Characterising Actor Trainers' Understanding of their Practice in Australian and English Drama Schools

A PhD case study of the perceptions of thirteen tutors and principals within their institutional contexts

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2004
ABSTRACT

Institutionalised actor training, which is essentially a twentieth century phenomenon, often remains a mysterious facet of the theatre industry due largely to the unarticulated understandings of pedagogical practices of acting tutors. This thesis examines acting tutors' instructional approaches to actor training in leading drama schools in Australia and England. Using qualitative case study, the report found that tutor responses could be grouped in terms of tutors' views of themselves, drama schools and the training process. The goals that the tutors had for actor training could be divided into four inter-related categories: intellectual, personal, social and practical, with a strong emphasis on personal and social meanings.

In Phenix's (1964) terms, the informants' meanings were synnoetic – direct, personal, and experiential; and the informants were using metaphor and narrative to try to communicate these meanings. In the terms of Broudy (1977) they were using different contextual frameworks of 'knowledge(s)-with' and these meanings were often expressed as polarisations or divides in meaning: for example teaching versus inspiring; conservatoire versus university; artist versus academic; systematic versus eclectic; trust versus scepticism; and experiential versus intellectual.

The data suggest that the meanings that the tutors had constructed on acting and on the teaching of acting were difficult to communicate in conventional ways. These difficult-to-convey and sometimes polarised meanings are developing in the drama school community of practice, over time, as a result of the different experiential histories of people who work within these schools. Most of the informants in the study had come from careers in acting, had worked in the theatre industry more broadly and also themselves had initial drama school training. It is possible that their differences in constructing meaning may be due to differences in their historically derived frameworks or contexts against which they construct meaning – different 'knowledge(s)-with'. However, much of what these tutors articulate is underpinned by core understandings of acting and actor training. As a result, there had developed a shared 'craft-based way of knowing' what acting is and how actor training should proceed. That is, the acting tutors had brought their own synnoetic meanings to the
drama school context, and this had developed over time into the shared mixture of seemingly quasi-pedagogical and anti-pedagogical tutor objectives.

The expression of informants' meanings echoes Bruner's (1986) differentiation between 'paradigmatic or logico-scientific' modes of knowing from a 'narrative' mode. Paradigmatic modes of knowing are used for good theory and logical proof whereas the application of the narrative mode involves good stories and historical [although not necessarily "true"] human accounts. The study acknowledges the different ways in which individuals apprehend experience, access the meanings that they construct on experience, and how they seek to render and communicate those meanings to others. Actor training, like acting itself, contains meanings which have consolidated over time into automated ways of knowing and are difficult to convey in conventional ways. Although it appears that much of their discussions of practice remained largely tacit, tutors demonstrated both tacit and explicit forms of knowledge, which were derived from various kinds of experiences.

A perceived separation between the ‘academic’ ['theoretical' or the 'intellectual'] and the 'practical' appeared to be largely derived from experientially acquired knowledge. In actor training, approaches to pedagogy are hard to capture by virtue of particular meanings being constructed vicariously through the process of moving from novice to expert. This is unlike traditions of generalist teaching which have sought to communicate a more explicit understanding of pedagogy and thus giving rise, perhaps, to why it is often claimed that acting cannot be taught.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank those splendid practitioners in Australia and England who supported this report by allowing me to interview them.

I owe a particular debt of gratitude to my supervisors for their personal care and ability to open my mind to many possibilities. Their guidance was both invaluable and inspirational.

**Principal Supervisor:** Professor John O'Toole  
**Associate Supervisor:** Professor John Stevenson

**Professional and personal inspiration:**
- Dorothy Heathcote whose work has changed so many lives, including my own, and who I was privileged to eventually meet in 2003 – *symbiosis*!
- Gavin Bolton who is a true gentleman of drama with an exemplary mind.
- Cecily O'Neill who in my practice provides me with a model of effective teaching and learning [and a way to enjoy it!].
- Jonothan Neelands who provides me with a model of successful practice, human warmth and generosity.
- Philip Taylor who first opened my eyes to another way of teaching and researching, and whose mentoring is responsible for this epic academic journey.
- Joanne O'Mara with whom I have shared a parallel research journey and who has been a loyal friend since 1983.
- The drama community too numerous to identify individually, and for that I sincerely apologise.

Much of this work is the result of the people who I have been most fortunate to know. Their encouragement and support kept me going throughout. Some of those special friends include: Adam, Bernie, Brendan, Clive, Frank, June, Kath, Leo, Lizzie, Marcus, Murray, Neil, Peter and Simon. I also include my RHD colleague Rea for her academic companionship. Last, yet most significantly, a very special 'thank you' must be given to my life mentor Gerald Taylor who has provided me with the voice of reason. His generous support, guidance and friendship will never be surpassed.

**Dedication:** To my Late Mother, Elizabeth who sadly passed away at this time.
DECLARATION

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where the due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Ross W. Prior
Date:
As so much of the actor's craft is learned unconsciously, it should not be too surprising to discover that not every one is able to pinpoint or even explain what it is they do 'intuitively'.

Hayes Gordon, 1992
Pulcra sunt quœ visa placent

- The beautiful things, when seen, please.
**A NOTE REGARDING INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS**

The full interview transcripts are available for scrutiny.

Direct quotes from these in the text are coded according to the line reference codes and page numbers used in the transcript document.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

HAMLET:
Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and I beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows, and noise. – William Shakespeare
(Hamlet, Act III, Sc. ii, lines 1-13)
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Prologue

Training! Training! Training! But if it's the kind of training which exercises only the body and not the mind, then No, thank you! I have no use for actors who know how to move but cannot think.¹

A great deal of personal observation has led me to ponder the 'teachability' of acting. For many of us², actor training remains a unique and mysterious phenomenon of the theatre industry. Distinctive training techniques resemble at times a collection of 'magic spells' that are learned and passed on. The sorcerer in the guise of the acting tutor weaves incantations in the name of Stanislavsky (1980 [1936]), Meyerhold (1921-2), Chekhov (1953) and Brecht (1992 [1964]). Maybe the answers lie with Grotowski (1975 [1969]), Chaikin (1972), Brook (1990 [1968]), Meisner, et al (1987), Strasberg (1987), or Adler (1988)? The methods and anti-methods, techniques and exercises are all part of the tutor's seemingly mysterious repertoire devoted to the creation of the 'prepared actor'. Institutionalised actor training, which is essentially a twentieth century phenomenon, informs not only the concept and construction of role but also the entire dramatic process (Hodge, 2000). Since its humble beginnings in the early nineteenth century³, however, western actor training has grown without a clearly articulated philosophy of pedagogical practice due essentially to the kinds of tutors employed who do not come from a teaching background.

Choosing the best course content and the most appropriate methods of delivery in theatre training are complex and often onerous undertakings for acting tutors. As Martin (1991) simply puts it: 'It is not difficult to appreciate that training an actor for such a diversified theatre, where the number of approaches has been so varied, is no

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² Based on my own experience working in the field of education, actor training and other manifestations of drama.  
³ Whilst privately run small-scale schools existed in the early 1800s it was not until the beginning of the 1900s that larger schools and academies were established. See pages 14-19.
mean task' (p.154). The acting tutor must also prepare students for an ever-changing and diverse acting profession.

Sifting and sorting through the refinement of skills required to produce a polished actor is difficult, especially when the intangible "it" factor is the measure. An actor is said to either have "it" or not have "it". Can a tutor ever really do very much in the cultivation of an actor anyway? When drama schools cull their auditionees from over 2,000 hopefuls down to 23 who eventually make the entry grade\(^4\), it may be argued that what the process leaves are 23 extraordinary young men and women who already have that special "it". The tutor's role might then be seen to refine and polish an actor's performance skills. But is the teaching of skills the mechanistic answer to creating great actors? Gross (1978) believes 'our job is not to teach acting so much as it is to help students become the kind of people who can act' (p.2). The opening quote by Vsevolod Meyerhold (1921-2) suggests that he sought to train the brains and bodies of actors (Leach, 2000), which suggests a philosophical fusion of both training and education, a notion that this thesis makes some attempt to deconstruct. Michel Saint-Denis (1982) revolutionised the training of actors (Martin, 1991) by taking a holistic approach to body and voice. However there are numerous proponents (Silverberg, 1999; \textit{et al}) who suggest there is more than one path to an ultimate truth.

How do actor trainers characterise their practice? From the multiplicity of choices that surround the tutor's craft, there is a deeper concern that relates to effectiveness. Larry Silverberg (1999) suggests that 'student actors cannot succeed unless you do' (p.14). How are notions of effectiveness addressed by the drama schools or the tutors themselves? Do great actors or directors make great tutors? 'What one needs to know to act and what one needs to know to teach acting are two very different things' (Gross, 1978:2). So, what is that special "it" that tutors themselves require to perform their job effectively, however ephemeral or intangible their job may be? Is the ability to teach well also a product of "talent". In part this thesis explores what the informants identify as tutor's "it"-qualities. The thesis also explores what constitutes acting tutor knowledge by how they make meaning of their practice.

\(^4\) Based on figures provided in the National Institute for Dramatic Art (NIDA) Annual Report 2002.
1.2 Purpose of the Research

This report aims to go beyond the closed studio doors and seemingly 'secret business' of actor training institutions and attempts to investigate the ways acting tutors talk about their practice. This is not easy given the implicit nature of actor training pedagogy. The *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* (1975) suggests that:

[…] a drama school is not basically about facts and figures; it is about something much more intangible and in many ways much more important – approaches to drama and techniques of passing on acting skills. (p.46)

In researching for this report I soon discovered that rarely are the voices of current drama school practitioners heard by anyone other than their own students. It is the aim of this study to document, examine those voices, determine the ways tutors discuss their practice and produce an understanding of those models of current teaching in various Australian and English drama schools. No absolute claims about all actor training can be made from this study, as the often-elusive phenomena of reflection examined in teaching practice must be, by its nature, incomplete (O'Mara, 1999:7). The study relies upon what the interviewed tutors say they understand about their practice. The tutors are challenged to articulate what it is that they do and as this study explores articulated knowledge there is special interest in how the tutors create meaning and their ability to pass this on.

Through the use of case study, the research examines the interview responses given by tutors, heads of acting and principals/directors of 'elite' actor-training institutions. From these interviews emerge underlying beliefs and perceptions of the individual tutors' practice. These case studies assist to inform our understanding of the issues that surround vocational actor training both in Australia and England. The choice of two countries may enrich the study's contribution to the field and provide an exchange of valuable data.

This study also raises the question of how much tutors may be influenced in their practice by their environment. The study attempts to illuminate what the tutors say about their practice in relation to the context in which they practice. Are there significant differences or are all institutions generating isomorphic conditions for the tutors? *Isomorphism*, the process leading to homogeneity among organisations that
experience the same set of environmental conditions (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991), has the potential to create similar conditions whether they are in Australia or England or from one drama school to another.

In his advice to potential students of drama school, Nigel Rideout (1995) suggests to 'read carefully the philosophy of the training' (p.16) and of course research each school carefully. Rideout's advice is based on the knowledge that drama schools vary in their approach and one needs to investigate the stated rhetoric. The purpose of this research is to understand and penetrate the rhetoric of the drama schools by talking directly with the tutors in an attempt to understand actor training from their perspective.

1.3 The Research Question

The key problem addressed in this research report is:

How do tutors in Australia and England characterise their teaching practice in actor training institutions?

Areas of Investigation

1. What themes emerge from what tutors say about acting and actor training?
2. What kinds of meaning do acting tutors seek to communicate and why?
3. How do acting tutors seek to convey these meanings?

Essentially this research report will demonstrate that acting tutors develop difficult-to-communicate meanings and ways of knowing based on practical experience. These understandings have led acting tutors to developing non-pedagogical understandings of actor training. I conclude that in order for acting tutors to make training practices more accessible and transferable, there needs to be found ways of making these understandings more precise and communicable to others.
1.4 Origin of the Research Question

The beginnings of this work are essentially rooted in my own personal experiences. As a teacher of Drama for many years in schools and universities, accompanied by professional experience in the industry as a theatre director and theatrical agent, I have become increasingly interested in the apparent tension that exists between the two fields of Drama/Theatre education and the Theatre Industry itself. Historically there has been a quiet rivalry which tends to dismiss the 'other' as less valid or less applicable to its own aims. Elements of this tension will be revealed later in the research. This tension is typified in the dubious, but often cited, axiom: *Those who can, do – those who can't, teach*. Actor training institutions appear to value tutors with industry experience, but how do tutors successfully make that transition from professional actor or director to competent tutor?

I came to this enquiry as a result of my Australian experience as the Melbourne Open Program facilitator for the National Institute for Dramatic Art [NIDA] for five years. I became acutely aware of the many differing skills and techniques that constitute a methodology that teachers in schools, and also to some extent universities, routinely possess compared with their counterparts in acting schools who have come directly from the industry. Through observation and practice it became clear to me that teachers possess a body of teaching knowledge which appears to be learned and refined by those who are teachers and who have an active interest in pedagogy. However technical skill and procedural knowledge appear to surround the acting tutor who, as it happens, is usually derived directly from the industry rather than a teaching background. I began to seek answers to questions such as: *Do tutors learn teaching methodology purely through 'hit and miss' or can tutors undertake formal education and professional development?*

As the research commenced, the data began to reveal that there might be two disparate [or somewhat contradictory] models being reflected in the informants' responses: training and education. These models will be identified in Chapter 2 and their origins later examined in the report.
1.5 Epistemology of Inquiry and Methodology

As a researcher I am aware that at every stage one must declare the relationship between the inquirer and what is known. The interpretative investigator 'understands that research is an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and by those of the people in the setting' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:6). Educational models of teaching and learning have to a large extent influenced my own professional background. This background has essentially been the catalyst in alerting me to issues surrounding process/product, training/education, and practice/theory debates, and pedagogy in general.

I approach this study of actor training with a bifocal perspective as a practitioner and educator. Over many years I have gained numerous insights into the acting industry, teaching and vocational training. A post-modern perspective would acknowledge that research cannot be totally free of the researcher 'colouring' or influencing the outcomes of the study to some extent. Schwandt (2000) argues that reaching understanding is not a matter of simply setting aside one's prior prejudgements but to examine them. After all, 'understanding is interpretation' (Schwandt, 2000:194). Therefore this study has been designed to allow for themes to emerge naturally from the data, which essentially sets the agenda for the research. My lenses, as it were, offer me alertness to teaching paradigms, which in turn has led to the initial formation of the research questions.

How to 'know the world' is made manifest through the choice of research methodology. In choosing a methodology for this study, consideration was given to its appropriateness to the research problem. In giving preference to the tradition of qualitative methodology for this study, consideration was given to the nature of the understanding I wished to gain from the research. The main merit of this was that qualitative research acknowledges the 'situated activity that locates the observer in the world' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:3). Case study was chosen as a means of studying the perceptions of the acting tutors within the contexts of their drama schools. In other words, this is an attempt to make sense of the meanings people bring to their situations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).
The data used in this study was obtained predominantly through the use of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews provide a balance between structured and unstructured interviewing techniques. The structured questions aim at 'capturing precise data of a codable nature in order to explain behaviour within pre-established categories' (Fontana & Frey, 2000:653). Whereas the unstructured questions attempt to 'understand the complex behaviour of members of society without imposing any \textit{a priori} categorisation that may limit the field of inquiry' (Fontana & Frey, 2000:653). The choice of survey instrument and justification is further detailed in Chapter 3.

Although qualitative research reports do not easily lend themselves to synthesis, this report makes an attempt to synthesise the data into meaningful findings. Research synthesis plays an important role in dissemination of knowledge and in shaping further research and practice (Suri, 1999). However some attempt to synthesise the data in this report is essential to enhance the practical value of the qualitative research and formulate implications of future policy making within the area of actor training. Current discussions of tutor qualifications both in Australia and England, especially in the area of vocational training, make this a timely study into an area often shrouded in artistic mystification.

1.6 Importance of the Research

The importance of this research is found in the contribution the work makes to an aspect of the field that has been under explored. Searches have yielded little evident research surrounding the notion of how tutors learn to teach or develop their practice within drama schools. Numerous texts have been written about acting methods and some have even addressed 'great acting teachers' (Brestoff, 1995). To date, the pedagogical murky waters of actor training remain relatively uncharted. This study will in part clarify the identity of acting tutors and examine their perceptions of what it is that they do. If appropriate, this study may lead actor training institutions to better develop existing models for teaching and assist with on-going professional development for their staff. A wider application of this study may assist in a more comprehensive understanding of practice at post-compulsory level Theatre teaching,
not just in elite drama schools. Further, this report may promote more informed practice within the field.

In claiming vocational aims and objectives, drama schools must continue to prepare those wishing to enter the industry for the future needs of that industry. Tutors need to ensure that they are indeed meeting the requirements of the profession and have the ability to understand their function as tutors. From a survey of drama school prospectuses it appears that many schools are still favouring theatre rather than the application of film and television within their courses. Many courses appear not to give consideration to new media possibilities.

Martin (1991) who adds weight to the necessity to conduct research such as this, supports a forward-looking view by writing that actor training needs to take into account its changing nature:

There is no doubt that the acting ideal has also undergone enormous changes during the twentieth century as the theatre has advanced so rapidly, and the risk is that one is training an actor for a theatre which has become, or is on the way to becoming, obsolete. Another important consideration is that the world has become somewhat more homogenous [...] and influences are felt more rapidly than ever before from one country to another, particularly in the theatre. Therefore, it is important to compare English actor training with that of other countries [...]. (p.179)

The importance of this research rests in its ability to provide a largely unheard dialogue about how acting tutors characterise their practice in Australia and England. As our actors continue to play in each other's countries and appear in each other's films, our international dialogue is becoming increasingly important. So, too, is it an important direction for the future that an international dialogue between tutors is heard and understood. No longer is it logical to assume that London 'does it best' and that past practices will serve the industry's future and globally changing needs. Similarly there is a need to examine practices in the USA. However this research focuses on two countries with strong historical and structural links in their actor training.5

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5 Many Australian drama schools were modelled on the British system of actor training. Noteworthy is the fact that a significant percentage of the Australian drama tutors/principals in this study have trained in the UK.
1.7 Outline of the report

Chapter 1 provides an overall introduction to the study, the origins of drama school and introduces the research question. Chapter 2 brings together a range of theorists in an interdisciplinary approach to a review of the related literature. Chapter 3 highlights the key methodologies of qualitative enquiry that have guided the research project and explains the data collection process. Chapter 4 details the selected drama schools from Australia and England and profiles the six key informants. Chapter 5 scrutinises the data further by building upon an understanding of the drama school contexts, further analysing the informants, locating them within their practices and analysing the training processes. The analysis is organised according to the study's questions or areas of investigation. This results in initially identifying and then analysing nine themes emerging from the data. Chapter 6 addresses the second and third research questions or areas of investigation by a further distillation of the data in terms of meanings generated by the informants' responses. Chapter 7 addresses the study's broader conclusions and implications based upon the analysis contained in the report. Chapter 7 seeks to summarise the conclusions reached for each research question and present these within the context of the data and prior research examined in the review of related literature found in Chapter 2.

1.8 Definitions

Some definitions are not uniformly adopted in the literature on actor training. Where possible I have clarified my use of terms when they arise in the report. However, to avoid confusion from the outset, three key terms are clarified below:

*acting tutor (n.)* – The use of this term is to be read as synonymous with 'acting trainer', 'acting teacher' or 'acting lecturer'.

*drama school* – An institution whose primary focus is to vocationally train and prepare actors for the industry.

*'elite' drama school* – A high-profile drama school that enjoys a reputation of offering the 'best' available actor training. This is defined by the frequency of their mention in the literature and that they deliver fully accredited programmes. They are frequently
characterised by graduate actors who become famous in the industry.

1.9 Delimitations of Scope and key assumptions

This research is limited to investigating a sample of 'elite' or influential schools [as defined in 1.8] in Australia and England. The research contributes to an understanding of vocational actor training, knowledge construction and teaching practice. This work follows initial concerns raised by The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report (1975); other related issues of actor training (Brestoff, 1995; Cohen, 1998; Hodge, 2000; Martin, 1991; Rideout, 1995; et al) and notions of educational practice as explored by Hoepper (1996), Levine (1999), Morgan & Saxton (1994), O'Mara (1999), O'Toole (1992), Prior (1997), Saxton & Miller (1998), Schön (1983), Taylor (2000); and others.

The geographic limits of the investigation pertain to Australia and England. England provides the older tradition of actor training models and Australian actor training shares a similar heritage to England in that Australian drama schools have established along similar models, unlike much of the studio systems of the USA. The investigation examines current practice based on interviews conducted between 2001 and 2003. The choices of drama schools are detailed in Chapter 3; however the schools included are ultimately based on those schools willing to participate. There are differences between drama schools which necessitated a sample to be chosen which represented both orthodox and alternative (Martin, 1991) approaches to training. Orthodox approaches represent schools that have particularly evolved their eclectic practices originally in Voice and Music schools. Alternative approaches are frequently characterised by systematic acting approaches that have specific and clearly articulated approaches to training. This report makes no claims for significance beyond these delimitations.

This study is also connected with those who have explored the nature of vocational training (Engeström, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1991; and Stevenson, 2003; et al) and education theorists such as Dewey, (1968 [1916]), Bruner (1986), Parsloe (1993), O'Toole (2000), and Taylor (2000). Ways of organising knowledge and teacher knowledge (Elbaz, 1983; Phenix, 1964; et al) are used as a framework for understanding how teachers make meaning through their teaching practice.
The research is driven by the need to understand how acting tutors know about and characterise their practice. Underpinning professional practice and a commitment to improve practice are those principles that are currently favoured by proponents of *reflective practice* (Schön, 1983) which suggests that teachers and other professionals can generate an improved understanding of their work through their own descriptions of it.

This research reveals that actor training as a field of research has tended to concentrate on acting methods and techniques rather than writing on the effectiveness of the delivery of learning. From an educator's point of view, this is surprising; however it needs to be recognised that tutors, for the most part, are drawn from the practical side of the industry and in many cases may have little interest in research, especially *teacher research*. In part, this study may assist in more completely understanding actor training processes and unravel the 'mystique' of the tutor's role. This study aims to authentically capture the voice of a number of tutors and begin to lay bare to scrutiny their understandings. Like O'Mara (1999) and Heathcote (1972) before her, the value of investigating practice is in 'opening up one's practice to other practitioners' (O'Mara, 1999:14) in order to learn and develop professionally.

The study fits into the wider field of drama that encompasses *drama in education* and *theatre studies*. It follows existing qualitative research such as case study research into tertiary drama education by Hoepper (1996) where individual lecturers were interviewed and their answers collated. Arguably drama education is not so concerned with *acting skills* as much as the depth and quality of the learning experience. It has produced a sound body of extensive teacher research (O'Neill, 1995; O'Mara, 1999, Gallagher, 2001; Taylor, 2000; et al) which has a wider application to actor training and learning. Other writers have had a particular interest in an aspect of actor training such as Voice (Berry, 1974; Martin, 1991; Linklater, 1976) or Movement (Meyerhold, 1921-2; Laban, 1980). There are some who have written with a particular focus on actor training practices such as Zarrilli (1995, 2001), Cohen (1998), Rideout (1995); and others.
1.10 Background to the Research

1.10.1 Genesis of Actor Training

Actor training is firmly rooted in historical practices themed by a tradition of apprenticeship and learning by doing. Acting, particularly in the Western world, has been seen by some as a rather dubious undertaking and at times a challenge to the fabric of society itself. 'Plato regarded actors as hypocrites, players of illusion and falsifiers of truth' (Harrop, 1992:109). This began what appears as a fascinating paradox where actors were responsible for revealing truths, yet they were themselves pretending.

Although institutionalised actor training is largely a twentieth century phenomenon (Harrop, 1992) its roots are as old as acting itself – dating from the beginning of the fifth century B.C. (Nicoll, 1976). It is likely that the Choruses of Greek drama were trained, particularly in the area of voice control. In the sixth century Thespis is credited in the canon of literature as having introduced the first actor as distinct from the choral leader. Since Pisistratus established the first dramatic festival (Nicoll, 1976) the competitive nature of these events provided the necessary impetus for actors to develop their craft.

Medieval drama in France, Italy and England offered no such competition as was formerly evidenced in ancient Greece. One sixteenth century record offers this critique of the actors who performed in Mystery plays:

[Actors are] an ignorant set of men, mechanics and artisans, who know not an A from a B, untrained and unskilled in playing such pieces before the public. Their voices are poor, their language unfitting, their pronunciation wretched. No sense do they have of the meaning of what they say. (Cited in Nicoll, 1976:112)

Whilst many participants in these dramas took their work seriously, they were largely amateurs. Professional entertainers such as minstrels and jongleurs [an early version of mime artists] were increasingly used to support the plays (Nicoll).
By the sixteenth century, professional and amateur players proliferated in English and European towns; however the Court plays were becoming increasingly more professional. Queen Elizabeth I and her Court came to depend more upon the skilled services of professional players than upon amateur actors. 'Companies of boys [the Children of Paul's, the Children of the Chapel and the Queen's Revels, and the Children of Windsor] became, in Elizabeth's reign, virtually professionals' (Nicoll, 1976:199). However, these were disparagingly described by Rosencrantz in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as "an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't…" (Act II, sc.ii, ll.344-46). This was followed by a growing interest in the stage by adult males who formed companies of players. The construction of the Theatre by James Burbage in 1576 saw the beginning of many purpose-built theatres in London.

In the East, drama was also developing its own traditions and conventions of actor training. Japanese Kabuki, developed towards the beginning of the seventeenth century, was derived from the Chinese. It employs precise, familiar, conventionalised movements and gestures (Nicoll, 1976). During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Kanami Kiyotsugu and his son Seami Motokiyo developed Nō drama which also retained the precision of prescriptive rule-based traditional actor training (Nicoll). Eastern theatre and its techniques began to influence Western theatre training from the first part of the twentieth century (Hodge, 2000) with a continual and growing interest in more systematic approaches to actor training.

### 1.10.2 Birth of the Drama School

Drama schools, as we understand them today, did not exist in England at the turn of the twentieth century. Cohen (1998) claims that the American Academy of Dramatic Arts established in 1884 is the oldest acting school in the English-speaking world. Rideout (1995) however claims that the earliest record of a drama school in England was located in Dean Street, Soho on the site of London's old Royalty Theatre. Rideout's research suggests a Miss Fanny Kelly established the school there in 1834. By 1837

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6 Pre-dating actor training in Japan is 'The Natyasastra' which is a large body of work from the classical Indian (Sanskrit) theatre written between approximately 200BC – 300AD.
she had built a small theatre there called the Duke's Theatre and the Royal Dramatic School was attached (Rideout, 1995). Heading further north to Glasgow is The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama [RSAMD] which is reputed to be the first performance institution of its type established in the United Kingdom in 1847 (RSAMD Prospectus 2001-2002). RSAM first began as a music academy and in 1950 the College of Drama was founded. In 1968 the Academy adopted its current name of Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama [RSAMD] which reflected its new commitment to drama as well as music (RSAMD website, n.d.).

Drama schools in the United Kingdom began as a direct response to the demise of the 'old stock system', which was replaced by the 'long run' (Cairns, 1996:71). The drama school was seen by some as the answer to providing 'quality' training for actors. Music academies such as the London Academy of Music [now LAMDA – London Academy of Music and Drama] offered voice production and elocution [founded in 1861], making LAMDA 'the oldest' continuing academy in London (LAMDA Prospectus, 2001:1). The London Academy of Music had been giving some acting tuition since 1904, but it was not until 1938 that Wilfred Foulis introduced a one-year full-time acting course and the academy subsequently changed its name to the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art [LAMDA].

The Guildhall School of Music [founded in 1880] evolved some nineteen years later than LAMDA's origin. By 1935, and in keeping with the developing trend, the Guildhall School of Music also added Drama to its title (Martin, 1991). There were, however, several training companies also established in the 1880s, such as Frank Benson's Shakespeare Company which was founded in 1883, Sarah Thorn's at Margate's Theatre Royal in 1885, and Ben Greet opened his Academy of Acting in Bedford Street, the Strand, in 1896 (Martin, 1991).

In the 1890s Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree encouraged the establishment of a drama academy and in 1904 he commenced a drama school in his own theatre [His Majesty's Theatre] in the Haymarket, London (Cairns, 1996). Its popularity soon grew and in that same year was moved to a house in Gower Street where it still resides, and so became
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Chapter One: Introduction

the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art [RADA] (Martin, 1991) which is 'probably still the most famous theatre school in the world' (Rideout, 1995:4).

Soon afterwards Elsie Fogerty founded the Central School of Speech and Drama in 1906. Central School offered an entirely new form of training, one that [as the name suggests] did not 'confine itself to a single educational model' (Central School of Speech & Drama 2001 Prospectus:7) but rather took a 'central position' in the type of training it provided. In 1956 the Central School moved from the Royal Albert Hall where Elsie Fogerty had originally joined Sir Frank Benson in rooms there, which according to Martin (1991), led to the founding of the country's first speech clinic at Saint Thomas's Hospital. The new home of the Central School was the Embassy Theatre, Swiss Cottage, in the London Borough of Camden.

Rose Bruford who began her career as a student at the Central School for Speech and Drama established Rose Bruford College in 1950 (Rose Bruford College Prospectus 2001-2002). She taught at the Central School and at the Royal Academy of Music, and in 1948 published her book 'Speech and Drama' for teachers. In 1950, with £600 she set up her own drama school and the Kent Education Committee offered her the use of Lamorbey House (Rose Bruford College Prospectus 2001-2002). In that same year the College was recognised by the Department of Education and Science and has remained within the public sector ever since. Rose Bruford developed a unique single course that combined actor and teacher training. She was Principal from 1950 until retirement in 1967 (Rose Bruford College Prospectus 2001-2002). The University of Manchester now validates all of the Rose Bruford College courses. Rose Bruford College was the first drama school to offer an Acting degree in the United Kingdom in 1976 (Rose Bruford College Prospectus 2001-2002). The College claims to be 'the most popular institution of its kind in the United Kingdom' (Rose Bruford College website, n.d.).

The most common factor that the majority of drama schools share is that they grew out of the Victorian academies of music and opera and out of private tuition for elocution and deportment (Rideout, 1995). Their existence came about through the need to provide singers with more accomplished acting and performance skills. Actor training was now set on a course that would see the demise of on-the-job company training as
apprentices in favour of actor training as a form of institutionalised vocational schooling.

Australian drama schools do not have quite the same long history as their Northern Hemisphere counterparts, however Australian actor training does have close historical links with the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Prior to the establishment of major Australian drama schools, many of those wishing to study acting had to do so in Britain or the United States of America. Parsons (1995) suggests that continuous professional theatre began in Sydney and Hobart in the 1830s. Many of the earliest professional actors came to Australia from England. These included William Creswick in 1877 and Charles Mathews in 1870 who brought their performance skills to the Australian stage. In the absence of much organised actor training, 'tradition was highly valued on the professional stage in Australia, and actors learnt their craft by imitating' (Parsons, 1995:18).

In the absence of the kinds of Australian drama schools existing today, influential American-born actor, entrepreneur, theatre manager J.C. Williamson in 1907 advised 'every humble performer' to 'make his closet his college and tutor himself' (Parsons, 1995:19). However many older actors ran private classes of their own. Considered amongst the best known were Philip Lytton in Sydney and Melbourne [c.1900] (p.333) and Mrs G.B.W. Lewis in Melbourne. In the early twentieth century Gregan McMahon in Sydney and Agnes Rahilly in Brisbane supplemented their work by forming training companies (p.19).

With the dissatisfaction at the state of Australian theatre, Allan Ashbolt, Peter Finch, Sydney John Kay, Colin Scrimgeour and John Wiltshire founded the Mercury Theatre in Sydney in 1946. Subsequently the Mercury Theatre School was formed where Allan Ashbolt lectured students on theatre history and Peter Finch taught Stanislavsky-based acting. The Mercury Theatre closed its operation in 1953 (Parsons, 1995:363-364).

Hayes Gordon, an American actor who had studied acting with Lee Strasberg and Sanford Meisner in New York, contributed to the post-war development of Australian actor training. Gordon taught acting from the time that he arrived in Australia in 1952.
He was brought to Australia by J.C. Williamson to star in *Kiss me Kate*. Importing lead actors and even complete casts to Australia from the United States of America and Britain to perform in major productions was common practice at the time (Parsons, 1995:18). Gordon commenced his teaching in Australia by giving backstage classes for the cast of *Kiss me Kate*. These classes eventually grew into the Ensemble Theatre, which in 1958 he established in Sydney. Hayes Gordon directed over 60 productions for the Ensemble Theatre. The classes were held at the Ensemble Theatre at the weekends. At this time the classes were in acting theory, conducted solely by Gordon. Students were expected to find their own Voice and Movement teachers as the facilities at the theatre did not support these types of classes. Actors attending classes provided virtually all the casts in Ensemble Theatre productions. In 1973 Gordon formalised the classes and established the school, subsequently named the Ensemble Studios (Ensemble Studios website, n.d.).

The National Institute of Dramatic Art [NIDA] is Australia's most famous drama school. It is an independent school established in 1958. NIDA is located in the Sydney suburb of Kensington, New South Wales. NIDA continues to maintain close links with its founding sponsors The University of New South Wales and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation [ABC]. It is an independent company incorporated under the corporations' law rather than operating as part of a university. NIDA offers three full-time degree courses: Acting, Design and Technical Production; a two year, full-time Diploma course in Theatre Crafts; and four, one year Graduate Diploma courses: Production Management, Directing, Movement Studies and Voice Studies (NIDA Prospectus 2003). John Clark was the Director of NIDA for 35 years from 1969 to 2004.

The Victorian College of the Arts [VCA] is located in Melbourne, Australia. It had its origins as an art school in 1867 and later added the School of Drama in 1975 becoming what is now the VCA. The VCA is administratively part of The University of Melbourne. The VCA claims to be 'a dynamic and innovative school with an intensive and rigorous curriculum providing training for the development of virtuosity in

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7 Historically in British and Australian actor training Voice and Movement have been taught by specialist teachers as separate component parts of the acting program.
performance in theatre and film and television' (VCA website, n.d.). The VCA openly promotes the fact that its training is best done by staff who are practising artists. In part this may have lead to unhealthy tensions when the VCA was amalgamated with the University of Melbourne.

The Queensland University of Technology's Creative Industries Faculty is located at Kelvin Grove in Brisbane, Australia. It began the acting component around the same time as the VCA [c.1974]. After institutional mergers it went from being a College of Advanced Education to become QUT in 1989 and called its drama school an "acting academy". QUT has committed itself to developing Australia's first Creative Industries Precinct at an estimated cost of $400 million [stage one]. The project forms links between the creative industries and boasts purpose-built, world-class facilities (QUT website, n.d.).

The most recent major drama school to be established is the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts [WAAPA] which was founded in 1980 and is located at Mt Lawley in Perth, Western Australia. It is part of Edith Cowan University. The school claims to 'offer the most comprehensive range of vocational training in music, performing and technical arts in Australia' (WAAPA Course Guide, 2003-2004). WAAPA has a particular reputation for producing musical theatre graduates.

1.10.3 The French Influence

Throughout the beginning of the twentieth century a major influence on European actor training was Jacques Copeau, a French theatre practitioner and founder of one of the most notable drama schools, L’école du Vieux Colombier in 1921 (Martin, 1991). In 1913 Jacques Copeau wrote his manifesto 'An Attempt at Dramatic Renovation' and announced the opening of the Vieux Colombier Theatre. As already suggested, formal actor training was at the time virtually unknown in Europe. Copeau believed that the future of the theatre relied upon actors being well trained and educated in it from an early age (Rudlin & Paul, 1990). Copeau's ideal was to have an acting school situated next to his theatre. The school would commence with children who might also work alongside the apprentice actors. Copeau wanted to take charge of children and develop
them within the school's artistic atmosphere, developing each boy [as they were] as 'man and as artist', to 'cultivate', to 'inspire conscience', and to 'initiate him into the morality of his art' and improve the 'understanding of the art':

It will not be a school for actors, but for theatre artists: dancers, musicians, mimes, stage managers, scene-painters, costume designers, carpenters, stage-hands, etc. (Copeau cited in Rudlin & Paul, 1990:11)

It appears Copeau was not intending to create great actors, but rather create a *brotherhood of artists* by immersing children from his school in an artistic environment, something akin to the early notions of inculcation found in monastic Religious Orders. He desired to take 'unselfish young enthusiasts whose ambition is to serve the art to which they dedicate themselves. To free the actor from cabotinage' (Rudlin & Paul, 1990:24). Copeau's idealism goes beyond a purely mechanistic approach to training and moves the ideology almost towards a type of 'spiritualism'.

Rudlin & Paul (1990) suggest that Copeau's vision of working [and playing] with children and installing a deep respect for an inherited tradition was also fundamental to the traditional Japanese theatre school tradition of Nō. The family-based Ryu of the Japanese Nō served as an example to Copeau (Rudlin & Paul). In 1913 the Vieux Colombier Theatre opened before his school [Vieux Colombier School], and Copeau's ideals for the school were never fully accomplished owing to many practical pressures and constraints. Rudlin & Paul (1990) explain that Copeau and his associates began a quest to solve the issue of actor preparation through a belief in *personal education* and *ensemble training*. Lee Strasberg (1987) continued something of that search with his work in the United States of America.

Michel Saint-Denis, the nephew of Jacques Copeau, perpetuated the French influence on the development of actor training in England. In 1935, Michel Saint-Denis formed the London Theatre Studio – 'the first school that aimed at training an all-round actor' (Martin, 1991:157). According to Martin, the commencement of the Second World War ended the London Theatre Studio in 1939. After the war Michel Saint-Denis, George Devine and Glen Byam Shaw joined forces to run the Old Vic Theatre School and Young Vic Company in a joint venture under the umbrella of the Old Vic Theatre Centre. Importantly, in all of the schools that Saint-Denis planned, he 'did not advocate
any one particular "method", but placed the freedom of the actor at the forefront' (Martin, 1991:159). In 1952 the Old Vic Theatre Centre was forced to close due to financial pressures. 'It provided a great stimulus to drama training by laying a foundation for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to acting' (Martin, 1991:161).

1.10.4 From Amateurs to Professionals and Apprenticeships to Schools

A report by the Institute of Manpower Studies on behalf of the Arts Council of England found that 86% of actors working in the industry had received formal professional training. Of course historically, this high percentage of formally trained actors was not always the case. As Simon Callow (2002) pointed out at an address to the theatre training industry, British acting has been built on three foundations: example; experience; and education. Callow believes that example and experience have become increasingly difficult to access since the decline of full-time companies and hence education and training have in part filled the gap:

Until the end of the 19th century, the theatre was essentially a family business; actors were – in the most literal sense – born and not made. The actor-managers, starting with Charles Kean in the 1850s, became increasingly concerned to improve both the moral tone and aesthetic level of their presentations: sets, costumes, lighting – the production values – began to matter a great deal, and the skill and grace of the performers were greatly encouraged, perhaps in contrast to the raw barnstorming of their predecessors. […] Henry Irving, in particular, was inspired in his productions to stage huge human frescoes with armies of highly disciplined extras. He also looked to the work and writing of the great French actor Coquelin [creator of the role of Cyrano de Bergerac] in terms of the actor's work on himself, and wrote a very lucid introduction to Coquelin's book The Art of the Actor […] Supported by all the leading actors of the day and many of its playwrights, Shaw, in particular, it boldly trumpeted the seriousness of the profession's intention of working on itself. (Callow, 2002)

As drama schools began to develop throughout England, apprenticeships gave way to professional institutionalised training. This began the era of the drama school and the conundrum of whether to train at a drama school or not. Callow further distinguishes the difference between drama school trained actors and apprenticed actors of the past:

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What did they have that their untrained predecessors lacked? I would put it in a simple phrase: the possibility of going further. The old method of learning how to be an actor was built on observation and imitation; it was, essentially, an apprenticeship. You entered the profession at a lowly level, you learned how to make the most of what you'd got, you watched the leading actors like a hawk, seeing how they got their effects, you developed by doing. You formed your own ideas about what the job entailed. You discovered what worked and what didn't. Sometimes you got advice. It was a pragmatic, a rough and ready, Darwinian survival-of-the-fittest sort of a business. (Callow, 2002)

Until the twentieth century, Western culture relied upon forms of actor apprenticeship to develop actors. This of course is in contrast to the Eastern performance traditions such as Japanese Nō theatre dating from the fifteenth-century or Kathakali from southern India where traditions of systematic actor training were routinely employed (Hodge, 2000). Actor training sprang up in Europe with an ever growing interest in these Eastern traditions and in a Western society which was becoming increasingly preoccupied with the legitimacy of formal, institutionalised structures. Konstantin Stanislavsky was the first actor and director to critically investigate in detail the process of acting. His published works: An Actor Prepares (1980 [1936]), Building a Character (1983 [1936]) and Creating a Role (1983 [1949]) became the 'bible' of acting for many European and North American actors. Rapidly, a tradition of actor training was being established in Europe, the United States and then in Australia:

Once this attempt at rationalising the acting process was under way, its increasing pedagogical aims led to the opening of a number of new studios, schools, academies, laboratories and theatres throughout Europe and the United States. These centres intended not only to investigate the nature of acting, but also to disseminate their research findings and ultimately prepare the actor for work. Each system or approach to actor training had quite different assumptions and ideas about the nature and purpose of theatre, and what the responsibility of the actor was within the process of making it. (Hodge, 2000:2)

Evolving apprenticeship models and histories of practice have raised questions that necessitate more detailed research into what is understood of actor training. This is particularly necessary given the extent to which actor training has evolved in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, now making 'drama school' de rigueur.
1.10.5 The Gulbenkian Foundation Report

In 1975 the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation published a report on professional training for drama in the U.K. The report came about in response to the concerns raised in 1972 by three leading theatrical organisations which included heads of principal schools engaged in training actors, representatives of CORT [Council of Regional Theatre] and Equity. This is a significant document that signalled the first serious attempt to understand actor training in the United Kingdom. The report identifies:

We are all greatly concerned at the haphazard way in which so many train for and enter the acting profession. The recent severe increase in unemployment coupled with the multiplication of training establishments has led to a critical situation and we all feel that a national enquiry is now needed. [...] This is not an enquiry which those engaged in the training and employment of actors can really do for themselves. There needs to be an impartial assessing body.  
(Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:5)

Subsequently an enquiry\textsuperscript{10} was established in February 1974 which was to adhere to the following terms of reference:

1. To elucidate the facts, and to make a study of the present provision in Britain for vocational education in drama, with particular reference to the training available for those who wish to become performing artists on stage, television and radio, including the related fields of direction, stage management and theatre technicians.
2. To bear in mind the present disparity between the numbers of those trained and employment opportunities.
3. To make recommendations.  
(Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:6)

Under the heading 'The Problem Areas' the report outlined four broad areas of concern which were divided into: \textit{Training and Education, The Finances of the Drama Schools, The Need for a 'Recognised' Sector, and Technical Training}. One pertinent concern contained in the report noted: 'Some teachers are skilled operators but do not have teaching skills. This is clearly a matter for concern' (p.64). The issues raised in this report published thirty years ago have led me to further question the current situation in Australian and English drama schools. In doing so, I also identified the need in this

\textsuperscript{10} The enquiry was established in February 1974 chaired initially by Mr Huw Wheldon, then by Professor John Vaizey from July 1974. The enquiry was concluded in June 1975 with the publication of 'Going on Stage' – \textit{A Report to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on professional training for drama}.  

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report to give the drama tutors themselves the opportunity to discuss their own practice in a way that the *Gulbenkian Foundation Report* did not\(^{11}\).

### 1.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter laid the foundations for the research and introduced the key research question and related questions. The research was justified, definitions were presented, the methodology was briefly introduced and justified, the report was outlined, and the limitations were given.

The historical development of institutionalised actor training in the United Kingdom and Australia was outlined in this introductory chapter as a way of providing a background to the study and set the research within a clear historical context. This served to highlight that although acting is an ancient art, formal institutionalised actor training in the West is essentially a twentieth century phenomenon.

Billington (1973) sums up precisely the spirit in which I present this research:

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[...] \text{the question arises whether a drama school should be setting standards for the future rather than following those of the present. Because English actors are, on the whole, innately suspicious of theory and analysis ['I'm an instinctive actor' is the phrase often used to disguise a distaste for doing one's homework], does it follow that the schools should be perpetrating this attitude? (p.7)}
\]

This thesis attempts to explore further the theory of actor training by making an analysis of the perceptions of current practice in a field which has tended to value *acting method* over understandings of *pedagogical practice*. The major objective of the study is to make comparisons of tutors' interpretations of how they understand training processes within the institutional contexts of the drama schools.

This study gives the tutors interviewed the opportunity to reflect on their teaching practice experiences which offer insights into their overall 'philosophical' assumptions underpinning their teaching. Thus the study has significance both for theory and practice. The study has potential for understanding the institutionalised training of

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\(^{11}\) At the time of writing there has not been a similar review or major report on actor training in the Australian context.
actors and also makes a strong case for greater attention to the pedagogical practice employed in actor training. Finally, the research has significant implications for the training of acting tutors in developing and seeking out improved training models.

Becoming a professional actor is a transitional process. Beginning actors engage in existing industry practices, which have a long and established history. The actor must learn to become skilled in order to be more completely accepted into this community. Both the actor and the tutor can only become fully accepted by serving their 'apprenticeship'. Both as actors and actor-trainers, practitioners follow accepted conventions in moving from 'newcomers' to 'old-timers', 'they have a stake in its development as they begin to establish their own identity in its future' (Lave & Wenger, 1991:115). Understanding these transitions and implications of current understandings of actor training practices is of primary importance to this research.
Chapter 2

Review of Literature

"Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught." – Oscar Wilde (The Critic as Artist)
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In order to understand the etymology of acting tutor practice Chapter 1 gives a brief historical overview of the development of actor training and introduces the study. In addition the research questions and place of the study are also outlined. Chapter 2 reintroduces the research questions and surveys the related literature. The literature is derived from an interdisciplinary approach that is used to understand the beliefs and assumptions of acting and actor training.

This report explores the epistemology of practice according to a sample of high profile or 'elite' drama school tutors from Australia and England. The study examines the nature of teaching practice as defined by the practitioners themselves. This is achieved both in the literature as revealed in this chapter and via interviews with current practitioners. This study seeks to understand the perceptions and meanings generated by acting tutor practice in vocational actor training. Where actor training is positioned in the twenty-first century is also explored by focussing on the study's key research question:

How do tutors in Australia and England characterise their teaching practice in actor training institutions?

The following three sub-questions of the study aim to identify characteristics of practice as represented by actor trainers within the contexts of these drama schools:

1. What themes emerge from what tutors say about acting and actor training?
2. What kinds of meaning do acting tutors seek to communicate and why?
3. How do acting tutors seek to convey these meanings?

The questions aim to illuminate current tutoring practice within drama schools and provide the opportunity for the tutors to discuss their practice. These questions further
aim to investigate and clarify issues surrounding vocational training and teaching. The review of the literature begins by exploring a range of issues pertaining to the theory and practice of vocational training and education including questioning the first basic assumption of whether actor training is necessary to begin with by examining the nature of talent.

This chapter is structured into four sections: Philosophical assumptions about the theory and practice of vocational training; Encountering the great divides; Current organisational practice; and Finding models of desirable practice. Towards the end of the chapter are examined some currently recognised components of practice applicable to actor training.

2.2 Philosophical Assumptions in the Theory and Practice of Vocational Training

2.2.1 A Question of Talent

'Training in the art and craft of acting is a virtual necessity for a successful career' (Cohen, 1998:27) but can acting really be taught? Nigel Rideout (1995) argues: 'It is true that skills are taught but that acting is learned: the acquiring of skill is largely the responsibility of the teacher, but the ability to act must be found within the student him – or herself' (p.6). This may be a helpful starting position in unravelling the point of paradigmatic departure between teaching acting skills and possessing natural talent. According to Rideout the methodology and pedagogy ['acquiring of skill'] is the teacher's responsibility. Rideout goes on to suggest that 'talent is an elusive quality that cannot be taught or learned. It seems to exist separately from skill, technique and knowledge' (pp.13-14). In addition to having the necessary 'talent' to begin with, the student's responsibility, at least according to Rideout, is in the synthesis of those skills and techniques [i.e. 'the ability to act'] and knowledge of acting.

If indeed actor training can be reduced to a series of skills to be learned, then we must question the whole notion of 'natural talent' which is 'the sine qua non of a performer' (Cohen, 1998:12). So, what is 'natural talent'? Stanislavsky (1988) defines 'talent' as:

[…] nothing but a prolonged period of attention and a shortened period of mental assimilation. In a genius the periods of mental assimilation have been
Reduced to a minimum, while the periods of active attention have been prolonged to a maximum. (p.214)

Rideout (1995) bravely, albeit simplistically, also attempts to define that 'special something' as being a combination of the following: the ability to translate life experiences; an open and generous spirit fired by an exciting energy; a strong eye focus filled with thought and commanding attention; great warmth; a sense of danger; courage; sensitivity and vulnerability (p.14).

Cohen (1998) defines talent as 'essentially a kind of communication. And since it is mostly non-verbal, it is not defined so much as it is recognised. "Magnetism", "electricity", stage "presence" – these are the metaphors we use to discuss talent' (p.12). Cohen's definition has more to do with how we as an audience may perceive the actor – that is, how we might recognise the talent via observation. Both Cohen and Rideout have provided us with at least some of the identifiable elements of that special "it". Cohen (1998) argues that 'talent' and 'personality' are the two most important characteristics of the successful actor. For Cohen, at least, 'talent' and 'personality' seem to out-weigh the need to have highly developed skill in order to be 'successful'. The recent Big Brother television phenomenon saw everyday people become celebrities by living in a house filled with cameras for a craving television audience to voyeuristically watch their every move. This seems to resonate to some extent with Cohen's view in that several of the Big Brother 'housemates' have even gone on to indeed become 'actors', not just personalities, on television. One would have to question, though, whether this causes some confusion with 'celebrity status' rather than quality of acting. Perhaps 'successful acting' does, at least in part, equate to the trappings of stardom and celebrity.

Can natural talent therefore replace the need for formal drama training? Most writers on the subject do advocate the necessity to complete some form of training, although many are also quick to acknowledge the exceptions to the rule citing those who have 'made it' without any formal training. Hayes Gordon (1992) believes that even if these actors are good, they too may not even be able to define "it":

Not everybody will necessarily want to tell you their [sic] trade secrets. And even the good actors you will be lucky to encounter will not necessarily be able
to explain what makes them good even if they wanted to. And then again, will you know who the truly 'good' actors are? (p.1)

The argument seems to follow that with good actors, 'talent' exists from the very beginning, even before they embark upon formal training [if any]. 'Craft and experience can be acquired along the way, but talent, where it exists, shows up almost immediately' (Cohen, 1998:13) and may not be readily articulated by those who have it. Similarly, the view presented by director and playwright David Mamet (1997) suggests that there is no direct link between an actor’s predisposition for the stage and the institution although they will claim the glory (p.14).

Talent, whatever the definition, appears to be that essential prerequisite for actor training. In 1924 Stanislavsky wrote in *My Life in Art*: 'Without talent or ability one must not go on stage. In our organised schools of dramatic art today it is not so. What they need is a certain quantity of paying pupils. And not everyone who can pay has talent or can hope to become an actor' (Stanislavsky, 1980 [1924] p. 79). Stanislavsky's concerns may be true today of university departments who offer performing arts units and courses with a growing move away from explicitly vocational actor training. This point will be explored later in the chapter.

### 2.2.2 Acting – Art or Craft?

Underpinning the practice of all tutors will be underlying beliefs and assumptions that support or inform their practice – a philosophy of practice. The much-touted debate of whether acting is an art or a craft is one such belief that can shape a tutor's practice. Harrop (1992) argues that if it is seen as 'an art' then its élite skill value is somehow reduced:

> [...] there does seem to be a special problem with acting. Is it an art at all; or merely a craft? If it is an art, it seems to be the easiest, the cheapest of arts, perhaps akin to photography where anyone can do it, even with a box-brownie. (p.1)

Through being so readily accessible, acting is essentially easily available for many people to try, at least in an amateur context. History has revealed that countless 'hopefuls' may attempt some form of acting. However, reality demonstrates that some
do it better than others. According to Bryer & Davidson (2001) acting is not art until it ceases to be life. It is not art until it takes what it portrays, recreates it in its own interpretative terms and adds to it something that was not there before. The work of Michael Chekhov (1953) supports this principle by suggesting:

\[\ldots\] the real task of the creative artist is not merely to copy the outer appearance of life but to interpret life in all its facets and profoundness, to show what is behind the phenomena of life, to let the spectators look beyond life's surfaces and meanings. (p.3)

Chekhov sought to have actors 'penetrate deeply into the inner life of the characters' (p.28) and searched for methods to enable this depth. Chekhov was looking to investigate the craft found in the art. Laurie (1994) confirms that much has been written on the art of acting but few publications are devoted specifically to an actor's craft. To this extent, the work of Elliot Eisner (1985) may offer a plausible reason for this situation. Eisner acknowledges that 'art has been defined as the process in which skills are employed to discover ends through action' (p.176). Craft on the other hand 'has been defined as the process through which skills are employed to arrive at preconceived ends' (Eisner, 1985:176). Craft connotes greater prescription with the implication of a pre-determined destination or outcome within embodied practices which are orientated to its virtuosity (Zarrilli, 2001).

If these definitions hold, then I would suggest that acting is both an art and a craft. It would seem essential to acknowledge both approaches if drama schools are to prepare actors for a demanding and evolving profession. To assume that acting is either one or the other seriously runs the risk of denying the opportunity that some writers such as Zarrilli (2001) consider to be the self-conscious choice to engage in a reflective and processual approach to acting.

2.2.3 Methods or Madness

Dewey (1968 [1916]) writes: 'Every artist must have a method, a technique, in doing his work. Piano playing is not hitting the keys at random' (p.166). Since the beginnings of formalised actor training various directors and actors have sought to make training less random and more methodical or systematised. Peter Brook (1990 [1968]) in his
text *The Empty Space* refers to a nomadic theatre group called the 'Living Theatre'. His analysis of this group could equally be made in reference to the dilemma of much of the actor training processes today. Brook writes:

[...] the Living Theatre, exemplary in so many ways, has still not yet come to grips with its own essential dilemma. Searching for holiness without tradition, without source, it is compelled to turn to many traditions, many sources – yoga, Zen, psychoanalysis, books, hearsay, discovery, inspiration – a rich and dangerous eclecticism. (p.70)

Actor training is based upon a range of philosophical assumptions governed by past practices and current interpretations of those practises. Essentially there are two approaches to actor training: *systematic* and *eclectic* [non-systematic]. To some extent, traditionally in Western theatre, the *eclectic* or non-systematic approach was born out of the long history of actor apprenticeship. *Eclectic* approaches borrow from a range of methods and ideologies. Acting tutors frequently reinterpret these approaches in ways that are understood by them, even if they may produce what Brook calls 'dangerous eclecticism' that at times may produce conflicting training approaches. Some current *eclectic* training is philosophically underpinned by a belief that there is no one path to an ultimate truth. Evidenced to some extent in many Eastern traditions and particularly early twentieth century Western practice, *systematic approaches* to actor training are based on particular ideas about the nature and purpose of training (Hodge, 2000) and where the individual actor is positioned within the process.

Much of the existing literature presents actor training technique as a didactic. This is where exercise regimes are followed and mastered by drill as a means to developing and improving technique, whether it be Voice (e.g. Berry, 1974; Linklater 1976; *et al*) or Movement (e.g. Meyerhold, 1921-2; Laban, 1980; *et al*). However it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that notions of *systematic training* began to heavily influence the Western world. Western *scientific objectification* was becoming *de rigueur* and even actor training began to search for more scientific means to justify and understand the training process. Training techniques borrowed from Japanese Nō theatre and the Kathakali dance-theatre of southern India, in part, offered models or systems of training that fitted this new Western thinking.
There have been many practitioners who have contributed substantially to the ideals of actor training, and I acknowledge the shortcoming in illuminating only a few. However it is useful to briefly demonstrate something of the assumptions of actor training being made. Unlike the actor/managers of the past, twentieth century theatre directors took responsibility for shaping the profession and developed many systematic methods of training. During the early part of the twentieth century Konstantin Stanislavsky was the first actor/director to thoroughly investigate the process of acting (Hodge, 2000). Out of his investigation came the development of a method or system that made acting appear more convincing. Stanislavsky sought to find consciousness in the sub-conscious rather than use 'dusty archives of old, worn-out theatrical traditions and conventions' (Magarshack, 1988:25). Stanislavsky's reputation results from his theory of acting which is often simply called 'The method'\(^\text{12}\) or 'The system', which has been adapted in many ways by various drama schools and tutors throughout the world. Although over time Stanislavsky's own ideas evolved, many of those who studied and worked with him replicated the approach taught to them at the time, for example, Lee Strasberg (1987) and Stella Adler (1988). Stanislavsky himself is reported to have said 'there is only one system – creative organic nature…[it] does not remain stationary. It changes every day' (Stanislavsky, 1988:1).

During the period 1959-62 Jerzy Grotowski also searched for techniques and a training method in order to 'objectify creative skill' (Grotowski, 1975 [1969]). Through a series of exercises, which uncovered what not to do [termed by him as 'via negativa'], he developed a personal form of training. Similarly radical techniques of acting might also include Bertolt Brecht's technique of producing an \textit{alienation effect}. Brecht (1992 [1964]) writes: 'the actor does not allow himself to become completely transformed on the stage into the character he is portraying' (p.137). In doing so, the actor avoids complete transformation into the character. As with Chinese acting, the actor is seen to observe his or her own movements. Brecht is credited with developing a new theory of

\(^{12}\) The Method was an approach developed in the USA derived from Stanislavsky’s early work on affect states. Its genesis in the USA can be traced to classes with some members of the MAT in New York after their successful tour to the USA in the mid-1920s. “Stanislavsky’s ideas (were) taught by Maria Oupenskaya and Richard Boleslavsky at the American Laboratory Theatre in New York city in the 1920s and radically interpreted and taught by Lee Strasberg at the Group Theatre and later at the Actors Studio” (Homby, 1992:5). Stanislavsky’s theories, however, continued to evolve.
acting. However it could never be conceived as a method, nor did Brecht attempt to present his work this way. Interestingly enough, in the last year of his life, Brecht began to re-think his 'epic theatre' theory with a change to 'dialectical theatre'. In this regard, both Brecht and Stanislavsky acknowledge through their work the dynamic, not static, nature of any acting system or approach to acting.

Although Stanislavsky's approach was organic and holistic, he at the same time sought to isolate parts of the actor in order to improve his or her own technique. For example, he believed breathing was the foundation of the development of introspective attention that actors must first develop. Many current Voice teachers commence with breathing work and their approach is exercise-driven. Berry (1974) argues 'you will find that doing exercises leads you to know something more of yourself and your attitude towards acting' (p.11). Berry does not, however, believe entirely in a corrective approach to Voice training, but rather one that also capitalises on the uniqueness of the individual actor. Anecdotally, we hear that Voice has become the major weakness in actors today (Laurie, 1994; et al) which reinforces the often heard call for a 'back to basics' approach via skill-based exercise regimes. 'The actor's voice is a vitally important tool of his [sic] trade' (Laurie, 1994:21) and combined with the actor's body forms what is known as the actor's 'instrument'.

Like Voice teachers, Movement teachers are also adherents to conscious training techniques. Meyerhold (1921-2) and his use of 'biomechanics' as a form of physical technique began a new philosophy of training. Interested in behaviourism, stemming from Pavlov's work on conditioned response behaviour, Meyerhold believed in 'exterior formation'. This method involves emotions stimulated by and resulting from physical movement which was part of this new disciplined approach to training. His actors were to be so thoroughly trained that they could respond immediately and reflexively to the needs dictated by his or her part or by the director (Leiter, 1991). No doubt Meyerhold's influence extended to the work of directors such as Peter Brook (1990 [1968]), Joseph Chaikin (1972) and Jerzy Grotowski (1975 [1969]) during the 1960s and 1970s (Harrop, 1992). Incidentally, Chaikin began as a method actor but later through frustration with the 'dogma' (Hodge, 2000) abandoned this system for the development of his own method.
The seemingly sports-like methodologies of Movement training are also based on a regime of exercises. However the genre of Movement training demands more than simply an outward physical show. Laban (1980) for example warns against purely mechanical regulations to movement, suggesting that 'man moves in order to satisfy a need' (p.1). 'Movement, with its wide range of visible and audible manifestations, offers not only a common denominator for all stage work but it also secures the basis for the common animation of all those participating in this creation' (p.7). An ideology of a conscious training is reinforced by these psychological imperatives. Harrop (1992) describes acting as an 'athletic activity' with all those physical concerns of grace, skill, balance, timing, agility, power, and plasticity. This view is also reflected in the work of Grotowski (1975 [1969]) who believed in a regime of physical exercises in developing an actor's craft.

