Shakespeare Through Stanislavski: Creating an Accessible Toolkit for Performing Shakespeare

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Abstract

In the United Kingdom, current approaches to teaching learners to perform Shakespeare have faced criticism and calls for reform due to their reliance on verbal reasoning. At present the dominant approaches in Further and Higher Education engage learners in extensive textual analysis as the primary means of encountering the text. This later progresses to the development of character and performance based on learners understanding of the text's rhythm, form, structure and literary devises such as metaphor and simile. These text-first approaches to performing Shakespeare can create accessibility issues for learners, especially those from non-academic backgrounds. Through my Practice as Research, I have developed The Shakespeare Toolkit, a new and accessible pedagogy for engaging with Shakespeare's plays rooted in a practice first, character-driven approach to developing performances which meet the demands of the verse drama.

To address the inherent issues in text-first approaches to working with Shakespeare's plays, this Practice as Research PhD study adapts and combines aspects of Stanislavski's 'system' with Elizabethan acting practices and First Folio technique to create a novel, practice first approach to performing – and understanding – Shakespeare's text. This was achieved through the development, application, and refinement of twenty exercises, or 'tools', to approach and interpret Shakespeare's plays by means of a character-driven, practice-centric methodology – The Shakespeare Toolkit. These tools can be used holistically in succession as a complete 'toolkit' in order to stage a production of Shakespeare's text with actors and/or acting students or can be individually incorporated with other practices.

This research will provide those facilitating acting classes or directing Shakespeare in the United Kingdom with a new means of approaching the plays through practice and character. In doing so, creating a more accessible means for learners and professional actors to engage with Shakespeare's writing performatively.

I certify that this thesis and the research to which it refers is the product of my own work, and that any ideas or quotations from the work of other people, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices of the discipline.

- *Benjamin Archer, January 2024*

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Preface

This thesis is accompanied by twenty instructional videos explaining the 'tools' developed as the result of my Practice as Research, these are available via the website www.shakespeare-toolkit.co.uk

I would advise readers of this thesis to begin by watching these instructional videos to provide a context for the discussion of the tools development and theoretical underpinning which follows in this thesis.

Throughout the thesis excerpts from the practical workshops and rehearsals utilised to develop the toolkit are provided via Quick Response codes and corresponding website links, these are all hosted on the website https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site

The final performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, rehearsed using my accessible toolkit, is available via the website https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/A-Midsummer-Nights-Dream-Performance-2022

I would advise watching this prior to reading Chapter Four, to provide an understanding of what was achieved through this phase of my research.

Introduction

0.1 Research Overview

The aim of my research was to create a character-driven approach to performing Shakespeare that is more accessible than current methodologies and practices utilised in twenty-first century Britain. This led to the creation of a 'toolkit' designed for use in actor training in both Further and Higher Education. Its applications as a rehearsal methodology also support its potential for use in professional theatre. By situating the toolkit in actor training, I am positioning it for use in a teaching environment where the aim is 'to produce technically knowing, investigative, flexible, responsive, innovative performers' (Freeman, 2019: 8). This is accomplished by learning through doing and the development of vocal, mental, physical and textual skills (Kruse, 2019: 159).

Within pedagogical practices accessibility constitutes part of inclusive learning and teaching, its definitions in this context are wide and varied (Addy *et al*., 2021). When I began my research in 2019 my definition of accessibility for the toolkit was rooted in providing a means of engaging with the demands of Shakespeare's text which was not centred on significant intellectual dissection of the script through verbal reasoning, whilst utilising a vocabulary of acting techniques which was identifiable to students (learners) from Further and Higher Education. In the following chapters of this thesis, when referring to accessibility this is the lens through which I am assessing the toolkit. I would also like to acknowledge that within the context of actor training both Stanislavsky and Shakespeare can create barriers to inclusion, Stanislavski's 'system' has become Westernised and white-centred within its teaching in Britain (Moschkovich, 2023: 49), and expectations for performing Shakespeare in the United Kingdom encourage 'a certain ideology: our intellectual response to the text is of primary importance. Trust the brain more than the body… this ideal of trusting the brain over the body is a particularly white, Western and patriarchal ideal' (Cooney, 2023, 138). Due to the time limitations of my PhD and my access to participants within the timeframe, those who engaged with my

research were typically white, neurotypical females whose home language was English, which further limits my definition of accessibility in relation to my toolkit.

I have chosen to use the term ‘toolkit’ to describe my approach for the same reason Bella Merlin chose to title her book *The Complete Stanislavski Toolkit* (2014). As 'By referring here to a 'toolkit', rather than a 'system' or a 'method' anyone can pick it up and use it' (Merlin, 2014: 8). With accessibility being at the forefront of my research, this aligned with my intentions of this new approach to training and performance. The terms ‘tools’ and ‘toolkit’ are also prevalent within actor training and its supporting material. Publications like Dee Cannon’s (2021) *In-Depth Acting (The Actors Toolkit)* and Scott Illingworth’s (2020) *Exercises for Embodied Actors: Tools for Physical Actioning.* The notion of a toolkit has also become prevalent within the wider learning and teaching practices for Higher Education and featured in the title for Phil Race’s (2019) *The Lecturers Toolkit: A Practical Guide to Assessment, Learning and Teaching*. In 2022, academic publishers Bloomsbury also grouped together a series of publications on voice, text, and movement which they have called ‘The Actors Toolkit’ (Bloomsbury, 2022). The term toolkit therefore not only implies, as Merlin states, that ‘anyone can pick it up and use it’ (Merlin, 2014: 8), but is also in keeping with current conventions for describing approaches to acting, actor training and pedagogy.

My toolkit was developed through a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology where ‘knowledge results from practitioner agency and/or reflection and/or research in practice’ (Maxwell, 2019: 26). Knowledge was generated from my agency as a practitioner, in the context of the development and application of tools through pedagogical practice. To do so required both my reflection on the development of the specific tools as well as the participants’ experience of utilising these through continual feedback and observation. My research methodology utilised an Action Research framework as this is considered to be the most effective means of researching pedagogical practice (McNiff and Whitehead, 2012: 2). My action research model is outlined in this introduction under the heading ‘PaR Methodology’. Throughout this thesis, there will be both Quick Response (QR) Codes and accompanying hyperlinked web addresses which lead the reader to video evidence of the practice research, demonstrating aspects of the analysed data. The combination of both a QR code and hyperlink for each is to aid

accessibility within the thesis, allowing the reader to choose how they access the supporting material. Alternatively, these can be accessed via the website: https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site

My PaR project resulted in the creation of twenty 'tools' (exercises) which can be utilised towards an original, character-driven approach to performing Shakespeare. These will be referred to as *the toolkit* throughout this thesis. The tools developed have proven their utility when used individually, but were designed to be utilised as part of an entire methodology based on the principles of scaffolding learning; a pedagogical approach whereby a 'teacher's temporary support helps pupils to perform a task they cannot complete by themselves and that is intended to bring pupils gradually to a state of competence in which they can complete a similar task independently' (Smit *et al*., 2012: 817). The design of my toolkit works from this principle, whereby the initial tools require greater support from the person facilitating the delivery of the toolkit; as the exercises develop, those utilising them begin to take more responsibility for the development of their performance. Initially, the facilitator serves a significant role in preparing the materials required for the application of the toolkit. As each tool is used in conjunction with the previous, it helps facilitate the learner to gradually develop a competence for performing Shakespeare.

The toolkit evolved over two hundred hours of workshops and rehearsals, guided by feedback from participants and my observations. My findings support the toolkit's accessibility in comparison to current approaches. When comparing it to the approaches one participant had previously encountered, he stated that 'it feels more like training to be an actor. I've been given Shakespeare scripts, and it is like, we are now going to sit down in a room and write for three hours, like why?' (Archer, 2023: Level5WS1). This was followed by a comment from another participant that 'it gives you an easier way to get into the text if you're not familiar beforehand and understand what's actually going on' (Archer, 2023: Level5WS1).The final exercises which comprise the approach are presented in instructional videos which can be accessed online via the website www.shakespeare-toolkit.co.uk or by following the QR code below:

The need for this research is based upon current discourse within the actor training community across Britain, where – as Hay and Dixon state – there is a belief that:

> acting students do not always find it easy to work with these [Shakespearean] texts. If efforts are to be made to make Early Modern drama engaging and useful for actors in training, considering a range of alternative approaches to the plays will be essential (Hay and Dixon, 2020: 45).

This perception of the challenges faced by acting students (learners), and the need to address it, is a view solidified by my own experience and the motivation behind this research. From a young age my mother and grandfather had instilled in me a profound love of words and wordplay. As such, when I first encountered Shakespeare at secondary school, it fuelled my passion to pursue a career in acting - my ambition being to work primarily in productions of Shakespeare's plays. When studying for my undergraduate acting degree I found the approach to Shakespeare's texts I was being taught to be demoralising and this created barriers to my engagement with the text. For the first eight weeks of the 'Shakespeare' module, learning and teaching focused on textual analysis and beating out or clapping rhythms whilst speaking the text. When an error in the rhythm was made this was often met with a firm 'No' or 'Wrong' from the lecturer. In the final four weeks of the module, we were then expected to apply our Stanislavski-based acting technique to the heavily analysed text and develop a performance for assessment. The shared experience of the class was one of humiliation and frustration, where our focus was largely on adhering to the demands of the text rather than the presentation of the character. Whilst my experience of performing Shakespeare on my acting degree was not enjoyable, I endeavoured to continue my pursuit of working professionally on productions of Shakespeare's plays. In industry, however, I encountered the same experience of developing a performance as I had in Higher Education. Typically, the first two weeks of rehearsals would be spent analysing the text and engaging in humiliating verse-related exercises from beating out the rhythm and being corrected when it went wrong, to dancing the rhythm whilst reciting the text. After working professionally as an actor, I initially began teaching in Further Education and progressed to lecturing in Higher Education, where I felt obligated to teach the same approaches to Shakespeare that I had

experienced - approaches rooted in verbal reasoning and intellectual analysis of the text - as these were the predominant pedagogy for performing Shakespeare and the industry which I was preparing learners for. Whilst a generalisation, most learners I have worked with come from strong practical backgrounds rather than academic ones. The learning and teaching practices which best serve such learners places emphasis on embodied knowledge. Such practices are well evidenced in the analysis of actor training pedagogy, where it is noted that:

> many approaches to performer-training, theatre-making, directing and choreography are interwoven with the bodily and foreground the body and embodied engagements as central to the process of inquiry, understanding and knowledge creation (Coetzee, 2018: 1).

The embodied knowledge Coetzee refers to leads to intellectual understanding and reflection, rather than an analytical and intellectual analysis being the primary means of investigation and understanding within training.

When working on Shakespeare, in contrast to an embodied approach to knowledge, actors in training are presented with a rigorous intellectual dissection of literature, where:

> existing methodologies implicitly and explicitly assume a level of actor familiarity with the texts, and largely neglect to respond to the significant difficulties faced by performers from non-academic backgrounds in fully engaging with Shakespeare's plays (Sumsion, 2018).

This difficulty for 'non-academic' performers, I believe, is due to the reliance on verbal reasoning in Shakespeare training and performance practices, where actors and actors in training are taught to approach the text as literature to be studied and deconstructed in the first instance, as opposed to encountering the text through performance and engaging with it practically. In *The Shakespeare Masterclass* (2020), Ron Destro provides the best summation of the dominant approaches to Shakespeare in performance:

> the first thing a good actor does when working on a Shakespeare role is read the text…Next, we should ignore all the punctuation, and re-punctuate as it seems logical…then the actor looks up all of those unknown words and phrases…The Next task for the modern actor is to dissect the characters speech. Is it in verse or prose? And if it's in Iambic pentameter…he/she must find when it is regular…The wise actor looks to Shakespeare's verse to instruct and direct him…The analysis continues: "Should I pause at the end of the line or the end of the thought?"… "How might I treat the prose?"…"What should I do with antithesis?"…and then memorization begins… Next, an actor must work out how to deliver the lines in performance. (Destro, 2020: 1-7)

This approach to performing Shakespeare is evidenced in the available actor training manuals and the practices of leading theatre makers such as*: Staging Shakespeare (2021), Rehearsing Shakespeare (2021), Acting Shakespeare's Language (2015), Speaking the Speech (2013), How to do Shakespeare (2010).*

Kristin Linklater best summarises the limitations of such approaches, stating 'when words are mainly experienced in the head and the mouth, they convey cerebral meaning. In order to transfer Shakespeare's full emotional, intellectual and physiological intent from the page to the stage, words must connect with the full human range of intellect and emotion, body and voice' (Linklater, 1992: 11). Linklater's alternative methodological approaches, whilst rooted in practical exercises, are positioned within vocal technique. Initially focusing on the pitch and duration of vowels and consonants before exploring the meaning of the text and its etymology (Linklater, 1992), she provides an equally analytical approach to the text, as those outlined above, by practitioners such as Destro (2020). Her analytical approach, however, is rooted in the technical assessment of the text from the perspective of voice production, complemented by the incorporation of textual analysis, it too is a methodology rooted in verbal reasoning.

My toolkit, instead, positions the character and the emotional engagement with the text as the primary means of interpreting and understanding it, negating the need for complex analysis of the text based in verbal reasoning. This is an original means of working with Shakespeare's plays, as current actor training methodologies for performing Shakespeare within Britain position 'the text as primary in the creative process, leading to the creation of character and emotion, rather than character and emotion being formed first' (Simms, 2019: 123). This approach of focusing on the text and its complexities first, as a means of later building a character based on literary analysis, is in opposition to the later work of Konstantin Stanislavski. Stanislavski's acting methodology ('system') calls for actors to have a spontaneous and intuitive relationship with the text to develop character first (Merlin, 2014: 189). I believe the disparity in approaches to performing Shakespeare, where text is the primary focus in the creative process, as opposed to the character first approach outlined in Stanislavski's 'system', alienates actors and actors in training when approaching Shakespeare as 'it is not hyperbole to say that traces of Stanislavski's legacy can be found in nearly all forms of text-based actor training in the Western world' (Pyne and Bucs, 2020: 1).

Stanislavski's 'system' of acting techniques, however, cannot be directly applied to Shakespeare's texts without modification and adaptation, a conclusion which Stanislavski ultimately arrived at, stating 'apparently it is not the inner feeling itself but the technique of its expression that prevents me from doing in the plays of Shakespeare what we are able to do in Chekhov' (Stanislavski, 1952: 350). This is because Shakespeare's plays have specific requirements due to their form and structure which must be addressed. Shakespeare's plays are written predominately in blank verse, with the integration of rhymed verse and heightened rhetoric prose. Blank verse being a form of unrhymed poetry and heightened rhetoric prose referring to the writing without metrical structure but written to be persuasive with a more formal use of language (Barton, 1984: 25-27). Whether lines are written in verse or prose also provides a framework for understanding and interpreting character.

When Shakespeare writes in verse, this reflects the character's heightened emotional response to a situation as 'the more intensely a character feels or the greater a challenge he confronts, the more poetically that character speaks' (Basil, 2006: 42). Blank verse is also an indicator that a character is of a higher social class, with rhymed verse most commonly reflecting characters making emphatic statements (Callaghan, 2022: 62-65). Whereas Shakespeare employed prose for the 'exposition of information, for disguises, and to make jokes' (Basil, 2006: 44). Prose can also be an indicator of a lower social class, though when a character changes from speaking in verse to speaking in prose this reflects changes in the emotional intensity of the scene (Hall, 2003: 45). The utilisation of each writing style also varies between plays, as Giles Block, *Master of Words* at *Shakespeare's Globe* Theatre explains:

> a couple of plays have no prose at all, some others almost none; whereas a handful have more prose than verse. Some plays have virtually no rhymed verse, yet there are two plays in which nearly half of all the lines rhyme. But all of his plays have some blank verse in them, and most have more blank verse in them than anything else (Block, 2013: 5)

Due to the significance of verse in Shakespeare's plays, any approach to performance must address the rhythm of verse to fully realise the texts meaning (Van Tassel, 2000: 6). The predominant metrical structure of Shakespeare's blank and rhymed verse is iambic pentameter, which is ten syllables per line divided into five metric feet each foot contains an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable (Kulick, 2022: 33). Breaks and

manipulations of this rhythm within the text also provide additional information as to the characters thinking and emotional states, which must also be addressed in the realisation of a performance (Hinds, 2015: 74).

Whilst Stanislavski's 'system' provides a framework for creating a characterisation within text-based performances, it does not provide a means of addressing the specific demands of Shakespeare's verse and prose. I theorised that despite the limitations of the 'system' it would play an important role in answering the fundamental question actors, directors and learners face when working on Shakespeare. That question of 'how to marry the Elizabethan text and acting tradition with our modern acting tradition' (Barton, 1984: 25). Our modern acting traditions are rooted in the work of Stanislavski, interpretations and adaptations of his 'system' (Butler, 2023). The genre of acting the 'system' is most associated with is known as psychological realism. This term applies to a performance where 'what the viewer sees is pretty close to life as we know it…behaviour will have a certain psychological dimension to which we can relate as twenty-first-century human beings' (Merlin, 2014: 17). Psychological realism, therefore, refers to a form of performance in which an as 'authentic' as possible version of real life is presented to an audience.

In contrast to the desire to present real life on stage, the Elizabethan actors which Shakespeare wrote for were primarily concerned with showing the character's emotions – or as they were referred to at the time, 'passions'. As professor Tiffany Stern explains:

> actors in Shakespeare's day were not primarily concerned with the story they were telling. Instead, they were looking inwards at their parts, determining what the emotion required by their roles were, and how best to manifest them using gesture and pronunciation. Which 'passion' was being exhibited, at which moment, was easily identifiable in a part and so was seen to be one of the most important aspects of acting nobel

The characters' passions were identified through clues imbedded into the text itself. This was, in part, due to the nature of theatrical traditions at the time and the fact that actors were only given their own parts as written and not the entire play (Freeman, 1994: 2). Instead, Shakespeare's actors worked from 'cue scripts' text which only contained their lines and the three or four words that cued them in to speak, enter or exit (Stern, 2004: 77). Actors 'did not even read a new play before performing it…the actors scripts contained only their own lines and cues' (Robbins, 2005: 65). To facilitate their

understanding of the play and how to deliver their lines, it is theorised that 'Shakespeare supplied actors with specific punctuation, capital letters, and other verbal clues that informed them how and when he wanted them to speak and move' (Basil, 2006: 2). This theory is widely debated amongst scholars with no definitive conclusions drawn (Weingust, 2006: 1-10). It is, however, recognised that the verse and prose in Shakespeare's plays provided an indication for the character's emotional state and social standing (Rokinson-Woodall, 2021: 59).

The acting tradition of Shakespeare's theatre focused on the presentation of emotions captured within a tradition of verse drama. The actors received their direction from the text and their ability to identify passions from the form, structure and other clues embed in their cue scripts (Stern, 2004: 62 – 90). They did not rehearse the play as a company, rather they responded to the other actors on stage with only two or three words of their scene partners' dialogue to cue them in. Contemporary Stanislavskian acting traditions would therefore seem to be incompatible with the Elizabethan text and traditions, given the demands of the text and the additional considerations required by the actor to effectively interpret the plays. The disparity between these two traditions and how they work together is well documented. Leon Rubin explains the inherent difficulties of directly applying Stanislavski to Shakespeare:

> in Stanislavski, the emphasis is on the inner processes of imagination and the sense which later find an outward expression. With Shakespeare, the text itself leads the outward expression; the actor needs often to construct backwards from language to inner feelings and thoughts. Shakespeare, in effect, tells the actor (and audience) what the character is thinking and feeling with extraordinary detail of language. Stanislavski, in *An Actor Prepares*, often refers to Shakespeare when discussing exercises, but he does not deal specifically with the challenges of a text that states thoughts and emotions…in one sense, there is more freedom of choice for the actor, and the Stanislavskian approach is more useful, but on the other side of the equations, there is much missing, detailed information for the actor offered almost directly from Shakespeare through language, grammar and verse structure. (2021: 45)

Rubin alludes here to some of the obstacles faced by actors when applying Stanislavski to Shakespeare's texts. Identifying fundamental challenges preventing the 'system' from being directly applied to Shakespeare without modification and adaptation to fully meet the demands of the text.

There is a belief within the industry that the quality of Shakespeare in performance is in decline (Billington, 2016). Scholarly reflection on this problem has meant 'much of the perceived decline in the quality of Shakespearean acting is placed at the door of Stanislavski and interpretations of his method' (Simms, 2019: 121). Whilst it is evident that Stanislavski cannot be directly applied to Shakespeare and fulfil the complexities of the Elizabethan verse drama, I believe the decline in the quality of Shakespearian acting originates from the current practice of detailed textual analysis as the actors first encounter with the text. Stanislavski stated that 'the more intricate the thinking, the further it leads away from creative experiencing and to mere intellectual acting or playacting' (Stanislavski, 2009: 9). I have seen the resultant 'intellectual acting' Stanislavski describes evidenced in an array of student and professional productions of Shakespeare's plays. My experience can be related to Sarah Werner's research, which determined:

> the ways in which actors are taught to approach and understand Shakespeare directly affect how they are able to perform his plays: the tools they are given to work with determine what they can build (1996: 249)

Therefore, actors equipped with an intellectual approach to his texts, based in verbal reasoning, are most likely to deliver what Stanislavski deemed 'mere intellectual acting or playacting' (Stanislavski, 2009: 9) - in essence, a representation of the text rather than a presentation of psychological realism. As such, both current approaches to Shakespeare and the direct application of Stanislavski's 'system' present the actor and actor in training with a wealth of challenges.

There are some practitioners who, in an attempt to address these issues, have returned to the Elizabethan performance methodology referred to as Original Practice. Patrick Tucker and his theatre company *The Original Shakespeare Company* are the strongest proponents of this methodology, finding that using the Elizabethan approach to performance allowed 'actors into a more immediate encounter with the text then they might otherwise enjoy' (Wingust, 2006: 8). The reason for such an experience is related to the limited exposure to the text actors have when working with Original Practice. A significant factor in working from the Elizabethan acting tradition or Original Practice is the importance of working from the First Folio (1623) versions of the texts as opposed to any other publications. This is because shared

Whilst Original Practice has been found to have some benefits, it too fails to fully meet the demands of performing Shakespeare in the twenty-first century. Chris Hay and

Robin Dixon's research focused on the application of the Elizabethan methodology in contemporary theatre practice and concluded that 'attempts to slavishly follow original practice may be of limited utility' (Hay and Dixon, 2020: 45). Patrick Tucker also addresses the limitations of the Elizabethan tradition by adding elements of verbal reasoning to the methodology, referring to 'verse nursing sessions', during which' actors are:

> asked to wonder why, at this particular time, his character changes from verse to prose or from simple to complex language, and the glory of it all: why they are changing from you to thee (Tucker, 2016: The Experiment).

These sessions also look at the linguistic and rhythmical elements of Shakespeare's texts before the actors go on to perform without any rehearsal time. The direct application of the Elizabethan acting approach to the text can therefore be deemed to be as incomplete a solution as the direct application of Stanislavski's 'system' and current approaches to Shakespeare based in verbal reasoning. Without a methodology for creating a role rooted in psychological realism, the performance will not resonate with a modern audiences' expectations, and without a direct focus on the demands of the text, the actor is unable to fully realise a performance written in verse and prose. My research, therefore seeks to solve this inherent issue by utilising principles of Stanislavski's 'system' to address the needs of psychological realism, whilst combining and adapting Elizabethan acting practices and techniques rooted in the interpretation of the First Folio. Thereby creating an accessible approach to performing Shakespeare which address both the demands of the text and psychological realism, through a practice first, character-driven approach to the text.

The data gathered presents a significant argument for the utility of my approach in addressing the accessibility in acting and actor training for Shakespeare's texts, thereby creating a new and more accessible approach to performing Shakespeare's plays. This approach has evolved out of two traditions and the development of original exercises to complement the integration of both methodologies and practices. My research has produced a novel, character-driven approach to performing Shakespeare which addresses the complexities of the text without the need for verbal reasoning or extensive intellectual analysis of the script. At present such an approach does not exist, and the result of this research has been the generation of original knowledge in the field of actor training.

In the following sub-sections of this introduction, I will contextualise the theoretical landscape which my research is situated within, concluding with an

explanation of my PaR methodology. *Chapter One: The Shakespearian Actors Text* analyses my research into the First Folio text compared to other publications of Shakespeare's Plays and the application of First Folio technique as a means of taking direction from the text itself. *Chapter Two: Elizabethan Acting Practices* reflects on my adaptation of the practises synonymous with Shakespeare's theatrical traditions and how these can be integrated into a contemporary approach to the text. *Chapter Three: Developing The Toolkit* is an evaluation of the tools created to address the specific requirements of the text through practice in a character-driven approach to verse drama. *Chapter Four: A Rehearsal Methodology* considers the final development of tools and their application to a rehearsal process for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, concluding with an evaluation of the final performance. The findings presented throughout this thesis are then drawn together to provide an overall analysis of the toolkit, measured against my research aims.

0.2 The Shakespeare Problem

The role of Shakespeare on stage is significant to British theatre and well documented, leading Bridget Escolme to conclude that:

> given how (relatively) well funded and popular the Royal Shakespeare company is at the time of writing, given that Shakespeare's Globe manages to fill season after season of mainly Shakespeare in its reconstructed Elizabethan theatre, given the National Theatre regularly gives over one of its main houses to a Shakespeare production that regularly sells out, the question 'Why perform Shakespeare's plays?' may have an obvious answer. (2013: xxix)

Notwithstanding its significance to the theatre industry, the way actors are trained to perform Shakespeare's plays has been subject to criticism and scrutiny. Actor training for performing Shakespeare tends to be routed in a notion that 'we will seek meaning starting from the detail of the text' (Nobel, 2010: 3), and move towards a detailed analysis of the literary functions of the text itself, such as rhythm, verse, prose, and devices such as simile, metaphor and apposition (Kulick, 2022: 31-79). This is because the 'dramatic verse in Shakespeare captures both the thought, and the feelings that the speaker of that thought has, at one and the same time' (Block, 2015: 13). The verse, its rhythms and irregularities in rhythm are integral to the fluid communication of the character's thoughts, feeling and emotional response to the circumstances of the scene (Berry, 2000:

52 -54). As the literary devices Shakespeare employs within his texts are integral to the communication of meaning their requirements must be addressed in any approach to performing the plays, as:

> Any interpretation which, breaks the line, unnecessarily distorts the iambic rhythm, ignores the antithesis, neglects the assonance, evades the alliteration or nine times out of ten does not lean on the end of the line (because that is where the primary meaning is usually found) will ruin the communication with the audience and what the actor is supposed to tell them by speaking the text (Hall, 2003: 27)

The need to address the specific textual requirements when performing Shakespeare led to a 'belief that Shakespeare, more than any other dramatist, needed a 'style', a tradition and unity of direction and acting' (Addenbrooke, 1974: 42). Establishing a specific tradition to directing and acting in Shakespeare's plays became the aim of *The Royal Shakespeare Company* (*RSC*) when it was founded in 1961 (Addenbrooke, 1974: 42-45).

When researching the professional practices of those currently directing Shakespeare, Leon Rubin finds that 'we can draw some kind of wavy line from John Barton and then through Peter Hall and Trevor Nunn at the Royal Shakespeare Company and the many actors and directors who followed' (2021: 5), referring here to a lineage of approaches to acting Shakespeare from the origins of the *RSC* through its history and into contemporary practices today. This is also reflected within actor training pedagogy for performing Shakespeare, as the vice principal of the *Royal Birmingham Conservatoire* Stephen Simms explains 'the approaches used by the RSC have greatly influenced the work that we do at the Conservatoire' (2019: 121). The *RSC* approach is situated within verbal reasoning, analysing the rhythms and literary devises at work in the text as a means of later developing character. As explained by *The Royal Shakespeare Company's* former artistic director Gregory Doran (2012 – 2022), 'the delivery of the language is a fundamental priority. But this is a craft that takes work. It takes discipline and effort to master technique, and art to hide that technique' (Doran, 2019). Whilst working as an actor for the *RSC,* Tina Packer found their approach to performing Shakespeare to be 'just too cerebral for her. Most directors were Oxbridge graduates (where the Shakespeare tradition was literary, rather than visceral) and actors were rarely asked to connect the text to the inner life of the human being' (Merlin & Packer, 2020: 10). This manner of working is therefore contradictory to the Stanislavski based approach to acting where 'the fundamental aim of our art is the creation of this inner life of a human spirit, and its expression in an artistic form' (Stanislavski, 1927: 14).

The emphasis on approaching the text from the position of verbal reasoning has faced criticism from practitioners within the industry. During a press tour for his 2017 production of *Hamlet* director Robert Icke claimed that 'British theatre had "shot itself in both feet" thanks to an obsession with "verse speaking" (Furness, 2017). Despite this criticism, verse speaking remains fundamental to acting approaches in British Shakespeare, with Doran establishing a Shakespeare 'gym' in order that 'Everyone has the iambic pentameter in their bloodstream' (Billington, 2020) because, in his opinion, 'you can't just do Shakespeare, you have to understand what it is, how that language is crafted, and that takes time, effort and discipline' (Snow, 2019). The Shakespeare gym Doran refers to is addressed in his book *My Shakespeare: A Directors Journey through the First Folio* (2023). The gym's approach begins with an exploration of the verse and its rhythms, as well as analysis of the text before considering what character information can be derived from the text. Many practitioners, me included, believe 'this intellectual approach seemed to be at odds with Shakespeare's heritage as an artist working right at the heart of the theatrical event' (Merlin and Packer, 2020: 11). The approach Shakespeare and his actors are believed to have utilised is a more immediate practical engagement with the text, where the play is experienced through performance rather than on the page.

0.3 Original Practice

Shakespeare wrote the plays he is best known for between 1580 - 1614, with most of his success found under the rule of King James I, despite this his theatre and practices are contextualised and often referred to as Elizabethan (Lewis, 2013). The evidence defining Elizabethan acting practices is limited and conclusions drawn by scholars are based on fragmented information. (Hattaway, 1982: 72). For the purposes of this thesis, I will be referring to the practices of Shakespeare's theatre as Elizabethan and positioning my perspective on Elizabethan acting practices in line with the research of Patrick Tucker (2016), John Basil (2006), Professor Tiffany Stern (2004) and Neil Freeman (1994).

In the Elizabethan theatre, 'An early modern actor's part, which he committed to memory, did not contain the entire play's text: a part consisted of the actor's lines, his

cues (usually one to three words, which told him when to speak his next line), and a few stage directions' (Lenhard, 2012: 449). In addition to working from these limited 'parts' or 'cue scripts', an actor's life would consist of 'learning or relearning lines in the morning and performing in the afternoons, with no time left for what we call rehearsals' (Tucker, 2002: The Research). Therefore, the actors had no concept of the play as a whole. This led to a spontaneous performance as the actors would have been forced to listen and respond to the unfolding drama live on stage, without any prior rehearsal with other cast members.

One of the potential benefits of approaching a text in this manner is the necessity for actors to encounter the play through performance rather than on a page. A comparison can be drawn between the Elizabethan approach to performance and Stanislavski 's own experiments with Shakespeare. When 'working on Othello in 1935, he didn't even want his students to read the play beforehand. He was worried their intellectual grapplings with Shakespeare's verse would violate their creative instincts' (Merlin, 2014: 189). Through my research, I found that integrating this Elizabethan approach of working from a cue script can create a more accessible way of encountering the play as it moves the actor away from the intellectual grapplings Stanislavski was concerned with, whilst keeping the text central to the development of the role.

The application of Original Practice – the strict replication of Elizabethan acting techniques for the contemporary stage – has faced criticism as 'merely adopting or modifying some aspects of early modern practice is not in itself sufficient to produce new forms of skill' (Tribble, 2017: 148). Through my theoretical research into Original Practice, I have drawn a corresponding conclusion about the approach. Its current applications rely on integrating Original Practice with the current conventions of analysing the text through verbal reasoning as I identified in the case of Patrick Tucker's 'verse nursing sessions' under the research overview section of this chapter. *The Globe Theatre*, under Artistic Director Mark Rylance (1995 -2005) used elements of Original Practice to produce some of its productions primarily through 'a handful of experiments with 'cue scripts' (Purcell, 2017: 59). Though ''Original Practice' rarely entered into the rehearsal process itself at the Globe, when 'Elements of OP were used by directors, it was primarily to further the goal of spontaneous, objective-driven playing' (Purcell, 2017: 106). *The Globe Theatre* acknowledge that 'Original Practice was exploratory and

experimental in nature and some of the investigations worked and some didn't' (The Shakespeare's Globe Trust, 2021).

The most significant practitioner of Original Practice is Patrick Tucker. He utilises a cue script orientated practice with *The Original Shakespeare Company* and developed his own methodology which he named 'The Original Approach'. It has some deviations from what is believed to be the Elizabethan practice which fall under the umbrella of verbal reasoning. In his book *Secrets of Acting Shakespeare* (2016), Tucker's first chapter, *30 Secrets,* provides an outline of the analysis of a Shakespeare text which is consistent with other forms of contemporary actor training for Shakespeare such as examining verse, metaphor and rhyming couplets. The Original Approach has also been adopted by some secondary school teachers as an effective means of engaging students with the plays. Bruce Robbins (2005) uses his own modified version of the Original Approach as a tool for teaching Shakespeare in English classes. He states:

> I confess I have probably misappropriated The Original Approach as I have adapted it for use in the English Classroom, and I probably owe Patrick Tucker an apology. But I also owe him my thanks for leading me towards a new approach to teaching Shakespeare that can show students how to breathe new life into the plays. (Robbins, 2005: 68)

Cue script-based approaches to Shakespeare have yielded positive results for engagement with the text, yet fail to provide a complete solution to the 'Shakespeare Problem' in which the actor needs to find a means of 'reconciling the working with dense text that survives at a distance of hundreds of years and the physical and emotion process of a contemporary actor' (Rubin, 2021: 6). The specifics of Original Practice vary company to company and consist of different techniques drawn from the Elizabethan acting tradition. The use of the 1623 First Folio text as a foundation for this work is the most consistent element in utilising the Elizabethan acting tradition (Weingust, 2006: 137).

0.4 First Folio

When working with Shakespeare's plays a unique challenge presents itself as 'unlike many of his great contemporaries, such as Spencer, Johnson or Milton, Shakespeare seems to have taken little interest in the printing of his masterpieces' (Honigmann, 2010: 937). As such, no 'official copy' of the plays approved by Shakespeare exists. It wasn't until

after his death that *Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories & Tragedies* (1623) was published. This collection of Shakespeare's plays is now more commonly referred to as The First Folio or 'F1'. At the time, a folio format was associated with books of 'superior merit or some permanent value' (Bowers, 1964: 76). Prior to this publication, sixteen of Shakespeare's plays had been printed in quarto format. These quarto texts were 'about the size of a modern hardback novel, and are known as 'quartos', because of the page size and method of folding each sheet' (Freeman, 1994: 1). Quarto texts are believed to be written from the memory of actors who performed in the plays or audience members who have tried to recreate the plays from their recollection of the performance, leading to the belief that they 'cannot possibly represent a written transcript of the author's text. All hypotheses concerning these corrupt versions imply, to a greater or less degree, a stage of memorial transmission' (Kirschbaum, 1938: 20).

The First Folio was compiled by John Heminges and Henry Condell who were both members of Shakespeare's acting company *The Kings Men*. On page A3 of the First Folio, Heminges and Condell write a declaration to the reader, stating that,

> you were abus'd with diverse stolen and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious imposters, that expos'd them: even those, and now offer'd to your view cur'd, and perfect of their limbs; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them (Shakespeare, 2001: lxv)

and thereby condemning the quarto copies that came before its publication, framing The First Folio as the definitive collection of Shakespeare's plays. This notion has been debated and dismissed by scholars and editors of the texts ever since. Of the thirty-six plays published in the First Folio, 'sixteen had been published (more than once) in quarto format' (Smith, 2016: 73). Subsequent publications of Shakespeare's plays following the First Folio make significant modifications and edits to the plays, many of which are in line with earlier quarto versions of the plays. The Second Folio, printed in 1632, contains '1700 modifications to update the language' (Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust, 2016). The subsequent publications of Shakespeare's plays following the second folio contain additional amendments including the reshaping of verse and prose over speculation of the First Folios legitimacy (Weingust, 2006: 1-24).

Whilst academics may question the integrity of the First Folio, it has a significant importance to the practice of performing Shakespeare. This is due to the notion that the subsequent edits to Shakespeare's plays after the First Folio were aimed at turning the

plays into works of literature rather than a script from which actors would generate a performance, leading some to conclude that 'the text from which Shakespearean actors now work have been created for a modern, often academic, reading audience' (Weingust, 2006: 4). This trend of editing the text for a reader rather than an actor can be traced back to the publication of quarto texts which were 'printed in extraordinary numbers to satisfy the reading audience of the early seventeenth century' (Rasmussen, 2016: 23). Where 'discussions of Shakespeare's earliest editors tend to focus on their textual manipulation and emendatory strategies, with less attention paid to their engagements with performance modes of dramatic realisation' (Paul, 2010: 390). This focus on the reading audience of Shakespeare's work rather than the actors' need for a performance text is where the division between academic scholars of the texts and theatre practitioners evolved, as 'actors who specialise in Shakespeare prize the Folio in the belief that it gives virtually unmediated access to the finalised, stage ready versions of his plays' (Egan, 2016 :69). In Richard Flatter's book *Shakespeare's Producing Hand* (1948), he suggested that the First Folio contains clues to the actor in how to perform the texts. His research was later built upon by Neil Freeman who finds that 'how things were set on paper, as well as what was set on paper, conveyed information to the first readers. In Elizabethan / early Jacobean writing the intellectual and the sensual were both available on the printed page' (Freeman, 1994: ix). This discovery has led to the development of techniques to analyse and derive performative direction from the text itself.

The techniques designed by theatrical practitioners to work from the First Folio are often condemned within Shakespeare scholarship (Weingust, 2006: ii), resulting in the belief that 'the only serious readers still labouring under the misapprehension that the Folio is the best edition of every play are theatrical practitioners' (Smith, 2016: 73). Whilst my research does not aim to address the validity of the First Folio, it has proven to contain information which can enhance a performance of the play and further a learner's understanding of the text. Through my research, I adapted aspects of First Folio technique as outlined by Freeman (1994) with a specific focus on the punctuation's performative meaning and incorporating into a series of practical tools. These tools utilised the punctuation's function within First Folio technique and applied it through acting theory rooted in Stanislavski's 'system'.

0.5 The 'System'

Konstantin Stanislavski held the belief that:

> the actor most likely to affect an audience profoundly is the actor who behaves most like a complete human being, thereby stirring not merely their emotions but then minds as well… if a character's behaviour is similar to our behaviour in life, then it becomes 'human' (Benadetti, 1998: 2).

From this belief, Stanislavski developed a methodology of acting techniques (his 'system') through the application of which the actor could replicate the behaviour of a human being and thereby create the illusion of reality on stage. Bella Merlin distils Stanislavski's work into four pillars from which the 'system' is built: relaxation, focus, observation and imagination (2007: xiv). In addition to these four pillars the fundamentals of performance in the 'system' are rooted in character action and its relationship with the given circumstances. (Benedetti, 2000: 62). The Given Circumstances as Stanislavski defines them are:

> the plot, the facts, the incidents, the period, the time and place of the action, the way of life, how we as actors and directors understand the play, the contributions we ourselves make, the mise-en-scène, the sets and costumes, the props, the stage dressing, the sound effects etc., etc., everything which is a given for the actors as they rehearse. (Benedetti, 2008: 52-53)

In essence, any information about the world of the play given to the actor either from the text or the realisation of that text in the form of a production's specific interpretation and aesthetic. The given circumstances are then used by the actor to determine a problem which the character's situation poses. The character must then solve this problem through action and the pursuit of an objective (Task) which the actor must place their full attention on achieving (Carnike, 1998: 88). Action within the 'system' can be divided into three categories, inner action, verbal action and physical action. The character has a want or need which is their inner action, this is then addressed through an activity using the body - physical action- and /or through speaking - verbal action (Merlin, 2014: 205 -207) Stanislavski considered verbal action to be the most significant as he viewed the words of a script to be the primary means through which the actor can embody the author's ideas (Knebel, 2021: 32). The principle behind objectives and action are interrelated. Stanislavski writes that 'Theatre consists in staging major human Tasks and the genuine, productive and purposeful actions necessary to fulfil them' (Stanislavski, 2008: 134). The actor choses moment by moment objectives in pursuit of what they want and this in turn leads the character to action. Whilst the 'system' is greater than the four pillars,

objectives, action, and the given circumstances, I utilised these fundamental principles as a framework from which to adapt the 'system'. In the subsequent chapters of this thesis both these and other aspects of the 'system' will be addressed as they relate to the development and application of tools within the toolkit.

It is important to note, that the 'system' evolved throughout Stanislavski's lifetime, with Stanislavski moving away from earlier techniques and principles to focus on physical and improvisational approaches to text work through Active Analysis and The Method of Physical Actions (Carnicke, 2009: 194). In Performing Arts education, both in Secondary Education and Further Education, due to time limitations, the need to address a wide range of aspects within the discipline and in an attempt to simplify the complexity of the 'system', Stanislavski's early work is the focus of GCSE, A-Level and BTEC syllabi (Darce *et all*., 2010: 10-19). In my experience as a lecturer in Higher Education, when I teach the later work of Stanislavski - such as Active Analysis - to my Level 4 learners, this is typically the first time they have encountered these techniques.For the purposes of my toolkit, therefore, I will be utilising terminology and principles from the early work of Stanislavski to provide a vocabulary and framework which learners from Level 3 onwards can relate to, enabling access to the toolkit through learners' existing understanding of acting vocabulary. To further support learners' ability to position the toolkit within their understanding of the 'system', I will also be utilising the terminology taught in Secondary Education. The 'system' was subject to mistranslation when originally translated from Russian to English by Elizabeth Hapgood, with a wealth of disparity between the two editions (Carnicke, 2009: 76). In 2008 Jean Benedetti published the 'only English edition cross-referenced against the Russian' (Shevtosva, 2019: 88). In Benedetti's cross-referenced translation *An Actor's Work* (2008), the terminology that is widely associated with Stanislavski's 'system' has been significantly rewritten. For example, the term *objective* has been translated as *task* (Benedetti, 2008: xviii). In *Rediscovering Acting* (2019: 95), Maria Shevtsova also finds additional mistranslations from Benedetti and suggests renaming the *given circumstances* to *proposed circumstances*. Whilst this is a relevant discourse within the scholarship of Stanislavski's 'system', providing learners working from the toolkit with this new terminology will not support my aim of creating accessibility through existing acting vocabulary.

0.6 Stanislavski and Shakespeare

Whilst my 'toolkit' utilises principles of the 'system' to create an alternative and more accessible approach to performing Shakespeare, the application of the 'system' to Shakespeare's plays is not a new line of enquiry. In fact, 'Stanislavski was concerned with this artistic problem during his whole life, and apparently never solved it' (St. Denis & Sanzenbach, 1964: 82). Throughout his career, and the development of his 'system', Stanislavski worked on an array of Shakespeare plays including *Othello, Hamlet,* and *Julius Caesar.* The 1903 production of '*Julius Caesar* brought home to Stanislavski the limitations of his working method' (Benedetti, 1982: 26), Despite this realisation, the fictional rehearsal room 'in *An Actor Prepares*, often refers to Shakespeare when discussing exercises, but he does not deal specifically with the challenges of a text that states thoughts and emotions' (Rubin, 2021: 45). Instead, Stanislavski actively avoids addressing the specifics of working with Shakespeare's verse drama.

Stanislavski's producing notes for his production of *Othello* are published in *Stanislavski Produces Othello* (1948). It is clear that the importance of the verse and its potential to aid the actors in their communication with the audience was not a consideration for Stanislavski. Examples of this can be found consistently through the document. In Act One Scene One the character Brabantio has been told that his daughter has run away with Othello. Brabantio's thoughts are not concise or well considered, which is evident in the rhythm of the verse and the use of enjambement - the technique of continuing a sentence from one line of verse to another (Hinds, 2015: 99). Brabantio's thoughts don't run from the start of a verse line to the end of a verse line. Instead, they tend to start in the middle of a verse line and run into the middle of the next, 'the greater fluidity introduced to the verse by enjambement indicates that what the characters in the later plays want to convey, cannot quite be packaged within the confines of such a tidy consistently repeated form' (Hinds, 2015: 100). Barbantio states:

> It is too true an evil, gone she is,
> And what's to come, of my despised time,
> Is nought but bitterness. Now Roderigo,
> Where didst thou see her? (O unhappy girl)
> With the Moore saist thou? (Who would be a father?)
>
> How didst though know 'twas she? (O, though deceives me

> Past thought:) What said she to you? Get more Tapers:
> Raise all my Kindred. Are they married, think you?
> (Shakespeare, 2001a: 1.1: 172 -179)

The persistent use of enjambment through the speech suggests that Barbantio has a great deal to convey in a way that is not restrained or deeply considered. It is an emotionally fuelled speech based on the way the thoughts straddle the verse lines.

If viewing this passage through First Folio technique, the parenthesis here is highlighting that those lines need to be delivered differently to the rest of the speech. The actor needs to 'change your delivery so the audience gets how different the moment is' (Basil, 2006: 77). Text contained within parenthesis should be treated as a divergent line of enquiry, this is a new thought but once the bracketed text is complete the character returns to the previous line of enquiry (Freeman, 1994: 106). In examining the first two occasions of parentheses within this speech:

> Where didst thou see her? (O unhappy girl)
> With the Moore saist thou? (Who would be a father?)
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.1: 175 -176)

Barbantio's questions about where and with whom his daughter was last seen are interrupted by his personal commentary on how his daughter has made him feel. The use of commas in the first three lines also indicates that there is an urgency about the lines. Unlike modern grammatical norms, where a comma would indicate a place to pause and take a breath, in First Folio technique the opposite is true, as commas are 'springboard-like miniature trampolines to keep your thoughts moving forward' (Basil, 2006: 71).

In Stanislavski's producer's plan however, he has Barbantio off stage delivering the first three lines and writes:

> After the word 'with the moor, say'st thou?'Barbantio enters armed with a sword. Business like, he interrogates Roderigo who pulls up to the bank to receive him in his gondolas, and gives orders on the departure. Bear in mind that at this moment Barbantio sounds strictly business-like, masculine and efficient, certainly more firm than tearful. (Stanislavski, 2014: 35)

This direction is contradictory to the information the enjambement and punctuation within the text is giving the actor. If Barbantio was at this point 'strictly business-like, masculine and efficient, certainly more firm than tearful' (Stanislavski, 2014: 35) the lines would be end stopped, meaning the thought would run from the start to the finish of a

verse line (Block, 2013: 34), not straddling two or more lines like the speech here does. There would also be an absence of minor punctuation, as this is indicative of an evolving thought building and evolving (Basil, 2006: 71-72). As opposed to someone who is efficient and strictly-business like as Stanislavski proposes (2014: 35). Stanislavski's interpretation of the character is therefore, at odds with the sporadic thoughts moving from one to the next with the rhythm driving the actor forward through the thoughts to the end of the speech. By ignoring the information Shakespeare is giving the actors with the rhythm of the speech through enjambement and First Folio punctuation, 'the sanctity of the line is betrayed, and Shakespeare's primary means of giving out information rapidly and holding our attention is destroyed' (Hall, 2003: 24).

Rubin (2021: 45) proposes that Stanislavski would have been working from a translation of Shakespeare's plays into Russian, which could account for the demands of the original English verse drama not being considered or adhered to, thereby created the challenges Stanislavski expressed when working with Shakespeare's plays. Recounting his work on *Othello*, Stanislavski states that 'the production became torture' (Stanislavski, 1952: 282). The struggle Stanislavski describes was between the inner life of the character, the text, and the outer image; 'At the time I did not recognise the importance either of the words or of speech. The outer image was more important to me' (Stanislavski, 1952: 281). Stanislavski describes a similar experience whilst rehearsing for Nemirovich-Dachenko's production of *Julius Caesar*. In a letter to Anton Chekov, he writes 'how I would like to push everything aside, free myself from the yoke of Brutus and live in and work on 'The Cherry Orchard' the whole day. I dislike Brutus, it oppresses me and drains my life-blood away' (Benedetti, 1991: 162). This conflict between the inner life of the character, text and the outer image of both character and the productions overall aesthetic would continue to challenge Stanislavski. During rehearsals for *Hamlet,* he found 'as soon as we attempted verse we fell back upon declamation, a dead seesaw rhythm, and a methodical flow of monotonous voices and monotonous conversationalization of speech' (Stanislavski, 1952: 523). Stanislavski's experience of working on Shakespeare's plays lead him to conclude that his 'system' was not applicable for developing a performance which would meet the demands of Shakespeare's texts (Stanislavski, 1952: 350).

0.7 Towards a Character-driven Approach

Despite the challenges Stanislavski encountered applying his 'system' to productions of Shakespeare's plays, it is a widely held belief that Shakespeare wrote characters, recognisable as human beings, with unique and differing personalities across the major and minor roles within his plays (Bloom, 1999: 1-17). These characters are now interpreted through the lens of psychological realism, though it is accepted current approaches to developing character for the genre are not entirely applicable and require a depth of text-based analysis in response to the verse, rhythm, and language (Rubin, 2019: 136-149). I theorised that approaching Shakespeare's plays through character could negate the need for a text-first approach, facilitating a practical exploration of the text's demands through practice. Thereby aligning this approach to performing Shakespeare with the character-driven acting methodologies which underpin contemporary actor training (Freeman, 2019: 6). In doing so, it would address the accessibility issues faced by learners and actors who favour embodied approaches to knowledge consistent with the majority of actor training pedagogy (Prior, 2012: 92), as opposed to the intellectual approaches to performing Shakespeare which dominate current practices.

The concept of a character-driven approach to performing Shakespeare has been widely dismissed and criticised. In *Clues to Acting Shakespeare* (2000), Wesley Van Tassel attacks the notion of a character-driven approach, in a section of his book called 'The Big Character Mistake' he explains that:

> When reading a script, actors imagine character and quickly search for actions to bring those character to life. Text study can seem to delay the opportunity to play the character. Many actors don't realise that with heightened language, character discovery comes through the text. These actors believe that text study is an intellectual activity that has little to do with playing the role. When acting Shakespeare, that naivete will spell disaster (Van Tessel, 2000: 6).

My research has proved that such 'intellectual activity' can initially be replaced by a practical character-driven exploration of the text. In doing so, it situates the process of acting Shakespeare in line with principles of Stanislavski's 'system' and less in the intellectual grappling's of the academically trained actor. My findings do however support the need for some aspects of text study, as archaic language, customs, and references require analysis to fully realise the role. These aspects of textual analysis in my toolkit are, however, framed in practice as explored in Chapter Three, section 3.7.

The toolkit is designed primarily for use within education and actor training environments, though it has proven to have application as a rehearsal methodology as examined in Chapter Four: A Rehearsal Methodology. The actor's journey into professional theatre can be varied, though one of the most common routes into the industry is through education, either via specialist conservatoire drama schools or universities offering conservatoire-style actor training with reduced contact time (Prior, 2012: 151). In addition to the conservatoire and conservatoire-style acting degrees, there has been a proliferation of university degree courses where acting features in the course title (Freeman, 2019: 3). When I began my research in 2019, *The University and College Admissions Service* (*UCAS*) listed sixty-five institutions offering one-hundred and fourteen undergraduate and postgraduate courses where 'Acting' is featured in the course title (UCAS, 2019), whereas, at the time of writing this thesis, UCAS currently lists five-hundred-nighty-eight (UCAS, 2023). For many actors in training, however, their education begins earlier - in Further Education courses 'designed primarily to develop the practical skills necessary to access a higher education degree' (Elkin, 2018). The aim of my research, therefore, was to tailor to this expanding market and create a toolkit that could be utilised at all levels of actor training, from Further Education through Higher Education, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, whilst also containing relevant applications as a rehearsal methodology for professional theatre.

As the pathways to the profession often begin at Further Education and continue through Higher Education, the toolkit was designed to be accessible to students at all levels of study. To address this need, the research was conducted in three phases, with participants in Further Education at Level Three (L3) and Higher Education at Level Five (L5) and Level Seven (L7). The initial phase of research was conducted with L3 participants to develop the tools which would then be tested as a rehearsal methodology in phase two on a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with L7 participants. The final phase of my research was to test the application of the toolkit with L5 participants to ensure it was applicable at both undergraduate and postgraduate study.

