English drama For critical pedagogy: adapting Caryl Churchill’S dramas as a methodological tool for community-engaged theatre workshopping in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong

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ENGLISH DRAMA FOR CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: ADAPTING CARYL CHURCHILL’S DRAMAS AS A METHODOLOGICAL TOOL FOR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED THEATRE WORKSHOPPING IN POST-UMBRELLA MOVEMENT HONG KONG

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PHD

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ENGLISH DRAMA FOR CRITICAL PEDAGOGY:
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by
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submitted in partial fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

English Drama for Critical Pedagogy: Adapting Caryl Churchill’s Dramas as a Methodological Tool for Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping in Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong

by

YU Hsiao Min

Doctor of Philosophy

Tertiary-level drama is often condescendingly perceived in Hong Kong as either vocational or leisure-related, and tends to be marginalized in many – though not all – curricula as an activity for extra-curricular inter-university competition. This research aims at re-imagining Drama and Community Theatre as a critical pedagogy in promoting community culture. The aim of the research project is to strengthen the social functions of drama as community experience and as a tool for empowerment in the ‘glocal’ sociopolitical context of today. The study examines the methodology of a semi-scripted, community-engaged, theatre workshopping initiative with scenes adapted from Caryl Churchill’s plays, offering a powerful pedagogic praxis with the goal of raising social and cultural consciousness in the post-Umbrella Movement era of Hong Kong.

The first part of the study focuses on the experimental forms of community-oriented plays and theatre workshopping practices in historical contexts, investigating how Churchill’s plays respond to theatre as social criticism in contemporary society. It proposes four community-engaged theatre workshopping models with scene extracts adopted and adapted from *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine*, *Serious Money* and *A Number* by Caryl Churchill. These models are designed to engage with the learning needs and interests of tertiary students particularly in the current global sociopolitical context.

The initiative is supported by an empirical action research element, which
envisages one of the models as a form of critical pedagogy, connecting the typical tertiary Drama Studies curriculum with outreach community experience. The second part of the research project presents a local case study in which scene extracts from Top Girls were adapted and introduced to Hong Kong secondary students as a methodological tool for community-engaged theatre workshopping. This small-scale experimental model of a community drama outreach programme was facilitated by a focus group of students from an undergraduate Drama course.

The research results reflect on how students’ existing social awareness of community cultural development and identity can be linked to the glocal construct in the way they perceive and interact with the contemporary community-oriented plays that Churchill has produced. Based on the narratives from the focus group and my participant-observation of the response from the participating community, my qualitative study makes a number of conclusions about the effect of such pedagogic methodology on students’ empowerment in learning autonomy. The model is intended to encourage tertiary students to create their own forms of theatre workshopping to share their internalized subject knowledge and personal insights with other communities outside the institutional setting. And the research expresses the significance of theatre for community as rehearsals of the anticipated tensions between citizens and institutions in the global sociopolitical context.
DECLARATION

I declare that this is an original work based primarily on my own research, and I warrant that all citations of previous research, published or unpublished, have been duly acknowledged.

____________________________
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Date:
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL OF THESIS

ENGLISH DRAMA FOR CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: ADAPTING CARYL CHURCHILL’S DRAMAS AS A METHODOLOGICAL TOOL FOR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED THEATRE WORKSHOPPING IN POST-UMBRELLA MOVEMENT HONG KONG

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Chapter 1: Contextualizing Institutional Education and Drama for Critical Pedagogy

Introduction to the Topic

The rising student movements around the globe in recent years have been characterized by an emphasis on the learner’s autonomy as self-empowerment and the correlation between academic acquisition and community advancement. The social relevance of institutional pedagogic approaches is thus called into question, and the role of community experience is foregrounded. In response to the claim for pedagogic alternatives in institutional education in the current sociopolitical environment in Hong Kong, as contextualized in a liberal arts university in Hong Kong, a research project related to the community-engaged pedagogic approach of an undergraduate English Drama course was conducted.

The study is grounded in scholarly criticism on conventional Hong Kong pedagogy in tertiary education from a cross-disciplinary perspective of English Studies, Cultural Studies and Education. It examines the integration of community theatre and community plays by Caryl Churchill as a viable critical pedagogic methodology especially in the Post-Umbrella Movement context of Hong Kong. The research explores the potential of Churchill’s plays as a culturally transferable foundation for social enquiry and debate generated by the sociopolitical critique that can be read into
Churchill’s dramatic lines. It will present a semi-scripted, community-engaged theatre workshopping tool with scenes adapted from Churchill’s plays. The project model can be implemented as a powerful pedagogic tool for empowerment and raising sociocultural consciousness across the various Hong Kong communities in the post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong context.

An action research project was constructed based on the structures of existing community-engaged theatre workshopping models with scene extracts adapted from four of Churchill’s plays. The action research facilitated a local case study adapting Caryl Churchill’s 1982 play *Top Girls* as a methodological tool for theatre workshopping with a focus group of students from an undergraduate Contemporary English Drama Studies course. Based on the narratives from the focus group, my participant observation as workshop leader, and the response from the participating community of secondary students, this qualitative study has endeavoured to draw conclusions from the effect of such pedagogic methodology on students’ empowerment in promoting learning autonomy. The major goal was for the workshop facilitators – all of them undergraduate students – to be able to transfer and share academic knowledge with young people from other communities to explore collaborative social development beyond the context of top-down institutional education in this era of global social activism. This introductory chapter will present
the background of my study in relation to the problematics of institutional education and conventional pedagogic approaches. It will also provide an overview of the potential of drama and community theatre for critical pedagogy in tertiary education.

1.1 The Problematics of Institutional Pedagogic Practices

In institutional education, the university is supposed to serve not only as a preparation for the participation of young adults in society, but also as a cradle of future community leaders’ perceptions of the world and communities. Nevertheless, according to Howard A. Berry (1991) tertiary education has been criticized as a “system of passive recipients and set knowledge, rather than one of active learners encountering active information” (p.53). The major challenges of pedagogy in tertiary education can be reflected by the common disjunction between students’ knowledge acquisition and their engagement in the community, and the lack of student autonomy in teaching and learning both within and beyond the institute. In light of the notion that knowledge is a shared experience of a given community, the deficient practices of institutional pedagogy often neglect the tacit dimension of learning (Polanyi, 1966), which refers to the idea that human factors and individual uniqueness play an important part in processing rational and technical facts.

In many educational contexts a passive learning style (Holt, 1964/1982)
has tended to be established based on the power relation between institutions and learners. As a result, academic teaching and learning in the cognitive dimension has been separated from the affective domain, with insufficient regard to learner motivation and interest in the topics and subjects to be learned. At this point, it should be noted that the more traditional institutional curriculum has started to undergo a transformative development. In recent decades many Asian institutions have begun to adopt experiential and collaborative pedagogic approaches in response to the global trend in higher education. In Hong Kong, spoon-feeding and ultimately controlling approaches in primary and secondary school are criticized for their tendency to transmit received ideas and attitudes towards learning among some university students. As part of the pedagogic reforming process Service-Learning, critical thinking, liberal arts methodology and community-engagement have all started to play more important roles in Hong Kong’s tertiary education over the past decade.

**Tertiary Education and Sociopolitical Development in Hong Kong**

In the current sociopolitical context of Hong Kong, there is an inevitable call for pedagogic alternatives in institutional education, as demonstrated by the contemporaneous post-Umbrella Movement. As a significant independent social movement in Hong Kong’s history, the emergence of the Umbrella Movement in 2014
has made a powerful impact on the cultural-political ideological awareness of citizens. People are more conscious that various aspects of their daily life, including education and economy, are inter-related and determined by existing institutions; culture thus involves “whole ways of life” (Williams, 1977, p.17). As Nick Couldry (2000) remarks, education, social practices, languages, economics and gender politics for instance, are a range of cultural experiences interacting with and mediating each other.

Regarding the educational impact of social movements and activism, one should not underestimate the significance of the crucial student strike organized by the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS) in triggering the unexpected eruption of the 2014 Umbrella Movement. The Declaration for Students’ Strike explained that students reject any notion that they were neglecting their civic duties and social responsibilities, thus “(t)o strike, is to create a new opportunity for synergy. To strike, is to push each Hong Konger to rethink her/his own ‘fate’” (HKFS, 2014, para. 3). This call to action – a response to the government's hardline policies in response to calls for genuine sociopolitical dialogue and reform – like its many political counterparts around the globe – proves that students have realized the vital association between institutional study and community engagement as a responsibility of their individual and collective sociopolitical identity.

The slogan “Strike for Learning” has also illustrated the principles behind
this strike: students and citizens are free to take part in diverse forms of teaching and
learning according to their own interests, Summerhill style\(^1\) (Summerhill, 2014). It
invites participants to “use the limited freedom and space we still have to collectively
brainstorm about the future… to expand our ability to imagine what can still be done …
(for) social reform to continue” (“Boycott Classes, Continue Learning”, 2015, para. 3).
The assembly with over 60,000 participants on normal school days marked the
beginning of the strike. In the following week over 6000 students, from both tertiary
and secondary sectors, and a supportive number from varied social and educational
backgrounds, ranging from housewives, workers, businessmen, to the retired elderly,
participated each day in this strike (HKFS, 2014). In addition to all the open lectures,
seminars and dialogue sessions organized officially by HKFS and a voluntary team of
tertiary educators, scholars and social practitioners, there were countless self-
generated open teaching and learning activities on the strike site: film screenings,
forum theatres, musical ensemble improvisation, mobile libraries, handcraft
workshops and a large covered study room built on the occupied road by voluntary
carpenters, for instance. All these learning forms have demonstrated the value of
learners’ autonomy, while many are still in practice on the streets in Hong Kong today.

\(^1\) Summerhill School is an independent free school founded by A.S. Neill in Suffölk, the UK since 1921
where students take control of their own learning experience.
Plenty of social issues and concerns have been raised in the Umbrella Movement instead of a solitary focus on the Government's proposal for constitutional reform. Democratic, socially responsible community engagement, as opposed to the top-down, paternalist capitalism of the prevailing orthodoxy, is one of the outstanding features. The Movement in fact epitomizes Churchill's own grass-roots socialist-feminist ideology as expressed in plays like *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*, *Cloud Nine* and *Top Girls*, which is the chosen text of the Drama Studies course in this case study. *Top Girls* also covers controversial issues relevant to social appeals such as same-sex marriage, which appeared during the Occupy protest. This correlation will be elaborated in this coming sections.

From the breakthrough experience of connecting teaching and learning with public space as well as the common good of society, it is obvious that our students and many citizens can no longer tolerate institutional learning as a separate entity divorced from the sociopolitical context of daily life and community outside the institution. In the wake of a revolutionary perception of how academics can associate with social actions in community building, it is necessary for us to adopt more diverse and community-engaged forms of pedagogy, as well as to respect learners’ autonomy. These should serve the actual learning needs of students following the pedagogic transformation brought about by the campaign of civil disobedience.
Pedagogy from the Cultural Studies Perspective

Realizing the deep-seated problems of the pedagogic practices in institutional education, educational critics such as Paulo Freire and Raymond Williams have advocated a provocative concept of education with cultural experience as the fundamental principle in teaching and learning. Following on from Freire and his influential book *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* critical pedagogy has evolved in responding to the deficiencies found in institutional education. It aims at facilitating students’ development of critical consciousness of what actually happens in society and the reasons behind events and actions, and above all to recognize the authoritarian tendencies in education and daily life and understand the relationship between knowledge and power relations. According to Henry A. Giroux (2010), critical pedagogy allows learners to liberate their minds through their own voices and actions in response to social issues, including feminism and democratic advancement.

From the Cultural Studies perspective, Lawrence Grossberg (1994) explains that critical pedagogy embodies the concept of education as a cultural practice in a specific institutional context. It advocates an alternative pedagogy which values learning as an experience and self-reflective process with collaborative contributions by all the involved participants, opposing the traditional result-oriented, transmissive mode of education. The idea of experiential learning which suggests learning through
actions and making reflections on one’s experience thus becomes a popular learning and teaching methodology.

The Tacit Dimension in Education – Experiential Learning

Considering the criticisms against the generalized learning approach practiced in formal institution contexts, it is not difficult to conclude that the problematics of education emanate from the very perception of knowledge itself. The scientist and philosopher Michael Polanyi (1958; 1966) has made an important contribution to theories of knowledge which exposes a long-standing fallacy in relation to the essence of knowledge. He points out that the tacit dimension of knowledge, as opposed to explicit knowledge, has always been neglected in our notion of education, in which tacit knowledge refers to the total understanding of an object through personal experience in one’s own perspective rather than the mechanical transmission of some scientific or standard knowledge. In other words, his notion exposes the underlying human factors, belief systems and institutional values for instance, in traditional perception on the nature of knowledge.

Emphasizing the absence of ‘objectivity’ in knowledge, Polanyi (1958; 1966) believes that all types of knowledge acquisition are based on personal judgments. He indicates that all human-beings can demonstrate the innate ability to know things.
in a tacit manner, so as to establish one’s personal knowledge about the world with subsidiary awareness. In his work *The Tacit Dimension* (1966), Polanyi concludes the structure of tacit knowing as an integrated process of personal experience which involves different stages: functional – from particulars to the whole object, phenomenal – integration of details from the whole view of an object, semantic – developing new meanings of an object in a particular context, and the ontological – object as an independent entity.

Furthermore, he insists on the existence of universal truth, which is usually perceived as ‘relative cultural traditions’ without absolute objectivity, which, he argues, can only be reached through tacit knowing. He also agrees that it is important to acquire universal truth as learners will construct the new meaning of knowledge based on the traditions, while the learning process of universal truth determines how this truth or knowledge relates to learners’ own self as well as to individual experience (Polanyi, 1966). He highlights the value of ‘in-dwelling’ of language learning, since learners are able to link up subject knowledge, such as language skills, and their personal experience in authentic life. In addition, according to Polanyi (1958), knowledge or universal truth is always constructed in a small community through interactive sharing and understanding among members, which can be known as the achievement of ‘shared experiences’.
Since learning is determined by experience, the essence of language learning should be allowing learners to construct a personal interpretation of the subject through experience beyond the single-way of adoption of what they gain in a formal institutional context – from textbooks or in the classroom. According to Clar Doyle (1993), drama is a critical pedagogic tool of experiential learning and a process of producing cultural forms based on the shared life experience in a community. It can be taken as a means of acquiring tacit knowledge that cannot be reached without action or experience. In terms of language education in tertiary education, community drama can be adopted as an experiential learning activity applied to everyday life contexts. Through dramatic performance and exploration, it can facilitate student’s tacit knowledge in relation to language, culture and social awareness by interacting with diverse community members.

**Learners’ Autonomy & Assisted Learning**

Based on Polanyi’s idea on tacit knowing, John Holt (1964/1982) believes that learning should not be separated from affection. He critiques the idea that learning in the institutional setting of school is constrained by the power relationship between institutions and learners. Constraining learners’ natural interest and motivation in acquiring knowledge, institutional education is characterized by its prescriptivism.
Lacking autonomy in learning, especially in the institutional context, students have often been required merely to reproduce imposed ways of thinking and skills to serve the needs of society and to maintain the existing power-relationship in society. Plane recommends offering learners much greater autonomy in institutional learning, as opposed to the typical one-way transmission of set knowledge as a conventional pedagogic practice.

Moreover, Lev Vygotsky (1978) places great stress on the intervention of an instructor or teacher in one’s process of skill or knowledge development. His insistence on assisted learning does not oppose learners’ autonomy in the knowledge development process, but he recognizes the significance of enhancing students’ achievement of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) knowledge. He reckons there are three levels of knowledge development: the first level involves knowledge that can be learned by the learner himself independently without support; the second level consists of items that can be learned by the learner when some guidance is provided – namely ZPD knowledge; and the third level refers to the knowledge beyond the learners’ reach even with guidance provided at such stage (Vygotsky, 1978). The notion about ZPD knowledge accounts for the need of assisted learning, either “under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86), in order to maximize the effectiveness of learning.
In addition, the higher level of mental functions involved in acquiring ZPD knowledge can only be formed through the process of internalization – transforming certain knowledge according to one’s own interpretation. Vygotsky (1978) regards learning as an experiential process with an emphasis on the role of teachers or instructors. According to Laura E. Berk and Adam Winsler (1995), teachers are the organizers of learners’ experience who design the setting of learning based on their professional knowledge of education. Internalization of ZPD knowledge aims at transforming learners’ assisted performance into unassisted self-regulated performance with the help of assisted learning experience, and therefore the role of facilitators or instructors is intrinsic in the process of learning with ultimate effectiveness.

**Experiential Learning as a Pedagogic Approach in the Local Context**

Synthesizing the overview of learning and pedagogy above, there are a several key factors needed to establish a transformed pedagogy to be adopted in the institutional context including tertiary education, for nurturing more capable, empowered communities in the globalized world of today. Engaging in critical pedagogy allows learners to raise self-reflexive questions through experience or action in a collaborative and experiential way in the authentic context. This supports learners’
attempts to construct and internalize knowledge with a personal interpretation associated with their own life experience in society. Peers or instructors need to discover a shared meaning of knowledge, and to stimulate the discovery of fresh meaning for individuals, through which learners are able to reach the ZPD level of learning.

In recent decades, proposed educational reforms can be found across the globe where experiential learning approaches are highlighted in new curricula and assessment forms. In the local context, the New Senior Secondary Curriculum was introduced to secondary schools in 2007. The implementation of a new core subject of Liberal Studies (CDC, 2007), the additional assessment forms of Independent Enquiry Study and Other-Learning-Experiences outside academic subjects have reflected the societal preference for a more humanistic and socially-related educational approach. This perception emphasizes learners’ exploration across disciplines as well as social experience outside the classroom.

In accordance with the world trend of experiential learning with community engagement, reforms and adjustments of course curricula and orientations also occur in Hong Kong’s tertiary institutes. An extensive knowledge-base is expected from university graduates in order to tackle various sociocultural issues they will encounter when they graduate and work in the community. To cope with the
shortcomings of the institutional pedagogy, experiential learning approaches such as pedagogy with community engagement or Service-Learning have been introduced in different universities. In order to facilitate instructors, students and community stakeholders to adaptation to this transforming pedagogic trend, this study aims to establish a methodology of community-engaged theatre workshopping for Drama Studies or a Language discipline in response to students’ need for relevant academic and social development in contemporary society.

**Service-Learning in Hong Kong’s Tertiary Education Context**

According to the International Partnership for Service-Learning™ and Leadership (IPSL), Service-Learning refers to the “pedagogy that links academic study with the practical experience of volunteer community service” (2010). According to Sato Yutaka (2010), the introduction of Service-Learning to tertiary education in Asia is mainly related to the promotional practices and networking of International Christian University in Japan and the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. This promotion of Service-Learning in Asian universities is aimed at fostering the linkage between liberal arts and everyday life with a ‘learning-through-doing’ approach. Various Service-Learning programmes have been implemented in numerous institutes in Asia, including universities in Hong Kong. It is particularly welcomed as
an idea for promoting “internationalism …… within the context of a liberal arts university education.” (Sato et al., 2010, p.31). Furthermore, it provides a recognized basis for matching between many universities that value liberal arts and the whole-person development of students.

In Hong Kong, there are academic essays recording the development of Service-Learning programmes in four tertiary institutes; including Hong Kong Baptist University, Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Lingnan University, and The Hong Kong Institute of Education (Xing & Ma, 2010). These papers can serve as a reference for different models and achievements of these projects within or outside disciplines. These cases of Service-Learning in Hong Kong universities highlight the components of a successful Service-Learning project. Operating a Service-Learning project usually requires the nomination of a programme coordinator, which can be the lecturer of the specific course if the project is a course-based one like my theatre workshopping model. Another essential component of a Service-Learning project is a community-partner outside the institute, such as a Non-Government Organization or school as the service-receiving party. The major function of a community-partner is to co-ordinate and gather participants from the target community.

According to Xing and Ma (2010), there are also three key stages of
implementing a Service-Learning or community-engaged project. The first stage refers to the preparation and planning, including the design of the project details in relation to the target community, the theme of the project, the objectives of the project, the use of materials, forms of service, and evaluation materials. It also involves preparation workshops and rehearsals led by the facilitator or instructor before students conduct the actual service in the second stage. The final stage enables students to reflect on what they have learned and perceived from interactions with the target community; the evaluation of effectiveness of the whole project can be assessed in collaboration with the students, the community-partner and the instructor.

In terms of learning outcomes, there are some common results found in different cases (Xing & Ma, 2010). The first outcome is the community experience obtained by students, which is beneficial to their personal growth and reflections on ethical values. It is reported that students enjoy intercultural exchange contributing to alternative perspectives on the world. Regarding academic development, Service-Learning projects serve as platforms for students to put theories into practices. Projects involving multilingual exchange can also raise students’ confidence in communicating in a non-native language like English in an intercultural context. It illustrates one significant aspect of the cross-community theatre workshops as a pedagogic tool attached to a drama or literature course in a Language/Literature Studies discipline.
Furthermore, the implementation of Service-Learning projects can reinforce a university’s commitment to liberal arts or whole-person service-oriented education. Adopting Service-Learning pedagogy fosters the network between the faculty, its counterparts and relevant international associations across the region. The context and practices of Service-Learning in Hong Kong universities has inspired my design of the present community-engaged theatre workshopping methodology as critical pedagogy in a glocal sense. The information can be taken into consideration when university faculties plan to establish Service-Learning projects or courses with Service-Learning components in diverse contexts. A case study was conducted in a multicultural and multilingual context to provide a community-engaged theatre workshopping model with adapted scenes from Churchill’s play, *Top Girls*, which was also integrated into a drama course curriculum with Service-Learning components (see Chapter 5 for details).

**1.2 An Overview of Drama and Education**

Paulo Freire (1970) believes that education is a form of action for freedom and knowing, an experience in which every member in the community can participate. According to his argument, a learning process which is inextricably involved in social and cultural experience is fundamental to education. In this regard, drama in both
senses of act and performance is an experiential pedagogical approach. According to Henry A. Giroux and Patrick Shannon (1997), education with drama is achieved by “the display of texts, bodies, and representations” (p.4). Manfred Pfister (1977) indicates that the very nature of drama comprises collaborative productions based on the inspirations from people’s living experience and creativity, which also presupposes a collective reception by audience from the community.

When Drama Studies becomes an academic course primarily, students may find themselves struggling in the institutional practices of teaching and learning. In my action research, the focus group members of the case study were asked to reflect on their learning experiences in the Drama course before participating in the outreach theatre workshopping project. Students reported again a passive learning style and the separation of academic knowledge and real life experience. A lack of motivation or meaning for making self-reflections is a result of having in-class presentations in a closed and fixed classroom setting. Similar input of knowledge and life perceptions among the classmates from the same community also formed a restraint on the scope for obtaining inspirational reflections on learning. In addition, focusing on literary studies on drama texts with rare opportunity for performance made it difficult to interact with other communities outside the classroom, which is an essential component for effective learning with critical insights into sociocultural issues.
order to conquer these challenges, the conventional teaching and learning approaches in Drama Studies should be transformed into more engaging and vivid forms of critical pedagogy. This will be elaborated in Chapter 2.

**Community Theatre for Critical Pedagogy**

Social and cultural experiences are the fundamentals in teaching and learning, and thus education itself is a cultural practice (Williams, 1977; Couldry, 2000). Critical pedagogy can be seen as a tactic in response to the problematics of institutional education, as illustrated in the previous section. Instead of assessing learners’ performance in fulfilling particular learning objectives in a set context of binary opposition, critical pedagogy focuses on learners’ reflections on their own cultural experience achieved and alternatives explored in the learning process (Freire, 1970; Polanyi, 1966; Holt, 1964/1982).

In the field of Drama Studies, community theatre is generally considered a form of critical pedagogy. Eugene van Erven (2001) indicates that drama activities nowadays often “operate(s) on the cutting edge between performing arts and sociocultural intervention” (p.1), and the development of theatre has highlighted a community-oriented nature of contemporary drama. According to Peter Mayo (1999), community theatre is the “practice of freedom”, offering a means for collaborative
expression of identity, concerns and aspirations through sharing and improvising stories among each other in community. Since our stories can never be the same as each other, an interactive theatre is a particularly vital means to express, admit and face our sociocultural differences, so to explore new possibilities and future directions with mutual understanding and respect. Facing cultural-political conflicts in daily life, citizens with various sociopolitical perceptions are invited to participate in a common effort to explore possibilities for social advancement. John O’Toole (2015) shares his view on community-oriented theatre: by sharing life stories, community theatre is able to open a dialogue involving holistic cognitive embodiment, empathy development, reflection-making for a collective exploration of possible reforms of society.

Linking up the authentic social context and students' desire for community engagement through their studies, the essential form of community theatre has been adopted as a critical pedagogic approach in Drama Studies in this action research initiative. Drama Studies as an academic subject consists of meaning-making with a tacit dimension, which can only be acquired by constructing understanding based on learners’ own learning experience in cultural practices. The study of language arts and literature should not be detached from other cultural activities, as they are created based on the ordinary lives of people. Hence, the form of community theatre can be adopted as a significant pedagogic approach to triangulate language, literature and
community in order to provide a holistic foundation for Drama Studies.

1.3 The Structure of the Research

The significance of the community theatre workshopping methodology is to offer a viable critical pedagogic alternative. In this way it is intended to promote a dynamic and participatory approach to the problematic issue of recognizing the value of Drama Studies in tertiary education. The study is constituted into two parts, in which my theoretical argumentation on drama, community theatre and critical pedagogy in the contemporary sociopolitical context (see Chapters 2 & 3) is supported by my discussion of an action research project. This is designed to test out the theoretical aims and ideas in a practical of the thesis in a practical and applied way. The first part of the research presents the theoretical construction of four community-engaged theatre workshopping models with scenes from Churchill’s *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine*, *Serious Money* and *A Number* that are intended to engage with the learning needs and concerns of tertiary students in the Post-Umbrella Movement context (see Chapter 4). Derived from the model structures, the action research section presents one of the dramatic models as a critical pedagogic form connecting tertiary Drama Studies with community experience to enrich the quality of critical and creative education in the curriculum (see Chapter 5).
The thesis consists of six chapters, and each plays a specific role in the overall research study. Chapter 1 provides the background to the thesis topic, indicating the problematics of institutional pedagogy with relation to drama provision in the curriculum. It also explains the aim of this research, which is to establish a methodological tool for community theatre workshopping for Service-Learning and sociocultural development under the glocal pedagogic trend of community engagement in higher education. Chapter 2 focuses on the development and functions of community theatre as social intervention. By illustrating the rationale, local and overseas practices, and forms of community drama and theatre, this chapter serves as a theoretical basis for the proposed theatre workshopping methodology relevant to Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong in the latter part of the thesis.

Meanwhile, Chapter 3 analyzes the community-oriented plays of Caryl Churchill and their potential application to the challenges of teaching-and-learning in the local institution. My Chapter 4 integrates the review on and analysis of the theory and practices of community theatre, specifically Churchill’s plays from the previous chapters. It illustrates four possible models of community-engaged theatre workshopping with adopted and adapted scenes from Churchill’s plays designed for application to the glocal context of Drama Studies in higher education. Following the theoretical argumentation, Chapter 5 presents a practical action research model based
on one of the workshopping models as explained in Chapter 4. It examines the feasibility and effects of the proposed methodological tool together with a localized small-scale case study, and reflects on and evaluates the various challenges and feasible solutions when putting the methodology into practice.

The significance of this research is concluded in Chapter 6, which also provides suggestions for consistent development of the methodology in the glocal social context. This integration of theoretical and practical studies prompts reflection on how students’ social awareness for community advancement can be linked to the ‘glocal’ construct. Churchill’s community-oriented dramas provide a means of responding more critically and analytically to issues such as women and the workplace and also offers a tool for them to interact with other communities beyond the confines of the university. The research experience enables me to offer practical suggestions for implementation and further development of a critical pedagogic methodology for Drama Studies in Hong Kong today and in the future.
Chapter 2: The Significance of Theatre Workshopping as Social Intervention in the Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong Context

Introduction to the Chapter

Because drama goes beyond a cultural art form for entertainment or appreciation, this research values drama as a significant platform for cross-community collaboration in promoting social advancement. Raymond Williams (1977) describes the social function of literature including drama as a concept to construct a stable domain for operating bourgeois class sensibilities – by defining social practices and expressing a class identity. Thus, to challenge the bourgeois concepts of social routines we must achieve consistent alienation in terms of institutionally defined forms and sensibilities of cultural practices including drama performance. This chapter will explore the development of community-oriented drama and community theatric forms as social intervention in the global and local contexts. It will also elaborate the potentials of community theatre workshopping for cross-community interaction in response to the sociopolitical needs of the young generation in Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong.

2.1 Performance in Everyday Life: Social Role and Identity Establishment

To understand the inseparable correlation between drama as a cultural
practice and the maintenance of social institutions, we shall look at Erving Goffman’s (1959) exposition of the relation between performance and the representation of selfhood in our everyday life. According to Goffman (1959), the purpose of a performance is to exert influence on theatre participants or audience in a given occasion, or to control and sustain the impressions that the others receive in a particular situation. A particular occasion or spectacle can be described as a theatre for such performance. This theatre does not necessarily refer to a cultural production, namely ‘stage drama’, but also occurs in our daily activity and interaction with others in reality. He believes that our performance in everyday life causes vital impacts on how we act in front of others and the attitudes of oneself as well as the reality we stage. He reckons there are two extremes of a performer’s attitude towards the impression of the reality as reflected in his performance: the sincere performer and the cynical performer.

A performer is ‘sincere’ when he is completely taken in by his speech and behaviour, where both the performer himself and his audience are sincerely convinced that the impression of the reality presented through the performance is a real one (Goffman, 1959, p.18). In contrary, a “cynical” (Goffman, 1959, p.18) performer may not believe in his own act, and neither has he had the ultimate concern with the beliefs that his audience have of him and the situation. The aim of his performance is to guide the judgment or conviction of his audience; in other words, it serves as a means for
obtaining something he desires from his audience. During such a process, the performer may achieve unprofessional pleasures from masquerade or masking. He may as well experience a gleeful spiritual aggression for being able to toy at his own will with what his audience would take serious. The performer can also convince the others to cooperate or respond in guided actions for what he considers as the audience’s own good or for the common good of a community.

Our daily life performances construct our social ‘roles’ and duties which determine our perceptions of selfhood, our relationship with others, and the community we belong to. By playing a social role, or putting on a “mask” in Goffman’s word (1959, p.19), we establish our self as well social identities. Such social roles will become the “second nature and an integral part of our personality” (Goffman, 1959, p.19). This functioning of role-playing and how it guides us to maintain social interaction is an incarnation of Williams’ idea on the social function of drama. It turns the reality into a theatre where every individual has to participate – to fulfill duties set by social roles and avoid breaking ‘social norms’ or the stability of social systems. However, this process of socialization is often defined by the bourgeois class and the governing institutions. It often results in cynicism as an ideology in people’s everyday life, which can be further explained by Michael Foucault’s (1980) concept of ‘Governmentality’.
Foucault (1980) expresses his insights on ‘Governmentality’ and cynical institutions. Since the governing party will always ensure a sustainable and effective governing of its people, it will attempt to produce citizens who are best suited to fulfill its governmental policies. Socialization, therefore, is systematically organized and implanted in people’s daily routines through performance. The implementation of social disciplines through repeated scenario in everyday life performances guides and motivates people to play certain social roles. People are expected to put on a mask of manner in order to satisfy social expectations. Socialization can be seen an ‘internalized’ discipline to standardize and normalize people’s perceptions of everyday life practices and the presentation of selfhood. When daily routines are established, reinforced and collectively accepted through performance, what people perform or express in daily life will then fit into social understanding or expectations. This explains the common tendency of performers who would strive to present the ‘idealized’ impression of one’s self according to social standards. Cynicism is constructed when a performer pays attention only to the maintenance of an ‘idealized’ impression; the way he acts often reveals his disbelief in or even distain for actual values and virtues of what his performance ‘represents’.

Goffman (1959) also highlights a typical representation of cynicism in institutional teaching and learning which demonstrates the contradiction between
‘expression’ and ‘action’. When an attentive student wishes to be attentive in class, he “exhausts himself in playing the attentive role that he ends up by no longer hearing anything (from the teacher)” (p.33). This dilemma reveals a fact that we may not find ourselves perfectly fitted into the roles of the everyday life performance in social interaction as well as the socialized masks embedded in our perception of the daily routines. In other words, it is not natural for us to accept the presentation of self as a fulfillment of socialized rules defining how we act and live our true values in everyday life. Therefore, we need to seek alternative forms of performance which will conform our ‘roles’ with the meant action rather than representing meretricious routines or ‘rituals’.

Moreover, since our social roles in daily performance keep changing in various settings due to “audience segregation” (Goffman, 1959, p.49), the change in the conception of our roles also affects our second nature or the truer self as a vital part of our personality. This causes obstacles in the establishment of a sustainable self-identity. To tackle these problems, we shall examine the potential of a cross-community simulation of alternatives through community theatre. A performance in everyday life is a ceremony of expressing common or institutional values of a society (Goffman, 1959). If a performance can reaffirm or rejuvenate common values of society, it also represents the potential to re-establish these social values through
alternative forms of expressing selfhood beyond everyday life routines. In this study, the power of transforming social values and practices through alternative forms of performance is embodied by community theatre.

Before illustrating the methods and the course of action of community theatre, we should be aware of the distinction between our daily performance for certain social roles and our participation in a community theatre action. The performance in daily life routines is a means to reinforce social stereotype, and thus the dominant system of stratification of society has restricted how we act within the internalized common social values. According to Goffman (1959), the motivations of fulfilling our social roles are the idealization of the higher social class and the aspiration to move upwards from the lower class by getting closer to these core values defined by the higher class. Therefore, people tend to regard the technique of expressing or acting as a vital tool to claim for a higher social status. Nevertheless, this is never the purpose of community theatre. Since the major aim of community theatre practices is more of value reflection and exchange across all theatre participants, there is no prerequisite that the performers should have acquired excellent or professional performing skills. This marks the prime distinction between a general performance in daily routines and participating in community theatre.

Another notable feature of community theatre is the emphasis of
collaboration of members within a community or across communities. Goffman (1959) believes a performer is much concerned to “make an effective showing” (p.33) to fulfill social expectations in the social sphere – a theatre where his professional competency can be displayed. However, the performer may receive less pressure to demonstrate his individual social roles and ‘professional’ duties when his identity is regarded as a ‘member’ of a group. It explains the importance of creating a cross-community platform to explore alternatives or new perspectives on social values through performance derived from the daily routines for individuals. What community theatre provides is a community-based and collaborative platform for bringing up possibilities in various social dimensions. Community theatre aims to provide an opportunity to re-construct people’s self-identities. As mentioned earlier, our social roles keep changing in different occasions due to “audience segregation” (Goffman, 1959, p.49), which hinders us from a sustained identity throughout our daily life. In response to its impacts, community theatre works in the way to turn all participants in a performance from ‘audience’ into ‘spectators’. It means that all theatre participants can initiate contributions to the performance or action. There will not be any more sole audience as the performers would become their own audience. Without the concern of audience segregation, all individuals can jump out of the assigned social roles and break fresh ground regarding the accepted values accorded by their roles in various
social settings.

The power of drama in re-shaping and adjusting an individual’s perception of the reality as well as his actions in everyday life can be reflected in the use of psychodrama. As noted by Goffman (1959), psychodrama as a therapeutic form facilitates patients in learning to perform their roles and duties in real life; in psychodrama they acquire “anticipatory socialization” (Goffman, 1959, p.72) through rehearsing a routine that happens in reality. Goffman (1959) concludes some principles about this form of drama performance, in which these features are shared by community theatre. It indicates how drama can function as an intervention in socialization, or the re-imagination of socialization, in practice. He believes that all performers can act effectively and further perform without a script, which means to sustain the performance away from the stage. This supports community theatre’s emphasis on the flexibility of developing a scene without a script or doing improvisation based on a story told. Psychodrama also gives weight to a performer’s own life stories so that a performer’s past will provide the fundamentals for staging a deception of life incidents. Participants are able to contrive in real life after playing the roles in a theatre as the drama itself has served as a rehearsal of the real life incidents. Apart from that, one can also play the roles of the significant others appear to him in a past incident. In such case he can act, view and experience the scene from the others’
perspectives of different social positions. This reflects the essence of a community theatre form named introspective technique which will be further described in the next section.

Furthermore, psychodrama presumes everyone has the ability to “switch enacted roles” (Goffman, 1959, p.72), which supports the concept of community theater to involve all members of a participating community. All community members are encouraged to participate and contribute to the performance. These features illustrate the similar rationale between psychodrama and community theatre, although the two genres aim at achieving very different of goals in terms of imagining socialization. In contrast with psychodrama as a demonstration of anticipatory socialization, community theatre seeks alternatives other than socialization and encourages resistance to anticipatory socialization defined by cynical institutions in reality.

2.2 From Drama Performance to Community Theatre

Reviewing the development of community theatre and theatric forms can contribute to the establishment of the community-engaged theatre workshopping methodology. Goffman’s illustration of the representation of self in everyday life explains the interrelation between social conventions and performance – our social
roles are usually played for others. This analysis is associated to the concept of *mimesis*, a term derived from the Greek word meaning ‘imitation’. Mimesis is a theatric concept which refers to the representation for someone (audience) rather than the representation of something. The concept thus presupposes a traditional division of actors and audience in a theatre. According to Matthew Potolsky (2006), based on the indivisible relation between acting and society, “the change in theatre might produce change in the social world as well” (p.85). Hoping to provoke rational self-reflections of one’s action in a theatre, Potolsky highlights the suggestion by German playwright Bertolt Brecht: performers should undermine mimesis by breaking the connections of the traditional theatre model.

Brecht criticizes Aristotelian theatre to be relying on emotional identifications with characters and creates a new model of political theatre named epic theatre (Potolsky, 2006). Epic theatre cultivates the alienation effect with different performance techniques with a goal of breaking the theatric illusion of expressing events of a play. In other words, the play should merely ‘imitate’ a certain everyday life routine but not represent the routine itself. Some techniques can be applied, such as actors reading aloud all stage directions in a performance, making reflections and criticism on the characters, and leaving the house lights on in a performance. The audience will be reminded that the performance is an imitation of but not the exact
scenario in reality. These techniques help to undermine the separation of the performance and audience and prevent actors from ‘living’ their assigned roles. All theatre participants can view the conflict or incident in a play at an outsider’s position – with a detachment from the roles or the actions performed (Potolsky, 2006). This alienation effect created in the alternative theatre model has displayed the spirit of community theatre. It sees the alternative forms of performance as powerful means to uncover the constraints of everyday life practices and beliefs established by social conventions. The effect also sustains when performers or participants walk away from the theatre. The alienation effect can also be noticed in many plays written by Caryl Churchill (see Chapter 3).

In the late-1970s, British playwright and director Ann Jellicoe started to promote a series of counter-cultural projects with alternative theatre. Kershaw (1992) describes Jellicoe’s plays as an early representation of the concept of “community plays” (p.186). Regarded as a sociopolitical theatric movement, the community play projects led by Jellicoe put an emphasis on the involvement of non-professional performers, community impacts, and the feasibility of the performance model (Kershaw, 1992). The plays could be adopted and adapted by extensive communities, implying a high degree of flexibility in the productions. Jellicoe began her theatric experiments with the productions of ideologically challenging plays. These plays were
written for specific communities, especially the younger generations, and often showed a liberated attitude of sexuality. The untheorized feminism commonly demonstrated in her plays also reflected the counter-culture of her time. Later she associated with other radical playwrights in conducting community play projects, in which the plays were characterized with the presentation of socialist ideas. These projects did not explicitly provide instant support of the left wing ideology, but encouraged the audience to discover dignity and energy of oneself in everyday life’s cultural politics. *The Poor Man’s Friend* is an example of her thought-provoking community plays which can cause an “ideological challenge to a community’s good fortune” (Kershaw, 1992, p.190).

The fundamental aim of Jellicoe’s community play projects was to construct common identity over-riding internal differences of members in communities. Similar to the ideological representation found in Churchill’s plays, political and cultural debates are often conveyed in Jellicoe’s community plays. This essence can open up communication and exchange of views through the participation of community members in creative and collaborative dramatic work. It can strengthen community networks and synergy, and transcend social and political differences across the community members. Some conventions of community plays can be identified from Jellicoe’s experience in community play projects. First of all, a community play
emphasizes groups rather than individuals as the protagonists. Also, the conventions of the drama are always drawn from non-theatric social occasions, meaning everyday life events or conflicts. This feature strengthens the juxtapositions of the play and reality. All theatre participants are involved in the play where they can take part in the action and make reflections through joining the scenario. Furthermore, scenes in community plays often mirror what occurs in reality – some scenes can be played simultaneously in “different parts of the space” (Kershaw, 1992, p.193) like everyday life routines. Similarly, this technique can be found in Churchill’s community-oriented play *Serious Money*, which is one of the selected plays for the community-engaged theatre models in this study (see Chapter 4). It forms a representation of what actually happens in real life outside the theatre.

Speaking of community theatre workshop, many of the plays by Caryl Churchill were written in a collaborative process. According to Elaine Aston (2009), “one of the defining characteristics of Caryl Churchill’s theatre is her desire to work in collaboration with other artists…… her reputation for working with practitioners from theatre and other arts-related media second to none among contemporary British dramatists” (p.144). This highlights the value of Churchill’s production of community theatre via the community-oriented collaborative method, which is how she establishes her unique theatre as ‘not ordinary, not safe’.
Community Theatre Forms & Techniques

Some prominent and notable forms of community theatre inspire the design of the community-engaged theatre models in this study (see Chapter 4). As mentioned, community theatre aims at providing a platform for interactions and collaboration in communities. Community theatre forms and techniques are therefore important tools to turn the theatre into a ‘discourse’. Augusto Boal (1985) believes that the application of simple forms can help a spectator-actor – audience becoming actors – to create spectacles or theatre “according to his need to discuss certain themes of rehearse certain actions” (p.126). Suitable forms can also encourage direct participation and intervention in the actions in the performance. In his work *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1985), Boal presents his collection of community theatre’s practical forms. This section will introduce four theatrical forms from his methodology, which are adopted and adapted in my suggested community-engaged theatre workshopping models (see Chapter 4).

*Forum Theatre*

Forum theatre is one of the most popular practices found in current community theatre projects worldwide and in Hong Kong (see the next section). Theatre participants are asked to intervene decisively in the dramatic actions with a
change of plot. The theatre starts with participants telling a story of social or political conflicts in their real life, followed by some discussions on a possible solution among the participants. The spectators will improvise and demonstrate the scenario. After the scene of a conflict is performed, the participants will be asked if they agree with the solution presented. When the scene is performed for the second time, any audience can replace any performer and adjust the direction of the action to an alternative development. The other actors will face the new situation and give responses to new possibilities of the action.

Boal (1985) stresses that it is vital for the participant who proposes a solution to act in the scenario instead of just commenting in his comfort seat as an outsider. He believes a person can be “very revolutionary when in a public forum” yet “often realizes that things are not so easy when he himself has to practice what he suggests” (p.139). The essence of Forum Theatre is to let participants face the real challenges and every possibility that the situation may inspire through actions. According to Boal (1985), a community theatre is not to show or indicate a “correct path” (p.141), but only to “offer the means by which all possible paths may be examined” (p.141). He regards forum theatre as a “rehearsal of revolution” (p.140), which can also be reflected in the community theatrical forms introduced in the following sections.
**Analytical Theatre**

Similar to forum theatre, analytical theatre starts with improvising a story told by a participant of the theatre. Participants need to break down all the social roles obtained by different characters in the play and suggest an object as a symbol representing each social role. These symbols are selected through discussions and thus represent the community’s perception of social functions and power implied by different characters in the scene (Boal, 1985). In a cross-cultural setting of theatre, the communities can compare and contrast their chosen symbols for particular social roles.

After the collaborative analysis on the characters, the story will be told again with certain symbols and social roles removed from each character. Various combinations of removing social roles from the characters will be proposed, and therefore the participants can examine and make reflections of the change. The major function of this theatric form is to encourage the discovery of the constitution of human actions – “not the exclusive and primordial result of individual psychology” but are constructed “through the individual speaks his class” (Boal, 1985, p.153).

**Myth Theatre**

Myth theatre is a straight-forward form to discover the obvious truths behind a myth or a legend. There are often ‘myths’ derived from everyday life stories
or a community’s history which may consist of legendary explanations of taboo and social rules. Such myths are one of the imperceptible means of shaping our perceptions of community traditions and social constraints. Myth theatre aims at illustrating such stories logically as to reveal the evident truths behind the established golden rules that we often ignore (Boal, 1985).

Boal (1985) gives an example of a myth presented through performance in a myth theatre. It is a legend about some dangerous ghosts inhabited the top of a mountain in Peru, creating fear so that nobody dares to go up to it. Nevertheless, this story is also told by a brave person – another character in the scene, who has climbed up the mountain and found the ghosts. The truth is revealed that these ghosts are in fact some Americans who own a gold mine at the mountain top. To achieve the intended effects of revealing the hidden truths, participants should have in-depth discussion on analyzing the myths presented in the theatre. Boal (1985) remarks that in such task “the theatre can be extraordinarily useful” (p.152) in re-imagining certain social rules and common values through interactions.