Michael Chekhov (1953), a former student of Stanislavsky, considered that physical exercises were required to overcome the body's physical resistance. Further, he believed drama schools must offer more than gymnastics, fencing, dancing, acrobatics, callisthenics and wrestling as part of their training. Chekhov suggests that the body of an actor must undergo a special kind of development such as developing 'extreme sensitivity of body to the psychological creative impulses. This cannot be achieved by strictly physical exercises alone. The psychology itself must take part in such a development' (p.2). The mind and the body are also important to the individual acting ideologies of Meyerhold (1921-2) and Artaud (1970).

The twentieth century placed major emphasis on the actor's ability, techniques and methods of using emotions on stage to affect an audience (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2001:38). Diderot's 'paradox', Stanislavsky's 'system', Meyerhold's 'biomechanics', Artaud's 'theatre of cruelty', and Brecht's 'alienation effect', to name but a few, all have a common desire. As Peter Brook puts it, this desire was to make acting 'open, responsive, and unified in all its responses' (Cited in Innes, 1981: 11). The field seems to agree that a training regime should essentially involve training the voice, body and mind. It is likely that this view has gained popularity from Stanislavsky's own vision.
for actor training which was essentially internal and organic but also explicitly acknowledged the need to train the mind, body and voice:

The studio must arouse a feeling for truth in man as well as his love; it must nurture and cultivate them with great care. And to teach the student the art of self-observation, the studio must teach him the laws of correct breathing, the correct position of the body, concentration and watchful discrimination.

(Stanislavsky, 1988:116)

Jerzy Grotowski between 1959 and 1962 searched for a technique or method of actor training that was capable of 'objectively giving the actor a creative skill that was rooted in his imagination and his personal associations' (Grotowski, 1975:101). Rather than prescribing lists of what to do, Grotowski worked with exercises to suggest what not to do. He termed this 'via negativa', a process of elimination. These exercises became personal research for the actor in order to empower them to find their own training. Grotowski (1975) in Towards a Poor Theatre acknowledges the limitations some methods may have upon the training of actors. He challenges us to find ways of exploring so as to understand more deeply. He writes:

I do not put on a play in order to teach others what I already know. It is after the production is completed and not before that I am wiser. Any method which does not itself reach out into the unknown is a bad method. (Grotowski, 1975:98)

The range of methods and systems available to the actor are extensive and all aim to provide explicit approaches to actor training. The range of approaches at times present extreme and potentially contradictory philosophies. There is little doubt, however, that Stanislavsky has had the greatest influence on shaping modern approaches to actor training.

**2.2.4 Teaching Acting Technique**

Numerous philosophical assumptions about teaching acting are made in the literature and some are worth highlighting. Firstly, a great deal of literature assumes that acting can be taught. However Stanislavsky (1988 [1950]) himself emphatically states 'that no one can be taught to act' (p.91). Secondly, it is largely assumed that there is still a need to objectify actor training. Many of the methodologies, techniques and systems were developed last century in a time when the scientific objectification of training was
developing and serious notions of 'rigor' expounded. Thirdly, many of the discourses about acting assume that they are indeed expressing the truth about acting technique, however widely that notion may be interpreted. However Zarrilli (1995) suggests that 'the epistemological assumption that a discourse of acting is the truth remains in the background, untold' (p.8). These assumptions are what Zarrilli describes as the 'ideology' infused in the theory and practice of acting. Fourthly, many writers offer training regimes in the form of series of exercises for the individual actor and/or the teacher of acting to follow. The major underlying assumption here is that the tutors know how to teach or perhaps that indeed the exercises themselves may somehow replace the need for understandings of pedagogy altogether. It seems that for many authors and acting tutors, what is taught becomes synonymous with the way it is taught.

There are exponents of the development of 'correct' techniques, which they suppose should be included in any actor's training. For example Laurie (1994) is critical of the neglect that some drama schools exhibit in teaching these 'correct' techniques:

But the technique of stage movement is often neglected in training. Actors who have been through drama school should know the most natural way to turn on the stage, and yet how often they go the long way round. (p.56)

Laurie further presents us with the view that there has been a misunderstanding between technique and its relation to feeling. Laurie suggests 'a mastery of technique frees the actor's emotion and is the means by which he [sic] can communicate it to an audience. [...] Technique is the hand-maiden of feeling and not a deadening disciplinarian' (Laurie, 1994:2-3).

The 'teachability' of acting and the necessity to train are recurring themes in the literature. Although Cohen (1998) attributes certain innate qualities of natural talent to the successful actor, he does not deny the benefits of a formal training. Cohen argues that 'every actor must have training and experience. No matter how naturally talented, attractive, sexy, and individual you are, you will flop in the audition if you don't know what to do' (p.27). The following survey of some documented thoughts by a few prominent actors further reveals an array of insightful views on the 'teachability' of acting technique.
Dame Flora Robson studied at RADA [ADA as it was known then] from 1919 to 1921. She identifies *technique* and *feeling* as the key components to the art of acting:

> [...] why do people think you cannot be taught to act? There are two sides to every art: technique and feeling. Technique you can never learn enough about. Ballet dancers, musicians, singers constantly find new teachers after they have become great stars. Technique in acting, I think, is ninety per cent control of the feeling – not faking it, but controlling it with the utmost firmness, as I was taught by such experts as Moffat Johnson, Helen Haye and Sybil Thorndike. You can learn technique. But only life can teach you how to feel. (Cited in McCall, 1978:31)

Robson's argument is compelling in that the synergy between *technique* and *feeling* appears to be an underlying point of debate when actor training is discussed. Is training to be an actor the same as training to play a musical instrument? The *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* (1975) does differentiate between *acting skills* as opposed to the skills of music and dancing 'where technical training must be studied at an earlier age' (pp.25-25). Gordon (1992) suggests that 'acting is the toughest and most intricate art form of any' (p.2). In continuing the music analogy he suggests that 'learning to handle a musical instrument is "a piece of cake" in comparison to learning to handle the human instrument' (p.2). Harrop (1992) also supports this view by writing:

> We have said that actors don't train like dancers and singers. But in one sense, actors, being their own instruments, are in training all the time, as they absorb or suck in experience. On stage, it is not the ordinary that is dramatic, exciting or illuminates ordinary experience. (p.114)

Cairns (1996) puts forward the proposition that only *experience* itself can create a professional actor:

> [...] it cannot be learned from any manual, nor for that matter, from any vocational course whether carrying degree status or not. Courses may give a useful grounding, but only in the proving-fire of public and paid work will the professional be forged. It usually takes anything from five to ten years of employment for the process to settle itself; and thereafter, the refinements continue with each role for the rest of the professional's life. (p.13)

A further sample of the views by some of the United Kingdom's notable actors from the past and present assist in finding anecdotal distinctions between *natural talent, skills, technique* and *practical application*. Margaret McCall, for instance, advocates the importance of *technique*:
I [...] realised the value of technique – the technique that allows one to play a character in the same way time after time, regardless of how one feels or how circumstances change. (McCall, 1978:12)

Dame Judi Dench, a graduate from Central School for Speech and Drama in the 1950s, comments on the subjectivity of acting which makes its dissection difficult:

I'm not sure what the word 'talent' actually means, or what my talent is. I know what I recognise and consider to be talent in others, though my colleagues might not see it or agree with me. Acting is such an impure art. What one person calls great acting another might feel simply doesn't work. (Cited in Rideout, 1995:viii)

Peter Sallis was a student at RADA from 1946 to 1948 and links the development of technique with experience. He questions the very idea that you can be taught to act:

No one has ever supposed that you can be taught to act and no one who has given the matter much thought would go to an acting school in order to find out. All actors and actresses are, to some extent, 'naturals' (p.126) [...] I find it difficult to assess how valuable these lessons were. To me technique has been synonymous with experience. The process of opening and closing doors, working with props, conveying the meaning of the author while at the same time performing some additional business has become easier as I've grown older and as I made sure that they were subservient to the main course of action. (Cited in McCall, 1978:132)

Patrick Macnee spent nine months as a student at the Webber-Douglas School in 1940 and identifies acting as a craft. He reflects on the dubious merits of his own drama school experience:

I am proud of my versatility, of my craft. For that is what acting is – a craft. One different from that of a dentist or a skilled fireman, but a craft just the same [...] Can the acting craft be entirely learnt, can drama schools prepare a man for a hurly-burly profession that may require him to advertise a Rover car one week and play in a Shakespeare tragedy the next? Are actors born rather than made? [...] Now, when I look back, I think I learnt more about acting at Eton than at my 'official' drama school which I was to enter when I was 17. (Cited in McCall, 1978:72)

Simon Callow attended the Drama Centre in the 1970s. He talks of having a positive experience, albeit a demanding one, and is able to discuss both technique and methodology with clarity:

By the time I arrived at drama school, I knew that I had much to learn, and I was terribly unsure about whether I had the talent or not. I was very blocked in all kinds of ways, personally, but I knew a lot about the theatre [...]. I set myself a tremendously tough sort of programme, which was to say that if the
Drama Centre found that I wasn't really an actor, then I would not be an actor [...]. Basically the Drama Centre takes on board the familiar divide between Strasberg and Stella Adler [...] which is an acknowledgement that Strasberg's interpretation of Stanislavsky stopped at the nursery level [...]. The Drama Centre taught us all that, so we started with the ABC of the Stanislavsky system, which was a tremendously good thing for any training actor to go through. But then it took us to the more elaborate and sophisticated variants that Stanislavsky himself never ceased to discover. Their philosophy is that acting and theatre are unbelievably tough areas [...]. Therefore, I think that they deliberately create a climate in which people have to toughen up [...]. At the Drama Centre, we learned to use objectives and obstacles, activities, and interactions when looking at a text. (Cited in Zucker, 1999:33-36)

'Experience' is a running theme in the literature of actor training. As discussed in Chapter 1, traditionally most actors prior to the latter part of the twentieth century actually learned on the job. These actors essentially gained the necessary experience through experience. However this was with some negative consequences:

The wastage rate used to be enormous. Of the thousands that decided to be actors, most who stuck it out ended up as fair to middling stock or repertory actors [...] experience gave them authority and facility, but not necessarily skill or top artistry. (Gordon, 1992:1)

Whilst acknowledging that there seems no substitute for experience, training is viewed by many writers in the field to play a significant and essential role in the development of beginning actors, particularly in the mastery of technique which enables the actors to feel more effectively. Hayes Gordon (1992) gives four reasons for someone to consider a drama school training. He lists them as: an awareness and appreciation of what to look for; resourcefulness in finding out what you need to; knowledge of the business; and an opportunity to showcase one's applied performing skills in order to help attract an agent. Gordon also addresses the question of whether apprenticeship or schooling is more appropriate by suggesting that 'most actors learn from both approaches to varying degrees. But neither approach guarantees any positive assurances of achievement' (1992:2). Despite the misgivings some actors may have about their own personal experiences, the literature overwhelmingly supports the view that it is indeed necessary to train. However the literature offers no definitive answers to those personal misgivings and shortfalls found in formal actor training processes.
Dewey (1968 [1916]), however, argues against too much emphasis upon skill rather than meaning in vocational training. He writes:

[There is] a tendency for every distinctive vocation to become too dominant, too exclusive and absorbing in its specialised aspect. This means emphasis upon skill or technical method at the expense of meaning. Hence it is not the business of education to foster this tendency, but rather to safeguard against it […]. (p.309)

2.2.5 What's in a Name? – Institutional Models

So what is in a name? Even the term 'drama school' appears to have come in and out of fashion over time. These institutions are to do with vocational actor training, and if we are to believe their rhetoric, they are all places of 'excellence'. I would suggest that many of the drama schools would ideologically place themselves somewhere between the academy model and the conservatoire model (Appendix A). Therefore, whilst a school's institutional title may be unclear or even misleading, what appears to count in their survival is the institution's fame surrounding its name. Interestingly, the use of the term 'drama school' appears to be gaining in popularity once more. This may possibly be attributed to these schools needing to find their own identity as the universities subsume them.

Meyer & Scott (1992) suggest that in order to be considered 'legitimate', an institution will consist of various rules that it must conform to as an organisation. Drama schools in Australia and England do conform to similar rules. In common with all leading actor-training institutions appears to be their sense of hierarchy, both in terms of staff profiles and also in terms of auditioning for the very best student talent available to them. These institutions ride high on their reputations in a fiercely competitive market place. Observation has led me to believe prestige has the potential to attract the best students. Prestige attracts more high-profile teachers. Prestige attracts the wealthy benefactors. Prestige attracts the 'best' agents for graduating students. Prestige will help the actor get the 'best' jobs…or so the thinking goes.

Drama schools are named 'academy', 'institute', 'school' and 'conservatoire' (Appendix A). However, are the contexts of these institutions a determining factor in the delivery
of teaching? Or do institutional models exist in name only and have no particular lasting historical and contextual significance? The fourth institutional type, the conservatoire, seems to underpin much of the ideology apparent in the literature. The conservatoire ideology reinforces the concept of conserving and passing on a tradition of practices. The conservatoire concept for training actors is one that will be explored throughout this report.

2.2.6 The Role of the Tutor

The post-apprenticeship actor training system has empowered the acting tutor as the vital link in the preparation of the actor within formalised and institutionalised actor training. Prior to the formation of drama school, Rideout (1995) argues that 'a few actors, blessed with sure instinct and imagination and a rare and natural insight into dramatic literature, were able to teach themselves the skills required' (p.1). However, it seems that experienced actors have always passed on the skills of their profession either through informal coaching or under more organised conditions such as apprenticeship to a theatre company.

As a researcher and practitioner I am interested in the tutor primarily because he/she is a human being placed in a position of power and influence over other human beings keen to enter the profession. Whilst this position affords reciprocal privileges for both staff and students alike, the tutor's more empowered role is vital to investigate in the process. So how precisely can we define the role of tutor within the contexts of actor training?

Finding the suitable nomenclature for the actor 'trainer' is difficult. The Macquarie Dictionary defines a tutor as one who will 'teach or instruct […] to train, school, or discipline' which perhaps not surprisingly corresponds closely with the definition of 'teacher'. The concise Oxford Dictionary also defines coaching as 'to tutor, to train, to give hints, to prime with facts'. However Parsloe (1993) believes that '80-90 per cent of people at work would not have recognised or used the word "coaching" in any of sense to apply to their daily working lives' (p.52). The teacher or tutor might be akin to a coach in that they 'develop the potential of the players and open them up to
possibilities, motivate and facilitate' (Prior, 1997:15). This understanding may offer insights into appreciating the tutor's role in the training process at drama school. Whilst talent itself may not be created by the tutors, the actor's talent might be to further develop their own talent. Manderino (1991) suggests that 'a good teacher instils in you the means to become your own teacher' (p.62).

Do drama school 'trainers' consider themselves to be 'tutors', 'teachers', 'coaches', 'trainers', 'facilitators', 'instructors', 'lecturers' or 'educators'? The literature seems to use all of these terms interchangeably. Typically though, some writers on the subject such as Rideout (1995) tend to consistently use the term 'teacher'. The term 'tutor' seems to rarely appear in the English literature, which might be a result of the term's public school or college connotation. However the literature generally does not capture the practitioners' direct voice. Therefore what these practitioners choose to call themselves is unclear. In this report I have elected to refer to these practitioners as 'tutors' to avoid confusion over their identity within the field that may not automatically accept the 'teachability' of acting.

What, then, do tutors actually see their precise function to be? The tutor may at times take the role of inspirer by encouraging the actors' creativity and possibilities available to them. The tutor as instructor must at times point to techniques and skills that enhance the craft. The tutor as coach is the role that most aligns acting to sport where performance is monitored and motivated. At times the tutor may perform the role of director by making aesthetic decisions with an outside eye. Tutors may find that at different times they will be one or a number of these. Manderino (1991) argues 'the teacher is a strong force, inspiring students to retain faith in their talents and keep reaching for goals' (p.60). To this end, Stanislavsky offers this general advice to teachers:

If only a teacher can avoid being a pedant, if he is quick to discern the organic qualities of a man's character, he will always be able to see the growth of the organic qualities in his pupil. Courage on both sides! Mutual respect and trust in each other's sense of honour will always prevent conflicts between master and pupil. (p.137)
In relying upon mutual trust, Stanislavsky (1988) argues: 'for in art one can only inspire' (p.116). If actor training is presumed to be inspirational alone, then this further questions the essential 'teachability' of acting.

2.2.7 Approaches to Training

As identified in 2.2.3, types of training have often been referred to as acting 'methods' or 'systems'. Historically, one methodological approach or another has from time to time gained favour over its counterparts, or a number of approaches have been used eclectically. Is it acceptable to expose actors to only one 'system' or 'method' of actor training, or should actors become more broadly equipped? Brestoff (1995) argues for open and transparent teaching that asks questions of the teaching process [pedagogy] itself. He writes:

A single training system has the advantage of giving the actor a way to approach his craft step-by-step. But since no single system can possibly contain all that might be helpful to an actor, the student must also gather what tools he can from other sources. But even after an actor has chosen his path of study, he still faces more questions. Is this the best teacher for him? Are these exercises truly effective? Is he growing as an actor? The actor must continually evaluate his progress. And this evaluation is made more difficult by the fact that most training is historical. That is, the student is rarely told how the exercises he is doing evolved, or from what traditions they come. Individual acting classes are given without much reference to the context of actor training as a whole. (p.xiii)

Brestoff's view for the main part reflects an American experience, therefore the question exists: Are Australian and English drama schools also conducting classes with little reference to the context of actor training as a whole? The available literature does not appear to address this issue. There are also histories and values inherent in the content of courses that should be explicitly identified in order to understand practices more thoroughly. Teaching and learning should assist learners to discover these values, their origins, and examine them in relation to their own beliefs and other value systems (Stevenson, 2003), in other words, to demystify the teaching and learning processes.
Silverberg (1999) accepts that there are many ways to train an actor but argues that the aim of actor training should be to empower the student with the ability to find his or her own truth:

I believe the only test of the validity of an approach to actor training should be: does it help the student arrive at the one essential truth – his own truth? And, as with any approach to training actors, ultimately the technique must disappear and what must be left is the actor in his acting, so that the student is not more like the teacher but more fully himself. (p.14)

Silverberg, like many other writers, advocates the principles of Konstantin Stanislavsky (1936), in 'finding truth' and 'avoiding imitation'. However Brestoff (1995) observes in practice that 'most teachers teach as they were taught' (p.xii). It may come as no surprise then that actor training appears to have a long history of disempowering the trainee, to some extent, by following the prescribed approaches of others. Stanislavsky was not satisfied with his own attempts at acting, identifying them as purely imitative, copying the actors he admired (Magarshack, 1986). Stanislavsky embarked upon his own search to find greater life in his art through finding essential 'truth'. Magarshack (1986) suggests that 'even as a child, Stanislavsky was preoccupied with one of the chief principles of what was later to be known as his "system": truth, that is, artistic truth, and belief. Without truth and belief there could be no stage art' (p.17).

Somewhat ironically, Stanislavsky's own personal search for improved acting meant that he devised a system that, through subsequent [re]interpretation and application, runs the risk of forming its own didactic by denying students their own search for understanding within their practice. A misuse of this didactic may result in less effective instructional practice. Copying exercises prescribed by other practitioners may not only lead to less effective instructional practice but may lead to replicated practices without a complete understanding of teaching and learning processes. Levine (1999) suggests that authentic teaching is to be found organically within the teacher, which may mean more than replicating other people's practices.

However Stanislavsky continued to evolve his understanding of actor training. Through the progression of his own work Stanislavsky demonstrated a shift in the development of his training ideology in moving from an emphasis on the psychology of the actor...
towards an emphasis on the actor's body (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2001:38). Stanislavsky's altered emphasis is not always represented in the current training techniques today and this shift 'appears to have been marginalised by Stanislavsky scholarship' (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2001:38).

2.3 Encountering the Great Divides

2.3.1 Training versus Education

Under the heading 'The Problem Areas' in Going on Stage – A Report to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on professional training for drama (1975), the report identified the perceived divide between education and training. The report states:

It is well to start by asking the very basic question of whether learning to be an actor is training or education. [...] In many fields, training and education merge into each other and this is certainly so with the arts. The fact that a course of study or training is essentially vocational does not automatically place that course in the training rather than the educational field. (p.58)

The literature does not appear to indicate that actor training has philosophically shifted to any great extent since 1975. For example from the time of my earliest interviews for this study of drama schools in the United Kingdom in June 2001 and at London's National Council for Drama Training, the responses appear to some extent to validate the perceptual existence of a training model and an education model. The perception of the training model is based upon preparing actors with the necessary practical skills for a career within the industry. On the other hand, the education model aims to enable participants to understand, appreciate, and generate theories. This divide does appear to exist both in people's minds and presumably in practice.

We have undergone a 'revolution in our national thinking about education and training' (Parsloe, 1993:31) which seems to have occurred without much public challenge or debate. We have moved from the 'final examination pass or fail' approach, to an assessment of predetermined competencies. The view inherent in the training model appears to suggest that learners should be able to obtain these competence-based qualifications by producing evidence of their competence via fulfilling predetermined outcomes. Searle (2003) holds the view that competencies are appropriate to assessing
the competent performance of work practices. Competency-based training is not the domain of abstract skills and abstract knowledge (Searle, 2003). The intention of current trends is that the academic and vocational qualification process will converge in practice and be accepted by people without question (Parsloe, 1993).

'Academic qualifications have usually been norm-referenced and competence-based qualifications are mainly criterion-referenced' (Parsloe, 1993:33). Academic and traditional models of education are value-laden (Stevenson, 2003); however competence is also normative. Technical skill in acting and its necessary meaning-making are not objective. Competence involves making value-laden judgements (Stevenson, 2003) even if they are criterion-referenced.

Taylor (2000) reminds us of the work on critical pedagogy in the drama classroom by Clar Doyle. Doyle claims that 'education is not a neutral process and cannot be denuded of the social, human, and historical elements that make up the process of teaching. Educators, he suggests, have not always been willing to account for their own and their students' 'socially determined taste, prior knowledge, language forms, abilities and modes of knowing' (Cited in Taylor, 2000:83). Therefore those involved with education and training are faced with the imperative to acknowledge not only value-laden judgements but also a range of factors affecting teaching and learning.

Unlike vocational training, preparation for the workforce is not necessarily the sole domain of education. In fact it could be a travesty for transferable knowledge if work was in itself the driving motivator for what we know and how we might think. O'Toole (2000) suggests that 'training' has become the word to define vocational preparation as distinct from education:

Many adult educators, driven by imperatives of industrial and professional contexts, prefer the word 'training' to 'education', to better define the very specific nature of their operation. They deal in transmission of skills, procedural and technical knowledge. (p.22)

'Vocational training' has also become a popular phrase, which is a puzzling term really, given that many jobs are not essentially vocational [of a calling] but are forms of paid employment. 'Employment training' or 'occupational training' would appear to fit
better. Acting, however, might well be justified as *vocational*, since many actors can frequently find themselves out of paid employment. Whether tagged as 'vocational' or 'employment', training might be defined as something other than *education*. Therefore 'we have to find, then, some differentia of training from education' (Dewey, 1968:13). Dewey (1968) further explains that 'a monotonously uniform exercise may by practice give great skill in one special act; but the skill is limited to that act' (p.66). Whereas 'the conception that the result of the educative process is capacity for further education stands in contrast with some other ideas which have profoundly influenced practice' (p.68).

Informed by the readings (Dewey, 1968; Jessup, 1991; O'Toole, 2000; Parsloe, 1993; Taylor, 2000; *et al*) Figure 2.1 indicates how I have been able to begin to separate the models of training and education into two paradigms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Conservatoire [closed]</td>
<td>• Raises questions [open]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Skills &amp; Techniques</td>
<td>• Knowledge &amp; Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A body of technical &amp; procedural knowledge to be learned [competencies]</td>
<td>• Learning to analyse and produce a body of knowledge [enabling skills]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practice/ Practise</td>
<td>• Praxis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Institutional/Academy model</td>
<td>• University/Academy model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Industry based</td>
<td>• Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Behaviouristic</td>
<td>• Humanistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mechanistic</td>
<td>• Organic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey of related literature from Chapter 2.*
In the contexts of formally organised actor training programs, acting skills are taught because they are discernible components evident in performance (Harrop, 1992). In isolating these skills the 'training' label becomes more appropriate. However when these skills are synthesised and in turn create further meaning the process takes on an 'educational' approach. Levine (1999) identifies education as being 'about people – touching the essence of other people, facilitating a full awakening of their abilities' (p.6). Levine's definition of education resonates, at least in part, with what actor training purports to be about. Some writers advocate for more than simply a skills-based program. Brestoff (1995), for example, suggests 'It is vital for actors to understand how their craft evolved and in what tradition they stand' (p.xiii).

Education seeks to open up enquiry and promotes a 'capacity for further education' (Dewey, 1968:68). However actor training which seeks to pass on a specific skill-base, may act as a conservatoire model of actor training. Dewey (1968) identifies two fundamental questions associated with vocational education: 'Whether intelligence is best exercised apart from or within activity which puts nature to human use, and whether individual culture is best secured under egoistic or social conditions' (p.320). Zarrilli (2001) proposes that training can and should be a form of 'conditioning'. Not that Zarrilli advocates 'unthinking' practice, but rather acknowledges that certain skills become automatic. However if much of the practice is simply based on conditioning alone it may not necessarily be a conducive model for opening up conscious questioning. Here the paradigms of training and education part. 'Facilitating the awakening of ability' (Levine, 1999) is a somewhat different ideology to 'conditioning', although they may in fact both be seeking to improve performance.

Zarrilli (2001) explains the training process as moving from initial concerns of competence to complete automation. Zarrilli cites Austin in an attempt to argue against 'inappropriate conditioning' (p.40):

First is the basic training to become competent. Following this comes increasing confidence in one's abilities. Finally it is necessary to 'let go'...[I]t means trusting one's brain to do the correct thing. The brain has a highly competent automatic pilot. (Austin cited in Zarrilli, 2001:40)
Complicating this further, Stanislavsky (1988) suggests that 'an actor must be 'a man of education' (p.117) with a focus on internal and external awareness. He writes:

By an actor's 'education' I mean not only the sum-total of his exterior manners, his polished competence of deportment, and the beauty of his movements, which can be easily acquired by training and drill, but the twin forces of a man developing on parallel lines, and the result of internal and external culture, which makes him into an individual human being. (p.117)

So committed was Stanislavsky to this notion of holistic and organic education in actor training that he asserts that an actor's strength, his or her ability to rise to the 'heroic heights' of thoughts and feeling, is a direct result of his/her education and outward appearance of skill combined.

2.3.2 Practice versus Theory – Phronesis/Sophia

There has existed a marked division between practice and theory – the latter often being commonly perceived by actor trainers as less attractive and accessible than the former. Academics in universities and theatre critics write about drama, whereas actors, drama schools, and the industry claim to do drama and make drama. This conceptual division has divided the camps and of course those who work in them. Taylor (2000) writes:

Unfortunately such words, theory and practice, led to unhealthy divisions between those who thought or wrote about drama compared with those who did and practised drama. The thinkers couldn't practise, and the practitioners weren't thinkers, or so the argument went. (p.5)

In the related field of theatre or drama in education 'many of the great practitioners are equally great theorists' (Taylor, 2000:6). The suspicions of being either one or the other have, in the context of Primary and Secondary school education, resolved into what is now termed 'drama in education' and 'theatre/dramatic arts'. Drama in education is a mode of teaching that favours a process approach (O'Toole, 1992; O'Neill, 1995; et al) and uses drama as a learning medium. There is, however, a division between educators in schools and the theatre profession. This is evident in that 'there is little indication that those practitioners married to the theatre are remotely interested in the drama praxis which occurs in schools' [reference to Primary and Secondary education] (Taylor, 2000:98).
There are also those, such as David Mamet (1997), who argue strongly against intellectualising acting:

Polite western society has long confounded scholarship with art. Scholarship is a reasoned endeavour; and the goal of scholarship, at least as it applies to the art of the actor, is to transform the scholar from a member of the audience into a being superior to it. (p.23)

Practical wisdom [phronesis] is valued by theatre professionals, however theoretical reason [sophia] has also been evident in the theatre for some time. Stanislavsky’s practical understanding of acting was informed by his own theoretical research conducted in the late nineteenth century, which according to Hodge (2000) ’was likely to have included Diderot’s writings, already available in Russia’ (pp.3-4). Stanislavsky was therefore as interested in theory [both in existing theory and developing his own theory] as he was with practice. It would be no surprise to find many of today’s practitioners also engaged in their own theory-making, albeit informally.

Methods of acting are emphasised in the literature on actor training at the expense of any theories of teaching acting [pedagogy]. Methods or systems of acting which purport to develop the craft of acting do not necessarily address the issues of teaching. Zarrilli (2001) suggests that traditional ways of knowing about acting may not serve either the actor or tutor well within drama school contexts. He writes:

[A] fundamental paradigm shift, from one form of essential way of knowing, to multiple epistemologies, should ideally open up the dialogue between theory[ies] and practice[s]. Unfortunately, the craft-based specific practical ways of knowing such as voice, particular ‘methods’ of acting, because of their particular concern with specifics of craft and technique, are all too often taught as absolutes, and without a sensibility capable of making sure that such techniques open the individual’s consciousness outward […]. (Zarrilli, 2001:43)

Throughout the literature the value of practical experience and the gaining of technique is both assumed and made explicit. For example Chekhov (1953) argues that a practical and working application of acting technique ’can never be properly understood without practising it’ (p.xiv). Acting is still embedded, it seems, in its practical origins of apprenticeship, practice and refinement. The counter view is that practical knowledge is subordinate to theoretical knowledge. Dewey (1968) reminds us that ’the notion that
knowledge is derived from a higher source than is practical activity, and possesses a higher and more spiritual worth, has a long history' (p.262). It is not surprising therefore that theory is frequently privileged in our society. However, knowing is derived from experience. Further, Dewey writes:

A person must have experience, he must live, if his artistry is to be more than a technical accomplishment. He cannot find the subject matter of his artistic activity within his art; this must be an expression of what he suffers and enjoys in other relationships [...]. (p.308)

The connection between life and art comes about through 'weaving together theoretical, philosophical and practical components underpinning the actor's exploration' (Manderino, 1991:3). Irving Wardle (Cited in Magarshack, 1986) suggests that Konstantin Stanislavsky 'had he been a naturally gifted actor, he would never have hammered out the system'. Wardle continues, 'if he has anything to teach us, it is not because he was blessed with inspired insight, but because he began as blind as everybody else' (p.x).

2.3.3 Process versus Product

Inherent in the use of the term 'vocational training' as applied to actor training, is an expectation of a creative output. However this is unlikely to be achieved without a creative process (Yashin-Shaw, 2003). Despite this acknowledgement, process and product have developed as two components of actor training. However process and product are not as dichotomous as it might at first be presumed. The acting industry places great emphasis upon the creative process; however the end product often acts as the over-riding imperative. Harrop (1992) argues:

Skills are the specific, recognisable part of an actor's work made evident in performance. Before there are skills, there is process. Process is the way in which an actor goes about discovering what it is performance skills should be applied to. There is no one process and, indeed, finding the right process for the right circumstances is itself a skill. (p.52)

Denis Diderot's *Le Paradoxe sur le comédien*, first published in 1830, [and as The Paradox of Acting, 1883] began the sustained debate regarding the nature of the actor's process. Diderot advocated a dualism of the inner mind controlling the outer expression of feeling. How 'truth' was positioned and interpreted in acting was a matter of major
debate at the time. The process of arriving at 'truth' (Stanislavsky, 1949), or 'non-truth' [for example Brecht in the 1930s-40s and Beckett in the 1950s-60s] now became inextricably linked to the end product. Two features of Stanislavsky's approach are the ways in which he attempted to scientifically and systematically objectify the acting process, and secondly, 'at least in the first instance, [his] major concern was not with gesture but with inner process' (Harrop, 1992:36). This thinking led to a greater emphasis upon the acting process than had been previously afforded.

Many of the processes of teaching actors how to act are born out of underlying ideologies or methodologies for refining the skills of the actor. How do acting tutors achieve their aims? Questions that focus on 'how' or 'why' are important theoretical questions to ponder, such as: How do we produce quality actors? How do we prepare actors for a changing industry? How do we teach more effectively? How do we structure our classes to benefit all students? How do I overcome my weaknesses as a tutor? Why do I teach this way? How can we use our studio space more efficiently? How do we assess our students more accurately? Why do we need to assess? How do I know if I am an effective tutor? However whilst these are significant questions pertinent to a tutor's practice, one may assume that 'what' questions mostly become the focus in pragmatic and practical product-orientated activities of producing plays and teaching acting. What is the play? What roles are there? What is our performance space? What timeline do we have? What is our budget? What students are we working with? What is the syllabus? What are the skills I am meant to be teaching? What is the condition of my studio space? What is my pay? And so on.

Asking 'what' questions often imply that there is one clear answer. 'What' questions are outcome-focussed (Taylor, 2000) which tends to circumvent the process and arrives at the product. 'How' questions can open up enquiry and imply multiple and often unclear answers. 'How' questions imply a concern for the process and the thinking that we might need to do in order to arrive at answers. However, there appear to be 'product-oriented' questions and 'process-oriented' questions at play. The process/product debate is also inextricably linked to the practice/theory debate. Taylor writes:

Of course it would be an over-simplification to say that practitioners only ask what and theoreticians ask how. This is precisely the problem with dividing our
thinking between practice and theory. The term praxis fuses together both concepts of theory and practice, where both are seen as 'part of a complex dynamic encounter'. (Taylor, 2000:5)

The early pioneers of actor training in the twentieth century were beginning to ask 'how?'. However it is in the interpretation and replication of these practices that tutors are in danger of merely asking the pragmatic 'what?'. Hence those unhelpful divisions have been generated within the arts community for sometime and are likely to be entrenched in the hegemony of practitioners. With so many varied approaches to developing an actor, perhaps questions of training should more appropriately go beyond the 'whats' and move to the 'hows'. Brestoff (1995) writes: 'These differences arise as to how to train and use the body, how to train and use the voice and mind, and how to open up and use the actor's emotional life' (p.xii).

2.3.4 Academic versus Vocational Training

There are tensions evident in the field between drama schools and university drama/theatre courses. Much of this appears to be based on the many purposes of drama; that is drama as 'actor training', drama as 'education', and drama as 'literature'. In an Australian context, Hoepper (1996) reports:

[...] there are tensions, and these tensions are associated with the many different identities drama has in the tertiary sector. One of the tensions is with drama as actor training. Vocational actor training courses have become Bachelor of Arts degree courses as a result of the amalgamation of universities to form the Unified National System, 1987-88, and these courses are still in the process of meeting the dual challenge of the academic demands of a university and the training demands of the profession. (p.2)

Some of these tensions are undoubtedly the result of drama schools viewing their responsibility as directly vocational unlike university drama departments. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report (1975) describes the basic difference between a university drama department and a drama school 'is that the former offers a general background course in both the analysis and practice of the theatre, whereas the latter provides a specialised vocational training' (p.21).
The 'academicisation' of acting is a relatively new phenomenon (Cohen, 1998). Many universities now offer a drama or theatre component, and given the limited places available in drama schools this may be perceived by potential students as an alternative to vocational training at those drama schools. Some criticism of university drama departments is aimed directly at their non-vocational nature. Cohen (1998) encapsulates this argument in his following account:

[...] not all is wonderful in university drama departments [...]. Perhaps the most important thing is that the university environment, even under the best circumstances, is an amateur one – and sometimes it is amateurish as well [...]. There are also many campus drama instructors, academically trained, who [consciously or unconsciously] resent the professional theatre world; and there are others, professionally experienced, who have fled the professional world in anger or bitterness. Both can badly misrepresent the profession. (p.30)

Much of the literature on actor training is not essentially academic. There are countless titles that offer acting techniques, acting methods, acting systems, interviews with actors, and all number of practical approaches and advice. There is surprisingly little written about actor training pedagogy; it is as if the field is suspicious about intellectualising the art and its teaching. Is this anti-academic philosophy also present in our drama schools today? Is academia perceived as too much akin to the not doing? Renk (1993) suggests that this dualism has something to do with the perceived difference in emotional and rational meaning. Renk argues:

The assumption that drama and theatre make sense of life at an emotional [lower status] level, whereas academic thinking does so on a rational [higher status] level is unfounded and it is as detrimental to art as it is to the quality of academic thinking and education. (p.198)

Similarly the call for 'intelligent actors' is anecdotally heard throughout the industry from directors to casting agents. In this instance 'intelligence' is understood to mean both emotional and intellectual intelligence. The issue of intellectual intelligence is apparently not a concept that the drama schools, especially evidenced in the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report, have been keen to embrace:

All the principals of CDS schools [Conference of Drama Schools] are adamant that academic qualifications are irrelevant to the capacity of students to benefit from drama training and to become good actors. (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:34)
The same 1975 report, however, goes on to express the view that the educational qualifications of those entering drama school will, by necessity, continue to rise albeit

*ipso facto:*

> It must be remembered that the academic qualifications of young people are steadily rising. [...] Many of the more able must almost automatically have completed the sixth form or further education college. If the profession is to continue to attract intellectually-able entrants it is inevitable that they will have some academic qualifications, whether the drama school requires them or not. (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:35)

It is not surprising then that academic qualifications have become marginalised in the field of vocational actor training. Vocational actor training in drama schools is differentiated from other drama programs and university courses by advocating its *practical* nature. Vocational actor training purports to provide intense immersion in the art of acting in order for the graduate's skill-base to be technically 'ready' to enter the profession.

The *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* (1975) highlights the difficulty of investigating actor training given the diffuse range of institutions offering drama and theatre related courses:

> Whereas an enquiry into the training of doctors would look at medical schools, an enquiry into the training of teachers at colleges of education and an enquiry into training artists at art colleges, an enquiry into training actors must look not only at drama schools which exist specifically to train actors, but also at institutions which do not see their major or even their minor functions as training actors, but some of whose graduates none the less end up on the stage. The situation is further complicated by the fact that between them, some of these other institutions provide a very wide spectrum of courses in drama-orientated subjects which, although non-vocational, contain a certain element of practical work. In particular, university drama departments sometimes use practical classes as an approach to the academic analysis of the theatre and drama history, and colleges of education [teacher training colleges] require students to do some practical exercises as a way of improving their teaching techniques and understanding the nature of the art. (p.18)

Cohen (1998) argues for the necessity of intellectual components to actor training. He suggests that acting requires all the 'sensitivity to literacy values, acquaintanceship with political and social history, understanding of philosophical dichotomies, and general appreciation of art and culture' (p.28). He further argues this is best cultivated in both modern and classical works which are 'regularly analysed, criticised, and performed'
(p.28). Cohen believes that there is a place for advanced university actor training which can provide that essential entrée into the industry. The National Council for Drama Training [NCDT] in the United Kingdom, however, warns explicitly about the non-vocational nature of university performing arts courses:

Vocational courses at recognised drama schools should not be confused with the vast number of performing arts courses on offer at UK universities. The Higher Education Funding Council funds over 700 degree courses with drama or theatre in the title, these courses may appear to have a connection with the industry, but most do not. (NCDT memorandum, 2002)

The essential close connection between the drama schools and the acting industry appears as a recurring theme in the literature. This connection promotes the vocational relevance of drama schools over universities, which are viewed as non-vocational in nature and not particularly helpful in launching an acting career.

In October 1995 a report dealing with the 'academicisation' of vocational training was presented to the Australian Federal Government. This report was titled Arts Education: Report by the Senate Environment, Recreation, Communication and the Arts Reference Committee. The Senate Report reinforces the view that academic requirements may detract from practical imperatives necessary in vocational training:

Performers and arts practitioners need to be alert to the potential problems raised by their incorporation within the university system, where a greater emphasis is to be placed on academic requirements at the expense of practice. (Australian National University Institute of the Arts, submission 116 p.1382 in Arts Education, 1995:144 Cited in Hoepper, 1996:2).

Mamet (1997) is not only opposed to the university as the place for training actors but is also resistant to any form of institutionalised instruction for actors. This is based upon his strong belief in learning acting via experience:

Past vocal and physical training, and the most rudimentary instruction in script analysis — all of which, by the way, can be acquired piecemeal through observation and practice, through personal tutoring, or through a mixture of the above — such training will not help you. Formal education for the player is not only useless, but harmful. It stresses the academic model and denies the primacy of the interchange with the audience. (p.18)
The divide such as between academic and vocational is strongly represented in the literature. This divide is reflected in traditions of practice and in ways authors come to know their practice.

2.3.5 Acting Methodology versus Pedagogy

As revealed so far in the literature the field of actor training largely confines itself to a discussion of acting methodology and not pedagogy. The underlying assumption emerges that if you have done it then you can teach it. Few writers actually address the teaching of actors. Silverberg (1999), however, asks acting tutors to examine their own views of the world and investigate 'deeper truths' in their own work before asking their students to do it. 'It is these very things you will be asking of your students if you are interested in helping these young people become human beings who act rather than actors that act' (Silverberg, 1999:16). Thus the experiential learning of acting is reinforced in the hegemony.

Kenneth Taylor (2000) reminds teachers that they should not assume that students do not bring anything to the formal learning situation. Taylor further suggests that tutors should 'run an audit of knowledge and experience and, in a phenomenological way, build upon this' (p.258). Much of the published actor training methodology implies that students forget all they have done beforehand and requires them to commence new and specific understandings of the acting process. Such is the power in the belief of a methodological approach to learning that it does not see the necessity to commence with what is known, but discover what is unknown. This resonates closely with the anecdotally cited [archaic] notion of "breaking the students down and re-building them back up again". Silverberg (1999) recalls seeing 'malicious and evil things done to acting students by teachers who use the word "honesty" as a way to make their destructive actions okay. But it is not okay' (p.16). Cohen (1998) too suggests that when students are requested to "unlearn" in an attempt to "retrain" that one should 'go along with it. You never really unlearn anything anyway, and it's what you do learn that's going to count' (p.35). However Zarrilli (2001) takes a different perspective suggesting learning always involves 'unlearning' or deconditioning. He argues that
'practices involve not just 'gaining' knowledge about something as if it were accumulated or quantifiable' (p.40) but may involve 'unlearning'.

Generalist educators have long recognised the need to investigate pedagogy in order to better understand their teaching practice and actively regulate it. A teacher's authenticity is built upon knowing about their practice, not merely imitating what they have seen before. Kenneth Taylor (2000) suggests that a teacher needs to be able to sort and retain information in his or her own head in order to be able to teach effectively. He proposes teachers should ask the following types of questions: 'What do you wish to teach? How does it work? How is it best taught? How can things be rectified if the teaching goes wrong?' (p.259). He further goes on to claim:

Questions are useful as they prompt you to modify your practice and its effectiveness. Teachers grow, develop and learn. If you are a good teacher it is inevitable: the more you teach the deeper your own understanding. Then as time passes your perspective changes. The good teacher accommodates developments, struggles to make sense and re-evaluate current assumptions. (Taylor, K., 2000:262)

In using questions, for example, Morgan & Saxton (1994) suggest metaphorically that 'the job of the teacher is to open doors' (p.75). Therefore teachers need to be clear about their pedagogy and in turn be 'authentically responsive' (Silverberg, 1999) to their students. A complete understanding of acting methodology may not necessarily guarantee an effective understanding of pedagogy. In reality there are a precious few in the field of actor training who have openly acknowledged the importance of pedagogy in their writings. Pedagogy, it seems, is replaced by descriptions of practices.

### 2.3.6 Key Competencies versus Enabling Skills

There is little doubt that one can recognise, especially in live theatre, whether an actor appears competent or not. The competency is composed of acquired skills or goals appropriate to the vocation and exercised within a formal adult educational context. These skills and work-related knowledge are summed up as 'competency' that can be ticked off a checklist once demonstrated. The *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* (1975) identified some of these:
Quite apart from the subjective area of genius, there is an objective level of competence required of actors in such aspects as movement and the projection and control of voice which has to be acquired by practice, learning and self-discipline. Whilst it might be possible in theory to acquire these skills 'on the job', in practice it is almost impossible and is invariably at the expense of an audience. (p.39)

O'Toole (2000) challenges our society's shift in the acceptance of task-centred, outcomes approach which can disempower the student as learner:

The contemporary preferred word to define the goals of much formal adult education in developed industrial countries is 'competency'. Though very much the result of quite mechanistic industry forces putting pressure on governments for quantifiable, specifically work-related skills and knowledge, the notion of 'competencies' to some extent straddles the conceptual divide. The students are still trainees, but rather than concentrating on the transmission to them of skills and technical knowledge, the word focuses on the students, and their acquisition of specific and pre-defined vocational competencies – in other words on the outcome for the learner. This would be still anchored in the realm of the behaviourists, were it not underpinned by the humanistic and socially critical concept of generic competencies that learners need to operate effectively and powerfully in all vocational settings, and in their life beyond the workplace too. (p.23)

Governments have responded to industry pressure to develop quantifiable work-related skills and knowledge (O'Toole, 2000) which, as the jargon dictates, are known as Core Skills or Key Competencies. It is unclear if it is essential to set goals in order to develop competence. Silverberg (1999) argues for well-developed skills. Concerned by the lack of outcomes in many programs, he attributes responsibility to the acting teacher. He writes:

[…] it is a great deal of first-hand observation that has provoked me to wonder: why do so many students come out of high school, college and university training programs ill-equipped in the most basic and essential skills in the craft of acting? Many teachers point the finger at a "lack of talent" in the student. But just as in a troubled corporation plagued by unhappy and dissatisfied employees, I always look to the character of the person up at the top. And because students are so eager and willing to offer their faith and trust to their acting teacher, I am deeply concerned about who it really is that is leading them. (Silverberg, 1999:14)

However there are inherent dangers when using outcome-driven approaches in striving for competence as they may constrict the design of a syllabus. Gross (1978), for example, places the emphasis upon the individuals rather than the syllabus. He writes:
I believe that there can be no syllabus set for actor training. Goals, yes; a repertoire of techniques, yes; but each student must be seen uniquely and techniques selected according to his needs with the utmost perspicacity. (p.8)

Competence and confidence are two qualities recognisable in the outcomes of actor training. However, when teachers claim to be building confidence in their students what they may really be suggesting is they are 'harnessing the mind of the learner' (Parsloe, 1993:150). Balk (1991) argues that rather than harnessing their minds that these learners must eventually be allowed to learn through their own experience. He writes:

Performers need the information – the instructions – necessary to develop and expand their performing power on their own, and to be released from dependency upon external authority figures. (p.164)

Difficult to pin down, acting seems to be more than a check-list of practical skills, although undoubtedly performance skills (for example voice control) are important. However, enabling skills are also essential if the actor is to continue to grow on their own as Balk proposes. Manderino (1991) suggests that 'unlike other forms of education, an acting teacher or coach is concerned with your entire being as an artist – emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual' (p.62).

2.3.7 Teacher versus Artist

Silverberg's question of 'who it really is that is leading them'? (1999:14) is in part a fundamental basis to the inquiry of this report. The value of contemporary practical experience by their staff is highly regarded in drama schools. However if drama schools value those in the industry how do the tutors continue to remain in the industry and at the same time be removed from the industry to become fulltime teachers? The literature is only partially helpful in answering this conundrum.

The theatre has a long tradition of establishing credibility through the use of listing the names of high-profile actors with whom one has taught, studied, and performed, and productions in which one has appeared. Credits are used to justify one's legitimacy or credibility to participate. Unlike academic credentialism, the value of practical experience is viewed as paramount. This emphasis appears to overshadow the
understanding of pedagogy and the role of the fulltime professional teacher. Does practical experience in the discipline equate to being able to teach effectively?

In the related field of drama education Kenneth Taylor's experience of Secondary school drama teachers would suggest that practical experience in the discipline certainly does not automatically equate to being an effective teacher:

I have noticed that many students come to the program with a wealth of drama experience but unable at first to describe this experience or make it accessible to others. They may be able to demonstrate specific acting skills or remember facts about the lives of dramatists, but they cannot make sound logical connections in order to break down what they know into small meaningful parcels. They cannot give clear practical demonstrations and exercises that will enable others not only to understand but be able to use for themselves the concepts under review. In short they cannot teach. (Taylor, K., 2000:256)

The question of whether a great artist makes a great tutor of artists is reminiscent of the central question raised by the Terrence McNally play Master Class, a play depicting the life of Maria Callas, an opera diva of last century. When her voice failed she 'resorted' to teaching singing. Callas knew her art well and was given many accolades during her career. However in this play she was depicted as having a short temper, a highly idiosyncratic and an unpredictable manner that could tear students' confidence to pieces. No doubt she loved her art and consequently demanded the perfection she thought it deserved. This at times caused enormous tension between Callas and her students, leaving no doubt that 'staff and students can have the most positive and also most devastating effect on each other' (Rideout, 1995:15). The influence of teachers over the students should not be underestimated. Billington (1973) writes:

The importance of the established drama schools, however, lies not simply in the help they may provide in getting a job. It resides in the fact that they are determining attitudes to the art of acting and influencing people's method of work for the rest of their lives. (p.2)

These attitudinal constructs surrounding the art and craft of acting are indeed significant influences that are passed down from tutors to students. The very notions of 'teaching acting' are passed down too. Kenneth Taylor (2000) suggests that what is learned through training helps actors make sense of the process for themselves because it has been internalised. 'They have struggled and made sense for themselves, not for others' (Taylor, K, 2000:256). However, teachers of acting have had to deal with the
real world demands (Brestoff, 1995) of being an actor in a difficult and often insecure industry. It is this value which is placed upon knowing how it is and how the actor might 'survive' it [or 'make it']. Therein again lies the distinction between a methodology and pedagogy – that is knowing how to act and knowing how to teach. Because most acting is based on strong methodological frameworks, suspicion appears to be raised when it comes to those who claim to be able to teach something they themselves have not done professionally. Generalist educators too are likely to be equally suspicious of those who have had practical experience but have not taught professionally or indeed possess teaching qualifications to do so.

The *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* (1975) attempts to debunk the myth that 'those who can – do, and those who can't – teach':

In fact all the evidence seems to be that, so far from hindering their careers, actors who involve themselves in teaching find that this is a distinct advantage in their careers and we are therefore pleased to help in laying that myth finally to rest by lending support to the view that involvement of the profession in drama schools can only be good for both parties and is strongly to be recommended. (p. 43)

Teaching is a complex act. Just as a sophisticated understanding of the acting process demands many abilities and skills, including the skills of application, so too does the act of teaching. Kenneth Taylor (2000) makes the analogy of driving a car. He suggests that 'it is often exhilarating to be able to drive a car but when the car breaks down you are at the mercy of those who understand how the car works' (p.260). Teachers sometimes find themselves imitating the teaching practice of others, especially their own former teachers:

[...] most teachers teach as they were taught. A student of Stella Adler's will teach her work, with minor variations. You teach what you know. But it must be admitted that some of the magic of these great teachers is, or was, in them alone. (Brestoff, 1995:xii)

*Authentic* teaching, however, relies upon the teacher having a clear understanding of the content and the learning processes not just to imitate them:

It is not enough to copy a good teacher. You must understand what it is that the teacher does and how you can use those techniques for yourself that will make you into a good teacher. If you copy someone else and the lesson goes wrong how can you fix things unless you understand the theory behind the process? If
you copy, what are you copying? Can you possibly know the history that has
gone into the lesson that you have observed between the teacher and class?
(Taylor, K., 2000:260-261)

Perhaps unlike acting teachers who may pass on the mantle of their own teachers,
movement teachers in drama schools [who are usually trained as dancers] 'have
developed their own method of training, of a kind they consider to be appropriate to
actors' (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:48). These teachers are compelled, in a
way, to develop for themselves a methodology and may also be alert to issues of
pedagogy.

Silverberg (1999) suggests that there are in essence two choices in actor training: 'the
kind of teaching that allows students to think of acting as an imitation of behaviour. It
produces work that is false, fake, artificial, pretended, slick, intellectual, deadly' (p.14)
or 'the kind of teacher who leads students towards true creativity, humanity, and
artistry' (p.15). This latter approach, according to Silverberg, offers the actor a holistic
training:

[…] the potential of becoming the magnificent expression of who you truly
are, of feeling greater pain and more sheer joy than you ever thought possible,
and experiencing a new kind of aliveness that will permit you to see the world
and your craft through fresh eyes. (p.15)

The question still remains though: Can artistry really be taught? Gardner (1983)
suggests that some people can be seen as 'talented' and that these abilities can never
actually be learned. However, talent can be further refined both through practice and in
practice. Polanyi (1962) suggests that artistic practice can not in itself be simplistically
reduced to a set of rules:

Rules of art can be useful, but do not determine the practice of an art; they are
maxims, which can serve as a guide to an art only if they can be integrated into
the practical knowledge of the art. They cannot replace this knowledge. (p.50)

Polanyi (1962) endorses a practical approach to learning. Authors such as Stevenson
(2003), Kanes (2003) and others advocate notions of 'contextualised' learning, where
learning occurs within and through real life environments or simulations of those
environments. The acting tutor is therefore ideologically positioned in the middle,
balancing between prescribing technique [rules] on one hand and facilitating practical experience [freedom to make mistakes] on the other.

Although principally interested in drama education within a primary school context, O'Mara (1999) contributes to our understanding of the complexities of teaching practice. She writes:

The complexity of the classroom and the changing nature of its dynamism can not simply be managed by the application of steadfast rules. Even using teaching strategies requires the teacher to have already analysed the situation at hand – understanding what there is to be noticed and defining what the problems are in the situation. The teacher must restructure the "complex and uncertain" situations into a readable and manageable frame. Setting the problem and defining the situation are the artistry as much as the action. (p.27)

The *teaching of artistry* is by necessity connected with the *artistry of teaching*. The two are inextricably linked. The art of teaching is an 'organic process' (Taylor, K., 2000:262) and the teacher's skill is how to cover necessary skills and processes that will create graduates who feel enabled enough to continue their own journey of discovery within the artform. Silverberg (1999) reduces this to one over-riding belief, suggesting that 'the single most important thing that a teacher must understand...is a fundamental value of all great theatre: *the only thing that really communicates from the stage is what the actor truly knows*’ (p.15).

### 2.4 Current Organisational Practice

#### 2.4.1 Practice and the Profession

Is it the role of a drama school to react to industry requirements alone or should they set the agenda with their own idealism? How the practice of acting tutors is situated in the profession is a necessary aspect of actor training which needs consideration. What role do these drama schools and their tutors actually play? Billington (1973) argues for drama schools to exhibit a more proactive approach to shaping the industry. He writes:

[...] if one looks to a drama school to instil a philosophy of theatre, to provide some kind of inspirational training, even to change the theatre by turning out a brand of student who will question the structure of the whole industry, then I would say they often fall alarmingly short...I would still like to see more schools that were built around a hard core of idealism and that had some vision
of the kind of theatre they would hope, in the best of all possible worlds, to be serving. (p.19)

Should drama schools encourage students to question current practice rather than adopting a *conservatoire* model, which seeks to pass on 'necessary' skills? Are drama schools *re-active* or *pro-active* to the needs of the industry at large? Similarly Billington (1973) asks the following questions: 'should [drama schools] prepare students for the acting profession as it imperfectly exists or should they prepare them for the acting profession as it ideally should be? In short, should training be vocational or inspirational?' (p.3). However, maybe the answers to these questions are not found in this simple 'either/or' binary. A more complete understanding of this might be found in focussing on both vocational imperatives and also on inspirational practice to effect change.

Another paradox of actor training exists in the tension between the individual and the ensemble. Again Billington raises this issue as another tension within drama schools – that is the competitive nature of the industry versus the need to work effectively in ensemble. He argues:

> The structure of the whole entertainment industry forces the actor to be competitive, self-absorbed and even slightly ruthless in the pursuit of his own ends, but that the art of acting itself requires him to be alive to his feelings of others and capable of subordinating himself to the demands of an ensemble. (1973:18)

Drama school mission statements are intended to guide the overall philosophy of practice. A survey of drama school documents reveals that some of these mission statements tend to point to specific methods of training or approaches to training. Some institutions will adopt one cohesive approach, whilst others may adopt more *eclectic* approaches. The issue of having a unified approach to actor training was raised in 1975 in the *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* and has received surprisingly little attention in the available literature since. The report states:

> This gives rise to a problem of great concern to drama schools. Many principals and members of staff argued that a school should have a certain unified approach or artistic philosophy; otherwise their training would tend to be piece-meal, scrappy, and uncoordinated. At the same time they were aware that they are training students to earn their living in a profession where many different practices prevail. There is even uncertainty between the advantages of
It is debatable whether one approach is more helpful than a diversity of approaches and the literature is not particularly helpful in clarifying this issue. 'Unity' may imply a more closed ideological position and 'diversity' may acknowledge the enormous range of methods, systems and styles extant within the industry or profession. This also raises questions regarding how institutions maintain unity or diversity given the large number of sessional and visiting staff usually employed by them. Hugh Cruttwell, principal of RADA in the early 1970s argues that 'unless you've got a small-scale school, it's not possible to stick to any one theory. As soon as you get a place of any size, then you lose any homogeneity' (Cited in Billington, 1973:3).

Each drama school has carefully developed its own aims and objectives that mark its unique qualities in the vocational training of actors. Importantly, each institution builds its reputation upon 'excellence' within the field. Again, the more sought-after the drama school, the more chance there might be of attracting the very best student actors. The better the graduating actors the better the reputation and so on. As one drama school principal put it: 'We cannot make diamonds out of stones, but we can and do turn rough diamonds into polished ones' (Cited in Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:40).

Drama schools rely on the talent of in-coming students to keep the competition and reputation high. Every drama school examined in this report has produced exceptionally high quality prospectuses. So too do they appear to go to some length to attract high calibre students nationally and internationally. Many 'leading' or 'elite' drama schools conduct auditions nationally and internationally too. These schools offer courses ranging from diplomas to more popular bachelor degrees and some now even offer practice-based masters degrees and doctorates.

It appears to have become increasingly unclear what the purposes might be of the myriad acting courses available to students seeking a vocational pathway. Grotowski (1975 [1969]), troubled by the need to develop actors' techniques, initiated the concept of an institute for methodological research – a place for working actors. Grotowski's
model could offer continuing possibilities in developing the practice of actors. He writes:

The actor who works here is already a professional for, not only his creative act but also the laws which govern it, become the object of his preoccupations. An institute for methodical research is not to be confused with a school that trains actors and whose job it is to "launch" them. Nor should this activity be confused with theatre [in the normal sense of the word] although the very essence of the research demands the elaboration of a performance and its confrontation with an audience. One cannot establish a method yet remain aloof from the creative act. (Grotowski, 1975:97)

2.4.3 Accreditation of Tutors & Their Employment

The accreditation of tutors must be a significant issue for actor training. Particularly pertinent is the issue of formal teaching qualifications in our drama schools. In 1975 the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report found that:

The number of colleges of education graduates who join the staffs of drama schools is very small, since most drama schools consider it vital to take their staff from the ranks of practising actors and directors. (p.23)

The British Government recently raised the issue of certification for acting/drama tutors at all levels\(^\text{13}\). It is anticipated that the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, UK [QCA] will introduce 'principles' for Higher Levels of qualification. It is believed that the awarding bodies for Speech and Drama have agreed to work together on developing these qualifications. In so doing, the National Occupational Standards and Qualified Teacher Status documents have been consulted in order to inform draft proposals. The Department for Education and Skills seeks to have drama tutors equipped with a recognised teacher qualification. The drama tutors for whom this certification will apply are limited to private drama schools or stage schools, and sessional drama teachers who teach in primary and secondary schools and the like. The Department has no jurisdiction over drama schools that operate under the province of universities, which now covers all actor-training institutions accredited by the National Council for Drama Training [NCDT] in the United Kingdom. This is an obvious anomaly where the institutions themselves are compelled to comply with certification

\(^{13}\) Based upon consultation draft copy of 'QCA Principals for the accreditation of higher level qualifications as they relate to educators in Speech and Drama' dated 5\(^{th}\) March, 2002.
requirements to remain recognised by the NCDT but teaching staff are not required to possess any formal qualifications, be it teaching [pedagogy] or foundation discipline.

Rideout (1995) somewhat indisputably argues that 'any academy is only as good as its current staff and students' (p.15). All of the drama schools referred to in this report have a core of full time staff that is supplemented by a large proportion of sessional or visiting staff who are employed as required. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report (1975) found that 'this is partly because of the generally accepted desirability of having some members of staff who combine their teaching with an active career on the stage' (p.43). One would also expect that it might also be a financial imperative offering greater staffing flexibility. The qualifications of the tutors are therefore varied with little or no emphasis placed upon formal teaching qualifications. Actors may find that almost by default they begin teaching acting when their original aim predominantly was to act for a career. In trusting their own methodology and training, do drama schools prefer to employ their own graduates? Anecdotally one may suspect that 'the old school tie' is alive and well in Australian and English drama schools.

How do tutors gain adequate preparation to teach? How are tutors mentored into their roles? The issue of mentoring tutors as they enter actor-training institutions seems to be a significant question. The reading in the field (Parsloe, 1993; Katz & Henry, 1993; Prior, 1997; et al.) of how people best acquire the skills of their new occupation suggests a formal mentoring process be established. Parsloe (1993) also advocates some intellectual learning to accompany any training to improve skill levels.