0.8 Practice as Research (PaR) Methodology

Kershaw et al. define Practice as Research (PaR) as a creative enquiry that connects scholarly research procedures and techniques (2011: 63). A common approach to data gathering in PaR is through interview, case studies and observational studies (Fulton, 2018: 318). To develop the toolkit, I have employed a multi-method design within my research, drawing on these aspects of PaR in conjunction with an action research model. Action research is employed as a means of improving practices and is a preferred research paradigm in pedagogical research (Koshy, 2010: 1). Interviews and observations were utilised across all three phases of my research to assess the validity of the toolkit's development, as this allows 'the researcher to examine both what participants said about the process and how the process had played out in practice' (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston, 2013: 234) As the participants experience of accessing Shakespeare's texts is the primary focus of my research, interviewing the participants was crucial in understanding their experience of the tools they were being asked to utilise. Drawing on their first-hand experience of the ease or difficulty with which they used the tools to develop their performances and engaged with the text.

The first phase of my research was the development of the individual tools that would make up the toolkit. It was conducted over the course of one complete academic year, through seventy-five hours of PaR. This was in the form of fifty, one and a half hour workshops, conducted with four participants in Further Education at L3. By developing the initial elements in a Further Education setting, I was working at the earliest intended level for the toolkit's application, where participants have the least amount of experience and training, allowing for the broadest spectrum of accessibility in relation to knowledge and experience of acting methodologies and practices. This phase was centred in action research and utilised Kemmins and McTaggart (2000: 595) Participatory Research Spiral, as demonstrated below in Fig. 1.

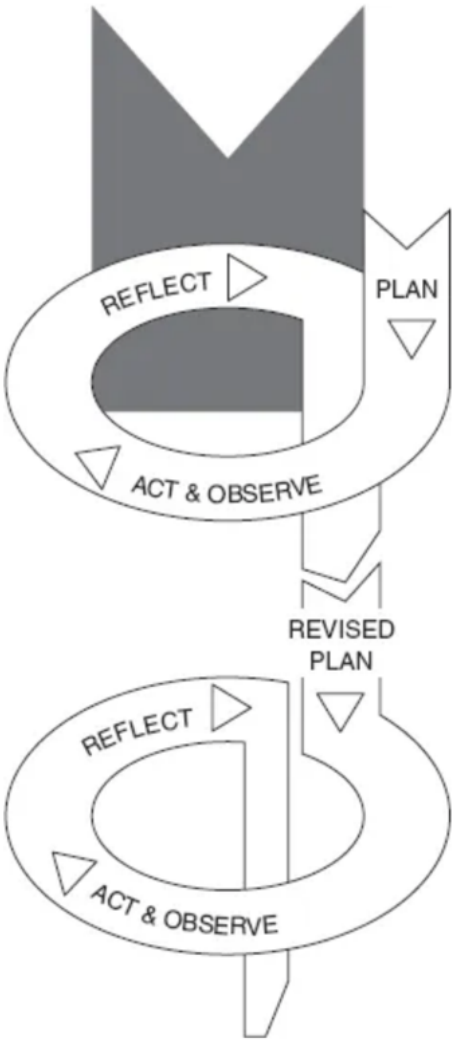


Figure 1: Kemmins and McTaggart's (2000: 595) Participatory Research Spiral

The Kemmins and McTaggart (2000: 595) Participatory Research Spiral is a process of planning an intervention (modification) in pedagogical practice, implementing it, and observing its effects, followed by reflections on the findings, before the initial intervention strategy is then revised and retested, following the same cyclic process, and so on. The interventions in my research took the form of the individual tools created to access Shakespeare's texts, which were tested through their application to a scene, reflected upon by both facilitator and participants, and then revised and re-applied in a cyclical fashion throughout the duration of this portion of the study. This process yielded significant results leading to the creation of eleven tools. At the end of the process, there was a need for further development of two of these tools, and the additional development of three further tools to fully address the requirements of the text. My analysis of this phase is addressed in Chapters One, Two and Three of this thesis.

The second phase was conducted with L7 participants at *The University of East London*. All participants were enrolled on either a Master of Arts (MA) in Acting or Directing. Initially, the first set of tools designed to make encountering Shakespeare's text through the L3 workshops was tested through an audition workshop, during which a need for amendments to the toolkit were highlighted. The toolkit was then applied to the rehearsal process of an abridged version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* The participation research spiral model was utilised in the development of the two tools which required amendments and the three additional tools which needed to be developed. The primary research model at this phase and for the final L5 phase, however, was a case study design. A case study design is also utilised within pedagogical research and its paradigm focuses on participants experience of a specific aspect of practice and its effects (Winston, 2006: 43). My aim with these two phases of the research was to test the validity of the toolkit and its application as a pedagogical practice to make performing Shakespeare more accessible. Case studies provide a space for participants' perceptions and experience of the practice as well as its effect on their learning (Winston, 2006: 41). As the tools which were carried forward at these phases of the research had been subject to a process of planning, acting, and observing, reflection and revision this model of action research was no longer necessary to test the toolkit.

I selected *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from Shakespeare's canon as prose, rhymed and blank verse are used to define three-character groups within the play. In which three stories run in parallel, that of: the court, the fairies, and the mechanicals and 'Language is the tool used to clearly distinguish between the three-character groups' (White, 2020: 154). This provided a means of analysing the toolkits application to the three writing styles Shakespeare employed, within the context of one play. The production had three hours of rehearsal per week, over a twelve-week period. It was divided into the three-character groups with rehearsal broken into one hour, thirty-minute sessions, culminating in a public performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at *The University of East London*. During the rehearsal process, the amendments to the toolkit and the additional tools required were tested alongside the existing tools and utilised as a rehearsal methodology. The findings proved the toolkit's ability to facilitate a more accessible approach to performing Shakespeare's verse drama. There was, however, a limited utility for the prose sections of text. My analysis of this phase is addressed in Chapter Four: A Rehearsal Methodology. Following the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the toolkit was further tested with L5 BA (Hons) Acting and Performance

students at *Solent University* to ensure the toolkit had been tested at different levels of Higher Education. The findings at this phase were consistent with phase two and are reflected on in the Conclusion of this thesis.

At all three phases, the participants engaging in my research were learners who I had an existing student-teacher relationship with. I acknowledge that this posed an ethical issue common in pedagogical research. As Ferguson *et al* explain, the 'need to research pedagogical issues creates an ethical dilemma for faculty, particularly if they are in a fiduciary relationship with the students whom they propose to involve as participants in their research studies' (2004: 57). The principal issues posed by working with learners as participants is 'the role of teachers in evaluating their students' progress [and] the social context of the teaching-learning relationship is characterised by differential power relations' (Moreno, Caplan, and Wolpe: 1999). To mitigate - where possible - these ethical issues, the L3 and L7 learners were all students who I was no longer assessing on their respective qualifications. The L3 participants were in their 'pre-vocational' year at the college, which was an academic year designed to prepare learners for conservatoire training. This did not result in any additional qualification to the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma they had been awarded after the two previous years of study in Further Education. The L7 participants had completed and received their grades and summative feedback for the two modules which I lead on their MA programmes at *The University of East London*. Whilst the L5 participants would continue to work with and be assessed by me, I conducted the workshop at the end of an academic year, to ensure all assessments for that level of study were complete and learners had received the grades and summative feedback from the modules I lead at *Solent University*. In addition to the ethical issues posed by my existing student-teacher relationship with the participants, the PaR model I utilised relies significantly on my judgment of qualitative data, which too poses ethical issues surrounding biases based on a single privileged perspective concerning culture, education, social position and life experience (Winkle-Wagner *et al*., 2018: 20). To address the subjective nature of assessing qualitative data, Tracy (2019: 3-4) proposes the use of self-reflexivity, the process of engaging in continual reflection on how experience, points of view and professional roles influence the researcher's perception of data. Continual self-reflection, or critical reflection, is a significant aspect of learning and teaching (Brookfield, 2017), which I engage in as part of my professional practice. This process of critically reflecting on how I interpret data was applied within my practice as a researcher throughout the process of my PhD research.

To further aid the integrity of my qualitative data and ensure consistency and reliability in judgments made I utilised stringent assessment criteria. In addition to the toolkit's focus on accessibility, it also needed to be capable of producing performances that met the current expectations of acting within the genre of psychological realism and Shakespeare. To evaluate this, I created a grading criterion based on Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) definitions of good acting in psychological realism and Nobel's (2010: 4-5) seven essential elements for performing Shakespeare. The extent to which participants achieved the criteria was measured by utilising a framework appropriate for the level of study. For the L3 participants, *Pearsons* (2020) 'BTEC Level Three Grading Parameters' were utilised. For the L5 and L7 participants *Solent University's* 'Generic Grading and Classification Criteria: Undergraduate and Postgraduate' (2022) was employed as an assessment framework.

Whilst the concept of good acting within psychological realism can be hard to define, Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) find that

> If we consider what constitutes a good acting performance, many would agree that the following elements need to be present:
>
> - A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character
> - Awareness, ease, focus, economy and clarity
> - Responsiveness and spontaneity
> - Engagement of the will and narrative drive
> - Imagination
> - Creation of emotional life and atmosphere
> - Physical and vocal embodiment of the character
> - Control and sense of perspective within the role
> - The sense of a whole, integrated person
> - Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience
> - Full expression of the content and form of language.
>
> (Gutekunst & Gillett 2021: 8)

Gutekunst and Gillett's definitions here are rooted in a Stanislavskian approach to acting and its desired outcomes. I concur with these definitions and would expect to see these qualities when assessing a performance. Whilst the list above is applicable to most contemporary performances of Shakespeare's plays there are further expectations placed on the actor as to what constitutes a good Shakespearian performance. Adrian Noble believes when working with Shakespeare there are seven essential elements which need to be addressed, these are:

- Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases and Ideas in a speech);
- Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy):
- Meter and pulse;
- Line endings;
- Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play);
- Vocabulary:
- Shape and Structure (Nobel, 2010: 4-5)

Nobel reiterates these seven elements in his most recent publication *How to Direct Shakespeare* (2022), and they are consistent with those addressed in other actor training manuals for performing Shakespeare such as: *Staging Shakespeare* (2021), *Acting Shakespeare's Language* (2015), *Speaking the Speech*: *An Actor's Guide* (2013), *Shakespeare's Advice to the Players* (2003), *Clues To Acting Shakespeare* (2000) and *Playing Shakespeare* (1984). The seven elements are also highlighted within reviews of contemporary practices such as: *Rehearsing Shakespeare: Ways of Approaching Shakespeare in Practice for Actors, Directors and Trainers* (2021), *Shakespeare in Action: 30 Theatre Makers on their Practice* (2019) and *Studying Shakespeare in Performance* (2011). They are therefore important metrics in the assessment of good acting within a Shakespeare performance and were utilised to inform my assessment criteria for the toolkit's application in conjunction with Gutekunst and Gillett's criteria for psychological realism.

For the purposes of my assessment criteria, Nobel's (2010) seven essential elements are defined as follows. Apposition is the way in which the participant addresses the contrasting of one word, phrase, sentence or idea with another, and this can occur within a single character's lines or be shared between characters in dialogue (Nobel, 2010: 14). Metaphor is also a broad criterion, encompassing the use of an array of literary devices, which covers imagery, simile, allegory and metaphors in their conventional definition (Nobel, 2010: 31). The meter is the pattern of stresses on a syllable and pulse, the number of metric feet per line. The most common meter and pulse in Shakespeare's plays is iambic pentameter, which is ten syllables per verse line divided into five metric feet, consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable (Kulick, 2021: 34). Nobel (2022: 53) defines the metric feet of a line as the Pulse, and the stresses within those metric feet as the Meter. In addition to the iambic rhythm Shakespeare, often utilises other meters within his writing, these include trochee, pyrrhic, and spondee. The trochee is a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable, pyrrhic two unstressed syllables, and spondee two stressed syllables (Kulick, 2021: 35). There are also variations in pulse, with the most common being feminine endings when an extra unstressed syllable is placed

at the end of a verse line (Berry, 2000: 78). Line endings refer to both the end of a verse line and the end of a thought. What is being assessed in my criteria is how these are used to convey the meaning of each thought as Shakespeare places the key ideas of a characters thought at the end of a verse line as well as the end of a thought (Block, 2013: 23). Word play is an assessment of how participants utilise devices in the text such as rhyme, alliteration, and assonance (Nobel, 2010: 80-97). With Shape and Structure referring to the shape of speeches and the changes present within them. The patterns of dialogue and the way scenes are structured to drive the narrative (Nobel, 2010: 121). Participants will be assessed on their recognition of these elements and how they inform decision making. In developing my assessment criteria Nobel's vocabulary element was removed. The element of Vocabulary as Nobel (2010: 98 -116) defines it, is an analysis of the use of language to make character choices. As my toolkit explores the text through practice rather than verbal reasoning this was not applicable criteria as the participants' use of language would be assessed through the Metaphor criteria. The remaining six elements Nobel proposes constitute the full expression of the content and form of language from Gutekunst and Gillett's criteria for good acting and as such this element was also removed.

The practice which formed my research was captured via video recording at all three phases. Throughout this thesis, excerpts of those recordings are presented alongside my written reflections. These are accessible via the corresponding QR codes in the chapters which follow or by visiting the website: https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site

Chapter One

The Shakespearian Actor's Text

1.1 Introduction

This chapter interrogates my hypothesis that working from the First Folio versions of Shakespeare's plays will provide the foundation for the successful combination and adaptation of both the Elizabethan acting practices and Stanislavski's 'system'. This initial phase of my action research was conducted with L3 participants. Utilising a practical workshop format, each workshop addressed a specific intervention as part of the Kemmins and McTaggart (2000: 595) Participatory Research Spiral. The first section of this chapter, Finding the Text, assesses the action research undertaken to investigate how different publications of the plays effect participants' interpretations of the characters and scenes. Building on the findings of this action research spiral, the First Folio Punctuation section of this chapter examines the conclusions drawn from my research into the application of First Folio technique, for interpreting meaning in the punctuation. The chapter concludes with the Summary of Findings, which highlights the conclusion drawn from my action research in relation to the First Folio's impact on the development of a performance.

The script - or text - is the initial point of departure in many approaches to psychological realism (Merlin, 2014: 59). In Stanislavski's 'system', the text is where the actor gathers essential information about their character and the world of the play. When defining the importance of the text to the 'system', Jean Benedetti explains that the 'investigation of the script, the clear understanding of its nature and its relation to an actor's own experience is the primary process in rehearsal from which all others follow' (Benedetti, 1982: 44). This definition positions the text as paramount to the actor's process and understanding of the role. The text also often provides the actor with

additional information and instructions on how to deliver the lines through the punctuation. This is true of both the Elizabethan acting practices and Stanislavski's 'system'. The application of Stanislavski's approach to punctuation, however, creates significant problems in applying the 'system' to Shakespeare's plays and is a key issue that my research needed to address to make the 'system' compatible.

Stanislavski explains that 'The real purpose of *punctuation marks* is to group the words in a sentence and indicate the speech rests, or pauses. They differ only in duration and character. Their character depends on the inflexion they carry' (Stanislavski, 2008: 441). Pauses and inflections when applied to Shakespeare's verse drama can have a detrimental effect to the quality of the delivery. For example, in the 'system', Stanislavski instructs actors that 'If the voice doesn't drop at the full stop, the listener won't understand that the sentence has come to an end' (Stanislavski, 2008: 414). This advice is in direct contradiction to the current practices of acting Shakespeare where it's important not 'to 'drop' the ends of the lines or give them a downward inflection' (Nobel, 2010: 69) because the thought contained within a line is often not completely formulated until the very end and therefore, if the end of a line is dropped, the conclusion of the thought is diminished and could also be missed by the audience.

When approaching the punctuation in Shakespeare's plays, there are additional considerations at to its function and application. Many theatre practitioners such as John Basil (2006), Neil Freeman (1994) and Peter Hall (2003), believe that the 1623 First Folio punctuation instructed the actors on how to deliver their lines. As it 'was for theatricality… actors must learn to approach Shakespeare's punctuation as acting punctuation rather than grammatical punctuation' (Basil, 2006: 64). Peter Hall, founder of The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), believes the First Folio text 'reveals clues for the actor, who can, with practice, 'hear' the shape of the original play in a way that is impossible with the over-punctuated texts of later editors' (Hall, 2003: 22). This refers to the subsequent publications made after the First Folio, which contain a wealth of amendments particularly to the punctuation, due to the introduction of new grammatical norms; 'by the turn of the eighteenth century all printing had to take into account new demand of grammatical and syntactical standards, standards which apply today' (Freeman, 1994: 1). Whilst the application of grammatical norms and syntactical standards are applied to all reprinted texts from the turn of the eighteenth century onwards, it has a specific impact on printed scripts intended for performance as it amends

the punctuation ability to guide the actor's delivery of the lines. To investigate the impact different versions of the text have on how they are interpreted, I began my research with an exploration of the First Folio, Quarto and *The Oxford University Press Complete Works of William Shakespeare* versions of the scripts. I chose to examine these three specific versions of the text as they have the most significant variations in the text and grammar. As will become clear through this thesis my findings supported the benefits of working from a First Folio text to aid the actors understanding of character, as the punctuation gave more clues as to the characters thought process and in some instances their physicality.

1.2 Finding the Text

Establishing the most effective text for actors to work from was paramount in adapting Stanislavski's 'system' to meet the demands of Shakespeare's plays. Stanislavski believed that 'the text presents the actor not only with words but also with a structure of actions' (Carnicke, 1998: 194). Action is one of the three fundamentals of performance in the 'system', as I identified in the previous chapter, alongside the Given Circumstances and Objectives. In addition to providing actors with a structure of actions, the text has an additional importance when approaching Shakespeare. Research conducted by Richard Flatter on The First Folio, suggests there were 'stage-directions wrought into the text itself' (Flatter, 1948: 10). Professor Tiffany Stern's research supports Flatter's beliefs, finding that due to the process in which plays were rehearsed and performed during Shakespeare's time, actors would often have to take direction from the script itself, as 'actors did not necessarily know details of the story in which they were performing until they entered on to the stage itself' (Sterns, 2004: 78). These clues for the actor are thought to exist primarily in the First Folio versions of the plays as Heminges and Condell were 'meticulous about reproducing, from the actor's point of view, the actor's version of each play, especially in the light of the acting clues that were there in the original text' (Tucker, 1990: 26). These clues exist in many forms, such as changes in writing style and use of language, with the punctuation playing a significant role in directing the actor on how to speak the lines (Sterns, 2004: 80).

Since the First Folio many of the 'potentially theatrically significant "irregularities" are "erased" by editors of modern versions of the text' (Flatter, 1948: 123). This is because:

> Editors ever since have been free with the punctuation and lineation of the first folio, assuming you need major corrections. They have changed prose to poetry, changed lines and to make some more "symmetrical" and cut out any half-lines to bunch whole speeches together to make full lines (Tucker, 1990: 26)

Though *Arden Shakespeare* general editor 'David Scott Kastan believe three of that volume's thirty-six texts were probably based on "scribal transcripts or the bookkeepers' marked playbooks" and had therefore been subject to processes of alteration, regularization, and excision before they reached the printers' (Yeats, 2012: 471). Many editors also argue that 'all the substantive changes not found in the First Folio originate no later than in the Dr. Johnsons edition of 1765, the largest number already found in the Second Folio of 1632' (Hunt, 1999: 57). These discussions of the textual manipulation and amendments often fail to address the impact these alterations to the text have for those performing Shakespeare's plays, when comparing modern editions to the First Folio (Paul, 2010: 390). The contention surrounding the First Folio not only exists within literary spaces but also the field of theatre, with opposing views within the acting industry as to the importance of working from the First Folio and its punctuation. The late RSC Director of Voice, Cicely Berry, states that the 'punctuation marks will vary according to the edition you are using; this does not matter' (Berry, 2000: 178). I however, contest Berry's standpoint on the punctuation and favour the use of the First Folio punctuation as a means of guiding learners' interpretations of the text. My research does not aim to prove the integrity of the First Folio but rather its utility in guiding a performance compared to other publications.

The 2005 *Oxford University Press Complete Works of William Shakespeare* 'was one of the most controversial Shakespeare editions of the twentieth century [which] drew on emerging paradigms in textual thinking' (Murphy, 2006: 157). Its controversy is derived from the fact the editors strove to create an edition that was a middle ground between a literary edition of the text and a theatrical edition of the text (Jowett, Montgomery, Taylor and Wells, 2005: xxxix). This is best explained in their assessment of *Hamlet* as a text in the introduction in which they explain that they 'believe the 1604 quarto represents the play Shakespeare first wrote, before it was performed, and the Folio

represents a theatrical text of the play after he had revised it. Given this belief, it would be equally logical to base an edition on either text: one the more literary, the other more theatrical' (Jowett, Montgomery, Taylor and Wells, 2005: xxxix). In addressing this duality, the editors 'have adopted emendations suggested by previous editors; at other points we offer original readings; and occasionally we revert to the original text at points where it has often been emended' (Jowett, Montgomery, Taylor and Wells, 2005: xli). In their assessment of the wealth of variation in edits available they also chose to use minimal punctuation in this edition 'working entirely from the early texts, we have tried to use comparatively light pointing which will not impose certain nuances upon the text at the expense of others' (Jowett, Montgomery, Taylor and Wells, 2005: xlii). This lightly punctuated edition, when compared to the First Folio, will play a significant role in exploring how the punctuation can be best utilised in adapting the 'system' to fit Shakespeare's texts. I have also compared these two editions to the 1597 Garrick Quarto of the text - a version believed to be replicated from an actor's memory as opposed to written by Shakespeare as addressed in the previous chapter.

I initially theorised that the First Folio would provide additional insights to the learner, as opposed to the other two publications. These additional insights in the First Folio, derived from its punctuation and presentation, could potentially make the text more accessible and allow for my adaptation of Elizabethan acting practices. To interrogate this, I began my action research with an exploration of the three texts through excerpts from two different plays, through two ninety-minute workshops called 'The Actor's Text'. The aim of this workshop was to evaluate how participants engaged with each version of the script and the different information the participants took from those versions. The first workshop focused on act two, scene three of *Romeo and Juliet.* The significance of the scene is that it has an array of changes to the meter and pulse that actors would be expected to identify through scansion, the process of identifying the rhythm of the lines and any irregularities in the iambic rhythm (Hall, 2003: 30). In this scene, both the characters of Juliet and Nurse have lines which start with a troche which is a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable (Kulick, 2022: 35). Below is an example of one of Juliet's verse lines that begins with a troche, the stressed syllables are presented in bold:

O, she is **lame**, Love's **her**ald **Should** be **thoughts**
(Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1269)

There are also examples of short lines and shared lines. Shared lines are where one character starts the line of iambic pentameter and the other finishes it, suggesting the second actor must come in quickly with their line. Short lines are where a line does not complete the full pentameter and either implies physical action or a pause (Hinds, 2015: 144–153). Below is an example of two short lines in one of Juliet's speeches, the short lines are presented in bold:

> **Where is my mother?**
> Why she is within, where should she be?
> **How oddly thou repli'st:**
> Your love says like an honest Gentleman
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1323 - 1326)

This section of text then continues to lead into a shared line between Nurse and Juliet, which is demonstrated in bold:

> **JULIET**
> Where is my mother?
> Why she is within, where should she be?
> How oddly thou repli'st:
> Your love saies like an honest Gentleman:
> **Where is your mother?**
>
> **Nurse**
> **O Gods lady dare,**
> Are you so hot? marry come up I trow,
> Is this the Poultis for my aching bones?
> Henceforward do your messages yourself.
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1323 - 1331)

In the scene, Nurse also has a section of the text where she stops speaking in verse and starts speaking in prose - 'a language which says one thing to hide another' (Block: 2012: 126). In this instance, Nurse is teasing Juliet about Romeo and saying contradictory things about his appearance and behaviour, a section of text rich in opposition. For a workshop focusing on what (if any) information could be gleamed from different versions of the texts without scansion or verbal reasoning, an excerpt with an array of devises present facilitated the most significant data gathering potential.

In the first 'Actor's Text' workshop my aim was to investigate what affect the three different versions of the scene would have on participants understanding and

delivery of the text. My specific focus was on the punctuation, presentation, and format of the three texts as demonstrated overleaf as Figure 2. The First Folio and *The Oxford University Press* versions of the text contain the same lines in this scene, however the punctuation and presentation of the lines differ as demonstrated overleaf. Whereas the Quarto version contains different text from the other two editions. In this example the difference in the presentation between the first two texts is also evident. The First Folio presents two short lines implying a pause or physical action are required to fill the remaining iambic beats of the line. *The Oxford University Press* version chose to create one complete verse line. There are also variations in the punctuation used within all three versions providing different information on how these thoughts are constructed. This was especially evident between *The Oxford University Press* and First Folio versions where the 'punctuation is altered to reflect modern grammatical norms' (Weingust, 2006: 4).

The actor's use of punctuation is essential, especially when applying Stanislavski's 'system' to the text, as Stanislavski placed great importance on knowing 'the nature of your own language and, in particular, the nature of punctuation marks' (Stanislavski, 2008: 414). In the context of the First Folio, its potential to offer additional insights also plays a significant role in the development of my toolkit. In preparation for the first workshop, I created a *Microsoft Word* document version of each text replicating the punctuation, layout, and spelling from each of the three versions. This was to ensure that all three were in the same type face and size to present the text in the same format, thereby avoiding these aspects of the texts presentation to affect the findings. These working documents can be found in the appendices at the end of this thesis; A.1 is the First Folio *Microsoft Word* document Participants received, A.2 is *The Oxford University Press* version and A.3 is the 1597 Garrick Quarto.

At the beginning of the workshop, I provided participants with a plot summary and a more detailed act summary (Appendix 4) to contextualise for the scene. Time was allotted for participants to read this information and ask any questions they had relating to the play. At this stage, none of the participants sought any further clarification. Participants were then given a First Folio version of the text and asked to initially read it through to themselves. This was followed by a practical exploration of the First Folio version punctuation, through the application of a Cicely Berry exercise designed to highlight the punctuation to actors and raise awareness of how the thought is structured (Berry, 2000: 300). When facilitating this exercise in my own teaching practice, I refer to

First Folio	The Oxford University Press	The 1597 Garrick Quarto
Now good sweet Nurse: O Lord, why lookest thou sad? Though newes, be sad, yet tell them merrily. If good thou sham'st the musicke of sweet news, By playing it to me, with so sour a face. (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1286 - 1290)	Now, good sweet nurse-O Lord, why look'st thou sad? Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily; If good, thou sham'st the music of sweet news By playing it to me with so sour a face. (Shakespeare, 2005, 2.4: 21 - 24)	Oh now she comes. Tell me gentle Nurse, What says my Love? (British Library: 2022)

Figure 2: Comparison of the Three Texts

this exercise as a 'punctuation walk'. Participants are asked to read the speech out loud 'walking briskly around the room, changing direction on every punctuation mark, commas and all' (Berry, 2000: 300). As I wanted to place extra emphasis on the punctuation, I added a variation to the exercise, asking participants to stop at each punctuation mark and then change direction and continue walking. An example of this exercise from the workshop can be viewed here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Punctuation-Walk

With the punctuation walk complete, I asked participants to reflect on what, if any, information could be taken from the punctuation. Participant A used the Nurse's lines for the exercise and stated that 'there is quite a lot of punctuation in the Nurses speech, which reflects the fact that she says do you not see, I am out of breath' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 3). Participant B, who was reading Juliet, noted that the punctuation suggested she 'goes back and forth between things' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 3). Referring to the frequency of punctuation and how she perceived this was due to indecision implied in the text. These observations showed how the punctuation can inform learners about key character information without any analysis of the text having taken place. A shared observation between the participants was that this version of the text suggested a lot of pauses to them through the amount of punctuation present. The punctuation walk was then replicated with *The Oxford University Press* version of the text. Collectively, the participants commented on the difference in the punctuation from the First Folio version - highlighting that there was less punctuation in *The Oxford University Press* text. Participant A stated 'I felt like it was better to pace it because there was less punctuation. With the other one [First Folio] it felt like it stopped quite a bit…this flowed a bit more' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 4). Additionally, participants expressed that this text felt more poetic, and the rhythm of the verse was more apparent. Participant B stated that 'this one gave more of a rhythm of natural speech, whereas the other one kind of gave more clues as to how she would be physically in the scene' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 4).

The participants' feedback, combined with my observation of the exercise, demonstrated significant differences between the two versions of the text and the information that could be taken from the punctuation. Prior to the workshop, I believed the First Folio would provide the participants with a sense of the rhythm through the punctuation, without the need to address First Folio punctuation technique. I also considered that it might draw their attention to sections and provide clues as to how to perform the role. My belief prior to the workshop was the First Folio would be experienced as 'The Actor's Text'. Whilst from my observations and the participants' experience, the First Folio provided more information for a character's development, I had not anticipated the *Oxford University Press* version would be preferential in terms of finding the rhythm of the speech. At this point in the workshop, both Participants A and C preferred the *Oxford University Press* version as they felt it gave them a better sense of the verse structure of the scene. The exercise was also applied to the 1597 Garrick Quarto text. Participant C noted that 'the punctuation was a lot more even, so saying it was a lot easier [than the First Folio] but I am not sure if I understood how she was meant to be feeling as much with this one' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 5). Participant B added 'there's a lot less detail in this one, than the other two. That doesn't really help me with the character or how to say the words' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 5). The results from this exercise clearly showed that the punctuation from the First Folio gave participants a sense of the characters' emotional and sometimes physical responses to the circumstances. Their understanding on the pauses they believed were implied by the First Folio punctuation would, however, need to be addressed. Due to the increased use of commas in the First Folio participants felt it suggested more pauses were needed in their delivery, applying this approach to the text effects the rhythm of the verse lines and how the characters thoughts were expressed in their delivery. For example, Juliet's thought, which is spread across two verse lines below:

> How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
> To say to me, that thou art out of breath?
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2:4: 1297 -1298)

If pauses were added at the commas in the first and second verse line, it would slow down the rhythm of the speech and distort the meaning, as Juliet is desperate for an answer from Nurse at this stage in the conversation and would therefore lose the sense of the thought as Juliet's urgency would not be communicated to the audience.

The participants' understanding of punctuation's purpose in performance was based on their previous studies of punctuations function within Stanislavski's 'system' which they had been taught during their BTEC, separate to my research. Their understanding of the comma was correct in relation to the principles of the 'system' as summarised by Jean Benedetti in *Stanislavski & The Actor* (1988: 88-90) the details of which are explored in greater detail in this chapter under the heading First Folio Punctuation. These findings made clear that in order to work from the First Folio text, the function of its punctuation would need to be defined as separate to modern grammatical norms and their application to a text in performance. Whilst the First Folio text provided participants with more character insights than the other two texts, they felt that the rhythm of the verse was more transparent in the two other versions, with *The Oxford University Press* text being preferable to the Quarto in providing them with a sense of the texts' rhythmic structure. Having completed this initial exploration of the three texts, I wanted participants to dissect the texts from an actor's perspective to identify if there were any other advantages or disadvantages to working from each text.

Building on these initial discoveries, I asked participants to begin a Stanislavski based round-the-table-analysis of the text. In the evolution of the 'system', Stanislavski's 'emphasis on 'round-the-table analysis' – or Mental Reconnaissance – evolved around 1904… The whole cast would sit around a table, animatedly studying and nimbly dissecting a text' (Merlin, 2007: 60). I sought to utilise this process to further explore the potential of each text. Whilst this approach to sitting, discussing and analytically dissecting the text seems antithetical to my intention of creating an embodied character-driven toolkit, a sat down analysis of the three texts was essential to identify any other impact the texts could have on learners, in addition to the punctuation. These findings would then inform my choice of script edition to be utilised within the more practical focussed toolkit. This round-the-table-analysis was not, therefore, intended as an exercise to be included in the toolkit itself.

This analysis was conducted on each of the three versions of the text, beginning with a process of breaking down and sectioning off a scene into thematic sections known as a 'Bit' for the purpose of a more detailed analysis of as scene (Carnicke, 1998: 214). Defining a 'Bit' is the process of dividing the text into smaller sections usually determined by a point at which 'the subject-matter of the dialogue changes, or where one character who was rather reactive in a scene begins to become particularly proactive' (Merlin, 2007:

72). Other factors can also determine the division of 'Bit's' such as a character's entrance or exit. Once this stage of analysis had been completed on all three texts, I asked participants for feedback on the experience. At this stage in the workshop participants found no difference in the process or information which could be obtained from the text between the First Folio and *Oxford University Press* versions. Participants believed the Quarto version was easier to break into 'Bits' as it contained less dialogue than the other two versions and was therefore easier to detect changes.

This process was followed by a discussion of the given circumstances. These are 'the circumstances which for the dramatist are supposed for us actors are imposed' (Stanislavski, 2008: 52). This discussion was informed by the details that could be gleamed from the scene as well as the plot and act summary provided at the start of the workshop. The identification of the given circumstances within the 'system' is accompanied by the defining of a character's objective in response to the circumstances, an action expressed as a verb which the actor must pursue within a given bit of a scene (Carnike, 1988: 88). This process is 'not about acquiring a whole list of facts and figures; it's about appealing to your imagination' (Merlin, 2007: 67). The details of the text found in the round the table analysis provide a framework for the learners' imagination to develop their characterisation in response to the circumstances of the play. The focus in this workshop was to examine the affect the variations in the texts had on the participants interpretation and, therefore, later performance of the scene. Reflecting on this stage of the workshops participants unanimously found the Quarto text to be 'difficult' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 7) to work with. Participant C explained 'the quarto version, because it's a lot more simplified you don't get to understand the character as much...and it's a lot harder from an actor's perspective to understand what she is feeling or how you are meant to act it' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 7) Participant A added that with the Quarto versions 'there wasn't much of a journey through the speeches, it just jumped from action to action' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 7). As explained before, the Quarto versions of most plays tend to be a 'bad text, concocted by actors who relied on their memories of the play' (Jackson, 2018: 17). This 1597 Garrick Quarto was no exception. The differences between it and the other two texts are extensive, being considerably shorter than the others, with large sections of the dialogue omitted. Participant A's assessment of the text was in line with my own, when I first read the script in preparation for this workshop. The details of the Quarto text are not sufficient to provide learners with enough information to develop their characterisation compared to the two other texts, and as such

is not a useful text to be used in conjunction with what will become my toolkit. With all participants agreeing that the Quarto was not a helpful text to work from in terms of character or scene development, the remaining workshop time was spent focusing on the First Folio and *Oxford University Press* texts.

I asked participants to perform each of the scenes influenced by the discoveries made in the textual analysis and what they believed the punctuation was suggesting about characterisation. In a side-by-side comparison of the two performances, there were significant differences in the delivery of the two texts. Participant A was guided by the punctuation and broke the thoughts up at all the punctuation marks, taking a short breath before continuing on. In the First Folio performance, she applied the appropriate stress to the lines which start with a trochee. For the performance of the *Oxford University Press* the punctuation was still observed but not all trochee's were utilised in performance, which I believe is due to the punctuation. The following excerpt from Juliet's lines, begins with a trochee:

First Folio	**The Oxford University Press**
Now good sweet Nurse: (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2:4: 1286)	Now, good sweet nurse-O Lord, why look'st thou sad? (Shakespeare, 2005, 2:4: 21)

In the First Folio there is no comma after now and in performance participants A and C who played Juliet placed the stress on 'Now' and not on 'good'. When performing *The Oxford University Press* version there is a comma after now, both participants added a slight pause after the comma and placed the stress on 'good'. This was repeated later in the scene with another example of a trochee, as shown below:

First Folio	**The Oxford University Press**
No no : but of all this I did no before (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2:4: 1311)	No,no. But of all this I did no before (Shakespeare, 2005, 2:4: 46)

With the absence of the comma between the 'No no' in the First Folio, the participants added the stress on the first 'no' whereas with *The Oxford University Press* text, the comma between the 'No, no' caused a slight pause and the stress to be placed on the second no, making the line closer to the iambic rhythm than a trochee. Participants A and C, who both played Juliet in the workshop, observed all of the punctuation marks in both texts by putting a slight pause at each mark. Whilst the *Oxford University Press* version added additional punctuation in the above examples, overall, there was less punctuation than the First Folio (See Appendix 1 and 2). The pauses added at the additional punctuation points in the First Folio therefore broke the thoughts up and led to a clearer delivery of the text from my perspective as a spectator. The *Oxford University Press* version did however lead the participants to find the stresses of the iambic rhythm of the text, which was disrupted by the punctuation in the First Folio version.

When observing the irregularities in the text, short lines were not acknowledged. The function of a short line had not been discussed or addressed in the workshop, however as it looks different on the page to the other lines, I was curious as to whether participants would approach these lines differently without instruction. Below is an example of the short lines present in the First Folio which are combined to create full verse lines in *The Oxford University Press* text:

First Folio	**The Oxford University Press**
Where is my mother? Why she is within, where should she be? How oddly thou repli'st: Your Love saies like an honest Gentleman: Where is your Mother?	Where is my mother? Why, she is within. Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest! 'Your love says like an honest gentleman " Where is your mother?" '
(Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1324-1328)	(Shakespeare, 2005, 2.4: 58-61)

As is evident above, there are significant differences in both the punctuation and presentation of these two sections of text. The First Folio presentation creates short lines on the first and third line of this excerpt. Within Shakespeare's verse short lines suggest a pause or physical is needed, as such the First Folio presentation is instructing the learner to deliver those lines followed by a pause or a physical action. With *The Oxford University Press* version, these short lines have become regularised, meaning made into complete verse lines removing these additional instructions on how to perform those

lines. In the participants' performance of the First Folio version the short lines were not approached any differently to *The Oxford University Press* version and were played as one continuous line in both instances. Another example of a short line is in an exchange between Nurse and Juliet, as shown below:

First Folio	The Oxford University Press
Nurse Have you got leave to go to shrift to day?	**Nurse** Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?
Juliet I have.	**Juliet** I have.
Nurse Then high you hence to Friar Lawrence Cell	**Nurse** Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell
(Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1333-1335)	(Shakespeare, 2005, 2.4: 66-68)

Juliet's Short line 'I have' is present in both versions and should be followed by a pause to complete the verse line, before Nurse replies, building suspense. In the First Folio performance this was observed by participant B but not in *The Oxford University Press* performance. I theorised this was due to the pace of *The Oxford University Press* performance as there was less punctuation the overall delivery was quicker and had less pauses throughout.

As addressed earlier in this chapter, another irregularity in the verse within this scene is the presence of shared lines. This is where one character starts a verse line and the other character has to be quick on their cue in order to complete the verse line. Whilst present in both texts, they manifest differently as demonstrated below:

First Folio	The Oxford University Press
Juliet Where is your mother?	**Juliet** "Where is your mother?"
Nurse O Gods lady dare,	**Nurse** O God's lady dear!
(Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1327-1328)	(Shakespeare, 2005, 2.4:61-62)

In the presentation of the shared lines, I believe the need for the two characters' lines to be treated as once verse line is clearer *The Oxford University Press* version than in the First Folio, as its orientation to the right of the page suggests it finishes the line above. When the participants performed the scene, the shared lines were observed for both texts. Participants playing Nurse completed Juliet's verse line with a quick response to their cue, however, the speed of reply to their cues was consistent throughout the entire scene. Based on this observation, I don't believe this was a result of them being led by an awareness of the shared lines through the presentation of either text, rather it was a result of their approach to performance and how quickly they responded to each other in the scene as a whole.

The final irregularity in the writing style of this scene is the Nurse's transition from verse to prose. The character predominantly speaks in verse but when talking about Romeo and teasing Juliet she switches from speaking in verse to speaking in prose. The transition from verse to prose is presented differently in both versions of the text, as shown below:

The Oxford University Press

Juliet

Is thy news good or bad? Answer to that.
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied: is't good or bad?

Nurse
Well, you have made a simple choice. You know
not how to choose a man. Romeo? No, not he; though
His face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all
men's, and for a hand and a foot and a body, though
they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare.
He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him,
as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways, wench. Serve God.
What, have you dined at home?

(Shakespeare, 2005, 2.4: 35-45)

The First Folio

Juliet

Is thy news good or bad? answer to that,
Say either, and Ile stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, ist good or bad?

Nurse

Well, you have made a simple choice, you know
not how to choose a man: Romeo, no not he though his face
be better than any mans, yet his legs excels all men's, and
for a hand, and a foote, and a body, though they be not to
be talked on, yet they are past compare: he is not the flower
of curtesie, but Ile warrant him as gentle as a lambe: Go thy
waies wench, serve God. What, have you din'd at home?

(Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.4: 1301 -1310)

In the First Folio version, the text runs longer across the page, so that when it is viewed in the context of other forms of verse lines - as shown above - it is clearly in a different format. For example, the Nurses' second line in the First Folio version finishes with 'face', which is part of her third line in *The Oxford University Press* version. The First Folio by utilising longer lines and a more evenly presented right-hand margin allows for a visual distinction between verse and prose. At the start of each new line in the First Folio version, there are also no capital letters, with the exception of the beginning of the paragraph. *The Oxford University Pr*ess version, contrastingly, presents the prose in a more uniformed way, similar to the length of a verse line with some capitals in the left-hand margin. The final line in this version of the text is presented in such a way that it could also be misinterpreted as a short verse line.

The presentation of verse and prose across texts is significantly different, however when approached in performance during this workshop the participants playing Nurse did not actively address either version of the prose text differently. Overall, *The Oxford University Pr*ess version had led to the iambic pentameter being engaged with throughout the performance, as participants had already identified that this text helped them find the underlying rhythm. As such, when the prose section of the text was performed there was a noticeable difference between participant B's performance of the verse and prose. I do however believe this is due to the prose section having more punctuation present than the

verse lines in *The Oxford University Pr*ess version. A direct comparison of the performance of both versions of the text in this section presents very little difference. Attention is only drawn to it in the *Oxford University Pr*ess performance as there have been less pauses and breaks played due to the reduced punctuation compared to the pauses and breaks added by the First Folio punctuation.

When examining the performances of the two versions of the text overall, the First Folio performance resulted in a clear delivery of the text and the dynamics of the characters' relationships, the intention behind the lines was also more apparent to me as a spectator. My findings in this initial workshop suggest that the First Folio texts could provide actors with more clues as to the delivery of the lines through the punctuation, though not to the extent which I had anticipated. By using the punctuation in the First Folio, the scene moves at a pace in keeping with normal speech and forces learners to slow down. In *An Actor's Work,* Stanislavski uses a speech from Shakespeare's *Othello* to explain that 'the inherent qualities of the punctuation marks will help calm you down and stop you rushing' (Stanislavski, 2008: 414). The First Folio punctuation does exactly that, unlike *The Oxford University Press* which has less punctuation allowing performers to increase the pace of delivery.

In order to interrogate further how the use of punctuation in the two versions of the text could affect the participants performance I conducted a second 'Actor's Text' workshop with the same participants utilising Paulina's Monologue from Act Three, Scene Two of *The Winter's Tale*. I chose this excerpt as in the First Folio version it contains every punctuation mark within the twenty-eight lines of the monologue. This workshop focused on the differences between working with the First Folio and *The Oxford University Press* versions and followed the same format as the first. Participants were given time to read the text independently and were provided with a plot and act summary to give them the basic given circumstances. I then asked participants to complete a punctuation walk followed by the textual analysis utilised in the first workshop. They then delivered a performance of the text based on the work they had conducted. My findings in this workshop were the same as the previous 'Actor's Text' workshop. Guided by the increased punctuation, all the participants delivered the First Folio text at a slower speed than *The Oxford University Press* versions, resulting in a more comprehensible delivery of dialogue, with signs of characterisation present in their

performances, through their use of pauses and inflections. The excerpt below is taken from the start of the monologue:

First Folio	**The Oxford University Press**
What studied torments (Tyrant) hast for me? What Wheels? Racks? Fires? What flaying? boiling In Leads or Oils? What old, or newer Torture Must I receive? Whose every word deserves To taste of thy most worst. Thy Tyranny (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 214-218)	What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me? What wheels, racks, fires? what flaying, boiling In leads or oils? what old or newer torture Must I receive, whose every word deserves To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny**,** (Shakespeare, 2005, 3.2: 174-178)

The First Folio version has question marks after each form of torture and there is a double space present after each question before the next, whereas *The Oxford University Press* text presents forms of torture with commas. In their response to the punctuation in performance, the participants' delivery of the monologue was more engaging to watch in the First Folio version, as it appeared Paulina was actually thinking and responding to what she is saying. Whereas the *Oxford University Press* performances present this moment as a list without the depth of meaning behind each form of torture. Below is a short excerpt of participant B performing those first few lines presented above. This demonstrates the impact the First Folio punctuation has proven to have on the development of a performance.

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Oxford-University-Press-vs-First-Folio

At the end of this workshop, participants were asked to reflect on their experience of both 'The Actor's Text' workshops and provide any feedback on their preference of text. Participant A stated that 'with the First Folio one because there was so much punctuation I had to stop more, which really interrupted the pace' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 19). Participant A viewed this as negative which had a detrimental impact on her performance, her expectations were that a Shakespeare text needs to be constantly moving with pace guided by the rhythm of the verse. She felt that the First Folio hindered her ability to find the pace of the text. From my observations, however, it was the pace with

which she performed *The Oxford University Press* text that was not as effective as it lacked the variation in tone and clarity of thought that she delivered in her First Folio performance. Whilst her stresses were in line with the iambic pentameter, the speed of delivery here was too fast and detracted from the rhythm of the verse. Participant C disagreed with A, favouring the First Folio and explaining that 'with *The Winter's Tale* one, because there are more pauses it came across that she was thinking more whereas with the other one, as there's less pauses, she's not really thinking about what she's saying' (Archer, 2020: Actor's Text 19). This view is consistent with my experience of watching the performances and how the interpretation of character was communicated through the use of the punctuation. In both workshops, these performances were the first time the participants had practically worked with these texts and as such only provide a preliminary indication of the differences between using the First Folio and *The Oxford University Press* versions of the scripts. There was a significant variation between the two and the influence the First Folio punctuation had on the participants.

The results from 'The Actor's Text' workshop therefore suggest that the First Folio is the best of the three versions tested because it aids learners in their initial encounter with the text. It serves as a means of slowing the actors down and forcing them to consider breaks within the verse drama which ultimately allows them to start with a more considered first performance of the text. At this stage though the First Folio did not appear to provide the participants with any of Shakespeare's dramaturgical intentions, or 'clues', that practitioners such as Richard Flatter (1948) have proposed. I theorised that the reason such 'clues' did not present themselves was due to the participants understanding of the punctuation's intended purpose, from their previous studies outside of the workshops. The First Folio punctuation 'unlike much modern punctuation, serves a double function, one dealing with the formation of thought, the other with the speaking of it' (Freeman, 1998: xix). The First Folio therefore requires a specific understanding of Elizabethan literary and theatrical practices to be properly understood.

1.3 First Folio Punctuation

The punctuation in the First Folio has its own set of rules which differ from the contemporary handling of punctuation. This is due to the fact that in the First Folio 'what was on the printed page was not grammar, but a representation of the rhetorical

process…each sentence would represent a new intellectual and emotional stage of a rhetorical argument' (Freeman, 1998: xvii). This form of punctuation is referred to as rhetorical punctuation as it is used to direct the speaking in the delivery of the rhetoric expressed by the character. Patrick Tucker believes the merit in working from the First Folio punctuation lies in the belief that 'the Folio punctuation divides the speeches into actor thoughts; these are not necessarily grammatical or even logical, but they are actable' (2016, Folio Punctuation). When referencing the punctuation in the First Folio, John Basil proposes that 'Actors must learn to approach Shakespeare punctuation as acting punctuation rather than grammatical punctuation' (Basil, 2006: 64). The use of the rhetorical punctuation from the First Folio is a significant focus of First Folio technique and utilising it as acting punctuation requires learners to understand the new set of rules assigned to the punctuation marks. Using the punctuation as thought markers could therefore help learners to clearly define the characters thought process. In sections of text where one thought runs across multiple verse lines, this could provide a framework for breaking the text down into sub-sections of the thought, facilitating a greater clarity in how the characters thinking is evolving. The punctuation also has the potential to provide learners with clues on the intended delivery. As detailed in the previous section above, evidence of this began to emerge in the previous 'Actor's Text' series of workshops, though every punctuation mark was utilised in the same manner as a pausing point.

The participants' understanding of punctuation in the 'Actor's Text' series of workshops was based on its function within Stanislavski's 'system'. Benedetti (1998: 88-89) defines each punctuation mark's function in the 'system' and what the actor should do vocally in response to them. He explains the comma indicates a slight pause with a rise in pitch to signify that the thought is not finished and will resume after the pause, whilst a full stop signifies the end of a thought and is accompanied by a drop in the voice. The question mark, then, signifies the character's need for a response and is expressed through a rise in pitch based on the strength of that need. The colon and semicolon are addressed in the same way, signifying a thought is almost completed and require a pitch which is approximated as being between that used for the comma and the full stop. Finally, Benedetti explains that the exclamation mark is used for emphasis of a passionate feeling, though no vocal instructions are assigned to its delivery (Benedetti, 1998: 88-89).

When compared to First Folio technique there are significant differences in how the actor should respond to the punctuation vocally and in their use of pauses (Freeman,

1994: 78). First Folio punctuation is divided into two categories: major and minor. The major punctuation is used to define the character's separate thoughts and consists of the full stop, semicolon, colon, exclamation mark and question mark (Freeman, 1998: xxi). The minor punctuation consists of the comma and parenthesis. The importance of this second subcategory reflects the way that, as Freeman sees it, Elizabethans were taught to constantly modify and evolve a thought; elaborating on what was just said, increasing the emotional connection to the thought or at times denouncing the thought that was evolving and providing an alternative view (Freeman, 1998: xix). The minor punctuation, therefore, instructs the actor that what follows is a modification to the character's current thought process, usually an addition to the thought or an increase in the intensity of the emotion behind the thought. Whilst the First Folio punctuation is broken down into two categories, each mark has its own set of rules that the learner must utilise in First Folio technique. To explore how effective they could be in realising a performance, I conducted two workshops called 'Working the Text'. These workshops focused on applying the rules of First Folio punctuation to Paulina's monologue from act three, scene two of *The Winter's Tale*. As with the second 'Actor's Text' workshop, I selected this monologue as it makes use of all major and minor punctuation within twenty-eight lines, which allowed for a focused examination of how the punctuation can be used. Participants had some exposure to this monologue in the previous workshop, though this was minimal. In the previous workshop they explored the punctuation based on a Stanislavskian understanding of its function, which they had studied during their BTEC, independently of my action research workshops. Evidence of them applying this was limited though, as all punctuation marks appeared to be treated equally.

As the focus of the 'Working the Text' workshop was on applying this element of First Folio technique to a monologue, I worked with each participant individually. In these workshops, I drew on the definitions and directions for how to use First Folio punctuation as outlined by John Basil (2006: 64 -86) and Neil Freeman (1994: 79 -110). Patrick Tucker also provides a similar approach to the First Folio punctuation in *Secrets of Acting Shakespeare* (2016: The Secrets Explained and Expanded), though he provides an alternative function for the semicolon. Freeman (1994: 79-96), Basil (2006: 64 -86), Block (2013: 240-259), and Tucker (2016: The Secrets Explained and Expanded) all contextualise the First Folio punctuation as a means of analysing the text and drawing conclusions to inform an actor's performance rather than providing a practical means of embodying the text through the punctuation.

For the development of the toolkit, I aimed to take this theoretical approach to the punctuation and centre it in a practical-first approach to working with the text. To do so, I devised a means of addressing the punctuation through performance rather than by analysing it on the page. I incorporated the meaning of the punctuation with the placement and use of breath the Elizabethans would have associated with them. I drew on Richard Mulcaster's *The Elematarie* (1582: 148 -150), which provides historically accurate instruction as to the approximate length of a breath and duration of pause that should accompany each punctuation mark. In actor training, significant focus is placed on the breath as it is the foundation of sound production, integral to speech, the manipulation and projection of sound (Houseman, 2002: 98). The study of breathing in acting Shakespeare has additional considerations as 'when working on classical text where thoughts are long and often span a number of lines; if we break that span we do not honour the meaning… we have to see it as the physical life of a thought, so that we conceive the breath and the thought as one' (Berry, 2000: 25 -26). As Berry (2000: 25 -28) explains, the character's thought is only successfully communicated through the appropriate use of the actor's breath to carry the sense of the verse line. Beyond the technical placement of breath to communicate meaning, the breath also connects the speaker to the emotional and intellectual content they deliver 'Breath is the guiding energy. But breath also connects us to our emotional intellectual right to speak' (Rodenburgh, 1993: 80). The connection between breath and emotion is particularly significant in Shakespeare's post plague work, as Block explains (Block, 2015: 48), from this point forward Shakespeare constructed the rhythm of the speech to reflect the characters emotional states.

