drawing upon their own histories and their own knowledge of real life to make meanings.

My students' perceptions of their own abilities was no longer the centre of their attention. As the emphasis changed from "we can't write" or "we don't know what to write" to "how can we best get this across", from abstract sentence to historical utterance, contradiction and multiplicity, so their writing changed. I see the actual drama experience, the lived event, as giving the students the creative and critical tools with which to work. As active participant, aware of all contextual frames and through active identification, dealing with subjects of relevance to them they can connect with emotional and practical values and then they have something to write about: drama is not meaningful in that it is lifelike but like life it is made meaningful.

Like life it is about difference and different ways of seeing. In role as Robert, Claudina wrote in prison, aware of her faults, appealing for comprehension; Barbara wrote a nostalgic, loving piece; and Nuno wrote as someone sad, alone and depressed. Some students were downhearted, others sad and a few angry. All had their own perceptions of how Robert would react to his mother's death. All wove their own metaphors around the drama experience.

For multiple inscriptions imply multiple ways of seeing and multiple ways of knowing. If these written texts are multiply inscribed, if each student has his own way of knowing and consequently transforming that knowledge then looking at the texts with merely the view of an EFL teacher will not suffice. It is therefore that I turn to different frameworks of analysis in order to embrace various ways of seeing, telling the story from different positions in order to see different things, seeking a fuller view of the meaning event.

Firstly, to complement and extend the above, I shall turn to the quantitative data which investigates the difference in marks and in attitude to writing pre/post drama. I will evidence that the texts above are indicative of a consistent improvement in writing, by statistically comparing the results of the writing at the end of term with that at the beginning. Once it has been established that the drama has had an effect on the writing, I shall turn to the drama/writing relationship itself, in order to look in more detail at the learning and development that occurred.



5.2.2. QUANTITATIVE OBSERVATIONS

5.2.2.1. DISCUSSION

The central aim of my research project is to discover and investigate the relationship between the use of drama in the EFL classroom and the process of improving the students' writing abilities. The central focus is the on the nature of the drama/writing process and how the use of educational drama can influence student writing. The underlying assumption is that a teaching programme including drama will change the nature of the writing process and perhaps writing proficiency as required for the University programme.

As already detailed in chapter 4, my research programme was set up to include all students majoring in English at the time of the data collection. I did not develop a study including an experimental and control group for several reasons. (1) I sought to develop a study with local groundedness which was naturally occurring in a natural setting. I did not want one group of students talking to the other about what was going on. (2) The aim was never to do a statistical analysis as to whether the experimental approach had lead to better learning results or not, but rather through thick descriptions over a sustained period of time examine the data to plot what happened. (3) The size of the sample would not permit too many divisions as there were already three natural divisions. (4) I do not consider it ethical to use students as guinea pigs in experimental and control groups.

I decided to test the total population of students on their writing abilities in a pre-test at the beginning of the semester and a post-test at the end of the semester.

All students in the three naturally occurring groups of students, namely the students in classes 1 and 2 in year one and the students of year two who formed only one class, in this project called class 3 for ease of reference, took both the pretest and the posttest. All students followed the educational programme using drama for the whole of the second term (April - July).

In addition all students were asked to fill in a pre-data collection questionnaire and post-data collection questionnaire which will be explained and examined in the following section.

By comparing both the results from pre/post test I sought answers to two questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post test means? If so, does this occur in all three samples?

2. If the students are grouped into categories of high, average and low writing ability in accordance with their pre-test marks, does a significant difference between pre- and post-test means occur in all three categories?

5.2.2.2. PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

CONTENTS

The pre-test and post-test consisted of an essay to be written in English. Students had a choice of two essay titles. All essay titles were set in accordance with the themes to be covered in years one and two and set at the levels of year one and two. This type of test was chosen because fifty percent of their final exam mark would be allocated to a test of this kind. The other 50% would be related to grammar, comprehension, oral and class work. During the year, three tests could be set at the teacher's discretion. Thus my colleague who taught the students in semester one gave them a test during the course and the latter two tests were saved for the pre- and post- test.

MARKING

The pre-test and post-test were marked blind, independently, by both my colleague and myself, fully qualified in our field. In subsequent meeting any difference in marks were discussed and a final mark for each student mutually agreed upon. Since we coincided in 87% of the marks, reliability was established.

Marking was carried out in accordance with the guidelines set for years one and two, in accordance with appendices 9.1 and 9.2. These marking schemes are based on those of the British Council for Advanced and Proficiency level and were approved by the Head of Department at the beginning of the academic year. Year one were expected to produce written work in connected contextualised form, using a variety of sentence structures and making few mistakes; year two were expected to have a higher level of fluency and a notion of style and genre/text type.

In accordance with University ruling marks were allocated out of a total of 20 in the following manner. Students with an average of 14 over all their university courses over all the total years of their course would be eligible for a masters degree (mestrado). Marks above 14 were rare. Students with an average of 12 in all three tests throughout the year were exempt from the final exam. It was the aim of every student to reach this mark. 10 was the pass mark, necessary for entry to the next year. Students with an average below 6 were not allowed to sit the final exam and allowed to repeat the year.

For ease of reference and in order to have a direct link to the criteria for selection of student work for study I have divided the students into high, average and low achievers. From a total mark of 20, high refers to marks 13-20 inclusive. Average refers to students with marks 12 -10 inclusive. Low achievers were students within the 0 -9 range, namely a fail.

Since the first years were given two tests of the same level and the second years two tests of the same level, it is possible to compare marks between students of different years.

STATISTICAL APPROACH

Dependent scores

The same students from the same group took both pre-and post data collection written tests and were also asked to complete both questionnaires in the pre-data collection and post-data collection. This implies that the scores on both tests are dependent.

Sample sizes

The sample-sizes of the three groups of students are determined by the natural grouping into classes for the population, namely 43 (year one class one), 41 (year one class two) and 24 (year two class three). It should be noted that the original group/sample sizes were bigger (50, 48, 29 respectively). As has been explained in chapter 4, some students did not take part in both tests or were absent during the research program because of a variety of reasons. The marks from these students were excluded from this analysis.

Alpha Level

The alpha-decision-level is set on $\text{Alpha} < 0.01$. Testing is nondirectional (bilateral), allowing a possible relationship in two directions.

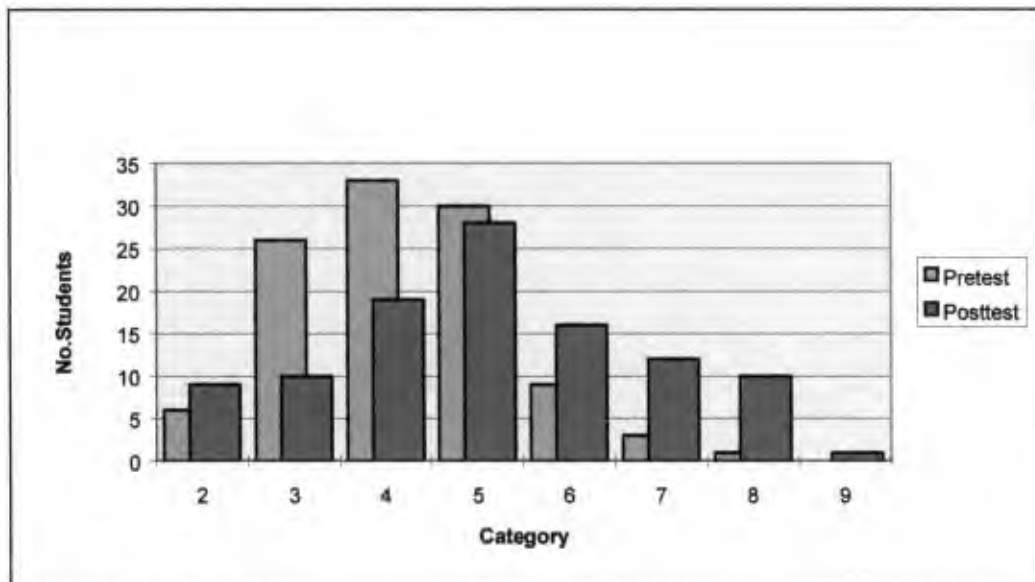
T-Test

Given the dependency of scores and the sample sizes, the T-test for paired-means is used when pre-and post test results are compared from the same group of students. The underlying assumption here is that the scores are normally distributed.

RESULTS

1. *Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post test means? If so, does this occur in all three samples?*

Figure 3: Pretest marks compared to posttest marks (all students)



The bar graph above shows the pre- and post test results of the total student population that took part in the project. The bars show the number of students per category. The categories stand for the marks the students obtained in the test in accordance with the following table:

Table II: *Student marks and categories*

Category	Marks from - to (inclusive)
2	04.00 - 05.50
3	06.00 - 07.50
4	08.00 - 09.50
5	10.00 - 11.50
6	12.00 - 13.50
7	14.00 - 15.50
8	16.00 - 17.50
9	18.00 - 19.50

T-TEST RESULTS

The table below shows the results of the T-test, comparing the post test results of all students to their pretest results.

Table III: *T-test: comparison post- and pretest results*

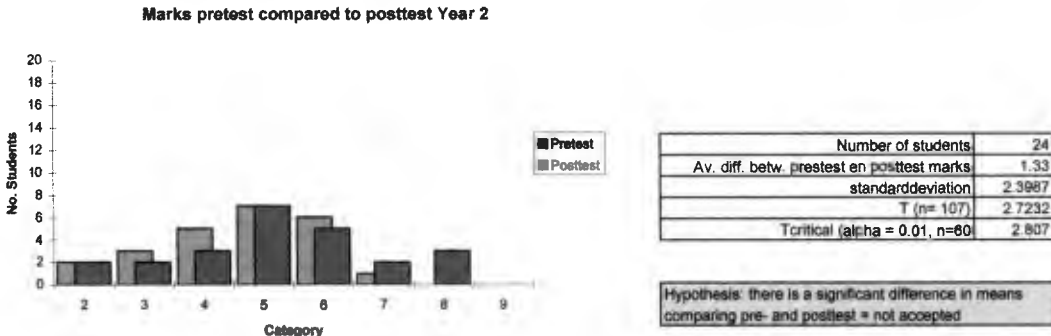
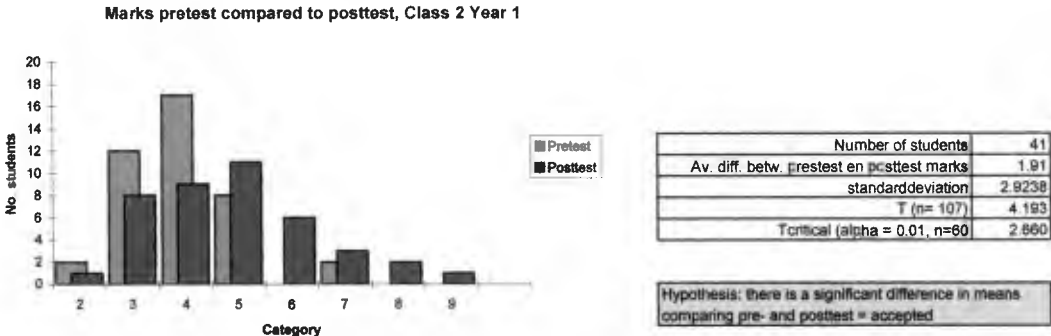
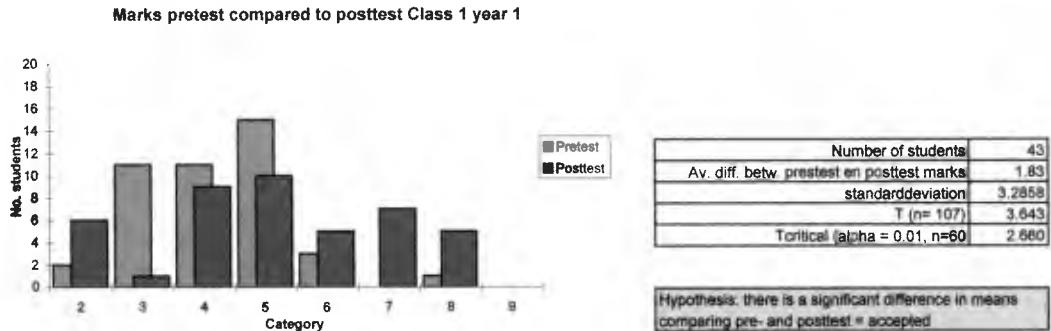
Number of students	108
Average difference between pretest and posttest marks	1.75
Standard deviation	2.953
T (n= 107)	6.158
Tcritical (alpha = 0.01, n=120)	2.617

T_{observed} is calculated to be 6.158. T_{critical} is found to be 2.617. $T_{\text{observed}} > T_{\text{critical}}$. The hypothesis that there is a difference in means of marks between the posttest and the pretest is thus accepted.

It must be noted, as shown on the following page, that when these marks are divided into each class group the hypothesis is not proven statistically for class three, year two due to the small size of the sample (24 students).

However, the pie graphs (see figure 7) show that although the increase in marks cannot be defined as a significant difference in the case of year 2 class 3, the number of students in the high category increased from 17% to 42%, 29% of the rest classified as average and only 29% as low. There was therefore a substantial redistribution of marks but only for a total of 24 students.

Figure 4: T-Test results per class



INTERPRETATION

Further interpretation of these test results is illustrated by the following pie charts and table. Students are divided into the broader categories of high average and low achievers as described earlier.

Figure 5: Student classification before project

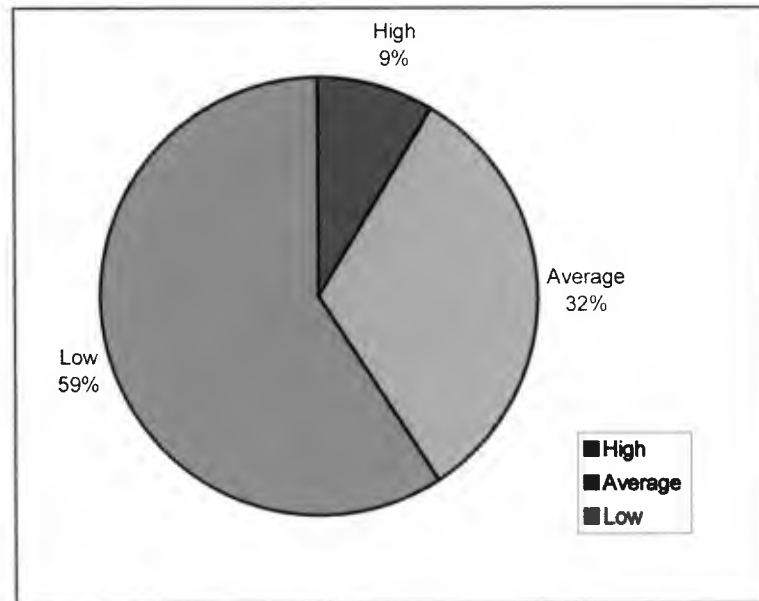
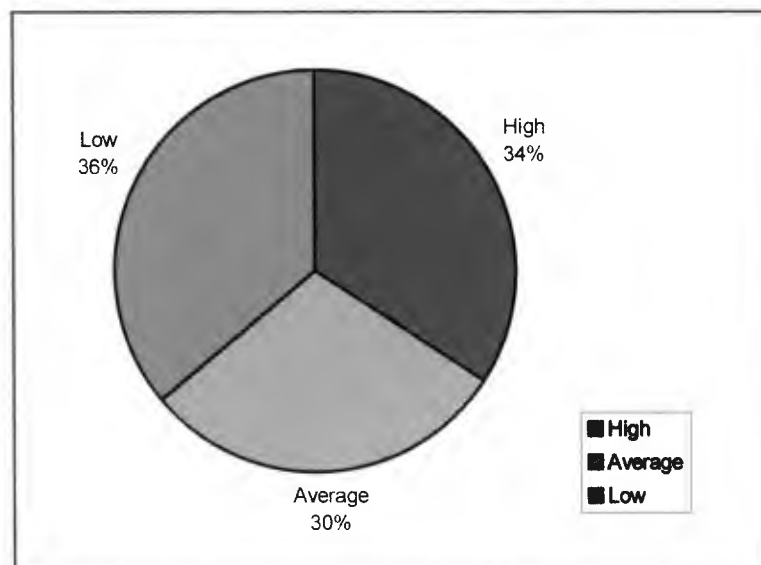


Figure 6: Student classification after project

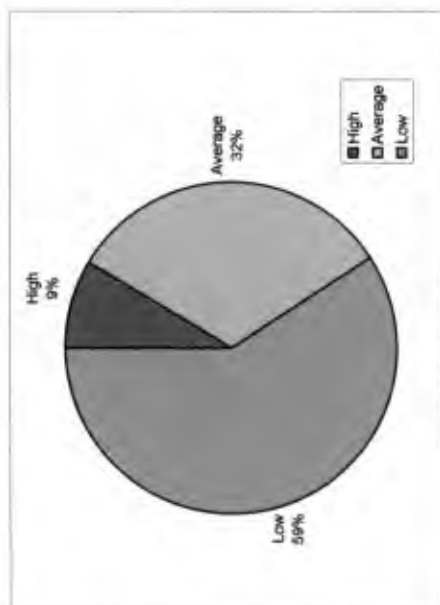


As the pie graph in figure 5. shows, before the drama sessions most students fell into the low category, a total of 59%. Only 9% made the high classification, the other 32% remaining in the average bracket. After the drama sessions these proportions changed, as per fig 6. The reader will see that the average number of students in the low category changed from 59%, more than half the class, to 36%, substantially less than half. 64% passed, with 34% of those students making the high category. This meant the average ability of the students was divided much more equally than before.

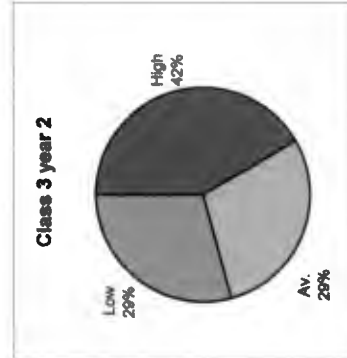
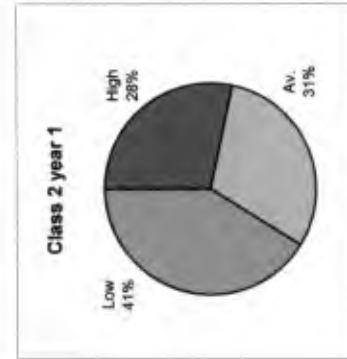
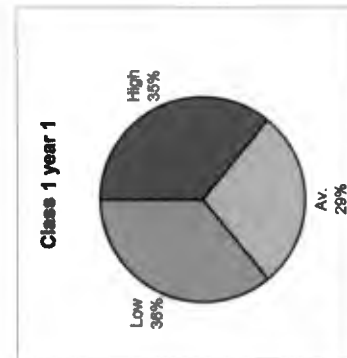
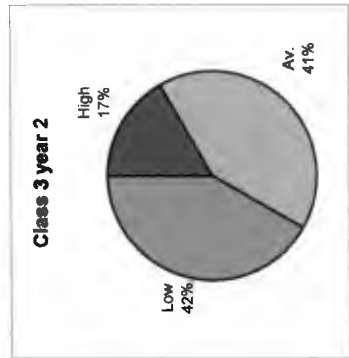
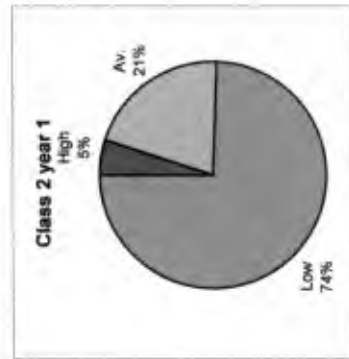
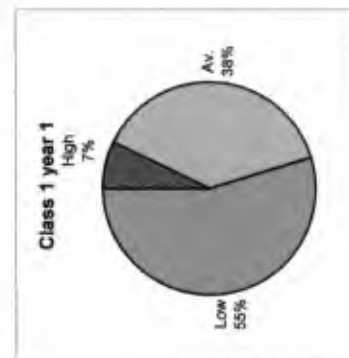
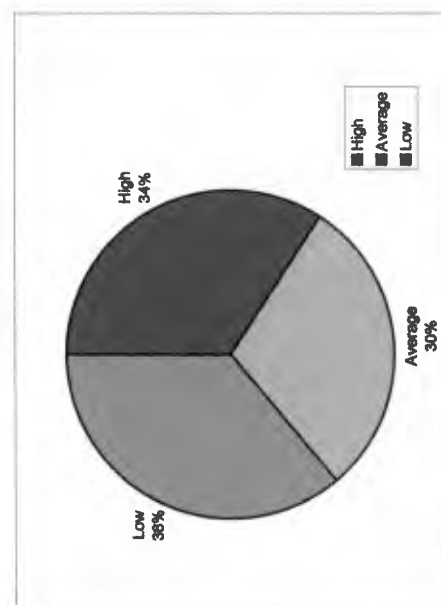
As mentioned earlier the pie charts on the next page show graphically how these students were classified in each class:

Figure 7: Student classification before and after project per class

Student Classification before project



Student Classification after project



Before the research project, class 1 students were, on the whole, slightly better than class 2 . Both classes had very few students classed as high achievers. In year 2 class 3 there were still only 17% of the class that fell into the high category and almost half the class fell into the low category. After the drama sessions the abilities were spread much more evenly round the classes than before. In each case more than half the class passed, percentages of low achievers in year one being 36% for class 1 and 41% for class 2. The increase of students in the high category went from 7% to 35% and 5% to 28% respectively. Moreover, in year 2 only 29% of students were classed as low achievers, 29% as average and a grand total of 42% became high achievers.

The following tables show statistically what happened regarding the change of marks and student classification between the pre test and the post test.

The categories relating to the increase or decrease in marks are defined as follows: "Improved++" relates to students who improved two categories, from low to high. "Improved" is defined as students who rose one category, namely low to average or average to high and "got worse" is defined as students who descended one category and "got worse - -" to students who descended two categories.

Table IV shows the differences in the percentage of students in each category when the pre and post test results are compared. This shows clearly that 25% more students were in the high category in the post test, 2% of those coming from the average group and 23% from the low group.

Table IV: Student classification pre- and posttest

Classification	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
High	9%	34%	25%
Average	32%	30%	-2%
Low	59%	36%	-23%
Total	100%	100%	

These figures show how the student mark improved significantly. Some improvement in mark would be expected within a term but such a substantial rise covering all abilities and both years, together with the bar charts shown earlier show that the educational programme had impact on the writing.

The next table, number V, looks at what happened to the students in each category, for example answering the question: what happened to the students in the high category, did they stay there or did they move category? The information is colour coded in accordance with table VI.

Table V: *Change in category pre- and posttest*

Classification Pretest	Classification posttest			
	No. Students	High	Average	Low
High	9%	5%	3%	1%
Average	32%	17%	10%	6%
Low	59%	12%	17%	30%
Total	100%			

Table VI: *Change in categories*

Improved ++	12.4%
Improved	34.3%
No change	43.8%
Got worse	8.6%
Got worse --	1.0%
Total	100.0%

Most students already in the high category actually stayed there, only 1% of the 9% total descending two categories. The 32% in the average group were redistributed as follows: 17% improved, 6% descended category and 10% remained in the same band. Of the 59% low achievers, 12% moved up two categories, 17% one category and 30% remained in the low bracket.

It can be noted that most students moved up a category or remained in the same category. Only 10% moved down a category, 1% descending two.

Table VI summarises this information into percentages of total students: 46.7% of the total students improved, 12.4% improving two categories. 43.8% of the students did not change category and 8.6% descended, only 1.0% descending two categories.

Hence the quantitative results show that, for the totality of students there is a significant difference in the marks between the pre-test and post-test.

5.2.2.3. QUESTIONNAIRES

All the students from the total population were asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning and end of term. From a total population of 127 students about 90 students handed in both questionnaires. Both questionnaires contained roughly 35 statements. The students were asked to fill in on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement in question.

BEGINNING OF TERM QUESTIONNAIRE

The statements in the questionnaire at the beginning of term belonged to one of the following categories:

- Writing apprehension
- Difficulties in English
 - Language
 - Content
 - Practical
- Importance of writing
 - Language improvement
 - Content
 - Institutional
- Organisational preferences

END OF TERM QUESTIONNAIRE

In the questionnaire at the end of term, the statement categories were slightly different, as follows:

- Writing apprehension
- Positive attitude to drama/writing relationship
- Writing should be done in class
- Evaluation by teacher

Analysing the results of the questionnaires served the following purposes:

1. The analysis of pre-drama results gave me a better view of the group of students that would take part in the teaching programme. As explained in chapter 4 these results were used in the selection of student work for study.
2. I was interested in comparing the results in the writing apprehension category before and after drama.
3. I was interested in the attitude of my students towards the drama/writing relationship after drama.

Appendices 9.4 to 9.9 give a detailed report of the content of the questionnaires and the answers of all the students. In this section I will deal with points two and three. Point one is dealt with in Chapter 4.

WRITING APPREHENSION BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROJECT

As presented on the next page, the writing apprehension category contained the same 14 statements in the beginning and end of term questionnaires. As evidenced in the copies in appendix 9, in some cases these were reversed. For the purposes of comparison all statements in the table have been formulated to show writing apprehension.

By comparing the overall score of all students on all statements regarding writing apprehension before and after drama the following results are obtained:

Table VII: Writing apprehension pre- and post project

Category	Pre-project	post-project	Difference
strongly agree	5%	6%	-1%
Agree	16%	11%	5%
Neutral	30%	21%	9%
Disagree	34%	30%	4%
strongly disagree	15%	32%	-17%

The amount of students that strongly agreed with statements, thus confirming a great fear of writing, was not high (5%). This did not change very much during the course.

All other categories except "strongly disagree" (i.e. agree, neutral, disagree) went down from a total of 80% (pre-drama) to 62% (post-drama). The only category that grew significantly (more than doubled) was the category "strongly disagree". This category represents the students who filled in the questionnaire as being students with lack of writing apprehension.

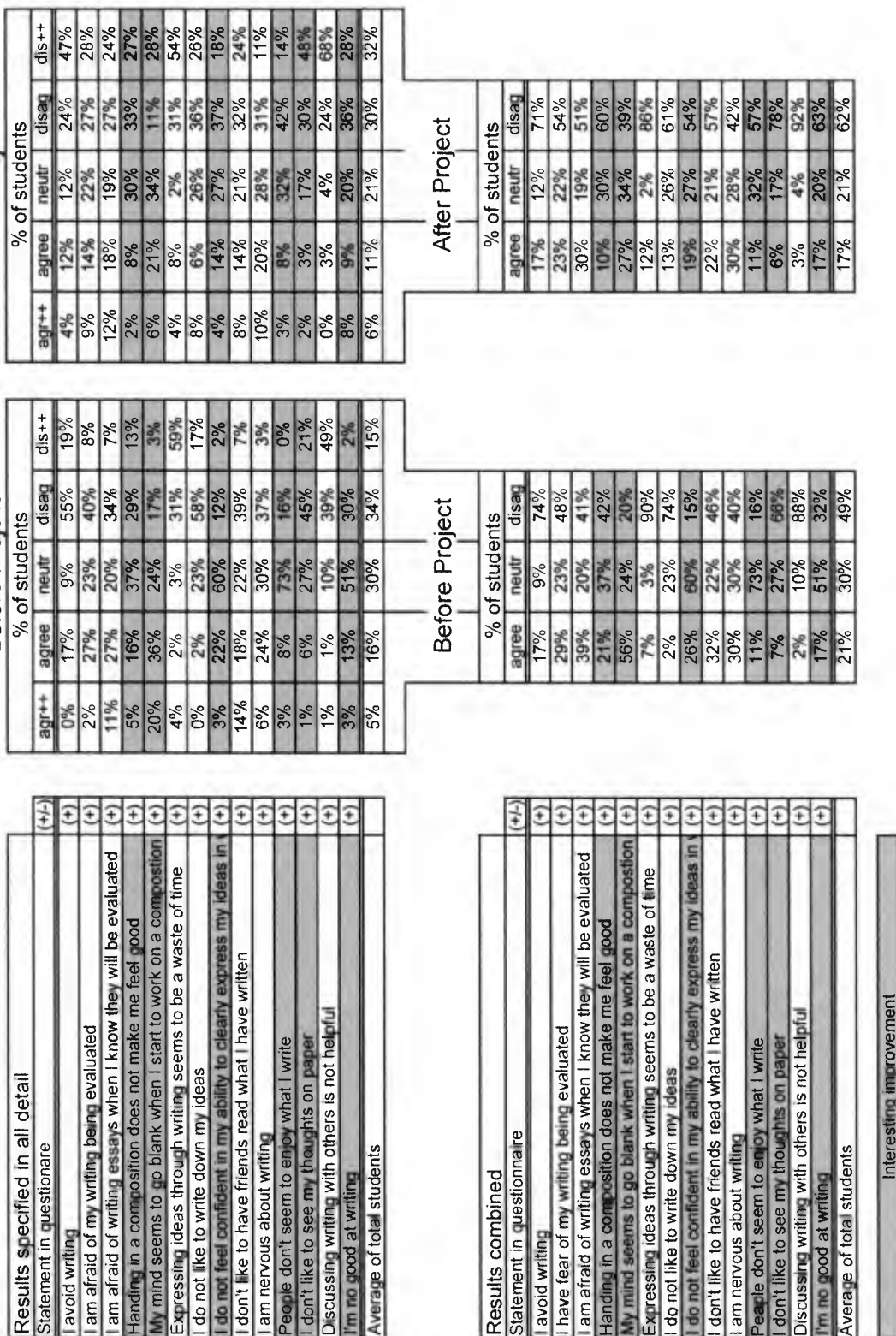
The different statements in figure 8. show that there is a notable change in the results of 6 statements when comparing pre-project to post-project. These statements are highlighted in blue. Five of these statements relate to self-esteem and self-confidence with regard to writing. The other relates to inspiration. In each case there is a strong decrease in writing apprehension.

Since both the test results have improved and writing apprehension decreased, this could begin to confirm that the findings of previous research, namely that there is a relationship between the psychological and social dimensions of writing in classroom contexts (Daly et al., 1988) (Ustundag, 1997). For it may well suggest that the reason that the apprehension has changed is due to the way in which writing is approached within a Vygotskian framework, through the drama.