**Breaking of Repression**

Breaking of repression focuses on a concrete moment of repression where individuals suffer from class struggles in everyday life. Similar to Williams’ notion,
Boal (1985) reckons the ruling or dominating class in society has defined its own values. It creates the sets of beliefs that are imposed on other social class members. As a result, the other social classes suffer daily repression. To stimulate resistance and reconstruction of the established social ideology, participants of the theatre are asked to rehearse possible changes of the repression they face in real life. The theatre starts with a participant telling and demonstrating a particular moment in real life when he felt repressed and acted in a way contrary to his true desires. That participant can choose actors from the other theatre participants to play the roles of the other characters in the scene. Being the protagonist of the action, the participant will direct and recreate the scenario based on the feelings he has perceived when accepting the repression.

Moving on to the second stage, the scene will be repeated but this time the protagonist will not accept the repression. He will make effort to insist his own will and idea, while the other characters will attempt to maintain the repression at their positions. Such reconstruction can demonstrate the possibility “one often resist(s) and yet fails to do so”, and facilitate the participants “to measure the true strength of the enemy (i.e. the other characters in the scene)” (Boal, 1985, p.150). The purpose of this technique is to prepare a person for effective resistance with rehearsals to the conflicts he may encounter again in the future.
**Introspective Technique**

Apart from the theatric forms presented by Boal, there are two other significant forms involved in the design of the suggested community-engaged theatre workshopping models. As demonstrated by community theatre practitioner Tim Wheeler in a community theatre workshop in Hong Kong in December 2013, the introspective technique shares a similar rationale with forum theatre. The major difference between the two forms is that the previous one aims at dealing with internalized conflicts of a person, while the latter applies only when there is a very clear outsider-oppressor with an oppressed person or community. Introspective technique dramatizes an internal struggle told by one of the participants in the theatre workshop, where the storyteller will demonstrate the scene with some other participants. Those participants will act as characters to present opposite opinions towards the conflict. Through discussions and turn-taking of playing different roles in the scene, the participants will make attempts with actions to solve the conflict. In such case, the theatre will construct an experiential learning process with a rehearsal of possible changes in reality with a collaborative and communicative approach.

The structure of this technique creates a mirroring effect which allows a theatre participant to speak about himself and review his own story as an ‘outsider’. It also mitigates the obstacles to make self-reflections on personal stories with a filter
through the role-play by other participants. Since the purpose of theatre workshopping as a methodology is to engage the community and achieve active exchange on sociocultural perceptions across communities, in my suggested theatre models the introspective technique will be applied to a conflict presented in a scene extract from a Churchill’s play (see Chapter 5); the fundamental subject of exchange can be extended from personal conflicts to a larger sense of community issues.

Invisible Theatre

Invisible theatre is another form of community theatre commonly adopted in current applied theatre practices in Hong Kong (see the next section on FM Theatre Power). According to Potolsky (2006), this technique presents a play with perceptual dynamics of theatre which turns the theatric space and the context into an ordinary one; performers will stage an incident or a conflict in public area. The theatre involves the unwitting audience in the action – the people who exist in that particular space. The purpose of this theatre is to arouse, develop and sustain theatrical mimesis by social conventions, so that participants can link up beliefs and everyday life practices with the theatric performance (Potolsky, 2006). Reflections on the real life conflicts presented will then be made.
Community Theatre Workshopping

After illustrating several theatric forms for community theatre workshopping, an early development of community theatre workshops conducted by Joan Littlewood will be highlighted in this section. As a British theatre director, Littlewood was best known for her work in operating community-based theatre workshops in 1940s. Before setting up the Theatre Workshop with her husband in 1945, she started her community work with radio plays where she has built her scripts and cast from the local working class. The running of her Workshop reflected a socialist nature, a strong sense of community, and an ambition for using theatre as a community-oriented social action. The cast and members of the Workshop lived and worked together in the form of a commune, and took turns to be in charge of the operation of productions. The major aim of the Workshop was to display and express through theatre people’s everyday life experience in the local communities.

Flexibility and alternatives were the emphasis in Littlewood’s productions, where the workshops presented an integrated project of both classics and modern dramas of contemporary themes. Improvisational techniques were also adopted as they provide flexibility in the development of plays for the projects. These practices illustrated the potential of community theatre workshopping as a platform for people to express and explore the underrepresented voices as well as experiences in the ever-
changing communities in contemporary contexts. This experience of theatre workshopping also demonstrated how theatre could serve as a powerful form of cultural-political intervention to empower local communities.

**Keynotes of Successful Community Theatre**

The section above has presented different aspects and the development of community theatre – the rationale of theatric alternatives, conventions of community plays, highlights of community theatre forms, and the practice of community-based theatre workshops. Kershaw (1992) concludes three “keynotes of successful community theatre” (p.193): the promotion of accessibility of the theatre, the involvement of community members, and the process of identification built on collaboration in the community. These keynotes will be reflected in the models of community-engaged theatre workshopping (see Chapter 4).

**2.3 Community Theatre in Contemporary Societies**

Inspiration can be obtained from practices of community theatre overseas and in Hong Kong to establish feasible models for community-engaged workshopping. This practices can elaborate how these applied theatre practices serve as a form of social actions. In this section, an overview of current community theatric forms and
their development in three Asian countries will be displayed. In the second part, notable local community theatre groups and their recent practices will be presented. There will also be a reflection on my participant-observation of an experimental forum theatre event held on an occupied site during the Umbrella Movement in 2014.

**The Overseas Practices – the Case of Afghanistan**

In 2013, I participated in a community theatre seminar entitled “Finding Peace in Afghanistan: Application of Playback and Forum Theatre” titled, which was organized by the Centre for Community Cultural Development. The seminar was given by Hjalmar Jorge Joffre-Eichhorn, a community theatre practitioner who has facilitated participatory theatre workshops for socio-cultural transformation around the world. He shared about his recent community theatric workshops for the community of women or widows in search for peace in Afghanistan. He introduced his theme-based community theatre workshop as a ‘combination of theatre and politics’. The major aims of the workshop included to explore how this cultural practice may lead to social and political changes in a community, and to encourage the marginalized social groups to engage with relevant social issues through drama.

Joffre-Eichhorn remarked that the form of performance and the play for a target community should be decided carefully – with consideration for the background of that community and the social issues they are concerned with. During the
performance, the selected play would be developed up to the point in which a problem or a conflict is shown without the solution. After the first half of the play is performed, audience could grasp the problem, and the actors would then perform the play again for community members who were invited to participate in discussion and suggest possible solutions. Audience awareness could be raised upon particular social issues implied in the play and experience a rehearsal of change and empowerment. This experience from the form theatre is possible to be applied to real life routines.

Joffre-Eichhorn also commented on the roles of the theatre producers and participants. Being responsible as facilitators, the producers should perform in the community and make friends with the community; trust building is fundamental to the theatre. As a cultural project, the preliminary and follow-up work of the theatre including reflections and the review of the programme should not be neglected. Such emphasis can in fact be reflected by the mutual nature of the work across communities in community theatre.

Community Theatre in the Philippines and Thailand

The Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA) founded in 1967 is as one of Asian’s leading community theatre groups. PETA originates from a Master of Arts Thesis titled “Prospectus for the National Theatre of the Philippines” – a paper
written by Guidote who has explored various western dramas during her high school years. According to Eugene van Erven (1992), PETA has developed into a progressive organization with a strong commitment to the use of theater as a tool for social change and development. It has established an issue-based community theatre method where the theatre facilitators will seek trust building with the community. An ‘exposure’ or a field-trip to the community is conducted to search for the stories or issues strongly affecting the life of the community members. In such case, a theatrical performance will be created collectively (Erven, 2001).

On the other hand, PETA has built connections with many community theatre groups where it offers assistance and professional guidance for their community theatre projects. Erven (2001) mentions a community project conducted in Marinduque, the Philippines, which was co-organized by a community theatre group Teatro Balangaw and PETA. The project followed the methodology of PETA’s workshops, and positive results were received at the evaluation stage. The target community found the theatre inspiring as “a lot of the factual information in the play was new (to them)” (Erven, 2001, p.49). The invitation of participating in the drama by the theatre facilitators also impressed them with the enhancement of self-confidence. Meanwhile, the young theatre facilitators from Teatro Balangaw regarded themselves “more disciplined and responsible” (Erven, 2001, p.49) after hosting the workshop.
The feedback showed that surprising positive effects could be achieved through the one-week-programme – such a short period of time (Erven, 2001).

Moving on to the community theatre practices in Thailand, there are a few permanent community theatre groups but “none of the actors (are) fulltime professionals” (Erven, 1992, p.212). The obstacle of attracting theatre practitioners results from the rare play productions conducted by relevant university departments to the community. Nevertheless, a theatre group named 28 Group is reckoned as the “hope for a meaningful contemporary theatre professional theatre” (Erven, 1992, p.212). The founder of the group was Luangthong a graduate from the Yale School of Drama. He “started it with some friends who had studied drama but had no opportunity to use it” (Erven, 1992, p.212). The aspiration of contributing to the community with the academic knowledge acquired in university motivates these young people from 28 Group to conduct community theatre. The Group was founded with a strong sense of social commitment “but not overly political” (Erven, 1992, p.212). The main reward of conducting community theatre is regarded as the “exchange of ideas” (Erven, 1992, p.212) between the facilitators and the community.

**The Local Community Theatre Practices**

Looking at the Hong Kong context, several remarkable figures have
strived for promoting community-oriented theatre activities with strong reflections of social and political issues.

*Mok Chiu Yu & Asian People’s Theatre Festival Society*

Being one of the most radical figures of community theatre for social intervention, Mok Chiu Yu started participating in youth social movements in the late 1960s. He initiated the development of the cultural dimension in social activism in the local context (Mok, 2002). Through community cultural projects he has involved himself in seeking alternatives to the colonial and postcolonial exploitative social system, and is eager to associate with overseas youth movement with his friends – regarding themselves as ‘internationalists’. Recognizing there was a missing part of the cultural and artistic spectrum in Hong Kong’s social movements, he founded the Hong Kong People’s Theatre group, taking some western theatre models for reference (Mok, 2002). His group began with street theatre and theatre in communities. After obtaining the experience from other Asian community theatre groups such as PETA, the group has developed its own methodologies for systematic participatory trainings (Mok, 2002).

In alliance with people’s theatre groups overseas, a network called Asian People’s Theatre Festival Society (APTFS) was established. The nature of its
community theatre work is anti-global capitalism, thus most projects conducted by this association have focused on migrant workers – the oppressed community under globalization. A feature of these projects is the emphasis on cross-cultural collaborative theatre productions. The community plays are developed with themes based on commonly concerned issues of the theatre participants, where the cast members are from various countries. Apart from the themes and casts, “visually and aesthetically exciting forms” are generated from a “fusion of traditional and folk gestural vocabularies from different parts of Asia” (Mok, 2002, p.357). In order to advocate an Asian voice in the western dominated leisure and cultural life in contemporary society, it is significant that “(e)ach multicultural encounter (of these projects) creates a theatre product that is uniquely Asian” (Mok, 2002, p.357).

Through these sociocultural actions, Mok (2002) realizes the power of culture in motivating social and individual transformation. The most essential value of people’s theatre is the collaborative effort which generates solidarity among workers in achieving the principle of “people before profits” (p.357) under global capitalism. Apart from reclaiming the humanity and dignity of migrant workers, the projects can also provide a channel linking up diverse participating communities for a mutual support in exploring the “aesthetics of an Asian people’s theater” (p.357). The process of creation in the multicultural productions can reflect an exchange of cultural dialogue,
skills through mutual learning. It can also be taken as an expression of collective strength and creativity.

On the other hand, the value of these community theatre productions is reflected by the themes of the plays. Since the projects always illustrate critiques of everyday life conflicts and portray people’s true desires, the theatre serves as rehearsals for a change in real life. The participants are “informed, educated and empowered” (Mok, 2002, p.357) in the theatre, and can sustain the transformation of daily life outside the theatre. Reviewing the influence of APTFS, Mok (2002) reckons that an alternative view and some enlightenment of social change have been represented through the theatre that engages audience “emotionally, aesthetically and intellectually” (p.357). He believes that it is important to engage each participant and examine if the theatre has been empowering to them.

**FM Theatre Power**

FM Theatre Power is another active community theatre group in Hong Kong, which has been adapting the concept of People’s Theatre in its productions. Lai Yan-chi, Mo (2014), a member of FM Theatre Power, explains that the group’s productions are “theatre of the people, by the people, for the people” (p.103). The productions highly focus on the participation of communities and humanity-related
concerns. In response to the single way of transmission in traditional conventions of stage drama, FM Theatre Power vigorously promotes interactions and the involvement of both actors and audiences in various community theatre forms in the local context. Their running of two specific community theatrical forms is illustrated by Lai (2014): the use of ‘invisible theatre’ in town centre-area and the productions of ‘playback theatre’. The first case is an invisible theatre event conducted in Mongkok, Hong Kong. Invisible theatre is a form presented in Boal’s *Theatre of the Oppressed* (see the previous section); a conflict or an incident is created through performance in public and all people existing in the spectacle are led to take part in the action. The form attempts to explore alternative developments of the ‘fate of the actors through people’s intervention.

Lai (2014) recalls that the group once performed an Invisible Theatre piece in Mongkok on Valentine’s Day with a theme of ‘love’. A pair of actors came into the crowd on street and started certain quarrels as if they were having some conflicts among the couple. For instance, they would argue over the body shape of the girl, or make complaints about the valentine’s gift. The theatre attracted the crowd of curiosity, and many people turned themselves into spectators instead of mere audience in the performance. They were enabled to intervene in the action by conciliating or aggravating the conflict. When a spectator gets involved in the action in an invisible
theatre, either emotionally or physically, he would bring alternatives and even encourage more participation from the crowd (Lai 2014).

The second theatric form often adopted by FM Theatre Power is playback theatre – a form invented by American theatre practitioner Jonathan Fox. Compared to invisible theatre, this form focuses more on emotions and the expressions of individual stories (Lai, 2014). The audience is well informed that there is a performance, and the participant is encouraged by a facilitator to share his personal real life stories with other theatre participants. The idea is that an audience shares a true story from his own life experience which involves a strong personal affection or emotion, and the actors will improvise and present their stories through dramatic performance as a gift in return. Through this sharing by the storyteller and representation by the actors, the theatre creates a mirroring and filtering effect in return for the audience’s reflections on the incident. According to Boal (1959), when a person is forbidden to share freely his own story, he is being oppressed. Playback theatre can offer a space or an opportunity for every participant to tell his own life story; his story can be shown in theatre which may also inspire other participants.

Lai (2014) believes the above-mentioned theatre practices help promoting participation or interactions of sociocultural perceptions across communities. With an open space where everyone is free to express their views and stories, participants are
able to seek and experience alternatives with the potential to change everyday life routines. She further remarks that the initiation of the theatre host in engaging the audience is important, and that sufficient rehearsals by the theatre facilitators and the actors are fundamental. This reminder gives an insight to the design of the theatre workshopping methodology as pedagogy in this study (see in Chapters 4 and 5).

**The Challenges of Community Theatre Practices in Hong Kong**

Reviewing the development of community theatre in Hong Kong in the recent decades, Mok (2011) has commented on the challenges of required resources of different community theatre forms in practice. A rapid growth of playback theatre in Hong Kong has been noticed, but not many attempts of forum theatre activities conducted in the local context. Most forum theatre events only occur in university lectures or professional workshops, and thus they can seldom be found in communities outside institutes. Mok (2011) considers this phenomenon to be a result of the differences between the nature and resources required for running the two theatrical forms. For playback theatre, intensive rehearsals and in-depth studies about a particular social issue are not required as there is no designed script to practice. In other words, the running of the theatre mainly relies on mutual understanding and communication between the actors and the participants within the theatre. Besides, the
number of actors is flexible; only the main facilitator and the sound effect producer are fixed positions. Temporary arrangements or adjustments on actors and characters are possible provided that those of the theatre are familiarized with the performing styles among the members. This theatric form therefore requires less in preparation and resources with flexibilities in the performance comparing to many other forms (Mok, 2011).

With respect to forum theatre, every step of the production is essential: the confirmation of a specific issue or theme, adopting a play, arranging the characters, and arranging plenty of rehearsals before the show. Liaisons with different interested parties or communities by the organizer are needed. There is not much flexibility in the arrangement of actors as every member is responsible for a fixed character or position in the scenes. According to Mok (2011), it is more challenging to conduct forum theatre than other theatric forms as it requires a greater sense of responsibility of the theatre producers – the offer of time, resources, and even intensive studies about the literary features as well as social issues concerned in the play. Nevertheless, these features of forum theatre can facilitate the pedagogic needs when conducting a student-led community-engaged theatre workshop in the academic context of Drama Studies. This will be elaborated in the case study in Chapter 5.
Forum Theatre in Practice during the Umbrella Movement

In November 2014, I participated as an audience member and a spectator in a forum theatre held on an occupied site during the Umbrella Movement. I will present in this section my personal reflections on the theatre from the perspective of a participant-observer. The forum theatre titled “Participatory Democracy” (參與式民主) was held on a Monday evening. The theatre space was on the occupied tram rail in the centre of Causeway Bay, Hong Kong. It was one of the major occupied sites during the Umbrella Movement. The event was conducted by a group of actors and graduates from a drama programme of Hong Kong Art School. These theatre members mainly served as actors and facilitators, while some of them sat with the audience and became ‘invisible actors’. My role transformed from a mere audience into a spectator when I participated in the action by expressing my own opinion on the discussed social issues in the theatre.

The theatre started with setting up a stage with two actors standing in front of the audience. They held opposite stands towards the Movement and initiated a discussion, and thus a conflict was created and presented to the audience. The participants attending the event were informed that the scene was a dramatic performance. However as more people were attracted to the theatre – including the passersby around the occupied site – many of the audience who joined at a later stage
of the theatre were not aware that it was a theatric event. To some extent it could be regarded as an invisible theatre performance to some of the audience, for they might probably have believed the dialogue was a real quarrel.

The action of the theatre was divided into ‘sessions’, where two facilitators would come out from the backstage and pause the scenes with a bell. These pauses usually occurred in the middle of an argument. The facilitators stood in front of the stage in-between the sessions, and invited the audience to give opinions regarding the issues discussed in the actors’ conversation. The actors would bring the opinion into the scenes and ‘voice out’ for the audience. The discussion topics were first generated by the actors through their dialogue, which were basically related to the common interest of all participants such the Movement’s impacts on transportation. Later on, more issues with social concerns – education, working hours and inflation for instance were suggested by the audience.

The facilitators played a significant role in the theatre especially in the first half of the event, during which the audience had to be engaged and encouraged to participate in the action. When the audience became more enthusiastic in sharing different stands, personal experience and genuine feelings, the facilitators started to invite the audience to pause and ‘revise’ the scenes or the lines of the characters. Sometimes the ongoing scenes might be interrupted by the audience who shouted out
their opinion loudly; an audience member even asked to play a role in the scene as to replace one of the characters. In other words, that audience turned himself into an active spectator. It was appreciated as these occasions reflected people’s eagerness in initiating a change in the situation through intervention. At the end of the event, there was no conclusion of the argument, yet the facilitators wrapped up the workshop by summarizing different points suggested in the theatre. This was a meaningful session to encourage further discussions among the audience when leaving the theatre.

From my observation, when the audience staying inside the occupied site, mainly the protesters, participated more in the forum, the surrounding crowd outside the site would also start to express opinion, ‘addressing directly’ the actors on stage by shouting. Meanwhile, this phenomenon would arouse more participation in the discussion from the floor inside the site. This showed that the theatre did not only generate an interaction between the actors and the audience inside the occupied site, but also led to a conversational exchange between the people inside and outside the site. This was truly a cross-community interaction on diverse sociopolitical stands. In addition, although the passersby might not stay in the theatre throughout the whole event, many of them presented interest and attention to the discussion by nodding or giving comments before exiting the site. As for the actors, they performed impromptu acting which maintained the discussion with the input of the audience’s opinion. They
needed to perform naturally and thus it would require some prior experience in drama performance, self-confidence, memorization, organization and summarizing skills. As Mok (2011) has remarked, sufficient rehearsals in advance among the actors are necessary in a forum theatre.

This event demonstrated a vivid and practical example of using drama and theatre for sociopolitical intervention. The event opened an opportunity for genuine cross-community interaction, collaboration and mutual learning. More importantly, even though the issues discussed were highly controversial in the context of Umbrella Movement, mutual respect was reflected by the audience’s encouragement – they showed appreciation by clapping to anyone who expressed an opinion. This experience was inspirational in terms of the potentials of creating and sustaining meaningful conversations across communities on sociopolitical concerns through theatre workshopping in the post-Umbrella Movement era of Hong Kong.

2.4 The Potential of Theatre Workshopping with Churchill’s Plays in Post-Umbrella Hong Kong

The previous section has recounted the application of community theatre as social intervention. Concentrating on the post-Umbrella Movement context of Hong Kong, this section will indicate the sociopolitical and pedagogic needs of cross-community interactions as reflected in the Movement. It will also discuss how
community theatre workshopping can contribute in meeting the challenges of sustaining democratic development in our society and how it can support social-cultural growth of our students.

**The Conflicts & Challenges of Sociopolitical Development in Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong**

The Umbrella Movement represents an emblematic step of democratic progression in Hong Kong society. At the same time, it has displayed the deep-rooted discrepancy of cultural-political perceptions of democratic social advancement and community building among citizens from diverse communities. The major sociopolitical issue triggering the Movement was the prospect of Hong Kong’s political and constitutional review. According to Law Wing Sang (2015), two types of forces have been demonstrated in the local democratic social movements since 1980s. The “political society” power (p.25) focuses more on political elections, the involvement in law-making and the development of political parties; while the “civil society” power (p.25) tends to rely on community empowerment and the promotion of social resistance in everyday life practices. The two forces represent contradictory political ideologies, in which their relation has been estranged by the distrust of each other in the past decades. This relationship has been fully revealed from the
preparatory stage of the Occupy Central Movement\(^2\) to the outbreak of Umbrella Movement – even after the Movement (Law, 2015).

As emphasized by former Legislative Councilor Margret Ng Ngoi-yee in an open lecture organized by Mobile Democratic Classroom\(^3\) on 28\(^{th}\) March, 2015, diverse social issues and thoughts on democratic development have been raised during the Umbrella Movement. She believes that citizens with varied perceptions must join in a common effort to achieve social advancement in the post-Umbrella Movement era as no one is capable for reforming a society by himself. In other words, the rivals and the attached distrustful or even hostile attitudes against the ‘others’ in society must be resolved, and this is the only way to construct consistent and constructive social advancement after the Movement. This struggle illustrates the necessary and an urgent request for a platform where people from different social and political positions can interact, express, admit and face our sociocultural differences. When mutual understanding and respect are achieved, we can start exploring new possibilities and the future directions for social development in the post-Umbrella Movement context.

\(^2\) Occupy Central was the originally planned one-day protest which was suggested by three local scholars and to be implemented on 1\(^{st}\) October, 2014. Yet it was unexpectedly fired up and merged with the Umbrella Movement on 26\(^{th}\) September, 2014, thus became a mass occupy movement lasted for three months.

\(^3\) Mobile Democratic Classroom is an organization generated and supported by a large group of scholars and university lecturers which has been conducting open civil seminars in public space since the Students Strike in September, 2014.
Inspired by the forum theatre event during the Umbrella Movement (see the previous section), community theatre workshopping can be a powerful tool to bridging diverse communities. According to John O’Toole (2015), community theatre is able to open a dialogue with holistic cognitive embodiment, empathy development and reflection making. Community theatre workshopping can deliver a collective exploration of possible reforms of society in the current sociopolitical context of Hong Kong.

Community theatre workshopping values interactions across all participants in a theatre. According to Rapport and Overing (2000), meanings and forms are distinct yet inter-related, while interactions allow the encounter of common forms and various meanings upheld by different individuals. Regarding community theatre as a form of interaction, it can serve as a shared vehicle “by which individuals and their meanings come together” (Rapport & Overing, 2000, p.196). According to Law (2015), when people with diverse social roles gather and re-discover their similarities in cognition, values, life experience and emotions, such an interaction will enable a process of collective identity re-establishment through affections. The process can possibly generate transformation of one’s cognitive frame too (Law, 2015). In this sense, community theatre workshopping which celebrates participation and expressions across communities can offer such significant form for mutual learning and collaborations. Speaking of identity establishment, Law (2015) takes the working
class and workers’ movements as an instance to explain the essence of building up collective identities. He states that identity of the ‘working class’ is not innate to any labour, but it is the dynamics of social actions and movements which construct, shape and reinforce the sense of identity of a ‘worker’. This shows that the identity of a member of a certain ‘community’ is established through the participation in certain community-engaged events. It also reflects the vital role of community-engaged theatre workshopping in the process of identity establishment in the cultural dimension of social activism.

In terms future directions of social advancement in the post-Umbrella Movement context, Law (2015) particularly indicates the problem of motivating protestors with anger or furious emotions revealed in the social conflicts during the Movement. Despite the fact that anger, either to the government or the social phenomena, could be a source of motivating protestors in a social movement, such a social action will only become a space where ‘victims’ gather for emotional expressions. If an action fails to be transformed into consistent sociopolitical movement with the synergy of various political forces, the action will come to a dead end of mere “expressive” social activism (p.21). Either to comfort one’s self or to blindly attack the others, the emotions expressed by participants in an ‘expressive’ social action will not be sublimated into constructive actions, but will lead to further
destructions in society. In response to the growing crisis of ‘expressive’ social activism in the post-Umbrella Movement context, community theatre workshopping is considered as a tactic. It is able to function as a tool to assist social activists or community members in achieving sublimation of their feelings, imagination and conflicts in relation to various social phenomena. It can direct participants from mere emotional expressions to get involved in the discussions of alternatives in future actions.

The future path for democratic community advancement will be much more challenging in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong. Seeking innovative means of resistance is vital in the long-term fight for democracy and community development. According to Law (2015), it is how we shape our imagination on and renew the forms of resistance based on everyday life experience that contribute to a ‘repertoire’ of implementing social resistance in our everyday life. He explains that exploring a new ‘repertoire’ is the way to expand a large-scale movement like the Umbrella Movement to every aspect of our daily life. Carrying out such a repertoire as a usual practice may help to accumulate the strength of citizens in a civil society. His opinion regarding ‘repertoire’ ingeniously reflects the idea of Goffman’s analysis on psychodrama (see the earlier section on Goffman), implying that theatre workshopping can provide essential rehearsals for practical actions in obtaining transformation in our real life.
The post-Umbrella Movement environment has formed an unprecedented sociopolitical context for the upcoming social activism (Law, 2015).

Many citizens of today are in search of alternatives in everyday life practices, and community theatre workshopping would be a useful tool to redesign and rehearse the ‘repertoire’ of resistance in response to the sociopolitical challenges in a collective way. The political needs of post-Umbrella Movement social advancement illustrate a demand for the development of community theatre as the cultural dimension of social actions. The following section will elaborate the educational needs in the post-Umbrella Movement context reflecting the significance of community theatre workshopping as critical pedagogy.

The Future Sociopolitical Needs of Students as reflected in the Umbrella Movement

This research suggests community-engaged theatre workshopping as critical pedagogy to link up undergraduate Drama students and the communities outside the institutes in the post-Umbrella Movement context. And thus, it is necessary to comprehend the learning attitudes, styles and expectations of students from the ‘Umbrella generation’. Hui Po Keung (2015a) shares an unexpected finding about students’ attitude towards teaching and learning as observed by many teachers during the Umbrella Movement. This student-led occupy movement represents an open-
minded attitude of the participating students with flexibilities towards unfamiliar and diverse political opinion from the public. Even when facing doubtful perceptions, they make efforts to understand and respond to the ideas. Hui (2015a) comments that the students have demonstrated the righteous attitude of learners who are eager and willing to learn. If this learning attitude can be supported by a critical pedagogic tool such as community theatre workshopping, students’ learning effectiveness can be further enhanced through mutual and active sharing of experiences and insights across communities.

Apart from students’ initiative to engage diverse social perceptions, the unique sociopolitical context of local educational reforms in recent decades also contributes to the penetrative learning objectives and the learning style of the students. With an underlying capitalist-oriented nature in the educational reforms, the institutional learning objectives are set to fulfill the interests of the commercial world (Hui, 2015a). Students are expected to acquire adaptability, creativity and the critical thinking ability from institutional education. In order to achieve these learning targets, the Education Bureau starts to abandon the traditional teaching and learning mode of single way of knowledge transmission, and implements western pedagogic ideas including Problem-based Learning, the Project Approach, out-of-classroom learning, for instance. This reformed pedagogic direction requires students to pay high attention
to current social and political affairs across the globe (Hui, 2015a).

On account of the rapid social change in the past decades, various social conflicts have been exposed. Students are required by the curricula to probe these social conflicts and issues from news as well as the community life. And it results in, perhaps surprisingly to the government, the arouse of students’ awareness to social injustice; their concern for politics and society is thus intensified (Hui, 2015a). Considering students’ attitude towards teaching and learning and their concerns for social advancement derived from institutional education, community-engaged theatre with the adaption of Caryl Churchill’s community plays will meet the needs of both academic and social development of students in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong (see Chapter 3).

About the Next Chapter

Moving on to the next chapter, it will elaborate the grounds for merging Churchill’s plays into the form of community theatre workshopping in the post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong context. In addition, the rationale of adapting her plays as a stimulant in a communicative pedagogic approach in a university Drama course will be illustrated.
Chapter 3: Churchill Plays as a Stimulant in the Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping Models

Introduction to the Chapter

In the previous chapter, the historical context and development of drama as a form of cultural experience as well as community-theatre for social intervention have been explored. This chapter will focus on the significance of theatre workshopping with Caryl Churchill plays in various educational institutions and settings. With the growing interest in intercultural performance across countries in the recent decade, the encounter between and mixing of cultures has become a significant and complex phenomenon, especially with Asian cultures as a theatrical context (Carlson, 1996/2004). This may explain why it is interesting to consider how an English drama text could arouse attention in a multicultural city like Hong Kong, and how such a text might be adapted into the local context.

In contextualizing the study with drama as a university subject, the first part of the chapter will respond to the strange status of tertiary drama, followed by an elaboration of the importance of combining both text-based study and practical work in the teaching and learning of drama. The second part will specify how Churchill plays fit in with a community-engaged theatre for critical pedagogy in Hong Kong. The noteworthiness of the language issues involved in integrating Churchill’s English
texts into local workshops will also be analyzed.

3.1 The Meaning of Drama as a University Subject

The objective of Drama Studies in university can be reflected in the fundamental vision of English language drama as an academic subject in historical terms. When the first English university drama department was launched in Bristol, England in 1947, it announced their two major educational purposes. It aimed to provide students with an opportunity to study drama as a projection of texts in real life, and to tackle social issues caused by the ever-changing popular dramatic entertainment (Shepherd & Wallis, 2004). In other words, the preliminary purpose of Drama Studies is to connect drama texts with living and social experience. One reason for the introduction of drama studies to university was that it was seen to function as a response to the problematics of traditional teaching-and-learning derived from the institutional education of the traditional UK system founded upon the idea of specialization.

The Problematics of University Education

Specialization in the educational context is demonstrated by the division of knowledge into fragments- the motivating force differentiating aspects of a subject
from one another - which constitutes one of the reasons for the hostility it generated among existing academic disciplines (Wickham, 1962). The practice of specialization in university education would deprive graduates, the future governing class of society, of the learning of their own community, the culture and the prospects by a systematically isolating form of pedagogy, and thus they would be “cut off from the larger part of society” (p.48, Wickham, 1962). As a tactic to address this problem, implementing drama in the undergraduate curriculum has to an extent contributed to liberating young people from this damaging specialization (Shepherd & Wallis, 2004).

The Tactic: Drama in University Curriculum

In fact, the first drama degree programme was set up in the United States in 1914, three decades earlier than that of the UK referred to above. Drama as an academic subject in the American conception was intended to facilitate education for whole-person development, as against the mode of pedagogy for producing only vocational training for jobs. At the same time, Drama Studies programmes would also provide training for future theatre artists, and therefore it is reasonable to involve performance and practices apart from theoretical study in the curriculum. According to Glynne Wickham (1962), to cope with the narrow focus resulting from specialization in tertiary education, introducing drama into the university curriculum
helped to nurture whole-person development and reunite the separated senses of learning especially in arts or humanities disciplines.

Nevertheless, the idea of education for whole-person development has traditionally been perceived as the role of adult education, while undergraduate education seems to imply a “focus on critical ability and specialism” (p.13, Shepherd & Wallis, 2004). Although the emergence of drama in university has reflected an appreciation of the benefits it has brought tertiary education, university drama is often marginalized as mere a supplementary student activity outside core curricula in the traditional academic context. It thus enjoys an awkward status of a discipline that is “official but always external” (p.13, Shepherd & Wallis, 2004), for it is conventionally regarded as contributing to students’ aesthetic development, yet is often regarded as not very functional in promoting factual academic acquisition.

Re-imagining the Role of Drama as a University Subject

To expand imaginative possibilities regarding the significance of drama in the university curriculum, we shall begin with reviewing the nature of performance. In similar vein to the illustration about social performance observed by Goffman (see Chapter 2), Nikolas Evreinoff, one of the first theorists of performance in society, argues that theatrical play is a basic instinct shared by all human beings and even animals, and therefore it is comprised of a pre-aesthetic spirit. That is to say, as Marvin
Carlson (1996/2004) comments, the play itself is more fundamental than the aesthetic expression or ritual involved. Considering this intrinsic character of theatrical play in anthropological studies, drama and theatre as university subjects should not be assumed to be nothing more than student entertainment or as extra-curricular activities for aesthetic appreciation only.

Here, the case of the Australian curriculum has displayed how the role of drama in institutional education goes beyond the aesthetic development of students. According to Kate Donelon (2007), Australian drama teaching artists have recognized four functions of drama in their curriculum. The first function is to engage the whole person of their students by offering experiential learning opportunities, given that such a process usually involves “the intellect, the emotions, the imagination and the body” (p.386). Secondly, students are urged to apply and practice social skills and acquired knowledge. Drama also provides a space for social imagination so that students can participate in an “open-ended and dialogic search for meaning” of a subject (p.386). In addition, students can initiate social inquiry and problem-solving in creative ways through drama, in order to achieve holistic teaching-and-learning in the academic context (Donelon, 2007). Inspired by the Australian example, the essence of drama and theatre as academic subjects is that they offer a transformation for meeting the “current and emerging environmental challenges” (p.386, Donelon, 2007) particularly
in contemporary multicultural society in the context of increasing globalization.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, the conventional perception towards undergraduate education usually places importance on “critical ability and specialism” (p.13, Shepherd & Wallis, 2004). The involvement of Drama Studies as an academic subject in university is not necessarily contradictory to this existing vision of tertiary education, and is actually capable of fitting within such a specialized curricular structure. In terms of specialization of particular skills and disciplinary knowledge, the study of drama does require students to obtain professional skills in both content and performance of plays. It presents specialized techniques in Drama Studies which connect play texts with performance instead of merely skills for interest such as make-up for actors, and this practical component demonstrating dramatic techniques is the foundation for a specialized form of drama in the academic sphere (Shepherd & Wallis, 2004). Together with the experiential learning process in Drama Studies which enhances the development of students’ ability in making critical reflections, thereby linking up texts and everyday life experience, drama as a university subject is adequate to a curriculum of specialization as well as a more generalized liberal arts style of education.

Since there has been a traditional conception of drama and theatre in tertiary education which concentrates on a text-based pedagogic approach, Drama
Studies is often perceived as a primarily literary subject. However, Carlson (1996/2004) has indicated that when the study of theatrical arts and performance appears in university, a new perspective is often constructed bringing in innovative forms of pedagogy and connecting play texts and community. This type of creative fusion has expanded the imagination of the role of Drama Studies in tertiary education. Based on this observation, some impressive functions of drama in the academic context can be observed including the “re-uniting of hands and head”, referring to “the experience of wholeness” through dramatic discourses, and the ability to “reconcile with one another the potential oppositions (in the debate of educational hierarchy)” (p.14, Shepherd & Wallis, 2004). Thanks to the cross-disciplinary nature of drama studies, a key contribution of the discipline has to be its potential for integrating the fragmented knowledge acquired in the established institutionalized education system.

Furthermore, in terms of theatre workshopping, the open experiential approach in drama can be regarded as a beneficial pedagogic tool in undergraduate education. According to Kirsi Kettula-Kouttas (2007), a drama workshop may enhance students’ awareness as well as their understanding of various perspectives and thought processes. It can also facilitate students’ readiness to acquire transferable skills required in future jobs, and “trigger self-knowledge” (p.336) within a participant her/himself.
Why Practical Work is Needed in Drama Studies

Speaking of a theatre workshopping pedagogic tool, the word “workshopping” has illustrated its emphasis on practice and actions. Unlike most of the other literary forms, David Gwilym James (1952) reckons that drama represents a special genre in the field of literature, and a genre which “needs to be understood in production” (p.10, Shepherd & Wallis, 2004). That said, effective learning of and with drama can only be achieved through practical work. Even when we look into a drama course from a text-based discipline such as Language and Literature in the Humanities context, practical forms or stage work, i.e. performance, is considered a vital component in the teaching-and-learning process. Such a component facilitates students' expression of subjective judgements which are essential in the study of drama. Practical work also helps students to understand the meaning of a play, especially in terms of the style or quality of presentation relevant to specific themes within the text, since this important element can only be captured through participating in rehearsals and productions (Shepherd & Wallis, 2004).

On the level of dramatic style of a play, a text naturally consists of what a character says in certain scenes. However, it is how the character says his lines that brings a play to life as a whole. Kenneth Pickering (1988/2003) observes that characters of a play are nothing but series of speeches and stage directions on a page
of a script. One can hardly produce concrete and in-depth discussion on
characterization or motifs of the drama unless these features are presented and
experienced through actions and through performance. Practical work bringing these
features to life will determine how the performers conceive the ‘persons’ or the roles
they are acting, as speech utterance is one of the keys to help comprehend a character
in a play.

As regards drama as a literary speech act, according to Carlson
(1996/2004), there is a basic subject of study in dramatic narration using Gérard
Genette's term énoncé, a French word meaning ‘speech acts within a drama’. It can
also be translated as the illocutionary relationship, a “communicative exchange
between a sender and a receiver of a speech in a given context” (p.47, Davy, 1986).
Speech action is fundamental in Drama Studies for it is the soul of a verbal theatrical
performance, and such action is determined by illocutions within the fictive world of
the play. In other words, the characters’ movements and their interrelationship will be
demonstrated clearly by their illocutionary acts (Carlson, 1996/2004). These abstract
aspects of a play constitute the tacit dimension of theatre which can, again, only be
explored through practice. Developing tacit knowledge in Drama Studies requires an
experiential learning process to be reached, so that any production derived from a text-
based study of a play should become substantiated by physical presence and utterances
of the script as text-based speech acts.

Whenever there is a production of play, there will usually be a need for prior rehearsals. Reviewing different theories of social performance according to Goffman’s notion, it is clear that a person is aware of several interactional constraints when playing a social role in everyday life. These constraints range from the search for an appropriate ‘front’ or way of presentation, the maintenance of coherence, to the arrangement of the material presented (Carlson, 1996/2004). A performer would naturally make efforts to obtain successful communication, because it is perceived as an appropriate form of cultural behavior in “assuming responsibility” (p.38, Carlson, 1996/2004). This refers to one’s consciousness of one's own effective performance and clear communication to the audience and management of the interaction constraints within the ‘frame’ of a play, in which a literary text serves as the primary frame for theatrical performance. In order to achieve a complete and satisfying theatre piece for social communication, it is necessary to engage in rehearsals in advance of a public performance.

As Carlson (1996/2004) writes, due to abundant experimental movements in performance art in early 20th century, the concept of theatre has been expanded from a play text and dialogic convention, i.e. contents and product, to the larger sense of development concerning the expressive qualities of the body. This is the main reason
for an inevitable component of practical work in modern-day Drama Studies, and further embraces the underlying spirit of community theatre for participation and transformation in socialized daily practices.

Moving on to the late 20th century, theatrical performance practitioners started to put greater emphasis on group discovery and collective development of performance, especially in their experimental work, through devising workshops and physically oriented rehearsals. This trend has implied the collaborative essence of community theatre, where dramatic performance is regarded as a holistic production informed by a rigorous process of rehearsals and collaborative development. That said, the workshopping process is the substantial component of practice for producing a thoroughly reflective communication with drama, particularly in a community-oriented theatre project.

Moreover, the workshopping process also implies flexibility of presentation in a theatre. Carlson (1996/2004) highlights the point that there is an “improvisatory, ad hoc nature of social performance” (p.45) based on his observation about Goffman’s study on role-playing in everyday life. In consequence, the practice of workshopping in community theatre will offer room for different interpretation and expression from a general social constructionist point of view.
The Need of a Script

Looking at the larger picture of Drama Studies as an academic subject, even though the significance of practical work has been emphasized above, the pivotal and established role of a scripted text of study is not to be neglected. In terms of drama, the text of study is the script of a play. A script refers to the text giving readers information, “a series of suggestions concerning a possible sequence of events in which certain imaginary individuals participate” (p.5, Benedetti, 1998). As remarked earlier, the script functions as the primary “frame” of a drama performance. This frame is a device which allows the fictive world of a play to be conducted in a coherent as well as cohesive way (Carlson, 1996/2004).

In the suggested methodology of a community-engaged theatre workshopping approach, the value of a script as a resource has also been recognized. Notwithstanding the improvisatory element demonstrated by common community theatre forms (see Chapter 2), it is evident that improvisation alone does not necessarily lead to a satisfactory outcome. This is the case with the learning objectives of an undergraduate drama course derived from a text-based study context, with particular reference to the case study of the action research to be elaborated in Chapter 5. In a community-engaged theatre workshopping platform linking up Drama Studies and community experience, a text as the subject material of study would serve as prior
knowledge input to the students before they engage with another outside community. The text can offer some guidance and directions for in-depth discussion on specific themes, thus providing a ‘frame’ to the workshop.

On the other hand, some participants, especially those with less experience in theatre, may find themselves uncomfortable in a community theatre workshop that is accustomed to the practice of unscripted improvisation and a communicative approach of sociocultural exchange. In order to help them cope with this challenge, a focused script would definitely help to achieve interaction coherence for the purposes of performance in a collaborative form (Goffman, 1959). A script is therefore an enabling device which encourages alternative attempts of presenting oneself within the defined frame and setting of a play. A noteworthy example can be observed from a performative presentation by students in the drama course in which I have instructed.

In the presentation, a female student performed a role with strong and self-assertive characteristics. She acted in the scene confidently and presented her lines in a clear and bright voice. Her performance was somewhat surprising and most impressive, because she habitually showed a rather quiet and timid character in normal lessons. I was interested in the motivation driving her to act in front of the peer audience with such confidence. Thereupon she explained that it was the assigned role of the character she was playing whose personality is strong and extrovert; she needed
to inhabit this character, even though her natural personality in everyday life is quite the opposite of the character. When she performed in the scene as a specific fictive role, it was the ‘person she acted, prompting her to attempt an alternative expression of self in the performance of an imaginary person.

There is another observation provided by Kettula-Kouttas (2007) from her action research on an undergraduate course involving drama workshopping pedagogy. She comments that it would be advantageous for learning efficacy if students could receive “formal knowledge prior to the workshop” (p.350). Put in the context of a tertiary drama course, knowledge related to literary analysis and dramatic skills will elevate the effectiveness of the learning experience with practical performance work as a whole.

**Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping as an Integrated Experience**

This combination of components of both practical work and a text enables participants to construct a transformative performance, referred to as ‘keying’ according to Goffman’s concept. According to Carlson (1996/2004), 'keying' involves “a strip of activity already meaningful on some terms that is transformed by recontextualization into something with a different meaning” (p.46). This product consists of a text as a primary frame and an accompanying process of “technical
redoings” (p.46, Carlson, 1996/2004), or theatrical rehearsals, resulting in the establishment of a performative setting in the complete sense of successful communication, i.e. a theatre. This concept of keying has been reflected in the design of the community-engaged theatre workshopping structure (see Chapter 5), and has helped to highlight the major aims of community theatre, namely the promotion of alternatives and transformation.