I theorised that linking the punctuation's meaning to breath could form an initial way of defining the character's separate thoughts, whilst also providing learners with clues as to the motivations behind the delivery of the lines with minimal textual analysis. In doing so, this would provide an accessible means of interpreting the text through practice, by exploring the relationship between breath and punctuation, thereby simplifying the process of engaging with the text. To test this theory, I initially provided participants with highlighter pens of different colours and asked each to go through the text and assign each punctuation mark with a specific colour. Full stops in pink, commas in blue, and semicolons in green, for example. As the workshop would explore each punctuation mark's function and relationship with the participant's breath, I implemented

the colour coding of punctuation to make the visual identification of the different punctuation more accessible in performance.

The workshop began with each participant performing the text, based on their limited understanding of it, to provide a point of comparison for the exercises which followed. I then asked participants to initially perform the speech grouping together the full stop, question mark and exclamation mark. This was because in any approach to the text, 'Shakespeare's thoughts are not complete until they reach an end stop: a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point' (Basil, 2006: 67). When they arrived at one of these three marks, they were asked to take a deep breath, making the conscious decision that they were ending a thought before starting a new one with the following line in the text. These signifiers of the end of a thought are also to 'help our breath at full' (Mulcaster, 1852: 149). My theory was that in doing this exercise, it would help separate the thoughts out for the participants and give a sense of distinction between different intentions of each line.

The difference between these and their first performance at the beginning of the workshop were significant across all four participants. By adding a full breath at these punctuation marks, and then making a conscious decision that they were beginning a new thought following that point, it added a clarity and vocal variation in the delivery of lines. It also made the separation of the character's thoughts obvious from my perspective as an observer / audience member as demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Breathing-into-a-New-Thought

Following this exercise, I asked participants to focus their attention on the colon, which according to Basil 'indicates that the character's next turn of thought is going to be more articulate, a better version of the same thought or a new twist. The character is honing the logic […] as an actor, internally you need to think "therefore" whenever you see a colon'' (2006: 74). The use of actively thinking the word 'therefore' at the presence of each colon is a helpful way of capturing the essence of what the punctuation mark

requires of the learner. To test this, I asked participants to take a shorter breath at the colon, think ‘therefore’, and then deliver the sentence that followed with the understanding that it was a more articulate summing up of what has just been said. The inclusion of this practice was unanimously successful with greater clarity in expression evidenced by all four participants. The video below is a short excerpt demonstrating participant C applying the intention of ‘therfore’ at the colons:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/The-Colon-Therefore

The participants’ first performance in this workshop reflected limited changes in the inflection and pace of delivery. Following the exercises applied to the text at this stage, however, there was a greater variety of tone and inflection present within their performances which suggested to me that their understanding of what was being said was evolving through these exercises, as it was in keeping with the emotional state of the character and the context of the lines delivered. My observations here were also reflected in the participants’ own reflection of their experience. Participant B stated that ‘this was really helpful, usually I would just think of them [a colon] as like, a fancy comma, and just ignore it a little bit, but now knowing there’s a reason behind it makes it more understandable’ (Archer, 2020: F1 Tec B). This analysis of her normal use of the colon is also in keeping with the Stanislavskian approach to the colon, which calls for it to be treated in a similar manner to a comma (Benedetti, 1998: 88). Using a colon to guide her understanding of the text’s meaning did make a significant impact on the tone and speed of her delivery around these lines. Participant A also found these exercises had impact on her understanding. She commented that ‘the idea of “therefore” really helped. She has had this massive outburst and now she’s thinking again’ (Archer, 2020: F1 Tec A). This observation was significant, as it demonstrated that this simple exercise had allowed the participant to make character decisions and an analysis of this section of the speech without having the aid of verbal reasoning or detailed textual analysis.

The workshop continued with an exploration of the comma’s function. Commas ‘are springboards – like miniature trampolines – to keep your thoughts moving forward...

commas don't indicate places to pause and think' (Basil, 2006: 71-72). To address this in practice, I asked participants to consider the comma as in indication that they were building a thought and increase the energy of their delivery after each comma. This instruction was designed to make the process of addressing the comma in performance as simple as the exercises which had preceded it, such as breathing at a full stop or saying 'therefore' at a colon. I also asked Participants to only take a breath at a comma if they felt it necessary to have sufficient breath for the rest of the thought, as the comma's function was to 'help our breath a *little'* (Mulcaster, 1852: 149). Building on this I also instructed that once they reached a major punctuation mark, denoting a new thought, they should bring the energy back down and begin the process of building at the commas again as they had moved to a new thought.

In practice, this application of the comma had limited success with participant D, who was the first to apply this approach to the punctuation, in the following section of the text:

> whereof I reckon
> The casting forth to crows, thy baby-daughter,
> To be or none, or little
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 229-231)

It seemed that the application of commas as springboard propelling the thought forward aided participant D in delivering the text with the urgency of the emerging thoughts. However, at other times, it led to a rushed delivery of the lines. As such, there was no consistency in its effect on her performance as evidenced in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/The-Comma

I theorised that this might be due to a breath control issue, and a feeling that, as she wasn't supposed to breathe at a comma, she needed to rush to the major punctuation, which had been addressed earlier in the workshop. Given that a thought in Shakespeare, from the start of a sentence to the major punctuation, can traverse six or more verse lines,

these springboards will at times also need to be accompanied by an additional, intermediary, breath. As such, after she had conducted the exercise, I addressed the breath element of the instruction again, emphasising that one can be taken, if necessary, at a comma or the end of a verse line. I then asked that she repeat the exercise. Adding this additional instruction led to a better use of the comma to inform her performance. By making participant D feel that she could also take a breath when needed at a comma, the energy of delivery increased at each one, but the performance didn't feel like the participant was rushing to the end of a thought. This was an important discovery, in terms of how my instructions will need to be phrased when carrying this forward into my toolkit. The instructions to learners will need to define the function of the comma whilst also ensuing learners have the freedom to breathe when necessary. To maintain the rhythm of the verse however, they will need to be instructed to take any additional breaths at the end of a verse line or a comma.

The workshop continued with an exploration of semicolons, which, according to Basil, indicate 'that the character's thoughts are rushing and gushing forward. The next turn of thought is more impassioned' (Basil, 2006: 73). As with the colon, Mulcaster doesn't comment of the breath length needed for a semicolon. As such, I utilised my own judgment based on its function and applied the same rules as a comma. To facilitate the urgency of thought that a semicolon indicates, I instructed participants to increase the speed of their delivery to match the intensity of the rushing thought. In Paulina's monologue there is only one semicolon as shown below:

> Thou wouldst have poison'd good Camillo's Honour,
> To have him kill a King: poor Trespasses,
> More monstrous standing by: whereof I reckon
> The casting forth to Crows, thy Baby-daughter,
> To be or none, or little; though a Devil
> Would have shed water out of fire, ere don't:
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 227-233)

Whilst there was an increase in energy here by all four participants, the semicolon occurs in a thought which has been preceded by three commas, as shown above. With the participants already increasing their energy at the commas, the difference at the semicolon wasn't significant. I concluded that this would need further analysis in a later workshop, with a reconsideration of how this could be addressed in practice.

The final punctuation mark explored in this workshop was parenthesis. Basil explains that 'frankly, the list of reasons why parentheses are used may be endless. Technically, you need to change your delivery, so the audience gets how different the moment is' (Basil, 2006: 77). In analysing the First Folio texts, I came to realise that often what is contained in parenthesis is either something of great importance or a thought which relates to the main line of enquiry the character is pursuing but is a slight deviation. They address this deviation before the character then returns to the thought, they were originally expressing. For example, in *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, during one of Hamlet's monologues:

> A little Month, or ere those shoes were old,
> With which she followed my poor Father's body
> Like *Niobe*, all tears. Why she, even she.
> (O Heaven! A beast that wants discourse of Reason
> Would have mourn'd longer) married with my Uncle
> My Father's brother: but no more like my Father
> Then I to Hercules. Within a Month?
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.2: 317-343)

Hamlet is reflecting on how little time has passed between his father's death and his mother marrying his uncle. The thought in parenthesis here is a slight deviation from the main line of enquiry as Hamlet begins to curse his mother and compare her short period of morning to that of a wild animal. Following this thought in parentheses Hamlet returns to his original thought.

Alternatively, within the First Folio, if a single word is contained within parenthesises, it is an indication of the importance of that word in shaping the intention of the line. In *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, during one of Mark Antony's monologues:

> I come not (Friends) to steal away your hearts,
> I am no Orator, as Brutus is
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.1: 541)

In the context of the scene, Mark Antony is trying to persuade a hostile audience that he is part of their community and inspire revolution against Caesar's murderers. By adding additional emphasis to the word 'Friends' in performance it adds further adds to the character positioning himself as one with the people.

Within Paulina's monologue, both functions of the parentheses are evidenced. The first use of parenthesis is for a single word '(Tyrant)' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 214) which Paulina uses to address the King before challenging him about how he will torture her for speaking her mind. The subsequent three uses of parentheses are for slight deviations in what Paulina is saying that would be removed and the thoughts either side of those in parenthesis would flow together (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 214-235). I instructed the participants to make an acting choice at the point of each – to do something *different* with the content contained inside parenthesis. This could be either emphasise what's contained in each or treat it like a 'sidebar'. The term 'sidebar', whilst taken from legal terminology, has become a neologism, and was in frequent use at the college amongst the L3 participants in this study as a way to denote that they had just thought of something that needed to be addressed and would return to their previous point in a moment. I chose to use 'sidebar' for accessibility in the instructions, as I felt the participants would have greater clarity of how to approach the line with this in mind. When this was added, participants approached the parentheses differently, distinguishing the lines in parenthesis from the rest of the text. From the perspective of an audience member, participant A made the most compelling use of this exercise. They approached each section in parenthesis differently, creating more variation in the vocal delivery of the text and separating those sections out as clearly different thoughts. Participant C employed a similar approach, though she was subtle in the distinction, she still clearly made those thoughts different to the rest of the text. Participant D chose to emphasise the sections in parenthesis, making each one a bolder statement than what proceeded and followed it. Below is the video footage of participant A performance to demonstrate this exercises application:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Parenthesis

The final element of First Folio technique employed in this workshop was the focus on capital letters, in the First Folio, capital letters have a multitude of purposes (Basil, 2006: 43). By looking at the first word of every verse line, the learner can

determine whether the text is in verse or prose with the presence or absence of a capital letter. This can then be further confirmed by identifying an even or uneven right-hand margin. This is significant to the interpretation of the character as verse reflects a character's heightened emotional state whereas prose is used primarily to impart information, it can also be a signifier of comedy or disguise (Basil, 2006: 43 -44). By identifying whether the text is in verse, the learner can therefore begin to make some judgments about the character and the situation, simply by looking at the presentation of the text on the page. I explained these visual clues to participants, and what information about their character could potentially be gleamed from capital letters. The participants unanimously found this to be an interesting prospect. Participant C stated that 'Just from the capital letters, I noticed a massive difference, I didn't realise how much Shakespeare actually gives you' (Archer, 2020: F1 Tec C). In practice, it didn't appear to have any extra effect on the participants' performances, though by this point they had already made significant discoveries through the other punctuation exercises as evidenced in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Capitals-as-Clues

Despite these findings, I believed, this aspect of First Folio technique, *could* play a more significant role in the learners first encounter with the text and therefore provide them with additional help initially understanding the text if applied earlier in the process. This theory was tested with the same L3 participants on a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which will be addressed in Chapter Three: Tray 1: The First Encounter.

The other function of capital letters in the First Folio is as a clue to add emphasis on a word, or as Basil eloquently summarises - 'Capitals as Spoken Bombs' (Basil, 2006: 37). The idea being that words with capital letters need extra emphasis and reflect a need to make an impact on delivery. In practice, the participants utilised this notion to significant effect, drawing out additional meaning in the lines through emphasising the words that were capitalised by stressing the word and increasing the volume of delivery. In reflecting on this, Participant A stated that 'I found the capital letters the most helpful,

I found that [it] brought new meaning to it that I hadn't thought of before, like emphasising [the word] "girls"' (Archer, 2020: F1 Tec A). Her experience of this was also reflected in her performance, which was enhanced by the emphasis of those words, drawing attention to thoughts which she had previously rushed through. Below is participant D performance of the monologue with additional emphasis placed at the capital letters:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Capitals-for-Emphasis

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to disregard actively applying the rules of each piece of punctuation to their performances and perform the monologue informed by that work but with a focus on their objective. These final performances were considerably improved from those at the start of the workshop, which was only twenty minutes per participant. I had not anticipated how significant these rules applied to the punctuation would be in realising a performance. The QR code below leads to a video of participant D's first performance followed by their final performance in this workshop to demonstrate the final results of this workshop. This has been captioned with the formatting of the First Folio text and punctuation to demonstrate when and how First Folio technique is being implemented in the text. Each caption on screen represents a single verse line:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/First-Folio-Technique

The techniques applied in this workshop proved to be significant in accessing many layers of meaning within the text, without the need for textual analysis and verbal reasoning. All four participants delivered a considerably more engaging and compelling performance after the application of these punctuation rules. Their performances reflected an appropriate emotional and intellectual presentation of the text in response to the

character within the given circumstances, with a determined pursuit of the objective. The techniques applied in this workshop proved to be significant in accessing many layers of meaning within the text, without the need for textual analysis and verbal reasoning. All four participants delivered a considerably more engaging and compelling performance after the application of these punctuation rules. Their performances reflected an appropriate emotional and intellectual presentation of the text in response to the character within the given circumstances, with a determined pursuit of the objective.

I also concluded that the way I tested these principles of First Folio technique needed amendment. I observed that layering punctuation exercises on top of punctuation exercises appeared to be a daunting prospect to participants in the workshop. Participant D made a final comment which related to my concerns stating 'It was very helpful, I thought it was going to be hard, when we got to like the second or third layer in my head I was like, oh this is getting hard now, but then by the end. I don't know if I had gotten use[d] to it but it didn't feel as overwhelming as I thought it was going to be' (Archer, 2020: F1 Tec D). Despite her reflections, I had concerns relating to the accessibility of layering these punctuation exercises one after the other. Whilst the instructions behind the punctuation exercises are simple and accessible, often linking breath and intention to a specific piece of punctuation, the clues learners are taking are visual, and rooted in the printed text. Intersecting these with other practical exercises that are less reliant on continual concentration to small punctuation marks on the page might increase how accessible these exercises are when experienced as part of the toolkit.

This workshop solidified my belief that the First Folio is an actors' text and should be the version of the plays from which the Toolkit is applied. The practical application of the punctuation rules led to a considerable improvement in all four performances within a twenty-minute workshop, but these principles could be applied in a different manner and implemented as part of a more practical exercise or tool. From my observations, the separation of thoughts in performance from the major punctuation was the most important factor in improving the participants' performances. The pause between thoughts added depth and clarity to the delivery, and the clear separation of thoughts in this way also allowed the participants to find shifts in the tone and thought process of the character. I was concerned, however, that the focus on breath in relation to punctuation marks was a technical requirement of the performance, rather than the character led approach to the text I intended to develop. The pauses created by the length of breath however, posed an

alternative line of enquiry to pursue. Pauses play a significant role in Stanislavski's 'system', which as addressed in the previous chapter, cannot be directly applied to Shakespeare. I theorised that the framework Stanislavski uses to address pauses in his 'system' could be adapted to meet the demands of Shakespeare's plays, by merging it with First Folio technique. To examine this relationship, I conducted a series of workshops focusing on the application of pauses, which is addressed in Chapter Three: Developing the Toolkit.

1.4 Summary of Findings

Participants unanimously found the Quarto versions of the text to be challenging to work from, providing them with a limited understanding of what was unfolding in the scene and character detail. Initially, participants found the *Oxford University Press* (2005) version of the text to be helpful in facilitating what they believed to be the rhythm of the text. Some participants considered the First Folio to be helpful in conveying the characters' physical state through the punctuation, such as the Nurse being out of breath when she enters the scene (Shakespeare, 2001a: 661). When participants were provided with the rules associated with the First Folio punctuation (Basil, 2006: 64 -78), their performances were significantly improved. The emotional life of the character began to develop, building a sense of reality in relation to the given circumstances. The association with breath and punctuation, however, complicated the tools developed for addressing the First Folio punctuation and I believed that an alternative approach was required. The amendments I developed in response to this are explored in Chapter Three: Developing the Toolkit. As the First Folio and principles drawn from its rhetorical punctuation proved to be an appropriate foundation for creating a more accessible means of approaching the text, I continued my research with an exploration of Elizabethan acting practices. Chapter Two: Elizabethan Acting Practices examines how the performative approaches Shakespeare's actors would have applied to their performances can be adapted and implemented to make a practice first, character- driven approach to the text, when working from the First Folio.

Chapter Two
Elizabethan Acting Practices

2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the findings of my action research with L3 participants into the application and adaptation of practices which were fundamental to Elizabethan theatre. My findings addressed in the previous chapter supported my hypothesis that there is a benefit to working from the First Folio, as its punctuation provided a means of creating an accessible and practical way of engaging with the text in performance. As the First Folio texts were written for the Elizabethan theatre tradition, I theorised that utilising aspects of its conventions and practices might further aid the practice-first approach I aimed to create through my toolkit. Contemporary theatre practitioners who utilise aspects of the Elizabethan acting tradition refer to this method as Original Practice, aspects of which are implemented by theatre companies such as The American Shakespeare Centre (Lenhardt, 2012: 449), The Atlanta Shakespeare Company *(2021)* and The New Renaissance Theatre Company (2020). As explained in the introduction, the Elizabethan actor did not rehearse as a contemporary actor would, nor would they receive the entire script. Rather, they would be given a cue script which contained their lines and the two to three words which cued them into speak, enter, or exit. (Lenhard, 2012: 449).

The cue script and the punctuation of the First Folio play the most significant role in the application of Original Practice in contemporary theatre (Weingust, 2006: 137 - 144). These aspects of Original Practice are often accompanied by coaching with actors to address the demands of the verse drama (Tucker, 2002: 30 Secrets). During his research into the practices of Shakespeare's theatre, Patrick Tucker:

> learned that actors could, in fact, perform whole Shakespeare plays in this manner if the actors paid close attention to the cues offered in the play's text. The performances were spontaneous because the actors were making and reacting to discovery after discovery (Robbins, 2005: 65)

The spontaneity Tucker discovered has parallels with the aims of Stanislavski's 'system', with the actors required to listen and respond 'genuinely' to the other actor. Tucker's findings are also supported by the conclusion drawn by Don Weingust (2006) in his research into First Folio technique and Original Practice, in which Weingust found that cue script work brought 'actors into a more immediate encounter with the text than they might otherwise enjoy' (Weingust, 2006: 8). This immediacy of engagement with the text is central to the aims of my character-driven methodology. As such, I sought to explore the application of cue scripts, in place of a full script, as a learner's first encounter with the text. Stanislavski's methodology 'is geared towards putting you in the strongest possible place-physically, imaginatively, emotionally and vocally-to listen, listen, listen, and from that true listening will rise inspiration' (Merlin, 2007: 47). I posit that by encountering some of the text through listening and responding, the learners are engaging with the text and the ethos of the 'system' simultaneously. As will become clear through this chapter, this cue script approach proved to be a highly effective means for learners to encounter the text. It facilitated the intended listening and responding I sought participants to achieve, situating their experience of the scene in a practical exploration of the text.

Accompanying the use of cue script performances, this chapter also analyses my research into the application of the Elizabethan acting practice of passionating. Actors in Elizabethan theatre would be instructed to 'play passions', or emotions, and would analyse the text 'through' these passions. As such, 'the actor had only to recognise which emotion was indicated in the text to know how to play it' (Stern, 2006: 80) I theorised that focusing exploration on the characters' emotions could help learners to find the meter and pulse of a speech without the need for scansion, the practice of identifying stressed and unstressed syllables (Hinds, 2015: 62). In addition to the performance of emotions being central to Elizabethan acting, it is theorised that while writing *The Rape of Lucrece* Shakespeare began exploring the connection between emotion and how one speaks (Block, 2013: 48). Between 1593 and 1594 the plague forced the closure of London theatres. So, instead of playwriting, Shakespeare wrote his two long poems: *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. Following this, Shakespeare's writing evolved - as all

plays written after *The Rape of Lucrece* have an entirely different verse form, amending his end-stopped verse from his previous works to a form that reflected the emotion's influence on speech (Block, 2013: 48). During my action research workshops, passionating proved to be an effective means of guiding participants in their use of pulse. Whilst not a complete substitution for scansion, it created a primary means of addressing rhythm which can be built upon with further tools.

2.2 Original Practice vs Contemporary Practice

To investigate the application of cue scripts as a means of first encountering the text, I conducted two workshops called 'Original Practice vs Contemporary Practice'. The workshops compared working with a cue script to the current twenty-first century convention of working with a complete script. The first experiment focused on Act Three, Scene Two of *As You Like It*. I initially utilised *As You Like It* because the play is predominantly written in prose – almost 60% (Rokison-Woodall, 2021: 29). By initially testing the methodology on prose I could explore the principle of working with a cue script in its simplest form, before adding the complications of verse to the participant's process. This method of approaching the text also needed to be equally applicable to both forms of writing as Shakespeare's later plays tend to switch between verse and prose. Current literature around working from cue scripts focuses on the verse elements of Shakespeare's plays and 'by the time Shakespeare came to write *As You Like It,* he was becoming increasingly flexible in his employment of verse and prose, mixing the two mediums within a single scene and within the language of a particular character' (Rokison-Woodall, 2021: 29). As such, working from a cue script needs to be as applicable for both Shakespeare's verse and prose if it is to be utilised within what will become my toolkit.

I began the first 'Original Practice vs Contemporary Practice' workshop by providing participants with both a plot summary and a more detailed act summary to provide context for the play and the section they would be focusing on. These were adapted from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's (2020) synopsis and plot resources. This contextual introduction was not an aspect of Original Practice. However, I believed that supplying this introductory information would equip participants with crucial context to the piece - which, in a Stanislavskian approach, is essential as the actor should always have an

understanding of the given circumstances of their character. Participants were also provided with a cue script, which I had created for both the characters of Celia and Rosalind based on the punctuation of the First Folio. A one-page excerpt from Rosalind's cue script is demonstrated below:

***As You Like It* Act 3 Scene 2**
Rosalind Cue Script

CELIA
hear these verses?

ROSALIND
O yes, I heard them all, and more too, for some
of them had in them more feet than the Verses would
bear.

CELIA
bear the verses.

ROSALIND
I, but the feet were lame, and could not bear
themselves without the verse, and therefore stood lame-
ly in the verse.

CELIA
upon these trees?

ROSALIND
I was seven of the nine days out of the wonder,
before you came: for look here what I found on a
palm tree; I was never so be-rhymed since Pythagoras' time
that I was an Irish Rat, which I can hardly remember.

CELIA
hath done this?

ROSALIND
Is it a man?

CELIA
change you colour?

ROSALIND
I prithee who?

CELIA
and so encounter.

ROSALIND
Nay, but who is it?

CELIA
Is it possible?

Initially, participants were asked to consider what their objectives might be based on their cue script. This was the only Stanislavski-based methodology that participants were asked to apply to the text. They were then instructed to perform the scene playing their objectives, whilst listening and responding to each other. Based on my observation of the scene, all four participants who took part in this workshop appeared to be genuinely listening and responding to one another based on the way they interacted. They each demonstrated aspects of responsiveness and spontaneity and focus from the good acting criteria posed by Gutekunst and Gillett (2021), as demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Cue-Script-Performance

Interestingly, participants were also speaking at a pace consistent with normal conversation. Whilst not demonstrating any of Nobel's (2010) essential criteria for performing Shakespeare, the text was easy to interpret from my observations as their audience. Physically, though, there was no specific embodiment of character by participants, and they stayed in the same position throughout. The physical embodiment of the role at this point was becoming a concern for me, as this finding had been consistent across several of the workshops conducted. I was, however, conscious that at this stage of my research thatI had placed significant focus on verbal action, with the content of the workshops centred on the text, with some regard for the character's inner action. However, I had not focused on approaching the scenes through physical action. At this point in my research movement was only utilised in the *Romeo and Juliet* scene, which had initially been interrogated through Stanislavski's early round the table analysis (see Chapter 1, section 1.2). In this scene from *As You Like It*, it appeared that participants focused on the exchange of dialogue- verbal action - without consideration of any physical action. To address my concerns, I would need to develop exercises which placed the participants' focus on their physical actions, as the initial development of the toolkit with the L3 participants was unable to provide a means of addressing these concerns – as will become clear in the next chapter. The solution to the physical characterisation

problem was discovered with the L7 participants and is addressed in Chapter Four, section 4.5.

The L3 participants in this first 'Original Practice vs Contemporary Practice' workshop were asked to give feedback on their experience of working with a cue script. Participant C stated:

> I found it ten times more difficult [than working with a complete text] initially, but you do end up listening more to what the other person is saying. With this I am understanding it more, whereas with a normal script, like, I would just be looking at focusing on my lines. Whereas, here, I was listening more to what you were saying (Archer, 2020: Cue Script 2)

Participant D added 'It was more like a conversation, without predicting what the other person is going to say, it felt more natural in a way, the emotions of what you portray are actually what you would in that situation' (Archer, 2020: Cue Script 2). This feedback from the participants, and my own observations, demonstrated that the cue scripts could provide a more natural approach to working with the plays as it focused their attention on listening and responding, experiencing the text as they would a conversation. It provided a means of limiting the amount of text each participant had to decipher, initially practically encountering the entire scene 'on their feet', rather than on the page. It also made listening and responding a priority as participants couldn't focus on their scripts when not speaking.

To compare the process against a conventional contemporary approach, participants were then provided with a complete scene from Act One, Scene Three of *As You Like It.* They were given both sides of the conversation this time, still using First Folio punctuation. Participants were again asked to consider their objectives before performing the scene. The speed of the dialogue delivery in this scene was considerably faster and at times difficult to comprehend from my perspective as their audience. I interpreted that as an indication that they were more inclined to read the script out loud rather than trying to listen and respond, with no regard for exchanging the dialogue. It appeared as though they were focused on the script in their hands rather than the other performer opposite them as demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Full-Script-Performance

With this full text performance, the participants experienced the same physical blocks as with the cue script; there was little physical characterisation and they appeared to focus on saying the *words* of the script instead of fully considering the scene itself. At this stage, I deliberated on the limitations of this approach as a physically limiting methodology. I was, however, conscious that – at L3 – the participants had limited exposure to other ways of working with text beyond a Stanislavskian approach, rooted in his early principles of the 'system'. Over the course of their studies, when working on a text, the physical characterisation developed later in the process as initially, they placed their focus on the lines and the corresponding verbal action. Once the toolkit was ready for testing with the L7 Participants, I was eager to interrogate whether their physical embodiment of the role occurred earlier in the process, or whether the limitations were imposed by the tools (this is addressed in Chapter Four, section 4.5).

When I asked the L3 participants to compare the experience of working with a cue script to working with the full scene, Participant A began her reflections with the full script with,

> because there is more script here, I found it easier to understand what was going on in the scene because there was more context. But then, on the other hand I felt like I was just reading the script and not really listening to what was being said. I was just waiting for my next line (Archer, 2020: Cue Script 4).

Participant D felt that 'it was nice to know a little bit more beforehand, but at the same time I did feel as though I was following the lines instead of listening to her' (Archer, 2020: Cue Script 3). Their reflections presented a potential limitation for the inclusion of cue scripts in my toolkit. As accessibility is the focus of the toolkit, participant A's experience of finding the full scene easier to understand than the cue script would suggest that a full script is the more accessible approach. The difference in initial performances, however, showed an advantage in working from a cue script, as the participants appeared to engage more with the text and speak at a slower pace whilst listening and responding to each other. Whereas I would consider their performance of the full text of the scene as

a ‘reading’ of the scene more than a first performance. The video below demonstrates participant C and D initially working from a cue script, followed by a full scene script. The difference in their attention and interactions are exemplified in these excerpts:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Original-Practice-vs-Contemporary-Practice

The results of this workshop showed the potential benefits of working from a cue script in the first encounter with a text. From my observations, the performance of the scene using a cue script was intelligible and resulted in a more engaging performance than working from a whole script. The early stages of engagement with the text were superior to that of a full text. The participants’ experience, however, indicated that the cue script and a summary of the play are not the most effective combination of information to make the text more accessible to learners. As I continue to highlight, the focus of my toolkit is accessibility. However, being engaged in the performance of the text from the first encounter with it is paramount to the way in which learners engage with the requirements of the text through practice rather than verbal reasoning. In order to explore how the accessibility of the cue scripts could be improved, I conducted a second workshop. Its purpose was to assess the information required to successfully work with a cue script *and* make it accessible, the second workshop focused on what, if anything, needed to accompany a cue script.

The workshop began with a scene from Act Four, Scene Three of *Othello*. Whilst the scene is written predominantly in verse, the character of Emilia switches between verse and prose in her lines. This workshop therefore provided the additional testing of cue script based practice when working with both verse and prose. This time, I removed the initial focus on the reading of context from the process. Therefore, participants were not provided with any information about the play or the scene, only their individual cue scripts to work from. At the start of the session, I provided time for participants to read their cue scripts and decide on their objective(s) before performing the scene with their partner. Participant A felt that the previous workshop where they were given the context of the play made the cue script easier to work with. Working without that information,

though, made it feel – to them – more like a genuine conversation, and she 'listened and responded more genuinely' (Archer, 2020: Cues Script 6). She acknowledged that work with a cue script is 'easier with the information, but I felt it was more natural doing it out of context' (Archer, 2020: Cues Script 6). This view was shared by Participant D, who believed 'it was more difficult, but then it felt more open to interpretation…I was taking it in, as it was happening' (Archer, 2020: Cues Script 5). Participant C however, found the process more challenging and explained 'I just found it a lot more difficult, I didn't really understand it' (Archer, 2020: Cues Script 5). From my observations, this was not an effective way of working with the cue scripts. In the participants' performances, the pace of the line delivery was very slow, and the participants didn't seem to engage in a performance of the text, as demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Out-of-Context

Interestingly, reflecting their use of the 'whole' script in the previous workshop[s], there was a quality of the scene being *read* rather than *performed* as the participants focus was not on listening and responding to their scene partner. Again, I returned to my reflection that delivery of the cue script with context from the previous workshop resulted in an engaging first performance that offered greater potential to build upon with the later addition of other techniques. Whilst the scene from *Othello* was written in a combination of verse and prose, my assessment of the challenges participants faced stemmed from a lack of context for the scene rather than the introduction of verse to the technique.

The conclusions I drew from this workshop support the use of cue scripts for the learners' first encounter[s] with the text. Cue scripts force the learners to listen and respond to one another in their initial performance of the scene rather than giving a line reading, focusing on their individual performance rather than the scene as a whole. As Stanislavski explains 'If you are listening, then listen and hear' (Stanislavski, 2008: 251). The cues scripts mean learners must do this, as without listening to and genuinely hearing what is said, they have no understanding of what is happening or how they should be

responding. There is, however, a significant challenge in the utilisation of cue scripts – as participants require a significant contextual understanding of the scene before the cue scripts can be effective as a means of first encountering the text. I proffer that a plot and act summary *must* be provided to learners when utilising this approach to the text, to generate a successful engagement with, and understanding of the text through performance. As the toolkit I am developing aims to put practice first, having an approach which relies on reading a summary and discussing the context of the scene before performance is approached is contradictory to my intended outcome. Yet, by approaching the scene through a cue script, informed by the plot and act summary, participants presented a more engaging initial performance; the pace of the scene being closer to a normal conversation. From my observations, this cue script approach provides a better starting point from which to develop the learners' characterisation and performance within the scene. To address the need to have the plot and act summary, I considered what alternative ways of engaging with the cue scripts might be found within Elizabethan acting practices and the focus of interpreting the text through emotions.

2.3 Passionating

Passionating, or the act of playing passions (emotions), was the primary focus of the Elizabethan actor (Stern, 2004: 80). Within the limited archival evidence of Shakespeare's theatrical productions is a review of Shakespeare's leading man, Richard Burbage, written by John Webster, who states 'for what we see him personate we think truly done before us' (Ackroyd, 2006: 183). Applying a contemporary understanding of theatrical practice to this review it would suggest that Burbage's realisation of emotion on stage was akin to the expectations of a contemporary delivery of the text within psychological realism. Whilst the performances may have been akin to current productions of Shakespeare's plays, presented through the lens of psychological realism the importance of emotions plays a very different role in Shakespeare's theatre compared to current twenty-first century British theatre. For actors in the twenty-first century working with Stanislavski's 'system', emotions are a result of the actors' response to playing an objective within the given circumstances (Stanislavski, 2008: 225). Bella Merlin eloquently explains that, in this context, emotions 'arise when something or someone stops us from getting what we want. OR when something or someone makes it

easier for us to get what we want' (Merlin, 2014: 156). Actors working with Stanislavski's 'system' therefore do not 'play' emotions. Rather, they play *objectives*, and the emotions are generated through action in response to the need for that character to achieve their objective (Merlin, 2014: 156 -161). When using the 'system' in practice, the actor's ability to generate emotion within performance is found during the rehearsal process and is achieved through their ability to empathise with the character and connect to the emotions they experience through physical activity, imagination and intuition (Carnicke, 1988: 149 -150).

How the actor achieves this within the 'system' varies. In his early work Stanislavski's explorations of emotion in acting were facilitated by an understanding of psychology and the work of Denis Dideriot and Théodule Ribot, who theorised all past experiences and emotions were recorded in the mind and could be recreated through the memory of an event or triggered through the senses by using what they referred to as 'Affective Memory' (Benedetti, 2000: 33-34). Stanislavski referred to this in his 'system' as 'Emotional Memory' and it typically involved finding a memory of an emotional situation from the actor's life that could be substituted for what the character is experiencing, though the term was equally applied to using the senses to recall a past emotional experience (Merlin, 2014: 143 -145). As Stanislavski's 'system' evolved and he placed greater emphasis on psycho-physicality, where the body can affect the mind as much as the mind affects the body, he began to place greater emphasis on arriving at an emotion through actions (in connection with the imagination) to elicit an emotional response; 'by finding out what happens and deciding what I would do physically in any given situation, and believing in the truth of my actions, I release my creative energies and my natural emotional responses organically, without forcing, without falling into familiar acting clichés' (Benedetti, 1998: 5). The actor's aim within the 'system' is to arrive at a 'truthful' presentation of the character's emotional state to an audience in relation to the situation they are in and what they want (Merlin, 2014: 143 -145).

For Shakespeare's actors, the opposite was true. Rather than aiming for authentic replication of realistic emotions, actors played passions which could be seen as emotional *extremes*:

> In texts of the time, one passion often yields to another with enormous rapidity, partly because passions were thought to overtake the intellect by their speed and violence, and partly because skill in showing a quick 'transition' of passions was highly valued. (Stern, 2004: 81)

Playing Passions was the essence of acting in Shakespeare's theatre, and, as such, 'visible transitions from one major passion to another within a speech were highly thought of - and so were written into text's' (Stern, 2004: 80). These transitions written into the text were achieved through changes in the language, verse structure or the change from verse to prose. One of 'the key principles of Elizabethan theatre to render language as experience rather than cerebral assessment' (Merlin and Packer, 2019: 84), eliciting an emotional response from the audience through their experience of the emotion behind the words in performance rather than an admiration of the eloquence of the language at an intellectual level. To achieve this now, the twenty-first-century actor uses approaches based in verbal reasoning, prosody (the patterns of stressed syllables) and breath placement. This is ultimately devised through a detailed assessment of the text from the perspective of its literary parts. Giles Block champions such processes and explains 'irregularities' – non iambic beats, together with 'short lines' and lines with extra syllables – 'should be seen as exciting clues, that will further help us to understand the emotional life of these characters that we are trying to play' (2013: 82). As Shakespeare wrote to facilitate actors' passionating, I theorised that learners could start with emotion and use the focus on an emotion to better understand both the content and rhythm of the text rather than the other way round.

Whilst an emotionally orientated approach to the text is in direct contradiction to the principles of Stanislavski's 'system', it can be situated within the wider field of Stanislavski's influence on contemporary Western acting practices. Lee Strasberg studied acting under two former members of Stanislavski's acting company Richard Boleslavsky and Maria Ouspenskaya, who taught the early work of Stanislavski and his 'system' leading Strasberg to develop what became known as 'The Method' with emotional recall as primary in its central exercises (Carnicke, 1988: 154). 'The Method' is based in the actor's exploration of their emotional states through a process of 'affective memory, private moments and substitution' (Krasner, 2019: 45). However, the emotional centred acting practice Strasberg developed for the genre of psychological realism is still significantly different to the Elizabethan practice of passionating.

The passions that Elizabethan actors would have worked with are best defined in 'Thomas Aquinas's taxonomy of eleven passions, ten of which fell into antithetical pairs: love and hatred; desire and abomination; delight and sadness; hope and despair; fear and

audacity; and ire' (Hacket, 2022: 40-41). Whilst these were the emotions the texts were written to reflect, I believed, however, that equipping modern actors with these eleven passions would not aid the accessibility of my toolkit. The vocabulary of the Elizabethan passions isn't in line with contemporary expressions of emotional states. There are some differences in terminology and understanding of these passions which could create accessibility issues if directly applied by the modern actor. In contrast to the passions of the Elizabethan era, the twenty-first century vocabulary of emotion is based on the research of Robert Plutchik, who theorised that 'in English there are a few hundred emotional words, and they tend to fall into families based on similarity' (Plutchik, 2001: 349). These families revolve around eight basic or 'primary' emotions: anger, fear, sadness, disgust, surprise, anticipation, trust and joy (Burton, 2016). These eight basic emotions can then be developed into more complex or 'Secondary' emotions from which those few hundred emotional words have evolved, such as boredom, serenity, rage and loathing. Although initially appearing very different, there are a wealth of similarities between the understanding of emotional states across the two ages. Plutchik's eight basic emotions are in antithetical pairs, as are ten of the eleven Elizabethan passions, for instance *joy* and *sadness*. Direct comparisons can also be made within the pairings. The Elizabethan passion *Ire* is a direct equivalent to Plutchik's *Anger*, and *Abomination* can be paralleled with *Disgust,* in the same way that *Delight* and *Joy* can be substituted for one another in the contexts of their Elizabethan meaning when compared to our twenty-first century understanding. Additionally, both the passions and our modern emotions also include *Fear* and *Sadness.* The remaining passions – love, hatred, desire, hope, despair, and audacity – when defined and compared to contemporary equivalents, can be located in psychology through secondary emotions and combinations of emotions. I believed that there was a significant advantage and possibility to using the eight basic emotions as a way of working with the text and chose to move forward with these in my research rather than the eleven Elizabethan passions. To investigate the possibilities of encountering the text emotionally in the first instance, I conducted a workshop titled 'Passionating' during which Participants approached the text with a focus on the characters emotion.

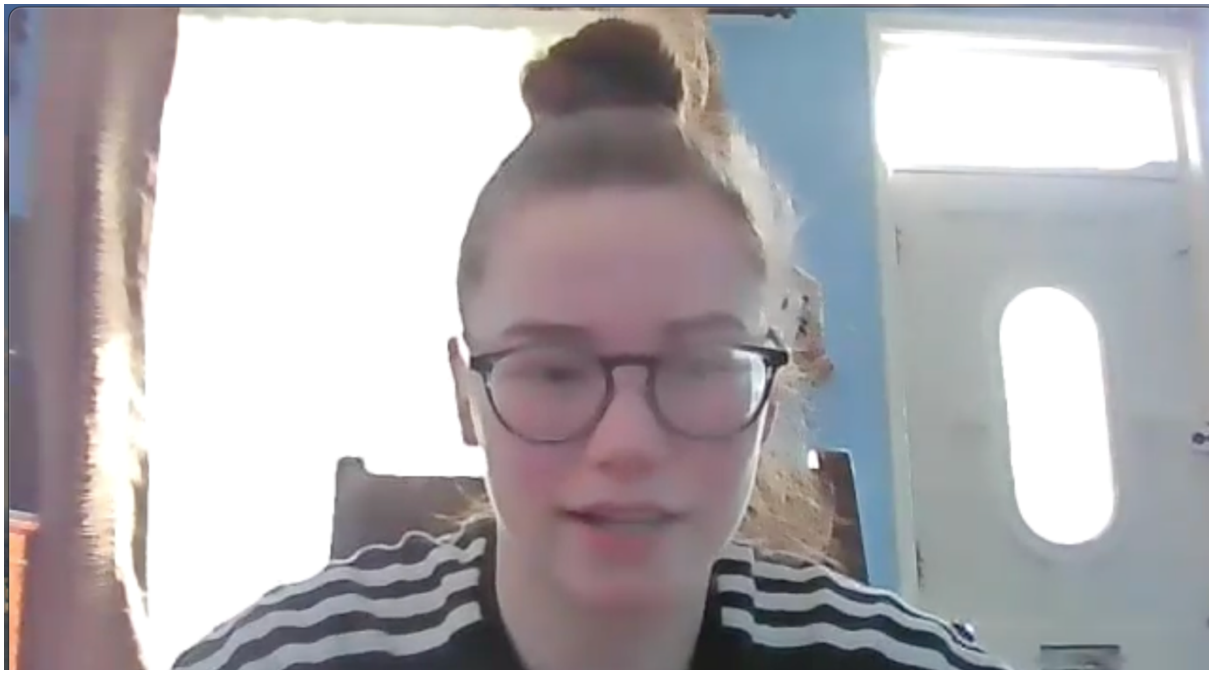


Figure 3: Example of Passionating Workshop on Zoom

Figure 4: Example of Passionating Workshop in the Studio

2.4 Online Passionating Workshops

Due to limitations imposed throughout 2020-2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic, my methodology had to change to facilitate safety measures. At the time of the Passionating workshops, instead of the planned studio-based workshops, my practical research was conducted via the video conferencing application Zoom. To contextualise the difference this made Fig.3 below shows the online Zoom workshops, whereas Fig.4 reflects studio space all previous workshops had been conducted in.

In these online 'Passionating' workshops, I placed participants into pairs, with the workshops then replicated for each pair. Group One consisted of Participants C and A, while group Two was made up of Participants B and D. Group One Participants were given cue scripts for two scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Initially, they explored Act Two, Scene One. I provided participants with a plot and scene summary to provide a limited context for the cue script. They were then asked to consider their objectives based on these cue scripts. Once this decision had been made, each participant was given a basic emotion to play in the scene. Participant C was asked to play 'Sad' and Participant A to play 'Angry'. These emotions were assigned based on my Stanislavski-based textual analysis, considering the given circumstances and their objectives.

A sidenote, here; in determining the emotions to assign the participants for this workshop, I conducted a significant amount of analysis of the text. This is not the aim of this exercise – to eliminate the learners' work by taking it on for them. Rather, the workshop was conducted to establish if the act of playing emotions 'first' could be useful. The inherent problem of how teacher-led this activity is would need to be addressed if it proved to be successful.

The participants committed to playing the assigned emotions, no time was given, or process utilised to approach these through psycho-physicality or any other technique to develop an emotional response based in the circumstances of the scene. The aim was not to present an emotional performance that an audience might identify as 'truthful'. Rather, these were representations of emotions based in stereotypes and clichés. Despite this, they did yield considerably interesting results. Comparing these initial cue script performances to previous workshops, there was a noticeable improvement in the quality

of the performances given by participants. There appeared to be a more detailed level of characterisation and, despite the participants focusing on applying one emotion throughout the scene, there was a greater degree of vocal variation than in previous first performances. The footage of this first performance can be viewed here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Passionating

When I asked the participants to reflect on this experience, they were unanimous in the opinion that working with both an Objective *and* an emotion made understanding the cues script easier. Participant C explained 'I didn't know much about it but having an emotion to go off made it a lot easier I think'. (Archer 2020: Passions Zoom1). Participant A agreed, claiming that 'As we didn't have a lot of information to go on, with an emotion we could kind of work out what our character was feeling and when' (Archer 2020: Passions Zoom1).

In Shakespeare's theatre, it is believed the Passions were emotional extremes (Stern, 2004: 80). As such, I asked participants to return to the scene again, but this time to play the emotion at an extreme. The performances were not as engaging or effective this time. Participant A's extreme anger resulted in a laboured performance where the words were pronounced very slowly and over articulated, destroying any rhythm in the text. For Participant C, the opposite was true with her extreme if Sadness. The pace of the text was rapid and at times inaudible as demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Emotional-Extremes

Following this, I wanted to investigate how this combination of objectives and emotions could work with an awareness of the punctuation to guide the participants in the performance. Due to the limited space participants had whilst attending online, instead of a punctuation walk, I asked them to do a punctuation clap. Using a similar principle to Cicely Berry's exercise but translated to the limited online space, I asked participants to read the text out loud, pausing and clapping every time they came to a piece of major punctuation. Unlike the workshop on punctuation in First Folio technique, no distinction was made between the different punctuation marks and their meaning. I considered that this might be a result of how much information relating to the punctuation participants had been provided with all at the same time in the previous First Folio punctuation workshop, as evaluated in the previous chapter under the heading 'First Folio Punctuation'. In these 'Passionating' online workshops, it became apparent that the principles of the First Folio punctuation needed to be adapted in to separate exercises and could be daunting if all applied at once. The purpose of the adapted punctuation walk exercises I had asked participants to utilise in this online workshop was to highlight the different thoughts through the major punctuation, in an attempt to slow down the delivery of the text and put vocal variation into the delivery of the lines. Upon completing this exercise, I asked participants to re-perform the scene whilst considering their objectives and what the punctuation suggested as well as, this time, playing the assigned emotion at a more naturalistic level than an extreme. This combination of these three elements resulted in a well-paced performance that showed distinct characterisation. Whilst the rhythm the participants were performing in did not always follow the Iambic rhythm of the lines, the majority of the performance here placed the stresses on appropriate syllables, falling in line with the iambic pattern of stresses as demonstrated below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Emotion-Objective-Punctuation

When asked for their reflections on this combination, Participant C claimed that 'being given the emotion helped a lot, when you don't know what's going on but also the punctuation. Knowing when to speed up and when she is getting lost in her thoughts,

when you need to slow down and pace yourself' (Archer, 2020: Passions Zoom1). Participant A added that 'yes the punctuation showed pace, but for me it also showed a new thought or a new addition'. She also felt that 'doing the punctuation, I suddenly understood what Demetrius was saying in the first paragraph as initially I wasn't too sure' (Archer, 2020: Passions Zoom1). From their reflections, it was clear that they were also applying their new understanding of the punctuation from First Folio technique to their assessment of the text in addition to being guided by the instructions given. The three-part combination of objective assigned emotion, and utilisation of punctuation enabled a significant development in both the participants' understanding of the scene as well as the quality of the performance in terms of characterisation, speed, and rhythm of delivery. The positive results of this exercise prompted a continuation in my exploration of Passionating by exploring if the *secondary* emotions from Plutchik's research could be used in the same way. My theory was that if this was effective, I could then use the secondary emotions as a way of adapting the remaining Elizabethan passions and applying them to the text.

I therefore gave participants time to read their cue scripts for Act One, Scene One from *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* The cue scripts were extracts from the end of the scene between Hermia and Lysander. Participants were asked not to consider what the character's objectives might be, but rather to just read the lines and try to understand what they are saying solely through this. I then assigned participants emotions for the scene. Participant C was asked to play the scene as Frustrated while Participant A was asked to play the scene with a sense of Calm. Working in this manner, both participants struggled to understand what was happening - with Participant A stating she felt 'a bit lost' (Archer, 2020: Passions Zoom1). The emotions assigned here were more abstract and complicated than the basic eight and may have accounted for the following disengagement with the technique. The performances developed from this exercise reflected the participants' lack of understanding, as the scene moved at a slow pace with no vocal variation and very little characterisation except for the emotion which was layered on top of the scene. From this, I concluded that the three-part combination of working with an awareness of the punctuation with an assigned *basic* emotion and a considered objective was the most effective combination of tools to aid participants in their understanding of the text. This combination of tools also allowed participants to come close to replicating the iambic rhythm of the scene without any textual analysis of the iambic pentameter or consideration of the text in verbal reasoning. In an interview for the *New York Times,*

Tina Packer explains ‘the principle rule of Shakespeare is that emotion goes through the language, not around it. Emotion is rooted in language. Language is rooted in the human psyche’ (Dudar, 1982). My findings in this workshop support how interconnected the language and emotions are within Shakespeare’s plays in that a focus on the emotion over the language still produced a performance that emphasised literary rhythm in the text.

When working with Group Two on the Passionating workshop, I made alterations to my initial workshop plans based on my findings with Group One. At the start of the workshop, I instructed participants to read their cue scripts from Act Two, Scene One but not consider their objectives. They were then asked to perform the punctuation clap exercise. Following this exercise, I asked participants to consider what the punctuation suggested to them about their character’s thought process. They were then assigned an emotion (Angry and Sad) and asked to play it in their initial performance of the scene, whilst also being instructed *not* to think about objectives. This proved to be an incredibly effective way of working. The participants appeared to unconsciously use – or at least emphasise – the iambic rhythm of the scene. Their performance was slower than would be expected in a final performance, however, it seemed that they had naturally found the underlying rhythm of the text without any verbal reasoning or discussion of iambic pentameter. Except for the punctuation clap, no textual analysis was undertaken and neither participant had previously worked on the scene. When asked for their reflections, both participants found the process to be an effective way of initially working on the text. Participant B stated that ‘it was easier than playing an objective because I didn’t have to think about why I was doing a thing, I just had to think about being upset’ (Archer, 2020: Passions Zoom2). From my observation, there were very few occasions where either participant varied their vocal performance. This can be explained by Participant D feeling that ‘if I was straying too far from it, then I was doing something wrong. So, if I said something and it didn’t sound angry, I thought I was doing it wrong’ (Archer, 2020: Passions Zoom2).

Group Two were then asked to look over their cue scripts for Act One, Scene One, and asked to conduct the punctuation clap exercise, considering what the punctuation might suggest about their character’s thought process. Both participants were then assigned emotions and asked to play them as extremes starting with one emotion to begin the scene followed by a specific line where their emotions change. When they reached that line, participants were asked to change the emotional extreme they were playing and

continue with the new emotion until the end of the scene. The results of this experiment were similar to the previous exercises. Participants appeared to find the rhythm of the text without having to assess or consider it prior to performance. There were occasions within the performance where this deviated and the rhythm was lost but, overall, this was a very effective means of finding the rhythm without having to analyse the text through assessing the meter and pulse and the use of scansion, although the use of rhythm was, perhaps, not as consistent as it would have been following the application of the latter. Participant D stated that playing the emotional extreme 'really helped me understand what was happening in the scene. The emotional switch made me realise there was a change in what was actually happening. Otherwise, I think I would have played it all on one level' (Archer, 2020: Passions Zoom2). This workshop solidified my belief in the benefits of asking participants to 'play' an *emotion* rather than an *objective* in their first encounter with the text. By focusing on the emotion, the participants naturally fell into the rhythm of the blank verse. Which I believe can be attributed to the fact Shakespeare allowed the characters' emotions to govern the rhythm of their speech in his post-plague writing (Block, 2013: 48). Emotion could therefore pose an alternative means of, or a way into, textual analysis, this would be an original means of addressing the textual requirements in contemporary theatre practice. The flaw with this approach, however, is the reliance on the learner being assigned an emotion rather than finding it themselves. This places significant emphasis on the role of the facilitator rather than the learner, even within the context of scaffolding learning. To address this, I explored potential ways of the learner identifying the emotion themselves in a workshop called Emoting.