The term 'mentor' came into vogue in the 1960s in its use by educational sociologist Torrence (1980) followed by Sheehy (1976), and Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe (1977) in their descriptions of academic delivery. The 1980s and 1990s saw a growing interest and acceptance in mentoring in areas of business, health and education (Lester & Johnson, 1981; Hjornevik, 1986; Prior, 1997; Hays, Gerber & Minichiello, 1999; et al.). Oxford University adopted a mentoring approach in the late 1980s in collaboration with the Oxfordshire Local Education Authority in order to assist beginning teachers. Of course mentoring is not new to theatre and in particular actor training. The craft of acting has relied upon mentoring young actors through an apprenticeship system since
Thespis in the sixth century through to Elizabethan England and into the European Repertory theatre of the nineteenth to late twentieth century. Indeed, apprenticeship was the model outmoded in favour of institutionalised actor training.

The literature surrounding mentoring beginning teachers is considerable and is located in a well-established field. Not only is it suggested that mentors offer *support* and *professional development*, but they also fulfil an inculcation function into the new work environment:

> The benefits of mentoring to protégés include access to people with specialised skills, and a role model who he/she may choose to emulate. Protégés are usually privy to personal knowledge and the politics of the institution, while being groomed in the unwritten rules of the profession. (Hays, *et al*, 1999:87)

Primary and Secondary schools have often been slow to formally recognise the importance of the mentor with little or no support available to the mentor to facilitate his or her job (Prior, 1997:6). It follows too, that drama schools may also not give significant recognition to formal mentoring programs. The available literature is not clear that there is any indication that mentoring beginning acting tutors is researched or even extant, if indeed it ever was.

### 2.4.4 Accreditation of Drama Schools

In the United Kingdom, accreditation of drama courses occurs through the National Council for Drama Training [NCDT]. Australia has no equivalent regulating body, due largely to the small number of drama schools in existence. Also these schools either operate within universities or closely affiliated with them such as Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art [NIDA]. The purpose of the NCDT is to 'promote, enhance and maintain the highest possible standards of vocational training and education for the professional actor and stage manager' (NCDT Criteria & Procedures 2000/2001). The NCDT was established in 1976 following the publication of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation report *Going on the Stage* into the vocational training of actors. Since its establishment, the NCDT has perceived the accreditation of courses in drama schools as its main priority. The reasons it gives are as follows:
Accreditation contributes to raising and maintaining of standards in drama training.

The list of courses accredited by the NCDT guides government and funding bodies in determining awards to their students.

The involvement of all sides of the profession in the accreditation process helps to promote closer links between the profession and the training sector. (NCDT Criteria & Procedures, 2000/2001:1)

The NCDT has two accreditation boards – one for Acting courses and one for Stage Management/Technical Theatre courses. These boards are given the responsibility for the accreditation process. A report is compiled by the chairman and is based upon the findings from panel visitations that aim to assess by observing classes, meeting with students and staff and reviewing other statistical data. These schools are visited by a panel of inspectors for two days, however Rideout (1995) warns that 'what the inspectors won't see is the teacher who can teach an excellent class when required to do so but who can be lazy and ill-prepared for the rest of the year' (p.17). This would appear to be an obvious weakness of flying appraisal visits.

Currently 21 institutions are accredited in the United Kingdom, which offer in total 48 accredited courses ranging from one-year certificate or diplomas to three-year degree courses [BA/ BA (Hons.)]. A number of these courses are not limited to actor training but also include such areas as stage management and technical courses. Any accreditation system is always open to the question: 'to what and whose standards are being applied?' (Cairns, 1996:17). The accreditation process raises questions about its reliability to improve actor training. As already mentioned, Australia has no such external accreditation body as the NCDT but relies upon university accreditation procedures for those drama schools operating within universities, and state education departments for those not.

2.4.5 Defining Vocational Expertise & Connoisseurship

So what does it mean to be an 'expert' in actor training? Expertise is difficult to precisely describe as it is often particularly automated and is socially determined (Stevenson, 2003). The term 'expertise' connotes mastery over a set of skills which sets the expert aside from the novice. In explaining 'expertise' Stevenson writes:
People can be seen in positive terms like efficient, skilled, capable, gifted, clever, or excellent. At the same time, a progression in expertise is usually apparent with practice. So an expert car driver can drive a car much better than someone just learning can – the car is driven automatically, fluidly, with confidence, without attention all the sub-skills involved, and with precision; and unexpected problems that arise can be handled. (Stevenson, 2003:4)

The literature refers to both 'expertise' and 'connoiseurship' as mastery over practice. But are they synonymous concepts? Eisner (1985) defines 'connoiseurship' as a 'fundamental core of realisation that gives criticism its material' (p.220). In order to develop connoiseurship, Eisner argues, one must see the subtleties, which implies much more than simply 'looking'. Although these terms are sometimes used synonymously, there appears to be some significant distinction between 'expertise' and 'connoiseurship' and this distinction can be illuminated and clarified in the etymology of the two terms.

'Connoiseurship' from connoisseur is literally defined as 'one who is competent to pass critical judgement in an art' (The Macquarie Dictionary). It is derived from the Old French connoître and Latin cognoscere, 'come to know or get to know'. Synonyms include iudex, meaning 'judge', and existimator meaning 'one who forms or gives opinions, a critic'. The distinction is that 'expertise' implies having skill or knowledge in a particular field. It is derived from the Latin expertus, meaning 'having tried', and experior, 'to know by having tried, known by experience'. A synonym is peritia [feminine] meaning 'experience and skill'.

The concept of expertise would appear to be more useful than connoiseurship to a study of actor training. Expertise is rooted in the predominant value reflected in the field, that of tutors having experienced professional acting first for themselves. Zarrilli (2001) suggests that 'experience and embodiment are central to the practices of theatre and performance, whether of past, present, or future' (p.35). Given these distinctions it may be argued that an experienced actor as an acting tutor is of more value to the training process than a critic might be. Expertise is composed of important characteristics of human capacities that are in turn developed through experience (Stevenson, 2003). A critic may simply pass judgement without necessarily knowing how by practical experience.
2.4.6 Expertise through Situated Learning

An 'expert', according to Stevenson (2003), is regarded as someone who has considerable facility with meanings and their inter-connections. He argues that 'expertise is being able to access and utilise the rich connections among meanings that enable an expert to perform well on routine tasks and to work out ways to solve creative and other problems' (Stevenson, 2003:5). Some members of actor-training communities may display what is commonly known as expertise – a facility with connecting different kinds of knowing.

Whilst actor training is laden with doctrine, the ability of this community to reproduce itself is largely through organised and institutionalised training. However, the reproductive ability of this community is not derived so much from the doctrine, but from the co-participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) embedded within it. The interactions between the tutors [as experts] and the student actors [as novices or apprentices] are formally aimed at developing skills and personal qualities. It is through these interactions that the value of the tutor as the more skilled or expert over the acting student is reinforced. This is underscored by the fact that the tutor relies upon his or her own experience of once having been a professional actor.

Who is the expert? In what are they expert? And how are the students given access to becoming experts themselves? A challenge to traditional notions of expertise is derived from more recent understandings of situated learning advanced by Lave & Wenger (1991). This is part of a growing body of research in the human sciences exploring the situated character of human understanding and communication which challenges traditional notions of expertise and models of learning. Situated learning explores the relationship between learning and the social situations in which learning occurs – not the acquisition of propositional knowledge, but rather learning as co-participation. The individual learner is not simply gaining a body of knowledge which is transported and reapplied in differing contexts later on, but rather the learner acquires the skill to perform by actually engaging in the process [legitimate peripheral participation] (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The learner is positioned, albeit conditionally, as 'expert'. This is a shift in the focus of learning from classical notions of the individual mind acquiring
mastery over processes of reasoning and description, by processes of internalising and manipulating structures.

'Learning' is a process that takes place in a framework of participation, not merely in the individual's mind (Lave & Wenger, 1991). There is a process of mediation between the participants in this community, and learning is distributed among co-participants. Understanding of Situated learning has the potential to challenge much of the current practice in drama schools by offering an opportunity to investigate tutoring practice more fully. Situated learning also provides for a useful paradigmatic connection between the original apprenticeship model for actor preparation and the way acting is purported to be taught today. Lave & Wenger (1991) began their work by examining the apprenticeship system, which led them to draw a distinction between a theoretical framework for analysing educational forms and the historical instances of apprenticeship. This further led to an exploration of what is called 'situated learning'.

In a similar way if we are to acknowledge the validity of Michael Chekhov's (1953) view that 'the technique of acting can never be properly understood without practising it' (p.xiv), then the argument for acknowledging situated learning through co-participation in actor training is substantially enhanced.

2.4.7 Patterns of Meaning & Types of Knowledge

Meaning is generated in multiple ways. The early work by Phenix (1964) is useful in identifying six fundamental patterns of meaning which emerge from the analysis of possible distinctive modes of human understanding. They are identified as Symbolics, Empirics, [A]esthetics, Synnoetics, Ethics, and Synoptics. All of these can be identified in the talk of acting tutors however some of these modes may become more significantly represented.

Symbolics are evidenced through language, gestures and rituals. Empirics are scientific in nature such as factual descriptions, theories and generalisations. [A]esthetics are heightened states of consciousness through the senses and the feelings, especially in the arts. Ethics involves moral meanings that relate to obligation rather than fact.
Synnoetics are evidenced in tacit knowledge where the knowledge is personal or relational. Synoptics are comprehensively integrated meanings evidenced in the disciplines of philosophy, history and religion, which combine empirical, [a]esthetic and synnoetic meanings.

Meaning has long been associated with the practical act of doing. For example Dewey 1968 [1916] identified that meaning is derived from one's capacity-to-do. 'Meaning is related to doing, where doing refers to direct experience' (Stevenson, 2003:8). Direct personal experience is synnoetic. 'Meaning in doing is concrete rather than abstract, and specific rather than general' (Stevenson, 2003:8). This emphasis upon the practical rather than the theoretical builds a practical knowledge, which is predominantly exhibited here in the literature on actor training. Therefore the types of knowledge exhibited by acting tutors are likely to be influenced by this practical and experiential history of understanding.

Zarrilli (2001), for example, questions what it is that constitutes knowledge in practice and training by deriving three components to that knowledge base:

Like other practices, first and foremost there is knowledge gained in and for an ever-deepening relationship to the act of practice – a sense of assiduous attentiveness in the moment of performance or doing. Second is knowledge about my engagement, i.e. my active reflection, here and now…on this experience, and the further parsing and articulation of optimal nature and qualities of this active state of being/doing. Third is my knowledge about the metatheoretical issues implicit in, and extrapolated from this mode of practice, i.e. my reflections upon the relationship between the body and mind in modes of embodied practice/performance, or upon embodiment in the act of reflection, or the 'larger' epistemological issues […]. (Zarrilli, 2001:36)

Whilst there is a great deal which can be learnt consciously, Gordon (1992) suggests that because 'so much of the actor's art is learned unconsciously, it should not be too surprising to discover that not every one is able to pinpoint or even explain what it is they do "intuitively"' (p.1).

Complexity is also encountered when seeking systematic descriptions of knowledge as the literature on 'knowledge' is diverse. Various authors provide an array of distinctions between multiple knowledge types. As de Jong & Ferguson-Hessler (1996) describe,
some attempts are based on cognitive theories and instructional design theories but most take either an explicit or implicit epistemological viewpoint, implying 'that elements of the knowledge base are characterised by the function they fulfil in the performance of a [target] task' (p.3-4).

Examples of the types of knowledge encountered in the literature include, but are not limited to: procedural knowledge, situated knowledge, declarative knowledge, strategic knowledge, domain specific knowledge, meta-knowledge, general knowledge, structural knowledge, tacit knowledge, abstract knowledge and concrete knowledge. In this report I have found the following four knowledge types useful constructs which are applicable to the data: personal knowledge, social knowledge, intellectual knowledge, and practical knowledge. These knowledge types and other knowledge types adaptable to 'teacher knowledge' are detailed in 2.4.8. Further, the identification of inert or tacit knowledge are also used and outlined in 2.4.9.

2.4.8 Teaching knowledge

Elbaz (1983) argues that 'the single factor which seems to have the greatest power to carry forward our understanding of the teacher's role is the idea of teachers' knowledge' (p.11). Indeed there is a growing body of research based on 'teacher knowledge' which has flourished over the last twenty or so years, not to mention the wider academic field of 'knowledge' in general. Of particular use to this study are the types of knowledge that are concerned with teachers' practice.

Pedagogical knowledge (Shulman, 1987) broadly represents a teaching knowledge – that is how to teach. Shulman (1987) advances the notion that this knowledge can be further divided into two distinct parts: content-nonspecific knowledge and content-specific knowledge. Content-nonspecific knowledge is knowledge of teaching practices that are generally procedural in nature, that is the mechanics of managing the students' learning. For example, managing student conduct, student motivation, group dynamics, record keeping, assessing and delivering [and writing] syllabus content. In contrast to this is Pedagogical-content knowledge, which is knowledge of how to teach what is specific to what is being taught (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995), for example, methods of
acting or how to correct students' naïve theories and misconceptions about subject matter (Gardner cited in Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). Shulman (1987) argues that both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are necessary types of knowledge for expert teaching.

A teacher's perspective, according to Elbaz (1983), encompasses intellectual belief, perception, feeling, values, purpose and commitment. All of these components contribute to teachers' knowledge and subsequently inform their individual pedagogical construct systems. At the crux of this study are issues of 'teacher knowledge' (Shulman, 1987) which underpin a tutor's daily practice making them more or less expert as teachers. One's shift from novice to expert is a continuum of development (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Learning to teach, therefore, is a continual process of hypothesis testing (Alexander, 1984) and refinement. Teaching, by its very nature, is an inexact profession (Levine, 1999) where intuition plays a major part. No amount of formal or theoretical instruction can ultimately prepare a teacher for how the classroom dynamic will work.

Silverberg (1999) suggests that the expert teacher of acting needs to be able to do three things. Firstly, the teacher must understand what are the skills that make great acting. Secondly, the teacher must have made those skills habitual for him or herself. Finally, have a way to guide students to experiences from which they will also make these abilities habitual. In advocating the habitualisation of skills, Silverberg (1999) rejects imitative behaviours and favours honest and human qualities. Gross (1978) is also committed to the belief that the tutor's job is not so much to do with teaching acting, but to 'help students become the kind of people who can act' (p.3). Parsloe (1993) suggests that 'understanding, and being able to explain how different people learn is essential if you are to guide people towards their most effective development route' (p.23). A developed understanding of pedagogy would therefore seem indispensable. The Calouste Gulbenkian Report (1975) in its findings notes the two essential components offered by drama schools:

As with teacher training colleges, they [drama schools] offer students the benefit of teachers who combine practical experience of the profession with specialised teaching skills. (p.39)
The analogy between teacher training and actor training may not, however, be an altogether comfortable one. After all, a drama school is primarily concerned with training actors not teachers of acting. Sternberg & Horvath (1995) distinguish between 'those teachers who are expert at teaching students from those who are merely experienced at teaching students' [emphasis added] (p.9). Therefore the question remains, how do the teachers obtain these 'specialised teaching skills'? Concerns over the qualifications of acting teachers were being raised in the 1970s yet apparently this has received little attention since. Gross (1978) draws our attention to the 'special qualities' of an acting teacher that may not be reliably dependent upon either qualifications or practical acting experience:

We now seem to understand [most of us] that the PhD in no way guarantees a person is qualified for the subtle, complex, and dangerous job of teaching acting. This is a very important realisation; we may wonder why it was so long coming. It's true that we immediately fell into an equally silly belief that any professional actor or anyone with an MFA in acting is qualified for the job, but we seem to have caught on rather quickly that what one needs to know to act and what one needs to know to teach acting are two very different things and so we're casting off that error too. Clearly, the qualifications of the acting teacher are very special. (p.2)

In understanding what those special qualifications might be, a close examination of pedagogy would seem necessary. It appears that vocational actor training has shunned an examination of its own pedagogy, possibly in the belief that acting methodology [the skills] and practical experiences as an actor are alone sufficient. Van Manen (1990) argues that 'pedagogy requires practical rather than intellectualised forms of knowledge' (p.10) which may provide one reason why the available literature yields little meaningful examination of pedagogical practice in drama schools. Undoubtedly many acting teachers possess their own, if only unconscious, knowledge of pedagogy. However this would require an exploration of what constitutes such a 'knowledge'.

Four general types of knowledge have guided the analysis of data in this report. These have been particularly informed by the orientations to practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1983) exhibited by teachers. Outlined as follows are four knowledges that have been adapted in this report:

- Personal [Self-actualisation]
- Social [Sharing and responsibility]
Personal knowledge is developed from particular perspectives and points of view, which shape a teacher's practical knowledge. According to Elbaz (1983), a teacher's perspective 'encompasses not only intellectual belief, but also perception, feeling, values, purpose and commitment' (p.17). This knowledge may involve understandings of self-actualisation. Social knowledge is that practical knowledge that is socially conditioned. Teachers will automatically shape the subject matter according to the students before them. It is likely there will be a sense of understanding about a social responsibility in their teaching. Practical knowledge, Elbaz suggests, that 'implicit in the situational, personal and social orientations of the teacher's knowledge is its experiential base' (p.18). The everyday experiencing, and the knowledge which gives shape to it, is part of the level of consciousness which the teacher brings to their practice. Elbaz (1983) argues that 'the teacher's practical knowledge is not a compendium of practical advice from other fields but a body of knowledge orientated to a particular practical context' (p.15) which within the contexts of acting will include skills, techniques and experiences. Intellectual knowledge is 'the teacher's knowledge [which] is held in a particular relationship to the realm of theory' (Elbaz, 1983:21), ideologies, and reflectiveness. Teachers are influenced and shaped by their own education and training and are also influenced by forms of thought and discourse around them exhibited in their workplace and field of expertise. As a result, teachers arrive at implicit if not explicit theories of knowledge, which inform their practical knowledge.

2.4.9 Embodied Practices & Tacit Knowledge

It may be argued that teachers call upon multiple ways of knowing which are likely to become enhanced through experience. Dewey (1968) links knowledge with experience and identifies the habitualised nature of such knowing:

[…] the function of knowledge is to make one experience freely available in other experiences. The word "freely" marks the difference between the principle of knowledge and that of habit. Habit means that an individual undergoes a modification through an experience, which modification forms a
predisposition to easier and more effective action in a like direction in the
future. Thus it also has the function of making one experience available in
subsequent experiences. (p.339)

Rather than the question of *how we know the truth*, Bruner (1986) suggests that we may
be better advised to consider the question 'how do we come to endow experience with
meaning?' (Bruner after Richard Rorty, p.12). Zarrilli (2001) asks the essential question
of what constitutes knowledge in the practice of exercises used in long-term actor
training. A reading of the literature suggests that a great deal of implicit knowledge
surrounds the performing of certain training exercises. Learned exercises or *exegeses*,
systematic approaches and techniques become the seldom-questioned embodied
practices of acting:

> Experience and embodiment are central to the practices of theatre and
> performance, whether of past, present, or future. The actor/performer, the
> spectator, the critic, the patron etc. are all engaged in practices that are
> embodied and through which experiences, and thereby theories, interpretations,
> histories, meditations/reflections etc about performance are generated. (Zarrilli,
> 2001:35)

The notion of *embodied practices* contributes to an understanding of this study's central
question in characterising tutor practice. Bruner (1986) alerts us to an examination of
'those dealings which are premised on a mutual sharing of assumptions and beliefs
about how the world is [...]’ (p.57). In this report tutors are invited to discuss their
practice and their own philosophies of practice whereby many of these assumptions
regarding acting and actor training are explored.

Göranzon (1990) and Josefson (1991) build their view of knowledge on Nordenstam
(1983), who divide subjective knowing into two ontological levels of knowing: *tacit*
and *explicit*:

- **Explicit**: theoretical [declarative] knowledge
- **Tacit**: practical [know-how] knowledge
  - familiarity [social, praxis-based] knowledge

Similarly, Polanyi (1983 [1966]) gives us an understanding that personal practical
knowledge is largely *tacit*. He describes this as one can 'know more than we can tell'
Knowledge held by practitioners often remains tacit in nature, evidenced by O'Mara (1999) in her own research. She writes:

Tacit knowledge is that which is known to the practitioner to such an extent that it is not a part of conscious decision making when working in action. As a practitioner develops expertise, their practice becomes increasingly tacit as they base their actions on their personal practical knowledge of the field. Much personal practical knowledge is tacit, feelings and hunches which are brought to bear on the decision making process but not considered by the practitioner.

Articulating one's practice can therefore pose a challenge when dealing with the unconscious realm of decision-making. It is in these hazy areas practitioners are likely to expose 'patterns of error' and through routine become less attentive to reflective practices (Schön, 1983). On the counter-side, tacit knowledge may contain more worth in practice than can be demonstrated by interview alone. What a practitioner can do instinctively may not be what they can readily discuss. Welker (1992) suggests that tacit knowledge carries with it high levels of expertise. He writes:

In fact, it is this concept that is used to describe the startling inability of experts in a variety of fields to explain the brilliant strategies which carried the moment. This observation reveals a new appreciation of the complexity of human understanding. Expertise appears to mean far more than having the right answers or formulating rules and principles to govern professional behaviour. It refers to that sense of familiarity which, though grounded in experience and practice, appeals primarily to senses of intuition and 'feel'.

Stevenson (2003) identifies that 'one of the limitations of this conception of expertise is that the propositional knowledge which is the subject of theoretical disciplines of knowledge often does not transfer to practice' (p.13). Again the inert nature of much of this expert knowledge is acknowledged in a range of endeavours, where 'expertise can be recognised in individuals' accomplishment in sporting, artistic, surgical and other skilful pursuits without their being able to articulate in propositional terms what constitutes their expertise' (p.13). Sternberg & Horvath (1995) believe there is reason to suspect that tacit knowledge is an important contributor to expert performance. However, Stevenson (2003) suggests that 'often expertise is so automated that it cannot easily be described' (p.4).
2.5 Finding Models of Desirable Practice

2.5.1 Constituting Better Practice

Little attention is given in the literature to detailed examinations of what constitutes 'best' or 'better practice' in drama schools. This report attempts to hear what those charged with the task of training actors have to say about their practice. 'To examine a practice is to examine [...] multiple sets of relationships and experiences. A practice is not a history, but practices always exist within and simultaneously create histories' (Zarrilli, 2001:35).

The *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report* commences its unravelling of notions of 'best practice'. The report suggests that a drama school 'must have a capable [and preferably an inspired] principal' and goes on to suggest that 'this is easier said than done and a particular problem, as with other members of staff, is to find someone genuinely interested in teaching' (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:40). The report also goes on to re-affirm the vital nature of the teachers themselves, suggesting that 'as in any form of education, the teachers are far more important than the facilities' (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1975:41). Increasingly though, drama schools are creating studio and theatre facilities that rival many professional theatre spaces in the 'real world' of the theatre industry. For example NIDA in Sydney has recently completed building a theatre complex at a cost in excess of 30 million Australian dollars.

It would seem an essential condition of a best practice model that it be able to clearly articulate its processes. Silverberg (1999) gives very strong advice to the acting teacher placing unequivocal onus upon the teacher to understand his or her practice:

So if you the acting teacher are to ensure that the student leaves your program equipped with the essential skills of great acting – or at least has made some progress toward acquiring them – you need, first, to understand what those skills are. Second, you need to have made them habitual within yourself. And finally, you must have a way to guide your students to experiences from which they too will make these abilities habitual. (p.15)
Although avoiding using the term, Silverberg seems to advocate for teachers to understand their 'pedagogy'. Silverberg at least identifies and articulates what those essential skills of 'great acting' might be:

- Acting students must learn how to really listen.
- Acting students must learn how to unmask and express their authentic emotional responses.
- Acting students must learn how to really do what their character is doing.
- Acting students must learn how to connect to the specific point of view of the character. (Silverberg, 1999:16)

If it is agreed that teachers carry responsibility in shaping practice, then the models for achieving good practice need to be documented and critically examined. The growing body of generalist teacher research is most helpful in giving teachers greater access to understanding classroom dynamics. Regrettably, acting tutors are not yet replicating a similar type of teacher research themselves.

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee [AVCC] back in 1993 published a set of guidelines for effective university teaching placing students centrally and actively in the learning process. The paper addresses three broad areas for consideration: i) The university teacher and effective teaching practice; ii) Departmental encouragement of effective teaching; and iii) Institutional valuing of teaching. The paper highlights many specific points regarding empowering student learning, encouraging better teaching practice, and assessment, which is described as providing 'an evaluation of the student's competence in meeting specified objectives' (AVCC, 1993:5), and practical subject management. Emphasis is given to departments encouraging positive learning environments through regular reviews of teaching, learning and assessment. The paper further reports that 'the institutional ethos and climate influence the status of teaching' (AVCC, 1993:6). It suggests fifteen points for institutions in promoting effective teaching. These range from mission statements and clear policies, appropriate resources and equipment, professional development, and review mechanisms.

Whilst the AVCC report is not specific to drama schools, it does make a detailed contribution to formulating specific guidelines for effective teaching in the post-
compulsory sector. Given that in Australia, universities administer most drama schools, this report has direct currency to those teaching in Australian drama schools.

### 2.5.2 Critical Teaching and Reflective Practice in Actor Training

*Critical theory* (Freire, 1970) informs our understanding that teaching and learning are not value free. The curriculum is value-laden and therefore should be open to investigation. Teaching practices too are value-laden. Greater empowerment to students in the learning process 'will make practitioners less inclined to perpetuate teacher centred learning: the "empty vessel" myth, that students should be merely filled with knowledge from a greater, learned intelligence' (Prior, 1997:27).

Understanding the values of the tutors, the institutions and industry expectations gives the investigator tools to understand institutionalised actor training more fully. One must commence with the proposition that actor training cannot be value free. Personality and intelligence influence the dynamic of the classroom (Levine, 1999). Much teaching can indeed be personality-driven. Acting tutors may possess guru-type personae or are at least endowed with this status by eager young acting students, ready to accept the tutor as 'master'. The historical connection with the use of this term is evident in the terminology commonly used in actor training which includes 'master-class', 'master teacher', 'mastery', and even 'master piece'.

Therefore if one is to accept the notion that teaching is shaped by personality and is value-laden, then a deeper understanding of personality and intelligence can significantly assist the teacher in his or her role and the nature of the epistemology of practice (Schön, 1983). However, in order to build a body of literature on understanding teaching practice in actor training, it would seem essential that tutors be able to convey their experience to others. Schön (1983) advocates that professionals are likely to reconsider and improve their own practice through making the unconscious conscious by reflection-on-action. Likewise, van Manen (1990) argues that for a practitioner to move beyond the narcissism of believing that what he or she thinks and does is what should be thought and done, one's own personal meanings need to be made explicit in order to increase thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness. During
the training process 'the actor must continually evaluate his [sic] progress' (Brestoff, 1995:xii). In the same way the tutor of acting must have a further interest in evaluating his or her own teaching in meaningful ways. In arguing that reflection is the key to understanding practice, Zarrilli explains:

[...] reflection as a process and attitude or awareness is not a given, but rather a self-conscious choice. Embodied practices which are oriented to the virtuosity of craft, like most of those involved in actor-training, can easily become habitualised, tradition-bond, self-referential, and therefore turn in on themselves so much that they become stifling and stultifying. (Zarrilli, 2001:42)

Bruner (1986) too argues that 'much of the process of education consists of being able to distance oneself in some way from what one knows by being able to reflect on one's own knowledge' (p.127). Reflective practice (e.g. Schön, 1983) is a significant component of the professional who commits to continuing growth and development. 'To reflect upon one's own teaching practice and students' learning is to engage in a process of evaluation and possible change' (Prior, 1997:28). The growing literature on reflective practice (Schön, 1983; Prior, 1997; Taylor, 1998, 2000; O'Mara, 1999; Gallagher, 2001; et al) offers some possibilities for teachers and students to explore the teaching and learning environment more fully (Taylor, 2000) and effect on-going change. 'Professional growth [Maxine Greene asserts] is located in teachers' ability to revisit their work with renewed eyes and possibly transform themselves through a deliberate and critical self-examination of their own fallible pedagogy' (Cited in Taylor, 2000:83). Examination of a tutor's own practice must be a conscious and critical act.

Zarrilli (2001) advocates the acknowledgement of practical experience in the rigorous process of theorising. He also points to the individual nature of the reflective process by citing:

[...] it will always be vital to have individual subjects looking, highly critically, at their own experiences. They alone can map what their experiences were, from the inside. (Austin cited in Zarrilli, 2001:38)

The processes involved in Schön's (1983) attention to reflection are much akin to that of a researcher. According to Taylor (2000) teachers need to be able to think, assess and re-assess. Teachers must search and re-search in order to make these places of
training and learning meaningful. Herein lies the need for tutors to be able to distance themselves in a reflective manner and respond reflexively. Taylor (2000) writes:

Just as the playwright and drama critic, Bertolt Brecht, was concerned with developing techniques to distance the spectator from the dramatic action if the play was to confront the audience to consider the truths of the world, arts educators need to find similar distancing strategies to examine their praxis. Clearly, the reflective practitioner is one such approach. (Taylor, 2000:84)

Freire (1998) believes 'that our capacity to learn is the source of our ability to teach' (Cited in Gallagher, 2001:103). As in the acting process itself, Zarrilli (2001) suggests that when one steps back from an exercise and thinks about it, one is engaged in:

[…] reflexively articulating knowledge about this exercise, about the optimal mode of doing and state of consciousness in its doing, about the paradigmatic assumptions regarding the relationship between the body and the mind implicit in the doing. (p.38)

The tutor who engages in reflective practice is therefore not merely reflecting after the action but is also reflecting in action, upon the action (Schön, 1983). Reflection-in-action is the key competence of a professional and it is the method by which the practitioner is able to contend with situations of uncertainty, uniqueness and/or value conflicts (Orton, 1994).

In his own research, Taylor (2000) attempts to identify nine characteristics of 'reflective practitioners'. They are identified as:

- Critical thinkers
- Producers of knowledge
- Risk takers
- Theory generators
- Prepared to fail
- Open-minded and flexible
- Collaborative
- Revising teaching and learning procedures
- Story-makers and story-listeners. (pp.84-85)

Reflective practice would appear to offer teachers the ability to engage more meaningfully with the teaching process and the curriculum. Reflective practice demands more awareness of one's pedagogy and places practices in a position of scrutiny. The articulation of one's practice would seem vital to self-improvement. Thus,
'reflective teachers are considered to be those who use new problems as opportunities to expand their knowledge and competence' (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995).

2.5.3 Praxis: Re-thinking Practice and Theory

In the early part of the twentieth century John Dewey (1929) was arguing for greater emphasis to be given to practice rather than merely relying upon theory itself. In breaking the polarised theory-practice debate, Freire (1970) through the use of the concept of 'praxis', encourages teachers to move forward by allowing practice and theory to inform one another. 'Put simply, praxis denotes the action, reflections and transformation of people as they engage with one another' (Taylor, 2000:6). The literature on acting and actor training on the other hand perpetuates these unhelpful divisions between theory and practice.

Praxis models offer tutors the opportunity to strengthen their practice. Praxis seems to serve both education and training well in that individuals can work towards end products but their attention is still arrested by the here and now. That is they can be concerned with the journey as much as the destination. Through praxis, educators and trainers become able to articulate theories about their practice and acknowledge the strong connection of theory and practice in all that they do. Zarrilli (2001) writes:

[… the individual subject's experience does not mean reifying that experience, or reaching conclusions based on that particular experience; rather, it means allowing that experience to have an appropriate place in a rigorous process of theorising. (p.38)

Within the last 100 years actors began to ask significant theoretical questions and query the power of traditional authority [the producers, directors and even the stagecraft] by creating a new democracy in theatre-making. Critical and ideological differences were openly raised and explored. Blau (1992) argues that what resulted was the loss of acting quality with the proliferation of non-conventional techniques. Although Blau's assertion may be difficult to measure, ideology is certainly seen throughout history to shape theatre practice. Much modern theatre practice, however, is now more open to a variety of eclectic approaches.
Zarrilli (2001) hopes that this paradigm shift from 'one form of essential way of knowing', to multiple epistemologies should open up the discussion between practice and theory. He points out the underlying problem though with actor training:

Unfortunately, the craft-based specific practical ways of knowing such as voice, particular 'methods' of acting, because of their particular concern with specifics of craft and technique, are all too often taught as absolutes, and without a sensibility capable of making sure that such techniques open the individual's consciousness outward and don't turn it inward on itself. When a dialectic is missing between the ongoing practice, the 'self', and reflection on, such practices can close down rather than open outward toward...the task, the thought, the imagination in... (p.43)

Importantly, Zarrilli argues that without a discourse, actors [and for similar reasons I would add tutors] are simply permitted to indulge in anti-intellectualism (p.44). A survey of the literature reveals that acting tutors are generally absent from research in the field of actor training and pedagogical practice. It has been beneficial in education to encourage the practice of 'teacher-researcher'. Gallagher (2001) argues 'the teacher-researcher, driven by the questions of a daily practice, makes the theory/practice dichotomy less one of polarities and more one of an active and reflexive relationship' (Gallagher, 2001:105). In a similar way, Taylor (2000) argues that teachers who see themselves as working in partnership with their students are the most effective teachers advocating 'it is the praxis, and the partnerships which emerge from it, that can liberate educators to examine their curriculum and themselves in new ways' (p.130).

2.6 Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 commences by exploring the philosophical assumptions in the theory and practice found in the field of actor training. Developed through time are a number of assumptions, which in turn have become the orthodoxy in practice. These include the significance of talent and whether acting is an art or craft. Identified is the range of methods and systems designed for actor training. However one central assumption identified, despite Stanislavsky's (1980 [1924]) claim that acting could not be taught, is that it was still largely assumed in the literature that acting could be taught. The role of the acting tutor is examined and a common term for the role is explored.
The divides which have arisen in the historical hegemony of actor training are outlined in the chapter as training versus education; practice versus theory; process versus product; academic versus vocational training; acting methodology versus pedagogy; key competencies versus enabling skills; and teacher versus artist. Authors examined reveal divides, which are reflected in traditions of practice and in ways authors know their practice. Some of the key divides evidenced in the literature encapsulate differences in thinking about the educative or training function of actor training, practices and theoretical constructs.

Current organisational practice is shaped by current understandings in the field. Some of these contemporary issues are explored in the literature such as how actor training is positioned in terms of the profession; the nature of embodied practices; accreditation of tutors and drama schools; and artistry and the teaching of artistry. In defining issues of expertise, the distinguishing differences between 'vocational expertise' and 'connoisseurship' are explored. The chapter also explores how expertise is developed through situated learning and the positioning of tutor knowledge as 'expert'. Revealed are types of knowledge influential in actor training such as teaching knowledge and tutors' inert or tacit knowledge.

The chapter concludes by attempting to find models of preferred practice. Better practice in actor training, it is suggested in the literature, may result from critical teaching and reflective practice. It is also proposed that rethinking practice and theory as 'praxis' may address those unhelpful divisions that have emerged and established themselves in traditions of practice. A central question raised in this section is: Does an actor with a methodology of acting necessarily have a clear understanding of pedagogy? It is revealed that these issues are only scantily addressed in the available literature on actor training.
"…the real task of the creative artist is not merely to copy the outer appearance of life but to interpret life in all its facets and profoundness, to show what is behind the phenomena of life, to let the spectators look beyond life's surfaces and meanings."

– Michael Chekhov (To the Actor)
CHAPTER 3

THE METHOD

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 identified the research questions and surveyed the related literature. Chapter 3 presents a methodological and philosophical framework used to addresses the major research questions of this study. The chapter is divided into three distinct sections, addressing: the research paradigms; data collection; and data analysis. The research methodology follows the tradition of qualitative case study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Gomm, et. al., 2000; Stake, 2000a, 2000b), grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1992) and the phenomenology and understandings of pedagogy explored through lived experience (van Manen, 1990). The theoretical paradigm used in this report is interpretivism/constructivism/hermeneutics (Gomm, et. al., 2000).

I commence with a rationale for the use of qualitative case study as the research strategy, grounded theory and phenomenology in an attempt to understand tutor knowledge in drama schools. The chapter identifies the use of informant interview as the data collection method. The informant selection criteria used for the cases are detailed and some insights into the process of gaining access to these tutors are explored.

Chapter 3 concludes with a description of the method of data analysis to be employed in Chapters 5 and 6. The data analysis method is identified as qualitative synthesis, which seeks to construct themes from the data as they naturally emerge and use them to inform a growing understanding of the data. The chapter argues that this is an authentic way to capture the 'voices' of the informants, bracket the themes and build knowledge of the lived experiences of others. I also propose that the notion of 'generalisability' is not conducive to this type of qualitative case study. Rather, an understanding of 'trustworthiness' is used in validating those themes.
3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

3.2.1 Rationale for Qualitative Case Study

In determining the appropriateness of qualitative case study as the research method van Manen (1990) reminds me 'there exists a certain dialectic between question and method' (p.2). The essential question is why choose one research approach over another? Van Manen suggests that 'the choice should reflect more than mere whim, preference, taste, or fashion. Rather, the method one chooses ought to maintain a certain harmony with the deep interest that makes one an educator [...] in the first place' (p.2). 'Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied' (Stake, 2000b:435). Although the term 'case study' is often broadly applied, 'in one sense all research is case study: there is always some unit, or set of units, in relation to which data are collected and/or analysed' (Gomm, et al., 2000:2). Case study allows the researcher to understand the particularities of that phenomena being investigated. According to Stake (2000b), 'the purpose of a case report is not to represent the world, but to represent the case' (p.448). Similarly, Gomm, et. al. (2000) argue for the authenticity of the particular:

Sometimes, case study research is advocated on the basis that it can capture the unique character of a person, situation, group, and so on. Here there may be no concern with typicality in relation to a category, or generalisability to a population. The aim is to represent the case authentically: 'in its own terms'. (p.6)

Qualitative research in sociology and anthropology was 'born out of concern to understand the "other"' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:2). Qualitative inquiry according to Denzin & Lincoln (2000) was first used in sociology in the work of the "Chicago school" in the 1920s and 1930s. These beginnings 'established the importance of qualitative inquiry for the study of human group life' (p.1). Qualitative research was soon being used in the social and behavioural science disciplines, including education, particularly evident in the work of John Dewey (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The last decade or so has seen a rising interest in qualitative research, particularly in the field of educational research. Influenced by phenomenology (van Manen, 1990; et. al.), qualitative research is often seen in the use of ethnography, participant observation, and case study.
This research uses the distinct research paradigm of case study, which positions itself between positivism, at one end, and naturalism, interpretivism or constructivism, at the other (Gomm, et. al., 2000:5). However, this research is positioned at the naturalism/interpretivism/constructivism end of the research paradigm because it seeks to construct understanding or meaning as it naturally arises between the researcher and informant. The use of qualitative research has become a preferred method of research of mine because it is in epistemological harmony with my prior experience (Stake, 2000a) as a teacher-researcher, where I have arrived at my understandings mostly through 'direct and vicarious experience' (Stake, 2000a:19). The use of case study here is similar to the research methodology employed in my earlier Master of Education research (Prior, 1997) where I examined my own supervisory comments made to three student teachers during their school practica. In this instance, the cases were my three student teachers.

Qualitative research provides a description or explanation of the studied phenomenon such as its essence, nature, or behaviour. 'Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:3). This descriptive quality is in contrast to quantitative research – figures that may tell us little of the knowledge of those tutors engaged in training actors. Qualitative research acknowledges the many variables in human behaviour and the fact that humans are complex social organisms where 'meaning is negotiated mutually in the act of interpretation; it is not simply discovered' (Schwandt, 2000). A quantitative approach would risk producing data that is too simplistic to understand the affective and immeasurable dimension of what is being studied. This study deals with thought-processes not the measure of variables as such. Understanding knowledge, including textual inference and subtext is immeasurable and suits description. Qualitative research not only acknowledges but emphasises the socially constructed nature of reality, the close relationship between the researcher and what is being studied, and the situated nature of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Although I acknowledge that there are more complex ways of addressing the data, such as detailed hermeneutic or linguistic analysis, I have found qualitative case study to be
a useful research tool in that it acknowledges diversity and subjectivity found within the data. Whilst case study alone does not necessarily produce highly 'generisable' results in a scientific sense, it allows themes, questions and issues to emerge naturally from the data which, in the case of this study, through the interviews themselves. Supporting this proposition, Lincoln & Guba (1985) dismiss the absolute notion of scientific conceptions of generalisability, arguing that 'the very idea of determinism rests […] on shifting sand' (p.30). Hence concepts of indeterminism are now replacing these scientific approaches to generalisability.

Stake (2000a) suggests that if research is to be of value to people, it needs to be framed in the same terms as that everyday experience – in the way that the participants of this research learn about the world for them firsthand. The strength of case study Stake argues is that it provides for an understanding of vicarious experience, in the form of full and thorough knowledge of the particular (Stake, 2000a). In doing this we facilitate what he calls 'naturalistic generalisation', and thereby build up the body of tacit knowledge forming the basis on which people are seen to act.

Stake (2000b) further reminds us that a researcher may jointly study a number of cases in order to investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition. He calls this collective case study. Collective case study is therefore also a useful term to describe this research where the purpose is to gain insights into actor training by examining the beliefs and practices of thirteen tutors from various drama schools in Australia and England. These cases are chosen to stand on their own but also with the belief that insight will lead to better understanding and theorising (Stake, 2000b) about the drama school tutors in general terms.

3.2.2 Rationale for using Grounded Theory

The difficulty from the onset was how to meaningfully conduct research into a field of professional practice that did not automatically follow the assumptions of actor training already laid down and well established in the field. Choices of the research model, the research approach and methods of data collection are important considerations to the success of the study. It is therefore necessary to assess the reasons
for and the implications of the choices made. Given that this thesis explores notions of education and training, the use of emergent methodology seems highly applicable in that it attempts to understand the community of thought amongst acting tutors. Grounded theory by its nature commences with a research situation and allows the researcher to attempt to understand what is happening through observation, conversation and interview (Glaser, 1992). If this research is to allow us to hear the voices of the tutors authentically, then emergent methodology appears to fulfil this requirement.

At the core of the process is the constant comparison that is made between one interview and the next. Themes and theories were generated as they began to emerge from the data, which offers the opportunity to compare the theory with the data at hand. During the coding of data, certain theoretical propositions gradually emerged and interpretations accumulated. Eventually core categories emerged with the frequency of mention. Connections between categories were recorded in memos. Eventually the process led to saturation where further interviews and data collection added little or nothing to the category, its properties, and its relationship to the core categories – that is, when I could be convinced that sufficient interviews had been gained. I acknowledge too that this approach 'constitutes just one way of slicing the cake' (Silverman, 2000:825). There are of course multiple ways in which the phenomenon of tutor knowledge and practice in drama schools may be investigated and analysed. Utilising perceptions of practice makes for a beginning in understanding approaches to current teaching practice as discussed and revealed through interview (3.3.11).

A grounded theory approach emphasises theory that is derived from data, systematically gathered and analysed during the research process (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Although this study uses qualitative analysis, a grounded theory approach encompasses the entire research project:

In this method, data collection, analysis, and eventual theory stand in close relationship to one another. A researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind [unless his or her purpose is to elaborate and extend existing theory]. Rather, the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; 12)
A grounded theory approach allows for transparency throughout the data analysis and the interview transcripts remain intact for the critical evaluation of others if they so desire. This approach allowed for recognition of the complexities of human thoughts and actions and yet at the same time was able to find connections between meanings in order to allow possible theory to develop.

### 3.2.3 Hermeneutic Circle of Understanding

My chosen methodology must also acknowledge the hermeneutic nature of the research process. Odman & Kerdeman (1997) define a *hermeneutic circle* in terms of 'pre-understanding and understanding' (pp.186-187). Familiarity with the entire phenomenon leads to a pre-understanding of the general context, which in turn facilitates an understanding of the specific context. In my case, any knowledge I had of actor training and teaching assisted by informing my enquiry – understanding which questions might be appropriate. In other words a better understanding of specific contexts improves the understanding of the entire phenomenon. It was therefore also important to read widely about the various drama schools in order to understand their ideology and historical origins. My understanding inevitably grew throughout the interview process and also through discussions held with regulatory bodies such as the NCDT [National Council for Drama Training] and QCA [Qualifications and Curriculum Authority]. This notion of a *dialectic hermeneutic circle* extends into the synthesis of data to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of actor training.

Van Manen (1990) reminds me 'it is better to make explicit our understandings, beliefs, biases, assumptions, presuppositions, and theories' (p.47). My prior understanding of some of the issues examined by this thesis is constructed through my own experiences as a teacher, my employment within the acting industry and facilitator of an acting course offered by a leading drama school in Australia. My own observations, experiences and discussions have necessarily led me to form connections and pose questions that in essence underpin this study. As a researcher, I do not come to this enquiry without some pre-conceptions or *pre-understandings*, to use the hermeneutic terminology.
There are obviously pre-conceptions of the various drama schools that may colour one's view of them. However at no stage was I aware that this was an influencing factor upon my own research other than informing a general understanding. I knew none of the participants personally prior to the interviews being conducted and consequently a similar interview 'tone' was conducted each time. Again, undoubtedly a benefit to this study has been my knowledge of the workings of several drama schools and indeed the touring program of one major Australian drama school with which I had been associated. I was alerted to what might be perceived as variations of practice, even deficiencies of practice. My own teaching background too has played a part in identifying pedagogical considerations and a desire to find better teaching practice. However I was not able to see these same considerations being applied by acting tutors in drama schools. The researcher is right to declare any agendas brought to the study and ensure these do not unduly influence the choices made.

Whilst acknowledging the nature of these general preconceptions, I am able to cognitively embrace such understandings in such a way as to enrich the research without compromise or bias to the study itself. Acknowledging my place in the research process is a *double-edged sword* in that the enquiry arises from prior knowledge, yet in order to remove bias from the research, I must consciously check that I can distance myself sufficiently and examine the evidence accurately. One method employed to ensure that my questions did not detrimentally limit the research was that I allowed tutors to talk freely and then give them final opportunity to add anything they thought had not been covered in the interview that I should know about.

In addition to a review of the literature and through some preliminary interviews with the NCDT, the QCA – both in the United Kingdom – and informal conversations with various leaders in the field, I began to familiarise myself with a variety of aspects of actor training and thus create further *pre-understanding*. My first participant interview was with Anton the director of English drama school 'B'. In its construction this was a considerably more open interview than the others that followed but it did allow me to hear from an expert in the field and pose some deeper and more directly relevant questions than I may have been able to generate from the literature alone. This *pre-understanding* enhanced my understanding of individual reports as they were gathered.
and allowed me to ask further probing questions where appropriate. An understanding of individual accounts informed my synthetic interpretation of the interviews as they occurred. Thus I often move back-and-forth between my understanding of the whole phenomenon and individual interviews seeking connections and pursuing common themes as they become apparent.

Here the hermeneutic understanding serves as a perpetual informant to study. Themes emerge from the data and as they do emerge more data can be obtained through the questioning process. I soon became aware that my initial interview questions carried considerable power. Certain questions became predictably easy to answer – for example, questions about the informant's history – whereas there were questions that required more philosophical answers which were mostly to do with the tutors' understanding of their practice that generally posed greater difficulty for the informants. Whilst this might to some extent be predictable, what was somewhat surprising was the general lack of ability to articulate the precise aims and objectives of the informants' institutions. Some tutors also attempted to run their own agenda in the interview. For example, a few tutors kept turning the discussion of teaching practice to acting methods or play productions when I wanted them to discuss their pedagogy. Whilst I allowed them to talk about these I kept returning the questioning to pedagogical and philosophical questions of practice. In this sense I was maintaining the overall agenda inherent in the interview process.

Where one can end or 'escape the hermeneutic circle' is difficult to determine (Denzin, 1989:141), as there really is no end to the interpretative process. What became obvious was that similar themes would reoccur and through this pattern I was able to reach moments of saturation. The types of questions and responses began to take on similar characteristics with minor variation, thus in a way validating them in the process.


3.3 DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1 Rationale for Site Selection

Why these particular drama schools? This study does not seek to survey all existing drama schools in Australia and England. Nor too can it hope to survey in detail every tutor of drama. The size of the task and probable difficulty of it would render such notions highly impractical. Silverman (2000) advises to limit the data in order to provide for a more detailed data analysis. The study therefore closely confines itself to a selection of leading or high profile vocational actor training institutions or drama schools. Although I will analyse the contexts of the drama schools and profile the participants in greater depth in the next chapter, I will outline here the general nature of these choices and the rationale used to select them.

A major consideration in the choice of countries stemmed from my own context of living and working in Australia. I desired to know more about the practice of actor trainers in Australia. Further, because Australia has largely followed the English model of actor training, Australia and England are compatible and comparable sites which helps broaden the research. I thought that including England in the research would help to further understand at least some of the origins of Australian practice too. The English influence also extends to the fact that a number of Australian tutors, originally trained in the English drama school system, now occupy senior positions in Australian drama schools. The same, however, is not true in reverse.

Influences from other countries will also become clear in the data analysis. Readers might suggest that comparisons with other European or Eastern traditions would have been valuable. Indeed, there is a considerably wide range of choices available to the researcher, including comparisons with the USA. However these are the place of further studies such as those that might seek to understand a different culture of actor training such as the American 'studio system' in particular.

For England the study is restricted to a sample of two schools which belong to the Conference of Drama Schools Limited [CDS]. CDS courses are explicitly designed to prepare students for work in the professional theatre, film, television and radio
industries. They generally do not contain a large measure of what is termed by them as 'academic work'. The CDS was founded in 1969 principally as a means of strengthening the voice of member schools and of developing and encouraging the 'highest standards in training'. There are 19 member institutions of the CDS. Two of these more well known and sought-after institutions were chosen for this study.

Within this selection of popular [and by virtue of their reputational legacy many would define as 'elite' drama schools] a conscious decision was made to sample two differing models (Appendix A). By 'models' I refer to their genesis and tradition. For example one drama school has an 'explicit and systematic' methodology and the other is more 'eclectic'. These distinctions will be borne out later in the research. Although my choice was limited, it potentially brings a broader perspective to the study than simply choosing "the top two or three" in each country and the subsequent problems associated with defining exactly what that might mean.

In Australia the selection process was less flexible in that there are only four nationally recognised 'elite' institutions that gear themselves to vocational actor training per se. The size of Australia's population and subsequent size of its industry is the major limiting factor. Like the situation in England, in addition to drama schools, there is a seeming plethora of university, TAFE [Technical and Further Education] and college drama courses on offer. Actors can of course enter the industry after having completed these courses also, although they may not automatically receive Actors' Equity membership upon graduation.

### 3.3.2 Some Site Assumptions

In selecting these sites, I have placed value on choosing these 'elite' drama schools upon the following assumptions: Firstly, these are the schools with the highest public profile and as such they may well be seen to carry the greatest influence in the field. Secondly, the policies of these drama schools might have been better developed over time than more recently established schools. Thirdly, the staff employed at these drama

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14 Refer to definitions on page 10. “Nationally recognised” as used here is particularly reflective of which schools the participants themselves believe constitute Australia’s top three or four.
schools might be competitively considered 'the best' available on an international scale. These are important assumptions, as they might generally be perceived to be valid by much of the population; however the research reveals moments when this may be questioned.

Schofield (2000) raises serious concerns about the researcher's selection of sites based upon prior knowledge of them:

[...] the strategy of choosing a site based on some a priori theoretical viewpoint or, for that matter, any seriously held expectation about it raises a difficult problem. If one is unduly committed to that viewpoint, one's analysis of both what happens and why may be heavily influenced by it, and one may not ask whether other more fruitful perspectives might emerge from a more dispassionate approach to studying the situation. (p.86)

I have had a direct association with only one drama school and one university [in which another Australian drama school is located] and I feel confident that no prior understanding of these schools has had an influence over their inclusion or others' exclusion. It is would also seem important or ethical to declare what prior knowledge and associations the researcher may bring to the study.

Essentially the criteria for site selection was based upon three over-arching criteria outlined below in Figure 3.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 3.1 Site Selection Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>criterion i.</strong> A drama school with an 'elite' reputation for training quality actors for the Profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>criterion ii.</strong> A drama school that offers government and industry approved courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>criterion iii.</strong> A drama school that offers a 3-year vocational degree course in acting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a researcher, I was most interested to understand models of practice as revealed by the Australian and English drama schools that are generally considered to be 'the best
in the field' of vocational actor training. The values inherent in these institutions are of particular interest given their high-profile status and consequential influence within the industry. However not every institution approached in England was willing to participate (see 3.3.5) and therefore the institutions meeting the same criteria were selected.

3.3.3 Case Study Participants

A unique aspect of case study lies in the selection of cases to study. Stake (2000a) claims that nothing is more important than making a proper selection of cases as the cases chosen are expected to represent some population of cases. Whilst this is largely true, each case informant is unique in his or her own right and offers insights into the particular. The case studies reveal the interview responses from the Principal/Director, Head of Acting and/or Senior Tutor from each of the five drama schools. The rationale for choosing these particular people is explained below. Two drama schools from England and three drama schools from Australia were selected. As mentioned this composition was largely dictated by the willingness to participate from the schools approached. Although the focus remains with the individual tutors and not the drama schools, each tutor and drama school is profiled (Chapter 4) and their responses later analysed within the contexts of their individual institutions.

In choosing informants to interview I was mindful that whom I spoke to would have significant implications on the data. In order to draw comparisons from the leaders and tutors within the drama schools I decided to interview tutors from various positions of responsibility within each school. It was therefore necessary to establish a set of criteria for inclusion (Figure 3.2). The overriding condition was that each informant had to be a willing participant in the research.
Figure 3.2 Interviewee Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>criterion i.</th>
<th>Principal/Director of each drama school.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>criterion ii.</td>
<td>The Head of Acting from each drama school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criterion iii.</td>
<td>[where possible] A senior tutor with a minimum of 5 years experience from each drama school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The additional tutor [where available] was also chosen for me at the discretion of the various institutions. Generally, this was arranged by the Principal's Secretary. Importantly, it should be noted that the Principal [also known in some schools as the Director] of the various drama schools was often bestowed with differing functions. In some schools the Principal/Director was quite removed from the daily teaching in the drama school itself [as in English drama school 'A']. In other schools the Principal/Director was very involved with the daily operations of acting program and also involved with some teaching duties and/or directing productions [as in English drama school 'B' or Australian drama school 'F'].

3.3.4 Some Participant Assumptions

In making certain decisions of who to include and who to exclude, I am aware of some assumptions being made. The inclusion of the Principal/Director is important to the study in order to give the perspective from someone who is involved with policy formulation and managing staff. Generally it is this person who is also in charge of managing the ethos and reputation of the drama school. In most cases the experience brought by them afforded some broad and comprehensive visionary insights into actor training. The experience of the Principal/Director is assumed to be extensive, both within the drama school and in terms of their own employment history. The inclusion of the Head of Acting is crucial as this position potentially offers the most direct influence on sessional and part-time staff and the students in the acting program. In all of the cases where there was an identified Head of Acting, it was this person who determined which sessional staff are hired. Again it is an assumption that this person
would have a comprehensive history of experience by virtue of the position's seniority. The administrative responsibility associated with this role also offers some broad insights into actor training, including an understanding of the hiring of sessional tutors. The inclusion also of a senior tutor potentially allows for the depth of understanding of their practice without the clutter of considerable administrative responsibility and a history of experience. In general terms, all these assumptions were borne out.

I acknowledge that the inclusion of beginning tutors would have also added to the collection of some worthwhile data. They might illuminate fresh ideology or be less bound by political influence from within the school. However, beginning tutors are difficult to locate in drama schools as few new fulltime tutors exist and in any case they are likely to be sessional staff working a relatively small number of hours. Also drama schools might have been less inclined to offer me new recruits as research participants as they may not have necessarily projected the perceived ethos of the Institution. In limiting the scope of this study, it was considered appropriate to interview the most experienced staff in the assumption that they could offer the most comprehensive insights. These are also the people who are likely to influence and maintain the hegemony of the institution.

3.3.5 Gaining Access and Permission

How do we "get in"? The ability to gain access varies enormously according to the group one is attempting to study (Fontana & Frey, 2000). In this case, gaining permission to conduct research at the various drama schools in Australia and England was not nearly as easy to accomplish as I initially presumed. Often the more 'elite' the school, the more difficult it was to make contact with specific personnel. Two prominent London drama schools ignored all of my inquiries. Others gave reasons for their inability to be involved ranging from "overseas auditions taking place" to "tight production timelines". Many seemed a little suspicious of the prospect of research being conducted within their schools. For all the drama schools approached, it would seem that they were concerned to preserve their reputation – it was paramount to maintain their perceived "prestige" in the market place. One Head of Acting, I was told by an administrator, was a "very busy person and could not be seen". It came as a
heartening change when some drama schools upon initial approach were obliging and totally open to the interviews. These schools tended to be those who in their prospectuses adopted a more transparent approach to disclosing the philosophical underpinnings of their course of study. The fact that these schools and tutors included are the ones who want to be heard or who are agreeable to being heard have inevitably influenced the data to the extent that I have captured those most willing. Essentially this is not a problem as this study does not seek generisability beyond the cases represented. Incidentally, most informants relished discussing their practice and found the process of the interview a worthwhile exercise, and for some, a cathartic experience.

On the whole it seemed that the Principal's Secretary or Personal Assistant was the "gatekeeper" not only in terms of gaining access to the informants but also crucial in following up and co-ordinating each appointment. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) advise us that 'even the most friendly and co-operative gatekeepers or sponsors will shape the conduct and development of research' (p.73). I found that I had no option but to be largely left at the mercy of these gatekeepers. In the case of England, individual approaches to tutors were often futile. Email messages, phone calls and even personally delivered notes left in pigeonholes seemed to have an alarmingly poor success rate. The front desk at English drama schools was impenetrable. Many drama school websites do not list email addresses of individual staff members. One possible explanation of this phenomenon is that the most prominent drama schools receive their fair share of persistent hopefuls, who wish above all else to be accepted by the school of their choice, and the schools have constructed their own way of denying access.

3.3.6 Gaining Trust: The Relationship Between Interviewer & Interviewee

To conduct effective interviews, the interviewer needs to establish some degree of trust with the respondents (Cicourel, 1974) early in the process. In some instances there may have been some initial telephone or email contact with the informants to arrange the appointment. As previously mentioned, more often than not the Principal's Secretary arranged the appointments. Owing to time constraints, my first and only meeting with the informant was to conduct the interview. I was mindful of going in 'cold' and
attempted to make each informant feel comfortable by making the interview appear as conversational as possible. The appropriate consensual paper work was discussed and signed before the interview commenced, thus safe-guarding the respondent against what he or she might say: "between, you, me and the tape-recorder" as one tutor amusingly suggested. Several expressed great relief and a feeling of freedom when told the interview was to remain anonymous. Only one interviewee prior to the day asked me about the types of questions that would be asked. I replied to her request by outlining only the general nature of the questions in order to preserve the similar conditions of interviewing which prevail throughout the study.

3.3.7 Formal Consent

Formal consent was gained from each participant included in this study. The consent form (Appendices B & C) was based upon the model provided by Griffith University at the time. The consent forms were signed by the participants having been given the opportunity to read and discuss with me the nature of the research. Beyond the information supplied to the informants, the precise nature of the research was never questioned by any of the informants.

It was clearly explained to the informants that a transcript of the tape-recorded interview would be forwarded to them to check for accuracy, amended [if necessary] and it was to be signed and returned to me for inclusion in the study. A number of participants, especially from England, also indicated that they were keen to receive the findings of the study, as they were curious to see how they compared to the informants from other drama schools.

3.3.8 Control

The issue of control within a study is very important. Who is actually controlling the research process is an important consideration. 'Who initiates? Who determines the salient questions? Who determines what constitutes findings? Who determines how data will be collected?' (Lincoln & Guba, 2000:175). Here Lincoln & Guba note that
issues of 'voice', reflexivity, postmodern textual representation all are important considerations.

I am acutely aware that in my attempt to have the informants articulate their perspectives on actor training it is inevitable that my own perspectives have been brought to this research. If one were to follow a constructivist approach to its natural conclusion, one would have the interviewees nominate their own questions in order to give them maximum control. Whilst this approach could have been adopted, I am not sure that the research would have necessarily been able to penetrate pedagogical understandings as the informants were not necessarily going to raise pedagogical issues. Again it is a useful reminder that the researcher's choice of questions will ultimately shape the types of responses. In asking the informants to "add anything they felt I needed to cover or should have asked", I believe that to some extent I was surrendering some control and opening up further possibilities should the participants wish to realign the data in some way. Generally though this was not an opportunity many informants felt necessary to accept.