3.2 Churchill Play Extracts as the Stimulant in Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping

This research study suggests models of community-engaged theatre workshopping as critical pedagogy in the field of Drama Studies, which attempts to offer participants some inspiration for transformation in their perception of sociocultural issues via cross-community interaction. Such an experiential process requires a prepared text or topic as a stimulant of debate and discussion over society-related themes in the theatre workshop, and community-focused plays by Caryl Churchill have been selected to be the text of study in this methodology. It is not surprised to find her plays being covered in local and overseas undergraduate contemporary literature or drama courses (Leong & Tang, 2012), for Churchill has created innovative texts in the field of contemporary drama with outstanding social, cultural and academic values. In this part, we shall focus on how Churchill plays
respond to theatre as social criticism in contemporary society, and the impressive features of her plays which contribute to their significance as a stimulating subject-matter to support workshopping methodology for community engagement.

**Caryl Churchill as a Community Playwright**

Caryl Churchill (1938-) is a British playwright who is recognized as a socialist-feminist dramatist and has been acknowledged as one of the most influential contemporary dramatists writing in the English language. As one of the most renowned contemporary English playwrights, she has created more than forty plays during her fifty-years career. Her work covers an extensive range of themes and forms that comment insightfully on various contemporary social issues relating to political issues, violence, gender inequalities and human nature in general (Tang, 2012).

At an early stage of her career, the spirit of Brecht’s Epic Theatre was reflected in her plays, as she endeavoured to expose the bias of the patriarchal political establishment in relation to controversial topics such as gender, race and war. Later, influenced by Artaud’s Theatre of Cruelty and other ideological trends of experimental theatre, she started to create texts out of more traditional conventions. After graduating from university, Churchill worked as a scriptwriter of radio drama and TV drama for British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) during the early ‘60s to the early ‘80s. She
wrote her first performed stage drama script *Owners* in 1972, and through the play an in-depth criticism of the Capitalist concept regarding jobs and working conditions was aired from her committed left-wing perspective. She then began cooperating with theatre groups and became the first playwright-in-residence of the Royal Court Theatre. Later in the 1970s she started hosting workshops with Joint Stock Theatre Company and Monstrous Regiment, and that was how she created new plays (the 1979 play *Cloud Nine*, for example) through workshopping with an improvisatory component (Tang, 2012).

Strengthened by the deep conviction that a playwright should serve as a collaborator of real life stories from people in the community, she writes her scripts constructed on and inspired by improvisations, interviews and case studies gathered from daily life. Her work is mainly of a community-oriented nature; she devises her plays with shared values and experiences of people in contemporary society, revealing her insightful appraisal of social-political themes such as the cultural identity of marginalized communities, gender and sexuality politics, and the frequently negative impacts of the contemporary ultra-capitalist economy. We will discuss her work on *Mad Forest* (1990) later, a play text that she established with student actors in Romania through workshops and rehearsals.

Churchill is a pioneer of community plays, not only in terms of providing
insightful critique on a wide range of social phenomena, but also in the way she chooses to explore bold and creative dramatic forms in her community-oriented work. In 2012, Churchill wrote a play named *Love and Information* at the age of seventy-four, which has become one of the most popular hits of contemporary theatre in the last few years. The play consists of fifteen actors playing a hundred roles, in eight acts with fifty-seven scenes. Though this “mosaic” form of the play Churchill has managed to illustrate the correlation between the rapid technological development and intimate relationship of people in contemporary society (Tang, 2012). Today, she is still an active playwright and her latest play *Escaped Alone* has been performed at the Royal Court Theatre during the first season of 2016. Selected plays by Churchill will be described in the next part in support of my elaboration of the theatre workshopping models suggested in this research study (see Chapter 4).

**Recommended Churchill’s Plays**

This part presents an introduction to six plays by Caryl Churchill which will provide examples for the analysis of features of Churchill’s work and support my argument about the suitability of her plays for a community theatre workshopping methodology. The first four plays narrated below, *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine*, *Serious Money* and *A Number*, will serve as the texts of study in the four models of community-
engaged theatre workshopping respectively. Also the remaining two plays, *Far Away* and *Mad Forest*, will be mentioned when we discuss the dramatic forms of Churchill plays in a later section.

**Top Girls (1982)**

*Top Girls* (1982) is a play adapted as a central case study of my action research plan (see Chapter 5). It is one of the best known plays by Churchill, taking her three years to complete. It consists of three acts with then quasi-contemporary settings, and presents the story of Marlene, the protagonist, a newly promoted boss of Top Girls Employment Agency with struggles related to career aspirations, social class mobility and family responsibilities. Different perceptions of career development and the social positions of women are illustrated in the play. At the end of the play it is revealed that Marlene has given up the claims of motherhood in order to pursue her career goal.

A feminist consciousness is shown in *Top Girls* through Churchill’s meticulous construction of settings, characters and lines. The play also demonstrates modern women’s experience in the workplace and the underlying inter- and intra-sexual oppression created by a capitalist patriarchy. The play’s subtext challenges its audiences to move beyond seeking solutions for the individual conflicts of daily life
to reflecting on the need for alternative social transformation particularly from the perspective of gender politics.

*Top Girls* indicates a critique of some feminist values and perspectives common in Britain from the late-1960s to the ‘80s onwards as a major theme. When Margaret Thatcher became the first female Prime Minister in 1979, she soon turned into a brilliant icon as the “New Woman”, and was idolized by many women with career aspirations (referred to in Marlene’s comment on “Maggie” in Act 3; “Maggie” here refers to Margaret Thatcher). Her working style and political attitude as an ideologically committed monopoly capitalist and monetarist advanced the inflection of feminism in a more individualistic, self-interested direction, which could be associated with the concept of “bourgeois feminism”. Instead of urging solidarity among women as a group, bourgeois feminism, based on Thatcher's example, valued individual social power and the pursuit of careerist ambitions by women in the capitalist economy.

Performed at the Royal Court in 1982, *Top Girls* gave a critical response to the socio-political context of its immediate time as a refutation of the notion that individual achievements of ‘successful women’ represented feminist goals, and criticized the attempt to construct only a reverse institution of ‘female domination’ parallel to the male-dominated perception. The central question embedded in this
community play is still closely related to the present time, and in contemporary revivals of the play audiences are invited to make reflections on the possible strategies for advancing the feminist movement in the context of contemporary society.

Cloud Nine (1979)

The second play to establish a community-engaged theatre workshopping model is Cloud Nine (1979). It is a two-act satirical comedy of which the first act is set in British colonial Africa in the Victorian era, and the second is set in London in a more contemporary context. The story begins with a patriotic and patriarchal Victorian family living in an unspecified British colony in Africa. There seems to be a harmonious relationship among the family members, until their respective desires, having long been repressed, are fully aroused by the visit of an old family friend and a widow.

Although a voice of feminist criticism can be found in this play as is also the case in Top Girls, the theme concerning sexual oppression is presented with a completely different style in Cloud Nine. In a more satirical tone, the play develops a parallel theme linking colonial and sexual oppression. It also exposes the motivating force and possible internal as well as external constraints on the liberation of the various desires among characters. The play explores how Colonialism and Imperialism
impact on interpersonal relationships and the carnal desires of individuals. Here, Churchill made a telling reference to Brecht’s revolt against theatre realism, in the way in which the realist narrative she portrays in Act 1 is immediately subverted in Act 2 by assigning her characters to age much more slowly than the actual timeline of the basic plot which spans nearly a century. The ironic treatment of the play's timeframe not only draws attention to the sluggish transformation of sexual ideology and slow progress toward greater gender equality, but also represents the play's alienation effect designed to encourage critical reflection from audiences (Tang, 2012).

**Serious Money (1987)**

Moving on to the third play, *Serious Money* (1987), in this work Churchill presented a satirical criticism of capitalist values and attitudes through her dramatic investigation into the high finance sector of Thatcherite Britain. Set in London, the story takes place around the British stock market, or the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE). It follows the death of Jake, a banker, which the police announce as a case of suicide yet her sister Scilla, working at LIFFE, insists that he has been murdered. Scilla reckons his death is associated to an underground trading racket, and consequently attempts to find the killer with another banker friend Zac, who does not sincerely care about the truth, but the troubles with
trading caused by Jake’s death. Scilla reaches a business woman with whom Jake was dealing, and happily accepts a job offer from the woman for a fresh start of career. The truth surrounding Jake’s death remains undiscovered at the end of the play.

Even though the play’s title may suggest an exploration of a solemn topic, “Serious Money”, the text is in fact written in verse and employs rhyming couplets which promotes both the alienation effect and the amusing and ironic tone of the play, similar to that of a Jacobean comedy from the early 17th century. It is ironic that one is expected to “enjoy” the risk-taking gambling as a game for earning “serious” money, without noticing or admitting the risk of losing one’s ethical values or even one’s life in the game. That said, the mordant irony of the play emphasizes the cynical acquisitiveness in society under the system of globalized capitalism. In the play Churchill reflects her strong condemnation of capitalist values and attitudes encouraged by Thatcher, while the play's satirical tone critiqued the often fraudulent dealings of the stock market (Tang, 2012).

Based on the observation by Kimball King (1988), it is interesting to note that the play became popular among upwardly mobile executives in the commercial field, where these audiences were the living examples of the cynical stakeholders of the controversial economic practices denounced by Churchill. This phenomenon could be explained from a social psychology perspective according to which these audiences
would prefer to “identify themselves with the world the playwright despises than to risk the unfashionable and unprofitable alternative of changing it” (p.152, King, 1988).

The phenomenon demonstrated the power of Churchill’s ingenious utilization of dramatic forms in capturing attention from a wide range of audience types.

**A Number (2002)**

The fourth play for the suggested community-engaged theatre workshopping model is *A Number* (2002), a controversial work addressing the issue of human cloning as well as identity establishment. The plot represents the conflicts between a father, Salter, and his three identical “sons”, Bernard (B1), Bernard (B2) and Michael Black. Given that B2 and Michael are the clones of B1, the play is constituted of scenes portraying Salter’s conversation with each son, where the three sons are performed by a single actor throughout the play according to Churchill’s instruction.

The play starts with a father’s foolish and selfish attempt to ask for a copy of his son, B2, to replace the original B1 after the death of his wife. When B2 finds out the truth by encountering his “original” in the street, he gets confused with his identity and is worried that B1 would kill him one day; thus he decides to leave Salter and his home. The text subsequently reveals that there are in fact more clones of the
original son, since the scientist who produced B2 has secretly created more copies without the consent of his father. The play is concluded by a scene in which Salter meets Michael Black for the first time; surprisingly Michael shows very different characteristics and values from those of B1 and B2, and Salter finally realizes that his two sons (B1 and B2) are unique individuals to him. He comes to recognize that it is the time he spends with each son which makes the particular son special to him. *A Number* does not only engage with the moral debate on human cloning, but further asks a significant question whether identity is established more by nature or nurture in a futuristic world of advanced biological technology and identity replication.

*Far Away (2000)*

In the overall analysis of Churchill’s community plays to be presented in the next section, *Far Away (2000)* demonstrates some striking features of dramatic forms. According to Tang (2012), although the short play contains only three acts and lasts for around fifty minutes, it constitutes one of the most challenging plays by Churchill in terms of its readability and comprehensibility.

The three acts are developed based on a girl’s encounter with strange events taking place as she grows up. In the first act, she is a little girl living in her aunt’s place, and there she accidentally discovers an unpleasant secret shared by the
adults. Nevertheless, she is told by her aunt to stay silent and to keep the secret for the sake of ‘protecting herself’. In the second act as an adult the girl starts working as a hatter in a factory, where she meets a man with an ambition to reveal the truth about the secretive events occurring in their society. Immersing herself in work, she feels constrained to stay silent again, and eventually becomes an accessory to the cruelty inherent in adults’ world. The play can be seen as challenging for comprehension specifically because the implicit ‘secret’ from Act 1 remains a myth up until the end of Act 3, although it appears to involve state repression, incarceration and execution. The writing style of this final act changes from realism in the first two acts to symbolism. The lines in this act are constructed via a pattern of extremely abstract and complicated ideological symbols, especially the central symbol of highly decorative and elaborately designed hats. The play conveys an underlying criticism referring to the politically apathetic attitude towards cruelty in modern society under the impact of globalization.

**Mad Forest (1990)**

*Mad Forest: A Play from Romania* (1990), or *Mad Forest*, is a play written right after the Romanian Revolution of 1989. Churchill established this play through workshops and rehearsals with a group of Romanian student actors together with students from the Academy of Dramatic Art in London, while she also received
inspiration and reflections from her own observation and her interactions with the community especially in the capital, Bucharest.

This three-act play invites audiences to take a look at life before, during and after the Romanian Revolution. The first act is set in Communist Romania, a few months before the Revolution, giving an impression of a life permeated by the Securitate, the Romanian secret police under Ceausescu’s dictatorship. It portrays a family under scrutiny as the daughter of this family is engaged to an American man. In Act 2, the characters are entirely different from the set in Act 1, although they are played by the same actors. They recount what happened on the Revolution day back in December, 1989, from the individual point of view. Act 3 resumes the set of characters from Act 1, with scenes from the hospital and a wedding party, where a character is recovering from injuries caused in the Revolution.

The play presents through conversation and monologues many conflicting views on the relevant sociopolitical situation. For instance, the Romanian perceptions of the Hungarian minority, the rise of the apparent leader of the Revolution, Iliescu, along with his overthrowing of the previous Communist leader by military force, and the discussion of the benefits of a coup d'état versus revolution. Such conversational extracts and social snapshots reflect the authentic social concerns that Churchill collected from the workshops and interviews with the Romanian community. Although
Mad Forest is not included the four suggested models of community-engaged theatre workshopping in this study, the community-oriented components regarding workshopping will be elaborated in a latter part of this chapter as a reference to the shared spirit of community engagement linking Caryl Churchill's dramatic art and the workshopping methodology of this research.

**Churchill Plays for Social Criticism & Engagement**

In this research, four recommended models of community-engaged theatre workshopping have been developed based on scene extracts from several Churchill plays. It is worthwhile to expound on the features which make these plays a significant social criticism and engagement, so to capture the rationale of adapting Churchill plays for a cross-community theatre workshopping tool relevant to the sociopolitical context of today's Hong Kong, and potentially elsewhere.

**Open Discussion on Social Phenomena**

First of all, Churchill has always raised critical questions on universal cultural, social and political themes in the contemporary contexts shown in her plays, concerned with subjects such as gender issues and feminist movement, sequels of (post-)colonialization, commodification of manpower under the globalized capitalist
economy and moral controversy over rapid technological advancement. However, it is not her style to impose a particular answer or a specific conclusion on her audiences.

Taking an example from *Cloud 9*, the female characters in both Acts demonstrate the existence of inter- & intra- sexual oppression, when gender-stereotypical ideologies exposed in the Victorian era (Act 1) appear to be transposed to a more liberated London in the ‘70s (Act 2), where the oppression based on sex and gender still remains a feature of society. Also, in *Top Girls* Churchill’s selection of women characters from different periods of time illustrates her sympathy for the cause of feminist advancement as well as her disdain for (male) oppressors. Nevertheless, she does not provide any ‘surreal fantasy’ at the conclusion of the play which may solve the characters’ problems easily. This arrangement reflects her aim to indicate that the conflicts in reality can never be easily resolved, unless we start to initiate more honest discussion across communities, and encourage in-depth conversation on social issues connecting real life experience and contexts.

On the other hand, the questions she asks in her plays are often left open for interpretation and reflection by both actors and audience. At the end of Act 3 in *Top Girls*, Marlene is left alone on stage and her ‘niece’ Angie suddenly enters mistaking her as her “mum” (p.87). The play ends with Marlene’s reply with reference to her supposed mother: “no, she’s gone to bed. It’s Aunt Marlene.” (p.87), showing a good
example of dramatic irony because she does turn out to be Angie's real mother earlier in this act.

Without any instructions in the script of how these lines should be spoken, there could be various ways of presentation. The actor could: i) project maternal guilt and draw audience sympathy towards her loss as she is paying her cost of denying her own motherhood; ii) demonstrate Marlene’s cruel rejection of Angie, and naturally the entire weight of audience sympathy will be placed on Angie; or iii) play it so that the weight of sympathy is directed towards both characters. With such approach, the performance will offer high flexibility on how actors, directors and audiences make their own connections between the play and real life experience.

Another case is the lack of punctuation and stage directions in *A Number*. This writing style certainly forms a challenge to the actors, but at the same time opens a space for diverse personal interpretations of the text. The play has reached its climax of emotional tension between Salter and Michael, a clone of his diseased son, when Salter finally realizes it is the time he has spent with his two sons (the original B1 and the first copy B2) that makes them unique to him. The final line of the text portrays Michael saying “sorry” (p.62) for he believes that he has had a totally different life or identity from Salter’s other ‘sons’. Again, Churchill has not given any advice on how the play should end, and thus various ways of interpreting the ending could be
performed. These include (but are not limited to): i) lights out and the play just ends; ii) Salter shooting Michael, the ‘false’ copy of his sons or iii) Salter killing himself for making an irreversible mistake of producing copies of his original son. This feature allows a high degree of autonomy on the part of participants/performers/directors to present their own interpretations through collaboration in contexts such as workshops, conversations or rehearsals.

In addition, Churchill ends the play *Far Away* with an emotional climax of undefinable fear. At the end of the play, the protagonist expresses her fear of walking home from her work, as she cannot tell if she would be attacked along the way like what she has witnessed as a child in Act 1. Without much specific instruction, actors and audiences are invited to contemplating the reasons behind such an emotion and ambience of fear, according to which it could be the propaganda by the government, pretending everything is going well in the new world, or the terrifying memory from witnessing one’s own family members participating in state-sanctioned murder. Considerable room for interpretation and discussion among participants of the theatrical performance project or workshop is conveyed by Churchill's text, together with the ample abstract symbolic lines and imagery communicated in the final act.
**Experimental Dramatic Forms**

Apart from her open-ended critique on social issues, Churchill has also expressed through the impressive and extraordinary dramatic features her perceptive methods in form and content when constructing a play. She observes that “(s)ubjects of plays change not because the problems are solved but because they become irrelevant” (p.39, Aston, 1997.2001), and so the forms of plays need to change, as the world changes, in order to reflect an adequate expression of life in reality, as opposed to outdated stage images of mimetic reality of time and space.

According to Churchill, “(w)henever conventions of subject and form outlast the impetus (motivation) that formed them they are felt to be inadequate to expressing life” (p.39, Aston, 1997/2001)”. Thus she believes that “new conventions” are “true” to a “changed view of the world, until in turn they harden into an artificial system” (p.29, Aston, 1997/2001). In other words, a convention is still “true”, “new” and constructive up to the point at which it does not reflect the authentic real-world-context anymore. This notion tends to explain why Churchill has been fond of experimenting with dramatic forms and the subject material of her plays throughout her long career as a playwright. In the following section, some impressive dramatic experiments in her plays will be highlighted.
A) Structure: Unique Conventions

In terms of structures, many extraordinary conventions can be discerned in Churchill’s plays. These striking conventions and dramaturgical methods have illustrated how Churchill constructs a play, where she usually begins with the contents of a play, and searches for an appropriate form of presentation. When writing Top Girls, she first started with the content constituted by the ideas of long-dead women coming back from their historical contexts and of women working as top executives (which is an outstandingly imaginative conceit at the time of the play being written). She then decided that the forms of magical-realism and anachronistic representation would be ideal in dramatizing the subjects of the play. This explains her arrangement of the settings of a private dinner party in Act 1, and an employment agency with top female executives demonstrating power in shaping others’ careers in the middle Act.

Also, a remarkable convention can be found in Mad Forest which shows, according to Churchill, a progression from people’s difficulty of saying anything towards the context of everybody speaking (Luckhurst, 2015). This is can be seen as a brilliant stroke of dramaturgy, as it precisely reflects the contents of the play written in 1990, portraying the life before and after the Romanian Revolution in December, 1989. Before the revolution there was no freedom of expression, and Romanians needed to self-censor in order to guard against betrayal by government informers.
B) Language: Characterization & Theme Projection

There are several signature language features presented in various Churchill plays. First, she was one of the pioneers in the use of overlapping dialogue in *Top Girls*, which can also be found in other plays like *Serious Money* and *Mad Forest*. Such lines of overlapping and interrupted dialogue are challenging to directors and actors in terms of how to make individual stories into a meaningful and purposeful holistic experience. In fact, this experimental dramatic form is particularly meaningful in Act 1 of *Top Girls*, for the intensively overlapping dialogue has contributed to the characterization as well as orchestrating a choric communication of overlapping monologues out of the individual storytelling by the six female characters.

Apart from this, there is a common use of song-like rhyming lines plus rhythmic stops and starts by Churchill, as applied to her scripts for *Serious Money* and *Cloud Nine*. As mentioned earlier, this feature could strengthen the satirical tone of the plays with respect to the serious themes represented. It always conveys an ironic criticism of various typically unconcerned attitudes to social problems and ordinary people’s struggles, such as the indifferent attitudes of the middle-class toward exploitation and social injustice caused by capitalism, colonization and imperialism.

Furthermore, in order to reinforce the presentation of a shared experience about the Romanian Revolution collected from the accounts provided by real-life
Romanian people, Churchill made a special narration device in the second act of *Mad Forest* to share the real life stories through monologue. In this act, the characters, performed by Romanian students or actors imitating Romanian accents as required, tell what happened to them on the Revolution day separately as if the other characters are not there, yet speak on alternative basis. The purpose of this arrangement is to orchestrate individual stories into a whole but still capture the dynamic of perspectives towards the Revolution event.

Speaking of monologue, it also serves as a device to portray the protagonist’s narrative and psychological struggles in *Far Away*. Since the experience of mental fear is one of the subjects of the play, the use of monologue is an effective tool to reveal the impact of political atmosphere on shaping one’s perception of social routines, i.e. the influence of socialization defined by governmental institutions.

**C) Contrasting Scenes & Characters**

In the plays by Churchill, it is not surprising to notice contrasting, sometimes exaggerated, scenes and characters. Here juxtaposition is a major structural device commonly found in her plays. It invites audiences to make both connections and distinctions related to the motifs, which creates an effect similar to Brecht’s notion of alienation of characters and audience. For example, *Cloud Nine* is constituted of
explicitly contrasting genders and races between characters and the actors playing such roles, such as Betty the oppressed housewife being played by a man, while Joshua the black servant in the British colony is played by a white actor.

Another example of unique juxtaposition can be seen in *Top Girls*, where significant and insignificant matters are mentioned in the same lines. In Act 1, Isabella the female explorer talks about her father’s death, and makes her food order at the same time. There is also a contrasting image of contemporary society displayed by the settings of Marlene’s office in downtown London and her working-class sister’s house in the suburb, which arouses audience attention to the confrontation between smart and poor, spacious and unexciting, and of elegant versus drab locations.

Moreover, Churchill tends to use the same set of actors playing different characters in a play to represent various points of view, just as she does in *Cloud Nine*, *A Number*, *Mad Forest* and *Top Girls*. This feature allows the shifting of the focus from a single point of view on the subject matter, while preserving the protagonists’ narrative and their relationship with other characters to support the cohesive and coherent plot element of a play.

*Prescient and Insightful Critique of Contemporary Issues*

As an innovative and adventurous playwright, Churchill always provides
trenchant and direct insight into causes and development of different social issues and struggles in contemporary society. In *A Number*, she demonstrates a critical response to the latest sociocultural development in the area of (bio)technological ethics, and the copying of human identity. However, she does not simply show her support or condemnation towards the scientific and technological agenda behind the cloning or information technology itself, but indicates instead the possible impact of technological development on social constructions. Though her play, she imagines how this tendency may lead to such negative sociocultural phenomena as identity confusion and family or interpersonal conflict.

As a feminist writer she never blindly supports the feminist agenda to follow fashion. Instead, she attempts though plays like *Top Girls* to expose how feminist advancement and the transforming ideologies of gender may lead to the reconstruction of another type of institution, which merely imposes all the same old violent values and perspectives experienced in the male-dominated system. As these insights show, Churchill is a farsighted social critic for such controversy concerning the prospects of feminist advancement as well as gender politics have become polemical subjects of debate across the globe nowadays.

In terms of feminist activism, Churchill has been proactive in exploring gender issues that are far more pertinent than the well-worn discourse about matters
such as gender stereotype. Churchill’s brilliant direction of developing discourse over transgenderism and gender switching has been demonstrated in her plays like *Cloud Nine*. Mary Luckhurst (2015) sees Churchill’s work as remarkably relevant to today’s world when compared with, feminist-related narratives such as Judith Butler’s theory on Performativity and gender which has become somewhat dated in the twenty-first century. These outdated gender narratives mainly refer to the argument with “heterosexual, heterosexist cultures” establishing the “exclusive binary tyranny of the categories of ‘man’ and ‘woman’, ‘male’ and ‘female’ to perpetuate a dominant order in which men and women are required, or even forced, to be heterosexual” (p.77, Luckhurst, 2015). Nevertheless, the relation between innate sex, gender identity and sexual orientation seem to be vague today. For example, *Cloud Nine*, written in 1979, presents a definitely proactive and forward-looking imaginative treatment of a cross-gender theme: transgenderism is indeed replacing homosexuality as the latest civic-rights frontier in many communities in today’s world. It again demonstrates Churchill’s astonishing prescience regarding social-cultural aspects that anticipates and even goes beyond current trends, ideologies and theories.

*Community-oriented Nature through Collaboration*

Churchill plays are always embedded in a community-oriented framework, and this can be illustrated by how Churchill organizes meanings in the development of
the plot and in her characterization which emphasizes the shared experience of people in society. At an earlier stage of her career back in the 1970s, she participated in an artistic community, a writing collective company named Joint Stock, and started workshopping with company members, sharing ideas among writers as part of the writing process. During the years at Joint Stock she was introduced to an alternative concept of ‘ownership’, in which a writer is responsible for expressing ideas that are not just her own, but also reflect a collaborative work and a collective viewpoint (Aston & Diamond, 2009).

Later on when she worked with Max Stafford-Clark, the director of the first production of Top Girls at Royal Court Theatre, she was inspired by his views of ‘writer as a collaborator’ and ‘theatre as a real collaborative art form’. Her willingness to collaborate motivates her to keep on workshopping with actors as an important component of her preparation for writing in the following years, which included asking the actors to reveal their own stories or secrets in productions such as Top Girls. The workshops do not necessarily dictate the final shape of her plays, but Churchill draws from them what inspiration she needs for her work (Aston & Diamond, 2009).

She also encourages actors and workshop participants to get more involved in the creative process of theatre-making. In Mad Forest, she intentionally leaves room for ‘free-flowing performance’ from the workshop participants to a certain extent by
writing stage directions like “etc.” (p.7), meaning “there can be other things shouted by the spectators” in the dialogue in one of the scenes. This flexibility encourages initiative participations on the part of the spectators, as it creates a sense of involvement and collaboration among the community during the workshop or performance.

The idea of collaboration and community-engaged commitment embedded in Churchill’s writing process can maximize the power of her plays being a medium for revealing people’s real everyday struggle. More importantly, it invites the audience members to be participants, and make connections as well as reflections on the subject matter discussed in the theatre, serving a useful stimulant in the community-engaged theatre workshopping models to be elaborated in Chapter 4.

Mad Forest: A Play Created through a Community-oriented Workshopping Process

As a consequence of collaborative creation since the ‘70s, many of the plays by Churchill have been produced via a workshopping process which involves actors’ improvisation based on field experience. Through this experience actors’ consciousness and critical reflections on cultural and political themes can enrich the engaging force of the improvisatory contents of the theatre (Leong, 2012). Also, through the observation on the rhythm and sense of linguistic features from the
presentation made by actors, insights obtained by the playwright would contribute to the dramaturgy of the play (Leong, 2012).

As indicated by its title, *Mad Forest: A Play from Romania* is definitely one of the examples of Churchill's plays that exemplify how field experience and interactive sharing of perspectives in a target community, Romanian people in this case interacting with UK student actors, may influence the development of a play. By highlighting the producing process of the play, the significance of workshopping to Churchill’s writing and the production of a theater for community-oriented discourse will be elaborated.

As described earlier, this play attempts a portrait of ordinary communal life before, during and after the Romanian Revolution in December, 1989. In 1990 Churchill made a visit with a group of student actors to Romania, the country which had just been liberated from the Communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaucescu. During the trip in Bucharest, they approached the Romanian people, observing their life after the culmination of the dictatorship and collecting their views on personal and social conditions by comparison with life before the Revolution (Leong, 2012). This preparation became a vital source of information and ideas later when Churchill wrote the play. In Act 2, the characters take turn to tell their experiences of the Revolution day. And this act is based on the interviews with the Romanian community conducted
by Churchill, the director Mark Wing-Davey and ten Romanian student actors during the workshopping process.

Churchill travelled to Bucharest again in July, 1990 for the rehearsals and the premiere of *Mad Forest* in Romania, and what happened in the rehearsals was emotional as she was aware of the fragile sensibilities of the Romanian actors. According to Wing-Davey, “the distrust of the new-found freedoms had been dramatically demonstrated during rehearsals when staff entering the space were panicked by the sound of pre-revolutionary music and feared that the country had slipped back into dictatorship” (p.123-124, Luckhurst, 2015). This observation doubtlessly caused Churchill the pressure and anxiety. Reflected in her journal, she was “particularly alert to the introduction of objects and clothes to the production that rent the stage fiction with their resonances of the historical reality outside the theatre building” (p.124, Luckhurst, 2015).

Responding to the challenge from the sociopolitical context, *Mad Forest* drew attention to the “mechanisms of narrative in performance”, and even “placed the act of spectatorship under particular pressure” (p.130, Luckhurst, 2015). Through the process of workshopping and sharing in rehearsals, Churchill collaborated with the participants in overcoming both physical and psychological challenges, especially the fears for the newly established regime. The production was constructed in
collaboration and synergy among all the participants of the theatre, and marks the essence of workshopping in a community theatre. Compared to the writing of a play based purely on an individual consciousness, Churchill believes that workshopping allows a person to spend time on researching with a group of people. The process does not only refer to data collection, but more importantly to the search of one’s perceptions on specific subjects, and alternative forms of expressing the subjects (Leong, 2012).

Moved by the “power and profundity of the occasion” experienced during Mad Forest’s rehearsals and workshopping, Churchill could not help asking herself “fundamental questions about the state of theater in England” (p.125, Luckhurst, 2015). She was able to make reflections on her experience in the community-oriented production and related back to her own cultural context of English language theatre. That said, mutual learning and inspirational social and cultural exchange through her interaction with spectators from another country have been achieved. The case of Mad Forest offers a practical demonstration of the power and value of a cross-community theatre workshop process.

**Caryl Churchill Productions in Hong Kong**

As a British playwright, Churchill has created community plays not only
about the social phenomena occurring in her own cultural context. In addition, her plays have attracted attention to a variety of community-related issues in contemporary society across a range of different socio-political backgrounds. Throughout the decades, her plays have been performed in diverse theatrical settings across the globe. This is the major reason for choosing Churchill plays as subject texts in the community-engaged theatre workshopping methodology in this research: her plays are capable of arousing reflection and critical interest in overseas and local communities.

Since the ‘80s onwards many prominent community-oriented plays like Churchill’s work have been inspired by the growing phenomena of greed-fuelled materialism, social indifference to the oppressed as well as to the environment, and advocating a leftist perspective particularly in Reagan-era America and Thatcher-era England (Carlson, 1996/2004). This context of politically-engaged performance and production subsequently prompted the development of a strong community-oriented nature in plays like *Top Girls* by Churchill. Moreover, this social context seems to reflect many features of sociopolitical conditions of the current society in Hong Kong and in other communities across the world. And thus, it is not surprising that political and community-engaged theatre which addresses social themes of the contemporary era in diverse theatre forms has flourished. Even though many of Churchill’s works were produced in the ‘80s, their potential relevance to the spirit of social criticism
could still be stimulating in the current social-cultural context of the local communities.

Indeed, in recent years many of her plays have been transformed and adapted on stage in Chinese-speaking theatrical contexts, including *Serious Money* in Hong Kong (2008), *Far Away* in Hong Kong (2010), Taipei (2003, 2011) and Beijing (2009), *Heart’s Desire* (1997) in Taipei (2005) and *A Number* in Taipei (2004) and Hong Kong (play-reading, 2010), play-readings of *Seven Jewish Children* (2009) in Macao, Wuhan China and Hong Kong (all in 2010) as well as *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You* (2006) in Hong Kong (2011). In addition to these productions, Chinese language translations of a few plays can be found even though they are not officially published. These include *Top Girls* as a research project of a local theatre major, *Far Away* translated for a 2010 local production by the director, and *A Number* with an extract translated and published in a Chinese poetry magazine (Leong & Tang, 2012).

These productions and translated texts of Churchill plays have offered artistic insights to audiences and theatre practitioners from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao and mainland China (Leong & Tang, 2012). This part will provide a summary of projects that engage with Churchill plays in Hong Kong and other Chinese-speaking regions, followed by reflection on the connections between her work, tertiary Drama Studies and community theatre in the local context.
The New Writing Hong Kong Campaign

In Hong Kong Caryl Churchill and her critically astute plays have started capturing attention in recent years, in which she has been a recommended playwright to study in the context of a large-scaled innovative theatre project, Contemporary Writing for Theatre 2012-2014. The project was set up by five members from a local theatre group, On & On Theatre Workshop, and was sponsored by the Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme of the Hong Kong government. The two major missions of the campaign were to promote New Writing for theatre in Hong Kong and to establish the New Writing Archive. This archive was launched in 2012 and has been Hong Kong’s first online research platform focusing on the New Writing topics. New Writing theatre is characterized by its strong engagement with social concerns as well as its creative forms of theatrical performance.

The purpose of this project is to recommend the most popular and incisive critical texts of contemporary plays from Europe, such as plays by Churchill, so to introduce to local audiences the current development and creativity of western theatre (On & On Theatre Workshop, 2012). The theatre arts scheme was an integration of creative performance, play translation, performance research and education, which organized and published relevant research data as well as translated European New Writing play texts. For instance, some extracts from Churchill plays have been
translated into Cantonese for the project archive and several play-reading events have been organized. The project aims at encouraging more local productions of outstanding community-oriented plays, in order to connect local creativity and the development of western contemporary theatre.

Caryl Churchill has been one of the highlighted contemporary playwrights in this project, where the archive has provided in-depth research articles regarding her plays and her writing style. Tang (2012) explains that Churchill has been listed as one of the New Writing playwrights for several reasons. First, throughout her long journey of play creation, she has insisted on advocating a constant and sincere perspective of social criticism in her plays. Her plays have always conveyed an energetic and powerful language sense, from the committed socialist-feminist voice at the earlier stage of her career to the global political insights her work has afforded in recent years. Also, Churchill has demonstrated with her brilliant plays the possibility of making political criticism through contemporary theatre. During the theatre project selected plays or scenes by Churchill were performed in Hong Kong, either on stage or in the form of play-reading. (See the local productions listed above.)

Churchill in Chinese-speaking Theatre

Apart from Hong Kong, as mentioned earlier, Churchill plays have raised attention in other Chinese-speaking regions, including Taiwan, Macao and mainland
China. It is interesting to explore the reflection and response from the theatre members and audiences after participating in different productions of Churchill’s work. As director of an adapted production of *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You* (Taipei, 2010), Social Chang argues that Churchill’s texts have always presented rigorous structures, and thus the critical shock brought by themes can only be experienced through onstage performance. He reckons some of her plays exhibit an “anti-drama” character, referring to the extraordinary forms of her plays that diverge from traditional perceptions of theatre (Leong & Tang, 2012).

Speaking of forms and structures, Hung-ya Yen from Taipei who directed two plays of Churchill has remarked on the theatre conventions of her texts. To him, Churchill plays have encouraged him to attempt a direct confrontation with socio-political problems in today’s world via “dangerous forms” of theatre. And through the productions, he could re-affirm the powder of language in a theatre, serving as a device for characterization and leading to an alienation effect. Through this, Churchill has illustrated how to invite audiences to engage in self-reflection by destroying their identification with a particular character or characters in a play. He reminds us that the acting and the scenes in a production of Churchill’s drama would need to make associations with audiences’ real life experience, and yet they should not be too realistic in order to prevent audiences being held up on the surface meaning of the
story (Leong & Tang, 2012).

Yan Pat To, the local director of two play-readings of Churchill plays, shows his high appreciation of her unrestrained writing style. An impression obtained from reading her plays is that through her minimalist writing fashion, Churchill has called for innovative theatrical asceticism in collaboration with theatre practitioners (Leong & Tang, 2012). Similar to Yan, Cao Ke-Fei the director of Far Away in Beijing (2009), also appreciates Churchill’s liberated style of writing, which has allowed his free interpretation of the play in a different cultural ethos. Taking the theme of violence in Far Away as an example, as long as the adapted production was constructed upon this core subject, he and his theatre members were able to explore alternative approaches in presenting the play, so that it could serve as a stronger action-through-theatre project in the community (Leong & Tang, 2012).

In terms of the significance of Churchill plays in action-through-theatre, Cao highlights that the production has changed his practice of focusing only the field of stage drama. After the production in 2008, he started exploring possibilities of theatre performance with diverse media. This experience drove him to question the practice of theatre, an encouraged a break with traditional theatre conventions, for instance, professional versus non-professional theatre, performer versus audience, everyday life versus arts, and the boundaries between drama and other cultural fields
In addition, the directors mentioned some responses received from audiences of their productions. Chang indicates that both the theatre group members and audiences have shown positive feedback about his production of *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You*. Thanks to the amusing tone of the company's performance, his audiences were able to enjoy this comedy, and he believes that the themes of this play by a British playwright were successfully presented even when it was adapted to a culturally different context in Taipei. It is not surprising that his team was invited to perform on campuses by a number of university professors after the first production (Leong & Tang, 2012), which demonstrated how this type of production can serve as a bridge between Churchill plays and the academic field. Likewise, Mok Sio Chong from Macao has shared his observation about audience response from his public play-reading experience. In 2010, he participated with various groups of actors in an unplanned and self-generated one-day play-reading of *Seven Jewish Children* in several public spaces in Macao. He recalls that no passers-by attempted to stop and see what the groups were doing on the site, even though he has personally achieved reflections on the themes of the play by reading it in public (Leong & Tang, 2012). The indifferent reaction of the audiences in his play-reading was probably due to the theatre form adopted. Since an invisible theatre-like environment was established, the
passers-by might not be aware that it was a performance in which they could participate. This observation may have illustrated the need for a carefully designed choice of theatre form to be adopted and the necessary rehearsals within the context of a planned workshop, if the aim of the theatre is to engage a target community.

Reviewing the experience of these directors, it is not difficult to observe that the productions of Churchill plays in Chinese-speaking theatre contexts engaged theatre practitioners in terms of their imaginative use of forms and presentation styles. Also, the productions have aroused attention and interest in Caryl Churchill from academics in these communities. In fact, some of these directors are instructors of tertiary Drama or Literary Studies with Churchill plays as teaching texts, and many of them have come to learn about Churchill’s work in academic courses when studying drama (Leong & Tang, 2012). This reflects the notion that tertiary Drama Studies is perhaps an important channel for bringing Churchill plays to local students as well as the Chinese or multicultural communities, instead of only to the (professional) theater field especially considering that there are not many official translations or formal productions of her drama found in Hong Kong.

3.4 The Language Issues: From an English Text to a Multilingual & Multicultural Community of Hong Kong

The increasing importance of the use of language in performance activities
since the mid-1980s has illustrated an inseparable link between the political and social contexts and as reflected in the language of the plays (Carlson, 1996/2004). This feature is particularly outstanding in theatre activities among people where their voice has been neglected in the mainstream social system, i.e. the more marginalized parts of the community. Since the aim of this research to initiate cross-community exchange via the language arts of drama, it is worthwhile exploring the issues related to language use involved in the theatre workshopping methodology.

According to Carlson (1996/2004), the role of language in contemporary theatre includes enabling participants to engage with “questions of identity on the one hand and of social, cultural, and political issues on the other” (p.132) through bodily performance in drama. Hence, the major function of language in theatrical performance is to offer intellectual and often political, artistically self-reflexive depth to the physical display” (p.128). Considering that for the purposes of the present study the recommended community-engaged theatre workshopping approach with Churchill plays has been adapted to the multilingual and multicultural context of Hong Kong, it is vital to analyze how language – especially English in texts written by this British playwright – functions as a bridging device rather than a barrier between the texts and the local communities. By reviewing the language issues in relation to Hong Kong’s sociopolitical factors in institutional education in the tertiary sector, the significance
of language in this workshopping methodology can be further elaborated.

From ‘Hegemony’ to Opportunity: Bridging English Drama and the Local Community through the English Language

Deriving his approach from Noam Chomsky’s sociolinguistic theory, Carlson (1996/2004) reminds that the language matter in drama is not just about “competence”, but more constructively about the application of such competence in a speech situation. That said, communicative performance involves abundant use of language conveying universal concerns regarding “truth, justice, and freedom” (p.58), according to which the language will be affected by the ideologies of distinct social contexts. Transcultural adaptation is a means to transform the text written in a foreign language into a form suitable for local communities, which shows the flexibility of communicative performance in different social contexts including the universal themes mentioned above. In the context of the present theatre workshopping methodology with English plays as the subject of study for students from the local community in this research, it is necessary to review the ideologies related to the status of the English language in institutional education in Hong Kong. In the 156-year period of colonization and even beyond the English language has represented a hegemonic ideological concept in Hong Kong. Focusing on higher education, according to Hui Po Keung (2015b) the demand for implementing English as the Medium of Instruction
(EMI) in university has tended to reflect the broad perception that EMI equals language education (Hui, 2015b). It seems to illustrate the false assumption that EMI education would guarantee students’ acquisition of excellent English proficiency. The aim of institutional education even seems to be reduced to merely ‘learning good foreign language’. And there tends to exist a somewhat reductive attitude toward English in institutional education in Hong Kong; it is emphasized as an instrument for enhancing the ‘international competitive capability’ of students (Hui, 2015b), rather than for integrative goals and cognitive and aesthetic value in itself.

Looking at the larger picture of the social status of English with Hong Kong’s position as an international financial centre, there is a general perception that English is essentially a device for economic growth as well as for cultural and socioeconomic capital. As indicated by local lawmaker Michael Tien, it is necessary to maintain high English proficiency among citizens so to avoid being eliminated by international city competitors such as Singapore (Hui, 2015b). Influenced by the sociopolitical and historical background of Hong Kong, as a former British colony, the English language remains a determining factor for choices of university disciplines and job opportunities for students and adults nowadays.

Even though it is not a focus of this study to investigate the social and cultural consequences or the current development of English language usage in Hong
Kong, its status as a world language and Lingua Franca offers a favourable environment for implementing community-engaged theater workshopping with Churchill plays. This is especially the case when it involves local undergraduate and secondary students and community-partners from the field of institutional education as epitomized in the case study (see Chapter 5). Given the hegemonic perception of the English language in Hong Kong, some community stakeholders of the workshopping project may have regarded the methodology as an English-learning activity, and probably considered the rationale for engaging in it similar to conducting English drama as an element of the secondary school English subject curriculum.

Provided the objectives of the cross-community interaction on social, cultural and political issues through alternative expression derived from drama can be achieved, such perception of English does not necessarily create a barrier between communities involved in the workshops. Rather, it has provided a motivating force of participation and an opportunity to link up various stakeholders in the field of community theatre. For instance, the co-organizing schools in the case study appreciated the proposals for the workshopping project and were willing to cooperate as community-partners mainly because they believed such a project would be beneficial to students’ acquisition of English language skills. They also valued the opportunity to get their students exposed to contemporary drama in English through
the experiential learning process, while students were encouraged to participate in a theater workshop covering plays and performance in English.

**Developing a Local Discourse on Sociocultural Topics with English Plays**

Jean Benedetti (1998) maintains that when he is given a script, he does not only see the words but the “social reality that lies behind them” (p.5) and recalls his perception of a world associated with his own social experience. In other words, a text is always associated to the social and cultural concepts behind the words or the language. This insight has determined how we perceive language as essentially a tool for integrating an English play into a cross-community theatre workshop in the local context. Fish (1980) believes that the communities of readers of a text control the meaning of the literary speech acts based on their social-self, which is constituted by their socio-cultural backgrounds such as gender, class and race. In other words, the communicative performance of universal values or topics, even conveyed in the same text, could vary considerably across communities with diverse backgrounds. Therefore, community-engaged theatre workshopping with Churchill plays is capable of generating distinctive and alternative styles and qualities of performance when implemented in a local community; in this way the language of drama has served as the text binding and the interpretive representation based on specific sociopolitical
conventions of the wider community.

To adapt an English play to a local workshop purpose, a ‘translation’ procedure is needed. Here, the word ‘translation’ is not restricted to the language of the words in a script. More significantly it refers to the transformation of the spirit or the motifs of the text into a local context, so as to open a dialogue between the participants and the play based on the condition and context of production (Leong, 2011). In this connection the English drama texts by Churchill are ideally suited to arouse participants' interest and draw attention to the underlying themes of social justice and liberation through the community theatre workshops.