The subsequent pages show the change in writing apprehension visually, via bar graphs.

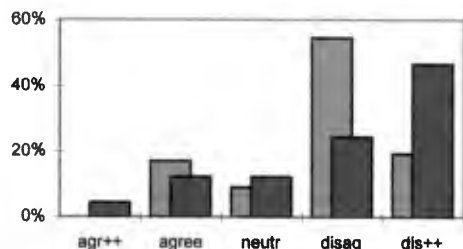
Figure 8: Writing apprehension before and after project in overview and bargraphs

Writing apprehension before and after project

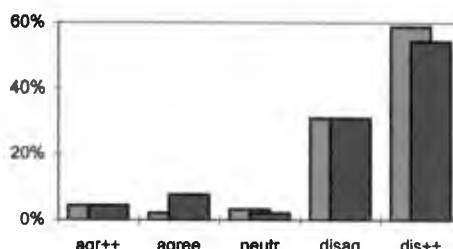


Writing apprehension before and after project

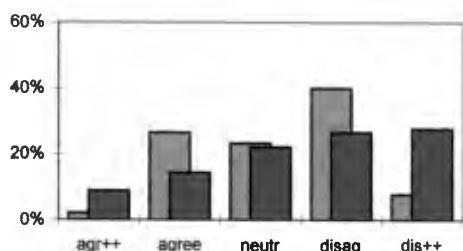
I avoid writing



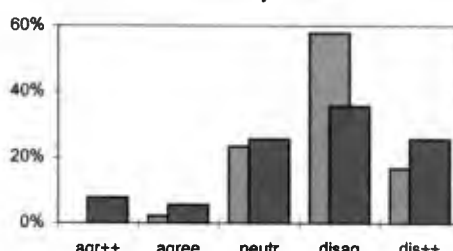
Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time



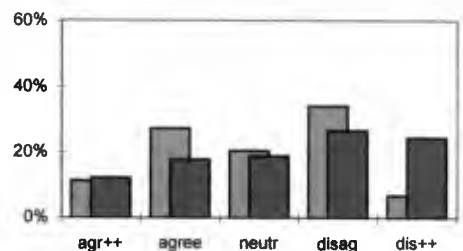
I fear my writing being evaluated



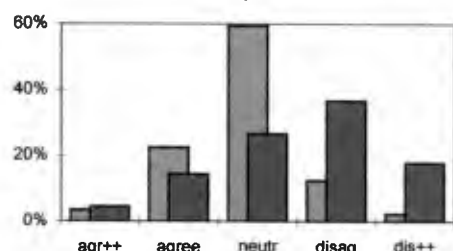
I do not like to write down my ideas



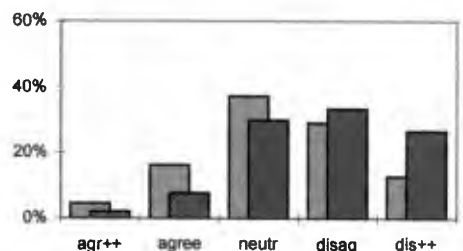
I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated



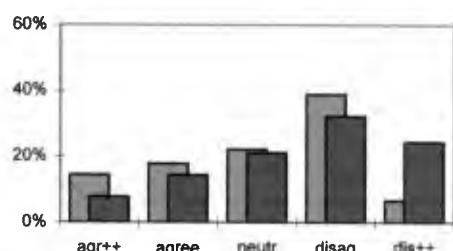
I do not feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing



Handing in a composition does not make me feel good



I don't like to have friends read what I have written

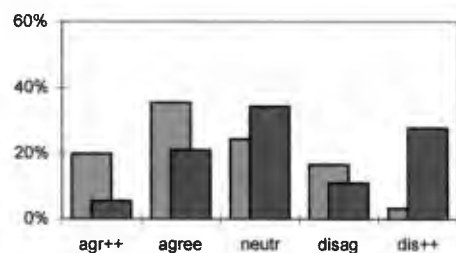


Before:

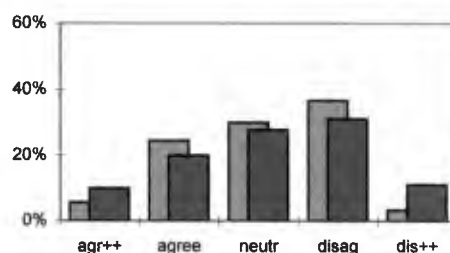
After:

Writing apprehension before and after project

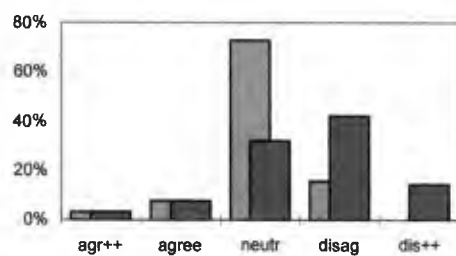
My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition



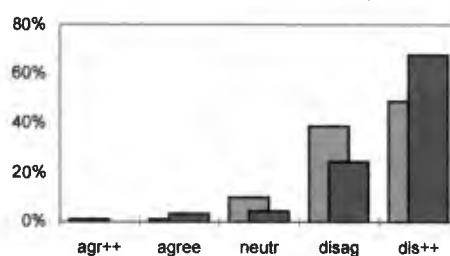
I am nervous about writing



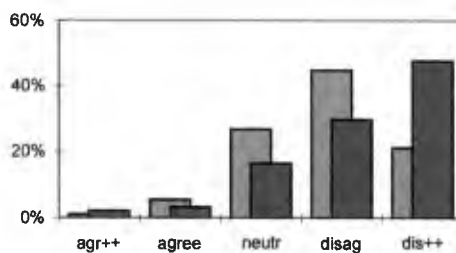
People don't seem to enjoy what I write



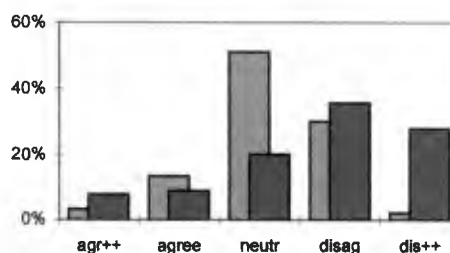
Discussing writing with others is not helpful



I don't like to see my thoughts on paper



I am no good at writing



Before: 

After: 

POSITIVE ATTITUDE TO DRAMA/ WRITING RELATIONSHIP

Thirteen statements in the post-drama questionnaire were related to student attitude towards the drama/writing relationship. They did not refer to whether or not the students liked the use of drama in their classroom but whether they thought the use of drama had an impact on (the quality and content of) their writing.

The average results over all statements and all students are presented in the following table:

Table VIII: Positive attitude towards drama/writing relationship.

Category	
strongly agree	52%
agree	25%
neutral	17%
disagree	4%
strongly disagree	2%

More than 75% of all students agreed or strongly agreed with the statements, showing a (very) positive attitude towards the drama/writing relationship.

The scores for each statement are presented separately in bar graphs in appendix 9.9.

6. CHAPTER SIX: THE DRAMA / WRITING PROCESS THROUGH TRANSFORMATION AND CHARACTER

The first task in an analysis of the relationship of thought and word as a movement from thought to word is to analyze the phases that compose this movement, to differentiate planes through which thought passes as it becomes embodied in the word.

(Vygotsky, 1987a p.250)

Covering such a large body of work necessitates making choices regarding presentation. I have divided the presentation of the qualitative data regarding the drama/writing relationship over three chapters, the first two dealing with transformational processes between the drama and the writing, the third dealing more with the written product and linking it back to the drama. The subheadings used in these chapters are not to be seen as labels for a comprehensive drama theory but as points of entry to the data, sets of perspectives which are by no means exhaustive. My aim in choosing such divisions is threefold (1) to echo the process of data analysis whereby these categories were plotted systematically through each drama session and each written piece, thus taking the reader through my own process; (2) to divide the data into manageable sections and (3) to show how the drama/writing processes interact.

Initially I would like to explain the general ideas behind my use of Kress's notion of transformation (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 1996). Subsequently I turn to the drama text and the written text of one student in role as a prophetess in the workshop on Delta X. By examining the text from both a Hallidayan and social semiotic perspective with specific reference to character, I take the reader through one example of the research process which led me to formulate the units of character, story and cultural histories.

6.1. THE NOTION OF TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESSES

Meaning making in drama workshops in the foreign language classroom is a social and collaborative activity whereby students of different levels of language ability choose and negotiate the use of different modes of expression with which to convey and/or explore meanings. These meanings may not always be obvious to the observers or indeed the other participants, especially when made spontaneously in improvised scenes. There is thus a certain demand on the co-participants to make an effort to interpret the message, especially when the student in question does not have full command of the resources available to her.

Required to work exclusively in English, to her a foreign language, a student may call upon resources other than language, such as gesture, action, song, drawings or artefacts in an attempt to convey her message to her audience or co-participants in the drama. To make her particular meaning she will use, whenever possible, whichever form is available. Otherwise she will use the one whose sense she is able to access most quickly or effortlessly: it is rarely appropriate to stop the action and look up words in the dictionary. Meanings are therefore made in several modes, out of choice or necessity. It is their interaction that forms the complete dramatic textual unit. For example, one drama scene may involve a combination of mime, speech and song to convey a particular feeling or event, the next might be a still image, the following pure dialogue.

When the student is given the chance to write, the meaning making process is taken one powerful step further. Each and every student is able to choose an element or event or group of elements/events that interests her within the topic chosen. Drawing upon the resources available to her, in role, she constructs her own reading of the meaning event. She is now able to interpret the happenings separately or in their entirety in whatever way she herself sees fit. She can deal with what that which is critical for her, constructing her own reading of the lived experience.

Both in her writing and through her writing she builds upon the drama sessions, utilising the dramatic representational means to create new meanings. Previously produced signs are transformed into new ones: the real flowers on the bar become the metaphor for love in the written text; the blue drug conjures up the blue line (linha azul) that exists for drug users in Portugal which in the writing is transformed into the pink line, a help-line for emergencies; when transferred to the written page the statues of fertility in King Tarquin's kingdom become the symbol of his decision to levy new taxes on the birth of his son. In drawing upon her actions and experiences the student is taking the drama event, its images, objects and discourse and incorporating and transforming them into her own discourse by means of a productive and cognitive act.

The student not only transforms the resources available to her as a result of the drama. Intermingled with those of the dramatic event are those of her own past history as a person and as a reader, writer, producer of texts and student of English. In writing that is creative, not merely representational, she changes the drama persona. Indeed the actual writing event, the entwining of the personal story and fictional narrative permit the displacement of boundaries of genre and culture, allowing for a personal rendering of both the drama and the student's own persona. Fixed meanings and identities are swept away as a cognitive, transformative process takes over. In other words the writing event becomes an act of transforming consciousness and claiming agency.

In the same way as the drama text draws on different modes to make meaning, the writers sometimes draw on different modes to make their texts, using images or cut out pictures for example to convey strong messages in newspaper articles or brochures. In an ever changing world where attention is being drawn to visual literacies these multi-modal texts are significant; when, for example, a linguistic resource is not available (which is a useful indicator for the teacher) and/or when a linguistic resource may be less apt. However this project concentrates on the purely written texts which form a rich body of writing as a whole. This is where my interests lie as the students were to be evaluated at the end of term upon their writing of compositions. It is their initial problems with this task, the interactive drama/writing process and the rich corpus of written texts produced that are the focus of this research project.

Hence, in this manner, the shape of the written text is influenced by that of the drama text. As students draw upon the drama together with their own life histories and experiences the written text becomes interwoven with many interacting voices and experiences, with constantly changing references and relationships. This intertextuality allows the student not only to play with meaning but with language and form. The quality of the written work, functionally more complex and varied, riddled with metaphor, images and human presence evidences a competence and expertise that was lacking before the educational programme took place. By using and extending the concept of transformation, as developed by Hodge and Kress (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 1996), it is possible to plot how the texts are constituted of transformed elements of the drama texts and their own individual, social and cultural histories.

I will now turn to the power of the drama/writing relationship to show how it links to the resultant powerful product, giving salience to the transformational processes that facilitate and develop a degree of L2 written competence and expertise that had never been seen before with regard to these students. I am interested in transformation at three different levels: character, story and cultural histories.

6.2. OPENING UP THE PROCESS

"We take no pleasure in foreknowing the fate of wholly uninteresting people, which is as much as to say that character is indispensable to enduring interest in drama."

William Archer

In drama the students are encouraged to battle with meanings. As they do so they discover an arena in which they make a difference, a fact they value and retain. The taking of a role gives a genuine need to communicate; since something is at stake their input is dedicated and pertinent. Furthermore as Ausubel taught, meaningfully learned material, namely that which is understood, is retained longer than something learned by rote. In this section I will look at what happens when a student assumes the role of another character in the drama and then writes in role subsequent to the drama. I will study this special drama/writing relationship by focussing on the specific transformations that occur with particular reference to character.

My aim is to show that when the emphasis is on the exploration of character, on the process and not the product, specific learning, an act of discovery, rather than the parading of accuracy occurs. The opportunity to look at something through the perspective of another character and try it out permits the student to reflect on and question her own.

The fictional event not only teaches about ambiguities, the power of the fictional "being" and the fictional "performance" serve to fire the imagination. When the imagination meets the writing act, in the skin of another character, a specific type of text results, one imbued with the drama and the experiences as well as the writer's own being.

During the course of the workshop on Delta X a fictional island was created with a laboratory where "Einstein" and his apprentices made the drug. It was an island where, as in the Algarve, fishing and agriculture prevailed. The island was ruled by a prophetess. The bad witch was constantly trying to steal both the powers of the prophetess and the secret of the drug. The drug itself was sold by one dealer to the villagers. In a dramatic improvisation the scientists "from the future" visited the island to interview the people and compile a report on what they found.

Ana Margarida was a quiet student who, at her own request, became the prophetess in the drama. I shall focus upon two separate texts involving the same student, to be found in appendices 8.11 and 8.12, which should be read together with appendix 5.1. Text DX.006.D is the transcript of the dialogue exchanged between the prophetess and the scientists from the future. Text DX.006.W is the written text produced by Ana Margarida as a homework assignment subsequent to the drama: a page of the diary of one of the characters in the drama, the day after the visit of the scientists from the future.

I would like the reader to accompany me then to a classroom in Southern Portugal and look with me at the nature of the drama/writing relationship, through a particularly shaped window, the work of a shy first year student on the character of the Prophetess.

I give you – Ana Margarida.

6.2.1. ANA MARGARIDA AS THE PROPHETESS

6.2.1.1. THE SPOKEN TEXT

Within the circle of her peers, Ana Margarida, in role as prophetess, remains seated as the strangers from the future arrive.

- *Who dares to disturb my peace?*

went the opening line to the final improvised scene of the workshop, spoken with force. The intonation and emphatic loud voice sufficed to create an air of authority. The linguistic register adopted, in contrast to the conversational style of the previous scene, served to mark it even more clearly. The character had gained the attention of the audience.

Was this the shy student, always on the sidelines, whom I had to help dress-up for the part as no-one else was helping her? Certainly not, this was the prophetess, the ruler of the island and confident leader of her people. Such a visible transformation of character eluded no-one and similar occurrences will undoubtedly be familiar to most drama teachers. This is one of the essences of the drama process, the power of adopting a fictional role within a fiction. Within the safe environment created by the drama, as another person in another world, Ana Margarida was given the opportunity to acquire power - and she grabbed it with both hands.

By transforming herself into a character in a drama Ana Margarida adopted another kind of personhood. A closer look at the words themselves will give us the full meaning of the question. The interrogative *Who* and the question form are not really a question, as she knows who the people are. They are a challenge not just meaning "what person" but "who on earth has the audacity to interrupt me". The use of *dares* and *disturb* evidence her authority, placing her as someone to be reckoned with. The use of the possessive *my peace* makes salient the calm and peace of her world in opposition to that of the strangers. It is also linking her to one of the good things in life, peace as opposed to war, whilst serving to place her apart from all the other people in the drama: the peace belongs to her.

The drama text oozes with confidence, that of Ana Margarida and that of the prophetess. It is important to point out that her task was the most formidable of the whole day: to provide the reason why the drug was killing the people of the future and not the islanders.

Subsequent to her opening line, which is more of a statement than a question, a way of asserting her power, she reinforces her authority by referring to her special powers: *I was expecting you*

and by ordering the scientists to tell her what has been happening: *could you tell me please*. The scientists accept this and reply to her. They become the ones who ask the questions and their efforts at persuasion contrast with the prophetess's language of negation, echoing her refusal to accept the scientists' knowledge. The prophetess uses emphatic statements throughout the scene to imbue her views with universal value and reinforce her role: *They will not die because I say so*. She does not use modifiers or modals which would undermine her power. Thus she is using language to portray an all-powerful and knowledgeable leader from the beginning to the end of the scene.

Her explanation for the problem is that the people of the future are too greedy and the scene revolves around various dichotomies, reflected in the linguistic differences between the scientists and the prophetess (one is emphatic and based on negatives, the other persuasive/challenging and based on the need for positive action). These dichotomies relate to levels of conflicting power, that of the scientists, that of the prophetess and the ultimate authority of the Gods. The latter is unquestionable, even to the scientists. Placed directly after the scene of the scientists' visit to the bad witch, the Good versus Evil antithesis is made more prominent. Whilst the prophetess loves her people, the bad witch hates them. The prophetess holds power over the people and the drug, the bad witch over neither. The prophetess has the blessing of the Gods and draws a happy picture of the island, whereas the bad witch is depicted as ambitious and greedy, wanting to attain the drug to gain control over the people and her island. Thus the character that is created, an authoritative and powerful ruler, is the direct opposite of the one that has just left centre stage.

In this drama scene Ana Margarida is allowed to explore an adoptive persona and make meaning but there are limits and boundaries to what she can do and create. The role of the prophetess that is created is restrained and partly structured by the interaction with the scientists who are pressing her quite hard for answers that no-one has provided during the day. The choice of utterance becomes dialogic, determined by her interaction with the other participants.

When matters start to get difficult and her power is challenged: *Why do you drink the drug if you have no wishes?* She turns to 'drama' for the answer, still replying emphatically, but using intonation, pitch and a contrasting quiet, slow voice to make her point: *Sorry? . . . I don't drink the drug*. Her next lines then serve to build up the powerful image she was in danger of losing: *I can help them providing the drug/there is no other way/ God gave us the power . . . now we will use it*. Thus her character has not only to fit into the context of the drama created throughout the day, but has to be created in active collaboration with her peers as scientists and, we must remember, thinking on the spot in a foreign language.

As time begins to run out and the scientists refuse to give up she clings to the drama once more: *I knew you would come. I know the future. I have this crystal ball* . Throughout the scene she has been seated behind a table clutching her crystal ball and at the end she is holding it very tightly as though it provides the answers to her problems, both real and imaginary.

Powerful language is being used to create a powerful identity for the character portrayed. In Hallidayan terms of field this text is both interview and confrontation, with tenor of second order: informer/responder/contradictor. We must bear in mind, in regard to mode, that this is a spoken text where finite mental processes and cognition processes are taking place: *They will not die ... It is just a sign ... You are killing yourselves./ But Delta X will make you as greedy; ambitious; as we are/Aren't you a human being too? I am a special human being. I have special powers.* By means of declarative statement, exclamatory question and negative response the figure of the prophetess is speaking as the recounter of universal truths not to be questioned: *You don't die now but you will/ We don't die because we are good people, simple people.* The character is not flexible and neither is the language. It becomes subordinate to the authoritative character by means of the modulated interrogative declarative and moodless declarative statements: *They don't deserve what they want. The Gods don't want people who wish too much.*

Thus the prophetess calls upon both linguistic and dramatic resources to help her maintain the figure of power she is portraying. This is important because it shows she has knowledge of how the language works and actively uses that together with the drama experience to create a meaningful text within the boundaries of the dramatic situation.

6.2.1.2. THE WRITTEN TEXT

Turning to Text DX.006.W, it is apparent that more complex processes are involved. As Ana Margarida writes in role as the prophetess a whole new experience, mobilised by the drama, begins to take place. The context is different to that of the drama text, Ana Margarida is writing by herself and has time to reflect on her role and her language. The form of the text itself is that of a diary, a personal form, yet allowing greater freedom as the addressee is the character herself. The context of the institution, writing for grading purposes, has to be borne in mind by reader and writer alike. However, by an analysis of the text and the dramatic and social relations of which it is a part I intend to show that the writing process goes beyond a 'writing task'.

Specific use of text type has been used to create a feeling of authenticity. The pages of the diary are numbered (1079/80/81). The initial character of each "chapter" is highlighted and there is an attention to register, unusual in this student : *and these are the thoughts of ...1693*, followed by the signature "C". Care has therefore been taken with presentation, the writing becoming a separate observable, visual phenomenon, positioning the speaking subject in time and space. It

is also notable that nearly three pages of A4 are produced when only one was requested. This was a common occurrence. Usually, with writing not related to the drama, the minimum of one sheet of A4 was the norm. The writing emerging from the drama almost always exceeded the minimum requirements.

Looking at the written language more specifically, characterised by the Hallidayan categories of field, tenor and mode, the prophetess is writing an entry in her diary subsequent to the visit of the scientists which not only involves the narration of events but the mental processes of knowing, perceiving, thinking and understanding. With regard to tenor and mode we have the authority, the prophetess writing for herself and any future readers of the diary of the leader of the islanders; we also have the student writing for the teacher and the student writing for her peers as both class members and members of the drama. This is writing to be filed and documented (as records of the ruler; record of the student). It is formulaic in that it is used by the ruler to address others with reference to a specific circumstance, the visit of the scientists. Furthermore it is not only expository but becomes didactic and both overtly and covertly persuasive.

For ease of reference and plotting of these points as a way into transformational processes I shall approach the text in three divisions as shown in the situational analysis in appendix 5.1

PART ONE

Commencing with the two titles, an impersonal tone is used in both, setting the register and authoritative tone for the beginning of the piece, together with the theme, the visit of the scientists. In the first paragraph the range is that of the historian, the powerful and confident leader and the opening is extremely important with regard to the character created. Note that the title *A visit from the future* does not refer to whom it is that visits. Together with the first sentence, it stands as the explicit point of departure for the text as a whole, providing clues as to the way it is likely to develop. The marked theme of *Today* takes prominence, referring to "today on my island" and "today in my classroom". There has been the transformation of Ana as pupil into the prophetess in the drama transformed back to Ana as the prophetess writing in role.

To find out what this progression shows I shall turn to the language and the differences in register, lexis and syntax. Thus, returning to the text, the theme changes from "Today" to "the visit" and the lack of foregrounding given to the scientists shows how the writer thinks and feels about them. The use of the passive in the opening sentence upholds this distance of the writer from the object and the choice of wording *some people* to refer to the expert scientists from the future signals her attitude to them and the power imbalance in her favour. This is not an objective narrator but one who codes her comment. In role as prophetess, she is able to voice

her values both about the future and the past. She is voicing the way she views scientific disciplines and the way she views the visitors at the same time.

This becomes more apparent as we look at the choice of verbs. The attributive clause; *they called themselves 'scientists'* is relational and identifying, syntactically a statement of value, and semantically lack of value which is enforced by the use of inverted commas. The identifier, the writer, fixes the identity of the target element, the scientists, by their function but removes their value by choice of verb. In this paragraph the verbs used express a degree of negativity rather than positivity. *They kept saying* is initially ambiguous, but placed in context it becomes apparent that it is a marked option, encapsulating the value judgement that although the scientists repeated something, the writer makes no claim to abide by what is said. Comment and affect are being coded in what at first sight appears to be the language of factual reality and general truth, declarative clauses functioning as statements. This interpretation is further highlighted by the salience of *they* as opposed to "the scientists". There is lexical cohesion in the repetition of *they* but its main function is to reinforce the covert statement of the writer with regard to the visitors, clarifying the thesis of the previous sentences. The scientists are not given the same importance as the drug, which is given more prominence and are just mentioned for qualification of circumstantial events.

The focus then changes from the visitors to the drug. The use of the qualifier and post-modifier *our beloved Delta X*, a direct translation of the Portuguese, "nossa querida Delta X" is used to refer to something of great worth, not necessarily in the usual sense of the English "beloved". Here it is attributing a quality to the drug, enhancing its powers and relating it to the islanders, before the narration begins. She is also asserting her power with the use of *our*.

The choices in language thus serve to reflect differences in attitude and subjectivity.

This is continued in the second paragraph, where the events described are recounted as fact, but include judgement: *trying to frighten them*. Mistrust of the scientists is created from the outset. By dissociating herself from what she reports, the writer is implicitly leading the reader to conclusions. The narration is therefore far from neutral. The whole paragraph is formed of only one sentence, a sentence within which a lot occurs. In the clause of mental process: *but my people is convinced...*, commencing with the negative conjunction *but*, the drama situation is built upon and judgement is made. The relationship of the prophetess and her people is made explicit with the use of the possessive *my*, the "my" of "ownership". The wording of the clause *my people is convinced* is circumstantial, an agentless passive not a process. It also locates the events in place and time.

By placing the "*Island*" with a capital "I" at the forefront of importance and writing as the ruling authority who speaks with force and conviction, certainty and knowledge, a ruler in control is portrayed. It must be noted here that the student has problems with tense at this point as she is talking of the past events and the present at the same time. I would suggest that she is making mistakes in writing because she is forming her thoughts through writing. The writing process itself is transformational, it is a concept of development.

To summarise, in the first two paragraphs the writing is based on the workshop, including a building of fiction upon fiction. Value judgements are made of the participants, making meaning true to the image of the island built up during the workshop and bringing in an analysis of the situations. Writing is being used for the purposes of thinking, for cognitive as well as creative purposes. Language is responding to and at the same time influencing the observations of its writer and mediating her experience. The role created on paper is clearly being transformed into a character that is much more powerful than that in the drama.

Moving through the text it is noticeable that in the third paragraph the emphasis changes to a complex multiple theme brought out through comparison and hypotactic elaboration: *For me it was much easier, I have this crystal ball ... future*. There is reflection on the drama process and explanatory comment: *I know what is happening... future*. The same level of certainty and knowledge is maintained, relating to dual worlds, that of the drama and that of the student playing a role, the metaxis of Bolton and Boal. The essence of drama and writing is that it involves not just the fictional situation but personal (hi)stories and the drama process as a whole.

The prophetess/historian focuses on conflict: struggles of power within the drama (villagers v scientists; prophetess v scientists; prophetess [power and perception] v villagers [ignorance]; gods v evil) and moves to wider matters: the destruction of mankind linked to evil.

Initially the text bore some similarities to the spoken text, written in a simple form without embedded clauses. In paragraph three there is a change. The prophetess puts herself and feelings first; *For me...* The tone also changes, a didactic, almost biblical tone being adopted: *And I explained to them*. This is to establish her position of power and knowledge, which is continued into paragraph four. The prophetess is seen as perceiver/ understander of the gods and the world in which she lives. Her attitude and identity are not left to supposition: *Delta X is just a sign.../they can't be very ambitious*. The didactic tone is maintained by the use, and repetition of *can't*. The interpreter/historian continues the story by the use of statements joined by additive and causal conjunctions, leading to the specific reason for the powers of Delta X. The character's thoughts are present behind this reason (since any giving of reasons postulates a source) as they are behind the details of the story presented, which have also been very carefully selected, as any mature writer will select his data. At this point in the text the subject

position of the writer is slightly different from that at the beginning of the text. She is stimulating interactions with the reader: *for me it was much easier .../ in my island...* The writer is now identifying with rather than dissociating herself from the action. The thematic prominence has become speaker oriented. The character is transforming...

The use of language serves to place the events in time (*that violence*) whilst inserting values of universal truth (*the world was in such chaos*). There has been a move from the individual to society in general and there are echoes of the real world at large. At the time this was written war and violence were very much in the news and the Portuguese were especially fired by the events in Timor. Transformational processes are therefore taking place on various levels and it is not until all these levels are seen to interact together that the full meaning-making process can be grasped. Real life histories are transformed into those of the fiction. For example it was also the University "Be Green Week" when posters and articles on the destruction of the ozone layer and the planet were to be seen all round campus. It was Easter time which is very important in the catholic country, hence the biblical echo in *:And I explained to them*. The writer is re-working the several strands of transformational processes simultaneously. Transformational processes and cultural histories will look at these matters in more detail in chapter 7.

In the last paragraph of the first part there is a change taking place, signalled by a change in tone introduced by the oppositive *but*. Prominence is given to the writer's point of view and her powers of judgement as an omnipotent authority: *they didn't understand*. In contrast to the drama text, she is shown as not always in control: *no matter how I tried....* Immediately clarification follows (*Of course...*), thereby taking the blame away from her through negative proposal: *they would not understand!* For once, emotion seeps into the text by means of the exclamation mark. Here the exclamation mark also contributes to establishing her distance from the scientists. Her persona is therefore not the same throughout the text; she has multiple identities. She does not back up her statement with any evidence, merely assumes that the reader will agree with her out of some vague notion of common sense. Meaning is therefore moving beyond the text to the social relations in which it is embedded. This reminds us that for a full picture it is also necessary for us to look not just at the text, but through it, to the meanings beyond it, and how these become transformed into the text itself and re-worked within it.

Returning to paragraph five, covert 'dislike' of the scientists becomes overt and there is an apparent paradox in the importance given to modal features within the interpersonal exchanges. Fact becomes dissimulated as the writer gives her opinions through grammatical metaphor, a vivid one allowing no room for change: *they are locked inside their ignorance*,. The writer is stepping outside her narrator role and commenting in another voice.

The transformation signalled by this paragraph becomes clearer in the next section.

PART TWO

The journal writer in part two of the text is no longer the historian, she has become the self-reflective narrator. Her narration of how the prophetess feels may be extended to relate to her own feelings during the drama process: *I tried to look very severe*. Feelings become much more prominent: *inside my heart was breaking* and mention is made quite openly of her sense of being powerless: *I felt so powerless*. The language shows a process of change, from an account presented as if it were objective to one which is openly subjective, evidenced in the choice of value judgement words like *injustice* and *pure feelings*. The intensity of the emotion drives the text to a crescendo. Without the boundaries set by the drama event, the writer is allowed to investigate inner processes of struggle and ambiguity. Ana Margarida exists in real life and she is also playing a character that she is relating to herself. The writer is therefore drawing on dual sources and the text becomes the site of the transformations and dialectic progression.