3.3.9 Ethical Considerations

Stake (2000b) reminds us that 'case studies often deal with matters of public interest but for which there is neither public nor scholarly right to know' (p.447). The researcher must be constantly reminded of this basic ethic. Also as the objects of inquiry in interviewing are human beings, it is an imperative that the researcher must take extreme care to avoid any harm to the participants (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Throughout this study consideration was given to ethical issues in the data collection. The reputations of institutions and individual tutors were at all times to remain unaltered by the progress of this study. Pseudonyms have been used for each interviewee and many specific references to other people deleted. Place-names were also deleted where considered necessary, and information likely to overtly identify individuals has been removed from the transcripts at some participants' requests. Pseudonyms were used from the very beginning of the transcription stage and maintained throughout the study. Anonymity was at all times guaranteed, thus respecting the right to privacy [identity protection], and protection from harm
[physical, emotional, or any other kind] (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This was particularly important as the actor training community is relatively small and one in which reputations could be quickly destroyed. Tutors were satisfied that the information they were providing was to be reported anonymously.

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed and returned to each informant to check for inaccuracies and that their identity had been properly concealed as satisfactorily as possible. Once satisfied of its accuracy, each participant then signed off on the interview transcript. One tutor from Australian drama school 'C', however, decided not to permit the use of his transcript after he gained a promotion within his institution. This tutor had received a copy of the interview transcript and upon reading it made the decision to withdraw from the study. He cited the main reason for his withdrawal as being that he was "too negative during the interview" and that was due at the time to political tensions at the institution. With his subsequent promotion he did not wish to have the interview made public even though I assured him in writing that all care would be taken to remove any identifying references and that he would be able to re-check this. It is significant to mention his withdrawal as it gives some indication of the delicate political climate of that particular drama school at the time and ultimately this tutor's own sensitivities. As disappointing as this withdrawal was, I had always stated that as a condition of participation, informants might withdraw from the study at anytime. Stake (2000b) reminds us that as we are 'guests in the private spaces of the world [our] manners should be good and [our] code of ethics strict' (p.447). In research the right to privacy must be observed at all times.

3.3.10 Asking the Right Questions

Using case study, which relies heavily upon interview as the data-gathering tool, places a significant onus on the types of questions being asked. The nature of the questions being asked is essential to consider in most research, as it will ultimately shape the information that is returned. In this report two sets of interview questions were used. One set of questions was geared to the practising tutors [which included the Heads of Acting] (Appendix D) and the other set was for Principals/Directors of drama schools (Appendix E). The same sets of questions were used across all cases. The choice of
questions aimed to illuminate various aspects of training, pedagogy and to assist in creating a profile of the respondents concerned. Whilst the same sets of questions were used, they were always treated as open-ended. There were numerous occasions where I found it necessary to ask some additional questions to clarify or illuminate the interviewee's responses. This promoted a conversational feel and assisted in moving away from a clinical interview. In many ways, open-ended questions facilitates a discussion, something of an enabling effect (Britton, 1982), albeit to mostly a respondent monologue. It was a method of giving tutors the necessary permission and scaffolding to discuss their practice in ways they may not have found readily available to them in the past.

The interview questions were designed to open up the responses of the tutors without intending to be too leading or even presumptive as to the responses. At all times I was aware that bias might creep into the way my questions were framed and consequently unduly influence the responses. I therefore attempted to remain as unbiased as possible in my questioning whilst allowing myself to ask the informants more questions to clarify certain points. Fontana & Frey (2000) reminded me that ‘interviews are not neutral tools of data gathering but active interactions between two [or more] people leading to negotiated, contextually based results’ (p.646). This negotiated meaning must be explicitly acknowledged in a study such as this.

3.3.11 The Interviews

Holstein & Gubrium (1995) suggest that the interview is a universal mode of systematic inquiry (Cited in Fontana & Frey, 2000:646). The focus and aim of the interviews was on understanding teaching practice. All my interviews were systematic in that they allowed me to address questions which had been raised through my reading and my own experience in the field. I further revised the types of questions asked after being informed by my first interview with Anton from English drama school 'B'. However it was always the intention of this study to permit the tutors to talk freely about their own practice and not remove the 'subtlety' which Hollway & Jefferson (2000) encourage:
Research is only a more formalised and systematic way of knowing about people, but in the process it seems to have lost much of the subtlety and complexity that we use, often as a matter of course, in everyday knowing. We need to bring some of this everyday subtlety into the research process. (p.3)

Everyday knowing, the 'common sense' if you like, can often be that assumed knowledge or knowledge which is intrinsic to the area of expertise or community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). It is therefore one thing to be able to do something and perhaps quite another thing to be able to talk about it. There is a difference between being a practitioner and a reflective practitioner who can critically analyse his or her own teaching and learning environments. The distinctions between the two will become clear and important to this research as the interviews are analysed later in this report.

The language used within an interview is not value-free. It creates meaning both to the interviewer and also the interviewee. Whilst this thesis does not interest itself with the study of semantics [which of course would in itself make a fascinating study] the importance of the use of language must at least be acknowledged here. I am not researching the tutors' practice as demonstrated, but as it is discussed. To this extent one must be reminded of the function of language. Britton (1982) suggests language has both a facilitating and limiting function:

We cannot afford to underestimate the value of language as a means of organising and consolidating our accumulated experience, or its value as a means of interacting with people and objects to create experience; nor can we, on the other hand, afford to ignore the limits of its role in the total pattern of human behaviour. (pp.278-279)

One such example came from Heather of Australian drama school 'D'. It sees her reflect on the language I was using as the interviewer as opposed to her language as the interviewee:

Heather: I can hear your language, and I can see what it is you’re heading towards and it's very interesting your language and questions you're presenting me with are very objective and I keep providing you with subjective answers which is great, which is fine, but I can hear a different vocabulary running through. (23-29:108)
What the informants say about their practice demonstrates the ideological beliefs and assumptions that underpin their practice. To verify whether this actually occurs in practice is beyond the scope of this study. Importantly, these perceptions must indubitably influence policy and practice within these drama schools. I was also conscious during the interviews that I was talking to actors [or former actors] who knew full well the nature of text, sub-text and audience. Were they acting here or did they move beyond that into authentically discussing practice? This question may well have no measurable answer. However, as will be discussed later in this study, some tutors were more willing to self-disclose than others.

Fontana & Frey (2000) caution us to remember that the question and answer process is not an easy one in so much as 'the spoken word has always a residue of ambiguity' (p.645). When we construct meaning we are forming concepts in our minds and hold within ourselves a great deal of assumed knowledge that may not transfer so readily to the listener [both the interviewer and interviewee]. The difficulties of transparent self, transparent account, and critical realism are legitimate concerns and will be explored in 3.4.3 and 3.4.4 respectively.

Fontana & Frey (2000) remind us also of the humanistic nature of research and understanding, in that 'interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings' (p.645). Understanding and searching for meaning is indeed the domain of language-making and of research generally. This study makes no apology for treading in the murky waters of value-laden perceptions – a place where numbers can never really be of benefit to understanding perceptions. It is necessary to acknowledge the value of leaving the research sufficiently open for informants' voices to be heard.

The interviews were arranged some time prior to the day and were conducted one-on-one. On most occasions the interviews were without interference, although during one interview the interviewee's colleague entered the room on several occasions, which of course altered the tone of the interview and I even stopped the tape to discuss that situation with the interviewee. On another memorable occasion the interviewee had
brought his rather playful [and vocal] dog along, which at times provided a distraction and subsequently made transcription challenging.

The interviews with tutors and Heads of Acting generally lasted approximately one hour. The interviews with Principals/Directors took approximately 40 to 50 minutes although there were some notable exceptions where several principals were keen to talk at length, for example, Directors of drama schools 'B', 'D' and 'F' who exhibited enormous passion and enthusiasm for the interviews. Two of these [and both with PhDs] saw great merit in participating in this research. One Principal in his excitement even offered me a glass of wine. Each interview followed the questioning structure set out (Appendices D & E). At times, I re-phrased questions in order to assist the informant's understanding. Sometimes I added questions to further draw out responses where I thought this might assist in clarifying the data. Generally, though, I let the interviewees talk for as long as they wished although time constraints meant that I had to move some interviews along at a greater pace, especially towards the end of our allotted time.

Again I attempted to make the interview as conversational as possible in order to relax the informants and allow them to talk openly and with insight in their practice. The questions were structured in such a way as to deal with more concrete responses first, such as their own training and work background and then moving towards more abstract and detailed responses to do with their teaching practice. Occasionally this is where some tutors asked me to explain the question.

Sometimes the rephrasing of questions was required simply as a result of terminology. For example during the interview with Brett from drama school 'C' there was some lack of clarity as to whom I was referring:

  **RP:** Okay. Alright did you receive any guidance from your employer – remember that?
  **Brett:** From my employer? Who’s my employer? The University or...
  **RP:** Anyone, I guess whoever was that interface with you say...
  **Brett:** We’re in a peculiar position in we’re employed by so many people at the same time, as you’ve probably gleaned. (33:41:86)
It became obvious that my use of the term 'employer' was too broad and actually not helpful when it came to a drama school housed within a university setting. It also became apparent to me that some individuals may have had certain expectations of me as a researcher. The sub-texts and relationships formed during the interviews indicated something of the way the interviewees viewed me. For example, some saw me as a possible authority within the field and others saw me as a student going about his research business. The question of how one decides to present oneself is, I believe, an important one. For all interviews I deliberately dressed down so to avoid being seen as an 'authority', on the assumption that the respondents might talk more openly and freely if I did not present too formally. I assumed [correctly] that they would be casually dressed too. Fontana & Frey (2000) raise this issue in relation to how we present ourselves as an influence over the success of the study:

[...] do we humbly present ourselves as "learners"? (Wax, 1960) This decision is very important, because once the interviewer's presentational self is "cast", it leaves a profound impression on the respondents and has great influence over the success [or lack of it] of the study. (p.655)

I was unsure of the expectations of the interviewees, as many had not even spoken with me prior to the interview and I was unsure what the Principal's Secretary had told them. At all times I wanted the interviewees to feel relaxed and comfortable, which is not necessarily an easy thing to achieve when they are discussing their own practice and understandings with an outsider. It was important to form a familiar connection with the informants by smiling, nodding and laughing where appropriate. I found it was helpful to acknowledge that I knew something of the practice of drama school tutors, but as researcher I needed to know more. For the most part, I did not discuss my professional involvement with either actor training or the industry until after the interview had concluded, thus preserving a neutral but interested position.

3.3.12 The Transcripts

The tape-recorded interviews were carefully transcribed, thus along with the tapes themselves become an accurate 'public' record (Silverman, 2000). The major benefits of tape recordings and transcriptions are that they can be replayed and transcriptions can be improved, and further, transcripts give the researcher the advantage of being
able to inspect sequences of utterances (Silverman, 2000) if so required. The use of recorded data acts as a 'corrective' to the possible limitations of recollection and intuition (Heritage, 1984).

The transcripts of the interviews became my primary source of data. Drama school prospectuses, annual reports and syllabus documents formed supplementary data (see 3.3.13), which were used at times to assist in the interviewing process by having more knowledge of the programs and stated philosophies of practice. Site-specific understandings enhanced the dialogue process rather than me naively approaching the interview without any prior knowledge. At the very least this achieved a better rapport between interviewer and interviewee. For example, in asking Heather about student enrolment numbers I was able to demonstrate some knowledge of the school's intake by suggesting what I knew it to be. However, it was often much more subtle than that. It may have been the tone, phrasing of a question, smiling, frowning, nodding and laughing that I was consciously aware of trying to connect a shared understanding with the interviewee. One note-worthy commencement to an interview was with Sam from Australian drama school 'E'. I found myself attempting to generate a rapport with someone who was taking a few moments to warm to both the interview and me. There was very little exchange prior to the taping and he commented that he wanted to get the interview done quickly because he had to leave the campus to do something before his next class. The interview commenced as follows:

**RP:** Right, first of all, when were you first employed by this institution?  
**Sam:** In 1984.  
**RP:** 1984 and why do you think you were appointed?  
**Sam:** Because I was somebody that looked as if he could teach acting.  
**RP:** What physically or –  
**Sam:** Probably. [Ross laughs]. (1-8:220)

Following this exchange Sam was abundantly talkative and warmed to the situation, the joke having 'broken the ice'. It did however present me with a classic case of needing to work hard on developing rapport in a hurry. This is an example of the fragile nature of conversation in general and the fragile nature of interview in particular.
3.3.13 Gaining Supplementary Data

Nearly every drama school included in this study publishes a quality glossy colour prospectus. Some prospectuses are book-like and include visually exciting photographic images. One noteworthy exception is Australian drama school 'F' whose prospectus is small and simple yet its annual report is very impressive. In this instance one must ask whom then are they attempting to impress? Certainly given their large audition numbers there seems no need to obtain more applicants. Maybe funding bodies is the answer as the annual report is unlikely to lure prospective students. This type of information becomes increasingly important when one begins to analyse the interview data.

Drama school prospectuses, annual reports, websites and syllabus documents [if made available] formed supplementary data used only to assist site-specific understandings such as the context in which the individuals located their practice and possible cultural and historical influences that impacted upon tutors' practice and the values inherent in them. Values, it is assumed, are used by individuals as a set of guiding principles for their work (Stevenson, 2003). These values and meaning constructs are evidenced in workplace manuals and influenced by imaging or marketing of courses. In order to investigate where certain values articulated by the respondents might have originated it is important to also examine the published documents of each drama school. This raises the question of what policies are implicit and which are explicit?

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

3.4.1 Analysing the Lived Experience

The work of Max van Manen (1990) has introduced to qualitative researchers an approach to researching one's own experience of pedagogy through the use of hermeneutics and phenomenology, especially in the context of educational research. Van Manen terms it 'researching the lived experience' which is actually an approach not a methodology:

The fundamental model of this approach is textual reflection on the lived experiences and practical actions of everyday life with the intent to increase one's thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness or tact. […] Phenomenology
describes how one orients to lived experience, hermeneutics describes how one interprets the 'texts' of life, and semiotics is used here to develop a practical writing or linguistic approach. (p.4)

Van Manen's reference to "text" is of course not restricted to printed works but rather the tacit meanings accumulated in and through personal experience. His explicit aim is to offer an approach that makes experiences more intelligible and informs an individual's understanding of pedagogy. His work is significant to this study as it offers approaches that attempt to make the unconscious – conscious, the implicit – explicit, the non-thematic – thematic, and the non-reflective – reflective. Irrespective of whether one is researching one's own experience or the experience of others, his approach is also useful to this research study in that the essential condition remains: to find a way of discovering how consciousness constitutes the objects of knowledge.

Case studies focus on a certain situation, a group, a culture or institution in order to understand what goes on there, the perceptions of the individuals of this group, and how it might vary from other groups (van Manen, 1999). In this study the cases are the individual participants and the particular interest is their lived experiences in the context of actor training. Similarly in this regard he notes the compatibility of phenomenology with case study:

There may be a phenomenological quality to such studies in that they ask people to talk about their experiences, but the end of case studies and ethnographies is to describe accurately an existing state of affairs or a certain present or past culture. (van Manen, 1990:22)

In the analysis of the research data, van Manen cautions researchers with a phenomenological interest not to attempt to make empirical generalisations in that it may prevent us from developing understandings of human lived experience in all it uniqueness. It has been important to keep this firmly in mind when determining how to deal with the 'voices' of the participants, the organisation in coding the transcripts, how to find the themes and the subsequent verification.
3.4.2 Linguistically Mediated Phenomena

The first consideration in analysing interview data is how to capture the 'voice' of the participants. 'Voice' has come to mean different things to different people (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). For the purposes of this study I have interpreted 'voice' as not only representing the exact words of the participants [including some paralinguistic cues such as pauses and laughter] but also the conscious abstracted realities of what they say in the form of themes. Lincoln & Guba (2000) remind us that:

[…] there is no single "truth" – that all truths are but partial truths; that the slippage between signifier and signified in linguistic and textual terms creates re-presentations that are only and always shadows of the actual people, events, and places […]. (p.185)

In very practical terms, the value-laden responses gained during the interviews are interpretations of teaching practice where 'acting and thinking, practice and theory, are linked in a continuous process of critical reflection and transformation' (Schwandt, 2000:191). In discussing these interpretations the participants are given the opportunity to verbalise ideologies or understandings of practice.

Meaning is always mutually negotiated throughout the interview process, not only it seems as an 'interior' process, but also between interviewer and interviewee. Schwandt (2000) writes:

[…] knowledge of what others are doing and saying always depends upon some background or context of other meanings, beliefs, values, practices, and so forth. Hence, for virtually all postempiricist philosophies of the human sciences, understanding is interpretation all the way down. (p.201)

In the case of transcripts of audiotapes, the researcher is faced with the consideration of how talk organises the world (Silverman, 2000). I have remained mindful of the levels of interpretation and on-going organisation that have occurred. However in talking we consciously understand. Van Manen (1990) suggests that 'anything that presents itself to consciousness is potentially of interest to phenomenology, whether the object is real or imagined, empirically measurable or subjectively felt' (p.9). In talking about their teaching, tutors too are making sense for themselves of their practice and their own worldview. This is often evidenced in the transcripts through the use of disjointed sentences and other inarticulacy.
3.4.3 Transparent Self Problem & Transparent Account Problem

No research methodology can claim with confidence that data gathered from informants 'tells it like it is'. Informants often know so much about themselves and their professional practice that assumptions are likely to be made. This is what is known as 'transparent self problem' (Holloway & Jefferson, 2000). There is the issue of an informant's ability and willingness to 'tell' this to a stranger – me as the interviewer. Holloway & Jefferson warn of the complexity of transparency in research:

Neither selves nor accounts are transparent in our view. Treating people's own accounts as unproblematic flies in the face of what is known about people's less clear-cut, more confused and contradictory relationship to knowing and telling about themselves. In everyday informal dealings with each other, we do not take each other's accounts at face value, unless we are totally naïve; we question, disagree, bring in counter-examples, interpret, notice hidden agendas. (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000:3)

Sub-text and self-presentation issues will always be inherent in the interview. There are agendas and concerns that an informant possesses which complicate the data. Does this lack of crystal-clear transparency render such interview methodology unreliable? How can we with any certainty believe what we are being told? Does it really matter if we believe it or not? The fact that it is verbalised – this is what the informants wish to reveal about their teaching practice – is significant to consider. Hollway & Jefferson (2000) are again useful in understanding the legitimacy of this type of research:

One of the good reasons for believing what people tell us, as researchers, is a democratic one: who are we to know any better than the participants when it is, after all, their lives? If we are prepared to disagree, modify, select and interpret what they tell us, is this not an example of the kind of power that we, as researchers, have that should be kept in check by being faithful to the voices of those we are researching. (p.3)

The maxim: 'that perception is reality' is the essence of this study. The tutors' perceptions are the reality of their current practice, revealing the beliefs, values and assumptions that underpin those practices and how constructed meanings create knowledge. Silverman (2000) advises the researcher to clarify how interview responses are to be treated: either as direct access to 'experience' or 'narratives' of activities to be analysed. This is a descriptive study where multiple meanings are attached to responses. I am relying upon the informants to tell me what they know and are
prepared to disclose about actor training. What the informants find difficult to express may equally be of interest.

3.4.4 Finding Personal Insights and Critical realism

Bhaskar (1978; 1979; 1986; 1989) is helpful in solving the question of how to deal with the voices captured in the data. Like van Manen (1990), Bhaskar was interested in a way of finding personal insights into human experience. That relationship between people's ambiguous representations and their experiences is sometimes called critical realism (Bhaskar, op cit; Bunge, 1993; Watkins, 1994-5; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Whilst this does not aid transparency in any way, it does allow the researcher to work within a definable zone of proximity between people's experiences and people's ambiguous representations (Figure 3.3).

![Figure 3.3 Critical Realism Model](source: based on Bhaskar, 1986; Bunge, 1993; Watkins, 1994-5; Holloway & Jefferson, 2000.)

Thoughts are not fixed by eternal unchanging principles. Internal and external factors will influence people's perceptions. Further, Kelly (1963) argues that not all that is known can be articulated:

A person is not necessarily articulate about the constructions he places upon his world. Some of his constructions are not symbolised by words; he can express them only in pantomime. Even the elements which are construed may have no verbal handles by which they can be manipulated and the person finds himself responding to them with speechless impulse. Thus in studying the psychology of man-the-philosopher, we must take into account his subverbal patterns of representation and construction. (p.16)
The analysis of data must take into account that whilst much is articulated, there will also be much of one's practice which has not been able to be articulated and will remain tacit. The use of metaphors and clichés may at times be used to articulate ideas in imprecise ways in order to attempt to formulate spoken 'philosophies' of practice. It is crucial to acknowledge the vicarious nature of the data and to constantly be reminded that the meanings conveyed during the interviews are caught between the informants' ambiguous representations and the informants' experiences (Figure 3.3).

### 3.4.5 Coding the Transcripts

The recording and transcribing of interviews was an essential part of the data gathering process. The transcriptions became important documents that were returned to the interviewees for their checking. Without these transcripts this checking process would have been logistically difficult. I also found it easier to make notes in the margin of the transcripts, which added meaning and clarity to the fieldnotes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). My questions early in the interview created bio-data, which was helpful in understanding the background of the informants. Each interview was coded by examining individual sentences and responses. I used colour highlighters to identify the different themes. I decided not to use a qualitative analysis software package such as NUD*IST or ATLAS for several reasons. Firstly, my sample is relatively small. However it contains a potentially large number of themes and ambiguous categories. Secondly, I found that there was a need to read and re-read the interviews many times carefully for myself and connect this with my memory of the interview thus enhancing the context and sub-text of the responses. Some obvious paralanguage was recorded in the transcripts noting significant pauses, laughter and gestures. Again the usefulness of tape recordings permits me to revisit the data in order to check the tone of responses to further enhance the understanding of given meanings.

With the aid of margin notes I was able to tabulate the responses and begin sorting these responses into broad categories. These data groupings initially consisted of the generic nature of the information. For example, I was able to construct brief staff profiles; institutional profiles; responses which related to what constituted actor training; the aims of actor training; what tutor qualities were valued; pedagogical
beliefs; impacts on teaching, etcetera. I was then able to rearrange these groupings into
a more logical flow of information and further sub-divide the broad categories by using
knowledge categories. Spiro et. al. (1987) suggests that tabulations are perused not
only for classification purposes but also for "crisscrossed" reflection. 'An observation
is interpreted against one issue, perspective or utility, then interpreted against others'
(Stake, 2000b:445).

Whilst it is highly appropriate in this study to examine meaning and knowledge as a
basis to an analytical framework, the complexities and debate within the field seems to
offer no clear way forward in using knowledge categories. With reference to Dewey
was able to develop frameworks that were useful to teaching practice as well as artistic
training (see Chapters 5, 6 & 7).

3.4.6 Finding Themes

Defining what I understood by the term 'theme' was an important consideration in the
data analysis. It was quickly apparent that a simple frequency count of selected terms
or phrases in the transcripts was not going to penetrate the data to give sufficiently
accurate insights into meaning. The diversity of responses and expression of those
responses revealed that frequency meant very little. Again I found the work of van
Manen (1990) to be of particular assistance and reassurance. Like van Manen, I was
searching for ways of uncovering meaning across the range of the cases. A theme,
according to van Manen, is not a fixed concept but 'gives control and order to our
research and writing' (p.79). He writes:

Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its
meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or
disclosure – grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-
bound process but a free act of "seeing" meaning. (van Manen, 1990:79)

Although I decided not to use theme as a frequency count, my understanding of theme
was to be informed by literature and play analysis – in the sense that theme is
understood to be a focus of meaning. Again van Manen reminded me that themes are
not objects that one encounters at certain moments in the text. 'Themes are intransitive'
(p.87) and do much to help describe human experience. Themes help give shape to the analysis of the data by bracketing the experiences of the informants and describing the content of the notions raised. Van Manen terms this 'giving shape to the shapeless' (p.88).

Finding shape, connections and patterns within the data was a slow process – discovering how these patterns might fit is of course the intention of this qualitative research. 'In determining the universal or essential quality of a theme our concern is to discover aspects or qualities that make a phenomenon what it is and without which the phenomenon could not be what it is' (van Manen, 1990:107). Therefore the process of analysing the data was time-consuming. As already foreshadowed, in truth the analysing was initiated in the field during the recording of the interviews. Patterns of responses began to emerge as I became further and further immersed in the world of the informants.

I then considered the implications of the informants' meanings I had been given throughout the study. How much of this was shaped by the institutions? How much was shaped by individual histories? Douglas Maynard (1989) asks us to look at how the participants see things, not just how they do things (Cited in Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). In other words we need to be aware of how the social world has shaped the practices of the workplace. The issues investigated by this type of qualitative research are 'complex, situated, problematic relationships' (Stake, 2000b:440).

Van Manen (1990) argues that these themes are not objects or generalisations but metaphorically likens them to 'knots in the webs of our experiences [or] stars that make up the universes of meaning we live through' (p.90). He extends the metaphor to suggest that it is 'by the light of these themes we can navigate and explore such universes' (p.90).

3.4.7 The Process of Qualitative Synthesis

In bringing the responses of the informants together, a qualitative synthesis is generated. A qualitative research synthesis is suited to promote an understanding of the
phenomenon being investigated (Suri, 1999) through an accumulation of understanding. Throughout this synthesis I attempted to hear and honour the 'voices' of the individual tutors as authentically as possible. The research process though remains largely exploratory as the analysis is based on emerging theoretical models of the tutors' understanding of acting and actor training (Chapters 5 & 6).

The synthesis of qualitative research is interpretative rather than aggregative (Suri, 1999) in a statistical sense. While preserving the integrity and holism of individual studies, inductive and interpretative techniques are used to sufficiently summarise the findings of individual studies into a 'product of practical value' (Noblit & Hare, 1988; Jensen & Allen, 1996; Sandelowski, 1997; Sandelowski, Docherty & Emden, 1997).

The purpose of using interpretative synthesis in qualitative research is not, as mentioned, to generate predictive theories, but to facilitate a more complete understanding (Jensen & Allen, 1996; Sandelowski, 1997) of actor training as characterised by the tutors themselves. Other types of synthesis may emerge such as reciprocal translational synthesis (Noblit & Hare, 1988) which is appropriate in synthesising reports with similar findings and methods. Individual reports with contradictory narratives are suited to refutational synthesis (Noblit & Hare, 1988) where the synthesis attempts to explain the refutations using an interpretative approach. When individual reports examine different aspects of a phenomenon or culture, lines-of-argument synthesis (Noblit & Hare, 1988) is likely to be an appropriate form of synthesis. Thus, the synthesis of qualitative reports becomes an interpretative, inductive, hermeneutic and eclectic process at every stage (Jensen & Allen, 1996).

Understanding that case study is not either simply 'narrative' or 'analytic' is an important acknowledgement. The false dichotomy between individual cases being 'narrative' and population studies being 'analytic' has been well argued by many (Abbott, 1992; Edelson, 1988; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000; et. al.). Individual cases are of research value, just as are smaller numbers of cases. Therefore single-case-based studies and population-based studies are not unequal. And that single cases, as Edelson (1988) suggests, are useful 'even if it is not [...] possible to provide evidence from a
Capturing cases in their uniqueness, rather than using them as a basis for wider generalisation or for theoretical inference of some kind, is sometimes the argued aim of case study (e.g. Gomm, et. al., 2000). In treating each case as unique, it is possible for the researcher to uncover what is happening within the particular context in which it exists. Learning environments such as drama schools are excellent examples of unique contexts. Lincoln & Guba (2000) are right to remind us that 'generalisations are not found in nature; they are active creations of the mind' (p.30) and cannot hope to necessarily say all that is valuable. 'Empirically, they rest upon the generaliser's experience with a limited number of particulars not with 'each and all' of the numbers of a 'class, kind, or order'' (p.30). Whilst this is not specifically a study of comparative cases, some comparison is made in gaining a synthesis of understanding across all of the cases.

Research into teaching is well placed to investigate assumptions that underpin practice. Statistics may be of little benefit in determining what accounts for tutor's practice as statistics fail to penetrate the practice and knowledge bases of tutors. The act of teaching is an organic and complex activity. It seems logical to begin with an investigation of the acting tutors' assumptions and philosophy of practice in order to form an empathetic understanding of the tutors. The assumptions and values held by individual tutors and collectively by drama schools are important qualitative areas of investigation. Booth (1998) argues:

> Everything we do in the classroom, in school, and at university is founded on a set of assumptions about learning and teaching, about knowledge. These beliefs and values, however, are all too often tacit and unacknowledged. We need to uncover and examine them if we – and our teaching – are to change and grow and develop. (p.12)

Synthesising the data can help deconstruct and in turn demystify the practices in learning environments. Many learning environments, such as drama schools, have been places where practices have traditionally been mystified – perhaps sometimes intentionally, but often as a product of a lack of critical research conducted within these environments. This study seeks to uncover and examine these tacit as well as the
explicit beliefs and values. The findings can have broad implications for further study and help question and understand the complexities of teaching practice.

3.4.8 Issues of Trustworthiness, Authenticity and Authority

It is not the intention of this study to use terms such as 'generalisability' to represent the reliability of knowledge. Generalisation is the aim of science and positivism which depends on the assumption of determinism; the possibility of inductive logic; the idea that we can produce knowledge that is free of time and context (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Lincoln & Guba argue that the value of generalisation 'lies in [the] ability to modulate efforts at prediction and control' (p.27). However, like many others (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ely, et. al., 1991; Taylor, 1992) suggest the use of ‘trustworthiness’ as a useful notion:

Being trustworthy as a qualitative researcher means [...] that the processes of the research are carried out fairly, that the products represent as closely as possible the experiences of the people who are studied. (Ely et. al., cited in Taylor, 1992:96)

Issues of credibility are as important in a qualitative research synthesis as in a primary research study (Jensen & Allen, 1996). It was my intention to be consistent and thorough at every stage of the synthesis to attain high level trustworthiness that was strengthened by checking if my synthetic interpretations resonated with the experiences of the practitioners in the field. After all, this study utilises individuals as the actual cases in order to 'give voice' to them. Recorded interviews, assisted by observations, published prospectuses and course documents are all used to form the basis of data collection and assist with checking and ascertaining trustworthiness. Lincoln & Guba (2000) suggest that 'no-one would argue that a single method – or collection of methods – is the royal road to ultimate knowledge' (p.178).

In order to establish trustworthiness, I have used both traditional triangulation and more contemporary notions of crystallisation to corroborate the emerging themes. So how then can one contemplate traditional notions of triangulation in this type of qualitative research? I have addressed the triangulation of the data in the following way: I have relied upon a range of methods to corroborate emerging themes, beginning
with the interview questions themselves. Some questions were designed to clarify and re-clarify responses. For example, Question 15 asks: 'What do you want to give your students?' Question 16 asks 'What do you want your students to take away from their experience with you?' And Question 17 asks: 'What would you like to see the graduates take away from the institution?' (Appendices D & E).

Again it is important to note that all participants were given the opportunity to re-visit the interview some weeks later by reading the interview transcripts, altering, adding or deleting certain responses. There is a need to establish the truthfulness of the emergent themes (Taylor, 1992). However when dealing with perceptions or ideologies of practice, the data relies upon accepting what tutors say they do and how they see things. This study does not attempt to measure this against what the tutors actually demonstrate in their teaching. However a study of that kind would not necessarily be any more helpful in answering this report's central questions.

In addition to the use of questions and re-visiting the transcripts for verification, I also relied upon the published documents from the various drama schools to illuminate and validate philosophies of current practice. These documents contained explicit statements outlining the aims, objectives and mission statements of drama schools. These documents provided a useful understanding of the institutional context in which the informants taught. If the philosophies were or were not aligned, then the nature of that alliance was also a point of investigation.

If in the broad sense 'triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation' (Stake, 2000b:443), then this study provides in 'case-form' multiple meanings from which perceptions and knowledge of practice are founded. Whilst I have consciously attempted to build triangulation into the methodology, I would suggest that I have found notions of 'crystallisation' (Richardson, 1997) more beneficial as a verification concept for this type of research. Owing to the multiple perspectives involved with this study, the image of the crystal rather than the triangle is closer to describing the process of validating emerging themes. The same story, of course, may be told from different points of view. Similarly in this research the views
of the tutors reflect different perspectives and understandings of actor training which crystallise into an understanding of how acting tutors construct meaning.

3.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the methodological framework for this study. A rationale for the choice of qualitative case study is provided. The use of case study is justified as a way to better understand the informants' perceptions, the meanings that they construct and their identifiable knowledge that they reveal. In understanding acting tutors' epistemology of practice [knowledge], it is also important not to overlook issues of ontology [the tutors' world in which they work]. Further, the strength of this qualitative research methodology comes from not only the acknowledgement of the situated nature of learning but also in the use of grounded theory where themes and theories emerge naturally from the interview data. In designing the methodology, the report is positioned at the naturalism/interpretivism/constructivism end of the research paradigm.

The data gathering process allows for transparency where interview transcripts provide a lasting documentation of the data. In gathering the data a hermeneutic circle of understanding is acknowledged where 'pre-understanding' is revealed and develops in the construction of understanding from the beginning of the research and throughout the data collection process. In an interpretive process, hermeneutic understanding serves to continually inform the study and assist in understanding the themes and theories that emerge. Importantly this study does not seek to simply provide answers to a pre-determined proposition but gives every opportunity to encapsulate the ontology and epistemology of what is known and facilitates in identifying what yet remains unknown. Emergent phenomena requires explanation and in doing so I rely in part on the use of realist explanations (Bhaskar, 1986).

The data collection methodology is outlined and criteria for the inclusion of cases rationalised. Thirteen informants are selected across five 'elite' drama schools encompassing Australia and England. The critical nature of case selection is illuminated and therefore selection criteria need to be transparent. In this report the
chosen informants include the Principal/Director, Head of Acting and a senior Acting tutor from each school. The choice of these criteria was based upon the assumption that I would be able to collect data from the most experienced informants available. A difficulty in gaining access to drama schools and their staff is identified; with one possible explanation being the guarded nature of the drama schools who are highly protective of their reputations.

Discussed are the pragmatic issues of gaining trust and establishing formal consent from the informants to be part of this research. Issues of control and ethics are addressed, particularly in relation to preserving the identity of the informants through the use of pseudonyms. Transcripts were made of tape-recorded interviews with all of the informants. These transcripts were returned to informants to check and alter if necessary. A strict ethical code was applied and the right to privacy maintained throughout.

The data analysis is discussed in conjunction with the influencing research paradigms and theories. The particular influence of hermeneutics and phenomenology to 'researching the lived experience' (van Manen, 1990) is distinguished as an approach to research not a methodology. Identified is the issue of how to avoid the temptation to make empirical generalisations at the expense of understanding the lived experience of the informants in all its uniqueness. Close attention was paid to this caution during the organisation of the coding of the data.

Acknowledged in the chapter is that phenomena is mediated through the interpretations of the informants. However in this research this is seen as a strength and not a weakness as it is their way of viewing the world that is of interest to understandings the meanings constructed by the informants in the development of their knowledge of actor training. However there is some weakness in the research methodology in that there is no absolute certainty of complete transparency in what the informants reveal during the interviews. Again, whilst noting this limitation of the research methodology, this may also prove to be one of its strengths in that it illuminates how the informants think about their practice and reveal [or not reveal] their world to the researcher. In this way critical realism is identified as the zone existing between the informants'
ambiguous representations and the informants' experiences. It also acknowledges that whilst much is articulated, there will also be a great deal of the informants' practice that will remain inert or tacit.

The coding of the interview transcripts is described along with the way themes were identified. Themes were defined not so much by their frequency count of selected terms or phrases used in the transcripts, but rather understanding themes as a focus of meaning [as in literature and play analysis]. This was achieved by bracketing the experiences of the informants and describing the content of notions raised. Influenced by van Manen (1990), this process of 'giving shape to the shapeless' as he suggests, is described in the chapter as a significant way in which meaning is created in this particular research report. The use of interpretative or qualitative synthesis brings together the responses of the informants. I do not justify it as a way to generate predictive theories, but rather as a way to facilitate a more complete understanding of the meanings constructed by the informants. Therefore, the report does not aim to seek 'generalisability' as a fixed requirement but replaces this construct with the notion of 'trustworthiness'. 'Triangulation' and 'crystallisation' are used as ways of validating the emergent themes and honouring the grounded nature of the data analysis.

An analysis of the contexts for the research and *pen-pictures* or profiles of the study's key informants are detailed in Chapter 4. Through a close examination of the emergent themes, Chapters 5 and 6 analyse the interview data according to the key questions identified in this report. These chapters attempt to honour the situated nature of practice whist meaningfully analysing the interview data.
Chapter 4

The Case Study Sites & Key Informants

"The proper school to learn Art in is not Life but Art."

– Oscar Wilde
CHAPTER 4

THE CASE SITES & KEY INFORMANTS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 presents a methodological and philosophical framework used to address the major research questions of this study detailing the research paradigm, data collection, and data analysis methods to be employed. In order to provide significant meaning in the analysis, Chapter 4 establishes the contexts in which the research has been conducted and introduces six of the study's key informants. For this research to have situational validity it is essential to re-construct the data's setting and re-connect this back to the data. In Chapters 5 and 6, these contextual findings are used to understand the themes that emerge from the data and analyse the meanings communicated by the informants.

The five drama schools and thirteen [originally fourteen] informants create a collective case study (Stake, 2000b) in an attempt to better understand the practices of acting tutors. Each drama school is unique in terms of history, implicit and explicit ideologies, physical environment, staff and student compositions, and financial structures. All teaching occurs within a structural context which Cornbleth (1990) defines as the 'education system's established roles and relationships, including operating procedures, shared beliefs and norms' (p.35). These conditions form what Lave & Wenger (1991) term 'a community of practice'. Lave & Wenger's interdisciplinary approach attempts to synthesise the work of scholars, practitioners and society that locates learning firmly in the processes of co-operation – not simply in the thoughts of individuals. To these ends the drama schools are also located within a broader community of practice in that they serve as a training ground to prepare students for the acting industry, both as it currently exists and to some extent for anticipated future changes to that industry.

Each drama school described below is portrayed as it was captured at the time of interviewing. I have attempted to provide sufficient details of each of the case sites in
order to clarify the contexts of this study without disclosing the identity of each drama
school. Whilst institutional disclosure was not an issue for any of the participating
drama schools, I felt that it was simply a further safeguard to help protect the
informants' identity. Descriptions of the schools and their courses are essential to detail
in order to understand the contexts and conditions for where the learning takes place.
Lave & Wenger (1991), have argued that learning needs to be examined within a
whole context:

[Learning] must be understood with respect to a practice as a whole, with its
multiplicity of relations - both within the community and with the world at
large. Dissociating learning from pedagogical intentions opens the possibility
of mismatch or conflict among practitioner's viewpoints in situations where
learning is going on. These differences often must become constitutive of the
content of learning. (p.114)

The study's contexts reported here are used to examine understandings of learning
reported in Chapters 6 and 7, which provide important bases on which to understand
the insights reported in Chapter 5. The intention here is to avoid unduly separating the
informants from their schools and social contexts. The situated nature of cognition and
learning (Kirshner & Whitson, 1997; Van Oers, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; et. al.)
recognises the contextual embeddedness of learning.

The wording used to describe the drama schools and their courses is largely that
provided by the schools themselves, particularly descriptions appearing in drama
school prospectuses and course documents such as handbooks. I have attempted to
preserve the language used in these documents in order to convey to the reader the
rhetoric used and ideology of each institution. For reasons of anonymity I have not
been able to cite the sources of those documents.
4.2 SECTION I – THE DRAMA SCHOOLS

In this section each drama school is reported in terms of the school's general description, mission statement, student profile, description of the course outline and aims.

4.2.1 English Drama School 'A'

Description of drama school:
Drama school 'A' is currently located on two campuses. The campus I visited is located in London. It was showing signs of decay and was clearly in its final stages of use. It will soon be closed and relocated thirteen kilometres away at its other campus. This English drama school is located separately, although it now operates within a university system. All courses are validated by a particular university and are accredited by the National Council for Drama Training [NCDT]. This institution not only offers vocational training but also a range of degree courses in Theatre. The school was established in the mid-1900s combining acting and teacher training. The school claims to remain "an artistic community of students who have a clear vision of themselves as professionals".

Mission:
Drama school 'A' will continue to deliver the highest quality teaching, learning and research in professional performance and to develop its national and international position as the leading institution in the field, continuing to inspire passion and commitment in the pursuit of excellence. Drama school 'A' provides innovative vocational education of the highest standard in the professions of the theatre. The school recruits the most talented undergraduate, postgraduate and research students, to programmes that recognise their diverse needs.

Student Profile:
Drama school 'A' claims to be interested in "the best students" which is founded on the belief that quality of intake, in part, determines successful outcomes. To this end, drama school 'A' auditions and interviews all over the world, despite claiming to be the most popular institution of its kind in the United Kingdom, attracting over 2,500
applications per year. The successful student is said to have a strong sense of professional purpose and direction and is well prepared and experienced. The qualities which students need to bring to each course are, however, so varied that the academic qualifications which make up the standard, formal entry requirements to a programme are always viewed alongside the individual strengths of each applicant. The success of drama school 'A' graduates is a source of pride to the school, claiming a consistently high level of employment across the full range of programmes including teaching/education. This covers a wide range of employment in Theatre, Film, Television, Radio and the Music Industry. For almost fifty years drama school 'A' has produced quality graduates many of whom now occupy high profile and key positions, nationally and internationally, in the field of education and the arts.

**Course Outline/Aims:**

**Program:** Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Acting.

**Duration:** 3 years.

Much of the course's teaching and learning methodology is practice-based in the belief that the student's role in the process of creating a performance demands the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, reflection and understanding that is then tested through practical application. The school claims that acting demands a sense of enquiry, commitment and self-discipline and the collaborative emphasis of theatre also demand strong communication and inter-personal skills. The development of a personal performance process, the ability to conceptualise and to reflect upon practice and the growth of collaborative company skills culminate in the course's production work where students work closely with other theatre practitioners. In practice-based work and in the development of theoretical skills and acquisition of knowledge students attain "degree worthy levels of achievement" and are trained to take their place in the contemporary theatre and acquire the understanding and skills to contribute to its development.

Specifically, the programme aims to promote the development of intellectual and imaginative abilities thus enabling students to identify, challenge and explore new concepts and competencies. There is a praxis-based philosophy that aims to encourage students to develop and test ideas both in theory and practice. Students are introduced
to the work of key practitioners and theorists and to their cultural and historical contexts. Students are also introduced to a range of research and practice methodologies enabling students to develop a range of analytic, reflective and communicative skills in order to become articulate and reflective practitioners in the theatre.

Drama school 'A' aims to provide training in the essential technical skills and working vocabularies of the actor in order to enable students to realise their professional and artistic goals. The school also aims to provide students with an extended knowledge and understanding of theatre in its cultural and historical context and to promote awareness and understanding of theatre as an interdisciplinary art form. The programme aims to empower students to collaborate effectively within a group and with other theatre practitioners.

The program outcomes are categorised as four distinct areas: knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills and transferable skills. The school hopes to equip students with an understanding and training that will enable them to make "worthwhile contributions" to current professional practice and to the development of theatre in the United Kingdom.

4.2.2 English Drama School 'B'

Description of Drama School:
This is a relatively small drama school that claims "a big reputation". It is currently located in central London and was established in the early 1960s. Whilst this drama school does not currently enjoy state-of-the-art facilities it is soon to relocate to specially designed premises. Even in its current location the school has a creative and industrious ambience which has produced many high profile graduates over the years. The annual student in-take is 32 for the Acting programme. This drama school is now part of an amalgam of arts colleges.
The school claims in its prospectus that the official day starts at 10am although students will frequently warm-up from 9am and the day finishes often at around 9pm. Punctuality is rigorously enforced as part of preparation for the profession. Drama school 'B' places great emphasis on using plays drawn mainly from a classical repertoire.

**Mission:**

Drama school 'B' does not have a formal mission statement; however the Director was able to provide the following "defining characteristics" of the school and its courses:

*The training is unequivocally vocational. The school aims to train and educate actors, directors, writers, etc., for direct entry to employment in theatre and its related industries. Courses place emphasis on the development of the artist as a whole – as a growing personality aiming to integrate the personal and individual with a sense of the function of artistic endeavour in society. Study on all courses is intensive (long hours; seeks deep learning; and has a broad and solid skills base). Acting and directing are considered study subjects in their own right, are therefore learnt systematically and not simply 'acquired' as a by-product of taking part in quasiprofessional productions. The School draws its inspiration from the traditions of Eastern and Central Europe: the Russian acting school; Laban-based movement and character analysis; Jungian psychology; Brecht via the influence of the school's Founders and Joan Littlewood.*

**Student Profile:**

Last year drama school 'B' had 1,100 applicants for the Acting course and 70 for the Directing course. They admitted 32 and 6 students respectively. Gender balance for the Acting course is 2 males to 1 female in admissions whereas on applications it was approximately 2 females to 1 male. Last year's intake was reported to be 30% "black and minority ethnic". Although unsubstantiated by this researcher, the school claims a tradition of accepting students from under-represented backgrounds, including those with little or no formal academic qualifications. It is also claimed they "tend to do very
well in their courses". The school is traditionally very international with some 15% of the students coming from outside the UK and some 10% from outside the EU.

**Course Outline/Aims:**

**Program:** Bachelor of Arts Honours (Acting).

**Duration:** 3 years full time.

The aim of the school is to provide the student actor with a systematic approach to the problems of acting. It is claimed that this will lead to an eventual control over their personal resources, many of which are subconscious in their origin and, for that reason, not susceptible to conscious control. The course aims to equip them, not with the license to 'do their own thing', but with the freedom that derives from a proper self-respect and the eventual mastery of their imaginative resources. It tries to develop their own individuality, often buried beneath the overlay of needing to 'conform', whilst preparing them for the disciplines of what is essentially a collective mode of existence. It introduces them to 'the classic tradition', for the maintenance of which they may one day be responsible, and to some notion of the modern stage. Its final goal is very simple: to teach the actor how to work by himself or herself.

The methodological approach to acting underpins not only the Course curriculum but also its teaching and learning strategies, which includes group teaching and learning, rehearsal exercise and tutorials. The methodological approach to acting demands that students investigate themselves, their bodies and their psyches in search of the raw material for their work. The students are assessed on *process, performance* and *professional conduct*.

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**4.2.3 Australian Drama School 'C'**

**Description of Drama School:**

This drama school is located in a part of Australia that is geographically remote from industry capitals. It is located within a university. Since the 1980s the school has developed a reputation for offering specialist training within the theatre industry. The annual intake of students into the acting program is approximately 18. The school
promotes itself as having world-class staff, a low student/staff ratio and state-of-the-art performance and teaching facilities providing "rigorous and specialised training of the highest international calibre".

Soon after I had conducted the interviews there was a major displacement of some key positions within the school. The Director resigned and the drama school no longer employs the Head of Acting.

**Mission:**

*The mission is to provide in the State a 'centre of excellence' for the education, training, motivation and encouragement of talented individuals. The school exists to assist students to achieve their potential as autonomous artists, performers and teachers in the performing and visual arts. It aims to offer specialist facilities, talented staff, inspiration, leadership and opportunities needed to help professional performers, artists and teachers, further develop their creative and performing skills. The school enhances, through its artistic community, wider participation in the appreciation of the performing and visual arts in Australia. It is a school that contributes directly to the cultural life in Australia – helping to develop the Nation’s cultural identity and that contributes to the economic well being of Australia – through its involvement in arts industries and the supply of excellent graduates.*

**Student Profile:**

The course has an international reputation based in the success of graduates such as [extensive list of graduates named]. The school claims that these and many other drama school 'C' trained actors have established rewarding careers in Theatre, Television, Radio and Film not only in Australia but internationally.

**Course Outline/Aims:**

**Program:** Advanced Diploma of Performing Arts (Acting).

*Can be converted to BA (Performing Arts) with substantive industry experience.*

**Duration:** 3 years full time.

Acting students at drama school 'C' take classes in acting, voice, movement, text and historical studies. Acting in workshops and full-scale productions students put their
class tuition into practice. The integration of class work and performance gives students "the best possible chance of success as professional actors".

The environment at drama school 'C' is emphasised as "collegial". Based on the traditional training principles of Stanislavsky and his philosophical descendants the course trains students as part of a theatre ensemble. Students have the opportunity to train according to industry standards. Preparation for working in the profession, including how to get jobs and seek an agent, is a significant part of the course, especially in third year.

The course adopts the view that performance grows from improvisation within specific, agreed structures – and classes begin with fundamental techniques for finding the truth in acting: impulse work, personification, sensory awareness, story telling and focus within the ensemble.

As the course progresses students acquire more advanced techniques for naturalism [in the works of Chekhov, for example] and approaches to acting heightened texts of comedy and tragedy [for example, the works of Shakespeare]. The art of acting is explored practically throughout the course in a wide range of works and approaches to performance including classical Greek, commedia dell' arte, epic theatre, poetic realism and contemporary trends in writing and performance.

Historical Studies place the training programme in the context of Australian and international theatre practice, and also in relation to our predecessors and their innovations, in order for the actors to be more intense, poetic, humane and expressive. To allow for emotional freedom, attention is paid to 'form and structure'. The study of dramatic literature teaches how to analyse and get the most out of a script. It is claimed that drama school 'C' actors "learn how important it is to be analytical and intuitive". The school promotes itself as "a place where you can learn the skills of your craft and practise them at the same time".
4.2.4 Australian Drama School 'D'

Description of Drama School:
This drama school is also located away from much of the Nation's dominant theatre and television industry. The drama school course was established in the 1970s originally as part of a College of Advanced Education. The drama school is located within a large university that is currently building a new location dedicated to an environment for "creatives and innovators". The annual intake into the acting program is 16 to 18. The school promotes itself as having a strong vocational focus and having links with industry. Its new facilities will aim to form links between the creative industries and boast what it claims as "purpose-built, world-class facilities".

Mission:
Note: This drama school does not have a formal mission statement and was not willing to provide one.

Student Profile:
Note: This school also does not have a formal student profile recorded and was also not willing to provide one.

Course Outline/Aims

Program: Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting).

Duration: 3 years full time.

This three-year conservatorium-style degree program is designed for students seeking to become professional actors. Students study core units in creative industries and a prescribed sequence of specialist studio-based units that focus on developing the actor's process as it applies to stage, film, television and musical theatre. Practical experience is gained through performance work for stage and screen through main-stage and intensive studio sessions within the University and with approved professional organisations. The training uses an American derived systematic approach to using the actors' bodies as their instrument. The school claims that acting graduates have been successful in signing with national talent and casting agents and securing roles in national theatre seasons, television series and feature films.
4.2.5 Australian Drama School 'E'

Description of Drama School:
This drama school is located in a large capital city of Australia. It is an independent school established in the late 1950s. This nationally high-profile school has developed a reputation for offering specialist training within theatre, film and television industry. It is primarily concerned with the training of practitioners. The full-time acting course is accredited as degree status. The annual intake of students into the acting program is 26.

Although associated with a university this school exists quite autonomously as an independent company. The drama school enjoys state-of-the-art facilities with theatre facilities to rival many medium-sized professional theatres. This drama school claims that its courses are "professionally effective and that graduates enjoy a high rate of employment within the industry". There are no stated training methodologies, however the school uses eclectic training with an emphasis on practice play production.

Mission:
The mission of Drama school 'E' is to pursue Excellence, Innovation and Access in entertainment arts, education and training, specialising in dramatic art, whilst maintaining national focus and international perspective.

Student Profile:
In 2002 there were 2041 applicants for the acting program with 23 being accepted. The school states that students are selected purely on the basis of talent and potential to benefit from the Drama school 'E' training. There are no quotas based on state of origin, gender, nor ethnicity. Applications are actively encouraged from Indigenous and ethnic Australians. Individual talent and potential to benefit from the course are the sole criteria for entry to the courses. The drama school claims that their roll of graduates "reads like a Who's Who of the entertainment arts". The school claims that since foundation drama school 'E' "has trained the heart of Australia's arts entertainment industry".
Course Outline/Aims

Program: Bachelor of Dramatic Art in Acting

Duration: 3 years full time.

The aim of the Acting Course is to provide exceptionally talented young people with a range of vocational skills and to assist them to apply these skills with imagination and intelligence to the realities of working careers as professional actors. The course provides a practical approach to acting in theatre, film, television and radio. Students are given broad training in every phase of the actor's art and acquainted with all aspects of theatre and the media. Students are expected to develop skills, methods of work and professional attitudes of a high calibre. The course provides a foundation for continuing growth within the profession.

The course is concerned with developing two complementary aspects of the actor's art: craft and imagination. The school claims that craft is that part of the actor's art that can be learnt by practice and guidance. Imagination is that part of the actor's art that cannot be learnt, but can be continually enriched by improvisation and spontaneous activity, by observation and awareness, by contact with all the associated arts and by exploration of the creative impulse.

Section Summary

The five drama schools included in this study are composed of two from England and three from Australia. All schools have an association in some way with a university. Intake into the first year ranges across the drama schools from 16 to 32 although most average approximately 20 students. The aims and practices of these schools can be summarised into three categories: processes, content and outcomes (Table 4.1). As identified the training processes range from systematic to eclectic approaches.

Drama schools highlighted certain features of their processes that may indicate subtle differences in their approaches. Table 4.1 illustrates that all processes are to some extent practice-based although Drama schools 'B' and 'D' made special mention of their use of exegesis of body and/or body and psyche. Drama school 'C' highlighted its
ensemble approach. All schools emphasised their practical processes employed in their programmes.

Content of courses varied but all contained production work, although drama school 'B' played down this aspect, preferring to emphasise that learning did not simply occur through production work but rather through explicit systematic training. Drama schools 'D' and 'E' specifically mentioned preparing students for media other than stage acting. Drama school 'A' stood alone in stating the development of working vocabularies. Table 4.1 reflects a range in emphases from a classical repertoire of plays through to studio-based acting process work.

Table 4.1 illuminates that the training outcomes were all similar in that they state the vocationality of their courses. However some schools such as Drama schools 'C' and 'E' specifically state other outcomes such as humanistic outcomes. Unlike the other schools, Drama schools 'B', 'C' and 'E' did not emphasise the collaborative ensemble, preferring instead to highlight the training of the individual.
## Table 4.1 Drama School Course Aims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drama School</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>• Practice-based methodology.</td>
<td>• Acquisition &amp; development of knowledge, skills, &amp; reflection.</td>
<td>• Professional actors with knowledge &amp; understanding of intellectual skills, practical skills &amp; transferable skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enabling students to identify, challenge &amp; explore concepts &amp; competencies.</td>
<td>• Development of working vocabularies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>• Development of the artist as a whole person.</td>
<td>• Exercises.</td>
<td>• Actors with a systematic approach to acting with control over personal resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Systematic &amp; methodological approach that investigates body &amp; psyche.</td>
<td>• Classical plays.</td>
<td>• Freedom derived from proper self-respect &amp; mastery of imaginative resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Group teaching &amp; learning, rehearsal exercise &amp; tutorials.</td>
<td>• Assessment on process, performance &amp; professional conduct.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>• Trained as part of a theatre ensemble.</td>
<td>• Exercises &amp; productions.</td>
<td>• Actors to become more intense, poetic, humane &amp; expressive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Promotes the view that performance grows from improvisation.</td>
<td>• Training according to industry standards.</td>
<td>• Actors who learn how important it is to be analytical and intuitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learn skills of the craft of acting &amp; practise them at the same time.</td>
<td>• Impulse work, personification, sensory awareness, &amp; storytelling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Techniques for naturalism (e.g. Chekhov).</td>
<td>• Approaches to heightened texts of comedy &amp; tragedy (e.g. Shakespeare).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Classical Greek, commedia dell’arte, epic theatre, poetic realism &amp; contemporary texts.</td>
<td>• Study of dramatic literature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Traditional training principles of Stanislavsky</td>
<td>• Development of craft &amp; imagination.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>• Conservatorium-style programme.</td>
<td>• Skills in stage, film &amp; television.</td>
<td>• Professional actors prepared for the industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• American derived systematic approach to using the actors' bodies as their instrument.</td>
<td>• Prescribed sequence of specialist studio-based units focusing on developing the actor's process.</td>
<td>• Actors with a systematic approach to acting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Practical experience is developed through performance work for stage &amp; television through mainstage &amp; intensive studio performances.</td>
<td>• Production work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>• Craft learnt by practice &amp; guidance.</td>
<td>• A practical approach to acting in theatre, film, television &amp; radio.</td>
<td>• A range of vocational skills applied with imagination &amp; intelligence to the realities of working careers as professional actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enriching imagination by improvisation &amp; spontaneous activity by observation and awareness, by contact with all the associated arts.</td>
<td>• Broad training in every phase of the actor's art &amp; acquainted with all aspects of theatre &amp; media.</td>
<td>• High calibre of professional attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Exploration of the creative impulse.</td>
<td>• Development of craft &amp; imagination.</td>
<td>• Foundation for continuing growth within the profession.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Informants' interview data.*
4.3 SECTION II – THE INFORMANTS

Section One provides an understanding of the case study sites and the institutional contexts in which the informants engage with their practice. Section Two profiles a selection of participants or key informants of the study through the use of 'pen-pictures' where the informants are described in terms of their own personal histories and relationship to their institution. Rather than portraying them clinically as 'subjects' I hope that something of the essence of the participants' interview responses has been retained in order to develop an understanding of who these people really are, how they are situated in their drama schools and how they express themselves. The pen-pictures of the participants are constructed from the information they revealed during their interviews. Without attempting to validate them, I offer their accounts of themselves as they explain them. I have also included a few salient observations from each interview and noted the participants' subsequent editing [if any] of their transcripts. These accounts are useful in categorising the finding in Chapters 5 and 6.

The drama schools' individual teachers and Principals/Directors significantly shape the hegemony of each institution. Rideout (1995) irrefutably argues that 'any academy is only as good as its current staff and students' (p.15). The biographical contexts as understood in this report are representative of and defined by persons' social [and economic] circumstances, experiences, interactions with other individuals and groups of people, institutions, industry and environments. Individuals further shape the biographical context by interacting with other people. The nature of this history is obviously dynamic – continually changing over time.

In total thirteen informants have been interviewed and all have contributed to the findings of this research. However I present here a selection of six of the key informants (Table 4.2) to profile as examples of their stories. Whilst all thirteen represent interesting and unique stories in their own right, I have sought to limit my pen-pictures to a manageable number of representative cases to detail here. The choice of six is not indicative of anything more than that they are representative of the total cases both by similarity and difference. They include each school, their roles [two
Directors, two Heads of Acting and two tutors] and I have included the only two female informants.

Table 4.2 Summary of Total Drama Schools & Key Informants (Pseudonyms used)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drama School</th>
<th>Director/Principal</th>
<th>Head of Acting</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Drama School 'A'</td>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Drama School 'B'</td>
<td>Anton</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>Gillian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Drama School 'C'</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Brett</td>
<td>Edward (withdrawn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Drama School 'D'</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>Heather (incumbent)</td>
<td>Terry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Drama School 'E'</td>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>Sam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Note: Pseudonyms have been used. Shading represents the six informants profiled in Chapter 4.

4.3.1 "WILLIAM" [Principal/Director] Australian Drama School 'C'

Commitment to the Interview

The interview was conducted in William's office. The surroundings were clean, spacious and modern. His secretary had escorted me through to see him. William was contemplative and clear in his responses. William appeared very comfortable discussing all aspects of actor training during the interview. He spoke with authority and breadth of knowledge. He enjoyed the opportunity to engage in a conversation about actor training and consequently the interview went considerably over time.
Personal History

William is originally from the United Kingdom and began his career by enrolling in a Bachelor of Education programme where he admitted to being "tempted" by a friend of his into a drama class which shaped his future. He also had a background in design and ended up as a professional theatre designer for a number of years before going into teaching. He had worked as a trained professional actor and worked professionally as a director for many years. Dominating his career for the last twenty or so years he has been involved in developing curriculum, developing institutions and in furthering actor training and theatre training in general.

He founded a theatre school in the United Kingdom in the late 1980s, which he says was the first new theatre school for approximately twenty-five years. It was part of the public sector and offered degrees in acting and technical theatre and was in partnership with a "prestigious" theatre company. He claimed that in terms of training actors this was the first time there had been that "marriage between education and the profession":

William: It was primarily established in a sense to challenge the status quo a little bit ‘cause at the time there wasn’t a really good theatre school in that part of the UK and they were sending all sorts of good students to other schools [...] mostly in the private sector. So we created a public sector institution in partnership with the Department of Education and we managed to get the [name of university] to validate degree programs to Masters Level. To be frank, nothing much has changed there since I left. It’s still operating the three degrees that I had at the time. (11-15:71,17-23:71)

From then on he became a Principal at [name of his drama school] in London. That particular institution was very much concerned with the professional interface and the training of undergraduate degrees through to PhD level. Along the way he claimed to have acquired an educational background. He is emeritus professor of a UK university and a full professor at his current institution which he arrived at two and a half years ago where he admitted "there’s a lot to do and a lot to change" (7-8:86).