As Hui (2015b) points out, teaching-and-learning through English a is conducive to the introduction of the cultural context that is bound up with the English language, including the meanings associated with ‘western values’ such as freedom and democracy. An English text would function as a medium in the workshop situation connoting influential concepts to the local community derived from globalization, for instance, values of democratic advancement and civil rights, which Hong Kong people are particularly conscious of given the contemporary geopolitical situation in China and in Asia in general. Churchill’s plays are particularly appropriate to be adopted and adapted in the community-engaged theatre workshop in order to stimulate discussion on such topics. They fit within the objectives of this critical pedagogic methodology.
Workshop participants would not feel distant from these sociocultural topics and values in everyday life as reflected in the attention they have received from many students and citizens since the events surrounding the Umbrella Movement (see Chapter 2).

**English Drama for a Multilingual Theatre Workshop**

Although Churchill's plays often cover universal social concerns related to contemporary issues, it is understandable when the cultural context represented in the plays is unfamiliar to the theatre workshop participants. An example taken from the case study in the action research would be the cultural setting and subject of the working world in *Top Girls*, where it may not be easy for either undergraduate or secondary students to identify with characters and situations. Nevertheless, according to Pickering (1988/2003), the language in theatre is a means to “bring us in touch with a whole cultural group” (p.66) which the participants are not familiar with. The significance of English language texts is to help participants to “identify the distinctive qualities of regional language and relate them to the rhythm of life, the underlying outlook of the people (as well as) the cultural expectations of the characters” (p.66). Thus, exploring a cultural environment that differs from our own sociocultural background through an English drama text is a valuable experience for participants.
reflecting the essence of community theatre, which is concerned with contemporary life and people of various ethnic groups, social classes and roles.

Discussion as well as sharing on contemporary sociocultural issues is a fundamental component of the community-engaged theatre workshopping tool. However, as Hui (2015b) indicates, the use of English alone may still pose challenges in studying sophisticated humanities topics in the local context. To tackle the possible practical challenge in discussion and collaboration in the theatre process, a multilingual interactive approach is more pragmatic and therefore advisable. Involving the first language of participants, i.e. mainly Cantonese in this case, is beneficial for engaging participants in both affective and effective methods of teaching-and-learning. It also motivates students, especially for those with a lower English proficiency, to initiate conversation over subjects related to the Humanities and Social Sciences contexts (Hui, 2015b), in order to achieve a more in-depth and authentic intellectual or cultural exchange.

In addition, as inspired by the Medium of Instruction policy of many local universities, a “switchable option” (p.155, Hui, 2015b) can be employed for a flexible discourse policy in the workshop. It is worthwhile paying attention to the rationale for language use in a community-engaged theatre workshopping activity in a multilingual and multicultural context. As Hui (2015b) emphasizes, the concept of a definite
‘standardized language’ should be discounted, as it is essential to comprehend or even adapt the variety of language forms available in different communities. This is the only sensible approach to celebrate the language diversity in the multicultural context of community theatre workshopping with the recognition and implementation of various languages in the mutual learning environment.

**About the Next Chapter**

In the upcoming chapter the four recommended community-engaged theatre workshopping models will be elaborated. The themes and cultural relevance of the four plays to the local contexts will be introduced, and specific scene extracts from each play to be adapted in the models will be suggested. It will also discuss in detail the application of selected community theatre forms in each model, and explore how the model could be produced in a feasible way.
Chapter 4: Possible Models of Churchill's Plays for Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping

Introduction to the Chapter

In Chapter 3, the unique status of Drama and Theatre in tertiary education, the sociopolitical representation of Caryl Churchill’s plays in the contemporary context, and the significance of the English language in local theatre workshops have all been explored. This chapter will focus on four recommended models of community-engaged theatre workshopping combining scene extracts from Churchill’s plays and various community theatre forms. It will discuss the themes of each play and their cultural relevance to Hong Kong in the Post-Umbrella Movement era. It will also analyze the distinctive dramatic features as represented in the scene extracts, and explain the application and the rationale of the recommended theatre workshopping models. The chapter will elucidate how these models could be implemented with a tertiary Drama Studies course curriculum, with some suggestions to tackle possible challenges of the theatre workshop production.

According to Luckhurst (2015), Churchill as a political dramatist has demonstrated through her work the resistance to classification. She always challenges “mainstream cultural assumptions about theatre as an art form” (p.3, Luckhurst, 2015) and rejects the formulaic theatrical form and shape with abundant writing experiments
in her plays. As indicated by Dan Rebellato (2009, p.166), Churchill has managed to inspire a transformed theatre perception by combining the English tradition of social realism and the European tradition of formal experiment among the streams of British theatre. Integrating professional stage drama and applied theatrical conventions, this idea of a community-oriented emphasis has been expressed in the four recommended plays by Churchill in this research: *Top Girls* (1982), *Cloud Nine* (1979), *Serious Money* (1987) and *A Number* (2002). The synopses of the plays can be found in Chapter 3.

The following presentation of the four theatre workshopping models with these plays will be divided into two parts. Part one will cover the models with scene extracts from *Top Girls* and *Cloud Nine* respectively, in which the plays share closely related themes on feminism and gender. They are suitable to be applied to most tertiary drama courses designed with an outreach theatre workshopping component in Hong Kong and other contexts. The second part will cover the two other plays, *Serious Money* and *A Number*, with a common concern about the identity issues in our contemporary and global capitalist society. Due to the relatively more challenging dramatic features conveyed in these two plays such as sophisticated lines combining monologue and overlapping dialogue or scenes with flashbacks, the workshopping models with their scene extracts will require considerable effort in pre-workshop study.
of texts. It may require acquisition of prior knowledge of specific topics, intensive rehearsals and abundant resources to support the performance. This category can be seen as an advanced level of community-theatre workshopping tools for tertiary drama students and the target community.

4.1 Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping Models – *Top Girls* & *Cloud Nine*

The first category involves recommended theatre workshopping models with scene extracts from *Top Girls* and *Cloud Nine* respectively. These extracts display the common themes of inter- and intra- sexual oppression, feminist liberation or progression of gender politics in relation to civic empowerment, and gender roles with family impacts. They are chosen to be the texts of study in the theatre workshops as they are able to respond to Hong Kong’s glocal cultural-political environment of social resistance nowadays. This section will explore the analysis of the major themes of each play, their highlighted subtexts and dramatic features as reflected in the extracts with their cultural relevance to the local communities – especially the young generation or local students. It will be followed by the suggested theatre workshopping design with various adapted community theatre forms.
Top Girls

*Top Girls* depicts the struggles of social class, gender, family responsibility and career aspirations among Marlene the protagonist and other female characters. Two scene extracts are selected for adaptation in the community-engaged theatre workshopping models. The first scene extract is taken from Act 2, Scene 3, which involves three characters, Marlene, Mrs. Kidd and Angie, and occurs in the main office of Marlene. Mrs. Kidd is the wife of Howard (a colleague of Marlene) and a housewife presenting a rather stereotypical perception of female positions in family and at work in a male-dominated context. She comes to the office of ‘Top Girls’ employment agency on a working day while her husband is not at work. She attempts to persuade Marlene to give up her newly promoted position as the company’s director to Howard. Mrs. Kidd expresses the idea that Howard cannot accept working for a woman and thus projects his anger on his wife. She needs to “do something” (p.59) for her husband and concludes that it is not “natural” (p.59) for Marlene as a woman to be an aggressive boss of men. In response to Mrs. Kidd’s vain wish and her accusation, Marlene firmly rejects the request and shows disdain toward Mrs. Kidd for endorsing such a patriarchal attitude regarding social roles of females. Angie, who thinks she is Marlene’s ‘niece’ but latterly revealed in the play to be her daughter, witnesses the whole incident. It is not difficult to realize her fond admiration for Marlene’s capability.
of taking in charge of the situation work and winning the argument over the senior position with Mrs. Kidd. It seems to be a triumph over the middle-class perceptions as projected by Mrs. Kidd. It is a dramatically ironic moment in the play, as Angie does not know the fact that Marlene has pursued her career goal by abandoning this her own daughter, who is Angie herself.

The second scene extract is chosen from Act Two, Scene 3. It is an interview involving Nell and Shona. Nell is another top career woman working with Marlene in the employment agency. In this scene, she interviews a young girl Shona who seeks job opportunities via the agency. During the conversation, Nell proudly shares her successful career experience while Shona tries to impress her by demonstrating an aggressive ambition to be a top salesperson. At first Nell expects to meet a ‘top girl’ like herself, but she becomes increasingly irritated by Shona, as she realizes that Shona is an inexperienced girl with no knowledge of any high-ranking job. Although she has submitted a curriculum vitae based purely on lies, Shona reveals herself as an ignorant girl and one who is far from being the kind of qualified career woman that Nell and her female colleagues wish to interview and find a good job for. The scene ends with Shona’s sullen, resentful claim about her potential ability to take on a high-ranking job.
Before looking at the subtexts conveyed in each scene extract, the featured themes are to be explored in this section. The first motif of *Top Girls* is to reveal the difficulty in surviving as a female in a male-dominated society. It displays different forms of representation of gender stereotypes and the attached universal resentment expressed by females. Despite their various social and cultural backgrounds, all female characters in this play have encountered the challenge of being a woman in a patriarchal society where the norms and social standards are defined by men. This can be shown in Marlene and Mrs. Kidd’s quarrel (see scene extract 1 below); although the two female characters, a career woman and a housewife, have had very different thoughts regarding female positions in the family and at work, both of them have found it quite a struggle to survive as women in their social and cultural conditions.

This leads to a further question raised by the play surrounding the difficulty of a female to seek a balance between her career aspirations and her family responsibility. Reviewing the social background of *Top Girls*, there have been more women in Britain being able to join the labour force due to an increasing divorce rate since the ‘70s. A change in the moral climate has occurred through the years and now single mothers are generally accepted by society – not only in Britain but in most places in the contemporary world. Another issue motivating women to join the labour
market is indicated by Virginia Woolf in her work titled *A Room of One's Own* (1929). This British feminist writer who considers writing to be a means of women’s liberation believes that “a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction” (p.4), emphasizing that economic independence is a vital condition for women seeking liberation and autonomy in her thoughts and in her life. Nevertheless, such conception has caused a challenging dilemma for career women with family responsibilities including roles as daughters, wives, mothers, or more often a mixture of these. Churchill tries to bring up this question not only to women but also to men, whether family ties are an obstacle in obtaining high-ranking jobs in many scenes of the play. For instance, during Nell’s interview with Shona who is looking for a high-ranking job (see scene extract 2 below), she implies that Shona would get a job with management status only if she is able to travel and accept relocation. In other words, “no (family) ties” (p.64) or family burden in the living city has become the best condition for a female to succeed in the job market and career development in the contemporary context of globalization.

Moreover, *Top Girls* is regarded as Churchill’s criticism of Bourgeois Feminism including its emancipatory values and the tendency of the Women Liberation Movement around the time she created the play in the early-1980s. As in many countries around the globe, the Women’s Liberation Movement was highly
active in Britain in the 1970s. Feminists questioned any assumption that women are subordinate to and dependent on men and that the social and sexual division of labour in society is unchangeable. Activists made a concerted effort to draw attention to women’s issues and enhancing women’s self-consciousness as a group as well as promoting self-determination as a tactic in response to the patriarchal ethos.

When Margaret Thatcher became the first female Prime Minister in 1979, she was seen as something of a female an icon as ‘The New Woman’ and was idolized by many women with career aspirations. It is easy to see Marlene in Top Girls as a follower of Thatcher with her ambition to succeed in career terms as expressed in her positive comment on “Maggie” in Act 3 – “Maggie” here refers to Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher’s working style and political attitude as a capitalist advanced the inflection of feminism in a more individualistic manner, which could be associated with the concept of bourgeois feminism. As described by Brandt, G. W. (1999), instead of urging solidarity among women as a group, bourgeois feminism t values individual social power and the ambitions of women in the capitalist economy. In other words, bourgeois feminism accepts the world as it is, and encourages women to strive for equaling men’s achievements following the norms of the established patriarchal institution. Nevertheless, this notion has shown no concern for class struggles and social deprivation in the capitalist society, in which the meaning of individual
achievements of ‘successful women’ is still defined according to the male-dominated perception.

An eye-catching irony presented by *Top Girls* is found in the employment agency which is run by top women including Marlene and her many female colleagues. After persistent struggles and sacrifice in diverse forms, these female executives are now capable of shaping the careers of other women and men. However, they have shown aggressive but dismissive attitudes towards their clients and even to their colleagues. To offer several examples, Marlene intends to ignore Mrs. Kidd’s description of Howard’s poor condition in scene extract 1, while Nell admits that she is “not very nice” (p.61) to her clients as a previous salesperson and gives a cold response to the inexperienced client Shona in scene extract 2. The scenes depict the harsh and unfeeling characters of these female executives, for they never consider helping other people, including women who suffer from deprivation due to class and gender oppression. Here, the discussion of whether the Women Liberation Movement of its immediate time has become a central theme of *Top Girls*. By exploring the many definitions of ‘women liberation’, Churchill questions if the feminist movement would merely reconstruct another institution adapting all the same old values that oppress females in the conventional male-dominated world: are women liberated when they do everything that men do?
In *Top Girls*, the top female executives achieve success and independence, yet their success is defined within a system where the standards are established by men. They are still struggling under the mainstream systems of patriarchal hierarchy and capitalism in which success is built on deprivation. These able business women demonstrate a dismissive attitude to men and a reversed hierarchal perception of females taking in charge of males. Bill Naismith (1991/2005) indicates that even though these top girl characters are brilliant and dismissive of men, “they have done nothing to challenge patriarchal authority” (p.xxxvi). These female executives “have had to adopt the kind of behaviour that women have traditionally resented in men” (p.xxxvi). By portraying the possible consequences of such bourgeois feminist ideology in *Top Girls*, Churchill sees this phenomenon as an unhealthy trend in the feminist movement, which does not only impact western countries but also in China as a result of its gradual economic development since the late-1970s.

In the late-1970s, a radical women’s liberation movement was led by All-China Women’s Federation, an official organization of the communist government in the People’s Republic of China. This movement pushed ahead with women taking up men’s jobs making a high demand on their physical strength in jobs such as coal mining – but the experience was regarded as a way of ‘self-liberation’. It was later criticized for causing different degrees of health problems among women including
amenorrhea.

Performed in 1982, Top Girls gave a critical response to the social and political context of its immediate time. Its critique of particular feminist values and attitudes concerning women’s role in career, family and the male-dominated capitalist world is still closely related to the present time. Nowadays this bourgeois feminist ideology is still being reinforced in various forms across the world; we are encountering the third-wave feminism with more females obtaining culturally and politically influential positions. For instance, a significant increase in the number of female national leaders has been evident in both western countries and the Asia-Pacific region in recent years including President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan, State Councillor Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, and Koike Yuriko the Governor of Tokyo, Japan. The play’s audience is invited to make reflections through Top Girls on the possible directions of advancing the feminist movement in the immediate future.

Socialist feminism explains that gender struggle is originated from class struggle, and regards it as ‘class-discrimination and oppression’ extended to the context of gender. As a socialist feminist, Churchill addresses the themes of many of her plays to the argument of capitalism versus socialism. She highlights in many scenes of Top Girls the interrelationship between class and gender oppressions, and suggests that eliminating the class oppression caused by capitalism is the only way to stop
gender oppression. According to Elaine Aston (1997/2001), Churchill has linked gender struggle back to the central issue of class struggle in Act Three through the conversation between Marlene and her working-class sister Joyce, who faces oppression as a single mother taking up four cleaning jobs to survive and raise the family. Another remarkable representation of class struggle is displayed by the language of speech of Marlene, Angie and Mrs. Kidd in scene extract 1, which will be elaborated in the following section. The language of speech reflects contrasting social backgrounds of different characters, and the scene can be seen as a class-gender confrontation of the three female characters.

With reference to *Top Girls*’ feminist theme in relation to the economic structure of contemporary society, alternative socialist ideologies started to flourish in Hong Kong in the post-Umbrella Movement context. Such ideologies may have been influenced by western concepts of Libertarian Marxism or democratic socialism. These newly formed active political forces are popular among the young generation. They do not identify themselves with communist ideas and meanwhile do not compromise with the current capitalist institutions or social systems determining the mainstream sociocultural values, including social expectations on gender and women’s roles. It is not surprising that citizens of Hong Kong like many counterparts over the world have shown a growing desire for seeking alternatives in social
constructivist models other than the bitter conventional rivals of capitalism and socialism since the post-Cold War era. As emphasized by Churchill through this play, it is important to make reflections on the correlation between the transformation of feminist movement and social as well as economic development of society. And this observation may start with the social phenomena linked with gender politics and feminism in Hong Kong, or more precisely the Greater China Region (“China”), since the financial crisis happened in 2008.

According to Dai Jinhua (2015), the gender issues in China have demonstrated a rapid change with high complexity as the global sociopolitical environment started to change rapidly since the 2008 financial crisis. And this transformation has led to gender-class polarization and retrogression of gender consciousness at different levels. Looking at the cultural representation of sexuality in social media in recent times in China, there is usually a standardized ‘modern’ voice supporting homosexuality and belittling heterosexuality. For example, a ‘fashionable’ or ‘cool’ slang “直男癌去死” (“curse the heterosexual cancer patients”) – a satirical expression of anger towards heterosexual men or people supporting heterosexuality – has illustrated a privileged status of non-heterosexuality and the underlying neglect of sexual diversity and sexual representation of today. This colloquialism reflects that a narrow-minded perception supporting only non-heterosexuality has become a force
affecting gender politics in society.

Speaking of the economic impacts of the 2008 financial crisis, although a speedy recovery in the economic conditions seems to have occurred in China, the majority of assets are in fact owned by males due to the economic and legal systems favouring men for property possession. Dai (2015) explains that even though more female members of families are urged to join or return to the labour force in the period of economic depression, their wages would mainly be used to support and maintain the assets owned by the male family members. That said, their contributions at work have become the fundamental of the male-dominated social and economic structure, in which the conception shares some similarities of the social effect caused by the top female executives in Top Girls. Even when today’s economic structure appears to celebrate ‘shared assets between husband and wife’, the female is often unaware of the determination of legal terms involving asset allocation between a married couple. As a result, the female could only have ‘income’ while the male would be the actual ‘owner of assets’. This phenomenon reflects a male-oriented social and economic constitution that protects males in control of assets, and consolidates a patriarchal social system along with other economic changes in recent China.

Meanwhile, under this institutionalized constitution of asset allocation, male social members without any asset are now being deprived of the right to enter
According to Dai (2015), two social and gender groups have been abandoned by the marriage system based on such institution; the top women who own personal assets and the males from the lowest social class. It is shocking that the social response to these marginalized sectors would be suggesting them to ‘engage in homosexuality’ as a solution to difficulties of finding a suitable partner. All these social trends and occurrence have signified different extents of polarization and the trace of backsliding of sexual consciousness in this decade. Since social problems and struggles have become more complex today, it is rather difficult to represent the oppressed people in gender and economic politics by simplifying them as a single oppressed group as ‘female’. And this is exactly what Top Girls has demonstrated concerning feminist topics in broader social discussions.

Furthermore, adopting and adapting scenes from Top Girls in a community-engaged theatre workshop will allow participants, especially students, to ponder on the current ideological stream of feminism and gender in academic studies in the Chinese context. Traditionally, the study of feminism and the correlative feminist movement are grounded in resistance to the patriarchal social system as an ideology, with a focus on women as the oppressed group in society. Meanwhile, gender studies as a discipline puts an emphasis on ‘gender’ as a cultural interpretation instead of a product of socialization defined by patriarchal institutions or a label established upon the natural
sex of a person. Nevertheless, instead of promoting mutual respect between genders, studies and social campaigns related to sexuality and gender politics now seem to proceed towards a rather narrow direction that concerns the social conditions of only sexual special interest groups such as homosexuals. This trend of developing radical feminist narratives does not only fail to achieve gender equality, it has in fact aggravated the polarization between genders and sexual orientations in social and academic contexts. Dai (2015) gives an example of a male professor’s statement made in a university meeting about hiring a new professor, where he expressed to be “fed up” with being surrounded by feminist academics and thus it would be “the best” to have a male professor. Dai believes that no one in the university would dare to make such a statement in public before the feminist and gender-related narratives took an extreme reactionary direction in recent China.

Churchill problematizes in the play Marlene’s attitude and her device of achieving ‘successful liberation’ from class and gender struggles. Putting it in the current social context, the play can serve as a discourse to mirror what is happening in our society; in today’s society feminist liberation and gender-related campaigns have established sexual minority-oriented values that in many ways simply imitate those of the former male-oriented social system. Focusing on the feminist ideological development in Chinese society, Dai (2015) suggests that it is time for people to review
the mainstream development of feminist ideology and movements, and to encourage a self-defined consciousness of gender in community from the glocal perspective. Despite the fact that *Top Girls* is a play written in the ‘80s, its core ideas as reflected in the two chosen scene extracts represent a powerful response to the social challenge we are encountering today. As revealed in the Umbrella Movement, many of the local youth are in search of alternative directions in social advancement with diverse cultural objectives outside the mainstream or conventional institutional ideologies. This play inspires discussion over the possible consequences of the current social development particularly related to gender and economic issues. The scene extracts stimulate theatre workshop participants’ debates on the correlation between individual practice and social transformation across communities of the younger generation in Hong Kong and other places.

**Scene Extract 1: Marlene & Mrs. Kidd’s Quarrel**

Having a closer look at the subtexts of selected scene extract, the first scene is taken extract from *Top Girls* (p.57-60, 1982/2005). (See Appendix 1.) There are a several remarkable features in the subtext of this extract that participants can pay attention to in a theatre workshop. In this extract, Marlene and Mrs. Kidd represent contrasting perceptions of women’s positions at work and in the family. The words
“normal” and “natural” appear several times in this conversation, implying a portrait of social norms from two distinctive perspectives. Marlene reckons that it is natural of Howard to feel miserable because he has lost in the competition at work, which demonstrates her capitalist values of pursuing individual success. As for Mrs. Kidd, “natural” to her means that women are responsible for supporting the male family member(s) to pursue their goals. Mrs. Kidd states that “(w)hat’s it going to do to him (Howard) working for a woman? I think it was a man he’d get over it as something normal”. The crux of the argument is not about Marlene being a professional woman, but a woman who is in a superior position and who therefore manages a male colleague. Hence, Mrs. Kidd needs to “do something” (p.59) even by making an unreasonable request to the woman who defeats Howard in the competition for the managerial position. Although Howard himself has never shown up in person throughout the play, based on Mrs. Kidd’s description, this couple shares the same belief that women should stay subordinate to men – both at work and in the family.

Towards the end of the conversation, Mrs. Kidd requests Marlene not to tell Howard of her visit, as “(h)e is very proud” (p.59). It implies Howard’s high self-esteem and the fact that he feels inferior towards capable women around him. Through this implication, Churchill reveals an important feminist analysis about the fundamental reason for the establishment of patriarchal hierarchy in the male-oriented
conventional institutions. Apart from this, even though Mrs. Kidd has expressed her complaint about Howard’s poor behaviour to her at home, she insists to maintain her subordinate role in the family. She concludes that Marlene will “end up miserable and lonely” (p.59), which may offer an explanation for her effort in maintaining her position in the patriarchal social structure. Her fear is that she will become “miserable and lonely” if she does not obey and support her husband. As an independent top executive who prioritizes her career over her family, it is not surprising that Marlene responds by despising Mrs. Kidd’s subordination to her husband and the guilt of abandoning her daughter.

On the other hand, the three characters from this scene extract, Marlene, Mrs. Kidd and Angie, have demonstrated contrasting styles of speech and rival attitudes which could be a reflection of their social class backgrounds. Naismith (1991/2005) regards this scene as a “confrontation of women from different backgrounds holding incompatible views about the roles of women” (p.xlvii). Mrs. Kidd is assumed to be from the middle-class and probably has a stronger educational background than Marlene and Angie. When Marlene introduces Angie, Mrs. Kidd replies with “the conventional ‘polite’ response of her social group – ‘Very pleased to meet you.’” (p.xlvii). In contrast, Angie responds “disconcertedly” (p.xlvii) to a greeting question which shows that she is “out of her depth!!!!…(and) might never...
have spoken before to a woman of Mrs. Kidd’s social background” (p.xlvii). She has been raised by Marlene’s working class sister in the suburb, and is at the early stage of wanting to imitate Marlene’s career aspiration. Compared to Mrs. Kidd and Angie, the social group identity of Marlene is not clear-cut. Through the lines of Marlene in the quarrel, she shows a mixed or confused perception of her social group – as a person who has grown up in a working class context and has struggled to enter the middle-class. In spite of her effort in handling Mrs. Kidd’s visit in a professional style, the vulgar terms she uses in the quarrel such as “(h)e really is a shit, Howard” (p.59) might have revealed her original social background. One may notice from the lines the awkwardness of her rival attitude towards Mrs. Kidd; she despises Mrs. Kidd and her representation of the middle-class values on gender and work, yet desperately desires to belong to the middle-class at the same time.

This identity confusion represented by Marlene reflects people’s struggles with the issue of self-identity and self-values in the globalized capitalist world of today. According to Ulrich Beck (2000), people are facing the struggle for “a new relationship between the individual and society” (p.165) under the influence of globalization in the current era. Recognizing the “ethic of individual self-fulfillment and achievement (being) the most powerful current in modern society”, people strive to be the “creator of an individual identity” (p.165). Beck (2000) regards this topic to be “the central
character of our time” (p.165). In this context of globalization with rapid changes in social conventions, the desire for shaping our individual identity as reflected in Marlene’s ambitions and characters has become the fundamental cause of global gender and family revolutions in relation to work and politics. Beck (2000) explains that the compulsion and possibility of gaining power in shaping our individual identity and our life would be reinforced when a society is “highly differentiated” (p.165), which is displayed by the social situation of post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong.

Due to the constant switches between various social identities, or ‘social roles’ to refer to Goffman’s words, with distinctive logic of actions on different occasions, such a highly differentiated society would not be able to integrate people into its functional systems and institutions. As a result, the social situation has caused identity confusion for people like Marlene; and thus what Marlene experiences is, in fact, what we are experiencing in Hong Kong, a global financial centre, and many other places in this era of global capitalism.

This scene extract also illustrates Marlene’s influence on Angie regarding her values in respect of career aspiration and gender politics. Angie witnesses the quarrel between Marlene and Mrs. Kidd over the issue of women taking managerial positions and shows her admiration to Marlene. Marlene ends the conversation by telling Mrs. Kidd to “piss off” (p.59), and Angie is impressed by her ‘victory’ over Mrs.
Kidd and particularly by her indecent language. According to Naismith (1991/2005), her admiration for Marlene is based on her understanding that the word ‘piss off’ is “not acceptable in Mrs. Kidd’s social world” (p.xlvii). This calculated offensive speech by Marlene represents a symbol of being aggressive in class struggles, and Angie demonstrates her appreciation of this attitude by telling Marlene she is “wonderful” (p.59). In addition, Angie says Marlene’s office is “where (she) most want(s) to be in the world” (p.59); she sees Marlene as a role model and yearns to be a tough and aggressive woman like her. According to Aston (1997/2001), this scene calls into question the dilemma of “Marlene’s ‘childless’ career” (p.42). The economic structure of contemporary society has constructed challenges in child-rearing and family education. As Sue-Ellen Case (1988) indicates, even if women like Marlene choose to avoid child-rearing or family responsibility and obtain the “emotional alienation of success within the structures of capitalism” (p.87), they still cause different forms of impacts on their family and children in terms of social values. This scene extract portrays another key topic of Top Girls about child-rearing in relation to class struggle, which is a pertinent issue particularly relevant to our young generation growing up in the environment of global capitalism of today.
Moving on to the second scene extract, it presents Nell’s interview with Shona (p.60-63, 1982/2005). (See Appendix 2.) In this scene extract, Shona represents an inexperienced young girl’s naïve imagination of a woman’s pursuit of career goals. When she is asked to describe her present job, she makes up a long speech full of invented details and inflated claims about her imaginary job. She claims to be selling “electric things” (p.63) and gives examples including “stainless steel tubs” (p.63), which is not really an electric appliance. This mistake reveals that she has a vague concept of what kind of products she is ‘selling’ at her present job, if any. She also mentions selling fridges, yet her explanation for the ‘high sales volume’ she claims to achieve in summer does not seem logical. As she remarks, fridges are needed all-year-round for storing perishable goods such as dairy products. Apart from the contradictory description of her sales conditions, constantly repeated words or clauses appear in her speech; such as “(m)y present job at present”, “(a)fter sales service, we offer a very good after sales service”, “(a)nd fridges, I sell a lot of fridges” and “with big freezers. Big freezers” (p.63). This repetition shows that her thought is unorganized and she is unprepared to talk about her ‘present job’. Since she has no working experience as revealed in the latter part of the extract, she can only speak off-the-cuff and needs time to make things up when she needs to lie about her job.
Instead of speaking about the actual job nature and achievement, Shona ends up telling Nell what she would do after work like staying in hotels and drinking in the bar. This part of her speech stands for her fantasy of an ‘fantasy life’ that she imagines to enjoy as an independent career woman, despite the fact that a real career woman like Nell would not describe her job in such way. Certainly Nell is an experienced top executive, and thus would not be easily deceived by Shona’s fantasy. However, this conversation displays the false impression that the inexperienced Shona has about pursuing career goals as a female. She might think that making up a working profile is sufficient for obtaining a position, but her thought and imagination remain immature. As we look at the life of Marlene and the other top women in the play, the truth is that a woman would have to sacrifice even her family role and possibility of motherhood to aspire after career success.

As regards the repeated clauses in Shona’s description of her job, another language feature of her speech is highlighted. Throughout the interview, Shona tends to mirror Nell’s speech by repeating her ultimate phrase of particular lines. For example, when Nell complains that “(employers) think we consider (the buyer’s) needs and his feelings” Shona immediately responds “I never consider people’s feelings” (p.61); and when Nell says “but I’m not very nice” Shona Echoes “I’m not very nice” (p.61). This mirroring behaviour not only conveys Shona’s lack of professional
experience, but also illustrates her attempt to master or to imitate the language style of her superiors in order to enter a particular social group — the middle-class which is where Nell belongs. According to Naismith (1991/2005), having command of a language through imitating “the speech and the sentiments” of the group is a “requirement for entry into any social group” (p.xliv), and therefore Shona unconsciously “mirrors the new woman in confidence, attractiveness and ambition” (p.xliv) – which are attributes she ascribes to Nell in the scene.

On the other hand, the idea of ‘travel’ is a symbol that appears in different scenes in *Top Girls*. Both Nell and Shona have presented in this extract the eagerness to secure a job with a travelling nature. As mentioned in the previous section, a major motif of the play is to reveal women’s difficulties in surviving in the male-dominated society, and this symbol of ‘travel’ indicates how women attempt to tackle the oppression they experience in such a society. In this interview scene, Nell refers to her enjoyment from her previous job which involved a lot of travelling and Shona emphasizes her desire for a job that would allow her to drive. It reflects the typical reaction of a female to an intolerable environment that oppresses her autonomy of life aspiration, which also implies her need for something ‘new’, a change or an adventure in order to feel alive. This symbolizes the strong yet possibly unconscious desire of women for an ‘escape’ and liberation from the oppressive situation of everyday life.
This symbol thus stimulates a further discussion on a “travelling life” or a “global life” (p.168, Beck, 2000) which again confuses our self-identity and values under global capitalism. Based on the critique by Beck (2000), the scene extract 2 is in fact a precise portrait of the concept of “globalization of biography” (p.168) in the contemporary age. As Beck explains, people nowadays are having a “travelling life…” both literally and metaphorically, a nomadic life, a life spent in cars… or (on) the internet, supported by the mass media, a transnational life stretching across frontiers” (p.168). This extract has reminded theatre participants that we are experiencing such a travelling life as a result of the mobility of identities. It raises the interesting question of how to define one’s identity, especially for the younger generation who have grown up with the internet and mass media – where one’s “own life is a global life” (p.168, Beck, 2000). It further questions how we should handle “a life lived in conflict between different cultures, the invention of hybrid traditions” (p.169, Beck, 2000), which constructs another discussion topic about cultural conflicts in a globalized world, outside careers and employment. Scene extract 2 is an appropriate text to develop a cross-community discourse in a theatre workshop addressing this global issue derived from the more internal or individual concerns of the job-search.
Noteworthy Dramatic Features for Study & Suggestions for Theatre Workshopping

One of the most significant dramatic features of *Top Girls* is Churchill’s first attempt to write overlapping dialogues. The recommended scene extracts have shown a dynamic pace of speech among characters which include interruptions, overlapping lines, continued lines right through another character’s speech and lines immediately adjacent to a previous line. In order to display the subtext between lines and actions to their fullest extent, individual practices and group rehearsals among the facilitator-student group are required for scene demonstrations before conducting the theatre workshop. Nevertheless, the extracts can be simplified for easier performance, as well as ensuring a suitable length of time; it may also help to establish more focused discussions on specific sociocultural topics in a cross-community theatre workshop.

Adaptation to the local context is encouraged to avoid obstacles of understanding due to insufficient cultural knowledge of the play’s setting. For instance, when a theatre workshop takes place in Hong Kong, Shona’s descriptions in scene extract 2 about “M1” (p.63) and “Staffordshire, Yorkshire” (p.63) – which involve geographic knowledge of the United Kingdom – can be substituted by places and familiar routes in the local or Asian context. The vulgar expressions in Marlene’s speech in scene extract 1 may be performed in Cantonese likewise. The adaptation and simplification of texts are flexible as long as the performance preserves key lines or moments, which
indicate the featured subtexts in the workshop, such as Angle’s appreciation of Marlene after witnessing the quarrel and Shona’s reaction when her lies are challenged by Nell.

**Community Theatre Forms to Adopt with Top Girls**

To integrate these scene extracts and interaction across participants in the community-engaged theatre workshopping models, several community theatre forms are recommended as suitable devices for establishing a constructive discourse. These forms have been introduced earlier in Chapter 2, and they are adapted as the theatre models employed in the study with the aim of linking up the texts and the community participants in the Hong Kong context. The purpose of adopting these forms is to encourage discussion on themes based on certain actions in drama, and to invite individual and group initiative and intervention in the dramatic action featured in the extracts by all participants in the workshops, including facilitators. Since the major purpose of these models are to strengthen academic studies for Drama students at the tertiary level and different communities outside the institutes, the facilitating group as the facilitators of each theatre model is assumed to be the undergraduate students. These models can also be adapted and applied to extended contexts other than the tertiary educational institution.
I) Adapting Forum Theatre & Introspective Technique:

The basic model suggested to be integrated with the selected *Top Girls* scene extracts is an adaptation of two community theatre forms; forum theatre techniques and the introspective technique. This model is adopted in the case study of action research that will be elaborated in the next chapter. The idea of the model is to invite theatre participants to intervene decisively in certain actions as represented in a drama with possible changes of plot. As explained in Chapter 2, the original structures of these forms are based on some conflicts or stories, as narrated by individual participants. With the stimulation of *Top Girls*, the scene extracts now provide the moments of sociological conflict on focused themes related to feminism, work and gender politics. The first stage of the theatre workshop consists of the facilitating group’s demonstration of the selected extracts in a target community. Thus, certain ‘conflicts’ which participants may encounter in real life can be presented. After the conflicts have been enacted, the facilitators lead a discussion among theatre participants regarding possible solutions or changes so that the presented situations and problems can be debated and possible remedies suggested.

Following the discussion of the scene extract is the second stage of ‘intervention’. The facilitators will invite participants to take part in the scene by
replacing them in some of the roles and performing the possible solutions or changes in direction or outcome suggested in the group discussion phase. The extract is then performed again with alternative plot or actions by certain role-players, which offers a new perspective on the conflicts that the scene presents. Participants can take turns to enact different roles in the same scene. This can stimulate further discussions and attempts at adjustment of the situation on the part of the participants, and the cycle of discussions and actions can be repeated to allow more open ideas and experiential exchange across the communities participating in the theatre activity. The workshopping focus is not predicated on the performing ability of participants, but on their exploration as well as their collaborative and communicative rehearsal of alternative actions during moments of sociopolitical conflict.

The suggested target community of this theatre workshopping model is senior secondary students. A community-engaged theatre workshop with *Top Girls* scene extracts can respond to the controversial topic of gender and employment issues in Hong Kong’s current social context; the topical themes can draw the attention of many participants of the younger generation. Similar to undergraduates, most of these students may lack working experience, but they have a strong imagination and various expectations regarding their working life in the near future. Moreover, some of the students will enter the work-force after leaving school, and this workshop encourages
them to discuss, explore and experience possible conflicts and challenges they may have to face at work. It is also a critical time for them before starting their careers to reflect on life priorities and values which are presented in the play. Another advantage of having undergraduates and senior secondary students in such theatre workshop activities would be the opportunity to share considerations, reflections and advice about future career or study plans from the perspectives of the younger generation. A case study on this model targeting senior secondary students was conducted in the action research part of the study (See Chapter 5).

On the other hand, the Ethnic Minority (EM) community can also benefit from this mode, such as EM school students and working women in HK. The EM community in Hong Kong is a relatively ‘closed’ community (Chow et al., 2005); its members usually have fairly limited engagement with Hong Kong’s political and social ethos. According to Chow et al, (2005), among the cultural differences between some members of the EM community and local Chinese, the language barrier of Cantonese could be an aspect encountered in their daily life. The EM citizens are proud of their ethnic origin, but most of them reported experiencing racial discrimination in society to various extents (Ku et al., 2006).

The situation of EM women is more difficult: due to the double-marginalization of sexism and racism, they often lack social exposure or access to
outside information (Ku et al., 2006). This reflects an underlying demand of cross-community interaction which requires initiation by another community. The issues of marginalization and oppression encountered by women, as represented by Top Girl, can be seen as a response to the sociocultural situation of EM women in the local context. According to a range of research projects on EM women in the local context (Chow et al., 2005; Ku et al. 2007; APSS, 2007), they mainly encounter everyday life problems in relation to family, personal, employment and language issues. As regards their family conditions, a number of them have had an arranged marriage and live with a huge family with grandparents(-in-law), children and relatives. They are often bound by the traditional cultural values of their ethnicity according to which women often represent a relatively lower position in the family. Some of the women also reported in the interviews experience of family violence (APSS, 2007). When I approached the officer from the first potential community-partner in my case study (see Chapter 5), she shared with me her opinion about EM women from her experience in coordinating services for their community. She expressed the difficulty of understanding the real social and personal perceptions of EM women, as these women could seldom express their deeper feelings in everyday life.

In terms of the personal development of EM women, it is estimated that more than 75% of them have received education up to the secondary level, with some
receiving higher education (APSS, 2007). Also, their interpersonal relationship is mainly established through marriage, and thus they seldom have local Chinese friends or friends outside their own community. As a result, it is not easy to have their social networks expanded beyond family or their own ethnic groups (APSS, 2007). The women also reported factors for a narrow social network including cultural, religious and racial issues, while some indicated that they had spent most of their time on jobs and family work. They further complained that most educational events in society are conducted in Cantonese – a language that EM women tend not to master (APSS, 2007). This language barrier hence becomes an obstacle to integration into the local society.

Regarding the language competence of EM women, about half of them excel in using English, while most women cannot speak Cantonese (APSS, 2007). Since the language barrier is a major constraint on job hunting and making local Chinese friends, they sometimes feel rejected by the local Chinese community, which would be often associated with the issue of racial discrimination. Researchers and EM social service providers emphasize the need of a common language as medium of communication with the EM community in order to create mutual learning opportunities of cultures and values in the local context (Chow et al., 2005; APSS, 2007). Cross-community theatre workshopping is an appropriate and effective platform to engage these EM citizens through English plays and a communicative approach.
EM women in the Hong Kong context usually have to manage jobs apart from housework and child care, while their median monthly income is supporting around one-third to half of the family’s median income (APSS, 2007). Traditionally women with relatively lower educational background may take up roles like teaching assistant in kindergartens or unskilled service labour (APSS, 2007), which may imply a smaller chance of career development. However, the upward mobility of EM women in the labour market is enhanced in recent years due to an increasing number of women acquiring university degrees and professional qualifications; there is also a trend of self-employment (APSS, 2007). Despite the fact that EM women are now getting more involved in the labour market, they still face the double-marginalization of sexism and racism, even when reaching positions of executive management. This phenomenon has caused a greater conflict of their social roles in relation to family, work and their own ethnic community (Ku et al., 2006; APSS, 2007).

The major conflict portrayed in Top Girls is the dilemma of career development and family responsibilities faced by a career woman. For EM women living in today’s Hong Kong, they have a traditional sense of being supportive to their family as a wife, mother and daughter(-in-law), as valued in their ethnic culture. Nevertheless, they are often expected to share financial burdens of their family through joining the labour market. In such case, the conflicts and sociocultural issues
demonstrated in *Top Girls* would echo their life and work experience, and the theatre workshops would offer an opportunity for expressing and sharing social and cultural perceptions from diverse perspectives among participants.

On the other hand, the multicultural nature of these EM women can be reflected in the female characters from diverse social and educational backgrounds in *Top Girls*. It is not surprising that EM women share similarities in their everyday life experience in the confrontation of class and gender among the characters represented in the different scene extracts. The play can be seen as a stimulant of reflection in response to the social and cultural differences and everyday life situations faced by women in the context of a contemporary multicultural city. The cross-community interactions and role-play sessions can also help to explore and rehearse possible tactics to cope with family, social and cultural conflicts employing a collaborative approach; participants will experience peer support for self-expression as well as changes in actions. In addition to self-expression, the English language play extracts serve to stimulate sharing across communities in a mutually-intelligible language that both EM women and local students tend to use for communication. Even if the EM women have very limited English the workshop can be simplified to accommodate their level by exploring their specific issues as represented in *Top Girls*.

There are several remarks and suggestions based on experience for
implementing this theatre workshopping model. When conducting the workshop, warm-up sessions and acting exercises are introduced before the main discussions and demonstrations of scene extracts. This practice is found beneficial for both the facilitating group and participants from community; once they feel at ease they are more confident in sharing ideas and taking part in the activities. This suggestion is also applied to most of the following theatre models which involve discussions, improvisation and acting in the scenes by community participants; yet models with invisible theatre are not included. This model also requires a clear duty of the host(s), or a “joker” according to Boal (p.167, 1985), in the discussions throughout the workshop in order to ensure the flow of ongoing discussions and activities based on the scenes. In terms of the application of the model, it can be integrated into a Drama course curriculum in the form of in-class workshops followed by outreach workshops, as elaborated in the following chapter – particularly suitable for a course with Service-Learning components or an emphasis on community engagement.

Adapted from the insight of Boal (1985), the rationale of this theatre workshopping model is to encourage participants to face the real challenges of certain social roles in everyday life politics which may be more difficult than one imagines without experience. The theatre discussions and acting sessions are not to provide a model answer for solving the conflicts presented in the scenes, but to offer participants
the opportunity to examine different options and possibilities in everyday life politics from a broad communal perspective. The most significant value of the workshop is to facilitate rehearsals of alternative actions inspired by the theatre which could be applied to a real-life scenario outside the theatre itself.

2) Free Theatre in Public with Invisible Theatre:

Another possible community theatre form to be adopted is so-called Invisible Theatre. This form contributes to a community-engaged theatre model which presents selected or adapted scenes from *Top Girls* within an ordinary space of sustained social conventions in everyday life. Adapting Boal’s (1985) idea on invisible theatre, the essence of this model is to conduct the scene in an “environment other than the theater” (p.144) and so the unwitting people that inhabit the space would be involved without noticing it is a designed “spectacle” (p.144). The purpose of this form is to maximize the importance of participants’ initiative in intervening in the actions based on curiosity or enthusiasm, and to encourage the interaction of different perceptions between the facilitating group and people from other sectors of the community through *actions and reactions* during a scene.

The target community of this model of Invisible Theatre could be professionals from the commercial field. Since the scene extracts from *Top Girls*
largely concern gender-class confrontation – a common topic to encounter at work in the local and global contexts of today they can echo the real life scenario or work conflicts experienced by these professionals. An advantage of setting these professionals as a target community of an outreach theatre is that the scene would be closely attached to their daily practice. These professionals are usually occupied by work; it is understandable that they may not take the initiation or have the motivation to participate in a theatre workshop. Conducting a scene from *Top Girls* in the form of invisible theatre in the public space where target participants can be found will effectively enhance the opportunity of the facilitating group to engage these professionals.

When implementing this theatre model of *Top Girls*, scene extract 1 is more appropriate to be performed, as a quarrel in public often draws attention from passers-by. Passers-by attracted to the scene are able to participate at any point between protagonists in the argument; the ongoing scene will not be hugely affected if some of the participants leave the space or join the spectacle in the middle of the action. For instance, the scene extract could be performed in an open area like a food court within a commercial district during lunch hours. By contrast, scene extract 2 may not be easily conducted in public in the form of invisible theatre. This extract portraying a job interview is better demonstrated in a closed setting such as a meeting room or an office,
where the surrounding people can observe the whole process of the interview. It is less likely to arouse intervention from participants other than the actors since people do not usually intervene in somebody’s interview or formal conversation related to business matters.

