



***University of the WesternCape***

**‘Taking hold’ of mobile phone stories in a Cape  
Flats reading club.**



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**Supervisor: Prof. Catherine Kell**

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Masters in Linguistics in the Faculty of Arts, University of the Western Cape**

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## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved gone and living.

Izihlwele zasekhaya: *Amacethe, Chizama, Bhurhuma, Khesi, Sanyaka, Yenzekile, Nobesi, Nomdakazana, Bangani.*

Apho uMama azalwakhona: *Oomomani, Amancotshe, Mandala, Msunu'sidumbu.*

Camagu!



## Abstract

This ethnographically-orientated intervention explored how members of a Cape Flats reading club “took hold” (Street, 2009) of digital literacy in their engagement with online fictional stories accessed by a mobile phone. The Masifunde reading club takes place inside the premises of a church located in one of the most impoverished and resource-constrained communities on the outskirts of Cape Town. The club is connected to a bigger sets of clubs under the Nal’ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign seeking to create nurturing spaces for learning by introducing children to literacy through story-telling. I wanted to diversify and increase the literacy material available by introducing mobile phones to the club.

This research paper is theoretically grounded in the New Literacy Studies (NLS) framework which argues that the social turn and digital turn to literacy have transformed literacy. I adopted an ethnographic approach to literacy in order to understand how mobile reading is ‘taken hold’ of within an already established activities of the club which are conceptualized using Goffman’s (1983) “interaction order”. Goffman’s (1983) “interaction order” was used to map the established print-based interaction order and then to examine the practices of reading online fiction and the materiality of the mobile phone as taken hold of within this interaction order. The notion of ‘taking hold’ of was further extended to reveal the ways in which mobile stories were resemiotized in the shared practices of the club members. The introduction of mobile phones is viewed within Prinsloo’s (2005) “placed resources” concept that pays attention to the specificity of the context in how the phone was taken hold of. What is more, through Goffman’s (1956) back stage and front stage concept, I was able to trace using Ker’s (2005) “text-chain” concept, how interactions in the back region WhatsApp group chat moved across space-time to the front stage interactions in the Saturday club event. This revealed the ways in which the uses and valuing of the phone changed across these spaces, with the phone being naturalised in the back stage, but being treated as a difficult object in the front stage sessions by the volunteers, while the children took up the phones in easy ways consistent with the existing interaction order and therefore as placed resources. The study reveals that triumphalist claims about uptake of digital technologies in resource-poor contexts and dismal internet connectivity need to be treated with caution.

## **Key words:**

Digital literacies, out-of-school literacy practices, mobile reading FunDza mobi stories, reading club(s), Nal'ibali, interaction order, resemiotization, placed-resources, New Literacy Studies (NLS)



## Declaration

I, Zandile Bangani, declare that ‘Taking hold’ of mobile phone stories in a Cape Flats reading club is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Name: Zandile Bangani

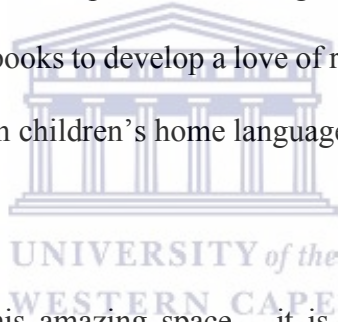
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Signed.....



## Acknowledgments

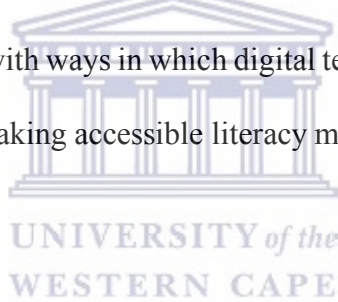
To the Masifunde reading club – thank you! For allowing me to come into your space. May you continue to grow in strength with the work that you do. In looking at the unfolding literacy crisis in primary schooling linked to these and others, the overcrowded classrooms, lack of teacher content knowledge and the uneven distribution of literacy material which makes children at most risk those from rural and townships areas such as where the club is situated. I want to thank the club volunteers for creating this informal learning space every Saturday that supports and encourages children to read and write by allowing them to do it not only in English but in isiXhosa their mother tongue. Similarly, informal learning spaces like the Masifunde reading club are becoming even more important in finding ways to address the ongoing literacy crisis since the club uses stories, books to develop a love of reading at the same time promoting literacy development especially in children’s home language, isiXhosa.



Having been and still part of this amazing space – it is truly ‘a home away from home’ environment. The work that you do is priceless. The reading club is not only special to the children but the volunteers who with no expectations for financial gains give relentlessly of their time, support and by having created a safe loving and caring environment which gives permission to the children to explore and experiment with ways of ‘being’. At the same time allowing them to belong, be heard, seen, and valued and to have a sense of identity as they learn to trust and believe in their own capabilities as this space is so affirming of who they are. And all of this is done while children are immersed in the world of magic, imagination, creativity, expression and adventure through stories.

***“Education to us means service to Africa” Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe***

My motive for pursuing a postgraduate education had always centred on this statement by Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe. In asking what role and how does my education come to serve a poorly resource and an impoverish community such as where I am from. As a result, this MA research paper is my advocacy for children who manage to escape and for those who did not situated on the periphery of resources where the system sets them up for failure – I am writing this research as my contribution to the development of education in South Africa. What I hope this contribution does is open up discussions with regards to exploring possible alternatives such as the digital media resources for addressing concerns in language, literacy and learning. Digital literacy resources should not be seen as a future reality however a right now occurrence by exploring and experimenting with ways in which digital technologies can assist with literacy development, at the same time making accessible literacy material.



This research study is made possible with the help, support and dedication of my supervisor Professor Catherine Kell. Your leadership has seen me through the years of writing and making sense of this research project. To you Cathy, thank you for your mentorship, guidance, support, understanding, encouragement and belief in me. And for extending yourself beyond academics at times when the personal became too overwhelming to deal with and the times I just broke down, thank you, you have been kind, and for the times where I just wanted your belief and trust in me that it is possible and I got that.

To my family – I am because we are. This paper I write for you to see ‘ndingumnqweno ndawufezekisa’ as I feel I became the personification of my family’s aspirations of what could

be and the possibilities. I know this comes with being the first in the family to be a graduate. This is for the dreams, goals and aspirations that could not come true because of the historical and political context of this country regarding what was deemed possible and acceptable for our black parents. I hope I broke the chains/cycle for future generations in my family to know it can be done and it will be done. To my family ‘nilithemba ebomini bam’, enkosi! Thank you! For your understanding, support and encouragement to pursue and finish my studies. There were many times where I neglected some of my roles but not once you complained instead you helped me through the process, thank you! To friends, thank you for making me believe it was worth it and your patience and support has allowed me to keep dreaming and trying.

To Zandile – khanya Nkwenkwezi!





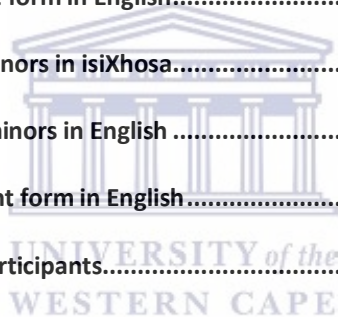
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	II
ABSTRACT .....	III
KEY WORDS .....	IV
DECLARATION .....	V
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	VI
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	IX
FIGURES .....	XII
<b>1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1. Background.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2. Statement of the problem .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.3. Research questions.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.4. Research objectives .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.5. Description of the study .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.6. Overview of the Thesis .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.2. Digital literacy .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.3. Technologies and social relationships.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.4. From face-to-face to mediated encounter and Goffman’s interaction order.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.5. Resemiotization, text-chains and the mobility of meaning making.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.6. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3. CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>39</b>



<b>3.1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>3.2. Research Design.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.3. Research site .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3.4. Data collection and analysis.....</b>	<b>44</b>
3.4.1. Ethnographic research method.....	44
Participant observations .....	44
Semi-structured individual recorded interviews .....	46
Photographed artefacts .....	48
Audio and Video recordings .....	49
WhatsApp chat group data .....	50
<b>3.5. Data analysis .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.6. Ethical considerations.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4. CHAPTER FOUR: MAPPING THE INTERACTION ORDER OF THE READING CLUB .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>4.1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>4.2. Constructing the reading club .....</b>	<b>57</b>
The Saturday session .....	57
The volunteers as a ‘team’ .....	61
The activities .....	62
<b>4.3. Routine and ritual in the Saturday session.....</b>	<b>70</b>
Exploring the interactional ritual – song singing as a meaning making transmitter .....	73
Dramaturgical conventions .....	76
<b>4.4. Moving between the back stage and front stage .....</b>	<b>82</b>
The text-chain of Lulama’s magic blanket .....	83
<b>4.5. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>5. CHAPTER FIVE: MAPPING THE INTERACTION ORDER AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MOBILE PHONES.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>5.1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>5.2. Constructing the reading club after the introduction of mobile digital literacy .....</b>	<b>100</b>
The Saturday session .....	101
The volunteers as a team .....	102
The activities .....	103
<b>5.3. Routine and ritual in the Saturday session.....</b>	<b>108</b>
Example one : Individual reading time.....	108
Example two : Individual reading time.....	111
Example three : Thuliswa at home.....	115
Dramaturgical conventions .....	117

<b>5.4. Moving between the back stage and front stage .....</b>	<b>120</b>
The text-chain of the FunDza mobi story : ‘How tortoise’s nose become crooked’ .....	121
<b>5.5. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>6. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>7. REFERENCE LIST.....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>8. APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>8.1. Appendix A: Children semi-structured interview in English.....</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>8.2. Appendix B: Children semi-structured interview in isiXhosa .....</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>8.3. Appendix C: Volunteer semi-structured interview .....</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>8.4. Appendix D: An overview of the activities in the Masifunde reading club what’s group .....</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>8.5. Appendix E: Children’s consent form in isiXhosa.....</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>8.6. Appendix F: Children’s consent form in English.....</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>8.7. Appendix G: Assent form to minors in isiXhosa.....</b>	<b>182</b>
<b>8.8. Appendix H: Assent form for minors in English .....</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>8.9. Appendix I: Volunteer’s consent form in English.....</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>8.10. Appendix J: Introducing the participants.....</b>	<b>188</b>



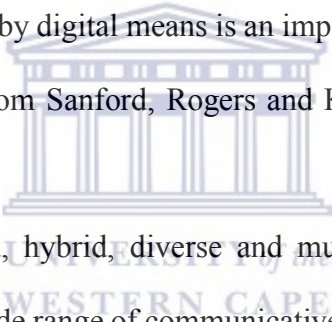
## Figures:

Figure 1: A child is writing on a page placed on the wall which asks "Iveki yam ibinjani/ How was your week?"	60
Figure 2: Is a typical example of the weekly activity on "Incwadi esizifundileyo"/'The books we have read"	61
Figure 3: Pair reading in younger children.	64
Figure 4: The ice-breaker	66
Figure 5: Main story	69
Figure 6: Story activity	70
Figure 7: Lisa, the visitor, reads 'rescuing rhino' in English and Portia, a volunteer and principal of the reading club, translates it to isiXhosa.	73
Figure 8: The cover of the story book 'Lulama's magic blanket'	85
Figure 9: Announcement of the story activity	87
Figure 10: Story activity part: making Lulama's magic blanket	89
Figure 11: Completed magic blanket	90
Figure 12: The middle age children with the help of the Funeka a volunteer is busy knitting	91
Figure 14: Children from the older age group are busy sewing together the patches of the magic blanket for Lulama. The sewing material are cloths provided by Sis Lihle	93
Figure 16: : A print text and a mobile text exist side by side at the Masifunde reading club as the children were reading from a book and a provided mobile phone for the research	104
Figure 17: The two images are showing two different interactions with the phone by the children.	105
Figure 18: Main story activity during the reading of the FunDza mobi-stories.	107
Figure 20: After mobile reading of the FunDza mobi stories failed the children adopted the mobile device as a recorder.	109
Figure 21: Children appropriating the mobile phone in ways applicable to them after the reading of an online mobi stories failed.	110
Figure 22: During individual reading these two girls were reading from the FunDza mobi-stories, and here they are copying from the phone into their pages.	113
Figure 23: Thandeka reading the story on the phone.	126
Figure 24: Final products of the story colouring of the characters in the FunDza mobi-story of 'How tortoise's nose became crooked' by the little children.	129
Figure 25: Thandeka is explaining the instruction for the story-activity for the middle age group. This is before she divided this group is divided into small groups.	130
Figure 26: The middle age group was asked to do a front page newspaper about the story - and this image is final product made by one groups in the middle age group	131
Figure 27: The writing stand has statements both in isiXhosa and English explaining the story given by the children.	133

# 1. Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1. Background

The idea put forward by Larson and Marsh (2010: 575) that childhood is infused with digital technologies may at first sound extreme, but in the context of affluent and highly digitized societies, then this is not an over-exaggeration of the current condition. Such is shown by the range of digital literacy practices that are embedded and normalized into everyday life in such societies and increasingly all over the world. Similarly, Merchant (2012) suggests the notion of being a ‘networked individual’ in today’s world implies that connectivity is central to everyday life. Even in the South African context, Prinsloo, Deumert, Kell, McKinney and Guzula (2014:2) argue “technology has become a norm, a fact of life for youth for whom instant messaging and social networking by digital means is an important part of their social lives”. In this research project, I borrow from Sanford, Rogers and Kendrick’s (2014: 2) definition of youth literacies:



Youth literacies are fluid, hybrid, diverse and multiple, and include the ability to interpret and produce a wide range of communicative texts, using not only written texts but also identifying themselves through art, music, dress, body art, movement, gesture and film to claim power in youth cultural sites and broader society.

The evolution of the internet and development of digital technologies have altered traditional forms of communication and transformed everyday literacy practices impacting, to a point where understandings of what literacy is and how it is used have shifted. This implies that it is necessary, but no longer sufficient, for children to develop competence in relation to print literacy and written texts; they also need to be able to engage successfully with multimodal, multimedia texts if they are to acquire the range of skills, knowledge and understanding

necessary to navigate the knowledge economy of the 21st century (Lankshear and Knobel, 2011). Thus, the conversation has generally moved from whether or not technology should be used to how it should be used (Clements and Sarama, 2003), and more recently to understanding how literacy is “taken hold” (Street, 2004) of in divergent contexts of practice. This new understanding as an alternative “offers a more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices as they vary from one context to another” (Street, 2003: 77) and literacy involves “the ways in which people address reading and writing [which] are themselves rooted in conceptions of knowledge, identity, and being” (Street, 2003: 77-78). Thus we get Street’s notion of the ‘taking hold’ of literacy “in specific local ways, whether absorbed into previous communicative practices or used to mediate the outside and the inside” (Street, 160: 2009).

Baynham and Prinsloo, (2009: 162) paraphrase Street’s (2004) argument as follows:

... most literacy practices come from ‘outside’ (distant literacies), and he maintains that the ways they are taken up (or not) by individual actors are distinct, locally specific, and often contested. He claims that literacy is always instantiated, its potential always realized, through local practices’ (p. 326) even though the outside or the global may be ‘embedded in the local practice’ (p. 328).

These changes in everyday literacy practices raise questions for schools which “have been often unsure as to how to respond to and understand these developments and their implications for educational organisation and practice” (Prinsloo et al., 2014: 3). The gaps and discontinuities that exist between the out-of-school techno-literacy practices of young people and academic literacy or the classroom are a concern when it comes to the teaching and learning of literacy in the 21st century, with the question that “at the heart of this concern is the sense that a whole

range of cultural resources fail to be translated into cultural capital by the school system (Merchant, 2007).

Other implications within the school or the discontinuities that exist between school-home (Hull and Schultz, 2001: 577; Heath, 1982) include the fact that the role of mobile and digital technology in classroom settings is not yet clearly understood nor defined. Tensions thus arise between the out-of-school and the emergent digital literacy practices of youth and children in comparison to the educational book-based and traditional literary forms which tend to dominate in the classroom context. On such account, “to have effective literacy learning will require constant engagement with how literacy works outside of school and what an effective relationship should be between literacy as practiced in school and in wider society” (Prinsloo et al., 2014: 3).



As part of a broader NRF project, conducted by researchers from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the University of Cape Town (UCT) on how “teachers use and children and youths engage with available online and mobile reading and writing resources under contemporary, globalized conditions in diverse South African settings” (Prinsloo et al., 2014), this research project explores the way in which reading club members from an out-of-school Cape Flats reading club, which I have called Masifunde, ‘take hold’ of digital stories on mobile phones and how they interact with the mobile technology as a new literacy practice. This builds on my Honours research paper in which I examined “the digital literacy practices of volunteers in a Cape Flats reading club with a view to understanding issues around access, use and potential of internet access through mobile phones for the running and development of the reading club” (Bangani, 2014).