2.5 Emoting

As explored in the previous section, Shakespeare's actors 'would need to break [their] part down into passions that could then be exhibited' (Stern, 2004: 82). For my toolkit to utilise the characters' emotions in the first encounter with the text, learners will need to be able to decipher what emotions need to be played in a scene without detailed textual analysis. In the English language, 'to a certain extent, vowels can be seen as the emotional component in word-construction and the consonants as the intellectual component' (Linklater: 1992: 15). This view of vowels and consonants is widely supported by voice practitioners such as former *RSC* voice coach Barbara Houseman, who have claimed that vowels 'are like a 'river of feelings' running through the centre of our speech'

(Houseman, 2002: 193). I theorised that, to fix the problem of the facilitator having to present learners with pre-determined emotions, the learners themselves could identify the emotions of their characters without having to conduct any detailed textual analysis by first examining the vowel sounds in the cue script. In essence, my idea was that using the vowel sounds, learners could determine what emotions needed to be played in their initial cue script performances. This was based on Barbara Houseman's assertion that by focusing on the vowel sounds alone the learner can connect with the emotional flow and structure of the text (2002: 197). To test this, I adapted an exercise which Houseman outlines (2002: 198) where she asks learners to consider the difference between diphthongs, short, and long vowels – marking above each vowel sound a specific symbol to denote the length of each. As my accessible toolkit aims to avoid this level of technical analysis in the early stages of working with a text, I instead simplified these exercises by removing the instructions that related to the length of vowel sounds and the distinction between diphthongs, short, and long vowels.

In this Emoting workshop, I provided participants with four different monologues, in each monologue the character was in a specific emotional state throughout. Each monologue represented a different passion and by exploring these different emotional states, I could test the versatility and effectiveness of this exercise. Prior to the workshop, I provided participants with plot and act summaries of all four plays to contextualise their monologue's given circumstances. The workshop began by exploring Helena's monologue from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After their initial performance, participants were instructed to go back over the text and simply underline the vowel sounds. They then performed the monologue by only pronouncing the vowel sounds – removing any consonants, and, therefore, a majority of the actual words themselves. The result of this technique was ineffective. All four participants failed to give the vowel sounds their appropriate length and, instead, all the vowel sounds were pronounced for the same length of time, which resulted in them all sounding the same and thereby making any emotional resonance of the vowels undetectable. The participants were then asked if they had noticed anything in relation to the characters' emotions from the exercise, which, understandably, they had not. Whilst the participants may not have discovered anything with regard to their character's emotional state, I wanted to see if the exercise had made a difference on their performance of the monologue. As such, I then asked them to deliver the monologue again as a 'normal' performance, consonants and vowels all included.

However, there was no discernible difference between the initial read and this performance.

The workshop continued with Helena's monologue from Act One Scene Three of *All's Well That Ends Well*. I instructed participants to underline the vowel sounds in the monologue before performing it, overemphasising each of them in their following reading. The aim of this exercise was to investigate whether overemphasising the vowel sounds in the context of the monologue as a whole would be effective in highlighting the character's emotions. This exercise is demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Emoting

Upon completing the performance, the participants were asked for their immediate reflections. Participant D stated that the exercise *did* help her to gain a better sense of how the character was feeling; 'I got a lot of desperation and stress' (Archer, 2020: Emoting 1). She did, however, feel that in a less dramatic monologue 'if it was funny or something, I don't know how that would relate' (Archer, 2020: Emoting 1). This view was also shared by Participant A. To test the stressed vowel exercise on a character in a different emotional state, participants were then asked to turn their attention to Paulina's monologue from Act Three, Scene Two of *The Winter's Tale* which is a monologue rooted in the characters anger. Upon completing the exercise, participants were asked if the exercise assisted them in uncovering the character's emotional state in the monologue. All four participants used the word 'helpful' to describe the exercise. Participant A said that she would 'be interested to see how it worked on a comedy one' as she felt this 'worked really well with: angry sad or desperate monologues, but I'm really interested to see if it works with slightly funnier ones' (Archer, 2020: Emoting 1) – a view shared by Participant D. To establish how the exercise works with more positive emotions, I instructed the participants to look at Phoebe's monologue from *As You Like It*, Act Three, Scene Five. The participants found the stressed vowel exercises overall

'less helpful' with a comic monologue. They all agreed with Participant A's assessment that 'when she is having her sarcy [sarcastic] moments the emphasis really works. But when she is having her less, I guess, emotional moments, I don't think it works as well' (Archer, 2020: Emoting 1). When asked to expand, the participant stated that, 'if you are doing an emotional monologue, it just fits with the theme of desperation or anger but I'm not sure if it fits with comedy' (Archer, 2020: Emoting 1). The workshop demonstrated that intense or heightened emotions are highlighted when the vowel sounds are stressed while reading the text out loud. The exercises were conducted on three monologues. For the two of these that had heightened emotional states, all of the workshop participants clearly and correctly identified the emotions that the characters were experiencing. For characters like Phoebe, who are happy but not overwhelmed with joy or laughing, the stressed vowels were evidently less effective for deciphering their emotions.

As above, working with the characters' emotions did prove to be an effective means of understanding the scene and beginning to build a performance. It also facilitated the underlying rhythm of the verse drama. The problem with the technique, however, continued to be in deciphering how the learners discover the emotion that they need to play. Unlike Shakespeare's actors, the twenty-first century actor is not trained to look for the Passions within a text at first glance. Uncovering the character's emotions therefore requires textual analysis. Exploring the vowel sounds was not an effective alternative, or shortcut, as in order for it to be consistently effective, the actors had to be provided with the emotions by the facilitator, as they were only evident from the vowel sounds alone when a character is written in emotional extremes. As such, I came to the understanding that Passionating as a prospective tool in my kit is only effective if the emotions are assigned to the learners.

2.6 Summary of Findings

The adapted Elizabethan acting practices of working from a cue script and passionating yielded positive results in providing a practical means of encountering the text for the first time. As such, each are incorporated into the final toolkit. Without having to gain a complete understanding of the scene prior to a workshop/rehearsal, the use of cue scripts encouraged participants to listen and respond to each other in the moment in order to discover what was happening and how they should be reacting. This, then, enabled a more immersive experience for participants who reported that this way of working felt more

natural to them and allowed for 'genuine' responses to what was happening in the scene. I tested this technique on both verse and prose, demonstrating its application across both writing styles. For the cue scripts to work effectively, however, participants required additional information and, as such, it became clear that providing an initial basic plot and act summary was an essential step in this process. Exploring the text through emotion as the Elizabethan actor would have – through a contemporary adaptation of passions - enabled participants to find the appropriate pulse of the text in their choice of stresses. There were, however, inconsistencies within this and I believe that it does not provide a full alternative to the practice of scansion. With the addition of tools that further address aspects concerning rhythm, I started to understand that Passionating could be used as a step in the substitution of scansion. Passionating does, however, require the facilitator to undertake a prior assessment as to which emotions the character is experiencing during the text it is applied to, before being the one who 'provides' these emotions to the participants. Whilst the toolkit was intended to be situated within a scaffolding learning approach, the amount of facilitator-led input to the application of this tool poses the question as to whether the work is being removed from the learner and placed on the facilitator. In Chapter Four section 4.7, a potential solution to this problem is addressed through the further development of Passionating as a tool and creating a learner-centred approach to exploring the emotions present in the text. Though as will become clear in the conclusion of this thesis, the most effective means of exploring the text through emotions is when they are assigned by the facilitator.

The workshops explored in this chapter led to the creation of two tools which became part of my practice first, character-driven toolkit, these were Cue Script Performance and Passionating. The Cue Script Performance tool is the initial engagement with the text through a cue script performance rather than the complete scene, supported by a plot and act summary. At this stage, I decided that The Cue Script Performance would become Tool One in the toolkit in order to provide a foundational approach to the text for the other tools to develop out of. Following the workshops addressed above, it was unclear where the Passionating tool was likely to be situated within the toolkit, as the results from the workshops suggested it would be more effective in conjunction with a clearer understanding of the text. In the next chapter, *Developing the Toolkit*, I reflect on the process of creating nine additional tools to work in conjunction with Cue Script Performance and Passionating, leading to a final performance of a scene from *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream to test the toolkit as a whole, functional, character-driven process.

Chapter Three
Developing The Toolkit

3.1 Introduction

Building on my research into the First Folio as an actor's text and the application of Elizabethan acting practices (see Chapters One and Two), this chapter explores the development of the further nine tools which became part of the final toolkit. These tools are evaluated in chronological order, concluding with an analysis of the participants' final performance, with each subheading reflecting the tools name and position within the toolkit. These tools were developed between January and June 2021 with the same L3 participants as the previous two chapters, and follow the same action research model as defined by Kemmins and McTaggart (2000: 595), with the findings measured against Gutekunst and Gillett's (2021: 8) definitions of good acting and Nobel's (2010: 4-5) essential elements for working with Shakespeare's texts as outlined in the Introduction under the heading Practice as Research (PaR) Methodology. At the end of Chapter Two, I mentioned how the workshops examined had to be conducted online due to the global pandemic. Following the workshops on Emoting, I conducted four further online workshops which are not examined in this thesis, as I concluded that such online workshops were not going to provide me with the same results as in person exercises would enable. Prior to the pandemic, I had identified that a significant focus of my workshops had been placed on verbal action and emerging tools were physically limiting (see 82). The online workshops, as participants had limited space to perform (as shown in Figure 3 on p.89), were not suitable for exploring physical action and were becoming more reliant on verbal action. As such, my research was suspended until in person research could be resumed. The workshops addressed in the remaining chapters of this thesis were all conducted in person.

The tools analysed in the following build on my previous findings regarding utilising aspects of First Folio technique and Elizabethan acting practices. The application of a cue script performance had proven to be an effective first encounter with the text (see p.62). As such, Tool One became Cue Script Performance, forming the foundation from which all other tools were developed. I place significant focus on the tools being rooted in physical action, as I agree with Stanislavski's opinion that, when approaching any text, 'the mistake most actors make is that they think not about the action but the result' (Stanislavski, 2008: 144). This misguided focus is especially true when participants engage with Shakespeare, where learners are striving to adhere to addressing the 'traditional' or 'popular' demands of Shakespeare's texts. As such, I wish to remind the reader, here, that I sought to place physical action, or *doing*, at the centre of the toolkit, rather than attempting to skip to a focus on identifying and producing the desired result.

3.2 Tool 2: Pushing and Pulling

It is my contention that in any given moment, in any of Shakespeare's plays, the characters are ultimately doing one of two inner actions: pushing or pulling. Fundamentally, when on stage, each character is attempting to pull someone or something in *or* push someone or something away, whether this 'something' is manifest as a thought, an idea or the actions or attentions of another person. My rationale for this theory is that 'not only did Shakespeare give you the rhythms of the body and psyche; he also gave you the rhythms of the mind, as expressed through the art of rhetoric' (Merlin and Packer, 2020: 133). During a lecture at Oxford University Gregory Doran explained that:

> certainly, at Stratford sometimes, as we introduce the subject, you see the actors' faces fall a bit as if rhetoric is far too academic a subject to really engage an actor's emotional sensibilities, but really very essentially rhetoric is just the art of persuading people through language, and Shakespeare knew a lot about it. (Doran, *et al*: 2013)

I believe this persuasive art can be simplified and embodied through one of two physical actions: pushing or pulling. Through those simple, accessible and easy to understand physical actions the actors can find the rhythm of the character's mind, leading them to the rhythm of the text. I also theorised that by encountering the text through inner and physical action in the first instance, this changes the way the actor responds to and thinks about the text. This is because 'action is not the thinking of the character, it is the will of

the character taking on a form' (Petit, 2018: 8). By engaging directly in the action behind the text, actors move away from their assessment of the text in verbal reasoning and instead consider the character's motivation for the lines.

My aim with Pushing and Pulling is to simplify the psychology of the character in to two physical actions. It was my contention that this should allow actors to connect to the texts through physical exploration rather than intellectual analysis, uncovering the action behind Shakespeare's verse and prose instead of getting distracted by its form and structure. I also believed the physical act of pushing or pulling would improve the vocal energy of the performance and potentially affect the pace and rhythm of delivery. In *The Need for Words: Voice and Text,* Patsy Rodenburgh (1993: 141-142) outlines an exercise for working with heightened text to connect the breath, body, and voice, where actors push against a wall. The actor's aim in the exercise is an attempt at pushing the wall over whilst delivering the lines. In teaching this exercise myself, I have found it works to increase the vocal energy of learner's performances and believed that similar results would also be produced through my Pushing and Pulling tool. I also considered the possibility that Pushing and Pulling could address some aspects of a learner's work on the line endings in Shakespeare's text. As Nobel (2010: 65-70) explains, how the actor handles line endings is important, as there must be a constant drive through the line towards its' own end, and there cannot be a downward inflection or 'drooping' of the line ending as each line's last word is, more often than not, the most important word in that line. To explain, there are two types of line ending present in Shakespeare's text, the end of a verse line and the end of a thought. If a thought is contained to a single verse line, it is considered end-stopped and the end of the line contains the point – the main meaning – of the line (Block, 2013: 23). When a thought is not contained within a single verse line, the end of the verse line(s) within that thought contain important information in the development of the thought (Block, 2013: 24). The end of the thought then highlights the point of the line, as with end-stopped lines. I theorised that by exploring the text through physical action, it would prevent learners from dropping the vocal energy at the end of a line as they would be physically and vocally engaged with a task that required energy through to completion, much like Rodenburgh's (1993: 141-142) exercises. Whilst fulfilling this technical requirement of the verse, it would also provide a practical means of analysing the text's meaning through an understanding of the characters 'want'.

To test my lines of enquiry, I conducted a series of workshops to explore the possibilities of Pushing and Pulling. The first two workshops called 'Pushing and Pulling' examined the physical actions in conjunction with Stanislavski's verb-based objectives. Over the two workshops, participants worked on three scenes taken from *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It* and The *Merchant of Venice*. For the first workshop, participants worked on Act Two, Scene Five of *Romeo and Juliet,* and were provided with a plot and act summary to supply context for their scene. To begin, I gave participants time to read their summaries as well as their cue scripts for the scene. I then asked them to perform the scene initially based on their understanding based on this limited information, this was to provide a basis for me to analyse what effect the pushing and pulling exercises explored in the workshop might have on the development of the performance. Following this initial presentation of the dialogue, I asked the participants to consider their character's intentions in the scene as either the physical action of pushing or pulling. Assessing what their character was trying to achieve in the scene, did they think this character wanted to pull something or someone in, or push someone or something away? The desire to be either pushing and pulling, in a similar way to Stanislavski's objectives, can – of course - vary from moment to moment, and, as such, participants were asked to be mindful of any changes in their action and shift from one to the other as necessary. Once they had made their decisions, the participants were given a meter length of rope, and then instructed to hold the rope firmly with one hand whilst holding their scripts in the other. I asked each to always maintain tension in the rope by constantly playing their action of pushing or pulling. Fig.5 below is a screenshot from the workshop footage to demonstrate how this appeared in practice.

Figure 5: Pushing and Pulling with Rope and Text

Following Pushing and Pulling, I asked participants to put aside the rope and perform the scene again, applying any discoveries made during the exercises. The performance delivered after this exercise was a vast improvement on the initial performance (before Pushing and Pulling was applied). The journey through the text, towards line endings, was consistent - with no dropping of vocal energy at the end of a thought or verse line. The participants were more engaged with one another than they had been both in the initial performance of this workshop as well as in all previous workshops addressed in Chapters One and Two. There was also a noticeably improved vocal energy in the delivery of lines. Participant C explained that 'it helped me understand when to put more emphasis on certain lines, and when I was feeling more desperate to hear what's being said, it's just easier to understand.' (Archer 2020: Push & Pull 8). This feedback supported my initial theory that Pushing and Pulling could be an accessible way into the text. Unlike the contemporary approaches outlined in the Introduction (see section 0.1), Pushing and Pulling shifts the focus from what information can be taken from the text through detailed analysis in verbal reasoning and situates the initial exploration of text through physical action, with the emphasis placed on assessing the character's wants in a simplified two choice approach – pushing or pulling. Whilst the rope exercise had positive results for three of the four workshop participants, participant D allowed the

physical energy to speed up her delivery of the lines and she began to lack comprehension. Despite the negative effect it had on her performance, Participant D explained that it *did* help with her own comprehension of the scene, stating that 'it helped me understand when she [the character] was being softer and the parts where it needed to be urgent' (Archer, 2020: Push & Pull 5). Participant B also found the exercise helped in responding to what the other actor was doing in the scene, 'you have to react to what they're doing more' (Archer, 2020: Push & Pull 5). This observation touches on Stanislavski's sense of truth in performance, where the technique of presenting psychological realism on stage is through a continual cycle of listening and responding through Action-Reaction-Decision (Merlin, 2007: 114). In the workshop, the actions of the one participant forced the other to react physically to keep tension in the rope and are they therefore obligated to decide which physical action to play in response; either pushing or pulling. The decision is based on the learner's understanding of the character in that moment within the given circumstances of the text, as well as having to react to their scene partner's (instant and physical) action instantly and physically, too. As such, a sense of truth begins to develop in the ongoing sequence of Action-Reaction-Decision.

Figure 6: Pushing and Pulling Bamboo

I decided to continue my investigation of Pushing and Pulling by exploring different ways of embodying the two physical actions – pushing or pulling. I therefore asked participants to replicate the original Pushing and Pulling exercise but, this time,

instead of using rope, each were given a sixteen-inch bamboo stick. I asked participants to place the stick on their index finger and keep the stick balanced at all times throughout the scene whilst applying the pushing or pulling action. The bamboo would act as a means of channelling the actions back and forth between the participants. The use of bamboo sticks in actor training is a common practice (McCaw, 2018: 95). In 1971, Peter Brook's use of bamboo canes during his rehearsals of *Orghast in Persepolis* is documented in Amdrie Seban's 1999 film *The Use of Sticks in Performance Training*. For contemporary theatre companies such as Complicité, working with bamboo sticks is a significant part of their devising process and their teacher training resources (Complicité, 2020). During their 1992 production of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, Complicité's use of bamboo was, according to Tunstall, 'designed to sharpen one's skill at turn-taking and at keeping light in the body in the moments of reaction and of risk-taking' (2012: 479). As 'the stick allows us to play and to engage' (Crook, 2015: 363) in various ways, my application of bamboo sticks differs to Brook and Complicité, in that my enquiry uses them as a means of physically connecting actors and allowing them to use it as a tool through which to channel their physical actions. Though parallels can be drawn between the turn-taking element of stick work in my exercise and Complicite's use of bamboo in rehearsals.

For my experiment with bamboo, the Pushing and Pulling exercise was conducted again, this time using sticks of bamboo in place of the rope, as shown in Fig.6. Using the bamboo resulted in the participants traveling around the space during the exercise. With the rope, the participants remained static for the most part, with the pushing or pulling action centred in their upper torso and arms. The bamboo, however, resulted in the participants using their bodies as a whole in order to maintain the bamboo's balance between their index fingers. The speed of delivery for all participants was significantly quicker when using the bamboo than the rope. There appeared to be a greater sense of urgency to get to the end of the scene, which appeared to stem from the fear of dropping the bamboo. When I set up the exercise, I explained that 'it's not a problem if you drop the bamboo. Just stop the scene, pick it up and continue,' though I don't believe this instruction helped. In 2011, I worked on a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where sticks were used in rehearsals to develop character space between performers. Whilst rehearsing, there was always a sense of embarrassment amongst cast members who dropped sticks. The bamboo sticks could therefore create more of a hinderance to the development of the scene than help. From my perspective, witnessing the exercise in action, there did not appear to be a benefit in terms of the development of characterisation

or the overall performance. The use of rope in Pushing and Pulling had proven to be far more effective. However, the participants' own experience, and the information they gleamed from the exercise was entirely different. In their reflection, participants stated that they felt that the combination of the rope and stick exercises were required to fully engage with both actions. Participant D explained ‘the rope is more about the pull, and the stick is more about the push’ (Archer, 2020: Push & Pull11). Participant A found ‘It was a lot easier to push the stick but a lot harder to pull the stick’ (Archer, 2020: Push & Pull 11). In fact, these notions were shared by all four participants.

To test what effect the exercises had on the development of the performance, I asked participants to perform the scene again using any discoveries made during the Pushing and Pulling exercises to inform their performance. Participant D slowed her performance down following the Pushing and Pulling exercises and conveyed a better paced of delivery than in the initial rope and stick performances. Overall, participants’ vocal energy greatly improved, and – in my observation - they appeared to be pursuing their character’s objectives with determination and commitment. However, none of the performances demonstrated consistency in the meter and pulse of the lines. There were sections of the text which were still rushed and occasionally difficult to understand. Despite this, there was a considerable improvement from the initial to the final performance, more than would be expected if the scene had simply been performed three times without the application of these exercises. I theorised that the Push and Pull tool could be used in combination with Passionating to shape the meter and pulse. A result that I had not anticipated from this experiment was the need to combine both rope and bamboo exercises. I believed, initially, that one would be preferable to the other specifically that the rope exercise would be preferable, as it was a more physically demanding means of Pushing and Pulling, whilst also freeing participants from the concern of dropping the bamboo. A video demonstrating the Pushing and Pulling exercises can be found here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Pushing-and-Pulling-Rope-and-Bamboo

One of the limitations I observed in the pushing and pulling exercises was the need for the participants to have the script in their hands while Pushing and Pulling. This posed physical challenges to them during both exercises, reflecting upon this issue, I considered alternative approaches. The most practical solution would be to have other participants feed the lines to those pushing and pulling, who then repeat the line as they execute the action. Alternatively, they could focus on pushing and pulling in response to the line they have just heard, without repeating it. This solution does have some inherent flaws, however. Firstly, the participants being fed lines could be influenced by the delivery of the line as it is being given to them. The lines would need to be fed in without intention or performance, so that the participants engaged in pushing and pulling were free to make their own choices about how to interpret the text. In a version of the exercises where the participants repeat the line they are being fed, there would be the further challenge of deciding how the lines are broken up as they are fed to participants. As a single thought can traverse multiple verse lines, feeding an entire thought to the participants for them to repeat would be impractical in most instances, as it would be too long to remember and repeat. The thought would therefore need breaking down into smaller more manageable excerpts. These excerpts would need to be guided by the punctuation, so that the thought is being delivered in its component parts. Arbitrary breaking down of the lines as they are fed in might distort the meaning. So, those feeding in the lines would need to be conscious of how the thought is deconstructed. To test this theory, I conducted a workshop called 'Lines' which focused on applying this new approach to pushing and pulling. The workshop utilised Act Two, Scene Five from *Romeo and Juliet*. Initially, participants C and D fed the lines to A and B, who conducted the pushing and pulling exercise with the rope, followed by the bamboo cane. For this first experiment, participants A and B were asked to focus on pushing and pulling *whilst* the lines were read.

The exercise was then replicated with the same participants who I asked to repeat what was being fed to them whilst pushing and pulling. After which, the participants swapped roles so that all four had experienced both versions of the exercise in a position of feeding in lines as well as pushing and pulling as demonstrated in the excerpt below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Pushing-and-Pulling-Lines

Upon reflection, the most effective approach to the exercise appeared to be when participants repeated the lines after they had been fed to them. This was supported by all four of the participants. The feedback from participant A best describes why this was a more effective way of working; 'when you are listening to it, you can have quite a different reaction to when you actually say it, because it was broken up you could think about the differences and where the shifts were' (Archer, 2020: P&P Lines Feedback). The 'shifts' in the lines which participant A refers to are associated with a thought change and often a deviation in the character's objectives or their emotional response to the unfolding action. The breaking down of text into sections denoted by the punctuation allowed participants to experience the thought changes through Pushing and Pulling. As can be expected, there were some errors from the participants feeding in the lines, as commas were at times ignored. This resulted in larger sections of text being presented, diminishing the tool's full capability for highlighting the structure of the thoughts. This was more prominent following the initial rope-based pushing and pulling exercises. When the tool was repeated with the bamboo cane, the accuracy of lines being fed in by the punctuation declined further. This is potentially due to the time taken with repeating the exercises as the lines were also fed to participants much faster the second time around. Whilst the tool had proven to be highly effective, I decided that how it is implemented will need to be considered, replacing the need for both rope and bamboo to enhance the tools benefit to learners. The application of Pushing and Pulling in this format with both the rope and bamboo can be viewed below. The excerpt is taken from a section of text where Juliet speaks in verse and Nurse switches between verse and prose. Demonstrating its application on both writing styles. The captions are produced with the First Folio punctuation to highlight where the tool is not being applied as instructed. The section of text in prose is also captioned in green to distinguish the two writing formats.

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Pushing-and-Pulling

At this stage in the research, this combination of rope and stick exercises became Tool Two: Pushing and Pulling. As Pushing and Pulling draws learners' attention to shifts in the text, I continued research to develop its application by combining this exercise with a consideration of the characters' objectives to further solidify the action of the scene.

3.3 Tool 3: Orders, Explanations Questions

As Bella Merlin (2014: 73) explains, the identification and pursuit of the characters' objectives are fundamental to Stanislavski's 'system'. With the complexity of Shakespeare's texts, identifying the appropriate objective in regard to a Stanislavskian approach can be challenging, especially given the limited information my approach provides the learner with. Actor trainer Andy Hinds believes that 'Every human utterance is an explanation, a question, or an order. When delivering lines, then, there are only three types of objectives a character can have. These are: 'To explain', 'to ask', or 'to order' (2015: 3). In my experience of teaching learners to perform Shakespeare, I have found this simplified way of thinking about objectives can help them understand the character's wants more accessibly and enable them to pursue their character's objectives with greater conviction. As the 'Theatre consists in staging major human Tasks and the genuine, productive and purposeful actions necessary to fulfil them' (Stanislavski, 2008: 143), my hypothesis was that by combining the action of pushing and pulling with the action-orientated choice of order, explanation and question, participants would be able to engage with the character behind the text rather than assessing the text with verbal reasoning, making the text more accessible, and characterisation more action-led.

To test my theory, I conducted a workshop titled 'Orders, Explanations and Questions' using Act Three, Scene Two of *As You Like It*. Participants received a plot and act summary of the play to contextualise the cue scripts they would work from. Participants applied the Pushing and Pulling tool, initially working with the rope followed

by the bamboo. I then asked them to consider their objectives as either: orders, explanations, or questions. Participants performed the scene using the above techniques and were then asked for their reflections on this manner of thinking about objectives. Participant A felt that 'narrowing it down was quite helpful, it made it a lot clearer what the character was doing' (Archer, 2020: P&P OEQ4) with participate D adding that 'having just three options it quite easy to narrow it down, you have to force yourself to be like, "it's one of these"' (Archer, 2020: P&P OEQ2). From my observations of their performances, the participants were engaging with each other in the scene far more effectively than their earlier performances; their performance indicated that they were actively pursuing their objectives as the pace of the scene was compelling to watch. Additionally, the meter and pulse of the text were adhered to for most of the performance without any discussion or analysis of the iambic pentameter.

The focus of this workshop was to test whether simplifying the choice participants had for determining their objectives when combined with the Pushing and Pulling tool would make the experience of the text more accessible by reducing the perception of analysis required when working with text. As such, the participants' experience of working with the text was more important here than the performance it generated. At this point, I asked the participants for their reflections on the experience and what effect, if any, this way of working had on them. Participant C commented that they 'found it easier to understand how to reply, because when [the acting partner] pulled on the rope I got that that was her intention' (Archer, 2020: P&P OEQ6). This view was shared by all four participants, who found the shifting force being exerted by their scene partner helped them to understand what they were saying. Participant B added 'there was more energy and more tension [in the pushing and pulling exercises than previous exercises], it just made more sense' (Archer, 2020 :P&P OEQ2). Participant D found that the pushing and pulling complemented the objectives; 'you could work out which force goes with which one. If it was a question, it was a pull, if it was an order, it was a push' (Archer, 2020: P&P OEQ2).

I concluded that the use of pushing and pulling followed by Andy Hinds' (2015: 3) adaptation of Stanislavski's objectives is a more accessible way into the text than working with objectives based in verbs, as this new, combined approach allowed participants to engage quickly with the action of the scene and understand their character's needs through physical actions. The limited choices of objectives here, in

comparison to Stanislavski's original approach, allow the participants to approach the text knowing their characters are only trying to achieve one of three things. This then focuses their attention on making simple choices. The Pushing and Pulling engages the participants physically with their scene partner and through actions that both physicalise inner motives and physically effect the other participant, helps them to understand what the *other* character is trying to do. This compliments the use of cue scripts, as cue scripts force the participants to listen and respond to each other to understand the scene as a whole. A demonstration of the participant A and C perfomance following the exercises can be found here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Orders-Explanations-Questions

The combination of Pushing and Pulling with the three-pronged options of 'orders, explanations and questions' proved to be effective both for the participants' comprehension of the scene and for the development of performance. As such, this became Tool Three in the toolkit. I considered that the combination of tools developed so far, Cue Script Performances, Pushing & Pulling, Passionating and Orders, Explanations and Questions could provide a means of replacing the less active plot and act summary when working with the cue scripts. Thereby approaching the text completely from an action driven perspective, with no additional reading other than the lines. To test such a limited information approach to working with the cue scripts, I provided participants with Act Two, Scene One of *The Merchant of Venice*.

I selected this scene from *The Merchant of Venice* due to the scenes content, the characters Portia and Nerissa are discussing a lottery Portia's' father designed before his death. Any suiter wishing to marry Portia must choose one of three caskets, one of which contains a portrait of Portia. Only the suiter choosing the casket containing Portia's portrait can marry her. As this lottery has been introduced earlier in the play the discussion between Portia and Nerissa Act Two, Scene One does not immediately contextualise this, making the dialogue challenging to fully comprehend. As such it provides a significant context to test the limited information approach to working with cue scripts. Initially Tool

One: Cue Script Performances was applied to Act Two, Scene One of *The Merchant of Venice* without the aid of a plot or act summary. This was then followed by the application of Tool Two: Pushing & Pulling and then finally the application of Tool Three: Orders, Explanations and Questions, by which point the participants had performed the scene three times, using a different tool to progress their understanding and the development of their performance. Participant B found that the initial performance, reliant only on a cue script, provided 'limited context [which made it] very difficult to perform' (Archer, 2020: You Know 8). This view was shared with the other workshop participants. Participant D, for instance, found that 'it helped quite a lot in understanding it a bit more, when the other person pulls or pushes it gives you more of an idea as to what *you* should be doing.' (Archer, 2020: You Know 6). Participant B agreed with this assessment, feeling that the second performance, with the aid of the Pushing and Pulling then Orders, Explanations and Questions, helped with 'the dynamic of the two characters' (Archer, 2020: You Know 6). Though all four participants agreed, it was still difficult to work without additional context. Participant A declared that they 'think context is definitely needed for a cue script' (Archer, 2020: You Know10). Whilst Cue Script performances followed by Pushing and Pulling then Orders, Explanations and Questions has proved to be both accessible and effective, I echoed participant A's sentiment that the supplying of further context is required for learners to use cue scripts as effective means of understanding the character's intentions. At this stage in the research, I decided to continue to provide plot and act summaries as part of Tool One: Cue Script performances, however, as will become clear in *Chapter Four: A Rehearsal Methodology*, my research ultimately found a means of replacing the need for these summaries to accompany the Cue Script performances.

In Chapter Two, I concluded that Passionating would become a tool within the toolkit, though it was unclear to me at that stage where in the toolkit it would be situated, as it was most effective when used in conjunction with a clearer understanding of the text. The results of this workshop led me to theorise that following the use of Tool Two: Pushing and Pulling, participants would have a sufficient understanding of the scene to apply Passionating effectively. This would then further enhance learners understanding of the scene and their engagement with the meter and pulse, before encountering the Orders, Explanations and Questions tool which would then solidify their understanding of the characters emotional state within the scene as well as their objective, giving their characterisation a clarity. My aim for the toolkit was to develop an approach situated

within the pedagogy of scaffolding learning, whereby the facilitator of the toolkit initially supports the learner with a task they cannot perform by themselves, increasing their competency and gradually allowing the learner to complete similar tasks independently (Smit *et al*., 2012: 817). At this stage of my research, I believed I had developed the foundational tools to facilitate learners with their first encounter of Shakespeare's text, would gradually develop learners' competencies through and beyond the support of the facilitator, *and* enable the development of future tools which placed the focus on the learners' ability to complete similar tasks. The findings of my research at this stage required a reordering of the tools, as addressed above, when considering the new order I also theorised that introducing the visual clues for identifying whether the text was in verse or prose (See p.71) would be most effective following Pushing and Pulling. By looking at capitals in the left-hand margin and how uneven the right-hand margin is learners can determine whether the text is in verse or prose, which in turn could be used to provide context about the situation the characters are in whilst also indicating the characters social standing. Introducing this information as Tool Three: Verse or Prose I believed would provide learners with additional character information that would further enhance how they engaged with Passionating and Orders, Explanations and Questions by providing them with additional character information through a simple visual assessment of the text on their cue scripts.

3.4 Tray One: The First Encounter

From this point forward, my aim was to utilise the same scene in every workshop in order to enable both the development of tools and provide a perspective on how the tools worked together to create the holistic toolkit through *one* example of text. To do so, I chose a scene which contained all of the textual clues, as defined by Basil (2006), and complexities, as defined by Nobel (2010), associated with Shakespeare's writing; an excerpt from Act One, Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The first section of the Toolkit, or the first Tray as I will refer to it as throughout this thesis, would involve learners delivering an unrehearsed cue script performance. This would be informed by a plot and act summary supplied by myself as the facilitator, providing [only] the essential context for the scene. They would then apply Pushing and Pulling with both a length of rope and the bamboo stick. Followed by Verse or Prose, the visual assessment of the text

to determine which writing style their lines are in. Leading to the application of Passionating, performing the scene with an assigned emotion or emotions. The tray concludes with a consideration of their objectives as Orders, Explanations or Questions, and then a 'final' performance through the combination of all five elements. This progression of tools is demonstrated visually below in Fig.7.

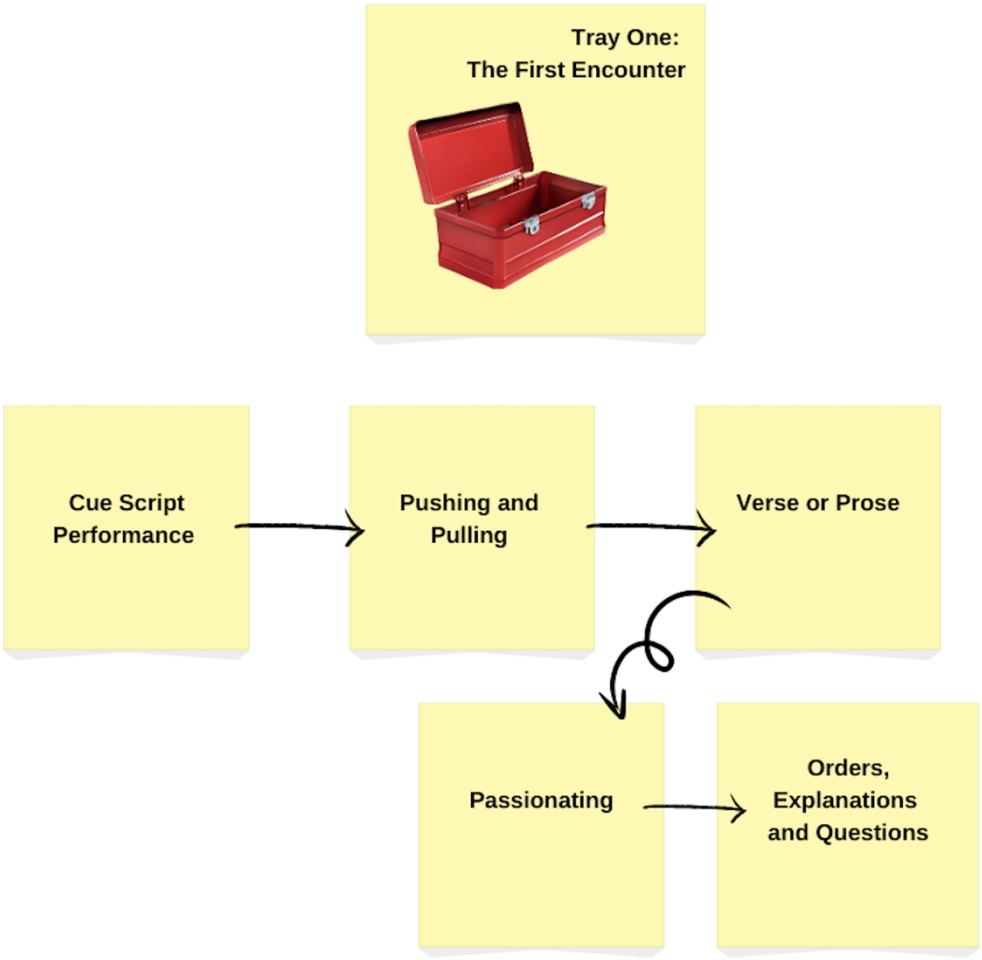


Figure 7: Tray One The First Encounter

To test this new combination of foundational exercises, I conducted a workshop called 'Tray One: The First Encounter'. As had been evidenced in previous workshops addressed above in this chapter and in *Chapter Two: Elizabethan Acting Practices*, the cue script performance in this workshop facilitated participants' engagement with both the text and their scene partner, actively listening and responding to each other. Following this with Pushing and Pulling then allowed participants to begin the process of discovering changes in the text - experiencing it practically and at a slower pace, whilst mentally and physically engaging with the words. This also increased the participants'

vocal energy and provided a greater range of vocal variation. Verse and Prose were then applied, the findings here reflected the discoveries made in the First Folio Punctuation workshop as addressed in Chapter One (See p.75), the addition of this tool did not have an impact on the performances. Participants understanding of their character, or the situation, was not furthered by this tool, though participants found knowing whether the text was in verse or prose to be useful information. As a plot and act summary are provided to participants with the Cue Script Performance tool, the information which Verse and Prose can suggests about the character and situation has already been addressed through these resources. The new addition of Passionating as the Third Tool in the toolkit further enhanced their understanding of the text, allowing for additional discoveries which Pushing and Pulling had not facilitated. It also began the process of connecting the participants to how the characters were feeling in response to the given circumstances and the unfolding action of the scene. Whilst the exercise itself does not develop a genuine emotional connection, the participants' understanding of the characters' emotional response to what was happening became clear, allowing them to begin the process of creating a performance situated in psychological realism. Passionating did, however, have a detrimental effect on the speed of delivery, increasing it significantly and divorcing the performance from the underlying rhythm of the text. I had not anticipated this effect, as the original Passionating workshops positioned the participants within the meter and pulse with only occasional omissions. As above, the initial Passionating workshops were run online due to the pandemic. Now that this process was being utilised in a studio environment where participants had more space and no concerns about vocal volume the tool increased their speed of delivery. I had anticipated that placing the Pushing and Pulling tool before Passionating would slow the delivery down, as participants were fed lines in smaller sections determined by the punctuation, highlighting to them the different thoughts, shape, and structure of the text. Pushing and Pulling had *also* facilitated the participants' engagement with the meter and pulse, which I theorised Passionating would help to solidify. As my thinking here was incorrect, and Passionating detracted from the discoveries participants had made with meter and pulse in the Pushing and Pulling tool, I began to reconsider the former's position in the toolkit, and whether the benefits of Passionating at this stage outweighed its detrimental effect on the meter and pulse as, despite the effect it had on the speed of delivery, Passionating had led to significant beneficial discoveries relating to character and changes in the text by becoming a substitute for textual analysis based in verbal reasoning. To address the speed of delivery caused by Passionating, I decided to focus on the application of pauses.

In the ‘Working the Text’ workshops reviewed in Chapter One, I drew on the terminology of Neil Freeman (1994: 79) to divide the punctuation into two categories: major and minor. In readdressing the speed of delivery in these later workshops, I returned to the definitions of major punctuation (the full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, colon, and semicolon), which signify the end of a character’s thought. For these later workshops, I instructed participants to say the word ‘Pause’ whenever they encountered major punctuation. In doing so, my intention was to make a clear distinction of when the thoughts ended, breaking down the text in performance and slowing the speed of delivery. This proved to be a highly effective addition and was successful in slowing the delivery of the scene. Following the application of Tools One – Four and the addition of the Pause exercise, participants were asked to perform the scene for a final time, informed by a combination of all of the above tools. The final performance of the scene is demonstrated by participants A and B and can be viewed below. This is accompanied by a short exert from the initial cue script performance of the scene and the final performance upon completion of the Tray One tools in order to provide a point of direct comparison so as to see the progress made.

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Tray-One

Through these final performances, the participants exhibited a clear initial development of the circumstances and the beginning of a characterisation, particularly through a well-considered and varying vocal embodiment of the role, in response to the circumstances of the scene. Responsiveness and moments of spontaneity were present, as was the beginnings of the character’s emotional life. In the video above, following the Tray One tools Participant A presents a performance that goes through the range of emotions Hermia experiences in this scene, from sad to disgust into anticipation and finally joy. Participant A is consistently listening and responding to her scene partner, measuring her delivery of the text in response to the performance given by Participant B. Whilst the performance delivered by Participant B does not evidence these progressions

in Characterisation as clearly, when compared to the initial performance Participant B delivered, there is a significant development in the same areas of performance as Participant A. These results, when compared to the initial performance given at the start of the workshop, in addition to the level of characterisation presented by the same participants in previous workshops addressed in the previous chapters, provided a strong rational for this sequence of tools to be solidified as Tray One of the toolkit.

In addressing the technical requirements of Shakespeare's verse drama, the underlying rhythm was present in these examples *until* participants reached punctuation marks. Lysander's text is heavily punctuated, and the participants reciting these lines were adding pauses at most punctuation marks. The video below is an excerpt of two sections of text demonstrating this and is closed captioned using the First Folio punctuation.

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Pauses-at-the-Punctuation

Whilst I intended to develop techniques utilising First Folio punctuation, I sought to introduce four separate tools each addressing a specific function of the punctuation later in the toolkit. I made this decision in response to findings form my previous research into First Folio punctuation (See p.75) where I identified the potential for the punctuation tools to be positioned within textual analysis rather than practical analysis. To address the issues evidenced by participants in this 'Tray One: The First Encounter' workshop I theorised, that adapting Stanislavski's approach to pauses might be an effective means of addressing the demands of the text and its rhythms, by positioning pauses in relation to the character's needs. Within Stanislavski's 'system' punctuation has a dual function, firstly it directs learners in their use of inflection and secondly, it provides a means of placing and marking pauses - dividing words and groups of words into what Stanislavski refers to as speech bars (Stanislavski, 2008: 449).

3.5 Tool 6: Logical and Psychological Pauses

Building on my investigation into the First Folio punctuation and its association with breath, as detailed in Chapter One, (see p.75) I conducted a series of workshops which considered the punctuation's relationship with the pause rather than breath. I theorised that the same principles of attaching specific breath lengths at particular punctuation marks could be useful when framed as a character motivated need rather than a technical requirement. The tools developed in relation to pauses underwent the most experimentation across the entire development of the toolkit, as the exercises were constantly amended due to the complications that arose.

Stanislavski believed that there were two types of pauses that actors must understand and be able to utilise within their performances. These were the 'logical pause [which] serves the head [and] the psychological pause [which serves] the heart' (Stanislavski, 2008: 419). As Stanislavski (2008: 417-422) explains, the functions of these two types of pauses directly correlate to action. Whilst the logical pause's function is to make sure the listener can understand the spoken content, and is therefore passive and inactive, the psychological pause is a form of conscious and subconscious communication where words are replaced with looks and expressions. Pauses not only allow for sense and feeling to be communicated, but 'very often communicate that part of the subtext which comes not only from the conscious mind but from the subconscious and can't be expressed concretely in words' (Stanislavski, 2008: 420), thereby allowing for additional layers of meaning behind what is said to be communicated in the silence. The actor's use of the pause is fundamental to the 'system' for both the actor's ability to listen and respond to the other actor but also to respond to themselves. The 'system':

> requires you to hear yourself as much as your partner. It's back to the basics of psycho-physicality, listening to your own words, thoughts and body, as much as those of your fellow performers. And the pauses give you the time to hear that information. (Merlin, 2007 :232)

Pauses, therefore, not only facilitate listening and responding from a performative perspective but they also allow the actor to communicate further sense and meaning of the text than just through the words.

Whilst pauses play a significant role in the 'system', they also create challenges for the actor working with Shakespeare's plays. In *Building a Character,* Stanislavski

> devotes four excellent chapters of this book to text-work, and most of the examples are taken from Shakespeare. But he advises the actor to introduce "psychological pauses" in reading the lines, although they might change the rhythm intended by the author and alter the meaning (St-Denis & Sanzenbach, 1964: 82-83).

The problem with the advice Stanislavski gives in relation to Shakespeare is that it fails to consider the requirements of a verse drama. The importance of rhythm in verse drama means that extra pauses not written into the text can have a detrimental effect on the quality of the performance and 'the modern actor loves to stop when he shouldn't; he loves to explore the pause…but pauses destroy the basic energy and shape of the Shakespearian line' (Hall, 2003: 24). The pause's ability to have a detrimental effect on the rhythm of the verse drama places Stanislavski's approach to both logical and psychological pauses in direct opposition to the demands of Shakespeare's texts. The principles behind Stanislavski's use of pauses, however, could theoretically be utilised within verse drama if the parameters of the use aligned with the demands of the text. I also theorised that by exploring the text through the pause, it would help learners to further clarify the meter of the script and identify thought changes, furthering their understanding of the structure of the speech *without* textual analysis.

For my exploration of how this could be achieved, Basil's (2006: 67-77) explanation of the First Folio's punctuation functions would guide my integration of Stanislavski's logical and psychological pauses when applied to the demands of the verse drama. The major punctuation, the full stop, question mark, and exclamation mark all serve the ending of a thought, while the colon and semicolon reflect the clarification of a thought. In both instances, there is a need for a longer duration of pause than with any other punctuation marks. These longer pauses must also be accompanied by a psychological motivation which the punctuation is serving, the learner must therefore be clear on why there is a need for a psychological pause at these punctuation marks, based on their understanding of the texts meaning and perform this accordingly. Whether that is formulating a new thought or reflecting on what has just been said. I began my exploration of pauses through a workshop titled 'Pause for Thought,' in which I explored the use of the psychological pause. Following their initial performances of the scene to provide a point of comparison for my evaluation of the exercises, I asked participants to

perform the scene pausing at the major punctuation and consider why they might pause there in relation to the punctuation's function(s), and then begin the new thought with the evident *intention* of pursuing a new thought and line of enquiry. Once that rationale for the psychological pause was clear in their minds, I asked participants to perform the scene again, playing those intentions at the pauses. This proved to be effective in clarifying the changes in thought, and participants made discoveries which informed and improved their performances. The disadvantage of this approach, however, was the length of pauses. Whilst Stanislavski (2008: 420) proposes that the length of a psychological pause can be dictated by the actor's need for the pause, within the parameters of verse drama there needs to be a defined and succinct duration for the length of pause to serve the rhythm of the verse. Through these exercises, the length of pauses varied, often to the detriment of the meter.

Drawing on the discoveries made in the previous 'The First Encounter' workshop, addressed in this chapter (section 3.4), I asked participants to say the phrase 'psychological pause' at the major punctuation before continuing with their delivery, thereby ensuring the length of the pause was consistent. Once they had performed the scene, they were then asked to return to those pauses and give themselves a justification for pausing at those points, which would then be applied to their performance moving forward. In performance, they would play the intention but ensure the pause lasted no longer than the time it would take to say, 'psychological pause' as demonstrated in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Psychological-Pause

This approach yielded better results in creating shorter pauses, however, they were still too long to meet the demands of verse drama. Building on my findings here, the phrase was shortened to just the word 'psychological'. The intention of defining the separate thoughts and creating a more engaged performance with the narrative drive remained the same, however, the time taken to say 'psychological' was more appropriate to maintain the meter of the speech. Whilst this adaptation and application of psychological pauses proved to be an effective means of interpreting the text, addressing

the logical pauses posed a more significant challenge. For Stanislavski (2008: 419), the logical pauses would most commonly be placed at the minor punctuation. In Shakespeare's verse drama, however, the minor punctuation is not an opportunity to / and should not be treated as such as 'From the performance / speaking viewpoint, to pause at every comma would be tantamount to disaster' (Freeman, 1998: xx) as such a pause would break the rhythm of the verse and minor punctuation's function in First Folio technique is to, instead, propel the thoughts of a character forward (Basil, 2006: 21). The minor punctuation will, however, *at times* need to be utilised to create a logical pause as the length of some thoughts would be impossible to deliver without a logical pause and corresponding short breath. Logical pauses will at times need to occur at different minor punctuation points, depending on the length and needs of any speech. This is further complicated by the different functions as addressed in Chapter One (see section 1.3). Initial workshops, therefore, focused on the principle of the logical pause and, in delivery, finding the moments where a logical pause felt necessary. Reflecting the use of the timing of the word psychological, participants were asked to say 'logical' at each point at which a logical pause needed to go and facilitating a short breath. This approach to the logical pauses was ineffective and did not serve the development of the participants performances nor their access to the text, as it was not a specific enough instruction or use of pauses and as such Participants were unclear on how and when to use it.

In reviewing the relationship between pauses, breath, and First Folio punctuation, I considered that the notion of logical pauses might benefit learners if associated with the semicolon, as what followed was more impassioned than the previous sentence. This was explored in Chapter One: The Shakespearian Actor's Text under the heading First Folio punctuation, where I identified a need for the further development of a tool in relation to the semicolon as participants could not distinguish the difference in performance between a semicolon and a comma. Taking a logical pause at each semicolon would, I theorised, allow the learner to take a breath before engaging in increased emotional intensity of the content. In practice, and in contrast to the more loosely applied logical pauses above, this narrower focus was an effective means of facilitating how participants prepared for the semicolon through appropriate breath placement., It failed, however, to fully address the full function of the logical pause as Stanislavski intended. It also created semantic issues as, in First Folio technique, a semicolon is a major punctuation mark. I realised that, for clarity, having all major punctuation marks categorised as demanding a psychological

pause would be most effective. As such, for the purposes of my toolkit, I have reclassified the semicolon into the minor punctuation category.

The use of logical and psychological pauses was not an effective means of addressing the relationship between punctuation and breath as I had initially theorised. It did, however, prove to be an effective tool for accessing *meaning* in the text. Participant B stated that the process 'gave reason to why you are pausing and taking a breath' (Archer, 2020: Pause Final), with participant A adding that 'it helped with the thought process quite a bit and how it changes' (Archer, 2020: Pause Final). Through my observations, I found a considerable change in the creation of the circumstances and the vocal characterisation using this tool. A side by side comparison of participant A and B's performance prior to the exercises and after it can be found below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Logical-and-Psychological-Pause

The use of psychological pauses at the major punctuation also facilitated the appropriate use of cesura. The cesura is a midline break which occurs when a thought ends in the middle of a verse line rather than at the end (Block, 2013: 97). Identifying and playing the cesura is a key to utilising the shape and structure of the verse lines. As Hinds (2015: 102-104) explains, when approaching the cesura in performance, the actor needs to take a short break before carrying on with the verse line and should introduce a new energy to the line which follows it. Building on the discoveries made through this series of workshops, I returned my focus to the First Folio punctuation to develop individual tools intended to address the needs of the minor punctuation individually across a new series of workshops.

3.6 Tool 7: Punctuating the Thought

The focus of the 'Punctuating the Thought' workshop was to evolve a technique for addressing the comma, based on the initial findings addressed in Chapter One (section

1.3). As Basil (2006: 71) identifies, the comma acts as a springboard driving the thoughts forward. At the start of this workshop, I provided participants with a new copy of the cue scripts for Act One, Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and asked them to highlight the different punctuation marks in different colours, as I had in the previous First Folio punctuation workshops, as this provided a visual way of distinguishing the different punctuation marks easily and in an accessible way. I then asked participants to return to their passions from the Passionating tool, reminding them of the assigned Passions for the scene. Every time they came to a comma, they were to increase the intensity of that passion and keep building at every comma until they reached a major punctuation mark. When they arrived at the major punctuation, they had to reach the height of the feeling they were playing. In my explanation, I framed the exercise as leading to a crescendo of that passion at the end of the line. This instruction was to further enforce the drive towards the line ending, and to avoid participants dropping the voice (Nobel, 2022: 56). Whilst pushing and pulling had successfully accomplished this, I wanted to further reinforce the position of a line ending. In this initial experiment, all four participants' performances improved. There was an increase in the vocal energy, and whilst, at times, the speed of delivery was too fast, the underlying meter was present in all of their stresses. Using the passions, however, detracted from the variation and sense of truth which had been developing over the course of the tools to this point. As the passions were limited to specific parameters, the scene's grounding in its circumstances was no longer evident.