Before leaving the UK he was appointed the National Assessor [Arts] for the Institute of Learning and Teaching, which was set up to give university and college teaching
staff professional recognition of what they were doing. This was an appointment on the top of his full-time job, but his role was to accredit courses such as the Graduate Certificate of University Teaching and to assess individual portfolios of staff who wanted to be recognised as members of the Institute. He explained that membership of the Institute meant being recognised by the UK Government as a qualified university teacher. He stressed being 'recognised' rather than 'qualified'.

William holds a number of honours and awards from institutions in the United Kingdom and the United States. He described being "a little bit of an unusual beast in that I have a very strong academic background as well as a managerial creative background. I also paint and I write novels" (41-44:70). He claimed to have written in the order of 35 to 40 degree programs from first degree to PhD in theatre or its related arts.

**Employment, Induction and Mentoring**

William said that Australian drama school 'C' via the University does have an induction process. It operates at two levels: part of it is online and part of it comprises a series of sessions. William explained that he meets all new fulltime members of staff. The Heads of School also have something of a mentoring role. Not that William currently does this, but he suggested that in the past he has brought groups of five or six new staff together, inviting and encouraging them to support one another.

**Relationship to the Institution**

William expressed his desire for open communication with staff and students. Approximately once per year William would address the whole student body of each of the departments. "I go around to each of those student groups and address them about what’s going on, take whatever they want to throw at me and answer it. And I also regularly go to staff meetings, I invite myself, and sometimes I’ve been invited" (17-22:70). He intends to be able to communicate with students in future via their new website with a monthly newsletter. Last year William introduced a Student Advisory Group, which meets at least once per semester. It consists of two representatives from every department:
William: They’ll just come in here and have a sandwich and a bit of a lunch break with me. We don’t have an agenda, they bring what they want, we tell them what’s going on, and that’s how it is. I respond to whatever it is they have to say. (3-8:82)

William explained that he is governed by the University's professional development policy and the Faculty is provided with two members of staff dedicated to arranging PD – one to organise professional development and another to organise instructional design which develops on-line materials from existing face-to-face delivery. William explained that any member of staff could apply for PD. Each school also has a "significant" Professional Development budget. This is a budget William suggested was often not completely spent:

William: I have to say it is one of the budgets that doesn’t get spent very well. That’s primarily because everybody’s too busy but we do get [...] support people [...] conferences and travel and so on. A number of people do higher degrees and other qualifications but the organised PD, say for a group of general staff or a group of acting tutors, would be organised through this service level agreement. I would sign off on that. (11-19:83)

William further outlined that the PD organiser talks directly with staff and liaise with William as to what PD might be relevant to staff needs. Recently, he claims, the PD organiser suggested a community of practice be established within the Institution where staff could share their aims and objectives and also "have a good whinge" (30:83). In addition to PD for fulltime staff, William is also supportive of PD for sessional staff and actively seeks not to distinguish between 'fulltime' and 'sessional' staff in this regard, even if it means not following the University policy exactly:

William: The university’s policy on that is not helpful, so I ignore it and as I said before I treat all staff equally badly. So if they come to me, [...] sessional staff know, and [...] if they go to those meetings, that if they make an application to me for support they will get it or they’ll be treated just as badly as anybody else. But, for example, a number of them are going through their graduate teaching/tertiary teaching certificate programme along with some fulltime staff and I didn’t distinguish between them. And I think there were eleven doing that which is quite expensive for us,
and the sessional staff... you never know whether it’s a sound investment because they could go and work somewhere else for three days a week. But I’ve just got tired of making that judgement. I think [...] they’re professional people they need to be professionally able to do what we want them to do. (42-52:83,1-8:84)

William went on to express the opinion that he draws no distinction between sessional, fulltime and general staff:

William: [...] it sounds a little bit idealistic, but my view is they're just staff. [...] They’re all trying to achieve the same thing. They’re all working for the benefit of the students. So I don’t actually, in my mind, make any distinctions in that regard. I know that in reality that people are paid differently, work under different conditions of service, but I treat them all as professionals [...]. (44-52:80,1:81)

On a university seniority scale with level 'A' at the bottom, William explained that he is governed by the University's policy that dictates that the Heads of Department and Heads of School do not deal with any appointment of 'Level C' and above. William can appoint anybody at 'Level C', as a Head of Faculty. It is only the Vice Chancellor who can appoint 'Levels D' and up. There are only two 'Level D' positions in the Faculty and they are the Heads of School. Most Heads of Department would be classified as 'Level C'. The Head of School can appoint 'Levels A and B' and they would also chair the interview panel. The Faculty employs many sessional staff and the Heads of Department make these appointments. Many of these sessional staff are local professionals. William also identified an extensive guest artist programme that operates in partnership with the City's International Festival.

In outlining employment patterns William suggested that sessional staff are not entirely drawn from the ranks of former students. This situation, he explained, comes about for two main reasons: the geographic remoteness of the Institution and the fact that the Institution has only existed for several decades which means the older profiled staff are likely to have graduated from other drama schools. The fulltime staff consists of a broad cross-section of staff with many international appointments.
On the issue of staff appraisal William explained that there was a rigorous quality assurance process that appraised staff and included student feedback. The process has only been applied to fulltime staff members and not to the sessional staff, but as he puts it "if they don’t perform they don’t get re-employed" (34-35:67). William suggested that soon sessional staff too would be subject the University's Unit Evaluation Instrument and a Teaching Evaluation Instrument, which are student evaluations of courses and staff. In determining the effectiveness of sessional staff, William suggested the process is both formal and informal:

**William:** If the guest Director can’t direct or has a string of student productions that you don't think are appropriate in terms of standard and student engagement, well then we don't employ them again. It may even be that formal and informal means of complaint and concern of the staff and students [...]. (38-44:79)

William informed me that the drama school is subject to external scrutiny both by the State Government and also through the Australian Quality Assurance framework. It is also subject to scholarship review every five years by an international panel. He further pointed to the belief in staff being part of a "dynamic collective":

**William:** As professionals they need to know what’s going on. They need to be able to do what they need to do and have the resources to do it. They need to know what they’re part of a bigger picture of the institution that’s moving forward. Now that’s the challenge, because it’s not really been very effective in this Institution. (1-8:81)

William described that in his previous institution there was a "sense of momentum amongst staff" (10:81) and "sense of excitement about what we were doing" (11:81). William candidly revealed how he perceived Australian drama school 'C' and alluded to possible frustrations with the staff becoming too complacent about its reputation and future:

**William:** It’s bit of dinosaur this place. It’s sort of quite slow to get up in the morning I think. It’s a very exciting place, very dynamic when you’re in it, but it tends to not think about its future very much, except you know individuals do, and they progress ideas and so on, and are encouraged to do
so. [...] Because most people work really, really hard on what’s right in front of them, and often don’t have the time or the energy to step back and think about it. (13-34:81)

William reinforced the point that all they do is underpinned by a "vocational set of objectives to do with getting people into the profession (52:72,1:73). He did not make any grand claims about this drama school, but rather acknowledged that it is not necessarily excellent at all it does:

**William:** We don’t pretend to be excellent at everything and in a sense it would be quite wrong for us to do that. There are other institutions that are good and excellent at some of the things that we do, but there are some unique features to this institution which we believe is our strength. (45-51:72)

**Transcript Editing**

William made numerous deletions to the transcript particularly in order to preserve his anonymity.

### 4.3.2 "MARVIN" [Director/Principal] Australian Drama School 'E'

**Commitment to the Interview**

My meeting with Marvin was delayed some few days owing to him being absent on sick leave. On the appointment day his personal assistant could not locate him for some time. He is a very 'hands-on' Director who likes to keep an active involvement with many levels of the programme. I sat in Marvin's modern office where he sipped coffee and graciously involved himself with the interview. Marvin answered the questions authoritatively and passionately. Marvin's almost 40-year history as Director of the institution positioned him as the paternal figurehead and he spoke as such. He described an active involvement in choosing productions and also directing some of them.
Personal History

Marvin is a graduate of the University of Tasmania, where in the 1950s he completed a BA (Hons) and an MA. A non-award postgraduate year followed this at Bristol University in the Academic Drama Department. He also did some work with the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and the Old Vic Theatre. In 1966 he also completed an MA in Film and Television at UCLA. Marvin was quick to assert: "That’s my academic background but normally we keep all that a bit quiet here because we like to differentiate our school from academic institutions. […] We’re more conscious of what we’ve done professionally" (11-16:173).

In Marvin’s case, he intended to become an academic but found himself teaching Theatre History at drama school ‘E’. Then he started directing plays for the school and for the Old Tote. He mused: "they were successful so I thought God’s trying to tell me something" (22-23:173). He taught at drama school ‘E’ for a while and then went to America for a couple of years in the mid-1960s and then came back to the school to honour a contract. He was still directing for the Old Tote and for drama school ‘E’. Marvin became Director of the school in 1969 and also directs and teaches. He is due to retire at the end of 2004.

Marvin looks after the Art and Education side of the drama school. The General Manager, who looks after administration and financial affairs, closely supports him in an administrative partnership. They have worked together since 1969, claiming: "Success has been due to that relationship which is absolutely critical to any arts organisation" (35-37:173). Marvin was quick to note that: "We think of ourselves as an arts organisation and not purely as a teaching institute" (37-39:173).

Employment, Induction and Mentoring

Marvin explained that there are certain staff selection procedures laid down which are open and transparent. Marvin talked, however, of the need to get right the composition in the employment of the guest directors. "I think it’s important to get a balance between older directors, younger directors, male directors, and female directors" (15-17:182), he asserted. As the Director, he is ultimately responsible for both selecting students and appointing staff. He explained that when a staff vacancy comes about a
committee is formed and that the Head of the particular course would closely advise him. Marvin explained that the Head of each course "is entirely responsible for bringing in people from the industry with particular expertise in a particular area" (40-43:180) and these people form what he terms "visiting staff".

Marvin went on to explain that all staff are on contract and that no-one on staff has permanent employment, including himself. He explained that this policy was important to the health of the institution although ironically a number of staff, including himself, have spent a large part of their life there:

Marvin: Sometimes artists and students change and staff doesn’t change with them, which is the unfortunate situation I’ve seen happen in a lot of academic Drama Departments and Music Departments where teachers have got stuck for years and years and haven’t really changed their method because they’re in secure employment. It’s not a very healthy situation. Not that we have a huge turnover here. The Head of Technical Production changed last year because the previous person left to be married and raise a family. The Head of Design has been here for many, many years now. He’s an extraordinary teacher. (47-52:180,1-7:181)

Marvin did not identify a formal mentoring process existing in the Institution for new staff, however he did talk about the way the staff collaborates as a 'community'. He admits too that most of the staff are graduates of drama school 'E' and therefore they already know the culture of the school. He explained how the visiting staff are briefed "on what the game is, on what the production is about, the aims of the production, the limitations, the timeframe, the budget" (1-4:185).

Marvin continued the theme of the importance of communication in the drama school by highlighting the meeting structure and the detailed planning that takes place. There are general staff meetings every two weeks and the Acting staff meets every two weeks. He pointed out that the tutors' work is always highly visible: "I’m constantly talking with tutors because I direct plays, I keep an eye on what’s happening. Of course the work that you do here as a tutor is always on display. It’s there for the world to see (42-46:183).
Relationship to the Institution

Marvin clearly made me aware that whilst the drama school is affiliated with the University, it does stand completely alone and does not have to operate in the same way that a university might:

**Marvin:** That’s why academic qualifications are not a big issue here. [Drama school 'E']’s not part of the [name of university]. [...] We’re totally independent. We live on the university campus and there are informal links. It’s a love affair rather than a marriage. And that works well for both of us. But [drama school 'E'] now awards its own degrees. (1-10:175)

When talking with Marvin, one cannot help but feel that the Institution is very much *his*, primarily, as it has occupied such a significant part of his lifetime. So many of the changes that have occurred have been under his direction. One such change has been the Institution's move from unaccredited diplomas to full degree status courses which are fully accredited externally by the State Education Department:

**Marvin:** While degrees are not important in the industry if you’re going for a job as an actor, or a stage manager nobody cares much whether you’ve got an MA, a PhD or whatever. Since 1988, most Australian universities now have Drama Departments offering BAs, MAs or PhDs. Given the growth of drama in education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, there are huge employment opportunities. Quite often, actors, directors, stage managers work in the industry for a number of years, and then need more security or a change of career. It would disadvantage [drama school 'E'] graduates to work in the education sector unless they had degrees. So we went into degrees. It was about 6 or 7 or 8 years ago now. I’m most proud that we made the transition from unaccredited diplomas into accredited diploma awards into degrees without any compromise whatsoever. We have to go through external assessment unlike university drama departments, which have an internal process. We’re subject to outside review. (15-36:175)

Marvin explained that whilst they enjoy freedom from the constraints of the University they do "have to meet certain criteria laid down for awards: outcomes, content, breadth
and depth" (1-2:176). To have a course accredited it has to meet certain criteria, which are published and set out by the State Education Authority. Marvin said that there has never been a problem accrediting their courses by the Education Department. A committee composed of industry groups, unions and the Education Department reviews the courses. Marvin explained that these courses are reviewed every five years. He believed that as theatre and acting are constantly changing, the courses too need to reflect these changes:

Marvin: The group of actors who are here now are very different from actors here three or fours years ago. So the kind of work that you do with them and the content of the course is constantly developing. While the broad structure remains, the content alters. We always try to involve the students in selecting plays and quite often they do their own projects. Their tastes and preoccupations differ because they’re subject to what’s happening in the society around them, the politics, and so on. (28- (51-52:176,1-10:177)

Pleased with the Institution's record of graduate employment, Marvin was quick to cite the names of some successful graduates as proof of the school's successful ability to train quality actors:

Marvin: In terms of employment, we have an exceptional record. Nearly all of last year’s actors have been out in the market now for three months and doing extremely well. We did a survey a few years ago, of all the [drama school 'E'] graduates from the year dot. We found over 80% were still working in or associated with the industry. We also found that one in five graduates had either won an industry award or been nominated for one. (3-12:176)

When I questioned him about professional development for sessional staff he mentioned the wide range of work that the staff undertake both in this country and abroad. He asserted that "their development is the work they do" (25-26:179). In reference to the provision of professional development for staff, Marvin's immediate attention was given to the need for staff to travel overseas:

Marvin: It is absolutely critical particularly to get staff members out of Australia into some of the Asian schools, which are very good, or the European schools. The teachers come back either with better
ideas or they come back realising what we do here is much better than anyone else; in which case they feel much more confident and good about themselves. For students of film, it’s possible to see everything that’s happening in the world in Sydney. You can go to the Film Festival and in the space of two weeks you can see the best and latest. In the theatre you can’t do that so easily. Directors and teachers have to go away. (40-52:178)

Once again Marvin reinforced the sense of 'community' existing in the drama school.

**Marvin:** Everybody knows everybody else. Everybody knows each other's work. Both staff and teachers are constantly on display. Everybody gets used to working that way. You put yourself on the line every time you do a production. You walk in next morning and somebody either says to you “Well that was wonderful last night” or they’re saying “Morning [Marvin].” Although [drama school 'E'] is big, size is not important. [Drama school 'E'] is an investment in the future as much as the present. (24-34:184)

He is acutely aware of the legalities and obligations associated with running a school such as this, particularly in the area of health and safety. He talked of being careful not to let those rules and regulations lock the school into "a more restricted and less innovative way of going about our work" (37-39:184).

In all that Marvin said, it seemed that his overall 'philosophy' in relation to his Direction of drama school 'E' centres on the students themselves:

**Marvin:** Everything here is defined in terms of the students, not the teachers. The important thing is that all the students know exactly what they’re doing now, why they’re doing it, and what they’ll be doing next and where it’s leading. Happy students are confident that the world around them is not chaotic and if they have a small part in this particular production they will get a big role in the next. (17-25:185)

Marvin's own level of almost paternal personal interest was again revealed when citing a recent experience with one particular student:

**Marvin:** Anybody can come in here and talk to me or [name of general manager]. There was one girl the
other day who suddenly discovered that a particular tooth looked bad on camera. We helped her out with a dentist to work out whether she should have bands on now, how long would it take and where the money would come from. (34-40:185)

Transcript Editing
Marvin made extensive revisions to the interview transcript. He made some deletions where specific examples of other parties were used. Many corrections were made to sentence structure, which now makes the verbal conversation sound more grammatically formal.

4.3.3 "JOHN" [Head of Acting] English Drama School 'A'

Commitment to the Interview
I met with John in his office, which he shared with a colleague. He had not long completed a conversation with the Principal. For the most part we were left alone to conduct the interview. He was concerned with the untidiness of his office and apologised for its condition. John spoke confidently about actor training and appeared pleased to talk about issues that frustrated him. He spoke "in confidence" about a number of issues of concern.

Personal History
John studied English at university and then completed a Postgraduate Certificate of Education in English and Drama. At university he was involved with student productions and it was during that time that he realised that he didn't want to teach. He then moved to the repertory system and was employed by what he described as the "smallest rep in the country" – and was taken on part-time as their Assistant Director to work primarily with youth theatre which he did for twelve months. He then got taken on for two years as part of the Arts Council bursary. Although John did not have formal training in directing it was through his university experiences and his Assisting Directing where he "watched and learnt" (10:10) on the job.
John was employed in a full-time capacity by English drama school 'A' almost four years ago but prior to that had worked there on a freelance basis for the two proceeding years on Third Year projects. He said that before working there he didn't know anything about the school but really liked it even though he described the place as "a bit of a shock" (13:9) when he first arrived.

He recalled coming to the drama school to be interviewed for what was at that point a Lecturer in Acting position. His role later became the Head of Acting. He felt that he knew a fair amount about the training because he had previously "worked at a few large places" (19:9). He had just come out of a year with the Royal Shakespeare Company and prior to that had completed seven years at The Young Vic where he was an Associate Director. It was at the Young Vic that he encountered what he described as "a lot of education work" and where the emphasis was "simply on doing plays of great artistic merit" (40-41:10). Although he has a Postgraduate Certificate of Education [PGCE] and had never actually formally taught in generalist schools, he believes that it was his combination of professional practice and an understanding of working with young people and knowledge of the training that gained him his current employment. In describing his artistic approach he explained: "I wouldn't say I was particular cutting edge or particularly au fait with more contemporary, physical theatre practice. My sort of background is very traditional and text-based work" (28-32:10).

Employment, Induction and Mentoring

John did not receive a mentor or an induction process when he arrived at drama school 'A'. John recognised the need to brief in-coming staff far more thoroughly than in his experience. He likened his arrival to being "thrown in the deep end" (28:11):

John: I was suddenly expected to cast plays, choose plays, contact external directors, but my first thing that I did here, I was thrown into teaching five level two Second Year acting classes [...] and I just had to do it. [...] I didn’t have an induction or anything like that. (33-44:11)

John briefly outlined the school's current induction process. He reported that each Year of the course has a Year Co-ordinator who is a senior lecturer and these people brief
the tutors employed at each of those levels. There is a briefing meeting for staff at the beginning and end of each semester.

I asked John whether he had ever received any guidance relating to practice from his employer. John talked only of learning about the school's approach on an *ad hoc* basis from his colleagues and just by being on the job. John revealed his surprise at having to teach First Year students about Shakespeare. He attributes this to the fact that his colleagues had not briefed him more thoroughly on what to expect. He also identified having an informal mentoring experience with one colleague in particular:

**John:** Certainly when I came here there was a tutor here who actually was responsible for the First Year and had a [drama school 'B'] based training herself. She was an actress. And I probably learned more from her about the process of acting. (9-13:12)

John described this as "an unofficial thing". He explained "It was conversations. It was watching her teach and... actually being quite inspired by her. But there wasn’t a formal thing" (18-21:12). John also reflected on the need to have been given more understanding of the specific approach adopted by this drama school. He admitted that he had very little knowledge of "the sorts of pure Stanislavsky sort of work" that the school uses, where they "encourage actors to score a text and break down a text". John explained it was "such an important part of the course, it would have been good to have had some sort of formal guidance practically on that sort of work. And really what’s happened is that I have picked it up informally as I’ve gone along" (47-51:12).

John described that during his interview for the position he was never asked about being *au fait* with this approach to text:

**John:** I’d been working in the business and I’d done a couple of shows here. I think it was assumed that I had an understanding of that. And I think what I found, subsequently, was that I did know how to do that, but I invented my own way of doing it. But I didn’t have the formal vocabulary that was required in a course like this. You know, I had people coming into the second year acting classes saying, “I’ve united my text and I know what my objectives are,” and I’m going, “Ooh! Ok, talk to me a bit about that.” (38-51:12,1-14:13)
Relationship to the Institution
John expressed some frustration with drama school 'A' in that he perceived that a shortage in monetary resources forced him to do far too much teaching at the expense of other aspects of his job. He was concerned that he was not able to hold onto the sort of training curriculum that he desired. He gave an example of a Unit that would not have had a director attached to it if he had not done it himself. He also cited running short of funds for the Third Year showcase and therefore he has had to do more of that work himself. In general, John indicated that the institution was having a negative impact on his teaching and ability to operate effectively:

John: My desk is a mess. I find that just putting my head out the door there’s so many people that want to talk to me and consequently I often arrive [...] to sessions late, flustered, not having prepared and [...] last week I was sitting in the room thinking, "I’m not doing very well here." I was aware that I wasn’t sort of getting the results or helping students the way that I should. There may be a tutorial with a student that goes on too long and then a member of staff wants to talk to me and I end up running to get to a meeting or class - usually late. (10-22:17)

He expressed at times a feeling of powerlessness in his role and that too much was expected from him. His candid comments also indicated a sense of despair: "I think one of the big things, is being expected to teach as much as I do and being pulled in too many different directions" (43-45:17). John goes on later in the interview to say that it is in the 'academic' area that he would like more assistance, as this is not his background even though he had completed a PGCE. He expressed that he would like to have "clearer academic leadership" from his Principal and administration:

John: I come from a practical background rather than a sort of educational background and I’m not fantastically au fait still, with current educational practice, current educational thinking, the sort of various directions that we’re pulled in here by [name of University]. We recently had to transfer to a modular system so we had to fit a conservatoire course into a modular format. The support that I got from the institution was not as good as it should have been because that’s not an area that I’m skilled in. (13-23:18)
He identified that it was a large course with a sizeable student body with many contact hours per week. He reported an unacceptable number of room double-bookings and timetable clashes, suggesting that: "I would love to be either the Course Administrator or Head of Acting. At the moment I’m trying to do both jobs. That’s incredibly difficult" (30-33:18).

He raised what he perceives as a tension between attempting to fit an actor training approach as a conservatoire model into the modular university model. He was adamant that there was a difference and pleaded "I’d like the institution to leave us alone" (33-34:18). John was committed to the sequential development of students over time. He cited an example of a student who was transferring from another institution and was going to be allowed to move straight into the Second Year program. John felt that this was inappropriate and personally intervened to prevent this occurring. He saw it as an equity issue that other students had to go through First Year and be indoctrinated with a particular training approach, whatever that approach might be. This approach was never clearly identified during the interview.

John also identified the University's semester model was inappropriate for vocational actor training that relied upon consistent practice. He likened actor training to that of training athletes:

**John:** That’s great for the institution because they can do summer schools and earn lots of money, but for the actor that’s being trained everyday like an athlete, to suddenly have six months, which is half the year, of not doing acting classes, not trying to drop their weight, not trying to centre the breath. [...] I believe that’s not in the best interests of the student and the students don’t believe it is either. [...] But having said all of that I have to say the conversation I’ve just had with the principal - the principal is very sympathetic. He understands that the acting course is important in maintaining [drama school 'A's] status with the industry and I think he’s beginning to understand... (17-25:19, 38-44:19)
Transcript Editing
Some minor editing of the interview transcript was requested by John in order to delete a small number of perceived identifying elements.

4.3.5 "HEATHER" [incumbent Head of Acting] Australian Drama School 'D'

Commitment to the Interview
I met with Heather just before the academic year had commenced. She had just returned to Australian drama school 'D' as Head of Acting and Technical Production after a two-year break from the same position there. Heather was very personable and enthusiastic during the interview. Heather had spoken with me over the telephone a few days prior to the interview and requested a copy of the questions that I was going to ask. In order to keep evenness about the data collection I only revealed to her in broad terms what the interview would be about, which was similar to what had been conveyed to each of the other participants. She had prepared a few pages of notes to assist her during the interview. Heather was always aware of the way she was answering and appeared to be concerned about how 'knowledgeable' she might sound and therefore actually wrote lists of thoughts when answering some questions. Heather was very generous with her time. The interview commenced after a few light-hearted remarks.

Personal History
Heather completed her undergraduate education at the University of Queensland as a Speech and Drama teacher. She claimed to have "felt like a fraud" (23-24:102) because she did not really know enough about acting. In order to rectify this situation she then worked as a professional actor for approximately 11 years and taught part-time. She commenced postgraduate work overseas and did three years with Shakespeare and Company in America. During that time she trained to become a designated Linklater Voice teacher. She says that she worked for six months with Cecily Berry and Patsy Rodenburg. She also worked with Robert Benedetti for three months. Fran Bennett, who was a master Linklater teacher, trained her at the California Institute of the Arts in
Los Angeles. Heather then began at Australian drama school 'D' as a casual tutor for eight years and then as a part-time Voice teacher, teaching Voice and Text.

Heather described her position as "not a typical academic appointment" in that it could not just operate within the confines of the University. Heather said that her original promotion to this position came about when she began expressing her opinion about what was wrong with their existing program:

**Heather:** And before I knew it I’d slid into the job, in fact it never was even advertised. The person who was doing it stepped aside and I just slipped in. It was a very odd situation for a university. This time I was appointed properly through an interview situation but the first time it was “Well put your money where your mouth is and show”. (42-44:106,1-6:107)

**Employment, Induction and Mentoring**

Heather explained that she had been assigned mentors when she took on the position and described how valuable she believed mentors to be: "there’s a generosity of spirit involved in mentoring, it’s good for our souls" (49-51:108). Heather revealed her admiration for one mentor in particular:

**Heather:** He’s a brilliant academic who is devoted to the art form. He hasn’t done his PhD. He doesn’t present papers, he doesn’t write books but what he does, is devote himself to the student body and he moves the University forward and the Faculty he serves. And he is unique amongst a professional body that can be self-seeking. (1-8:109)

Heather reflected that the main type of guidance she received from her mentor/supervisor was in the area of curriculum planning:

**Heather:** Ah yes, mostly advice came to me in the curriculum planning and my supervisor was a man who understood curriculum, and he was also an actor and director and he guided me in forming a curriculum that we both felt would work. He responded to my need to change the curriculum and helped me with it. He wasn’t someone I had to answer to all the time. He would give you a little bit of advice and then let you run with it, let you be free, and then he’d give you a little bit more advice, you’d have to
Heather acknowledged that although she had received good mentoring she would have liked someone encourage her to be more dominant earlier in her career. She also admitted to now "keeping a low profile" although she says that she has had strong opinions in the past. I asked Heather how she could assist incoming staff and this led to a discussion of Professional Development. Heather said that she meets with new sessional staff and informs them of the 'philosophy' of the course. She also advises staff of the Professional Development opportunities available to them however she explained they don't often exercise the opportunity, as they are all "practising artists with the next gig to go to" (34-35:117):

Heather: They’re all busy doing their acting jobs in between or going off and doing this festival or travelling and they don’t fit in to the... they go to the PD thing at University and it’s a group of people where they’re not fitting in with and they don’t speak the language. We're outlanders! (37-42:117)

Heather also detailed her informal mentoring role, which sometimes involves simply meeting with staff after class, describing herself as a "nurturer":

Heather: They come in and they say, I’ll say “How was that?” they lean up against the wall and tell me and I’ll say “How’s so and so doing?” or anything coming out of that or “Don’t worry it will be better next week”. “I’ll speak to the student”. It’s that kind of informal thing. (47-52:117)

Heather disclosed that former students are frequently employed to teach at the school, admitting "they’re the ones I train, yes it’s terrible. You bring in the people that you know are at the heart for the work, yes you do" (31-33:119). Heather believes that "everyone goes home to where they were trained" (37-38:119) however she said that they do also employ people who trained elsewhere.
Relationship to the Institution

During the interview Heather expressed a sense of excitement about her re-appointment. Her feelings about the Institution are best summed-up when she said "I love the university system, I love curriculum, I love planning curriculum, I love interfacing" (42-44:109). Heather is also positive about her work: "I love, I enjoy my work" (20:110). However, Heather pointed out just how accountable she feels when there are vocational imperatives added to the course's outcomes. She described how the University looks at how many of the course's graduates are selected by the top agents in Australia. Heather added, "I don’t know of any other course in any university that uses that system" (38-40:113). She described that "a lot of my work happens in knowing the agents and knowing the changes and who likes what" (43-45:113).

Heather felt that the institution actually makes her be more accountable and that the course also needed to be accountable and responsive to a changing industry. Heather recalled that when she commenced teaching at Australian drama school 'D' the tutors were talking about "generic skills" and "lifelong learning". She remembered as "the purse strings tightened" the situation changed from "Teach them what you can, send them out in the industry: doesn’t matter whether they get jobs or not" (43-45:114) to becoming much more accountable.

Heather expressed some annoyance at the University bureaucracy she encounters and lack of administrative support. Most of her frustration is with getting payments through to casual staff and keeping up with new systems which "robs us of time for core business" (42-43:116). Whist these are frustrations, Heather described drama school 'D' as "a beautifully generous place" (17-18:109) but acknowledged that "You’ve got to get in though! It’s hard, it’s hard. Once you’re here it’s fulfilling and challenging" (20-21:109). Heather also talked about her plans for forging links between other university disciplines such as Film and Television, Animation, Fashion and Computer design.

Transcript Editing

Heather made extensive revisions, mostly in the form of deletions to her interview transcript. Heather was concerned about having made statements that might be "used
against her”. She requested to see the transcript a second time after making amendments and prior to her final signing-off.

4.3.4 "GILLIAN" [Senior Tutor] English Drama School 'B'

Commitment to the Interview
Gillian agreed to meet with me during the term break, which meant the school was devoid of students and most staff. We sat in an acoustically vibrant rehearsal room to conduct the interview. Gillian spoke self-referentially in response to many of the questions even when they were questions of a more general nature. She was generous with her time and was willing to talk at length. Gillian was enthusiastic about the interview although conscious about how she would appear in the study. At times she replicated the jargon used by this particular drama school in her responses. Before I left, Gillian was pleased to give me a guided tour of the school and also expressed an interest in reading the results of this study to "see how she compared" with other tutors.

Personal History
Gillian attended Birmingham University from 1967 and completed a degree in Drama and Theatre Arts. She explained that Drama as a degree subject was only taught at that time at higher education level at four universities in England. They were Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and Hull. Gillian noted that Drama was always combined with English or French "to make it seem responsible" (32-33:39). She reported that Birmingham University decided to institute a single Honours Drama degree, which she claimed, was the first of its kind in the country. Gillian recalled only eleven students in that course. She believed that it "was very pioneering and it was very experimental in the sense that nobody had done it before so nobody quite knew how it was going to work" (37-40:39).

Gillian then became a student at English drama school 'B' from 1970. She undertook 'The Professional Instructors Course' which was a two year course, but Gillian was offered a third year to extend her acting skills in a particular area which she described
as a "kind of Uta Hagen acting class", "a sort of discovery of personal resources" (15:38). When Gillian graduated from English drama school 'B' she worked in the "good old English Repertory system" (2:43). She was grateful for the experience because she was employed in companies for 5 years without a break. She described the diversity of this experience as useful "training":

Gillian: So I had a fantastic training in terms of playing lots and lots of different parts. Rubbish plays, big classical plays, musicals, pantomimes, the works. Old characters, young characters and [...] in the early 70’s what the Directors were looking for were actors who could be different. So they weren’t looking for personalities, they were looking for actors who could transform. Which is what this school was all about, the ability to transform yourself, the transformative power or the ability to make yourself into other people, to become a vehicle of meaning in that way for the playwright's intentions. And so I was very lucky, the training was very good for that [...] (7-21:43)

Gillian explained the difficulty of maintaining an acting career once she was married and was in her late twenties when she was not the "young thing, flavour-of-the-month anymore", especially "as a woman in the business" (33-34:43). It was also the time of the repertory system's demise in England. These factors combined, which led Gillian to become an acting tutor:

Gillian: I was offered, quite out of the blue, a job to direct a student production at another drama school and I thought, “I’m not ready for this, I’m not ready for this” and in the end I thought, oh God who's going to know me? So I did it and it was so exciting and so stimulating that I thought "Yes, this is it, this is absolutely all that stuff that I’ve thought [...] 8, 9, 10 years ago about being interested in training". I wasn’t wrong. I am. Absolutely. I do find it utterly fascinating. [...] I was offered more work at this other drama school [...] I was then offered a little bit of work here and I thought, well it will be interesting to go back and see if I can be part of that for a bit. (8-24:44)

Gillian continued to work as an actor and was soon offered substantial amounts of sessional teaching and freelance directing which led to her current position at English drama school 'B'. She acknowledged that she had to give the idea some careful
consideration as "there was something in me that doesn’t like to be part of an institution, just psychologically. I don’t like the feeling of being owned" (41-44:44). However Gillian accepted the full-time position given the security that it offered her and that she felt at the time "I’ve got something to say, I think I’ve got something I can contribute to that organisation" (4-6:45).

Gillian: [...] I was not just interested in acting I was actually interested in the whole concept of training but I was not prepared to involve myself in it until I’d had a lot of experience in the profession. I needed to sort out in my mind the kind of strategies and psychology of training if that’s not too clumsy way of putting it really. (21-28:37)

Gillian believed she was appointed to drama school 'B' in 1994/1995 because she knew the way that the school worked and that she had completed the 'Professional Instructors Course', which she described as "unique":

Gillian: [...] there wasn’t another course like it in the country. There were lots of courses for people who wanted to do drama in education and teach drama in schools and that kind of thing. But there was nothing at all available for people who are actually interested in the whole notion of actor training. You kind of fell into it. You became an acting teacher because you’ve been an actor. There was nothing that was there to look at the strategies that you might employ in a quite structured way. And it was a course that only took about two people a year, in some instances it didn’t take any. There were very few people that actually did the course. Interestingly enough people who did the instructors course went on to run major institutions and they were [...] very, very proactive in the kind of development of a systematic actor training, particularly in this country, but also in Australia and America. I don’t think that there is a major drama school in this country now that hasn’t been in some way radically touched by the work that the school has done. (21-41:37,1-9:42)

Although that particular course no longer exists Gillian spoke of the significance of the Professional Instructors Course to her becoming an acting tutor. They had seminars with the tutors and when she was not observing classes she was allowed to take certain sections of the class and be observed by the tutor. Gillian was co-opted as an assistant
to Doreen Cannon who was Uta Hagen’s protégé in the United States of America. "I was really an observer" (28-29:38), musing "she cracked a very strong whip" (29:38). At that time she was put in charge of an evening class for young adults who were thinking of going to the drama school and wanted to sample something of the experience. In running these classes she was able to use the work. "Because I was also going through it and experiencing it myself, it wasn’t just a kind of intellectual repetition of something, it was something that I was dealing with, the strategies and the problems in a kind of organic way" (38-42:38).

**Employment, Induction and Mentoring**

Gillian was not mentored when she was first employed at drama school 'B' and described her induction as "they sort of threw me in and let me get on with it" (50-51:40). She said that she had actually been asked to come back to teach because she had been a former student. Gillian was aware of what was ahead of her saying: "I knew the conditions, the dreadful conditions under which I was going to work physically" (52:40;1-2:41). She suggested: "they knew that I’d been out in the world and that I’d been able to in some way make it my own as opposed to just regurgitating it" (4-7:41). Gillian revealed a certain power that the institution had, and continues to have over her:

**Gillian:** I didn’t really need to be inducted into anything very much. Nothing much […] had changed really [laughs]. It was still like being in a concentration camp. I was really nervous about coming back actually because I’d had such an extraordinary time here. It was so inspiring, and I was in such awe and even when I had been working for you know 10, 15, 20 years in the business. The minute that I was face to face with the two Principals here, I felt like a first year student again. I felt a kind of real sense of the weight of responsibility of coming back and teaching here and trying to live up to their ideals, and even now that they’ve gone, they both sit on my shoulder. One has to be answerable […] to an ideal and sometimes you just want to say “Go away, get off and let me get on with it”. And sometimes it’s wonderful because that inspiration makes you be rigorous, it makes you kind of ask the questions, and make demands both on yourself and on the students. (9-30:41)
Gillian did not specifically recall any advice being given to her as "they trusted" her. She continued, "If I wanted advice, I could go and seek it which I did occasionally, but they believed that once you are in that position then you are experienced and grown up enough to do it" (35-38:41). Gillian constantly talked of "knowing the school" and "knowing the work". She acknowledged that the in-coming staff now receive more advice than when the previous Principals who seemed to think "people would kind of know how it worked by osmosis" (8-9:42).

**Relationship to the Institution**

English drama school 'B' has had a significant impact on Gillian in that she expressed the view that she would not be the teacher she was if it had not been for this drama school. She suggested that the ethos of the school was the same now as it was when she was a student but acknowledged there had been some changes to the way the training is delivered. She talked about her relationships with other tutors and reflected on how they make her re-think a lot about what she is doing. She explained her consciousness in trying to make references and connections to the work of other tutors in the course so as to avoid being an "isolationist" (31:48). Gillian spoke of the imperative to teach what they say they teach in the course documents.

She identified areas where her employer might assist her more with such things as better pay, better facilities, fewer students, the need for more space, some artefacts such as rehearsal furniture and black screens, and more time with her students.

**Transcript Editing**

Gillian edited her transcript extensively in order to correct sentence structure and eliminate repetitive expressions.

4.3.6 "TERRY" [Senior Tutor] Australian Drama School 'D'

**Commitment to the Interview**

I met with Terry at the coffee shop at the University and we proceeded to his office where he spoke with enormous passion and enthusiasm about his practice. Terry was
very clear about his methodology and used this to answer many of the questions. Wearing a baseball cap, he reclined casually in his chair, leaning forward on occasions when he became animated. He remained casual and conversational throughout the entire interview.

**Personal History**

Terry is American and is the senior acting tutor at this school. He has a BFA in Drama Production and an MFA in Acting and Directing at the University of Arizona. It was here that he was required to teach in order to obtain his MFA. He worked in the theatre where most of his work was in Repertory Companies. He then went to Los Angeles and did some film work but claims "not enough" (17:149). He was asked to be a judge and adjudicator in the American College Theatre Festival. From that he came to know a number of academics who subsequently asked him to teach. He then began teaching part-time when he says they "made me offers I couldn’t refuse, being a starving actor in LA" (18-20:154). He was offered a full time salary if he would study under Arthur Lessac and use his approach in teaching Acting, Voice and Movement at California State University, Fullerton which he did for six years. Whilst working there he learnt different systems from Master Acting teachers such as Arthur Lessac who Terry claimed "is one of the geniuses of voice and movement" (22-23:149) and with Jose Quintero who he suggested "is one of our greatest Theatre Directors in America" (25-26:149).

Terry revealed that he studied with professional teachers in Los Angeles where Eric Morris the author of five or six books, substantially influenced him. Terry described Morris as a "controversial Acting Teacher" because he does what is called "instrument work". Terry said, "of all the teachers I was studying with at the time, I noticed he was getting the fastest and the best results" (43-45:149). It was there that they created a teachers' class with Eric Morris where Terry had to teach in front of academic teachers and Eric Morris himself. He described a process where he got to teach students in front of Morris and then Morris would teach the 'teachers', "how to spot things and see things in the instrument work" (14-15:150).
Characterising Actor Trainers’ Understanding

Morris has had a significant influence upon Terry's approach to training. Morris studied with Strasberg therefore the Strasberg side of the Method as opposed to Stella Adler understandings of the Method is the dominant influence. Terry explained that Eric Morris also studied with Martin Landau and took from Landau a better way of teaching and to "formularise it in some way" (36:150). He created a series of what are called “instrumental exercises” which is claimed to put the actor in the appropriate emotional state.

Drama school 'D' employed Terry in 1996. At the time the University, via the Head of the Academy and Head of Department, was looking to change the ethos of the course "getting away from the theoretical and getting more into the real hard core method, believability sort of thing" (7-8:148). The actual contact hours were to be increased to make the course more of a conservatory-style training with a greater film orientation. Terry believed he was employed because he fitted with this new philosophy which was an "industry kind of orientation and a real Stanislavski method base" (5-6:148).

Employment, Induction and Mentoring

Terry recalled not having received any form of induction or mentoring when he first arrived at drama school 'D'. In fact he was left to write many of the programmes that suited him within the broad constraints of having to do productions with the Second Year students and larger productions with the Third Year students:

Terry: When I first started, they pretty much said “Here it is, take it, do something with it” you know. “What do you want to do? How do you want to set it up?” So I got to set it up as close to the way as I’d like to, as I can. I mean I really think it’s a four-year program that we’re squeezing into three years. (36-42:151)

Terry said that when he arrived at drama school 'D' "nobody told me how to teach it or what not to do" (49-50:152). He expressed a certain confidence that the drama school knew sufficient about him because they had seen him teach by going over to Los Angeles to watch him work with his students. Terry described that he has since mentored a former student of his to now teach the First Year students thus ensuring that his own personal training approach is passed on through this former student. "He
just got back from what’s called a Voice Dialogue workshop with the psychiatrist that we use in the work. It’s called Sub-Personalities. We use that a lot for character work and stuff so, he’s really working hard to train the same way that I kind of trained" (31-37:152).

Terry suggested that the type of mentoring he would like to see in the Institution would be the same as the one that he had engaged in with his former student. This would involve making the tutor do the class work him or herself before teaching it. Terry also suggested that the school should run a separate teachers' class where they could keep perpetuating the drama school's approach to acting.

**Relationship to the Institution**

Terry expressed a sense of satisfaction and contentment in his current position where there is advocated one consistent approach to training. He recalled his previous teaching position where eclectic inconsistencies were not helpful to staff dynamics with individual staff promoting particular approaches. He even mentioned that in his last academic position he had "a nemesis who was after me who was trying to destroy me, politically, in everything I did" (25-27:153). Although Terry spoke of fewer political problems at this University than in his previous experience, he was aware of what he believes to be vicious politicking but felt that he was protected from most of that. He believes that "Academic politics are always vicious" (13-14:153) and suggested that one of the reasons he came to drama school 'D' was that he perceived there to be less politicking.

In monitoring staff effectiveness, Terry was of the view that the University appraisal system was somewhat inappropriate for the teaching work that he does. He suggested that the ultimate test of his abilities and effectiveness is if the graduates actually obtain work in the industry and through seeing the plays that he directs. Terry suggested that the University appraisal system was an academic one and did not connect with what they do: "it’s really academic and doesn’t have a lot to do with what I’m doing down here. We’re disconnected in that sense and they don’t really want to know [laughing]" (35-39:158).
Terry identified some pressures that were being placed upon the Acting course by the University describing the "biggest impact" as budgetary. He claimed they needed greater funds so that they could hire more teachers. Terry seemed to find the physical classroom spaces adequate: "Well we really need good classrooms where we can yell and scream and pretty much we’ve got what we need now" (22-24:159). He pointed out that they might be relocating to a new building with the re-shaping of the Faculty. Terry commented that he felt that ideal class sizes should be in the order of 12 to 15. He mentioned that several years ago there was pressure from the University to take in 20, which he believed to be too many students. Terry added that this pressure was no longer there.

Terry said he would like to see a structural change to the course in order to offer a four-year programme rather than the current three-year programme:

Terry: If I had my way you know we would do nothing but instrument work the first year, which we pretty much do. In the second year we’d continue with classes and do scene work [...] but still doing organic classes; then the third year we’d go on to studio productions. Then in the fourth year we’d go into professional type productions. As it is we kind of have to squeeze that all together into three, so they really don’t get enough classes I think in the second year, they have to go into productions a little too soon. [...] There's not enough of me to go around so we can’t monitor them as well as I’d like in the second year. (42-52:151,1-4:152)

Again, when discussing how his employer could assist his role within the Institution he reiterated some of the practical aspects already mentioned such as having more funds for production work, more classes and more teachers. His answer identified a separation between the 'practitioner-based teachers' who he described as "teachers who really are just down there on the front lines" (45-46:160) and 'academic teachers'. Most of all it seemed that Terry would like to have the funds available to train other teachers in his methods: "I’d like to train [...] another Acting Teacher and I would like to train some of the Voice teachers in my work too. I would like to be able to pay them to learn more of my work so we could get it even more of a system" (4-8:161).
Transcript Editing
Terry did not return a validated interview transcript despite several attempts to elicit this from him.

Section Summary
In summary Table 4.3 provides a précis of the informants' personal histories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Academic Qualifs.</th>
<th>Teaching Qualifs.</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Grand styles/Influences</th>
<th>School Ethos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Director/Principal</td>
<td>B.Ed (Hons)</td>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td>Vocation objectives</td>
<td>None identified</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>Director/Principal</td>
<td>BA (Hons)</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>Director of some plays.</td>
<td>Vocational objectives Nurturing</td>
<td>None identified</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Head of Acting</td>
<td>BA (English)</td>
<td>PGSC (Eng. &amp; Drama)</td>
<td>Director (associate) youth theatre.</td>
<td>Conservatoire/vocational</td>
<td>Shakespeare *Stanislavsky</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillian</td>
<td>Senior Tutor (Course Director)</td>
<td>BA Dip DCL</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>Actor in UK repertory theatre.</td>
<td>Honouring the work</td>
<td>Doreen Cannon *Uta Hagen *Stanislavsky</td>
<td>Systematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>Senior Tutor</td>
<td>BFA (Drama Production) MFA (acting/directing)</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>Actor in USA repertory theatre.</td>
<td>Conservatoire/vocational</td>
<td>Stanislavsky *Eric Morris *Arthur Lessac</td>
<td>Systematic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Informants' interview data.
4.4 Conclusion: The Sites & Key Informants

Section One of this chapter provides an understanding of the case study sites and the institutional contexts in which the informants engage with their practice. The analysis is informed by Lave & Wenger's (1991) notion of a community of practice. The five drama schools included in this study are composed of two from England and three from Australia. Revealed in the data is a similar student profile in all Acting courses. The smallest intake into first year is 16 and the largest intake is 32. Audition numbers vary in range although they are all high compared to their intake quota.

The practices of these schools are summarised into three categories: processes, content and outcomes (Table 4.1). Whilst the data reveal that the drama schools have much in common, it is seen that the schools fall into two categories based upon their training ethos. The stated training processes reveal that the schools subscribe to either systematic or eclectic approaches. All processes are practice-based although Drama schools 'B' and 'D' make special mention of their use of body and/or body and psyche exegesis. In common across all courses is production work although drama school 'B' prefers to place the learning emphasis on the use of explicit systematic training exercises rather than quasi-professional production work.

Predictably, mission statements stress the vocationality of their Acting programmes. Neither English drama school 'B' nor Australian drama school 'D' has a formal mission statement. All programmes are committed to vocational aims and objectives. Training outcomes are all similar in that they state the vocationality of their courses, however some schools such as Drama schools 'C' and 'E' specifically also state humanistic outcomes such as professional attitudes and humanness. Drama schools 'D' and 'E' include notably broader vocational aims than the other schools by specifically mentioning preparing students for film and television as well as the stage. Some schools such as Drama school 'A' uniquely identify specific aims such as the development of working vocabularies.

The drama schools' hierarchical structures are similar with most schools now closely affiliated with a university. Most informants found some difficulty existing within a
university context as they viewed that their way of working incompatible with the university way of working. This is further explored and analysed in Chapter 5.

Section Two of this chapter profiles six representative informants of the study through the use of 'pen-pictures'. Included is at least one representative informant from each drama school. These informants include two Principals, two Heads of Acting and two Tutors (Table 4.2). The informants are described in terms of their own personal histories and relationship to their institutions. These six informants were selected as a sample of the total number of key informants.

All of the informants displayed a strong commitment to the interview and a willingness not to simply repeat the institutional rhetoric alone. For many of the tutors the questions I asked forced them to articulate their practice in ways that were not necessarily automatic to them. This is explored further in Chapter 6.

The informants' personal histories (Table 4.3) were all very similar. It was usual that they had experienced the professional industry either as actors or directors and sometimes both. However, the data reveal that most tutors and principals had taught for a significant period of their employment history with many having returned to their alma mater. The data reveal that most tutors were employed with little or no induction into their place of employment. In each case it was assumed that they would know what they were to do. Mentoring is revealed to be an unofficial practice in the drama schools yet significantly valued by the informants themselves in developing their own teaching practices.

The data reveal that most informants express a positive relationship to their own institution even when they acknowledge the poor conditions in which they worked. Some even view their poor conditions as an advantage by placing the emphasis upon the acting, not the accoutrements and on producing graduates with realistic industry expectations. Heads of Acting frequently discuss the divided and sometimes conflicting nature of their role as administrator, artistic director, artistic nurturer and teacher. Heads of Acting consistently complain of insufficient time to perform their duties.
Generally the informants' editing of their interview transcripts was kept to a minimum although Marvin, Heather and Gillian were three notable exceptions. Both Marvin and Heather were concerned to remove material that might be viewed as 'incriminating'. All three took the opportunity to improve the way they expressed themselves.

With the contexts now established and a representation of the informants introduced, Chapter 5 identifies and analyses the themes emerging from the data. Chapter 6 examines the meanings communicated by the informants.

4.4.1 Transcript Editing

The informants all reacted quite differently to the final checking and editing of the transcripts of their interviews. Marvin and Gillian made extensive corrections to sentence structure. Heather made extensive revisions and deletions based largely on her concern that some statements could be used against her. Heather was the only informant to request a second viewing of the transcript before finally signing-off on it. William and John made some deletions of identifying elements. Sam and Anton made few alterations and Charles made no alterations. Terry, Brett, Roy and Paul did not return an edited copy of their transcripts. Edward withdrew from the study once he received his transcript as he thought he was too negative. Generally, the informants were pleased that the interviews were anonymous. Anton was the only informant for whom anonymity was explicitly not a concern.
Chapter 5

Data Analysis: The Themes

"…the measure of the worth of any social institution, economic, domestic, political, legal, religious, is its effect in enlarging and improving experience…” – John Dewey

(Democracy and Education)
CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS: THE THEMES

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 establishes and analyses the contexts in which the research has been conducted and profiles the participants through the use of pen-pictures. These pen-pictures reveal the participants' personal histories, their relationship to the schools in which they teach and each institutional context. These attributes combine to assist understanding of the situated nature of this community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) explored in more detail in Chapter 5. The research data is further contextualised by exploring the informants in relation to these research sites. This approach acknowledges Shotter's (1993) notion that 'it is the joint activity between [people] and their socially [and linguistically] constituted situation that 'structures' what they do or say, not wholly they themselves' (Cited in Van Oers, 1998:480). Chapter 5 therefore scrutinises the case data further by building upon understandings of the drama schools included in this study, examining in more depth who these people are, how they are situated within their schools and how they relate to the training process.

In undertaking this research, I adopted the work of Max van Manen (1990) who argues that the emphasis of phenomenological research is always on the meaning of lived experience:

The point of phenomenological research is to "borrow" other people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience, in the context of the whole of human experience. (62:1990)

Phenomenology is not predominantly interested in hearing the subjective experiences of the participants or informants but rather the deeper goal of asking what is the nature of this phenomenon that makes it a human experience (van Manen, 1990). In the following sections the data is analysed to understand in more depth what tutors understand about their practice and begin to unravel the consequences this may have upon students' learning.
This chapter addresses the first research question of the study identifying the themes of acting and actor training, which emerge out of the interview data in a cross-case analysis. More specifically, I investigate the emergent themes from the participants' own understandings of their practice in addressing the main question of this study. Thematic analysis is a way of seeing the data and processing the data into meaningful groups.

Chapter 6 pursues the other two research questions which examine the kinds of meaning acting tutors seek to communicate and how acting tutors seek to convey these meanings. Chapter 7 discusses and presents the findings of Chapters 4, 5 and 6 within the context of the literature on actor training, situated learning, teacher knowledge and meaning as addressed in Chapter 2.

5.2 AREA OF INVESTIGATION ONE

QUESTION: What themes emerge from what tutors say about acting & actor training?

In examining the data there are nine themes that emerge. These themes revolve around the tutors' ideologies of acting and the actor training process itself. These categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) have been derived from the data in order to conceptualise and classify the different dimensions (pp.69-73) of the themes and in order to investigate their relationships. The groups were devised by finding general commonalties that captured all the significant relationships in the data. It soon became apparent that the data could be discussed and analysed in relation to the role of the tutors, their community of practice and the object of the training process. In an attempt to keep the analysis specific and in relation to the individual informants, I decided to quite specifically connect these identified themes back to the tutors themselves. The emergent themes are therefore divided into three groups: a) How the tutors see themselves as tutors; b) How tutors see themselves in relation to the drama schools and the industry/profession; and c) How the tutors see themselves in relation to the training process. Within each theme there were identifiable clusters relating to definitions/terminology; and other clusters such as issues of effectiveness and
pedagogy peculiar to each theme as listed in Table 5.1. This chapter is divided according to these groups.

### Table 5.1 Groups of Emergent Themes

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*Source: Analysis of informants' interview data.*

These groups of themes are discussed in turn in the following series:

#### 5.2.1 Group 'A':

**Tutors in Relationship to Themselves**

(a) *How the Tutor is Defined*

i) *The Tutor's Role*

Upon embarking on this study I was aware of the various terminologies used to describe the Teachers of Acting. I had opted to call the instructors "tutors" as I assumed the term possibly came closest to representing the role of these people. I subsequently commenced interviewing by using the term "tutor". I soon became aware that some of the interviewees happily assumed this terminology and others began using other terms including "teacher" and "lecturer". During my interview with Brett from Australian drama school 'C' he asked for clarification as to whether I meant "lecturer" or "teacher". I asked Brett what title he would like to call himself and he replied
"teacher". He considered that "tutor" implied more one-on-one modality although he was also satisfied with "tutor" once he thought about it. Brett also pointed out "I'm called a lecturer and I sometimes teach through the kind of lecture format" (18-19:98).

In attempting to honour the participants' voices I found it necessary to deviate marginally from my initial questions to ask directly what it was that they called themselves. This was met by a variety of responses. Sam from Australian drama school 'E' accepted both the terms "tutor" and "teacher" although "acting teacher" was for him "a 1950s word". However, the term "facilitator" he described as being "too hippie" for him. In search of the most "benign" term, Drew from Australian drama school 'D' began a lengthy and explorative answer that introduced the term "coach":

Drew: Yeah. I'd say a trainer; a coach would best describe what I do. You know if you had to describe it in a visceral sense. Yeah, I train people, I coach them. I don't really tute people; I don't do tutes in the academic sense. Of course I educate for sure, I bring my knowledge and my experience. I also do preparation so there is an academic side to back up the process of teaching [...] or Acting Coach [...] There probably is a word to describe it, better than those two but that's the feeling I get. (3-10:144,20-23:144)

I probed further by suggesting that since the school was attached to the University whether the "lecturer" term was suitable. This led to a discussion where he struggled to match the terminology to his practice. For example he firstly rejects the lecturer term outright:

Drew: No, not that! Definitely not that. Antithesis of that, what ever that would be. I do not do lectures to my students! I do lectures to other students when it’s appropriate, so if you can think of a word that's the opposite of that then you've got it. (26-31:144)

Drew also considered the term "acting director", not as a director of a production but to teach in a manner as to "direct [the students] towards the positive aspects of what they do and then gently direct them into the areas of their inefficiencies to create an awareness there" (36-39:144). Drew further suggested that actually "guiding is what
you’re doing” (44:144). He finally thought that "acting teacher", although not perfect, was also a term that could comfortably be used:

Drew: [...] it would be okay in the sense that I mean it, I mean from the conversation “teacher” means many things doesn’t it? It seems the most benign word – “teacher”, to me, so possibly that’s the one that will suit. (7-11:145)

Terry from the same drama school acknowledged that his university also labelled him a "lecturer" he too was more in favour of the "coach" label. In his answer he distinguished the non-intellectual component of training from the other function of university education. Terry's philosophy of doing means that coaching, like sports coaching, seemed more appropriate. Terry's analysis here is most helpful in characterising his practice:

Terry: We’re closer to a coach of sports. I think what we’re really doing is closer to sports than it is teaching. There’s only a few intellectual principles that an actor needs to understand but after that the principles don’t do them any good. In fact they can do them a lot of harm. That’s why the David Mamet approach means there’s too much intellectualising and not enough actually doing. [...] I’m called an “acting teacher” because that’s what I am in here but I think in reality, you can’t teach acting, I think you can only coach it. You know, inspire it. [...] Biology, it’s much more closer to sports than biology. [...] So I mean how do you teach basketball? Because basketball is a doing thing you know. There’s certain principles that you can teach. [...] I’m teaching believability. You know, ensure you’re listening to your partner; certain principles that go in all good acting. [...] You can’t just say “listen to your partner”, you’ve got to coach them to do it. ‘Cause listening to your partner just doesn’t happen, it has to be practised. [...] We have involvement exercises that help practise listening so that an actor works on these specific exercises in which they’re looking in the other person’s eyes and they’re listening and they’re doing feedback and they learn how to actually listen. So most of that is coaching them to do that, not just saying "acting is listening". (14-48:155)
Also from the same drama school, Heather added another perspective when she suggested that actor trainers are many things. Overall Heather believed that she was an "educator", however she emphasised that she takes on different roles depending on the aspect of the work she is tackling: "When I’m working on a play, I’m a director. When I’m working for another director I’m a coach, a facilitator. I’m an educator" (28-31:123). Heather also felt she was uncomfortable with "hierarchical terms"; however she was happy to settle with the generic label "lecturer" even though she acknowledged that she did not teach in that mode. She admitted once having "facilitator" printed on her business card. I was still keen to have Heather make a distinction given that the term "lecturer" connoted a certain mode of instructional delivery. I was also acutely aware that this drama school was located within a university where the 'lecturer' term was de rigueur. She wasn't completely comfortable with "lecturer" either and "tutor" for Heather was very similar.

Heather, having decided she was happier with "trainer" than "tutor" finally dismissed the terminology issue altogether and suggested "We’re chameleons. We’re working in a development of young talent. We're mothers and fathers as well. What does it matter what we're called? It's about the work" (20-23:124). Roy from Australian drama school 'E' also acknowledged the variety of roles but was content with the "teacher" label and provided an interesting insight when he linked the terminology of the practitioner to this issue of whether the training is for an 'art' or 'craft'. Having suggested terms such as "educator", "trainer", "facilitator", and "tutor", Roy felt that the terms all seemed "so robotic" and appeared to settle on "teacher". In sorting out the distinction, Roy mentioned the European notion of "pedagogy" being the art of teaching. He questioned "Is it a craft or an art? I don’t have an answer to it" (17-28:206). This raises an important pedagogical issue to be addressed later in this chapter.

Summary
Overall there was no clear agreement about what these trainers should be called. "Teacher" or "lecturer" seems to be the most frequently used label. However this strikes at the heart of the philosophical dilemma. If one accepts Terry's assumption that acting cannot be taught then it is difficult to call oneself a "teacher". Although the
"teacher/lecturer" label was extant, many of the informants reacted negatively to the pedagogical assumptions implied by these terms.

ii) The Professional Acting Teacher

Another aspect of this theme emerging from the interviews was the somewhat contentious notion of what is called the "professional teacher". The professional teacher is defined as the tutor who has made a career out of teaching acting rather than being an actor who supplements their income with itinerant teaching. These teachers have consciously decided to concentrate on their teaching and develop their skills as teachers. Whilst the vast majority of informants talked of the need to have experienced professional acting before having taught it, Roy the Head of Acting from drama school 'E' expressly raised the issue of the professional teacher:

Roy: I am a teacher and a professional teacher. Of course in the 1980s the issue of professional teachers in drama schools, [...] the very idea of a professional teacher was still an anathema. And you had that very cruel maxim of Shaw's: "those who can do, those who can't teach". Which is just hideously cruel and horrible but you know you do... you get it. [...] You know until my time, until I took over as Head of Acting, the previous Heads of Acting were all actors or directors and so they were practitioners. Now that is an arguable case that only practitioners can teach but of course it doesn't really apply, at all, you know. [...] Throughout the eighties you had the development of what I would call the Australian professional teacher [...]. (51-52:189,1-18:190)

Anton however stressed the need for the tutor to have experienced the profession before teaching about it:

Anton: I think it is, for me, essential that whoever does it would have done it, hopefully still does it professionally to a fairly extensive level. I think you have to have been an actor to know what it feels like to be on stage night after night, or a director to be able to transmit that experience rather than knowledge. [...] I personally would be very reluctant to engage an actor or director, stage manager or design tutor [...] who has any influence on the work
Brett further explained the common view amongst the tutors that they should by preference be able practitioners as "practitioner artists" or as "practitioner tutors" (41:104) who teach from their professional practice. Drew also argued strongly in favour of industry professionals rather than acting teachers dedicated to teaching. "My staff are all industry professionals and that is a prerequisite for me. I don’t hire professional teachers I hire professional practitioners" (40-43:142). Whilst Anton also valued industry experience he addressed what he perceived as an unhealthy divide in attitudes that sometimes existed between the profession and the drama schools:

**Anton:** The biggest barrier we have in assimilating people in the profession is the attitude the professional has towards the teaching establishment [...] which can be summed up as: "I'm doing it out there, therefore by definition, I know more about it than you do. And therefore I will do it my way and if you think it is the wrong way it is only because you are outside the profession." Now, in some cases this may well be true, but in the vast majority of cases I think it is not true because: a) most of us also work in the profession, therefore we have a view of it; and b) we are certainly up-to-date with what is happening out there. We have constant programs of staff development; and c) most importantly, we've done it. We know what it is like and most of us would have been in their situation, obviously as visiting teachers before we became fulltime members of staff [...] we also did the business. We also have discussions with our mentors. (13-33:28)

Drew also expressed the view that he wanted "practitioners who can teach, and some of the practitioners are qualified as teachers as well" (10-11:143). Drew conceded that although the tutor may have had experience as an actor, he or she may not necessarily be an effective teacher. He claimed that he attempts to establish this during the staff induction period:

**Drew:** Most of the people that I employ who are from the industry [...] do teach. Some are qualified Drama teachers as well as being [...] industry professionals. But that is a requirement for me that they can sit in both camps. It’s very important for
The tutors generally agreed upon the value of experience in the acting and directing profession before claiming to be able to teach it. However Roy mentioned how working professionals sometimes find it hard to teach what they know. He said, "I've had professionals come in who freak, when they actually have to teach and [...] they've got the knowledge but they don't actually know how to impart it because of self doubt or [...] going off on tangents" (43-47:206). Roy further mentioned that "what I've also found from practitioners is that sometimes they're the worst teachers. It's fine to have a wonderful career out in the professional theatre but teaching is a different issue" (31-35:190). He spoke of some professionals not having "the technique in teaching" (49:206). "It sounds terrible but I think actually you can either teach or you can't, really. Where do they go?" (51-52:206, 1:207). In raising the question of where do they go to learn to teach, Roy gave some examples of his school catering for Voice and Movement teachers. However he did not provide examples of where acting teachers were comprehensively catered for either at his school or other drama schools. He suggested "but it wouldn't surprise me if it came, is that you offer training courses for the teachers (43-52:206, 1-11).