In this Honours research paper (Bangani, 2014), I was concerned with learning how best the volunteers used mobile technology in their day-to-day lives and how it supported the running and development of the Masifunde reading club. This had been examined by looking at the everyday relations between reading club volunteers and their mobile phones and relating this to their wider usage of digital technologies in the activities of the reading club. The research, undertaken during 2014, was situated in one of Cape Town's low income areas where the majority of learners attend under-resourced schools. It did not focus on what was happening in the reading club sessions, rather it focused on the digital literacy practices of five of the adult volunteers in the club, occurring, as it were, in the backstage of the Masifunde reading club WhatsApp group chat.

By focusing on the backstage involving the WhatsApp group and the individual digital literacy practices of the volunteers, my Honours project centred on exploring the potential for widening reading club activities, co-ordination and forms of support using their personal mobile phones. As a result, the current research project addresses the gap that I identified in the lack of use of mobile phones in the print-based interaction order of the reading club's Saturday sessions.

Since the Masifunde reading club, both backstage and in the Saturday sessions, has well-established communicative routines and literacy practices I also explore whether and how the introduction of digital stories mediated by mobile technology shifts and influences the "interaction order" (Goffman, 1983). Gillen and Hall (2003) argue "young children are strategic literacy learners who pay attention to the print world, participate in that world, and develop theories about how that world works". Can such be said about the children and volunteers in the reading club in their engagements with digital stories and the mobile phone as a literacy resource, and how they participate in this world of mobile mediated learning?

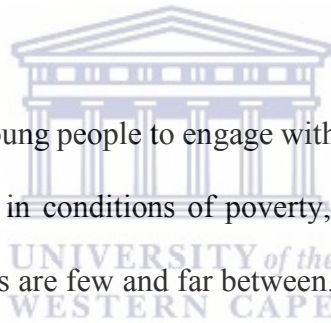


The Masifunde reading club is part of a network of such clubs initiated through an organisation called PRAESA (the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa) over the past decade, aiming to “enable inspiring and motivating opportunities for literacy learning among and development for all children living in multilingual settings by transforming the way adults engage with children using print in both formally and informally structured educational settings” (PRAESA, 2017). My research, while being based in the PRAESA-affiliated reading club, also engaged with an initiative run by the highly successful FunDza Literacy Trust that uses mobile and digital technology to “get young people reading and writing for pleasure, as well as for educational development in South Africa” (FunDza, 2017). The FunDza Literacy Trust works “to boost literacy among teens and young adults in township communities by popularising reading, building communities of readers and nurturing new and authentic young writing talent – all using mobile phone technology” (FunDza, 2015). Through its affiliation with the Cover2Cover publishers, the FunDza literacy trust has published a selection of titles for young teens and young adults, and these include, the FunDza anthology Big Ups, that are a collection of FunDza’s most popular short stories given Big Ups by FunDza fans on its mobi network (FunDza, 2017), as well as the following hard copy titles which had been donated to the Masifunde reading club: ‘Soccer Secrets’, ‘Sugar Daddy’ and ‘From Boys to Men’ amongst others.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

There is a crisis in the South African Basic Education system, as Prinsloo et al., (2014) put it “regarding reading and writing, public protests about unequal access to resources, and the underperformance of children and youths in the standardized tests”. The University of Pretoria in a recent press release stated, “the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)

2016 report paints a disturbing picture of primary school reading literacy in South Africa, with no significant progress nationally since the last report in 2011” (UP Press release, 2017). This disturbing revelation can be seen from the “8 of 10 South African children who cannot read, or 78% of South African Grade 4 students who cannot read for meaning” (PIRLS, 2016: 55). In addition, this literacy crisis had also been recognized in the 2011 Annual National Assessment (ANA) by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in literacy/language and numeracy/mathematics, when it found that “the majority of the learners who wrote the 2011 ANA displayed an inability to read and were thus not able to read questions with enough understanding to respond. In addition, many of those who could read seemed to be constrained by limited vocabulary to write creatively and express their opinions freely where this was required (ANA report, 2011: 35).

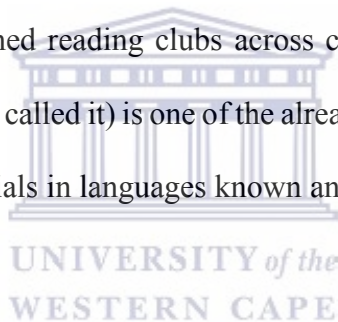


One basic problem in enabling young people to engage with literacy is the fact that there is not a rich literacy environment, and in conditions of poverty, such as those of the areas where reading clubs are based, resources are few and far between. Furthermore, the types of literacy materials available for children and young people are frequently not exciting and engaging and are unlikely to increase children and young people’s desire to engage in reading and writing for pleasure. Yet young people are using technologies all the time, with much creativity in their language play online (Jones, Chik and Hafner, 2013). The unfortunate side of this is that “the South African education system is currently characterised by literacy crisis and failure. Unfortunately, study after study confirms the crisis” (Bizos, 2009: 31).

Therefore, given the literacy crisis in South African Basic Education system and under the initiative of PRAESA, the Vulindlela reading club(s) were started (amongst many others) in order to create conditions in community settings which inspire, promote and support reading

for enjoyment and the development of reading in mother tongue language among children and adults (Alexander, Bloch, Jogee, Guzula and Mahobe, 2011). The aim of setting up community reading clubs was to create nurturing spaces which motivate children to want to read and give them a sense of identity and belonging (Alexander et al., 2011), as “literate subjects” (Millard, 1994).

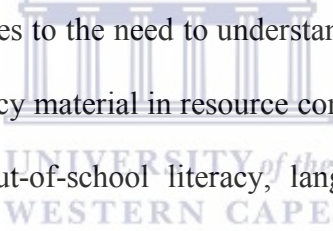
PRAESA is an independent research and development unit affiliated with the University of Cape Town. Recently, PRAESA extended the reading club idea into the Nal’ibali campaign which is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children’s potential through storytelling and reading. Nal’ibali has, as part of its goals of initiating, supporting, and helping sustain community reading clubs, the commitment to provide necessary resources and support to establish and already established reading clubs across communities in South Africa. The Masifunde reading club (as I have called it) is one of the already established community reading clubs that receives reading materials in languages known and spoken by the participants.



The Masifunde reading club is a print-based informal learning space that uses “stories in powerful ways so that children can consistently experience literacy in ways that are not available to them in schools” (Alexander et al., 2011). Every Saturday a two-hour session takes place between 10:00am-12:00pm inside the premises of a church, and the sessions are led by volunteers from the community. The reading club’s literacy practices ranges from the storytelling, book reading, writing, song singing and playing of games thus making their learning to be multisemiotic. The reading club is routinely structured with activities such as ‘individual reading’ constructed as a moment for free reading, ‘icebreaker’ including games and songs; ‘circle seating’: a time for sharing of thoughts with a big group; ‘main activity’: involving reading aloud and storytelling which is the heart of the Saturday session; and finally

‘story-activity’: where children experiment and explore with available modes and materials to complete a story activity question.

However, given the material constraints in such clubs as that of the Masifunde reading club it is possible that resources such as technology can supplement the activities of the reading club and offer opportunities for new learning practices to emerge while diversifying the conditions of learning as digital literacy comes into play. Hence, my research is an ethnographically-orientated intervention that introduces to the Masifunde reading club the FunDza mobi-stories, mobile phones and mobile reading practice. Thus far the reading club has had no engagement with digital literacy in its actual Saturday session.



In part, my research interest relates to the need to understand and explore digital literacy as a way of improving access to literacy material in resource constrained communities by learning “how children’s and youths’ out-of-school literacy, language and digital resources and orientations interface with particular educational initiatives, in school and in out-of-school educational initiatives and with what sorts of consequences?” (Prinsloo et al., 2014). For this reason, the study will explore the ways in which a reading club (situated on the periphery of Cape Town in one of the most poorly resourced and impoverished communities), based on engagements with print-based literacy materials, can transition to, engage and interact with digital literacy materials. Following Prinsloo et al., (2014: 3) I focus on “the take-up of digital resources ... with a wider focus on how digital media are used, developed, shared and adapted in particular ways in particular contexts, by youths and children, outside of school, particularly in otherwise poorly resourced contexts” (Prinsloo et al., 2014: 3).

In addition, literacy initiatives such as the African Storybook project (ASP), the FunDza initiative and Nal'ibali reading for enjoyment campaign aim to become important sites for language and literacy learning in out-of-school settings. Research therefore needs to address in detail “what the potentials and challenges are for digitally-based initiatives to address (the crisis in the South African Basic Education system), in particular, those initiatives concerned with literacy development by way of material provision by digital means and by way of reading groups” (Prinsloo et al., 2014: 5).

These initiatives are all exploring and experimenting with ways in which digital technologies can assist with literacy development, exploring how “new literacies are being taken up by today’s youth in ways that could not have been imagined a few decades ago, and still not understood by educators, parents and policy-makers today” (Sanford, Rogers and Kendrick, 2014: 1). Projects such as the above provide spaces for innovation. The Masifunde reading club, as well as the FunDza initiative, provide one such space in which innovations can be tested which can possibly make a difference to young people’s engagement with reading and writing with an attempt to improve the literacy crisis, at the same time make accessible to resource constrained communities literacy material generated by digital-based initiatives such as the FunDza literacy trust or ASP. And last of all, “given the potential of digital media resources to engage children in practices of reading and writing, the objective of this research is to generate in-depth, multi-faceted research with regard to electronic media resources and their roles in children’s and youth’s learning and networking activities” (Prinsloo et al., 2014: 5).

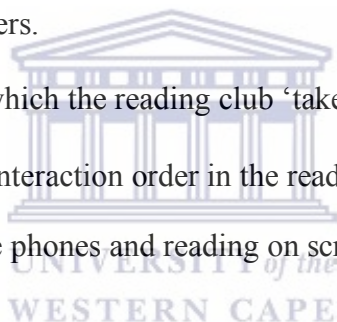
### 1.3. Research questions

- How do reading club members in a Cape Flats reading club ‘take hold’ of fictional stories designed to be accessed on mobile phones?
- Does reading on the mobile phone change the interaction order and the literacy practices in the reading club? If so, how?

### 1.4. Research objectives

The objectives of the study are:

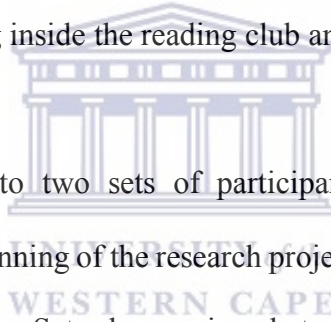
- To ‘map’ the currently-existing reading club’s interaction order around print-based literacy.
- To introduce reading of fiction and engagement with FunDza stories on mobile phones to the reading club members.
- To examine the ways in which the reading club ‘takes hold’ of digital fiction.
- To ‘map’ changes to the interaction order in the reading club which might occur with the introduction of mobile phones and reading on screen.



### 1.5. Description of the study

In late 2015, whilst I was presenting to the volunteers the summary and recommendations for an Honours research paper I worked on – ‘*Digital literacy practices amongst volunteers in a Cape Flats reading club*’ (Bangani, 2014). I ended the presentation by presenting an intended study for an MA research paper and talking more of this new project to commence the following year (2016) if permission was granted. Fortunately, it was granted, and in 2016, I began with the current study – ‘*Taking hold’ of mobile phone stories in a Cape Flats reading club*’.

In February 2016 after one of the Saturday sessions I again had a talk with the reading club volunteers about the study and their involvement and that of the selected children from the older age group. Then after the Humanities and Social Science Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape had given its approval for this MA research study, I again approached the Masifunde reading club volunteers where I discussed with them setting up dates for starting with data collection. The talk involved the issue of consent forms where I informed them that I was going to ask parents to sign agreeing to allowing their children to be part of the study, at the same time I asked the children to sign as committing to take part in the research. Four volunteers were initially intended to be part of the study but given their unavailability and matters that arose during data collection, I was only able to work with three reading club volunteers. I reiterated that my involvement with the children would only develop an account of the literacy practices occurring inside the reading club and not at home or school.



Data collection was divided into two sets of participant observations. The first set of observations was done at the beginning of the research project to record the existing interaction order and took place on five of the Saturday sessions between May and July 2016. A second set of three observations took place in August 2016. Prior to the start of the first set of observations I brought four new mobile phones to be used experimentally by either the children or reading club volunteers. The phones were used more by the children, and no data at this time was collected besides noting the usage and the arising concerns, in particular, the mobile reception problem. The mobile reception issue persisted even after I changed from Cell C to Vodacom. After making a contact with a FunDza staff member who came to the reading club one Saturday to observe and give a talk about the FunDza Literacy Trust, she advised that I changed back to Cell C for the free basic webpage: [www.internet.org](http://www.internet.org) since the Mxit App I was using was being phased out. This was a slight improvement, but the speed was still not

acceptable and I then focused on the ways in which members of the reading club ‘worked around’ the difficulties of using the phones in the club and developed some techniques myself for increasing the usage of the phones to introduce new stories to the group despite the reception issues. These are all outlined in Chapter 5.

## **1.6. Overview of the Thesis**

Chapter Two: Literature Review.

In this chapter, I detail a discussion as grounded by the New Literacy Studies (NLS) framework and outlining three generations of the NLS, as well as a discussion of literacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I discuss digital literacy and the out-of-school literacy as practiced by children and young people, as their literacy practices are infused with technology.

Chapter Three: Methodology.

I present my research approach by mapping out the methodological framework as an ethnographic study, and the approaches that I use for an ethnographically-orientated intervention, such as participant observation, individual interviews and a selection of photographed texts, audio and video recordings. I also introduce the research site and my ethical considerations.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis.

The data analysis section has two analysis chapters. In Chapter Four, I map the current print-based interactions of the Masifunde reading club, by using Goffmanian (1983, 1956) concepts such as the ritual, routine, team, social interaction, front stage and back stage performances, setting, performance, dramaturgical co-operation, interaction order and impression management. These provide a lens to see and understand what the Masifunde reading club



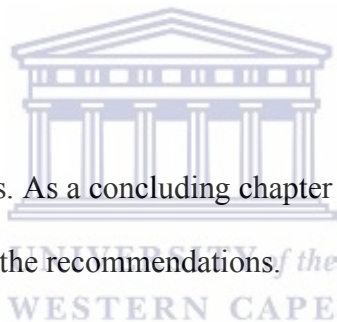
looks like prior to its involvement with the FunDza mobi-stories and the provided mobile phones used as literacy tools.

#### Chapter Five: Data Analysis.

Chapter Five is an exploration of the reading club as it transitions to engage and interact with the FunDza mobi-stories and mobile phone for the mobile reading practices. It is here that I begin to see how the reading club members took hold of the mobile-based fiction, and how they interacted with it, what literacy practices emerged, as well as the ways in which the volunteers responded to the presence of mobile technology and the FunDza mobi-stories. So in both analysis chapters I focus on analysing of the findings by going back to the theoretical framing and research questions.

#### Chapter Six: Conclusion.

Conclusion and recommendations. As a concluding chapter I summarise main findings of the study whilst giving discussion to the recommendations.



## 2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.1. Introduction

The research is grounded in the New Literacy Studies (NLS) which according to Pahl and Rowsell (2005: 19) “opens up our frame of reference about literacy, as it makes us aware of our learners in relation to their identities”. At the same time, Street (2003: 77) argues that “what has come to be termed the New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Gee, 1991; Street, 1996) represents a new tradition in considering the nature of literacy, focusing not so much on acquisition of skills, as in dominant approaches, but rather on what it means to think of literacy as a social practice (Street, 1985)”.

The NLS involved the social turn to literacy, a shift in meaning of literacy understood as a basic skill of letter, word and sentence recognition, to the alternative that saw “literacy as essentially social, and located in the interaction between people” in what are known as “literacy events and practices” (Barton and Hamilton, 2000: 142). As well, it argued that:

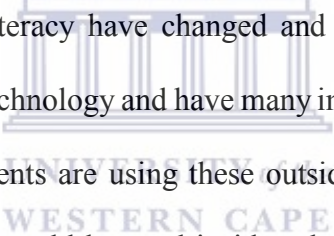
... literacy is a social practice and literacy practices vary: that what is meant by the terms literacy, reading and writing differs across various kinds of social groupings and networks; that these differences are not just cross-cultural, but also across different contexts in the same society, such as the home and the workplace; and even within the same activity (Prinsloo and Baynham, 2013: xxiv).

At the same time the ‘social turn to literacy’ has been followed by the ‘digital turn to literacy’ where participating in 21st century literacy practices is deeply wrapped-up with digital forms of communication. In these turns to literacy, both socially and digitally – the ‘literacy as a social practice’ approach, according to Barton and Hamilton (2000:142), “focuses on the

everyday meanings and uses of literacy in specific cultural contexts”. Digital literacy therefore relates to Barton and Hamilton’s proposition that “literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices” (2000: 140).