The change in linguistic style from formal to informal is echoed in her change in position and in functional variation. The focus is on observing herself, distancing herself as object. The language is lacking in difficult structures, which signals the lack of power of the ruler. In the second paragraph the reader is invited to identify with the writer: *I'm just a human being like them*, and the power balance is more equal. The prophetess is still needed as ruler: *they need my cool appearance* but she is no longer the ruler who is totally in control. She is seen as able to fail: *try to keep away from them*. Events become subordinate to the looking inward of the writer.

Indeed the listener seems absent at the end of the first paragraph of part three as the writer, both as the prophetess and as pupil, begins to write for herself, explaining and enhancing rather than recounting, by reference to causal-condition (*But people ... panicky*). Commas and semi-colons are used, reminiscent of someone thinking aloud. The use of *but* not only signals an adversative component, it also embraces concession and paratactic addition (*but I also...*). As her attitude changes, so does her discourse, excluding her from access to the discourse of power.

The person becomes all-important, how Ana Margarida feels about the character. This is shown by the constitution and positioning of the speaking subject and by use of the focus on the pronoun *I* and its frequency. The writer is no longer a passive recipient of the drama but is using literate skills to suit her purpose and needs. There is a quest for a concept, a construction of self, affect, identity and meaning, especially in the second paragraph.

The third paragraph revolves around similarities and differences. She starts off with the possibility of identification with the islanders: *But inside I'm just a human being*. However she

goes on to say she is special and different. This paragraph also includes comments and values which extend beyond the drama. She talks of the *pure feelings that an human being use to have*, meaning that they have them no longer. The feelings she classes as pure are *love fear, happiness, unhappiness, loneliness*, feelings that she appears to think a ruler should avoid. Here she is most probably drawing on her Portuguese culture, where pride in the nation and an emphasis on an outward appearance of strength is nurtured.

I would propose that meaning is being realised through the construction of the text. Her reflection has become critical and she shows the ability to maintain control of the meanings that she makes. A transformation is underway.

PART THREE

Part three of the text signals a change in time and space and places the writer as narrator/historian/storyteller as a fiction built upon fiction. It is as if the process of writing and exploring her feelings has unleashed a whole new fictional process that is tied carefully to the drama world created in the classroom, (*I stopped in front of the volcano - the volcano was at their centre of the island and constructed in the classroom*) but which draws on her own storytelling, histories and inventive techniques.

A change in focus and adoption of the storytelling form in the first paragraph is once again mirrored by a change in register. Unusual words are used: *warrior, fateful, roamed*; words, which as a foreign language student, she will have searched for in a dictionary, words which fit perfectly into the storytelling genre. Although the character of the prophetess is 'fictionalised' through the storytelling, she is also actualised, the process of discovery authenticating the character she is describing (*I wasn't the same person... special*).

Any emotions mentioned, such as the crying, are mentioned in a 'factual' manner, to give relevance to the story, not for critical reflection. In a not quite so distant manner the prophetess now proves her worth, explaining how she acquired her powers, reverting to the notion of authority. However, in contrast to the beginning of the journal where emphatic statements were used, the focus has become more inward, physical and emotional. As she sums up she uses a dash to emphasise that which is most precious to her - *life, peace, harmony*. The text is changing from storytelling to positive monologue.

In the last paragraph the writer uses the explicit subjective form to validate her observation, whilst signalling the confrontation between the scientists and the prophetess (*I know that I'm right...*). The repetition of *I know that I'm right* highlights not just her confidence but her need to insist on her powerful role in case it is challenged. The authoritative figure is still there but she

has been transformed from a stereotypical figure to a more human figure. The use of *perhaps* adds a probability, even if a high value probability, that she is still not certain, whilst also being a value judgement. The last clause, placed at the end of both the sentence and the text as a whole, gains emphasis and importance. It is made very real by the use of the present tense. The action is not only unified, it is universalised.

At the end (*And these...*) there is a certain celebration of form, a textual manifestation echoing the authority and power of the ruler. It is important to note the use of the word *thoughts* as opposed to "words" or "diary". It is obvious that a transformation has taken place. Events have become subordinated by the narrator to that which is physical, emotional and inwardly searching.

Appendix 5.1 gives a situational description of the text, in Hallidayan terms, with relation to character. It indicates how within the text type of a diary entry, transformation has taken place. Commencing with a narrative and historical information, the text ends with unselfconscious cognitive and affective analysis. I would suggest that as she has interpreted it, and within the boundaries placed by both the drama and the text type, Ana Margarida has used the diary form to allow her to present a person as opposed to a role.

The transformational process begins with the presentation of a person and a situation, it moves to a statement of her own difficulties in relation to her authority of her people and then gives a summary of issues. The writer adopts various subject positions. She moves away from the conventional voice of the narrator to adopt a more personal voice. Initially she is dissociating herself from the events, at the end she is very much involved. Writing has permitted her to develop a fiction about a person in relation to the drama, building into an "I" a complexity that is not expressed in the drama text.

My point is that the written form has provided the resources of the fictionalised diary to permit a complex description of character. Drama has taken the language further than the institutional and classroom context and permitted and created the possibilities for Ana Margarida to develop the character in relation to issues chosen by her. Whereas in the spoken text the language was directed at particular individuals (the scientists), with the specific intent of persuading them to accept her views, the written text focuses less on the interpersonal functions and more upon the logical function and the skill of working within the generic and written forms of language.

The writing process has changed the quality of the experience by transforming it into something else. To summarise what has gone before, writing in a diary form has allowed an exploration of character that has greater fictional complexity than that portrayed in the drama, a character that revolves around what it is to be a person: the confident leader became the troubled leader.

There is a shift in relationship between writer and character, which can be monitored by looking at the ways in which language has been used. For example, when she feels threatened and feels a need to assert her authority the writer increases the use and focus upon the pronoun *I*. The drama has influenced the content of the writing but this moves beyond direct reporting or storytelling. The writing produced is not simply a transcription of the spoken word: the character in the drama has changed. The role on paper has been sustained and developed in a way that is different since any artificiality and stereotype has been removed.

The writing process is used to invent and authenticate this process of discovery. This type of writing is closer to writing of a native speaker than anything the writer has written before. The subject is placed in time and space. Through self-disclosure the writer is both making a statement and negotiating meaning and expression. By writing, sense is made of the difficult situation she was placed in during the drama; that the drama/writing process has unleashed creative and interpretative processes, active and responsible meaning making.

6.2.2. EMERGENT QUESTIONS

The general overview of the two texts of this character poses various questions. The stereotypical, constrained character has transformed into one with feelings, emotions, who is capable of using and making cognitive and affective connections on various levels. Whereas the character in the drama was a cardboard character with special powers, the character in the writing had special feelings. The dominant, inflexible character in the drama became the tolerant person in the writing, merely trying to look severe, to keep up a front. She who was negative in the drama became caring in the writing.

The character in the writing was thus one of the author's invention. The character changes, the prophetess is more in control. Different points in the drama are taken further and others ignored (in the drama the visitors are given prominence, in the writing it was the drug). The author uses parts of the drama, for example elaboration of the plot, to explain changes character trait (as in her reaction to her father's death). In the drama the happenings decide the action or reading of it; in the writing the author brings in outside influences and other experiences.

In the process the language acquires depth of expression, stereotype has become a particular way of making sense of not only the drama but the world and the self. The language changes as the prophetess reflects and tries to influence the reader. Use of register is salient: *So the gods, in order to avoid the destruction of the plant by the greedy of men, gave Delta X a new power, the power of killing those who use it in order to command the world.* She is no longer only flaunting her power in the story, but also her power over linguistic issues.

Events become subordinate to her reflection rather than the interaction with the visitors. She elaborates on the story, building on the drama text in order to explain her feelings – both as the character and as Ana Margarida. In the drama the happenings decide the action or reading of it; in the writing the author brings in outside influences and other experiences. The language changes as the prophetess reflects and tries to influence the reader. Events become subordinate to her reflection rather than the interaction with the visitors. She elaborates on the story, building on the drama text in order to explain her feelings – both as the character and as Ana Margarida.

Building her story around certain key issues or parts of the drama: the visit, the greed, the volcano, the crystal ball, she brings emotions to the fore. The prophetess in the drama would not have cried, but the more human, sensitive prophetess of the writing did. When she writes *something had changed inside me, I wasn't the same person, the same innocent child; I was different, special*, she is not only writing as the prophetess, she is writing of her own transformation from shy onlooker to active and central participant. One cannot help but question where the role of prophetess stops and where Ana Margarida starts: *I tried to look severe and rude, but inside my heart was breaking in pieces.*

The theme of fear runs throughout the writing, whereas in drama it was more exasperation. In the written text the story changes as the visitors try to frighten the inhabitants with their stories. The island becomes very like the Portuguese community where crops, fish, happiness, peace and wealth come to the fore. Gone is the fame and luxury imagined at the beginning of the drama, so is the friendly visit. Instead the fear seems to echo the introverted student's fear at adopting a central role, the importance of which she could not have foreseen at the beginning of the drama. The way in which the drama developed meant that her intervention was the final scene of the drama where everything could or could not be resolved and where she was the centre of attention. When she lists the attributes of a human being there are more negative than positive ones: *love, fear, happiness, unhappiness, loneliness.*

These initial findings set me out on a journey to track the ways in which the drama text had been transformed into the written text. I became interested in what different students picked up on in the drama and the transformations that took place between drama and written text, namely what was transformed and how. I wondered if there was a difference between workshops that had a central character and those which hadn't.

Analysis led me to include two further interrelated levels of transformation, namely story (plot) and cultural histories. I shall now turn to the findings regarding transformation and character. In the next chapter I look first at the levels of a) transformation and story then b) transformation and cultural histories. Subsequently I look at the three levels of transformation as a dynamic

process as evidenced through analysis of one text. In chapter eight I revisit the same texts with reference to the language, to learning as a linguistic process. The reader should bear in mind that the underlying questions for these three chapters are:

- a) *How did drama influence the writing?*
- b) *How did drama influence the writing process?*
- c) *How did drama influence the quality of the writing?*

Each question varies in importance and salience in each section in accordance with the emphasis on process or product but they all lead naturally to the central issue, namely what is the nature of the drama/writing relationship and its relevance to teaching writing in the foreign language classroom?

It is essential that discussion of the transformations in each text should be read together with three types of appendix (1) the text itself (2) the situational analysis (3) the relative appendix(ces) regarding the plotting of transformations, as indicated in the discussion.

6.3. TRANSFORMATION AND CHARACTER

With regard to character the workshops can be divided into two broad categories, those with a central character and those without. In each workshop the students were required to write in role, either as the central character or as the particular character they or one of their peers had invented in the drama:

Table IX: *Workshops with and without central character*

Workshop	Central Character	Writing in role as character
Old Age	yes	Robert
The Sibyl	yes	The King
Time Travel	yes	John Taylor
Delta X	no: multiple characters	own character/or that of any of peers
Emigration	no: multiple characters : certain characters seen in detail	own character/ or Claudia; Jewish mother; unhappy daughter
Key to Success	no: multiple characters : certain characters seen in detail	own character/or Fuji and Sandra; special agent

Writing in role is writing from a fictional point of view, adopting the persona of someone who took part in the drama. The writing in this project was often specifically to do with the character's thoughts or feelings, which evidenced his/her character:

Table X: Examples of different writing assignments per workshop

Workshop	Example of writing assignment
Old Age	write the letter Robert never wrote to his mother
The Sibyl	write the entry in the King's diary the day before the Sibyl returns for the last time
Time Travel	write the entry in John Taylor's diary the day before he stands trial
Delta X	write the entry in your diary the day before you, the scientist, appear on a TV programme investigating the secret drug Delta X; as islander of your choice write the entry in your diary the day of the visit of the strangers
Emigration	write a letter to a friend explaining why he or she should or should never come to your new country; write the entry in your diary a week after arriving in your new country explaining why it was/ was not a good idea to move
Key to Success	write in your memoirs 10 or 20 years later how you describe this project

Close analysis of the written texts reveals different layers on which transformation and character operates. These layers are consistent across the abilities and across the different workshops. Full texts can be found in appendix 8. These should be read together with the relative situational description in appendix 5 and appendix 6 regarding transformations as indicated. Let me begin by examining the character of Robert in *Old Age* with particular reference to the work of one student, Claudina.

6.3.1. TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF ROBERT IN *OLD AGE*

In the workshop on *Old Age* Robert, the old lady's son, became the central character. A large sheet was kept upon which the students listed what they found out about him. Robert in the drama text was a "spoiled brat", cold and manipulating. A thief and a gambler with a penchant for young women, he always wanted things beyond his means. When his father died, Robert disappeared from home and became rich by both his activities as a sculptor and by devious means. From his earnings he bought a yacht around which his life revolved. He never once contacted or even thought about his elderly mother again.

Whilst half of the students created spaces important in Robert's life (his studio/his yacht/the yacht club) and provided a student in role as Robert in each setting, the others prepared surprise incidents to take place in the aforementioned places, situations designed to bring out Robert's character. The person taking the role of Robert had to deal with the situation created through improvisation and/or forum theatre.

The first improvised scene took place in Robert's studio. The studio itself was prepared with diplomas on the wall, pictures, sculptures and a statue (student covered with a sheet). Claudina helped prepare the surprise situation for Robert in this setting. She was very active in the

preparation, always in deep discussion about what was to happen. In the action itself she took a small part.

A moor appeared (student in role wrapped in shiny gold curtains), with a translator and three subjects bearing gifts, reminiscent of the three kings. Claudina, with a scarf wrapped round her head, was one of these subjects. Through his translator and very convincing "phonetic gobbledy-gook" the moor instructed Robert to paint portraits of his forty wives whilst his subjects presented Robert with gifts: gold, cigars and valuable objects from his homeland rather than gold, frankincense and myrrh. Claudina bore the cigars with pride and presented them with deference, kneeling before Robert as if before a King. Comical negotiations took place whereby the moor informed Robert that he was not allowed to see the women because their religion did not permit it; Robert insisted he had to have some indication of what they looked like. When the moor set an impossible time limit, Robert was even more reluctant to take the job. However his face beamed when he was presented with a bag bursting with American dollars. His greed took over and he promised to do the impossible.

The initial humorous atmosphere thus created, transformed drastically via scenes related to smuggling and gambling to the final scene that was of a coffin, upon which the last sepia photograph of Miriam was lain. The students filed past and in turn, as Robert, paid their last respects. The students initially found it hard to assume the role and there was a false start with nervous giggles. A powerful intervention changed this: *I'm sorry mother, but you deserved it.* The reactions from Robert became sincere, blurring the distinction between real-life dramas and theatrical dramas, reminiscent of some of Boal's work. The room was charged emotional space with each subjective rendering of the same event. As each student faced the visual stimulus they became several different versions of Robert, all permissible within the drama:

- Oh Mother, let me see you for the last time. I left you Miriam, much before you left me
- For many years you were simply Miriam, simply Miriam. Today you are my mother. But I don't know why and I'm sorry.
- Hello mother. Who was the guilty one? Am I a stranger to you?
- Mother, you were the only person who trusted me and I was unworthy of your trust. May you rest in peace.

Claudina stumbled towards the coffin, swigging from a bottle mumbling the final words of the workshop: *I had to drink a lot to say that I love you.*

The writing task set was the letter Robert never wrote to his mother. Claudina was so moved by the workshop that she produced two very different written texts. One was the letter asked for (Text OA.069.1), the other Robert's thoughts after paying his respects to his mother (Text OA.069.2). Here I shall focus on the latter because, like Ana Margarida's work, it synthesises many of the points I wish to make with reference to character. I shall also refer to the former, the analysis and discussion of which can be found in appendices 5.12 (situational description), 6.1. (transformations) and 8.57 (text).

TEXT OA.069.2

This text should be read together with appendices 5.13 and 8.58.

This text is creative writing, very different to the letter requested in both form and content, yet similar in that cognitive and affective abilities are engaged via links to the drama. It is different in tenor in that it was not produced for evaluation nor to be used in the classroom. It is writing for enjoyment. Nonetheless it has obviously been painstakingly composed. In contrast to the letter this is a piece of writing showing numerous crossings out and tippexed corrections: something I allowed as my point was that I preferred the students to spend time working on the text rather than copying it out. Whereas the other text was devoid of adjectives this text abounds with them, transmitting its message through metaphor.

Whereas the letter is obviously a result of the drama session, this text initially appears to be set in a different setting. It is only with the mention of the sculpture that overt reference is made to anything in the drama. However I will show that a closer reading evidences how the writer has taken other elements of the drama text and transformed them into her own text. It links to the letter in its insistence on the importance of memories. The rest of the text refers to Robert's feelings for his mother and his analysis of his life.

With reference to character the text can be divided into four parts in accordance with appendix 5.13. The appendix evidences how the text is structured in a careful and meticulous way, via the theme of love. Taking us from that first image of Robert sitting and looking through the window on life into the at once happy and sad memories of the past, it moves through metaphors of life to an analysis of both the situation and Robert's feelings and then to a discussion of love in general and his particular situation. Finally it returns to the picture of Robert, sitting like a stone, also separate from his environment. Description becomes self-inquiry and deep thought. In part four the character himself transforms. The inactive subject becomes active as his attitude changes and he not only recognises and accepts the love he feels for his mother, but does something about it. Engaging both cognitive and affective abilities, no longer restricted by the

boundaries of a set text type, the writer can experiment and create her own genre, permitting the exploration of a character that is intensely human.

At first reading, this text seems to be of Claudina's complete invention. However, closer analysis shows that in parts one and two her metaphors, whilst original, use parts of the drama and transform them.

Initially Robert is pictured looking out of the *other* window. Perhaps this is how the writer pictures Robert before he wrote the letter to his mother. In the drama it was Miriam who sat either in the garden or beside the (other) window, dreaming of the day when her son might return. The trunk was part of the drama, used to contain artefacts of importance to Miriam. Here it is compared to Robert himself, to his lack of action and his mixed feelings. The mirror, the fireplace and the tear were all part of the initial story, formed by her peers from the piece of string commencing the session. The writer has used the attributes of the string in her writing in a unique way. It is as if she has commenced the drama session again, starting with the objects in the same way as the drama started with the objects, including parts of the drama as in references to the stone and the sculpture and moving on to different conclusions and a different exploration of character. The table below summarises transformations regarding the building of the character of Robert in relation to this text.

Table XI: *Examples of transformation of drama text Old Age into written text OA.069.2*

Written text	Drama text	Building of Robert's character
Sitting by window	description of Miriam	apart, alone, inactive
Fireplace	attribute of string	happy memories of past
Tear	attribute of string	sadness re: relationship with his mother
Trunk	artefact in drama	mixed feelings, sadness and joy
mirror	attribute of string	self-inquiry
stone	Robert as sculptor: improvisation writer involved in	inactive; separate
sculpture	Robert as sculptor by profession	regret for his inaction
flower	artefact in drama on coffin	love for his mother
road	description of family home: at end of a long road	active, responsible

In part three the writer begins to draw these comparisons and it is in this latter part of the text that the story takes another direction and the outcome of the drama session is changed. The writer rarely uses the drama for points of reference, except in the metaphor of the flower which gives the text its unity, symbolising his love for his mother and the long road. Instead the story is transformed in accordance with the writer's own interests. The thematic prominence is oriented by the writer as he moves between himself and the different personifications of love, love in

general and love for his mother. As the above table shows it is through these transformations that it is described how Robert's character changes as he journeys down the road of destiny, a road like the one down to Miriam's cottage. Persuasion is notably absent as the writer feels no need to convince us of how things are; the language remains simple, the metaphors and similes doing the work. As with the drama the audience are left to draw their own conclusions. Like the drama text the written text is riddled with meanings.

This text is different from the letter in that it takes the emotions and feelings of the drama session and transforms them into an expressive, imaginative piece of writing where language is used to explain affect. In this process the writer has transformed the character of Robert on paper, sustaining the role but creating her own meanings. The contextual is provided by the transformations from the drama but the expression is the writer's own. This text is thus the site of dialectical processes between the drama and the writing. Creative capacities, which thereto had been hidden, have been unleashed by the writing event. Thus although the student is practising language she is doing more, by sharing her thoughts and articulating her feelings, linking language learning to the whole cultural being. This is L2 learning which is a complete learning experience and as such particularly valuable to the L2 teacher.

6.3.2. ROLE-TAKING AND TRANSFORMATION OF CHARACTER

Playing with character has, in the case of Claudina, led her to produce two very distinct texts, which show different moves to communicate and particular ways of playing with language. Not only has Claudina gained the confidence to play with language but she is communicating complex thoughts. Patterns emerge in these texts and in their relation to other written texts, patterns that separately have different outcomes, which when taken together can evidence the nature of the drama/writing relationship.

This transforming of elements of the drama into a personal story is something that was not particular to Claudina. The significant pattern that emerges when looking at these texts in comparison with the others is how each and every student takes elements from the drama and transforms their significance into something else in her writing. I am interested in this section in how these relate to the formation of character. Appendix 6.2 plots the specific transformations between the commencement of the drama where students had to make a piece of string into an object and the subsequent writing of the letter. It traces which object the string became for each student and how the same student transformed that same object in her writing into an image or symbol of some aspect of Robert's character. To my surprise, this was a recurring pattern. I had expected events/scenes rather than objects to be transformed. Thus in the same way as in the letter (Text OA.069.1), Claudina made the string into handcuffs and later wrote as Robert in prison, the other students used their transformations of the string in their written text for varying

effects. In the creative writing she did not use the handcuffs but used several examples from other students' work. Hence, just as the attributes of the string were drawn into a story with which to commence the drama, they became elements in a new story in the writing, used specifically to bring out some aspect of character. For example:

Table XII: Transformations from drama text to written text in *Old Age* with reference to Robert's character³⁰.

Student	String in drama text	Robert's character	Quote showing transformation in written text
051	bird	trapped	<i>I was like a bird in a cage, a bird needs freedom.</i>
073	fireplace	warmth of home he abandoned	<i>... the beautiful woman I was used to see near the fireplace</i>
081	mirror	fear of facing reality	<i>I couldn't look at my image on a mirror</i>
082	hat	carefree cf. to fear and uncertainty	<i>My pink straw hat... I'm heading home.</i>
085	mountain	weight of guilt	<i>I've been sleeping under a mountain of unaccountable lies.</i>
086	tear	sadness	<i>My heart is like a desert, he is empty and full of sadness.</i>

The learners also worked the inventions of their peers into their writing for various purposes. In this workshop the fireplace and the mirror were favourites. Some patterns did repeat themselves from text to text (a flower to symbolise Robert's love for his mother), others were very particular (the snake to symbolise his wrong-doings). The important thing is that the presence of these transformations of objects and images show that the written texts were socially constructed, that there were no fixed meanings. Moreover the presence of the writer's own invention in the drama transformed into the written text show how writing, language learning and learning about language, have become a cumulative experience, at once socially formed and very personal.

As already seen in the snippets of text quoted, Robert reacted in different ways when in a different skin. Amongst the feelings that arose were those of:

DEPRESSION:

"Looking back I consider my life as something empty and vague, without feeling, except the euphoric ones about money, power and amusement, the ones that coloured my soul."

(Ana Isabel)

SADNESS:

³⁰ Extract from appendix 6.2.

"No one can begin to know how my whole body aches inside. I long to hold you and smell your fragrance."

(Susie)

GUILT:

"Now I'm more mature and able to see what I have done , that's why I want to make it up to you. If I could go back in time everything would be different. All my mistakes would be corrected and you wouldn't suffer so much."

(Vanessa)

and

HUMILITY:

" For all you've ever done and for everything I didn't do, I kneel before you, assume I went wrong and try to make up for the troubles I caused you."

(Fernanda)

Each student had their own perceptions of how Robert would react to his mother's death, perceptions which were taken further as the writing gave them the space to reflect critically.

Some students preferred to work with stereotype. Lisa's Robert (Text OA.076) abandons his mother for reasons which are very extreme - a love affair, the shooting of a policeman and a fight - but which build upon and reflect the Robert of the drama (a flirt with women/aggressive towards the police). Lisa has created her own TV drama on the paper. However, mingled with the stereotype is depth of feeling, recognition by Robert of the wrong that he has done and a human appeal for forgiveness.

Other students created lifelike, poignant renderings of the situation by taking one thing from the drama and using it for their own purpose. Barbara (Text OA.066), in a carefully structured text verging on the poetic, plays with language and with selected things from the drama. She plays with the sound of the name Miriam that is shortened to Maria, the Portuguese for Mary. There is a play of words between Mary and the Marigolds, which symbolise love in the text. Barbara commences her work with a visual image of the old lady in the garden, which was her solace in her loneliness, the first picture drawn at the beginning of the drama session and the first picture drawn at the beginning of the letter. The description of the marigolds runs throughout the text and moves the text along. The marigolds did not appear in the drama workshop but there was a vase of marigolds on the counter of the canteen where everyone went for their coffee break, so one could surmise that they made her think of the connection and she transformed that vase of waning flowers into a very positive and evocative image. Someone did place a couple of wild flowers on Miriam's coffin, an image several students were to use later. Barbara was however

the only one who made the connection with the Marigolds and used it for her own dramatic performance on paper. This text is examined in more detail in section 7.3.

The examples of different ways of reading Robert's situation are numerous. Eloisa (Text OA.082) turns the exercise around and writes as Miriam, aiming, as she says in interview later, to show his character through his mother's feelings, since she could identify more with her, as she is also a mother. She draws a vivid picture of a young woman on a bicycle in a straw hat, making the description match the date, maybe linking it to the literature we had been studying in class. She brings in a real life name, James, that of her lecturer the previous term. Through a series of binary opposites she creates the contrasting picture with no movement, no warmth and no joy. The declarative statements: *Oh these stubborn tears!* and *Oh these stubborn fears!* can be read in several ways. Were they tears of joy or tears of sorrow or her eyes watering in the wind? The fears are fears of being alone and of having done wrong and maybe not seeing her son again but their relationship to the tears is uncertain. In fact Eloisa intended the stubborn tears to link to both the text above and the text below, tears of joy and tears of sadness. Thus there are not only a multiplicity of texts, a multiplicity of Roberts but a multiplicity of meanings within each text. It is writing that is at once both profoundly personal and profoundly social and no longer an exercise in text type. It is also thoughtful writing where meanings are challenged and new meanings made in an attempt to find out what makes the character tick.

The same process can be evidenced in other workshops. Appendices 6.3 and 6.4 show in depth the transformations of character with reference to the King in *the Sibyl*, with relation to two different kinds of written text: a diary and a newspaper. Different student renderings are plotted. Findings are the same as in *Old Age*: the joining of sentences has become analysis, the drawing of conclusions and in many cases the questioning of the events of the story and the actions of the character in question. By looking at inner feelings a more human character has evolved. In the process the writers have played with register, syntax and lexis, moving from statement through description to an analysis of the situation. Therefore the exploration of character has taken the writers through several language events which as a cumulative whole form an evocative and competent text in which few errors are made. The writers have developed language skills whilst making relevant connections between the character and the events in the drama and those in their own minds, evidencing both independent and collaborative decisions in a genuine response (see for example text Sib.111).

Appendix 6.6 plots the transformations of character from drama text to written text in every workshop, showing how the simple character in the drama becomes a complex character with a mind that works. Whereas the drama constructs positions for the audience and its players, the writing lets the students reconstruct these positions and meanings into a social and a very personal construction of meaning. One of the things that facilitates that process is the

exploration of character which frees *interpretative* abilities, as the writing moves beyond a mechanical exercise to a place where language is infused with meaning.

6.3.3. TRANSFORMATION AND PERSONAL INVENTION

When imaginative powers were called into use in the drama, they were often continued in the writing. Earlier I gave the example of how the string in *Old Age* became transformed in the writing into something which showed the nature of Robert's character (see appendix 6.2). In the same way the students in *Emigration* were asked to imagine what was in a brown paper package that was passed around the circle. As they imagined what was in the package they became the characters to whom it belonged. Only two of these characters were chosen for further development.

When, after the session, they wrote at home as an emigrant, the object they had invented in the drama was often a vital part of their text. Whether they were writing as the character they had invented or another one, the object usually remained part of the text, telling us something about the character to whom it belonged. Thus the object, or its significance in the drama, was transformed into another object of different significance in the writing.

TRANSFORMATIONS FROM DRAMA TEXT TO WRITTEN TEXT IN EMIGRATION WITH REFERENCE TO THE EMIGRANT'S LETTER HOME

- a) during the drama each person turned the package passed round the circle into something of significance for the emigrant they were becoming.
- b) they then used that same object in their written text to evidence the character of the emigrant writing the text.

Table XIII: *Significance of package in drama text:*

Student	Package in drama text	Significance in drama text	Quote from drama text
016	doll	Memories of her deceased father	<i>... my father gave him to me before he died</i>
018	teddy bear	Memories of happy childhood	<i>Mr Bear was the first toy that my parents gave me.</i>
030	husband's ashes	reason for journey	<i>I must take my husband to a safe resting place.</i>
024	wedding dress	family memories	<i>It reminds me of love, family and union.</i>
049	bible	link to the past	<i>I learned to read through the bible; my mother taught me lots of moral laws...</i>

Table XIV: Transformation of package in written text:

Student	Package in drama text	Emigrant's character in written text	Writing as same character they invented in drama	Quote showing transformation in written text
016	doll	rejected	yes	<i>... she's holding me now, at least she'll never left me.</i>
018	teddy bear	loneliness	no	<i>Besides my teddy bear I have no friends</i>
030	husband's ashes	determination	yes	<i>.. and a bag with Tom's ashes ... to achieve my dead husband's biggest dream...</i>
024	wedding dress	lost innocence	yes	<i>I remember a white dress, a lamb, a time of innocence. Could it all be a dream?</i>
049	bible	loving	yes	<i>... this destruction, this pain, and pray for our dead beloved...</i>

Thus for example, a doll in the drama reminded the emigrant of her father who had given it to her before he died, a symbol of love for a lost one. In the writing it became her only friend in a country that continued to reject her in every way, a symbol of her pain, and so on.