The lack of education and training for people to become acting tutors became a recurring aspect to this theme. Anton suggested that "one wishes that there was a short course for actors who want to teach and just put them there for twelve weeks or however long it takes and teach them how to teach" (8-11:27). Heather also expressed her concern about this:

Heather: But there was no formal training on how to be a tutor. I worry about that. But how could a non-
artist know how to train in the field? Have you ever had someone facilitate something in a group meeting where a [...] facilitator is full of personal idiosyncrasies and fears and can’t facilitate a group of people who are passionately talking about things. You know it’s very hard to find someone who can tutor a tutor in theatre. (29-38:110)

John expressed the typical view that tutors must maintain their direct involvement in the industry. Ironically most of the tutors interviewed had also abandoned their acting careers to become full-time tutors:

**John:** [They] really need a knowledge of the industry that they’re training the actor for, and current practice. [...] But I think to be able to maintain contact with the industry and to continue to work in it, can only be good for the students and the tutor. (24-30:16)

Although Anton expressed the parallel belief that it was essential that the acting teacher must have experienced the profession, he was able to further draw distinctions between Acting teachers and Voice and Movement teachers:

**Anton:** I would look for someone who [...] has dedicated their lives to teaching from the beginning, rather than someone who has taught late in life. Either a teacher of Movement or a teacher of Voice... because partly they are reflective subjects and also because their imparting entails a lot of knowing how to teach as well as what to teach and that is [...] a skill to be taught in itself. And that is the balance most Directors of drama schools in this country will look for. They will look for, on the one hand, a core team of technical teachers perhaps aided and abetted by one or two core acting teachers who were actors but are now fulltime. And then on top of that bring in a constant stream of people who are acting in the profession but are also able to teach [...] (27-44:26)

Anton pointed out that the "better organised schools" will have induction programmes for beginning tutors; however he highlighted the *ad-hoc* nature of assuming tutors can teach:

**Anton:** [...] at the moment it is very haphazard. We simply hire directors or actors on the basis of an interview and discussion assuming that they will
have the teaching ability and then it is trial and error. Some of them do but a lot of them don't and they don't get re-employed and those who do have the ability to teach will naturally prosper in the teaching side of it and they become very sought after. (44-52:26)

Roy highlighted the situation that there is still some resistance in drama schools to the idea of a professional teacher:

Roy: Some people will turn around and say “What do they know, they’ve never done anything”. But that’s just bunkum really, because you do do something and what I’ve also found from practitioners is that sometimes they’re the worst teachers. It’s fine to have a wonderful career out in the professional theatre, but teaching is a different issue. (28-35:190)

Roy believed that the successful graduates of the school were proof of his success as a professional teacher:

Roy: I’ve been doing it for so many years now I’m of course in a different, this sounds arrogant and pompous, but I’m in a different position. And also because throughout my reign, if you like, at [drama school 'E'] [...] the graduates that have gone through, particularly during the nineties have all been enormously successful. So when really anybody questions me, all I have to say are two words to people – “Cate Blanchett” [...] Cate’s not the only one I’ve trained. I’ve trained Miranda Otto, Jeremy Sims, Essie Davis, it goes on and on and on which I’m very proud of. And I’m not necessarily claiming that I’m responsible for them and all that sort of stuff, but nevertheless part of what their technical approach to acting is based on, what I have taught them, or what they’ve experienced at [drama school 'E'] whilst I’ve been in charge of the Acting Course. (45-52:190,1-13:191)

Summary

The conundrum is illuminated here where industry experience is highly valued by the informants. However most of the informants themselves have forsaken their own acting or directing careers to become what Roy terms "professional teachers". Essentially the informants claim that they have done it and therefore they understand
it. Imbued in this is also the value of being able to teach effectively. It was acknowledged that not all those who can act could teach successfully. This raises the question of where can industry professionals go to learn how to teach? It also raises the larger question of what is the real value in having been an actor or director that gives rise to the stamp of legitimacy? Is the answer found in their understanding of process?

(b) How the Tutors Emerged

From the differences in values of what constitutes the role of a tutor there is the essential question: 'Who are these people and how did they emerge as tutors?’ As evidenced in Chapter 4 (4.3) the tutors have divergent backgrounds. However most have in common the experience of once being an actor and have now moved from their own acting career to actor training. Most staff expressed that they had become tutors quite serendipitously. Their changes in careers were unplanned and mostly came about through the need to look for permanent work or having been asked by someone in a drama school to consider taking on permanent employment there. This was typified by Sam's background story. Sam said that he learnt to be an acting tutor simply by trial and error. However his initial teacher training had given him some advice on teaching technique. Sam is now a senior acting tutor at drama school 'E'. However he was for a period of time the Head of Acting before Brett.

Sam explained that he was a primary school teacher before he went to train at drama school 'E'. Sam revealed "I was 18 and I was a precocious child so being precocious [...] I’d finished university and I was teaching my first full time class at the age of 18, turned 19 during the year and that was primary school. It was primary school for two years and then high school English for a year and then I auditioned for [drama school 'E'] and I got in here" (49-53:210, 1-3:211). He graduated from drama school 'E' in 1971 and then worked for some principal companies in Sydney, including The Old Tote working day and night for four years. He claimed "I just found the burden of acting so difficult" (11-12:212) and he gave it up.

To gain an income he took work as a guide at the Sydney Opera House. During that time Sam became connected with Q Theatre, which was a lunchtime theatre at Circular
Quay in Sydney. He said that in three or four years they ran a series of workshops across the whole of Sydney and regional New South Wales. As a part of Q Theatre he helped set up the company in Penrith in 1977 where he says he gained a lot of experience running free workshops in the community for four or five years. Sam then received a State scholarship from an Arts Panel of the New South Wales' government and subsequently went to the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco where the Theatre Company had a school attached to it. There he undertook six months as an auditor in what was called "auditory". "But it was such a revelatory experience being in the objective position after being trained here at [drama school 'E'], then working professionally for 12 years, to be able to just audit an acting school" (19-23:209). "I came back with so many revelations about my own work but in the practice that [...] I had begun..." (25-28:209). Sam returned to drama school 'E' to teach in 1984 after a total of twelve years as a working actor. He offered the following account of how he came to be invited to teach at drama school 'E':

**Sam:** I was blabbing my head off to [Marvin the Director] about the experience and he said “Well maybe you’d like to do some teaching here or some directing”. [...] I used to come back to school to see plays that the students were doing, principally because it saved you having to read that play this year. So there was another production of “Three Sisters” and so instead of having to read it [...] one could see it, however bad or good that production may be. So I was kind of a spirit that would arrive in the building and see the play and [Marvin the Director] would see me there, and then as a result of this I suggested to him that we set up a program for professional actors, a training program which I then began and now [name] runs the [name of program]. I only did it for about 2 or 3 months. I’m not very good at doing the administration - ideas and art I’m pretty good at. So then as a result of that [Marvin] said “Why don’t you have a go at directing a play here at school?” So I directed several plays. There was a crisis in the institution. Somebody was resigning and [Marvin] said “Well perhaps you’d like to try running the course”, so I did. So out of several productions and the reaction to the techniques or whatever things I made up to direct the plays, which ended up being good experiences for the actors in training. As a result of that then [Marvin] took a chance and
offered me the opportunity to run the course, which I did then for 4 years. But again the administration got me down. Which hat am I wearing? – the teacher, the artistic nurturer, [...] or the administrator, and I found the two things difficult to do. And the students found it difficult to be open with me in class when I’m also the administrator. So I resigned from the administration job and started then teaching part time here, I’m now back fulltime [...]. (40-43:209,1-38:210)

Most of the tutors gained their current employment as a direct result of being known to the institutional staff, particularly to the Principal/Director or Head of Acting. Nearly 43% of the informants obtained full-time employment with their particular drama school after having taught there in a part-time or sessional capacity or having previously directed plays for that drama school. None of the tutors emerged as professional acting tutors by having an academic drama background alone and many were quick to make this distinction between 'academia' and 'practical acting experience'. John, like so many of the informants, promoted the fact he came "from a practical background rather than a sort of educational background" (13-14:18).

The data reveal a number of trends that help us create a clearer profile of the Directors/Principals, Heads of Acting and Acting tutors. The data revealed that nearly half of the tutors were former students of the drama schools in which they now worked. However only one Principal/Director was a former student of his drama school. Nearly all of the informants had either been working actors or directors [or both] prior to beginning teaching at their drama school. Approximately 30% of the informants had formal teaching qualifications. More than half of the informants had postgraduate degrees and two of the four Principals/Directors had PhDs. Proportionally the same number of Australian and English acting tutors had completed Masters degrees. Unlike Australia, however, in England Masters degrees were limited to the Principals/Directors. None of the staff interviewed appeared to have attained substantial standing as actors themselves. This of course is difficult to ascertain as it relies on unclear definitions of "standing". However if 'fame' is a factor then none of the tutors or Directors expressly claimed to have reached such 'pinnacles' in their industry careers.
Anecdotally, a source beyond those included in the study's transcripts, revealed that he learnt to teach by replicating his training. Even though he thought it sounded appalling, he admitted that he learnt to teach "by dredging up some of the original exercises that [he] had been taught back in drama school by the teachers. Evolving certain exercises that [he] felt worked". Similarly the tutors in this study suggest that they had little or no formal mentoring when arriving at their drama school. Tutors who were former students tell of the faith placed in that fact. As particularly evidenced in the previous chapter, many informants reflected on being left to construct their own understandings of teaching and administration. Only the minority of tutors suggested they would have benefited by a mentoring program or extensive induction process. If anything, they point to their former teachers as being role models for their own teaching.

Summary

It is evident that most tutors moved into teaching as an alternative to full-time acting or directing. A significant proportion of tutors were absorbed into their original training institutions or once they had first taught at a particular drama school on a casual basis and had become trusted and known entities. Directors/Principals appear to have much greater mobility between drama schools than regular tutors.

(c) Qualities of Effective Tutor Practice

i) The Qualities

The responses to what made effective tutor practice were diverse. Table 5.2 lists the key words or phrases capturing the informants' beliefs about tutor practice. However, many of the tutors reported that an essential quality of Acting teachers should be that they are "inspirational". For example Paul responded to my question of what qualities make for an effective tutor by suggesting "the first thing that jumps into my mind is inspiring. Having received that from good tutors – on [a] rare but very profound level. I think that would be of primary importance, to inspire" (28-31:57). Heather identified that her teaching frequently involved being inspirational in the sense of being motivational. "Yes. I do a lot of inspirational talking; I do a lot of life coaching" (5-6:120). Terry levelled criticism at Stella Adler's published work in that "It’s all
John identified some qualities associated with effective teaching such as "rigor", "discipline", "passion" and "the ability to inspire", but placed the emphasis on the tutors also doing what they asked their students to do – "the ability to put themselves on the line. We ask students to do that all the time, but students respond if they see tutors doing the same thing" (17-20:21).

In the overall responses the tutors generally identified "the need to be inspirational" which was closely followed by "the need to show passion about their work". Typically this was reported as follows when Roy identifies the qualities of an effective tutor:

**Roy:** Knowledge of the theatre, of acting and the heritage of acting, the cultural heritage; passion – you’ve got to love it, if you don’t love it then don’t do it. […] Aim to improve all the time. See I’m a bit of a romantic I have to admit and I don’t believe in coming to despair or optimism. […] There’s no room for complacency. See everyday at [drama school 'E'] for me is a challenge. But I welcome the challenge. You’ve also got to want to work with young people, and unfortunately in the profession as it stands, to a certain extent, it’s not as bad as it was. But there is a great suspicion of the youth, I find. And there’s also a love for them because they’re always looking for something new, but generally there’s also a suspicion because they are new, they are looking at it fresh. Now all of us at [drama school 'E'] are […] not the world’s best paid people, we’re public servants, so you don’t do it for the money. You do it for the love of it, you know, despite what people think. (38-52:193,1-12:194)

Terry believed "in general, good passionate actors can make good teachers" (35-36:168). He spoke of the need to have a passionate temperament:

**Terry:** I think, yeah, you have to have a passionate temperament. It doesn’t have to be mean. […] I’m not
mean in that sense, I’m not [...] I can be if I have to really push them for some reason, but you don’t have to be the cliché Strasberg kind of like “bastard” in order to get an actor to act. You’ve just got to be able to push them. (38-45:168)

Along with being "passionate", Sam expressed the belief that it was more about the students than the tutor. "I think the key is to have no ego. It’s not about you it’s about them" (43-44:217). Paul takes the view that effective teachers also know how to question. "I don’t think a teacher’s job is to butter up. It is to question, to demand independent thought from the student" (32-34:57). Drew was able to extensively articulate what it meant to be a good acting tutor which included possessing "a high competency level" (36-37:142) and "practical experience and that they are a professional and they use their practice in the profession" (37-40:142):

**Drew:** My staff are all industry professionals and that is a prerequisite for me. I don’t hire professional teachers, I hire professional practitioners. So yes, best practice first. Then the desire, willingness and openness to train – to impart their knowledge. Patience. An open generous personality. A young spirit is very important for best practice. Also a process of feedback so a system of monitoring the progress, [...] monitoring of those journals and then very clear precise feedback methodologies which I discuss with them. You know what they think. They give the feedback to me first and then we workshop that and [...] the capability to give [...] individual feedback to the actors. (40-52:142,1-3:143)
### Table 5.2 Qualities of Effective Tutor Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspirational</th>
<th>Be receptive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Inspire imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigor/rigorous skills</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>Inspire danger &amp; bravery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective attitude</td>
<td>Like teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be clear &amp; basic</td>
<td>Inspiring as opposed to overwhelming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge assumptions</td>
<td>Listening &amp; responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not let students generalise</td>
<td>Interaction with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>Mutual respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance</td>
<td>Create a safe rehearsal atmosphere through your personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of humour</td>
<td>Genuine desire to help students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a guru or strength of personality</td>
<td>A young spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical experience in the profession</td>
<td>Open, generous personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Teach from the positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuition</td>
<td>Consultative/responsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>No ego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
<td>Love it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are direct not manipulative</td>
<td>Desire to work with young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible in attitude</td>
<td>Be human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Must be able to articulate what they are doing not just able to demonstrate it</td>
<td>Accepts other points of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to observe &amp; evaluate</td>
<td>Not for popularity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear sense of structure</td>
<td>Acknowledging individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages reflection</td>
<td>Stay open to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand independent thought</td>
<td>Not overly prescriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a brilliant way to describe what they see</td>
<td>Have a brilliant eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A process of feedback to students</td>
<td>Create possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity/clarity of instructions</td>
<td>Look for positives not negatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absorb &amp; re-interpret continually</td>
<td>Non-critical regard for the process of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to teach</td>
<td>Objective/supportive criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-critical responsiveness</td>
<td>Understand each student as an individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enormous sensitivity</td>
<td>Understand the individual student's resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unselfishness</td>
<td>Be part of the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work spontaneously</td>
<td>Spend time with individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put themselves on the line</td>
<td>Keen eye on the individual &amp; the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies qualities to be developed</td>
<td>Be part of youth culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Not to produce clones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>Engaging students in self-discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearlessness</td>
<td>Life coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Knowing what to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a tutor must have worked with someone of integrity</td>
<td>Know your aims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching moment to moment believability</td>
<td>Learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release things they can use</td>
<td>Accuracy in observation of human behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truthfulness</td>
<td>Tutor can also do it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be firm</td>
<td>Ability to describe how they act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of excitement</td>
<td>A process that enables the actor to react not act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in human beings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand uniqueness of each student</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Informants' interview data.*
Drew identified that a personal and positive approach was required where there was interest in the individual as well as the group work. He identifies the qualities as:

**Drew**: Patience; a genuine desire to help the student; to spend time with each individual, someone who can do that. And look for, in each individual, [...] the positive aspects of their work as well, and favour that more than the negative aspects of their work. And teach from the positive rather than the negative. [...] You know exactly where they're falling down and you gently direct them into competency in those areas. So teach from the positive. Don't dwell on the negative and what they cannot do. That’s the main quality for me that makes a good teacher of actors. (51-52:135,1-15:136)

William the Director of Australian drama school 'C' warned of the dangers associated with dominant personalities driving acting courses:

**William**: I’ve all too often seen institutions dominated by the personality of the Head of Acting or an acting tutor. And it even works in the UK in the private sector at institutional level, where the Head of the Institution is seen as some sort of guru. Highly dangerous stuff in my view. So I wouldn’t say that an effective tutor is somebody that relies on their strength of personality to dominate the learning process. I think that good, effective learning is about engaging students in self-discovery; in interaction with others; in taking risks and being allowed to fail. A tutor who has an open attitude to organising that learning environment is a good tutor. And acting is about possibilities and therefore a tutor who will create possibilities for the students in an acting class is doing a good job. (27-43:78)

Roy shared these concerns by being actively opposed to the students seeing the tutors as "gurus". He asks his students to challenge the tutors as much as they are challenged and to keep their scepticism. "Because ultimately especially in the training of an artist, you know it’s a collaborative art form that we’re involved in. It always was, it always will be" (40-43:198). Brett suggested "I think ultimately some of those American acting teachers just end up being gurus, and I think what we have to do is continue to be practical and humble" (44-52:104). William argued that whilst "the tutor obviously has a key role" (23-24:78) the emphasis should be on learning rather than teaching:
"It’s about learning, it's about what is effective learning and how is that organised, designed and delivered" (21-23:78).

The informants also expressed a number of essential knowledge-based components of being an effective tutor. These were expressed as *essential knowledges* that the tutors should possess. Table 5.3 lists these, which predominantly include references to general knowledge and cultural knowledge.

### Table 5.3 Tutor Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A profound, adaptable, flexible knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic knowledge</td>
<td>Open attitude to organising the learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be constantly informed</td>
<td>Read Stanislavsky &amp; Shakespeare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eloquence/love of language</td>
<td>Read widely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a good understanding of dramatic material</td>
<td>Recognise honest, truthful feeling versus facilitated emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know cultural heritage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the world</td>
<td>Understanding of acting process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of theatre, acting, heritage of culture</td>
<td>Source: Informants’ interview data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

From the discussion above, the predominant qualities of effective teaching were said to be "inspiration" and "passion". Other qualities centred on an extensive and eclectic list of *personal qualities* of the tutor. A broad general and cultural knowledge was also seen to be valued. The notion of tutors being viewed as "gurus" was rejected in favour of emphasis being placed on the students and the learning experience.

**ii) Reflectiveness/Consciousness**

The interviews demonstrate both the presence and absence of a reflective quality in the informants' practice. A number of informants spoke of the necessity to promote a conscious understanding of the acting process. Anton expressed the view that frequently practitioners may not be able to explain what they do. This was evidenced in the difficulty in eliciting from the tutors reflective responses when it came to their own
models for effective teaching and learning. Anton placed value on this reflective quality by further expressing the desire to employ tutors who are reflective practitioners. "Obviously one selects people who are actors or directors on the basis that they already have a reflective attitude towards their practice [...]" (15-17:27).

Like many of the tutors in the study Brett was unable in explicit pedagogical terms to describe his own practice yet instinctually he believed he was a good teacher: "Not everyone is a great teacher, I’m a really good teacher, but I don't know I do it. I think it’s actually kind of innate" (5-7:105). I asked Brett how he knew he was a good teacher and he replied "because I like it" (9:105). He suggested that the students seemed to like it and he basically thought that he was "a natural teacher" (16:105).

I asked Paul if he thought that being a great actor would necessarily translate to being a great tutor. His answer pointed to elements of teaching that required explicit consciousness:

Paul: I guess that leads me to thinking of the ability to observe and to evaluate very clearly. I think you don’t have to be a good actor to do that. I mean some actors are brilliant personally, but they couldn’t describe it. They couldn’t describe what they do, they couldn’t observe it in others and give them feedback. (33-39:68)

William valued "an actor who can articulate a process" (36-37:71) and an acting tutor who was "able to articulate what it is they're doing, not just be able to demonstrate it" (47-49:78). Anton raised the issue that other component parts of actor training such as teaching Movement or Voice specifically involved knowing how to teach. Anton argued "because partly they are reflective subjects and also because their imparting entails a lot of knowing how to teach as well as what to teach [...] and that is a skill to be taught in itself" (31-36:26).

Drew was able to be insightful about his own teaching however this was not generally representative of the other tutors who found a degree of difficulty in identifying areas to improve in their teaching. Drew provided an example of where he was able to
articulate with reflective consciousness about his own teaching, illuminating where he identified possible weaknesses in his own practice:

**Drew:** When I’ve taught which I haven’t done for a while, more individual attention. Definitely a little bit more humility would help [...] distinguishing personal reactions to individuals and then your responsibilities as a teacher. [...] To actually find a way of spending just as much time with the individuals that you don’t find as interesting. [...] Rather than just work with the bright ones, also work with the dull ones. I think my practice could improve in that area because I’m such a personal engager. I get re-inspired by the feedback system. So if someone’s passionate, then I naturally tend towards that person. If someone is dull, and actually I tend to not see them. (18-35:145)

Gillian summarised the training at English drama school 'B' as to "find conscious ways of making the subconscious conscious" (16-17:46). Anton, the Director of the same school also argued for the importance of raising the consciousness of pedagogy in the training process itself. He spoke of how the training was explicit and conscious. Anton explained that over the decades the school had developed "a coherent body of knowledge about the teaching of acting" (48-50:24). Anton's view was that this school's approach allowed people to become better acting teachers:

**Anton:** [...] there was a deliberate policy of engagement in a systematic, explicit training. [...] They taught a methodology - not just 'the method' but a methodology which was explicit and conscious. The result of which was to not only help actors become better actors but also helped a lot of actors and directors become better instructors... to teach. And as a result of that, it revolutionised the teaching of drama in the UK and abroad in Australia [...] because it was the first institution and the only institution which created [...] people who were enabled by its teaching to train other people. They received a coherent body of knowledge and they passed it on. (20-34:23)

Anton argued that many tutors who do not have this explicit awareness to articulate what it is that they do, would in an ad-hoc way rely simply on instinct, inspiration and spontaneity.
Anton: Whereas up to this day, to some extent, most people who tutor actors tend to do it in a very ad-hoc way, not badly - some of them are brilliant teachers. [...] If their own training has been either university-based, which is the case for most directors in this country, or drama school acting-based in a non-systematic way, they would tend to place huge emphasis on instinct and on inspiration and on spontaneity. And they would find it very difficult to pin down what they teach in explicit words. Now, that has two sides to it: One, is a very good one because British actors tend not to be terribly spontaneous. Therefore the more spontaneity they carry with them the better it is. But on the other hand, if the tutor is not brilliant by instinct, it is very difficult for them to improve either their performance or that of their students. [...] And that is why [drama school 'B's] influence is unusual and very important. (34-41:24,1-12:24)

William also pointed out that his University values practice-based degree programs including the awards of Masters and Doctor of Philosophy. The crucial aspect is consciousness in practice, "so long as you can articulate what you're doing, and provide a rationale" (12-25:72).

Summary
The informants were generally not reflective in their discussions of their own practice. Several of the Directors/Principals, namely Anton and William, particularly displayed a commitment to valuing a reflective attitude to actor training. Where reflectiveness was mentioned, the general consensus was that both the students and tutors should not only be practically proficient but also able to articulate what it is that they can do and how they do it.

5.2.2 Group 'B':

Tutors in Relationship to Drama Schools & Industry/Profession
(a) How Acting is Defined
This theme emerged as some tutors articulated specific qualities they valued in an acting approach. For instance "truth/believability" was highly valued by many of the
tutors, in particular this was articulated by tutors from English drama school 'B'. Paul's response was representative of the way "truth" was reported:

Paul: I suppose primarily, and it's something I probably inherited from this particular school, truth. Fundamentally, you can do anything stylistically within acting, but the bottom line is truth at the level of human behaviour. Not in the sense of behaviourism, the idea of making it look like you're in your own kitchen all the time, although there's a place for that. I think stylistically you can go to any extremes - extremes of grotesquery but the truth of the human impulse under certain situations and circumstances I think drive every part of my teaching. (9-21:57)

Heather from Australian drama school 'D' defined "good acting" as "being available in the moment" (47:120) and "responding to external stimuli, internal stimuli and being able to express that and wanting to express that" (48-50:120). Terry talked about how it takes time and practice for the actor to read emotional states or his/her "instrument's subtext". Terry was also looking for honest and truthful feelings in acting:

Terry: I think the most important thing is the ability to read the instrument's subtext. The ability to read emotional states. [...] And that is something that takes time and practice. That's what I learned by being coached by the brilliant guys. They could teach me how to look and what to look for. And how to read what a person was really feeling versus what they're trying to show that they're feeling. So that's the biggest asset - is an Acting Teacher who can recognise honest, truthful feeling versus facilitated feeling in the actor's instrument. A lot of Acting Teachers [...] teach facilitated emotions, fake acting. And if you want truthful acting it's got to come from that instrument. And so you have to be able to see when is the person's real or when are they not real. [...] You've probably seen actors who seem really good but you don't really listen to what they're saying and you can't figure out - well he's really good, he's got a great voice, he's seems to be connected. He seems to be doing this, but just not involved in what he's doing. Why? The reason is, is because he's not really there. He's learned to fake it so well, he's facilitating the being state so well, that the mind is fooled, but nothing is coming across, the magic is not coming across. (33-52:156, 1-9:157)
Whilst tutors gave varying definitions of acting, it is clear that precise agreement is unlikely although in general terms there is a shared general understanding about the abstract nature of acting. Roy, for example, specifically referred to the abstract nature of acting and the various influences upon this artform:

**Roy:** Is acting an abstract artform? Yes it is. And then we have the realist tradition, the modern tradition if you like, which is Stanislavsky. And this is where influence by Freud, and Darwin and Marxism and all the isms of modernism. You have this psychological approach which is where we still are. (24-31:193)

John's thoughts were representative of those who talked in positive terms of finding an acting style. He said that he has been influenced by his previous experience at The Young Vic in finding an acting style for himself where there was an emphasis on "revealing a complex or great text and making it accessible for young people. So there was an emphasis on clarity and accessibility and acting – an acting style that was very simple and very clear" (43-49:10).

Drew, the Head of Acting at Australian drama school 'E', spoke at length about the acting process and illuminated the contrary position. He did not believe in "a style of acting" (27:154). He stressed that "every human being is unique" (34-35:154) and "their impulses are unique" (35:154) and that believability comes from "real impulses". Terry also from the same school outlined his methodology as "I don't believe in acting, I believe in reacting. I don't believe in acting styles, I believe in acting reality" (23-25:171):

**Terry:** I can actually see styles of acting. If you read David Mamet's book and a lot of people are working with his book, and I worked with his book about 15 years ago. There’s something missing in that and if you study his movies that he’s directed, you can see it. [...] It becomes a style, a formula, a thing that happens. [...] I don’t think you can mould acting into a series of 'dos' and 'don'ts' per se. I think it has to be the person’s own instrument that has to be encouraged to come out, with their own impulses. (26-40:154)
Gillian talked of the students needing to be individuals: "one isn’t trying to produce clones [...] or a particular acting style. Actually, what is it in that unique individual that is going to make them a unique actor? (14-18:45). Terry talked further about 'believability' and distinguished between a 'being state' and a 'doing state':

**Terry:** I’ve trained my eye to where I don’t see believability unless it’s coming from real impulses. If your impulses are being stifled from the left side of the brain, I can see that. And that’s not believable to me. So what I want is somebody who’s actually in the 'being' state not a 'doing' state. [...] Great film acting is when a person is totally believable in their 'being' state. They're acting, reacting based on their moment to moment impulses. [...] No matter whether you’re playing in front of camera or even in a big theatre, you just make the stakes higher so it radiates in your body, but it still has to come from the actor’s heart, the actor’s soul and there’s no one formula for each person. (42-52:154,1-8:155)

Roy discussed how his ideas on acting are actually an amalgam of various people's ideologies. He can identify these quite specifically and excludes certain approaches too:

**Roy:** I teach a fairly rigid style I guess. I follow certain things [...] for example my approach to acting is a bit of a hybrid. I mean it's part Stanislavsky. It’s very much influenced by the Americans of course as most is... by Uta Hagen and Stella Adler and Michael Chekhov and Sandy Meisner in particular. I don’t go towards Strasberg though. [...] I’ve re-interpreted all that, and put it in a combination that works for me. I also teach Rudolph Laban's work and Yat Malmgren's work as well. [...] My technique is like a hybrid of all that. I’ve re-interpreted it and made it my own. (11-23:204)

**Summary**

The informants predominantly defined acting by referring to such concepts as "finding the truth", "being available in the moment", "honest and truthful feelings", "accessibility" and "responding to external stimuli". Some tutors talked of *acting styles* whereas others were opposed to acting styles. Some approaches were described as
"rigid", others appear less precise. The informants expressed the influence of various acting directors in shaping their own methodology or approach to acting.

(b) The Training Context

Another strongly repeated theme was the overall rejection of the university model for successfully training actors. The conservatoire model was consistently and overwhelmingly favoured as the most desirable context in which to vocationally train actors:

John: I feel that the conservatoire model that we work to, which believes that actors’ bodies and voices have to be trained physically, daily for a certain number of hours a day over a certain number of years, is expensive and is time-intensive, labour-intensive and old-fashioned. And I’m making no apologies for the fact that it’s old-fashioned. It is old-fashioned. It’s based on the model that has been set up for many years but it works. And I wish they’d just let us get on with that, rather than they’re continually trying to make us fit a structure that may be appropriate for a more academic course. (34-47:18)

John, like most of the tutors, was strongly opposed to the university structure, which he suggested suited academic study and the university financially, but was not in the best interests of consistently training an actor like an athlete:

John: I feel that we’re being dragged kicking and screaming into [...] the two semester model, for example, means that the students have got five and a half months off in the summer. That’s great for the institution because they can do summer schools and earn lots of money [...]. (13-18:19)

Gillian identified that the proliferation of university courses has made the intensity of conservatoire training appear less attractive to potential acting students:

Gillian: I think that the younger ones do find it difficult [...] because now they’re applying through a university system and a lot of their friends are going to university. And after their first time here they come back with “My friend who is doing Drama

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15 The University system and conservatoire model are defined and discussed in Appendix A.
and Theatre Studies at, I don’t know, somewhere, is only doing two lectures a week a couple of seminars and then they go off and rehearse a play. They certainly don’t sit in classes from 10 o’clock in the morning until 9 o’clock at night, everyday and then have to go home and then work, learn their lines, do voice exercises, then they’ll go and work in a bar over the weekends. (9-22:40)

Brett highlighted what he believes is the essential difference between a drama school and a university by drawing the distinction between *experiential* and *intellectual* teaching:

**Brett:** Because we teach experientially and an academic institution teaches intellectually. [...] You can do a course inside an academic institution on-line. I can’t offer any courses on-line. I don’t want to offer any blackboard courses. I need to be actually here in the room, we’re actually doing things to each other. It’s actually a responsive, visceral thing that we’re doing. (11-19:102)

Anton proposed that university enquiry is based on *scepticism* whereas training in a conservatoire is essentially based on *trust*:

**Anton:** A university by definition is a place of intellectual endeavour. The philosophical basis or the psychological basis is scepticism. One asks constant difficult questions otherwise there is no point. The basis of the teaching of Arts, whatever – arts and crafts, [...] whether it is painting – is trust. It is impossible, I think, for an actor, or a painter or a sculptor to emerge or to develop through a relationship with a master – as a tutor, if they don’t trust the tutor. And if they don't trust implicitly the validity of what the tutor imparts. The moment you engage the sceptical function of the brain it paralyses the other psychological functions which keep going to making an artist – the emotions – the feelings side; the sensory side. There is a tension between the cerebral and intellectual. That applies I think to their attitude to theatre altogether. (32-50:30)

Sam pointed out the unique distinction between this drama school and how universities approach learning, explaining that at drama school 'E' "it's a doing course, it's not an
academic" (28-29:222) course. He pointed out that the students are the instrument where "they are doing it, they are trying it out on themselves class after class after class" (31-33:222). "Because it is physical work they actually have to rehearse it and they can’t go home and write an essay and put it in the drawer and hand it in" (38-41:222). Sam suggested the difference between university and a practical course such as this one is "it’s not a violin they can put in there or an essay they can put in the drawer they carry it around with them" (45-47:222) and they attend classes from 9am to 6pm five days per week.

Anton also pointed to the difference between conservatoires as places of vocational training and universities as places for theory:

**Anton:** But we are two different animals. That's the fundamental sort of tension between universities and us because they look at us and say "You are very old fashioned and conservative" and we look at them and we say "yes, but you are totally unrealistic and are not useful to our students' desire to integrate into the profession". It is essentially the difference between vocational training and theoretical. (46-52:31,1-2:32)

Marvin reinforced this point when he drew a distinction between university education and vocational theatre schools:

**Marvin:** With us it’s the quality of teaching, the imaginative work and the capacity to inspire and liberate young actors which is critical, not academic awards. There’s a great difference between university education and vocational theatre schools. Universities are concerned with the life of the mind and are led by intellectual enquiry. Places like [drama school 'E'] are concerned primarily with the life of the imagination. Intellect and emotion and intuition are all bound up together. (15-25:174)

Anton went further to suggest that it is the education and training sequence that also distinguishes conservatoires from universities:

**Anton:** Of course we also educate our students, but [...] it is perhaps a question of sequence, we train them first, get them to have an organic understanding of the process, and then we ask them to think beyond their training and invite them to
challenge that and say: "Well now I know what it's about, do I like it or agree with it, want to challenge it, or whatever". The universities do it the other way around. They first of all ask their students to challenge and ask. Then they give the better ones little snippets of practice for that scepticism for that critique to be informed by some element. (4-16:32)

Anton went on to use the analogy of studying music to help illustrate this point:

**Anton:** It is all very well for a university student of music to say this sonata is badly written for the piano. Unless they can sit down and do it, that is simply invalid - nobody can believe them. Which is why of course you cannot be a student of music at a university or a music college unless you play an instrument, you just can't. Now, all university students think they can act, and tutor or direct, but they can't because they haven't done it. They can't project their voices; they can't move properly; they don't understand their inner processes. They just can't do it, or very few of them can do it naturally and therefore their critique is invalid in that sense. Of course there are areas of the profession which suit it very well: the textual values, the meaning of the piece. They hardly ever talk about acting. They will talk about the [...] the visual signs but they very rarely give a knowledgeable critique of the acting process. (17-36:32)

**Summary**

The informants favoured the conservatoire model of training actors in preference to the university model. Conservatoire training was noted to be concerned with the consistent physical training of voices and bodies. The analogy of training an athlete was used to describe the daily exercise regime in training actors. Actor training was seen to be experiential and based on "trust" whereas universities were seen as places of intellectual endeavour and based on "scepticism". Overwhelmingly it was agreed that actor training relies upon understanding organic inner processes where actors are trained in an environment that supports practitioner-tutors who pass on their own experiences.
(c) Perceptions of Effective Drama Schools

i) Reputational Legacy

Whilst this study has no method for making a determination on which drama schools are more effective, the importance of each drama school's reputation was specifically raised by several of the Directors. The way tutors and Directors reinforced **reputational legacy** was demonstrated by the constant reference to the names of successful graduate actors as proof of their personal and institutional success. William, the Director of Australian drama school 'C' identified that an institution's reputation was a significant factor for actor training. He reflected on why the industry would always look for graduates coming out of schools with excellent reputations:

**William:** [...] one of the potentially inhibiting factors in actor training, I would say the US, the UK and here is a reputational legacy. Reputation is what drives a lot of the employment pattern. Primarily because, although one could argue that the theatre isn't an anarchic institution, ironically the people who work in it don’t want to take risks. And of course being an actor is all about taking risks. The agents and casting directors in the industry, tend not to want to bet on an individual, they want the safe bet. So they know that if they take a graduate from let’s say the big three [...] they’re on fairly safe ground. (49-52:75,1-11:76)

Marvin, the Director of Australian Drama school 'E' reinforced his school's "pursuit of excellence" (21:177) and acknowledged that the quality of graduates is important to the drama school's reputation. He claimed "these courses are vocationally based and stand or fall by the achievement of the graduates" (18-19:177). William too spoke of the fragility of a school's reputation: "The reality is however that reputations do come and go and that the distinctive and different actor training in those three institutions actually suggests that it’s not as risk free as it might appear" (13-22:64).

William warned about drama schools and their staff becoming complacent with their reputations. He appeared to hint that this might also be true for his institution:

**William:** But it goes back to this reputation and legacy. Institutions like the bigger ones in Australia, I mean in name terms, reputation terms, tend to every now and again, fall into the complacency of living off a reputation and assuming
things are not changing. So the [Australian drama school 'D's] of the world will come along and challenge that status quo and good on them. Because we need every now and again to be woken up about what we're doing, so engaging staff in even internal institutional issues, let alone national and international objectives is hard. (19-31:81)

William spoke of the difficulty for drama schools to establish a reputation in what he described as a "closed shop" in an already restrictive market. Having experienced creating a theatre school in the United Kingdom he said "the only way I could actually break in, was to take with me a very highly respected theatre company, otherwise I would have stood no chance" (31-34:76). William also believed that "the accreditation system in the UK and the Equity rules in the UK, over the years have made it very difficult" (35-37:76). William argued that in Australia the only constraints are "geography and reputation and the size of the industry. Arguably the industry isn’t large enough for 4, 5, 6 or 7 actor training institutions" (38-41:76).

Frequently the informants and the drama school prospectuses referred to famous graduates. For example, Roy's response typified the importance of justifying one's practice by referring to the names of successful graduates: "the graduates that have gone through, particularly during the nineties have all been enormously successful so when really anybody questions me, all I have to say are two words to people – “Cate Blanchett” (49-52:190, 1-2:191). The highly selective nature of the drama schools' intake was also used as marks of their reputation. For example Australian Drama school 'E' claims that in 2003 it had 2041 applications for 23 places in the acting programme. With a similar intake, English Drama school 'A' claims it attracts over 2,500 applications per year from all over the world.

Summary
As evidenced in the above discussion, the effectiveness of drama schools were seen to be based upon reputation and graduate output more than any other identifiable measure. The "pursuit of excellence" in creating distinctive actor training with successful actors was seen to be vital to the reputation of a successful drama school. In
order to promote their popularity, drama schools publicise the names of famous graduate actors and their typically large auditionee numbers. The limited size of the industry was seen as a contributing factor for such intense competition.

**ii) Shaping the Future Industry**

Five of the informants specifically mentioned that it was also the role of the drama school to assist in shaping the future industry. William for example demonstrated a clear ideology that drama schools should be *proactive* and not simply reactive in relation to the industry. He stressed this was a personal point and one which shapes his work:

**William:** I don’t believe we’re here to serve the profession. I think we’re here to produce people to change the profession. And I often hear it said how do you relate to the acting industry? How does the industry determine what you do and all that kind of stuff? Actually it’s the wrong way round. We’re creating people who are going to be the industry and then they’ll change the industry because they, in some cases will be leaders. [...] I think that’s an important point because if you leave it entirely to the industry to determine what you do, the chances are that in some respects the industry doesn’t really know what it wants. It knows what it wants immediately but it tends not to think about the longer term. And that’s why it’s important to produce artists and professionals who are flexible. And I think this institution is regarded for its flexibility of its actors for example because they’re not trained or channelled into one particular professional outcome. And again they’re not sort of dominated by the immediate objectives of the profession. It’s our job to sustain a professional engagement over a career and not just meet the needs of the industry today. (3-29:73)

Whilst Marvin outlined the vocational nature of the course he also expressed a desire to improve the industry by ensuring that higher standards are met than might be demanded by it:

**Marvin:** The main objective is to produce people who are equipped to go into the industry and find employment and to encourage them to develop
sufficient idealism, imagination, drive and energy to change the industry for the better. We’re both servant and master. We provide the industry with what it wants but at the same time we try to improve the industry. It seems to me that you’re doing much more for training a young actor to help him or her to deal with the difficulties of acting Shakespeare than dealing with bad television scripts. If you can do the Shakespeare you can do anything. (29-41:179)

Roy believed that both the schools and the industry should be setting the agenda. He referred to there being little evidence in Australia of what he calls "colour-blind casting" and he does not believe that Australia's multi-culturalism is being reflected in the casting of film, television or theatre. Although he believes drama schools are more multi-cultural than they used to be, he does not see this reflected in the industry:

**Roy:** I’ve said this publicly and so the industry knows how I feel about this and I intend to actually keep knocking on the door a bit, is that in [drama school 'E'] we will have colour-blind casting. What needs to be questioned is why isn’t it happening outside? And I will continue to ask that question to our professionals. So that’s me setting the agenda, right. (40-48:200)

Rather than merely "meeting the needs of the industry" William suggested that: "I would rather see a partnership between the industry and educational training, rather than one being subservient to the other. Unfortunately that expression implies subservience" (37-41:73). Whilst John again reiterated the vocational intention of actor training he talked of providing "an education of excellence" (52:17) and of shaping the profession not just 'fitting in':

**John:** To allow students to train or study in a supportive, positive environment and to try and produce artists of the highest standard; people that can actually go out into the industry and take a place in the industry and also to help shape the future of that industry. (2-7:18)

Heather believed that both the drama school and the industry are setting the training agenda. She expressed the need to be responsive to the industry. She acknowledged the overall size of the drama school and how it must compete in the training market:

**Heather:** [...] every industry person says something different, there is no agreement in the industry so
all you can do is maybe garner a little bit of wisdom. Certainly every school has a different kind of philosophy, I observe. Mine has come from survival. We’re a small course, we’re a small State, population-wise and the University would not allow this course to go on if it wasn’t National. [University's name] it’s a big pushy university so I had to go that way. And now we’ve got [name of new faculty] it’s even going to be more connected to industry. (6-17:114)

Heather was concerned about having to look at what the industry was demanding by looking at five years ahead. For example she described how they were moving into the area of animation by focussing on teaching animators about emotional complexity. She hints at her concern with the term "industry":

Heather: I’m just moving ever so slightly into this dreaded word “industry”. What’s the difference between industry and profession? I’m just keeping it alive in this very competitive environment […]. (12-15:115)

Roy also has responded to the needs of the industry by developing in the course a stronger emphasis upon film and television after consulting with the profession and past graduates of the school:

Roy: When I became the Head of the Acting course, I actually got a lot of actors over the past previous years, arranged meetings with them to say what do you think needs to be added to the curriculum? How can the curriculum be improved? So I went out and asked the profession. And invariably the answer came back: "more film and television". Because when I started teaching here, all that the actors had was two weeks with the ABC at the end of their third year, and that was it. And that simply isn’t enough. Because just as an actor has to develop confidence working in the theatre, they have to develop a confidence in working in front of a camera, and that can take a very long time. (49-52:200,1-11:201)

Summary

Five of the informants specifically mentioned how their drama school might also shape and enhance the industry rather than merely "responding to the needs of the industry".
Actor preparation for the long-term requirements of the industry was seen as desirable by most of the informants. This was best summed-up by the phrase: "We're both servant and master".

5.2.3 Group 'C':

**Tutors in Relationship to the Training Process**

(a) How Training is Defined

There is no clear consensus expressed by the tutors with regard to how training is defined. In fact, Paul disclosed to me that he would not want to see one definitive approach. He worried that drama schools might in the future become homogenised in their approach:

*Paul:* There isn’t one answer to what theatre should be, so there probably isn’t one answer to what training should be. There are many brilliant, fascinating answers and I think you probably can’t answer them all, and so you have to ask the questions that are pertinent to you and to your sensibilities. And […] embrace the other questions that the other schools have and not attempt to be like them or […] force them to be like you. (5-13:62)

William highlighted two objectives in particular – "creativity" and "professionalism". This again was set within a clear vocational context:

*William:* But I suppose that it’s about, excelling at producing creativity and professionalism in the individual artist or technician. And I would say that would apply across just about everything you do. But it is clearly vocational, that’s the point. (12-17:72)

Much of the training discussed revolved around methodological training. Particularly common was the *Stanislavsky Method*. Often the names of directors/teachers were talked about as 'methods'. For example, names such as Uta Hagen, Lee Strasberg, and Stella Adler were frequently mentioned yet the precise understanding of what these meant to the individual tutors was unclear and they possibly meant different things to
different tutors. For example this may be particularly evident when mentioning Stanislavsky, with the wide interpretation of his approaches evidenced in the literature.

Tutors from English Drama school 'B' and Australian Drama school 'D' were clearest in citing specific acting approaches. The tutors from school 'B' cited approaches such as Stanislavsky's Method and the work of Uta Hagen, Joan Littlewood, Yat Malmgren and Rudolf Laban. The tutors were able to cite these freely in a way that indicated conscious embedded practices. Each of these tutors had also been a student of this particular drama school and much of the school ethos is represented in what they had to say. Anton who is the director of English drama school 'B' expressed a very clear sense of the historical tradition that has shaped his training and subsequent practice:

**Anton:** [Doreen Cannon] was the first to introduce to the British training system the idea of a systematic methodological training of actors based upon Uta Hagen's work. Uta Hagen's work is published in two main books one is called “Respect for Acting” and the other is more recent [indecipherable] now, so the [drama school 'B'] took Uta Hagen with her Stanislavsky method. They also brought the Expressionistic movement of Rudolf Laban and then brought the expression of political thinking about theatre which came from Joan Littlewood's 'theatre workshop'. (35-46:24)

Tutors from Australian drama school 'D' were also able to distinguish themselves from general *eclectic* training approaches in that they used one system. Their system is based upon American work such as that espoused by Martin Landau who formularised an approach using 'instrumental exercises' which was later developed by Eric Morris. Terry explained that at his school "we’re not eclectic we have one system and that’s what we teach" (42-43:153) although he did mention that they teach Voice and Movement separately. He explained that the students were also exposed to different kinds of directors because "they have to be able to work within our system in the real world" (40-41:153). Terry saw substantial benefit in having one approach being used by a drama school:

**Terry:** And you’ll have different kinds of acting teachers in this system usually sort of fighting each other, yeah. In eclectic programs you have one that’s Adler-based and one that’s Strasberg-based
and one that’s ‘nobody’-based and they’ll be fighting with each other about how to teach everything. (27-33:153)

Heather spoke about the negatives of *eclectic* training upon the students' understanding of the acting process, describing less effective training as "very eclectic where each part-timer comes in or each person comes in and does their little turn, and the students are left to try and make the connections themselves" (50-52:109,1-2:110). Heather described this as "anti-training". Drew suggested that the approach to training by drama school D is unique. Although the school is committed to a single approach, Drew pointed out how it too is an amalgam of philosophies:

**Drew:** What we think is more unique than any other place. I believe what we teach here is a form of the method Strasberg, if you like. But Stanislavsky method filtered through the American system, and then equally filtered through me as the Head of Department, coming from I suppose you could call it a more British methodology where movement and voice and ability in the theatre and theatrical technique is important. So a blending of those two philosophies. (46-52:145,1-4:146)

Much of the *eclectic* training is characterised by production work that seeks to stage plays of a quasi-professional standard. Several tutors identified some inhibiting factors associated with this model of training where the emphasis is upon practising the theatre production process. Avoiding a *conceptual approach* in the staging of plays was significant to John at drama school 'B'. Enabling the actors to reveal the text's meaning was also pertinent to John's practice:

**John:** We avoid a conceptual approach — I mean, I’d rather just do a play in an empty room, with no props, no sets, no furniture and concentrate on the performer; the actual work on the text. And that really is central to my work. It’s about enabling actors to emotionally and intellectually connect to the world of the play, and to be able to reveal its meaning [...] without any fuss. (18-26:15)

John voiced his concern over visiting directors working conceptually or even cross-disciplinary collaboration with the theatre design departments who are particularly focussed on such conceptual work rather than the acting process:
John: I absolutely do not believe at an institution like this, that working in a conceptual way is advantageous to the training of actors. [...] But I’ve seen actors suffer so many times because a director’s come up with an incredibly strong concept. [...] You know we’ve had some disastrous situations where a director wanted to try out their latest ideas. You know, a very sexually explicit television shoot for example, where you’re terribly worried your students have been exploited and that the actual process of the actor — the training of the actor — takes second place to the director’s concept. (49-52:14,1-3:15,9-16:15)

Anton gave clear examples where professionals coming to the drama school to tutor or direct plays may reveal the point of friction between professional industry agendas and training imperatives:

Anton: Now that is a typical point of tension when the priority of the incoming tutor is to produce a production of quasi-professional standard, with all those criteria where casting, for example, follows as closely as it can. Where production values are very important, and clearly we have other priorities — the development of our students. The classic, classic example of a director with the use of sound, "I do all my sounds live" but while the stage management tutors are asking "but please do some sound recording because he needs to learn". Now it's that kind of thing, at the other extreme is "I need fifty flying cues" — but we have to say we haven't got enough crews. (48-52:28,1-10:29)

Drew from Australian drama school 'D' discussed the negatives of conflicting methodologies inherent in eclectic training:

Drew: Most of the problems I’ve found in other institutions that I’ve worked at [...] the methodologies are conflicting and students get confused because it's too eclectic and you know the right arm doesn’t know what the left arm’s doing. And that was definitely one of the things I wanted to change here. (9-15:137)

Terry from the same school referred to the conflicts that can be found in institutions between the adherents to various acting methods and systems who are all aiming for the same thing but "just have different ways of maybe getting there. And I would hope
that any acting teacher had that as their goal – believability, or a process that helps the actor to trust themselves in their own work" (47-51:166). Terry defined the acting process they use at drama school 'D' as centring on the actor's own instrument and the craft of acting:

**Terry:** [...] there are two parts of my work and that’s the instrument work and the craftwork. Craft is when you start to apply the organic work to the text basically that’s what makes the difference. In other words, when you pick up a text, we teach you how to organically analyse it, which means we’re going to look at, in terms of basic Stanislavsky who, what, where, when and why – basically what’s the time and place, obligation, what’s the character obligation. [...] We don’t really believe in character. [...] There might be differences between the actor and the character, so you’ve got to take those things into consideration and find a way to make them believe their work. You have the emotional obligations and you have the sub-textual obligations which I don’t use very much but, you have these different obligations with text and then so you have to be able to figure out what they are. And that’s where the brain comes in, and then you have to be able to have approaches that allow you to make them organic or personal, make them mean something to you. And so you have what we call 'choices', and 'choice approaches', which we’ve already explored in a lot of the instrument work. (32-52:163,1-5:164)

Brett likened the training at Australian drama school 'E' to the "operatic" end of the theatre spectrum with an emphasis on the classics. He pointed to the graduates' "aptitude to succeed as professional artists" (8:103).

Terry spoke of the drama school's specific systematic approach to training actors, which varies from other drama schools. Even though the school does not deliver eclectic training, students are exposed to Voice and Movement classes, a variety of directors and also get to do film work. He stressed that they have one system "and that’s what we teach" (43:153). Terry gave an explanation of the nature of their training system to clarify how their approach might vary from an eclectic training approach:
**Terry**: Like a lot of dramatic material is confront and then encounter and so we do a lot of what are called the 'confront' and then 'encounters'. And we get the actor comfortable using his voice and his body and using his own anger in the exercise. And because of that, lots of people want to call it psychology, but it's not really, it’s just practising emotional expression. So we’re not interested in the 'why', or what it is that’s causing the person to be angry. We’re interested in them expressing it, getting comfortable expressing it. No matter what it is, whether it's anger, or love or you know sexuality or anything. (50-52:150,1-11:151)

Summary

The two main distinctions between actor training approaches reveal themselves as either "eclectic" or "systematic". The *eclectic* approach accepts that there are many different ways to train, whereas the *systematic* approach believes that only one approach should be taught and to do otherwise could be considered "anti-training". *Eclectic* training appears to have a tendency to engage in a great deal of production work of "quasi-professional" standard. The *systematic* approach appears to focus more on exercises that lead to performance. All the informants were significantly influenced in their beliefs based upon their own training experiences. A few of the informants expressed their clear awareness of both *eclectic* and *systematic* approaches being employed by their own institutions.

*(b) Key Components of the Training Process*

*i) The Audition*

In this emergent theme the *audition process* is revealed as being highly significant which echoes William's belief that it is actually "a really important part of [the students'] training" (28-29:74). There was broad agreement amongst the informants that the *audition process* was paramount to the success of the quality of the graduating actors. Getting the intake right appears to have much to do with the ultimate success of the Acting courses. William was adamant that "if you don’t get that right, it doesn’t
matter how good your actor training is, you’re not going to produce working professional actors at the end of the day" (24-27:88).

William gives us a useful insight when he offered an account from the previous drama school in which he worked. The anecdote he offered illustrates the search for that "it-factor" – that special quality that is looked for in a fine actor:

**William:** The founder of my previous institution used to do all the auditions herself and she used to sit in a room behind a desk with a bell on the desk. And when the candidates came in to do their speech, they usually came in with a string and card around their neck with their name on the card – she was a bit short sighted. So you know they’d come with "Susan" written on the card, and there are many famous actors who’ve written in their autobiographies about this particular experience, but basically they came in and they would start their speech and she would ring the bell when she’d had enough. And sometimes that was 10 seconds and sometimes it was 20 minutes. But you never knew whether that was a good or bad sign because basically she’d seen enough. If somebody came in and they were brilliant in those 10 seconds, she rang the bell – why waste time? If it took 20 minutes and she wasn’t convinced, she’d still ring the bell at that point. So in a sense it wasn’t the longer you stayed the better you were. It was that she’d seen what she needed to see. (51-52:87,1-21:88)

Heather argued that "a good group of graduating students depends on one thing – and only one thing – the intake. Some years you just can’t get them. The ones you want, they don’t come along" (49-52:115,1-1:116). In determining this Brett looks for a list of qualities in the students he auditions which he claimed are immediately apparent:

**Brett:** I look for people who are inspiring. Charismatic, plastic in the way the Russians used it. And by that I mean they’ve got some resources; [...] like their body can move; they can express things, call it "expressiveness" if you like. Bright, like they’re intelligent enough to make sense of the words. A love of language, and a sense of humour. And that they can listen to what we’re saying. [...] They’re responsive and uncritically responsive in the moment [...] because we actually organise our auditions in a way that we give
everybody [...] 10 minutes or so, maybe 20. But everybody just comes in and they have a little mini class and they bring in some work and we say a few things, give them [...] another go at some of it and then say, "Well thanks". [...] It’s a little audition for all of us. They might say: "I don’t like working with... I don’t want to work with you, I don’t like how you treated me". Fine. The minute they walk through the door, the minute they open their mouth, it’s as strong as that. Actors just glow the minute they walk in. (16-40:101)

Heather agreed with the notion of immediately knowing that if someone has "it" and in fact is slightly embarrassed about acknowledging this immediacy. She said that there is hardly any disagreement "someone walks into the room – straight away you think, someone will pay to see that person. So, isn’t it awful? It's about inner life and instinctiveness, not physical beauty" (8-14:122).

Drew looks for difference in the candidates when he searches for individuality "Obviously we look for potential. Is this person trainable? But yeah we’re looking for that individual spark, yeah definitely. And that’s why we quite often take the quirky ones" (28-31:142). Although at Roy's drama school the audition process is highly selective he takes a slightly different approach. Given that many candidates are applying for the same schools, he places the emphasis back on them to question the suitability of the school for them by asking is this the right approach that’s right for you? William who also acknowledged just how competitive it is for drama schools in attracting the most talented students again raised the same question of how suitable the school and course is for the candidate. He illuminated the maturity issue of candidates and highlights the competitive nature of the selection process. He, like most of the tutors, is certain that he can immediately tell if the candidate has got "it" or not. William claimed "I could tell you within ten seconds" (47-48:87). He gives the following explanation:

**William:** In my last position, for five of my seven years, I was responsible for auditioning the actors. I insisted on doing them. It was part of my quality control. I used to audition about 5,000 applicants a year, in 11 countries, but obviously most of them in the UK [...]. It was a lengthy full day [...] but I saw that as being the single most significant factor
that I could engage with to influence the quality of the outcome, because I wasn’t teaching them. But I felt it was really important to get the entry profile right. (33-46:86)

William explained that at drama school 'C' the Head of Acting is responsible for the auditioning of students. He revealed that they have approximately 600 applicants and that they end up with the exact same applicants as drama school 'E' which William describes as "Australia's most popular institution" (10:87):

William: And of course it’s ultimately up to the student to choose which institution they wish to go to. Not surprisingly they go either way. They make their judgement based on their experience with you, and I suppose what kind of actor they want to be. [...] The audition process is very much, from our perspective, a two way process. We’re encouraging the student to make a decision about being here because we want the best students. (13-22:87)

Sam was confident about the audition process at his drama school. He pointed to the length of time spent in total with the final cull. The implication was that he and the other auditionees will know the candidates fairly well. The candidate's temperament is most important to Sam and he expects that the two-day audition process is gruelling enough to sort that out. He doesn't want overly compliant students either:

Sam: They’ve been in a room with the auditioners, from anything from 10-16 hours. Even if they're just sitting on the side. [...] It goes from a big group and goes down to 10. 5 comes down to just the 1 or the 2 that is left. Working on these speeches over and over again. Improvising, playing games, sight-read this text. "What are your interests, what films have you seen? Well you can argue - that that’s boring, I think that’s a stupid film. Why would you go and see that?" You know, try to get them to argue, try to provoke them. Do they have the temperament? [...] Do they believe in something or are they just 'yes men'? Obedient yes men and women. So it’s pretty gruelling, I think, to get in. (4-19:223)

Anton had earlier indicated to me that training might not be necessary for the genius actors, given that the audition process distinguishes the talented candidates and reveals who has "it". When I questioned him further on this point Anton replied:
Anton: Are you asking: "Should we not take the geniuses?" We are taking the geniuses. We take any genius that comes through the door. We probably can't do very much for them. You see, in which case we probably have some, I don't know about geniuses, we have some who are very immediately ready to work. (7-13:34)

Anton spoke further about how the audition process selects the students who already have within themselves certain abilities:

Anton: We don't look for genius, right? We're looking for people who have the ability. Some of us have devised quite conscious ways of analysing acting. First and foremost, to do with the ability to exist in the moment, to be convincingly there, in those circumstances. And therefore the audition process often involves changing the circumstances, for example to say: "what if she's forty-five?" You change the circumstances to see if this person can change and adapt. [...] If you want to go a bit deeper – the ability to exist in the moment comes from a psychological mechanism behind it, [...] an easy access to emotions. And you can see that in their movements, in the way they walk and that's the other feature. They have [...] to be adaptable to the circumstances, and then can they express it clearly? (11-28:33)

Anton went on to explain that during the audition process they "are looking for people who are interesting. That usually boils down to whether they are 'watchable' on stage which boils down to presence... which boils down to weight... sensuality – sensuous quality... these are the signs of talent" (31-36:33). Sam, the Head of Acting from Australian drama school 'E' on-the-other-hand acknowledges that he is working with the very best students available who have been selected through their extensive audition process:

Sam: I really do believe having auditioned students for this place, we work with very talented individuals, so half your battle is done. [...] I've worked in other institutions in other places where there's no possible way that I could teach them in the way that I teach people here, because of [...] their talent and because of their ambition. So you know that you're working with generally the crème of the crop. (5-14:213)
Summary
Overwhelmingly, the informants agreed that the entrance audition to find the best available students was paramount to the success of the training. This initial quality control measure determined the quality of the graduate output. What the tutors looked for in potential students were such things as the auditionees being "talented", possessing the "it-factor", "inspiring", "the ability to exist in the moment", "a trainable quality" and "individuality".

ii) The Showcase
In both Australia and England the Showcase remained a significant final component of the training where the students demonstrate their abilities to an audience of agents in the search for professional representation upon graduation. William, the director of Australian drama school 'C' described the Showcase as "the point of transition between training and work" (38-39:75). He also stated that if it was not planned correctly then the students were severely disadvantaged. Drew spoke of the success of the Showcase at Australian drama school 'D' in that it displayed the students' ability to act on film as well as stage. He suggested that they now have a reputation for this format\(^\text{16}\):

\begin{quote}
Drew: Our Showcase was very successful because we show both aspects of what I’m talking about. Basically the theatre side of things, so the actors can do theatre performance with a lot of my influence. And they have the film scene as well. We’re the only school that does that as part of the Showcase. That’s what we targeted, our niche market. From the feedback from the agencies and the industries: "yep positive way to go". They see them on film, they see what they can do on film, they see they’ve got a film technique, then they see them on stage and they see their theatre technique as well and they are very different. Very different. (38-51:146)
\end{quote}

\(^{16}\) This claim is uncertain. An increasing number of institutions are now using film scenes in their Showcase.
Summary

The Showcase was most clearly described as "the point of transition between training and work". The informants were united in the importance placed upon this event. The reputations of drama schools rode heavily on the Showcase being a success. A successful Showcase meant that "top agents" would compete for the graduates. Some distinguishing qualities of the Showcase revealed several schools have departed from the theatre-only model to showcasing their students in the film medium also.