This option of the community-engaged theatre workshopping model can be seen as an extension of the first one listed above; nevertheless, it would be much challenging and time-consuming to implement. According to Boal (1985), the invisible theatre format requires “detailed preparation” (p.144) even of a simple text. It is noticeable that performing in the less controlled theatrical space will cause various difficulties; for example, the requirement of projecting to arouse attention within an unfocused and open ‘stage’. Boal (1985) emphasizes that “it is necessary to rehearse the scene sufficiently so that the actors are able to incorporate it into their acting” (p.144). It is also important to include during the rehearsals “every imaginable intervention” (p.144, Boal, 1985) from the participants. These possibilities may even inspire “a kind of optional text” (p.144, Boal, 1985) for adaptation, and it will increase the flexibility of the theatre workshop. Moreover, the adaptation of the script would be essential in order to utilize the theatre to stimulate sociopolitical exchange among unwitting spectators in a local context. This model is considered more suitable for actors with prior acting experience, including those with experience of participation in
previous outreach theatre workshops, as it requires both confidence and flexibility in responding to improvisational and unexpected events that may occur during the performance.

The theatre workshop should be wrapped up by a debriefing. However, in this model the debriefing will probably be conducted among the acting group only. Their reflections will be made upon their own observation and interpretations of the actions of participants from the target community or the public, and may lack a thorough mutual exchange of insights on specific themes presented in the play or the scene. If this challenging model of theatre workshopping is to be included in an advanced level of Drama or Community Theatre course curriculum, it is not suggested to have assessment based on the scene demonstration session – it is in fact difficult to anticipate the stage environment and reactions from audience or spectators. The post-workshop reflections or self-evaluation would form a better assessment device, if necessary.

The key of conducting this theatre model is to abolish the conventional theatrical rituals and to retain only the theatre itself (p.144, Boal, 1985). As Boal (1985) elaborates, such invisible theatre “erupts in a location chosen as a place where the public congregates”, and therefore “(a)ll the people who are near become involved in the eruption and the effects of it last long after the skit is ended” (p.144). As a full-
length play *Top Girls* is not suitable for such treatment, but one or two extracts – including our workshop extract 1 – could work effectively.

**Cloud Nine**

The second model for community-engaged theatre workshopping adopts the scene extracts from *Cloud Nine*, a play that shares a relevant feminist theme with *Top Girls*. This two-act play is set in British colonial Africa in the Victorian era and in contemporary London in its first and second acts respectively. It displays the correlation between colonial and sexual oppressions based on the abuse of power, and portrays desire for sexual liberation among characters of diverse genders, sexual orientations and races across a period of time. According to Aston (1997/2001), *Cloud Nine* can be seen as “Churchill’s dramatization of sexual politics” (p.37) which presents concerns about marginalized homosexual identities as well as the oppression of women. Compared with *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine* concerns the more general subject of sexual politics, while *Top Girls* focusing on the subject of feminism constitutes “an issue of immediate, although not exclusive, concern to women” (p.37, Aston, 1997/2001).

*Cloud Nine* starts with a sequence of secret affairs among a British family of a colonial officer posted to an African colony and their family friends, showing the
oppressed sexual desires of different characters. Various forms of oppression and abuse of power are demonstrated in Act 1 involving diverse power-relationships of characters including colonial administrator Clive – the father and husband, his wife Betty, their children Victoria and Edward, Betty’s mother Maud, the governess Ellen, the ‘loyal’ servant Joshua, and the family friends Harry Bagley and Mrs. Saunders. Act 2 shows a dramatic jump forward in time in terms of plot development being set in 1979’s London, whereas for the characters the action takes place is twenty-five years later. Scenes include interactions between characters Victoria, Lin, Victoria’s husband Martin, Edward, his lover Gerry, Betty and some characters from Act 1. Their interactions present different degrees of liberation and attitudes regarding personal sexual desires.

Three scene extracts are recommended to be integrated in this model. The first two are extracted from Act 1, and can be adapted and demonstrated as consecutive events in the same scene, and the third scene extract from Act 2 can be performed and contrasted with the first two extracts. This will be elaborated in a later section on the theatre model. The first scene extract portrays the conversation between Clive and his wife Betty at home after his long day of work. Betty demonstrates her desperate longing for his return as an obedient and delicate wife, but carelessly shows her ‘unseemly’ excitement when Clive tells about their explorer friend Harry’s visit to the
family. Meanwhile, Clive keeps extolling his mighty and glorious mission as well as his contribution to civilizing this colony located far away from their imperial homeland. This conversation conveys Clive’s projection of patriarchal views onto his gender stereotypes in respect of his wife, and implies his disdain for female’s sexual autonomy, which illustrates parallel situations of abuse of power in sexual and colonial oppressions with regard to the autonomy of the individual.

The second scene extract presents a short conversation between Betty, Maud and Ellen after the family is informed of Harry’s visit. Betty is a state of silent expectation and anticipation of meeting Harry, and expects him to bring her some excitement to her dull life. As the only friend and a secret admirer of Betty, Ellen artfully exposes Betty’s inner desires before Maud tells her to perform her governess’ duty and leave the conversation. Maud then lectures Betty on her attitudes towards her marriage that she has to be content as a “happy” and “most fortunate” (p.6) married woman. Maud advises Betty to learn from the family tradition of learning to be well-behaved wife, aware of the difference between the duties of men and women. She further reminds Betty not to be friendly with Ellen due to their hierarchical positions. Betty feels nervous about her ‘inappropriate’ inner desires, and thus attempts to suppress the desires by reaffirming her satisfactory status of being “perfectly happy” (p.6).
The third scene extract jumps to the contemporary setting of Act 2, featuring the dialogue between Victoria and Lin in a park where their children are playing with friends. They chat about their life as mothers and individual aspirations in terms of love and self-enhancement. Although both of them appear to have feminist perceptions on self-liberation as women, the two characters demonstrate different attitudes towards men. Victoria is an independent woman who is open-minded to have her parenting and domestic duties shared by her husband. Lin, on the contrary, shows her hatred for men, which is probably due to her experience of being violently abused by her ex-husband. She also projects her radical feminist perception of men on the upbringing of her daughter Cathy. There is a contrast between the child-rearing (child-rearing) styles of Victoria and Lin – Victoria expects her son to stay away from wars and the idea of joining the military force, while Lin encourages her daughter to resort to violence and to “kill” (p.32) males.

According to Luckhurst (2015), Lin is a doubling of Ellen in Act 1. In this scene extract, she directly professes her lesbian affection for Victoria, yet Victoria is not at all surprised at her confession. This implies a certain degree of progress achieving a liberated social perception of alternative sexual identities in contemporary society. Nevertheless, their conversation also indicates some possible family constraints that the characters may encounter in their personal pursuit of sexual desires.
and satisfaction. This scene extract is recommended to make a comparison and contrast with the first two extracts in the community theatre workshop model; this will be elaborated in the later section on the workshopping model.

**Featured Themes & their Cultural Relevance to post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong**

Three significant themes are noticed in *Cloud Nine*. Janelle Reinelt (2009) reckons it is Churchill’s purpose to show through the play “how possible yet difficult it is for actual human beings to transform themselves into new, non-normative identities” (p.29). In response to the social resistance of established social institutions in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong, exploring the themes of *Cloud Nine* can stimulate a critical debate on unavoidable sociopolitical problems and actions in social transformation particularly related to gender politics and post-colonial issues across communities. The play does not only present the confusion and complexity of gender ambiguity in a contemporary context, but also conveys the opportunity for “radical socio-sexual change” (p.29, Reinelt, 2009) across social class, sexual, racial and generational borders.

The first major theme of *Cloud Nine* concerns the performance of gender. As Aston (1997/2001) explains, the dramatic techniques applied to this play – including the doubling of characters, cross-gender and cross-racial casting – advocate
a challenge to the dominant heterosexual ideology and to the idea of “fixed sexual identities” (p.32). Luckhurst (2015) agrees that “cross-sex casting and the revelation of ‘illegitimate’ private desires become devices for exposing the transgression of strict social and sexual codes” (p.75) in reality, as represented in the play. In terms of its theatrical potential to engage audience or participants, these techniques can create an alienation effect enabling more in-depth reflections on characters’ mental conditions in a theatre workshop process. The emphasis of gender being a cultural construction can be noticed throughout the whole play. Since gender is a “fictive production” (p.77, Luckhurst, 2015), ‘gender trouble’ is unavoidable which refers to the struggle between social appearances and true desires within an individual.

‘Gender performance’ is displayed in both acts of Cloud Nine and exposes the constitution of sexual identities and the emancipation of one’s sexual as well as social behaviour. Comparing the two acts, Aston (1997/2001) realizes the female characters in Act 1 are oppressed by “dominant doll-like… representations of femininity” (p.37) and female desires are being completely neglected. Even though a more liberal age is portrayed in Act 2, the characters still experience different struggles regarding gender identities and expression. Aston (1997/2001) gives an example of the transformed female representation of the character Betty in the play; she lives in Act 1 within the “objectified gaze” (p.37) of her husband resulting in an absence of her
female desires, but she is able to rediscover in Act 2 her own desires and pleasures of her body without the intervention of any male character.

Another outstanding theme of the play is the parallel representation between gender and colonial oppression, which can be extended into the issues of feminist liberation and post-colonial civil disobedience in contemporary glocal contexts. Luckhurst (2015) believes that the juxtapositions of power-relations between husband and wife, parents and children, master and servant, and the colonial authority and the colonized are designed to be the “reflexive mechanisms” (p.76) in Cloud Nine. These mechanisms aim to reveal “the production of history as patriarchal narrative… the production of gender and the manufacture of mandated social appearances versus desire” (p.76, Luckhurst, 2015). Clive the husband, for instance, represents the colonial authority ruling over his wife Betty – the colonized in Act 1. John M. Clum (1989) highlights that women in Clive’s eyes would “never want an existence apart from the sexual and social domination of men” (p.98), and that “(l)esbianism does not exist in Clive’s empire” (p.98). In other words, a female’s desire for self-autonomy or being independent from men or her ruler is regarded as ‘absence’ from the patriarchal and colonial perspectives. Therefore, the colonized communities are not ‘expected’ to gain autonomy and independence from the holistic domination of the colonial authority.

This skillful and metaphorical critique on gender and colonial oppression
calls for collaborative reflections on the current sociopolitical situation and challenges in the local context among theatre participants. It can draw attention and promote discussion on democratic social advancement in response to the Chinese Communist Party’s rule over Hong Kong in the present era. As reported by The Telegraph (2016), various ‘colonization’ fears have been raised in Hong Kong over cultural and political dominance from the Chinese government in the recent years. Many citizens are concerned with the sociopolitical challenge that Hong Kong is “losing its cultural identity”, and fear that “Beijing is… stifling political and legal autonomy in the former British colony”\(^5\). It is reported that such worries have been intensified since five local citizens involved in selling books that are seen as being critical of the Chinese communist leaders went missing in late 2015. Experiencing perceived encroachment of political institutions by the Chinese government, many citizens especially the young generation and students have begun to call for the city’s independence from China. As reported by the magazine Time (2016), ‘localist’ political groups with a major aim of gaining Hong Kong’s independence have been a growing force since the Umbrella


\(^5\) Ibid.
Movement. In the near future, more intensive and radical calls for independence may appear in Hong Kong, as advocated by the global trend of independence movements like the Scottish independence poll in 2014, ‘Brexit’ in 2016 and the series of Ryukyu pro-independence campaigns in Okinawa, Japan in recent years. These various representations and the critique of colonial oppression in *Cloud Nine* can form a critical discourse in responding to the increasing number of sociopolitical and ideological debates among local and global citizens in the current era of civil disobedience in the world in general.

Furthermore, the theme of ideologies related to gender and marriage, as represented by *Cloud Nine*, also leads to an extended topic of modern constructions of sexuality in the colonial and post-colonial contexts of Hong Kong. Churchill's play overtly and implicitly critiques ‘marriage’ and ‘family roles’, as defined by the patriarchal institutions. In Act 1, ‘marriage’ and ‘family’ are seen as devices aimed only at reproducing socially constructed sexual identities and the ‘normative’ social order – it is not for enjoyment but is considered a social duty and the life mission of

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7 ‘Brexit’ refers to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU). The 2016 referendum was conducted in the UK territories in June, 2016, and the result was announced as 52% voted to leave the EU and 48% to remain.
women. This narrative would allow theatre participants to review their social perceptions of ‘family’ as shaped by colonial or post-colonial agendas of propaganda in the Hong Kong context.

Similar to the insight of Churchill, as expressed in *Cloud Nine*, Cho Man Kit (2010) considers the modern attitudes as well as top-down narratives of ‘sexuality’ and ‘family’ in Hong Kong are closely related to the colonial background of the city. Reviewing the institutional perception of ‘family’ in the colonial era, this claim can be substantiated from the functions of the Family Planning Association of Hong Kong (formerly called the Hong Kong Eugenics League) which was established in 1936. According to Cho (2010), although Hong Kong has had one of the world’s pioneering organizations of family planning, the British colonial government showed a very conservative and sluggish attitude to implementing the family planning campaign as a “project of modernity” (p.108) during the 1950s to ’70; the passive response by the colonial government has ironically restricted the development of more modern and enlightened approaches to sexuality in Hong Kong. With reference to this issue, a theatre workshop with relevant scene extracts from *Cloud Nine* offers the local community an opportunity to discuss the contributing factors behind the current socialized perceptions of sexual identities, marriage and family originating from both the colonial context of Hong Kong and deeply ingrained Chinese attitudes toward
family roles.

Moreover, the discourse constructed by *Cloud Nine* can lead to a deeper extent of reflection about institutionally-defined ideologies of family and gender. The play's metaphorical narratives can connect with in recent events and issues in Hong Kong in the relationships between the Chinese Communist Party as the sovereign power and Hong Kong as an administrative region – or ‘colony’ of the Chinese government. According to Chan Hau-nung, Annie (2015), people tend to employ ‘metaphors’ related to family and sexual institutions when talking about issues of the China-Hong Kong relationship of today. She emphasizes that when people are accustomed to these metaphorical narratives without a critical alert to implicit ideologies – even ideologies that may not be appropriate or logical – it tends to reinforce dominant power relations and structures. She remarks that the metaphorical narratives connecting family or gender ideologies and sovereign power are not only found in Hong Kong, but also in other places. In this exemplar community theatre workshopping model, scene extracts from *Cloud Nine* are presented as a device to stimulate discussion on this topic. It is particularly meaningful as the play can be used to provide an association and a comparison between the British colonial context and the post-Umbrella Movement local context; it offers a more thorough exploration of these metaphors and Hong Kong’s historical background as a post-colonial city.
Speaking of the ‘metaphors’ found in social narratives in contemporary Hong Kong, different types of metaphors can exemplify how the socialization of institutionally-defined perception of ‘marriage’ and ‘family’ values is linked to the political narratives surrounding sovereignty and Hong Kong citizens. The first kind of metaphor is to describe national political issues in connection with ethical relationship within a nuclear family; a familiar metaphor in the local context is to portray the China-Hong Kong relationship as the relationship between a grandfather (China) and a grandchild (Hong Kong). Chan (2015) explains the reason for China being described as ‘grandfather’ instead of any other family member and shows how the metaphor is closely supported by conventional family ethics in Chinese-speaking regions generally. Since the power structure of a family is built upon a hierarchical system, a more senior member would naturally possess a higher degree of authority. Hence, the metaphor of the Chinese government as the ‘grandfather’ tends to be an extension of the concept of a patriarchal system, in which the ‘grandfather’ possesses unquestionable status and authority (Chan, 2015).

Another type of metaphor in the local context echoes the parallel between gender and political oppression, as conveyed in Cloud Nine; and an example of this type of metaphor presents a familiar social narrative directly connected to the Umbrella Movement. The root cause of the Umbrella Movement and the student strike before
the outbreak of the Movement was the National People's Congress proposal for Hong Kong’s 2016 and 2017 Political Reform. Since the proposal creates a restriction on the nomination system for the election of the Chief Executive, it is not generally welcomed by the local citizens. A propagandistic metaphor for the proposal employed by Zhang Xiaoming, a Chinese communist leader, was his description of the proposal as a ‘beautiful daughter’ who is ‘admired by every man’. Chan (2015) explains this metaphor is based on the socialized perceptions of ‘marriage’ and ‘gender’; its subtext refers to the imaginary loss of Hong Kong citizens – represented by the metaphor as the ‘man’ – if he rejects the idea of marriage with a ‘perfect maiden’, i.e. the proposal.

Reflecting on these metaphorical narratives, Chan (2015) believes that we are able to challenge the implied hierarchical power structure between a sovereign power and citizens. The development of newly constructed narratives will also be made possible in order to re-imagine the underlying institutional perceptions related to gender and political oppression in this era. The type of feminism advocated by Churchill and other women does not only aim at achieving gender equality but also democracy, justice and diversity in social systems. Chan (2015) encourages citizens to replace the patriarchal perspective with a feminist one for a radical re-imagination of the China-Hong Kong relationship. Based on this insight, discussions on transforming social perceptions of sexuality and marriage through a community theatre workshop
by working through *Cloud Nine* extracts would be beneficial to democratic social advancement in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong.

**Scene Extracts 1 & 2: Conversations of Clive & Betty/ Maud & Betty in the Victorian Colony**

As mentioned above, the first two scene extracts recommended for community-engaged theatre workshopping are adapted from Act 1, and they could be demonstrated as a pair of consecutive moments of the same scene. The first scene extract (p.2-3, 1979/1985) features the conversation of Clive and Betty when the colonial administrator husband just gets home from work (see Appendix 3). The second scene extract (p. 6, 1979/1985) shows the conversation between Maud, Betty and Ellen (see Appendix 4). In a theatre workshop, this extract can be demonstrated following Clive’s exit at the end of extract 1 with Maud and Ellen entering the scene as an adaptation. The dumb character Victoria can be represented by a doll or omitted in the demonstration.

Several distinctive subtexts can be found in the above scene extracts illustrating the motifs of the play. The first subtext addresses the issue of the ‘male gaze’ on a female’s characteristics, which is a term coined by feminist film critic Laura Mulvey (1975) in her writing about representations in Hollywood films. It refers to the patriarchal imagination and expectations regarding female images in a male perspective, and usually consists of a binary view that females are depicted as either
an ‘angel’ or a ‘monster’ – ‘angels’ are pure, innocent, powerless and subordinate to males, while ‘monsters’ show a jealous nature with illegitimate or ‘evil’ desires for reclaiming individual subjectivity. In these scene extracts, Betty is obviously an ‘angel’ in Clive’s eyes, and is regarded as sentimental, hysterical, non-sensible and weak. For instance, Betty is nicknamed “my little dove” (p.2) by Clive, and Clive thinks that she would already be a “brave girl” (p.3) for not “fainting” (p.3) or displaying signs of “hysteria” (p.3). Such perception even seems to be adopted and internalized by Betty, according to which she is “nervous at the thought of (longing for) entertainment” (p.6) in scene extract 2. Clive and Maud are the representations of the patriarchal imagination applied to females, and thus to them it is natural for Betty or any ‘angelic’ female to stay subordinate to men; and she must not show any self-consciousness of her personal desires for pleasure. At the end of scene extract 2, Maud asks Betty to “learn to be patient” (p.6), supported by the self-description that “I am patient” (p.6) and her “mama was very patient” (p.6). This demonstrates the power of familial influence on one’s attitudes towards gender politics, which may even result in intra-sexual oppression across generations.

This perception also leads to the conventional attitude on marriage as conveyed in Maud’s lecture to Betty in scene extract 2. Maud believes that marriage is the only pursuit of young women, and to maintain the marriage is the only mission
in life for all females. Based on this perception, a woman should get married and please one and only one man in her everyday life, handling domestic work and providing her husband with every comfort when he comes back from his valuable work outside the home. This mission of women is perfectly demonstrated by Betty in the first scene extract for pleasing and satisfying her husband; she reassures him of her loyalty and expresses the view that Clive is her only admired person by belittling Harry Bagley, saying “he’s done nothing at all compared to what you do” (p.3) to Clive. Nevertheless, the scene extracts also expose the truth behind the unhappy life of Betty. Living an arranged life with an assigned family role, Betty finds herself suffering from the ‘lack of society’ and describes her life as one of great “monotony” (p.3). Her dull life leads to the unspoken desire for entertainment or excitement even from a man other than her husband, i.e. Harry Bagley. Her longing for Harry’s visit reflects that she is envious of Harry’s life as an explorer, who can travel away from home. This reminds us of the more liberated or radical attitudes of the female executives from Top Girls who would regard dating men as ‘entertainment’.

Clive, on the contrary, lives an exciting and ambitious life pursuing his ‘manly’ career. He is a representation of colonial aspirations for spreading ‘civilization’, and embraces his glorious mission of ‘saving the weak’. Compared to Betty’s domestic life in a closed context within the house, Clive is proud of his
important work as a colonial administrator, emphasizing that the family is “not in this country to enjoy ourselves” (p.2). The two extracts display the contrasting social roles of the two genders, where the male characters work outside in the community, and the female characters stay inside the home without any connection to another community apart from other expatriate visitors. In response to the theme of Cloud Nine, Clum (1989) reckons that the stereotypical gender roles of Clive and Betty within the patriarchal structure of society represent respectively the colonial authority and the colonized community under political oppression. Such patriarchal social structure also illustrates a dominant sexist perception regarding a woman as a “man’s creature” – from Clive’s introduction of his wife at the beginning of Act 1, which also connects with the underlying homophobia from a feminist point of view.

**Scene Extract 3: Conversation between Victoria & Lin in Contemporary London**

The third scene extract (p.32-33, 1979/1985) selected is set in the more liberal social context of Act 2, featuring the conversation between Victoria and Lin in contemporary London. The two mothers chat in a hut located in a park while their children are playing around them. (See Appendix 5.)

The first significant subtext of this scene extract involves perceptions about gender and sexuality – transposed and updated to a certain extent – compared with the
first two extracts. It also raises questions about the direction of women’s liberation in the contemporary context. Community theatre participants are encouraged to compare and contrast the Victoria and Lin of Act 2 with the female characters in Act 1 in respect of their thoughts, styles of speech and behaviour. In terms of language use, the female characters in this scene extract are not restrained from using expletives or earthy language in everyday conversation. An example is Victoria saying “(w)hat the hell” (p.33) to express how she is annoyed by her son, which would not be regarded as appropriate ‘lady’s talk’ in the context of Act 1. Victoria in this extract also projects a sensible character with an intelligent mind, someone who is interested in scientific knowledge; this makes a remarkable contrast with Betty’s delicate and powerless image in Act 1. In addition, both mothers in this extract are independent of men, and Lin is divorced and raises her daughter on her own. Marriage thus is not being depicted as the necessary and only condition of a female’s survival in contemporary society.

Talking about the transforming stereotypical view on gender social roles, females can now “kill” as Cathy ‘kills’ her friend with a toy gun (p.32), and males can avoid getting involved in wars. Victoria wants her son Tommy not to join the army when he grows up, which implies that ‘wars’ are not generally perceived as glorious action for ‘missionary’ and 'civilizing purposes in the modern context. Here, her comments on wars and violence are infused with a strong strand of pacifist sentiment
by Churchill; this corresponds to today’s global concern about wars, gun control and terrorism.

In terms of family duties and work, the female characters in Act 2 are able to work since the domestic duties are now shared by men. According to Victoria and Lin, their husbands babysit or wash dishes at home. However, Clum (1989) points out the fact that “women still have the responsibility for their children” (p.108) and for child rearing, as the two mothers in this extract are shown watching their children play in the park. By this, Churchill attempts to indicate responsibilities of parents and the constraints of a mother seeking ‘work-family balance’ in today’s world. Again, this leads to the discussion of the family’s influence on children in relation to gender politics. As Aston (1997/2001) observes, on one hand the imposed gaze of patriarchy on children is reduced in Act 2. On the other hand, ironically, Lin as a victim of violent abuse on the part of her ex-husband is now teaching her daughter to “kill” other boys. It is not surprising that Victoria suggests Lin to review her radical and hostile attitude towards men as well as her style of parenting as regards the issue of violence.

Luckhurst (2015) describes Lin as “an ‘outed’ version” (p.76) and the doubling of Ellen from Act 1 who is now seeking to form a “lesbian alliance” (p.76) with Victoria. As “Lin’s lesbianism is connected to her hatred of men” (p.110, Clum, 1989), a radical feminist attitude of disdaining men is portrayed. Both Victoria and Lin...
may have displayed ‘feminist’ insights in this extract, yet they are representing very
different attitudes towards gender politics. Victoria has adopted ‘manly’ habits and
characteristics; she is rational and calm when talking about men and family duties. On
the contrary, Lin shows rather radical thoughts on men – she hates men and calls them
“bastards” (p.33), but at the same time she feels “grateful” (p.33) to her violent ex-
husband for leaving her the child. Her feminist attitude consists of contradictory and
irrational emotions, which is one of the focused themes to be explored in a theater
workshop.

Noteworthy Dramatic Features for Study & Suggestions for Theatre
Workshopping

The intended cross-racial and cross-gender or cross-dressing casting is one
of the most outstanding dramatic features of Cloud Nine. A note on ‘Casting and
Doubling’ written by Churchill has been added to the script since 1983, in which she
reminds the reader that the cross-racial and cross-gender casting of four characters is
non-negotiable: Joshua the black servant in the colony should be played by a white,
Edward in Act 1 should be played by a woman, and both Betty in Act 1 and Cathy are
to be played by men. This design strengthens the dramatic effect of representing the
suppressed gender identities and sexual desires of relevant characters. However, when
the scene extracts are integrated into a community-engaged theatre workshop, it is
suggested that the cross-gender casting can be adapted and substituted by symbolic performance corresponding to the characters’ gender identities and sexual dispositions. For instance, Betty in the first scene extracts can still be performed by an actress, while she may put on a false beard as a symbol of the suppressed gender identity that she is representing. This substitution can eliminate the restriction on the combination of genders among the facilitating group. Since the purpose of theatre workshop is to facilitate participants’ reflections on sociopolitical conflicts through experience and actions, this adjustment is to prevent such cross-gender casting requirement from discouraging or limiting the participation of diverse community members in the workshop.

In addition, spectators can take up more than one role when demonstrating different scene extracts in order to demonstrate the doubling effect. Nevertheless, according to Churchill’s 1983 note on casting, the doubling in the play is not intended to produce fixed pairs of characters. In other words, the facilitating groups and theatre participants enjoy the flexibility in pairing up characters in different scenes based on their interpretation of the relevance or correlation between the pairs. For examples, the doubling of Maud-Lin in extracts 2 and 3 would highlight the contrast of two extreme attitudes on gender politics, while the doubling of Ellen-Lin would display the liberated lesbian orientation of the characters in a contemporary setting.
Community Theatre Forms to Adopt with Cloud Nine: Adapting Analytical Theatre

The theatre workshopping model for Cloud Nine is suggested to adopt the community theatre form of analytical theatre as a device. The main purpose of this form is to reflect on the social functions as well as power relations between certain social groups and their impacts as represented by the characters in the play. It requires theatre participants not just to take part in performance, but also to conduct in-depth analysis and collaborative discussion on subtext and characterization in the scenes.

Adapting the form of analytical theatre, the facilitating group may start with inviting participants to identify the social roles of specific characters as well as the underlying conflicts or oppressions occurring in the demonstrated scenes. Since the suppressed desires of characters and their represented social functions are often unvoiced, the facilitating group may need to encourage more thorough analysis with guiding questions. Theatre participants may form groups to discuss the social functions and power of focused characters, then decide on a symbol to represent the perceived social power of each character. For example, Clive may hold a ‘sword’ as a symbol of his patriarchal and political power over females and the colonized community. In a cross-community theatre workshop, the groups are able to share and compare their
analysis of social roles and the proposed symbols of social power from different perspectives.

The facilitating group can invite participants to take up specific characters in the scenes and demonstrate possible changes in the conflicts or oppression when their power, based on their social position, is removed – as their ‘symbols’ of power are removed. Through the demonstration of adjusted power and social positions of the characters, participants can experience and re-imagine the impacts of various social roles on the sociopolitical structure of community and its relation to gender politics. Suggested characters to be focused on during discussion include – but are not limited to – Clive, Maud and Lin. By comparing the changes in these social roles and representations in different settings, participants will explore to what extent modern perspectives on gender and sexuality reflect a sense of progress in contemporary society and in the global context.

As a footnote to the scene demonstration, some of the lines and scenes in *Cloud Nine* consist of a large amount of sensually explicit language and acts. If scenes other than the recommended three are adopted in the workshop, the facilitating group may adapt the script according to the nature of the target community. It will help to reduce the barrier of participation due to possible culturally offensive lines or acts. Target communities for this theatre workshopping model could include communities
in which the content challenges culturally received ideas and teachings, as well as organizations concerning sexual and gender identity rights or feminist activist groups. Since these communities often express their underrepresented status in the mainstream social structure, the workshop can serve as a platform for interactions and discussions on sexuality and gender politics among students and concerned groups. Connecting personal experience to a broader sense of social ideology, this workshop enables participants to exchange their own experience of suppressed desire, and to reflect on possible privileges they have enjoyed based on specific gender identities or ascribed statuses from cross-cultural perspectives. The rationale of this model is to strengthen mutual understanding and respect across communities, so that alternative perceptions on gender politics can be explored in collaboration.

4.2 Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping Models – *Serious Money* & *A Number*

Another category of the two recommended community-engaged theatre workshopping models involves respectively the scene extracts from *Serious Money* and *A Number*. The chosen scene extracts will cover the common themes of identity confusion and re-establishment, community building and development, and the critique of capitalism – which are some of the most controversial issues of the contemporary world of today. Each of the plays will be matched with adequate
community theatre forms in order to achieve effective theatre workshopping models of cross-community exploration in relation to various sociopolitical issues

**Serious Money**

*Serious Money* is a satirical play portraying social values and attitudes toward human relations under capitalism through a series of events experienced by the characters working in the high finance sector. The protagonist Scilla and her brother Jakes work in The City – the financial hub or the ‘Wall Street’ of London, and enjoy their upper-class life as high finance professionals until Jake is found dead one day. As Scilla insists her brother has been murdered, she hopes to find the truth of his death by tracing his connection to an insider trading network. Nevertheless, it is revealed during her investigation that her banking professional friends, including banker, Zackerman (Zac), and even her stockbroker father, Greville, are more concerned with their trade and their professional reputations than with tracking down the murderer of Jake. This plot line is juxtaposed to another plot of a leveraged buyout planned by Zac and a corporate reader, Corman, involving flashbacks. This buyout also involves other investors, including businesswoman Jacinta from Peru. The murder of Jake remains unsolved at the end; Scilla's principal motive turns out to be her desire for a share of his payoffs from the insider trading. She gets in touch with an American arbitrageur, Marylou, during the investigation, and ultimately accepts her job offer, which gives a
fresh start to her career.

Churchill’s background research with the financial community of London was essential to the creation of this play. According to Elaine Aston (2001), the development of the play relies on “meeting with and engaging in dialogue with people involved in (the) community” (p.64). And thus, Serious Money as a community-oriented play has shared the spirit of community engagement of the theatre methodology in this study. Three scene extracts are selected from Act 1 for adaptation in the theatre model, which depict the values and perceptions towards the money markets among the high finance professionals. The first scene extract presents a conversation between Scilla, Jake and their broker friend Grimes in the Champagne Bar of London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE). They talk excitedly about their recent career successes and their working ambitions. They also make comments on a number of high finance professionals and clients yet often in an arrogant and contemptuous tone. The conversation attempts to portray a general picture of the luxurious life and values of the characters from the upper class and the high finance sector. It questions the definition of ‘success’ in relation to these characters.

The second extract reveals Jake’s death and presents different characters’
reactions to his death. It starts with Zac’s monologue, recalling the moment to identify 
Jake’s body with Scilla and their chat in the coffee shop afterwards. There is a 
flashback presenting Scilla's and Jake’s cautious talk about his life threat before he is 
found dead, and Jake’s involvement in an insider trade deal is exposed. This explains 
Scilla’s belief that her brother was murdered due to the insider trade deal. Moving back 
to the conversation between Zac and Scilla, Zac shows an unconcerned attitude about 
‘who has killed. Jake’; instead he orders flowers to send to his potential business 
partner and sex partner, Jacinta, from Peru. The third extract involves a conversation 
between Scilla and Greville – the father of Jake and Scilla – after Jake’s death. Scilla 
hopes to talk about the possible murderer and the insider dealing of Jake. Greville 
thinks Jake’s death unfortunate, as he considered Jake very talented and successful in 
his career. Nevertheless, he attempts to persuade her to abandon her pursuit of the truth, 
as it will damage his professional reputation as a stockbroker. Their conversation ends 
with a comment which implies Greville’s patriarchal attitude towards his daughter and 
his wife. The second and the third extracts showing the reactions of Scilla, Zac and 
Greville towards Jake’s death can be demonstrated as consecutive scenes in the 
workshop.

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Hong Kong

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Developed through interactions and research with the collaboration of high finance professionals in London, *Serious Money* thoroughly assimilated and demonstrated the community’s experience, practices and cultural ideologies including the language style of the London finance community. As Kimball King (1989) observes, it is a “two-hour crash-course on manipulation in world financial markets” (p.151). The play is a difficult text constituted by jargon and professional information about the high finance sector. However, since there are increasing global concerns about the problems related to social and economic systems under capitalism, *Serious Money* is particularly worth exploring and discussing in a cross-community context of today. According to Hui Po Keung (2012), the major problematic of a capitalist economy is the equivocal meaning of its ‘language’. He indicates that the ambiguous presentation of many Economics theories often cited as being ‘common knowledge’ have functioned as a device of an empty signifier which is often employed in the manipulation of the public in financial politics. For instance, as exposed in the 2008 financial tsunami, neoliberalism is a product of the populist construction of the ideology regarding ‘free markets’ as ‘total freedom’ – which is in fact a system of unjust relocation of wealth only beneficial to giant enterprises and audacious entrepreneurs (Hui, 2012). In *Serious Money*, the empty rhetoric in the speech of the high finance community has been demonstrated throughout the play. Despite the fact
that it is not easy to comprehend the underlying institutions behind the financial systems and practices, this rhetoric has ironically determined the sociopolitical development of the whole world in the contemporary context. As King (1989) comments, it “would take the average person two years in an MBA program to acquire the information Churchill has compressed into (this) play” (p.151). Through the theatrical experience provided by *Serious Money*, participants of the theatre are able to explore the ‘common knowledge’ and questionable ideologies in relation to the operation and practices of the global economy and high finance in the era of neoliberal capitalism.

With regard to the significance of language in relation to the economy, Christian Marazzi (2008) emphasizes that one needs to comprehend the linguistic operation of today’s economy in order to “to understand the workings of contemporary finance markets” (p.9). He takes the 2008 financial crisis as an example to illustrate how language constructs the actual workings of the stock markets, arguing that “the crisis of the financial markets reveals the *bodiless* self-referentiality of financial language” (p.35). In other words, speech acts and linguistic conventions employed by the global high finance community play a vital role in determining the workings of markets. Hui (2012) remarks that this phenomenon also applies to contexts other than finance and economy, such as the operations of government policies, education and
popular cultures. And thus, language is the economic fundamental of the constitution of the current capitalist institutions and social systems. In order to achieve social reforms, it is therefore necessary to re-imagine ‘language’ as a dominant form of capital and economy, and explore alternatives in the economic fundamentals of social institutions. *Serious Money* as a focused text of theatre workshopping serves as a preliminary mirror reflecting the speech acts and linguistic conventions in relation to high finance as a start to the collaborative transformation of economic fundamentals and practices in contemporary communities.

In recent years, a number of occupy movements have appeared across the globe with different extents of inspiration provided by Occupy Wall Street, the 2011 New York protest for world revolution. It also inspired the original Occupy Central proposal, which later became the fundamental support to the operation of the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement in 2014. Looking at the larger picture of global finance capitalism, according to Hui (2012), the Wall Street logic and cultural values – social institutions constructed by the capitalist financial economy – have ‘occupied’ the world in various forms, including cultural and material violence in contemporary society. Such logic and values neglect the process of goods production, and only target the accumulation of wealth profit through neoliberalism – an extreme form of capitalist financial system. The problematic of neoliberalism is that it hinders citizens from
obtaining a democratic social system and enjoying “the right to nonconformity” (p.61).

Since the Wall Street logic and values have occupied diverse sociocultural aspects of people’s everyday life, a financial crisis in the narrower sense of the local economy turns into an enormous crisis affecting the whole society or even the entire world. 

*Serious Money* is a portrait of this symbolic relationship between financial capitalist value and everyday life, in which the institutional violence causes negative impacts on people’s living conditions, emotions and social perceptions in many ways. Reviewing the local context, there is an inevitable correlation between democratic social advancement and the spirit of resistance to the financial hegemony of global capitalism.

As Christian Marazzi (2010) suggests, instead of conducting occupy movements as a protest, it is more significant to explore alternative cultural meanings of investments, work and commercial activities through collaborative discussions and practices. Thus a theatre workshop employing extracts from this play serves to promote critical thought and debate on the subject.

Speaking of neoliberalism, the market-based approach of global economic policies has been subjected to acute criticism in recent years. Coined by John Williamson in 1989 in *Washington Consensus*, neoliberalism stands for a set of economic policy prescriptions which constitutes the ‘standard’ reform package for crisis-wrecked countries. The main idea of neoliberalism is a complete ‘free market’
without any official interventions, yet it is currently under intensive criticism for causing damage to sustainable economic growth. Frequent global social actions can be found in recent years concerning social problems caused by neoliberalism, including income inequality which leads to the extreme disparity between the rich and the poor in society. As one of the advocates of neoliberalism in the past decades, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) now begins to air concerns about the unhealthy impacts of this economic approach and questions the myth of a ‘free market’. Now that neoliberalism has reached the stage where it can be scrutinized, it seems to be high time for a review of its social values and policies implicit or explicit in the neoliberal agenda from a critical glocal perspective.

Focusing on the local context, the tight fiscal policy has become one of the areas of concern raised in the Umbrella Movement as it causes severe challenges, particularly to young citizens trying to make a living and afford housing in a city in

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8 The Stand News. (27 May, 2016). 《打倒昨日的我》IMF罕有发文批新自由主义: 扩大社会不公害持续增长》 (In Chinese). Retrieved 30 June, 2016 from https://thestandnews.com/finance/%E6%89%93%E5%80%92%E6%98%A8%E6%97%A5%E7%9A%84%E6%88%91-IMF%E7%BD%95%E6%9C%89%E6%8C%89%E7%99%BC%E6%96%87%E6%89%B9%E6%96%B0%E8%87%AA%E7%94%B1%E4%B8%BB%E7%BE%A9-%E6%93%B4%E5%85%85%E6%A4%AE%E7%A4%BE%E6%9C%83%E4%B8%8D%E5%85%AC%E5%8D%B1%E5%AE%B3%E6%8C%81%E7%BA%8C%E5%A2%9E%E9%95%B7/

which senior government figures are working in association with property developer hegemony. The policy thus reinforces the demand for alternative economic and sociopolitical development in a more egalitarian community-oriented approach. And this explains the emergence of community empowering actions like The Community Citizens' Charter in the post-Umbrella Movement period. Concerning the underlying crisis of social ideological development of Hong Kong, Hui believes that the dominant cynicism in the local society is a result of “moral blindness” created in the neoliberal social and economic context of the China-Hong Kong relationship. It illustrates the importance to initiate critical discussions among citizens on social values in relation to the glocal economic environment. Though a community theatre workshop based on extracts from Serious Money, participants may collaborate in seeking the causes and possibilities in tackling social inequality caused by neoliberalism. They can also explore alternative forms of social and economic policies, as initiated by the communities themselves instead of the government; this can be seen

10 The Community Citizen Charter is initiated by scholars and young activists after UM with a vision to rebuild and fortify the foundation of social democratic development which begins at the community level.


as a form of community empowering to initiate a real transformation of institutions and society in everyday life.

**Scene Extract 1: Scilla, Jake & Grimes at Liffe Champagne Bar**

The first recommended scene extract from Act 1 of *Serious Money* (p.204-207, 198/1996) presents a social chat between Scilla, Jake and Grimes at Liffe Champagne Bar. (See Appendix 6.) In this scene extract, different characters who work in as dealers on the floor of the stock market talk about their career achievements, discuss their clients as well as other financial professionals and talk about what they pursue in their jobs. Though this conversation, which is composed in dramatic verse, Churchill expresses the values and social perceptions constructed by the contemporary capitalist world. Common values as represented by these characters include materialistic pursuits and commodification of human relations as money-making tools; for instance, Grimes describes that his clients are “for the chop” (p.205) while the banker Zac is “quite a useful guy to have as a friend” (p.206). The characters also believe in sleazing being the only condition to maintain their positions in the financial sector – as Jake points out, Scilla would “have to fight dirty” if she is “really determined to survive” (p.206). Also, a ‘successful career’, which guarantees wealth, is portrayed as the sole standard for measuring a person’s value. It is not surprising
that Grimes feels proud of his success, especially since his “school reports used to say (he) was too aggressive” (p.207), since being aggressive turns out to be “quite useful” (p.207) in his financial career. He observes that his “old headmaster wouldn’t call (him) a fool again” (p.207) and thinks that no one will not look down upon him as he can gain respect due to his money-making talent.

The attitudes and values of these characters can be seen as a representation of the paradoxical ideology of “institutional individualism” (p.166, Beck (2000) in contemporary society. According to Beck (2000), global capitalism has established institutional individualism which leads to a standardized life merging both the interest of individuals and a rationalized society. This ideology is constructed through doctrinal socialization and instructional education, embedding the idea of ‘governmentality’ of Foucault (see Chapter 2). Institutional individualism is supported by the belief that “life is most securely bound into networks of guidelines and regulations” (p.166, Beck, 2000). As a result, these institutional guidelines of contemporary society, such as education systems and the labour market, will require individuals to live their lives in conformity with them “on pain of economic sanction” (p.166, Beck, 2000). Again, the ideology would gradually impose a golden rule of survival – namely that ‘money’ is the only device allowing a person to live his own life and to manage his own identity under capitalism.
On the other hand, the female protagonist Scilla demonstrates how a woman survives in the sexism of the money market. She engages in the world of masculine power by adopting the language conventions used by men. According to Aston (1997/2001), she attempts liberation from her social class background of the upper-class by “going out to work” (p.72), and finds her approach to survive in the sexist context of the financial profession by “speaking the same language” with other male members of the high finance community. She “love(s) it down with the oiks” at work, where she gets used to the linguistic conventions of employing obscenities just as colleagues like Grimes speak. Considering the function of expletives in characters’ speech, King (1989) suggests that the “explicit vernacular dialogue… (creates) a pervasive subtext of brutal sexual innuendo” (p.154) in the marketplace. It shows a correlation between the desperate ambition for both money and sex as twin goals of a cultural ideology, which will be elaborated in the analysis of scene extracts 2 and 3.

With reference to family status and connections or social class background and one’s success in the capitalist world, class confrontation is illustrated by Jake and Grimes in this scene extract. According to Aston (1997/2001), Jake here represents the upper-class, while Grimes, being without family connections in the City, is the representative of “the class of ‘new market makers’” (p.71). It is interesting that in this capitalist economy anyone could form an alliance, or collaborate as ‘brothers and
sisters’, as long as they are identified as market makers. This demonstrates the new social structure defined by the money market which has become transformed from the “old boy network”, (p.71, Aston, 1997/2001) a feature of the traditional social class structure based on class distinction.

**Scene Extracts 2 & 3: Conversations of Zac & Scilla/ Scilla & Greville on Jake’s Death**

The other two scene extracts are chosen from Act 1 after Jake’s death. The second scene extract (p.218-221, 1987/1996) shows the conversation between Zac and Scilla as they identify Jake’s body, with a flashback in the middle of the scene where Jake and Scilla have a conversation about the threats to Jake’s life. The third extract (p.221-224 ,1987/1996) moves to the conversation between Scilla and their father Greville about Jake’s death. These extracts could be demonstrated in the workshop as consecutive events. (See Appendices 7 and 8.)

In scene extract 2, Scilla insists that Jake has been murdered because he would not kill himself “for shame” (p.218). Scilla’s description of Jake conveys a satirical tone with rhyming lines based on his playful attitude to his life as a dirty game of money-making. Scilla shrewdly reckons that Jake would not bother leading an honourable moral life; instead he is shameless about his participation in insider deals. Meanwhile, Scilla appears to be the only person who cares about Jake’s death in these
extracts, while Zac and Scilla’s father Greville are reluctant to find out the truth – in fact they do not want the truth to be exposed. As Scilla remarks, “powerful friends” (p.223) in the high finance sector could actually be harmful to one’s life, and they also mean “powerful enemies who’d like to see (one) dead” (p.223). The subtext implies that the involvement in dirty deals represents a gamble in which one’s life is at stake.

The conversations in these extracts present suspicious factors surrounding Jake’s death, and create a ‘myth’ to be explored in the theatre workshop. The method for delivering the workshop model will be explained below in the later section.