Digital literacy as a relatively new field of study signals the changes brought about by “... screen-based technologies which make available different modes and semiotics resources in ways that shape processes of meaning making” (Jewitt, 2005: 315), and the understandings of what literacy has come to mean in contemporary times for young people.

Thus, the emergence and ubiquity of inexpensive internet connected mobile and digital devices has challenged schooled literacy practices, because:



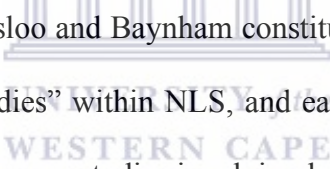
The social practices of literacy have changed and expanded exponentially with the development of web 2.0 technology and have many implications for classroom practice. More importantly, if students are using these outside of school, it follows that these modes of communication could be used inside school to engage students in learning (Rowse and Walsh, 2011: 60).

Ethnographically sensitive studies are needed to understand the nature and manner of the varied ways new literacies travel and are appropriated in diverse context across settings. The multiple and varied ways of how they get “taken hold of” (Street, 2009: 24) asks that digital literacies be “studied for their situated use not as evidence of what affordances they might carry across contexts but as resources that get assembled and adapted in distinctive ways” (Prinsloo and Rowse, 2012). Hence, in this study I contribute to place-based studies of digital literacy in the ‘globalised periphery’ by studying the ways in which members of a Cape Flats reading club

‘take hold of’ the FunDza online fiction/mobile phones in their reading club activities. As a result, by situating this study under the place-based studies approach I begin to show that, “even if technologies are the same when they enter a context compared with other contexts, an essential dimension to any research on technologies (and new literacies, for that matter) is how local specificities point to divergent practices” (Rowse, Saudei, Scott, and Bishop, 2013: 351).

Prinsloo and Baynham (2013: xxiii) argue that:

“... the last few decades have seen growth in the quantities and uses for reading and writing of many kinds that are being carried out by people on-line, on computers and mobile phones, on paper, at home, at work and at leisure, and that are changing rapidly in their uses and purposes”



These studies as outlined by Prinsloo and Baynham constitute what has come to be termed as “three generations of literacy studies” within NLS, and each focusing on specific themes in theory and methodology and in literacy studies involving language an ‘ethnographic approach to literacy’ (Street, 1984). This moves away from the traditional views that see literacy as a set of skills independent of context to “what it means to think of literacy as a social practice”, and this can be inferred from Barton and Hamilton’s (2000:144) six propositions about the nature of literacy and these are:

1. Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.
2. There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.

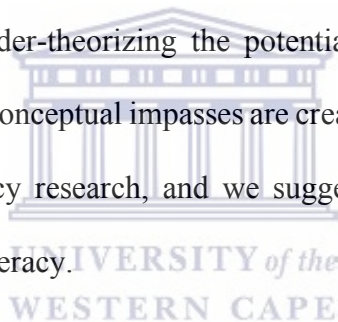
3. Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies are more dominant visible and influential than others.
4. Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices.
5. Literacy is historically situated.
6. Literacy practices change and new ones are frequently acquired through the processes of informal learning and sense making.

With regard to the three generations of New Literacy Studies, Olson and Torrance (2009: 340) believe that “Baynham locates all three generations within three overarching concerns: the orientation to literacy pedagogy; the definition of literacy in a period when multimodality is salient; and the relationship between the local and the global”. The first generation focused on firstly ‘literacy as situated social practice, literacy events and practices where “written texts, or texts are central to the activity, and there may be talk around the text” (Barton and Hamilton, 2000). Secondly, Street’s ‘autonomous’ and ‘ideological’ models of literacy (Street, 1984), and thirdly, the need to recognise Street’s notion of ‘multiple literacies’. This generation then extended to a second generation of research studies. Two important studies, Besnier’s on a South-Pacific atoll and Kulick and Stroud’s study in a Papua-New Guinea village, showed “situated groups of people ‘taking hold’ of literacy in ways that made sense to them and did not involve an absorption of ‘western ways’ by some kind of undiluted osmosis” (Prinsloo and Baynham, 2013: xxix-xxx). Since literacy is historical and literacy practices are shaped in context by being purposefully-driven, then the take hold of is shaped by the local context. Heath (1982: 70) in “*What No Bedtime Story Means: Narrative Skills at Home and School*”, illustrates this in her claim that: “children have to learn to select, hold, and retrieve content from books and other written or printed texts in accordance with their community’s rules or

‘ways of taking’, and the children’s learning follows community paths of language socialization”. Hence the ways of “taking hold of” by the children in the study by Heath is the same as the situated people in South-Pacific atoll and Papua-New Guinea village which is in accordance with their communities’ literacy related interactions. Lastly, a third generation of literacy studies responded to Brandt and Clinton (2002) who called on the limits of the local and questioned if “an analysis of literacy practices in local contexts could provide an adequate explanation of the role of literacy in society, and of the way in which the global reaches into the local” (Kell, 2009: 80).

Brandt and Clinton (2002: 337) advanced their argument on the limits of the local thus:

By exaggerating the power of local contexts to define the meaning and forms that literacy takes and by under-theorizing the potentials of the technology of literacy, methodological bias and conceptual impasses are created. Hence, there is a need to open new directions for literacy research, and we suggest more attention be paid to the material dimensions of literacy.



The third generation of new literacy studies focuses on “...the proliferation of multimedia writing that has accompanied the dramatic explosion of digital, electronic communication by way of computers, phones, tablets and other devices linked to the Internet and using email, websites, Skype, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other communication and writing resources” (Prinsloo and Baynham, 2013: xxxii). This research study therefore shifts the focus to how digital media resources can be taken hold of in distinct ways by young people and educators, with differences across contrasting social settings (Prinsloo, 2005). Then and there, Street’s (2004) notion of ‘taking hold’ allows for the move away from the technological determinist view that has “previously dominated the account of literacy in which, the term

‘autonomous model’ referred to the model of literacy that assumes the technology of literacy in itself had ‘impact’” (Street, 2003: 2825). Street’s work argued that the autonomous model of literacy “was not an appropriate intellectual tool for understanding the diversity of reading and writing around the world ...” (24). The “question this approach raises ... is, then, not simply that of impact of literacy, to be measured in terms of a neutral development index, but rather of how local people ‘take hold’ of the new communicative practices being introduced to them, ...” (Prinsloo and Baynham, 2009; 24). These authors further argue (2013: xxviii) that Heath’s work made the case that there are multiple ways of taking and making meaning in reading and writing practices, and this too, could be intertwined with the fact that literacy practices that are deeply wrapped-up with digital forms of communication.

At the same time, having noted Brandt and Clinton’s (2002) argument on ‘the limits of the local’ around the local/global debate and the need to find ways to ‘characterize the relation between the ‘local’ and the ‘distant’” (Street, 2003), the notion of “taking hold” is a tenet of NLS that speaks to multiple and varied ways of appropriation. It becomes “problematic to accept that distant literacies come to local contexts with their force and meaning intact (Street, 2003: 2827) and there is a body of work (Stroud and Kulick, 1993; Street, 1980; Heath, 1983) that shows that “local peoples more often “take hold” of these new practices and adapt them to local circumstances” (Street, 2003: 2827). How digital media as resources and as ‘distant literacies’ while entering the Masifunde reading club interaction order, are taken hold of can be seen as part of Prinsloo’s notion of “placed-resources” (2005). Prinsloo (2005: 87) argues, “that despite their global impact, the new literacies are best studied as resources situated by social practices that have local effect”. My study focuses on the specificity of context and place and I show how taking hold of literacy focuses on “localised literacy practices” (Lytra, 2009: 5), in these and under the placed-based approach my study “... draws attention to the varied

and specific ways that media resources are taken hold of in divergent social settings” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 271).

The focus on the new media as placed resources ... indicates our efforts to deal with questions of variability and specificity in how new media are encountered and used across socio-culturally divergent social settings, and across different social activities in the same or similar settings. As well as, at the level of practice, the new literacies are never reproduced in their entirety across different contexts. They function as artefacts and as signs that are embedded in local relations that are themselves shaped by larger social dynamics of power, status, access to resources and social mobility. They are placed resources (Prinsloo 2005, 96).

## 2.2. Digital literacy

Hull and Schultz (2002:2) ask “why ... does literacy so often flourish in out of school contexts?”, Knobel and Lankshear (2003) provide an answer that children’s out-of-school literacy practices take two forms “those literacies which look like school literacy such as story-reading, name-writing, print awareness and completing school homework, and those literacies which do not look like schooled literacy and, often, will not be tolerated in school”. Below are two vignettes of two children drawn from two different studies showing the overlap between the two forms of out-of-school literacy with the form of literacy influenced by popular culture and mediated by digital media resources.

- Sarah is 13 years old; she spends her time playing online games on her family’s computer, but she prefers to spend more of her leisure time socializing with her school friends via text messaging and building her web profile in MySpace.com (an online networking social space) (Hsi, 2007: 1511).



- At home, John actively engages in various activities, such as reading and writing fantasy novels, listening to hip-hop songs, and drawing cartoons. His literacy practices at home are computer orientated (Pyo, 2015:2).

The point here is well-explained by Dyson (1997) “young children bring to their writing from their social worlds, including linguistic and symbolic tools appropriated from popular culture”. The two vignettes demonstrate this perfectly. Similarly, the two vignettes, as examples of literacy in the 21 century in highly resourced contexts, are indicative of the varied ways in which the children in out-of-school contexts have taken hold of literacy/new literacies with differences across contrasting social settings. ‘Taking hold’ of thus focuses “on localized literacy practices [then] it shows how they open up spaces for identity negotiations, creativity, improvisation and change but can also impose new and unexpected constraints on literacy learners” (Lytra, 2009: 5).



In order to assist children’s language and literacy development at school, educators need to understand the multifaceted nature of literacy in the 21st century outside the schooled context or from different domains, because of “the ways in which literacy connects and with learning, doing, and becoming outside of school, and the need to ask how we might draw on the out-of-school worlds that engage youth, even as we attempt to foster school-based expertise?” (Hull and Schultz, 2001: 590). Furthermore, it should be noted that:

young people today are generally ahead of the older generation with respect to the technical skills of using technologies and communicating in ways via them; but what then should teachers be adding to this, what do learners ‘need’ in addition to what they have learned in peer and auto-didact ways, how might teachers bridge the generational

knowledge forms that learners and tutors range over? (Baynham and Prinsloo, 2009: 29).

In part, the bridging of generational knowledge forms regarding new literacies starts with acknowledging and broadening the scope of what literacy was within the traditional perspective – the ‘autonomous view’, and comparing that with what it looks like after the social turn and digital turn to literacy. Following that, “educators need not only to be concerned with the technical skills needed for handling new communications media but also the meta knowledge for recognising these skills and media and for integrating them in meaningful ways” (Baynham and Prinsloo, 2009: 30). For instance, a study by Rowsell, Saudeiii, Scott, and Bishop (2013) called “*iPads as Placed Resources: Forging Community in Online and Offline spaces*”, showed the changing perception(s) from teachers and new engagements as learners’ learning was mediated by the iPads. The authors argue that (2013: 354):

What Natalie (the teacher) identified early on as the most valuable potential of tablet teaching is how much freedom students to explore and experiment in ways that they felt unable to do with printed texts. Also, Natalie noted that struggling students revealed hidden strengths and literacies that she had not seen previously.

And further,

Diane and Natalie discovered that thinking about students' use of technology outside of school and building on the affordances of their experiences and expertise shifted their understanding of student-teacher hierarchies. Teacher-led and controlled learning had been eclipsed by student-led practices and epistemologies.

UNESCO (2014) more triumphantly states that “mobile learning/reading is not a future phenomenon but a right-here, right-now reality”, and outlines new paths to accessing literacy

material, especially for resource constrained communities (such as the Masifunde reading club) and for struggling classrooms. Another UNESCO report of 2012, argues that “the rapid growth of access to mobile phones around the world and in Africa and Middle East regions in particular have potential of improving teaching, learning and institutional efficiencies to enable national education system transformation”. Similarly, Huang, Hwang and Chang, (2010) showed that “mobile learning applications can facilitate students not only learning contents conveniently but also interacting with others collaboratively anytime and anywhere”.

Since South Africa is faced with the “literacy and technology paradox which points to the country as book-poor and mobile-rich” (Walton, 2010); then as a book-poor and mobile-rich country like South Africa – mobile learning and teaching seem relevant, especially as Prinsloo et al., (2004) suggest that “young people gain much of their experience and knowledge in relating to digital technologies outside the formal institutions of knowledge building”. If this is the case, then an integration of mobile and digital learning may not be far off. Kellner (2000:249) argues in this period we are experiencing rapid social change, which requires educators to foster a variety of new types of literacies to make education relevant to the demands of a new millennium. Other studies have confirmed, for example, Davidson (2009: 37) that the increased use of new technologies by young children in the home suggests the need for institutional changes in early childhood settings and in school classrooms.

By the same token a study about the Yoza project in South Africa revealed that:

The enormous success of the Yoza project for South African teens, which provides English, Afrikaans and IsiXhosa mobile reading stories, plays and poetry free of charge along with commenting and voting features, demonstrates that small screens are not an

insurmountable obstacle and constitute a good option in a book-poor, mobile-rich context (GSMA, 2010A; Isaacs, 2012b)” (Pegrum, 2014).

In answering the question: “How to bring text to the unreached? How to make material accessible? UNESCO argues that the answer; at least in the immediate term, is mobile devices as they are plentiful in places where books are scarce” (UNESCO, 2014). The report thus came at a critical time as it raises understanding of how to take advantage of mobile reading in addressing a literacy crisis marked by the failing of learners in international standardized tests, and unequal access to books.

That is to say, “the mobile platform has taken access to resources at the time of need to a new level, and has enabled new environments where learning can be accomplished and where learning experiences can be injected” (Ally and Tsinakos, 2014:18), and this is evident from this study after having introduced the FunDza mobi-stories/mobile phones as a literacy tool to the Masifunde reading club as a way of expanding access to literacy material. However, what is important, is understanding the ways in which context and pattern(s) of interaction influence and shape practices. This requires that each enabled environment is considered from a situated practice and not from a generalized one with regard to the ways in which technology becomes appropriated. By looking at the enabled environment from the ways of making and taking meaning in a situated practice, my next section focuses on how technologies are socially shaped in contexts of practice as informed by the concept of the Social Shaping of Technology (SST). SST, as well, pays attention to how context of practice shapes and influence the interpretation and understandings of what and how technologies are taken hold of.

### 2.3. Technologies and social relationships

With regard to the Social Shaping of Technology (SST) approach, Mackay and Gillespie (1992) claim that as an emerging field back then, SST were starting to address “concerns with explaining how processes, actions and structures relate to technology, and thus were concerned with developing critiques of notions of technological determinism”. SST stands in contrast to technological determinism with the latter arguing for “traditional approaches which only addressed the outcomes or 'impacts' of technological change...” (Williams and Edge, 1996: 865).

In the same way, our interpretation of what technology and particularly, \mobile technology is and what it is used for socially, have an impact on how we understand its role, function and uses in everyday life. We thus need to understand, according to Hutchby (2015) “...the recognition that social processes are involved in all aspects of technology (453) and “.... in both their form and their meaning, are socially shaped, as opposed to being the clearly defined products of particular inventors and innovators” (441). Hutchby argues that “the field of social shaping of technology is not about technology in the abstract, but about the complex relationships between technologies and the social and interactional circumstances in which they exist and through which they attain their meaning” (Hutchby, 2015: 442).

Mackay and Gillespie (1992: 698) comment on the social appropriation of technology as follows:

Close inspection on technological developments reveals that technology leads a double life, one which conforms to the intentions of designers and interests of power and another which contradicts them – proceeding behind the backs of their architects to yield unintended consequences and unanticipated possibilities.

It was through the ‘impact’ assumption made about the agency of technology, rather than the social shaping and relation between the two, that SST emerged. The beginnings of SST then emerged in a critique of technological determinism, as noted by William and Edge, (1996: 8660), that to say technologies are socially shaped and other times reshaped in context.

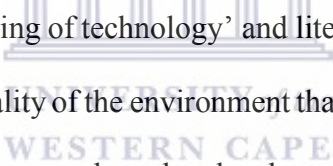
My research as also contributing to the place-based studies of digital literacy follows Prinsloo and Rowsell in asking for attention to be drawn to “varied and specific ways that media resources are taken hold of in divergent social settings” (2012: 271). This further alludes to SST’s claims about ‘technologies as socially shaped and other times reshaped in context as they travel across context of practice, rather than, seeing “technology as the most significant determinant of the nature of society” (Mackay and Gillespie, 1992: 686). However, as technologies are developed and designed with the consideration of social processes at that point “digital media exist in the local (...) but not without the constraints that mark their status as persons located on the globalised periphery” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 271) as my research participants are.