(c) Pedagogical & Non-Pedagogical Beliefs/Imperatives

i) Method as Pedagogy

This final theme of pedagogical beliefs and imperatives is the most comprehensively reported as it reveals the core assumptions which underpin the training of actors. Whilst not revealing in specific pedagogical detail how they taught, the tutors limited themselves to broad 'philosophical' beliefs about their general pedagogy such as teaching being "inspirational" and involving "searching for truth". In talking to the tutors much of their discussion of actor training began by generating responses to what 'acting' itself meant. For many of the tutors their pedagogy was the methodology of particular acting processes employed. Therefore for many tutors synonymous to training pedagogy is acting method or system. Teaching acting was bound by acting method(s) or system(s) themselves. Terry from Australian drama school 'D' provided a classic example of avoiding an explicit discussion of pedagogy; even when I attempted to have him specifically address it, he referred back to the system based on Eric Morris. Terry's use of a system of acting was in itself the only pedagogy he consciously employed.

Roy from drama school 'E' found the notion of being a pedagogue repugnant: "I just tend to cringe of the idea of being called a pedagogue because I think it's got connotations [...]" (28-31:206). Roy was opposed to the use of the term "pedagogy". Although not offering an alternative term he does distinguish between teaching acting and the profession itself although he does not explicitly detail the difference:
Roy: I’m not going to get into the pedagogy of teaching, I hate that word [...] it’s just different the demands of training actors is different, very different from working within the profession. (35-39:190)

Drew discussed the difficulty of the pressure that the university context placed on their programme by focussing on pedagogical outcomes rather than creative outcomes:

Drew: I think it is a fulltime occupation to train actors over three years, it’s such a short amount of time and it’s very difficult to put on whiz bang projects when your methodology has to be pedagogical. You’ve got pedagogical outcomes not creative outcomes. Creativity is an aspect of what we do, but we’re training actors, or you’re training dancers and that’s got to be your drive. (48-52:133,1-4:134)

Summary

The informants assumed discussions of acting methodology in place of discussions of pedagogy. There were no clear distinctions in the minds of most of the informants. The creative aspect of the training was given high priority with scant regard to pedagogy, with one informant arguing that pedagogical outcomes were inhibiting creative outcomes. The majority of informants found it very difficult to discuss pedagogy in ways that a teacher might. They particularly appeared to understand pedagogy to mean 'acting methodology'.

ii) How the tutors understand Aims and Objectives of Actor Training

The majority of tutors and Directors were able to articulate the official institutional aims and objectives in non-specific terms, whilst others simply referred me to their institution's handbook. However tutors were clearer in articulating their own personal objectives (Table 5.5) and aims (Table 5.6). Not surprisingly, the vocational orientation of the Acting courses was consistently given as the principal training objective.
Some tutors specifically identified that training graduates for the *stage* was only part of their function and that mastering acting for *television and film* were becoming important course components given that much of the graduates' careers could well be centred around these media. Terry a tutor from drama school 'D', for example, summarised his school's aims and objectives as to train "people ready to go into the professional film and television and theatre" (33-35:160).

Anton the Director from drama school 'B' explained the broad aims of actor training as being a sorting and discovery process where the students can expand their emotional range and develop techniques of acting:

Anton: We teach them how they access their emotional senses at will and not wait for inspiration. And then to teach them to know who they are – to see themselves realistically, not critically, but not in a negative way – realistically in terms of their aspirations, give them a broad enough knowledge of the profession... “Am I a screen actor? Am I a character actor or am I one or other or perhaps both?” (38-49:33)

The informants generally expressed their ideology as a combination of aspects. For example Gillian from English drama school 'B' summed-up her aims and objectives by emphasising the *profession, the artistry, the intellect and the human*:

Gillian: [...] to prepare students for a profession. I'm sure all drama schools say this: to train creative, imaginative, brave, independent artists, artists being an important word. To send students out into the world with a very strong sense of who they are and what they've got to say and what that place could be in the world both as artists and human beings. To broaden the acting muscle, as it were – the imagination and the intellect. (1-9:49)

Paul from the same drama school articulated an ideology that both he and his drama school share:

Paul: I think it’s to rigorously uphold a classical English/European tradition of theatre. To demand and push students further than they could conceivably expected to be pushed, in the time available and possibly even in the rest of their career. To make demands of them that are greater and deeper and more
difficult in order to give them a sense of what’s possible in the craft of acting and theatre itself. And also to sort of inspire ideals in them, which you hope that they would take on when they hit the business. And that it is possible to balance pragmatic requirements of a business with the idealistic requirements of a craftsperson or an "artist", if that’s not a dirty word. (33-47:60)

Whilst Paul was interested in developing within students an autonomous ability, he was very mindful of balancing the artistic with the practicality of working in the "real world". He also communicated the notion that one's training continues for the rest of one's life:

Paul: I think the bottom line actually is [...] to ensure an actor can work by themselves. And that would be the bottom line I suppose of the whole school. If when they leave after three years here, they can look after themselves [...] and work with no aid, no help. Although it's full of ideals this place. They can work in the un-idealistic real world by looking after themselves and having a strong technical base to their work. They've got the questions and they decide to find the answers on their own for the next fifty years, after the three years they have in training. And you inspire them to keep searching. I think [...] it doesn't take three years to train an actor, it takes 7, 20 or however long. And that all we can do is set them in our direction for three years [...]. Again, its our job to inspire [...] to keep the training going individually for the rest of your life. (47-52:60,1-20:61)

Summary

The informants were united in their understanding that actor training was vocational both in terms of skill development and sustainability within the industry. Some informants revealed that training for film and television was now taking an increasingly important part of their courses. There was however a diverse range of aims and objectives. These are centred on personal development, being inspirational and other autonomous artistic qualities.
iii) Contextual Dimensions in Actor Training

During the analysis of the data it became clear that tutors spoke about actor training, including its aims and objectives, within four overlapping contextual dimensions. The four dimensions represented are: Intellectual; Practical; Personal; and Social (Table 5.4). These dimensions were evident across all of the cases with more or less emphasis placed upon particular dimensions by the individual informants. The practices of individuals were more or less influenced by where their emphases were placed. These dimensions are not oppositional in nature but are simply different ways of rendering meaning. Table 5.4 shows the movement between these contextual dimensions, which are intellectual and practical; personal and social.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual</th>
<th>Personal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-centred</td>
<td>Self-actualisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep understanding</td>
<td>Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical</td>
<td>Auto-didacticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflectiveness</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Practical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>Practice-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Skill-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community responsibility</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental awareness</td>
<td>Industry orientated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Analysis of informants' interview data [based on Light & Cox, 2002].
(a) Intellectual Dimension

This contextual dimension is defined by 'thinking' skills that include ideas, theories, deep understanding, reflectiveness, and problem-centred concepts. Much of this might be traditionally known as 'educational'. Heather for example identified the need to include educational objectives in the course where the "graduates who know about the world. They're very well educated, that's another objective. That understands the world, the context in which they are working, with opinions" (9-12:116). Heather described there being "a lot of academic work; they have to know the responsibilities of an artist and the context they work in. They have to know about what creativity is all about in other cultures" (14-17:116).

Gillian described how her drama school includes an 'intellectual component' to the course. Whilst she pointed out that the students do not have to write essays, there is what she describes as "a very strong emphasis on using your brain [...] and stretching the mind" (14-15:49). One such component of the course is called 'Theatre Analysis' and deals with "placing of the great theatrical movements and the great artistic movements in the social, political and cultural context over time" (18-21:49):

Gillian: The students have to research that, they have to do projects on it. They then have to do extracts of plays on it, they have to stand up and talk on it. They have to create projects that disseminate information but they are theatrical in their presentation. So they don’t just get up and give a dry lecture, they have to deliver something else and all of that feeds into the fairly rigorous research work that they do for their rehearsal exercises. (21-30:49)

In addition Gillian outlined how the students also do a class on 'Character Analysis' which is based on the work of movement psychology which she described as "to do with physical manifestation of the inner life" (39-40:49):

Gillian: It’s a kind of rather wonderful theoretical construct [...] it’s not theoretical, it’s completely organic but you have to kind of get your head around the theoretical construct in order to understand it. There’s a lot of it that I still have to really think my way through that makes big intellectual demands on the students. (41-48:49)
It was seen as vitally important to William, the Director of Australian drama school 'C' that the training should aim to create "intelligent actors" who could consciously articulate the acting process and the craft:

**William:** I suppose it’s about creating intelligent actors. […] An actor who can articulate a process – who can play a range of professional circumstances throughout their career. […] None of my degree programs have been in inverted commas “academic” […] If there’s a knowledge, if there’s an academic element, it's within the underpinning theories that the actor needs to be able to articulate. So I suppose the basic approach is that if you understand what you’re doing and how it works for you, you’ve got a better chance of using it effectively rather than just being able to switch it on and off. (35-49:71)

However Sam challenged what it means to be an "intelligent actor":

**Sam:** You’ve got somebody with a Masters degree in 'such and such' and 'so and so' who just can’t act. Yet someone who is 18 and can’t spell… So what is an intelligent actor? An intelligent actor is somebody that has the appetite and the ability to be inspired to create a life-force in the space and wherever that comes from. (41-47:223)

Paul expressed the specificity of the methodological training at English drama school 'B' which forced students to look closely at its process and ask questions about that process:

**Paul:** As a student actor here, you are forced to ask certain very fundamental questions about process, about how you go about things. So I do think that […] the majority of people leave with a very solid understanding of methodological approaches to acting and that I think is an advantage. I think it's not a surprise that there’s a lot of teachers who trained at [English drama school 'B'], at most of the drama schools in this country and beyond, and I think it's because that’s such a distinct side of the training. (29-40:56)
(b) Personal Dimension

This dimension of meaning is defined by qualities that are centred on the individual such as the value of personal experience, self-actualisation, identity, auto-didacticism and confidence. Although the tutors' aims for actor training were varied, many tutors focussed on personal qualities (Table 5.6) such as "displaying passion", "being better human beings" and "demonstrating independence both personally and artistically". Roy summarised the purpose of a drama school for a student as "the preparation where they are actually allowed to sort out their own artistic identity" (11-12:199). Sam's response varied slightly from his Head of Acting's in that the first thing that came to his mind when asked to articulate the school's aims and objectives was simply to "produce better human beings" (51-52:221).

Gillian's pedagogy revolved broadly around developing particular qualities in the individual with particular resources and to develop an understanding of what makes them unique. She also suggested it involved being "truthful, being brave, understanding it's about offering them a way of working and keys to open doors" (19-22:45). The pedagogical belief which underpinned Gillian's teaching was to do with helping each young actor to find themselves and their own cause in life and how they wished to express it:

Gillian: I think that what underpins my teaching is [...] the desire in me to help students [...] find their voice. What their voice might be as an actor. "What is it that you want to say as a human being? And do you think that acting is the way in which you can say it? What have you got to contribute to the world? There is no reason why you shouldn’t have something extremely substantial to contribute to the world through your acting but in order to do that you have to know yourself. You have to know who you are, you have to know what you’ve got on offer. You've got to find a way of working that’s going to release all that fascinating, interesting subconscious stuff. [...] "You have to find conscious ways of making the subconscious conscious." Which sounds a bit arsey [...] I know what I mean anyway. (51-52:45,1-19:46)

However Gillian further qualified her response with a warning to be very wary of "amateur psychology". "You’ve got to be very aware of sort of psychoanalysing the
students and I absolutely shy away from that completely" (22-24:46). Gillian suggested "What I try to do is to open doors for them. I try to give them strategies that will release things that they can use in the service of the play" (24-27:46). Gillian however identified the need to search for different pedagogies for different students, acknowledging "there will be certain things that work for one student that don’t work as well for another. The interest is in sorting out what it is they need" (24-27:52). This personal approach was also apparent in how Heather described her pedagogy as one of nurturing the students "you’ve got to look out for the person. And try not to destroy them, that’s my teaching pedagogy really. Sounds a bit hokey but that’s it" (27-29:112).

(c) Practical Dimension

This dimension of training is defined by qualities that are centred on the practical "nuts and bolts" of tangible and often outwardly apparent qualities essential to preparation for employment in the industry. These qualities highlighted the craft of acting that is active, practice-based, skill-based and technique-based. Industry orientated, Sam presents an important statement when he acknowledged that students could already act when they come to drama school so that they are teaching them various skills to "act more reliably":

**Sam:** We believe that anybody that gets into this institution can act. So all we’re trying to do is teach them to act more reliably. By giving them technical skills both verbal and physical and hopefully emotional skills. To undo what they did instinctively to get into this place, so that the instincts are revealed and these are the things that make up what you could do off the top of your head before you came to training. (1-10:222)

Heather from Australian drama school 'D' articulated her school's aims and objectives separately. She identified that the course aims to graduate a small group of actors "Who are able to move immediately into mainstream industry in Australia or indeed internationally" (30-32:115). Heather then identified the objectives as including industry skills as well as artistic skills. Heather was concerned about ensuring that the students are engendered with a realistic understanding of the industry:
Heather: The objectives would be that we would graduate people who are self-sufficient, trained in accountancy, and [...] how to keep their books, how to entrepreneur themselves as product. How to run themselves as a business. To have people who know how to audition [...] It’s all very well having a sexy Showcase but I’m coming in on another platform this time, I’m coming in to say our students reflect the job they audition for, and that’s different so I’m injecting a new element into the curriculum. Objectives that demand they are emotionally healthy, and have understanding of the problem industry. (32-47:115)

Roy had his own 'philosophical' answer to what the aims and objectives were at drama school 'E'. Firstly, his vision was to create "poets" and secondly, to develop an individual or personal acting technique gained through experience. He talked too about "giving" actors skills and techniques in a way that suggested these were skills that could be passed on from tutor to student. William the Director of Australian drama school 'C' spoke of the need to have vocational acting courses rooted in practice rather than being academic in nature. He was adamant that "if you don’t need it as an actor, then it’s not in the course" (4-5:72). In similar pragmatic terms Drew suggested "if we can get every actor an agent by graduation we feel that we’ve done a reasonable job or part of a reasonable job" (21-23:138).

(d) Social Dimension

This dimension of training is defined by social qualities, which are centred on the individual's place within the world, and within the industry. This dimension involves concepts such as a responsibility to share, ethics, interpersonal skills, community responsibility and environmental awareness. Frequently the tutors made reference to the ability to work together as an imperative. Drew for example claimed that his "personal methodology is ensemble, team work" (2-3:142). Paul spoke of creating an ensemble that encompasses the entire training process:

Paul: I think that’s an active process throughout the lessons, the rehearsals and the school probably, creating a shared endeavour. Without denying differences of opinions and beliefs... we’re here to find why we want to do this play by Shakespeare [...] or whoever it may be, and trust all [...] to unify. And our strength is in coming together. I think
that’s a very practical thing. That’s not just ideas on reflection. That’s something that is repeated day in and day out and attempted to engender it in the spirit of the group. (16-27:67)

Roy emphasised that actors are involved in a collaborative artform. He expressed the view that he agrees with what he believes Stanislavsky said by suggesting that "no acting process or your creative process should be at the expense of other people, or of other artists" (11-13:203). Sam supports this notion when he identified that acting is about the ensemble and teamwork, suggesting "a production is only as good as its weakest link" (28:226):

Sam: [...] it’s about being part of a play. You’re given a part you are not the whole thing. So that you’ve got a sense of your own responsibility within yourself to create this life-force and then to have that life-force fitting in with everybody else that’s in the ensemble; to arrive at a message that everyone in the audience understands at exactly the same time. (12-21:226)

Whilst Sam strongly advocates the notion of the ensemble he acknowledges too that there are large parts as well as small parts to be played. He assists his students with this understanding by using the analogy of a "planetary system":

Sam: My theory of acting is it’s a planetary system, and that every performer whether you be the butler in The Importance of Being Earnest or Jack or Gwendolyn - you are the sun, you are the centre of the universe. The writer tells you how the universe is laid out but you must believe that the play’s about the butler [...] "You’re the butler - this play’s about you." Or "Lady Bracknell - this play is about you." The writer has said who it is about because he’s only given the butler two entrances. But you mustn’t submit - this play is about you coming in to serve Lady Bracknell because you want her to be impressed so that you can get a job in her household and move to London. So you can get a better living and you can get to the theatre cheaply. [...] So by looking after the individual you look after that sense of - you’re the sun or the centre of the universe. So I direct and teach with every one of them being the centre of the universe. (34-53:226)
Drew identified as "most important" that the graduates also develop a code of ethics during their training:

**Drew:** A code of ethics in respect for the artform and respect for people with more experience than them, that when they get out of here it is only the first step to what it is you need to learn and that you can actually learn more from professional actors working out there, directors and getting gigs in the profession than you can in three years in an institution. (40-48:141)

Marvin suggested that being part of a community was important where you all shared the same aims and objectives. "The staff and students are all interested in pursuing the same thing" (38-39:177). This extends to Marvin's 'philosophy' of the institution too: "It just happens that some of us are teachers and some of us are students" (39-40:177). "We are a community of artists – a very big extended family" (46-47:177). Sam elaborated upon this notion to speak of the graduates' responsibility in terms of "a sense of mission" towards of the greater community. He argued that the graduates "have a responsibility to the civilisation that they work in that they are the storytellers of their tribe" (42-44:218):

**Sam:** To go out and give it to the rest of the community. Go out and give what they've learnt [...] either as story tellers or as teachers or whatever, but to go out and give the skills that they have, to serve their community at whatever level. It could be TIE or opera or high arts. (46-52:225)

In a similar way Gillian also spoke of the actor's imperative to make a contribution to the world:

**Gillian:** What is it that you want to say as a human being? And do you think that acting is the way in which you can say it? What have you got to contribute to the world? There is no reason why you shouldn’t have something extremely substantial to contribute to the world through your acting but in order to do that you have to know yourself. (3-10:46)

Summary
Most of the informants believed in an intellectual quality to training actors. Tutors spoke of processes involving *researching, creating,* and *disseminating.* Tasks
containing some elements of research and analysis were distinguished by the informants and considered to be 'intellectual'. The ability to articulate the acting process was considered a sign of intelligence. Others talked of an 'intelligent actor' as one being able to know their art form by being able to create it or do it. Generally it was agreed that 'intelligence' in acting was not seen to be linked in any way to formal degrees.

Many inner-qualities or personal qualities such as "passion", "identity", "truth", "confidence" and "finding oneself" were highly valued by all of the informants. Meaning centred on direct personal experience leading to self-actualisation and autodidacticism. The belief was favoured by most of the informants that an acting tutor should somehow nurture the individual and to assist them to find his or her own way in life and their art.

Many informants spoke of not actually teaching how to act but how to act more reliably by developing and practising skills or techniques. Developing a personal acting technique for one's self was generally favoured over adopting someone else's acting technique. Not only did these skills include craft skills such as Voice and Movement but also practical skills to survive in the industry, such as accountancy and 'entrepreneurship'. These skills can be categorised as industry skills.

The majority of informants spoke of acting as a collaborative venture with actors having responsibilities to each other and their community. This social dimension included an awareness of individual and collective responsibility. Ethical obligation was a recurring feature of the responses, which encompassed both the individual and the art form. Emerging from the data was the perceived ideology that actors are society's storytellers serving the community with their artistic and communicative abilities.
### Table 5.5 Tutor Objectives for the Training Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Broaden the acting muscle: imagination &amp; intellect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To be educated <em>and</em> trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating intelligent actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Holistic education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Training also for film &amp; TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They're the best actors because they act every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will always be theatre-based but now responding to film &amp; TV industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give actors preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop open-mindedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Inspire ideals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Make them interesting people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning about themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Train creative, imaginative, brave, independent artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To learn to do what an actor does as effectively as possibly</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Forget what was taught at secondary school drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Undo what they did instinctively to get in</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Liberate young actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To train as fully &amp; as rigorously as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a poet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Power of the ensemble/strong sense of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respect for people who know more than them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graduate a small number of actors who are able to move directly into the industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Informants’ interview data.*
Table 5.6 Tutor Aims for Learners at Completion of Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual</th>
<th>Practical</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding why things happen/why characters do things</td>
<td>• Sense of capabilities as an actor</td>
<td>• A sense of passion</td>
<td>• Code of ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Actors who can articulate a process</td>
<td>• Energy</td>
<td>• Be better human beings</td>
<td>• A sense of mission about the influence of artform in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To read more</td>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Independence</td>
<td>• Create artists with a responsibility to civilisation as storytellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consciousness of their craft</td>
<td>• Self-confidence</td>
<td>• Confidence</td>
<td>• Understand the problems of the industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not too concerned with end product</td>
<td>• Not to be overly serious about what you do</td>
<td>• Desire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A structure/approach to work with</td>
<td>• Pursuit of excellence</td>
<td>• Awareness of possibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Approach a text successfully</td>
<td>• Know themselves</td>
<td>• Pride in their own ability to achieve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trained with accountancy/business skills</td>
<td>• A passion and ability to do anything</td>
<td>• Non-judgemental views of the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practical understanding of what is required</td>
<td>• Know they have a voice (something to say)</td>
<td>• Courage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give actors skills, tools &amp; techniques in order to work independently</td>
<td>• A sense of purpose</td>
<td>• Objectivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Play a range of professional circumstances throughout career</td>
<td>• Joy</td>
<td>• Articulation/self-articulation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To uphold English/European theatre tradition</td>
<td>• Purpose</td>
<td>• Creative not reductive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Walk onto any stage &amp; know exactly what to do</td>
<td>• Respect for the artform</td>
<td>• Set in direction for life-long learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Generic transferable skills</td>
<td>• Bravery</td>
<td>• Being wonderful at what they do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affected by the school's ideology</td>
<td>• Self-sufficient</td>
<td>• Autonomy/resourceful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reasonably equipped to go into the industry</td>
<td>• Desire to see more</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A secure methodology</td>
<td>• A person who stands for something</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know how to audition</td>
<td>• Be emotionally healthy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• To graduate the student</td>
<td>• Send students out with a strong sense of who they are</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sense of capabilities as an actor</td>
<td>• Become active and proactive</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Energy</td>
<td>• Passion &amp; commitment to excellence in storytelling</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• An edge: quality of excitement &amp; danger</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-confidence</td>
<td>• Being able to work independently</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Not to be overly serious about what you do</td>
<td>• Confidence in own artistic ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Pursuit of excellence</td>
<td>• Confidence in the process</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know themselves</td>
<td>• Sense of excitement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A passion and ability to do anything</td>
<td>• Feel good about themselves &amp; the industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know they have a voice (something to say)</td>
<td>• Inspired in the craft</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A sense of purpose</td>
<td>• Understand humanity not judge it</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Joy</td>
<td>• To love the craft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Purpose</td>
<td>• A strong sense of voice/well trained voice</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Respect for the artform</td>
<td>• Flexible artists/professionans</td>
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<td>• Bravery</td>
<td>• Survival techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-sufficient</td>
<td>• Understand the top is a plateau</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Desire to see more</td>
<td>• A sense of reality of the industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A person who stands for something</td>
<td>• Capacity to work truthfully</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be emotionally healthy</td>
<td>• An edge: quality of excitement &amp; danger</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Send students out with a strong sense of who they are</td>
<td>• Being able to work independently</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Become active and proactive</td>
<td>• Confidence in own artistic ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Passion &amp; commitment to excellence in storytelling</td>
<td>• Confidence in the process</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An edge: quality of excitement &amp; danger</td>
<td>• Sense of excitement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Being able to work independently</td>
<td>• Feel good about themselves &amp; the industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Confidence in own artistic ability</td>
<td>• Inspired in the craft</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Confidence in the process</td>
<td>• Understand humanity not judge it</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sense of excitement</td>
<td>• To love the craft</td>
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<td>• Feel good about themselves &amp; the industry</td>
<td>• A strong sense of voice/well trained voice</td>
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<td>• Inspired in the craft</td>
<td>• Flexible artists/professionans</td>
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<td>• Understand humanity not judge it</td>
<td>• Survival techniques</td>
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<td>• To love the craft</td>
<td>• Understand the top is a plateau</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A strong sense of voice/well trained voice</td>
<td>• A sense of reality of the industry</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Confidence in the process</td>
<td>• Capacity to work truthfully</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Autonomy/resourceful</td>
<td>• An edge: quality of excitement &amp; danger</td>
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Source: Informants’ interview data.
iii) Non-pedagogical Beliefs and Imperatives

(a) Anti-pedagogical

A common sub-theme emerging from the data is that acting cannot be taught, rather it is improved or refined through experience, both in training and in professional practice. Like many of the tutors, Terry believed that "you can't teach acting I think you can only coach it. You know, inspire it" (27-28:155). Heather further added that an actor's art couldn't be taught. "It’s a given, you pre-suppose that the people in the group have that special sensitivity or emotional volatility that is their art, because you can’t teach that" (34-37:121). Sam's view was that they are not there to actually teach the students to act but rather a drama school is about refining acting technique:

Sam: So we say they’re gifted and good actors already all we’re doing is refining and giving them a technique to solve the problems that they don’t instinctively arrive at when they read the script. So it’s not to teach them to act, they can do that. It’s just to help them to solve problems in some of their work that they may meet in their life and to give them the skills to facilitate that. (20-24:222)

Brett from drama school 'C' suggested that even though some terrific people tutored him during his own training at drama school he actually learnt to act through directing other people:

Brett: I learnt more about acting through directing others than I really learned when I was an acting student. I don’t remember much that I did as an acting student. I don’t remember much detail in the course. I can remember certain events and things and I must have learnt a lot but [...] I can sort of remember a lot of bad news and attitudes. I must have been created. I must have been tutored successfully. (33-41:98)

At the centre of the non-pedagogical or anti-pedagogical beliefs is the notion that talent is very much entwined with what tutors are able to achieve with their students in the training process. Firstly, as has already been acknowledged, the audition processes for each drama school are significant. Entry to each drama course is by audition and it is a highly selective process. Many would see the drama school as the gateway to getting into the industry. But are drama schools simply about taking the geniuses? Anton the Director of English drama school 'B' suggested that they are not there for the geniuses,
that is "the people who don't really need to train" (6:33) but those who demonstrate certain qualities that indicate strong acting potential.

Heather, the Head of Acting at Australian drama school 'D', defined talent as "the inner technique" (41:121) which was a result of natural talent and instinct. She insisted "the talent has to be there when you get them" (42:121). Heather was adamant that talent itself could not be taught and that is why the audition process was so critical to get right. Heather said that she could readily recognise talent. "Some people you want to watch and some people you don’t want to watch and I think that’s what talent is" (6-8:122). When I asked Heather if she could teach talent she adamantly responded that it could not be taught:

**Heather:** No. I’ve never been able to. Maybe I haven’t been trained right, but I can’t teach talent and I’ve never seen it done. I've seen wonderful, miraculous "breakthroughs" in class but that's the result of high intensity coaching from a teacher. That breakthrough only develops if a student has natural instinct or talent. (44-50:121)

Gillian identified that the audition process may accept an individual who demonstrates "a very interesting example of raw talent, they’ve got something about them" (7-9:40) but they may be too young and find the training too difficult. Marvin also candidly identified this particular problem when students discover that they may not have sufficient natural talent for the demands placed upon them. Marvin admitted that on occasions the school may take a risk on some students for whatever reason and that the lack of talent ultimately thwarts their sense of achievement:

**Marvin:** In my experience, the unhappiest students are students who may not have all that much natural talent. We often take in people who are a risk, sometimes it pays off and sometimes it doesn’t. If they find they’re not doing well they get unhappy and blame other people for their problems. (27-32:185)

(b) Quasi-pedagogical

The informants also spoke about their teaching in quasi-pedagogical terms. Terry was not happy to believe that people were either talented or not talented. Terry believed everyone had "the instrument" to be an actor:
Terry: I don’t believe in talent. I believe that every human being is talented in terms of acting. Every human being has the instrument to be an actor. What’s missing is usually the passion or the desire. I think that’s what talent is in acting. [...] You know if a person doesn’t really have that desire to expose in that way, they won’t. They just won’t do it. (9-18:136)

Terry thought that everyone was equally talented: "You have the instrument for it, it’s just the matter of whether you have the will because a lot of people have the will to become stars, or famous […] but that’s not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about the passion for the craft, the thing that makes them need to expose" (21-27:136). Terry suggested that the instrument work that he referred to is strengthened by exercise.

However Anton argued that whilst skills such as Voice, Movement and Fencing can be explicitly taught, the acting process is not taught but transmitted by "osmosis". Anton went on to explain the quasi-pedagogical concept of transmitting by "osmosis":

Anton: Acting and directing is transmitted just as much by osmosis as it is by methodological, pedagogical teaching. And you know you cannot transmit anything by osmosis if you don't have it yourself. It is particularly in directing, which is very much about how you assess what is happening in front of you and how you are reacting — those things can be taught explicitly. But most directors when you ask them [...] mention subliminal messages, behaviour patterns etcetera, which can only emerge. (42-52:25,1-22:26)

Along with notions of "osmosis" were expressions such as those used by Gillian that describe actor training as being "completely organic" (43:49). Anton also suggested that "we train them first, get them to have an organic understanding of the process" (6-8:32). Terry spoke of "doing organic classes" (47:151) which is then applied to the text:

Terry: Craft is when you start to apply the organic work to the text basically that’s what makes the difference. In other words, when you pick up a text, we teach you how to organically analyse it. (34-37:163)
Summary

Overwhelmingly, most informants suggested an *anti-pedagogical* approach that was underpinned by the belief that acting could not be taught. The *anti-pedagogy* was reflected in the belief that the students had to be highly talented to begin with. However, there was some significant acknowledgement by the informants that skills such as Voice and Movement could be specifically taught and further refined. An emergent *quasi-pedagogical* belief indicated that the acting process is "organic" and is somehow transmitted by "osmosis" from the tutor to the student.
### Table 5.7 Pedagogical Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutors impart</td>
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<tr>
<td>No right or wrong answers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not dos &amp; don'ts</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal with assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn the craft by exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof is in the outcome</td>
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<tr>
<td>It's about the work</td>
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<tr>
<td>To <em>train</em> an actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eclectic philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experiential not academic</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowing risk-taking &amp; being allowed to fail</td>
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<tr>
<td>An eye for truth/critical eye</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognise the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist students psychologically to become confident human beings &amp; confident of their own work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission by osmosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal with difficult situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim to improve all the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing the student to fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher allowed to fail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend other teachers' classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspirational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find conscious ways of making the subconscious conscious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Force students to be proactive in the process</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanist approach to acting that is thorough/detailed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Informants' interview data.*
5.3 Conclusion: The Themes

The chapter reveals nine themes that emerge from the data. These themes demonstrate commonalties and differences in the tutors' discussion of actor training. These themes are further grouped into three groups: a) How the tutors see themselves as tutors; b) How tutors see themselves in relation to the drama schools and the industry/profession; and c) How the tutors see themselves in relation to the training process. The tutor is placed at the centre of each of these groups which positions them within their practice.

Much of the data reveal divides in understanding. Whilst these are presented as distinctly explicit and implicit oppositional binaries, the reality seems more complex. Yet these are significant polarisations of meaning that help explain the types of meanings communicated by the informants analysed further in Chapter 6. These perceptions help understand the values inherent in rendering the informants' ways of knowing. Stevenson (2003) argues that 'While verbal renditions of values may be inexact renditions of values personally held, these renditions and their interconnections help in clarifying and communicating about values in practice' (p.194). These values are explored in Chapter 5 and in more detail in Chapter 6.

A) Tutors in Relationship to Themselves

There are implicit and explicit divides in the ways the informants talked about themselves. The data reveal a divide between whether the informants saw themselves as "tutors" or "teachers/lecturers". The recurring theme that acting could not be taught makes the use of the "teacher" label problematic. Although the "teacher/lecturer" label was extant, many of the informants reacted negatively to the pedagogical assumptions implied by either of these two terms.

All the informants claimed to have engaged in professional industry practice before becoming acting tutors. None of the tutors expressed that they originally intended becoming acting tutors, but rather had their sights set on working as professional actors or directors. For the most part the choice to become involved with actor training was one of financial security and was quite serendipitous. A tension is illuminated where
the informants valued industry experience. However most of the informants themselves had forsaken their own acting or directing careers to become fulltime tutors. Generally the notion of being a "professional teacher" was only seen as acceptable if the individual had some substantial prior industry experience, although a number of informants considered that it was desirable for the tutor to continue to work within the industry. Drama schools largely overcame this situation by hiring a large number of sessional staff and using visiting directors.

Most informants equated having acted or directed to 'understanding it'. It was acknowledged by most of the informants that not all good practitioners make good tutors. The qualities of effective teachers centred on an extensive and eclectic list of personal qualities of tutors. The main quality identified by most informants was that tutors should be "inspirational". Again the predominant view was reinforced by the majority that acting could not be taught however it could be inspired. Closely associated with "inspiration" was another frequently mentioned personal quality of "passion". A broad general and cultural knowledge was also considered by the majority of informants to be highly desirable. The notion of teacher as "guru" was rejected in favour of more egalitarian models of training where students work with their tutors. Overall the informants were not specifically reflective in their discussions of their own pedagogical practice. However two of the four Principals/Directors were committed to notions of reflective practice and the ability of actors and tutors being able to consciously articulate acting processes.

### B) Tutors in Relationship to Drama Schools & Industry/Profession

An analysis of the tutors in relationship to the drama schools and industry/profession reveals further implicit and explicit divides in meanings. In discussing the informants' beliefs about actor training some tutors defined the nature of acting such as "finding truth", "being available in the moment" and finding "honest and truthful feelings" etcetera. Some informants referred positively to finding acting styles whereas others were strongly opposed to acting styles. The informants expressed the influence of various acting directors and teachers such as Konstantin Stanislavsky, Uta Hagen, Lee Strasberg and Michael Chekhov in shaping their own acting methodology which
significantly are all part an 'internal and empathetic acting' movement. Eastern acting methodologies were not indicated as being significantly influential to any of the informants.

Most informants explicitly favoured the conservatoire model of training actors in preference to the university model. Conservatoire training was noted by many of the informants to be concerned with the consistent physical training of voices and bodies. The analogy of training an athlete was used by the majority of informants to describe the daily exercise regime in training actors. It was revealed in the themes that actor training relies upon understanding "organic" inner processes where actors are trained in an environment that supports practitioner-tutors teaching experientially. It was viewed that intellect, emotion and intuition are bound together in vocational actor training.

The two main distinctions between drama school actor training approaches reveal themselves in the data as predominantly either "eclectic" or "systematic". The eclectic approach accepts that there are many different ways to train, whereas the systematic approach believes that only one approach should be taught and to do otherwise would be considered "anti-training". This separation is also addressed in tutors' relationship to the training process.

Overwhelmingly, the informants agreed that the entrance audition to discover the best available students was paramount to the success of any drama school training. This initial quality control measure determined the quality of the graduate output. The reputations of drama schools rode heavily on the 'Showcase' being successful. The industry looked for drama school graduates with excellent reputations. All of the informants either explicitly stated or inferred that the reputation of the drama school was generally of paramount importance.

Many informants held to the ideology that they were part of the future shaping of the industry rather than merely responding to the current demands of that industry. However it was generally acknowledged that the schools were both "servant" and "master" to the industry.
C) Tutors in Relationship to the Training Process

Evidenced in the responses was a divide between adherents of systematic and eclectic training methodology. Whilst this divide seems to exist, the consensus was that a multiplicity of approaches across different drama schools was indeed healthy to maintain as a way of offering students a choice of approaches in finding one that suits their own needs. In discussing their practice, some informants revealed the belief that eclectic training amounted to 'anti-training'. Underlying this belief was the assumption that training meant learning a particular approach to acting or way of arriving at one’s acting.

The entrance audition was considered vital in selecting talented students who were likely to reflect well on the drama schools in their graduate output. General consensus revealed that it was possible to immediately know if someone had "it" — defined as 'watchability' and 'individuality'. All the drama schools searched for actors who were trainable, in that they were not only able to be believable but also flexible in their interpretative approach.

Again, the data reveal that the Showcase was a significant event in the life of each drama school where the work of the graduating students was on public display. It was also the opportunity for agents to make their selection. One drama school had changed its Showcase to include the screening of film scenes in addition to the stage performance of the graduating actors. A number of the schools were now including acting for film and television into their courses.

Most of the informants assumed discussions of acting methodology in place of discussions of pedagogy. Anti-pedagogical and quasi-pedagogical approaches underpinned many informants' understanding of actor training. A common view was that acting could only be inspired but not taught. Again, the natural talent of the individual student was viewed as a necessary prerequisite. The pedagogical concept was dismissed outright by some. Other informants suggested quasi-pedagogical approaches such as learning acting by "osmosis" and "organic" approaches.
The majority of the informants viewed the development of personal qualities and ideals as part of the training process. The informants were united in their understanding that actor training was vocational both in terms of skill development and sustainability within the industry. For many, this now included film and television. The informants' beliefs were significantly influenced by their own prior personal training experiences.

5.3.1 Indications of Ways of Knowing

The informants' ways of knowing about themselves as actors/directors and acting tutors appear to have grown out of their own personally significant experience. Most informants claimed that the legitimacy or authority as an acting tutor is derived from experience gained in the industry. However those adherents to the notion of the "professional teacher" justify their extended employment as tutors by suggesting they have concentrated on their teaching to build up their skills as teachers. They see that by virtue of their initial experience and particularly their own training, they can pass on a body of knowledge and particular approaches to acting. One informant even claimed he felt duty-bound to do this.

For many informants the application of a label to describe one's role within a drama school was problematic and led to much introspection about how they were situated within the learning process. For many of the informants, the job of teaching was seen to be largely "inspirational" although the notion of being seen as a "guru" was rejected in favour of egalitarianism. Without a pedagogic language, the tutors relied upon words such as "passion", "organic" and "inspiration" to describe what it is they do.

The tutors' experience is based upon industry experiences and teaching/learning experiences. Originally the informants learnt about acting through the application of various methods and systems of acting. These were acquired in practice and refined through practice. Mostly without formal teaching qualifications, these former actors have sought to understand how to pass on what they and their drama schools understand of the acting process. These tutors are further aided in their success by the filtering of students through the audition process. Again, knowing what to look for in identifying talent comes through experience in the industry and experience as a tutor.
The ways of knowing about themselves as tutors and their practice appear to be experientially-based via knowledge rooted in practical acting/directing/teaching experience. What is known is known through doing. It is based on the capacity to act or direct. Using Stevenson's (2003) idea of values involving 'what individuals and groups at work see and adopt as desirable and preferable activity' (p.187), one can identify the underlying values inherent in the tutor's role. These values are mediated by ideological frameworks, which cause the tutors to see themselves as "coach", "teacher", "non-guru" and the like. Their values are practice-based and reflect what is deemed desirable or preferable in the art form and the training situation. For instance, conservatoire training versus university education; trust versus scepticism; and practice versus theory.

Implicit and explicit values were indicated by all of the tutors throughout. For instance, implicit is the pedagogy, which was indicated by the use of intuitive terms such as "osmosis" or "organic" which indicated imprecision and teaching "by feelings". Explicit is the adherence to particular 'idols' such as Stanislavsky for instance, or grand styles such as Method acting. Explicit, though, were the anti-academic sentiments that were a recurring theme throughout the interviews.

These findings are further synthesised in Chapter 7 where the meanings communicated by the informants are analysed in relation to all the themes.
"The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails."
– James Joyce (A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man)
CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS: THE INFORMANTS' MEANINGS

6.1 Introduction

Through an analysis of the themes, Chapter 5 builds upon understandings of how the informants are situated: as tutors or Directors/Principals in relation to the industry/drama schools in which they work and the actual training process itself. An implicit and explicit polarisation of meanings emerges from this analysis, which illuminate the informants' ways of knowing about themselves as actors/directors and tutors of acting. It is argued here that these have grown out of their own personally significant experiences. The ways in which knowledge is rendered also appears to be based in practical experience. That is, in this community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The informants typically expressed values and concepts that are practice-based, are difficult to express in theoretical terms and reflect what is deemed by them as desirable or preferable conditions for their artform and the actor training process. The structure of the chapter is outlined below.

This chapter analyses the data further by addressing the final two research questions:

- What kinds of meaning do acting tutors seek to communicate and why?
- How do acting tutors seek to convey these meanings?

These two questions are centred on meanings conveyed by the informants' responses in terms of their 'expert' knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995; et al) or 'teacher knowledge' (Elbaz, 1983) and the ways people in 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991) discuss such knowledge.

In addressing the first of these final two questions it was necessary to further distil the themes revealed in the data from Chapter 5. This was achieved by analysing the apparent divides in meaning. In the Vygotskian tradition (e.g. Leont'ev, 1981 [1959]), meanings that are developed in such communities of practice are contextual and social. Therefore the second research question is addressed by an analysis of the kinds of meaning the acting tutors seek to communicate by building upon the contextual and situated nature of knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in actor training.
Communities of practice have histories and developmental cycles, and reproduce themselves in such a way that the transformation of newcomers into old-timers becomes unremarkably integral to practice. (p.122)

Coming from a philosophical tradition Phenix (1964) argues that "human beings are essentially creatures who have the power to experience meanings. Distinctively human existence consists in a pattern of meanings" (p.5). In contributing to an understanding meaning, Broudy (1977) distinguishes between those more familiar modes of knowing such as 'knowing-how' and 'knowing-that' and proposes an implicit type of knowledge he calls 'knowledge-with'. Further, Broudy argues that people interpret situations differently through their 'knowledge-with', and that there are many tacit and explicit forms of such knowledge(s). This section explores the different kinds of meaning found in the interview data and analyses the most predominant kinds of meaning which have now embedded themselves in the practices of actor training since the informants have become experienced or in other words 'old-timers' within their community of practice. This leads to an analysis of the informants' *craft-based ways of knowing* and understanding their practice, that is to say their contextual 'knowledge-with' which is both interpretive and associative (Broudy, 1977).

The meanings rendered by the informants are analysed within the three groups of themes as identified in Chapter 5: i) Tutors in Relationship to Drama Schools & Industry/Profession; ii) Tutors in Relationship to the Training Process; and iii) Tutors in Relationship to Themselves. The meanings derived from these three groups of themes are analysed in terms of their implicit and explicit *polarisation* in order to illuminate the informants' ways of knowing about themselves.

The final area of investigation answers the third research question of the study by analysing *how* acting tutors seek to communicate meaning. In this third section the broad distinction is drawn between two different ways of knowing: the *paradigmatic* and the *narrative* (Bruner, 1986). This section is concerned with the implicit and explicit understanding, and the ways the acting tutors communicate such meanings. It is argued that within *communities of practice* tacit understanding evolves through *craft-based ways of knowing*. 
Craft-based ways of knowing are also modes of communication which tend not to be declarative but rely upon less precise ways of communication. These tools of communication are identified in this chapter as symbolic metaphors, anecdotes, references to heroic archetypes/grand styles, and aesthetics. Each of these tends to echo Bruner's (1986) narrative ways of knowing. These ways of knowing are not the same as more traditional and declarative representations of pedagogy. Moreover, this gives rise to issues of the levels of teachers' awareness of their own 'teaching' knowledge and their ability to articulate it (Elbaz, 1983).

6.2 AREA OF INVESTIGATION TWO

QUESTION: What kinds of meaning do acting tutors seek to communicate and why?

As practitioners move from being novices to experienced practitioners their evolving knowledge, skill and discourse are part of a developing identity (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This has revealed itself in the meanings the informants communicated as practitioners in this particular community:

Knowing is inherent in the growth and transformation of identities and it is located in relations among practitioners, their practice, the artefacts of that practice, and the social organisation and political economy of communities of practice. (Lave & Wenger, 1991:122)

It appears that these socially constructed ways of knowing are formed in practice and through practice as craft-based meanings. It appears that these craft-based ways of knowing are founded on particular meanings in practice. These meanings have revealed themselves in this study as divided paradigms or polarities.

6.2.1 Craft-based Meaning and the Drama School/Industry

The predominant kinds of meaning that the tutors in this study sought to communicate, and thus aimed to make legitimate, were those that exist through experience – the belief that it is essential to have acted before one can teach acting. Tutors largely spoke about their practice from the point-of-view of artists and craft persons with direct and personally significant experience. The most prevalent of all the meanings
communicated by the informants were personal meanings. These synnoetic (Phenix, 1964) meanings are derived from direct and concrete experiences. Because these meanings are gained through practice and experience, tutors placed great value on these personal meanings in their own discussion and understanding of their practice, both as artists and now as tutors. It was this tacit knowledge that was used to interpret their experience. If one accepts that 'context is a form of tacit knowing' (Broudy, 1977:12) then it was the acting tutors' 'knowledge-with' (Broudy, 1977) that provides a context against which their practice is understood.

It appears that these meanings may have developed contextually within this community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) through craft-based ways of knowing which, according to the informants, includes studies of Voice, Movement and specific 'methods' or 'systems' of acting. The informants suggested they learnt their craft through doing. To this end mention was frequently made of the tutors' prior experience as a way of legitimising what they do. This was indicated by references drawn from three overlapping domains of experience: Drama school experience as former students; Industry experience as professional actors/directors; and Artistic/Creative experience in the art and craft of acting (Figure 6.1). The informants' own drama school experiences centred on their initial and significantly influential training experiences. Recollections of these experiences were frequently used to legitimise what it was they had learnt. Industry experience centred on their employment, which they used to legitimise knowing by 'doing', and through practical experience represented as production credits. Artistic or creative experience centred on the informants' understandings gained through the personal and internalised nature of the acting process itself where meaning was rendered empathetically.

Despite their somewhat different trajectories, the informants communicated many meanings. The point at which the informant's own drama school experience, industry experience and acting experience overlap is what I term the accumulated zone of craft-based knowing (Figure 6.1). In this figure synnoetic meaning constructed through the experiences of individuals is also co-constructed through interactions with others. The data revealed that high value is placed on experience in each of these three overlapping domains of experience which build upon previous experiences.
Brett believed that a tutor's practice is ultimately shaped by these practical experiences rather than by theory alone:

**Brett:** The training is very much a reflection of each teacher/artist’s own practice [...] anyone teaches their own training and professional experience. [...] The training is the kind of baby food and the practice is how we learn what we do and that’s why we’re here because we’ve really got a lot of professional practice. We’re not teaching this out of books. (21-29:94)

## Figure 6.1 Craft-based Ways of Knowing

![Diagram showing Drama School Experience, Industry Experience, and Artistic/Creative Experience]

*Source: Analysis of informants' interview data (see Chapters 4, 5, & 6).*

It is suggested that these three types of practical experiences that form the accumulating zone of craft-based ways of knowing can also be understood as three focal points of a trajectory moving from 'new-comer' to 'old-timer' (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The three spheres of experience are illustrated as follows:
i) The Drama School Experience

Like many of the tutors, Gillian still had vivid impressions of her training and the particular influence of her drama school's two former Principals. Gillian felt "the weight of responsibility [...] trying to live up to their ideals" (20-22:41). Gillian identified that the ideals espoused by her training now promoted both inspiration and rigour in her own approach to training:

Gillian: One has to be answerable, you have to be answerable to an ideal and sometimes you just want to say "Go away, get off and let me get on with it". And sometimes it’s wonderful because that inspiration makes you be rigorous, it makes you kind of ask the questions, and make demands both on yourself and on the students. (24-30:41)

Paul also identified the powerful influence of English drama school 'B' upon his own cognition:

Paul: I think possibly my answers up till now have been only superficially personal, they tend to be about the institution as much as... based upon what I received from the institution and very specific teachers as well. (43-47:64)

Brett also recalled the strength of his former tutors' personal qualities, which provided him with models. He remembered what his tutors did rather what he did in his training:

Brett: I was also taught by some great people. And I can remember, I was taught by Richard Wherrett, by George Whaley, by Aubrey Mellor. And while I don’t quite remember what they teach... do you know what? What I remember as an actor, is them [...]. They are kind of my models as an actor and director you see. And I remember the quality of training, if not the details of the training. Do you see what I’m saying? I actually remember what they did much better than I remember what I did [...]. (29-38:99)

Paul spoke of a holistic education that he received at his drama school that not only included the mechanics of acting but went beyond this to "an added desire to be an auto-didact, to want to teach oneself, to read more, to see more" (25-27:63). This has shaped Paul's own teaching and created for him a mission based on 'showing' not 'telling':

Paul: [...] to give the students that sort of immense education which I feel and know from personal
experience, isn’t necessarily happening at school level. People don’t arrive, or very rarely arrive at a drama school well read or with a great perspective on the world. Many of them don’t read newspapers; many of them don’t watch the news. [...] You cannot just tell them to do it, but show them why. (31-39:63)

Roy acknowledged that at the age of 18 he was "dismissed for being really too young" (40-41:187) from his original drama school in Australia. Roy then went to London to train at the Drama Centre. He identified the influence by suggesting that "a lot of what I teach is very Drama Centre-based" (44-45:187) which was "a very particular type of training" (2:188).

The types of training experienced have consolidated in the tutors' minds particular ideals. The strength of influence by certain tutors in the past and their own ideals has in turn directly influenced a new generation of acting tutors. Where particular types of training have been identified, these too were in some form replicated by the informants. These are expressed in narrative rather than in paradigmatic or logico-scientific form (Bruner, 1986). The tutors demonstrated that they had developed contextual understandings of actor training. These histories appeared to have directly informed how the tutors perceived their practice. The tutors were cognisant of actor training where their particular 'knowledge(s)-with' (Broudy, 1977) were anecdotally referenced.

**ii) The Industry Experience**

Previous industry experience was frequently referred to as being significant, although not often elaborated upon by the informants. The difference between working in the industry and working in the drama schools was evidenced when Drew made the distinction between the "real world" of acting and the hierarchical structures found within the teaching institution:

**Drew:** It’s very interesting for me coming from the real world into a structure like this where I’ve never really had a manager. I’ve never had a boss. I’m a freelance director, freelance actor for the past fifteen years, running my own company to come
into a situation where it’s almost medieval with its hierarchical structure [...] and management’s "open cards on the table stuff" is mostly rhetoric. It’s still [...] hierarchical and you still do have to kneel before the Dean or the Vice Chancellor and everybody scurries and gets out the red carpet – it’s very strange politics for me and again I think it creates inefficiencies at the coal face. (38-52:134)

A number of tutors placed significance on their experience in the industry as also a place of training. Both Gillian and John particularly spoke of their experience in the repertory system as something that gave them a breadth of experience. However one could also detect a sense of relief in now not having to worry about the lack of financial security associated with being freelance actors or directors. Taking a permanent teaching position for Gillian meant "a proper job with a salary and holiday pay and pension rights and all that" (51-52:44,1:45). However knowing what it is like through direct experience in the industry was frequently repeated and highly valued. William, for example, spoke of the necessity to employ staff with not only professional experience but also "credibility" (8:79) which was supposedly attained through industry achievements. Brett described gaining his "credibility" by working at a Sydney theatre company where he claimed: "I won most of my medals, creating, staging new work" (8-9:91).

Born out of industry experience was a rich array of stories about that industry. Bruner (1986) argues in relation to the imaginative application of the narrative mode, that it leads to 'good stories, gripping drama, believable [though not necessarily "true"] historical accounts' (p.13). These stories serve as anecdotal references to things that are known through direct experience. Thus, it appears that there exists a narrative and 'knowledge-with' used for providing "credibility" and for seeing the world, rather than relying upon discussions of pedagogy to inform actor training.

iii) The Artistic/Creative Experience

The nature of acting, at least in part, involves the critical analysis of oneself and the internalising of situations and feelings. This of course relates directly to an aesthetic
experience. Terry mentioned "the ability to read emotional states" (34-35:156) and display "truthful feelings" as being crucial to acting. Making sense of situations, characters, relationships and conflicts is richly synnoetic in itself, relying on a 'knowledge-with' which is tacit and difficult to communicate. Terry claimed that when commencing with a text "you have to be able to read this person’s journey and understand it and then be able to then personalise it" (2-5:156). Gillian spoke of "the transformative power or the ability to make yourself into other people, to become a vehicle of meaning in that way for the playwright's intentions" (16-20:43).

Terry also spoke of the personal nature of acting. He begins by first getting the "actor's instrument in good shape" (52:155). Roy talked of helping the students "establish a personal technique for them through their various experiences that they go through" (2-4:197) which is what Gillian referred to when she talked of "a sort of discovery of personal resources" (15:38). Roy also identified something of a 'philosophy' behind Australian drama school 'E' when he said that they ask the students "who are you? "Not who are you as a person so much but… what is your artistic consciousness? What is your artistic soul, can you define it? And can you actually then use it?" (50-52:198, 1:199).

Sam identified the "intuitive understanding of the creative processes" (3:213) that actors possess. Drew believes that through the experience of acting one will "know what that process is all about" (27:143) and suggested that if tutors "don’t know what that process is all about I don’t believe they can teach that process" (27-29:143). However the way the process is understood is not through paradigmatic thought but through narrative. Bruner (1986) argues that human mental activity is fully expressed when linked to a 'cultural tool kit' expressed through the participants' own narratives. Broudy (1977) argues too that aesthetic understandings may reveal universal truths [or at least universal truths for actors] using images which may be called exemplars and 'are not communicated by direct assertion' (p.5).

Summary
The predominant kinds of meaning that the informants relied upon in explaining their worlds were those that exist through practical experience and are expressed in narrative
form. The most valued experiences of the informants were distinctly personal or synnoetic in nature. They are craft-based ways of knowing which seen to have been derived from three predominant domains of experience: drama school experience [training-related], industry experience [work-related] and artistic/creative experience [aesthetic-related]. These ways of knowing shaped the manner in which knowledge was communicated, which helps to explain how practical experience has become the dominant value in actor training. Although they are often tacit, these synnoetic ways of knowing appeared to provide powerful interpretive-frameworks ['knowledge-with'] for understanding in these particular communities of practice, and operate predominately in them.

6.2.2 Polarisation of Meanings
One common way of communicating these difficult-to-express meanings and frameworks was through constructing 'the other'. Thus polarisations were a common tool in differentiating this community of practice from others such as universities. The polarisation of meanings are analysed in the thematic groupings introduced in Chapter 5 [given in this section in the reverse order to assist the development of the conceptual argument] as: (i) Tutors in relation to drama schools and industry/profession (Table 6.1); (ii) Tutors in relationship to the training process (Table 6.2); and (iii) Tutors in relationship to their own identity [themselves] (Table 6.3).

There were found multiple kinds of meaning and multiple ways in which meaning was constructed. By examining these meanings some interesting schisms emerge. They either are perceived as divides by the individual informants or have become divides when comparing data between different informants' discourses. Many of these divides illuminate the individual contextualised interpretive frameworks of the informants, and were often expressed as values.

i) Tutors in Relationship to Drama Schools & Industry/Profession
Influenced by prominent directors and their own novice training, the interviews revealed divides in the various definitions of acting, where some informants valued acting styles versus others who valued having no acting style at all. Most informants
favoured 'finding honest/truthful feelings' and 'being available in the moment' over *facilitated emotions*.

Most informants favoured *conservatoire* training over the university education context. So too was the value of experiential learning privileged where it was suggested that "organic" development could be achieved based on trust. This was opposed to the articulated model of academic pedagogy based on scepticism.

Drama school communities appeared to value their reputations highly. The reputational legacy of the drama schools was considered vital in maintaining the schools' popularity and hence the competition for places. The informants' rhetoric included seeking "the pursuit of excellence" as a necessary condition. Identifying with elite drama schools was a frequent feature. The ideology of shaping the future versus reacting to present demands informed the practice of many tutors, thus reinforcing the significance of the role played by drama schools.

Such divides (Table 6.1) reflect for the tutors various forms of membership to both the drama schools and the wider industry. These forms of membership rely upon having experientially acquired knowledge. It is through this acquisition that construction of identity appears to form. Each individual is located in a field of mature practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) which includes a history of both working in the drama schools and working in the acting industry/profession.
Table 6.1 Polarisation of Meanings: Tutors in Relationship to Drama Schools & Industry/Profession

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESS FAVOURED</th>
<th>MORE FAVOURED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acting styles</td>
<td>No acting styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitated feeling</td>
<td>Honest/truthful feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clones</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Conservatoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Practical exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual teaching</td>
<td>Experiential teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scepticism</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Vocational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic awards</td>
<td>Capacity to inspire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual inquiry</td>
<td>Life of the imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety in the known</td>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formula/style</td>
<td>Impulsive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

DIVIDES WITHOUT COMMON PREFERENCES

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implicit</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing state</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Being state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Reacting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-training</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Systematic training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive training</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Reactive training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing skills training</td>
<td>versus</td>
<td>Practice in productions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Informants' interview data (see Chapters 4, 5, & 6).
ii) Tutors in Relationship to the Training Process

An examination of the data revealed polarisation of meanings in the tutors' relationship to the training process (Table 6.2). Training was defined in terms of knowledge, skills, and experience evident in multiple approaches across the schools. Major divides exist between adherents to 'systematic' training versus adherents to 'eclectic' training which some informants equated to 'training' versus 'anti-training'.

The informants highlighted several components of the training process that consisted of the quality of the auditionees and the end Showcase. The quality of the auditionees determined the quality of the graduate output, therefore it was important to accept high quality students displaying what was described as the "it factor". The Showcase provides the platform to display the abilities of the graduates. It was revealed in the responses that the Showcase needs to be highly successful in fulfilling its objective as the transition between training and work.

The informant responses suggested they did not value pedagogy as such, nor did they view the training process through a pedagogical framework. Acting methodology was discussed rather than pedagogy. Creative outcomes were favoured over pedagogical outcomes. Imprecise terms such as the use of "organic" reflected the quasi-pedagogical concepts spoken about. For instance terms such as transmitting by "osmosis" were used to metaphorically explain actor training which reflected the general agreement that acting could not be taught. The term "osmosis" reflects the difficulty that these tutors had in articulating their practice and defining processes in pedagogical terms.

The strongly vocational function of drama schools reinforced skill development and the training for film and television in addition to training for the stage. However, personally significant meanings were reflected in the tutors' organisation of mastery of those skills. This included particular 'philosophies' or privileging particular approaches to actor training. Typically this was reflected in anti-pedagogical sentiments that favoured personal development and autonomous artistic qualities.

In summary, acquired meaning was again synnoetic – being direct, personal and experientially based. Narrative representations of the tutors' 'knowledge-with' were
shaped by hegemony derived from the contexts. Existing in these meanings were overlaps between the tutors' own drama school experiences, their industry experiences and artistic/creatives experiences. As represented in Figure 6.1 this central overlap is what I term the 'accumulating zone of craft-based ways of knowing'. That is, as Leont'ev (1981 [1959]) would argue, how the tutors have come to know the world determines how they understand and conduct themselves in that world.