Regarding the reactions of other characters to Jake’s death, Zac in extract 2 shows no genuine sympathy for his friend and makes an unfeeling complaint that his chat with Scilla after identifying Jake’s body has made him “late for work” (p.218). Instead of showing any interest in tracing Jake’s murderer, he only shows his passion for Jacinta, a potential partner for business and sex, by ordering her a gift in this scene. He has no hesitation in admitting through the monologue that he just keeps “thinking about a friend of his (Jake’s)” (p.221), the attractive Jacinta. Moreover, according to Aston (1997/2001), the affair between Zac the British banker and Jacinta the Peruvian businesswoman implies capitalism as a reflection of the colonial ambition. She explains that the “act of trading or speaking money is… an act of colonization” (p.173), and therefore, thanks to the money she can acquire, Jacinta from Peru – the oppressed
country – is now empowered to colonize other economically deprived communities. Aston (1997/2001) reminds us that this subtext of colonial ideology also implies a critique of the corrupt international money market supported by unjust and oppressive governmental policies.

At the same time, Greville in scene extract 3 also expresses no intention to find out the truth behind his son’s death. He would like Scilla to abandon her plan for further investigation, considering it would affect his reputation, and that he “could easily lose (his) job” (p.223) if he attracts any attention in relation to this incident. Being the father of Scilla and Jake, Greville shows a brutal attitude towards his own family members – and this is not only displayed by his response to Jake’s death. In the conversation between Scilla and Greville, both of them have shown an underlying scornful view of each other. Greville’s comments on Scilla convey a sexist ideology embedded in capitalism, as he derides her for “suffering from feelings of rejection” (p.223) and having “a vivid imagination (like poor Mummy)” (p.224). This may remind us of Clive’s patriarchal comment on Betty’s powerless and sentimental nature in *Cloud Nine*. On the other hand, Scilla warns Greville that she would not protect him if she finds out he is “in on it” (p.223) – on killing Jake or any crime – despite the family relationship. In resistance to her father, Scilla also declares that she has “always been ashamed of you (Greville). Your drink and your pomposity” (p.224). The bitter
interchange between these two characters creates a subtext related to the challenges and struggles encountered by a woman in the patriarchal institution of the capitalist economy.

In addition, there is a metaphorical subtext referring to the obsession with money and power as sexual pleasures in *Serious Money*. According to Aston (1997/2001), the implied affair between Zac and Jacinta in scene extract 2 represents the association between the greed for money-making and sexual desires. In terms of this metaphorical representation, King (1989) elaborates the irony that the obsession with power in the money market would exhaust a person and even devastate one’s love life. He argues that “sex is described in exploitative terms” (p.154) in the play, and it becomes mere physical desires which are not built on relationships. Sexual partners thus are treated as objects to manipulate in the capitalist sense of commodification and transaction. This subtext leads further to the symbolism of AIDS in this play, which represents the fatal disease caused by the risky gambling on the money market. King (1989) indicates this symbolism of AIDS – an incurable disease and a “spectral monster presiding over the death of sex” (p.157) to be an ironic reminder from Churchill. Together with the metaphor for the obsession of money and power as desires for manipulating sexual objects, this symbolism aims to demonstrate the destructive consequences when a person values his wealth as well as career achievements more
than his own health and life. This reminder is particularly relevant to young people who are at the beginning of their career for they may sacrifice their physical well-being at a young age for the sake of various materialistic or physical desires.

**Noteworthy Dramatic Features for Study & Suggestions for Theatre Workshopping**

There are some dramatic features to note when conducting a community-engaged theatre workshop with the above scene extracts from *Serious Money*. The first feature is the sophisticated use of overlapping speeches in both extracts. Given that monologues are presented to reveal a character’s mental status or secret thoughts, sometimes the dialogues within a conversation may even overlap with monologues. In a theatre workshop, speeches are suggested to be performed at fairly fast pace in order to show the dynamics of the restless and ruthless money market setting. When dealing with the overlapping dialogues and monologues, a performer’s position and her/his gestures on stage are important to signify the difference between a speech to other characters and a monologue of his inner thought to the audience. And hence, it requires intensive study of the play and rehearsals of scene extracts in collaboration among the facilitating group to prepare for a highly cooperative and effective demonstration.

As King (1989) highlights, *Serious Money* is written with a contrast between “naturalistic and fanciful elements” (p.155). For example, the use of songs
and rhyming lines in characters’ speeches projects the irony implied by the play’s title – with characters of non-serious life attitude aiming at the acquisition of ‘serious money’. The synchronization of scenes and occasional flashbacks also integrate realistic and fanciful dramatic methods within the play. This dramatic approach does not reduce the authenticity of the scenes, but it again requires careful interpretation and design for a smooth presentation of the flashback in scene extract 2 when conducting the theatre workshop.

In addition, it is possible for the same actors to play different characters in the extracts. King (1989) believes that multiple characters played by the same actors in *Serious Money* can represent specific “universal models of corruption” (p.156) in the money market. Possible pairs of doublings can be demonstrated in the workshop based on the interpretation of spectators, as in the case of *Cloud Nine*. Nevertheless, the explicit swearing in characters’ lines, such as Grimes’ speeches in scene extract 1, may need adaptation or adjustment according to the nature of the target community for the workshop.

**Community Theatre Forms to Adopt with Serious Money: Adapting ‘Myth Theatre’**

Myth theatre as a community theatre form is found suitable for adaptation in the theatre workshopping model for *Serious Money*. “Who or what kills Jake?” is the ‘myth’ that functions as a central question for discussion in the workshop, and
theatre participants are encouraged to explore the possible hidden truth(s) of Jake’s death through dramatic interaction and improvisation. The objective of the model is to invite participants to recognize the underlying sociocultural ideology behind the blinding rhetoric and linguistic conventions of capitalist finance and economy. It also aims at probing the impacts on the individual and social development in a neoliberal economic system under global capitalism.

According to Boal (1985), the myth of the theatre “should be studied and analyzed… (until) the hidden truths revealed” (p.152), and in this process the theatre is particularly capable of dramatizing the clues one may often neglect behind a ‘myth’ in relation to everyday life practices. Moreover, Aston (1997/2001) indicates that the spectator would be the “only potentially moral agent in the performance frame” (p.73). Theatre workshop participants and audiences will make critical reviews on high finance scenario through its “Brechtian mode of address” (p.74) in Serious Money. A consecutive demonstration of scene extracts 2 and 3 can be carried out in the workshop, and the dramatized thoughts of different characters regarding Jake’s death can be compared and analyzed in order to investigate the clues that lead to possible hidden truth(s).

There are two suggested target communities to be involved for this theatre workshopping model. The first community would be undergraduate students who are
interested in starting a career in the business or high finance sector, such as Business or Economics majors. The workshop will provide them an opportunity to experience the dynamics and culture of the financial sector. The scene extracts and the interactions between the facilitating group and the community stimulates a sharing and review of their own values of self and life. They can also prepare themselves for the confrontations or conflicts between different social perceptions embedded in the workplace through rehearsed repertoires in the theatre.

Another type of suggested target community is the social activist groups of local professional sectors now flourishing in the post-Umbrella Movement time, such as Act Voice and Financier Conscience the activist groups constituted by local actuary and banking professionals respectively. These activist groups gather professionals related to high finance and aim at reviewing the social impacts of various institutions in the contemporary capitalist economy and advocating social transformation. By taking part in the workshop, the members of these communities are able to share their reflections on the sociopolitical topics based on their experience in the financial sector. The workshop will facilitate the exploration of alternative directions of the global economic and political changes based on a collaborative and bottom-up approach – to promote social and economic transformation on the part of the community instead of by official institutions.
A Number

*A Number* is a play of five sections based on the theme of identity as well as the controversy of human cloning. The plot is developed around the confrontations between a father, Salter, and his three ‘sons’ Bernard (B1), Bernard (B2) and Michael Black – with B2 and Michael being the clones of the original son B1. The play is written using dialogue with incomplete sentences and inarticulate utterances as in everyday speech. Its dream-like twists, including the conflicts between confusing characters, eventually reveal the truth behind Salter’s veiling of the cloning secret.

According Luckhurst (2015), this play “has become a staple for university drama curricula and now ranks with *Top Girls* as Churchill’s most celebrated play” (p.165). It is regarded as an appropriate text for study in a tertiary drama course using an advanced theatre workshopping approach.

Two scene extracts are recommended for the community-engaged theatre workshopping models. The first scene extract is adopted from session 3, which shows the conversation between Salter and B2 at home after the latter unexpectedly saw the original son, B1, in the street. From the conversation we learn that B2 “has always been led to believe he was Salter’s biological son” (p.161, Luckhurst, 2015). He experiences very complicated emotions, as he is confronted by the truth that he is a
clone of B1 – and there are nineteen more clones. Salter’s “slow leak of information” indicates that he is “well-practised at evasion and denial” (p.161, Luckhurst, 2015). However, as B2 has witnessed the existence of B1, Salter is now forced to confess the terrible truth behind the cloning story and their family history. Feeling the threat of B1’s existence, B2 becomes confused about his identity, and decides to leave Salter.

The second extract is selected from session 5, the ending part of the play. It portrays the confrontation between Salter and Michael Black – one of the clones who has never lived with Salter. By that time both B2 and B1 are dead. This scene of Salter and Michael meeting for the first time forms a contrast with the earlier conversations in the play involving B2 and B1. Salter and Michael have a talk about the truth that Michael was cloned as well as about his cheerful personality which is very different from those of the other two siblings. Instead of being bothered or frustrated, Michael is rather excited by the news that he has brothers. According to Luckhurst (2015), Salter is disappointed to realize that Michael does not share the dark side of his own character, and thus he fails to “re-find his two dead sons in him” (p.163). At the end of the scene, Michael presents an ironic speech to restate his autonomy in self-identity and emphasizes the fact that he is independent from Salter.

*Featured Themes & their Cultural Relevance to post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong*
The first significant theme of *A Number* concerns the impact of technological development on social environment and one’s identity, which is an attractive topic for discussions and exploration in the Post-Umbrella Movement era. Observing one of the advocating groups of protests in recent years, Hui\(^\text{13}\) expresses by the perseverance of local youth in resisting political oppression, which is completely different from the general perception of ‘examination-oriented’ local students in Hong Kong. For instance, young citizens who previously cared more about ‘selfies’ on Facebook were determined to stay overnight as ‘guards’ in the occupied areas during the Umbrella Movement; and they even insisted to stay on the site after teargas was used by the police. Hui mentions that some critics also observe young protestors’ endeavour to maintain the tidiness of the occupied areas in relation to the common image of youth in the virtual world context such as on Facebook\(^\text{14}\).

According to Hui (2015a), the performance of the younger generation during the Umbrella Movement has shown contradiction to the general criticism often made about young people in Hong Kong. On the one hand, young people are usually considered weak in interpersonal skills. Nevertheless, it was the younger generation

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\(^{14}\) Ibid.
that successfully called on tens of thousands of citizens to participate in the 79-day-movement. On the other hand, young people are often criticized as poor in concentration as a consequence of the swiftly-growing information technology revolution. However, their high concentration, meticulous organization and their devotion to actions demonstrated during the Movement indicate their facility in the virtual world, with electronic games and social media requiring prompt reactions and creative thinking from this younger generation.

Hui believes that this apparent shift in behaviour pattern is related to the impact of rapid technological development on the local culture especially among the younger citizens. He suggests everyone needs to ‘unlearn’ and re-imagine the body and emotional construction in relation to technological development and the self. It would be significant to discover how technology like the internet reinforces people’s concerns about environmental and biochemical crises in society; or how technology affects young citizens’ perception of social actions. Churchill’s play reflects the impact of technological innovations in its central motif. According to R. Darren Gobert (2009), this play illustrates a contemporary phenomenon in which “origins and authenticity” (p.105) are always tied together. As human cloning is now possible with technology, meaning there could be ‘copies’ of human beings, the perceived connection between

15 Ibid.
origins and authenticity has been challenged. This is one of the developmental and ethical issues facing contemporary society, constituting a severe existential conflicts and fierce debate around the subject of ‘identity’ raised in _A Number_. A community theatre workshop employing extracts from _A Number_ stimulates conversations on identity dilemmas caused by scientific and technological development in today’s world.

The major question asked by Churchill in this play is the fundamental determinant of a person’s identity – whether human identity is constructed by nature or nurture. It explores individual uniqueness and similarities, and invites theatre workshop participants to reflect on the factors contributing to one’s identity. According to Luckhurst (2015), the question of identity by nature or nurture is based on the fear created by a widespread ‘identity fallacy’. Despite the fact that “genetic (ic) material determines only a portion of the total amount of the properties that an organism possesses” (p.159), people often fear that clones could replace their original identities. Churchill implies in _A Number_ that it involves both “genetics and environment factors” (p.159, Luckhurst, 2015) in determining what a person thinks, and how s/he lives or interacts with the environment; and this reminder leads to a further critical question of ‘who am I’ in the play. Seeking ‘selfhood’ or ‘self’ reflects the desire to distinguish oneself from ‘others’, which is according to Gobert (2009) the fundamental shaping of
how one articulates her/his subjectivity. Gobert (2009) illustrates Churchill’s perspective of human cloning as conveyed in *A Number*: since our uniqueness or selfhood “inheres not in ‘originality’” (p.120) but is shaped by “the actions we perform and the words we say” (p.120), human identity should not be threatened by reproduction or biological factors. And this explains why identical twins usually have different identities. As Luckhurst (2015) argues, *A Number* is a play created with questions to challenge theatre participants for reflections on selfhood. It is particularly stimulating for cross-community sharing of thoughts regarding one’s identity and perception of ‘self’.

Furthermore, the play’s motif of identity struggles in the contemporary context is displayed in various social dimensions. The first dimension concerns personae versus identity in the context of global capitalism. Richard Sennett (2000) explains that ‘personae’ is the masks one uses to present different images in different contexts, which can be seen as “instant markers” (p.175) of self and others’ images. ‘Identity’, on the other hand, refers to life-narratives of a person rather than fixed self-images; it also means to recognize “others’ lives intrude into one’s sense of self” (p.175). He argues that “the global economy… (and its) ever-shifting, external market reality disturbs fixed pictures of self” (p.176, Sennett, 2000), and therefore people are desperately in search of their own identity in this era. Sennett (2000) elaborates how
“flexible capitalism” (p.176) transforms our experience of life and work; “people labour at short-term tasks” (p.176) and there are frequent changes of employers. When lifetime employment is almost impossible to secure, people can no longer identity themselves with particular positions at work. Hence, it causes identity confusion and frustration because a person finds difficulty in “scripting a sustained life-narrative from their labours” (p.176, Sennett, 2000) or jobs. Under global capitalism, people are disturbed by questions of identity such as ‘where is home’ or ‘where do I belong’ – as it “(disturbs) identities based on place” (p.176, Sennett, 2000). These questions are not only faced by the elite class, who may relocate or travel constantly for work, but also by migrant workers from the lower socio-economic level. Looking at the local context of Hong Kong, over 300,000 domestic workers relocated from overseas live in the city, and there are many international professionals as well as students. In a multicultural context like Hong Kong, community theatre workshopping with *A Number* would be responsive to the identity struggles of various communities of residents.

Another dimension of identity struggles is grounded in individual versus collective notions in relation to the construction of ‘generation identity’. In the recent decade, phrases like ‘generational conflicts’, ‘post-80s generation’ and ‘post-90s generation’ are constantly employed by mass media in the local context. Their many stereotypical representations have created the myth of the rivalry between ‘new’ and
‘old’ generations in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong. The sociopolitical struggles appear to be the crux of all the social conflicts in today’s society. The conflicts between Salter and his sons as portrayed in *A Number* seem to expose the subject of inter-generational conflicts too. Nevertheless, Karl Mannheim (1972) reminds us that individuals living in the same geographical and historical space do not necessarily constitute a ‘generation’. Instead, a generation identity as a collective identity is produced when a social and historical unit of people are facing and participating in the common destiny of their unit. In other words, it is the common stand that a group of people adopt in response to social issues of their time that constructs a generational unit or collective identity of a specific ‘generation’. As Chow Sze Chong (2010) elaborates on Mannheim’s insight into collective identities, he emphasizes that biological features, living space and social class background of a person are not the determinant factors constructing his identity at both individual and collective levels. Applying this notion to the subject of ‘inter-generational conflict’ in *A Number*, it explains why the conflict between Salter and Michael represents a different nature of rivalry from that between Salter and his two other sons. The key to such conflicts is not rivalry between ‘generations’ in the sense of ‘age’ or any biological connection, but the difference in social perceptions of life-narratives and human relations.
In terms of environmental factors constructing a person’s identity, Luckhurst (2015) highlights that the play’s structure and characters display Churchill’s belief in the powerful effects of parental influence on “the health and stability of offspring” (p.164). Just as in many of her other plays like Top Girls and Cloud Nine, child-rearing is a featured topic covered in A Number. Gobert (2009) notes that its theme of the parent-child relationship invites theatre participants to think of how some parents today perceive their children according to Salter’s view – as possessions, commodities, copies or independent entities? This issue concerning child rearing attitudes forms the “centrality of family relations in establishing a unique identity… (under) patrilineage” (Gobert, p.108); in which a father exercises control over members of his family – and therefore Salter in the play could ‘sell’ his son’s genetic material to the scientist and replace the original one (B1) with a new ‘product’ B2.

**Scene Extract 1: B2 tells Salter his Discovery and Decision to Leave**

The first scene extract (p.38-45, 2002/2004) is selected from the conversation between B2 and his father Salter in Part One of the play after B2 has met the original son, B1, by chance. His mixed feeling upon learning the truth drives him away from Salter. (See Appendix 9.) The first featured subtext of this scene extract is the identity confusion of B2 when he is confronted with the existence of B1. Although
he says he is absolutely different from B1, he is irritated when he knows there are ‘copies’ of him. He thinks that the existence of “exactly the same genetic person” (p.39) makes him unable to feel like himself, and he states that he does not want to see the other clones. According to Luckhurst (2015), B2’s mixed feeling of frustration, upset and worry display the fear for “diminished individuality” (p.159) or the loss of human diversity based on the common perception of human cloning. Meanwhile, like B2’s reaction in the scene, people often assumes that a clone would “manifest identity dysphoria and suffer trauma” (p.159, Luckhurst, 2015). In the conversation, B2 doubts if B1 would do the same things as he does for they have the same genes, but have grown up very differently. His concern with their different life experiences raises the question whether one’s thoughts and personality are derived more from our heredity or more from environmental influences; the selected extract is designed to lead theatre workshop participants to respond to the thematic question of identity constitution that recurs in the play.

Apart from B2’s reaction to the truth about his creation, theater workshop participants should also pay attention to Salter’s own perception of human cloning and human relations. It is revealed in this extract that he has lied to B2 about the family history – his original son B1 did not die in a car-crash with his mother, and Salter just “started again” (p.44) by replacing his son with the cloned B2. As Luckhurst (2015)
describes, Salter’s decision, it is a representation of the “resurrection fallacy” (p.161) about cloning. From his confession, it is learnt that B1 became extremely troublesome to him, and therefore he traded B1 in for a replacement (B2); this sounds similar to the way that people nowadays trade in their mobile phones constantly for more fashionable models. He hopes for the extension or replacement of a person’s life with the help of cloning technologies, and consequently he falls into confusion whether B1 and B2 are the ‘same son’. His schemes and his lies form a portrait of his selfishness which leads him to regard his offspring as his private property and a commodity. He also neglects the influence of environment, including the effects of family relations, to a person’s identity and personality constitution. This bitter truth for Salter to digest at the end of the play, guides the theatre participants back to the topic about child rearing as mentioned above, and the discussion on the morality of human cloning, including the autonomy of cloned beings.

At the end of this conversation, B2 insists to leave as he is now in search of his identity. Speaking of identity confusion, Sennett (2000) explains that it is often a result of the conflict between “how others see you and how you see yourself” (p.177). For instance, Salter thinks both B1 and B2 are his ‘same son’, but B2 is sure that he is different from B1. This is the main source of B2’s frustration over his identity and motivates him to search for his life-narrative through “(s)elf-explanation” (p.177,
Sennett, 2000). Such process requires ongoing “recasting in the course of experience” (p.177, Sennett, 2000), and so one can formulate constant new explanations of oneself in response to life experience. This is the main force driving B2’s decision to leave at the end of this scene. In addition, Sennett (2000) indicates that the capacity to recast one’s life-narrative reflects the strength of a person in coping with the ever-shifting world of today’s flexible capitalist economy. This critical perspective is missing from the typical institutional curriculum in local education; thus a theatre workshop involving extracts from A Number embedded in a drama course provides participants with an opportunity to explore the relevant self-evaluation of personal identity in society, as well as the shifting patterns of interaction with society’s expectations currently absent from the mainstream curriculum. In this scene extract, B2 is repressed by the existence of B1. He feels threatened, and thus desires an escape from the situation. This dramatic moment, illustrating the theme of ‘repression’ for the theater workshopping participants, will be developed in a later section on the theatre workshop model.

**Scene Extract 2: Salter and Michael Black Talking about other Clones**

This extract (p.60-62, 2002/2004) presents the conversation between Salter and Michael Black when they meet for the first time in the latter part of the play. They talk about Michael’s positive personality and life experience, and Michael seems
excited to hear from his ‘father’ about his cloned siblings. Yet Salter is disappointed that he is unable to relate Michael to himself and the other two sons that we met in previous scenes. (See appendix 10.)

In this dialogue, Michael reveals an attitude toward cloning that contrasts sharply with B2’s. He welcomes the idea and finds it “funny” and “delightful” (p.60) when he is informed about the existence of other clones. Instead of being bothered by his ‘copies’, Michael expresses an open-minded attitude to identity diversity as he “see(s) the joy of it” (p.61). He does not find the other clones cause him confusion about his own identity, although he is able to comprehend why Salter is “not at all happy” (p.61) during their conversation; he can also understand the attempt by Salter to ‘restore’ his son’s life by getting in touch with him. As Luckhurst (2015) comments, “Michael has a secure sense of identity” (p.164); he is conscious of his autonomy as a person and of his own unique character that is independent of his biological connection to Salter. He presents a cheerful and outgoing personality, in strong contrast to B2 and B1, which explains Salter’s feeling of powerlessness over Michael, since he cannot find any of the expected characteristics of his ‘son’ in him.

Through their conversation, Salter finally realizes B1 and B2 are two different sons. He understands both sons are special to him, since he has spent time living with each of them, and he has had different life experiences with the two sons.
His transformation in perception in the course of the conversation with Michael demonstrates how one may adjust one’s life narratives through a microscopic social exchange. As cited above, identities are built up in “negotiations” and “exchanges” (Sennett, 2000, p.182) that help to determine how others see one and how one sees oneself. In the play, Salter gradually formulates his own life narrative and grasps the life narratives of his sons through talking with each of them, demonstrating Churchill’s subtextual meaning that conversations and social interaction among people are essential to soothe the dissonance within one’s own identity. A cross-community theatre workshop based on scenes from A Number provides a platform to make reflections on such life-narrative negotiations in the multicultural contemporary context of Hong Kong.

**Noteworthy Dramatic Features for Study & Suggestions for Theatre Workshopping**

Dan Rebellato (2009, p.168) describes A Number as a play written with dreamlike and surreal logic. It requires careful study of the text as well as acquiring some basic knowledge of the play’s topic of cloning. Moreover, in preparing the scenes for workshopping, one should notice the difficulty in handling sophisticated lines written mostly in “sparse, incomplete sentences” (p.165, Luckhurst, 2015). The theatre workshopping models with the above recommended scene extracts will be time-
consuming for pre-study of the text, as well as for collaborative discussions on the
rehearsals and presentation. It can also be challenging to the target community unless
they are well informed of the play’s structure and plot development. In other words,
the facilitating group needs to spend a substantial amount of time on careful design of
workshop content and materials in their preparation.

Bearing this advice in mind, there are some outstanding dramatic features
which offer this play a high degree of flexibility for performance in a theatre workshop
or in a conventional theatre performance. According to Gobert (2009), the “near-
absence of punctuation” in the lines as well as “zero stage directions” (p.120) is a
theatrical analogue of “textual DNA”. Also, “Churchill shadows each of her characters
with echoes of the others” (p.120), and brings the subject of ‘genetic connection’ to
life for the theatre workshop participants. These features allow highly flexible
individual interpretations of the play which is in itself a representation of individual
‘uniqueness’. Through her writing Churchill invites diverse imaginative responses and
interpretations on her characters and their thoughts, and thus the play matches the
broader purposes of community theatre workshopping. Participants are encouraged to
share their opinion and explore alternative perceptions and actions through workshop
collaboration.

The advantage of adapting scenes from A Number in the community-
engaged theatre workshopping model is its simple setting and structure. As indicated by Luckhurst (2015), the structure of the play is concise in that it only consists of interactions between Salter and his three sons. The sons are assumed by Churchill to be played by the same actor, and thus it does not necessarily require a large number of people to form the facilitating group. Yet when applied to the community theatre workshop, the three sons could be performed by different actors as long as there are symbols signifying several generic similarities among the characters. The symbols could be related to the appearance or physical conditions of the characters, such as ‘beard’, ‘birthmark’ or ‘glasses’, indicating genetically inherited short-sightedness. This adaptation can enhance the flexibility of the facilitating group’s size and may also involve diverse theatre workshop participants in the experimental acting sessions. A simple structure and setting also mean not much stage preparation required in the theatre.

**Community Theatre Forms to Adopt with A Number**

There are two types of community-engaged theatre workshopping models that are suitable for *A Number*. The first type involves the adaptation of forum theatre, resembling the first theatre model recommended for *Top Girls* (see above). It is suitable for exploring a broader range of topics conveyed in the play like identity
construction, parent-child relationships, and commodification of human lives. The second type will adapt the community theatre form of ‘breaking of repression’ or ‘playback theatre’, in which the two forms present a similar technique of recalling particular repressed moments in everyday life, and rehearsing performed resistance to such repression.

1) Adapting Forum Theatre:

The functioning of the model adapting forum theatre is similar to that of *Top Girls* as mentioned in the first section of the present chapter. The facilitating group will lead discussions among the target community after the demonstration of each extract. For the first scene extract, theatre participants are encouraged to discuss the factors leading to B2’s decision to leave Salter after meeting B1, which may be related to the issues of identity establishment and parent-child relationship. The extract can be adapted and shortened according to the preference of the focused discussion topic and the time allocation in the workshop. It is suggested that the discussions can be held in small groups, so that different groups can share and compare diverse discussion results and decisions of plot alteration through actions in the repeated scene demonstrations.

As regards the second extract, the discussion can focus on issues of autonomy of identity, the commodification of human beings and the potential impacts
of human cloning. In addition to this, since the text provides an ‘open-ending’ in the final scene, participants are encouraged to imagine and discuss any possible development of the plot after Salter’s and Michael’s conversation. The facilitating group can invite participants to take up the roles of Salter and Michael to improvise an extended the scene. This part of the workshop can stimulate a critical and creative perspective on behalf of participants on the various social impacts of technologies in a collaborative methodology.

2) Adapting Breaking-of-Repression or Playback Theatre:

Another type of theatre workshopping model adapts the form of breaking-of-repression, or playback, theatre. The first scene extract is highly recommended to be the focus text for applying this model. The idea is to explore the repression encountered by B2 in scene extract 1, and to repeat the scene again without accepting the idea of repression in the character. The purpose is to rehearse resistance to repression and to challenge the oppositional forces represented by the setting as well as by the other characters – Salter and the ‘invisible’ B1.

According to Boal (1985), when implementing breaking-of-repression as a theatrical experiment, a particular instance of a ‘repressed’ moment will “serve as the point of departure” (p.150), yet the instance must also “reach the general (perception
of repression)” (p.150). The process of the theatre will transform the subject of repression from ‘phenomena’ towards the institutions that “govern those phenomena” (p.150, Boal, 1985). By taking up a role in the repeated scene and experiencing the resistance to repression, theatre participants can reflect on the effects and force of these institutional ideologies behind repression. Discussions of alternative ways to resist such repression also allow in-depth analysis of phenomena presented in the scene from a cross-community perspective. The workshop will guide participants to review the effects of repression in everyday life, emanating from specific phenomena to general institutional ideologies in contemporary society.

By contrast to breaking-of-repression techniques, playback theatre focuses on the experimental process from a general situation of social institutions back to a more personal emotional experience. The development of playback theatre is deeply influenced by storytelling, traditional tribal rituals and psychodrama as a form of psychotherapy, and thus it emphasizes the right of everyone to share her/his own stories, feelings and emotions. The aim of this form is to strengthen the connections across community members through mutual understanding and respect for personal stories and feelings. If this form is adapted to the theatre workshop, scene extract 2 can also be involved as a focus text.

When adapting this form, the facilitating group can demonstrate the scene
extracts without explaining the background or structure of the play. In such case, participants who don’t have the concept of the overall plot will pay more attention to the emotions of the characters, as shown in their conversation. This can arouse their curiosity in discovering what exactly frustrates the characters (B2 and Salter) in the scenes. After the first demonstration, the facilitating group tells the story behind the scenes and leads group discussions among the target workshop community. Participants are guided to interpret the conflicts presented in the scenes and the emotions of characters based on their own life experience. The community members are also asked to demonstrate in the repeated scenes to share their interpretations after group discussions. Through performing as the characters, participants can have first-hand experience of their personal struggles in the alternative and open theatrical space. They can experiment with different reactions to the conflicts in relation to their own life experience through the theatre model. In other words, the theatre workshop functions as a platform for participants to share their own stories reflected in the themes or subtexts of the play.

This theatre workshop model, based on breaking of repression or playback theatre, embraces Slavoj Žižek’s (2010) insight into the possibility of opting for a ‘correct choice’ the second time around in making key life decisions. As Chow (2010) points out, common phenomena in everyday life are always formed by certain
accidents and key moments in the past. Based on the logic of ‘thinking backwards’, Žižek argues that a ‘correct choice’ in everyday life could only occur when the situation is repeated; for him, the ‘wrong’ decision made by the person the first time around is the pre-condition and opportunity for a ‘correct choice’ when deciding on the issue the second time. The significance of this workshopping methodology is to offer the condition for an improved choice in everyday life through theatre workshop rehearsals of key moments and decisions that we face in everyday life.

The suggested target community includes school students who are interested in science and technology. Since the young generation is growing up in an age of rapid technological development, the workshop can stimulate them to share thoughts and ideas and reflect on how they experience the social impacts of various kinds of technologies from a ‘user’ perspective. Through participating in the theatre workshop model, they can also be inspired to prepare for anticipated social and technological developments in the near future. The facilitating group is required to liaise with schools and subject teachers who are interested in the relevant topics of A Number for cooperation in conducting the workshop. In addition, the facilitating group can also consider migrant workers or ethnic minority teenagers as the target community. As indicated in the previous section, the identities of people are formed to a great extent “based on place” (p.176, Sennett, 2000) in contemporary society. The
theatre workshop involving these members in the multi-cultural city can offer an interactive platform for mutual sharing and understanding of the complicated identity struggles involved in living in a socially and culturally diverse society.

About the Next Chapter

In the following chapter my action research project connected to one of the community-engaged theatre workshopping models above will be presented. There will be an illustration of a case study on the theatre workshopping project with *Top Girls* as a theatre workshop extension of an undergraduate drama course. Likewise, the design of the workshop, research methodology and the research process in my small-scale action research project will all be elaborated. The research results will be analyzed based on the narratives of the facilitating group, and my reflections based on participant-observation will also be offered. Suggestions for feasible implementation of the model with an undergraduate drama course adopting the pedagogy of community engagement, or Service-Learning, in the local context will also be put forward in this chapter.
Chapter 5: Action Research – A Case Study of Top Girls for Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping in an Undergraduate Drama Course

Introduction to the Chapter

The first part of the thesis has presented the theoretical argumentation on community drama and theatre for critical pedagogy, and the integrated application of these ideas in community sociocultural development as a methodology. Moving on to the second part of the thesis, an action research praxis is developed based on the theories and experiences involved from Chapter 1 to Chapter 4. The concept of performance in everyday life, community plays and community theatre is adopted as the fundamental idea of developing sociopolitical consciousness among community members via theatrical practices. It results in a provisional structural design of the semi-scripted, community-engaged theatre workshopping tool as critical pedagogy linking up students, community-partners and community members outside the educational institution. The socially-engaged features of community drama and the power of Caryl Churchill’s plays in provoking discussion on social issues also inform the selection of potential scenes to be adopted and adapted in the theatre workshopping models.

Clearly, however, the methodological tool can only function as a
meaningful learning experience when it is put into practice. Conducting an action research experience is the only way to examine the feasibility and effects, expected and unexpected, of the proposed methodology. It would likewise reveal the challenge of implementing this pedagogic alternative in praxis and facilitate consistent improvement for achieving its objectives.

The previous chapter has illustrated an in-depth analysis on the four plays by Churchill in response to the sociopolitical context of Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong. The possible theatrical models of community-engaged theatre workshopping with scene extracts from these plays are also explored. This chapter will illustrate a case study of the *Top Girls* model for community-engaged theatre workshopping (see Chapter 4) with a focus group of undergraduate students from a drama course. The purpose of this action research is to investigate the significance of the workshopping project on students’ academic enhancement, community experience and pedagogic practices. It will also display the transformation of students’ learning experience of the play as part of the drama course.

The first part of this chapter will describe the research methodology and the implementing process of the case study. The research results will be presented in the second part with an analysis based on the narratives from the focus group and my observation as an instructor of the course unit as well as the project. Reviewing the
research results and the implementation of the workshops, the third part of this chapter will give suggestions for applying the model to an undergraduate drama course with community engagement or Service-Learning components in the local context. This experimental workshopping project will inspire ‘alternative’ pedagogies and opportunities for future development of a community-engaged pedagogic approach in the Post-Umbrella Movement era.

5.1 The Case Study with *Top Girls* – The Action Research Methodology & Process

The workshopping project in this case study was attached to an undergraduate core course of English majors on Contemporary Literature (‘the Drama course’). With regard to the challenges of studying contemporary drama as an academic module, students found themselves struggling in the institutional practices of teaching and learning. In the study, the focus group members were asked to reflect on their learning experiences of drama in the course at the early stage of the workshopping project. They reported a passive learning style within the course, which was a conventional learning style in the formal educational context. Students were also concerned about the separation of academic or subject knowledge and real life experience in the course. In the post-workshop interview with the focus group, a student recalled her frustration of studying literature and expressed the view, “I can’t
integrate new ideas from literature texts with my existing perceptions or life experience, and they’re always just ‘new ideas’; I don’t feel I’ve actually acquired anything” (translated from oral Chinese, Focus Group Interview (‘FGI’) on 17 July, 2015).

Apart from that, a lack of motivation for doing self-reflection on the learning process appeared to be a result of having in-class presentations in a closed and fixed classroom setting. Focus group members agreed that they could hardly receive inspiration from their classmates “who had almost the same educational background and input of knowledge” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015). As the setting of the in-class workshopping assignment was not truly “authentic”, sometimes they would “pretend to teach something ‘new’ to the classmates while the classmates pretend not to know anything” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015). Hence, the workshopping assignment originally designed to enhance students’ learning experience in the course had turned into a “mere fulfillment of the assessment requirement” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015). In addition, since the nature of this course focused more on literary analysis of texts, the focus group members reckoned their learning of the drama component of this course was less effective than expected due to rare performative interaction with the community outside the classroom.

In order to conquer these challenges, the experimental theatre
workshopping project was in search for a more engaging and vivid form of critical pedagogy as an extension of the course. It integrated the unit of contemporary drama *Top Girls* and an in-class workshopping assignment with two voluntary outreach theatre workshops hosted by a focus group as an extension of the course. The project consisted of a series of semi-scripted community-engaged theatre workshops using adapted scene extracts of the play as recommended in the previous chapter. It aimed to demonstrate an alternative pedagogic approach which would achieve a balance between academic learning of Drama Studies and community engagement for sociocultural development. The research methodology and the workshop design will be described in the following sections.

**The Research Questions**

This action research calls for a feasible critical pedagogical approach concerning the tacit dimension of Drama Studies which embodies the entity of language, literature and community as a holistic illustration of people’s everyday life. The central question of the case study is to investigate ‘how a community-engaged theatre workshopping model with adapted scene extracts from *Top Girls* facilitates the integration of academic learning and community experience in tertiary Drama Studies’.

There are four research questions addressing the purpose of this case study:
i) What ‘alternatives’ does the workshop project inspire in terms of using drama for critical pedagogy?

ii) How do the Drama students respond to the theatre workshopping project as a critical pedagogic approach?

iii) How does the target community respond to the theatre workshopping project as a critical pedagogic approach?

iv) What are the key elements of conducting a feasible community-engaged theatre workshopping project as an undergraduate course component?

**The Workshop Design**

Based on the framework of the theatre workshopping model as elaborated in Chapter 4, this case study involves a focus group of four undergraduates from the Drama course as the facilitating group in the workshops: Cindy, Fiona, Jane and Dora\(^{16}\).

This action research was constituted by three theatre workshops in total: an in-class workshop as a course assignment which could be seen as the preparation for the first experimental or ‘action’ cycle; and two voluntary outreach workshops as the extended learning experience of the Drama course – namely the two action cycles. The design of the workshopping methodology was inspired when I participated in an applied

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\(^{16}\) Apart from the name of the researcher, all names involved in this action research are fictitious to protect the privacy of participants.
theatre workshop held in Hong Kong in December, 2013. The workshop facilitator and community theatre practitioner Tim Wheeler shared his notion of ‘three stages to achieve effective learning’: to learn, to do, and to teach.

In accordance with this notion, the focus group started the workshopping project with studying and selecting two scene extracts from *Top Girls*. They adapted, rehearsed and performed the scenes in the form of an interactive drama workshop to their classmates; also known as the in-class assignment of the course. Extended from the in-class workshop, the group adjusted the workshop design and materials in order to conduct outreach workshops in a particular target community – senior secondary students in this case study. In the outreach workshops, the focus group demonstrated the scenes as workshop facilitators. They led and stimulated cross-community discussions with school students on dramatic features as well as critical sociocultural themes conveyed in the play through interactive activities. At the latter stage of the outreach workshops, the focus group explored with the target community the possible interpretations and alternative ways of expressing emotions and thoughts through action changes in the scenes. The community members (secondary students) were encouraged to take turns acting as different roles and review changes of expression followed by debriefing discussions.
Data Collection

This qualitative research examines the narratives of the focus group members and reviews their own reflections on their academic, social and personal achievements through participating in the project. The results reflect whether students believe they can establish ‘new meaning’ of what they have learnt from the Drama course and internalize the acquired knowledge with personal and community experience. The means of data collection included reflective journals written by the focus group members after the in-class and the first outreach workshops respectively and the observation journals written by myself throughout the project. There were also individual and group interviews with the focus group conducted within two weeks after the second outreach workshop. The interview questions were developed based on their reflective journals and my participant-observation as the unit instructor of the course as well as a facilitator-observer in the workshops. Excerpts of my observation journals also served as feedback on the workshops for the focus group, in which they could adjust or improve the design of the following workshop(s) during the project. In addition, the two outreach workshops were video-recorded. The community response to diverse workshop sessions was observed and reviewed.
The Workshopping Process

As indicated, the workshopping project included a pre-action stage which was embedded in the teaching unit and an in-class assignment of the Drama course. The two action cycles following the pre-action stage involved two outreach theatre workshops hosted by the focus group in two different secondary schools. At the pre-action stage, the group studied the text of *Top Girls* in class and had the first attempt of theatre workshopping with two selected scene extracts as an in-class event. As a cross-community learning experience derived from the course, the focus group then designed and facilitated two workshops with adaptation of the scene extracts for two groups of senior secondary students. In between the workshops the focus group reviewed the previous one through discussions and writing reflective journals. They made adjustments to their approach toward hosting the coming workshop(s). As tutor, I provided my comments on their previous workshops, and gave suggestions regarding their design of materials, presentation and rehearsals of drama scenes; that said, the style and content depended on the students’ final decision.

The first outreach workshop was carried out in an English Language lesson of an elite class\(^\text{17}\) of Secondary 4 students on a normal school day in May, 2015.

\(^{17}\) An elite class in a school in Hong Kong refers to the class consisting of students with the top academic achievements in a Form.
Taking up the role of teachers, the focus group members led the lesson for the first time. They invited school teenagers to participate in warm-up acting exercises, demonstrated and analyzed two scene extracts with knowledge they learnt from the Drama course, and facilitated the teenagers to try acting as the characters from the scenes. From my observation the first workshop turned out to be more like an English Language teaching and learning activity.

Before the second outreach workshop in July, 2015, I encouraged the focus group to consider how to enrich the scope of sociocultural discussion on the reflections on the scenes in the next workshop. The focus group adjusted some warm-up sessions and the approach to stimulate a more in-depth discussion on the sociocultural issues conveyed in the drama. The second workshop was conducted in the form of a voluntary post-exam activity for interested students from senior secondary classes; the venue was therefore an activity room instead of a classroom. Rather than role-playing and analysis of dramatic features of the scenes, this time the focus group invited teenagers to form two teams and brainstorm reasons for supporting two female characters in the play who upheld diverse attitudes towards gender and social roles of women in a contemporary workplace. This session was like a debate to facilitate exchange of ideas from various perspectives, where the teenagers were encouraged to share their opinion based on their real life experience. The atmosphere was more relaxed out of the context
of the daily class routine, and it was closer to the Summerhill style\textsuperscript{18} with free participation of interested students.

5.2 Research Findings & the Analysis

To examine the interesting findings of the case study, we shall start with the motivations of participating in the project as expressed by the focus group. Since this project was a voluntary learning experience extended from the course, all the members of the focus group were self-motivated to participate in it. As indicated in the post-workshop interviews, most of the group members said the major aim of joining the project was to obtain teaching experience as they would consider joining the teaching profession after graduation:

Fiona: I didn’t have any experience in classroom teaching before participating in this project. I joined it because I could engage secondary students in the workshops, senior secondary students. I want to teach senior forms in secondary school in the future, so I want to obtain this experience. It’s difficult to gain such experience as there’s no means to engage this community by myself.

Jane: I did join voluntary teaching in Taiwan and Nepal before, but those were really young children. And voluntary teaching is just for fun, we teach singing. Engaging secondary students would cause much pressure. I thought of being a teacher, but never imagined to be a secondary school teacher. I am so afraid that I would ruin somebody’s future… but I would like to try engaging students

\textsuperscript{18} Summerhill School is an independent free school founded by A.S. Neill in Suffolk, the UK since 1921 where students take control of their own learning experience.
from secondary school, and see if it’s as terrible as I imagined.

May (Researcher): So did the workshops help?

Jane: Now I think teaching secondary students is quite enjoyable. At least they would show interesting responses…… being a secondary school teacher is not as terrible as I thought.

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015)

It is noticeable this project has offered them a rare opportunity for having community engagement with school teenagers, particularly those from senior secondary forms. Similar motivation for participating in the project was expressed by Cindy:

Cindy: I joined it mainly because I’m interested in helping secondary students in English learning. I’ve considered to be an English teacher but I don’t have relevant experience, so I want get in touch with secondary students through this field experience. I want to know what would happen if I need to teach secondary students. Although I have an ambition for the teaching profession, I’m not sure if I can really handle it or it’s suitable for me. This is really a good experience to assess if I’m suitable to be a teacher.

May: What do you think about that after completing the project?

Cindy: I’m still interested in teaching secondary students. I think they’re very lovely. I wish they could really learn something (through the workshop) ……I’d like to facilitate students to learn something meaningful, but not only to complete homework or exam. I want to help the students…if they could learn something or enjoy the workshops, it’s a kind of reward, the sense of satisfaction.

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015)
Here, Cindy highlighted that the sense of satisfaction to serve the community could be seen as a form of reward for participating in the project. Apart from this, the focus group members were also attracted to join the project by the certification issued by the Department upon completion of all workshops; they could enrich their curricula vitae for job hunting in the near future. In addition, another focus group member Dora also indicated in the reflective journal that she joined the project “for fun” as her friends were also in the group. It reflects that peer influence may also form a significant motivation for participation in the workshopping project.

**The Response from the Focus Group**

The focus group has responded to the workshopping project in terms of academic enhancement, community experience and personal development. Based on their self-evaluation and my observation, we can elaborate how these students experience the play and Drama Studies differently after participating in the project. The feedback from the focus group members has illustrated that the learning experience and achievement in the project could be diverse and personal. In terms of academic enhancement, a high level of creativity as well as learners’ autonomy was demonstrated during the workshopping process with their own choice of workshop contents and forms of presentation. Cindy appreciated this form of experiential
learning. She specified, “the autonomy of learner is much higher compared to the in-class assignment – I don’t need to insist on fulfilling some strict criteria” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015). She remarked that this workshopping project has offered flexibility for students with different learning styles; it provided them both guidelines and freedom. In other words, the project could cater for learners’ differences as a pedagogic tool.