Prinsloo's notion of new technologies as placed resources is helpful to contextualize where, how, when, and in what ways these networked artefacts (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010) are used and understood (Rowsell, Saudelli, Scott and Bishop, 2013: 351). In part, the argument put forward by SST is to locate “technology within social processes/actions and structures” (Mackay and Gillespie, 1992). This is similar to Prinsloo’s notion of “placed resources” (2005), where Prinsloo and Rowsell argued that “communicative resources of all kinds, in their uses and functions, are shaped by context and place, and we examine what that means for people engaging with new media resources, particularly people who are not part of the global

mainstream” (2012: 271). This is what I have done by studying a Cape Flats reading club in how it takes hold of the fictional online stories designed to be accessed by a mobile phone.

The intricate nature and manner in which the “socio-techno scenario” (Mackay and Gillespie, 1992) exists can be understood as follows:

People are not merely malleable subjects who submit to the dictates of a technology: in their consumption they are not the passive dupes suggested by crude theorists of ideology, but active, creative and expressive – albeit socially situated – subjects. People may reject technologies, redefine their functional purpose, customize or even invest idiosyncratic symbolic in them. Indeed, they may redefine a technology in a way that depicts its original, designed and intended purpose. Thus the appropriation of technology is an integral part of its social shaping. (Mackay and Gillespie, 1992: 699).



The above mentioned ‘social shaping of technology’ and literacy as placed resources takes into account the specificity and materiality of the environment that technology/digital literacy comes to inhabit. It is here then that it becomes shaped and reshaped into context as “meaning making comes into play” (Kell, 2017) and this too depends on the needs, choices, interests, materiality of the device and its affordance for a user at a given time and space.

This is also argued by Bijker and Law (1999:8):

Technologies do not have a momentum of their own at the outset that allows them [...] to pass through a neutral social medium. Rather, they are subject to contingency as they pass from figurative hand to hand, and so are shaped and reshaped. [...] At other times they take novel forms, or are subverted by users to be employed in ways quite different from those for which they were originally intended.

As suggested by Cronberg (1992), the social shaping of technologies expresses the negotiability of technology and highlights the scope for particular groups and forces to shape technologies to their ends and possibilities of different kinds of technologies and social outcome. While the notion of affordances has come up as a determining factor or an influential factor in the social shaping of technologies it is important to see technologies neither in terms of their 'interpretive textual' properties nor of their 'essential technical properties, but rather consider them in terms of their affordances (Gibson 1979).

Barton and Lee (2013: 27) explain the concept of perceived affordances as the possibilities and constraints for actions that people selectively perceive in any situation. This emphasizes that people do not focus on the intrinsic properties of an object; rather, they perceive what is of value to their particular purposes. The materiality of the object therefore allows for the different ways it 'passes from figurative hand to hand, being shaped and reshaped' in context. Madianou and Miller (2012) suggest that the choice of which technology to use in creating different forms of text is dependent on the social context of use and the affordances of the particular digital artefact or platform, young people play around with the available affordances of technologies that facilitate how language is to be used. For example, in the use of 'please call me' messages, a text has to be short and straightforward to be effective. For Velghe (2014: 40) "please call me is another remarkable way of using the mobile phone within the daily reality of poverty to send 'please call me' messages". This was very evident in a study I completed for my Honours research in 2014, where I examined the uses of mobile phones amongst the reading club volunteers (Bangani, 2014).

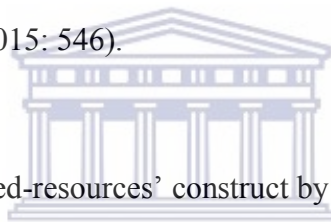


With reference to SST and new literacies as placed resources and the many ways it gets appropriated in divergent settings, in the same way, then the ‘taking hold’ of digital media resources can also point to what has been called its “domesticated nature”. For that reason, Mackay and Gillespie emphasises that “technologies emerge out of choice and negotiation between ‘relevant social groups’ (...). The concept of domestication, according to Horst (2012: 62), relates to the ways in which new technologies and platforms have become a normal and accepted part of everyday life, being naturalized (or domesticated). Because to say digital media resources are taken hold of differently also means their usage and functions are dependent on the way they are normalized or domesticated into everyday living.

This was evident from my Honours study, where I investigated “how portable devices, particularly those with same level of connectivity, are being used in people’s day-to-day lives” (Merchant, 2012 771) and how this constituted domestication. My study revealed that mobile, digital literacy practices of the reading club volunteers mirrored the naturalization or domestication of technology. For instance, when Thandeka claimed, “no life without my phone- this sums it up- that’s how important it is in my life” (Bangani, 2014: 42-43), Thandeka is showing how her mobile phone functioned in her context as a placed resource and how this shaped how it got taken hold of, at the same time being suggestive of the domesticated manner of the mobile device. This is because, a mobile phone is better at accomplishing some things rather than others, and sometimes, “the domestication of the mobile phone into everyday life involves innovation by the consumer-using technology in ways not anticipated by the designer” (Berg, 1994a).

A study by Prinsloo and Sasman (2015) about how the Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) were taken hold of points to what the (IWB) was domesticated for as it travelled across contexts into an early schooling classroom. In the study the writers claim:

The IWBs as a teaching resource does not challenge the orientation to teaching language and literacy that the teacher brings to her work at all but streamlines it and adds the novelty for the children of screen-based reading. Because the focus is on a form of reading and textual engagement that precedes the introduction of multimedia resources into the classroom, the visual and interactive dimensions brought to the activity by the IWB serve primarily illustrative functions that support the language and literacy learning. They do not introduce any new dimensions of reading, writing, or language use that might be associated with the affordances of digital media and with digital media practices (2015: 546).



My study contributes to the ‘placed-resources’ construct by investigating how the reading club takes hold of the FunDza mobi-stories within an already established and print-based “interaction order” (Goffman, 1983). The following section, therefore examines the interactional circumstances through the lens of Goffman’s (1983) “interaction order” by discussing both face-to-face interaction and mediated encounters.

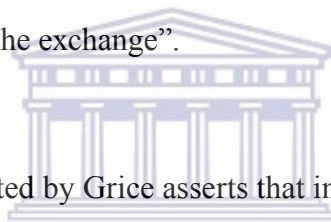
#### **2.4. From face-to-face to mediated encounter and Goffman’s interaction order**

According to Marsh (2011:100) the relationship between literacy and the social order has seen a radical transformation in the digital age. In the contemporary society, technologies intersect with humans in complex and dynamic ways. Goffman’s (1982) concept of “interaction order” is useful here. While he explicitly restricted his “microsociological analysis to face-to-face interaction, various studies have found Goffman’s insights relevant to mediated interaction

(e.g. Boden and Molotch, 1994; Heath and Luff, 1992; Meyrowitz, 1985)” (in Rettie, 2009: 422).

When extending Goffman’s theory to mediated contexts, Meyrowitz (1985) argues physical boundaries are irrelevant in mediated communication, thus, situations should be defined as ‘information systems’ or ‘patterns of access to information’.

In mediated encounters, the physical presence of the interactants is irrelevant and insignificant to the process of creating meanings, as it serves no purpose to the process of creating meanings or how participants in mediated interaction work together or act upon the “cooperative principle” in creating meanings (Thomas, 1995:61). According to Keenan and Evans the cooperative principle (2009:226) implies “that participants in a communicative exchange are expected to make contributions to a conversation as required, keeping in mind the mutually accepted purpose or direction of the exchange”.



The cooperative principle suggested by Grice asserts that in conversational interaction, people work on the assumptions that certain sets of rules are in operation, unless they receive indications to the contrary (Thomas, 1995: 62). Marsh (2011:101), however, showed how “... children drew on specific literacy practices to construct and maintain an interaction order when they engaged in out-of-school use of virtual worlds”. The children despite the online platform acted upon the “cooperative principle” (Thomas, 1995:61) in maintaining and constructing an interaction order online.

Online cues and other means used by interactants in online platforms become means through which the cooperative principle is achieved. This allows the participants to be cooperative in the interaction whilst creating meanings in online spaces. Online communication or mediated encounters are marked by their own form of presence in which the physicality of the place is

insignificant and plays no role on the mediated interactions. On the other hand, Goffman had regarded mediated communication as not constituting proper situations instead they are 'situation-like' (1979), but then again Rettie (2009: 425) stated "although the interactants are in different locations, they share a time-frame and mediated co-presence: as the interactants converse they collaborate on what we can call 'mediated encounter'".

This is where schools struggle to understand the nature and significance of online platforms as adding any value to teenagers and children, 'forgetting' that this is a space where they 'live' and it is a space they occupy and understand. As teaching practice and educational policy makers fail to integrate new technologies and platforms inside the classroom; they overlook the assumption that "it is undeniable for students right now to acquire a repertoire of both print and digital literacy practices for the future workplace and life" (Rowse and Walsh, 2011: 54). Ultimately, in the contemporary period, "many cultural contexts of literacy involve digital technologies" (Mills 2010: 248), implying participating in literacy practices is not just about print-based literacy practices, but also involves digital components.

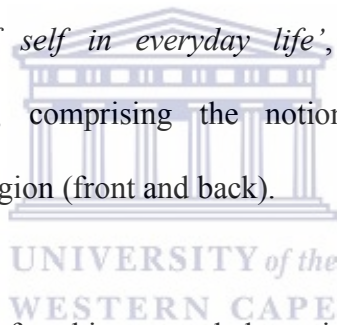
## **2.5. Resemiotization, text-chains and the mobility of meaning making**

Ervin Goffman, a Canadian-American sociologist, was born 1922 and died 1982. He is renowned for his contributions in the field of Sociology; particularly for his book titled: "*The Presentation of Self in Everyday life*", which according to Jones, Potrac, Cushion, and Ronglan (2011: 15) "pioneered the study of face-to-face interaction, or microsociology". In studying micro-interactions, Goffman adopted the metaphor of theatre as a way of describing the aspects of everyday face-to-face interactions. Jones et al., (2011: 15) further comments that "through these and other works he developed an understanding of the way we convey social information through symbols and images, and how these images are incorporated into social expectations".

This is what came to be known as the “Interaction order” (Goffman, 1982). Goffman (1982: 2) states “my concern over the years has been to promote acceptance of this face-to-face domain as an analytically viable one – a domain which might be titled, for want of any happy name, the interaction order - a domain whose preferred method of study is microanalysis”.

From his most ground-breaking work: “*The Presentation of Self in Everyday life*”, I borrow the concept of “interaction order” (Goffman, 1982) and other theoretical concepts in the elements of a dramaturgical frame to examine the way the Masifunde reading club an out-of-school Cape Flats reading club ‘takes hold’ of digital stories on mobile phones by looking at how they interact with the mobile technology as a new literacy practice. Jones et al. (2011: 20) comments that:

In the ‘*presentation of self in everyday life*’, Goffman (1959) unfolded the dramaturgical metaphor, comprising the notions of performance, impression management, team and region (front and back).



The Goffmanian view adopted for this paper helps with understanding the temporarily constructed reading club to be a social interaction as the literacy related interactions involve two or more individuals who are in one another’s response presence, at the same time, the WhatsApp group chat has extended the idea of ‘interaction order’ to an online space, that make up the two regions of the Masifunde reading club. The two regions in the case of the Masifunde reading club are firstly, the backstage - the WhatsApp group chat that continues from the time the Saturday session ends, throughout the week and up until the beginning of the following Saturday session and the front stage which are the performances occurring in the Saturday sessions in the premises of a church. Through the concept of impression management, I am able to show how by adopting dramaturgical conventions the volunteers and children are able

to co-operate in defining a situation and this definition is then carried over once the club transitions to engage with mobile technology as the volunteers try to maintain it even with the presence of mobile technology and the FunDza mobi-stories. According to Jones et al. (2011: 20) “Goffman emphasized that performances not only deal with the single individual’s presentation of self but are usually staged by groups”. The volunteers then are a team who co-operate with the children who can either be labelled an ‘audience’ or performers’ depending on the definition of a situation, thus, “the team develops and tries to sustain a certain consensus on the definition of a social situation, which makes it possible for the participants to act suitably” (Jones et al., 2011: 20).

Goffman’s (1982 and 1956) work has thus informed my research on how the mobile phones enter an established and print-dominated space (the reading club), and transition interactions and engagements with the FunDza mobi-stories designed to be accessed on mobile phones rather than printed books or papers. In this already-established interaction order based on print literacy materials in the reading club, meanings are constructed and resemiotized into multi-semiotic group practices through the use of already available (but scant) resources. What is more, there is a crossover of meanings across space-time within the club’s regions where the making of these meanings can be traced back to the back region/ the club’s WhatsApp group chat during the planning and preparing of a session by the reading club volunteers. This tracing of meaning making across space-time within the club’s regions reveals particularly a text undergoing a series of resemiotizations between the online planning practices and the staging of a performance in the Saturday session. However, the studying of mobile meanings does not have to include everything “... but rather the moments when the meaning being made is carried over into new participant frameworks” (Kell, 2017: 533). On the other hand, Baynham and Prinsloo (2009: 83) believes:

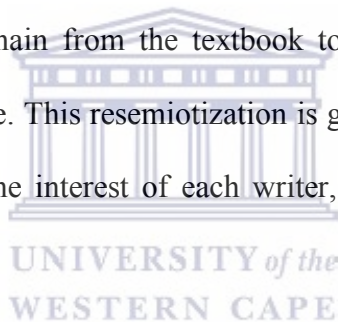
Resemiotization takes a further step in examining how the shift of meanings across context draws on different codes and semiotic modes. Iedema show how this happens in the chain of events that led to the redesign and rebuilding of a hospital, from the initial verbal discussions, through the minutes of these meetings, to the architects' plans and finally to the durable structure – the building itself.

What is more, the mobility of meaning making were "... linked in a chain of resemitization that originated outside the ..." (Ker, 2015: 21) front stage but "travelled" (Blommaert, 2003) there for the Saturday's literacy activities. As "mobility is concerned with what travels through and in-between territories, crossing boundaries ..." (Nicols and Snowden 2016: 8); then the practice of resemitization accounts for the ways in which these meanings are taken up in their material realization in the making of a text-chain. I then extended Goffman's interaction order (normally reserved for the analysis of face-to-face interactions) to take account of the online WhatsApp group chat interactions of the Masifunde reading club. In view of that then, online communication according to Rettie (2009: 425) means "the interactants are in different locations, they share a time-frame and a mediated co-presence as the interactants converse they collaborate on what we can call a mediated encounter". This extension is therefore applicable to the club's back region/WhatsApp group chat – an online social order, since it also permits for the mobility of meanings to cross space and time and it involves two or more reading club volunteers who plan and prepare for a Saturday's session as mediated by the online digital media and communication platform (the reading club WhatsApp group chat).

Ker's (2015) "text-chain" concept is used to examine and explore the linkage of the club's regions as they exist in different spaces and time – online (WhatsApp group chat) and offline (the Saturday sessions), by tracing two stories across the regions - that of 'Lulama's Magic

Blanket’ and the FunDza mobi-story ‘How Tortoise’s Nose became Crooked’. In using a multimodal ethnographic approach, Ker (2015) has shown how the text-chain is applicable in tracing the writing practices of teachers and students in a Portuguese-language primary school in Mozambique. He (2015, 171) further comments:

In the classroom, teachers and students engage in a text-chain ritual in which the teacher copies a text from the textbook onto the chalkboard which is then copied by the students into their notebooks. (...) At the same time, the research found that students vary considerably in the extent to which they are able to copy chalkboard texts into their notebooks. Some students are able to create a legible facsimile of the chalkboard text. Others produce various types of pseudo-writing which imitate the shape or design of the words on the board without resulting in intelligible copies of the text. As texts proceed along the text-chain from the textbook to the student notebooks, they are resemiotized at each stage. This resemiotization is governed by the affordances of the various written modes, the interest of each writer, and the exigencies of classroom practices.



In another study that looks at the mobility of texts and meanings, Kell (2017) uses a slightly different framework - that of a “meaning making trajectory”. The meaning making trajectory according to Kell (2017: 531) “gives priority to analysis of transcontextual processes, questions of agency and intentionality, and the precise ways in which semiosis materializes activity as it unfolds over time and space”. Other studies have also looked at the mobility of texts/meanings using different frameworks than the above, including Bhattacharya, Gupta, Jewitt, Newfield, Reed and Stein (2007); Kress, Jewitt, Bourne, Franks, Hardcastle, Jones and Reid (2005) who have too explored the idea of texts/meanings moving across space-time through using the text-cycle framework. Each of the studies pays attention to the mobility of meaning making across



space-time, and whether to frame this as a ‘text-cycle’, ‘meaning making trajectory’ and the ‘text- chain’ in tracing “the transformational processes empirically, in multi-sited ways” (Kell, 2017: 356).