Each drama workshop was slightly different and in the other workshops students were required to use their imagination in different ways. Appendix 6.5 gives an overview of all of the workshops, showing how particular moments and particular meanings are worked into new texts and new meanings on the written page. The exploration of character on the written page has given the students opportunity to rework and build upon the meanings of interest to them. This is one way in which drama influences the content of writing.

6.3.4. TRANSFORMATION AND ARTEFACTS

Transformations work on a slightly different level, also through imaginative processes, as students bring specific artefacts of the drama into their written texts in unique ways. Several objects achieved special significance in each workshop: the bible in *Emigration*, the Judge's hammer in *Time Travel*. When the students wrote in role they brought these objects into their writing. As they did so they not only made them a part of their writing but also used them as a symbol of the writer's character.

Appendix 6.7 takes two artefacts from each workshop and gives an example of how students have used them in their writing, as shown in the following three excerpts, tables XV, XVI and XVII.

KEY TO SUCCESS

BLACK BOX OF KNOWLEDGE

Table XV: Transformation of the significance of the black box with reference to character

Student	Object in writing	Character	Quote from writing
099	black box	remorse	<i>that message stabbed my heart which became like the black box, full of knowledge and yet worthless: John I want a divorce, see you on court.</i>

In the *Key to Success*, the black box was central to the drama. All the findings had to be written down and placed in the black box of knowledge. Once they were in they could not be removed as there was only a small slot in the top and no other opening. When Carlos writes his memoirs he tells another story, of how he returned home drained and exhausted, regretting his experience, to find his wife had left him. In his writing the black box is his heart, symbolising the remorse at having answered the request to be part of the experiment. He thus takes an important part of the drama, transforming it into an important part of his writing.

TIME TRAVEL

JUDGE'S HAMMER

Table XVI: Transformation of the significance of the judges hammer with reference to character

Student	Object in writing	Character	Quote from writing
082	metaphorical hammer	guilt	<i>Guilt pierces my head, pounding my brain, again and again, like tomorrow's hammer: good, bad, right, wrong, life, death.</i>

CLOCK

Table XVII: Transformation of the significance of the court clock with reference to character

Student	Object in writing	Character	Quote from writing
085	metaphorical clock	dilemma	<i>and the clock ticks in my head... and the clock is always there</i>

In *Time Travel* two artefacts, the Judge's hammer and the big clock, used first to show the time travel and then to mark the time of the defendant in court, became metaphorical objects in the student writing producing powerful writing³¹. The hammer became nagging guilt and the clock's ticking the recurring memory of the character's dilemma. Exploration of character has led to patterns of transformation which are at the same time similar and different, as each written text is at the same time part of a pattern and something very particular. The power of writing in role is that the student is not fixed in a singular position. This is foreign language learning that involves the whole person and not just powers of repetition or storytelling. It is a complete learning experience and as such particularly valuable to the foreign language teacher.

In order to see how these separate layers work as a dynamic, appendix 5.33 takes one cited text from each workshop, three from students with marks below ten prior to the drama and three from students with marks above ten prior to drama, providing a full description with relation to transformation and character through the different frames of analysis.

In the same way that Fairclough (1995) argues against the separation of content and form, the drama/writing dichotomy only serves to drain the process of its real life. Both are interlinked in the students' search for meaning. Their relationship has to do with the view of the writer, the self as someone who makes her own choices at a particular moment in time: multiple selves making multiple choices and multiple meanings for which they are responsible.

This section looks at how meanings are made with relation to character. The next section will turn to story.

³¹ See appendix 5.31 for situational description with relation to character.

7. CHAPTER SEVEN: TRANSFORMATION THROUGH STORY AND CULTURAL HISTORIES

7.1. TRANSFORMATION AND STORY

In this section I shall be looking specifically at the stories of the student writers. I am interested in the nature of their transformations of the stories and storymaking and how it is that these relate back to the drama. As does indeed happen, I would have expected the students to necessarily *develop* the narrative action in different ways. What I did not expect to happen are two levels of *transformation* which I shall call narrative links and embodied narrative.

Transformation of narrative links involves the writer's reworking and changing of key points in the story into something completely different, in accordance with whatever engaged the writer's interest. Embodied narrative refers to the human presence that infuses the writing, stories of persons engaged with and situated in the world in a variety of ways, in particular the transforming of the physical and emotional experiences in the drama story into the written story.

As before, it is essential that this section be read together with the referenced appendices, which due to space, I am unable to incorporate in the text. When a particular written text is mentioned, as before, it should be read in conjunction with its situational description in appendix 5. Texts can be found in appendix 8 by reference to student number and workshop.

7.1.1. TRANSFORMATION AND NARRATIVE LINKS

TRANSFORMATION OF POINTS OF INTEREST IN THE DRAMA INTO NEW STORIES IN THE WRITING

The written texts do not adhere to the boundaries of the drama story. Writers create their own stories, stories which could have happened in accordance with the drama event but which are of their own invention. Appendices 6.8 to 6.13 show the range of different stories invented by the students in each of the workshops. What are particularly interesting are those cases where writers make unique narrative choices. The narrative links may be simple, merging with or building upon the drama story(ies) or those which they created themselves in the drama and which were not taken up.

An example of this is the way in which some writers in *Emigration* created a story around the one that they initially imagined as the brown paper package was passed around the circle at the beginning of the session. To give an example from appendix 6.10.

Table XVIII: *Transformations of the story of the emigrant in Emigration.*

Student	Writing related to drama story	New developments in the emigrant's story
016.2	Writing as British girl who goes to America but merging of Jewish and American scenes.	Emigrant goes to America but talks of discrimination and racism.
024	Emigrant travelling with her wedding dress which reminds her of her lost husband.	Emigrant has fled the country after marrying in secret and then some tragedy too terrible to explain. She writes to her priest to confess.
026	Emigrant leaves to find her fortune with her bible for company.	Emigrant travels in Europe with her "traveller's bible", <i>Let's go Europe</i> , for company. She vividly describes what she sees and how she feels. She meets an American who is to accompany her on part of her travels.

Transformations can also be more complicated. Some writers take a key point in the drama and transform it into some other significant point in their own story. This is not merely story telling, it is a transforming of significant points of interest into others so that the story is no longer the same. Examples can be found in appendices 6.14 to 6.19, which cover every workshop. Special care has been taken in each case to give examples from a high, average and low achiever, to evidence the way this works systematically across the abilities.

For example in *Old Age*, Robert was a painter who put his money before his art. In the writing:

Table XIX: *Transformations from drama text to written text with reference to the story of Robert in Old Age*³²

Student	New stories in the writing	Quote
071	Robert is a con artist. He makes copies of masterpieces and sells them on the black market	<i>People think I am involved in drugs but that is really only a cover up for my art dealings. I can copy any masterpiece...</i>
072	Robert finds his mother's beauty in everything he paints.	<i>You are always in my work, in every smile I paint and every sweet flower.</i>
090	Robert, a criminal is also known as an artist who paints only women	<i>... AN ARTIST THAT MAKES PAINTINGS ONLY OF WOMEN , -</i>

³² excerpt from appendix 6.14

Sometimes whole texts are made up of different series of narrative links. Examples of this can be found in appendices 6.20-24 with reference to specific texts in *Emigration* and *Old Age*. Let me illustrate a few.

Celeste and Eloisa both took the story of Robert in *Old Age* and turned it on its head, writing as Miriam instead of Robert, developing the story of the old lady rather than that of her son. These texts are OA.080 and OA.081.1 respectively. Their descriptions with relation to story can be found in appendix 5.15 and 5.16. Both writers take the story of the drama and transform it in their own ways, using opposites rather than elaboration.

Table XX: Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text OA.080

Drama	Writing
Task: Robert writes to mother	Mother writes to Robert
Portrait of Mariam in trunk; on coffin	Portrait of son in the house
At the end Robert shows remorse	At the beginning mother shows remorse
Robert was to blame for situation	Mother accepts part of the blame: she did not understand him.
Mother was gentle, humble.	Mother was too proud.
Mother died without seeing her son again. In writing task Robert was to write the letter he had not written to his mother, saying how he wanted to see her.	Mother doesn't want to die without seeing her son.

Table XXI: Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text OA.082.1

Drama	Writing
Begins in the present and moves to past	Starts from past and moves to present
Miriam as sad	Miriam as radiantly happy
Miriam motionless sitting in chair	Miriam bicycling in the wind
Tears of sorrow	Tears of joy
Garden as warm and loving	Garden as cold and unfriendly
Miriam as resigned	Miriam as fearful

Celeste, in text OA.080 takes several key points in the story and completely reverses them through a series of transformations of narrative links to tell a different story. Miriam becomes a mother who was too proud, who accepts part of the blame and who does not want to die without seeing her son. Narrative becomes a way of linking the drama and the writing experience and making those links known through other experiences. The writer is using the drama as a cultural tool with which to produce her own story. One other tool is language, something which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Miram's storytelling demonstrates the writer's ability to sequence ideas, reporting the real events in the drama whilst at the same time combining information in her own way to make her own links, thus controlling the picture made for the reader. This making of the drama story into a personal story is of immense value. It indicates that the message of the drama has not been too abstract for students to find their own connections. It also exemplifies how by transforming narrative links, the writers engage with the subject, which itself is transformed in a variety of ways in accordance with what is important to the student. Celeste, like her colleague, in interview after the drama tells how she could understand the mother better than the son. Thus their own personal beings transform into that of Miriam when she writes. This point is important to the next section on cultural histories.

Therefore, two different students have taken the same approach, namely to write as Miriam but they have produced texts different in structure and content, the writers' own particular ways of making meaning of the drama. The stories are both very different, yet they could be joined together to form one story, which is what in fact happened in one of the post drama sessions. Thus the texts are not only formed of intertextual connections, they also connect dialogically as new meanings are negotiated.

Vanessa's story (Emig.050) moves at a different speed and in a different direction, or indeed in many directions simultaneously. The text broadly follows the structure of the drama, dealing with the past, then a dream scene and then reality. It is important in that she transforms the scenes in the drama events into the written event, not only transforming their content but their relevance to the story. See appendix 6.22 for further discussion.

Table XXII: Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text Emig.050

Drama	Writing
Past scene	Past scene
Dream scene	Dream scene
Reality scene	Reality scene
Husband was alive at home.	Husband seems to be dead.
Husband's past was not told	Husband wrote books which were burned together with his book collection for containing dangerous matter.
Husband was Jewish	Husband was German
They were happily married	Their marriage was annulled because he was a gentile and she a jewess.
Son was dead	She does not know if her son is alive or dead. He was taken away by the secret police when nine years of age.
Nazi soldiers were rude to her	Nazi soldiers teased her by making reference to the table lamps.
Drama world - "as if"	Living in a fictional world

STORYMAKING FROM MORE THAN ONE DRAMA STORY

Claudia was the student who played the girl who arrived in America in the reality scene. Although British she used her Portuguese name which other people adopted in their writing. This text is different from other texts produced in this workshop because it merges the two main stories, the Jewish and the American into one.

Table XXIII: Transformation of narrative links with relation to story in text Emig 016.2

Drama	Writing
Started with trunk; trunk in each leaving scene.	Bags begin the text.
In one story the emigrant left by boat, the other by plane.	Mentions both.
Dream does not occur, reality hits.	Dream becomes reality.
Discrimination against Jews.	Racism becomes subject of letter.
No-one helps her in America	Compares hostility of Americans to discrimination for religious reasons, for example the Jews.
Dream scene.	Talking of her old dreams.
Feels helpless in America.	Feels small.

This discussion should be read in conjunction with appendices 8.29 and 5.3.

The text commences with a playing of words and images: bags of confidence become bags on the journey. Like the drama which also begins with the trunk, the bags commence the story: *We have the bags, we have the confidence and we may or not have the money, but one thing we have for sure: the dream!* Like the drama the dream becomes one's worst nightmare, which Claudia here compares to life being taken from us slowly before our eyes. The writer mixes the Jewish and American stories by starting with the American one, the one she took part in. As in the drama she explores feelings of loneliness and compares the hostility she was faced with the discrimination. She compares her loneliness to that of people in a prison camp who never get out and can never tell their story: *We have no one to tell our story to. Like people in a prison camp who never get out and never tell the story (and if you do no one really understands because you need to be there to do so).* She is also talking of the experience of actually BEING somewhere, of going through the experience, saying it is like no other, thus referencing the drama experience. She is thus working with different narratives at the same time.

The theme continues and the nastiness she found in America is compared to people's racism: *But we are talking here about descrimination from a white person to another white person, from one culture to another, with no reference to creed.* Finally she talks of the fact that she can no longer remember the dream: *This was my dream and it has died. I cannot bring it back. The prejudice runs deep.* As in the drama she feels tiny in the heart of big America, small and helpless. It is this feeling with which she leaves us.

Claudia has thus woven the two stories into one. In the process, via narrative links she has connected the two drama stories and made sense of the American story through the story of the Jewish mother. See appendix 6.17 for a similar occurrence in *Key to Success*, where two stories, those of Sandra the biologist and Fuji the computer engineer have been merged into one. These texts show the way in which students actively construct their texts out of their understanding of past events. They are learning how to sequence ideas and select and combine information in accordance with who they are and what they know or want to know. They are making meaning from the drama experience as a whole rather than confining themselves to set divisions, the way they do in the world in general. They are particular meanings in particular settings, decided upon and controlled by the writers themselves.

TRANSFORMATION OF VISUAL IMAGES OF THE DRAMA INTO THE BEGINNING OF NEW STORIES IN THE WRITING

Students carry with them certain visual recollections of vivid parts of the drama which lead to the formation of a new story, as evidenced in appendix 6.24. For example, during the drama, the Sibyl was strange and powerful. She had many secrets and spoke in riddles, staring at people as they tried to puzzle out what she had said. Although she was a good person she was drawn as a type of sorceress with hidden powers behind her gaze. As the King writes in this text he interprets her gaze as that of a vulture. To him she becomes a bad person:

Table XXIV: Transformation of visual images with relation to the creation of new stories

Student	In drama	In writing
111	glare of the Sibyl	<i>She has the eye of a vulture, a cruel sparkling eye</i>

In *Time Travel* it was the Court scene that stuck in everyone's mind, together with the emotional connections. When the President was taken to court and found guilty as charged, the workshop ended on a note of shock. The penalty was death. However, writing in role as John Taylor it was the scene in the court that came to most writers' minds and not the consequences or the death chair, often repeatedly in the same way as it would have reoccurred in the writer's mind: (TT.082): *Flashes of light, eyes staring, lawyer pacing, that picture's clear*. In Nuno's text it invaded the text itself: *The click from the door behind me stoped my trip over my conscience. - All rise*. In this way visual images link the new story to what happened in the drama and bring back the experience. For those readers who did not take part in the workshop they give an insight into what actually happened and what the participants were feeling. Thus the experiencing of the drama is central to the use of these visual images, what I call embodied narrative.

7.1.2. TRANSFORMATION AND EMBODIED NARRATIVE

"There are no secrets to good writing. Read. Listen. Write. Read. Listen. Write. You learn to write well by reading wonderful writing and by letting those words and ideas become part of your blood and bones. But life is not all books. You become a better writer by listening – to your self and to all the colors, shapes and sounds around you. Listen with all of your senses. Listen to the wrinkles on your tia's face."

Mora (1992 p.341)

RELIVING THE SCENE: TAKING PHYSICAL EXPERIENCES FROM THE DRAMA AND DEVELOPING THEM INTO A STORY

Figure 9: Scene in Emigration



Marcia played the Jewish mother in the leaving scene which was a scene to stay with everyone who attended the workshop on Emigration. Stage left sat the three other members of the Jewish family. Centre stage lay the trunk. Behind the trunk stood Marcia, taking leave of her family. Stage right on a chair stood another student, Carlos, holding up one of the artefacts from the

trunk, a huge Bible. As the students improvised their farewell, Carlos softly sang a poignant song entitled "It's just so hard to say goodbye" and as the song ended with the words so did the spoken text of the students enacting the leaving scene, at exactly the same time. The effect was long lasting. There was a pregnant pause before anyone started to clap. It was no surprise to me when the writing came in to find two thirds of the class had chosen to write about the Jewish story rather than the American one. It is not that it was done any "better", it was simply that it moved everyone that day. It led to many texts involving use of embodied narrative. See appendices 6.20-6.23 for Marcia's and others' stories.

Emotions were central in the connections made by students. These were made in two broad but overlapping ways (1) by reliving the scene: taking physical experiences from the drama and developing them into a story and (2) transforming emotions and feelings into an atmosphere for the story. Appendices 6.25 and 6.27 respectively, summarise just some of the ways in which this has occurred. The new stories that are developed in the writing are more than new storylines, they are texts in which the person is ever present, texts with which the reader can identify, texts which tell a very human story. Due to the nature of the dramas it was not surprising to find these emotions emerge again in the writing. What was surprising was the way in which they were expressed and their contribution to the telling of the story as a whole.

Margo, was so moved by the Jewish leaving scene that she wrote about her own life experiences (Emig.025): *The Jewish departure scene has moved me to tears, it has really touched my heart! So, I have decided to write about my two most distressing departures.* She looks back on one scene framed in her mind in the same way as the drama: *I remember that scene just like yesterday, framed with rigid wood, unyealding, unrelenting, always there.* Another student was reminded of the emotions felt when her father left for Canada and did the same thing (Emig. 020).

Writing as the President, (TT.066)³³ Celine relives almost all the major points in the drama. She starts with exploring how difficult life is for the President. In the drama, whatever the situation, life was always difficult for the President. In the writing he says he is only able to talk to his diary. In words reminiscent of a song he relives the depth of his confusion: *Each step I take, each move I make, each word I say, all remind me of my big mistake.* Such anguish reminds the reader of the President sitting on the stand in court, his pain written all over his face.

In part two the tone of the piece changes as the President assumes his guilt and tells the story of why he wanted to change the past. He relives the visit to the agency and the reactions of his

³³ The text should be read in conjunction with appendices 6.26 and 5.30.

country. By recounting the reasons and emotions involved he moves beyond the sketching of a narrative so often found in the foreign language classroom and writes a story impregnated with life: *I didn't mean to resource in the people the flame of hate that I've tried to calm down through all those years.*

Part three is where the President looks at his future life story. He agonises about the future through metaphors of nature: *I can see to the bottom of the sea, down to the stones. My life will be like those stones. I cannot swim free with the fish.* Be it in metaphorical stories, where there are no boundaries, or in his own real life story, John Taylor's narrative is filled with life. Even the language itself is more alive. It is full of grammatical mistakes but that is made up for by the abundance of new structures that are attempted and the energy behind the prose as opposed to being lacking in vitality but filled with correct lifeless structures. The very writing itself affirms this. Taking part two as an example, it is as if the President is really talking to the diary whilst still managing to make emphatic statements: *That it was my fault is not to be questions. Nobody can take that from me. But I thought I could ...*

This reliving of parts of the drama is evident in most of the writing. In text 051 death becomes personified as John relives the past in his memory; in text 071 as he faces the charges in court he feels as if he is at the start of a race for his life except the gun could be pointed at him. Sometimes the reliving of a scene serves as an explanation for his actions (060), at others to bring him back to reality (085). In each case it both deepens and furthers the story.

TRANSFORMATIONS OF EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS INTO AN ATMOSPHERE FOR A STORY

Agony and tension prevailed in John Taylor's texts in *Time Travel*. For example in text 051 the feelings of the President when he relived his past mistake are attributed to his thoughts of going back into the past. This exploration of how he felt sets the tone of the whole passage: *My life became unbearable. I passed days thinking, remembering, unable to sleep. I felt dirty. I felt as if I was a murderer ...* It also links the new story to the drama story.

Previously I mentioned text TT 071 in which the President likens his fate to a race. In this analogy Cristina, the writer, is using the President's fear to create a tense atmosphere for a story about a court case which could swing either way. The pain the fear puts him in, tells the President's story for him: *Yes I am still alive, suffering day after day the torture of my soul, the pain of my conscience.* The writers are not only showing that they can write but that they also recognise and understand different feelings in other people. These feelings set a certain scene, both present and future, the writers often continuing the telling of the narrative by revelation of feeling. Cristina's President relives the tension of the drama but before the trial takes place, blaming himself for causing harm to the people: *It was my weakness that started the war and*

because of that weakness the people of my country died. And I am alive! ... What an unfair destiny! However the President of the writing becomes the President of the drama at the end of the text, sure that he has done the right thing whatever the consequences.

In most of the texts the anguish of John Taylor creates a certain atmosphere of tension and foreboding. By concentration on feelings rather than events the events themselves become more vivid and important. They also become more realistic.

For example, despite being a mainly happy and optimistic, text Emig.026 from *Emigration*, which has a particularly vivid opening description of Africa (*I looked up at the clear blue sky. Not a cloud in sight. Mid-December and the temperatures were soaring. Soon, and in a matter of minutes that clear blue would turn grey and the usual daily thundershower would pour down, leaving the smell of wet earth in the air and warm vapours rising from the torrid tar*) also has its own “come back to reality” scene when the writer suddenly feels alone and lost: *I saw myself many years from now, surrounded by family, sobbing uncontrollably ...* Its purpose is to make the story less idyllic and more credible³⁴. Other students reverse the drama scenes but keep the emotions, for example in text 037 where the dream scene becomes reality, where the mother finds her son alive : *It was a moment so beautiful that my emotions were confusions.*

In appendix 6.27 clear examples are given of the work of students where emotions and feelings are used to create an atmosphere for the story. Emotions are very difficult to put down on paper, especially in a foreign language, but these writers do a very good job. Calling upon all the senses they create such a depth of feeling that often a native student would be pleased with the description. This is a special quality that not only allows for metaphor and personification, as I will demonstrate in chapter 8, but also a more personal and evocative type of writing, writing that is imbued with meaning and understanding. This is writing as it is in the world as opposed to the classroom, something for which all teachers of writing strive. For example:

³⁴ see appendix 5.5

Table XXV: Transformations of emotions and feelings from the drama into the writing in order to develop an atmosphere for the story

Student text	Drama experience/ Emotions/ feelings	Storymaking in the writing	Quote
Emig 026	Reality scene. Loneliness.	Suddenly the writer feels lost. Emotions develop into a fear of being alone.	<i>I saw myself many years from now , surrounded by family, sobbing uncontrollably as I looked at the little ones and wondered what their lives would be like. Like a film on "rewind", I recalled things said and things done. I looked at the sky then and offered my prayers.</i>
KS115	Students in role as high achievers took part in the Government project.	Reliving the experience and giving in to the emotions that he suppressed in the drama as he conformed to what was asked of him.	<i>A cold, empty room; a menacing false smile; a prickly sensation of fear in my body, alarm bells ringing that I choosed to ignore. What happened seems so distant in the past and so near at the same time. My reactions thought seem like belonging to another person.</i>

OPINIONS AND POSITIONAL DIFFERENCES: STUDENTS WHO REFLECT ON WHAT THEY DO AND SAY

Another indication that the students are identifying with what they are writing and thinking about is the fact that they often express their own opinions and take different positions as they reveal powers of reflection in their writing. This will be the focus of this section which should be read together with appendix 6.29 and appendix 6.30.

Several students showed their critical powers in the writing. By this I mean that they not only transformed key points of interest in the drama story into the writing but transformed them into subjects of reflection. They looked at why events had occurred and tried to find the reasons behind characters' reactions.

In her short diary entry as John Taylor, Barbara is clear and concise. Her President's story is that of a man who has made the world the way it should be but who is unable to enjoy it because he may soon be behind bars. Thus she has taken the key point in the drama that the past was changed and transformed it into the fact he may go to prison for the rest of his life. The President reflects on this fact and questions whether he can really be happy shut away from the world. He doesn't however regret what he has done as he did it not for himself but for the world in general: *it was for a cause: the greatest of all, the cause of mankind.* In part two the writer takes the court trial from the drama, where the President defended himself and has made it an important part of her own story in that the President is critical of himself, realising it is his pride

that has caused him to refuse a lawyer. He shows reflection and insight as he realises that he has an impossible task: *strangely the page lying on the desk remains of an immaculate white, in expectation for the salvation words*. In part three the writer takes the fact that the President changed the past and is very clear about the reason behind the problem: he has made a mistake like any human but Presidents are supposed to be super heroes, not human beings. The main question is whether a President is to be treated differently from everyone else because of the position he holds or whether he should be treated like another human being. Consequently the writing is more than the telling of a story, it is the questioning of the events in the story. This is what I mean when I say critical inquiry has taken over from grammar. This is writing engaging with cognitive processes.

This did not occur with all the texts although most writers did try to approach the question “why” when recounting a story. One student, Eloisa, (Text TT.082.2), does not go into any detail at all about the narrative of the drama: *flashes of light, eyes staring, lawyer pacing, hammer posed, that picture's clear*. Instead she builds her text on a series of questions. The President begins by writing about the pounding in his head, the guilty feeling that kept coming back. At the same time the writer plays with the drama (*what truth might that be m'lord*). The President takes the dilemma he was faced with in the drama story, searching for the reasons behind it: *Could it be that what I did was so very wrong?* The questioning of what might happen in court grows into a questioning as to the nature of truth itself: *Is life just one big lie?* He also questions the real reasons behind his actions and the way a President conducts his office: *Should political strategy prevail over our morals. Even if I don't know any more. Good intentions don't count in this game*. This is writing which is thinking rather than mimicking, writing which is searching for the truth. The writer is dealing with real issues, issues as to why wars start and the way in which countries are run.

This is also writing that works on a personal level. The President does not merely recount the fact that he is alone, he comments on the fact that his friends and colleagues were false and have turned on him: *Where have all the wagging tails gone now things are tough? Instead are the gnashing jaws of anger, contempt and rage, ready to take hold and bit the flesh*. Later the student's voice also comes through: *You'd think history would have taught me a lesson but no. There I go again...; Dream on Taylor, dream on*. Small personal details bring the reader further into the story: *I am writing this in my chambers and wondering if they will be mine this time tomorrow*. There is an air of credibility about the text which makes the reader accept the reasoning within it more willingly.

In the drama it was emphasised that the President had a certain responsibility to the country. The writer takes the role of the President and makes him criticise the way he has handled the task, again with evocative language: *There I go trying to play God on my do-good chariot and all*

I've done is handed over my seat to my false wimp of a deputy who is revelling even now as I squirm. He questions whether he will continue to hold his office and furthermore what is to happen to his family if he is found guilty, especially his son: *How can he carry that on his shoulders for the rest of his life?* However the questioning does not end there. The changing of the past in the drama becomes thoughts on the verdict of the jury which in turn leads to a discussion as to the root of all evil: *change*. Thus once more the story has become inquiry and reflection about the self and about others. The story line has allowed the writer to transform the story into one that is more in keeping with every-day life.

Writers are engaging their thoughts and really thinking carefully about what they write. In the process the "how they write" is put in the background but does not lower in quality. In the search for metaphor and explanation new words and constructions are accessed, as will be shown in chapter 8. Thus content does not improve at the expense of syntax or lexis. Each in fact helps the other.

The fact that students write in this way is very important to me as an educator. My aim was to provide discussable themes, not facts for absorption, to give them a taste of what it really means to write. When students do write in the way just described they are also learning about life, they are finding out about what it is to be able to write and then send their writing out into the world as part of a wider cultural statement or debate.

My interest is in how the students got to this point and how I can help them get there. As I see it, just as the storyteller repeats one part of his story over and over again so that it will remain with his listeners, so the drama student creates and participates in recurring images both literal and metaphorical in order to generate meaning. The multiple meanings made by both participants and audience come from the active construction of the understanding of these events. In the drama/writing relationship this is taken further. Dramatic possibilities transform into writing events, dramatic images transform into new stories as each student negotiates her personal and collaborative meanings through experiencing what it is to use the foreign language code.

The way the writers compose their work after the drama is by thinking back to the drama, reliving the experience and connecting the whole meaning event or certain parts of it to their own interests. They transform these narrative links into their own new story and use them to set the context or build upon them, turn them upside down or merge one with another to form a single story. They learn from the experience of writing and the experiences in the drama which give them the opportunity to freely try out their ideas, discovering and shaping their own ideas in the process.

Part of their shaping of ideas comes from their understanding of the world, which is shown in part by the way it is represented in their writing. I shall now turn to transformation and cultural histories looking at how, in the quest to find their own voice amongst the many, writers draw upon their own personal and cultural histories in the search for meaning.

7.2. TRANSFORMATION AND CULTURAL HISTORIES

*O fado nasceu um dia
Quando o vento mal bulia
E o céu o mar prologava*

*Na amurada de um veleiro
No peito de um marinheiro
Que estando triste cantava*

*Ai que lindeza tamanha
Meu chão, meu monte, meu vale
De folhas, flores, frutas de ouro
Vê se vês terras de Espanha*

*Areias de Portugal
Olhar ceguinho de choro*

José Régio/Alain Oulman

*Fado was born one day
When the wind scarcely stirred
And the sky stretched right along
the sea*

*In the bulwark of a sailing boat
In the breast of a seaman
Who, sad, was singing*

*Oh what great beauty
My lands, my mountain, my valley
Of leaves, flowers, golden fruit
See if you can see the lands of
Spain*

*The sands of Portugal
With a look blinded by tears*

my translation

Nothing is more Portuguese than Fado: a song/poem of “saudade”, loosely translated as longing. Fado is a song filled with love of one’s country, the sea and the land. It is a song of regret, of broken romance or of marvel and deep passion. It speaks of the faith and the pride of the nation. Fado is in the bones and the soul of anyone who is Portuguese. It is something that grows on you and within you. The deep feeling expressed in the verse can only fully be understood if one understands both the language and the culture.

When students write after drama, transforming its characters and stories into their writing, they sometimes write new stories. They more frequently rewrite the drama stories, in the process transforming particular personal experiences or values into those stories, experiences from their own lives, or values and traits of their own cultures. I would suggest that the writers’ association with their diverse roles from many different places is very powerful, akin to the emotions expressed in Fado. Indeed I would suggest it is so powerful that it leads them, in a series of transformational processes, to weave that person together with the role they take into their writing. As they find they have something particular to say their writing becomes more personal and the content of the texts improve as genuine writing takes place. As the writers truly identify

with what they write their passions about life come to the fore in the same way as they do in their traditional songs. They speak of the same things and the same values, with the difference that modern day culture is also introduced. As with Fado, it is important to know about their culture in order to understand the deeper meanings in the writing.