To address this issue, I looked at an alternative framing of what should be increased at the commas. Investigating whether using the objectives that participants had selected and increasing the intensity to which they pursued them at, each comma would be more effective. The performances here were better situated in the circumstances, though this framing increased the speed of delivery more than the passions whilst also detracting from the vocal energy. Comparing the emotional connection to the comma with the objective-focused connection within this workshop, the emotional connection to the text yielded better results. As such, I asked participants to consider the emotional state of the characters in their speeches and be conscious of how they felt about what they were saying. The exercise was then repeated with participants instructed to increase the emotion they were experiencing at each comma - leading to a crescendo of that emotion at the end of the line as demonstrated below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Punctuating-the-Thought

This approach to the comma resulted in engaging performances from all four participants. There was clarity in the communication between participants, with the emotional life of the characters therefore becoming clearer. There was also greater definition in the vocal embodiment of the role; the meter and pulse were also closely adhered to following the application of this tool, though there were still some rushed moments affecting the complete utilisation of the verse rhythm. The combination of the psychological pauses tool and this comma tool also worked to address the *enjambement*. As Hinds (2015: 99 -101) explains, enjambement is a common feature in Shakespeare's mid to late plays, where a thought is not contained within a single verse line. In approaches to performing Shakespeare, understanding enjambement is essential to driving the energy of a thought towards its conclusion, which could traverse multiple verse lines and end with a cesura, where a thought finished in the middle of a verse line rather than at the end of a verse line (Hinds, 2015: 102).

Playing enjambement is essential to maintaining the rhythm of the verse and the sense of the characters' thought process. By increasing the emotional intensity of the performance, leading to a crescendo at the end of the line, participants were utilising the enjambement present in the scene; keeping the momentum of the thought driving towards the major punctuation. At which point, they would take a pause and introduce the next line with a new energy for the new thought process. Whilst utilising emotional intensity in this tool was highly effective, it posed a problem for addressing the semicolon. As Basil (2006: 73) explains, a semicolon indicates that the turn of thought following it is rushing forward and will be more impassioned. In my First Folio punctuation workshops, focusing on the speed and urgency of the thought following a semicolon proved ineffective. The emotional intensity of what participants are playing at the semicolon and the notion of it being more impassioned needed to be the focus of the tool. As participants would already be increasing the emotional intensity of their performance at the commas, distinguishing between the two provided a challenge to my approach. The impassioned use of the semicolon needed, therefore, to be introduced in the Toolkit prior to the

commas. I theorised that this would draw learners' attention to the thoughts following the semicolon and how to address them in their performance, which would become solidified before addressing the commas, presenting two varying types of engagement with the different punctuation. Given the comma tool had already been conducted with this group of participants, to interrogate this theory I would have to wait until I began applying it to the L7 participants' work on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, positioning the heartfelt tool prior to the punctuating the thought tool.

3.7 Tool 8: Thought Lines

When approaching Shakespeare's texts, one of the challenges learners are presented with is the complexity of Shakespeare's writing. As Beer (2021) explains, Shakespeare's grammar school education would have provided him with an understanding of Greek and Roman classical literature, Latin and a focus on rhetoric as a lens through which thought is constructed. The English language of the time, too, was evolving - drawing on a multitude of influences:

> the language [Shakespeare] had at his disposal had the earthiness of its Anglo-Saxon roots, the intellectual breadth that characterised its Latin vocabulary and the sophistication that accompanied the French influence. (Nobel, 2010: 99)

To understand the meaning of these influences on the text, Michael York proposes that 'The reader needs a guidebook. No actor or director should be without a good, annotated edition' (1995: 57). In this sense, York proposes that for learners to comprehend fully what they are saying, a translation of the text's meaning into contemporary English is necessary. This task, however, is cerebral and situates itself in the verbal reasoning-based approach to Shakespeare my toolkit seeks to address the inherent problematics of. As there is not an alternative way of making these translations, I sought to integrate this aspect of textual analysis with a creative character driven activity.

Initially, I aimed to utilise Stanislavski's principles of the characters inner monologue in order to develop a tool which would facilitate the learners need to translate the texts meaning into contemporary English, whilst framing it in an exploration of the characters inner life. Maria Knebel (2021: Inner Monologue) defines the character's inner monologue as the unspoken thoughts behind the writer's text which give characters the

psychological depth of a human being. In the same way a person has an inner thought about what is being said to them or what they chose not to say out loud, the actor too must develop this for their role. In the 'system', this is positioned as a means of listening to the other actor and responding through their knowledge of the character's inner life (Knebel, 2021: Inner Monologue). In my adaptation of this method, I aimed to consider the thought process behind the actors' own lines rather than those they were listening to. The thought process of the character in Shakespeare's plays are integral to its structure. Neil Freeman believes that 'The keynote to the Elizabethan text is easy movement from idea to idea, and then from thought to thought' (1994: 79). I believed, therefore, that breaking the text down into the individual thoughts, and looking at the intention behind what was said, would provide a character-driven lens through which to translate the text. The focus of this tool is to simplify the text, by defining the characters thought process rather than the words they use to communicate it. It is therefore not a direct translation of the line into modern English, rather, a chance for the learner to consider what the character is thinking when they say that line and express it. In addition to clarifying the meaning of the text and their character's thought process, I had considered that this exercise might begin to draw learners' attention to aspects of the text addressed through the word play and metaphor assessment criteria for a performance of Shakespeare, based on Nobel (2010: 4-5) and the seven basic elements as explained in the Introduction, section 0.7.

To test this theory, I conducted a workshop called 'Thought Lines' which built on the L3 participants' performances from *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. To create their thought lines, learners would need to utilise some form of guide or annotated text to facilitate their understanding of every word in the text. In the first series of exercises for the 'Thought Lines' workshop, I asked participants to approach the text in this manner. For each workshop, participants were given a different annotated version of the text to facilitate their creations. When translating Shakespeare into modern English, my preference has been to use Alexander Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary: A Complete Dictionary of All the English Words, Phrases, and Constructions in the Works of the Poet* (1874). This publication is often referred to as a 'Shakespearian Dictionary', as it follows the format of a dictionary with every word used in all published Shakespeare plays listed in alphabetical order, accompanied by their meaning. Whilst a detailed and helpful resource, it is split into two volumes alphabetically *A-M* and *N – Z*. With both editions having 1484 pages. As such, these are not practical books for use in the rehearsal room or studio. However, the editions have been turned into a smartphone

application which was used in the workshop rather than the original book volumes. When teaching in Further Education, I would often recommend *SparkNotes, No Fear Shakespeare* (2021) to learners, which is an online resource in which Shakespeare's text is presented on the lefthand side of the screen and a modern translation in contemporary English on the right-hand side. In my own experience, this has proven to be highly effective for learners comprehending the plays. It does however, come with some limitations in application outside of secondary and further education contexts. As the resource is intended for secondary school students, where there is an ambiguous interpretation of the text, only one is selected and presented without any mention of others. Additionally, sexual, and other possibly contentious references, are interpreted without addressing the meaning. At the time of writing this chapter in 2023, the resource now requires a paid subscription to access. Despite these issues, I decided to utilise both of the above resources in the following workshop, which were accessed via participant's smartphones and laptops. In addition to these, participants were also provided with physical copies of the text in the form of annotated editions. These were *The Arden Third Series* (2017), which Adrian Noble (2010: 101) recommends, and *The Arden Performance Edition* (2020), which are editions written to 'provide annotations designed to meet actors' needs' (Bloomsbury, 2020).

Initially, the focus of this workshop was to establish which means of understanding the text would be most effective. To do so, participants were presented with the printed excerpt from Act One, Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and asked to look up any words, phrases or references which they did not understand. Each time they came to a section of the text which they didn't understand, they had to use a different means of looking up, from either the Shakespeare Lexicon app, *No Fear Shakespeare*, *The Arden Third Series* (2017) or *The Arden Performance Edition* (2020) of the texts. Approaching the task in this way, I theorised, would provide participants with an opportunity to utilise each approach to understanding the meaning behind the text. Participants found the *Arden Third Series* (2017) to be the most effective means of understanding the words or phrases that were unfamiliar too them. Participant C stated that '*The Arden Shakespeare Third* was the most helpful because it just explained everything' (Archer, 2020: Thought 3), with participant A adding that 'you could just go into the bits that you needed to know, without a long explanation of what it all meant' (Archer, 2020: Thought 3). Building on this, participants returned to the *A Midsummer Night's Dream* scene and were asked to create Thought Lines, breaking down each

thought from the start of a sentence to the major punctuation and writing out what they believed the characters thought was behind the line. Once each participant had established their Thought Lines, they were asked to perform the scene using their thought lines. This explanation was accompanied by the acknowledgment that the lines wouldn't flow between the participants like a scene as the thought lines had been written in isolation, rather than collectively. In her reflection on the tool, Participant B compared it to previous approaches she had encountered where she would translate the text into modern English to understand what was being said, stating that 'it is more effective because it makes you think about the character more, rather than just the words. So, it makes it easier to understand what your character is doing' (Archer, 2020: Thought 5). Participant A added that, 'with the translation I feel like you can fall into the trap of just translating it. You can understand it but not understand the character behind it' (Archer, 2020: Thought 5). The performance following the exercises demonstrated more engagement with the metaphors and similes present in the texts than previously, as participants now had a better understanding of their meaning. This is evidenced in the video below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Thought-Lines

Whilst providing a foundation to address the metaphor and simile criteria, I felt that additional tools needed to be developed to fully realise them in performance.

Building on these results, I explored the potential of integrating the participants' Thought Lines with Shakespeare's text as a means of exploring what one character is thinking in response to what the other character is saying. To achieve this, I theorised, would require one participant to deliver the original lines, whilst the other responds with their Thought Lines. At the end of the exercise, they would then repeat it in the opposite order to ensure both participants had performed both their thought lines *and* Shakespeare's lines. The concept behind this was to ensure that participants had a clear understanding of what they and their scene partner were saying and thinking. Participant B made direct reference to this in her feedback, stating that the exercises 'makes it easier to understand what your character is saying in response to what the other character is

saying' (Archer, 2020: Thought 6). When asked to compare this to the previous approach, however, all four of the participants were unable to distinguish if there was a difference in their comprehension between the two approaches. I observed the participants working more effectively when performing their Thought Lines to each other rather than through the combination of Thought Lines and Shakespeare's text. When performing only the Thought Lines they appeared to be listening to each other, when Shakespeare's text was introduced, the participant performing the Thought Lines appeared to disengage and focus more on preparing for the next Thought Line.

The Thought Lines tool therefore became an initial exploration of the thought a learner's character was having whilst saying the lines. Any words, phrases or references which were not understood would be looked up using *The Arden Shakespeare Third* series of texts to support learners' comprehension, as the participant's feedback had positioned this as the most accessible and effective resource of those explored in the workshop. The Thought Lines would then be performed with an acknowledgment that there was not an expectation of the lines to flow in the scene as they had been written in isolation. The tool in practice can be viewed below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Thought-Lines-in-Practice

3.8 Tool 9: Playing Parenthesis

Building on the participants investigation into the characters thought process the next tool to be developed focused on the use of parenthesis within their cue scripts. During my initial research into First Folio punctuation through the 'Working the Text' workshop; I addressed the use of parenthesis (see p.71-73) explaining to participants that they should perform the text contained within parenthesis in one of two ways. Either they should treat the text contain within parenthesis as a slight deviation in the characters thought process, which I referred to as a 'sidebar', or alternatively they should treat the text as the most

important part of that thought. These instructions for addressing parenthesis proved highly effective during the 'Working the Text' workshop, however, I had asked participants to review the monologue and decide which of the two approaches to the text in parenthesis they should use before applying it to their performance. This approach to parenthesis was, therefore rooted in verbal reasoning and an assessment of the text rather than the practice-first approach my toolkit aimed to accomplish. To address this, I conducted a workshop titled 'Playing Parenthesis' during which I provided participants with this same explanation of the parenthesis function in the text, as outlined above. I then asked them to perform the scene twice, initially playing all the text in parenthesis as a 'sidebar'. Followed by a second performance of the scene in which I asked them to play all of the text in parenthesis as the most significant idea in that thought. The video below demonstrates Participant C's two approaches to the text in parenthesis.

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Playing-Parenthesis

Following the two performances of the scene, I gave participants time to reflect on their use of parenthesis and decide which would be most applicable for their character, based on their understanding of the scene. When asked to compare this new approach to parenthesis to their original experience in the 'Working the Text' workshop, all four participants unanimously found that this new approach - applying both ways of delivering the text in parenthesis through performance before making a decision about which to choose - was more effective for developing their understanding of the text within parenthesis and considering how to address it in their performance. Participant D explained that 'I liked experimenting with different ways to say it [the text in parenthesis], so that I could find how best to say it' (Archer, 2020: Parenthesis). With Participant C adding 'before [in the 'Working the Text' workshop] I wasn't really sure, how to say the bits in brackets, but now I understand it' (Archer, 2020: Parenthesis). I also observed a significant improvement in how the text within parenthesis was addressed approaching it practically and applying both ways of delivering the lines. In the 'working the Text' workshop Participant A utilised the technique most effectively, when approaching the parenthesis through verbal reasoning. Whilst the other three participants also amended

their performance to address the requirements of parenthesis in that initial workshop, their confidence and commitment to playing the text in parenthesis was significantly improved during the practical approach applied during this 'Playing Parenthesis' workshop. As such this performative approach to exploring the function of parenthesis within the cue scripts became Tool 9: Playing Parenthesis.

3.9 Tool 10: O Warm-Up

Rhetoric 'is the study of how language and ideas influence other people' (Brandreth, 2021: 1). The study of rhetoric was foundational to Elizabethan education and the way they viewed literature, poetry, morality, politics, and history, as such Rhetoric and Rhetorical devises are significant within Shakespeare's writing (Brandreth, 2021: 7-9). Through the tools previously detailed in this thesis, the persuasive nature of character's speech has been addressed through practical tools, such as Pushing and Pulling, which simplifies the rhetoric of the text into the actions of pushing or pulling something or someone. A significant rhetorical device, however, which needed to be addressed at this stage of the research was the rhetorical functions in Shakespeare's use of the letter 'O'. As Douglas Kneale (1991: 146) explains 'O' was an important aspect of rhetoric used to signpost exclamations due to an extreme emotional response. For example, when Hamlet is contemplating how quickly his mother remarried after morning the loss of his father:

> She Married. O most wicked speed, to post
> With such dexterity to Incestuous sheets
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.2: 326 -327)

In this section of text, Hamlet is overwhelmed with emotion thinking about how quickly his mother remarried to his uncle. The 'O' starts a new thought part way through a verse line (cesura) and is an extreme emotional response to the situation the character finds himself in. Or in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet says

> What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
> Nor arm, nor face, O, be some other name
>
> (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.2: 800 -801)

when she is overwhelmed by her frustration that Romeo's last name is Montague and as such she is unable to love him as she believes she does.

In my previous facilitation experience, learners often struggle to address ‘O’ in performance and are quick to get to the next word in the line. Once taught the function of ‘O’, too, there is often still a hesitancy to engage with it, usually due to embarrassment. Thoughts in Shakespeare which start with an ‘O’ change the rhythm of a verse line from Iambic to trochaic, meaning a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable (Kulick, 2022: 39). In addressing the ‘O’ correctly, learners are also engaging with the change in rhythm without the need for scansion. To explore how ‘O’ can be effectively addressed in my toolkit I conducted a workshop called ‘O’ continuing the L3 participant’s work on the *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* scene. Initially I explained to participant’s that the ‘O’ was to act as an emotional release valve, put in the text as a way of expressing an extreme emotion when the character couldn’t communicate how they felt through words. As a focus of the toolkit so far has been on emotion, they were asked to utilise their understanding of what the character was feeling, and channel extremes of that feeling through their performances of ‘O’. In their initial performances, Participant C presented a slightly elevated emotional response in her delivery of the lines with ‘O’ in them. However, this wasn’t perceptible in the workshop, and it was only through reviewing the footage that could I discern a difference from her initial performance. Reflecting on her performance, participant C stated that they ‘felt really silly, and I found it hard to, like, I don’t know maybe I am not mature enough, I just found it hard, in my head I just felt really silly doing this’ (Archer, 2021: O). To address this, I designed a warm-up exercise to subvert the aspect of embarrassment. I asked Participants to stand in a circle and throw the ‘O’ sound at each other, each time they threw it, participants had to do something different with the sound to anything that had gone before. I instructed them to not just throw the vowel sound around, but to ensure, as they were throwing it, that there was an emotional response to the sound. As part of the exercise participants were asked to physically engage with it, imagining they held the ‘O’ in their hands and directed it to the person they were throwing it to. The footage of this exercise is available below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/O-Warm-Up

Following the warm-up, participant C stated that ‘it made me feel more comfortable doing that in the scene, I think I can now use that and perform’ (Archer, 2021: O). Participant A added that they ‘think the exercise also taught us to look at [O] as an emotion not just a sound’ (Archer, 2021: O). Within the scene from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, which the L3 participants had been developing with the tools addressed so far in this chapter, the ‘O’ is always at the start of a verse line. For example, ‘O cross! too high to be enthral’d to love’ (Shakespeare, 1997: 5), with the ‘O’ at the start of a verse line it makes the rhythm trochaic – a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. Following the implementation of the O Warm-Up tool, participants performed the scene again, where the lines beginning with ‘O’ had the stress on the ‘O’ followed by an unstressed syllable, therefore adhering to the trochaic rhythm. The emotional and physical engagement, in these performances, was clear with both the ‘O’ and the rest of the thought that followed. A warm-up exercise which was initially independent from the text but led to a text-based activity proved to be a successful approach to this problem. The most logical place in the toolkit for the O-Warm-up was at the start of a tray, with the performance utilising the discoveries made during the warm-up later in the same tray of tools to give learners additional time to reflect on how their experience of O could be implemented in performance. I reviewed the tools developed at this stage of my research and reconsidered the progression of tools within the toolkit, Fig.8 illustrates Tray One: The First Encounter and Fig.9 shows Tray Two: Living the Text. As the toolkit is designed to also function as a rehearsal methodology, I continued my exploration of warm-ups in the toolkit and what function they could serve.

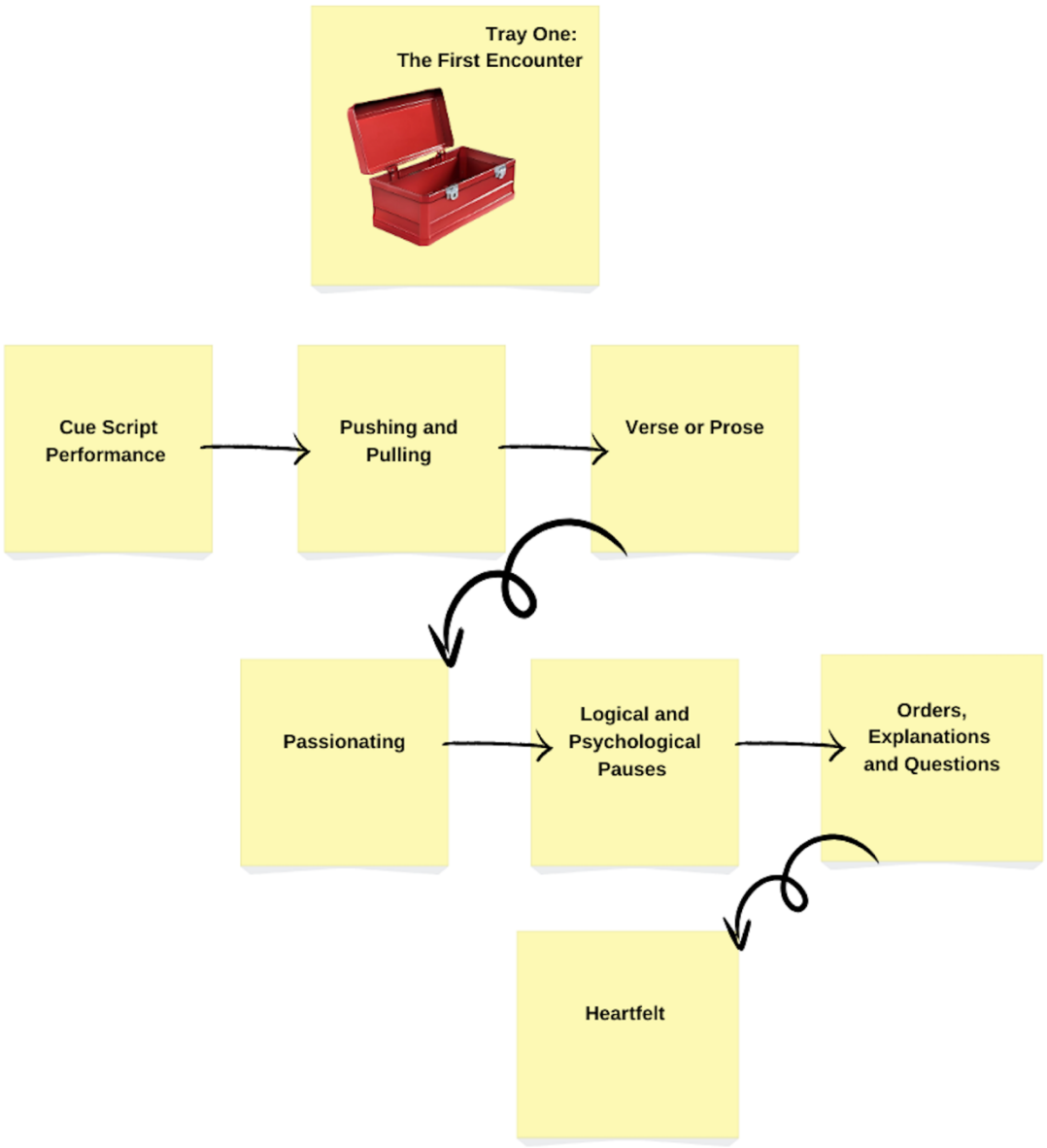


Figure 8: Tray One Revised

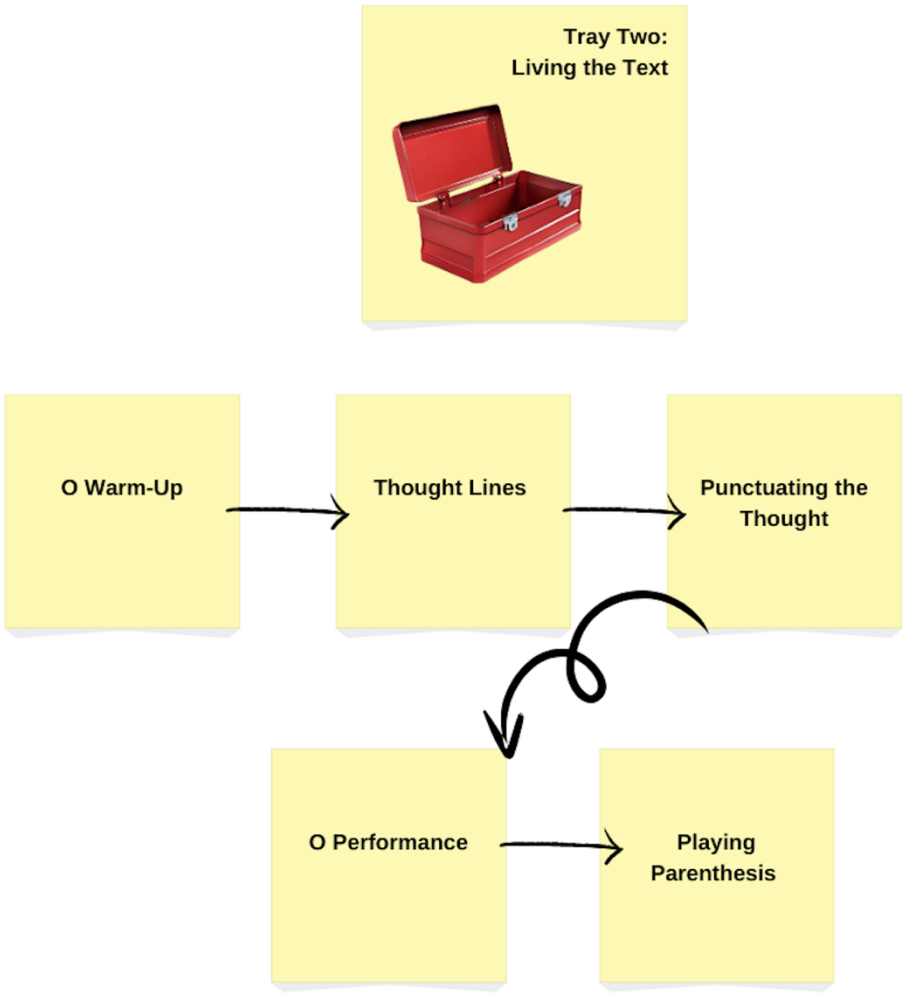


Figure 9: Tray Two Living the Text

3.10 Tool 11: Wall

Jessica Swale (2009: 140) outlines a warm-up exercise called Bomb and Shield, where learners have to identify one person in the rehearsal room to be their 'bomb' and another to be their 'shield'. They must always move around the space keeping their shield between them and their bomb. This is an exercise which can increase the energy and focus in a room considerably by engaging learners in a physical activity which requires them to be constantly focused on both a person and an objective, whilst continually adjusting their physical energy and speed of movement. I sought to adapt the premise of this for use with Shakespeare's texts as I believed it could be utilised as a means of bringing physical

energy into the text, addressing the absence of the physical development of the role which had been evidenced in the tools developed at this stage. I also theorised that it could further facilitate the meter and pulse of the text, as it might highlight to participants where they are adding stresses within their delivery. To test my theory, I conducted a workshop call 'Wall'. Continuing to utilise the *A Midsummer Night's Dream* scene, I instructed participants to work in groups of three with their scene partner and a third person who would be their 'Wall'. The aim of the exercise was to always keep the Wall between them. I asked the participant acting as the Wall to move around the space, constantly varying their speed and direction. Whilst this was happening, the other participants were fed their lines in the same manner as Pushing and Pulling. They were instructed to repeat the lines whilst keeping the wall between them and their scene partner. A video demonstrating the exercise is available here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Wall

Following the exercise, participants then performed the scene. For all participants, there was an increase in the vocal energy which they applied to their performance. For participants B and D this increase in energy was also accompanied by an increase in the speed of delivery. This increase had a detrimental effect on the progress made with the scenes thus far in terms of utilising the text's rhythms and the clarity of expression. It did however affect their physicality - adding more movement into the scene. For participants A and C, it increased their physicality within the scene and the energy the text was delivered with, though occasionally it also resulted in the rushed delivery present in the other two performances. Its value as a tool to be included within the kit was at this stage unclear, as it had a positive effect on some participants' physicality, which had become a concern with the development of the tools thus far. Its impact on the meter and pulse, as well as the clarity of communication, however, limited its utility. In the workshop which followed, the participants' initial performances had not retained the detrimental effects on the speed of delivery, however - the movement which had been introduced as a result of the exercise was present.

I theorised that there were potential applications for this tool depending on where in the toolkit it came, and which exercises preceded it, such as at the start of a rehearsal during the early stages of scene development. This theory was tested during the L5 and L7 phases of my research during which time it increased the focus of participants, establishing a playful environment for learners and encouraging them to experiment with the pace of the text. Whilst, at L7, the Wall tool facilitated occasional discoveries within the meter and pulse where changes in the iambic pentameter occur, it did not consistently influence the development of the participants' performances. At L5, when working on a single scene, the tool did not influence the development of the participants performances. As such, I did not include this tool in the final toolkit videos available via the *Shakespeare Toolkit* website due to the inconsistency in its ability to provide a significant impact on the access to or development of the text in performance.

3.11 Tool 12: Therefore

Following the Wall workshop, I returned to the development of the First Folio punctuation tools, with a workshop titled 'Therefore' exploring the use of the colon. In Chapter One: The Shakespearian Actors Text (p.69), using the colon as an indicator of intention behind a character's thought had proved to be a simple and effective way for participants to make both character decisions and analyse the text without the need for verbal reasoning. In First Folio technique, the colon instructs actors to treat the thought that follows it as a more articulate summation of the thought which preceded it. Building on Basil's (2006 :74) notion that the actor should think the word 'therefore' at every colon, I had previously asked participants to say 'therefore' out loud (see page 77). Whilst saying 'therefore', greater clarity in expression was evidenced by all four participants in the previous workshop. However, such application doesn't always make sense in relation to the content of the text. Upon reflection, Participant D stated that 'sometimes when I saw therefore, I was like oh yeah, that makes a lot of sense, but sometimes it felt a bit weird. If there were a lot [of colons] in a row as well' (Archer, 2021: There 1). To address these in this current workshop, I gave participants a list of words that could be used in place of 'therefore' which included *hence*, *consequently*, *so*, *thus*, *then*, and *ergo*. They were also given the option to select their own choice of word, providing it was a synonym for 'therefore'.

I allowed participants time to go through the text and annotate above the colons with their own word choices. During the process of applying this to the scene, the participants struggled on occasion with adding in 'therefore' or related synonyms due to the word which followed the colon. In describing this difficulty, Participant C gave an example; 'the word after [the colon] was "then", so it felt like it didn't really make sense to say "so" or "hence", it didn't make much sense there' (Archer, 2021: There 4). Participant D also noted that there were occasions where the word following the colon might already be a synonym of therefore and 'if it was one of the words [synonym of therefore], I was then saying it as if I had put it in myself' (Archer, 2021: There 4). Participant D found that the exercises drew her attention to synonyms of therefore which followed a colon in the text and facilitated an acting choice to be made in how she addressed that thought, which she would not have considered without this exercise. This discovery was significant, as it demonstrates the tools ability to draw learners attention to ways of delivering existing lines in the text and enabling an analysis of the this aspect of the text through practice.

I then instructed participants to perform the scene again, this time *without* adding in any words, whilst keeping the purpose of the punctuation – defined in the previous exercise – clear. Unlike the initial punctuation workshop, breath length was not addressed within these instructions. Despite this, each participant instinctively stopped at the colon taking a big breath before continuing. All four participants also evidenced minor changes in their performance with a clear change in intentions being played at the colon. The impact on the performance, however, was not as significant as in the First Folio punctuation workshop. The participants also referenced this in their feedback in which they described that they felt that, due to the limited number of colons in the scene, the approach felt less effective in this workshop than in the previous First Folio punctuation workshop. For example, Participant D remarked that 'in the other text, I felt I had to differentiate them [synonyms for therefore] more because it [colon] was coming up so often' (Archer, 2021: There 4). This sentiment was supported by the other three participants, who felt that the limited number of colons in the scene prevented them from utilising the tool effectively. I theorised that the response here might not be shared with learners who had not encountered the technique before. As such I reviewed its application L7 participants (see p.175) and with the L5 participants (See p.194).

3.12 Tool 13: Capital Gestures

In Chapter One (p.71) the function of capital letters within the main body of the text was explored. Participants were given the simple instruction of emphasising any words within the main text which had a capital letter, unless they followed a piece of major punctuation, which denotes the start of a new thought, or were in the left-hand margin, signifying a verse line. This was applied effectively to their performances of Paulina's monologue from *The Winter's Tale*, however, I theorised that this function of capital letters may also provide an opportunity to engage learners physically with the text, as I had become concerned about the limited physical characterisation participants had presented at this stage in the toolkit's development. To do so, I sought to incorporate the capitalised word, which required additional emphasis with a physical gesture, linking the increased vocal energy required with an embodied action. Patsy Rodenburg (2018: 140) outlines an exercise for connecting the body and breath when delivering text, by throwing a ball whilst speaking. In my teaching practice, I often utilise this exercise when working with learners on monologues, asking them to work in pairs and throw a ball back and forth to their partner whilst delivering their lines. In my experience this not only helps learners to connect the body and breath but also relaxes learners physically leading to the development of the characters physicality. I theorised that adapting Rodenburg's exercises and making the physical activity a specific gesture in relation to the capitalised word, would help learners to both emphasise the word and enhance how they embodied the role.

To test this theory, I conducted a workshop called 'Capital Gestures', I began the workshop by explaining the function of capital letters when found within the main body of text, distinguishing this use of capital letters from those used to denote a verse line or new thought. I then asked participants to emphasise any words which began with capital letters, and to accompany the emphasis with a physical gesture. In my instructions I made clear to participants that the physical gesture they utilised must relate to the capitalised word, to enhance its delivery. The example I gave was if the capitalised word was 'You' they might want to gesture vigorously to their scene partner. Below is an excerpt demonstrating the participants application of this in practice:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Capital-Gestures

Participants engaged with the emphasis on capitalised words but presented a very limited engagement with the physical gestures, as evidenced in the above video. As such, through my observations, I had concluded that this tool was no more effective than the instruction-based exercise utilised in Chapter One (p.72). The participants experience of the exercise, however, provided a different rationale for including Capital Gestures within the toolkit. Participant C explained 'it made me emphasise those words [in capitals] but more than that it made me want to move closer to her [her scene partner] on those words, and it made me feel more connected to the text' (Archer, 2020: Cap Gest). Participant A reported the same experience when gesturing with the capitalised words stating, 'it really helped, it actually made more of a connection [between her and her scene partner] because we weren't just standing there, we were having to think about movement' (Archer, 2020: Cap Gest). Whilst in practice their physical gestures were limited, the experience of doing the exercise forced participants to consider their physicality and proxemics solidifying Capital Gestures as an effective tool for the toolkit. This was well evidenced in the performances delivered following Capital Gestures as shown in the excerpt below taken from the beginning of the scene:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Capital-Gestures-Performance

3.13 Tool 14: Painting Pictures

When utilising Stanislavski's 'system', learners create mental images based on the text they perform, their response to the words of other characters, and their relationship with

the given circumstances (Stanislavski, 2008: 73 -75). This creation of images in the actor's mind is fundamental to character development as 'when the actor sees what they are talking about, what they need to convince their partner of, they manage to capture everyone's attention with their mental images, convictions, beliefs and feelings' (Knebel, 2021: Mental Images). When performing Shakespeare's plays, I have found utilising this Stanislavski based practice of mental images can be an effective means to address the images Shakespeare writes into the text. This is because:

> as well as using imagery copiously, Shakespeare also employs what might be called 'imagistic language'; that is, language in which one thing is not being compared to another but which is nevertheless designed poetically to create pictures in the mind of the listener (Hinds, 2015: 24).

Learners must create mental images to ensure they communicate meaning of the images and imagistic language to their scene partner and an audience. To address this in the toolkit I sought to design a tool which allowed learners to discuss the dominant imagery of the text. Having a tool which would facilitate learners' creation and discussion of the text imagery, I theorised, would create the foundation of mental images for the performance, which could be further developed and refined through independent work on their role. The foundation of this exercise would be based in the format of Tina Packer's free association exercise called dropping-in (Merlin and Packer, 2020: 137-144), which involves connecting the text to the breath and imagination. The format of Packer's exercise involves the actors sitting opposite each other with one actor neutrally feeding lines to the other but drawing their attention to key words and asking free association questions to connect the actor's imagination and character to those words (Merlin and Packer, 2020: 137-144). In my teaching practice, I have found this to be very useful and felt that some aspects of it could be adapted as a means of exploring the imagery of the text through imagination and collaboration.

For this workshop, entitled 'Painting Pictures', I utilised a similar format to Packer's exercise. I asked participants to sit in chairs opposite each other and deliver the text. When they reached a specific image in the text, or language which they felt created specific images in their mind, they were to share that image with their scene partner, describing in as much detail as possible the image that they had in their mind. Their scene partner would listen and respond by describing how they envisaged that imagery. I theorised this would allow learners to address the metaphor performance criteria for assessing the toolkit's efficacy in the development of a performance, based on Nobel's

(2010: 4-5) seven essential elements as outlined in the Introduction under the heading Practice as Research (PaR) Methodology (p.35 -42). This was because the images and imagistic language are often presented through metaphors, similes, and comparisons. I also believed that, in paying closer attention to the images, the apposition in the text would become clearer as it is also often contained within imagistic language. Once identified, I believed that learners would then make additional discoveries about apposition at work elsewhere in the text. In the performances which followed the exercise, Participant A, B and D all presented a greater emotional connection to the text and their delivery of the images and imagistic language was evident, as shown in the excerpt below:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Painting-Pictures

Participants took time to deliver the images and their inflections had greater variety, the rhythm of the text here was also clearer, as they were utilising the language more effectively and not rushing through the imagery. The metaphors, similes, and comparisons present in the scene were all addressed with greater clarity and intent following the implementation of this tool. The apposition, however, was not commented on, nor was it highlighted within the performance. When reflecting on the exercises, Participant A stated that they 'felt like when I was doing the script the second time round, I was really thinking about the image in my head. I thought about words which I hadn't thought about before and trying to get that image across' (Archer, 2021: PPic7). Participant B added that 'it also helped me knowing what [Participant A] was thinking, and connected me to the imagery more, rather than it just being pretty words' (Archer, 2021: PPic7). This exercise facilitates a shared experience of the language using imagination, listening and responding whilst allowing for discussions to emerge, which shaped participants' understanding of the text through the inner life of their role. As such Painting Pictures became the tenth tool in the toolkit.

3.14 Tool 15: Clues in The Text

The Verse and Prose tool addressed in the previous chapter (p.58) utilises visual clues in the text to determine whether a line is written in verse or prose. Whilst Shakespeare's verse is predominantly written in iambic pentameter, he often manipulates the verse to highlight moments of change within a speech or situation through the addition or absence of syllables in a line or through the length of a line itself (Hall, 2003: 28-29). Within Shakespeare's verse there are two specific variations in line lengths which learners must address, these are short lines and shared lines which were explained and analysed in Chapter One (p.56). Both short lines and shared lines, like verse and prose can be identified through visual clues from the presentation of the First Folio. A short line 'consists of fewer than ten syllables. If the line is finished by the following line, usually spoken by the next to speak, it is a shared line' comma A short line instructs the learner to take a pause or add some physical action sufficient to fill the remaining rhythm of the iambic pentameter (Block, 2015: 82). Conversely, a shared verse line is instructing the learners to share a complete verse line of iambic pentameter, through the combination of two separate character's short lines. One character begins a line of verse, and a second character must quicky pick up their cue to finish the verse line (Van Tassel, 2000: 18).

When I considered the structure and progression of the toolkit, I theorised the final visual clues which could be taken from the text, would be best addressed through an independent task rather than a tool which required a facilitator to guide the learners through its use. At this stage in the toolkit participants had developed a robust understanding of both their character and the scene through a practice-first approach to the text. I therefore considered that these final elements of the text's requirements could be addressed as individual preparation on the role, leading to a rehearsal of the scene to apply any final text-based discoveries to their performance. At the end of the 'Painting Pictures' workshop addressed above I finally provided participants with a complete First Folio version of the scene. Prior to this, learners had access to the full dialogue of the scene, rather than their cue scripts in the 'Thought Lines' workshop (p.126) though this was through annotated copies of A *Midsummer Night's Dream*, such as *The Arden Third Series* (2017), and *The Arden Performance Edition* (2020). These annotated copies of Shakespeare's play's do not always include or follow the same formatting of short and shared lines when compared to the First Folio. In the example below taken from Act One Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in Egeus' monologue, both *The Arden Third*

Series (2017), and *The Arden Performance Edition* (2020) add additional text to the short lines present in the First Folio to make them complete lines of iambic Pentameter.

First Folio

My Nobel Lord,
This Man hath my consent to marrie her.
And my Gracious Duke,
This Man hath bewitch'd the bossome of my child

The Arden Third Series

Stand forth, Demetrius . My nobel lord,
This Man hath my consent to marry her.
Stand forth, Lysander. And my gracious duke,
This man hath bewitched the bosom of my child.

(Shakespeare, 2017: 1.1: 24 -27)

By removing the short lines, the direction to the learner to add an action or pause at this point is also removed, which is why for the 'Clues in the Text' tool it was essential to provide learners with a complete First Folio version of the scene and make clear that they must work from the First Folio text, rather than the editions they used in the Thought Lines tool. Once I had provided participants with the complete First Folio version of the scene, I explained short and shared lines using visual examples from the *Romeo and Juliet* scene they had previously worked on (see p.60). I then asked participants to take the scene away with them, review it and identify any short and shared lines for the next workshop, where they would have the opportunity to apply their discoveries to their performance.

At the start of the next workshop, titled 'The Final Performance' participants reflected on their independent task, and correctly identified the shared lines present in the text. Within the scene participants were working on, from Act One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* there is only one shared line and no examples of short lines. In their performances participants utilised the short line, as evidenced in the video overleaf under the heading 'Final Performance'. Both participants playing Hermia who are responsible for picking up the cue quickly and creating the shared line - did so effectively, keeping the rhythm of the text by treating Hermia's response as the conclusion to Lysander's verse line. As there is only one example of a shared line in this scene, and no examples of short lines, the conclusions which can be drawn in relation to this tool were limited at this stage

of the research. I also considered here that to aid the accessibility of identifying short and shared lines it should be separated into two specific tools - one to address short lines and one to address shared lines. For the L7 phase of my research these became Action to address the short lines and Quickly to address the shared lines, my findings for these two tools are reflected upon in Chapter Four (p.173). The visual aids below in Fig. 10, 11 and 12 demonstrate the structure and progression of tools developed at L3 phase of my research.

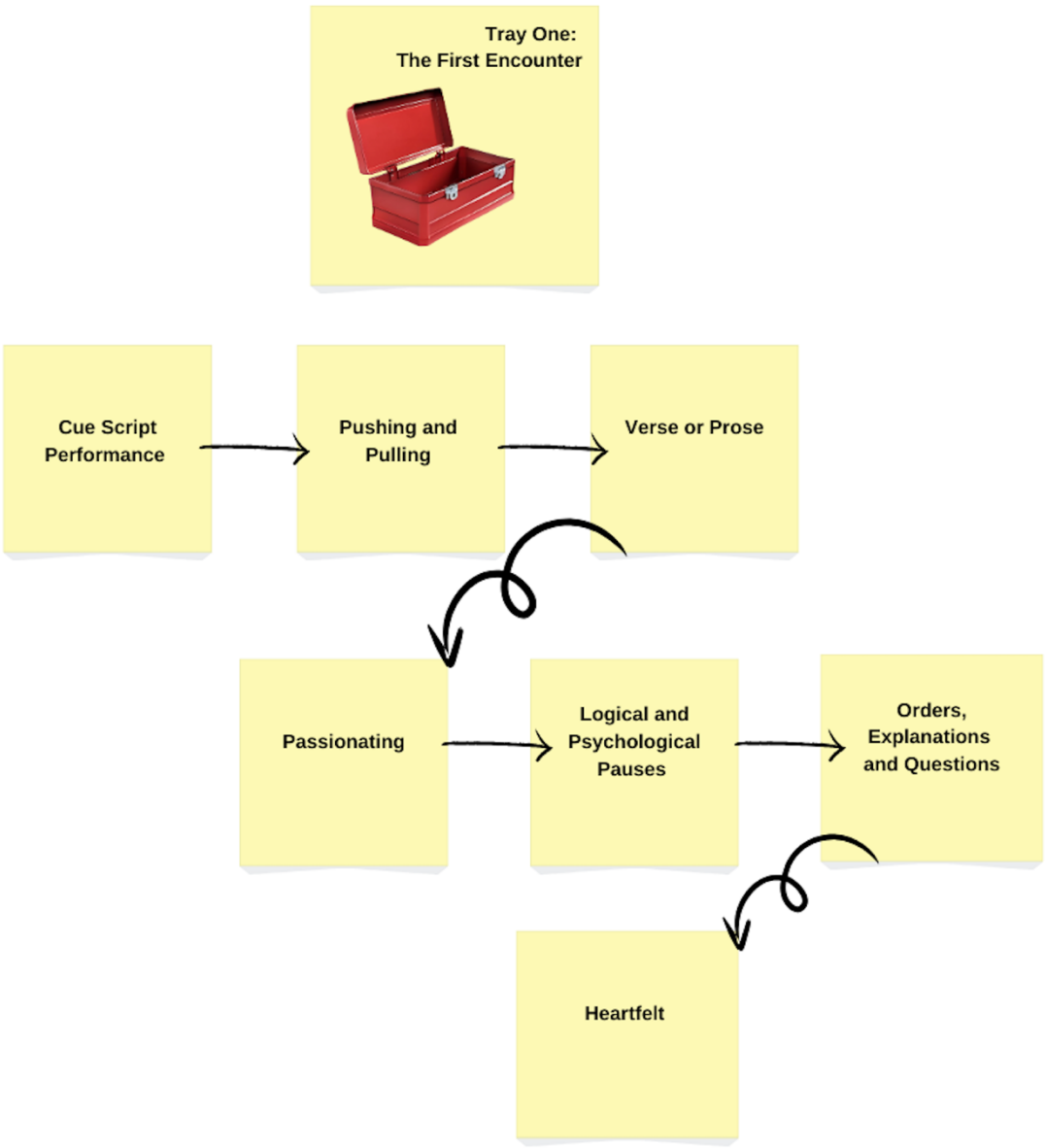


Figure 10: Tray One L3 Final

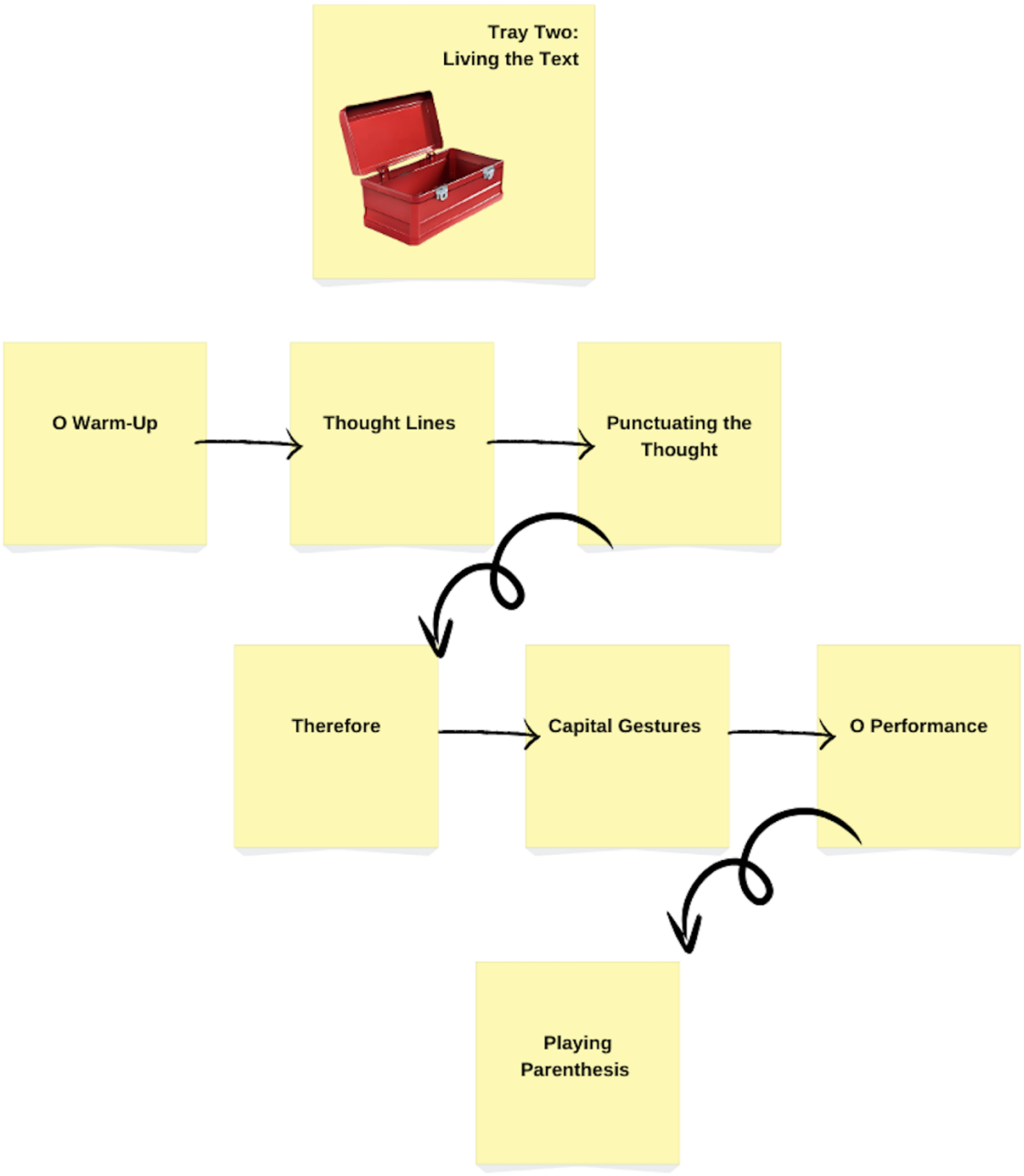


Figure 11: Tray Two L3 Final

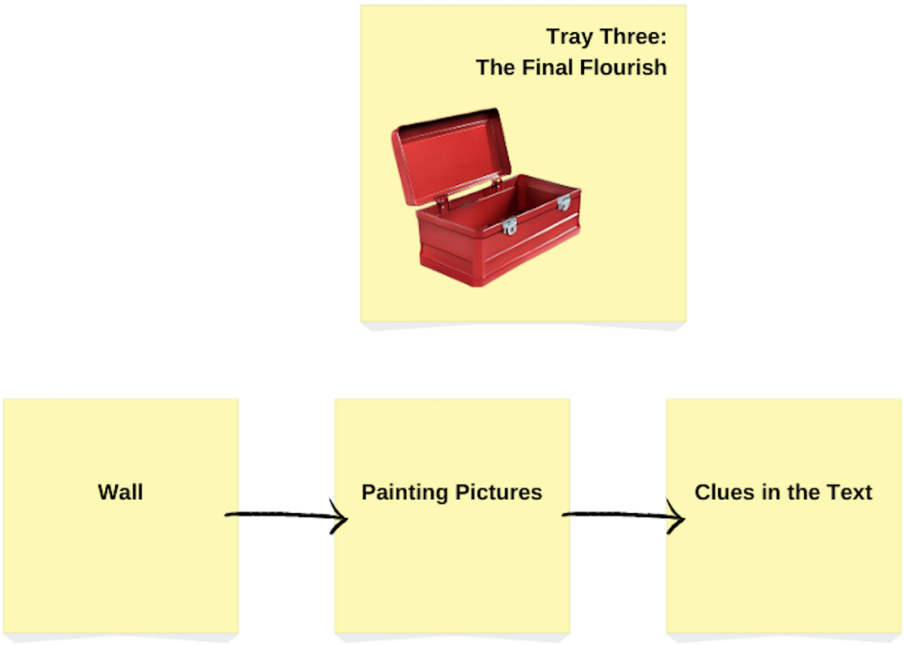


Figure 12: Tray Three L3 Final

3.15 Final Performance

Following the application of all of the tools outlined above participants delivered a final performance of Act One, Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Below is a recording of the final performance from participants A and B, followed by their first cue script performance, as a means of demonstrating the development of the scene through the application of the toolkit:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/FE-Final-Performance

To assess the final performance, I utilised a grading matrix rooted in the criteria of Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) and Nobel (2010: 4-5). To define how successfully each criterion was met I utilised Pearson's (2021) assessment parameters and definitions for a Level 3 performance, whereby a Pass is achieved by demonstrating the use of skills,

Merit through effective application of skills and Distinction through confident and disciplined application of skills (Pearsons, 2021).

In Appendices 5-8 at the end of this thesis, the completed grading matrices for all four level three participants can be viewed. Participant A delivered the most effective performance, creating a physical, vocal and emotional embodiment of the role in relation to the circumstances, whilst adhering to the textual requirements. Her energy in the performance was well sustained and appropriate to the demands of the text, playing line endings and the First Folio punctuation successfully. She also effectively utilised the text in brackets, playing it differently to the main body of her speech added variety to her vocal performance and discerned those aspects of Hermia's thoughts as separate to the main body of ideas expressed. Her use of the imagery within the text was effective, however - at times - it lacked the clarity of expression required. She utilised the shared line effectively, keeping the rhythm of the text by treating her response as the conclusion to Lysanders verse line. Playing the text in brackets differently to the main body of her speech adding variety to her vocal performance and discerning those aspects of Hermia's thoughts as separate to the main body of ideas expressed. Her use of the imagery within the text was effective, however, sometimes lacked the clarity of expression required.