As a consequence, “with regard to virtual mobilities, we consider how ... (the reading club members) are using new technologies and digital media to build social connections across space–time, produce virtual “places” (the reading club WhatsApp group chat) in online spaces, and otherwise interrupt the spatiotemporal contours of their lives” (Leander, Phillips and Taylor, 2010: 330). Though “Goffman’s concept of a gathering is restricted to physically co-present interactants, it makes sense to extend the gathering to include interactants in mediated encounters...” (Rettie, 2009: 427), to be in accordance to practices of mobility as occurring in the club’s back region/ the club’s WhatsApp group chat to the front region Saturday session performance occurring inside a premise of an old church. At the same time, “literacy-in-place” (Kell, 2013: 22), can be suggestive of Goffman’s face-to-face interaction in which Kell (2013: 22) believes it can be developed:

By viewing literacy as enabling the instantiation of meaning making within participation frameworks in event-spaces, that situated view can be maintained. By adding the concept of recontextualisation within the wider framework of text trajectories (concerning this study it will be the links within the text-chain in the development of the two stories), texts can be traced along spatial and temporal lines, as meaning making moves from the local.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I gave a detailed discussion on the theories that frame and shape this research project. My research paper as grounded in the New Literacy Studies (NLS) discussed NLS in

relation to the social turn and digital turn to literacy and the three generations of literacy studies as a tenet of NLS. I also made a suggestion that the rapid developments with mobile technology as given rise to digital literacy practices or new literacies be looked at through ethnographically focused-studies to see the varied ways new literacies travel and become appropriated in out-of-school settings. Also, in showing the different ways of appropriation, studies must be informed by the place-based approach that focuses on the specificity of context. By focusing on the specificity of place, take up is revealed to show the varied situated practices. I further went on to discuss the out-of-school literacy and literacy as practiced in the 21st century by children and young people, as their literacy practices are infused with technology. The focus in this analysis is shaped by two vignettes as a way of showing the overlap between two forms out-of-school literacy practices and as influenced by popular culture. Since context plays a role in the take hold of literacy or new literacies then I use the section on SST to talk about the how communicative resources in their uses and function are shaped by context and place. I use the example of the IWB to show how this object had been shaped by context in how it is taken up thus making it a placed resource. With literacy and the social order having been transformed by the digital turn to literacy, this results in the need to look at the complex and dynamic ways technology and humans interconnect. I then adopted the concept of interaction order by Goffman to show how a Cape Flats reading club which thus far has had no involvement with technology transition to engage with it in their established and print-based interaction order. In my last section, I talked about the how meaning making in the shifts and are realized differently from context to context, from practice to practice. I also drew from other studies to talk about the mobility of meaning making even though these studies have used different frameworks. This mobility of meaning making is discussed in relation to the concept of text-chain where I show that the context to context mobility of texts/meanings is always connected to previous as well later texts.

### 3. Chapter Three: Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I present my research approach by mapping out the methodological considerations associated with an ethnographic study, and detailing my research design, research site and the methods used to collect and analyse the data. The shift in literacy that came with the social turn and digital turn in New Literacy Studies (NLS) transformed how literacy came to be understood from technical skills to the socio-cultural practices that favour the view of literacy as socially situated in the interactions amongst people. For that reason, the ‘ethnographic approach to literacy’ adopted in this study is “... concerned with attempting to understand ‘what actually happens’” (Street, 2016) in an informal learning space such as the Masifunde reading club after the FunDza mobi-stories are introduced as an ethnographically-oriented intervention strategy. Hence, the focus on this study is on literacy and the ethnographic approach to literacy to help me understand what happens as the phones are introduced at the club; or the different ways it is “taken hold” (Street, 2004) of by the club members, whilst investigating how new literacies at the club function as “placed resources” (Prinsloo, 2005).

My involvement at the Masifunde reading club is marked by two roles, that of the researcher and as a volunteer. I came to join the club through an Honours project: *Digital literacy practices amongst volunteers in a Cape Flats reading club* (Bangani, 2014), in which the study explored the digital literacy practices of the volunteers in how they support the running and development of the Masifunde reading club. Eventually, my role as a researcher developed into a full-time volunteer as I live in the same area as the reading club. With regards to the current research project; particularly in the time of data collection – I became either a participant observer or a volunteer depending on the circumstances.

The project is therefore an intervention (the introduction of the phones and the FunDza mobi stories), and I documented the reading club activities before the intervention and during it. The volunteers are well-known to me, since they were the subjects of my Honours research project: *Digital literacy practices amongst volunteers in a Cape Flats reading club* (Bangani, 2014).

### **3.2. Research Design**

As a qualitative study I adopted an ethnographic approach, where my role as an ethnographic researcher was to “describe and analyse the practices and beliefs of a culture” (Dörnyei, 2007: 130). By ‘culture’ I am simply referring to a “bounded unit” (Harklau, 2005) such as that of the Masifunde reading club. Coming into this informal learning space and informed by my theoretical framework my role then and there as an ethnographer was to uncover a ‘way of life’ or of doing things in the interaction order of the Masifunde reading club.

I adopted and framed the study as an ethnographically-orientated case study as a way of understanding the way of doing things in the interaction order of the club before and during the introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories. This meant “telling a credible, rigorous, and authentic story” (Fetterman, 2010: 1) of the ways in which the club members engaged with reading fiction online, which thus far has had no engagement with digital technologies. Since the study is an ethnographically-orientated intervention – this intended that I “give voice to people in their local context, by typically relying on verbatim quotations (and other research methods associated with an ethnographic study) and a ‘thick’ description of events” (Fetterman, 2010: 1). So in seeking to understand how the club members engaged and interacted with online fictional stories, how the mobile phone is used as a literacy resource in the club; then “the story is told through the eyes of the local people as they pursue their daily lives in their own

communities” (Fetterman, 2010: 1). What is more, an “ethnographer also begins with biases and preconceived notions about how people behave and what they think - as do researchers in every field” (Fetterman, 2010: 1). This for me occurred when I preconceived that the mobile phones reading practices would “travel” (Blommaert, 2003) to and work successfully upon entering the reading club space –and this generalization was informed by “... discussions of the new literacies in ‘technology-rich’ contexts” (Prinsloo, 2005: 87). But through adopting Prinsloo’s ‘placed resources’ notion I begin to see the dangers of this taken for granted generalization from well-resourced middle class context, thus, new literacies at the club functions as a placed resource in order to account for the specificity of how it is taken hold of in context.

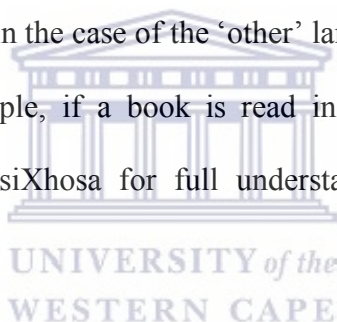
Being an ethnographically-orientated intervention I begun the study by mapping the current interaction order of the club. What happens? How it happens? When does it happen? This is documented in Chapter Four while in Chapter Five I mapped the club’s order as it engaged and interacted with digital literacy. In other words, doing ethnographic research entailed immersing myself within and into the practices of the studied, in order to get a better view and understanding of their everyday practices/discursive practices in relation to the subject of inquiry.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 3) further states:

In terms of data collection, ethnography usually involves the researcher participating, overtly and covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artefacts – in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw to light on the issues that are emerging focus of inquiry.

### 3.3. Research site

The Masifunde reading club has been running since 2011. It is run entirely by volunteers from the local community. The number of children that attend ranges each Saturday. At times, it is a full house with +/-60 children, while at other times there are about 30 children attending. The number of volunteers varies and is determined by their availability – there are about eleven volunteers, plus three or four visiting volunteers throughout the year. Every Saturday a two-hour session takes place between 10:00am-12:00pm inside the premises of a local church which has been set up in a large ‘shack’. Inside the church, children are met by a group of enthusiastic volunteers who play games, sing songs with the children, read books and tell stories. Sessions alternate between isiXhosa and English or any other language that either a volunteer or a child can speak, or when this happens in the case of the ‘other’ language use, isiXhosa or English is then used to translate. For example, if a book is read in English or Afrikaans it will be simultaneously translated into isiXhosa for full understanding as children attending are isiXhosa first language speakers.



Given that I introduced technology in the form of the mobile phones with the FunDza reading initiative App, I therefore intervened in allowing for mobi-stories to be made accessible in an already established informal learning space which prior to technology was/and still is ‘governed’ by its well-established interaction order around print literacy. Goffman’s theory of interaction order came to assist in analysing the space prior and during the introduction of technology/mobi stories. At the same time, the study provided lessons and understandings of what comes to play when technology exist side-by-side with print for literacy purposes or what happens when technology comes to exist in an already established order.

I purchased four basic internet enabled mobile phones to be used for the research project in each Saturday session for the duration of the study. The four mobile phones were only brought to the club during the second set of observations. The model of the phone was a Hisense Infinity Pure 1 Mini and airtime was provided by the project. In between sessions I kept the mobile phones at my house (which is in a neighbouring street to the church premises where the reading club sessions are held). After the research is concluded the mobile phones will be donated to the Masifunde reading club, and the volunteers will assume full responsibility for them.

The majority of children in the club are eleven years and under, but there is a small group of twelve, thirteen and fourteen year olds, and it was this group that formed part of the research participants, together with the reading club volunteers. Resources and reading materials for this age group are scarce, as most of the books that the club has are aimed at the younger age groups. The scarcity of reading material is even more pronounced for stories available in the children's mother tongue language – isiXhosa. At the Saturday sessions, the age groups are divided into three: 3-5-year-old younger children, the middle age group is 6-9-year-olds, and lastly, the older children from 10-14-year-olds. The older age group forms part of the target audience for the FunDza stories, hence working with them would expose and introduce them to mobi stories. The children are already aware of the FunDza hard cover titles donated to the Masifunde reading club; hard cover titles such as 'Soccer Secrets', 'Sugar Daddy', 'From Boys to Men' and 'Big Ups' amongst others.

Initially I identified ten of the older children, but I finally settled on four children as their participation at the Saturday sessions was regular. I was able to work more closely with three of the reading club volunteers within the bigger group of volunteers associated with the club. It is important to note, though, that, the provided mobile phones were not restricted to the

identified children as research participants but were encouraged to be used as they saw fit, hence, interaction and engagement was spread amongst the children. In spite of this, not all children got to experience an engagement/or interact with fictional online stories accessed using a mobile phone; however, the children did a get a chance to be part of the bigger mobile reading interaction when a volunteer read a FunDza mobi story during the main activity: read aloud and storytelling. For brief description of the research participants please consult appendix J.

### **3.4. Data collection and analysis**

#### **3.4.1. Ethnographic research methods**

I approached my data collection using a range of methods appropriate for ethnographic research, including participant observation and, individual interviews. I photographed texts, and did audio and video recordings of the Masifunde reading club sessions.

##### *Participant observations*

Participant observation is a qualitative method with roots in traditional ethnographic research, whose objective is to help researchers learn the perspectives held by the group being studied (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest and Namey, 2005: 13). Participant observation permitted me to fully immerse myself into the practices of the club which ranged from the temporary transformation of the church into an informal learning space, storytelling, book reading, writing practices, children reading and talking about books with other children or a volunteer, group reading, individual reading, choosing of books from the display on the floor, songs, rhymes and games.



These literacy practices and others are suggestive of the club's "... behaviours and activities— what they do, how frequently and with whom" (Mack et al., 2005: 14). Therefore, an advantage of adopting an ethnographic approach to the study is that "ethnographic research provides the researcher with the opportunity to study outlier cases in depth. Rather than use research methods that seek generalizations and tend to aggravate cases on a distribution, ethnographers can select unique instances of a teaching method and submit them to intense scrutiny ..." (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993: 83).

I conducted two sets of participant observations. The first set was at the beginning of the research project to record the existing interaction order. The second was after the mobile phones had been introduced to the Saturday sessions. Each set of observations had four weekly sessions but due to various challenges explained below it took longer than the two months.

In the first four sessions I documented and mapped the existing print-based literacy practices in the Masifunde reading club Saturday sessions. A detailed description was generated: what happens, when it happens, how it happens, what the interactions are.

The second set of observations saw the introduction of mobile phones and the FunDza mobi-stories within the Saturday sessions. Here, I observed how the mobile phones and the FunDza mobi-stories were received and integrated in the sense of 'taken hold of' into the practices of the Masifunde reading club Saturday sessions.

I mapped the ways in which the phone and the digital story were taken up in the interaction order of the reading club. I adopted Ker's (2015) concept of the text-chain to help me trace meaning making in the links of two text-chains involving the planning and the performance of

two different stories – the first called *Lulama's magic blanket* which was a hard copy book and the second was the FunDza mobi-story called *How tortoise's nose became crooked*. I traced both across the back stage (interactions in the WhatsApp group during the week preparing for the Saturday) and the front stage (interactions in the Saturday club event).

The difficulties of both being a volunteer and participant observer saw me struggle to find a balance between my two roles at the reading club – “as a participant observer and particularly as a volunteer. It was important for me to negotiate how much of my time to spend on being a participant/volunteer and how much time to spend on being an observer” (Loerts, 2013:69). Striking a balance between these roles both belonging to me had been even more debilitating during the times when we did not have enough volunteers, at times like this, I had to completely abandon my role as a researcher in order to assist as a volunteer. This is particularly challenging if one has a fixed time frame for completing a research project. It then means, because of my two roles, that of the volunteer who is also conducting research “I needed to be mindful of deciding times in which to collect data” (Loerts, 2013:69), hence, my initial time frame for collecting data went over the proposed time. At times, when a cross-over occurred between my roles it forced me to pause as I needed to be reflective of a role I had been performing in that particular moment and needing to regulate my actions so as not to impose on the club members, who are also my research participants.

#### *Semi-structured individual recorded interviews*

I conducted semi-structured individual recorded interviews with the four children and three volunteers after the completion of data collection the two sets of observations. Semi-structured individual recorded interviews are open-ended and conversational where I tried to “understand their insights and to give them a chance to give answers where they felt they needed to go”

(Loerts, 2013: 64). In addition, semi-structured interviewing implies a particular approach to research ethics, whereby the power relationship between interviewer and interviewee is equalized as much as possible, and where the interviewee gets plenty of opportunity to tell her or his story in his or her own way (Mason, 2004: 3-4).

As Miller and Crabtree (1999) point out, the interview genre with its turn-taking conventions and expectations for participant roles, etiquettes, and even linguistic phrases usually involves shared cultural knowledge. This is very true as, in my case, I have been involved as a volunteer in the club and I am quite familiar with the Masifunde reading club, however the introduction of the phones in the Saturday sessions is something new to all in the Masifunde reading club. It is however quite domesticated in the background, as volunteers plan and prepare for the running and development of the reading club using WhatsApp. As well, according to Kvale (1996: 5-6) “a typical qualitative interview is a one-to-one professional conversation that has a structure and a purpose to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena”. In doing the interviews with the research participants both children and the volunteers is to allow each participant to express and narrate their own story as the interviews took place at various points.

The semi-structured individual recorded interviews were audio recorded using one of the provided four Hisense mobiles. As isiXhosa is the first language to my research participants as well my own first language, interview questions and interviews were conducted using isiXhosa, but both the children and volunteers were given a chance to use either isiXhosa and/or English to respond to the questions asked. I suggested English as an alternative because it is the second most common spoken language after isiXhosa at the reading club, also many of the children attend schools where the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) is English. It is notable

that there were moments of translanguaging practices between the two known languages in the interviews.

Each isiXhosa interview was then transcribed and then translated to English. The interviews took place between late 2016 and finished in 2017; and, each interview lasted for roughly 18 minutes. The focus of questions in the interviews was the language practices, literacy interactions at reading club and the access and engagements with technology. The format of the semi-structured interview allowed me to be able to make alterations depending on each child and the adjustments allowed them to be comfortable and not feel pressured. In this way the process became informal and conversational.

Usually in the semi structured interviews, “the interviewer will ask the same questions of all the participants, although not necessarily in the same order or wording, and would supplement the main questions with various probes” (Dörnyei, 2007:136). This was the case for me as I interviewed the children and volunteers but with the children, I had to adopt different strategies in prompting engagement since each child had a unique way of responding. Thus meant that, I could not treat them using the ‘one size fits’ all approach – I needed to adapt and adopt to the arising circumstances at that moment of conducting the interview.