Accordingly this section will explore the ways in which the writers ultimately derive their significance from the events in accordance with the culture to which they belong and who it is they are as a person. It will show that they are not producing language in isolation, but as particular individuals living in history. My analysis will demonstrate how, as a result, the content of the writing is imbued with different levels of communication and understanding, working together and separately, overlapping, sometimes subjectively, with those already covered to form a tightly woven fabric of meaning upon meaning.

I shall use cultural and personal frames, which are overlapping, subjective divisions, to look at the way students make sense of the drama experience in accordance with their reading of the world. First are the cultural frames, ways of doing, being and saying particular to the writers own real worlds, the institutional and ideological background: *Student writers and their cultural histories: cultural frames of reference*. I shall commence with the work of one writer from *The Key to Success*, then look at recurring features with relation to texts in all of the workshops under the subheadings cultural values, Portugal and the Portuguese. Secondly are particular personal histories within the culture: *Student writers and their personal histories: personal frames of reference*. This refers to individual thoughts, beliefs and concerns; personal significances brought to the topic, namely what it is that is unique and different about every individual's experience; events which are of no public importance but which are significant in the writer's own biography.

It is important that all sections be seen as fluid and interacting. They must be read in conjunction with the texts and the appendices mentioned therein.

7.2.1. STUDENT WRITERS AND THEIR CULTURAL HISTORIES: CULTURAL FRAMES OF REFERENCE

RUALDO'S FRAMES OF REFERENCE

In the *Key to Success* students went immediately into role as High achievers who had been invited by the Government to take part in a secret project to find out what it was that was particularly special about them: how it was they had become top of their field. The workshop initially revolved around the commencement of the project. Each student invented a character

and took part in the project with TIR as a sinister organiser. By talking with an old friend about their past they developed their particular character and by movement explored how they felt in the heavily charged environment. A list was kept of the reasons behind their success. This was updated throughout the drama. Thoughts and developments were written down and placed in the black box of knowledge. In the second part of the drama the students were to choose two of their characters whose lives they would like to investigate in further depth. It was decided to join two characters together, as their aims were very similar: Sandra the biologist and Fuji the computer engineer. The life of the Special Agent was also investigated. Improvised scenes took place regarding their lives as a child, adolescent and adult. One student, Rualdo, wrote two assignments after this drama. I shall use his texts KS.107.1 and KS.107.2 as an introduction to the way in which students weave their own lives and values into their writing.

In text KS.107.2 Rualdo uses both fiction and argument to make his point: *When Asterix drinks the potion made by Panoramix he becomes the strongest man in the world. Forget it!* He couches his discussion in the middle of a story built around Asterix. Asterix is a character that all Portuguese readers would immediately recognise and sympathise with. Numerous Portuguese students, in particular males, have a general passion for cartoon strip books, especially those of Asterix whose adventures are translated into Portuguese. Therefore in this text the writer is acting upon his cultural background when making the fictional setting. His peers would be fully cognisant with the compiling of a potion and the message in the fiction: *The potion which transforms a normal man into a successful one has not been invented yet and Panoramix is not available at this moment. But I'm sure that if this potion existed Panoramix would need more than two hands to handle his business.*

Within Rualdo's central argument are several references to his own experiences and his own cultural values. His opening sentence, *If you're the son of a king...*, reminds his colleague readers that it was this writer who played the role of King Tarquin throughout the workshop on the Sibyl. I would suggest this experience has led him to make the connection. His own cultural background shows through as he makes further connections. For those living in the Algarve there is a particular focus on getting richer. Poverty is still very commonplace through the rest of the country, but less so in the South. The relatively new tourist industry and money from the EC have given the locals the possibility to make money and improve their standard of living by selling land, building houses and apartments or working in the holiday industry. Thus references to *millionaires, big houses and swimming pools* all relate to the dreams of those in the Algarve at the time of writing. Mention of people who have never had a chance to study and people who feel hunger refer to the all too common cultural background: *Others, which have never had a chance to study try to achieve success by themselves, transferring hunger for food to hunger for success.* Having myself worked with the translating of legal documents I am fully aware of the large number of older people in Portugal who are still unable to sign their name. Also, that very

year six students who would have been part of the project had to return home up north because of the severe drought. Their parents who were financing the studies found it impossible when their source of income literally dried up. With no water to feed the animals whole herds were sold and families went into debt and poverty. Thus the sentence - *Life is difficult and not everybody can be successful* - would really hit home to his peers.

Rualdo's story is also a very personal story. Coming from a small village, like those in his examples, he had to fight every step of the way to get to University and if the new University in the Algarve had not opened he would probably not have had the opportunity to travel further and study as was his dream. The writer also speaks of his own values, which are very much cultural values: a happy family; faith in God. He also speaks of his own dreams: to become a rock star, the role he took in the workshop and in text KS.107.1.

In text K.107.1 he concentrates on family values to bring home his message: *The fact is that if I don't choose quickly between my family and my career I will lose the people I love for ever.* He speaks of the sacrifices one has to make in order to achieve fame as a star and the consequent difficulties in his private life. The writer has taken something of particular value to him and written about it as a result of the drama experience rather than dealing with the events of the drama itself. This is therefore a different type of transformation to that found in character and story. It is not a transformation from the drama to the writing but transformation working on several levels simultaneously. It is the transforming of the person who is writing into the drama/writing experience and a further transforming of the private life experiences which are found in the drama. At the same time it is a transforming of the cultural context relevant to the writer into the context of the drama story. So the meaning is made in the texts with relation to whom the writer is as a person, in this case as a Portuguese male student from a small village in the Algarve.

Miguel in Emig.039 draws on the same values. He tells the story of a man from a poor village who goes abroad to find his fortune. He too speaks of family values, his love for his family, his continuing support when he became rich, his happiness at his forthcoming marriage. He also speaks of his Catholic beliefs: *Another thing I thought about was in God. Who is He, where is He and if he would listen to me if I prayed to him.*

The twist of the story is the MacDonald story, the chain of fast food outlets known all over the world. The writer here is bringing in a part of his own life as a young Portuguese. MacDonalds had only just opened in Portugal, in Lisbon and it was quite an outing to go all the way to Lisbon to eat at MacDonalds – *the place to be.* To someone unaware of the Portuguese situation the story may seem rather trite. To someone in the Portuguese community, especially a young person, the story is funny and completely up-to-date: *In all my cafes I put a mascot, a little duck*

named Donald. People started to call me Donald but I told them my name was Mac, so they began to call me MacDonald.

The meaning potential of these texts therefore goes far beyond fiction, beyond a situational description. There is a two-way dialogic relationship between the contexts of culture and situation in these texts. The drama medium has permitted the students to get in touch with themselves. To evidence what happens I shall now illustrate the recurring ways in which they made meaning with relation to their own cultural histories. Chapter 7 will demonstrate the linguistic consequences of this dialogic relationship.

CULTURAL VALUES

Family is very important in the Portuguese culture. Life revolves around the family and as parents get older it is seen as the children's obligation to provide for them. Most of my students lived at home and several who lived away from home wished they were not doing so. Female students of 20 or 21 years of age were still very much under their mother's thumb, much less liberated than their Spanish counterparts. Few were particularly ambitious professionally and their wish was to get a teaching job, settle down and start a family. Therefore it was of no surprise when these family values were found to run through the writing. As would be expected due to the subject matter, these were particularly apparent in the workshop on *Old Age*, as summarised in appendix 6.31

As Robert writes to his mother, or vice versa in some cases, the severing of family bonds is seen as both bad and painful for all concerned (OA.066, OA.074) and the reuniting of the family the ultimate aim (OA.060, 069.1,069.2, 085): (OA.073) *Those were the days I felt asleep in your arms in what seemed like being far from all the rest. I could sense the tenderness, the smoothness in your white hands fondling me in a somewhat state of fulfilment.* Robert is often portrayed as full of guilt for abandoning his mother (OA.056, OA.066). Relationships were also often the cause of Robert's running away (OA.074). Mention of him marrying and having a son (OA. 081) or having a girlfriend (OA. 074 ;086) is seen as a sign of stability and achievement. His playboy lifestyle is definitely condemned (OA.071): *I do not want a different girl every night. I want someone beside me all the time.* Family life is seen as happy and desirable.

In the other workshops, as shown in the abovementioned appendix, family values were apparent. In *Delta X* writers were worried about their children and their grandchildren; in *Emigration* family was sorely missed and family values were important, as in Emig.039 for example. In the *Key to Success* several writers explored what result their actions would have had on their family life. In one case the writer was faced with an empty home and a letter requesting a divorce (KS.099); in another the difficulties of reconciling a job and a family life

were discussed (KS.112). In the *Sibyl* written texts told of the effect the King's decisions in all matters had upon family life. In *Time Travel* the President wondered why his family had abandoned him (TT.098), spoke of how worried he was for his family who survived him (TT.082) or of his distress at having killed them by his decision to start a war (TT.071,078, 098). Echoes of the writers' own family values permeated the texts, whatever the subject, whoever the speaker in whichever land.

My students live in a very catholic country and although people do not flock to church in the same way as in Spain, they are deeply religious and genuine in their beliefs. Although I was fully aware of their beliefs I had not expected them to be written about so prominently in the texts, as evidenced in appendix 6.32.

It is in writing after *Emigration* that religious beliefs really come to the fore, as the emigrants face reality they turn to their faith for guidance and comfort. I quote from appendix 6.32.

Table XXVI: Examples of quotes from written texts in *Emigrant* regarding religious beliefs.

Text	Quote
Emig 020	<i>Now he realises he has being a foll because he always had a great faith in God and now he is so fraitened that he couldn't have a positive thought. So he prayed to God to watch for him and give him strenght to keep on going.</i>
Emig.024	<i>Father, I write to confess I have made a mistake. Another one. Yet again. I write to open up my soul... ... That what is most worst I fear to tell you. My fault it was not but I was once more afraid of having failed. Of failing my husband, my father, myself and God. Alone, afraid and very confused I tum to you my spiritual guider and friend... Father, I beseach thee, tell me if I am really a sinner. Tell me why I make such a mess of things.</i>
Emig.026	<i>clutching the latest copy of "Let's go Europe" - the traveller's bible as far as places and prices went. But I suddenly felt the need to clutch on to more than my copy. I clutched on to my simple beliefs and muttered a quick prayer. In this land where everything and everyone was unknown I asked Him for guidance and protection. I saw myself many years from now , surrounded by family, sobbing uncontrollably as I looked at the little ones and wondered what their lives would be like. Like a film on "rewind", I recalled things said and things done. I looked at the sky then and offered my prayers. A simple mortal in the hands of the Almighty. After a lifetime filled with work , adventure, romance and suffering I was on the verge of driving the last spike.</i>
Emig.028	<i>I hope everything is fine in Teeran. Is the old priest getting better? The last time I saw him he hardly speaks. He is such a good man.</i>

In the drama the only reference to religion was the prayer book of the Jewish mother. However there was a pattern of frequent references to faith and religion in the writing. One student, Luis, in role as Emma, wrote home to her priest, voiced her inner fears and made a plea for help and

guidance. This text is described in detail in appendix 5.33 with regard to character. It is an obvious example of the openness and clarity with which students voiced their beliefs.

In other workshops the same thing happened. In text DX.030 for example one writer compared herself, in role as a scientist, to Jesus Christ: *because he also discovered that there was something more than earthly life, he discovered that love and tolerance between men was something important*. In text OA.073 Robert wrote to his mother that he knew she had already forgiven him because of her Catholic creed. It was only in the *Sibyl* that there were no references to Catholic beliefs. This was due to the subject matter of the workshop and references centred instead around the King's religion, the Gods in the kingdom and also around the Sibyl's powers.

Family and religion were not the only cultural echoes to be found in the texts. In *Delta X* student writers compiled pamphlets, newspaper or magazine articles for or against the use of Delta X. Here their own cultural values became very evident as arguments were made in accordance with their own values and cultural histories. Reference was made to what it is people would wish for: *to own an island, a fast convertible, a yacht, a big house by the sea or in the mountains, diamonds, money, a skin coat* (pamph DX 011,018, pamph DX.009). The mention of furs is a strong reminder that a Portuguese student and not a British student is writing. I doubt whether a British student in the nineties would want a fur coat, but they are still widely sought after and used in Portugal where they are a sign of wealth. One article, (DX.035) speaks of the effect of advertising and the fact that people continued to take the drug because it was culturally accepted, something also mentioned in DX 022/n. Women's struggle to stay beautiful was also the topic of several articles, something with which most cultures could identify (DX.035, DX.046). This is taken further in text Pamph DX ,005,010,017, where the drug can be obtained from Herbalife shops. Herbalife is a slimming product widely available in Portugal. Promoted by Michael Caine, Delta X is sold as a healthy drug which takes the user to paradise. Thus showing knowledge of how a product can be sold (use of a famous person/ health is in vogue), the writers weave their own cultures into the text about a different world. The format of the brochure is also a copy of the format of the Herbalife brochure, showing the type of connection the writers have made: the wonder drug that makes your wishes come true.

In the *Key to Success* women writers made reference to the role of women in their society. In their culture, outside the big cities, women regard a secretarial job as one of their best possibilities in life. Jobs higher up the ladder are seen as men's jobs, even in the nineties. In Text KS.117 a young woman writer tells of her ambition to move into the chair of the managing director of the firm to which she is secretary and explains how she did so. In KS.112 another woman writer speaks of her husband's arguments that she should remain at home and not go out to work, her fight against him and her failure in keeping her family together. Woven into the

various stories are all kinds of values regarding their own culture, as diverse as family responsibility, a woman's place, material possessions and the duties of a ruler. The writers are definitely transforming part of themselves into their meaning making. Appendix 6.33 evidences some of these examples.

PORTUGAL AND THE PORTUGUESE.

This section should be read in conjunction with appendix 6.34.

It is evident that in the search for meaningful writing the writers draw upon what they know about the world around them, what they have experienced, what they read and what they hear, reflecting the culture of which they are a part. In *Delta X* the students created an island with a life-style akin to their own, with fishermen and farmers. In the writing they describe the growing of the Delta X plant (014): *Me and some of my workmates were digging the land in wich we cultivate a plant, a very special one*; and of the simple wishes of the inhabitants (DX.006W) *In my island when people drink Delta X they wish for better crops, more fish, happiness, peace, wealth*. Worries about the future revolve around the future for the fisherman if they cannot catch fish. Many of the local students whose fathers were fishermen would be used to long hard winters when rough seas stop the boats going out and salt fish is their staple diet. Students from up North would think of the troubles on their parents' farms. Writers here are transforming their own histories, their own hardships into their texts, in language that could easily be found in Fado: *Fishermen's nets will be devoid of catch and the farmers cannot till barren land*.

Depending on the subject matter of the workshop, the emphases are different. In *Emigration*, the *Key to Success* and *Time Travel* writers are more likely to speak of prejudice, also a fact of their way of life. People from the colonies fight prejudice daily, even in the younger generations: (TT.066) *Our country has enough troubles with racial tension and poors living in difficult conditions*. In the *Sibyl* writers speak of both earning a living from the land (Sib.119/n) and the high taxes levied (Sib.114/n). High taxes plague everyone in their own culture and writers transform this into a symbol of the King's greediness in his own society. The way writers speak of the King as a tyrant from whom they need freeing (Sib.111) reminds readers of Salazar's oppression. In the drama the people plotted against the King as they did against Salazar. In the writing this is developed further to jubilation worthy of revolution: (Sib.111): *My people is going to be set free. The King they had been calling despotic ... has been defeated*.

Poverty is still a fact of life for many of my students and this is indicated in *Delta X* (DX.018.2) *Our people will die, not due to Delta X but of starvation*. In *Emigration* one writer speaks of living on beans and rice, the poor person's diet in Portugal. In the *Key to Success* the consequences of being poor are explored (KS.111): *I had to learn how to lower everything one has of most*

precious: to lower my pride, my voice and even to lower myself. People used to look down upon me and many tried to stop my way. Only because I was poor, people used to doubt about my competency and qualifications. In every workshop, as seen in appendix 6.34, poverty comes to the fore in some way or another. This drawing upon their own cultural histories to make sense of the drama adds a special dimension to the writers' work, making it come alive.

References to their lives as young individuals in Portuguese society are common in the written texts. Obvious references are made in magazine article DX.046: *He was getting home from a disco when ...*; other links are more discreet. People who were addicted to Delta X were encouraged in one pamphlet (pamph DX 014.029.041.047) to telephone the *pink line*. This is a direct link to the writers' own cultural history. In Portugal there is a "blue line", a telephone line which people addicted to drugs can call anonymously. The *pink line* is obviously a transformation of this. In text DX.022/n the article writer signed the name *Homer Simpson*, that of a cartoon character on TV. In text OA.069.3 the writer speaks of the image that appears on TV when children's hour begins to explain how small the reality of the world is: *When you're three years old the world seems just a big round thing like is shown in the Children's Channel.* Other writers told of dating and romance or of family quarrels. Their own lives have been intermingled with the life of their fictional characters. In Emig.026 there is a vivid picture drawn of young travellers, *haversacks on their backs and clutching the latest copy of "Let's go Europe"*. Hints of songs about "saving the world" come into texts (Emig.050; TT.071; TT.086) as students relate their writing to world issues. Other popular songs are also mentioned: (K.S. 119.2) *"But I'm not the only one", John Lennon was!*

Thus each person tells their own story in a unique way, transforming themselves and their vision of the world into their texts. This would suggest that perceptions of identity become linked to questions of voice and position when explored in the context of historical and positional differences. I would also suggest that taken as a whole these texts provide a connection with the culture of the writers in the same way as a Fado. They are texts in which their writers are writing as real individuals as part of a real society, connected through mind and body.

7.2.2. STUDENT WRITERS AND THEIR PERSONAL HISTORIES: PERSONAL FRAMES OF REFERENCE

STUDENT WORLD

In the abovementioned processes it often occurs that very personal histories also come to the fore. Writers not only draw upon the culture that surrounds them but upon their own particular circumstances. As students at University the connections they make are often to do with studying. In *Delta X* one of the pamphlets says (Pamph DX.014,029,041,047): *Problems? - look for help; search for it near parents, teachers, friends.* In a written text an islander speaks of her children who work on the land with her: *They are not able to go to school. We do not know what are the Universities of the future. Our children learn values not words.* Other writers in other workshops mention University in diverse ways. In the *Key to Success* one writer (KS.119) speaks forcefully of her determination to succeed at University. Another (KS.115) compares his actions to children at school, putting himself below them on a scale of intelligence: *Surely if we were such high achievers we were supposed to have some intelligence in our brains. Well not much showed! We did things like zombies. Not even kids at school would be as docile and calm as we were.* Thus connections are being made in accordance with the writers own experiences. In an advertisement in *The Chronicle* in the *Sibyl* a new prophetess offers to help readers pass their exams (Sib.103/n) In *Time Travel* the sheet of paper on which the President is supposed to write his defence speech is compared to the blank piece of paper lying in front of someone about to do an examination (TT.060): *Strangely, the page lying in the desk remains of an immaculate white, in expectation for the salvation words. The examination nerves begin.* Examples of this type of transformation are given in appendix 6.35.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

I have already mentioned the leaving scenes in *Emigration* which were particularly moving, with depth of emotion worthy of Fado itself. Dora in Emig.020 uses a leaving scene to commence her text which is actually her father's story. The emotions of the writing are very much the emotions of the drama: *The last kisses and embraces were the only thing he could think of in that painful journey.* The writer uses the structure of his leaving, his dream and his reality as in the drama. Like other written texts this one emphasises both the importance of family and the emigrant's faith in God that spurred him on. It speaks of his need to feed and clothe his family and the pain at the separation. There is a mingling of the drama and the real events. His despair when he arrives reminds the reader of a Fado story: *the sensation of emptiness was terrible and he only wishes having someone by his side to guide him in that dangerous and unknown adventure. He feels very lonely and harmless without any support unless his own*

mind and heart. He needs desperately to hold on to someone or something. This depth of feeling is something that was never found in writing before the drama, especially in the work of less-abled students. These emotions of pain and grief transform into pride as writer's own voice shines through as she explains who the emigrant is: *That man was a great man. That man was the best. That man suffered and sacrificed his life in behalf of his beloved family. That man was Mr. Antonio Amaral. That man was my father.* This is writing that is full of conviction and strength, writing that may contain several linguistic errors but which carries a forceful message successfully.

Another writer who links the drama to her own personal life in an emotional and touching piece is Margo (Emig.025). At the reader's request only part of her text is used, due to its extremely private nature. Margo is one of the quieter students whose work improved with leaps and bounds when she started drama. It was to my surprise when she wrote about something so very close to her heart. In her text she writes of her father leaving her mother to bring up seven young children alone and the effect it had on her as a child who barely understood what was happening: *He smiled at me without looking me in the eyes. My little heart was beating like crazy.* This story revolves around the leaving scene (*He was leaving and so were we.*) and is very dramatic in nature. The second part of the text deals with her moving to University at the other end of the country and how difficult it was to leave her mother and boyfriend behind: *They were leaving and so was I.* Behind this are the cultural issues of it being a man's world and a place where families are particularly close-knit.

In both parts of the text there is an emphasis on feelings and atmosphere. The sun wouldn't shine, the house was silent and the writer watches the scene through a rigid frame. She feels empty and abandoned. Her emotions were aroused by the drama in such a way that she relived the emotions in her past life. Such intensity and openness was not apparent in the writing before the drama. Even when asked to write about autobiographical events that had moved them, writing was dull and uneventful. The writers did not seem to get in tune with their past histories in the same way as they did after the drama sessions. One writer even admitted she was so in touch with her character that she forgot whom it was that her character was writing her letter to. (Marcia in text Emig.049). Instead of writing to her husband she wrote home to her mother and brother, whom it is she would have written to had she been writing home. Thus there is very much a sense of identification, a sense of the bringing of oneself into the writing.

In text Sib.112, as explained in appendix 6.3 Guilhermina moves from a somewhat forced attempt at an adoption of ancient style to personal experience, adopting the discourse of the current music scene: *I am in a blue, blue funk. If only I knew what these stupid scrolls contain.* Fairclough teaches (1995 p.123) how all texts express the social identities of their producers and address the assumed social identities of the addressees and audiences. My reading is that

Guilhermina's own identity has permeated that of the kind constituting an alternative subject position. As the writing event frees her from social convention and as she experiments with the words and meanings on the page she draws upon that which is close and known to her. In this sense I see the text as a process, an ideological process that is part of a social event and thus also open to various interpretations.

Writers are therefore writing whole texts which are connected and contextualised with regard to both the drama and their own lives. There is a sense of multiplicity as different writers weave in the past, present and future in their own ways. Since the writers have a sense of self and a sense of purpose, they reach back to what it is they have done in both the drama and their own lives. They select and focus their information in accordance with who they are, using personal knowledge and experience to make meaning. Their writing has become learner centred, writing which deals with the whole person and the cultural being, rather than their knowledge of linguistic terms and forms. The "I" of the text and the "I" of the writer appear to be one. In this process the writers learn about learning and about their own lives as well as how language works. Furthermore they find that by writing about things in their own way they really have something to say. As Chapter 8 will demonstrate both their sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence improve as the writers stretch themselves linguistically in the search for meaning. Moreover, as personal significances are transformed into the text the writer becomes more engaged with the subject matter resulting in the fact that both the content and the language in the text are richer.

7.3. MULTIPLE TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESSES WITHIN A SINGLE TEXT:

BARBARA'S STORY

Having described the three main types of transformation with reference to a group of texts spread over all the workshops and all abilities, I shall now turn to one text and plot how they work together to make a text which is the site of multiple levels of transformation which are specifically active, social and learner and person-centred. It is important that this section be read with the text (OA.060), its situational description (appendix 5.11) and the table of transformations (appendix 6.36). The section will lead through transformation and character to the two subsidiary categories of story and cultural histories.

Barbara was a shy student whose work has already been mentioned briefly. She normally sat at the back of the class and initially in the drama session on *Old Age* she was also reserved, sitting staring into space. Quite a way into the drama she came forward to take the place of Robert's housekeeper in the hotseating process in which the students spoke to people in Robert's past to ascertain his character. She was visibly nervous, flushed and fidgeting,

searching blindly for words. She glanced anxiously round the classroom for help and grabbed a feather duster. Clutching it tightly she went straight into role: *Master Robert was too much of a gentleman for that...* No-one had called Robert *Master Robert* up to that point; it was not a term I would have expected her to know.

Barbara's subsequent transformation was her own work completely. In one improvised scene the silent student became a sexy waitress on Robert's yacht, shawl tied jauntily round her hips, her long hair which always hung over her face tied back with a band to show a very expressive face. As she became more and more involved she began to let go. She pranced and smiled and flung herself provocatively across Robert's lap, pouting and enticing him. This was not the sweet, gentle introvert we were used to. In the scene where the police arrived unannounced to arrest Robert she gave such a piercing scream that her astonishment seemed very sincere. She was really living her part.

As I mentioned with the case of Ana Margarida (DX.006), this type of transformation often happens in drama. However it was in the writing assignments that an even more profound change occurred. A consistently low achiever before the drama sessions, Barbara surprised even herself by writing a very proficient piece which played with the story of the drama, transforming it, through imagination and metaphor, into another one filled with very different emotions, those of love and tenderness.

Her written text is a letter (OA.060), shown by the date at the top and the attempt at an appropriate end. Although the writer is using the letter form there is initially no introductory phrase and the writer, Robert, treats his mother as Mary. It is only when we read *the best mother in the whole world* that it is made explicit that the person Robert is writing to is his unseen mother. However what occurs within these boundaries is more than a simple letter. A fiction is contained within a fiction: the content of the letter is of Barbara's invention. None of the events mentioned in the letter occurred in the workshop but not one jars the fictional reality that took place. Barbara is imagining the 'pre-drama' fiction and via the transformation of narrative links, bonding it with the drama session itself by including things which were part of the workshop and making her own connections from them.

Different kinds of transformation of story occur. On a simple level there is that of the snake. In the drama the writer's colleague made the string at the beginning of the drama into a snake which was brought into the story by simply being in Miriam's garden. In this text it is transformed into the symbol of Robert's past mistakes: *forget the snake*.

There is also the transformation of the initial image of Miriam. At the beginning of the drama she was depicted as either sitting in the garden or sitting inside in the rocking chair. At the beginning

of the writer's story she is pictured in the rocking chair which is in the garden as the two images become one. As in many of the other cases, the visual recollection provides the starting point for a new story. It is as if the writer thinks back to the drama and visualises things which spark her imagination to create her own story. By including these images in her story she is also providing a link to the drama event.

On another level two different transformations work together, those of the name and the flowers. The transformations regarding Mary and the marigolds in this text has already been described in section 6.3.2. (Miriam/Mariam/Maria/Mary/Marigolds). The metaphorical marigolds run throughout the text and are transformed into a symbol of Robert's love for his mother. With regard to story, they not only help commence the story at the beginning as another visual link to the drama but it is with reference to them that the new story holds together. The writer's story is formed of imaginary anecdotes and in parts one, two and four³⁵ when the writer's focus is on Miriam, it is the flowers that connect them. The only part in which they are not present is part three, when Robert discusses his past actions. With regard to character they give us clear indications of what both Robert and his mother are like and what type of relationship they have.

In part one the marigolds are visible, as is Miriam's love for her son. In part two Robert plays with them as he plays with his love for his mother. This is a transformation of a narrative link. In the drama Robert played with his mother's feelings by not contacting her. In the writing he plays with her feelings more overtly as a child: *when I was a little boy, I used to pick them up, just to make you angry, but also to make you smile*. The mention that perhaps she no longer prefers Marigolds points to the severing of their relationship: *Julie told me you prefer roses or gardenias now*. In part four Robert asks his mother to bring the Marigolds with her, to bring her love back to him. Thus his character has transformed. He is shown as the prodigal son who wants to make amends.

Between the references to the marigolds Robert inserts little stories from the past which give further indications of the character of Robert and his mother. Only twice is Robert explicit: in part three when he says he is *egotistical* and that he was always a *capitalist*. These are traits we already know from the drama. As his character is shown to transform the reader is left to draw his own conclusions from the stories told: stories about how he picked the marigolds then teased his mother by picking off the petals one by one - *she loves me, she loves me not*; stories about his schoolmates' jealousy; stories about how he used his expensive presents to gain power over his friends; all stories which combine into a heteroglossic text, a text which tells a story of love, regret and repentance. In this way the writer is building upon the character in the

³⁵ Parts refer to the text as divided in appendix 5.11, situational description of text with relation to story.

drama, making him more rounded, more human, less of a cardboard cut-out figure. She is also widening the focus from the characters in a particular story to family values in general.

There is great attention to detail in order to make the stories plausible and life-like. The *apple pie and scones; the Giants; John, Barry and Paul*, all add authenticity. The ball is *brand-new*, the toys are *expensive*, the bicycle is *colored* suggesting it is bright, shiny and new. The writer knows that children call a train a *chu-chu* and is fully aware that famous baseball players would not play in a small town, but in the city. Every detail pays attention to the social reality in the fiction. Furthermore the senses are evoked to create an almost three-dimensional picture: *Now, you are in the warm kitchen; I can still feel the marvelous apple perfume in the air; the Marigolds were left in the large rectangular wooden table, waiting for the hands that will gently place them in a beautiful jar.* Through embodied narrative, Barbara is exploring the gestures and actions of the dramatic text, drawing the reader into the story. More than graphical and sensory detail, there is also a depth of feeling: *you could disguise neither your love for me, nor your tenderness.* This is a son associating past events and objects with his feelings and evaluating past experiences as if he were vocalising them to his mother, expressing nostalgia, love, remorse and then hope. It is also a writer reliving the emotions at the end of the drama and transforming them into her own story. Appendix 5.11 shows this progression in more detail in a situational description of the text with relation to story.