Participant B made clear distinctions in thought changes throughout the performance and utilised the line endings successfully. When approaching colons, she added a pause in the characters thought and often approach the next line with the intention of 'therefore', however, this was not consistent throughout the entire performance. She made use of the meter, pulse, and structure of the text for the majority of her performance. On one occasion, however, she added in pauses which were detrimental to the rhythm. On the line 'Making it momentary, as a sound' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.1: 246), the length of pause she added at the comma broke the rhythm of the line and effected the meaning in delivery, separating the line as two thoughts. Her use of the text in brackets was also inconsistent; at times she utilised this technique successfully, however when she delivered the line 'That (in a spleen) unfolds both heaven and earth' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.1: 248), she did not perform the bracketed text differently to the rest of the line - neither emphasising it or treating it as a sidebar. However, Participant D, who also played Lysander, successfully applied the technique to her performance – creating changes in the delivery of the lines which made them distinctive from the line of enquiry her character had been pursuing.

Participants B, C and D all required further development of their physical embodiment of the role in order to fully address this aspect of Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) criteria for a good performance in psychological realism. Participants physical embodiment of their roles was an issue which I had noted throughout the development of the toolkit. It was an area of my research which was later addressed with the Level 7 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as will become clear in the next chapter. In the Introduction, section 0.5, I identified the four pillars of Stanislavski's 'system': Relaxation, Focus, Observation, and Imagination (Merlin, 2007: xiv). It was my intention to build my toolkit on these four pillars, at this stage of my research, I recognised that the toolkit had only addressed three of the four pillars of the 'system'. Whilst the tools developed had been situated in Imagination, Observation, and Focus, Relaxation had not yet been directly addressed. The final performances at this stage, however, demonstrated that this version of the toolkit was an effective means of facilitating participants to meet both Gutekunst and Gillett's (2021: 8) definition of effective acting and most aspects of Nobel's (2010: 4- 5) criteria for addressing the demands of Shakespeare's texts in performance. Whilst the extent to which these criteria had been achieved varied between participants, this is in keeping with academic attainment and is a representative model of the toolkit's application in a learning environment. I had however, identified areas of the toolkit which needed amendment in addition to the creation of new tools these are addressed in Chapter Four: A Rehearsal Methodology under the heading Finalising the Toolkit.

3.16 Summary of Findings

The use of the new tools Pushing & Pulling and Logical & Psychological Pauses, in combination with the tools developed earlier to explore the First Folio punctuation, shaped the participants' use of the text's meter and pulse, shape, structure and line endings. The use of metaphors, similes and the imagistic language began to emerge through thought lines but was most successfully addressed through Painting Pictures. The word play written into the characters' dialogue in these scene used within the se workshops was limited, though the findings confirm that this is an area of performing Shakespeare which required further exploration in the next stage of my research, in addition to the development of tools addressing the apposition. In their reflections

following the application of all of the tools developed at this stage of the research, Participant A stated that ‘These exercises have helped and shaped my understanding of the text so much’ (Archer, 2021: Full TK1). Participant B added that ‘The way we thought about character, has changed immensely as well, when I first looked at the scene, I was like oh he’s really concerned, he really cares for her but now I can see there is a dark undertone’ (Archer, 2021: Full TK1). The feedback from participants in the development of each tool reflects their experience of the toolkit as an accessible approach to performing Shakespeare.

Chapter Four
A Rehearsal Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the application of the tools developed throughout the past three chapters by utilising the toolkit as the basis for a rehearsal methodology towards a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In reviewing the findings from these previous chapters, I identified the need for additional tools to be developed, these tools were developed during the rehearsal process of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and are analysed in this chapter under the heading Finalising the Toolkit. The final production was performed on 6th June 2022 at The University of East London. A video recording of the final production is available here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/A-Midsummer-Nights-Dream-Performance-2022

I selected *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from Shakespeare's cannon as the play consists of 2,102 lines, 400 of which are in prose, with the remaining lines utilising both rhymed and blank verse (Hart, 1932: 21). The play has three distinct character groups: the court, the fairies, and the Mechanicals. The court speak predominantly in blank verse, the fairies - and anyone under the spell of their magic - speak consistently in rhymed verse, and the Mechanicals speak in heightened rhetoric prose, except when they are acting in the play-within-a-play, which is performed in rhymed verse (White, 2020: 7).

As the character groups are associated with a specific writing style, the play facilitated an analysis of the toolkit's application onto Shakespeare's different writing styles within one production, within three sub-groups of participants.

The participants for this production were all enrolled on Master of Arts (MA) programmes in Acting at the University of East London, with one participant from the connected MA Theatre Directing programme. Utilising this specific group of participants allowed me to test the application of the toolkit for Higher Education at Level 7, whilst also providing evidence of its utility for a professional rehearsal methodology as the majority of L7 participants had been working at a professional level prior to their studies. The rehearsal process was originally designed to span forty-eight hours. This allocation of rehearsal time was based on my experience of contact time typically allocated to a theatre production module on an undergraduate acting programme. Forty-eight hours has been the minimum hours I have experienced assigned to this type of module, with one hundred and eight being the maximum. In professional theatre, rehearsal times vary based on the production's budget, but four weeks of rehearsal is commonplace. In an article for *The Stage,* director Phil Wilmott writes 'as a director, I like four weeks, Monday to Friday, prior to technical rehearsals if it's a musical or a classical text' (Wilmott, 2015). Whilst Wilmot doesn't specify how many hours included in these weeks, Equity guidelines stipulate that 'the working week shall be no more than 40 hours worked over no more than 6 days in a 7 day period' (Equity, 2022). This would equate to a maximum of one hundred and fifty hours of rehearsal time. By working with forty-eight hours of rehearsal, I aimed to test the methodology as a teaching tool to stage a Shakespeare production in Higher Education, whilst also testing its validity within the industry, working with a limited rehearsal period. The play did, however, require abridgment to meet the running time requirements of a theatre production in Higher Education. When calculating the running time of a Shakespeare play, Nobel (2022: 129) proposes that each runs at an average of seventeen lines per minute, making *A Midsummer Night's Dream* approximately one hundred and twenty-four minutes in length. Most theatre production modules require a performance of forty to ninety minutes in length, as such, the play required an abridged version for the purposes of this case study. Within the character groups (the court, the fairies and the Mechanicals) the court also contains a sub-group, referred to as 'the Lovers', consisting of: Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius and Helena. These characters speak in both blank and rhymed verse, allowing me to analyse the toolkits application on both verse forms with the same four participants. I therefore created the

abridged version with the focus being on the lover's story and a running time of eighty-minutes.

When designing the rehearsal schedule, I had focused on meeting the contact time requirements for a Higher Education module without fully considering the additional time required for the new tools to be developed utilising the Kemmins and McTaggart (2000: 595) Participatory Research Spiral. Nor had I considered that testing the tools established from the previous chapters with the L7 participants through a case study research methodology would also require additional time allocations. As a case study design is situated in participants' experience of a specific aspect of practice and its effects (Winston, 2006: 43), it requires additional time than a Higher Education theatre production module to allow for the interviews conducted with participants during the application of the toolkit. There were also further delays caused by participant attendance and preparedness for rehearsals, limiting what could be achieved in the original time frame and contributing to extending the rehearsal process. These complications, however, are representative of trying to rehearse a theatre production module in Higher Education and are not consistent with professional theatre. Given all these factors, the rehearsal process was extended to sixty hours to fully accommodate the application of the toolkit within the parameters of my PaR project.

For the rehearsal process, I wanted to ensure that it was the focussed utilisation of the toolkit that guided the development of the performance and the participants' interpretation of the text. In *Inside the Rehearsal Room* (2021), Marsden addresses the notion of the invisible director and quotes Stockroom theatre company's Artistic Director Kate Wasserberg:

> the director is essentially invisible. What I and the company have in common is that moments of visual innovation have come necessarily from the text. It's not about me demonstrating my skill or putting something on top of the play. The production grows up and out through the play (Marsden, 2021: 61).

The notion of visual innovation coming from the text refers to the show's aesthetic being guided by the actors' discoveries through rehearsal. Professor Leon Rubin's research finds that 'the tendency to personalise and mono-focus a single theme of the play and warp a concept or design around it is a common practice' (Rubin, 2021: 14). His analysis of current practices for rehearsing Shakespeare's plays finds that directors typically draw an idea out of the play and create a production which is centred around it, often

diminishing or disregarding other themes within the play text. Andy Hinds also acknowledges this trend [of imposing an idea onto Shakespeare through staging], but warns that such productions 'neuter the truth of the play by subjugating it to some opinion, or ideology, of the director…as opposed to it being an act of service; an act where one's intention is to honour the text' (Hinds, 2015: 18), condemning works in which the text serves a purpose for the interpretation rather than the interpretation serving the text. Whilst this might be a common practice in the industry the toolkit was designed for, from a research perspective it could affect the data generated at this phase of the research. This is because when applying aspects of Stanislavski's 'system' to the text, as my toolkit does, the director's interpretation forms part of the given circumstances (Merlin, 2007: 66). A specific directorial interpretation of the play would therefore have an impact on how the participants consider their character. As my toolkit is designed as a character-driven methodology affecting the interpretation of character will also influence the validity of the data gathered. As opposed to an interpretation or idea being imposed on the text, the aesthetic is developed through the actor's interpretation. This approach to the production was necessary to determine how much information participants were taking from the toolkit's utility in making the text accessible. As such, at the start of the rehearsal process it was made clear to participants that there was not a theme or concept for this production and that one would arise from their interpretation of the text. Participants were also instructed not to engage in any research relating to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or to read the play. They were also asked not to approach or prepare the text in their usual practice. In following these instructions, it would ensure the toolkit was driving any understanding, discoveries, and interpretations of the text rather than any external factors, which would also impact on the research findings. As the toolkit utilises cue scripts rather than the full play, rehearsals were designed to progress linearly so that, through each new scene rehearsal, the plot would unfold along with the participants' understandings. The process of realising this performance began with a casting workshop, which also provided a means of further testing aspects of the toolkit prior to the production.

As will become clear in this chapter, the conclusions drawn from this phase of my research support the toolkit's ability to make Shakespeare's texts more accessible to learners through a character-driven approach when applied to verse drama. In its application to heightened rhetoric prose, the toolkit makes the text accessible, though does not contribute to the same depth and clarity of performance than current approaches to heightened rhetoric prose, such as those detailed by Andy Hinds (2015: 168-192) which

are rooted in verbal reasoning. These conclusions have been drawn through participants' feedback during the rehearsal process, my own observations, and by assessing the final performance against the parameters established in the Introduction, section 0.7. Whilst proving effective, this stage of my research also highlighted its limitations, which will be addressed through this chapter. Unlike previous chapters, participants here will be referred to by the name of the character they played in the final production. These character names are also utilised when analysing the casting workshop which focused on the section of Act One Scene One between Hermia, Lysander and Helena (Shakespeare, 1997: 6-8). This chapter follows the process of creating the production - from the initial casting process, through pre-production and the development of new tools, and concluding with my reflections on both the rehearsal process and the final production.

4.2 Casting

To cast the roles, I conducted three one-hour audition workshops with L7s. My focus in these workshops was on utilising the first two tools of the toolkit: Cue Script Performance and Pushing and Pulling. The casting workshop began with the Cue Script Performance tool as outlined in Chapter Two (p.62). Following the application of this tool to the scene, I asked participants for feedback on their experience. Most of the feedback related to the focus and attention it forced them to place on their scene partner. This was best summarised by Helena who stated 'it made you pay attention to your partner, it made me not want to look and see what they were reading. I had to look and make eye contact with my partners, which I thought was awesome' (Archer, 2021: MA Audition 4). Despite this positive experience of the tool, I observed two participants who seemed to struggle to comprehend what they were saying, which Bottom confirmed when stating that they 'really struggled with that' (Archer, 2021: MA Audition 4). To address this, and ensure the accessibility of this tool, an additional step was required to help facilitate learners' first encounter with the text, the development of which is addressed in this chapter in section 4.5, Improvisation.

Following the Cue Script Performance tool, I introduced a redesigned version of Pushing and Pulling to participants. When reviewing the L3 test of this tray, I felt it necessary to address the Pushing and Pulling tool. The need for bamboo sticks and rope wasn't a practical tool at this stage, as it limited how many learners could participate in

the exercise to two at a time – pushing or pulling against a single partner. In Act One Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* there are six characters on stage at once, each interacting with different characters at different points in the scene. As such, it would have meant Pushing and Pulling needed to be repeated for each of the character interaction combinations. The need for bamboo and rope would also create challenges when applied to a teaching environment or a professional rehearsal due to the number of resources required. To address this, I introduced a large hula-hoop, which was made of interlocking sections, so that it could be easily stored and transferred between teaching / rehearsal spaces. This proved to be a more successful delivery method for the tool as it simultaneously allowed for both pushing and pulling due to its structure as shown below in Fig.13.

Following the Pushing and Pulling tool with the hula-hoop, participants' feedback evidenced the clarifying of intentions and increased understanding of the text's meaning, as was similarly reported by the L3 participants previously. Puck stated 'you could really feel the intention between each line, and I think it helped translate better the relationship. Ok, you're pulling away here' (Archer, 2021: MA Audition 5). The clarifying of relation-

Figure 13: Pushing and Pulling Hula-Hoop

ships with this tool was reported by most participants in the workshop. Participants also found it helpful in creating a connection between each other. Hermia expressed that 'it was really nice not to have to worry about our lines during that process too, because then there was a deeper connection that was easier to maintain' (Archer, 2021: MA Audition 5). Lysander believed that 'it was good for building "grasp", which I wasn't expecting' (Archer, 2021: MA Audition 5). By grasp, Lysander was referring to Stanislavski's definition of the term as the connection between two characters (Merlin, 2014: 207-2011). This reflection was significant as grasp between actors in performance is an important aspect of the listening and responding process, which the Cue Script Performance tool had begun developing with the L3 participants, as the L7 participants reported establishing this initial connection through the Improvisation tool, I theorised it would further enhance participants listening and responding when they utilised the Cue Script Performance tool following the Improvisation. The amended Pushing and Pulling tool can be viewed here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Pushing-and-Pulling-MA

The redesigned Pushing and Pulling tool was experienced by participants as beneficial, with positive feedback well situated within their acting practice and was therefore carried forward into the toolkit with a large hula-hoop in place of the original bamboo stick and rope.

4.3 Pre-production

In preparing the cue scripts for the production, I discovered a flaw in my methodology. My approach to creating the cue scripts had previously been to take the digital version of the text from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2019) Shakespeare repository website and copy it into a Microsoft Word document. From there I would amend the text and its punctuation based on the First Folio version taken from *The Applause First Folio of Shakespeare Comedies, Histories and Tragedies in Modern Type* (2001). Once the text matched the First Folio, I would then divide scenes into cue scripts by redacting lines to

characters lines and the three cue words for each character. This process, whilst time consuming, was manageable when creating cue scripts for a single scene. When trying to develop the cue scripts for Act One, Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* however, the time constraints became a concern. Within the parameters of the preparation time a lecturer in Acting would be expected to spend on resource materials for a module, the development of cue scripts alone would have far exceeded the time allotted, and therefore posed an issue for the lecturer utilising the tool, making this an accessibility constraint for the facilitator. This assessment was based on my experience as a lecturer at three different universities and my experience of time allocations in academic workload planning. When it came to creating cue scripts for an entire show, I determined that the task was an unrealistic undertaking for every role in the production.

In *Secrets of Acting Shakespeare: The Original Approach* (2016), Patrick Tucker includes the web address for his theatre company where users can buy cue scripts for individual characters or cue scripts for the entire play as a package. These cue scripts are based on Tucker's research into Original Practice as described in Chapter Two of this thesis. Initially, I examined these cue scripts for the roles of Hermia and Lysander and went through the texts line by line, comparing them to the First Folio. The texts, it turned out, were identical; as such, I purchased the scripts for the entire cast, and methodically checked each part to ensure its accuracy. In using these cue scripts, rather than creating them, it would make the methodology more accessible to those facilitating its delivery. These cue scripts are replicas based on the formatting of Elizabethan Cue Scripts, as shown below in Fig.14. In the L3 workshop phase of my research, the cue scripts I utilised were designed to reflect modern formatting of play texts to make them more accessible. My previous versions also modernised the spelling of words, whereas Tucker's cue scripts retain the original Elizabethan spelling. As demonstrated overleaf in Fig.15.

In the first rehearsal of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I asked participants for feedback on their experience of using this new type of cue script as opposed to the formatting they experienced in the audition workshop. The change yielded positive results in participants' experiences, as not knowing who the cue was coming from made them focus more than the previous formatting required. Egeus stated that 'it made us more focused because we had to see who was speaking to us which was nice' (Archer, 2021:

A Midsommer Nights Dreame

Hermia

[I-1]

_____ with revelling.

Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius.

_____ worthy Gentleman.

So is *Lysander*.

_____ the worthier.

I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

_____ his judgment looke.

I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold,
Nor how it may concerne my modestie
In such a presence heere to pleade my thoughts:
But I beseech your Grace, that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed *Demetrius*.

_____ single blessednesse.

So will I grow, so live, so die my Lord,
Ere I will yeeld my virgin Patent up
Unto his Lordship, whose unwished yoake,
My soule consents not to give soveraignty.

_____ fade so fast?

Belike for want of raine, which I could well
Beteeme them, from the tempest of mine eyes.

_____ in blood.

O crosse! too high to be enthral'd to love.

_____ respect of yeares.

O spight! too old to be ingag'd to yong.

_____ choise of merit.

O hell! to choose love by anothers eie.

_____ to confusion.

If then true Lovers have beene ever crost,
It stands as an edict in destinie:
Then let us teach our triall patience,
Because it is a customarie crosse,
As due to love, as thoughts, and dreames, and sighes,
Wishes and teares; poore Fancies followers.

_____ stay for thee.

My good *Lysander*,
I sweare to thee, by Cupids strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicitie of Venus Doves,
By that which knitteth soules, and prospers love,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage Queene,
When the false Troyan under saile was seene,
By all the vowes that ever men have broke,
(In number more then ever women spoke)
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To morrow truly will I meete with thee.

_____ comes *Helena*.

Enter Helena.

God speede faire *Helena*, whither away?

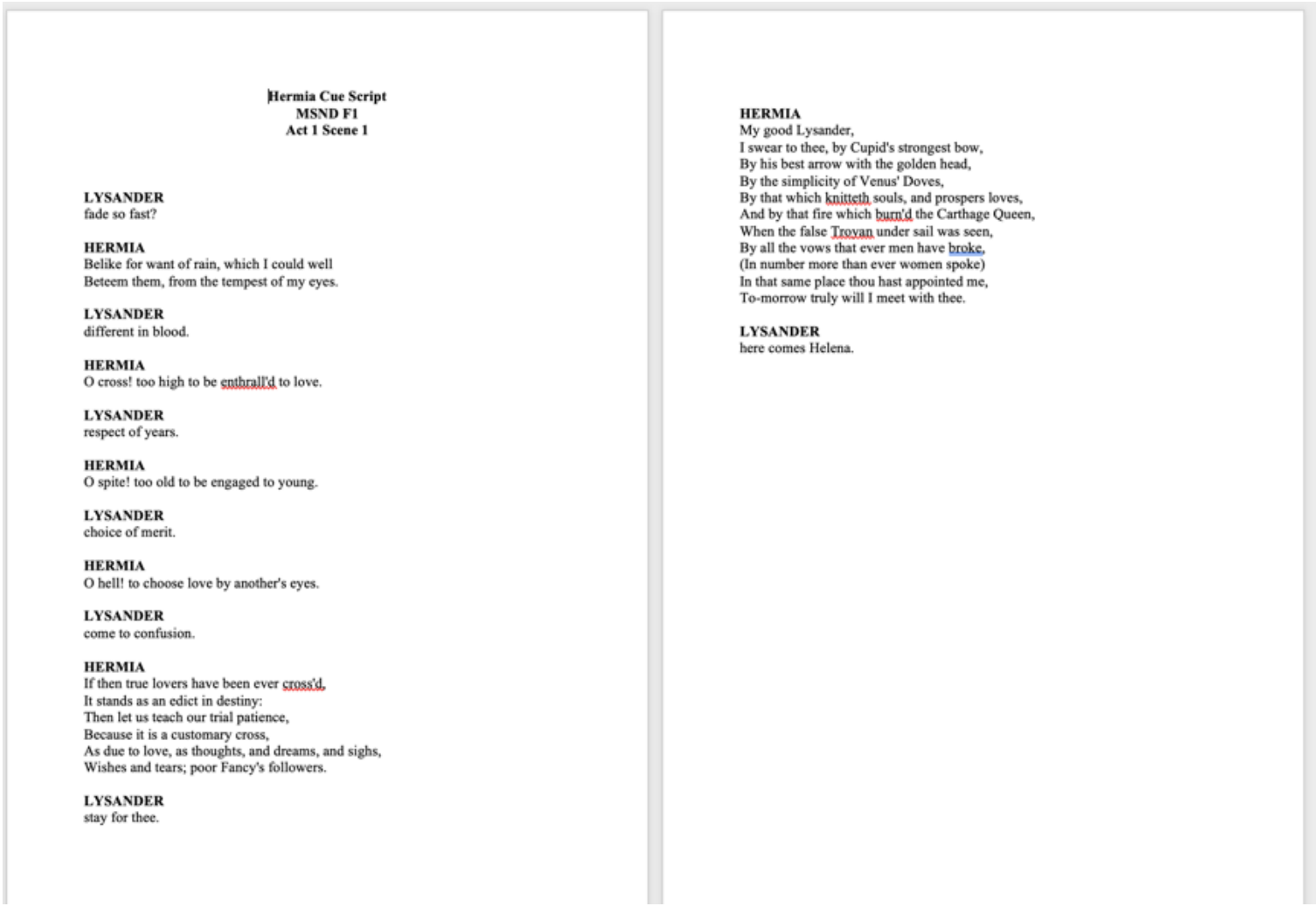
_____ *Demetrius* hart.

I frowne upon him, yet he loves me still.

_____ smiles such skil.

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Figure 14:The Original Shakespeare Company Cue Script.



Hermia Cue Script
MSND F1
Act 1 Scene 1

LYSANDER
fade so fast?

HERMIA
Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them, from the tempest of my eyes.

LYSANDER
different in blood.

HERMIA
O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to love.

LYSANDER
respect of years.

HERMIA
O spite! too old to be engaged to young.

LYSANDER
choice of merit.

HERMIA
O hell! to choose love by another's eyes.

LYSANDER
come to confusion.

HERMIA
If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love, as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,
Wishes and tears; poor Fancy's followers.

LYSANDER
stay for thee.

HERMIA
My good Lysander,
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' Doves,
By that which knitteth souls, and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage Queen,
When the false Trovan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
(In number more than ever women spoke)
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

LYSANDER
here comes Helena.

Figure 15: Level 3 Cue Script.

MSND First Rehearsal 2), an experience which was supported by the rest of the cast in their feedback. In White's review of the First Folio version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* he suggests that 'the spelling differences are easily assimilated' (2020: 7), which was supported by the participants' experience. When asked about the spelling in this version of the cue script, the participants couldn't identify any particular effect on their understanding or utilisation of the script. There were some comments which could be interpreted as a *negative* experience of these cue scripts. Theseus, for instance, found it 'weird, but I haven't done Shakespeare for a long time so it's all weird' (Archer, 2021: MSND First Rehearsal 2). Lysander also reported that 'at some point, I thought I was speaking French, all the extra vowels in there' (Archer, 2021: MSND First Rehearsal 2). Despite these comments, Lysander and Theseus' views did not represent a significant accessibility effect on using this version of the text.

In my own reflections, I considered the potential impact of the Elizabethan spelling for learners with specific learning difficulties. As someone with dyslexia, I didn't find the Elizabethan spelling challenging to navigate, though - occasionally - my comprehension of some words took longer due to the spelling when I experimented with reading out loud. As this was a potential accessibility issue in utilising this type of cue script, I monitored it throughout the rehearsal process but found no conclusive results with this group of participants.

4.4 Finalising the Toolkit

This section of the chapter analyses the six new tools which were developed at this stage of the research. These were in response to my analysis of the data collected with the L3 participants, feedback received during the L7 Casting workshop and developments made to tools during the rehearsal process.

4.5 Improvisation

In the audition workshop with the MA Acting and MA Theatre Directing students, it became clear that an additional tool was required for the participants' first encounter with the text. The first rehearsal, on 3rd February 2022, explored Act One, Scene One

and finalised the initial step required to address the issues raised in the audition workshop. My theory was that in providing the participants with the circumstances of the scene and asking them to improvise it as themselves in that situation, this might provide an accessible way of first encountering the scene. This concept was based on my adaptation of the foundational etude in the Nicolai Demidov school. Demidov taught Stanislavski's 'system' at the Moscow Arts Theatre where he was head of the Fourth Studio and later developed his own technique, which he referred to as a school (Malaev-Babel, 2015: 70). The term *etude* is taken from French, translated as to study, and is used within both Stanislavski's 'system' and Demidov's School as signifier of a practice exercises, to develop an acting skill. Demidov's foundational etude is rooted in a text-based improvisation, which 'provides some of the given circumstances, but does not firmly dictate characters, relationships, place or time' (Malaev-Babel, 2015: 78). As the etude develops, the circumstances of the scene are embodied by the actor. This approach positions the first encounter with the scene in the 'real I', a principle drawn from Stanislavski's 'system' and the starting point for an actor in developing character. The 'system' facilitates the actors' journey from the 'Real I' to the 'Dramatic I'. The definitions of these two concepts of the actors being are best described by Jean Benedetti when he defines the 'Real I' in terms of the actor in their everyday life; 'When I speak or do something, my words and actions bear the imprint of my personality…what I say is coloured, shaped by who I am. There is a Real 'I''(1998: 2). Whereas Benedetti positions the 'Dramatic I' as the opposite of the 'Real I', in relation to acting:

> acting is created behaviour, prepared spontaneously, something which looks like life but is, in fact, a selection from life, organised in such a way to make an audience participate in the events being shown. To do that, I have to create a Dramatic 'I' that looks and sounds as human as a Real 'I' (Benedetti, 1998: 2).

The 'Real I' is, in essence, the actor and the 'Dramatic I' is the actors' realisation of a role. Approaching the text through improvisation in the 'Real I' also utilises other aspects of Stanislavski's 'system' - principally imagination and using 'if' to connect with the imaginary circumstances (Stanislavski, 2008: 49-54). Improvisation is also fundamental to Active Analysis, Stanislavski's methodology for analysing a scene through improvisation. The process consists of reading the scene, discussing it, improvising the scene and then returning to the text, making reflections on the improvisation in relation to the written scene (Merlin, 2007: 197).

Unlike Active Analysis, my approach to the first encounter solely focuses on circumstances and improvisation. Participants will not have read the entire scene, nor will they have an understanding of the character. For the first rehearsal, therefore, participants were given the circumstances and asked to improvise the scene as themselves in the 'Real I'. When asked for feedback on their experience of this task, Hermia stated that 'it felt very natural' (Archer, 2022: MSND First Rehearsal 1), and, when discussing the interaction with Helena through the improvisation, she said 'that small interaction we had was very similar to real life for us, I've got to be honest, so it just felt very natural and real to have those conversations.' (Archer, 2022: MSND First Rehearsal 1). In addition to the participants' experience of working with improvisation in this manner, I observed a significant change in their physical engagement with the scene. The physicality in performance had been an issue with the work developed through the toolkit in the L3 testing. Lysander, commenting on the exercises, explained:

> we are just using our own words right now and that indicates our movements and intonations, when we put that in the actual text its going to work perfectly, I think. Because we are figuring out with our own words and then adding the characters words and thus the character becomes alive, which is really helpful (Archer, 2022: MSND First Rehearsal 1).

Demetrius, whilst sharing some of these sentiments, stated that they 'did find it difficult to have not a little bit of an idea of who the character [was] creeping in a little bit, just well that's probably not how I would act in that situation.' (Archer, 2022: MSND First Rehearsal 1). Demetrius had an understanding of his role prior to being cast. As such, this approach for him posed a contradiction to the scene based on his understanding of how his 'Dramatic I' would soon behave. Depending on the environment the toolkit is utilised in, this could present a problem. If a learner has prior knowledge of the play and then applies this approach, they are likely to experience the same conflict in working from the 'Real I'. The learner may also have a very different way of approaching a set of circumstances to their character, which again creates a potential barrier between what the tool seeks to accomplish (a preliminary understanding of the scene) and what is achieved through the exercise.

In response to both the feedback and my assessment of the exercise's utility, I reconsidered how the improvisation could be approached. For the improvisation of the Lovers' section of Act One Scene One, I gave the cast limited information about their

characters, as well as the circumstances of the scene. I did so to facilitate an improvisation that is in the early stages of creating the 'Dramatic I', where the learner is moving from working in their 'Real I' to making decisions which are informed by their understanding of the character and how they might respond to the circumstances. Participants unanimously found this approach to be more effective than the previous use of improvisation without the limited character information and made a wealth of interesting discoveries which would later help shape the development of their characters. Following their improvisation from Act One, Scene One, Hermia said to Helena, 'I think we are more frenemies than best friends' (Archer 2022: A1S1LHL), to which Helena agreed, stating 'I think we have a toxic friendship going on' (Archer 2022: A1S1LHL). Hermia concluded, 'Yes, it's a little dangerous' (Archer 2022: A1S1LHL). This information from the exercises was then carried forward into the way the two participants interacted when working with the cue script in the next tool. Speaking to the utility of the improvisation as a tool, Helena said 'I think what the improv did was open up room for emotions and a place to put the climax of the scene, so I think that had a good build to it. I think our movement was lovely and really fun too.' (Archer 2022: A1S1LHL). The conclusions drawn by the participants aligned with my own observations. The dynamic of the characterisation and the characters' interactions, in addition to their use of space, was significantly improved by this approach to the text. It also facilitated a greater understanding of the Shakespearian text when it was introduced as part of the cue script tool. Quince stated that 'I was very scared to do the Shakespeare for the first time with the script, but after that improvisation, it was very easy' (Archer 2022: MecT1). This experience was shared by all participants and well-articulated by Puck who remarked that:

> I definitely think doing the improvisation helps to build context and characterisation before going straight into Shakespearian literature. I definitely think it's helpful because there are parts where I was like I know exactly where we are and then there were parts where I am like, I am not entirely sure how I should be reacting or reading the line (Archer 2022: A2S1FP).

Fairy also found that 'the improvisation made us more relaxed and unblocked in a way, because the text is quite difficult, so I feel like if we just have the text, and we follow the text it makes us blocked in a way' (Archer 2022: A2S1FP). The association Fairy made with relaxation and this exercise was important. At the end of the L3 workshops, I identified that the toolkit did not directly address Relaxation as one of the four pillars

of the 'system' identified by Bella Merlin (2007: xiv). As relaxation was an area of development which needed to be investigated further, this was an insightful observation. The reflections from the participants provided strong evidence of how this tool made the first encounter with the text more accessible by providing them with an experience of the scene's content. They could then relate this experience to the text, with an understanding of what action took place in the scene.

Part of the analysis of a scene within Stanislavski's 'system' is to identify the scene's 'Event', which is at the heart of every scene and drives the play's progression (Merlin, 2014: 202). Through improvising the circumstances of the scene, the participants were able to find and examine the scene's event which, in turn, furthers their understanding of what needs to happen for the scene to progress. When they are then working from Shakespeare's text, the embodied knowledge of the scene helps them to comprehend what is happening in the scene and provides an outline of the scene's action for the text's meaning to be built upon. With Improvisation positioned as the first tool in the toolkit, it also removes the need for a plot and scene summary to be provided, as participants are given limited information through which they can begin to experience the scene, building their understanding as the toolkit and rehearsals progress. The following example is taken from the rehearsal of Act Two, Scene Four. This video demonstrates the initial improvisation followed by the first cue script performance.

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Improvisation

In analysing the cue script performance following the improvisation, I observed that the participants have a significant comprehension of what they are saying. This was based on the delivery of the lines, reactions, and intonations during delivery. There are examples within the scene, however, where hesitations would suggest the participants are struggling with the text. Throughout the scene, the participants are clearly listening and responding to each other and engaging in the scene as a performance rather than a line recital. Demetrius is adding sounds in response to other's

lines, reflecting how he believes the character would in this situation., thereby demonstrating his engagement with and understanding of the text.

4.6 Relaxation

To further explore and integrate relaxation into the toolkit, I adapted a relaxation protocol Stanislavski utilised at the Moscow Opera Theatre. Stanislavski and Rumyantsev (2013: 5) outline a warm-up exercise which works by harnessing energy and then relaxing it, set to the rhythm of eight quarter notes. The iambic pentameter utilised through much of Shakespeare mimics the rhythm of a heartbeat (Kulick, 2021: 34). As such, I utilised the warm-up sequence Stanislavski and Rumyantsev describe, replacing the rhythm of eight quarter notes with the sound of a heartbeat. I theorised that using the underlying rhythm of the text and a combination of harnessing energy and then relaxing would create a connection in learners to the rhythm through the process of action and relaxation. To analyse the effect of the warm-up on participants work, this tool was not added to rehearsals for Act One, but added later when working on Act Two, providing a point of comparison between rehearsals for each Act. The warm-up can be viewed here:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Relaxation

Following the exercises, participants were asked how they felt. Helena responded with 'relaxed' (Archer, 2022, Tray 1 Lovers), Lysander added 'good' (ibid) with Hermia and Demetrius nodding in agreement. Whilst their experience might have been relaxing a comparison of the performances created using the Tray One Tools in Act One without the relaxation warm-up and the Tray One Tools in Act Two following the relaxation warm-up did not reflect any benefit to the development of their characters or the scenes they were working on. The addition of the heartbeat also had no effect on how the rhythm of the text was engaged with. As in the Level Three workshops, engagement with the rhythm began with Pushing and Pulling, and was solidified

through the combination of punctuation exercises. I therefore concluded that the addition of the heartbeat rhythm was unnecessary and furthermore, this relaxation protocol would not become a tool within the toolkit.

4.7 Passionating

For the characters who had monologues of eight or more lines in the productions, I scheduled a one-to-one rehearsal to focus on applying the tools to the monologues. Prior to these rehearsals, the monologues had been performed in the context of the scene they were located in, and all of the tools from Tray One had been applied. During Helena's one-to-one rehearsal for her monologue in Act Two Scene Two, she asked if she could repeat the Passionating exercise, as she had found it to have a significant impact on interpreting her intentions for a line and making discoveries with her monologue in Act One. This was well evidenced in her feedback when discussing the monologue, as Helena stated:

> I read it more sad, because she's longing for that [love] as she's looking at Lysander and Hermia, because she's like how happy some other people be, some other couples, those dumb asses and I'm not happy. But I think she's more making fun of herself she's like oh how happy other people can be look at me this sucks. You know she's surprised that she is not experiencing that because she is just as pretty as her friend (Archer, 2022: Helena Mono 1).

Using Passionating to make this assessment of the text was a significant finding for the tool. In my experience, Helena's 'How Happy some, ore othersome can be?' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.1: 230) monologue from Act One is often initially interpreted by other learners as sad and self-pitying. Through textual analysis and verbal reasoning, learners later draw alternative conclusions. As Block (2013: 192-193) proposes, through analysis of Helena's use of rhyme, a stronger more resolute interpretation of the role can be realised. Using Passionating, (the participant portraying) Helena had begun the process of analysing the text through practical discovery rather than verbal reasoning. As per her request, we revisited the Passionating tool for Act Two, and I gave her the option to choose her own passion to explore the text with, from the list of Elizabethan passions. Helena then decided that, as she felt the monologue was sad, she wanted to try it playing 'joy'. During her performance, it occurred to me that by exploring the monologue twice with opposing passions, this might highlight contrasts

in the text. Following her interpretation of the monologue with 'joy', I asked Helena to play it again 'sad'. After this performance, she stated 'I made a contrast, juxtaposition' (Archer, 2022: Helena mono 11). She then continued to explain the apposition found in the monologue. She found that by approaching the text from antithetical emotions, it highlighted to her the direct oppositions within the lines themselves. This was a significant discovery, as apposition is one of the criteria I outlined in the Introduction (p.41) by which the final performance will be assessed. As Nobel explains, 'it is the tool that gave form to emotion and power to his [Shakespeare's] actors [and] allows intelligent debate to be accessible, robust and entertaining' (2010: 30). Through emotion, Helena discovered the apposition, and then incorporated this into the performance of the monologue, making the character's thinking intelligible and accessible to the audience.

As the usefulness of playing opposing emotions was discovered early in the rehearsal process, the tool was modified to include this addition for all future rehearsals. When applied to rehearsals, the length of a scene influenced what information participants found using the tool. In work on shorter scenes and monologues, the changes in the scene and apposition within the lines was a consistent finding. In longer scene rehearsals, such as Act Three, Scene Two, the apposition in the text was not discovered. Participants did, however, report finding changes in the text and using the tool to discover where their characters response to the circumstances changed. The most significant discovery made during this scene as a result of the new Passionating tool was the influence that magic was having on the characters in the text. Hermia, Lysander, Helena and Demetrius all commented on how it had drawn attention to the magic's effect on their speech, with Hermia summing up that they could 'find the contrast, of you two [Lysander and Demetrius] being magicked and weirdly happy because you are under a spell and I am literally trying to rip her hair out, like that's a hilarious juxtaposition' (Archer, 2022: A3S2 Passionating). This discovery then influenced how participants developed this scene and their characterisation within it, providing an alternative means of analysing the text practically rather than through round the table analysis. Using the tool to uncover the apposition in the text is only effective with smaller sections of lines. The way Passionating is applied, therefore, needs to be clearly defined in the toolkit with a recommended text length assigned to

facilitate effective discoveries. Fig.16 below is a visual representation of the revised Tray One tools.

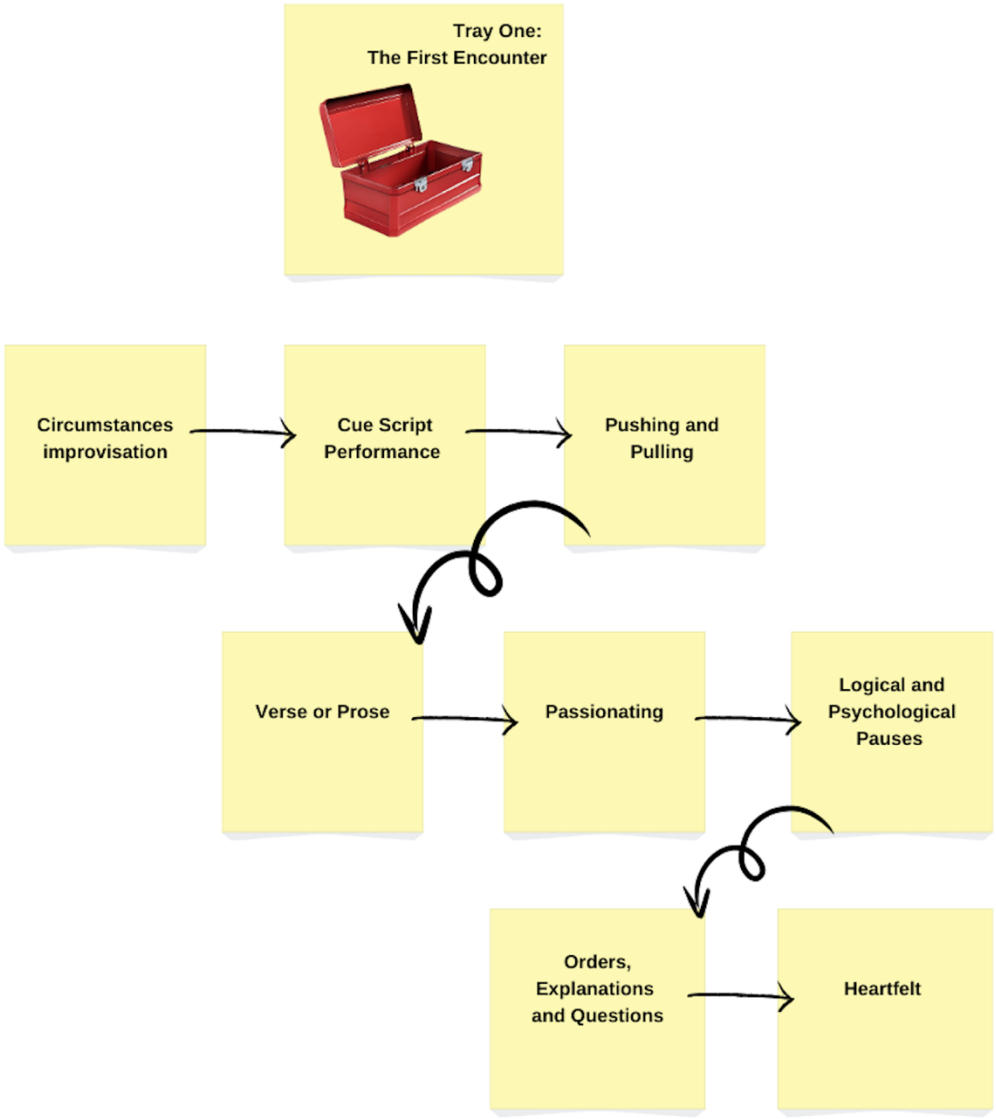


Figure 16: Tray One L7 Final

4.8 Mic drop

Rhymed verse, alongside blank verse, and heightened rhetoric prose defines the structure of Shakespeare's plays. As Giles Block (2013: 176) identifies, whilst rhymed verse is the least frequently encountered structuring of the text, it poses a challenge to anyone performing Shakespearean text. This is due to the fact that 'If a performer does not acknowledge and to some extent *present* the rhyme in any lines he acts, it is a little

bit as if someone in a musical comes to a number and, instead of singing it, decides to just say the words of the song instead' (Hinds, 2015: 115). By not addressing the rhyme, learners' performances will have a detrimental effect on the rhythm structure of the verse lines, which can detract from the meaning. The function of rhymed verse in the texts varies. As Block explains, 'rhyme can be the language of Lovers; of magical spells; of encapsulated wisdom; of discoveries. Or rhyme can simply be the way someone comes up with a quick rejoinder with which to outsmart others' (Block, 2013: 176). Whilst it has many applications, its most common function, as Hinds (2015: 114) explains further, is to draw attention to a point, or - when placed at the end of a speech - to make a definitive conclusion to an argument. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* rhymed verse is a significant feature of the writing. As White (2020) explains, rhymed verse is the language of the Lovers, the fairies and those under the influence of magic.

During the developmental workshops with the Level 3 participants, the function of rhyme was explored through an exercise which proved to be ineffective. Despite Participant C's reflections that 'previously I had struggled with that bit because it was rhyme, but this helped with the emphasis' (Archer, 2021: Rhyme), rhyme had not been utilised effectively within her performance or the performances of the other participants. To address this with the L7 participants, I drew on popular culture and the notion of a 'Mic Drop' which is 'an act of intentionally dropping a microphone after you have given a speech or performance, as a way of making an impressive ending' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). The mic drop is comparative to the main function of rhymed verse and, as such, I sought to explore how this could facilitate engagement.

I introduced Mic Drop into the third rehearsal of each scene and told participants that rhyme can be seen as a 'mic drop moment' in Shakespearean texts. When they encountered rhyme, they were to act out a mic drop, adding the physicality of dropping a mic with the intention of making an impressive conclusion. Initially, this tool was met with embarrassment and it took several encounters with rhyme in their text before participants fully engaged with the exercise. As this tool was also positioned late in the rehearsal process, and - at this stage - the performances were well developed, the tool quickly stopped being used as participants' focus turned to the unfolding action rather than the text. Hermia stated 'I feel like we kind of forgot it after a while' (Archer, 2022: Mic Drop), with Demetrius adding that 'once we got

in to the scene it didn't show up at all' (Archer, 2022: Mic Drop). This finding was consistent across the scenes. By this stage in the rehearsal process, participants appeared eager to partake in a more conventional approach. Which, for the final stages of rehearsal, would be a 'learning, revisiting and consolidating time' (Nobel, 2022: 136), as opposed to working with tools to make new textual discoveries. Whilst I theorised that the issue was the approach to rehearsals and its deviation from convention, this was not directly expressed by any participants. This tool's findings were consistent across the participants and scenes. At this stage in the rehearsal process, there was not sufficient time left to develop an alternative tool to address the rhyme. I proposed further extending the rehearsal process and delaying the performance, however, due to their final MA assessment deadlines, participants were unable to accommodate further research time. In the final performance, Helena, Hermia and Demetrius consistently played the rhyme, drawing attention to it and utilising it within their performances. Other participants varied their engagement with rhyme in performance, with occasions where it was overlooked.

4.9 You and Thee

As Andy Hinds (2015: 37) explains, the French influence on the English language created a distinction between 'Thee' and 'You' mirroring 'tu' and 'vous', with 'You' being the formal address and 'Thee' being familiar. Hinds notes that 'it is clear Shakespeare is using the distinction between 'you' and 'thee' with deliberate dramatic intent' (2015: 37) in his plays. The manner in which characters address each other can therefore be utilised by learners as a means of understanding the relationship between characters. I theorised that utilising this clue from within the text could draw out nuances in the characters' relationships to one another, *and* when shifts occur in the characters relational dynamics. To facilitate a practical exploration of the text using thee and you, I drew on an exercise developed by Katya Kamotskaia to create a connection between actors, or as Stanislavski referred to it 'communion' (Merlin, 2018: 4. Practical Exercises). Kamotskaia's exercise involves learners standing opposite each other at a distance and trying to find a point of contact with a consideration of the changing space between them.

To facilitate this at a point within rehearsals, I asked participants to stand opposite each other. Depending on the number of participants, this would either be in a square formation for larger groups, or directly opposite each other for two participants. They would then perform their lines from the stationary position, moving closer to the person they were speaking to when they addressed them with the informal 'thee', before considering if an eventual point of contact was appropriate for their relationship. When participants addressed someone with the formal 'you', they were to create distance between that character as they felt appropriate. Participants then made insightful discoveries through the exercise which influenced the development of their role. Quince found it to have made clear aspects of her relationship with Bottom. She stated 'I am trying to get my things and he is just countering me all the time. So I am trying to be respectful so he will get my things but I don't like him' (Archer 2022: MecT2Feedback). For Titania, it made her realise the intensity of her desire towards Bottom, stating 'Yes, thee, thee, thee, thee. She really wants him.' (Archer 2022: MecT2Feedback).

Whilst participants made additional discoveries utilising this exercise, I had theorised it would also develop the communion between the learners, building on the grasp developed during Pushing and Pulling. However, this was not evidenced or experienced by participants. As the tool was applied in the second rehearsal, participants were still working from their scripts. In Kamotskaia's communion exercise (Merlin, 2018: 4. Practical Exercises), learners are not working with the text itself and instructed to maintain unbroken eye contact. Placing this tool in the Third Tray, where participants were required to have their lines learned, I theorised, could allow for learners to focus on each other as with Kamotskaia's exercises, and build communion between the learners whilst keeping the interaction rooted in the text. The exercise was moved to Tray Three to test this theory for the remaining scenes. However, participants had still not learned their lines as requested by this stage. Whilst the lines could have been fed to participants as with Pushing and Pulling, this is a time-consuming process and was not achievable within the rehearsal timeframe remaining. Fig.17 below is a visual representation of the final Tray Three tools developed during the L7 phase of my research.

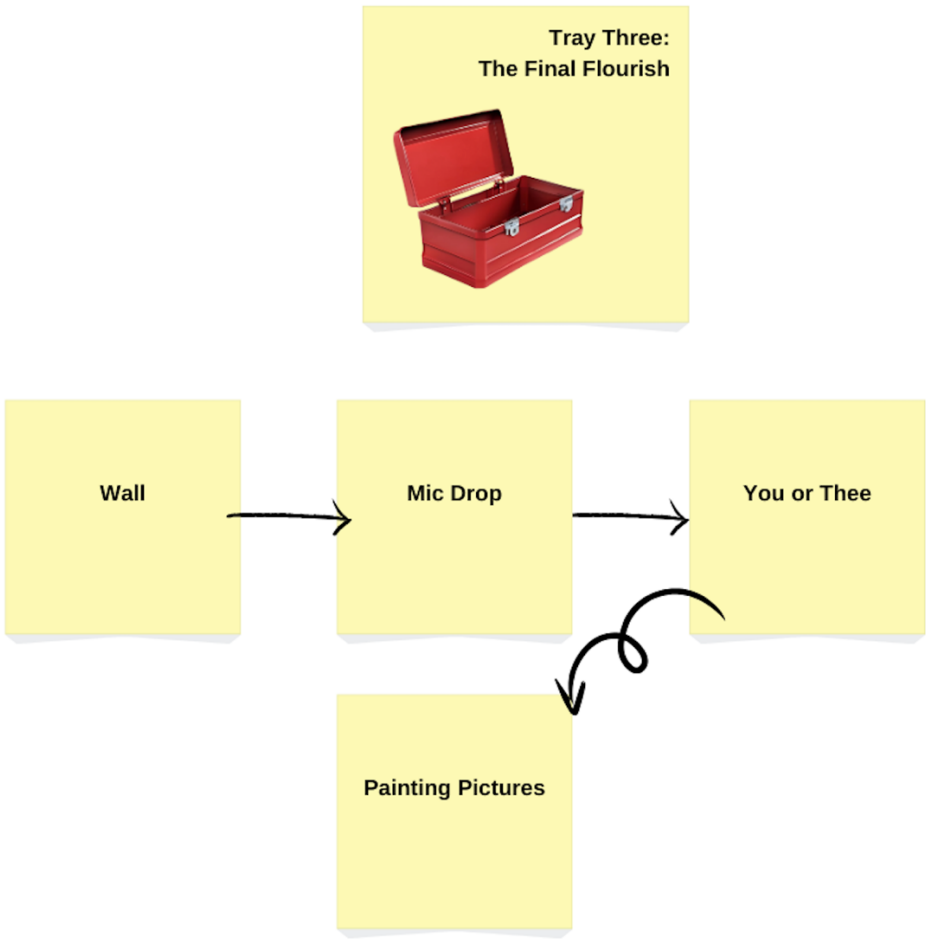


Figure 17: Tray Three L7 Final

4.10 Stage Directions

The final three tools of the toolkit were designated as independent study for learners to consider in preparation for their last rehearsal of each scene. These were the Action and Quickly tools addressed in Chapter Three (p.174) and the newly developed tool for the L7 phase of my research, Stage Directions. As Shakespeare's actors were working from cue scripts, without rehearsal prior to a public performance, physical actions and activities were written into the dialogue. Across Shakespeare's plays there are approximately three thousand stage directions written into the dialogue (Smith, 1953: 311). In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Shakespeare's stage directions are especially prevalent during Act Three, Scene Two, for example Lysander's line 'Hang off thou, cat thou bur: vile thing let loose' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 464). This is telling the actor playing Hermia that she should be hanging onto Lysander, whilst also

instructing the actor playing Lysander that he should be trying to remove Hermia from him. If the participants do not identify these stage directions and incorporate them within their performance, it both diminishes the meaning of the lines and can cause confusion for an audience. At the end of the third rehearsal for each scene, all three tools designated as independent preparation – Action, Quickly and Stage Directions- were explained and demonstrated to ensure participants understood what needed to be accomplished for their independent work with these tools. Participants were then provided with a supporting document explaining the tools should they need to refer to it (see Appendix ten).

In the fourth rehearsal of each scene across the production, it became clear that the implementation of the independent study tools from Tray Four required reconsideration, as it proved to be an ineffective means of addressing the clues in the text. In Act Three Scene Two, there are significant instructions in the text as to physical actions the participants should be engaging with, such as 'No, no, Sir seem to break loose' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2:461). In the context of the scene, this implies that Hermia is holding on to Lysander, and Lysander is struggling to break free of her hold. During the Tray One rehearsals, the participant playing Lysander noticed this and commented on it, prior to the introduction of the tool. In the final performance, however, this physical action was not incorporated into the development of the scene. I theorised that these findings, like those of the Mic Drop tool (p. 204) might be attributed to the participants desire to consolidate the scenes through repetition in the stages of rehearsal rather than make new discoveries which changed their performances. In the L5 phase of my research addressed in the Conclusion chapter (p.206) Stage Directions, Action and Quickly proved to be effective when facilitated in a workshop rather than set as an independent task. Fig.18 below is a visual representation of the final Tray Three tools developed during the L7 phase of my research.