### Photographed artefacts

The photographed artefacts form an important part of data collection, and were a window to understanding the practices occurring at the Masifunde reading club in the duration of the two sets of observation. According to Henry, Otto and Wood (2013: 35) an artefact such as the ones collected for the period of data collection are defined as “a complex phenomenon, consisting

of a collected material thing, its specific documentation, and the stories and theories that give it a history”. The collected artefacts tell a story of what the club is like by showing the current print-based activities, and at the same time, the introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories and mobile phones into the club’s already established interaction order. In this way the collected materials carry a history that tells a story of the Masifunde reading club before and during the transition. Some of the photographed artefacts included the produced work during the interactions taking place, as well as other objects used within the Saturday sessions as representational means to reconstruct the church into an informal learning environment.

A number of photographs were taken within the two sets of observations. Each reflects the different stages of the research. I began by visually documenting the current-existing print dominated informal learning space, then I captured specific interactions after the mobile phones had been introduced. The photographed texts do not in any way substitute or erase the other means through which data is collected at the reading club, instead they complement the multiplicity of the ways data was collected.

#### *Audio and Video recordings*

Similar to the photographed artefacts audio and video recordings helped with archiving the different captured data. Together the audio and video helped with replaying and rewinding the captured interactions. This assisted significantly in accurately portraying what happens at the Masifunde reading club. Certainly, choices were made with regards to what to use and what to leave out, mainly due to time, and not everything could be thoroughly observed. Therefore, I picked and chose the elements that spoke to me in terms of my research design, but everything

chosen was authentically voicing the research participants and the practices at the reading club and nothing is used out of context.

Dörnyei (2007: 139) suggests that “there is general agreement if we want to use the content of a semi-structured or unstructured as research data, we need to record it – taking notes is simply not enough as we are unlikely to be able to catch all the details of the nuances of personal meaning; furthermore, note-taking also disrupts the interviewing process”. At the same time, “... the fact that by doing audio recording you inevitably lose some information, for example nonverbal cues such as eye movements, facial expressions or gestures. This would suggest that a video recording is always preferable ...” (Dörnyei, 2007: 139). Both methods greatly supported and assisted with collecting data – and each proved to be invaluable in the process of understanding the interaction order around print and technology at the Masifunde reading club. For each session observed I made audio recordings and four audio recording from the first set of observation are transcribe and three from the second set of observation. Three sessions were video recorded. In the first data set I only had one video recorded session while in the second data set two sessions were video recorded.

#### *WhatsApp chat group data*

The Masifunde reading club WhatsApp group chat facilitates the club’s administration. This online platform serves a variety of functions for the running and development of the reading club. The functions range from discussion, announcements, updates, meetings and setting up for future meetings, inquiry, to inform, sharing of stories prior to the Saturday session, asking for assistance, giving feedback on the reading club’s activities, celebrating each other. For more detail on this see Appendix B – an overview of the activities in the Masifunde reading club WhatsApp group chat. However, the analysis only focuses on one of the functions of the

reading club WhatsApp group chat which is the preparing for the Saturday sessions through the sharing of stories prior to Saturday. This will be done by taking the two stories ‘Lulama’s magic blanket’ and ‘How tortoise’s nose became crooked’, exploring them as a text-chain that connects the back stage (the reading club WhatsApp group chat) and the front stage (the Saturday sessions taking place inside a church). This is to trace the interactions of the reading club volunteers in the WhatsApp group chat through the sharing of the story prior a Saturday session to the co-operative interactions between the children and volunteers in the Saturday club literacy events.

This online space is used by the Masifunde volunteers only, with membership restricted to the people calling themselves volunteers. Because I am a volunteer turned into a researcher, I am also part of the group chat, and the volunteers were aware that the chats were used as part of the data collection. The data from the WhatsApp group chat started in May, 2016, when I officially began with collecting data during the first sets of observations and it continued until early December, 2016 when the club had its final event for the year when volunteers planned for a three-day camp that was made possible with the help of parents and friends of the friends of the reading club.

This online digital and communication platform (WhatsApp) allowed me to see the domestication of the mobile phone as used by the volunteers. Horst and Miller explains this as “new media technologies become a normal and accepted part of everyday life, they have become domesticated” (2012: 62). In this online space the running, planning and development of the Masifunde reading club takes place throughout the week prior to the Saturday session. As the texts/planning from the back stage region moves over to the front region during the Saturday session the phone takes on a different function. It was through this WhatsApp group

chat that I was able to explain though adopting Ker's (2015) "text-chain" methodology how meanings become recontextualized from the back stage (WhatsApp group chat) to the front stage (Saturday sessions in the church) as the volunteers plan and prepare prior for the Saturday sessions. In addition, Iedema's (2003) concept of resemiotization enabled for tracing the shift in the material realization of the meanings from the different stages of practices across the links in the text-chains of the two stories used.

### **3.5. Data analysis**

Once data collection was completed, data analysis was guided by Goffman's concept of the interaction order (1982) as well as the concept of placed resources (Prinsloo, 2005), and resemiotization (Iedema, 2003). Goffman's (1982) framework of the interaction order is central to my study at the Masifunde reading club – it is through this theory and others such as rituals and routines, and back stage and front stage that I was able to unpack, conceptualize and interpret the foregrounded and backgrounded interactions at the reading club. On the other hand, the two concepts of placed resources and resemiotization were helpful. The former assisted in examining the use of mobile phones in the localized practices of the club and the nuances of the specificity of the context; while the latter, permitted the tracing and meaning making across the two regions of the club – in an online and offline contexts of practice of the club's interaction order. Goffman's interaction order allowed me to 'map' the currently-existing reading club's interaction order around print-based literacy with other Goffmanian concepts used such as ritual, routine, team, front stage and back stage performances, setting, performance, social interaction and dramaturgical co-operation, dramaturgical metaphor, interaction order and impression management, (1956) used to explore the different alignments and interactions that have positioned the reading club as an informal learning environment as its temporarily constructed for two hours every Saturday inside a church.



I then further mapped how the phones were appropriated in the club, while the concept of resemiotization enabled me to explore how meanings are recontextualized in the different stage of practice with the ‘text-chain’ approach used to show this tracing of meaning making. Prinsloo’s ‘placed resources’ became imperative in understanding ways in which people ‘take hold’ of the phones and digital stories.

### **3.6. Ethical considerations**

In an ethnographic study and during fieldwork “the ethnographer must work out her or his relationships in the field to other participants, to various parties with an interest in the research and to their emotions” (de Laine, 2000:11). Throughout the study, the research participants and the club members’ engagements in the project were considered. This played out particularly when I was forced at points to abandon conducting research as a way of accommodating the club’s interests. Thus, in times of difficulty like when the club was short of volunteers, I needed to consider and put their emotional stability first by shifting my role to that of a volunteer, hence, abandoning briefly my duty as a researcher.

In the promotion of research ethics and conduct, this study was approved by the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape. Shampoo and Resnik (2015) states that “to act with integrity is to act according to rules or principles. Integrity in science is a matter of understanding and obeying the different legal, ethical, professional, and institutional rules that apply to one’s conduct”. This meant my involvement at the club needed to adhere to the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape guidelines.

In keeping with integrity and credibility, the requirements for conducting this research were adhered to, as the identity of children, volunteers and the club are protected by using pseudonyms, while the church where the sessions are held every Saturdays is not referred by its name but the 'church'. No confidential information will be shared under any circumstances. The involvement of children as research participants was approved by their parents. Parents received explanations that children's participation in the study would be restricted to the club's practices and no follow-up engagement at home would be done. In recognising their involvement as part of the study, children, volunteers and parents were given consent forms to sign see Appendix E, F, G, H, I. Each signed consent form addressed the involvement of the aforementioned and parents signed for their children, while children also signed theirs to mark their agreement for participation. It was important that children were given a chance to sign as well as this I believe respected their wishes. The consent form was initially written in English but was translated into isiXhosa, since this is first language of the participants and the researcher. As well, the study did not interfere, disrupt or engage with the school work of the children. My work with them involves engagement only in the reading club.

As an ethnographically-orientated intervention, the study involves the use of mobile phones as a literacy resource in the reading club. The mobile phones that had been used were provided by the researcher and were used to access the FunDza fictional stories. Financial costs for buying airtime for instance were incurred by the researcher. During the research the mobile phones stayed with the researcher, and were only brought to the club for the Saturday sessions.

After the completion of the study the mobile phones will be donated to the Masifunde reading club as an alternative to the print material that they only have access to. The volunteers will then take full responsibility of the usage and financial costs regarding the buying of airtime and

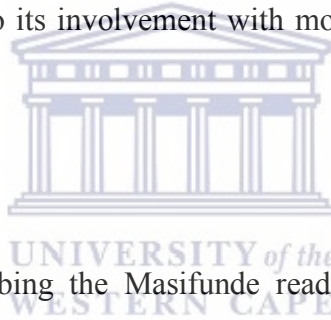
its usage as a literacy resource in the Masifunde reading club. My role as a researcher was simply to introduce mobile phone in the Masifunde reading club as a literacy tool which can be used to access online stories that are provided by the following literacy initiatives – the FunDza literacy trust, Storybook Project and Nal’ibali, and others in the effort to diversify their access to literacy material.



## 4. Chapter Four: Mapping the interaction order of the reading club

### 4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I use Goffman's interaction order (1983) and other related concepts such as ritual, routine, team, front stage and back stage performances, setting, performance, social interaction and dramaturgical co-operation, dramaturgical metaphor, interaction order and impression management, (1956) to explore the Masifunde reading club as an out-of-school informal learning space; a co-created space between the children and volunteers. I give a detailed description of the events of the Saturday sessions, demonstrating the interaction dynamics of this print literacy environment. This chapter therefore focuses on the interaction order in the reading club prior to its involvement with mobile reading of the FunDza mobi-stories.



I begin this analysis by describing the Masifunde reading club as an informal learning environment and how through “representational means” (Pahl, 2014) the church is reconstructed and repurposed to an informal learning space. I then assess how the volunteers’ interactions constitute a ‘team’ (Goffman, 1956) while also, identifying and interpreting the practices under the concepts of ‘ritual’ and ‘routines’ (Goffman, 1956). Since Goffman views “human interaction as a matter of routines and rituals” (Jacobsen, 2010: 59), the associated Goffmanian concepts become the means through which I represent the different alignments and interactions that have positioned the reading club as an informal learning environment in the space of an old church.

## 4.2. Constructing the reading club

As the reading club volunteers came to temporarily construct their reading club inside a religious space, accordingly, certain movable resources are brought to the church in order to reconstruct the church into an informal learning space for a duration of two hours every Saturday between 10:00am-12:00pm. This construction occurs at three levels: constructing the Saturday sessions, the volunteers as a ‘team’ and the activities which constitute the club’s routine structure that unfolds in the course of two-hours.

### The Saturday session

This one room religious space is quickly transformed into an informal learning space when the older children and Themba (a volunteer) start putting the books from the boxes on the floor and the little ones and other children crowd around to choose which book(s) they want to read or be read (FN, 28 May 2017).



The above fieldnote shows a typical example of how the space of the church is re-constructed. The space therefore transitions from a religious setting to an informal literacy learning space and the mobile resources help in constructing the ‘temporality’ of the reading club. Actions such as ‘the older children and Themba start putting the books on the floor’ and ‘the little ones and other children crowd around to choose’ are in that moment part of the representational means that re-construct and repurpose the church. Not only that but within the two-hour session different resources are used to construct the rituals that mark and identify different parts of the routine which unfolds over the two hours.

As a result, “spaces are relational and can be transformed in interaction” (Pahl, 2014, 33). At the same time, a “space can be understood as being semiotically constructed through discourse and practices” (Pahl, 2012: 203), and is “something not given but made ...” (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). That gathering can be seen as a social interaction, which “can be identified narrowly as that which uniquely transpires in social situations, that is, environments in which two or more individuals are physically in one another’s response presence” (Goffman, 1982: 2). On that account, Pahl, Scollon & Scollon and Goffman could be speaking about the little church which from September, 2011 to the present, is transformed, recreated through discourse and practices every Saturday and how “as a space of play, improvisation and creativity, (the Masifunde reading club) is a site of potentialities, of meaning making and significance” (Pahl, 2014: 133).

As a result, the physicality of the place, and other objects belonging to the church, remain, but through representational practices that range from the display of children’s books in front of the chapel, to an easel, pens and pencils, the singing of rhymes, A4 printing paper used to write on, and the print literacy artefacts is re-purposed. An example would be the two A1 sheets of paper placed on the wall for each session with the question usually written in two languages (isiXhosa and English), “Iveki yam ibinjani”/ “How was your week” “Incwadi esizifundileyo”/ “The books we have read?” as seen in (Figures 1 and 2). These, according to Taylor (2004), “frame the world in particular ways”. Hence, “they (the representational resources) are ‘social imaginaries’ that construct and legitimize discourses in certain ways, and these are storied” (Taylor, 2004).

A reading club volunteer explains the actions as follows:

Here at the reading club we arrive at ten in the morning, the opening time. When we arrive, we display books so that each child will be able to choose which books they want for reading, and us volunteers we are able to read for children or the children will read for themselves, or an older child will read for a younger child. After some time, children put away the books, and join in a circle where they start playing a game and this excites them. Subsequently to the game is the sharing of thoughts about their week, holidays. Following this, is the reading of the story? Once a story is read they are asked questions in relation to the story in order to show how they understand the story when this is done we have an activity for the story (Volunteer interview, 2017).

Pahl states that “places are also sites of possibility and meaning making” (2014, 33). At the reading club the children’s ability to make and remake meanings is central to the learning process, since “literacy practices (in this informal learning space) are much wider and more diverse than those contained within the curriculum” (Pahl, 132), whereas the “classroom is the primordial and institutionalized site of formal education” (Kääntä, 2010: 13) that gives preference to traditional forms of literacy. Pahl further states “literacy practices such as oral storytelling fill and change spaces” (2014: 33). As a result, stories are central to the literacy practices of the Masifunde reading club where children are inspired, encouraged and supported for the “‘learning to read’ and ‘reading to learn’” (Spaull, 2016: 1) moments, at the same time encouraging reading for enjoyment as opposed to the assessments/standardized testing practiced inside the classroom.

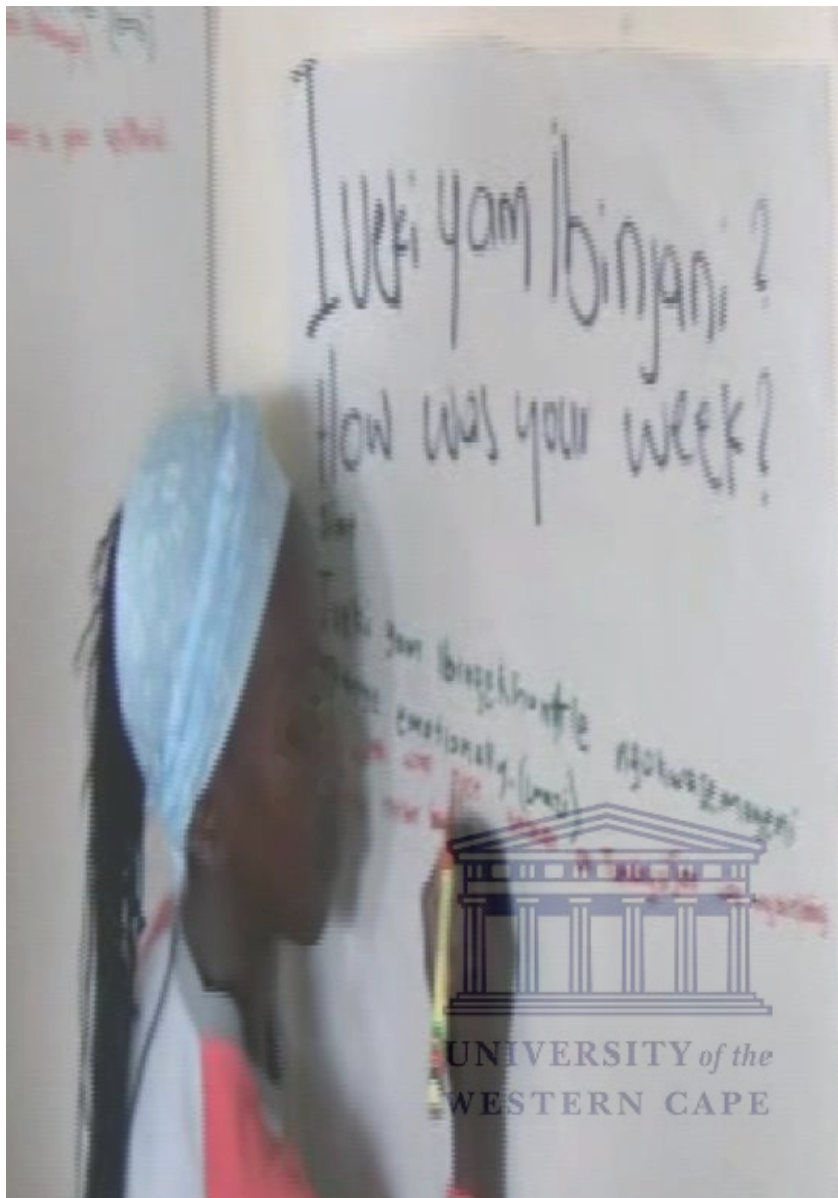


Figure 1: A child is writing on a page placed on the wall which asks "Iveki yam ibinjani/ How was your week?"