The details taken together draw a comprehensive picture with which the reader can empathise. In the building of that picture a transformation of the writer's cultural and personal history has taken place. The cultures of Southern Portugal intervene with the writer's imagination: a British expatriate community that sells apple pies and scones in seaside cafes owned by Brits; the American video or TV show about baseball. Barbara's ideological links are different to those of her other colleagues. She brings in an Americanised world. Her partner is involved with the student council and thus with exchange students; she has access to cable TV and the internet. Other students come from much more sheltered Portuguese households where family and gender divisions are more pertinent, where material goods are not so easily come by. Thus the connections made by Barbara differ from those of her colleagues, and the resultant story is different.

There is language consciousness in the way the story is told and in the way that more complex and compound tenses, embedded sentences and new vocabulary are used: *Balancing back and forward in the old rocking chair, which I have no memory from whom have you inherited it; with Marigolds in your lap; I was a capitalist, since tender age; you could disguise neither your love for me nor your tenderness.* This emphasises the fact that the text is clearly composed as opposed to being spontaneous, a careful piece of work. Despite the fact it is not always

linguistically correct, the writer is aware that language can be used to work in her favour and it is this she strives to accomplish.

The initial declarative statement, *I see you in the garden*, is distanced from the rest of the text, marking it out as separate and important. The continuation of the picture gives us no indication of what is to follow: our visual senses are evoked to picture the idyllic memory, without explanation of the significance of the metaphor of the Marigolds. The writer struggles with the embedded clause, but still makes the reader's perception of the picture very explicit. With *now* we are brought back to the present, reminded this is a letter and that Robert has an audience. This is made more explicit with *Dear Mary* as the text changes temporally from the past to the present and statement becomes question. Robert progresses from perception to affection and finally cognition. Parataxis becomes hypotaxis, the report becomes a mental process of cognition, stated forcefully with the declarative; *I know why; marigolds make you remember*. Here the significance of the marigolds is identified in the identifying mode so there is no room for doubt. The writer's advanced use of imagery and powers of storytelling and her transformations of parts of the drama into her story show that the drama/writing process has had consequences on the way she writes. Her story stems from that of the drama and is woven around it in an intricate pattern, just as she weaves her own text into an intricate pattern.

As the story progresses language continues to be used carefully and consciously in the construction of the metaphorical story. Robert's behaviour is contrasted sharply with that of his mother through story and through language. In the story his conscious behaviour differs from her unconscious behaviour. In language this is shown by the marked opposition between the use of the words *brat* and *love/tenderness*. He identifies her attributes and assumes his position as actor in all circumstances which are negative. In comparison, family itself is only seen as positive.

Robert's letter is then ruled by declarative statements: *I recognise...; It wasn't your fault...; I was a capitalist...; today I look around me and there is only loneliness...*, all statements reverting to the content of the drama and transforming it slightly so that both stories converge by for example bringing in the blackmailing of his friends. The final paragraph draws together the writer's imaginative world with that of the drama, transforming them both into one complete story via the transformation of the significance of the snake.

Returning to the drama story and Barbara's contribution, as aforementioned she was at first withdrawn. She concluded the string was "a smile" which indicates a positive attitude behind her shyness. When each student was asked to get into the skin of Miriam and BE her, she walked round the room in a stereotypical stooped fashion, not really entering the role. As her colleagues developed the history of Miriam she gradually seemed to become drawn in by the

“story”. When artefacts were introduced as belonging to Miriam she showed more interest, writing avidly what the importance of one of the artefacts was to Miriam. As explained earlier it was when the class decided to interview Miriam’s maid, husband and best friend that her dedication to the task became evident as, unprompted, she jumped nervously on the hotseat in role as the maid. From that point onwards she became a very active participant.

Thus initially attracted by the story and aided by artefacts (those of Miriam; the feather duster she clutched; the shawl round her hips) Barbara began to use her powers of imagination to create meaning. Later through imagination and metaphor she transformed that process into her writing to create a text formed of multiple transformations, searching critically and reflectively for her own meanings. She has moved beyond creating her own text through personal connections and begun to fashion a reading which has become a critical response based on personal experience. This response is documented in appendix 6.36.

8. CHAPTER EIGHT: DRAMA AND WRITING AS A LINGUISTIC PROCESS

“And the moral of that is – take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves.”

Duchess to Alice in (Carroll, 1865/1946 p.96)

“Dreams are like the alphabet..., they do not end in 28 letters.”

Gianni Versace as quoted in (Teberosky & Tolchinsky, 1992)

Now I would like to turn to the ways in which the writing itself has changed as a result of the aforementioned transformational processes, looking at language as a linguistic process. With reference to the same texts as cited in chapters 5, 6 and 7, I will focus on the kinds of learning that took place. My interest lies in the types of competence practised as opposed to what level of proficiency was reached, for which an error count or analysis of cohesion would be more suitable. Assuming that language deals with not one, but with a complex set of meanings that interrelate and work simultaneously, together and separately and that the texts produced are heteroglossic in nature, I shall try to avoid the “humpty-dumpty” effect (Stern, 1983 p.183) and look at the written texts as sites of multiple interrelated competencies that work concurrently.

Analysis will draw upon the whole language approach of Goodman et al. (Goodman, 1986; Goodman, Smith, Meredith, & Goodman, 1987; Goodman & Goodman, 1990) and on definitions of language competence based on the work of Fairclough (1995), van Ek (Van Ek, 1986), Stern (1983), Canale (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980) which I would suggest should be involved in any good foreign language course, namely:

- a) linguistic competence: the ability to produce and interpret meaningful utterances which are formed in accordance with the rules of the language concerned and bear their conventional meaning;
- b) sociolinguistic competence: an awareness of ways in which the choice of language forms, the manner of expression, is determined by such conditions as situational context, relationship between communication partners, communicative intention etc.;
- c) discourse/sociocultural competence: the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction of texts; an awareness of the sociocultural context in which the language concerned is used by native speakers and of ways in which this context affects the choice and the communicative effect of particular language forms;

d) strategic competence; the ability to use communication strategies to compensate for gaps in the writer's knowledge of the language code.

Following the lead of van Ek I shall also look at

e) cognitive development; and

f) affective development,

without which the picture of learning would not be complete. Thus in the same way as it was necessary to look at all contexts within which transformations took place, no precise understanding of the linguistic process would be possible without taking into account all levels of context, competence and development.

Initially I shall return briefly to the text used at the beginning of chapter six (Text DX.006.W) with a different lens, that of the language itself, in order to evidence the sorts of patterns that emerged when I focussed on the writing itself. In this section I will revisit Ana Margarida's written text by looking at the specific nature of the language she has used. I will look at the way in which language becomes the link between thought and feeling as the desire to resolve creates the need to understand and express.

Subsequently I shall look at the different levels of context, competence and development, namely:

The drama/language medium illustrates how different types of learning were accessed through the investigation of a fictional character and the specific effects that this had with respect to the writer's abilities;

Realisations at the micro level examines the language with special reference to lexis, metaphor, creative capacities and logical reasoning. It confirms the way in which writers move towards critical inquiry through self-narrative, producing writing that is responsible, an exploratory device rather than language on display; and

Realisations at the macro level verifies the knowledge the writers have of the means by which entire texts are structured. Moreover by looking at range and form, register and appropriacy, it focuses on the fact that students become sensitive to the use of different types of text type, drawing upon and restructuring orders of discourse to produce new configurations of text types and discourses.

8.1. DEEPENING AN UNDERSTANDING THROUGH WRITING: ANA MARGARIDA'S WRITING

... "written speech requires the situation to be established in full detail so it can be understood by the interlocutor. Written speech is the most expanded form of speech. Even things that can be omitted in oral speech must be made explicit in written speech. Written speech must be maximally comprehensible to the other. Everything must be laid out fully. This transition from a maximally contracted inner speech (i.e. from speech for oneself) to a maximally extended written speech (i.e. to speech for the other) requires a child who is capable of extremely complex operations in the voluntary construction of the fabric of meaning."

(Vygotsky, 1987b p.204)

Firstly it is obvious that the drama has provided a location for Ana Margarida to develop the drama story through transformational processes. In the same way that she plays with the form of the diary, she also allows herself to experiment with language. She does not stay within the easy syntactical forms, but experiments with different structures in an attempt to explain her reading of the situation: *in order to avoid the destruction of the plant by the greedy of men ...* She uses fronting for example to make salient important points in her story or to create atmosphere: *In that fateful day I roamed for a while...*, she chooses her verbs carefully: *they called themselves "scientists"*. It is also obvious that she has used a dictionary (*provoke; comprehension; warrior; fateful; roamed; knelt*), mixing new (sometimes specialist) vocabulary with words remembered from the drama: *people in the future are very greedy*.

As previously discussed this taking of a role has led her to move beyond stereotype to a more human character: *but I also have the most simple and pure feelings that an human being use to have*. She not only talks about what happened but how she felt and what this has led her to learn. She is thus engaging in both cognitive and affective processes: *perhaps is because they don't deserve to know what happiness is*. In the process the writing not only gains a rich content but the language acquires depth. Ana Margarida feels sufficiently confident to experiment with her own metaphor: *they are locked inside their ignorance*. This would suggest that playing with ideas leads to playing with language, as the writer finds out for herself what works. She has tried to adopt the register of a prophetess: *our beloved Delta X; and these were the thoughts of Prophetess C*. She starts off by writing a diary entry but ends by recounting a narrative through a series of flashbacks. This is thus obviously writing for an audience, writing that is carefully structured and worked out on the page. As language use is engaged in the solving of the task, group significance becomes personal resonance as Ana Margarida begins to trust her own ideas and her use of English. Thus if in the drama she has learnt to listen to her peers and their different ways of seeing the world, in the writing she has learnt to listen to language and the different ways of expressing those opinions. It is as if the demands of a real language situation

activate unconscious knowledge about language, about the way in which different linguistic processes and discourses can be used. In her text she moves from statement to explanation, through doubt to reassurance, awareness and an acceptance of others. Her insight is deep. All these different stages of thought require different types of language to convey them. Moreover, linguistic competence is evidenced in the use of lexis and metaphor; sociolinguistic competence in her choice of language forms and expression; sociocultural and discourse competence in her attention to form and content; strategic competence coming to her aid when language fails. All four types of competence are being practised in one single text, together with both cognitive and affective processes. This is an exciting finding.

8.2. WRITING COMPETENCIES

The recognition regarding the interaction of the different competencies in one text was particularly interesting to me as an educator. Here was a completely unexpected development. As mentioned previously I had expected the texts to be richer in content but I had not expected the language to a) improve linguistically nor b) engage so fully with the competencies required in a L2 writing course. Closer analysis of the texts from a language point of view divulged a series of recurring features, which can be summarised as follows (see next page):

Table XXVII: Recurring features of writing competencies

Drama provides a context		1	2	3	4	5	6
	Natural locations for unique stories	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
	A safe arena of confidence and encouragement	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
The power of writing in role							
	Writing reduces stereotype	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y
	Character development and the affect	N	N	N	N	Y	N
	Choices and cognitive development	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
	Particular ways of making meaning about the world and the self	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
	Writing as language learning	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
	Language as the site of dialectical processes:	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Writing as unleashing creative capacities							
	Lexis						
	Writers access new vocabulary	Y	N	N	N	N	N
	Writers use words/phrases from the drama	Y	N	N	N	Y	N
	Writers use precise terms and specialist vocabulary	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
	Writers use a range of synonyms	Y	N	N	N	N	N
	Writers attempt to match lexis to register	Y	N	N	N	N	N
	Metaphorical processes and the imagination	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
	Writing as an exploratory device leading to new structures	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
Language as the mediator of experiences							
	Changes in situational mode						
	Writers change the situational mode of the writing as the text progresses	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
	Writers need to access different language skills as situational mode changes	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
	Different types of meaning lead to different types of writing	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
	Playing with ideas leads to playing with language						
	Writers find out for themselves what works	Y	N	N	Y	N	N
	Writers want to be understood	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Appropriacy and audience							
	Writers become aware of register	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
	Writers pay attention to expression	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Writers show knowledge of text types							
	intertextual; multi-levelled configurations	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y

Numbers in table refer to following competencies:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1: Linguistic competence | 4: Strategic competence |
| 2: Sociolinguistic competence | 5: Affective development |
| 3: Discourse/sociocultural competence | 6: Cognitive development |

Y refers to Yes (i.e. occurrence in the texts) and N to No (i.e. non-occurrence in the texts).

As the table shows these features engage with the different competencies which are involved in writing. This would suggest that working through drama has allowed the students to access their tacit understandings of language. Appendix 7.1 evidences how these competencies come into play in six different texts, one from each workshop, two from high achievers, two from average and two from low achievers.

What I would suggest is happening is that the various transformations are acting on experience, constructing and construing it. Part of this process is its realisation in language. This in turn is the thinking through of the transformations on the written page. The adoption of a role and the experiences in the drama gives the writer a place to start from, a natural (authentic) location for her own stories and her own particular linguistic renderings. The writer is thus focussing on content rather than grammatical structure. In the search for understanding and the conveying of that understanding to the reader, the writer assembles her tacit powers in language. She creates the language for the character in which she has invested authority, playing with meanings, imagination, creativity and emotions in the search for understanding.

I shall briefly make a few remarks about the abovementioned layers through which the drama connects with the language. These sections should be read in conjunction with the discussion and tables in the appendices referenced after the titles, which show how the layer works with regard to each workshop and the three levels of ability.

8.3. THE DRAMA/LANGUAGE MEDIUM

Please read together with appendix 7.2.

NATURAL LOCATIONS FOR UNIQUE STORIES.

As I have discussed with reference to transformation, the drama/writing relationship removes the artificiality of the text book, setting the language in what could be likened to a mini-immersion or whole language programme rather than the stylised simulation or role play exercises usually attributed to EFL classrooms. The endless possibilities within each text naturally imply different kinds of linguistic renderings which engage with the emotions, imagination and thinking processes: *All those thoughts are coming again ... The Past is steel alive, is like an image, always cursing me for what I've done* (TT.086).

A SAFE ARENA OF CONFIDENCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

Whilst the pragmatic is still of importance, in the drama/writing relationship, social identities, relations and systems of knowledge and belief also become essential as particular ideologies and subject positions are tried out as a natural (and not stylised) part of the creative process. This process necessitates the interaction of both language use and language usage, creating a situation where division between the two is unnecessary and unjustified.

Accordingly, sociocultural competence and competence in discourse are required as the students write from their own multi-personality perspective, as the fictitious and real personalities overlap and interact. Consequently, their recognition of the best stylistic devices and communicative strategies with which to relay their message becomes apparent, despite their imperfect command of the language: *For all you've ever done and for everything I didn't do, I kneel before you, assume I went wrong and try to make up for the troubles I caused you* (O.A.073).

8.3.1. THE POWER OF WRITING IN ROLE

Please see appendix 7.3.

As already suggested, when pen touches paper the writer gets beneath the other person's skin in a way which was not evidenced in the drama. As, through various types of transformation, the student intermingles her life experiences with those of the persona she not only creates a new persona but identifies so intensely with that new personality that the writing becomes forceful and perceptive. In order to express strongly felt views or emotions that the reader will understand, the writer has to work with language to create a carefully structured text as language becomes the link between thought and feeling. The writers' unconscious linguistic knowledge is activated by the demands of a real language situation.

WRITING REDUCES STEREOTYPE.

In the drama Eloisa in role as the President said: *I only changed the past to put things right. I did not want to be the cause of all that war.* In comparison he/she writes *there I go trying to pay God on my do-good chariot and all I've done is handed over my seat to my false wimp of a deputy who is revelling even now as I squirm* (TT.082).

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT ENGAGES WITH THE AFFECT THROUGH LANGUAGE.

As the writer becomes determined to express these feelings to the reader, language is used carefully, evoking a whole series of emotions, for example regret and tenderness: *Those were the days I felt asleep in your arms in what seemed like being far from all the rest. I could sense the tenderness the smoothness in your white hands fondling me in a somewhat state of fulfilment.* (OA.073)

CHOICES AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT INTERACT.

The adoption of a particular stance as a character and as a writer, necessitates making choices. Not only do the students investigate the conflict in question but they raise new questions, set up hypotheses and give evidence. In this logical process, they also express their feelings and evaluate their actions the writing has acquired a quality akin to that of native speakers: *As for that last stretch of road I try not to think about it. My motto has become "Live one day at a time". I try to do the most and the best I can* (Emig.026). In the course of this type of cognitive development, the writing produced is indicative of a person who is thinking in the language as well as thinking about it. It is the aim of every foreign language learner to achieve this ability.

PARTICULAR WAYS OF MAKING MEANINGS ABOUT THE WORLD AND THE SELF.

As real thinking is engaged, students make their own comparisons between their world and that of the drama: *the film on rewind* (Emig.026); *the jail of their ignorance* (DX.006) for example. They are not repeating phrases learnt from the book but seeking their own connections through language.

WRITING BECOMES LANGUAGE LEARNING.

By working out their own representations of experience textually they draw upon and restructure orders of discourse, producing their own configurations of discourses. Take the example of Eloisa who finds out that binary opposites can tell a story much better than explicit comparisons: *July 1930: I can see myself bicycling, the wind in my face ... Oh! These stubborn tears! July 1990: I rest motionless in the garden chair, a cool breeze makes me shiver... Oh! These stubborn fears!* (OA.082). I am proposing that just as playing with ideas leads to playing with language, using language by writing leads to a knowledge of how it works.

LANGUAGE BECOMES THE SITE OF DIALECTICAL PROCESSES

Students do not only merge and mingle their personalities with those of the role, in the process they negotiate and change different associations of meanings, as a consequence taking control of the language in a way that I did not predict: *When he was alive my father always wanted me to go to University, to learn and to grow. But he always expected such great things. Afraid of failure I ran. A secret marriage, fleeting passions, then a tragedy* (Emig.024).

8.4. REALISATIONS AT THE MICRO LEVEL

Briefly I would like to draw the readers attention to the linguistic realisations of the transformations. I do not provide an exhaustive list, rather point to the most recurring features across the workshops and the different levels of ability.

8.4.1. WRITING UNLEASHES CREATIVE CAPABILITIES

Students are creative both with and through their use of language as explained briefly below and more fully in appendix 7.4.

8.4.1.1. LEXIS

A) WRITERS ACCESS NEW VOCABULARY.

Writers use words new to them to discover the association of meanings between the character whose role they are adopting and the dramatic events that have taken place: *Fisherman's nets will be devoid of catch and the farmer's cannot till barren land* (DX.018.2). This is just the first of the many small steps taken on the way to learning about linguistic competence.

B) WRITERS USE WORDS/PHRASES FROM THE DRAMA.

When this happens, a kind of linguistic transformation occurs. The exact words used in the drama are repeated in the writing but they sometimes acquire different significance in accordance with the writer's interest. In the Key to Success, the leader of the experiment enthused: *You are called here today because you are all special. Special people do special things. This is one of them.* Gonçalo wrote: *Because we are so special. That's why she had us there. Special people do special things she said. But we didn't really DO anything special. We didn't really do anything at all. We acted like naïve stupid human beings* (KS.115). The words are played with as the writer searches for the meaning behind the project and looks at the character of the woman who ran it. Thus as each student accesses language from the drama,

reconstructing part of the drama, they become aware of how language can be made to work for them and how they can best use lexis to serve their purposes.

C) WRITERS USE PRECISE TERMS AND SPECIALIST VOCABULARY.

Eager to make the reader understand or visualise their messages they show engagement with their subject by finding, or in some cases fabricating the specific vocabulary related to their subject. For example in *Delta X* students look up medical terms (*mental disturbances, psicopatic reactions, neurotic actions*); in *Emigration* student 026 talks of *gares de Paris* rather than the train station; in the *Key to Success* one participant's room is compared to a *penitentiary* rather than a prison and in *Time Travel* students show knowledge of legal vocabulary: *When I take the stand tomorrow what line of questioning will the Prosecutor take?* (TT.082). By attention to this type of detail students become aware of the discourse types related to different social practices. They begin to learn about particular systems of knowledge and belief by experimenting how people use specific terminology in certain situations. Thus competency in discourse is being learnt through lexical procedures.

D) WRITERS USE A RANGE OF SYNONYMS.

In the quest for clarity, often quite difficult words are used to emphasise something of particular importance to the writer. Since written texts were used in subsequent classes many students benefited from the dictionary work of their peers: *I fought against prejudice, bias, injustice, wrong* (KS.111).

E) WRITERS ATTEMPT TO MATCH LEXIS TO REGISTER.

Different registers are accessed in the exploration of numerous characters in distinct situations. I would suggest that it is in the act of writing that the ordering and developing of thinking takes place. Through writing authors have the time to perfect not only what is said but how it is said: *Millions of names written in gravestones reminded me of that fatidic day, the ones I killed who love and believed in me* (TT.098). As the students take on roles of people of differing social status in varying situations they gain knowledge of social appropriateness of language, social conventions and both situational and topical control. Such sociolinguistic competence had not been evident in their previous essays. It is notable how, in their new creative processes and attention to detail the writers begin to take control of the language conventions appropriate to the language context and as a result their texts are much richer linguistically.

8.4.1.2. THE POWER OF THE FICTIONAL AS FIRING THE IMAGINATION

One of the most notable developments is the frequency with which students make their own images through similes and metaphors, often of their own making, as illustrated below:

Table XXVIII: Metaphoric processes and the imagination

Text	Quote from writing
DX. 018.2	<i>as unpredictable as the volcano, more dangerous than its fire</i>
Emig.024	<i>Visions of the past flash before my eyes, with the throttle on override, faster and faster, dimmer and dimmer.</i>
KS.106	<i>By making a brainwash to all the participants of that mousetrap game...</i>
OA.069	<i>Love is a flower, a lynx that can be the most beautiful thing in nature but the most frightening thing also. For me love was a fearsome lion.</i>
Sib.111	<i>Every drop of blood in my body is brought to a stop by the thought of seeing her again. She has the eye of a vulture, a cruel sparkling eye.</i>
TT.082	<i>Guilt pierces my head, pounding my brain, again and again, like tomorrow's hammer: good, bad, right, wrong, life, death</i>

Sometimes the comparisons draw on particular parts of the drama. In the example from *Delta X* the student compares the powers of the drug Delta X to the powers of the volcano on the island which was mentioned twice in the drama but only in passing, although its model occupied a prominent place in the classroom. In this text it is transformed into a forceful and destructive symbol. In text Emig.024, where Luis is writing as Emma the emigrant, her flashbacks of the past are compared to the flashes of countryside the writer would see from his motorbike, in very vivid and original imagery. In this process of making metaphor the possibilities of the story become limitless as students use the drama as a base for numerous metaphorical meanderings, accessing new linguistic structures and vocabulary. Appendix 6.37 illustrates, with reference to each workshop, ways in which this is done. I quote two excerpts:

Table XXIX: Transformations of linguistic ability via metaphorical story-making in Delta X and TimeTravel

DELTA X

Student	Story	Quote from writing
014	Farmer recounts visit of strangers from the future	<i>This day was the most astounding day of my life, I felt like I was in the gibbet wayting for the moment of my ruin. Exposed, suspended in space and time, swinging one way then the other. How would be my life from this day on without Delta - X? For a moment dashed our hopes and I saw in my mind a really hard way to go. My body limp and helpless. No use to anyone. Tom body, tom hope, tom world.</i>

TIME TRAVEL

Student	Story	Quote from writing
082	John Taylor has been abandoned by his political party who are compared first to loyal dogs and then attacking wolves.	<i>Where have all the wagging tails gone now things are tough? Instead are the gnashing jaws of anger, contempt and rage, ready to take hold and bite the flesh.</i>

When imaginary powers are unleashed the images are unending and in many cases totally unpredictable. Most students also make the language work for them, whether they are competent scholars or not, a mixture of strategic competence and daring leading them to produce metaphors of their own invention which in turn make use of numerous linguistic devices. As the writers seek to make their voice heard the proficiency of their language improves. Gone are the mundane, stereotypical comparisons of the old essays. In their place is real writing that encourages the reader to make her own connections rather than using trite explanations. It is writing which evidences linguistic competence through creative fantasy both as a result of the transformations from the drama and as experimentation on the written page itself.

8.4.1.3. WRITING AS AN EXPLORATORY DEVICE LEADING TO NEW STRUCTURES.

The writers are not only inventive and creative, as the imagery shows, but their meanings are expressed in language which is very adventurous. Different sentence structures are attempted as the students become aware of the use of syntax. Longer, more complex sentences are used to combine clauses through the use of conjunctions other than the additive, causal and temporal. Concessional, conditional, inferential and disjunctive conjunctions become part of the text as the students play with ideas. Indeed, as will be shown later, it is the type of writing produced that necessitates such grammatical control.

Many students experiment with fronting to salient their ideas through structure as well as lexis. The writers are not always successful in what they attempt to do, but they happily attempt difficult sentences. Transmission of meaning is more important than worrying about a structure they have not used before. By practising in this way the students begin to understand the intricacies of the language, that it is by making mistakes that proficiency comes. Half of the problem with the writing prior to the drama was that the students had neither the confidence nor the inclination to experiment with the language. In these texts experimentation seems to be of paramount importance: *Yesterday morning the Secretary of the "Consumer defence" appealed once more to the fact that people should not be having the product "Delta X" which invaded our country with its promises of beauty, health and happiness. (DX.035)*

It is not my purpose to ascertain to what degree the students were competent in their syntax and cohesion, but to draw attention to the variety in the language and contrast it to the simplistic language found in the texts prior to the drama. The same student before drama wrote: *Well I had some problems in my childhood that are now almost gone. But actually I see childhood as a different world. The world of children.* Before the drama Vanessa wrote: *It tell us the history of a very known american singer. Going in a town to German. During that, the young man falls in love for a german girl...* After Time Travel she wrote: *I could die in this instance because guilt wages no more inside my conscience, my mind is light as a bird.* In each case the two texts of the students are totally different.

In the first case two weeks had passed between the writing of the texts, in the second half a semester. I would suggest that the exploratory nature of the writing connects with language. Thought is akin to a pseudoconcept which allows for metaphor and the imagination to connect with structures in the search for new expression.

8.4.2. LANGUAGE AS THE MEDIATOR OF EXPERIENCE

Thus language responds to and at the same time influences the observations of the writers and mediates their experiences. This is evidenced by looking at the context of situation, as indicated below.

8.4.2.1. CHANGES IN SITUATIONAL MODE.

A) WRITERS CHANGE THE SITUATIONAL MODE OF THE WRITING AS THE TEXT PROGRESSES

In appendix 6.3 several texts from the *Sibyl* were discussed. Their situational description can be found in appendices 5.17 to 5.28.

The following table summaries the progressive changes in mode for the work of eight of the students already described, writing as King Tarquin.

Table XXX: Changes in mode in written texts

Situational description: changes in mode as text progresses				
Student	Part 1 of text	Part 2 of text	Part 3 of text	Part 4 of text
099	declarative	narrative	analytical	confessional
104	descriptive	declarative	questioning	declarative
106	narrative	description	analytical	not applicable
107	narrative	description	analytical	declarative statement
112	descriptive	explanatory	descriptive	decisive
115	descriptive	narrative	rational argument	n/a
117	declarative	analytical	explanatory	declarative statement
127	discussion	declarative	discussion	interrogative

Although all students start with description, narration or declaration, they all move on to some kind of cognitive engagement, be it analysis, questioning, rational argument or confession. These modes of writing require certain types of language, which evidence the students' writing development.

The process that takes place in the *Sibyl* happens in each workshop as students move from declarative statement to cognitive analysis through differing variations in mode. The following table gives random examples from each workshop, covering all levels of ability, showing how no one student writes their text within the same mode:

Table XXXI: Changes in mode through the same text

Text	Situational description: changes in mode as text progresses			
	Part 1 of text	Part 2 of text	Part 3 of text	Part 4 of text
DX.006	statement; explanation	doubt; explanation; reassurance	assertion of authority and values	n/a
Emig.024	statement	reflection; narration; statement of fears	analytical; discursive; narrative; interrogative; confessional; appealing	n/a
KS.106	declarative	narrative; descriptive; discussion	discussion; analysis; statement	n/a
OA.069.1	statement; explanation	statement; explanation; appeal	poetic; confessional	n/a
Sib.117	declarative	analytical	explanatory	declarative statement
TT.082	descriptive	interrogative	discursive; analytical	declarative; dramatic statement

B) WRITERS NEED TO ACCESS DIFFERENT LANGUAGE SKILLS AS SITUATIONAL MODE CHANGES.

What is important about these changes in mode is that different types of language use come into play in each. See the following table:

Table XXXII: Types of language use in situational mode.

Examples of situational mode	Examples of types of language used
declarative	stating of facts and opinions
descriptive	description of feelings; description of events; description of place
narrative	recounting events clearly and logically
interrogative	eliciting of information; inquiry; seeking justification or clarification; seeking help
analytical	questioning of attitudes, events and feelings; cognitive inquiry
explanatory	expression and clarification of ideas, attitudes and events; emotional attitudes; logical argument; reasoning

C) DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEANING LEAD TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF WRITING.

As different types of meaning come to the fore, different types of writing take place. By gaining practice and understanding of how written language functions the students get in touch with language abilities far beyond the connection of correct sentences. Fluency, expression and meaning become salient in the place of formal accuracy and in this manner a whole range of competencies come forth. Linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discorsal and sociocultural competence and strategic competence all come into play.

The next table illustrates, with reference to six texts, how the finding of particular meanings influences the writing that originates. I have taken a different situational mode in each case, summarised the types of language accessed and then given an example from the writing. In the process multiple aspects of different types of proficiency are dealt with by the writers. This is often unconscious as it is the particular nature of their writing that often dictates what and how they write.

Table XXXIII: Examples of language use in situational mode.

Text	Examples of situational mode	Language used	Quote from writing
DX.018/2	declarative	stating a fact; stating an opinion; explaining	<i>Delta X has many other powers, some even magical, these I shall never reveal because from what I see you future people are to selfish.</i>
Emig.030	descriptive	describing; reminiscing; wishing.	<i>This place is an absolutely unenticing world and I long for our long nights in front of the fire...</i>
KS.112	narrative	recounting past happenings	<i>A long time ago, when I was still young and pretty, I met a boy.</i>
OA.082	interrogative	questioning; analysing; describing; reasoning;	<i>What did I do so very wrong that left me here so alone? Why am I so mixed up? Bring back the sunshine, the smiles, the produce of our love: my beloved son.</i>
Sib.127	analytical	describing; stating a fact; reasoning; questioning	<i>My power seems powerless; my throne is only another seat, my people do not respect me, but I am the King, I am their leader, I alone should give orders.</i>
TT.078	explanatory	stating a fact; explaining the outcome	<i>Man will never forgive me for what I done, specially because I made a war brake out and later I tried to change the past.</i>

8.4.2.2. PLAYING WITH IDEAS LEADS TO PLAYING WITH LANGUAGE.

Preoccupation with content and ideas leads to creativity with regard to language as shown below and in appendix 7.5.