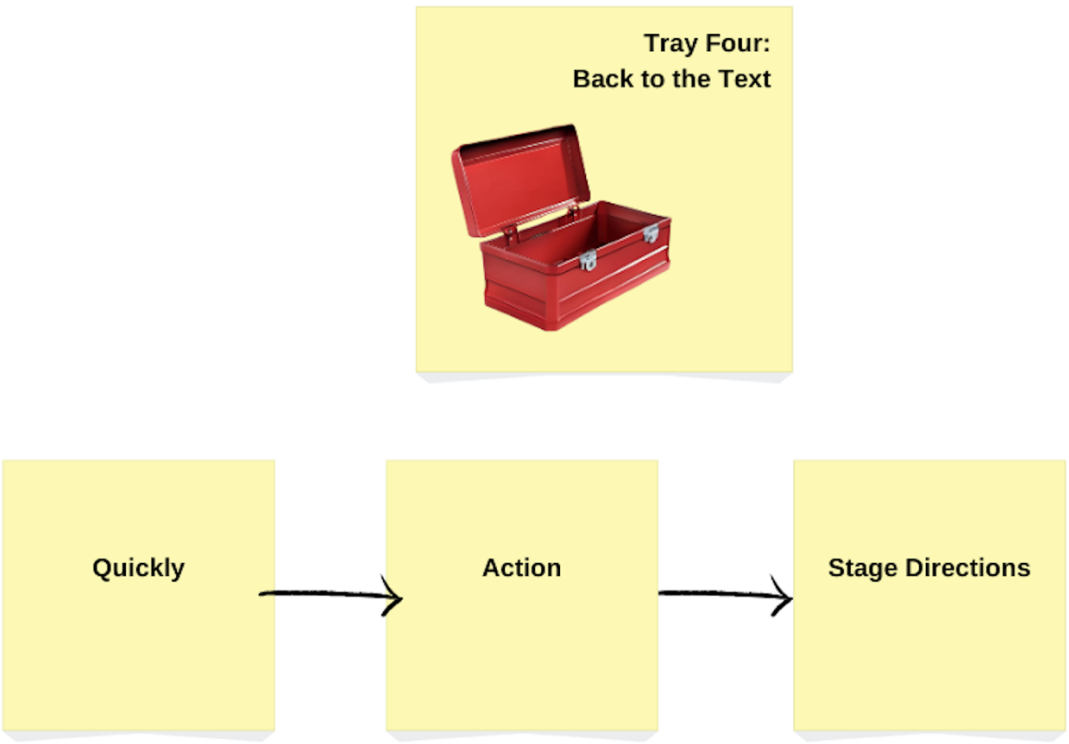


Figure 18: Tray Four L7 Final

4.11 Rehearsals

Whilst there isn't one set way of rehearsing a Shakespeare play, Rubin (2021: 136 - 162) outlines a typical process based on his research into contemporary practices. It starts with a cast read of the play, leading to a cycle for each text section consisting of intellectual overview, textual analysis, and practical performance decisions. This is followed by staging or 'blocking' - mapping out the movement of the production which is then solidified through repetition. Unlike this approach, the *A Midsummer Night's Dream* rehearsal process for the purposes of this research was intentionally structured around the trays of the toolkit. The first three trays of the toolkit were addressed with one rehearsal per tray, per scene, resulting in three initial rehearsals per scene. As Tray Four focuses on the visual clues that can be taken from the text, this was set as independent study, with a fourth rehearsal of the scene scheduled for actioning those discoveries in practice. Appendix nine shows the structuring of rehearsals and the tools applied in each rehearsal.

During the rehearsal process with the L7 participants, the tools which had been developed at the L3 phase of my research yielded the same results when applied to the scenes in both blank and rhymed verse. The L7 participants reported similar experiences of working with the tools and I observed the same effects on the development of their performances. When applying the toolkit to the heightened rhetoric prose in the mechanical's scenes, the Tray One tools provided the same access to the text, as evidenced with the verse. In the Mechanicals' scenes, however, the lines are shorter and contain less development of thought. Which meant the Logical and Psychological pause tool had a limited utility. Fig. 19 shows Quince's cue script in order to demonstrate the difference in line length when compared to Helena's cues script presented overleaf as Fig.20.

The tools rooted in the First Folio punctuation were also less successful when applied to the heightened rhetoric prose than when they are applied to rhymed or blank verse. The parts of the text that were written in prose contained a limited amount of punctuation. Bottom, who had the most punctuation of the Mechanicals, stated that the Punctuate the Thought and Therefore tools 'helped me understand a bit more what he was talking about, it made it more simple' (Archer, 2022: MecT3). Whilst it facilitated his understanding, it did not have the same effect on developing the vocal variation and pursuit of intentions as it had with participants working on the verse text. When discussing the semicolon in the Heartfelt tool, Quince stated 'I only had one or two but I could see what was important to him' (Archer, 2022: MecT3). Again, facilitating the understanding of moments in the text without making significant changes to the delivery of the lines and realisation of the role. The limited punctuation diminished the variation in the vocal performances and the changing intentions - which had been well evidenced in these tools for the verse sections of the play. This detracted from the sense of a whole integrated person in their characterisation. Whilst the prose text does not have a metric rhythm for the punctuation to guide in delivery, the line endings are equally important.

The only type of line ending with prose is at the end of a thought. There needs to be the same drive towards a line ending, without a dropping of the voice as in verse (Block, 2013: 117). The Pushing and Pulling tool increased the energy and drive

towards the line ending with prose as it had done with verse. Both Quince and Flute placed appropriate emphasis at the end of the thought by using the tools of the toolkit.

A Midsommer Nights Dreame

Quince (Prologue)

——————————————— and backe againe.

Exit.

[I-2]

Enter Quince the Carpenter, Snug the Joyner, Bottome the Weaver, Flute the bellowes-mender, Snout the Tinker, and Starveling the Taylor.

Is all our company heere?

——————————————— to the scrip.

Here is the scrowle of every mans name, which is thought fit through all *Athens*, to play in our Enterlude before the Duke and the Dutches, on his wedding day at night.

——————————————— to a point.

Marry our play is the most lamentable Comedy, and most cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisbie*.

——————————————— spread your selves.

Answere as I call you. *Nick Bottome* the Weaver.

——————————————— for, and proceed.

You *Nicke Bottome* are set downe for *Pyramus*.

——————————————— or a tyrant?

A Lover that kills himselfe most gallantly for love.

——————————————— more condoling.

Francis Flute the Bellowes-mender.

Figure 19: Quince Cue Script

Helena 3

——————————————— cannot love you?

And even for that doe I love thee the more;
I am your spaniell, and *Demetrius*,
The more you beat me, I will fawne on you.
Use me but as your spaniell; spurne me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; onely give me leave
(Unworthy as I am) to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,
(And yet a place of high respect with me)
Then to be used as you doe your dogge.

——————————————— looke on thee.

And I am sicke when I looke not on you.

——————————————— your virginity.

Your vertue is my priviledge: for that
It is not night when I doe see your face.
Therefore I thinke I am not in the night,
Nor doth this wood lacke worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world.
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is heere to looke on me?

——————————————— of wilde beasts.

The wildest hath not such a heart as you;
Runne when you will, the story shall be chang'd:
Apollo flies and *Daphne* holds the chase;
The Dove pursues the Griffin, the milde Hinde
Makes speed to catch the Tyger. Bootlesse speede,
When cowardise pursues, and valour flies.

——————————————— in the wood.

I, in the Temple, in the Towne, and Field
You doe me mischiefe. Fye *Demetrius*,
Your wrongs doe set a scandall on my sexe:
We cannot fight for love, as men may doe;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to wooe.
I follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

Figure 20: Helena Cue Script

By the third Mechanicals-focussed rehearsal, however, the clarification of thought which the Punctuating the Thought, Therefore and Heartfelt tools had provided for the verse text needed to be addressed. As participants were unable to extend the rehearsal process further, developing a new series of tools to replace these was not a possibility. As such, I had to utilise an existing exercise. Director Max Stafford-Clark developed a rehearsal technique which addresses the intention of every line and is situated within principles of Stanislavski's 'system'. Though he admits that he 'never actually studied Stanislavsky, [he's] sure this is a Stanislavsky-based working Method' (Stafford-Clark, 1989: 66). The method Stafford-Clark alludes to is 'Actioning the Text' or 'Actioning', in which actors identify the separate thoughts and assign it a transitive verb within a phrase to clarify who you are intending that action to effect (Mosely, 2016: VII). In Bessell's (2019) review of acting and directing practices for performing Shakespeare, this technique was found to be commonplace in the rehearsal rooms of established practitioners. In my experience as a lecturer, this technique, whilst useful, can be challenging for learners to become proficient in and utilise effectively. It does, however, provide a greater range of vocal variation and clarity of intentions in performance when applied successfully. Simplifying the technique provided an opportunity to further address the intentions and clarity in meaning which the punctuation tools had provided for participant's working with verse. The Mechanicals were asked to return to their work on psychological pauses and reclarify the different thoughts they had identified. They then needed to consider what they intended to do by expressing that thought and define it in one word. The word however had to be an action-based word such as belittle. This addition supported the engagement with the characters intentions and added additional vocal variation. Though not to the same extent as the First Folio punctuation-based tools had for the verse text. The Mechanicals performances did not accomplish the same sense of a whole, integrated person as the characters speaking verse.

During the L3 development phase I had identified two tools which needed to be examined in greater detail during this phase of the research. Firstly, addressing the colon through the Therefore tool required further scrutiny during the rehearsal process. With the findings of the punctuation tools on prose, the focus on 'therefore' was through its application to the verse text. During the L3 workshops, when applying the Therefore tool to a scene, participants reported that the tool was less effective when

there were a limited number of colons in a scene. This was not the experience of the L7 participants, Lysander explained that 'I only had two [colons], but everything that we were doing, it all made more sense, like the commas and the intentions going higher and then it's like, therefore. It's kind of like ok, let's cut to the real stuff now, it shifts at some points and that makes sense now' (Archer, 2022: A3S2Therefore). Lysanders perspective of how the tool works in combination with the Punctuate the Thought tool aligns with my intention for the punctuation tools to build learners' understanding(s) as each new tool is introduced, consequently developing the scene.

The second tool which I had identified for further scrutiny was the Heartfelt tool, specifically in regard to addressing the semicolon. In the L3workshops, this was placed after the Punctuate the Thought tool, which looks at building emotion through the comma. As such, the Heartfelt tool had less impact, as the commas had been utilised to build the character's emotional intensity towards the line ending. For the L7 phase of my research I placed the Heartfelt tool at the end of the first rehearsal (Tray One) and the Punctuating the Thought tool in the second rehearsal (Tray Two) This meant participants experienced Heartfelt first, which enabled them to make the thought after the semicolon more impassioned. When they later applied the Punctuating the Thought tool in the second rehearsal there was a distinction present in participants performance between how they utilised the semicolon and comma to develop their performances.

Whilst these two tools proved to be effective with the L7 participants, I identified a constraint in the Thought Line tool which, specifically in Act Three, Scene Two, created challenges for the participants. The scene consisted of four characters and was the longest scene in the production running for twelve minutes in the final performance. In rehearsal, when participants were performing their Thought Lines within this scene, there were points when they became confused as to who spoke next and then needed to confer as to where in the scene they were. Despite this, the tool did aid their comprehension of the scene. Helena stated that 'that part where you two [Lysander and Demetrius] are arguing between me, it makes a lot more sense for me now, there were some parts where I thought I knew what they were talking about, but I guess I didn't' (Archer, 2022: A3S2Tray2). Lysander also added 'when I say it in this type of English the reactions make more sense too' (Archer, 2022: A3S2Tray2). The participants understanding of the text was therefore improved by the Thought

Lines, as was the intentions and reactions performed in the scene. The confusion experienced by participants with Thought Lines in Act Three, Scene Two was not replicated in the tools' application to other scenes. As Act Three, Scene Two is the longest scene in the play, and involves consistent interjection between four characters as part of an argument, it is a complex scene to perform using four sets of Thought Lines all written independently without clear links to the original text. As such, the toolkit will need to stipulate how long the tool should be applied for and advocate for breaking longer scenes into shorter sequences to apply the Thought Lines too.

In the final stage of rehearsals there was one additional Elizabethan practice implemented to complete the production. For a contemporary production of Shakespeare, Noble (2022: 197 – 205) proposes three complete runs of the play prior to the technical and dress rehearsals. As my toolkit draws on Elizabethan acting practices, I sought to adapt the principle of working from a 'Platt' to shape the way the play was brought together as a whole. Backstage in an Elizabethan theatre would have hung the 'Platt' – a text that would outline briefly what happened in each scene, who was in it and who played the parts. (Tucker, 2016: The Research). The Platt would be used in conjunction with the cue script in the absence of rehearsals to provide a framework for the actors understanding of the play as a whole. As *A Midsummer Night's Dream* had been rehearsed using a cue script-based approach, I sought to utilise an adapted version of the Platt to bring the individually rehearsed scenes together. The Platt used can be viewed in Appendix 10.

The final rehearsal before the performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was the first complete run-through. Until this point, scenes had been rehearsed in isolation. Noble (2022: 199-200) proposes the first run through should be staggered with notes after each scene building to the complete performance. For the first run, the Platt was attached to the wall in the wings in all four entrances to the stage. For Hermia, Lysander, Helena and Demetrius (the Lovers) this approach to the first run-through was very successful, and they entered appropriately piecing together their different scenes within the context of the play as a whole. Puck also worked very well with this approach to the first run through. The other participants struggled to use this approach to connect the scenes of the production together into a complete run of the show. I observed that this may have been because the Lovers and Puck were the only participants whose focus was on the performances onstage. None of the participants

had completely learned their lines by the third rehearsal as requested, the other participants focus was on their scripts between their performances rather than watching and listening for their cues. The Platt remained in place for the technical and dress rehearsals in addition to the final performance. Once participants focused on the performances taking place on stage rather than their scripts the use of the Platt became more effective, with the technical and dress rehearsal being the only additional run-throughs of the play before performance.

My findings in the rehearsal process suggest the toolkit is most effective when applied to verse drama. The tools of Tray One, combined with Thought Lines, O, Release Valve and Painting Pictures worked across prose, blank and rhymed verse, allowing participants to access the text through practice, and building their understanding of it performatively. The punctuation exercises guided the rhythm of the verse, and the participants' vocal energy. The toolkit facilitated participants' ability to achieve all the criteria set by Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) and Nobel (2010: 4-5). The Mic Drop tool, however, requires further analysis as its application was not sufficiently tested in the rehearsal process. The disparity between the toolkit's application to prose and verse will need to be the subject of later research as additional tools will need to be developed for prose.

4.12 The Performance

To assess the public performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I developed a grading matrix which utilised the assessment criteria of Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) and Nobel (2010: 4-5). To define how successfully each criterion was met, I utilised Solent University's (2022) assessment parameters and definitions for a L7 performance. Throughout the process, the Lovers were the most committed to rehearsals and the application of the toolkit, which is reflected in their final performance. Appendices 11 -14 include the completed grading matrices for the Lovers. As these characters speak in both blank and rhymed verse, my evaluation of the production and the toolkit's utility as a rehearsal methodology will predominantly focus on their performances. Line retention posed a significant issue within the final performance, and all participants had occasions where they had to improvise aspects

of their lines or reversed sections of their speeches. This effected the rhythm, shape and structure of the text. For the purposes of assessing how effectively the toolkit facilitated participants attainment of the criteria, these instances have not been included in my reflections of the performances.

All four Lovers presented detailed characterisation, creating a sense of a whole, integrated person through their vocal and physical embodiment of their roles. This allowed for clarity in the meaning behind the text in passages of complex and archaic language. Lysander did, however, have occasions in the production where she allowed the speed of her delivery to distort the clarity of her communication and create a pyrrhic pulse of two unstressed syllables in succession rather than the iambic pentameter it should be performed in. The creation of her character's emotional life, though, is evidenced throughout and is consistent with the other three Lovers' performances. They were responsive to each other, listening and reacting moment by moment to what the other characters were presenting to them. Both Helena and Hermia presented a sense of truth in the creation of their roles in relation to the circumstances. Demetrius' and Lysander's performances were also rooted in a sense of truth with some examples of inconsistency. They both played for comic effect, at times detracting from the sense of truth they have created in other moments of performance. The lover's ability to address the specific requirements of performing Shakespeare's texts through the application of the toolkit will be evaluated below through the analysis of specific scenes with accompanying footage. This has been captioned with the First Folio text and punctuation to demonstrate when and how the First Folio based tools are being implemented in the text. Each caption represents a single verse line. On screen, these often present as two caption lines due to the formatting restriction of the video editing software.

4.13 Helena and Demetrius

The following performance excerpt is taken from Act Two, Scene One:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Helena-and-Demetrius

Comparing Helena's performance to the First Folio text, it is evident that she was utilising all of the punctuation tools -though, when her line retention was inaccurate, the tools are not implemented. For the sections where she had command over the text, the punctuation tools are clearly influencing her performance. Helena's use of the Punctuating the Thought tool is well evidenced and implemented through her performance. There was an increase in the energy and her emotional response to the text at the commas, building the intensity of her performance and driving her delivery of the thought towards the major punctuation. This was also accompanied by an increase in her vocal energy, making considered use of the line endings, both at the end of the verse line and at the end of thoughts to highlight the meaning behind those thoughts. When Helena initially enters the scene however, she was playing the circumstances of the scene, chasing Demetrius through the woods. As such, her acting out of breath because she had been running, added pauses at the commas for her first line 'You Draw me, you hard-hearted Adamant' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.1: 197). She continued to build the emotional intensity of her performance and vocal energy at the comma, then in the next line proceeded to use the commas as a springboard propelling her towards the line ending without adding additional pauses. The Heartfelt, Therefore and Playing Parenthesis tools were also clearly evidenced in her performance. As the colons, semicolons and parenthesis were being employed to create changes in her intentions and delivery which further facilitated the clarity of her communication and the sense of a whole integrated person.

Helena also made excellent use of the meter and pulse within this scene, maintaining appropriate rhythms, as dictated by the text. The shifts in the pulse were present, as evidenced in the line 'use me but as your spaniel; spurn me, strike me' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.1: 207). The feminine ending, here, was adhered to with the unstressed 'me' maintained at the end, followed by the shift in the meter to a troche on the following line for 'Neglect me' Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.1: 208). The apposition present between Helena and Demetrius' lines were highlighted, often with comic effect. The metaphors and similes within the text were communicated with clarity and embraced within her performance, often embodied physically to further solidify the

meaning within the conversation. Throughout the scene, Helena's use of pauses were highly effective to both communicate the character's emotional life and thought process, whilst adhering to the requirements of the verse. She adds psychological pauses appropriately at the major punctuation and occasionally also adds them at the end of a verse line, which would be more effective as logical pauses, though these do not detract from the shape and structure of the text nor the meter and pulse. Helena did, however, add a pause that broke the rhythm on her line 'your virtue is my privilege' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.1: 223). This is in response to Demetrius' line 'With the rich worth of your virginity' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 2.1: 222). Demetrius also broke the rhythm and momentum of the line by adding a pause before virginity. As such, Helena's response in a prose text would be an effective acting choice as her pause highlights virtue in response to Demetrius' virginity. Whilst a strong example of listening and responding in the moment of performance, it breaks the rhythm of the scene. In a section of verse, the rhythm must dictate the acting choices, as breaks in the rhythm can diminish the energy of a scene, detract from the meaning of the line, and cause confusion for an audience, due to the rhythm carrying the sense of the line and driving the actor towards a thought's conclusion at the end of a verse line or the major punctuation (Hall, 2003: 24). Honouring the rhythm of the verse is also important as Shakespeare utilises verse differently character to character, giving each role a unique voice and providing a means of communicating the characters feelings and intentions through the rhythm of their speech (Hinds, 2015: 58-59). Preserving the rhythm of the speech is therefore paramount in both the learners' ability to present the character on stage and communicate effectively with the audience. For clarity, this is not to say that attention should be drawn to the verse, with the rhythms over emphasised, rather learners should be 'honouring the verse, but in a way that allows it to marry with, and to serve, the feelings and the active intentions in their lines' (Hinds, 2015: 59) When the verse is adhered to it provides a clarity in the communication of the lines content and in the presentation of the characters wants, feelings, and the intensity of the situation they are presented with.

The participant playing Demetrius, whilst exhibiting similar technical proficiency as Helena in the requirements of verse drama, consistently added pauses which detracted from the lines' meaning. Typically, this occurs after a stressed syllable or at minor punctuation rather than waiting to the end of a thought or a verse line. This was a result of his acting choices and his desire to highlight specific words to the

audience through emphasis and pause, rather than allowing these to be highlighted by the stress of syllables present in the meter and pulse. At times these choices resulted in a different emotion or intention being presented, which is not rooted in the text. To contextualise this, it is the equivalent of taking a contemporary twentieth, or twenty first century play written in prose, applying a Stanislavski based textual analysis of the role and then choosing objectives or interpretations of the lines which are contradictory to the authors intentions. Or as Andy Hinds explains it, it is the equivalent of an actor taking a modern authors' play, asking 'why do I even have to say the actual words the author has written. Why, as a unique and creative individual, can I not just say what occurs to me on the night; In the moment' (Hinds, 2015: 57). Demetrius' performance reflects acting choices and interpretation of character taking prevalence over the demands of the text and the information the text is giving the learner. Despite this, however, the shape and structure of the scene was well utilised by both participants with the subtle and obvious shifts in content addressed through changes in their behaviour and physical use of space.

The scene concludes with Helena's rhyming couplet:

> I follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
> To die upon the hand I love so well
>
> (Shakespeare, 1997: 20).

Following the Mic Drop tool, Helena placed extra emphasis on the words 'hell' and 'well' to ensure the rhyming couplet was played within the scene. In the final performance, however, Helena added pauses after 'thee' and 'hand', which slowed the momentum of the line towards those key words (hell and well) and diminished the line's impact. The Mic Drop tool, whilst highlighting the rhyme does not contextualise the need to build momentum towards the rhymed words and maintain the rhythm. Additional instructions contextualising the need to avoid adding pauses which have not been dictated by the punctuation in rhymed text, therefore needed to be added to the tool, to ensure it is effective in addressing the demands of the rhymed verse.

Throughout the production, the participants' characterisation and understanding of what they are saying was extremely clear. Acting choices they made however, are, at times, in conflict with the demands of the verse drama. These choices are well situated in the circumstances of the scene and how their character should react,

but the verse's requirements are at times dismissed by character motivated pauses and action. In this scene, the additional pauses affected the rhyming couplet by interrupting the flow of the lines to highlight the couplet itself. As Helena had been consistent in her utilisation of the Punctuating the Thought tool, the impact on the energy and intensity of the scene created by the additional pauses Demetrius added was, in this instance, minimised.

4.14 Helena, Demetrius, and Lysander

The following performance excerpt is taken from Act Three, Scene Two:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Helena-Demetrius -and-Lysander

This section of text was written predominantly in rhymed verse, which all three participants play in order to emphasise the meaning of their thoughts; driving towards line endings with their vocal energy, guided by the punctuation. The heightened emotional nature of this section of the scene contains five 'O's', which were handled well by the participants although Demetrius' first 'O' is overemphasised and detracts from the sense of truth Helena and Lysander had developed at the start of the scene. Through this section of the scene, however, the 'O' lines are performed with variations in intention between each - used, as such, to channel the characters' emotional state whilst also facilitating the trochaic rhythm of the lines. As both Lysander and Demetrius were under the influence of magic at this point in the play, the changes in the participants' characterisations are evident when compared to previous scenes. These changes in their performances were influenced by discoveries made during the Passionating tool, where they identified how their behaviour and emotional state appeared to be in contrast to the circumstances of the scene and how they had behaved previously.

This section of the text also contains a shared line between Demetrius and Lysander. In performance, Lysander continues Demetrius' half verse line responding immediately with her half verse line;

Demetrius: There to remain.
Lysander: It is not so.
(Shakespeare, 2001a, 3.2: 372-373)

Whilst the application of shared lines is well evidenced in this section of the scene, there were some inconsistencies – as it progresses - in its utilisation between the four participants as evidenced in the recording of the entire play. Of the twelve shared lines present in this scene beyond the excerpt presented above, three are not applied - with participants adding pauses or action in the break rather than continuing the line. These occasions, much like those identified above under the heading Helena and Demetrius, are again examples where the participants' acting choices are rooted in the circumstances and responding to each other in the moment but don't address the textual requirements for their performance. In this scene, the participants not utilising shared lines had the same effect as the additional pauses Demetrius added in the previous example above. Because, in the case of a shared line, one character starts a verse line and another finishes the same verse line, this has the effect of keeping the pace of the scene moving forward and maintaining the energy and the intensity of the performance. By not adhering to the shared lines, it slows the performance down and breaks the momentum and pace the verse is giving to the scene. As participants in this scene were making good use of the Punctuating the Thought tool, the energy and pace of the scene were well maintained, however, and the breaks in the adherence to the verse were minimised. If, however, this use of the First Folio comma was not being applied, these additional pauses would have a significant impact on the way the scene progresses.

4.15 Verse In Performance

The two sections above reflect the application of the toolkit to Shakespeare's blank and rhymed verse. As was evidenced in these excerpts from the final performance, the toolkit provided participants with a means of addressing all of the specific requirements of verse drama. Based on the criteria taken from Nobel (2010: 4-5), these

are: apposition, metaphor, meter and pulse, line endings, word play, shape and structure. The specifics of each criterion are explained in the Introduction under the Heading Practice as Research (PaR) Methodology (p.35-42). The toolkit facilitated the participants' access to the text through practice, allowing them to reach these discoveries without the need for verbal reasoning, though some textual analysis had to be utilised during the Thought Lines tool. This was, however, minimal in comparison to current conventions for performing Shakespeare. Whilst a character-driven approach has been successful in addressing the requirements of the verse, there are occasions where character decisions have taken precedence over the requirements of the verse drama and affected the successful implementation of all its demands. For example, the pauses which Demetrius chose to add into the text to emphasise certain words created a break in the meter and pulse of the line, detracting from the rhythm of the character's speech and the pace of the scene. As participants were adhering to the use of commas through the Punctuating the Thought tool, the pace of the scene was, however, well maintained overall. In the two verse lines containing the rhyming couplet, Helena added pauses to convey the magnitude of the thought she was having, which in prose would have been effective - but by breaking the rhythm of the verse and the drive towards those two key words at the line ending, it diminished the impact of the rhyming couplet in emphasising the juxtaposition of ideas.

4.16 Prose in Performance

During the rehearsal process, the limitations of the toolkit for developing the prose text was evident. As such, there is a significant difference in the quality of performance created by the Mechanicals. Making an accurate assessment of the final performance of the prose text is, however, challenging as Bottom was unable to attend some rehearsals. The participant also decided to present a characterisation for the performance which was different from the work created during the rehearsal process. Due to Bottom's attendance prior to the performance, the Mechanicals met to rehearse their scenes independently and significant changes were made to the work produced when applying the toolkit as the means of developing the scene. For my assessment of the prose text, I will be focusing on Quince and Flute's performances. The following performance excerpt is taken from Act One Scene Two as it has the most significant

use of punctuation within the prose text. The captions here also demonstrate the First Folio text, they are however presented in thoughts as determined by the First Folio punctuation:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Prose-in-Perfomance

There were some strong moments where Quince demonstrated Gutekunst and Gillett's criteria of 'A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character' (2021: 8). Her actions and behaviours were rooted in the moment-to-moment response to the other participants, and she was behaving in a manner which an audience could conceivably equate to how someone may behave in those circumstances, as per the parameters of psychological realism (Merlin, 2014: 16), though there are examples where she was playing for the audience, signalling to them of how the character is feeling, such as the moment where she is nodding at Bottom's dialogue and then looking at the audience.. At which point, the acting is no longer rooted in psychological realism, though this was not how she presented her performance in rehearsals. Quince kept the energy on the line endings for all but one of her lines. In the longer passage of text beginning 'Here is the scroll' (Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.2: 258) there are three commas, which she does not utilise to build the energy of the speech. Instead, there is a dip in volume and vocal energy during this section of text. The apposition is also not addressed. Instead of playing the juxtaposition of 'lamentable comedy' Shakespeare, 2001a, 1.2: 266), she chooses to stress 'most' (ibid.). Additionally, whilst there is repetition in the line, which she correctly identified during the Pushing and Pulling tool, this was overemphasised without addressing the apposition.

Flute maintained her characterisation throughout, which was well situated in the circumstances of the scene. Her realisation of the role was based on discoveries she made during the application of the toolkit in rehearsals. Her use of pauses, however, detract from the fluidity of the lines and didn't utilise the commas to propel

vocal energy towards the line endings. Flute's performance provides a significant point of comparison with the application of the toolkit. The participant playing Flute, a role written in prose, was fully committed to the process, and also played Egeus, a role written in blank verse. Below is an excerpt of her in the role of Egeus:

https://shakespearetoolkit.cargo.site/Egeus

Analysing her performance as Egeus it is evident that she was utilising the Punctuating the Thought, Heartfelt, Therefore and Playing Parenthesis tools to guide the delivery of the lines and shape her performance. The drive towards the line endings at both the end of the verse lines and thoughts were clear and well incorporated into her performance. In rehearsals, she made use of the short line present in the speech adding an action of bowing to the Duke to fill the pause instructed by the text. In the performance, this was rushed and didn't fill the entire verse line as it had done in rehearsal, though the intention was still clear. She made use of the parenthesis to separate out those section of thought, making them separate to the main line of enquire for her character. There were examples within the performance where the creation of her character's emotional life result in a rushed delivery, breaking the meter and pulse. The difference in her performances of the two roles is significant. The realisation of the role in verse meets the demands of the text, with occasional errors. In realising the prose performance, the punctuation techniques have not been applied and, as a result, the shape and structure of her text is not fully adhered too. Nor is the performance as well developed as Egeus.

4.17 Summary of Findings

When applied to blank and rhymed verse, my assessment is that the toolkit is a successful rehearsal methodology to realise performances which address the demands

of the text, such as the need to honour the rhythm of the verse. It provided participants with a means to access the text without the need for verbal reasoning in the early stages of developing the performance. Through practical, character-driven tools, Nobel's (2010: 4-5) six elements of Shakespeare in performance were all addressed. The toolkit also guided the development of participant's roles to achieve Gutekunst and Gillett's (2021: 8) definitions of good acting within the genre of psychological realism. There are occasions throughout the performance, however, where character choices subvert the needs of the verse drama. The participants' understandings of the scene[s], circumstances and their spoken content is clear. At times, however, in reacting to each other, the demands of the text are overlooked to fulfil their characterisation within the role. To address this, the toolkit will need to include a more precise explanation of what the tools are helping learners to address in relation to the textual requirements and why they need to be maintained in performance. For example, following the application of the Mic Drop tool, explaining to learners that it is important to emphasise the rhymed words and to do so they must obey the punctuation rules previously addressed through Logical and Psychological Pauses and Punctuate the Thought to keep the pace of the line moving towards the rhymed words. In the Toolkit's application during the L7 phase of research, the emphasis was placed on applying the tools with some context given for why they were being used. As contemporary approaches to performing Shakespeare place great emphasis on the demand of the text and obeying certain rules, my aim for the toolkit was to instead place emphasis on discovering the text through character and practice. A greater balance of being specific about what is required of the learner whilst keeping the textual analysis practical and character-driven needs to be established.

Whilst the toolkit has proven to be both accessible and applicable for working with verse, its application to Shakespeare's heightened rhetoric prose is limited. As the prose features less punctuation and shorter lines, as well as fewer examples of metaphor, word play and apposition, many of the tools developed are not as applicable to the prose sections. The tools are also implemented differently by participants with prose. In the verse performance, these had a significant impact on shaping and developing the performances. When reviewing the footage, the effects of the tools on the verse performances are evident and I can see where certain tools have been utilised. The most effective point of comparison is through the punctuation tools, as following the First Folio and the performance demonstrates their use. Again, this is not as well

evidenced in the prose performances, which are often presented without regard to work developed during the rehearsal process. Farr (2018: 278) acknowledges that participant recruitment and retainment is one of the most significant challenges to a study. The engagement from some participants in the rehearsal process of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has contributed to findings of this phase of my research. The disparity in performance quality between the Lovers and the Mechanicals is in part due to the engagement with the process from the Mechanicals.

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The conclusion of the practical explorations within this research project is the Shakespeare Toolkit which aims to provide an accessible means of encountering and developing a performance when working with Shakespeare's verse drama. The toolkit utilises fundamental principles of Stanislavski's 'system' and adapts them for use with Elizabethan acting practices, guided by the punctuation and presentation of the First Folio and culminating in a character-driven approach to performing Shakespeare's verse drama. The initial version of the toolkit that I created with the L3 participants did not fully address the demands of working with Shakespeare's plays. As such, additional tools were developed in the early stages of rehearsal on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the L7 participants, which then led to the creation of the final Shakespeare Toolkit. This definitive version was solidified and implemented by the third rehearsal of each scene in Act One and then utilised for the remainder of the process.

The initial tray of tools – designed to facilitate the learners' first encounter with the text - works successfully across Shakespeare's writing styles of blank verse, rhymed verse, and heightened rhetoric prose. Due to the changes in style present in the prose, the tools relating to the First Folio punctuation are not as effective at guiding learners' performances and meeting the demands of the texts shape and structure. This was evidenced during the rehearsal process of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The toolkit which I had developed at the L7 phase of my research was then tested with Level Five (L5) participants. This was to assess the validity of the toolkit across different levels of Higher Education, providing data for its application at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. No amendments were made to the toolkit prior

to the testing at L5. This final testing stage was implemented over four workshops to reflect the trays of the toolkit. Participants worked with Act One, Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to ensure all three phases of testing had been applied to the same scene - ensuring the data points were equally comparable. The conclusions drawn here were representative of those discussed throughout the thesis and summarised below in section 5.2. However, there were also some additional findings at this stage of the research. The L3 participants had previously questioned how applicable the Therefore tool was. At L7, the tool was found to be a helpful means of signifying key moments in the characters' thinking and aiding participants' understanding of how thoughts developed and evolved. L5 participants acknowledged the utility of the exercises – with Participant E stating, 'I get that putting the word in helps build the intention and as such it is a useful technique' (Archer, 2023: L5WS13). Despite this, participants E and F both echoed the L3 participants' sentiments, questioning how effective this tool was at developing their performance. I observed the effect this had in practice, making clearer distinctions of the thought's intentions following the colon. In this scene, the colons are limited - which was part of the issue raised at L3. I attributed the limited means of engaging with the tool to be the underlying factor in both the L3 and L5 feedback.

The application of the toolkit in Higher Education as both a rehearsal methodology and teaching tool (across both L5 and L7) are well evidenced in my findings in regard to working with Shakespeare's verse dramas. There are aspects of the toolkit which require further refinement, and some aspects of Shakespeare's writing - such as alliteration and onomatopoeia - are not directly addressed within the toolkit's application. For the L7 participants, however, it appeared that the combination of tools facilitated their use of alliteration and onomatopoeia intuitively. Whilst the final toolkit would benefit from the integration of additional exercises to address the prose writing, my findings reflect that the Shakespeare Toolkit is an accessible approach to actor training in performing Shakespeare.

Klause Kruse (2019: 158 -160) proposes that actor training can be defined through three mutually informing learning strands: training, thinking, and doing. He defines training as the development of core skills and techniques for voice, psycho-physicality and textual realisation. *Thinking* is the engagement with theories and histories of acting., while *doing* incorporates rehearsal and performance, interrogating

theory through practice. The structure and theoretical underpinning of the Shakespeare Toolkit addresses all three mutually informed learning strands. Within the context of Higher Education, the toolkit can be applied to the teaching of Shakespeare's verse in a range of different practical modules, facilitating a practice first, character-driven approach to the texts. The time required to apply the toolkit as a complete rehearsal methodology could, however, pose some challenges depending on allocated contact time for a theatre production module. In conservatoire actor training or universities which offer a conservatoire style actor training (Prior, 2012), learners have more contact time per week than other university courses. I currently lead a L5 theatre production module where learners have seven hours of contact time per week allocated to them, over a fourteen-week semester. In this, or similar, contexts the time allocated to the module facilitates the complete application of the toolkit to rehearse the production. In any practical Higher Education module, the toolkit could be applied to the development of a scene, as was evidenced by my L5 workshops which were conducted over four one-hour workshops. It can also be applied to the development of a monologue within a similar timeframe, as evidenced through my one-to-one monologue rehearsals during the L7 phase of my research. The toolkit's application to a professional theatre production would be reliant on the time constraints, in the example of a professional rehearsal structure given by director Phill Willmott in Chapter Four, there would be sufficient time for the toolkit to be utilised as a rehearsal methodology to address the verse sections of the play and to begin the engagement with any prose text. As the toolkit was incomplete when tested with the L3 participants, its application in Further Education cannot be fully concluded within the scope of this research project. In assessing the performance work across the FE participants, I do believe, however, that there is evidence of increasing the accessibility to the text through the application of the tools within FE, which aided in the development of performances to a high standard - achieving all the assessment criteria based on Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8) and half of the criteria defined by Nobel (2010: 4-5).

What follows in this chapter is the summation of findings through my research and the conclusions that can be drawn from the twenty tools developed throughout. These tools are broken into four trays. Tray One tools provide a character-driven, practice first and accessible means of initially engaging with both Shakespeare's verse and prose texts Trays Two and Three provide a practical means of analysing the text through practice and are most effective when applied to verse, as the tools rooted in

First Folio punctuation such as: Punctuating the Thought, Therefore and Heartfelt are less effective when interpreting prose text due to the reduced levels of punctuation present in the prose writing. Tray Four utilises visual clues which can be taken from the First Folio to finalise the development of the performance. The Toolkit is available online as a series of instruction videos by following the QR code or web address below:

www.shakespeare-toolkit.co.uk

5.2 The Shakespeare Toolkit

5.2.1 Tray One: The First Encounter

Tools:

1. **Circumstances Improvisation**
2. **Cue Script Performance**
3. **Pushing and Pulling**
4. **Verse or Prose**
5. **Passionating**
6. **Logical and Psychological Pauses**
7. **Orders, Explanations and Questions**
8. **Heartfelt**

Tray One facilitates the initial encounter with the text through practice. By engaging with character details and the basic circumstances of the scene, learners develop a preliminary understanding of the text. In the first instance, the scene is explored through **Circumstances Improvisation**, providing learners with a basic comprehension of the narrative central to the structure of the scene. Participants found

this to be an accessible means of beginning to work on the text, with reports that this reduced their concerns around the complexities of Shakespeare's writing and provided them with a preliminary understanding of the scene's content and the basis of their character. As the improvisation is followed by **Cue Script Performance,** learners engage with only their lines and the last three words of their scene partner's lines which cue them to speak, enter or exit, rather than the full scene. This reduces the amount of language each learner must interpret and try to comprehend on the page. The additional benefit of working from cue scripts is the requirement of learners to listen and respond to each other, as their understanding is reliant on their scene partner. Rather than relying on the text for information, it facilitates active listening and responding. These first two tools - Circumstances Improvisation and Cue Script Performance- position the learner's exploration of the script in practice. It allows learners to develop a contextual understanding of the scene through practice, using their character as a lens through which to analyse the text and its meaning, as opposed to approaching the text through verbal reasoning, which later informs how they build their characterisation.

Having initially encountered the scene through performance, **Pushing and Pulling** begins the process of analysing the text through practice in order to break the character's thoughts down into their component parts and decide upon the character's intentions. As this is achieved through two limited tasks, pushing or pulling, it simplifies the analysis and enables learners to begin the process of discovering what their characters want. As the text is broken down and then repeated, this also enables textual discoveries, such as the presence of repetition. The physical acts of Pushing and Pulling create an engagement with vocal energy and the drive towards line endings. Through its application on verse, learners also begin to engage with the text's meter and pulse. This enables a practical discovery of where stresses need to be placed within the verse lines, whilst also initiating the process of driving the thoughts forward towards their conclusion, through the use of the text's rhythm. Once the practical analysis of the text has been established, learners can then take a visual clue from the text using the **Verse or Prose** tool. Within this tool, verse and prose are framed as a lens to investigate character, as each writing style can be suggestive of both the characters social standing and how emotional charged the scene is. The **Verse or Prose** tool facilitates the easy visual assessment of writing style through the presentation of the text on the page. Learners can therefore discern some basic information from this which can then inform the development of the role based on the medium in which their

character speaks. At L3, the plot and act summaries provided to participants during the Cue Script Performance had already supplied them with the character information which could be taken from this visual assessment of the text. Whilst they reported that this tool was a helpful way of distinguishing which writing style the passage of text was in, there was not a perceptible impact on the development of their performances following its application. As the L5 and L7 participants had initially experienced the scene through improvisation, they had a limited understanding of character and the circumstances, which also diminished the impact this tool had on their understanding of the scene, though they too acknowledged that this was helpful to know.

The next tool in the tray, **Passionating**, provided participants at all levels with a greater understanding of the text and character. At L3, participants only engaged with one emotion during the tool and found it to be a useful means of understanding and beginning to develop the emotional life of their character, highlighting to them where changes in the narrative and the character's response to the unfolding action occurred. The tool was then refined with the L7 participants, requiring them to perform the scene with antithetical emotions. By performing the scene with contrasting emotions, it had the additional benefit of highlighting apposition present within the text. Passionating achieves this effectively when applied to shorter sections of text, when applied to a full scene the apposition present in the text was less apparent to participants. Based on the findings at L7, two pages of dialogue appears to be optimal for making the most significant discoveries with the tool.

Whilst Passionating is a highly effective means of analysing the text practically, some participants at L3 and L7 increased their speed of delivery in the application of this tool - detracting from the meter and pulse that was beginning to emerge following Pushing and Pulling. The addition of the **Logical and Psychological Pauses** tool provided an effective means of addressing this, by defining the shape and structure of the learners' lines. Pausing at the major punctuation and initially saying 'psychological' makes a clear distinction between the separate thoughts. Learners must then decide why they are pausing at the end of the thought, creating a psychological motivation. This then enables a change in delivery of the following thought and giving definition to the character's separate thought process in performance. This draws learners' attention to how the character is constructing and evolving their thinking. The act of only adding a logical pause at the semicolon provides a basis for the

Heartfelt tool, positioning the semicolon as different to most other punctuation marks. The use of logical pauses here also allows for a discussion with learners about how they choose where to add a logical pause in longer sections of text. This gives them autonomy in the shaping of their delivery, whilst also directing them towards the end of verse lines as a place to add logical pauses in longer speeches. At this stage in the toolkit, towards the end of Tray One, learners have made significant discoveries relating to the scene, their character and aspects of the text. To solidify their active pursuit of an objective, the toolkit utilises Andy Hinds' (2015: 3) adaptation of Objectives through the **Orders, Explanations and Questions** tool. This aids the accessibility of the toolkit, as providing learners with three categories of objectives simplifies the depth of analysis in verbal reasoning required to select an objective. The tray concludes with the **Heartfelt** tool where learners discover that the thought preceding a semicolon is more impassioned than the thought that proceeds it. Heartfelt aids learners in making discoveries relating to intentions, adding changes in their performances and vocal variation. As the tool addresses emotion, thought structure *and* logical pauses, it was placed at the end of Tray One as a means of bringing some of the concepts addressed in the previous tools together. Whilst Heartfelt proved to be an effective means of addressing the semicolon, in Shakespeare's play's, semicolons are infrequently used (Basil, 2006: 73), which prevented Heartfelt from being the effective means of solidifying concepts previously addressed within the toolkit as I had originally intended.

My research has evidenced that the tools developed for Tray One provide an accessible means of first encountering the text by allowing for a practical-first exploration and analysis, facilitating both the learners' initial understanding of the lines and character through *doing* rather than *thinking*. As the tools in this tray build upon each other, they unpack the structure of each character's thoughts. Within Stanislavski's 'system', the initial stage of character development focuses on acquiring the basic information about a role through textual analysis, before practically exploring them. My toolkit takes an action-first approach to this, with some limited information given to learners as part of the Circumstances Improvisation tool. This then provides context for the shape and structure of the text, with the meter and pulse beginning to emerge through the developing performance.

5.2.2 Tray Two: Living the Text

Tools:

1. **O Warm Up**
2. **Thought Lines**
3. **Punctuate The Thought**
4. **Therefore**
5. **Capital Gestures**
6. **Playing Parenthesis**

Tray Two builds on the initial engagement with text and its structure, shaping the character's intentions and the emotional life of the role whilst creating clarity of expression. The focus of this tray is to exploit rhetorical functions of the text and First Folio punctuation to shape the inner life of the character and their expression of thoughts and feelings. The second tray begins with the **O Warm-Up**, asking learners to engage with throwing an 'O' sound around the circle to each other. This tool provides a foundation for implementing the rhetorical function of the 'O' within the text. By asking learners to create different emotional releases with the 'O' sounds as they throw them to each other, the tool demonstrates how emotion can be channelled through the 'O' sound, whilst also reducing the embarrassment of utilising the 'O' in performance when later applied to scene work. When the rhetorical function of the 'O' is then positioned as an emotional release valve towards the end of this tray, the O warm-up has effectively engaged learners with this in practice, providing them with a point of reference to develop a performance of 'O' with greater nuance and emotional truth. Following the warm-up, elements of verbal reasoning should be introduced to learners. As Shakespeare's plays contain references to Elizabethan culture and mythology - and include words and phrases no longer in use - learners must research the aspects of the text which they don't understand. To position this textual analysis within a character consideration, the **Thought Lines** tool asks the learner to consider the character's thought processes behind each line. For each thought, previously identified through the Logical and Psychological Pauses tool, learners consider what the character is thinking behind the complexity of the line, clarifying their intentions further. As learners develop their thought lines, any words or phrases they don't

understand are researched. At the L3 phase, participants found *The Arden Third Series* of Shakespeare's plays to be the most accessible means of defining the unfamiliar text and informing their thought lines. This conclusion was drawn from the sample of supporting resources explored, selected based on my experience as a teacher of acting and a professional actor. Creating thought lines also helps learners to understand some of the images, metaphors, and similes within the text, providing them with an understanding of their presence, which is later explored through practice in the painting pictures tool. Once thought lines have been created for the entire scene, learners perform them to each other, with the understanding that there will not necessarily be a connection between the dialogue as their thought lines were created independently. By performing thought lines to each other, learners develop an understanding of what each character is thinking in the scene, whilst providing context for unfamiliar or complex language which might have been present in their scene partners lines. This reduces the amount of individual textual analysis learners must do on the scene to develop their understanding. The application of this as a tool frames this work as an exploration of the character's thought process behind the lines, rooting the task in imagination rather than an academic assessment of the text. Exploring the lines in this manner further enhanced the learners understanding of their character's intentions and helped to evolve their understanding of the scene and narrative.

Learners then return to the scene and their exploration of the First Folio punctuation through the **Punctuating the Thought** tool. Building on the emotional exploration of the text from Tray One, learners identify how their characters are feeling in the text, with the aim being a development of what Stanislavski referred to as emotional truth. This is not to say the learner should experience the actual emotion, rather they should believe in the truthfulness of the emotion the character experiences and its connection to the actions carried out in pursuit of an objective (Merlin, 2014: 118 – 119). Throughout the Punctuating the Thought tool, every time a learner arrives at a comma in their text, they must increase the intensity with which they play the characters emotional response to what they are saying. This builds at every comma, until they arrive at the next piece of major punctuation. At all levels, this was the most informative First Folio punctuation-based tool. It helped develop the emotional life of the character, adding vocal variation within the lines. It also facilitated the use of enjambment, building upon the shape and structure of the text discovered in earlier tools such as Logical and Psychological Pauses. The momentum of the thought and its

clarity is then further interrogated through the **Therefore** tool. Addressing the function of the colon as a signal to a thought's clarification. The colon in Shakespeare's plays often occurs after a long thought with a multitude of commas. Participants at all levels found this tool to be very helpful in shaping the delivery of their lines and clarifying their intentions. When working on the excerpt from Act One Scene One of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* L3 participants questioned the effect this tool had on the development of their performance, however L5 and L7 participants found this tool to be very helpful in shaping the delivery of their lines and clarifying their intentions. I concluded that the L3 feedback was influenced by their previous experience of applying the work with colons to a monologue in which there were eight colons across twenty-five lines compared to the five colons present in the fifty-two lines of the excerpt from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Building on these discoveries, the **Capital Gestures** tool was developed as a means of addressing the capital letters present in the First Folio, whilst also engaging learners physically with the text. In the First Folio capital letters on the left-hand margin signify that a line is in verse, as explored in Tray One. If capitals are present anywhere else in the text, they are there to highlight words which need extra emphasis. This tool not only directs learners in their acting choices but can also help with the pulse of the speech by guiding stressed syllables. During the L3 phase of research, this was initially explained to participants and set as an independent task to review their text and apply to performance. The emphasis on these capitalised words was then effectively utilised in all four participants performance of Paulina's monologue from *The Winter's Tale*. I theorised, however, that adding an over exaggerated gesture at the capital letters would aid engagement with both the stresses and the physical exploration of the role. This was, in part, to address the limited physical embodiment of roles being presented at L3, and led to the implementation of the Capital Gestures tool for the L3 participants work with the scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, though the participants engagement with the physical gestures was limited it resulted in a more considered approach to proxemics and their use of the performance space. The utility of Capital Gestures was then tested at L5 and L7, however the Circumstances Improvisation tool introduced at the L7 phase of research facilitated physical engagement with the role from the first encounter, in addition to their use of space and proxemics. This removed the need to draw further attention to the learner's physicality as they were engaging physically with the development of their character

throughout the toolkit. The gestures accompanying the capital letters had no effect on the physical embodiment of the role at L5 or L7. I also did not observe any additional benefit for emphasising the words beginning with capitals when compared to the initial instruction issued at L3 with Paulina's monologue. As such, for the final toolkit, the physical aspect of Capital Gestures was removed and replaced with the simple instructions of how to address capital letters rather than an action-based tool.

Playing Parenthesis is also an instruction-based independent analysis of the text rather than an action-based tool. When learners are presented with parenthesis in their text, it is instructing them to do something different with the thought contained within the brackets. This can either be that it requires extra attention and clarification or that it is a tangential thought from the main line of enquiry and should be played as a distraction from the other lines surrounding it. Within the Playing Parenthesis tool, learners are required to perform the thought in brackets as a tangential thought and then repeat it - playing it the second time as the most important aspect of the thought. By playing the text contained within the parenthesis two different ways, it provides them with a perspective on which they feel is the most appropriate for the developing scene, allowing them to implement one approach at this stage of the scene's development, with the possibility of returning to the alternative interpretation at a later stage should they change their mind through the development of the scene.

The tools in this second tray evidence significant development of characterisation and understanding of the text when applied to sections written in verse. The tools developed to utilise the rhetorical punctuation proved to be a highly effective means of developing learners' understanding of the characters intentions, whilst also drawing their attention to the shape and structure of the speeches and scenes. They also further facilitate the development of the meter and pulse, building on discoveries made in tray one. The punctuation tools, however, were not as effective for the text written in prose, as there is less punctuation present in such sections.