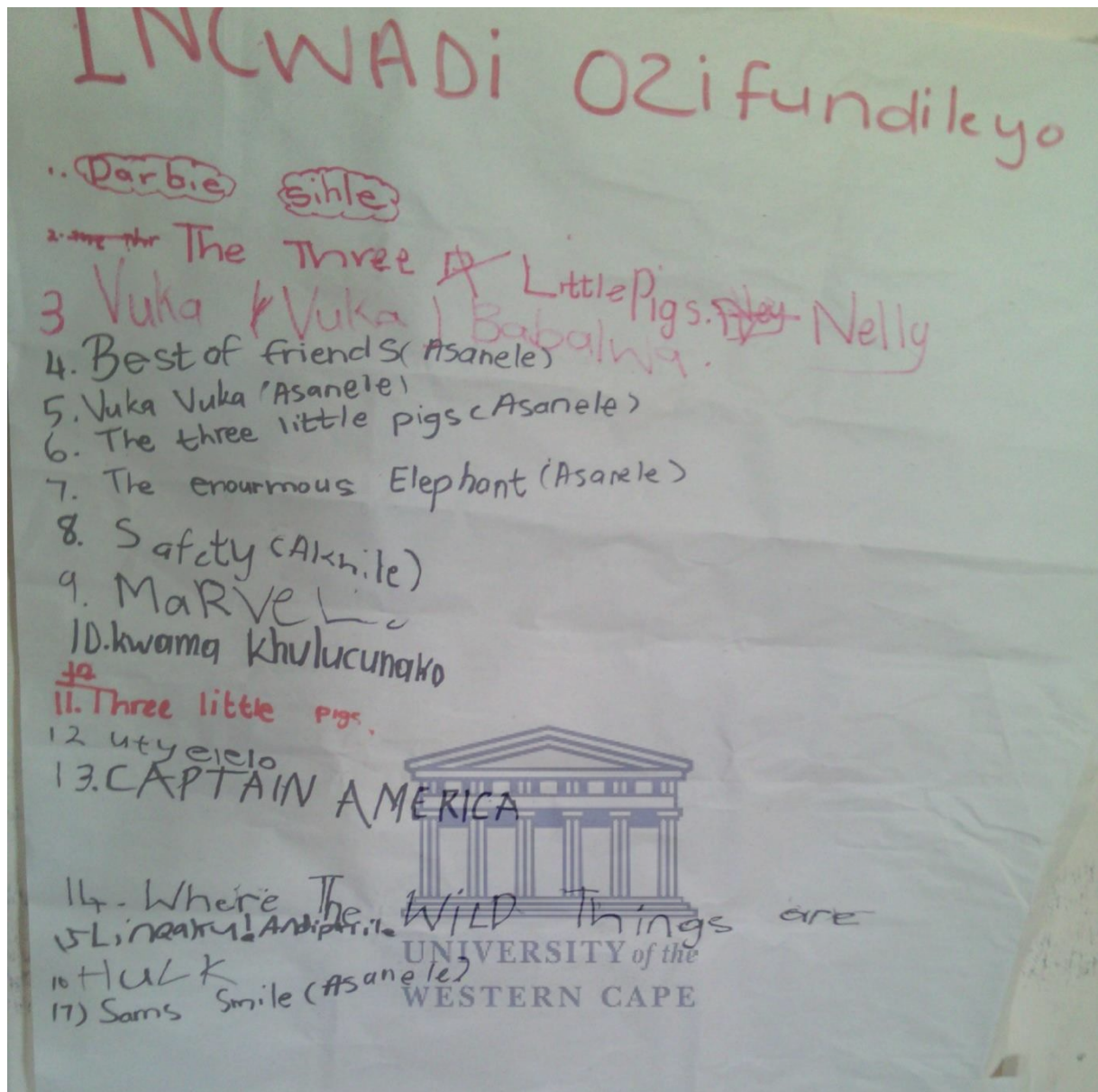


Figure 2: Is a typical example of the weekly activity on “Incwadi esizifundileyo”/“The books we have read”.

The volunteers as a ‘team’

According to Goffman (1956), social life is a "performance" carried out by "teams" of participants in three spaces: "front stage," "back stage," and "off stage". Performance is defined as “all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers” (Goffman, 1956: 13). Front stage refers to the “place where the performance is given” (1956:

66). By contrast, the back stage according to Cole (2017) is where “we rehearse certain behaviours or interactions and otherwise prepare ourselves for upcoming front stage performances”.

These two concepts of ‘front stage’ and ‘back stage’ help establish the different contexts of the club from the online social order/the WhatsApp group chat in the back stage, to the front stage/the offline social order performances as evident in the Saturday literacy events of the Masifunde reading club. However, to be able to talk about the Masifunde reading club, one has to start with the group of volunteers, which Goffman calls the ‘team’, in other words, “in general, then a set of individuals who co-operate in staging a single routine may be referred to as a performance team or, in, in short, a team” (Goffman, 1956: 48). The concept of team, Goffman further remarks “allows us to think of performances that are given by one or more than one, performer (...)” (Goffman, 1956, 49). This performance is not only limited to the reading club volunteers, but extended to the various visitors throughout the year, like Lisa from *Loving Animals without Cruelty* who regularly visits and reads a story that creates awareness around animals.

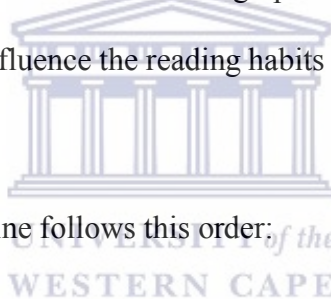
Therefore, by co-operating, the Masifunde reading club volunteers work together to ensure the functionality of the reading club and in maintaining a single routine even whilst preparing and planning in the back stage for the Saturday routine.

### *The activities*

The Masifunde reading club has its established orders and rules; and these administer the ‘spatial organization of the setting’ where a range of ‘interactional resources’ are channelled.

From this then, “ritual practice creates a moral order, which defines the boundaries, emotions, and perceptions of group members” (Rawls 2004:15). As well, “through repeated engagement in ritual, the group and the shared focus of its attention become totemic symbols with the ability to arouse intense emotions of a moral quality—emotions that denote confirmation or threats to the moral order” (Hausmann, Jonason and Summers-Effler, 2011: 131 -132).

As a result, to describe the ‘spatial organization of the setting’ of the Masifunde reading club from Goffman’s ‘interaction order’ “entails that the participants’ actions are examined with respect to how they are organized through the interaction and how they are constructed to meet the goals of the setting ...” (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby and Olsher, 2002). Where the club was established to create a supportive informal learning space that encourages learning through using stories as it develops and influence the reading habits especially using the child’s mother tongue language – isiXhosa.



The Masifunde reading club routine follows this order:

1. Individual reading: In arriving at the church children find books placed on the floor by either a volunteer(s) or children who have already been to fetch the materials at a neighbouring house where they are stored. During individual reading, children are encouraged to select and choose books from the floor either to be read to by a volunteer or older children reading to younger children. This is also a time for silent reading for those children preferring to read on their own. Other literacy activities that can take place during this time include the making of the drawings, and a favourite of the boys, writing or rewriting of text mostly copied from the books. A great deal of shared reading is evident at this time where children learn and imitate other children and volunteers have encouraged older children to also take a responsibility in reading to younger

children. As a result, it is possible to see a lot of pair reading: child-to-child or volunteer-to-child interactions, group reading or group drawings/writing by the children. A lot of modelling practices occur at this time, and a lot of conversations about things outside the reading club and inside the church are talked about. This first part usually lasts about 25 minutes. The following image reflects a photographed story reading moment between two girls from the younger age group who had selected a book from the book display on the floor.



*Figure 3: Pair reading in younger children.*

2. Icebreaker: games and songs. After breaking from the individual reading – children sing and play games with the volunteers. The games and songs are mostly in the

children's home language isiXhosa. One of the favourite of the games and frequently played is a name spelling game called "amathozi thozi". Children stand in a circle singing 'amathozi thozi' – the words have no meaning but are rhyming and repetitive which makes it easy and fun to sing along to. One person stands inside the circle whether a volunteer or child leads by singing 'amathozi thozi' and the rest standing in the circle respond through a clapping and repeating the 'amathozi thozi' words – the pace or rhythm depends on the person leading at a particular moment as you could sing slowly or a bit faster just to vary the routine. Once picked to go inside in leading the amathozi thozi game you are required to spell your name and in the course of the spelling of a person's names those in a circle will keep quiet but continue clapping in the background as offering a beat to the spelling. After a person is finish with spelling you then pick another person to come inside the circle and play – the game continues with picking and spelling until it is stopped. The singing and playing could be 15-20 minutes. It always varies each day but it rarely goes over the 20 minutes' limit. And below in figure 4 is an example of the Icebreaker: games and songs and the activity is led by Thandeka – a reading club volunteer not far off from Thandeka is the principal and a volunteer in the club, Portia busy writing the register for that day's attendance by going around the circle.



*Figure 4: The ice-breaker.*

3. Circle seating: After the singing or game time children are asked to sit down in a circle and volunteers would also join-in, in the circle as they do with other activities. At this time, children are asked to share in the big group about their weeks, and answer to the same question “how was your week” written down in an early activity. The difference now children share in the big group rather than write as done earlier on. Circle seating is also a time for introducing visitors to the reading club and making of announcements. Unlike writing on the wall about their weeks, at this time, a particular song is sung in order for the sharing to take place. Below is an example of the “how was your week” which I had led on one occasion.

Following their response to the singing of the song that controls this game, I went around and picked a child. After that I asked that child to share in the group their name

and answer to the question ‘how was your week?’ A second child I had picked was too shy to say anything. I then asked her if she preferred to whisper her response and she said yes. I then listened to the whispering child as other children looked on whilst a third also had been hesitant to say anything but eventually I got him to say aloud his name and how was his week:

Child: “Igama ndingu Akhona”

Zandile: Iveki ka Akhona ibinjani?

Child: Ibimbi

Zandile: Bekutheni?

Child: Ingxaki iteam yam akhange iwine

Zandile: Iteam yakho ayiwinanga. Benidlalaphi?

Child: eDelft

Zandile: okay, siyamxolisela kuba iteam yakhe khange iwine kodwa next time izokuwina



#### Translation

Child: “My name is Akhona”

Zandile: How was Akhona’s week?

Child: It was bad

Zandile: What happened?

Child: The problem my team did not win

Zandile: Your team did not win. Where were you playing?

Child: in Delft

Zandile: Oh okay. We apologise that his team did not win but next time his team will win.

I carried on asking a small number of other children to share their week. There had been a variety of things shared to the group, for example, two other boys besides Akhona had played sport, one girl shared that she is happy because it was her father's birthday on that day, and a very shy girl who didn't want to say anything was happy because she got to read a book.

4. Main activity: reading aloud and storytelling: "lixesha lebali, lixesha lebali sonke siyamamela"/ "it is time for the story and we all listen" – this song informs the children that it is time for the reading of the story/storytelling. Storytelling is the main activity of the Masifunde reading club and it lasts about 20-30 minutes. While singing the story song, children sit facing the wall where a volunteer will either stand or sit in a chair in front of them for the storytelling. Reading or storytelling can be done in any language as long as it is translated to isiXhosa – a home language to children attending the reading club sessions. The below image was taken during my first day of observation and the reading of the story was done by the children, and this is not an unfamiliar practice as volunteers encourages and motivate the children especially from the middle and older age group to take part in such practices, and the reading had been their idea.





*Figure 5: Main story.*

5. Story-activity: children break into the three age groups (older, middle and younger children). The age group, younger children: 3-5 year olds. Then the middle group: 6-9 year olds and finally the older age group is between 10-14 year olds. During the story-activity time children are split into the three age groups with the middle age group divided into smaller groups as it makes up the largest number of children in the club. After children are split into their age groups they then occupy a space designated to that age group. This time is significant as it is mostly a time where children are given a chance to express themselves and explore issues in relation to the main story by using a multiplicity of modes available at their disposal for the completion of the story-activity text. It is also where children's voices are developed and experimented with, through the different literacy activities that are done. Children learn to be critical whilst developing arguments for their opinions. There is never a right or wrong answer.



*Figure 6: Story activity.*

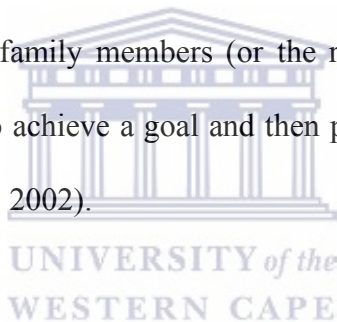
### **4.3. Routine and ritual in the Saturday session**

The Masifunde reading club has its own “pre-established pattern of action which unfolds during a performance and which may be presented or played through on other occasions may be called a part or routine” (Goffman, 1956). The unfolding of the action at the club is channelled and regulated by the routinized and ritual practices that unfold in the course of the two-hour session. Since according to Birrell “rituals are the dynamics of a process which joins together a system based on symbols” (1981: 357), the five identified routine practices as a system of symbols are joined together by various resources which project meaning during the transition from part to part and also through ‘impression management’. Impression management is concerned “with behaviours that people employ to create and maintain desired impressions” (Schlenker, 1980).

Miller and Dingwall (1997: 106) states:

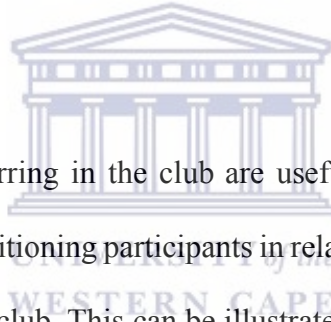
Goffman (1956) referred to such action ‘impression management’, as suggesting that individual present themselves to others so as to foster and maintain a particular image or front. In their performances, individuals construct some images intentionally and provide others inadvertently.

Moreover, these “...routines and rituals are embedded in the cultural and ecological context of ... [the reading club]” (Fiese, Tomcho, Douglas, Josephs, Poltrock, and Baker, 2002: 381). Over and above, as is the case in the Masifunde reading club “routines are an opportunity for “scaffolding” to occur between family members (or the reading club volunteers) who can structure the child’s behaviour to achieve a goal and then provide praise and encouragement for its accomplishment” (Martini, 2002).



The analysis in this section is to show and explore in-depth some of the Masifunde reading club routine and ritual parts as well as to show how their commencements are communicated. The Saturday sessions are an informal learning space where everything is performed, additionally, the “performance serves mainly to express the characteristics of the task that is performed and not the characteristics of the performer” (Goffman, 1956: 47). As the social interaction between the children and volunteers is co-created inside the church, Goffman suggest “in many interaction settings some of the participants co-operate together as a team or are in a position where they are dependent upon this co-operation in order to maintain a particular definition of the situation” (1956: 57).

In the process of co-operating in defining and maintaining “impression management” (Goffman, 1956) as a pattern of action unfolds during a performance, the performers “both design and interpret the meaning of their actions through a myriad of interactional resources” (Kääntä, 2010: 14). I will examine this through an analysis of the ritual song singing as the songs are a resource for projecting meaning in the transition of the activities or “elements of the interaction order” (Jacobsen and Kristiansen, 2015: 68) in the reading club, for example, a move from individual reading part to icebreaker: games and songs part is communicated by singing the ‘qokelela’ song which translates to ‘start packing away’. In this way I explore the “process, structure and elements of the interaction order (of the Masifunde reading club) by making use of Goffman’s conceptual metaphor of ritual” (Jacobsen and Kristiansen, 2015: 68).



The interactional rituals as occurring in the club are useful for defining what activity is to commence and also help with positioning participants in relation to each other as they get ready to partake in the activities of the club. This can be illustrated by the singing of ‘lixesha lebali, lixesha lebali sonke siyamamela” song which translates to ‘it is time for the story and we all listen’. Immediately the singing of this song informs of the start of a new activity, then children move from whatever activity to sit down facing the wall where a volunteer to do a reading stands or seats in front of them as seen in Figure 7.