Also, the focus group reckoned theatre workshopping itself was an effective stimulant to raise social awareness and reflections on the social, cultural and political themes conveyed in the play. In the post-workshop interviews, some members shared views about the transformation in their perceptions of social phenomena, as reflected in the scenes in the workshops:

Cindy: The drama presents certain messages, but I didn’t pay attention to them. I thought it is just describing some ordinary phenomena. Say Shona’s behaviour (in the second scene extract) … when I studied this scene in the drama course, I thought it’s just a normal thing. However, when I brought this scene to the secondary students in the workshops, their response to the scene has changed my mind. They simply pointed out cheating in an interview was something bad; I used to think it’s normal, but now I realize that’s evil. It’s the innocent thought of the secondary students that changed my perception of the scene…. I think it’s actually the message of the play, the playwright wants us to review on something we have get used to. We have to be more critical to some social stances, and further develop our own perception of these social issues.

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015)

Fiona elaborated on the significance of the workshops in relation to
enhancing social awareness and self-reflections. Through the workshopping process, she realized the existence of some important ideologies, which she would “have neglected in everyday life even when they were embedded in the play” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015). Such transformed perceptions of the play show that the project can serve as a channel for reviewing the criticism on ‘social norms’, as presented in the scenes, from a new perspective; students can experience genuine learning with continuous self-reflections in the learning process.

In addition, as an extension of the Drama course, the focus group members believed that the workshops have reinforced their own subject knowledge acquisition. It was especially helpful that they could capture something they have missed in the course when they became the teachers in the workshops. For instance, Dora discovered that “there was something (she) thought (she) understood, but still couldn’t capture the essence when (she) attempted to teach it” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015). Jane agreed that it functioned as a holistic learning process where she could teach after acquiring the subject knowledge. The workshopping process offered them a chance to evaluate and improve their learning effectiveness.

Furthermore, these students have transformed the set knowledge acquired in an institutional setting of a drama course into its ‘new meaning’ defined by learners
themselves. Such new meaning of knowledge was constructed through the cross-community interactions on diverse social perceptions and values, and thus the new knowledge would be applicable to daily life. Fiona explained in the interview the process of transforming the set knowledge of the play into something meaningful as a reflection of her everyday life:

Fiona: My scene of demonstration was about pretending to be an experienced professional in a job interview. Without demonstrating in the outreach workshops, I wouldn’t have an in-depth reflection on the nature of a job interview. I wouldn’t realize it means I have to show off my quality as a candidate… after demonstrating the scene by myself, I think it’s so realistic that many people have to fulfill society’s expectation, I’m expected to act very much like a professional in a job interview even when I’m a fresh graduate!

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015)

On the other hand, when they perform as the facilitators in the workshop, they have learnt to make subject knowledge comprehensible to another community. Dora described the difference between conducting an in-class workshop and an outreach workshop in relation to the nature and preparation:

Dora: The in-class workshop was like an academic presentation. Every classmate has learnt what we have learnt in the lectures, and we didn’t need special preparation as we all attended the course as a foundation; it’s just routines. But when we hosted the workshops for secondary students, we needed to divide theoretical knowledge into small pieces, and explained the rationale behind. We can’t just impose the terms on them…. We first need to digest the subject knowledge and make it applicable to other situations, so we could really share it with the students in the (outreach) workshops.
Her explanation of the group’s preparation for the community-engaged project has highlighted the effective learning experience provided by this pedagogic methodology. Since it involved comprehension, analysis, reflection and re-organization regarding the subject knowledge, the workshopping process would reinforce meaning-making and application of the knowledge initiated by learners.

In response to their opinion on the in-class assignment before participating in the extended workshopping project, the group members now believed that the in-class workshop was significant and an essential part of the learning process. Fiona emphasized the importance of having the in-class assignment in the post-workshop interview:

Fiona: If everyone needs to participate in community engagement or Service-Learning like this theatre workshopping project, the in-class workshop is very important. Before I did the in-class workshop, I didn’t actually know what ‘theatre workshop’ means… I hadn’t joined any theatre workshops before. I agree that I needed to do the in-class workshop, I must first experience the workshopping process and the form before running an outreach workshop on my own.

After completing the project, the group agreed that the in-class workshop was an inevitable experiential input which allowed them to host community theatre workshops outside the institute. In other words, the methodology did not only provide
an alternative pedagogic approach for the drama course, it has combined and transformed the ‘uninterested’ in-class assignment into a vital and beneficial learning opportunity within the theatre workshopping project from students’ point-of-view.

In terms of community experience and personal development, this community-engaged pedagogic methodology allowed students to examine the authenticity of their perception of a particular community, or to ‘re-imagine’ another community. Cindy shared her discovery in the workshops about her false impression on the community of senior secondary students:

Cindy: Talking about Shona in the second scene extract… we university students thought that secondary students were used to homework plagiarism or telling lies – it sounds normal to me when secondary students do those things. But I was surprised that they’re very innocent! At least the boys whom I’ve talked to in the warm-up role-playing session said we shouldn’t do those things…. From the workshops I’ve learnt something about the community which was not exactly like my previous imagination. Say I imagined they would plagiarize homework, but they were very innocent. It became a surprise to me, and made the community experience very significant.

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015)

Dora also shared a similar discovery; she found the two groups of secondary students quite different from her impression of some other students whom she met before. It reflects that the community experience offered by the community-engaged project would renew participants’ established perceptions of other communities, which may affect how they perceive and interact with other social
members in everyday life. By comparing the workshops with their previous community experiences, the focus group agreed that their awareness of community diversity and uniqueness has been raised.

Speaking of this awareness, Jane has done a special ‘preparation’ before the second outreach workshop in order to understand more about the target community. She talked to her younger brother who was a secondary student in English as a “pre-test” (FGI on 17 July, 2015), and tried to capture his English proficiency for reference. She believed this preparation would help her to adjust her presentation to a group of secondary student in the workshop. Through engaging different communities, students would become more conscious of social diversity and their efforts needed in approaching other communities

Students also treasured the chance of mutual learning across communities on social perceptions outside the institution. Although they functioned as the facilitating group in the workshops, they indicated in their reflective journals that they would understand various social perceptions from secondary students’ perspective. Fiona gave an example of her discussion with secondary students about social expectations of job seekers, in which she has “learnt some insights that (she) hadn’t thought of”. Students agreed that this workshopping project was not a single-way of knowledge transmission but more about mutual exchange of sociocultural experiences
across communities.

Moreover, the focus group members found it pleasurable when they could enjoy different social roles in another community. In both reflective journals and post-workshop interviews, students described themselves as the “instructors”, “facilitators”, and “teachers” (reflective journals; FGL on 7 July, 2015 and 17 July, 2015). They regarded the workshopping process as a transformation from the state of being mere learners in the course into a teaching role who facilitated teenagers in the theatre. And thus they were excited and proud of themselves for being able to contribute to others in society. Cindy remarked that she learnt through the process “how to transfer knowledge with personal insight to another community” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015). The members of the focus group all agreed that the workshopping project was a positive and enjoyable learning experience. Based on their reflections and my observation, students demonstrated in the workshops that they have internalized knowledge acquired in the course. They were also able to create a product – the workshops – which was completely owned by themselves with their personal insights as well as interpretation on the subject of study.

In response to students’ learning challenges in the Drama course, the workshopping project functioned as an alternative pedagogic approach which celebrated learner differences and autonomy. The workshopping process allowed
flexibility for students in deciding the workshop contents and materials, where they could experience diverse teaching and learning styles with different target communities. As the instructor, I provided feedback and suggestions based on my observation during the project, but it was for the focus group to decide what to adopt and how to construct *their* workshops after group discussions. The group also improved their design of following workshops by reviewing their interaction with the target community in the previous one. By shaping the forms and contents of the workshops, students showed their awareness of the importance of catering for learner differences in teaching and learning.

In addition to this, the project also catered for knowledge and skills acquisition in the tacit dimension in academic studies. Cindy shared in the post-workshop interview, “if I didn’t have this workshopping experience, I would believe that everyone could understand the English I usually speak to my peers” (translated in oral Chinese, FGL on 7 July, 2015). In the first outreach workshop she realized that it required more elaborations when sharing critical ideas on the English scene extracts with secondary students, and therefore she adjusted accordingly her style of speech and the way of presentation of the ideas in the second workshop. This example demonstrated how the tacit dimension of knowledge sharing was achieved. The workshopping process required meaning-making based on personal perceptions on
certain idea and the interactions with others – which could only be obtained through actual communication across communities. Comparing the in-class assignment and the outreach workshops, Jane explained that its major difference was their nature and objectives. She regarded the outreach workshops as focusing on the application of the acquired knowledge and preliminary theatre workshopping experience established in the in-class workshop. The project enabled her to apply the knowledge and insights to “authentic communication across communities… and achieve mutual learning based on the subject (of study)” (an excerpt from a reflective journal by Jane).

On the other hand, this workshopping project formed a tool to transform students from a position of service-user – the ‘passive learner’ in an academic course into the service-provider – active learner as well as teacher in the outreach workshops. This transformation of social positions allowed students to feel empowered and excited with higher degree of autonomy and involvement in the teaching and learning process. Dora highlighted in her reflective journals that she could “enjoy teaching and learning in a secondary school environment again, which was quite different from (her) memory and perceptions of being a school student in the past”. By encouraging students to take the initiative role in teaching and learning, the project reinforced the effectiveness and enjoyment of acquisition and cross-community transfer of academic knowledge.

With this synergy of students, course instructor, target community and
community partners – the cooperating schools – this community-engaged mutual-learning platform further broke down the boundary and conventions in institutional education. The project could be seen as a result of the collaboration between teachers, students and the community. Moreover, this form of critical pedagogy could reduce negative impacts of imbalance in the power-relationship commonly found in an institutional setting especially in local context.

**Community’s Response as Observed**

Burton Bargerstock the Chairman of International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) believes that community-engaged pedagogy aims at serving the students. It encourages students to step out of their comfort zone and understand the world beyond the ‘self-centred’ perception of “the world starting with me”. He reckons that nowadays students demand to “engage the community, listen to the community and shape it with the community”. Although community-engaged pedagogy aims to serve the learning needs of the students in the contemporary context, the integration of academic

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19 From Burton Bargerstock’s speech at the opening luncheon of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) 2015 Conference in Boston, MA, the US on 16 November, 2015. Recorded in my research journal as a conference participant.

20 Ibid.
acquisition and community experience forms the basis of sustainable community development. Apart from the response from the focus group, community impact provides a reflection of the significance of the theatre workshops methodology; the community’s response would illustrate whether the project has been seen as an ‘imposed’ task on the target community.

Acquisition of dramatic experience and the eagerness of the target community to participate in dramatic demonstration were seen to be relevant factors in the workshop design. For the first outreach workshop, the workshop content planned by the focus group was closer to the plan of the in-class workshop, which focused more on the presentation of the academic knowledge related to the play, such as the explanation of subtexts and characterization in the drama. The workshop sessions tended to be similar to the usual classroom routine. The secondary students from the elite class were attentive, and thus most were willing to participate in the drama demonstration or other acting activities, as instructed by the facilitators. Nevertheless, creativity, diversity or unexpected acting methods did not feature in their performance to any extent.

When the focus group and I reviewed the running of the first outreach workshop, they also reported a similar observation on students’ reaction during the scene performance sessions. After discussion they decided to replace the warm-up
sessions of each scene into more vivid activities which involved impromptu acting based on an everyday life scenario. In the second outreach workshop, the target community members were more engaged in the impromptu acting activities. These secondary students enjoyed experimenting with ways to express various ideas without speaking. They were allowed to use props or even the help of another classmate (a ‘dummy’) to mime certain emotions or actions. In such process they were required to show their creativity and imagination, and this time the warm-up sessions enhanced their eagerness to take part in role-playing during scenes. In the role-playing sessions, the students demonstrated their understanding of the scenes and displayed their own interpretation through diverse expressions in acting. When the facilitators provided feedback and suggestions of drama skills, they were able to integrate the newly acquired skills in their acting for the second time, i.e. the repeated scene demonstrations designed to promote possibilities for change.

Moving on to the discussions on sociocultural topics, the enthusiasm for participation and the diversity of ideas also appeared to be influenced by the workshop design. Since the discussions on the scenes and themes in the first outreach workshop focused more on the academic perspective, the content seemed to be more distant to the life experience of the target community. As a result, the response from the
community tended to be more standardized although they could capture the idea explained by the facilitators. In the second outreach workshop, the focus group decided to extend their focus from mere academic knowledge sharing to sociocultural exchange of everyday life experiences with the target community. They adjusted the workshop plan by adding some group debate sessions on the social perceptions represented by different characters in the scenes. They joined the groups in the debate as facilitators and strengthened the interaction on sociopolitical insights with the community.

A positive result in terms of the target community’s response was achieved by this re-arrangement of the workshop; the insights and ideas shared by the school students were both sophisticated and unexpected compared to the first outreach workshop. For instance, when debating women’s positions in family and at work, these students actively expressed their views on homosexual rights in Hong Kong with reference to the United States’ legalization of same-sex marriage – a current incident reported in the news by the time of the workshop. Many of their ideas were in fact not included as a planned topic in the workshop, and this was regarded as a demonstration of the significance of community engagement embedded in this workshopping methodology. Fiona indicated in the post-workshop interview, “considering the ideas these students gave me when we discussed the sociopolitical topics of the scenes, I
could tell that they did have careful reflections, and their sharing was inspirational to me” (translated from oral Chinese, FGL on 17 July, 2015). This mutual inspiration with initiative sharing by the target community has illustrated the essence of the theatre workshops, namely that it can enrich the diversity and authenticity of interaction through a collaboration between facilitators and participants on social and life perspectives.

Looking at the language issue, the use of English or ‘English Language learning’ could serve as a tool to link up the target community and community-partners for cooperation. From the observation and feedback from the focus group, as long as the facilitators captured the communication style according to the background of target community, the use of English texts with bilingual facilitation would not cause a language barrier in the theatre. Yet it would be important to have some understanding of the target community in advance and allow flexibility of adjusting the communication style during the workshop. There was a transformation in the perceived nature of the theatre workshops from an English learning activity to community-based theatrical interactions. Based on the community’s response, the first outreach workshop was mainly perceived as classroom teaching of English Language through drama and role-play, while the second one functioned as an interactive experience of sociocultural exchange derived from the drama text. Possible factors
affecting how the target community perceives the theatre workshopping methodology are believed to be the design of content, time and venue of the workshop. This aspect will be elaborated in a later section of the current chapter.

As for the response from the community-partners – the two cooperating schools in this project, both teachers-in-charge or the school representatives offered a high degree of support throughout the process. They welcomed the proposed workshops and believed that it would be beneficial to their students’ learning of English and discussion skills through drama activities. They also regarded it as an opportunity to enhance students’ scope of sociocultural exchange with university students outside normal English classes in school. During the project, the schools assisted in arranging students to join the event, and provided adequate venues as well as sufficient time for each workshop. After the workshops, both schools appreciated the effort of the facilitating group and invited me to organize more workshops in the future. The school teachers also asked if there would be other drama events in the university and they would recommend students to join. It reflected that when being approached, these community-partners would be able to contribute to the cross-community theatre workshopping project with technical resources.

In addition, certification provided by the Department as a motivating force of co-organizing the project was a useful and relevant feature of the outreach. Since
there were more students joining the second workshop than informed by the school-teacher in advance, I realized the prepared certificates for the students were insufficient at the end of the workshop. Therefore, I promised the teacher would send them the remaining certificates after the event and fulfilled my promise within a week. The school-teacher was grateful, as she placed exceptionally high importance on the certificates. She explained that it would enrich student’s profile for academic promotion, which was understandable in the context of institutional education. This sociocultural relevance could become a significant aspect of the approach to different schools to become community-partners in future developments of the project.

**What ‘Alternatives’ does the Case Study Offer for Institutional Teaching and Learning?**

This community-engaged theatre project was established aiming to serve as an alternative pedagogic approach, which can be complementary to the existing practices featured in the typical institutional Drama Studies course curriculum. When it comes to ‘alternatives’, it is important to review the inspirations and possibilities of teaching and learning as well as students' personal development brought about by this project. The focus group members all agreed that this performative and communicative project was a preferable pedagogic approach, even in daily lessons within the institutional setting. Jane recalled the positive reactions and participation in the
interactive sessions of the secondary students in the first outreach workshop. She believed that “students certainly prefer this kind of communicative teaching and learning experience if they have to attend classes anyway, and thus they enjoyed the workshop” (translated from oral Chinese, FGL on 17 July, 2015).

Meanwhile, this workshopping experience allowed students to go beyond their own point-of-view: the focus group could reflect on and consider alternative pedagogic practices to tackle teaching and learning challenges in relation to institutional routines from a teacher’s perspective. According to the reflective journals, during the preparation the focus group would explore the possibility of alternative pedagogic practices, which could stimulate interaction and intellectual exchange among the theatre workshop participants from a facilitator’s perspective. Fiona and Jane also indicated in the journals that they would reflect on the teaching and learning process they had experienced in the Drama course, and reconsider how pedagogic approaches such as assignments and interactive sessions facilitated their learning. As mentioned in the previous section, this breaks the conventions of a lecturer teaching an academic subject to his/her students; the collaboration between teachers, students and community in the teaching and learning process can reduce negative impacts of an imbalance in the power-relationship usually found in institutional education.

Focusing on Drama Studies, it is a bold attempt for English major students
to embrace a more extensive appreciation of theatre practices by experiencing community theatre forms of applied theatre apart from conventional forms of professional or ‘disciplined’ stage theatre. The focus group welcomed the extension of the study scope of Drama in the Language Studies discipline:

Dora: It can’t be denied that ‘professional’ or conventional theatre should be included in the curriculum. Without this fundamental knowledge of drama, we can’t host a community theatre workshop. But I think we can bring community theatre and applied theatre experiences into our classes.

May: That means learning about professional theatre and conventional drama is a basis for adopting new forms of community theatre?

(Jane, Fiona and Cindy nodded to agree.)

Fiona: And if we haven’t done this community theatre workshop, the Drama course would only be a programme of conventional stage theatre…… but now we’ve done this workshopping project, we have captured the essence of both professional theatre and community theatre. I think this is a good idea!

(Jane said ‘yes’; Dora and Cindy nodded to agree.)

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015)

The reflections from the focus group would stimulate the possible extension of the scope and diversity of Drama Studies as a literary analysis-focused subject. It invites course designers to explore how to integrate community theatre into the curriculum of conventional Drama and Theatre courses; it could be inspirational to develop a course in collaboration with the students.
Furthermore, the project has offered career inspiration to students. Before conducting the outreach workshops, the focus group members shared with me their motivation for joining the project. Dora expressed her interest in teaching, but preferably not to be a school teacher. She hoped to seek alternative forms of teaching and learning that she might engage in after her graduation. In her second reflective journal she remarked that this community-engaged theatre project had impressed her with an idea that “learning does not only happen in a school setting”. This experience of theatre workshopping inspires her to consider alternative ways to facilitate teenagers’ learning and self-enhancement through community-engaged pedagogy as a future career, which is an unexpected effect on the personal development aims of students.

Studying a drama text with specific themes related to feminism and gender politics like *Top Girls* may arouse concerns about its nature of being ‘exclusive’ of male students and participants. Nevertheless, this project has demonstrated that the exploration of feminist texts could be for all participants from various backgrounds in Drama Studies. Although the focus group members in the case study were female students, there were a few male students in the Drama course who showed interest in participating in the project with a similar motivation of gaining teaching experience in school. Since the project was an extension of the course and was implemented after the end of the semester, these interested male students turned out to have time clashes
with the project period in the semester break. It is likely that more students, irrespective of gender, would take the initiative to participate in the project, if it is integrated into a course with community-engaged pedagogy.

Looking at the response of the target community members, both female and male participants have shown interest in discussing their life experience and perceptions of gender. In the outreach workshops, the focus group attempted to draw attention to the social and cultural constructions of gender in people’s ordinary lives. During the discussions the participants are encouraged to examine women’s social positions based on the *Top Girls* scenes from their stakeholders’ points of views; some male participants expressed their concerns about pressures of achieving career ‘success’ as male family members. Inspired by their sharing of social perceptions and insights, it was emphasized that the text was a reflection of marginalization of women as well as social expectations of gender roles.

During the in-class workshop, some male students performed cross-gender acting – an expression of their perceptions of gender. When it comes to Drama or Language Studies as a discipline in the local context, male students may constitute a ‘minority’ in terms of gender among their colleagues. Similar to females, male students would also experience different extents of marginalization during their studies in the Arts and Humanities-related subjects. Instead of being exclusive of male students, this
theatre workshopping approach with a feminist text like Top Girls can serve as a means for all participants to share their life experience and insights of gender politics through drama.

In addition, the feminist topic of the play is one example of the cultural experiences of our ordinary life, which links to other aspects such as issues of economy, education and government policies, as demonstrated in Top Girls. This again illustrates the diversity of sociocultural topics one may explore using the cross-community theatre workshopping methodology. Speaking of this diversity of topics stimulated by the project process, this community-oriented workshopping methodology can be regarded as an effective pedagogic tool in a cross-disciplinary curriculum. It is a useful form of teaching and learning particularly in today’s context of tertiary education with its pedagogic trend of Service-Learning or community engagement. The application will be further explained in the final section of this chapter.

Re-conceptualization of Institutional ‘Teaching and Learning’

After the whole project, some focus group members have shared insightful perceptions regarding the transformative effect of the ‘teaching and learning’ experiment in the institutional context. In her reflective journal Fiona shared her new perception of the meaning of learning after sharing in conducting in two theatre
workshop. She commented that “learning is not cramming knowledge into our mind but making connections between the new information and our experience or previously acquired knowledge”. In the post-workshop interview, she elaborated her opinion of ‘real learning’:

Fiona: Now I think real learning is to assimilate new information.

May: How do you assimilate the information?

Fiona: What does it mean by learning? I think all students have got their own perceptions on different life issues, but when we encounter new information, we may need to adjust our own views on the issue, and integrate the newly learnt information into our own perceptions. We need to be able to agree with this new idea so to have really ‘learnt something’.

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 17 July, 2015)

Fiona’s opinion reflected that she valued the experience of learning through the project, which involved revision, interaction and internalization of newly acquired insights and her own life experience and perceptions during the learning process. A thorough insight regarding ‘teaching and learning’ from a learner’s perspective has been constructed as a result of participating in the project. It is an encouraging finding, since the theatre workshopping methodology is established as a form of critical pedagogy, which aims at stimulating personal reflections on learning through diverse community experiences.

On the other hand, restricted by previous educational experience with
institutional routines and social expectations imposed on learners, some students found it hard to experience extension of their perception from a stereotypical idea of ‘successful teaching and learning’. Dora expressed to me after finishing the second outreach workshop that ‘better teaching’ was achieved in the first outreach workshop. She reckoned the first workshop was more successful in the context of classroom teaching, as “everything is under control, as expected” – participants could speak out or perform what was expected/instructed without any “accidents”. She believed that it was an English lesson and therefore she “couldn’t understand why the school allowed students to speak bilingually in class” (an excerpt from a reflective journal by Dora). Her opinion in fact presented many of the routines of teaching and learning in the institutional setting in the local context, where her reflections on the learning process and meaning appeared to be less significant.

These different responses illustrate that long-term efforts and alternative practices are needed in expanding the conventional concept of teaching and learning in the context of institutional education. Providing more community-engaged pedagogic tools may facilitate stakeholders in adopting a transformative perception of pedagogy which emphasizes community engagement in academic curriculum. This transformation of pedagogic ideology has occurred in institutional education across the globe, and is desirable and vital. Regarding the Post-Umbrella Movement context
of Hong Kong, it may be noted that academic freedom has been challenged\textsuperscript{21} drawing attention to strengthening the autonomy of learners and the synergy between academics and our community. Rapid alienation and contradictions of social perceptions appear in society, especially among young adults and students who are in desperate search of social change in various political and cultural aspects. In the global sense, uprisings and protests have occurred in countries in which citizens are calling for alternative social systems defined by a community-oriented perspective. In terms of institutional education these sociopolitical conditions have motivated the exploration of diverse forms of teaching and learning in tertiary institutes; pedagogic approaches which encourage interdisciplinarity and co-operation among academics, students, practitioners and community partners are highly promoted. Both students and teachers need a certain period of adaptation and support with diverse teaching and learning models for transforming practices in the area of community-engaged pedagogy. Equally, this project can serve as a reference point for developing a Drama course curriculum with an outreach communicative approach, in order to strengthen the synergy between academic institutes and community in the glocal sociopolitical

context of today.

Key Features for a Feasible Theatre Workshopping Model

This case study has demonstrated a feasible community-engaged theatre workshopping model as critical pedagogy attached to a Drama course. Apart from the model’s structure as described in Chapter 4 and the previous section, reviewing the establishing process of this project from the instructor’s perspective will sum up the key features to enhance the feasibility of this pedagogic tool. This section will elaborate the challenges and the opportunity I encountered during the process of constructing the case. I will also offer a conclusion about the key features necessary in order to conduct a feasible theatre workshopping project as a pedagogic tool.

During the project, there were two major challenges encountered. The first challenge was the liaison with suitable community-partners. As presented in Chapter 4, one of the suggested target communities would be the Ethnic Minorities (EM) in Hong Kong. At the beginning of my project plan, I attempted to seek cooperation with a non-profit making organization serving the EM community in Kwai Chung district. Knowing that my university has had a connection with this organization in community service, I got in touch with an officer of the organization around one year before the project period and proposed to co-organize the theatre workshopping project with my
students. The officer replied with positive feedback after reading my proposal, and thus we both expected to cooperate in the project. Nevertheless, later when the officer presented the proposed project to her manager, the idea was turned down as the manager reckoned there was a lack of human resources to handle the project. I also attempted liaising with other community service organizations, but realized that it was not easy to seek a suitable community-partner without an existing connection for cooperation. As a result, I decided to change the target community to another sector, that of senior secondary students. This experience reminded me the importance of liaising and confirming the proposed project with the personnel who would be able to make the final decision and take responsibility as a potential community-partner at an earlier stage.

Turning my focus on the field of secondary students, I soon secured successful partnerships with two secondary schools. As a former school teacher, I was introduced to these school partners through my personal connections. The persons I contacted were both heads of the English panels respectively in their schools, and so their decisions would involve less administrative limitation. This helped a lot with a prompt confirmation of cooperation and convenient arrangements of settling the project details such as the time, venue and participants of the workshops. In addition to accessing schools through connections, local schools usually welcome proposals for
co-organizing educational events especially from university units. And since the required resources of the project, including the workshop space and technical support, are easy to obtain in a school setting, these potential partners would be less concerned about time and resource consumption in co-organizing the event. From my experience in the case study, once the connection is built with these school partners, it is much easier to implement co-organized projects, with particular reference to the positive feedback from the school representatives, as illustrated above.

Another challenge to meet during the project was the search for a facilitator in the community theatre context to assist the focus group in preparing the workshops. Although there was a freelance professional drama instructor assigned to assist students in their performance and presentations in the course, I realized an instructor without community theatre experience could hardly capture the essence and the rationale of the community-engaged workshopping project. Therefore, I considered seeking a community theatre practitioner to help facilitate the focus group during their preparation of the outreach workshops. I consulted Mok Chiu Yu from the Centre for Community Cultural Development, an experienced practitioner and organizer of community theatre programmes, and concluded that it would be difficult to seek a freelance practitioner for this project due to financial restrictions. Encouraged by Mok, I decided to take up the role of facilitator by myself with my acquired knowledge and
experiences of community theatre from previous academic studies and practical workshops as well as community events.

My facilitation was effective, because the focus group could capture the rationale of theatre workshopping and adopt various community theatre practices and techniques in the project. As a focus group member, Cindy indicated in the post-workshop interview that the role of instructor or facilitator in the project was significant, for it would “determine whether students can understand what they want to achieve in the theatre workshops” (translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015). To achieve the objectives of this critical pedagogic tool to the fullest extent, the instructor or facilitator is expected to have captured the concept of community theatre and be able to cater for learners’ differences. With high flexibility in integrating ideas and practices, a competent facilitator helps enhance the quality of students’ learning experience that celebrates individual uniqueness.

Moving on to the opportunity, the positive and welcoming response from the school partners before and after the project have illustrated a strong motivation for co-organizing this cross-community learning event. Looking at the New Senior Secondary Curriculum, Other Learning Experiences (OLE) is set as one of the vital

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components in addition to the core and elective subjects with the aim of facilitating the whole-person development of students (see Chapter 1). Under this curriculum, schools are expected to provide students with a large range of OLE activities and encourage them to participate in learning experiences in different areas such as ‘Community Service’ and ‘Moral and Civic Education’. In such case, OLE becomes one of the assessment aspects for university admission. This explains why certificates and the involvement of communities outside the school in learning activities are attractive and meaningful to the school partners in this context of institutional education. Together with ‘English learning’ as an engaging element in education as analyzed in Chapter 3, the context of local institutional education has offered a good opportunity for conducting community-engaged theatre workshopping with school students or teenagers as a target community.

Furthermore, there are several relevant features if we wish to consider the feasibility of the workshopping tool as part of a university course. As reflected by the focus group members, prior knowledge of the input material is essential before conducting a theatre workshop. This input should not only include the study of drama texts, but also the concept of community theatre in order to “avoid confusion of objectives” (excerpt from a reflective journal by Jane). Fiona, Cindy and Dora also expressed in the post-workshop interviews the significance of a clear introduction of
the rationale of the project. A short briefing session with demonstration can be given in advance of the workshops hosted by students.

When talking about the possible implementation of the project as part of a course curriculum in the future, the focus group was highly concerned about the assessment methods. From a learner’s perspective, Cindy believed written reflections were essential, and could serve as reviewable records of her learning experience. She explained in the post-workshop interview the benefits of writing self-reflections during the project:

Cindy: Making self-reflection is important. Apart from having a record, I can actually clarify what I have done in the process, how I feel, and what impressive moments I have experienced. This is great. These may not look very important for now, but the records would help me review my achievements in the future.

(Translated from oral Chinese, FGI on 7 July, 2015)

The other group members then indicated a balance should be achieved between students’ performance in the workshops and the self-reflections due to the diversity and differences in learners’ strengths. They remarked that it would cause “frustration” and “discouraging effects in learning” if the community’s response were taken into account in the assessment (excerpts from post-workshop interviews). It is understandable that in the local context of institutional education, students usually have huge concerns about assessments and academic results. To increase the
effectiveness of learning with meaningful reflections, it is suggested to conduct an ungraded debriefing session for mutual sharing of experiences among the course students after completing the outreach workshops. The post-workshop group interviews had served a similar function in the case study. The students can also submit written reflections such as journals in fulfilment of their participation in the project as an assessment requirement. Since the rationale of the project is to provide flexibility in teaching and learning styles, it is recommended that course instructors can take students’ concerns into consideration for designing necessary assessment means.

On the other hand, we must be aware of the setting of time and venue of a theatre workshopping project in relation to how the participants, both the facilitating group and the target community, perceive the nature of the event. Comparing the two outreach workshops in the case study, the interaction between the focus group and the secondary students in the first workshop presented a more routine style of daily classroom teaching and learning. The classroom environment of the workshop conducted in a normal English Language lesson during the semester may have caused the unconscious perception in the first workshop that it was a conventional classroom practice. The facilitating group tended to feel a ‘responsibility’ to teach dramatic skills and vocabulary items in English, where the theatre participants appeared to be obedient to classroom regulations and routines such as putting up their hands before answering.
a question. Jane also indicated in her reflective journal after the first outreach workshop that “the students seemed to be a bit reserved in their answers or role-play… probably due to the classroom setting”.

However, the responses from the target community in the second workshop were more active and diverse. The adjustment of workshop design certainly contributed to this change, but it could also be a result of the different time and venue arrangement of the second workshop. The second workshop was held as a post-examination activity which was optional and targeted at interested students, and was conducted in an activity room with comfortable and colourful seats, bookshelves, computer and sofa. Jane regarded this venue as a “mini-theatre” where students were “more relaxed and enjoyed the workshop as a game” (from a reflective journal by Jane). This experience reflects that the time and venue of the workshop can be one of factors determining the results and perceptions of the project.

Remarks for Further Implementation with Service-Learning & Ethnic Minority Workshops

The community-engaged theatre workshopping models recommended in this study are designed to contribute to the pedagogic trend of tertiary education with an emphasis on community engagement in this era. Cross-disciplinary and cross-
community approaches are promoted in global intuitional education (Sato et al., 2010). In the recent decade, universities in Hong Kong have started to adopt more community-engaged pedagogic styles in various academic disciplines including critical pedagogy of Service-Learning (see Chapter 1). This case study inspires methods to establish theatre workshopping projects in response to the ongoing pedagogic development of Service-Learning and cross-community exchange in local tertiary institutes. Apart from working with senior secondary students, implementing this model for Service-Learning targeting the Ethnic Minority community can also provide Drama students with a valuable learning experience.

The Values of Engaging the EM Community in Hong Kong

As described in Chapter 4, due to the ‘closed’ culture of the community and the cultural differences with the local Chinese community, the EM women in Hong Kong are described as the “invisible” minorities in Hong Kong (APSS, 2007, preface). It is reckoned that this community “deserve(s) to be truly recognized and their needs should be properly addressed by the society” (APSS, 2007, preface). This aim of social integration will only be achieved by cross-community interactions and mutual learning opportunities, conforming to the objectives of Service-Learning as critical pedagogy. The synergy between students and EM women as the target community can been seen
as a form of empowerment, which embodies sustainable community advancement in collaboration as the essence of this theatre workshopping methodology.

Based on the previous social service projects targeting the EM community especially their female members, it is concluded that EM women appreciate opportunities of self-development and meeting people from the local Chinese community (Ku et al., 200; Chow et al., 2005; APSS, 2007). Transforming the “role from service user to provider” (Chow et al., 2005, p.26) for mutual teaching and learning in these Service-Learning projects allowed the women to feel content and empowered. They managed to transfer their life skills in the ethnic culture to another community, in which they could “(step) out from home to society for mutual learning and contributing to the community” (Chow et al., 2005, p.26). A theatre workshopping project can Service-Learning or community-engaged tool can also break the racial gap and enhance trust building between the EM community and other communities in society.

Meanwhile, the EM participants are able to serve as an inspiring community to the local undergraduates for significant sociocultural exchange of social perceptions and life experience in Hong Kong. The multicultural and multilingual nature of the workshops can contribute to students’ exposure to languages and cultures, while the EM community can enjoy a programme for sociocultural development
conducted in English or multi-languages. Last but not least, it is recommended to approach non-profit making organizations with social services for the EM community at an earlier stage for feasible arrangements in cooperation for a cross-community project. It is the best to liaison with potential organizations that the university has been connected with in previous projects. Another means to seek potential community-partners for the project would be secondary schools with large amount of EM students.

About the Next Chapter

In the final chapter, there will be a conclusion to this research. Reviewing the study, it will present the limitation and the significance of this study. The suggestions for further development of the methodology and relevant research will also be provided.
Chapter 6: Conclusion of the Study

Introduction to the Chapter

The purpose of this research is to re-imagine the significance of English drama for critical pedagogy in institutional education in post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong. The study presents the community-engaged theatre workshopping methodology with adapted scene extracts from Churchill’s plays as an alternative teaching and learning tool. It aims to strengthen the synergy between academics and the community with a cross-community interaction on social, political and cultural issues through community theatre forms and texts by Caryl Churchill. The workshopping models are developed to meet students’ needs of academic, community and personal development in relation to the critical pedagogy of Drama Studies. This methodology constructs a possible means to facilitate community advancement in collaboration in an era of civil disunity and ideological differences in Hong Kong and across the world.

I have argued in support of the sociocultural functions of community theatre and Drama Studies in the academic context, and Churchill’s plays as a stimulant of community-oriented interaction in contemporary society. I will conclude the study by pointing out the potential significance of the community-engaged theatre workshopping methodology explored in my study. I would also like to highlight the
reflections on the case study as an action research project on the viability of introducing a workshopping model of pre-written dramatic scenes such as those from *Top Girls*. The limitations of the research scope and my suggestions for further development of the study will also be provided in the final section of the chapter.

6.1 Developing the Community-engaged Theatre Workshopping Methodology

This research is constituted by a theoretical exploration on the values of adopting and adapting community theatre and Caryl Churchill’s plays as a critical pedagogic form in the institutional context of Drama Studies. The problematics of institutional education and Drama Studies in contemporary Hong Kong reflect the need of alternative pedagogy which will meet the sociopolitical challenges of the young generation in the post-Umbrella Movement era. In order to establish a theatre workshopping methodology in response to the problematics, I have reviewed the historical and sociocultural development of community-oriented plays and community theatre in the global and local contexts. The reflection has demonstrated the values of community theatre and dramas as a form of community empowerment and ‘education for freedom’ in contemporary society. The rationales and forms of community theatre have been adapted in the establishment of the methodology of community-engaged theatre workshopping suitable for the local context of institutional education.
To integrate the essence of community theatre and contemporary English plays for critical pedagogy, Caryl Churchill’s plays are stimulating texts that are highly suitable for the context of the proposed workshopping methodology. Churchill has constructed critical responses through her plays to various contemporary issues, which make her plays stimulating as a reflection on sociopolitical challenges in today’s Hong Kong and in the global situation generally. The controversial themes, her socialist feminist insights and outstanding dramatic features also make her plays rich resource texts for cross-community exchange through theatre workshopping. Concerning the language issues of adopting the English texts, I have explored the social conditions of the role of English in relation to the pedagogic and historical backgrounds of Hong Kong. The social perceptions of the use of English in teaching and learning inspire the opportunity of engaging different communities and students through theatre workshopping with Churchill’s English language drama.

Moving on to the suggested models of community-engaged theatre workshops, Churchill’s *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine*, *Serious Money* and *A Number* are recommended texts of study in the workshops on account of the diverse sociocultural topics raised by their themes and their characterization. Selected scene extracts from the four plays can be adapted according to different models, while most of the models can be integrated into the curriculum of an undergraduate drama course involving a
community engagement element. The analysis of the themes, subtexts of the scene extracts and implicit questioning of these plays illustrate their strong cultural relevance to the sociopolitical context of post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong. They can also inspire the communities which the outreach targets using different workshopping models. These models are able to facilitate cross-community academic and social exchange between university students and members of society outside the institution. In response to the challenges facing institutional pedagogy, the flexibility of applying these models emphasizes the alternative styles of teaching and learning through experiential learning and collaboration across communities.

After establishing the structures of different community-engaged theatre workshopping models with Churchill’s plays, an action research on the theoretical study of the methodology was conducted. This research illustrates a case study on the workshopping model with *Top Girls* in the form as an extended project based on an undergraduate Drama course. The research methodology and workshopping process has been presented, followed by the analysis of the research results. The reflective journals written by the focus group, my coordinating experience and my participant-observation as the project instructor reflect students and community’s responses to the model. This case study has demonstrated the feasibility, possible effects and the significance of the workshopping model in the local institutional context of Drama.
Studies. Based on the case study, I have demonstrated the opportunity for adopting these workshopping models in courses under the pedagogic trend of community engagement in Hong Kong and across the globe. In addition, the developmental background of Service-Learning as pedagogy in local tertiary education and the social conditions of the Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong as potential target community have inspired ideas for further application of the models. It also indicates the values of engaging different communities outside institutes of higher education through theatre workshopping in multicultural and multilingual contexts.

6.2 The Significance of the Research

This study has concluded a basic methodological tool using scene extracts from community English plays as critical pedagogy for institutional Drama Studies. To promote transformation in higher education there is a call for community-engagement and critical pedagogy in tertiary institutes. This research has illustrated how community theatre workshopping can function strategically with an experiential, collaborative and communicative approach across communities. The methodology celebrates learners’ autonomy in the teaching-and-learning process, allows flexibility in the form of individual uniqueness, and combines personal experience with community engagement. And thus it can act as a bridge between literature and drama.
in community in the form of a ‘living theatre’.

This methodology is applicable to a course curriculum linking up academic studies and community experience as a Service-Learning component; it can facilitate both teachers and students to adapt to the transforming pedagogic trend of community engagement in response to the need for social progressiveness in the era of social activism. The suggested community-engaged theatre workshopping models with Caryl Churchill’s scenes can serve as a platform for cross-community intellectual and experiential exchange in the glocal sociopolitical contexts of today.

With the support of the action research project, the model is found to have encouraged students to create their own forms of theatre workshopping to share their internalized subject knowledge with personal insights with other communities outside the institute. Their challenges of pedagogy in the institutional setting are channeled into a meaningful goal of self-reflection through the experiential process. For instance, the compulsory course assignment has become an essential and valuable foundation for teaching and learning in the cross-community theatre workshopping project from students’ perspective. The approach marks a positive and enjoyable alternative learning experience from the students’ perspective. It encourages students to reflect on the meaning of ‘Drama for Community’, according to which they can read a play with diverse community concerns beyond personal or purely literary perceptions.
In addition, the reflections from the focus group on the project in the case study also inspire a transformative perception regarding critical pedagogy in the current context of local institutional education. The methodology complements the current structure of the Drama course regarding the objective of performative as intrinsic questioning of sociocultural phenomena in a broader sense as well as in the contemporary glocal context. The case study examines and concludes the key features of a viable structure for implementing the workshopping models, which can facilitate the development of a Drama course with Service-Learning components. In terms of ‘Drama for Service-Learning’, the study has also discussed the aspects of its coordination, and also how to address everyday life issues in workshops, and the institutional expectations and limitations of implementing this methodological tool in the curriculum.

Reviewing the significance of Drama and Theatre as social intervention, theatre workshopping as social actions initiated by young citizens would facilitate ‘bottom-up’ social transformation, which forms a force for exerting pressure on mainstream institutions. Through the theatre workshops for Service-Learning in community outside the institutes, mutual learning and sharing of diverse experience can be achieved and in consequence academic learning and community life can become more unified. With regard to the need for sublimation of the current social
actions, theatre workshopping can bridge the gap between personal experience and collective social issues. Theatre as a collaborative process and action can facilitate identity (re-)establishment for community and personal empowerment in the current sociopolitical context.

The U.S. Congressman Joe Kennedy III believes that the significance of community engagement in terms of institutional pedagogy is to give hope and justification to people in an age of cynicism when citizens are losing faith in their governments\textsuperscript{23}. This study aims at encouraging the development of more critical, community-connected and alternative pedagogic forms in tertiary education. The goal is to nurture synergy between academics and the community, which allows students and the younger generation to contribute with their academic insights to social advancement beyond the confines of the institution. Overall, this research reflects on the sociopolitical challenge of implementing university drama projects in the current glocal context. Since social issues and discussions are often conveyed in Drama for Community such as autonomy, empowerment and identity establishment, drama

naturally functions as a form of activism. With the conflict between these liberal ideas and anticipated socialization defined by the existing institutions (as described in Chapter 2), this study indicates a foreseeable institutional challenge in implementing Drama for Service-Learning or community engagement in educational institutes: Will Service-Learning become merely ‘cosmetic’ rather than dynamic and genuine? Will the workshops address mere ‘display’ questions instead of general challenge to real social issues?

In the post-Umbrella Movement context of Hong Kong, the above is an unavoidable sociopolitical issue to confront while academic freedom is being challenged with increasing contradictions in perception regarding social change in society. In the global context, protests in many countries are increasing, which explains why the synergy among academics, students, practitioners and communities is highly important. As Law (2015) indicates, Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement has signified the beginning of an era of resistance to cynicism and authoritarianism. To seek an alternative way out of the current sociopolitical conflict, community engagement and collaborative discussion are vital to the exploration of sustainable forms of community development. This research highlights the potential of community dramas and theatre as a means to facilitate such collaboration for social transformation. In this context, Drama for Community as Service-Learning functions as a ‘rehearsal’ of the tensions
between the youth and the institutions. In response to the marginal role of university
drama, this study has demonstrated that Drama and Theatre do have a place in both
community education and institutional courses and can contribute to community
development beyond the conventional institutional curriculum.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Development of the Study

Since the action research element of the theatre workshopping model with
*Top Girls* was developed as an extension of the Drama course in the case study, the
case does not involve graded assessment as a course component. And thus, the case
does not necessarily reflect the possible challenges regarding the design of assessment
tools of an outreach workshopping project when the model is integrated into a course
curriculum. Although the response from the focus group has provided noteworthy
reference about students’ concerns regarding assessment forms with such community-
engaged pedagogy, further action research can be conducted to examine and explore
various assessment designs and effects on the academic, social and personal
achievements of students with this pedagogic methodology. It will contribute to the
adjustment and development of alternative and practical assessment tools as an
essential means of enhancing students’ learning experience in institutional education.

Finally, this study adopts for the most part the narratives derived from
students and my own observation as a facilitator. Future research based on this pedagogic methodology can investigate the community impact of the workshopping tool by conducting debriefings or interviews with the target communities and acquiring more thorough feedback from the community-partners. Reviewing these various community impacts can furnish the study with perceptions from all stakeholders on this community-engaged educational initiative. More workshops with a range of community-oriented texts – not just those of Churchill, but other dramatists writing either in English or in Chinese – and diverse communities will demonstrate potential variations on the model proposed in my thesis. This can facilitate sustainable development of the methodology, and make it applicable in different contexts and for a wider range of younger and older citizens of Hong Kong. The resulting synergy between communities can promote both critical enquiry and a more sophisticated understanding of the difficulties and challenges that we face, not just as Hong Kong citizens but as human beings.
Appendices
Appendix 1

Scene Extract 1 from Top Girls (p.57-60, 1982/2005): Marlene & Mrs. Kidd’s Quarrel

(From Act Two, Scene 3. Main office.)