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5.2.3 Tray Three: The Final Flourish

Tools:

1. ***Mic Drop***
2. ***You or Thee***
3. ***Painting Pictures***

Tray Three practically explores the language within Shakespeare's text and positions its use through the development of mental images and action. During the L3 phase of testing, the exercises explored to address rhyme within the text were unsuccessful. When rehearsing A *Midsummer Night's Dream,* the **Mic Drop** tool was introduced, which asks learners to create a 'mic drop moment' every time they reach rhyme in their script. This needs to be physically embodied, with the vocal intention of making a definitive statement through the use of rhyme. For the L7 participants, there was limited engagement with this tool. Participants were conscious of the rehearsal time remaining when working with the Tray Three tools. As this tool is applied within the performance of the scene, participants took this as an opportunity to run scenes and solidify their staging, rather than engage with the tool. At L5, in a workshop environment, this tool was successfully utilised and facilitated engagement with and use of the rhyme in performance. The physical embodiment of rhyme through a 'mic drop moment' is followed by the exploration of proxemics via the **You or Thee** tool. You or Thee is a means of finding nuance in character interactions based on clues within the text. Learners stand in a formation which allows space between them. When they address someone as 'thee', this signifies an informality and closeness in their relationship, and learners explore this practically by moving towards a point of contact. If addressing someone as 'you', participants move away from their partner - creating increased distance. If learners have not committed their lines to memory, these must be fed to the participants. This tool clarifies relationships and highlights changes which occur within them. The design of the tool was based on Katya Kamotskaia's (Merlin, 2018: 4. Practical Exercises) Communion exercise. Communion, also referred to as

radiation or grasp, relates to Stanislavski's belief that actors not only communicate through words and physical actions, but through an energy exchange, which – if each actor is sensitive to it - can allow them to influence each other's emotional state (Merlin, 2014: 209). In Kamotskaia's Communion exercise, learners stand opposite each other and place their focus on one another, looking to develop communion and find a point of contact, where they feel the need to make a physical connection. You or Thee, whilst based on a similar principle of exploring the physical space between learners, serves a different primary function, which is taking clues from the use of language in a scene to discern how characters feel about each other. Despite this, I had intended You or Thee to also build communion between the learners, but this was not evidenced by L5 or L7 participants. Since concluding my practical research, I have theorised that If Kamotskaia's Communion exercise was explored with learners *before* introducing the You or Thee tool, the former could enhance the application of the latter, as learners would have a greater comprehension of creating points of contact through grasp.

The final tool in this tray is **Painting Pictures**, which requires learners to sit opposite each other while delivering the vocal performance of the scene. When they reach an image or imagistic language, they describe the image they have of this in their mind to their scene partner. Their partner then responds with how they saw that image in their mind, creating a shared experience of the language, such as metaphors and similes. This proved to be a highly effective means of exploring the language through imagination and facilitating discussions between learners, which further enhanced their understanding of the text.

The tools in this tray have proved to provide a practical means of addressing aspects of the literary devices present in Shakespeare's writing such as rhyme, metaphor, simile, and imagistic language. For the L7 participants the combination of tools applied at this point in the kit facilitated their discovery and use of onomatopoeia and alliteration, though this was not evidenced with the L5 participants, and therefore additional tools may need to be created in future development in order to address this requirement of the text in performance.

5.2.4 Tray Four: Back to The Text

Tools:

1. **Quickly**
2. **Action**
3. **Stage Directions**

The focus of Tray Four is on returning to the text and locating additional clues to aid the development of the performance. Learners are finally provided with a complete copy of the play or scene depending on how the toolkit is being implemented. Whilst Learners have had access to the complete play or scene for the Thought Lines tool, this was through *The Arden Third Series* editions, which do not always provide the same visual clues as the First Folio. Initially, the **Quickly** tool draws attention to shared lines present within the verse text. A shared line occurs when one characters' section of verse has fewer than ten syllables and is followed by a different characters' line which is also less than ten syllables. These two short lines should be performed as one continuous verse line to maintain the iambic pentameter. As such, there is a need for the cue to be picked up quickly, so the two learners' lines create one line in relation to the meter and pulse. Quickly uses the First Folio presentation to draw attention to short lines simply by how they appear on the page. Conversely, the **Action** tool asks learners to identify where their character has a short verse line proceeded by a full verse line. This is a visual clue to learners that they need to fill that space with an activity or a psychologically motivated pause. Based on their understanding of the text, which has developed over the course of the toolkit, learners must choose whether an action or a pause is appropriate for their short line.

The final tool in the tray is **Stage Directions**. This asks learners to identify any descriptions in the text of actions or activities within their lines. For the L3 participants, these tools were instruction-based. They were provided with an explanation of short lines and shared lines. They took the visual clues from the text and then implemented these in performance. The L7 participants received the same instructions; however, they were to apply these tools as independent work to be conducted on their scenes between the third and fourth rehearsal. In performance, the application of these tools was evidenced, though there was inconsistency within its use. For the L5 phase of my

research, I integrated these three tools into the workshop and applied aspects of actor training pedagogy which I had previously omitted from the research. Claire (2016: 148 -149) proposes that the pedagogical approach Stanislavski outlines in *An Actors' Work* (2008) is rooted in Socratic philosophy and is achieved by actively working through ideas in practice. Typically, a Socratic pedagogy is a dialogue between learner and teacher where discussion leads enquiry (Schunk, 2000). Whilst my approach to teaching encourages critical thinking through practice, this is further enhanced through questioning. During the practical exploration of techniques, I pose questions to learners initiating dialogue and discussion. Actor training is a process of continual dialogic feedback to enhance the learners' knowledge and understanding. In developing and testing the toolkit, I decided to omit questioning, as the research aimed to develop an accessible approach to performing Shakespeare. I theorised that adding questioning would have affected the validity of the findings, as it could have been used to achieve the desired outcome through teacher-led, question-based instructions rather than the actual use of the tools working to facilitate discoveries. The L5 findings, however, suggest that the integration of questioning and dialogic feedback enhance the utility of these Tray Three tools, evolving learners' understanding of short and shared lines functions and the stage directions Shakespeare includes within the characters dialogue. In addition to these tools being accompanied by questioning, the Stage Directions tool needs to be repositioned in the toolkit, especially when used as part of a rehearsal methodology. The directions for actions and activities within the text need to be considered in the early stages of a scenes development to ensure they are utilised in performance. Positioning this as the final tool in Tray Two would be a more effective means of implementing it.

The tools in this final tray are important for understanding aspects of the meter and pulse from the First Folio's presentation through short and shared lines in the Action and Quickly tools. They also need to be positioned within questioning and discussion between learner and the facilitator of the toolkit. The directions to learners from the dialogue are equally important and need to be introduced earlier within the toolkit. The Stage Directions tool would also benefit from being adapted to work within questioning and discussion to ensure the directions from the text are fully realised in performance.

5.3 An Accessible Toolkit

My findings demonstrate that The Shakespeare Toolkit offers an accessible approach to performing Shakespeare for learners across FE and HE. Through the practical tools I have developed through this practice as research study, learners encounter the text through *performance*; predominantly analysing the text through imagination and action rather than verbal reasoning. Of course, due to Shakespeare's use of references, words, and phrases no longer commonplace in contemporary culture, *some* textual analysis has to be conducted through verbal reasoning as there is not an alternative means of addressing it. The Shakespeare Toolkit does, however, frame this within its character-driven methodology by positioning the textual analysis as a means of investigating the characters thought process and inner monologue.

Tray One: The First Encounter makes the text more accessible for all of Shakespeare's writing styles: blank verse, rhymed verse, and heightened rhetoric prose. By approaching learners' first encounters with the text through an improvised approximation of the scene's circumstances, it allows for a foundational understanding of the scene to emerge. Following this with a practical exploration of the text itself and a simplified approach to discerning the characters wants, the structure of the text and the characters' separate thoughts are then made clear through an exploration of pauses, to provide perspective on the delivery of the lines.

Tray Two: Living The Text, facilitates a practical exploration of how to deliver the text using tools rooted in First Folio punctuation. When approaching verse, these tools are highly effective for shaping learners' performances and directing them in the delivery of the characters' thoughts. The punctuation-focussed tools – which had a significant impact on developing performances for verse text – are not quite as effective for text written in prose due to the limited punctuation, offering less opportunities for the punctuation to inform the learners' acting choices. The prose text therefore requires additional investigation and the development of tools to further facilitate its needs. Within this tray, the content that requires verbal reasoning to understand words, phrases, and references that no longer applicable in contemporary society is addressed through the character-driven process of creating thought lines, simplifying the thought behind the line.

Tray Three: The Final Flourish then approaches aspects of Shakespeare's writing style such as rhyme, metaphor, simile, and imagery through practical exploration. Language is accessed through imagination and discussion, and learners create a shared experience of the textual devices at work in a scene, which in turn facilitates engagement in both expressing and listening to the language during their performances.

Tray Four: Back to the Text finalises the development of learner's performances by taking visual clues from the presentation of the text to identify anomalies in the verse through short and shared lines. it also explores stage directions written into the text through the dialogue, which need to be addressed in performance.

My research aimed to create this toolkit through a combination and adaptation of Stanislavski's 'system' and Elizabethan acting practices guided by the First Folio. Principles drawn from the 'system' such as objective, given circumstances, events, inner monologue, and mental images are utilised throughout the toolkit. The use of emotion in the toolkit is, however, contradictory to the ideology of the 'system' - in which learners don't play emotion, rather emotion is the result of playing an action in the given circumstances. Playing emotions was integral to the Elizabethan theatre, Shakespeare's plays are written to reflect this (Stern, 2006: 80). The meter and pulse present in Shakespeare's writing after 1594 also reflect the characters emotional states (Block, 2013: 48). As such, accessing the text through emotion has provided the basis for tools such as Passionating and Pause for Thought. The four pillars that Bella Merlin (2014: xiv) distils Stanislavski's work into – relaxation, focus, observation, and imagination – are also not all addressed through the toolkit. Regarding relaxation, the toolkit is designed to aid accessibility, and participants did report feeling more relaxed about approaching the text following the improvisation. Beyond the experience of feeling relaxed about working with the text, relaxation is not directly addressed or utilised to develop tools within the toolkit. In the context of professional theatre, relaxation would be addressed as part of the warm-up in rehearsals (Thompson, 2019: 76), and is typically incorporated into session warm-ups within actor training (Moor, 2019: 28). Except for the O-Warm Up – designed to address a specific function of rhetoric within Shakespeare's plays – the toolkit does not include warm-ups. As such relaxation could be addressed in conjunction with the toolkit when applied in actor

training or professional theatre environment as part of current practices to prepare learners and actors to engage in performance work. Imagination, focus, and observation are, however, key to the successful implementation of the tools. As a character-driven approach to performing Shakespeare, there were examples in the L7 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* where character choices in performance affected the requirements of the text. This was predominantly evidenced by the actor playing Demetrius, who added psychological pauses in sections of the text which were contradictory to the use of pauses dictated by the toolkit. Despite this, taking a character-driven approach to the text has proven to be an effective means of realising performances of Shakespeare's texts and addressing the requirements of the verse drama.

Whilst successful as a rehearsal methodology, I believe that the Toolkit would be more effective if applied within current conventions of rehearsals, such as those proposed by Noble (2022: 197 – 205). In the performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the adaptation of the Elizabethan platt, a document outlining participants entrances and exits, with lighting, sound and text cues, was not an effective means of bringing the individually rehearsed scenes together for a complete run through of the show. In the Elizabethan theatre, a platt would contextualise scenes and characters to provide context for the actors' cue scripts (Tucker, 2016: The Research). My adaptation, as demonstrated in Appendix 10, provided participants with the cues for their entrances and exits to facilitate the construction of the play as a whole, bringing together the individually rehearsed scenes in a fluid performance, rather than stopping and starting. Allowing additional time to solidify scenes, rather than structuring the rehearsals to allow one rehearsal per Tray, per scene will be necessary in future applications of this toolkit. Of course, this would require a longer rehearsal process to implement the full toolkit and provide additional rehearsal to run scenes. As such, in its current, full form, the Toolkit may only be wholly effective as a rehearsal methodology in Higher Education at universities offering conservatoire-style training and drama schools where contact time is significantly larger per module as opposed to conventional universities. Its application within the industry would also be reliant on the time allocated to rehearsals, as it would require more than sixty hours.

The toolkit has evidenced its ability to create performances which allow learners in Higher Education to meet the assessment parameters of Nobel's (2010: 4-

5) six elements of Shakespeare in performance *and* achieve Gutekunst and Gillett's (2021: 8) definitions of good acting. As the toolkit was incomplete when tested at L3, I feel that limited conclusions can be drawn about its application within Further Education. Though the tools that were developed at this phase of the research allowed for three of Nobel's (2010: 4-5) six elements to be achieved in addition to meeting the criteria of Gutekunst and Gillett (2021: 8). Whilst designed to be implemented as one complete toolkit, the tools developed for the final toolkit can be used individually as a means of aiding other approaches to performing Shakespeare in addition to presenting one complete accessible methodology.

My ambition for the Shakespeare Toolkit is for it to provide those facilitating acting classes or directing Shakespeare with an alternative means of approaching the plays through practice and character. In doing so, I hope this shall create a more accessible means for learners and professional actors to engage with Shakespeare's writing performatively. The instructional videos that I have developed as part of this doctoral research project will also continue to provide facilitators or directors with a publicly accessible and free resource - which can be used in conjunction with other approaches, by selecting specific tools to utilise rather than the entire methodology. I hope that the Shakespeare Toolkit provides a new accessible method for working with Shakespeare in performance, both in education and the industry.

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Appendix 1

First Folio Microsoft Word Document

Romeo and Juliet

Act Two Scene Four

JULIET

The clocke strook nine, when I did send the Nurse,
In halfe an houre she promised to returne,
Perchance she cannot meete him: that's not so:
Oh she is lame, Loves Herauld should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glides than the Sunnes beames,
Driving backe shadowes over lowring hills.
Therefore do nimble Pinion'd Doves draw Love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings:
Now is the Sun upon the highmost hill
Of this daies journey, and from nine till twelve,
I three long houres, yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warme youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball,
My words would bandy her to my sweet Love,
And his to me, but old folkes,
Many faine as they were dead,
Unwieldie, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

ENTER NURSE

O God, she comes, O honey Nurse what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse
Peter stay at the gate.

JULIET
Now good sweet nurse:
O Lord, why lookest thou sad?
Though newes, be sad, yet tell them merrily.
If good thou sham'st the musicke of sweet news,
By playing it to me, with so sour a face.

Nurse
I am a weary, give me leave awhile,
Fie how my bones ake, what a jaunt have I had?

JULIET
I would thou had'st my bones, and I thy news:
Nay come I pray thee speake, good good Nurse, speake.

Nurse
Jesu, what haste? can you not stay awhile?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET
How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me, that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay,
Is longer then the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good or bad? answer to that,
Say either, and Ile stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, ist good or bad?

Nurse
Well, you have made a simple choice, you know
not how to choose a man: Romeo, no not he though his face
be better than any mans, yet his legs excels all men's, and
for a hand, and a foote, and a body, though they be not to
be talked on, yet they are past compare: he is not the flower
of curtesie, but Ile warrant him as gentle as a Lambe: go thy
waies wench, serve God. What, have you din'd at home?

JULIET
No no: but all this did I know before.
What saies he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse
Lord how my head akes, what a head have I?
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My backe a tother side : O, my backe, my back:
Beshrew your heart for sending me about
To catch my death with jaunting up and downe.

JULIET
Ifaith: I am sorrie that thou art so well.
Sweet sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me what saies my Love?

Nurse
Your Love saies like an honest Gentleman,
And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,
And I warrant a virtuous : where is your Mother?

JULIET
Where is my Mother?
Why she is within, where should she be?

How oddly thou repli’st:
Your love saies like an honest Gentleman:
Where is your mother?

Nurse
O Gods lady dare,
Are you so hot? marry come up I trow,
Is this the Poultis for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET
Here's such a coile, come what saies Romeo?

Nurse
Have you got leave to go to shrift to day?

JULIET
I have.

Nurse
Then high you hence to Friar Lawrence Cell,
There staies a Husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton bloud up in your cheekes,
Thei'le be in scarlet straight at any newes:
Hie you to Church, I must an other way,
To fetch a Ladder, by the which your Love
Must climbe a bird's nest soone when it is darke:
I am the drudge, and toile in your delight:
But you shall bear the burden soon at night,
Go Ile to dinner, hie you to the Cell.

JULIET
Hie to high Fortune, Honest Nurse, farewell.

[Exeunt]

Appendix 2

The Oxford University Press

Microsoft Word Document

Romeo and Juliet

Act Two Scene Four

JULIET
The clock struck nine when I did send the Nurse.
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him. That's not so.
O, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glides than the sun's beams
Driving back shadows over louring hills.
Therefore do nimble-pinioned doves draw Love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours, yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood
She would be as swift in motion as a ball.
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me.
But old folks, many feign as they were dead -
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

Enter Nurse and PETER

O God, she comes! O honey Nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse
Peter, stay at the gate.

Exit PETER

JULIET
Now, good sweet nurse-O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou sham’st the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

Nurse
I am a-weary. give me leave awhile.
Fie, how my bones ache. what a jaunt have I!

JULIET
I would thou hadst my bone, and I thy news.
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak, good, good Nurse, speak.

Nurse
Jesu, what haste! Can you not stay awhile?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET
How art thou out of breath when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good or bad? Answer to that.
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied: is't good or bad?

Nurse
Well, you have made a simple choice. you know
Not how to choose a man. Romeo? No, not he; though
His face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all
men's, and for a hand and a foot and a body, though
they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare.
He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him,
as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways, wench. Serve God.
What, have you dined at home?

JULIET
No, no. But all this did I know before.
What says he of our marriage - what of that?

Nurse
Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back-
(Juliet rubs her back)
a' t' other side- ah, my back, my back!
Beshrew your heart for sending me about
To catch my death with jaunting up and down.

JULIET
I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse
Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a
courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant,
a virtuous-where is your mother?

JULIET
Where is my mother? why, she is within.
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
'Your love says, like an honest gentleman
“Where is your mother?”

Nurse
O God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? Marry come up, I trow.
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET
Here's such a coil! Come, what says Romeo?

Nurse
Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

JULIET
I have.

Nurse
Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell.
There stays a husband to make you a wife.
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks.
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church. I must another way,
To fetch a ladder by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon, when it is dark.
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight,
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner. Hie you to the cell.

JULIET
Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.

Exeunt [severally]

Appendix 3

The 1597 Garrick Quarto

Microsoft Word Document

Romeo and Juliet

JULIET
The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promised to returne.
Perhaps she cannot find him. That's not so.
Oh she is LAZIE, loves heralds should be thoughts,
And runne more swift, than hestie powder fired,
Doth hurrie from the fearfull Cannons mouth.
Enter Nurse
Oh now she comes. Tell me gentle Nurse,
What says my Love?

Nurse
Oh I am wearie, let me rest a while.Lord how
my bones ake. Oh wheres my man? Give me some aqua
vite.

JULIET
I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news.

Nurse
Fie, what a jaunt have I had: and my back a to,
The side. Lord, Lord, what a case am I in.

JULIET
But tell me sweet Nurse, what says Romeo?

Nurse
Romeo, nay, alas you cannot chuse a man. Hees
No bodie, he is not the flower of curtesiel, he is not a proper
man: and for a hand, and a foote, and a baudie, wel go thy
way wench, thou hast it ifaith, Lord, Lord, how my head
beates?

JULIET
What of all of this? Tell me what says he to our ma-
Riage?

Nurse
Marry he says like an honest Gentleman, and a

Kinde, and I warrant a virtuous: wheres your mother?

JULIET
Lord, Lord how odly thou repliest? He says like a
Kinde Gentleman, and an honest, and a virtuous; wheres
Your mother?
Nurse
Marry come up, cannot you stay a while? Is this
the poultesse for mine aking bones? Next arrant youl have
done, even doot your selfe.

JULIET
Nay say sweet Nurse, I doo intreate thee now,
What says my Love, my lord, my Romeo?

Nurse
Goe, hye you straight to Friar Laurence Cell,
And frame a scuse that you must goe to shrift:
There stayes a Bridegroom to make you a Bride.
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
I must provide a ladder made of cordes,
With which your Lord must climb a birdes nest soone.
I must take paines to further your delight,
But you must beare the burden soone at night.
Doth this newes please you now?

JULIET
How doth her latter words revive my hart.
Thankes gentle Nurse, dispatch thy business,
And ile not faile to meete my Romeo.

Appendix 4

Plot and Act Summary

Romeo and Juliet Plot and Act Summary

Sourced from The Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust:
https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/shakespedia/shakespeares-plays/romeo-and-juliet/

Romeo and Juliet Summary
An age-old vendetta between two powerful families erupts into bloodshed. A group of masked Montagues risk further conflict by gate-crashing a Capulet party. A young lovesick Romeo Montague falls instantly in love with Juliet Capulet, who is due to marry her father's choice, the County Paris. With the help of Juliet's nurse, the women arrange for the couple to marry the next day, but Romeo's attempt to halt a street fight leads to the death of Juliet's own cousin, Tybalt, for which Romeo is banished. In a desperate attempt to be reunited with Romeo, Juliet follows the Friar's plot and fakes her own death. The message fails to reach Romeo, and believing Juliet dead, he takes his life in her tomb. Juliet wakes to find Romeo's corpse beside her and kills herself. The grieving family agree to end their feud.

Act I
Romeo and Juliet begins as the Chorus introduces two feuding families of Verona: the Capulets and the Montagues. On a hot summer's day, the young men of each faction fight until the Prince of Verona intercedes and threatens to banish them. Soon after, the head of the Capulet family plans a feast. His goal is to introduce his daughter Juliet to a Count named Paris who seeks to marry Juliet.
Montague's son Romeo and his friends (Benvolio and Mercutio) hear of the party and resolve to go in disguise. Romeo hopes to see his beloved Rosaline at the party. Instead, while there, he meets Juliet and falls instantly in love with her. Juliet's cousin Tybalt recognises the Montague boys and forces them to leave just as Romeo and Juliet discover one another.

Act II
Romeo lingers near the Capulet house to talk with Juliet when she appears in her window. The pair declare their love for one another and intend to marry the next day. With the help of Juliet's Nurse, the lovers arrange to marry when Juliet goes for confession at the cell of Friar Laurence. There, they are secretly married.

Act III
Following the secret marriage, Juliet's cousin Tybalt sends a challenge to Romeo. Romeo refuses to fight, which angers his friend Mercutio who then fights with Tybalt. Mercutio is accidentally killed as Romeo intervenes to stop the fight. In anger, Romeo pursues Tybalt, kills him, and is banished by the Prince.

Juliet is anxious when Romeo is late to meet her and learns of the brawl, Tybalt's death, and Romeo's banishment. Friar Laurence arranges for Romeo to spend the night with Juliet before he leaves for Mantua. Meanwhile, the Capulet family grieves for Tybalt, so Lord Capulet moves Juliet's marriage to Paris to the next day. Juliet's parents are angry when Juliet doesn't want to marry Paris, but they don't know about her secret marriage to Romeo.

Act IV

Friar Laurence helps Juliet by providing a sleeping draught that will make her seem dead. When the wedding party arrives to greet Juliet the next day, they believe she is dead. The Friar sends a messenger to warn Romeo of Juliet's plan and bids him to come to the Capulet family monument to rescue his sleeping wife.

Act V

The vital message to Romeo doesn't arrive in time because the plague is in town (so the messenger cannot leave Verona). Hearing from his servant that Juliet is dead, Romeo buys poison from an Apothecary in Mantua. He returns to Verona and goes to the tomb where he surprises and kills the mourning Paris. Romeo takes his poison and dies, while Juliet awakens from her drugged coma. She learns what has happened from Friar Laurence, but she refuses to leave the tomb and stabs herself. The Friar returns with the Prince, the Capulets, and Romeo's lately widowed father. The deaths of their children lead the families to make peace, and they promise to erect a monument in Romeo and Juliet's memory.

Appendix 5

Level 3 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Participant A

	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Fail
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases, and ideas in a speech)				X
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X		
Meter and pulse		X		
Line endings	X			
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)			X	
Shape and Structure	X			
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character	X			
Awareness, ease, focus, economy, and clarity	X			
Responsiveness and spontaneity	X			
Engagement of the will and narrative drive	X			
Imagination	X			
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere	X			
Physical embodiment of the character	X			
Vocal embodiment of the character	X			
Control and sense of perspective within the role	X			
The sense of a whole, integrated person	X			
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience	X			

Appendix 6
Level 3 Toolkit Assessment Criteria
Participant B

	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Fail
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases, and ideas in a speech)				X
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X		
Meter and pulse			X	
Line endings	X			
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)			X	
Shape and Structure		X		
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character	X			
Awareness, ease, focus, economy, and clarity	X			
Responsiveness and spontaneity	X			
Engagement of the will and narrative drive		X		
Imagination	X			
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere	X			
Physical embodiment of the character			X	
Vocal embodiment of the character		X		
Control and sense of perspective within the role		X		
The sense of a whole, integrated person		X		
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience	X			

Appendix 7

Level 3 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Participant C

	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Fail
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases, and ideas in a speech)				X
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X		
Meter and pulse		X		
Line endings	X			
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)		X		
Shape and Structure		X		
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character		X		
Awareness, ease, focus, economy, and clarity		X		
Responsiveness and spontaneity			X	
Engagement of the will and narrative drive		X		
Imagination			X	
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere		X		
Physical embodiment of the character			X	
Vocal embodiment of the character			X	
Control and sense of perspective within the role		X		
The sense of a whole, integrated person			X	
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience		X		

Appendix 8

Level 3 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Participant D

	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Fail
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases, and ideas in a speech)				X
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X		
Meter and pulse		X		
Line endings	X			
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)			X	
Shape and Structure	X			
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character		X		
Awareness, ease, focus, economy, and clarity		X		
Responsiveness and spontaneity		X		
Engagement of the will and narrative drive		X		
Imagination		X		
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere		X		
Physical embodiment of the character		X		
Vocal embodiment of the character		X		
Control and sense of perspective within the role		X		
The sense of a whole, integrated person		X		
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience		X		

Appendix 9

The Toolkit L7

The Toolkit / Rehearsal Structure

Rehearsal One / Tray One: The First Encounter

Circumstances improvisation

Participants were provided with the basic circumstances of the scene and limited character details. They were then asked to improvise the scene using this information to inform their thinking.

Cue Script Performance

Participants were provided with a Cue Scripts seven days in advance of the performance to ensure those with neurodiversity were not disadvantaged by being presented with a text in the rehearsal. Following the improvisation, participants were asked to perform the scene using the cue scripts.

Pushing and Pulling

Participants were provided with a hula-hoop and asked to grip it with both hands. Their lines were read to them, broken down into manageable chunks by the punctuation. Participants were asked to consider whether their character was trying to push something or someone away or pull something or someone in. They were then to physicalise the action by pushing or pulling on the hula-hoop whilst repeating their lines.

Verse or Prose

Utilising the format of the First Folio, participants were asked to look at their cue scripts and identify whether their lines were in verse or prose. They were told that the writing style might inform their character choices, or it might provide additional context for the circumstances.

Within verse, the first word of every line is capitalised, and the right-hand margin is uneven. Verse represents truth under pressure, the more intensely a character feels or the greater a challenge they confront, the more poetically that character speaks.

Prose is for exposition of information, disguises, to make jokes or to reflect class. The first letter in the left-hand margin will not be in capitals and the text runs margin to margin.

Passionating

Participants were assigned an emotion from the following list:

- Fear
- Sadness
- Disgust
- Surprise
- Anticipation
- Trust
- Joy

They were instructed to perform the scene with a representation of that emotion. It was made clear this did not need to be a developed and truthful presentation of that emotion.
Following this initial performance, they were assigned an opposing emotion and asked to repeat it with the new emotion.

Logical and psychological Pauses

To aid the identification of punctuation in performance, participants were provided with highlighter pens and asked to highlight the punctuation marks with one colour for different groupings of punctuation. For example:
. ! ? = Blue
: = Green
, = Red
; = Yellow
Stanislavski's definitions of logical and psychological pauses were then explained.

Participants were then instructed to perform the scene, but when they reached the major punctuation (. ! ? :) say 'psychological' then begin the next line with the clear intention of beginning a new thought. Participants were then asked to go back to the thought breaks at the major punctuation and give themselves a psychological reason for pausing at that moment.

Following the exploration of psychological pauses, participants were asked to say 'logical' when they reached a semicolon in their text. Following this performance, they were instructed that additional logical pauses may need to be taken. If they had previously identified that their text was in verse the best place to add these would be at the end of a verse line.

Participants performed the scene saying both 'logical' and 'psychological' at appropriate pausing points as defined above. The scene was then repeated without the use of the words logical and psychological, instead utilising the pause at these points in the text.

Orders, Explanations and Questions

Participants were asked to identify their objectives for the scene. Instead of taking the conventional Stanislavski based approach of utilising any verb, they were asked to use Andy Hinds' method of simplifying the objectives as either an order, explanation, or question.

Heartfelt

Participants were asked to return to their highlighted punctuation. Every time they reached a semicolon and took their logical pause they were instructed to play the

thought that followed the semicolon as a more impassioned thought than the one which proceeded it.

Thought Lines

Participants were asked to consider the thought behind what they were saying and create their own line based on the understanding of that thought. If there were any words or phrases present in the line they were working on, they were instructed to find their meaning using *The Arden Third Edition.*

Independent Work for Next Rehearsal

Participants were provided with the complete scene from *The Arden Third Edition* of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. They were asked to create thought lines for each thought as identified by the psychological pauses tool.

Rehearsal Two / Tray Two: Living the Text

O Warm-up

Participants were instructed to stand in a circle and throw the 'O' sound to each other. They had to use their full body to throw it and engage imaginatively, physically, and vocally with the warm-up. When throwing the O, they had to use the sound to express emotional extremes and no two O's could sound the same.

Thought Lines Performance

Using the thought lines created as independent work prior to this rehearsal, participants performed the scene replacing Shakespeare's text with their thought lines. They were assured that as these had been created independently, the scene would not flow between participants as a published play scene would.

Punctuating the Thought

Participants considered the emotions of the character throughout the scene and were asked to identify how they felt. This was explained as being rooted in their understanding of their character's emotional life and response to the circumstances, not based on the passionating tool.

Participants then returned to their highlighted punctuation and were instructed that at each comma within a thought they had to build the intensity of the emotion their character was feeling at that moment. Using each comma to propel them forward through the thought whilst building the emotional intensity. This was accompanied by a reminder of how thoughts are separated based on the psychological pause tool.

Therefore

Participants were told that a colon signifies a clarification of their characters thinking. Whatever follows a colon is a more articulate summation of the thought that has come before. Initially, participants perform the scene and every time they reach a colon are instructed to say 'therefore' and then perform the line which follows with the appropriate intention of summing up their thought process.

This is followed by asking participants to consider if a synonym of therefore would better serve their interpretation of the line. Participants were presented with examples including hence, consequently, so, thus, accordingly or ergo. As they performed the

scene they were asked to add in their chosen synonyms at the colon. The scene is then repeated removing the word but playing the intention of that word.

Capital Gestures

Participants were told that If capitals are present anywhere in the text other than at the start of a line in the left-hand margin it is highlighting words which need extra emphasis. As participants perform the scene, they must create an overexaggerated gesture to accompany any words in the text that begin with capital letters. Participants were also instructed that names of people and places will start with a capital letter but if you are not supposed to emphasise them, they are in italics.

O

The function of the O in Shakespeare's plays was explained to participants as being an emotional release valve. Every time participants came to an O in the text, they had to consider what emotion was overwhelming their character and channel it through their performance of the O sound.

Playing Parenthesis

Participants were told that any text in parenthesis was an instruction to them to do something different with the thought contained within the brackets. This is either a 'side bar', a tangential thought that was separate to the main line of enquire they were pursuing, or the thought contained within the brackets was the most important thought in that section of text. Participants were asked to play the scene both ways to see which felt correct for their characterisation.

Independent Work for Next Rehearsal

Participants were asked to have learned their lines by the third rehearsal.

Rehearsal Three / Tray Three: The Final Flourish

Wall

This warm-up required participants to select a member of the company who was not in their scene. That person would act as their wall, whilst performing the scene, they had to always keep the wall between them and their scene partner. The wall was instructed to move around the room constantly varying their speed and direction of travel making it challenging for those performing the scene to keep them apart.

Mic Drop

The function of rhyme was explained to participants as a mic drop moment. When a character is using rhyme, they are doing so to make a definitive point. In performance when they came to rhyme in their text, they had to physically and vocally act as if they were dropping a mic. If one character starts the rhyme and the other finishes it, they should treat it a battle for the best mic drop.

You or Thee

Participants were asked to stand at a distance from each other and deliver the vocal performance of the scene from their fixed places in the room. If they addressed someone as 'thee' they should move towards that person and consider whether they

wanted to create a point of contact. If they addressed someone as ‘you’ then they should create distance between them.

Painting Pictures

Participants were asked to sit opposite each other and deliver the vocal performance of their scene. Every time they came to an image, they had to stop the scene and describe the image they had in mind to their scene partner. Their scene partner would then discuss how they had imagined that image. Discussion was encouraged and participants were told to take the exercise slowly allowing time to develop and evolve the mental images.

Independent Work for Next Rehearsal / Tray Four : Back to The Text

Participants were provided with a complete copy of the abridged version of the play in the First Folio format.

Quickly

Looking at the format of the line’s participants were asked to identify any shared lines present in their text. This is where one character begins a verse line and the next person to speak finishes it.

Action

Participants were asked to look for any short lines in their text. This is where a character is speaking in verse and the line is significantly shorter than the verse lines above or below it. This signifies that they should pause or add a physical action in the space.

Stage Directions

Participants were asked to look for any descriptions in the text of actions or activities the lines may suggest they were doing.

Rehearsal Four

This rehearsal focused on running the scene and implementing discoveries from Tray Four which had been set for independent preparation on the text.

Platt Rehearsal

This rehearsal was the first complete performance of the play, using an adaptation of the Elizabethan platt to show participants how the scenes come together to create a complete performance of the abridged play.

Technical Rehearsal

The play was run from start to finish, stopping and starting as required to address sound or lighting cues.

Dress Rehearsal

A complete run of the play with costume, sound and lighting.

Appendix 10

Hand-out for L7 Participants

Independent Preparation Work

For Rehearsal Three

Thought Lines
Using the *Arden Third Edition* of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* provided with this hand-out, please consider and then write out your Thought Lines. You will need to think about the thought behind what your character is actually saying and create your own line based on the understanding of that thought. If there were any words or phrases present in the line you are working on, which you do not understand, please find their meaning using *The Arden Third Edition* of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*
For example, if you look at this excerpt from Othello:
Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current, and compulsive course,
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Proponticke, and the Hellespont:
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb
to humble love, Till that a capable, and wide revenge
Swallow them up.

The punctuation is telling you that this is two complete thoughts. The first one ends at the colon and the second at the full stop.

As Thought Lines these might be expressed as:

'My mind will never change:
these violent thoughts will never return to love, simply drive forward to revenge'.

For Rehearsal Four

At the end of Rehearsal Three you will be provided with a complete copy of the abridged version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the First Folio format. Please review your text for the next rehearsal and apply the following three independent study tools in preparation for Rehearsal Four.

Quickly
Looking at the format of the line's identify any shared lines present in their text. This is where one character begins a verse line and the next person to speak finishes it. As shown in this example below from *Romeo and Juliet* the shared lines are shorter than the verse lines above and below them.

Juliet
Your Love saies like an honest Gentleman:
Where is your Mother?

Nurse
O Gods Lady dare,
Are you so hot? marrie come up I trow,

Action
Looking at the format of the line's identify any short lines in their text. This is where a character is speaking in verse and the line is significantly shorter than the verse lines above or below it. This signifies that they should pause or add a physical action in the space, it is your decision as to which you apply. Consider rehearsing the text in both ways as with the Playing Parenthesis tool. Look at the excerpt from *Romeo and Juliet* below:

Juliet
Where is my mother?
Why she is within, where should she be?
How oddly thou repli'st:
Your Love saies like an honest Gentleman:

The two short lines are identifiable when compared to the verse lines surrounding them.

Stage Directions
Please look for any descriptions in the text of actions or activities the lines may suggest your character is doing. You will need to look at all character's lines present in the scene to make this analysis, not just your own. For example in *Romeo and Juliet* when Rome says*:*

See how she leans her cheek upon her hand.

This is a stage direction to Juliet, that at this point she needs to have her hand on her cheek and be leaning on it.

Any questions or concerns with these independent task tools please do email on: b.archer@uel.ac.uk

Appendix 11

Platt

A Midsummer Night's Dream Platt

House Lights Up – Classical Music Playing while audience enter
House Lights down, birds SFX

Enter Hippolyta *USR*
Once Hippolyta is seated Enter Theseus *USR*

Theseus:
Go Philostrate,
Stirre up the Athenian youth to merriments,
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth,
Turne melancholy forth to Funerals:
The pale companion is not for our pompe,
Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And wonne thy love, doing thee injuries:
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pompe, with triumph, and ***with revelling.***

Enter Egeus, Hermia, Lysander and Demetrius. *DSL*

Lysander:
Keepe promise love: looke here comes Helena.

Enter Helena *DSL*
Helena:
I will goe tell him of faire Hermias flight:
Then to the wood will he, to morrow night Pursue her;
and for his intelligence,
If I have thankes, it is a deere expence:
But heerein meane I to enrich my paine,
To have his sight ***thither, and backe againe.***

Enter Quince DSL, Bottom USR and Flute *DSR (SEATING)*

Bottome:
Enough, **hold or cut bow-strings.**

Enter Puck *DSL* and Fairy *DSR (SEATING)*

First Fairy:

And heere my Mistris: **Would that he were gone.**

Enter Oberon DSR (SEATING) and Titania *DSL*
Oberon:
Shee shall pursue it, with the soule of love.
And ere I take this charme off from her sight,
(As I can take it with another hearbe)
Ile make her render up her Page to me.
But who comes heere? I am invisible,
And I will over-heare their conference.

Enter Demetrius and Helena *DSL (SEATING)*
Oberon:
Fare thee well Nymph, ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt flie him, **and he shall seeke thy love.**

Enter Puck *DSL*
Oberon:
I pray thee give it me.
I know a banke where the wilde time blowes,
Where **Oxslips and the nodding Violet growes,**

Enter Titania *USR* and go to sleep on bench

Oberon:
What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true Love take:
Love and languish for his sake.
Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,
Pard, or Boare with bristled haire,
In thy eye that shall appeare,
When thou wak'st, it is thy deare,
Wake when some vile thing is neere.

Enter Lysander and Hermia *USR*

Hermia:
With halfe that wish, the wishers eyes be prest.

Enter Pucke. *USL*

Pucke:
Churle, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charme doth owe:
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleepe his seate on thy eye-lid.
So awake when I am gone:
For I must now to Oberon.

Enter Helena and Demetrius *DSL*
Hermia:

Speake of all loves; I sound almost with feare.
No, then I well perceive you are not nye,
Either death or you Ile finde immediately.

Enter Bottom, Quince DSL and Flute USR
Quince:
Piramus, you begin; when you have spoken your speech, enter into **that Brake, and so every one according to his cue.**

Enter Puck *USL*
Titania:
The Moone me-thinks, lookes with a watrie eie,
And when she weepes, weepe everie little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastitie.

Enter Oberon *USL*
Oberon:
I wonder if Titania be awak't;
Then what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on, in extremitie.

Enter Pucke *USL*

Pucke:
I tooke him sleeping (that is finisht to)
And the Athenian woman by his side,
That when he wak't, of force she must be eyde.

Enter Demetrius and Hermia *USR*
Oberon:

As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wak'st if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Enter Puck *USL*

Pucke:
Then will two at once wooe one,
That must needs be sport alone:
And those things doe best please me,
That befall preposterously.

Enter Lysander and Helena *USL*

Pucke:
Up and downe, up and downe, I will leade
them up and downe:
Enter Bottom Titania USR and sleep
I am fear'd in field and towne. Goblin,
lead them up and downe: here comes one.
Enter Lysander *DSL*

Follow me then to plainer ground.
Enter Demetrius. ***DSL***

Demetrius:
Nay then thou mock'st me; thou shalt buy this deere,
If ever I thy face by day-light see.
Now goe thy way: faintnesse constraineth me,
To measure out my length on this cold bed,
By daies approach looke to be visited.

Enter Helena ***USL***

Pucke:
Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kindes makes up foure.
Here she comes, curst and sad,
Cupid is a knavish lad,

Enter Hermia ***USL***

Pucke:
Jacke shall have Jill, nought shall goe ill.
The man shall have his Mare againe, and all shall bee well.

Enter Oberon ***DSL***

Titania:
Come my Lord, and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I sleeping heere was found,
With these mortals on the ground.

Enter Egeus ***DSL (Seating)***

Egeus:
My Lord, this is my daughter heere asleepe,
And this Lysander, this Demetrius is,
This Helena, olde Nedars Helena,
I wonder of this being heere together.

Enter Theseus and Hipolita ***DSR (SEATING)***

Demetrius:
Why then we are awake; lets follow him,
and by the way let us recount our dreames.

Enter Bottom ***USR***
Bottom:
Bottomes Dreame, because it hath no bottome; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, **before the Duke. Per- aduenture, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.**

Enter Quince and Flute *DSL*

Bottome:
Masters, I am to discourse wonders; but ask me
not what. For if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing as it fell out.

Enter Hippolyta and Theseus *DSR (SEATING)*

Theseus:
Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth:
Joy, gentle friends, joy and fresh dayes
Of love accompany your hearts.

Enter Lysander, Hermia followed by Demetrius, Helena *DSR (SEATING)*

Theseus:
What Revels are in hand?
Is there no play, To ease the anguish of a torturing houre?
Call Egeus.

Enter Egeus *USR*

Theseus:
The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing
Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake;
And what poore duty cannot doe, noble respect
Takes it in might, not merit.

Enter Quince, Bottom and Flure *USR* Strike a pose, very dramatic and enter Puck *USL*

Appendix 12

Level 7 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Helena

How you have met the specific assessment criteria for this coursework	A1 -2 (80-100)	A3 &4 (70-79)	B (60-69)	C & D (50-59)	F1 (40-49)	F2 -3 (0-39)
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases and Ideas in a speech)		X				
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X				
Meter and pulse	X					
Line endings		X				
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)		X				
Shape and Structure		X				
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character	X					
Awareness, ease, focus, economy and clarity		X				
Responsiveness and spontaneity	X					
Engagement of the will and narrative drive	X					
Imagination		X				
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere		X				
Physical and vocal embodiment of the character		X				
Control and sense of perspective within the role		X				
The sense of a whole, integrated person	X					
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience		X				

Solent (2022) Level 7 Practical & Professional Skills General Characteristics

Marking Band	Practical & Professional Skills Characteristics
A1 &2	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based and exceeds advanced professional expectations in most/all aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement exceeds expectations in most/all practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks and demonstrates exceptional ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is exemplary or exceptional in most/all instances • Evidencing of decisions is exemplary, showing deep understanding of all factors.
A3 &4	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks to advanced professional expectations and exceeds them in several/many aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement meets and sometimes exceeds expectations in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks and shows excellent ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is excellent and may be exceptional in some/several instances • Decisions excellently evidenced or justified, showing in depth understanding and consideration of relevant factors
B	• Expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks consistently meets advanced professional expectations and occasionally exceeds them • Shows autonomy in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Consistently exercises secure judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, sometimes exceeding the expectation for this level • Decisions convincingly argued and justified
C & D	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks generally meets advanced professional expectations • Shows autonomy in most practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Exercises judgement in decision- making in complex and unpredictable situations • Decisions adequately argued/justified
F1	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks marginally fails to meet advanced professional expectations • Shows some lack of autonomy in practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks

	• Occasional errors of judgement/indecisiveness in complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments/justifications for decisions incomplete or not wholly convincing
F2 &3	• Performance of specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks is inadequate, failing to achieve expertise or meet advanced professional expectations • Work in practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks relies on guidance and support and lacks autonomy • Judgement poor/absent and fails to address complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments and justifications incomplete, absent and unconvincing

Appendix 13

Level 7 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Hermia

How you have met the specific assessment criteria for this coursework	A1 -2 (80-100)	A3 &4 (70-79)	B (60-69)	C & D (50-59)	F1 (40-49)	F2 -3 (0-39)
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases and Ideas in a speech)		X				
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X				
Meter and pulse	X					
Line endings		X				
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)		X				
Shape and Structure		X				
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character	X					
Awareness, ease, focus, economy and clarity		X				
Responsiveness and spontaneity	X					
Engagement of the will and narrative drive	X					
Imagination		X				
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere		X				
Physical and vocal embodiment of the character		X				
Control and sense of perspective within the role		X				
The sense of a whole, integrated person	X					
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience		X				

Solent (2022) Level 7 Practical & Professional Skills General Characteristics

Marking Band	Practical & Professional Skills Characteristics
A1 &2	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based and exceeds advanced professional expectations in most/all aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement exceeds expectations in most/all practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks and demonstrates exceptional ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is exemplary or exceptional in most/all instances • Evidencing of decisions is exemplary, showing deep understanding of all factors.
A3 &4	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks to advanced professional expectations and exceeds them in several/many aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement meets and sometimes exceeds expectations in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks and shows excellent ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is excellent and may be exceptional in some/several instances • Decisions excellently evidenced or justified, showing in depth understanding and consideration of relevant factors
B	• Expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks consistently meets advanced professional expectations and occasionally exceeds them • Shows autonomy in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Consistently exercises secure judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, sometimes exceeding the expectation for this level • Decisions convincingly argued and justified
C & D	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks generally meets advanced professional expectations • Shows autonomy in most practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Exercises judgement in decision- making in complex and unpredictable situations • Decisions adequately argued/justified
F1	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks marginally fails to meet advanced professional expectations • Shows some lack of autonomy in practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks

	• Occasional errors of judgement/indecisiveness in complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments/justifications for decisions incomplete or not wholly convincing
F2 & 3	• Performance of specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks is inadequate, failing to achieve expertise or meet advanced professional expectations • Work in practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks relies on guidance and support and lacks autonomy • Judgement poor/absent and fails to address complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments and justifications incomplete, absent and unconvincing

Appendix 14

Level 7 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Lysander

How you have met the specific assessment criteria for this coursework	A1 -2 (80-100)	A3 &4 (70-79)	B (60-69)	C & D (50-59)	F1 (40-49)	F2 -3 (0-39)
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases and Ideas in a speech)			X			
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)			X			
Meter and pulse		X				
Line endings		X				
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)			X			
Shape and Structure			X			
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character			X			
Awareness, ease, focus, economy and clarity		X				
Responsiveness and spontaneity		X				
Engagement of the will and narrative drive			X			
Imagination		X				
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere			X			
Physical and vocal embodiment of the character			X			
Control and sense of perspective within the role			X			
The sense of a whole, integrated person			X			
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience			X			

Solent (2022) Level 7 Practical & Professional Skills General Characteristics

Marking Band	Practical & Professional Skills Characteristics
A1 &2	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based and exceeds advanced professional expectations in most/all aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement exceeds expectations in most/all practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks and demonstrates exceptional ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is exemplary or exceptional in most/all instances • Evidencing of decisions is exemplary, showing deep understanding of all factors.
A3 &4	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks to advanced professional expectations and exceeds them in several/many aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement meets and sometimes exceeds expectations in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks and shows excellent ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is excellent and may be exceptional in some/several instances • Decisions excellently evidenced or justified, showing in depth understanding and consideration of relevant factors
B	• Expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks consistently meets advanced professional expectations and occasionally exceeds them • Shows autonomy in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Consistently exercises secure judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, sometimes exceeding the expectation for this level • Decisions convincingly argued and justified
C & D	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks generally meets advanced professional expectations • Shows autonomy in most practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Exercises judgement in decision- making in complex and unpredictable situations • Decisions adequately argued/justified
	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks marginally fails to meet advanced professional expectations

F1	• Shows some lack of autonomy in practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks • Occasional errors of judgement/indecisiveness in complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments/justifications for decisions incomplete or not wholly convincing
F2 & 3	• Performance of specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks is inadequate, failing to achieve expertise or meet advanced professional expectations • Work in practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks relies on guidance and support and lacks autonomy • Judgement poor/absent and fails to address complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments and justifications incomplete, absent and unconvincing

Appendix 15

Level 7 Toolkit Assessment Criteria

Demetrius

How you have met the specific assessment criteria for this coursework	A1 -2 (80-100)	A3 &4 (70-79)	B (60-69)	C & D (50-59)	F1 (40-49)	F2 -3 (0-39)
Apposition (the juxtaposition of words, phrases and Ideas in a speech)		X				
Metaphor (similes, comparisons, flights of fancy)		X				
Meter and pulse			X			
Line endings		X				
Word play (rhyme, alliteration, word play)		X				
Shape and Structure			X			
A sense of reality and truth in the creation of circumstances and character			X			
Awareness, ease, focus, economy and clarity		X				
Responsiveness and spontaneity		X				
Engagement of the will and narrative drive		X				
Imagination		X				
Creation of emotional life and atmosphere			X			
Physical and vocal embodiment of the character		X				
Control and sense of perspective within the role			X			
The sense of a whole, integrated person			X			
Communication of character and the plays story and themes to the audience		X				

Solent (2022) Level 7 Practical & Professional Skills General Characteristics

Marking Band	Practical & Professional Skills Characteristics
A1 &2	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based and exceeds advanced professional expectations in most/all aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement exceeds expectations in most/all practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks and demonstrates exceptional ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is exemplary or exceptional in most/all instances • Evidencing of decisions is exemplary, showing deep understanding of all factors.
A3 &4	• Demonstrates mastery of all specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks to advanced professional expectations and exceeds them in several/many aspects • Exercise of autonomy and judgement meets and sometimes exceeds expectations in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks and shows excellent ability • Judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations is excellent and may be exceptional in some/several instances • Decisions excellently evidenced or justified, showing in depth understanding and consideration of relevant factors
B	• Expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks consistently meets advanced professional expectations and occasionally exceeds them • Shows autonomy in all practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Consistently exercises secure judgement in decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, sometimes exceeding the expectation for this level • Decisions convincingly argued and justified
C & D	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks generally meets advanced professional expectations • Shows autonomy in most practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks • Exercises judgement in decision- making in complex and unpredictable situations • Decisions adequately argued/justified
	• Level of expertise in specialised practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks marginally fails to meet advanced professional expectations

F1	• Shows some lack of autonomy in practical, technical, creative, work- based tasks • Occasional errors of judgement/indecisiveness in complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments/justifications for decisions incomplete or not wholly convincing
F2 & 3	• Performance of specialised practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks is inadequate, failing to achieve expertise or meet advanced professional expectations • Work in practical, technical, creative, work-based tasks relies on guidance and support and lacks autonomy • Judgement poor/absent and fails to address complex and unpredictable situations • Arguments and justifications incomplete, absent and unconvincing

Appendix 16
Research Degrees and Ethics Subcommittee Letter

University of East London

Pioneering Futures Since 1898

Dear Benjamin

Application ID: ETH1819-0209

Project title: Shakespeare through Stanislavski: Creating an Accessible Toolkit for Performing Shakespeare

Lead researcher: Mr Benjamin Archer

Your application to University Research Ethics Sub-Committee was considered on the 22nd of June 2020.

The decision is: **Approved**

- *In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the University Research Ethics Sub-Committee (URES) has taken the decision that all postgraduate research student and staff research projects that include face-to-face participant interactions, should cease to use this method of data collection, for example, in person participant interviews or focus groups. Researchers must consider if they can adapt their research project to conduct participant interactions remotely. The University supports Microsoft Teams for remote work. New research projects and continuing research projects must not recruit participants using face-to-face interactions and all data collection should occur remotely. These regulations should be followed on your research until national restrictions regarding Covid-19 are lifted. For further information please visit the Public Health website page https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england*

The Committee's response is based on the protocol described in the application form and supporting documentation.

Your project has received ethical approval for 2 years from the approval date.

If you have any questions regarding this application please contact your supervisor or the secretary for the University Research Ethics Sub-Committee.

Approval has been given for the submitted application only and the research must be conducted accordingly.

Should you wish to make any changes in connection with this research project you must complete 'An application for approval of an amendment to an existing application'.

The approval of the proposed research applies to the following research site.

Research site: The University of East London, University Square Stratford. No face -to-face research will be conducted until it is safe to do so in line with the University guidance on COVID-19.

Principal Investigator / Local Collaborator: Mr Benjamin Archer

Approval is given on the understanding that the UEL Code of Practice for Research and the Code of Practice for Research Ethics is adhered to.

Any adverse events or reactions that occur in connection with this research project should be reported using the University's form for Reporting an Adverse/Serious Adverse Event/Reaction.

The University will periodically audit a random sample of approved applications for ethical approval, to ensure that the research projects are conducted in compliance with the consent given by the Research Ethics Committee and to the highest standards of rigour and integrity.

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University Square Stratford
Salway Road
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srm@uel.ac.uk
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Please note, it is your responsibility to retain this letter for your records.

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of the project

Yours sincerely

Fernanda Silva

Administrative Officer for Research Governance

University of East London

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