A) WRITERS FIND OUT FOR THEMSELVES WHAT WORKS.

As writers experiment with lexis and metaphor and use unfamiliar structures, practice teaches them what works and what doesn't. When Denice writes about the effects of Delta X, playing with the noun *death*, she finds that repetition can lead to a powerful statement: *You lose weight, you feel sick (occasional vomiting), all your brain cells are destroyed and you die. Brain death, real death, your death not mine.* (DX.018). Catia repeats a verb to link the description of where she is, to how she is feeling. The exploration of ideas through language leads to experimentation with language on the page: *Other travellers looked equally lost, haversacks on their backs and clutching the latest copy of "Let's go Europe" – the travellers bible as far as places and prices went. But I suddenly felt the need to clutch on to more than my copy. I clutched on to my simple beliefs* (Emig.026). As linguistic features in one text are interpreted in relation to those in other texts language skills also fall into place. Language becomes a linguistic process.

B) WRITERS WANT TO BE UNDERSTOOD: THEY HAVE A NEED TO BE CONSISTENT, EXPRESS IDEAS LOGICALLY, BE CLEAR AND PRECISE.

Students become aware of the powers of a cohesive text when writing becomes the medium for ordering and developing thinking. Beginnings and endings become important as do logical connections. Together with a sense of audience, which I will turn to in 8.5, comes a certain language awareness, the recognition of the presence or lack of shared background knowledge or values. This is evidenced through the writers' choice of words or forms of language: *If I don't accept these scrolls I am running the risk of getting my people's hatred and if this happens they can leave me. The wealth I possess was built by their help too* (Sib.119).

The describing and stating of facts and opinions that occurs at the beginning of the texts is quite different to the eliciting of information, commenting, questioning, seeking of confirmation and justification of opinion that becomes evident as the texts progress. Narrative description turns into hypothesis, suggestion, inquiry and reflection. Working through drama and through language has led to the expressing of agreements and disagreements, to intellectual, moral and emotional attitudes and clarification of why these have been adopted. In order to get their messages across, messages which are sometimes quite complex, the students, through their writing, are learning how to order and structure both their work and the way in which it is presented.

8.5. REALISATIONS AT THE MACRO LEVEL

I shall now turn to the way in which these texts are structured as text types. This analysis will disclose how the texts have become events which have been culturally recognised and far from arbitrary. For when prominence is given to text rather than the sentence or grammatical structure, it leads to writers paying attention to the way in which their texts are structured as a whole. This commences within the text itself, with attention to whom writers are writing for and for what purpose, their sense of audience. It results in fascination with the way in which the writing can work as a complete text. As their language interprets and realises the meanings they have made out of the drama, the students learn how to operate the complex way in which it works. Furthermore they make it function in ways which are distinctive, singular, unique.

8.5.1. APPROPRIACY AND AUDIENCE

The following sections, together with appendix 7.6, illustrate the way which writers are aware of the forms their texts should or could take.

WRITERS BECOME AWARE OF REGISTER.

Writers are very aware of the tenor of their writing, conscious of their double position as fictitious character and student. Consequently salience is given to the relationship of text and context, namely register. The qualities evidenced in the drama, as the students match their language to their characters and the characters match their language to different situations, become all that more apparent in the writing. Students have much more time with which to experiment. Their writing shows sociolinguistic awareness as the language reflects role relationships and evidences situational control. They find their own academic style as they attempt to project their own identity: *Today for the second time the Sibyl, from the Great Cave, came to see me, and again fear and terror entered my soul* (Sib.127). The writer begins with a forceful declarative statement, in role as the all-powerful king. The manner of expression is that one would attribute to a king in ancient times. Transforming the cave in which the Sibyl lived into the Great Cave, thus also making the Sibyl herself more powerful, the writer uses strong language to explain his state of mind. Word order highlights the importance of the scene and the king's reaction, the register setting the scene for what is to follow. Register works in a different way in text TT.082 as the writer uses the language of a court in a text which does not take place in court but which talks about the President's fears the day before he stands trial. The language imitates what will happen the following day: *What truth might that be m'lord?* The writers thus show knowledge of the world and of the principles and norms of language used by different characters in social situations and in different text types.

WRITERS PAY ATTENTION TO EXPRESSION.

Aware that they are writing for an addressee for some particular purpose and that the writing is to be used to further the drama, writers pay attention to particular forms of expression used within the register they adopt. They demonstrate an ability to use it for their own purposes, an awareness of social conventions such as politeness together with a knowledge of the principles and norms of language use. As such the students have become responsible writers, aware of the consequences of their words upon the page. For example in text OA.071 the writer uses short sentences to evidence his anger whilst using register to convey his indignation. This is an adult, not an adolescent, an adult who feels wronged and betrayed: *I feel wronged and bitter about what happened and need to put the words on paper. I cannot lie. I am the one who is*

constantly being blamed for having left home. Yet should I be expected to live at home all my life? Men have their own lives to lead. I also have to look for myself and my future.

WRITERS SHOW KNOWLEDGE OF TEXT TYPES

In all of the writing after drama, whatever the text type, attention is almost always paid to format. Writers are also aware that meaning resides in the use of language in connection with the form in which it is presented. Students are obviously aware that there are certain ways to write in certain social situations. What is special about this writing is that students work with this idea in complex ways to produce a text riddled with different language processes.

I shall now take each text type and look at the various modifications of each identical task as intertextual multi-levelled configurations of discourse. I shall not cover the pamphlets or magazine articles from Delta X nor the brochure in Time Travel as these are texts specifically multi-modal in nature where pictures are often more in evidence than writing.

The reader should bear in mind that students were given the subject of an essay and the text type but no further instructions were given. Analysis will show that there were various modifications on each identical task. Focus lies on the way in which student learn how written language functions and how they learn to sustain unfamiliar registers as they practise and access new discourses. This is important because it affirms how the students not only learn the system, but how to make use of it. The language used attains a new "quality", one more akin to that of a native speaker as text type is not confined to one strict form. Emphasis will also be given to the way this flexible approach leads to writing which works on multiple levels as the context engages with the abstract to form a text which parades creativity rather than the text type itself.

For ease of reference, the texts selected for referral are placed side by side in appendices 8.101 - 8.104.

A) DIARIES

Each class had the chance to write in the diary form, which was their favourite in most cases because they said it was flexible, allowing them to write in almost any way they wanted. For example in *Time Travel* writer 082 starts with a dramatic image, which reminds the reader of creative writing rather than a diary entry. The dramatic continues, interspersed with questioning, throughout the text to the very end. The text works on four levels: (1) that of a narrative with regard to the court scene (the hammer, flashes of light, angry politicians), which is seen to continue after the diary entry has been written: *but the nightmare continues* ;(2) that of a diary entry with regard to what will happen the following day; (3) a discussion of the role of a

President ; (4) a discussion of change. This is done through careful use of discourse, a mixture of description, questioning and irony. Again, as in the previous text, there is careful use of lexis not usually found in the order of discourse pertaining to a diary. Thus the writer is using the diary form to her own advantage, pushing back the boundaries to fit her needs.

B) MEMOIRS

Couched in dramatic description, Fuji's memoirs in text KS.115 analyse the project itself and the reactions of those present. The text begins like a short story, with the dramatic beginning setting the scene and atmosphere for what is to come: *a cold empty room, a menacing false smile, a prickly sensation of fear...* As the text progresses the writer writes as if he is writing his diary or writing a letter to a friend: *you know me well. Why was I off my guard?* The text type of a memoir has been stretched to another limit, that of soul searching through writing: *Did I like the idea of being a chosen person? Did it make me feel special?* His description of the project is highly subjective and his scorn of himself and the other participants complete: *we did things like zombies.* Akin to a diary this is writing which is open and honest: *If I find out, the question will be, dare I share it with the world?* The writer is using the text type in exactly the way he pleases, stretching the boundaries out slightly so that he can discuss what it is that interests him.

C) LETTERS

INFORMAL

In Text Emig.016.2 one emigrant writes about the problems of racism in general in a text that works on two levels, that of the emigrant and that of the writer herself who compares her feelings to those of the Ancient Mariner, having read Coleridge in class. Only at the very beginning and the end of the letter does the writer come to her part in the drama and speak of her own situation in America at the time of writing. Otherwise she writes what in the EFL classroom would be classed as a discursive essay. Both form and discourse are used for the writers' specific purposes.

FORMAL

In *Delta X* writer 018, uses persuasive discourse, logical explanation and a startling new revelation to try to convince the President what he should do. The order of discourse is that of someone writing to a superior. However this changes by the end: *Act wisely Mr. President. The force is with YOU.* The writer feels able to introduce images of her own making (as *unpredictable as the volcano, more dangerous than its fire*), to joke about Australia where, she

was to tell me later, her parents met and to indirectly compare the President to someone from “Star Wars”.

Students are again reluctant to follow stereotypical norms, as they would usually have done, in the process bringing a more genuine quality to their prose.

D) NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

In their newspaper articles the writers showed knowledge of the way the press works. In the *Delta X* example the text is intertextual in that parts of the medical reports which were written in the drama come into the text: *fever, dehydration and irregular heart rhythms*. The writer also uses the text to experiment with language rather than just report a story: *People used to take the innocent sky blue elixir...; The innocent blue has a darker side. DX from pleasure to death*. Furthermore she makes her own statement about the general attitude to people taking drugs: *and when we say people we mean EVERYONE*. Rather than telling the story of the workshop writers deal with the consequences of taking the drug and its effect on society in general, moving away from narrative to discussion at a more abstract level, involving connections between the fiction and their own society.

Through language writers are thinking about real issues and not just concentrating on getting words down on the page. This capacity for critical inquiry is important as it shows the students are engaging with their subject. Since language events do not occur in isolation from social behaviour, the students are learning about the language as it actually is used in society at large, about the mutual relationship between language and social context, matters concerned with sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence. Thus their writing is more proficient than that before the drama.

E) FINAL REMARKS

The above examples reveal that just as there are no limits to the ideas transferred from the drama to the writing, there seem to be just as few limits to the way in which students interpret how a text type may be used. Dramatic purpose and the need for meaning lead to awareness of both language and text type. The writers dare to express unconventional ideas and opinions in unconventional manners, finding new ways of classifying the world. The drama context creates a need for ways of reading what happened. The writing gives the opportunity for students to express those meanings, using the text rather than the sentence within which to organise, select, combine, focus and sequence non-chronological events.

8.6. LEARNING AS A LINGUISTIC PROCESS

Language in these texts becomes the link between thought and feeling as the need to resolve creates the need to understand and express. I would suggest it is the cultural mediator of individual development. In the drama the students access and give order to what they know. As the above examples illustrate, in the writing they reconstruct this in various ways as the locus of evaluation moves to within the student herself.

Students find out that meaning is not in the words but in the social space they occupy, the subtext and the intertext (Smolka, 1994). I am reminded of Cruces' consideration of Laura Bohannan's experiment in 1966 (*Shakespeare in the Bush*) where she tried to translate Hamlet to the language of an African tribe, but they would not accept the translation, they changed the story to fit in with their culture (Cruces, 1994). For it is important for any consideration of meaning, knowledge and communication to take into account how the culture builds a discourse for the understanding and transformation of knowledge (Rosa & Valsiner, 1994 p.16).

Words do not simply appear. Texts go through different processes from beginning to end. As the writers' concern moves away from vocabulary and the sentence to concepts and the structure of the text as a meaningful whole, they become agents in the creation of meaning and the formation of new texts, text types and discourses. As Kress would say signs are motivated. As Vygotsky would say it is through interaction that mental development is achieved. Writers are actively and constructively playing with language which, as we have seen, becomes a tool for thinking. Content is not inserted from the drama but created in it out of the drama and personal and collective connections. As Vygotsky would argue, thought is not expressed in the word, but completed in the word (see also Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991, Chapter 15 ; Vygotsky, 1987b), the relation between words and things is a process. As knowledge of action is taken over and transformed, knowledge of language and linguistic processes is built in the quest to make personal experiences meaningful to others, and to the writers. It is one thing to know how to complete grammar exercises out of context, but another to use the language in connected, vibrant prose. By making previously unconscious or tacit knowledge more conscious, where the writer concentrates on the way in which a message is given (as opposed to the giving of the message / communication) the writer becomes involved in the active construction of her own higher psychological functions. The demands of a real language situation activate knowledge about the way in which different linguistic processes, text types and competencies can be used and then puts them to use. Language becomes reconstructed, text types are renewed and multiply inscribed. Behind those multiple inscriptions lie individual students with their own thought processes, their own histories and their own understandings of the working of the language in society.

In summary, if the drama gives them frameworks within which they can find their own voice, focus or vision of the world, the writing gives them the potential to set out and discover other possibilities, both in content and in language. This would suggest that transformation allows for processes changing in accordance with both the writers' own readings of the event and their linguistic realisations. It is not only a tool of observation but also a tool of analysis. This would begin to tie in with Vygotsky's idea that people change their minds by appropriating linguistic tools and that these tools change in the process of being mastered and used. For one thing this project has shown is that the drama and writing processes have changed the students' thinking in fundamental ways; not only the way they think about the subject in question, but the way they think about writing. It has examined how drama, through cognitive, affective and imaginative processes has also engaged with the intellect and writing competencies. Furthermore, it has shown that writing and the writing process is not an aid to language learning but a part of the learning process itself.

I will now turn to the findings as a whole, seeking to make connections between the Vygotskian framework, the different frames of analysis and the findings.

9. CHAPTER NINE: INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will look back on the study as a whole. Initially I shall present a brief summary of what happened, describing the nature of L2 writing as competencies realised within my framework of L2 writing. I shall then look at the hypotheses underlying the study.

In the subsequent discussion I use a lens with a two-way focus to provide two different interpretations of the study. Firstly I look through the lens of sociocultural theory at L2 writing connecting it to theories from other sources, describing the nature of the learning process. Subsequently I use my study on L2 writing as a lens to pick up key points from Vygotskian theory. I look at the way in which Vygotskian theory is renewed by this project and how it could be potentially extended by further work.

The final section considers educational implications, concluding with some final remarks.

9.2. INTERPRETATIVE SUMMARY

This study has taught me about the nature of L2 writing, the L2 learning environment and the L2 learner. Specifically it has brought to the fore matters regarding shaping and experimentation in imaginative experience. Let me first recap on what actually happened.

I set up a research project with innovative drama practice at the centre, to explore and evaluate the educational drama/L2 writing relationship. I decided the research would be best carried out by a qualitative approach including two quantitative measures: (1) the scores of pre/post project tests and (2) measurement of student writing apprehension. In turn, this led to a focus on improvements and developments in L2 writing; and the nature of the learning environment with regard to the teaching of L2 writing.

The quantitative measures evidenced both that the scores improved and that attitude to writing changed positively. The qualitative analysis of the drama process showed the work of cultural transformation as well as ideas and narrative. The qualitative analysis of the writing looked at the way in which the quality of the scripts improved considerably, both in content and fluency.

To revisit the project more specifically, I began with a theme in a language book, which was transformed into a drama text through working in the drama medium with students in active, collaborative, negotiative processes. This drama medium was specifically designed to incorporate those things considered important in historical sociocultural theory. The teacher's role was proleptic, language was given a central role and space and time provided for students to think. Room was allowed for different forms of learning through social processes: that which engages with the intellect, that which requires imagination and affect and that which results from being a human being in social activity. In Vygotskian terms, scientific and everyday concepts were allowed to meet and interact. During the drama process learners were allowed to think with their bodies as well as their minds, engaging with the topic in any and every way they wished. Subsequently that drama text was transformed into a written text at home, each student engaging with the drama in accordance with her own interests. Different written texts were produced, each unique, and each building on or transforming what had happened in the social interaction/negotiation in accordance with who they were as a person and what it was that they had particularly engaged with. These texts were very different to any they had previously produced both in content and linguistic ability.

In short, drama provided an extra step in the writing process. Instead of being given a topic from a book and transforming that into a written text, the learners first made a drama text and then a written text. I think the essence of what happened is that

- (1) in the drama, learners were able to examine, validate and sort the ideas they would normally have to explore in their head or in a written draft, before writing their text and
- (2) they did so in a particular educational environment, created through the use of educational drama, in which everyday and scientific concepts activate thought and lead to development.

For a full appraisal of the writing, I would like to return to the framework I developed for L2 writing (Figure 2), using it to summarise what happened with reference to different competencies.

The project was essentially learner-centred, concerned with the power of the process, allowing the student to use personal knowledge and experience by working within the target language and culture. Language can be seen to have responded to and at the same time influenced the observations of its speakers/writers and mediated their experiences. Factors in learner language come to the fore. The drama process fed the writing, unleashing hidden competencies, firstly through social activity and then through the writer's engagement with a topic by reporting real events and combining information. For the students were writing whole texts, forming

connected, contextualised and appropriate pieces of communication. Kaplan was thus not right, the process was not linear (1966; 1987). Writing was not simply a transcription of the written word as the transformations have shown. The students showed an ability to produce and interpret meaningful utterances within grammatical structures, following the rules of the English language. Like Connor (1987; 1990) I take into account the written product for the analysis to be complete. Linguistic competence was evidenced in the writing in the same way as it was in their other classes. When the linguistic skills were not there, strategic competence came to the rescue.

Although drama was not the only method of instruction, the difference in texts in a relatively brief period of time, as evidenced between the pre and post drama texts in chapter 5, shows that the research project itself did have quite an impact. The project was a many-sided process in which many things contributed. As I will discuss later in the chapter some things were indirectly released by the drama and others more directly. For part of the process was the fact that the students had real tasks to do, they were motivated and excited and had a real audience. This meant that writing tasks were given a context, that they were open to the creativity of the situation, a situation in which they could make choices as writers as to how they responded. Added to this was my own support as a reader, a reader who was involved in the situation and who was interested in their writing. This whole process was co-ordinated by the drama and worked through the drama, which was particularly suitable, since the direct consequence was a type of creative activity in which writing was made important. Thus it is uncertain how to distinguish the direct consequences of the drama from the indirect, but there are good grounds to say that while the methodology does not isolate drama, drama contributed a particular part of the process.

Whether the students accessed the competencies which were usually dormant in their writing as a conscious or unconscious activity is unclear. Students admit to having used their dictionaries and taken more care with their writing as they had a particular investment in it. This led to an awareness about writing as students dared to express unconventional ideas and opinions and new ways of classifying the world, using their own conceptions and their own language resources to create texts. Textual considerations came to the fore as lexical and semantic choices were made to convey particular meanings and emotions. The texts were not only inventive and rich; they were shrewd and well organised, reflecting the writing in good writers. This would imply that as writing was used for thinking, problem-sensing and problem-solving rather than mimicking, discourse organisation and linguistic competence resulted.

Learner-external factors became important to the writers. In the drama, forum theatre and improvisation had shown them different ways of reading an event. This seems to have led to an awareness of the nuances of language and text, of discourse and sociocultural competencies.

Students gained a sense of audience, text type and the respective discourses. The using of creativity rather than a parading of form allowed for flexible approaches to the task. There was an opportunity to practise various forms and functions as, through the transformational processes, the students selected and categorised content, focussed information and involved language use in the solving of the task. They showed sociolinguistic competence, an awareness of the way in which contexts and relationships influence language. This supports work on audience and social context, especially that of Intaraparwat and Steffensen (1995). By playing with different characters in different situations, the nature of texts as socially constructed was made salient. Moreover, as has been discussed, students showed themselves more able to sustain and develop roles on paper than in the drama; by actively selecting and transforming parts of the character in the drama there was not only a change of character but a change through character. Therefore the contextual can be seen to have helped the writing, by taking away its artificiality. Writers learnt that in a story, choices need to be made and that these choices, the sequencing, categorising and selection of its forms of representation affect the picture made for the reader. This led to specific care in the elaboration of texts.

The project shows how the act of writing developed interpretative abilities. In their active transformation of the drama events, writers interwove past, present and future with personal knowledge(s), intuition and experiences to apply the transformations cognitively and affectively. Thus learner-external and learner-internal factors overlap.

This project changed the usual role of the EFL teacher, through the mixing of drama and Vygotskian emphases. My role was one of support, both in and out of role, in accordance with the strengths and weaknesses of the participants. There was no overt instruction or outline given. Written competence was acquired inductively by working actively with others. Not only the learning environment but also the open nature of the writing task itself affected the written texts produced. Each student had an identical task and each wrote her own modification, not only learning the system but how to make her own use of it. Writing then is not about putting language on display but about making choices and trusting one's own ideas. It is about self-expression, finding one's own voice. By linking the L2 to real contexts of use, writing becomes responsible, independent thinking.

Thus with regard to learner-internal mechanisms it becomes evident that this project has given us a picture of learning as well as language learning. That which was helpful to learning has also been helpful to language. As evidenced in the previous chapter, the written texts show that a preoccupation with lexis has been replaced by a preoccupation with concepts. Lexis is used instead to support, convey and develop concepts. Writing has thus become a means of stating who the writer is. This would suggest that learning from experience is linked to language and to experience through language. Exposure to the language and working with and within it enables

the learner to experience both what it is to use it and how the act of writing can give birth to ideas. This is cognitive development that is also creative and meaningful. Perhaps then, writing has to be learnt by doing rather than being taught by example or stipulation. Perhaps teaching strategies for L2 writing do not always engage with students' knowledges or use their abilities to the full.

This project has evidenced that writing is not about the teaching of sub-skills, it is about engaging cognitive, affective processes, about the interrelationship between thought and language, about teaching without putting words in the mouths of the students. The concept of transformation develops Smith's 1994 study of six writers which shows that a range of mental processes are involved in writing. It shows that when students are fictioning creatively they do not need fast rules and procedures. Whilst L1 and L2 learn from each other, the nature of L2 leads to a concentration on surface features. Both differences and similarities in composing are raised, taking Carson & Kuehn (1992) and Moragne e Silva's (1991) work further. Matusda's writings on the importance of the specific context of L2 as a dynamic context where reader and writer concerns meet also grow in significance as analysis of the texts points to the attention to register (1997).

Hence, *L2 development* becomes the important focus which suggests that an emphasis on *acquisition* is overly narrow. Developing a capacity for sociocultural and sociolinguistic competence could well be just as important as teaching structure and grammar. Realistically, as research has shown, too overt correction of errors is discouraging whereas drama inserts an atmosphere of confidence. The results of the questionnaire survey on writing apprehension show that drama is more than an amusing respite from grammar. It is instrumental in instilling confidence and commitment. Writing should also be an enjoyable exercise, not a chore.

This study particularly investigates the language learner in action. It shows that when given a sense of self and of purpose (which are usually lost in a communicative or role-play approach), writers acquire intrinsic motivation. Working together with others also helps the students, it gives them time to "think aloud", to practice and to find out what knowing a language might involve by working with the whole person and cultural being, not her mind in isolation as a language machine. The project supports Krapels' view that lack of competence in essay writing is to do with the writing and not the linguistic competence (1990). Teaching writing is not about training students through picture sequences and outlines, but about making it part of the educational process. It is more important that the teacher makes sure the conditions are right in which to learn rather than to TEACH writing. Writing is not an additional extra or a reinforcement exercise, it is an integral part of the foreign language. I would suggest that it be used to think with rather than to practise the latest tense being learnt.

To return to my study, the plotting of transformations elucidates the strategies used, both consciously and unconsciously by the writers in the creation of their texts. The composing of a text is thus seen as the result of the active connections, starting with the global and moving to the more defined (Kouraogo, 1987 p.33), from unscripted social interaction to careful use of the language code. Each text is unique, showing that whilst the strategies may have been the same, the connections were different. This is an important discovery as it throws light on both the way in which people learn about writing and how writing enables and supports the development of expertise in particular areas of knowledge since writing is only one part of the larger socially generated activity. The project has shown that meaning, knowledges and even culture itself gets transformed over time.

It is clear that the overall project has fulfilled its aims, namely to allow me, as researcher, to explore and also evaluate the educational/drama writing relationship. Although it must be recognised that drama was both a direct and indirect part of a particular process, nevertheless one can say the two directional hypotheses were accepted, namely:

H₁: *The introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom will change the nature of the writing process.*

H₂: *The introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom will have an effect on the writing apprehension of the students.*

Discussion of the data has been presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7. In particular the plotting of the transformations has allowed me to show the workings relating to the writing process, as discussed earlier; and the results of the questionnaires as presented in chapter 5 have looked at the writing apprehension. The evaluation of the data and the project itself are the subject of this chapter.

With regard to the nondirectional hypothesis:

H₃: *There is a relationship between the introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom and L2 writing proficiency;*

this was accepted by (1) the results of the tests as presented in 5.2 and (2) the discussion of the same as presented in 5.2 and chapter 8. The quality of the writing was indeed seen to change (positively) as a result of the educational process of which drama was an integral part. What was unexpected was that the linguistic quality improved. I had expected the content to be richer but

not that there would be such an effect on the competencies involved in L2 writing right across the spectrum of abilities.

Accordingly the one null hypothesis:

H_0 : *There is no relationship between the introduction of educational drama into the L2 classroom and L2 writing proficiency.*

is rejected.

Looking back on the project as a whole it is important to realise that it has its limitations as explained in chapter 4 and appendix 4. There is a need, for example, to recognise that drama is part of a process, that perhaps there is some other way of introducing this kind of educational environment for which drama is so apt. Also, this project refers to only one educational classroom where writing skills lagged behind oral skills. It refers to young adult students who have a good oral background and an interest in learning to write for their academic careers. There is thus no generalisability across classrooms. It would be interesting to see what the results would be were the students less proficient orally or perhaps 12 years old instead of 21. It would also be interesting to see the reactions of a less extrovert culture, or a multi-cultural classroom. Secondly only creative writing in role has been produced. I would have liked to have had time to move to what is called "academic" writing, namely the writing of more discursive essays on for example drug use today rather than the imaginary drug Delta X. It would be interesting to see whether any of the drama would be transformed into "real life" topics. Thirdly and perhaps most importantly I was the only teacher in the drama sessions. Therefore whilst the marking of scripts was shared and it was ensured that there was no bias, there is a possibility that another teacher would obtain different results. However, as explained in appendix 4, since it is impossible to eliminate the influence of the researcher in this project I have tried to use, rather than fight or suppress my own rapport with the students in order to further the research.

One of the main problems for the teacher is the marriage of different disciplines. Whilst do not hold a degree in drama I did study drama as an undergraduate and did extensive field work in drama classrooms and workshops before embarking on this project. I am also trained in foreign languages and foreign language pedagogy. Knowledge of both of these areas is necessary in order to create the right kind of drama, for the drama work has to be pedagogically sound in order to provide a structure to transform. Recent work by a drama practitioner in a L2 classroom has shown that it is essential to strike the correct balance between L2 and drama, or the whole process can go terribly wrong (Edmonds, 1998). It is therefore important to be aware of the way

both disciplines work and of the language level of the students before engaging the students in the drama process.

In this study I have sought to make connections and open up the drama/writing process in L2 in a way that has not been done before, building an account of the way sociocultural mediation, transformation, writing and drama work together. This crossing of conceptual domains presents two specific difficulties. One is that in marrying different disciplines across domains there is a difficulty of expression for the reader, who could come from any one or any combination of them. How far should I go into detail to explain a certain concept to the reader for example without digressing from the subject? The second is that at times this leads to emotional responses not being fully excluded in the structure. Because I am not consciously working within the style of one theory I sometimes fall back on everyday notions of teaching to make a point. However, as documented in appendix 4 matters are drawn together in the discussion, moving from the specific to the general. Thus theoretical triangulation is an essential part of the project.

As also discussed in appendix 4, the study does show that the interpretation relying on Vygotskian theory, transformation and textual wordings and choices, provides a valid interpretation of texts. I address validity threats at a practical level in the appendix, with the aim of showing how they were provided for within the context of the project. Here, I would like to discuss them at a more theoretical level. It is important to realise that the three positions do fit together and are compatible, despite the fact there are discrepancies between them. Subsequently I will turn to the drama.

For Kress signs are “motivated conjunctions of signifiers (forms) and signifieds (meanings)” (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 1996). Language is no exception: all linguistic form is used in a motivated (non-arbitrary) manner in the expression of meaning. The essential point in speech and writing is that it is the interest of the speaker or writer or group of speakers or writers that “express themselves as the (histories of) conventions of codes (see Kress, 1996, for discussion). In Kress’s view, the role of the teacher and of the literacy curriculum is to make available new representational resources for the child learner to use in their transformative making of new resources. This is how teachers engage with ZPD in a Vygotskian sense, how they produce their path into culture using the resources of an existing culture.

Vygotsky sees language as predominantly a socially, culturally and historically produced system, whereas Kress sees individuals as users and (re)makers of that system of representation out of their social and cultural histories and present positions and out of their affective dispositions, their interests at the point of making signs. Thus both individual actions and the effect of the socially and culturally available resources are important. For Vygotsky it is symbolic instruments that play a central part in the development of psychological processes (Paez,

Iguartua, & Adrian, 1996; Vygotsky, 1971). For example works of art induce emotions, retain them and provoke the complexity of both thought and the affect. A story, a novel, the cinema, drama, all can be seen as external instruments that society puts at the disposition of the individual. These develop what Vygotsky called the superior emotions, since for him it was clear that the basic emotions of a child are different to those of an adult (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991). The link between Vygotsky, emotion and drama can be made through his use of Aristotle's concept of catharsis. He states that all emotion serves the imagination, that it is reflected in a series of representations and images. Also, as we have seen earlier, he speaks of the reality of feelings, even in an imaginary setting.

However, returning to language, both Vygotsky and Kress see language as cognitive work; where they differ is in the role of writing. Vygotsky assigns it a central role, whereas for Kress it is one of various modes of communication and representation with subjectivity at the centre. Mode of representation and subjectivity are mutually interacting and interdependent. Subjectivity is placed at the centre between (1) social and cultural possibilities and forces and (2) available resources, power and the action of the individual in the making of the sign.