MRS KIDD comes in.
MRS KIDD. Excuse me.
MARLENE. Yes.
MRS KIDD. Excuse me.
MARLENE. Can I help you?
MRS KIDD. Excuse me bursting in on you like this but I have to talk to you.
MARLENE. I am engaged at the moment. / If you could go to the reception –
MRS KIDD. I’m Rosemary Kidd, Howard’s wife, you don’t recognize me but we did meet, I remember you of course / but you wouldn’t –
MARLENE. Yes of course, Mrs Kidd, I’m sorry, we did meet. Howard’s about somewhere I expect, have you looked in his office?
MRS KIDD. Howard’s not about, no, I’m afraid it’s you I’ve come to see if I could have a minute or two.
MARLENE. I do have an appointment in five minutes.
MRS KIDD. This won’t take five minutes. I’m very sorry. It is a matter of some urgency.
MARLENE. Well of course. What can I do for you?
MRS KIDD. I just wanted a chat, an informal chat. It’s not something I can simply – I’m sorry if I’m interrupting your work. I know office work isn’t like housework / which is all interruptions.
MARLENE. No no, this is my niece, Angie. Mrs Kidd.
MRS KIDD. Very pleased to meet you.
ANGIE. Very well thank you.
MRS KIDD. Howard’s not in today.
MARLENE. Isn’t he?
MRS KIDD. He’s feeling poorly.
MARLENE. I didn’t know. I’m sorry to hear that.
MRS KIDD. The fact is that he’s in a state of shock. About what’s happened.
MARLENE. What has happened?
MRS KIDD. You should know if anyone. I’m referring to you being appointed managing director instead of Howard. He hasn’t been at all well all weekend. He hasn’t slept for three nights. I haven’t slept.
MARLENE. I’m sorry to hear that, Mrs Kidd. Has he thought of taking sleeping pills?
MRS KIDD. It’s very hard when someone has worked all these years.
MARLENE. Business life is full of little setbacks. I’m sure Howard knows that. He’ll bounce back in a day or two. We all bounce back.
MRS KIDD. If you could see him you’d know what I’m talking about. What’s it going to do to him working for a woman? I think if it was a man he’d get over it as something normal.
MARLENE. I think he’s going to have to get over it.
MRS KIDD. It’s me that bears the brunt. I’m not the one that’s been promoted. I put him first every inch of the way. And now what do I get? You women this, you women that. It’s not my fault. You’re going to have to be very careful how you handle him. He’s very hurt.
MARLENE. Naturally I’ll be tactful and pleasant to him, you don’t start pushing someone around. I’ll consult him over any decisions affecting his department. But that’s no different, Mrs Kidd, from any of my other colleagues.
MRS KIDD. I think it is different, because he’s a man.
MARLENE. I’m not quite sure why you came to see me.
MRS KIDD. I had to do something.
MARLENE. Well you’ve done it. You’ve seen me. I think that’s probably all we’ve had time for. I’m sorry he’s been taking it out on you. He really is a shit, Howard.
MRS KIDD. But he’s got a family to support. He’s got three children. It’s only fair.
MARLENE. Are you suggesting I give up the job to him then?
MRS KIDD. It had crossed my mind if you were unavailable after all for some reason, he would be the natural second choice I think, don’t you? I’m not asking.
MARLENE. Good.
MRS KIDD. You mustn’t tell him I came. He’s very proud.
MARLENE. If he doesn’t like what’s happening here he can go and work somewhere else.
MRS KIDD. Is that a threat?
MARLENE. I’m sorry but I do have some work to do.
MRS KIDD. It’s not that easy, a man of Howard’s age. You don’t care. I thought he was going too far but he’s right. You’re one of these ballbreakers / that’s what you are. You’ll end up
MARLENE. I’m sorry but I do have some work to do.
MRS KIDD. miserable and lonely. You’re not natural.
MARLENE. Could you please piss off?
MRS KIDD. I thought if I saw you at least I’d be doing something.
MRS KIDD goes.
MARLENE. I’ve got to go and do some work now. Will you come back later?
ANGIE. I think you were wonderful.
MARLENE. I’ve got to go and do some work now.
ANGIE. You told her to piss off.
MARLENE. Will you come back later?
ANGIE. Can’t I stay here?
MARLENE. Don’t you want to go sightseeing?
ANGIE. I’d rather stay here.
MARLENE. You can stay here I suppose, if it’s not boring.
ANGIE. It’s where I most want to be in the world.
MARLENE. I’ll see you later then.

MARLENE goes.

ANGIE sits at WIN’s desk.
Appendix 2

(From Act Two, Scene 3. Interview.)

Interview
NELL and SHONA.

NELL. Is this right? You are SHONA?
SHONA. Yeh.

NELL. It says here you’re twenty-nine.
SHONA. Yeh.

NELL. Too many late nights, me. So you’ve been where you are for four years, Shona, you’re earning six basic and three commission. So what’s the problem?
SHONA. No problem.

NELL. Why do you want a change?
SHONA. Just a change.

NELL. Change of product, change of area?
SHONA. Both.

NELL. But you’re happy on the road?
SHONA. I like driving.

NELL. You’re not after management status?
SHONA. I would like management status.

NELL. You’d be interested in titular management status but not come off the road?
SHONA. I want to be on the road, yeh.

NELL. So how many calls have you been making a day?
SHONA. Six.

NELL. And what proportion of those are successful?
SHONA. Six.

NELL. That’s hard to believe.
SHONA. Four.

NELL. You find it easy to get the initial interest do you?
SHONA. Oh yeh, I get plenty of initial interest.

NELL. And what about closing?
SHONA. I close, don’t I?

NELL. Because that’s what an employer is going to have doubts about with a lady as I needn’t tell you, whether she’s got the guts to push through to a
closing situation. They think we’re too nice. They think we listen to the buyer’s doubts. They think we consider his needs and his feelings.

SHONA. I never consider people’s feelings.

NELL. I was selling for six years, I can sell anything, I’ve sold in three continents, and I’m jolly as they come but I’m not very nice.

SHONA. I’m not very nice.

NELL. What sort of time do you have on the road with the other reps? Get on all right? Handle the chat?

SHONA. I get on. Keep myself to myself.

NELL. Fairly much of a loner are you?

SHONA. Sometimes.

NELL. So what field are you interested in?

SHONA. Computers.

NELL. That’s a top field as you know and you’ll be up against some very slick fellas there, there’s some very pretty boys in computers, it’s an American-style field.

SHONA. That’s why I want to do it.

NELL. Video systems appeal? That’s a high-flying situation.

SHONA. Video systems appeal OK.

NELL. Because Prestel have half a dozen vacancies I’m looking to fill at the moment. We’re talking about in the area of ten to fifteen thousand here and upwards.

SHONA. Sounds OK.

NELL. I’ve half a mind to go for it myself. But it’s good money here if you’ve got the top clients. Could you fancy it do you think?

SHONA. Work here?

NELL. I’m not in a position to offer, there’s nothing officially going just now, but we’re always on the lookout. There’s not that many of us. We could keep in touch.

SHONA. I like driving.

NELL. So the Prestel appeals?

SHONA. Yeh.

NELL. What about ties?

SHONA. No ties.

NELL. So relocation wouldn’t be a problem.

SHONA. No problem.

NELL. So just fill me in a bit more could you about what you’ve been doing.

SHONA. What I’ve been doing. It’s all down there.
NELL. The bare facts are down here but I've got to present you to an employer.

SHONA. I'm twenty-nine years old.

NELL. So it says here.

SHONA. We look young. Youngness runs in the family in our family.

NELL. So just describe your present job for me.

SHONA. My present job at the present. I have a car. I have a Porsche. I go up the M1 a lot. Burn up the M1 a lot. Straight up the M1 in the fast lane to where the clients are, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, I do a lot in Yorkshire. I'm selling electric things. Like dishwashers, washing machines, stainless steel tubs are a feature and the reliability of the programme. After sales service, we offer a very good after sales service, spare parts, plenty of spare parts. And fridges, I sell a lot of fridges specially in the summer. People want to buy fridges in the summer because of the heat melting the butter and you get fed up standing the milk in a basin of cold water with a cloth over, stands to reason people don't want to do that in this day and age. So I sell a lot of them. Big ones with big freezers. Big freezers. And I stay in hotels at night when I'm away from home. On my expense account. I stay in various hotels. They know me, the ones I go to. I check in, have a bath, have a shower. Then I go down to the bar, have a gin and tonic, have a chat. Then I go into the dining room and have dinner. I usually have fillet steak and mushrooms. I like mushrooms. I like smoked salmon very much. I like having a salad on the side. Green salad. I don't like tomatoes.

NELL. Christ what a waste of time.

SHONA. Beg your pardon?

NELL. Not a word of this is true is it?

SHONA. How do you mean?

NELL. You just filled in the form with a pack of lies.

SHONA. Not exactly.

NELL. How old are you?

SHONA. Twenty-nine.

NELL. Nineteen?

SHONA. Twenty-one.

NELL. And what jobs have you done? Have you done any?

SHONA. I could though, I bet you.
Appendix 3
Scene Extracts 1 from Cloud Nine (p.2-3, 1979/1985): Clive & Betty At Home

(From Act I, Scene 1. At home.)

Betty I thought you would never come. The day’s so long without you.
Clive Long ride in the bush.
Betty Is anything wrong? I heard drums.
Clive Nothing serious. Beauty is a damned good mare. I must get some new boots sent from home. There ones have never been right. I have a blister.
Betty My poor dear foot.
Clive It’s nothing.
Betty Oh, but it’s sore.
Clive We are not in this country to enjoy ourselves. Must have ridden fifty miles. Spoke to three different headmen who would all gladly chop off each other’s heads and wear them round their waists.
Betty Clive!
Clive Don’t be squeamish. Betty, let me have my joke. And what has my little dove done today?
Betty I’ve read a little.
Clive Good. Is it good?
Betty It’s poetry.
Clive You’re so delicate and sensitive.
Betty And I played the piano. Shall I send for the children?
Clive Yes, in a minute. I’ve a piece of news for you.
Betty Good news?
Clive You’ll certainly think it’s good. A visitor.
Betty From home?
Clive No. Well of course originally from home.
Betty Man or woman?
Clive Man.
Betty I can’t imagine.
Clive Something of an explorer. Bit of a poet. Odd chap but brave as a lion. And a great admirer of yours.
Betty What do you mean? Whoever can it be?
Clive With an H and a B. And does conjuring tricks for little Edward.
Betty That sounds like Mr Bagley.
Clive Harry Bagley.
Betty He certainly doesn’t admire me. Clive, what a thing to say. How could I possibly guess from that. He’d hardly explored anything at all, he’s just been up a river, he’d done nothing at all compared to what you do. You should have said a heavy drinker and a bit of a bore.

Clive But you like him well enough. You don’t mind him coming?

Betty Anyone at all to break the monotony.

Clive But you have your mother. You have Ellen.

Betty Ellen is a governess. My mother is my mother.

Clive I hoped when she came to visit she would be company for you.

Betty I don’t think mother is on a visit. I think she lives with us.

Clive I think she does.

Betty Clive you are so good.

Clive But are you bored my love?

Betty It’s just that I miss you when you’re away. We’re not in this country to enjoy ourselves. If I lack society that is my form of service.

Clive That’s a brave girl. So today has been all right? No fainting? No hysteria?

Betty I have been very tranquil.

Clive Ah what a heaven of piece to come home to. The coolth, the calm, the beauty.
Appendix 4

Scene Extract 2 from Cloud Nine (p. 6, 1979/1985): Maud & Betty at Home

(From Act I, Scene 1. At home.)

Maud  I daresay Mr Bagley will be out all day and we’ll see nothing of him.
Betty  He plays the piano. Surely he will sometimes stay at home with us.
Maud  We can’t expect it. The men have their duties and we have ours.
Betty  He won’t have seen a piano for a year. He lives a very rough life.
Ellen  Will it be exciting for you, Betty?
Maud  Whatever do you mean, Ellen?
Ellen  We don’t have very much society.
Betty  Clive is my society.
Maud  It’s time Victoria went to bed.
Ellen  She’d like to stay up and see Mr Bagley.
Maud  Mr Bagley can see her tomorrow.

Ellen goes, taking Victoria

Maud  You let that girl forget her place, Betty.
Betty  Mother, she is governess to my son. I know what her place is. I think my friendship does her good. She is not very happy.
Maud  Young women are never happy.
Betty  Mother, what a thing to say.
Maud  Then when they’re older they look back and see that comparatively speaking they were ecstatic.
Betty  I’m perfectly happy.
Maud  You are looking very pretty tonight. You were such a success as a young girl. You have made a most fortunate marriage. I’m sure you will be an excellent hostess to Mr Bagley.
Betty  I feel quite nervous at the thought of entertaining.
Maud  I can always advise you if I’m asked.
Betty  What a long time they’re taking. I always seem to be waiting for the men.
Maud  Betty you have to learn to be patient. I am patient. My mama was very patient.
Appendix 5

Scene Extract 3 from Cloud Nine (p.32-33, 1979/1985): Victoria & Lin in the Park

(From Act II, Scene 1. Winter afternoon. Inside a children’s playcentre in a park.)

Victoria Tommy, it’s Jimmy’s gun. Let him have it. What the hell. *(She goes on reading. She reads while she talks)*
Lin I don’t know how you can concentrate.
Victoria You have to or never do anything.
Lin Yeh, well. It’s really warm in here, that’s one thing. It’s better than standing out there. I got chilblains last winter.
Victoria It is warm.
Lin I suppose Tommy doesn’t let you read much. I expect he talks to you while you’re reading.
Victoria Yes, he does.
Lin I didn’t get very far with that book you lent me.
Victoria That’s all right.
Lin I was glad to have it, though. I sit with it on my lap while I’m watching telly. Well, Cathy’s off. She’s frightened I’m going to leave her. It’s the babyminder didn’t work out when she was two, she still remembers. You can’t get them used to other people if you’re by yourself. It’s no good blaming me. She clings round my knees every morning up the nursery and they don’t say anything but they make you feel you’re making her do it. But I’m desperate for her to go to school. I did cry when I left her the first day. You wouldn’t, you’re too fucking sensible. You’ll call the teacher by her first name. I really fancy you.
Victoria What?
Lin Put your book down will you for five minutes. You didn’t hear a word I said.
Victoria I don’t get much time for myself.
Lin Do you ever go to the movies?
Victoria Tommy’s very funny who he’s left with. My mother babysits sometimes.
Lin Your husband could babysit.
Victoria But then we couldn’t go to the movies.
Lin You could go to the movies with me.
Victoria Oh, I see.
Lin Couldn’t you?
Victoria Well yes, I could.
Lin Friday night?
Victoria What film are we talking about?
Lin Does it matter what film?
Victoria Of course it does.
Lin You choose then. Friday night.

*Cathy comes in with a gun, shoots them saying “kiou kiou kiou,” and runs off again*

Not in a foreign language, OK. You don’t go in the movies to read. *(She watches the children playing outside)* Don’t hit him, Cathy, kill him. Point the gun, kiou, kiou, kiou. That’s the way.

Victoria They’ve just banned war toys in Sweden.
Lin The kids’ll just hit each other more.
Victoria Well, psychologists do differ in their opinions as to whether or not aggression is innate.
Lin Yeh?
Victoria I’m afraid I do let Tommy play with guns and just hope he’ll get it out of his system and not end up in the army.
Lin I’ve got a brother in the army.
Victoria Oh I’m sorry. Whereabouts is he stationed?
Lin Belfast.
Victoria Oh dear.
Lin I’ve got a friend who’s Irish and we went on a Troops Out march. Now my dad won’t speak to me.
Victoria I don’t get on too well with my father either.
Lin And your husband? How do you get on with him?
Victoria Oh, fine. Up and down. You know. Very well. He helps with the washing up and everything.
Lin I left mine two years ago. He let me keep Cathy and I’m grateful for that.
Victoria You shouldn’t be grateful.
Lin I’m a lesbian.
Victoria You still shouldn’t be grateful.
Lin I’m grateful he didn’t hit me harder than he did.
Victoria I suppose I’m lucky with Martin.
Lin Don’t get at me about how I bring up Cathy, OK?
Victoria I didn’t.
Lin Yes, you did. War toys. I’ll give her a rifle for Christmas and blast Tommy’s pretty head off for a start.
Victoria goes back to her book

(Lin) I hate men.

Victoria You have to look at it in a historical perspective in terms of learnt behaviour since the industrial revolution.

Lin I just hate the bastards.

Victoria Well, it’s a point of view.
Appendix 6
Scene Extract 1 from Serious Money (p.204-207, 198/1996): Scilla, Jake & Grimes at Liffe Champagne Bar

(From Act 1.)

Liffe Champagne Bar
SCILLA (trader with Liffe), her brother JAKE (commercial paper dealer), GRIMES (gilts dealer) drinking together in the champagne bar.

GRIMES.
Offered me sixty right? So next day
The other lot seventy-five. OK,
So I go to the boss and go ‘I don’t want to trouble
You’, and he goes ‘All right you cunt,
Don’t mess about, how much do you want?’
So I go – I mean why not – I go ‘Double
What I’m getting now’, and he goes ‘fuck off’. Meanwhile
Zackerman rings and – this’ll make you smile –
He goes, he goes, I’ll give you a hundred grand,
Plus the car and that, and fifty in your hand,
But no thinking about it, no calling back,
This is my first and last. I say, Zac,
A good dealer don’t need time to think.
So there you go. Have another drink.

JAKE.
So there’s twenty-seven firms dealing gilts.

SCILLA.
Where there used to be two.

GRIMES.
Half the bastards don’t know what to do.

JAKE.
Those of you that do have got it made.

SCILLA.
And all twenty-seven want ten per cent of the trade.

GRIMES.
So naturally there’s going to be blood split.
JAKE.
Ten per cent? Go in there and get fifty.

SCILLA.
Everyone thinks it’s Christmas and it’s great to know they love you,
But you mustn’t forget there’s plenty still above you.
(There’s at least two dozen people in the City now getting a million a year.)
Think of the ones at the top who can afford.
To pay us to make them money, and they’re on the board.

GRIMES.
They’re for the chop.

JAKE (simultaneously).
I’m on the board.

SCILLA.
True, you’re on the board,
But how many of us will make it to the top?
If we’ve a Porsche in the garage and champagne in the glass
We don’t notice there’s a lot of power still held by men of daddy’s class.

GRIMES.
No but most of them got no feel
For the market. Jake’s the only public schoolboy what can really deal.

JAKE.
That’s because I didn’t go to university and learn to think twice.

SCILLA.
Yes, but they regard us as the SAS.
They send us in to smash the place up and get them out of a mess.

GRIMES.
Listen, do you want my advice?

SCILLA.
They’ll have us on the scrap heap at thirty-five,

JAKE.
I’ve no intention of working after I’m thirty.

SCILLA.
Unless we’re really determined to survive
(which I am).
JAKE.
   It probably means you have to fight dirty.
GRIMES.
   Listen, Nomura’s recruiting a whole lot of Sloanes.
   Customers like to hear them on the phones
   Because it don’t sound Japanese.
   If you want to get in somewhere big –
SCILLA.
   Grimes, don’t be such a sleaze.
   Daddy could have got me in at the back door
   But you know I’d rather be working on the floor.
   I love it down with the oiks, it’s more exciting.
JAKE.
   When Scilla was little she always enjoyed fighting
   (better at it than me).
SCILLA.
   But it’s time to go it alone and be a local.
   I’m tired of making money for other people.
GRIMES.
   (Going to make a million a year?)
SCILLA.
   I might do.)
GRIMES.
   I tell you what though, Zackerman can recruit
   The very best because he’s got the loot.
JAKE. I told him for what he’s getting from my team, why be a
   meanie?
   He got rid of the BMW’s and got us each a Lamborghini.
   He’s quite a useful guy to have as a friend.
   So I thought I’d ask him home for the weekend.
   He’s talking to dad about amalgamation.
   Klein needs a brokers.
SCILLA.
   And daddy needs a banker.
GRIMES.
   Won’t survive without one, poor old wanker.
JAKE.
   I told dad / his best bet’s a conglomeration.
GRIMES.
Some of them old brokers is real cunts.

JAKE.
But I’ve got to go to Frankfurt Friday night,
So Scilla, you can drive him down, all right?

SCILLA.
Yes, that’s fine. I wonder if he hunts.

JAKE leaves.

SCILLA.
I’m beginning to find Zackerman quite impressive.
(I wonder how he got to where he is now?)

GRIMES.
My school reports used to say I was too aggressive
(but it’s come in quite useful),
My old headmaster wouldn’t call me a fool again.
I got a transfer fee like a footballer. He thought I was a hooligan.
He goes, you fool boy, you’re never going to get to work,
What use is a CSE in metalwork?
I could kiss his boots the day he kicked me out of school.

GRIMES and SCILLA leave.
Appendix 7
Scene Extract 2 from Serious Money (p.218-221, 1987/1996): Conversations of Zac & Scilla on Jake’s Death

(From Act 1.)

ZAC.
I went with Scilla to identify her brother Jake’s body which was kind of a mess.
Then we stopped for coffee, which was making me late for work, but it was a special occasion, I guess.
It’d be good if we could handle this So you don’t get associated with anything too scandalous.
(Just stick to No comment, and let them make things up.)

SCILLA.
Zac, I told the police I had breakfast with Jake at Klein Merrick yesterday morning.
Just to say hello. But in fact he gave me a warning.

ZAC.
They know the DTI paid him a visit.

SCILLA.
But it wasn’t just that. He was frightened of . . .

ZAC.
Well, what is it?

SCILLA.
What was Jake like? charming, clever, idle.
He won, he lost, he cheated a bit, he treated it all as a game.
Can you really imagine him killing himself for shame?
(He didn’t know what honour meant.)
He wasn’t telling me he was suicidal.
He was telling me . . . You may think it’s absurd, but I am certain he must have been murdered.

JAKE and SCILLA at breakfast.

JAKE.
Don’t let me worry you, I’m probably imagining it.

SCILLA.
Have you shared a needle?
JAKE.
   No Aids, I’m perfectly / healthy.
SCILLA.
   At work they ask for tea in an Aids cup, they mean / a disposable
   because the dishwasher –
JAKE.
SCILLA.
   What?
JAKE.
   No, never mind, you know I left my diary at your place last week? /
   You haven’t got it on you?
SCILLA.
   Yes, do you want – ?
   No, but I could – .
JAKE.
   Hold onto it. No, maybe you’d better – No, hold onto it. You can
   always burn it later. Fine.
SCILLA.
   What is this?
JAKE.
   No, it’s just . . . I’m in a spot of bother with the authorities / but
   it’s no problem. I’m sorting it
SCILLA.
   What have you done?
JAKE.
   out, it’s more what the sorting out might lead to / because once I
   start –
SCILLA.
   Are you going to prison?
JAKE.
   No, I’m not going to be in trouble at all by the look of it but that’s
   the problem, I’m going to be very – I’m probably paranoid about
   this.
SCILLA.
   Leave the country. / Are you serious?
JAKE.
They’ve taken my passport. I just wanted to let you know in case anything —. I haven’t mentioned any of this to Dad / but when the shit hits

SCILLA.
No, don’t get Dad started. Can I do anything?

JAKE.
No, it’s all under control. I feel better talking to you. I didn’t go to bed, you know how you get in the night. / If anything happens to me —

SCILLA.
Have some more coffee.
What? Like what?

JAKE.
Shall I get you another croissant?

SCILLA.
So what have they found out?

JAKE.
Jam with it?

SCILLA.
If you’ve been making a fortune, I think it’s very unfair of you not to have let me in on it.

JAKE.
Forget it.

SCILLA.
So you haven’t got Aids. That’s great.

SCILLA and ZAC continue.

SCILLA.
So clearly he was frightened because he’d agreed to tell the DTI who else was involved (and they’d want to shut him up).
If I can find out who they are, the murder’s halfway solved.
There’s plenty of names and numbers here in his diary So I’ll start by contacting anyone who looks interesting and making my own inquiry.

ZAC.
Are you OK?
SCILLA.

    Yes, I feel terrific.

ZAC.

    You’ll just find out a whole lot of colleagues’ numbers, that won’t
tell you anything specific.
    My number’s probably there for God’s sake.

SCILLA.

    I’m going to find out who killed Jake.

ZAC.

    Take a sedative, have a sleep, and then see how you feel.

SCILLA.

    Nobody sleeps in the middle of a deal.

ZAC.

    You’ve always been lucky, Scilla, don’t abuse it.
    (I mean, these guys, whoever they are, they could be dangerous.)
    You’re crazy at the moment, / you’re in shock.

SCILLA.

    / I’m in shock, I might as well use it.
    (I’ll let you know what happens.)

ZAC.

    Jake’s death was a shock to me too, and I kept thinking about a
friend of his I’d just met.
    She was called Jacinta Condor and we’d all been doing business
together and I knew she’d be quite upset.

ZAC phones.

ZAC.

    I want to order a number of tropical birds . . .
    Maybe twenty? . . .
    Don’t tell me what kinds because I won’t have heard . . .
    Yeah, parrots, cockatoos, marmosets (no, is this a monkey?)
    lovebirds, sure, stick in some lovebirds, an assortment in good
    bright colour, I don’t care the exact number but plenty . . .
    No not a cage so much as a small aviary . . .
    Deliver it gift wrapped to Jacinta Condor, at the Savoy and the
    card should read, ‘From Zac, as a small tribute to your beauty
    and bravery.’
Appendix 8
Scene Extract 3 from Serious Money (p.221-224, 1987/1996): Conversations of Scilla & Greville on Jake’s Death

(From Act 1.)

SCILLA and GREVILLE at GREVILLE’s house.

SCILLA.
Pull yourself together, Daddy.
What does it matter if Jake was a baddy?

GREVILLE.
Poor boy. Who would have thought? I’d rather he’d been a failure.
He used to want to emigrate and sheepfarm in Australia.
He always would rush in. He had no sense of balance.
He could have done anything, you know, he had so many talents.
Musician. Politician. No obstacles in his way.
If he’d done something else, he’d be alive today.

SCILLA.
What was he up to, Daddy?
If it was just insider dealing,
It’s not a proper crime like stealing.
They say it’s crime without a victim.
He’d hardly kill himself just because the DTI nicked him.

GREVILLE.
Dammit, why would he die for something that’s not a crime?
(It’s not illegal in America, Switzerland, Japan, it’s only been
illegal here the last few years.)
You have to use what you know. You do it all the time.
That used to be the way you made a reputation.
By having first class contacts, and first class information.
One or two greedy people attracted attention to it.
Suddenly we all pretend Englishmen don’t do it.

SCILLA.
So what was he up to, Daddy?

GREVILLE.
I’ve simply no idea.
SCILLA.
Do you know who these people are? I’ve got Jake’s diary here.
Marylou Baines.

GREVILLE.
Marylou Baines
Was originally a poor girl from the plains.
She set out to make whatever she wanted hers
And now she’s one of America’s top arbitrageurs
(second only to Boesky)

SCILLA.
Condor, Jacinta.

GREVILLE.
A very smart lady from South America who comes here every winter.
Europe sends aid, her family says thanks
And buys Eurobonds in Swiss banks.

SCILLA.
Corman.

GREVILLE.
Billy Corman,
William the Conqueror, the great invader,
A very highly successful dawn raider.
I don’t want to hear any more. Did Jake have friends like this?
I wish he was still a baby and giving daddy a kiss.

SCILLA.
Pull yourself together, daddy.
Did he give you information?

GREVILLE.
Absolutely not.

SCILLA.
I thought you might be in on it.

GREVILLE.
In on what?

SCILLA.
Then aren’t you annoyed he kept it secret from you and didn’t share what he’d got?

GREVILLE.
Scilla –
SCILLA.
Jake had powerful friends, that’s clear from what you said.
And that means powerful enemies who’d like to see him dead. /
(He wasn’t brave enough to kill himself.)

GREVILLE.
Absolute nonsense.

SCILLA.
I’ll start by calling on Corman.

GREVILLE.
Security’s terribly tight /
He’ll never agree to see you.

SCILLA.
Don’t worry. I’ll get in somehow and see if it gives him a fright.

GREVILLE.
Scilla, you don’t seem to realise. Newspapers across the nation.
I could easily lose my job if I lose my reputation.
You and the yobs you work with are hardly worth a mention
(no one excepts them to have any standards),
But I have to keep very quiet, and not attract attention.
Until it’s all blown over I think I’ll stay in bed.

SCILLA.
You never liked me, Daddy. Jake was always your favourite.

GREVILLE.
I don’t like the louts you work with.

SCILLA.
And now you’ve got to pay for it.

GREVILLE.
Poor Scilla, are you suffering from feelings of rejection?

SCILLA.
If I find out you were in on it, you’re not getting my protection.

GREVILLE.
(In on killing Jakey?)

SCILLA.
(In on anything.)

GREVILLE.
Darling, don’t be difficult when I’m so awfully sad.
I think Jakey was playing in a bigger league than Dad.
SCILLA.
I’ve always been ashamed of you. Your drink and your pomposity.

GREVILLE.
Scilla, the oiks you work with have made you a monstrosity.

SCILLA.
If I find you’re implicated in my investigation / the News of the World can have you.

GREVILLE.
Darling, you always did have a vivid imagination
(like poor Mummy.)
Appendix 9

Scene Extract 1 from A Number (p.38-45, 2002/2004): B2 tells Salter his Discovery & Decision to Leave

(From session 3.)

SALTER As you mean to go on as in not seeing him any more

B2 as in leaving the country.

SALTER For what for a week or two a holiday, I don’t

B2 leaving, going on yes I don’t know, going away, I don’t want to be here.

SALTER But when you come back he’ll still

B2 so maybe I won’t

SALTER but that’s, not come back, no that’s

B2 I don’t know I don’t know don’t ask me I don’t know. I’m going, I don’t know. I don’t want to be anywhere near him.

SALTER You think he might try to hurt you?

B2 Why? why do you keep

SALTER I don’t know. Is it that?

B2 It’s partly that, it’s also it’s horrible, I don’t feel myself and there’s the others too, I don’t want to see them I don’t want them

SALTER I thought you did.

B2 I thought I did, I might, if I go away by myself I might feel all right, I might feel – you can understand that.

SALTER Yes, yes I can.
Because there’s this person who’s identical to me

he’s not

who’s not identical, who’s like

not even very

not very like but very something terrible which is exactly the same genetic person

not the same person

and I don’t like it.

I know. I’m sorry.

I know you’re sorry I’m not

I know

I’m not trying to make you say sorry

I know, I just am

I know

I just am sorry.

He said some things.

Yes.

There’s a lot of things I don’t, could you tell me what happened to my mother?

She’s dead.

Yes.

I told you she was dead.
Yes but she didn’t die when I was born and she didn’t die with the first child in a car crash because the first child’s not dead he’s walking round the streets at night giving me nightmares. Unless she did die in a car crash?

No. No.

Your mother, the thing a thing about your mother was that she wasn’t very happy, she wasn’t a very happy person at all, I don’t mean there were sometimes days she wasn’t happy or I did things that made her not happy I did of course, she was always not happy, often cheerful and

she killed herself. How did she do that?

She did it under a train under a tube train, she was one of those people when they say there has been a person under a train and the trains are delayed she was a person under a train.

Were you with her?

With her on the platform no, I was still with her more or less but not with her then no I was having a drink I think.

And the boy?

Do you know I don’t remember where the boy was. I think he was at a friend’s house, we had friends.

And he was how old four?

no no he was four later when I he was walking, about two just starting to talk

he was four when you sent him
SALTER that’s right when his mother died he was two.

B2 So this was let me be clear this was before this was some years before I was born she died before

SALTER yes

B2 so she was already always

SALTER yes she was

B2 just so I’m clear. And then you and the boy you and your son

SALTER we went on we just

B2 lived alone together

SALTER yes

B2 you were bringing him up

SALTER yes

B2 the best you could

SALTER I

B2 until

SALTER and my best wasn’t very but I had my moments, don’t think, I did cook meals now and then and read a story I’m sure I can remember a particularly boring and badly written little book about an elephant at sea. But I could have managed better.

B2 Yes he said something about it

SALTER he said
yes of course he did yes. I know I could have managed better because I did with you because I stopped, shut myself away, give it all up came off it all while I waited for you and I think we may even have had that same book, maybe it’s you I remember reading it to, do you remember it at all? it had an elephant in red trousers.

No I don’t think

no it was terrible, we had far better books we had

Maybe he shouldn’t blame you, maybe it was a genetic, could you help drinking we don’t know or drugs at the time philosophically as I understand it it wasn’t viewed at not like now when our understanding’s different and would a different person genetically different person not have been so been so vulnerable because there could always be some genetic addictive and then again someone with the same genetic exactly the same but at a different time a different cultural and of course all the personal all kinds of what happened in your own life your childhood or things all kind of because suppose you’d had a brother with identical an identical twin say but separated at birth so you had entirely different early you see what I’m saying would he have done the same things who can say he might have been a very loving father and in fact of course you have that in you to be that because you were to me so it’s a combination of very complicated and that’s who you were so probably I shouldn’t blame you.

I’d rather you blamed me. I blame myself.

I’m not saying you weren’t horrible.

Couldn’t I not have been?

Apparently not.
SALTER  If I’d tried harder.

B2  But someone like you couldn’t have tried harder. What does it mean? If you’d tried harder you’d have been different from what you were like and you weren’t you were

SALTER  but then later I

B2  later yes

SALTER  I did try that’s what I did I started again I

B2  that’s what

SALTER  I was good I tried to be good I was good to you

B2  that’s what you were like

SALTER  I was good

B2  but I can’t you can’t I can’t give you credit for that if I don’t give you blame for the other it’s what you did it’s what happened

SALTER  but it felt

B2  it felt

SALTER  it felt as if I tired I deliberately

B2  of course it felt

SALTER  well then

B2  it fells it always it feels doesn’t it inside that’s just how we feel what we are and we don’t know all these complicated we can’t know what we’re it’s too complicated to disentangle all the cause and we feel this is me I freely and of course it’s true who you are does freely not
forced by someone else but who you are who you are itself forces or you’d be someone else wouldn’t you?

SALTER I did some bad things. I deserve to suffer. I did some better things. I’d like recognition.

B2 That’s how everyone feels, certainly.

SALTER He still blames me.

B2 There’s a difference then.

SALTER You remind me of him.

B2 I remind myself of him. We both hate you.

SALTER I thought you

B2 I don’t blame you it’s not your fault but what you’ve been like what you’re like I can’t help it.

SALTER Yes of course.

B2 Except what he feels as hate and what I feel as hate are completely different because what you did to him and what you did to me are different things.

SALTER I was nice to you.

B2 Yes you were.

SALTER You don’t have to go away. Not for long.

B2 It might make me feel better.

SALTER I love you.
B2  That’s something else you can’t help.

SALTER  That’s all right. That’s all right.

B2  Also I’m afraid he’ll kill me.
Appendix 10
Scene Extract 2 from A Number (p.60-62, 2002/2004): Salter & Michael Black
Talking about other Clones

(From session 5.)

SALTER So tell me what did you feel when you found out?

MICHAEL Fascinated.

SALTER Not angry?

MICHAEL No.

SALTER Not frightened

MICHAEL No, what of?

SALTER Your life, losing your life.

MICHAEL I’ve still got my life.

SALTER But there are things there are things that are what you are, I think you’re avoiding

MICHAEL yes perhaps

SALTER because then you might be frightened

MICHAEL I don’t think

SALTER or angry

MICHAEL not really

SALTER because what does it do what does it to you to everything if there are all these walking around, what it does to me what am I and it’s not even me it happened to, so how you can just, you must think
something about it.

MICHAEL: I think it’s funny, I think it’s delightful

SALTER: delightful?

MICHAEL: all these very similar people doing things like each other or a bit different or whatever we’re doing, what a thrill for the mad old professor if he’d lived to see it, I do see the joy of it. I know you’re not at all happy.

SALTER: I didn’t feel I’d lost him when I sent him away because I had the second chance. And when the second one my son the second son was murdered it wasn’t so bad as you’d think because it seemed fair. I was back with the first one.

MICHAEL: But now

SALTER: now he’s killed himself

MICHAEL: now you feel

SALTER: now I’ve lost him, I’ve lost

MICHAEL: yes

SALTER: now I can’t put it right any more. Because the second time round you see I slept very lightly with the door open.

MICHAEL: Is that the worst you did, not go in the night?

SALTER: No of course not.

MICHAEL: Like what?

SALTER: Things that are what I did that are no trivial like banana icecream nor unifuckingversal like turning over in bed.

MICHAEL: We’ve got ninety-nine per cent the same genes as any other person.
We’ve got ninety per cent the same as a chimpanzee. We’ve got thirty percent the same as a lettuce. Does that cheer you up at all? I love about the lettuce. It makes me feel I belong.

SALTER  I miss him so much. I miss them both.

MICHAEL  There’s nineteen more of us.

SALTER  That’s not the same.

MICHAEL  No of course not. I was making a joke.

SALTER  And you’re happy you say are you? you like your life?

MICHAEL  I do yes, sorry
Appendix 11
Workshop Plan of the First Outreach Theatre Workshop by the Focus Group

Target community: Secondary 4 Students (30 students)
Duration: 70 minutes

1. Greeting: Introduction to the facilitators and the purposes of this workshop
2. Introduction to Top Girls
3. Introduction to Marlene and Mrs. Kidd’s scene (Scene Extract 1)
4. Warm-up activity: Presenting on the expression of emotions in drama
5. Demonstration of Marlene and Mrs. Kidd’s scene by the facilitators
6. Discussion on the scene: Interaction with students by asking guided questions on the subtexts
7. Introduction to Nell and Shona’s scene (Scene Extract 2)
8. Warm-up activity: Students act in pairs. Each student talks about three achievements about himself with confidence, the partner will guess which one is a lie.
9. Demonstration of Nell and Shona’s scene by the facilitators
10. Discussion on the scene: Interaction with students by asking guided questions on the subtexts and dramatic features
11. Class activity: Students have to pair up to act in a simulated scene of an interview
12. Students’ performance of the scene
13. Wrap up/ Conclusion
Appendix 12
Workshop Plan of the Second Outreach Theatre Workshop by the Focus Group

Target community: Secondary 4 & 5 Students (25 students)
Duration: 90 minutes

1. Greeting: Introduction to the facilitators and the purposes of this workshop + distribution of the handout
2. Introduction to Top Girls
3. Introduction to Marlene and Mrs. Kidd’s scene (Scene Extract 1)
4. Warm-up activity: Understanding the expression of emotions in drama with a funny YouTube clip + ‘Change of emotions’ activity (Students are invited to join a contest in expressing different emotions without speaking)
5. Demonstration of Marlene and Mrs. Kidd’s scene by the facilitators
6. Discussion on the scene: Group discussion and debate on feminist subtexts
7. Class activity: Students will pair up to act out the scene with their own interpretation
8. Students’ performance of the scene + explaining their own interpretation
9. Introduction to Nell and Shona’s scene (Scene Extract 2)
10. Warm-up activity: ‘Mock interview’ demonstration (Students will pair up and have a role-play in a simulated scene of interviewing for an extra-curricular post in the school + 2-3 pairs of students will be invited to give a demonstration)
11. Demonstration of Nell and Shona’s scene by the facilitators
12. Discussion on the scene: Group discussion and debate on job hunting challenges

13. Class activity: Students will pair up to act out the scene with their own interpretation

14. Students’ performance of the scene + explaining their own interpretation of the scene + debriefing led by the facilitators

15. Wrap up/ Conclusion
Appendix 13
Adapted Scene Extracts from *Top Girls* & Workshop Handout by the Focus Group

*Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill (1982)

*Top Girls* is a play written by the British playwright Caryl Churchill in 1982. It is the story of the female protagonist Marlene, a newly promoted boss of ‘Top Girls’ Employment Agency.

The short scenes we are going to play are set in the main office of Marlene. In the first scene, Marlene the ‘top girl’ has just defeated her colleague Howard and got promoted to the directing manager of the company. Howard’s wife, Mrs. Kidd, comes in to the office to persuade Marlene to give up her position, as Howard cannot accept working for a woman and puts his anger on his wife. Their argument shows very different attitudes towards career aspirations, marriage and the social/family roles of women.

The second extract features Nell (Marlene’s colleague, another top business young woman) interviewing a girl Shona who is looking for a new job. The interview shows the difficulty of getting an ‘ideal’ job.

1) Marlene & Mrs. Kidd’s Argument Scene for Role-playing

_Mrs. Kidd:_ Howard’s not in today.

_Marlene:_ Isn’t he?

_Mrs. Kidd:_ He’s feeling poorly.

_Marlene:_ I didn’t know. I’m sorry to hear that

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_Mrs. Kidd:_ It’s not that easy, a man of Howard’s age. I thought he was going too far but he’s right. You’re one of these ballbreakers/ You’ll end up miserable and lonely. You’re not natural.

_Marlene:_ I’m sorry but I do have some work to do. Could you please get off?
2) Nell and Shona's Interview Scene for Role-playing

Nell: So just describe your present job for me.

Shona: I'm selling electric things. After sales service, we offer a very good after sales service. And I stay in hotels when I'm away from home. I check in, have a bath, have a shower. Then I go down to the bar, have a gin and tonic, have a chat. Then I go into the dining room and have dinner.

Nell: Christ what a waste of time. Not a word of this is true is it?

Shona: Not exactly.

Nell: How old are you?

Shona: Twenty-nine.

Nell: Nineteen?

Shona: Twenty-one.

Nell: And what jobs have you done? Have you done any?

Shona: I could though, I bet you.
Appendix 14

Workshop Outline: Activities in the Second Outreach Workshop
(See Appendix 12 for the complete Workshop Plan.)

Facilitators: the undergraduate Drama course students (the focus group)
Participants: Secondary 4 & 5 students (25 students)

Warm-up activity 1:
- Facilitators talk about how to express emotions in drama with a video clip as a demonstration.
- Participants are invited to show how they would express different emotions through non-verbal language (e.g. body gestures, facial expressions) in a ‘change of emotions’ contest. They need to demonstrate an immediate change of emotions according to facilitators’ instructions.
- This activity aims to encourage students’ exploration of expressing a particular emotion or message without speaking, so to reflect on non-verbal dramatic elements in the scenes.

Scene Extract 1 – Discussion & Role-play:
- After facilitators’ demonstration of Scene Extract 1, participants are divided into two groups to discuss the feminist subtexts shown in the scene. One group discusses Marlene’s attitude towards gender and social roles of women in workplace and at home, while the other group discusses Mrs. Kidd’s attitude towards the issue. Facilitators join the groups and encourage participants to suggest reasons for supporting the characters’ social perception. Representatives from each group report and present the groups’ idea and insight on the sociopolitical topics.
- Participants pair up to act out the scene (role-play) with their own interpretation of the characters’ emotions after reflecting on the struggles of the characters in the scene.
- Participants are invited to perform the scene to others and explain their interpretation on the subtexts and their way of expression through acting.
- This activity aims to stimulate in-depth reflections on the subtext of the scene and to experience the challenge faced by the characters through action. It also encourages
students to associate the scene with their real life scenario or personal insight through the ‘rehearsal’ of conflicts in the role-play.

Warm-up activity 2:
- Participants pair up and have a role-play in a simulated scene of an interview, in which they are applying for an extra-curricular post in school. They take turn to ‘show-off’ their competence for the position in the ‘3 minute-mock interview’ and they are not required to present based on facts. Pairs are invited to demonstrate their interview to others and let the audience suggest whether a ‘candidate’ is telling the truth through observation.
- This activity aims to explore how a person may perform when hankering for an offer, and to experience the psychological conditions when not telling the truth, or not able to do so.

Scene Extract 2 – Discussion & Role-play:
- After facilitators’ demonstration of Scene Extract 2, participants are divided into two groups to debate on whether Shona should tell lies in the job interview scene. Each group discusses the challenge faced by Shona as an inexperienced girl in the job market and Nell’s expectation on a job seeker. Facilitators join the groups and encourage participants to reflect on characters’ social perceptions. The groups brainstorm reasons supporting or against attempted cheating in the job interview. Representatives from each group present and debate on the groups’ insight on this sociopolitical topic.
- Participants pair up to act out the scene (role-play) with their own interpretation of the characters’ attitudes and thoughts after the collaborative discussion on the conflict shown in the scene.
- Participants are invited to perform the scene to others and explain their interpretation on the subtexts and their way of expression through acting.
- This activity aims to stimulate in-depth reflections on the subtext of the scene and to experience the struggles faced by the characters through action. It also encourages students to associate the scene with their real life scenario or personal insight through the ‘rehearsal’ of conflicts in the role-play.
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