Table 6.2 Polarisation of Meanings: Tutors in Relationship to the Training Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESS FAVOURED</th>
<th>MORE FAVOURED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homogenised approach</td>
<td>versus Diverse approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-methodological training</td>
<td>versus Methodological training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual approach</td>
<td>versus Acting process [non-conceptual]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>versus Acting methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical outcomes</td>
<td>versus Creative outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for the theatre</td>
<td>versus Training for theatre, film and TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>versus Human beings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>versus Anti-pedagogical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>versus Organic/ by osmosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>versus Quasi-pedagogical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic analysis</td>
<td>versus Organic analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>versus Doing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIVIDES WITHOUT COMMON PREFERENCES

| Eclectic                      | versus Systematic              |
| Anti-training                 | versus Training                |
| British methodology           | versus American system         |
| Quasi-professional productions| versus Development of students |
| Personal training aims        | versus Vocational training aims|
| Inspirational                 | versus Teaching                |
| Quality of tutoring           | versus Talent of student       |
| Candidates being right for the school | versus School being right for candidates |
| Vocational aims and objectives| versus Personal aims and objectives |

Source: Informants' interview data (see Chapters 4, 5, & 6).
iii) Tutors in Relationship to Themselves

The biographical data [particularly Chapter 4] reveals the history and identity of the tutors. Labels used by the informants such as "teacher", "coach", "tutor", "lecturer" and so on point to the difficulty the informants had in accurately describing their own function and suggest divides (Table 6.3) in training ideology. Underpinned by this is the divide between whether acting is an art or craft and therefore its implied 'teachability'.

How the informants found a 'way in' to these institutions and to their roles within the institutions gives rise to an understanding of how the tutors operate within these environments and reflects their apparent 'legitimacy of participation' (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Lave & Wenger suggest that 'if the person is both member of a community and agent of activity, the concept of the person closely links meaning and action in the world' (p.122). With their history of moving from the practical industry into the drama schools, tutors often reflected the importance of this form of transition. As a consequence this appears to have produced a divide between the identity of being a professional fulltime teacher versus working part-time in the industry and part-time tutoring. This sits in opposition to the legitimacy of being a 'professional actor' versus the legitimacy of the 'professional teacher'.

Additionally it was revealed that many teachers returned to teach at their alma mater, first as casual tutors/directors leading eventually to fulltime employment. This link between one's initial place of training and eventual place of employment was strongly repeated and provided another divide between the informants as 'insiders' and 'outsiders' to particular school communities. In this sense the tutors' 'knowledge-with' may have become even more particular to specific localised institutions and conditions.
Table 6.3 Polarisation of Meanings: Tutors in Relationship to Themselves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESS FAVOURED</th>
<th>MORE FAVOURED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guru</td>
<td>Tutor-Student Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Inspiring/Passionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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DIVIDES WITHOUT COMMON PREFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>Teacher/Lecturer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Tutor/Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Teacher</td>
<td>Professional Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruited from alumni</td>
<td>New to the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Doing</td>
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Source: Informants' interview data (see Chapters 4, 5, & 6).

Summary
The divides in meaning found amongst informants illuminate the frameworks of 'knowledge-with' through which they made sense of, and assigned values in their practice. The divides were either perceived or articulated as divides by the individual informants and/or became apparent as divides in the data based on their stated opposition to something else (Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3). Examples included conservatoire versus university; artist versus academic; inspiring versus teaching; trust versus scepticism; organic versus pedagogic and experiential versus intellectual.

Having once been actors or directors, the informants learned to speak as tutors of acting, developing a cultural practice for actor learning. Thus meanings had been [co]constructed socially within a community of practice and were shaped contextually by experience. Ways of seeing the world were strongly influenced by the ways in which the informants understood the world.
6.3 AREA OF INVESTIGATION THREE

QUESTION: How do acting tutors seek to convey these meanings?

In answering this final question it is useful to refer to van Manen's (1990) use of the term "texts of life". These are the tacit meanings which practitioners accumulate through personal experience. The various ways the informants attempted to make their experiences and knowledge intelligible and communicable are explored specifically in this section.

Bruner (1986) broadly differentiates the ‘paradigmatic or logico-scientific’ mode of knowing from the ‘narrative’ mode of knowing (p.12). Paradigmatic thinking is defined as a 'formal, mathematical system of description and explanation' (p.12) with an emphasis on theory generated through verifiable hypothesis-testing. The paradigmatic mode aims at abstraction by the use of categorisation or conceptualisation most used in mathematics, sciences and in generating theory. This is contrasted to an application of the narrative mode defined by Bruner as 'good stories, gripping drama, believable [though not necessarily 'true'] historical accounts', [dealing] with human or human-like intention and action and the vicissitudes and consequences that mark their course’ (p. 13). 'It strives to put its timeless miracles into the particulars of experience, and to locate the experience in time and place' (p.13). As Bruner points out, narrative is built around this concern for the 'human condition', and therefore it is not expressed without feeling.

The informants' were prone to recall their practice narratively rather than in paradigmatic ways. Further, the informants in this study reinforced the idea that meanings for them were synnoetic (Phenix, 1964). That is, their knowledge is generated through direct, personal and experientially derived meaning. Much of what is known remains tacit, that is knowing more than can be told (Polanyi, 1983 [1958]). Therefore the informants used both metaphor and narrative in an attempt to communicate these meanings derived contextually through past experiences. Again it appears that this has frequently resulted in meanings being expressed as polarisations.
6.3.1 Meaning Communicated by Tacit Knowledge

As foreshadowed above, much of the tutors' synnoetic knowledge of teaching was known tacitly and therefore was not readily articulated by the informants. It was argued above that the world of the acting tutor consisted in the accumulation of subjective practical knowledge acquired through the experience of having been to drama school, having worked in the industry and now teaching within a drama school. These tutors appeared to have learnt to rely on action flowing from internalised or embodied practices (Zarrilli, 2001). It has been advanced that formulating connections and relationships between these experiences can be regarded as generating craft-based ways of knowing which have developed through shared interactions in practice. These ways of knowing were frequently not explicitly nor readily communicated. Nor were these tutors accustomed to articulating their own pedagogy.

The way in which acting tutors may view their teaching and the teaching of others will ultimately shape their own personal teaching 'philosophies' and values. Marvin, for example, suggested that "so much of this business depends on intuition" (1-2:186). However as already cited in Chapter 5 (5.2.1), Anton argued that tutors who rely on "instinct" are less likely to be able to articulate their pedagogy "in explicit words" (3:24).

Because "instinct" and "intuition" can be pejorative words, these ways of knowing and communicating meaning are here called 'synnoetics'. They are usually tacit, in that a community of practice is built around notions of tacit meaning (Polanyi, 1983 [1958]). However, in this community of practice, there were found agreed ways of communicating tacit meaning, not solely in declarative ways but often through, for example, symbolic metaphors, anecdotes, referring to heroic archetypes/grand styles, and aesthetics. These taxonomies relate closely to the synnoetic and tacit meanings inherent in craft-based knowledge and also the narrative modes of thought advanced by Bruner (1986). These ways of communicating meaning were substantially evident across the range of informants. Each of these references is illustrated below.
i) Symbolic Metaphors

When attempting to describe what it is that the training aimed to achieve, tutors sometimes relied on quite abstract symbolic metaphors. Gillian for example sought "to broaden the acting muscle" (8:49). The understanding contained within this concept appears to have particular meaning known more precisely to Gillian, but would not necessarily convey clarity to everyone else. On the other hand, the use of the term "organic" seemed to have more frequent currency amongst the Acting tutors. Terry suggested "you have to be able to have approaches that allow you to make them organic or personal" (52:163, 1-2:164). The "organic" term conveys favourable connotations and in every instance was used as a positive ideal.

Terry described his way of working as "kind of on the edge" (40-41:149) and referred to poor acting as "the magic's not coming across" (8-9:157). Sam, like many other informants, referred to natural talent as "the gift" (39:223). Roy spoke of when his students "blossom". Suggesting, for example, that some students may "blossom" after they leave drama school rather than whilst they are doing the course. Gillian spoke of developing in students the "keys to open doors" (21-22:45). Again, what is actually meant by "blossom" and "keys to open doors" may be generally understood but remain imprecise explanations. In a similar way Paul spoke of his practice by using symbolic metaphors: "You want to open that door to them as wide as possible so that all the possibilities are there for them. I guess […] possibly we’re biting off more than we can chew, or I can chew, it’s not just to make them good actors, I think it is to make them an interesting person" (17-22:64). Recurring words and phrases such as having "it", finding "truth" and "anti-training" were also used as symbolic metaphors.

ii) Anecdote

Tutors frequently referred to stories and examples from their own experiences to convey meaning. With references to their own training being the most frequently conveyed anecdote, tutors sought to legitimise their experiences through practice rather than theory. Sam for example specifically recalled having actually been taught via anecdote during his training at drama school 'E'. Sam made the distinction between teaching from anecdote and teaching from theory:
Characterising Actor Trainers’ Understanding  Chapter Six: The Informants’ Meanings

Sam: You know as a trained actor, I think having someone like [name deleted] who taught from anecdote not from theory [...]. From his own experiences as an actor he’d say this happened and that happened. And one discovered that there is no right or wrong answer in what I was attempting to do as a student actor or as an actor. [...] I was an avid reader, precocious as I suggested to you, so... reading Tolstoy or Dostoevsky [...] unconsciously I think [...] there’s no right or wrong it's entirely up to you. And to keep yourself open I think that I absorbed that unconsciously over my life rather than someone saying something. (16-30:215)

Sam's example of anecdote illustrates how it is also used by actors to contextualise themselves within their practice and within the processes involved in acting. Part of making sense of one's understanding appears to come from using anecdote to illustrate one's place within the world.

Anton referred to teaching Acting or Direction as the "summation" of the component parts of acting such as Voice and Movement. Anton spoke therefore of the importance of extensive practical experience in the industry and how a tutor must be "able to transmit that experience rather than knowledge" (47-48:25). For Anton, anecdote appeared to be the means by which experience was transmitted.

iii) Heroic Archetypes/Grand Styles

Many styles were referred to in ways that assumed a shared understanding such as "The Method", or directors' and playwrights' names. These included the frequent mention of heroic archetypes such as "Stanislavsky", "Uta Hagen", "Shakespeare", "Eric Morris", "Strasberg", "Meisner" and so on. Roy, for example, spoke of his own methodology being aligned to the practices of particular significant people:

Roy: I follow certain things [...] for example my approach to acting is a bit of a hybrid, I mean it's part Stanislavsky, it’s very much influenced by the Americans of course, as most is... by Uta Hagen and Stella Adler and Michael Chekhov and Sandy Meisner in particular. I don’t go towards Strasberg though. So but I’ve re-interpreted all that, and put it in a
combination that works for me, I also teach Rudolph Laban's work and Yat Malmgrem's work as well [...] as I said my technique is like a hybrid of all that. I’ve re-interpreted it and made it my own. (11-23:204)

Terry said, "Meisner believes the same thing I believe in… in the sense of getting the actor to trust his own impulses and to allow those impulses to come out" (20-23:166). Anton provides for us a further example of how the informants spoke about these grand styles:

Anton: Herbert Berghof Studios, which was a method studio but in a more down to earth in a concrete, physical way than Strasberg or Meisner or any of the other directors' centres. So [Uta Hagen] subsequently went back to Stanislavsky's physical action method rather than teaching Strasberg's interpretation. (23-29:24)

Other grand styles referred to were "practical aesthetics", "instrument work", "irreverent acting" and "finding the truth" or for example Gillian's reference to "the capacity to work truthfully" (31-32:51). "Truth" as such was never specifically defined. Whose "truth" or what type of "truth" was not clearly ascertainable yet it was consistently used as a linchpin of the tutors' practice.

Paul made reference to "rigorously uphold a classical English/European tradition of theatre" (33-34:60). Many other informants also referred to "the classics" as a body of works that appeared to hold a type of essential and meritorious status in the field, particularly including playwrights such as Shakespeare, Chekhov and Shaw.

iv) Aesthetics

There was a general absence in the data of the informants directly addressing aesthetic concerns in the training process. However I am reminded that the interviews were primarily focussed on pedagogy and were not intended to probe the informants' artistic philosophies. However, there were some references to artistry, feelings and emotions. For instance numerous tutors referred to "artistic identity". Roy, for example, pointed to the single most important thing that he wanted his students to learn which was
confidence in their "artistic identity" (51:202). Anton spoke of the ability to "exist in the moment" via a psychological mechanism of "easy access to emotions" (24:33). Paul suggested that when looking at a performance one should ask, "does it look beautiful" (18-19:58). Roy talked of wanting to create poets: "I talk to the actors about developing the eye of a poet" (44-45:196) and "developing lyricism in your approach" (50-51:196).

Summary

Much of the tutors' knowledge of teaching is *synnoetic* and known tacitly, and therefore was not readily articulated during the interviews. However this community of practice is built around notions of tacit meaning with agreed ways of communicating some of this tacit meaning narratively (Bruner, 1986) through the use of symbolic metaphors, anecdote and references to heroic archetypes/grand styles and aesthetics. These ways of communicating meaning suggest shared frameworks or 'knowledge-with' (Broudy, 1977). These ways of communicating meaning were known through experience and had developed into *craft-based ways of knowing*. These *craft-based ways of knowing* were constructed through embodied practices. Broudy argues that 'knowledge-with' can be 'cognitive, affective, aesthetic, moral, social, religious' (p.13) and that associations based on 'knowledge-with' can be 'iconic, structural, functional, analogical and metaphorical' (p.11).

6.4 Conclusion: The Informants' Meanings

In addressing this area for investigation, the data reveal that the predominant kinds of meaning the informants sought to communicate and legitimise were those existing through practical experience. The most valued experiences of the informants are seen to be distinctly personal or *synnoetic* in nature. Based in the research data, a model is proposed of *craft-based ways of knowing* which are derived from three predominant domains of experience: drama school experience [training-related], industry experience [work-related] and artistic/creative experience [aesthetic-related]. The development of these *craft-based ways of knowing* appeared to be in actuality a shared framework or 'knowledge-with' for interpreting and communicating aloud their stories.
Personally significant meanings developed through these three main experiences with meanings possibly being transformed as the participants move towards shared ways of knowing. The identities of the informants would have developed as they have moved from being originally 'newcomers' to becoming 'old-timers', emphasising the sustained character of developmental cycles of communities of practice in which practitioners learn and continue to grow. Lave & Wenger (1991) situate learning in the 'trajectories of participation in which it takes on meaning' (p.121). Here meaning appeared to have developed as a direct result of past experiences of training, industry work and artistic processes. The meanings are socially constructed within communities of practice and are shaped by previous experiences. Polarisations of meanings appeared to be derived from the informants' relationship to their own training and professional work, the training process and their own role as tutors.

The third area of investigation revealed that much of the informants' synnoetic knowledge of teaching was known tacitly and therefore was not readily articulated. Agreed ways of communicating this tacit knowledge were developing and consist of symbolic metaphors, anecdotes and references to grand styles and aesthetics. These resemble Bruner's (1986) narrative ways of knowing, which appeared to be shaping into a collective or shared 'knowledge-with'. These relationships are summarised and depicted in Figure 6.2.

**Figure 6.2 Genesis of Shared Knowing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Tacit ways of Understanding and Acting</th>
<th>Actor/Tutor Craft-based Ways of Knowing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Drama School Training Experience.</td>
<td>- Shared Discourse [Language used in and about Practice].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Industry Experience.</td>
<td>- Shared Interpretive Frameworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Artistic/Creative Experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Informants' interview data (see Chapters 4,5,&6).*
Chapter 7 discusses the conclusions of this research. These conclusions are examined in relation to the literature on acting, teaching, and meaning. The study's implications for policy and practice are then outlined. Unexpected limitations of this work are also identified and suggestions for further research are offered as a way of advancing understandings of tutor practice in actor training contexts.
"THE COUNT: She seems quite satisfied. She tells me that the actors you sent down are perfectly suited to their parts, and very nice people to work with. I understand she had some difficulties at the first rehearsals with the gentleman you call the producer, because he hadn't read the play; but the moment he found out what it was all about everything went smoothly." – Bernard Shaw (Fanny's First Play)
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This thesis illuminates those themes of actor training which largely affirm that knowledge structures are cultural (Vygotsky, 1986; Leont'ev, 1981 [1959]; et al). The predominant kinds of meanings generated by acting tutors in the discussion of their practice were synnoetic, that is they were direct, personal, and experiential (Phenix, 1965). Meanings constructed about acting and actor training were known tacitly and therefore were difficult to communicate in conventional ways. The thesis identifies the knowledge(s) dominant in the hegemony of this community of practice in order to further appreciate how 'teaching' is understood within the contexts of actor training.

Chapter 1 begins the study by a brief survey of the genesis of actor training. It serves to remind us that although formalised Western acting dates from the fifth century B.C., actor training as we know it today, is largely a twentieth century phenomenon. As such many of the underlying assumptions and understandings of actor training may, in historical terms, be relatively 'recent'. The key research question is identified in Chapter 1 as:

**How do tutors in Australia and England characterise their teaching practice in actor training institutions?**

The subsequent questions/areas of investigation are identified as:

1. What themes emerge from what tutors say about acting and actor training?
2. What kinds of meaning do acting tutors seek to communicate and why?
3. How do acting tutors seek to convey these meanings?

The chapter concludes by outlining the potential importance of the report's contribution to understandings of how acting tutors learn to teach acting and understand their practice.

Although there is a distinct lack of literature on the pedagogy of actor training, Chapter 2 brings together a range of theorists in an interdisciplinary approach. It builds upon
the 1975 Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Report *Going on the Stage* and a range of available literature on actor training (e.g. Harrop, 1992; Rideout, 1995; Zarrilli, 1995, 2001; Cohen, 1998; Hodge, 2000; *et al*). In order to examine how much previous work on actor training was analysed without it being concerned with a thorough analysis of the pedagogy [such as published training techniques/exercises], it was necessary to examine recent literature on workplace learning (e.g. Engeström 1987; Lave & Wenger 1991; Stevenson 2003; *et al*), and the literature on knowledge construction (e.g. Dewey 1929; Phenix 1964; Leont'ev, 1981 [1959], Elbaz 1983; Polanyi, 1983 [1966]; Bruner, 1986; Göranzon, 1990; Josefson, 1991; *et al*). The key concepts derived from literature and used in the study are *synnoetics* (Phoenix, 1964), 'knowledge-with' (Broudy, 1977), tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1983 [1966]), narrative (Bruner, 1986), community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and knowledges 'about', 'in' and 'for' (Zarrilli, 2001).

Chapter 3 highlights the key methodologies of qualitative enquiry that have guided the research project such as the use of qualitative case study and interpretive synthesis, and is informed by van Manen's (1990) notion of 'researching the lived experience'. The chapter introduces elements that assist us to find 'a way in' in order to understand the complex nature of actor training and the personal meanings of the tutors themselves. Chapter 3 also explains the data collection process which used tape-recorded interviews of thirteen tutors, Heads of Acting and Principals/Directors across five different drama schools in both Australia and in England. The difficulty in first obtaining access to drama schools to conduct the research is also illuminated.

In Chapter 4 the drama schools from Australia and England are profiled as the contexts in which the tutors discuss their practice. A sample of six key informants is profiled by the use of *pen-pictures* in order to give the reader a more intimate understanding of these people rather than presenting them impersonally in the study as mere 'research subjects'. In a practical way it also serves to acquaint the reader with the thinking and modes of expression used by these tutors as the informants grapple to understand what it is that they comprehend when they engage in the training of actors. These modes of expression are taken up for investigation in Chapters 6 and 7.
Chapter 5 builds an understanding of the drama schools [contexts]; discusses the informants in further depth; finds how the informants are situated within their practice; and how they relate to the training process. The analysis of data is organised according to the study's questions or areas of investigation. This results in initially identifying and analysing nine themes emerging from the data. These themes indicated the personal histories and ideologies of the informants. The themes were classified into three groups: tutors in relationship to themselves; tutors in relationship to drama schools and the industry; and tutors in relationship to the training process. These classifications become central to the structure of the analysis contained within this report.

Chapter 6 addresses the second and third research questions or areas of investigation by a further distillation of the data in terms of tacit meanings found in expert knowledge and craft-based ways of knowing. This in turn results in the emergence and subsequent analysis of implicit and explicit polarisation of meanings that illuminate the informants' ways of knowing about themselves as actors/directors and tutors of acting situated in a community of practice. The ways in which these meanings are communicated are generally in narrative form. The characteristics of 'knowledge-with' are then further identified and analysed within the chapter.

Chapter 7 addresses the study's broader conclusions and implications based upon the analysis contained in the report. The chapter summarises the conclusions about the findings for each research question and presents these within the context of the data and the prior research examined earlier in Chapter 2. The conclusions reveal the extent to which acting tutors do and do not communicate shared meaning by synthesising the findings that suggest particular meanings are constructed within these communities of practice. Meaningful experience is of multiple kinds (Phenix, 1964) and therefore tutors may demonstrate multiple ways of knowing, both collectively and individually. The conclusions reveal the extent to which there are agreed ways of communicating meaning within these communities of practice and the extent to which it forms a shared 'knowledge-with' (Broudy, 1977).

Also revealed in Chapter 7 are the insights discovered through the interview process, which were not considered during the conception stages of the report. Unexpected
limitations of the study are also addressed. The chapter concludes with practical implications and recommendations for future research in this particular area of actor training.

7.2 Conclusions about the Research Problem

The three questions that guide this thesis throughout are:

- What themes emerge from what tutors say about acting and actor training?
- What kinds of meaning do acting tutors seek to communicate and why?
- How do acting tutors seek to convey these meanings?

I revisit these questions now in broader terms, firstly by summarising the conclusions made thus far. Then in section 7.3 I relate the synthesised findings and conclusions to the literature discussed particularly in Chapter 2.

7.2.1 Summary of Themes Emerging: What Tutors say about Acting & Training

The data reveal that informants display certain histories and ideologies in common. These were categorised in order to conceptualise the different dimensions of commonality. The nine emergent themes revealed in the data address the following:

- How the tutor is defined.
- How the tutors emerged.
- Qualities of effective tutor practice.
- How acting is defined.
- The training context.
- Perceptions of effective drama schools.
- How training is defined.
- Key components of the training process.
- Pedagogical and non-pedagogical beliefs/imperatives.

These are further clustered into three groups a) How the tutors see themselves as tutors; b) How tutors see themselves in relation to the drama schools and the
industry/profession; and c) How the tutors see themselves in relation to the training process. The following is a summary of these conclusions:

A) How the tutors see themselves as tutors

- Most informants accept the "teacher" label but many informants question its accuracy.
- The use of the term "coach" appears to most accurately describe the function of the role for most informants.
- There is overwhelming support for the idea that it was important for the tutor to have 'done it' [experienced it] to understand it.
- The unanimous conclusion of the informants is that acting is not taught but rather it is inspired.
- All informants suggest a tutor's personal qualities are important in successful training.
- Articulation of the acting process is identified by almost half of the informants as an essential condition of a trained actor [and consequently tutor].

B) How tutors see themselves in relation to the drama schools & the industry/profession

- All informants describe the nature of acting as particularly involving the discovery of inner qualities, finding truth, and empathic acting.
- Thought is divided between the merits of promoting acting styles versus no particular acting styles.
- Conservatoire actor training is unanimously favoured over university delivered acting courses.
- Distinction is made between training models and education models of actor preparation.
- Most informants are supportive of the concept of practitioner-tutors.
- Revealed is a strong divide between the concepts of eclectic versus systematic training.
- The notion that the entrance audition determines the success of graduate output is unanimously supported.
• Most informants view the role of drama school as one to assist shape the future industry not simply to respond to it.

• A small minority of informants is content to openly accept the [full-time] "professional teacher" concept.

C) How the tutors see themselves in relation to the training process

• All tutors articulate either eclectic methodology or more systematic approaches.
• Most tutors look for "watchability", "individuality", or "it-factor" in potential students.
• Most informants place vocational and reputational importance on the end 'Showcase'.
• Most informants talk of acting methodology in place of pedagogy.
• An implicit and explicit concept of organic 'learning-by-osmosis' is prevalent.
• Personal development is overwhelmingly agreed as a significant component of actor training.

7.2.2 Summary of the Meaning Acting Tutors Seek to Communicate & Why

Through an analysis of the themes, the data is further distilled to examine the kinds of meanings the informants seek to communicate by building upon the contextual and situated nature of their knowledge. Informant responses can be grouped in terms of three domains of experience: Drama school experience as former students, Industry experience as professional actor/directors; and Artistic/Creative experience in the art and craft of acting. The following is a summary of these conclusions:

• Meanings are socially constructed within a culture or community of practice.
• Meanings are shaped by previous experiences of training, industry work and artistic processes.
• The predominant kinds of meanings informants seek to communicate exist through practical experience.
• The most valued informant experiences are distinctly personal or synnoetic in nature.
• Essentially all the informants exhibit craft-based ways of knowing.
• Polarisation of meanings appears to derive from the informants' relationship to
their own past experiences.
• The goals that the tutors have for actor training can be divided into four inter-
related categories: Intellectual, Personal, Social and Practical; with particular
emphasis on personal and social meanings.

7.2.3 Summary of How Acting Tutors Seek to Convey Meanings
An examination of the meanings that the informants accumulate reveals that they are
known largely through personal experience. These meanings are difficult to
communicate and are therefore conveyed in non-conventional ways. The following is a
summary of these conclusions:
• Much of the informants' synnoetic knowledge of teaching and training is known
tacitly and is not readily articulated in conventional ways.
• All the informants make reference to practical experience as a way of making
meaning and communicating tacit knowledge.
• Generally, most meanings are not conveyed by the informants through declarative
ways of their own.
• Tutor knowledge is derived through familiarity, gained by insight, experience or
rapport.
• All informants convey meaning predominantly through the use of symbolic
metaphors, anecdotes and references to grand styles and aesthetics.
• Narrative modes of knowing are prevalent as opposed to 'paradigmatic or logico-
scientific' ways of knowing.
• The informants make references to craft-based ways of knowing, both in and
through practice.
• The informants use different 'contexts', 'frameworks', or 'knowledge(s)-with'; and
these meanings are often expressed as distinct polarisations.

7.3 General Conclusions and the Research Literature
To preface this section, it should be noted that this report is a synthetic rather than
comparative case study. However, all of the general conclusions reported below
represent a consistency in findings across all cases, both in Australia and England. General commonality existed even though English drama school 'B' and Australian drama school 'D' subscribed to explicit systematic training, and Drama schools 'A', 'C' and 'E' delivered eclectic training.

The findings reported on nine themes that were revealed in the data (see 7.2.1), which in turn were clustered into three groups. These showed: how the tutors saw themselves as tutors; how tutors saw themselves in relation to the drama schools and industry/profession; and how the tutors saw themselves in relation to the training process. Each of these clusters of findings revealed situated and historically derived ideology that was understood within traditions of practice. For example, whilst it appears that most informants accepted the "teacher" label, their ideology suggesting that acting was not so much taught but inspired, was at odds with the term. Traditional understandings of pedagogy were generally foreign to the informants, which was revealed as they expressed a strong sense of knowing by doing. Conclusions of a more general nature derive from, but extend beyond the nine themes and questions of meaning. These are further synthesised here by discussing the literature and general conclusions in view of the two main theoretical ideas conveyed:

- Meaning and Knowledge.
- Development of Tutor Expertise.

Dewey (1968 [1916]) recognises that meaning is the understanding which is born out of personally significant experience. Human existence according to Phenix (1964) consists of a pattern of meanings. Educating, for example, might therefore be seen as 'the process of engendering essential meanings' (Phenix, 1964:5). The work of Phenix identifies six fundamental patterns of meaning which emerge from the analysis of the possible distinctive modes of human understanding. As outlined in Chapter 2 they are identified as Symbolics, Empirics, [A]esthetics, Synnoetics, Ethics, and Synoptics (Phenix, 1964). To some extent all of these meanings are identified in the talk of the acting tutors when discussing their practice. However the findings of this research reveal that the acting tutors essentially make meaning synnoetically, which is through direct personal experience. Synnoetics represents relational insight or direct awareness of a personal kind (Phenix, 1964). Stevenson (2003) argues that 'meaning is in the
capacity-to-do' (p.8) and this is primarily *synnoetic*. Dewey (1966 [1916]) also writes that what the participants 'must have in common in order to form a community or society are aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge – a common understanding – like-mindedness as the sociologists say' (p.4). That 'shared understanding' within a *community of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991) consists in meaning, which is known originally and primarily *synnoetically* by the informants interviewed in this study.

In discussing their practice, the acting tutors communicate meanings that are essentially expressions of their *craft-based ways of knowing*. The term 'craft-based ways of knowing' is defined in this report as being, for the most part, those practical components accepted in actor training such as Acting methodology, Voice, Movement and other skill-based considerations where practices become habitualised, and includes the kind of knowing that is *synnoetic* and experientially derived. In general terms this is evidenced in the way the tutors make meaning of their practice, both for themselves (Leont'ev, 1981 [1959]) and for others such as their students, administrators, industry personnel, funding bodies and even for researchers!

Such views of knowledge are reinforced or perhaps even influenced by Stanislavsky (1988 [1950]) who suggests 'in art "to know" means to be able to' (p.121), which he juxtaposes with the kind of 'general' knowledge that he proffers is *without* feeling. He suggests that this kind of knowledge is 'of no use whatever to an actor who is also a creative artist' (p.121). Therefore Stanislavsky's ideology is consistent with the informants' revelations that view knowledge as the result of *experience* and also that knowledge(s) of acting are inextricably entwined with *feeling* as in affect states.

Part of becoming 'expert' or at least at one within a community of practice involves moving from knowledge controlling and guiding the individual, to the individual controlling and selecting knowledge as required for him or herself (Bruner, 1986). Bruner alerts us to the level of awareness the individual has in relation to this knowledge. He writes:

> If he develops a sense of self that is premised on his ability to penetrate knowledge for his own uses, and if he can share and negotiate the result of his penetrations, then he becomes a member of the culture-creating community. (Bruner, 1986:132)
There has been a long understood distinction between two kinds of meaning: 'knowing-that' and 'knowing-how'. Stevenson (2003) points out that theoretical work in universities favours knowing-that and skilled trades tend to favour knowing-how. Zarrilli (2001) puts forward the notion of knowledge-about [knowledge about performance], knowledge-in and knowledge-for [knowledge gained in and for the relationship to practice]. Zarrilli suggests 'experience and embodiment are central to the practices of theatre and performance' (2001:35). It is through experience and embodiment that practices become habitualised. Zarrilli further argues for a more processual view of experience that raises questions of the consciousness of both the actor's mind and body for 'engagement in doing generates certain experiences, meanings and awareness' (p.36). These are deeply internalised practices, which would again presuppose the engagement of feelings and emotions.

A similar view of knowledge is reinforced in the data when Marvin, for example, draws a distinction between university education and vocational theatre schools. According to Marvin his drama school is concerned with "the quality of teaching, the imaginative work and the capacity to inspire and liberate young actors which is critical, not academic awards" (15-18:174). He goes on to suggest "universities are concerned with the life of the mind and are led by intellectual enquiry" (20-22:174). These dichotomies might not, however, be so clearly separated. Lave & Wenger (1991) argue that the setting apart of these two kinds of knowledge is problematic if not illogical:

[...] sequestering when it is institutionalised is that it encourages a folk epistemology of dichotomies, for instance, between "abstract" and "concrete" knowledge. These categories do not reside in the world as distinct forms of knowledge, nor do they reflect some putative hierarchy of forms of knowledge among practitioners. (p.104)

Whilst Lave & Wenger point to this false hierarchy of knowing as either theoretical or practical, the informants in this study reveal a strong acceptance of this separation. Identified in this report are various knowledge types (Table 7.1) which can be approximately divided as either: theoretical [speculative ways of knowing] or practical [craft-based ways of knowing]. Whilst the informants largely demonstrate and advocate practical or craft-based ways of knowing, they do to some extent also rely
upon theoretical or speculative ways of knowing which have generally been passed on through a narrative mode (Bruner, 1986). Such polarisation of meanings appears to derive from the informants' relationship to their own past experiences: drama school experience [training-related], industry experience [work-related] and their artistic/creative experience [aesthetic-related]. For example, these are represented in their responses as 'inspiring versus teaching'; 'conservatoire versus university'; 'artist versus academic'; 'systematic versus eclectic'; 'trust versus scepticism'; and 'experiential versus intellectual'.

However Broudy (1977) introduces the notion of 'knowledge-with' which is particularly useful in this research as it provides a framework for acknowledging implicit knowing. 'Knowledge-with furnishes a context within which a particular situation is perceived, interpreted, and judged' (Broudy, 1977:12). Broudy identified that 'given the importance of context for cognition, imagination, judgement, and decision, there is still much that is not known about the epistemology, psychology, and the pedagogy of contextual knowing or knowing-with' (p.13). The findings of this report concur with Broudy and advance such understanding of how meaning and knowledge are seen in relation to acting tutor expertise across the thirteen informants.

Table 7.1 Theoretical & Practical Ways of Knowing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Speculative Ways of Knowing</th>
<th>Practical Craft-based Ways of Knowing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Propositional</td>
<td>Experiential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disembodied practices</td>
<td>Embodied practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artform-based</td>
<td>Craft-based</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Review of literature (Ch.2) & Informants' interview data (Ch. 4,5,&6)
Acting tutors in this report talk about their practice in terms of what is experientially learnt, and through my questioning they attempt to reveal to me [as a researcher] what they can of this knowledge. What the acting tutors articulate and how they convey meaning is of particular interest to this research. However, inherent difficulty is encountered when asking tutors to articulate their practice since much of what is known to them remains largely inert or tacit. Therefore most tutors in this study find it difficult to critically discuss in detail the pedagogy of their practice.

It is useful to be reminded that Polanyi (1983 [1966]) found that not all meanings can be made explicit through language. That is, some knowledge always remains tacit. By way of caution, it is essential to note that Polanyi argues that we legitimatise the importance of language in constructing and communicating meaning to others. Because a great deal of acting tutor knowledge sought to be represented in this study remains tacit and may not be readily discussible, it does not necessarily relegate those acting tutors to the realms of being poor practitioners. However this does raise questions of teaching and learning efficiency and its ability to be reproduced. This is a point that will be explored in 7.5 as an implication of this research. In contrast, much educational thought views knowledge as 'empirical' or 'analytical' and has traditionally placed a relatively low value on experiential knowledge (Elbaz, 1983). This is exemplified in the report when Marvin, for example, suggests that "so much of this business depends on intuition" (1-2:186). The way in which the acting tutors may view their teaching and the teaching of others will as a consequence ultimately shape their own personal teaching philosophy.

As mentioned, the data suggest that much of an actor's synnoetic knowledge is usually in a tacit form. This report indicates that when these actors/directors made the transition to become acting tutors, they appear to continue to operate with this same kind of tacit understanding. A community of practice is therefore built around notions of tacit meaning (Polanyi, 1958 [1966]). Essentially the acting tutors in this report talk about their practice synnoetically, in terms of their own experiential learning. For instance, the majority of tutors refer back to their own drama school training when discussing and justifying their own practice. There remains little doubt that many tutors are deeply and profoundly affected and influenced by their own training. Many
tutors feel that they carry on the legacy of that training. Paul and Gillian, for example, describe the great weight of responsibility in this regard. In similar ways the informants referred to past artistic and other work experiences to legitimise their knowing.

The findings suggest that as this community of actors seeks to reproduce itself through the institutionalised training process, an accepted dialectic will develop. It appears from the research that in this community of practice the agreed ways of communicating tacit meaning are through artefactual, metaphorical and anecdotal ways. For example, the data reveal uses of symbolic metaphors, references to grand styles, heroic archetypes and senses of the aesthetic. The informants are content to use explicit or declarative modes when making references to what I term 'heroic archetypes' and 'grand styles' [e.g. Stanislavsky and The method]. The findings show that the tutors subscribe to [or dismiss] these influential people in the field and their theories or 'philosophies' of acting. However, the informants only ever articulate general understandings of these approaches through a narrative mode.

The majority of informants had digested the orthodoxy of internalised/psychological approaches, based particularly on their own understanding derived from the work of Stanislavsky (1980 [1936]). Much of what the tutors reveal is an eclectic mix of approaches which have become meaningful to them in their own acting and now in their own teaching. Anecdotal and metaphoric references appear to allow these tutors ways of giving examples of their practice rather than discussing detailed theoretical [declarative] constructs that might underpin their teaching practice. Sam's reference to "learning by anecdote" is a clearly articulated observation of one particular teaching style employed.

Throughout the training process the tutors appear to have co-constructed meanings, which is evidenced across all the cases, by the similarity in ways the tutors speak about actor training. Originally, as actors or directors, they would construct meaning during their own artistic careers. On becoming tutors with new and differing sets of responsibilities they would co-construct meaning between their art, their teaching and also between each other. These meanings are revealed as being contextual. Situated
learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) conceptually explores the relationship between learning and the situation in which it occurs. Learning is therefore seen as a process that takes place within a participation framework. Balk (1991) writes:

Performers must come to know the information and instructions through direct and persistent experience with them. [...] The next step is interaction with others in the field – including teachers, directors, and colleagues, as well as audiences in general – for support, guidance, and [if appropriate] realignment with purpose. (p.164)

Just as actors move through this trajectory of experience, so too it seems, that the acting tutors in this research replicate these patterns of knowing. Similarly, this report supports Lave & Wenger's (1991) view that learning is not merely located in someone's head, but is found in the increased participant access to expertise. However, this report goes further to examine those conceptions that are in the heads of the informants in terms of how they actually know about their practice.

From these findings, the report concludes that the knowledge structures inherent in drama school tutoring are developed through meanings of acting and actor training that were largely tacit and synnoetic – direct, personal, and experiential. Whilst these meanings were often difficult to communicate, they were expressed narratively and used frameworks of 'knowledge-with'. This has resulted in a confluence of understanding amongst the informants, creating commonly accepted polarisations of meanings [e.g. teaching versus inspiring; artist versus academic]. Particular meanings have become entrenched in the hegemony of actor training, referred to in this report as 'craft-based ways of knowing'. Further, the informant responses suggest that these meanings have perpetuated within these drama schools and developed into seemingly anti-pedagogical tutor objectives, resulting in at least the tacit acceptance, that [in the traditional understanding of teaching] acting cannot be taught.

7.4 Implications for theory

Some of the possible implications for theory include an understanding that not only is knowledge not one-dimensional but that difficult-to-communicate meanings play a significant part in the practice of actor training. The research findings acknowledge
that individuals understand experiences and construct meanings differently, and communicate these meanings differently. This report advances Zarrilli's (2001) identification of pragmatic/intuitive knowledges 'for' and 'in' that exist in acting. Identified in the informant interviews is also a 'knowledge-with' (Broudy, 1977). Further, the ways the acting tutors in this study understand their practices reveal the important influence of meanings derived through a community of practice. The research findings suggest ten key theoretical propositions. These are summarised as follows:

- The ability to act well is believed to be based on natural talent.
- 'Internal and empathetic acting' [e.g. Stanislavsky] substantially influences current acting methodology.
- Acting is known *synnoetically* and is developed through multiple and imprecise ways.
- The training of actors is also known *synnoetically* and is difficult to communicate.
- Actor training is reliant upon the personal qualities of the tutor [e.g. "passion" and "inspirational"] and other 'quasi-pedagogical' constructs.
- The kind of *knowing* to be an acting tutor may be different from the kind of *knowing* that one needs to be an actor.
- Developed over time through a history of practice are shared *craft-based ways of knowing* of what acting is and how actor training should proceed.
- The acting tutors had brought their own *synnoetic* meanings to their drama school context, which have developed over time into the shared mixture of seemingly anti-pedagogical tutor objectives.
- The kind of knowing about actor training is difficult to be understood, learnt or passed on when it remains in tacit form.
- Differences in the ways the acting tutors construct meaning may be due to differences in their historically derived frameworks or contexts against which they construct meaning through their ‘knowledge-with’.

Zarrilli's (2001) calls for us to 'always engage the open-ended dialogical question of how our knowledges 'about', 'for', and 'in' continuously inform each other, and are not simplistically dichotomised' (p.44). The theory here identifies the tension between the
consolidation of ways of constructing meaning into automated ways of thinking and practising and understanding pedagogy.

### 7.5 Implications for policy and practice

The issue of accreditation [or recognition] for tutors is raised during the data gathering process. The purpose of this report is not to investigate the need for accreditation *per se*. However it is a clear implication for effective vocational training that the quality of tutor practice in our drama schools should be given closer attention. The essential credentials for coaching beginning actors are constantly repeated in the data to be largely based on the experience of having once been [or continuing to be] an actor. How practice can be informed by *explicit* understandings of pedagogy remains in question. Without explicit education in this regard, tutor practice remains vulnerable to 'hit or miss' approaches. Without an explicitly articulated pedagogy it would appear to be difficult to efficiently pass on a coherent body of teaching knowledge or for that matter devise ways to improve upon it.

When meaning is known *syntoetically*, explanations of pedagogy may become difficult to articulate and are likely to be seen by the acting tutor as irrelevant in their pursuit of creative endeavour. However, as acting tutors learn to discuss their practice in explicit and meaningful ways, models such as *reflective practice* (Schön, 1983) may become more prevalent. O'Mara (1999) writes in her doctoral research that reflective practice has led her 'to interrupt some of [her] patterns of behaviour, particularly actions that are inconsistent with [her] beliefs' (p.319). She continues by arguing that 'the value of this as a practitioner cannot be underestimated' (p.319). Testimonials such as this give rise to the essential value reflective practice has for processes associated with improving one's own professional practice. Reflective practitioner models may provide ways for acting tutors to communicate and think about their experiences in more organised ways.

A further implication of this research might be to suggest a paradigm shift from traditional master-apprentice type models to newer apprenticeship models that allow for greater *co-participation* with working actors, and training models that are more
clearly articulated. We may need to find places where meaning is constructed in more consequential ways, and where actors are allowed to "fail" – that is experiment and develop their art and craft as once they could when employment opportunities were more prevalent. Structuralist views of learning can be further challenged by suggesting that learning is a way of being in the social world, not a way of coming to know about it (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The acting tutors in this research appear to have digested and even reinterpreted various theories of acting concerning the mind and body, but demonstrate very little theoretical knowledge about training and education processes. What is known about acting and actor training is known through familiarity, gained by personal insight, experience or rapport. Brestoff (1995) suggests that actor training is highly teacher-dependent, however 'most teachers have the information about acting but not many are greatly gifted at communicating it' (p.198). The kinds of meaning the tutors in this study seek to communicate and aim to make legitimate are those that exist through experience – that it is essential to have acted before one can teach acting. What actually is gained through experience needs to be harnessed and made more readily available to others. It would seem essential that tutor education be formalised where close attention is given to more informed teaching practices.

Institutions and appropriate government bodies would be well advised to respond to what appears to be a long overdue need to adequately equip actors who move into actor training as tutors. Most informants in this study describe finding themselves "thrown in the deep end", unsupported and learning to teach on the job. How experienced tutors assist inexperienced tutors is revealed in this study to be haphazard with little or no evidence of drama schools having formal mentoring structures in place. Much of the mentoring, if it exists at all, is initiated informally by the tutors themselves. Formalised mentoring schemes should be instigated and made an essential part of a new tutor's inculcation into their new drama school. New staff should be supported in this way for at least the first twelve months.

All Heads of Acting expressed the tension existing between their administrative duties and their teaching and/or directing responsibilities. Drama schools might need to
consider separating these roles. Another consideration for drama schools should be the concern that these Heads of Acting expressed regarding how over-worked they felt. Redefining this role so as to relieve them of either their administrative responsibilities or teaching/directing may rectify this situation.

The value of the institutionalisation of actor training should be carefully examined in the light of new ways of participation such as 'co-participation' proposed by Lave & Wenger (1991). Partnerships with theatre companies may offer exciting and meaningful possibilities for drama schools. Further, this research elucidates the informants' united view that calls into serious question the legitimacy and value of the academicisation of acting, particularly when this is not the way acting is understood by many of its participants.

7.6 Limitations

In addressing the question of how acting tutors characterise their teaching practice, the research addresses three areas for investigation beginning with the emergent themes from the data. It is from these themes that we are able to claim what is significant to the tutors themselves rather than the researcher alone. It is however important to recognise that whilst the questions asked do not seek to limit the informants' answers they do act to frame and shape their answers to some extent. For instance, it is now clear that some issues would not have emerged through a more general discussion of actor training had I not specifically raised them through my own questioning. This is evident in my attempt to address particular notions of pedagogy with the informants. Therefore if one accepts the premise that acting cannot be taught, then it is difficult to use teaching frameworks such as pedagogical theories. In order to honour what the research was telling me, it was essential for me to move more specifically to literature on training than education alone.

I soon became aware that I was asking actor trainers to talk reflectively when they may not be by instinct reflective themselves. However, in gathering the data, particular care was taken to allow for as much scope as possible in asking the tutors to freely discuss
their practice. In an attempt to ground the data in these responses and capture their voices, I seek where practicable to report the findings in the words of the participants themselves. This at times leads to some lengthy responses. However the way in which the informants tell their stories is important to hear as this frequently adds richer insights into the ways the informants apprehend synnoetic meaning.

Another possible limitation of this research is that we never get to go inside these tutors' studio spaces. It would have been valuable to observe the tutors at work with their students in order to understand more completely their approaches to training. This may have served to validate what the informants identified during their interviews. It may have also served to raise issues about the training processes that were not identified by the informants themselves. However, I am reminded that this report did not intend to validate teaching models. Rather, it was the intention to examine the themes and meanings extant in the tutors' responses.

A further limitation was raised in the process that allowed the informants to re-visit the transcript of the interview. Some of what the tutors edited from the interview transcripts may have contributed more candour to the interview data. For example the interview from the informant who withdrew from the study would have revealed with considerable poignancy the understandings and difficulties of one acting tutor in his attempt to articulate his own practice and possibly the difficulties in negotiating the politics of his setting.

Further it would have been desirable for the informants to have read the findings of the research and recorded their responses. This would have served to further validate the findings and add the potential to discover additional findings. The limitations of time, resources, and the ability to maintain contact with the all the informants have not made this practical or possible.

Whilst it is not so much a limitation as a caution, it is possible that the tentative theory presented here may apply in different ways to actor training in other cultures. However I again remind myself of the intent of this research that specifically confines it to Australian and English drama school informants.
7.7 Further research

The challenge for the field of institutionalised actor training is to investigate and develop a cognisance of the interactions between its participants – tutors and students, tutors and tutors, and tutors and principals/directors. The practice of acting tutors could be further researched by observing acting classes and through interviews with acting students. Research undertaken by the tutors themselves should also be encouraged. Elbaz (1983) suggests that because teachers may be unaware of the value of their own knowledge 'there is little encouragement for teachers to view themselves as originators of knowledge' (p.11). As reflected in the data, these drama school practitioners see themselves as being quite separate and removed from theoreticians or academics. To reduce this unhelpful chasm, acting tutors also need to be viewed as originators of knowledge where their studios can become rich sites for teacher-research or practitioner-research.

For the majority of the informants in this study, universities are not seen as comfortable or desirable places in which to operate a drama school. To explore this further, a comparative study of the approaches of acting lecturers in universities, as opposed to the tutors in drama schools, may or may not reveal a basis for such claims of difference.

Whilst this study focuses on the tutors from drama schools in Australia and England, further research could investigate the practices of acting tutors in drama schools from other cultures. A comparative study of the approaches of tutors from diverse cultures could assist in developing further understanding of tutors in drama schools and how this might be culturally determined.

In addition to the issues already raised in the study itself, there are some further questions that emerge:

- How might tutors [as 'masters' of the art and craft of acting] change if they become seen as co-participants and co-learners?
How might actor training move from invariant structures of training to more adaptive structures?

How might acting tutors be better prepared for their role in institutionalised actor training contexts?

How well trained or educated should actors be?

Can training prepare for the unknown or is training only part of the equation?

To what extent can existing education or training models provide tutors with models of best practice?

What does it mean to have expert knowledge of acting and/or actor training and how these can be made portable and transferable?

7.8 The Final Word

Nigel Rideout provides this eloquent plea in the quest to find and retain "remarkable teachers":

I'll presume to say what I believe drama schools should really be about: of course they should offer an efficient technical training – [...] of course they should have teachers really able to help aspiring actors to act well – this is more difficult and extremely rare at present, but possible. However, above and beyond this, drama schools should be places that can give their students an appreciation of the art of acting as part of all art, part of history, and part of man's deepest needs and aspirations – a real artistic philosophy that will carry the graduate actor cheerfully through some of the worst horrors of 'the business'. This sense of 'connecting' – with the past, with Europe and the world, with other arts and artists and with the future can only be transmitted by remarkable teachers. We must find them, we must pay them, and we must see that they have the best drama students in Britain to work with. (1995:70)

This research in part seeks to further understand what it means to be an expert or a "remarkable teacher" and how acting tutors might begin to also embark upon this quest for themselves as reflective practitioners. It is difficult to eliminate less effective training practices when potentially the situation is heavily masked by drama schools who simply take the 'best' or 'most gifted' students. Additionally, tutors must surely grapple with questions of how to adequately prepare students for a changing profession if their function is actually vocational preparation. The profession that the tutor left say fifteen years ago may not be the same as it is today. The training that the tutor received
thirty years ago may not be adequate for the changing profession in the twenty-first century. As employment opportunity seriously wanes and the number of actors available increases, the competitive demand for a breadth of skills, versatility and professionalism increases.

Tutors should feel encouraged to challenge what it is they know, to reflect upon this knowledge and maintain an on-going conversation between what they [and others] know and their own daily practices. The future of actor training is surely full of potential as new possibilities for models of training are discovered [and/or re-discovered] and put into place. The largest challenge for actor training may still lie in the tension between the consolidation of ways of constructing meaning into automated craft-based ways of knowing while developing explicit and conscious control over the various but inter-related ways in which meaning can be [co]constructed by its participants.
"When I read a book I seem to read it with my eyes only, but now and then I come across a passage, perhaps only a phrase, which has a meaning for me, and it becomes part of me." – W. Somerset Maugham (Of Human Bondage)
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Characterising Actor Trainers’ Understanding

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Characterising Actor Trainers’ Understanding


Rose Bruford College (not dated) Rose Bruford College Website. Retrieved on March 7, 2002 from http://www.bruford.ac.uk


"Much learning does not teach understanding."
– Heraclitus, 540 BC - 480 BC (On the Universe)
APPENDIX A

Drama School Nomenclature

Drama schools have adopted various historically derived titles. The research in this report has not revealed any particular significance of these titles in relation to their models. Whilst drama schools may use titles such as ‘academy’, ‘institute’ or ‘school’, they adopt a ‘conservatoire’ model of delivery. The names of the drama schools are likely to have resulted from the popularity of the terms at the time of their inception.

The "Academy"

An academy refers to a society of learned persons organised to advance science, art, literature, music, or some other cultural or intellectual area of endeavour. The Encyclopaedia Britannica tells us that the word academy is derived from the name of an olive grove outside ancient Athens where it is believed Plato taught philosophy. Gradually the term acquired the general meaning of a higher school. At the close of the European Middle Ages, learned societies called academies began to be formed in Italy. By the start of the 18th Century most European countries had scientific and literary academies, and these were followed by fine-arts academies. One of the most prominent was England’s Royal Academy of Arts, founded in London in 1768 by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Most fine-arts academies were closely connected with teaching functions and thus differed from earlier academies. Academies of music, social sciences, medicine, mining, and agriculture also began to appear from the 18th Century on. The foundation of academies continued throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries. The academies’ influence was greatest during the 17th and 18th Centuries but declined during the 19th because of their tendency to resist new and unorthodox developments in science and culture.

The term academy is also often used to designate a secondary school or college in which specialist subjects are taught, for example, fine arts, acting, music, or business. The academy gives rise to an academic model that suggests competitiveness,
knowledge, quality teaching and learning. Implicit in this model is the cultivation of excellence. The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts [WAAPA], Perth; Queensland University of Technology's Academy of Arts [now the Creative Industries Faculty], the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art [LAMDA], and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art [RADA], London, all share reputations of excellence and some indeed an international reputation.

The "Institute"
Derived from the Latin meaning 'set up' we have the concept of a formal administrative structure that is composed of rules, beliefs and practices. The institute is driven by a belief that a set of activities leads to a desired goal, and consists of rules to be observed in order to be considered legitimate (Meyer & Scott, 1992). Institutes develop homogeneity and conformity (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). The general expectation for high profile actor training institutions would be that any outcomes are quality assured. The National Institute of Dramatic Art [NIDA], Sydney, enjoys a reputation for producing highly skilled actors in Australia.

The "School"
"School" suggests discipline, to 'bring under control, train or accustom' as the Oxford dictionary defines it. The term "school" is usually applied to places of learning for children or branch of study at university. The dictionary further defines a school as 'a group of thinkers or artists or the like with common inspiration or principles or methods or characteristics.' The term appears to suit many drama schools as places to learn the craft of acting, its skills and disciplines.

The term 'drama school' has once again become a fashionable way to refer the places where actors train. The use of the term 'drama' adds to the confusion when the drama in education movement in schools and universities has become particularly developed in using drama as a learning medium. Perhaps the term 'drama' carries more weight and credibility than the term 'acting'?
The Central School of Speech and Drama in London, for example, is named to take a 'central' or moderate philosophical position, not to 'reflect a single educational model' (CSSD, 2001). The Victorian College of the Arts [VCA] is located in Melbourne, Australia and whilst adopts the name "college" it divides itself into "schools".

The "Conservatoire"

This is a late 18th Century concept, which the Encarta Encyclopaedia tells us is a French term, borrowed from the Italian conservatorio, which was originally a home for orphans that provided an education in music. A conservatory is now given to refer to an advanced music or drama school where these disciplines are taught to a professional standard. The underlying principle is that of conservation, to protect the culture from harm or loss. The approach is conservative in the sense that techniques for acting are refined and reduced to a core of necessary skills. Many actor-training institutions adopt the conservatoire model whether or not they formally take this name.

In 1962, directors John Blatchley, Christopher Fettes and Yat Malmgren founded the Drama Centre, in London, which serves as a particular example of a conservatoire although called a "centre". This drama school is now under the administrative umbrella of Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design and The London Institute. The Drama Centre calls itself 'The European school at the heart of London'. Uniquely, it maintains a belief in a systematic training which 'in the early days its essentially methodological approach distinguished it from all its rivals' (Drama Centre London, 2002-2003:8). This approach was born out of four contributions to the development of European theatre: The Stanislavski Method including the approaches of Lee Strasberg, Uta Hagen and Herbert Bergof; German Expressionism and Rudolf Laban [whose ideas influenced Michael Chekhov a another forefather of Method acting in the USA]; Copeau and the Rediscovery of the French Classical Heritage; and Theatre Workshop such as Joan Littlewood's eclectic approach that fused together the contributions of Stanislavski, Brecht and Laban. Overall, the Drama Centre claims to 'correct the erroneous notion…that serious study of the actor's art commences with the early years of the Twentieth Century' (Drama Centre London, 2002-2003:8).
University Drama & Other Acting Schools

There are indeed a plethora of other acting schools, stage schools and university programmes to be found in Australia and England graduating more would-be actors than the industry could ever hope to employ. Preliminary investigations reveal approximately 46 courses are offered in acting/theatre within Australia alone, however not all claim to be principally concerned with training actors, but all appear to some extent to be doing so. There are different emphases between institutions and indeed many of providers do not claim to train actors despite offering acting classes. The relationship between institutions is not always harmonious either:

In many universities there is an open hostility to so-called Method acting, although they will often have teachers trained in the various versions of the Stanislavski system Colleges and universities incorporate methods taken from many sources...Each training institution has its own unique offerings and emphases. (Brestoff, 1995:xiii)

In order to limit the scope of the research, this study will focus its attention upon that vocational preparation of actors. For these purposes, this is limited to the 'elite' drama schools that see their prime function dedicated to training those who wish to enter the professional theatre/film/television industry as actors. 'Elite' drama schools have been chosen so as to investigate the tutor practices that have been afforded the most prominence. This study does not seek to endorse those reputations nor to infer that the practices of other providers are illegitimate or by implication inferior.

Note: Generally all major drama schools in Australia and England are now located within university structures and offer university accredited degrees.
APPENDIX B

Information Sheet

The participant should retain the sheet for future reference or to provide future reference for the researcher or Griffith University. The participant should make a complete report of anything that happens in the research.

Project Title:
Best Practice as Characterised by Internship in Australian & English Actor Training Institutions

Researcher:
Rex W. Prior
Centre for Applied Theatre Research
School of Vocational, Technology & Arts Education
Contact details: Tel. (07) 3375-5888
Email: rwp@txtbhq.unix.edu.au

This is a study towards the fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Professor John O'Toole who holds a distinguished career in Drama Education and is the Director of the Centre for Applied Theatre Research at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, supervises the project. Should you have any comments, Professor O'Toole can be contacted via email:
JOOTOOLE@steadybyte.com.au

Project Summary:
The study is principally based upon identifying perceptions of tutors and other relevant persons in characterising 'best practice' in actor training facilities in Australia and England. Participants from a number of sites will be interviewed to form part of this study. The information gathered may be used directly in the researcher's thesis. This is an important study drawing in leading actor training institutions. The study gives new insights into how the results may help inform our understanding of the actors training and practice.

Participants in the study are voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you may become entitled. You may withdraw at any time without penalty or without providing an explanation. Confidentiality of names and to the case studies will be maintained by not referring to them in detail, replacing them with pseudonyms. Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research project is conducted, should it in the first instance be given to the supervisor, or if an independent person is preferred, either:
The University's Research Ethics Officer, Office for Research, Box 50, Griffith University, Nathan, Qld 4111 Australia, telephone (07) 3375-6041.
The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Administration), Box 50, Griffith University, Nathan, Qld 4111 Australia, telephone (07) 3210-9743.

Thank you for your valuable assistance with this research project.

Yours sincerely,

Rex W. Prior
Centre for Applied Theatre Research
Griffith University, Brisbane

Appendices page 5
CONSENT FORM

Please read the information sheet carefully and ask any question which you might have. The consent form is to be retained by the researcher not the participant.

**Project Title:**
Best Practice as Characterised by Tutors in Australian & English Actor Training Institutions

**Project Summary:**
The study is principally based upon the identified perceptions of tutors and other relevant persons in characterising best practice in actor training facilities in Australia and England. Participants from a number of sites will be interviewed to form part of this study. The information gathered may be used directly in the researcher's thesis. Identifying material will not be used publicly except with your express permission. All transcripts and quotes will be recorded anonymously. This is an important study into tutoring in leading actor-training institutions. The study gives voice to tutors and the results may assist inform our understanding of the tutor's practice.

**Information to the participant:**
In signing this consent form, I understand that I am not required to participate in this research project if I do not wish to do so and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without needing to explain my reasons for withdrawing. No loss of benefit or treatment will occur as a result of my withdrawal nor penalty be incurred.

Feedback will be provided to the participants involved in the study upon request, unless there are good reasons why this is not appropriate.

All reasonable measures will be taken in order to protect the individual participant's confidentiality where required.

**Please read carefully and sign the statement below:**

I _________________________________

Participant's name

I have read the information sheet and consent form. I agree to participate in this study investigating Best Practice as Characterised by Tutors in Australian & English Actor Training Institutions and give my consent freely. I understand that the study will be carried out as described in the information statement, a copy of which I have retained. I realise that whether or not I decide to participate in this study and will not affect my fair dealings with the researcher. I also realise that I can withdraw from the study at any time and that I do not have to give any reasons for withdrawing. I have had all questions answered to my satisfaction.

**Signatures:**

.................................................. .................................. Date

Participant

.................................................. .................................. Date

Investigator

Gold Coast, Logan, Mt Gravatt, Nathan, South Bank
APPENDIX D

Interview Questions for Head of Acting & Tutors

1. When were you first employed by this institution?
2. Why do you believe you were appointed?
3. What is your background [education & prior experience]?
4. How were you inculcated into this institution's environment? i.e. Did you have a Mentor when you first commenced tutoring?
5. What guidance did you receive from your employer?
6. In hindsight, what guidance would you have found beneficial?
7. How did you learn to become a tutor?
8. What beliefs underpin your teaching practice?
9. What are the qualities of an effective tutor?
10. How is your performance monitored by the institution?
11. What impact does this institution have upon your own teaching?
12. Can you concisely articulate the aims/objectives of this institution?
13. How could your employee assist your role within this institution?
14. How could you assist in-coming staff to their new position?
15. What do you want to give your students?
16. What do you want your students to take away from their experience with you?
17. What would you like to see the graduates take away from the institution?
18. What is the single most important thing you want your students to learn?
19. Do you teach for unity or diversity?
20. Which key points, then, characterise tutor's best practice?
21. How would you describe yourself [educator, trainer, instructor, teacher, tutor]?
22. What areas could you develop in your teaching to give stronger input to students?
23. Are there any other questions you think I should have asked or anything else you would like to add?
APPENDIX E

Interview Questions for the Principal/Director

1. What is your educational and employment background?
2. Would you in your own words articulate this institution's mission statement?
3. Would you outline the institution's main aims and objects?
4. Are there any specific outcomes as set-down by this institution? If so, what are they?
5. What do you expect your graduates will take away from the institution? Why is this significant?
6. How do you select tutors for employment?
7. What makes an effective tutor?
8. How do you monitor the effectiveness of tutors?
9. What guidance do you give your tutors?
10. How do you assist in-coming tutors? i.e. Do you have a mentor scheme?
11. What professional development opportunities exist for tutors?
12. Do you believe that certification for tutors will be in any way beneficial?