What this project specifically uses from Kress's work is the agency of the individual and the transforming rather than the decoding view, the encouraging of a new subjectivity and a making of personal histories. This is not inconsistent with Elbers' work on Vygotsky (1987; 1991a; 1991b; 1993; 1994a; 1994b; 1996; 1992). His view is that many current interpretations of Vygotsky emphasise the transmission of knowledge from adults to children and neglect the children's contribution, elaborating on Vygotsky's work on play and his lectures on paedology where he talks of the creation of novelty, "the personally meaningful experience of the environment which guides the development of the child". Basically then, internalisation does not rely on other-regulation but on joint-regulation, the task by two active collaborators. The internalisation process necessarily transforms the process itself and changes its structure and functions (Wertsch, 1985) but what transformation teaches us is the learner's role in this, it teaches us about spontaneous creativity.

Essential to this project is the point that transformation is more than agency, it focuses on **WHAT** has been transformed as well as what the learner does. What I develop from Kress is the concept of transformation, showing it as a negotiatory (dialogic) act as well as an act of transformation, operating on several (rather than one) levels, connecting with not only individual interpretation/agency but with social, cultural and historical factors as in the Vygotskian story. Yet we must remember these particular transformations are different to those described by Kress because the move is across modes. Kress's transformations remain within the same mode. In this way this study develops Kress's work, not only calling attention to the need to focus on what is transformed across modes, but what that change across mode entails.

Important in the Vygotskian framework is the theory that social relations underlie mental process such as thinking, reasoning, remembering and volition – between people to inside the learner. The transformations allow us to see part of the inner dialogue. They enable us to look at what goes on in the internalisation/ externalisation process, whereas Vygotskian theory allows us to interpret it. The project allows us to look first at the interaction process, Vygotsky's concept of ZPD, which is the subject of so many empirical studies in L2. What is sometimes missing and what this study brings back, is discussion of the part of the learner. It looks at a theory of the construction of L2 development in the context of social relationships, through drama/play, which also creates ZPD. ZPD is not therefore only a teacher/pupil exchange. Drama/play is not only linked to cognition. They are part of the learners' overall development as persons.

Several issues arise from this linking across domains. The relationship between context and cognitive performance comes to the fore and points to possible directions of further research. It raises questions as to the universal or culture-specific nature of texts. As found by Elbers (1994), there is seen to be a connectedness between the construction of knowledge by the learner and the way culture prestructures and prepares the learner's cognitive activities. However the direction of development is relative to the culture but not dictated by it. Learners not only need to learn cognitive structures, grammar and content, they need to learn about the conditions in which this knowledge is adequate or useful. Neither culture nor knowledge is simply transmitted or constructed spontaneously. ZPD, communication and negotiation are all part of the process.

With an emphasis on communication and meaning as the results of negotiation, issues arise as to the role of language use in the formation and functioning of mental processes; the developmental origin of competencies. The project has shown that the construction of sense and meaning takes place not only in the mind but in the textual workings and choices of the students. This would support the view that "meaning is not in the words but in the social space of speech the speakers occupy, in the subtext and the intertext, that is in the process which produces the movement of creation of sense" (Smolka, 1994).

The project thus allows us to consider

- a) how the learner accesses knowledge
- b) how knowledges get transformed by the learner
- c) how the writing interacts with this, builds a discourse for the understanding of the processes and acquisition and transformation of knowledge and becomes itself a subject of inquiry
- d) what it is that is transformed and what the change across mode entails.

The question that always arises is, how do I know that it is the drama itself that has led to this development, could it be more that the invitation for playfulness gives the signal that creativity and playfulness is valued above accuracy? I would answer that there is a problem in claiming that the development is all due to drama. However other methods introducing playfulness (role play, audio work) and creativity (through autobiography) had been tried out with the students to no avail. Moreover there is more to drama than playfulness and creativity. Central to the whole story is the engagement with the affect and thus motivation. There is a need to communicate through taking a role which affects the writing. Drama also engages with concepts. As the transformations show, the drama has had an influence, or rather several influences on the writing, for one of the beauties of drama is its richness. It gives a real audience (something always difficult in L2); it avoid the practising of structures through role play by linking fun to conceptual thinking. Students thus engage with language and events in the mind, but these are events that have been experienced and felt through the body, since the writing after drama demands scrutiny and reflection as well as play. The different levels of transformation plot the way in which different stimuli from the writing have been created by tasks such as forum theatre, hotseating, voices in the head etc. The confidence in the ideas and in expression evidenced in the drama is echoed in the use of language afterwards. Remember that drama involves language in short tasks, which are easily remembered due to their vivacity and use of different modes of representation (different learners react to different things). The suggestion is that the different kinds of stimuli unleash the transformational processes, providing a springboard to language development. For creativity and playfulness are valued *as well as* rather than *above* accuracy.

It is important not to see drama as a miracle cure for problems in language. It is not that a learner's lack of competence transforms into competence when they adopt a role. Learners may not have the words necessary. However, if they cannot access the necessary language, others will. Movement and gesture can also communicate. So can lack of movement, for bodies are never silent. This would point to the semiotic and dialogic nature of human actions and development, and the social formation of the mind as emphasised by Vygotsky. It would also point to the notion of an individual consciousness configured by and in relationship with others (Smolka, De Goes, & Pino, 1995). For each learner seeks to find her own voice amongst the many voices. And a negotiatory, dialogic process presupposes that there are dissonant, conflicting, different ones. This also connects with Kress's notion of the individual reading different signs in different semiotic modes in terms of "constantly revised organisations of relevance" (Kress, 1996). Events, emotions, experiences are RE-presented in accordance with the learner's interests and present positions.

What drama does is to engage with those things that the learner can do: everyone can feel, everyone can "be" someone else, take on a role. They do not have to perform, they have to

imagine what that person would feel like either through their own knowledge(s) or creative powers, both alone and together with others in the workshop. This highlights questions of subject formation and intersubjectivity. Through interaction with others the student in role reacts to others and to situations created for the character. Together with knowledge of the character, merge personal and cultural concerns. Afterwards another student adopts the same role, turns it on its head and denies the actions of her peer. Perhaps then yet another student enters as another character, throwing a different light on what has happened. Maybe the character is hotseated, thrown open for an intersubjective account. Meanings are mediated through the drama, through the social processes, by testing out ideas on others and hearing them come back. Yet when the learner adopts the role after the drama, as different transformations take place, the writer's own subjectivity comes into focus and is transformed. For example the emotive response to the drama, the physical nature of the expression is transformed into a conceptual one by reflecting on the role through writing. Moreover the adopting of a persona can also lead to a change in identity, a change of vision, a change in who the learner is as a person. It is this type of transformation that is often picked up and worked on in drama used for more radical or political purposes to change views and to create communities. I am more interested in subjectivity in the way it relates to the cognitive and associative connections made by the students from drama to writing, to the way in which forms of literacy are connected to forms of identity .

Had I wanted to prove it was drama and not some other method that produced the results of this project it would have been better to have a control group of students and to carry the project out in different kinds of classrooms. This would however have been to miss out on the richness of the project. Moreover, as stressed in chapter 4, the question behind the project was not whether drama had an influence on the writing but what was the nature of the drama/writing process. By investigating the nature of this process, by opening it up and by using different frames of analysis to show the different levels on which both the drama/writing relationship and the written texts themselves work, numerous questions are raised and connections across disciplines made possible. I would suggest that the way to move forward is to look at those connections, to investigate other classrooms, other ages, other abilities. It is also interesting to look at whether students who followed this project now use drama in their L2 classrooms, and if so how and for what purposes. Only then will it be possible to move forward with a theory of the precise kind of drama that should be brought into the L2 classroom. Only then will it be possible to establish a theory of L2 writing which bridges all four areas of my framework, showing the dynamic nature of the context of writing and the complexity of decision making processes that are involved in the construction of L2 text.

9.3. DISCUSSION

The interest of the research project is not only to contribute to L2 writing pedagogy. There are also more theoretical ends in view in wishing to contribute to a more general theory. I would therefore like to discuss the more theoretical perspectives derived from the marriage of L2 writing with Vygotskian and sociocultural theory. First I shall focus on using sociocultural theory to read my texts and to relate various other thinkers to the findings. Then I shall reverse the lens, to see in what ways the project might inform Vygotskian thinking.

9.3.1. THE VYGOTSKIAN LENS

Looking at the process through the lens of historical, sociocultural theory helps shed light upon it. Building on Vygotsky's idea that imagination has its origins in action, the new educational space can be seen to have provided opportunities to engage in embodied, imaginative acts through what might be called a literacy of the body, leading to literacy as we usually know it. For the body " speaks/writes/encodes just as it is encoded and as it thus represents its coding" (Brunner, 1996 p.9) . The project brings out the symbolic nature of drama, its value as a frame within which particular kinds of interaction and communication take place (Ortega, 1991). In drama students learn through lived experiences, experiences which are theirs and which are at the same time of others and of the characters in the story. Borrowing the notion of masque/mask from Brunner (1998), they work successively and simultaneously through different levels of narrative to remove the various masques characters wear in different roles and different situations, delving beneath the multiple inscriptions to find out not only what they unmask but whether they can be unmasked at all. Hence, drama awakens students to shifting identities and to the nature of life itself. It helps remove stereotype, giving students different frameworks within which they can find a voice, a focus, a vision of the world

The taking of a role allows learners to access different kinds of knowledge, to not only convey ideas but to influence each other and learn new things. It does not reflect cognitive or creative thinking but engages them together. Vygotsky describes fantasy as creative imagination and not memory, as the successor to childhood play in adolescence. He suggests that when the learner is no longer a child, fantasy is liberated from purely concrete imagistic features and is infiltrated by elements of abstract thinking, aided by metaphor. Furthermore there is a transition from a passive and imitative childish fantasy to an active and creative fantasy (Vygotsky, 1994a). Analysis of the data evidences that as the students progress their dramas and ideas become more sophisticated, moving from mime to forum theatre, from representation to questioning and interpretation. This move is echoed in their writing. Moreover, when the students' narrowed set of expectations about writing disappear, there is overt use of imaginative powers, a tendency to use metaphor, to tackle conceptual issues in and through the target language. This would

suggest two important things. Firstly, that there is a place for both cognitive and creative thinking in L2. Secondly, that drama releases the potential contained in the abilities already possessed by the students, which points to the social nature of the development of competence(ies).

In the same way that Boal teaches that drama lets people find their voice in order to form ideas, Vygotsky also teaches that imagination and conceptual thinking are linked, that conceptual and creative thinking are dialogical processes. This study begins to confirm such lines of thought. My students had a history of believing the focus of writing is on the surface. Once they were allowed to engage with character and story in an imaginative environment, they took on another authority, the invested authority of a writer confident about what she was saying, giving her own views on something in which she knew her readers were interested and involved. It is as if the creative part of the process has engaged with her subconscious as she draws on all her knowledges, those as a participant of the drama, those as a member of Portuguese culture, those as a student of English, etc. The action and the imaginative creativity have allowed her to discover what it is that already resides within her, giving her the capacity to reinvent and re-present herself and her world.

I see educational drama as central in moving the writer away from lineal to circular processes, focusing on meaning(s) rather than grammar. Throughout the workshops students engage with different concepts (both everyday and scientific) within their own time frames, their own spaces, their own ZPD, collective and individual. It is a way of inviting the whole self into their writing. Writing in role invites the student to tell her story, in direct rather than indirect speech. As an author, as the creator of a character she accesses language not available in indirect speech, language that is responsible, full of connections/transformations. Those links involve not just intellectual connections made possible by the depth of the drama experience (in stark contrast to those one can access in a modelling exercise); they involve connections involving the body, the emotions and fantasy.

The abundance of *verba sentiendi* together with the intense feeling brought out in the writing by the numerous references to the senses show the emotional involvement invested by the writers. Emotions are easy to recall. In Vygotskian terms, fantasy has turned into a subjective activity, bringing satisfaction to the emotional side of life, reminiscent of child's play. Coupled with the sense of achievement the participants felt after the collaborative drama sessions, which in turn acted as a spur to their confidence as writers and their need to communicate rather than practice structures, sociocultural theory acquires importance.

In the drama ideas come into being and are explored from different directions. It has given the students a place for critical negotiation, not through debate but through a particular form of co-operation: affectively charged, creative processes.

The drama/writing process is characterised by knowledge(s), understandings and collaborations at different levels. This is where it is different to the autobiographical work they were given in semester one. Allowed to write creatively after drama, students engage with their subconscious. Writers react to the drama process by bringing in other experiences, their own cultural histories, personal responses. According to Freire (in McLaren & Tadeu da Silva, 1993 p.59), "historical agency acquires its grounding in emancipatory acts as individuals challenge the everyday language and social practices that social agents use to give shape and meaning to their world." Dialogue in a Bakhtinian sense between ideas and concepts, between memories and emotions is what creates self-reflexivity about passively accepted meanings in a pedagogical arena. Whilst not entering into the Freirian debate of power and privilege in social discourses, educational drama, by using Boalian techniques, draws on Freire's notion of critical and active thinking. Through Boal, educational drama parallels Freire's need for the students to understand the historical contexts, social practices, cultural forms and ideologies that give discourses their shape and meaning. This has been evidenced through the tracking of the drama to writing process through the workings of transformation. Through the fictive, students have been seen to engage with the real world. Freire himself articulates why this is important:

" True dialogue cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking – thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and (humans) admitting of no dichotomy between them – thinking which perceives reality as process and transformation, rather than as a static entity – thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved. Critical thinking contrasts with naïve thinking, which sees 'historical time as a weight, a stratification of the acquisition and experiences of the past', from which the present should emerge as normalised and 'well-behaved'. For the naïve thinker, the important thing is accommodation to this normalised 'today'. For the critic the important thing is the continuing humanizing of people".

(Freire, 1970 p.64-65)

Drama is a collective process in which everyone has a voice, in which the historical world is seen as a transformable reality (Lanksear, 1993 p.111). Whilst Freire and Boal as critical educators and cultural workers are interested in encouraging new subject positions in order to resist domination and inequality, my aim was to push against different boundaries, those of stereotype and the passive repetition of set phrases. I sought for the students to find their own identity in their words. Identities are created and recreated via the active engagement of the

students with the subject, through several negotiative and dialogic activities. These activities are not a succession of tasks that follow progressively, they often happen simultaneously and contradict each other. Different readings of the situation are shared until a consensus is reached as to which will be chosen to continue the proceedings. The procedure is characterised by disjunctions and concentric circles of knowledge(s).

Analysis of the written texts has taught us not only about student language but about the language/thought relationship. For both are seen to be open to, conveyed by and understood through imagery, metaphor, play and commitment. Vygotsky did not say exactly what kind of mental development he envisaged. This project would suggest that in allowing learners to draw upon imagination, concepts and emotions, playing with meanings through language transfers to playing with meanings in language. Furthermore, writers are not only learning about meaning but they are learning about their own independence as writers, as part of the world. In this way self-narratives from experience can be seen as a springboard to development, an interpretative device, reflecting, connecting and progressing, synthesising the inter-intra psychological.

This is understanding through the making of new meanings, though changing. For stories come into existence historically, since lived acts are embodied in an emotional and a relational sense. This would suggest that there is a need to account for the constructive and social constructive dimensions of writing processes and texts. As pointed out by Valsiner, Vygotsky's emphasis on the person's active construction of his own higher psychological functions "make it possible for psychology to conceptualise the emergence of new psychological phenomena in people's lives" (Valsiner, 1988 p.165). In L2 however, it is the social dimension in the co-construction of meaning that needs special emphasis. The ability to look at different kinds of transformation has shown that writing is not about recalling but about a dynamically productive process, about different ways of identifying and recounting with social processes.

The written text produced is, following Bakhtin, a dialogic text, a heteroglossic text, living utterance. It is a text in which words are "peopled", which works on various levels simultaneously; a text which can only be described by more than one level of analysis and which admits learner language, learner-external, learner-internal and the language learner. Each writer has constructed her own sense of the drama experience and the use of the words on the page. In the process she has called on all resources possible: cultural, social, linguistic, past, present and, perhaps future wishes as a free-play of associations come into her head. Through what I, following Kress, see as a series of transformations of motivated signs, a multiply inscribed text is produced, reminiscent of the processes from which it has been made.

What the plotting of transformations has allowed me to see is that the shaping of the writing took place in the drama, in the experiments and experiences. Each student approached the task

differently, some (re)articulating one particular experience, others another. In the written text some things were extended, others reintroduced at different levels: textual, emotional, creative. I see the students as being very human agents in the creation of their own unique texts. Where I depart from Kress is in the view that these texts are also products of negotiation.

This would suggest that on a micro level the drama medium can be perceived as different students internalising different things at different moments, externalising them through sharing and exploring/negotiating them socially and internalising what is of importance to them. Specifically the student engages with imaginative, affective and creative processes, drawing on both body and mind as different concepts come into focus. Drama mediates different ways of knowing in the same way that the imagination, emotions and concepts do. Assuming this, the writing process can be seen as a step in the same process, the internalisation/externalisation process this time including a different action, that of writing. It may be that in drama language can be seen as a mediating *tool* (exterior looking) whereas in writing it is more of a mediating *sign* (inward looking): mediating mental activity, from the social to the individual and back again. Writing thus becomes a mediator of the making of meanings, a different place in which connections are made, links, which are at once individual and based on joint experience. It too is influenced by the trio of mediating processes: thinking/imagination/emotions, between which it is not possible to draw a precise boundary as they are mutually interacting processes. These bring with them several of the drama experiences and other texts such as the writers' past histories and/or cultural values.

If we look at the whole process on a different level, a macro level: (1) the drama mediates the externalisations of the writer's meanings/knowledges/texts through interactions and social processes; (2) simultaneously, and subsequently at home, engagement with the imagination, concepts and emotions helps internalise those processes; (3) the act of writing helps the writer externalise and interact with those meanings/knowledges/texts.

9.3.2. L2 WRITING AS A LENS ON VYGOTSKY

In using Vygotskian theory in this project it has become evident that Vygotsky is asking a great many questions. It is all too easy to convert his questions into answers. I would like to suggest that this study of L2 writing through educational drama might deepen or expand Vygotsky's ideas, even if it means posing more questions. For many of the points which come to the fore in my study are those about which he was writing on the eve of his untimely death and which seem to indicate the direction future research will take. I am referring specifically to the roles of writing, imagination, emotions, inner speech, play/fantasy, all related to the concept of development (Van der Veer, 1994 p.294).

Vygotsky did not believe that there was one way of achieving development, although literacy was seen as the crucial key to the remodelling of our thinking. As we have seen, he argued that psychological functions are culturally and semiotically mediated. If language is a specific human form of semiotic mediation, this would suggest that the psychological cannot be separated from signification and discourse. If we link L2 writing and imagination through the use of educational drama, both emotion and cognition come into play. The study evidences that when drama meets imaginative, creative writing, one thing that results is conceptual thinking. However this is too much of a simplification, for one thing the project has definitely shown is the complex nature of the process.

What this study has done is open up a view of the process, to let us see ways in which the student has engaged with the drama/writing relationship, which in turn allows us to look at Vygotskian emphases within the general parameter of a cultural-historical approach to signs and internalisation/externalisation. It has let us into the mind of the student, firstly by making visible the connections made in the speech/drama and secondly by permitting us to see the drama/writing transformations. For Vygotsky saw language as a psychological instrument, a mediator of individual action; and concepts as the key to understanding both cognitive and emotional development. Without making a mind/body split, this study provides a view of how language as a mediator can undergo transformations and how words and concepts acquire different senses for different learners. It has shown the workings behind the various transformations, workings which, as we have seen, have multiple readings, of which I have only discussed those relevant to the project itself.

Let me return to a reading of the process I suggested earlier, that in drama, language could be seen as a mediating *tool* (exterior looking) whereas in writing, it is more of a mediating *sign* (inward looking).

Vygotsky argued for the mediating role of symbolic tools (such as language) that transform the individual's higher psychological processes. It is through the mediation of signs that languages, texts and discourses are inextricably linked. The narrative fantasy in the drama becomes a way of understanding significant experience through feelings and connections. Understanding and internalisation result from this collective activity, where the imagination originates. By actually using the language, by sharing it, experiencing it and opening it up for criticism and/or change, meaning is found to be open-ended, imbued with collective and individual resonances; a product of social connection in which emotions present and represent themselves. Language is a mediating tool looking outwards, in a collective quest for meaning.

The role of language in writing is different. It can be seen as a mediating sign, inward looking; specifically engaging with both the imagination and fantasy through creative, cognitive and emotive connections. It turns inwards to the individual readings of the events, to connections with other languages, other experiences, interpretations and cultural histories. Writing is a conscious use of language, integrating different knowledges, structuring thought. L2 therefore deals with content and meaning, it is a support of practical activity, a learning device. The plotting of the transformations has brought out the place of the individual as active participant in living processes and living language. L2 can, in this sense, also be seen as a vehicle of internalisation, through the engagement by the student with what it is that she knows and can do. The internalisation process which usually takes place through inner speech, in this particular case occurs through the transformational processes. Perhaps in this sense transformation can throw light on one way in which things become internalised by showing the nature of the transformation.

The extra-linguistic in the drama links to the inter-linguistic in the writing through transformational processes. This would suggest that in the drama external supports and processes serve language as a tool to provoke inner speech, cognitive and creative processes. In the writing however language becomes the psychological instrument of transformations of the drama, its happenings, emotions and images. Traditional competencies are therefore reconceptualised as "culturally mediated systems of actions" (del Rio & Alvarez, 1990), controlled both consciously and unconsciously by the writer as agent in her own learning process.

The project therefore engages with Vygotsky on different levels. What is exciting is the wide range of Vygotskian themes that have come into play in the research, which opens up questions regarding:

- a) the internalisation/externalisation debate: this project would suggest it is not a linear process;
- b) the relations between the visual and the linguistic, as evidenced through the transformations: students do latch on to visual recollections;
- c) joint creative/cognitive activity as being important for individual creative/cognitive activity (without drawing the line between the two too clearly);
- d) the interplay between personal interpretation and textual representation (thought and language as dialectical processes);
- e) writing and written language as part of the mental representation of everyone;
- f) the way in which play/fantasy lets the learner construct her own ZPD, making use of all the resources around her; the connection between the social formation of mind and play/fantasy activity;

- g) the links between the emotions and the intellect, as evidenced through the plotting of the transformations; the nature or extent of the relationship is still open to question;
- h) whether transformations are part of all internalisations, as they are here in the writing.

Vygotsky wrote of the role of writing but he did not open up the process through any applied study. This project, through the examination of the drama/writing relationship, also looks at Vygotsky's writings from different perspectives. Through distinct voices, different levels of analysis, the project reveals different aspects about the same points. For whilst Vygotsky writes of the important role of language he does not look at the learning process from a linguistic perspective. I would suggest that this project enriches his writings by offering an applied use of his theories, studying the interactions of writing at both an internal and an external level. It goes some way to explaining the role of writing as a semiotic instrument in mediation. By looking at the role it plays in the different activities and different conditions it throws the subject open to more interpretation.

Here I should highlight one important result of the project, to be discussed in the following section and that is that we have a closer view of what L2 learning could be like in our educational institutions today, in comparison to what it actually is now and what it was like in the Soviet Union at the time that Vygotsky was writing. The project shows that L2 can benefit by incorporating teaching which would usually be applied to L1. It points to the fact that L2 is not mere translation, it has to do with cultural, historical and social processes and thus should be learnt in those instances. Vital to the process is the motivation created by the returning of practical and personal relevance to the classroom. Students are no longer required to sit and listen until they are required to speak/perform, they contribute in spontaneous, active, co-construction of social dialogue.

Writing is therefore not only about interaction or internalisation, it is about collaborative and mutual engagement through action and through affect, through finding significant ways of doing things. It allows the learner to write from both the contextualised/relational and the decontextualised. As the character, the writing is contextualised, part of a living event; as the writer with her own past history, as the learner of language, as the drama student who has discussed what happened in the session, she is allowed a privileged position, one which allows her to decontextualise. Language turns inward to who it is that the writer really is or wants to be within the boundaries of the fiction. In the process tacit knowledge of language is accessed, as the data have shown. For to know a language is not only to relate to other people but to have the linguistic competencies as well. Existing knowledges are merged with new knowledges to create new understandings and skills (Elbers, 1987 p.118). Tacit and hidden competencies are made more conscious as the writing preserves them for contemplation and reworking.

This position of the writer as able to reflect on both the drama and her work joins the psychological and the cultural, the internal and the external. It allows her to go over the same meaning making twice, first collectively then independently. In the process scientific and everyday concepts are seen to “mutually enrich each other”, whilst the former takes the leading role (Van der Veer, in preparation p.598). This would suggest that in order to develop intellectually, students should learn about contextualised knowledges and structures. This conclusion is the same as Elbers' (, 1987 p.146) regarding the teaching of children. It would indicate that educators need to seriously consider the results of putting social origins and contexts on a common plane with linguistic matters.

The connections with Vygotsky are many. The above comparison reminds us that this study deals with young adults, which is something infrequent in sociocultural research. It particularly supplements Vygotsky's writings on the adolescent, extending his writings on fantasy and the imagination. This makes salient matters concerning not only the learning of a language but the place of language learning in an overall picture of development. It also provides data regarding the question as to whether it makes sense to distinguish different age periods in development.

So this project, in exploring the different ways in which students connect drama and writing, through their own representations of the process and the world, has not only thrown light on that process *per se* but allowed us to look at themes in Vygotskian thought in more depth. I hope that this particular story has indicated that more studies of this kind are necessary.

What is indeed evident is that by working together, L2 and psychology can move forward, as they often share not only the same aims but the same problems. For studies of learning need to know about teaching and studies of teaching about learning. Combining these different insights, we can see L2 writing as not only a genuinely human and social activity but one which is also cultural and imaginative. By understanding others we come to understand ourselves.

9.4. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND FINAL REMARKS

The project does not just describe processes, it describes processes which involve educationally significant differences, with repercussions for the way in which L2 writing could be taught in the classroom. The historical, sociocultural approach offers a great deal but it is also very demanding (del Rio & Alvarez, 1990 p.16). For, if, as Daniels points out (1993 p.46) Vygotsky's aims are to be realised, a full account of cultural transmission needs to be accounted for.

The new emphasis of the potential of the sociocultural classroom requires a different outlook as to the understanding of L2 learning and the place of language learning in the social identity of

the learner (Candlin, 1990 p.52). Time has to be given for students to make mistakes, to discuss, check, clarify and complete incorrect expressions. The teacher's role is proleptic, stimulating the exchange of information, relating the content to personal and social existences, assuring the linguistic level is adequate. Whilst in the background, she is still very much there.

Whilst it should go without saying, I will add that the level of target language of the teacher should also be high enough to deal with the many kinds of language which will come into play. She should also be ready to mark many more scripts than usual.

Adopting this method of teaching writing has implications for both teacher and learner. The teacher in her preparation of classes has to take into consideration not only the subject of the essay but the interests of the students and all the things drama teachers usually deal with which I shall not go into here, such as how much she is prepared to change the teacher/student relationship, how much time she is allowed to spend on the drama. The drama teacher has to be resourceful not only in the physical things she brings into the classroom but in the mental capacity for dealing with a totally different classroom. For educational drama to be used, the teacher does not have to be a drama graduate but she does have to learn from drama practitioners, to be willing to let go, experiment, make mistakes and use her own creative imagination to invent drama situations around the themes covered in day-to-day classes. In order to do this she has to be prepared to spend time, both thinking and preparing for the sessions and the time involved should not be underestimated. However after a while a 'stock' of drama sessions can be built up and re-used, bearing in mind that with each set of students the drama goes in different ways. I myself after the project held an extra session on the last day of term for the first years, at their request. We did class 3's drama, the Sibyl. The direction the drama took was totally different to that of class three, even though, once more, it was the king they wished to investigate. The teacher has to be prepared for such eventualities and often work prepared for situations that do not occur are never used, or have to be used in other ways which involves the teacher thinking on her feet, being overall flexible. It also inevitably involves preparing specific classes for specific groups, which requires dedication. Therefore this method requires a lot of input from the part of the teacher beforehand and less "overt" input in the classes. For in drama, as opposed to in immersion classes, it is the students who do most of the talking and not the teacher (Sierra, 1993 p.33), something which is initially difficult to learn.

With this change in teaching method other matters will rise to the fore. In bypassing the writing assignments in course books teachers will be subscribing to a particular view of L2 *learning* which may well affect the way they see other types of exercise in the book. It will also pose questions regarding marking of essays. Our marking scheme at the university did have a place for content and holistic comments. Not every marking scheme has this and one that does not

take into account content as well as grammatical accuracy will not only be missing out on the richness of the writing but also failing to mark the essays in the spirit of which they are taught.

As previously mentioned this project has its limitations. It only covers one type of student, mostly girls, (competent orally but not on paper) in one educational establishment. More studies are needed to ascertain whether these findings apply to other types of student in other establishments. It also only deals with creative writing. Research is needed to find out whether drama helps the more “academic” text types such as discursive essays. In an educational setting, research needs however to be related to the type of essays required of the students. In my university creative writing was valued. In another it will not be. Sometimes one type of writing is required in one year of study and another in the following year. All these matters need to be taken into consideration.

Other obvious restraints will come into play – time, rooms, noise levels etc. However, the introduction of a new teaching method is never easy whatever it entails. Even if colleagues may secretly subscribe to the ideas it is always “safer”, easier and less time consuming to go with the flow rather than against it. Those of us who wish to introduce innovative methods need to have persistence as well as conviction, in order to make our mark. One thing that does help is the reactions of the students and the results of studies like this which show such great increases in ability and motivation. I do hope that other teachers/researchers of L2 writing will examine these results and press for more studies to be carried out in both psychology and L2.

If this project had such an impact in such a short time surely it should make us stop and think: about the role of language, thinking, imagination and feeling in L2 writing. In the same way as I press for the lowering of the boundaries between L2 theory and pedagogy, I press for dialogue between psychology and L2. For, as this project has shown, we have a lot to learn from each other.

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