The ‘lixesha lebali’ song defines the start of main activity: reading aloud and storytelling and this definition is maintained through responses to the songs. Likewise, the singing of this song positioned the participants into an acceptable manner under the frame of this part/activity. Jacobsen and Kristiansen state “Goffman employed the concept of frame to describe the fact

that actors automatically interpret social situations within significance-providing frames that guide their understanding and definition of what is going on as well as the identities of those participants present”. The following data shows how the songs as ritual are used to mark a transition from one type of activity to the other in the five identified over the course of the two-hour sessions. Note that in the transitioning from one activity to the other – club members use particular songs and these songs are the same all the time, however, this does not mean other songs are not sung.



Figure 7: Lisa, the visitor, reads 'rescuing rhino' in English and Portia, a volunteer and principal of the reading club, translates it to isiXhosa.

### Exploring the interactional ritual – song singing as a meaning making transmitter

#### Qokelela song

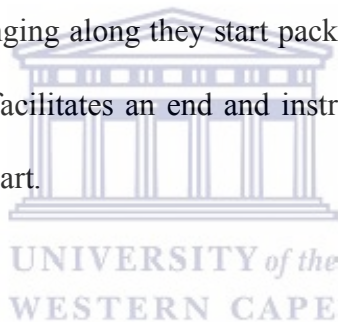
The following are examples of the ritual songs:

At 10h45 am individual reading ended and the icebreaker: games and song part started marked by singing of the qokelela qokelela song. As much as the children were noted about the time coming to an end at 10h45am for the individual reading session but there had been an approach used that signalled an end to this part. I started singing and one of the children took over the singing ‘qokelela qokelela tshisa’ loosely translates to start packing away the books and the children responded ‘qokelela, qokelale tshisa’ (FN, 2016).

In singing along the ‘qokelela’ song children are aware of the move from the individual reading part to icebreaker part; and in singing along they start packing away the books into boxes. In other words, the qokelela song facilitates an end and instruct children to stop reading or to conclude the individual reading part.

#### Sayivula – azwi song

The singing of sayivula – azwi: ‘sayivula- azwi, sayivula- azwi, zwi zwi, sayiqhawula aqhashi’ loosely translates to opening of the circle. As they start following the singing - ‘sayivula- azwi, sayivula- azwi, zwi zwi, sayiqhawula aqhashi’ their signing is accompanied by actions to the song. When singing ‘sayivula azwi’ means ‘sayivula/opening a circle’ –children start by forming a circle then begin by holding hands, when the part of the song goes ‘sayiqhawula aqhashi’/ it implies breaking away from the hand holding, an action of pulling away is emphasized by the children’s hands breaking from the child next to each other but remain standing in a circle (FN, 2016).



As seen in figure 4 earlier – how the children are positioned/or the standing in the circle is the result of the singing of the ‘sayivula – azwi’ song which marks the start of the icebreaker: games and song part.

### Ixesha lebali song

There is a story song sung before the main activity: read aloud and storytelling part – ‘lixesha lebali, lixesha lebali sonke siyamamela’ translates to ‘it is time for the story and we all listen’. Through singing of this song children move from whatever activity/position they were engaged in to seat down facing the wall where a volunteer to do a reading stands or seat in front of the children (FN, 2016).

By singing ‘sayivula- azwi’, ‘lixesha lebali’ or ‘qokelela qokelela’ song; one or the other song, the club’s interaction order changes; and significantly these interactional rituals help establish an aspect of the kind of interaction to commence. By interaction Goffman claims “may be defined as all the interaction which occurs throughout any one occasion when a given set of individuals are in one another’s continuous presence; the term ‘an encounter’ would do as well” (1956: 8). This encounter amongst the children and volunteers is administered and communicated through the interactional rituals, as seen from the three above songs as each has a specific intent as to how it regulates the club’s offline interaction order during the Saturday sessions.

On that account, “rituals include a prescription of roles and occur at a predictable times and places” (Fiese & Kline, 1993). Applied in the context of the club by using the example of the ‘ixesha lebali’ song, prescribed roles are defined and communicated as children sit facing a wall while a volunteer reads or tells a story standing in-front of them, and the singing occurs at

a 'predictable time' after the 'circle seating' activity every Saturday. As well, such forms of "ritual communication" have "symbolic meaning ..." (Spagnola and Fiese, 2007) and function as 'joins' (Kell, 2006, 2009) or 'connecting pieces' (Pahl and Rowsell, 2010) when they are able to create relations between people across contexts" (Budach, 2013: 330).

### *Dramaturgical conventions*

The construction of the Saturday sessions can be studied using Goffman's three dramaturgical conventions namely: dramaturgical loyalty, dramaturgical discipline and dramaturgical circumspection. These are "frequently rehearsed, they are also skills that actors employ while performing" (Lyman, 1995: 95). Scott further claims (2015) that "Goffman's dramaturgical theory pays attention to 'performance teams' who interact co-operatively to stage a show. (...). Correspondingly, a team's composition may be either fluid and changeable, defined by the exigencies of the situation". What is more, "together these three dramaturgical components are critical for the impression management of a desired impression before the service audience, because each is a source of symbolic communication" (Giacalone and Rosenfeld, 1989).

The three dramaturgical conventions are as follows:

The performance teams must abide by the conventions of 'dramaturgical loyalty' (the notion that team mates must act as if they have accepted a moral responsibility to sustain definitions associated with their performances), 'dramaturgical discipline' (based on the contention that team performers are obliged to remember their parts and to avoid unwittingly committing gestures or mistakes that might destroy the performance or desired impression) and 'dramaturgical circumspection' (this practice is based on the



need for the performers to determine in advance how best to stage the show) – in assuring a good performance” (Giacalone and Rosenfeld, 1989: 432-433).

The Masifunde reading club can achieve a goal of defining a situation through dramaturgical co-operation. If one of the club’s participants acts outside of the aforementioned dramaturgical conventions; then that person(s) could be said to be threatening the ‘defined situation’ of the reading club. To define a situation is a way of creating an ‘impression’. For the reading club, this impression at a macro level, is interrelated with the sets of clubs under the Nal’ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign. These “were started to create conditions in community settings which inspire, promote and support reading for enjoyment and the development of reading habits in mother tongue and additional languages among children and adults” (Alexander et al. 2011). ‘Impression management’ at the club is created and enacted with the different elements of the club’s interaction order. In other words, there is a broader impression that frames the work of the club which answers to who you are or what you do question that interconnects with the sets of clubs linked to Nal’ibali. At a more micro-interactional level; this defined and maintained impression become visible with the different lines that the club adopts for the activities that make up the club’s interaction order.

For instance, the first dramaturgical convention at the micro-interactional level during the Saturday sessions – dramaturgical loyalty - presupposes that everyone takes responsibility for the reading club’s performance. This can include the do’s and don’ts concerning the club’s literacy activities within the five identified routine sets, which everyone must abide by. Below I will use a practice called ‘warm welcome’ or ‘Chinese clap’ as an example of a dramaturgical loyalty. This practice is used to welcome visitors and celebrate each other at the club. It

involves clapping three times on the right and left hand side, followed by the upper body shaking then the Chinese bow, as can be seen in the following fieldnote:

Thandeka: Anizokumbona ukuba ngubani today we have a visitor (as she was saying visitor she simultaneously claps her hands)

Visitor: hello I was here the other day //Thandeka: ohhhh?// it's just that you were not here

Thandeka: oh okay and oohh \*laughs. Oh okay, masimnike ke iwarm welcome esuka kuthi)

### Translation

Thandeka: You have not seen who is she – today we have a visitor (as she was saying visitor she simultaneously claps her hands).

Visitor: hello I was here the other day //Thandeka: ohhhh?// it's just that you were not here.

Thandeka: oh okay and oohh \*laughs. oh okay, let's give her a warm welcome that comes from us. (FN, 2016).

The visitor got up and explained in English. Once it had been established that she was not entirely new Thandeka and the children went ahead and traditionally welcomed her to the club. This had been done by clapping three times on either side of the body, followed by the upper body shaking then the Chinese bow (FN, 2016).

In performing the 'Chinese clap' Thandeka asked children to "impression manage" by putting on a performance for the visitor in welcoming her to the club. And in honouring the

dramaturgical loyalty, children and volunteers as teammates or co-ordinating the joint performance accepted ‘a moral responsibility to sustain a definition’ associated with giving a performance for the Chinese clap or warm welcome. For the club to have performed the warm welcome successfully - the club needed to “establish a ‘party line’, to maintain loyalty to the team’s performance, and sustain that ‘line’ effectively during the show” (Shulman, 2017: 84).

‘Dramaturgical discipline’ asks that each member of the reading club remember their parts in putting on a performance or in fostering the dramaturgical co-operation. This will be illustrated by what is called ‘mosquito’ practice. Here the members of the reading club celebrate and honour one another through performing this practice called ‘mosquito’. In performing this action, a volunteer calls out “mosquito” two times and the children respond with a mosquito sound. This is repeated as a volunteer wishes, then children are asked to catch the mosquito, in ending the performance children are asked to kiss it and then blow on it. The kissing and blowing it brings finality to the performance of the mosquito practice. In the below fieldnote Simphiwe had asked children to validate Natasha after finishing singing a song.

#### Mosquito practice

Natasha: Igama lam ndingu Natasha ifani yam nguBona mna ndihlale apha elantuze eziflatin mna namhlannje ndakuniculela ingoma from uBeyonce amh Pretty Girl

\*Natasha sang the chorus of Pretty Girls by Beyonce\*

Natasha: thanks

\*the group started clapping\*

Simphiwe: mosquito mosquito

Everyone: zzzzz \*making a mosquito sound\*

Simphiwe: mosquito mosquito

Everyone: zzzzzzz

Simphiwe: yibambe

Everyone: \*followed by the action of catching the mosquito by everyone\*

Simphiwe: yibambe yicatche

Everyone: \*followed by the action of catching the mosquito by everyone\*

Simphiwe: yikhetshe kiss it

Everyone: \*everyone is acting to be catching and kissing the mosquito

Simphiwe: yivuthele

Everyone: \*blowing the mosquito\*

Simphiwe: Blow it

Everyone: \*blowing the mosquito\*



Simphiwe: Thank you (FN, 18 June 2016).

### Translation

#### Mosquito practice

Natasha: my name is Natasha and surname is Bona. I stay here in a flat. I will sing for you guys  
a song by Beyoncé called Pretty Girl

\*Natasha sang the chorus of pretty girls by Beyoncé\*

Natasha: thanks

Simphiwe: mosquito mosquito

Everyone: zzzzz making a mosquito sound

Simphiwe: mosquito mosquito

Everyone: zzzzz

Simphiwe: catch it

Everyone: followed by the action of catching the mosquito by everyone

Simphiwe: kiss it

Everyone: everyone is acting to be kissing the catch mosquito

Simphiwe: Blow it

Everyone: blowing the mosquito

Simphiwe: Thank you (FN, 18 June 2016).



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In acting in accordance with the dramaturgical discipline, children, when asked to take part in the performance of the mosquito practice are needed to and ‘are obliged to remember their parts in order to avoid unwittingly committing gestures or mistakes that might destroy the performance’.

Lastly, dramaturgical circumspection obligates the volunteers through planning, to know prior to coming to the Saturday session how the performance will be presented, as a way of assuring a good performance. The dramaturgical circumspection focuses more on the back region of the club, and the planning occurring in this region/reading club WhatsApp group chat which is controlled and managed through the supervision of the reading club volunteers. It then moves into the front region during the Saturday session where it is still regulated by the volunteers

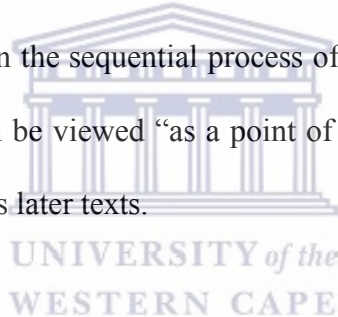
despite constant negotiations with the children. While volunteers as part of the performance may be in a position to lead and manage the regulation of activities, dramaturgical co-operation is needed amongst themselves and the children in putting up a performance in the front region.

#### **4.4. Moving between the back stage and front stage**

The volunteers must decide prior coming to the Saturday session how best to stage a performance. This planning occurs in the group's WhatsApp chat and is regulated and managed by the reading club volunteers. This overlaps with the front stage practices during the Saturday session, which under Goffman's dramaturgical model requires "for certain behaviours to take place and for people to 'be' and 'become' certain types of people, the appropriate settings and audiences must exist" (Riggins, 1990: 73), hence the direct separation of the two regions. As a result, "a key structural element of dramaturgy is the distinction between front stage and back stage. In the theatre, front stage is where the performance takes place for the audience. In contrast, back stage is where the make-up is removed, lines are rehearsed, performance are rehearsed, and people can step out of character" (Newman, 2010: 75).

In this section I look at the linkage between the back stage and front stage which make up the 'interaction order' of the club by taking the example of the planning for the Saturday session's main story activity involving the choice of a book called 'Lulama's magic blanket'. I explore this as a text-chain that connects the two regions of the reading club. In part this section will assess how "resemiotization is meant to provide the analytical means for (1) tracing how semiotics are translated from one into the other as social processes unfold, as well as for (2) asking why these semiotics (rather than others) are mobilized to do certain things at certain times" (Iedema, 2003: 29).

Through the idea of (2015) text-chain, I detail “an account of the process texts undergoes as sign-makers resemiotized them in a specific context” (Ker, 2015: 21), as well as, the “writing practice (in the back region of the club) links in a chain of resemiotization that originated outside the .... (Saturday sessions) (...)” (Ker, 2015: 21) but comes to frame the sessions every Saturday. By text-chain Ker (2015: 21) implies that “a text is in some way connected to a previous text as well as a later text”. Another way of conceptualising this process is as a “text-cycle” involving “the selection of texts, their presentation and re-production to and for students, and the teacher’s production of new texts” (Kress, Jewitt, Bourne, Franks, Hardcastle, Jones and Reid, 2005: 141). These concepts pay attention to the mobility of meaning making across space-time. Whether as conceptualized as a ‘text-chain’ (Ker, 2015: 21) or the textual cycle (Kress et al., 2005: 20) – a text in the sequential process of the textual cycle when entering a new participation framework can be viewed “as a point of intersection” (Bhattacharya et al., 2007: 467) for previous as well as later texts.



### *The text-chain of Lulama’s magic blanket*

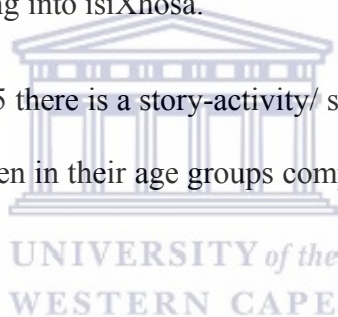
The following text-chain of Lulama’s magic blanket “... reveals complexity in the transformations of meaning making across space and time” (Kell, 2017: 531), also it shows “how texts circulate ... and are in the process changed in various ways” (Ker, 2015: 107). What is more, the text-chain and the chained links “... as the unit of analysis enables us to see that meaning making is not situated at all, but highly mobile” (Kell, 2017: 543), and this is evident from the flow of meanings created to and from the regions of the reading club, where “... meanings move from moment to moment and context to context” (Kell, 2017: 543). The six stages of Lulama’s magic blanket can be referred to as “links in the text-chain” (Ker, 2015).

The following analysis shows the mobility and resemiotization of meanings with the unfolding of the six links in the text-chain of Lulama's Magic Blanket.

**Firstly**, on 2016/07/06, at 21:15 pm Sis Lihle, one of the volunteer, informs other volunteers in the WhatsApp group chat about the story she will read with Thandeka. She then asks for a woolly blanket; and two volunteers converse with her about the requested woolly blanket by asking if she needs an actual woolly blanket or just actual wool. Occurring in the back region of the club, the WhatsApp group chat, this link mainly serves to inform of the story to be read then a discussion over a request made by Sis Lihle is initiated.

**Secondly**, on 2016/07/ 09, at 11:15 am on the Saturday the process moves to the front stage where Sis Lihle reads the story of Lulama's magic blanket and Athi, a visitor and friend of the reading club, translates the reading into isiXhosa.

**Thirdly**, on 2016/07/ 09, at 11.45 there is a story-activity/ statement that acts as a guide to the story related activities that children in their age groups complete. The story-activity/statement is 'the making of the blanket'.



**Fourthly**, 2016/07/ 09, Children in the three age groups: younger, middle and older children recontextualize the story of Lulama's magic blanket into different story-activity texts.

**Fifthly**, 2016/07/ 09, the story-activity text is taken home. This could be in the form of the actual produced artefact or the story-discourse about the reading and making of Lulama's magic blanket, and material used to make the magic blanket belonging to Lulama. For example, some of the children in the older age group who were sewing asked for the left over cloth to take home as they wanted to continue with the sewing.

**And lastly**, 2016/07/10 and 2016/07/11, for two days following the Saturday session volunteers went back to the back stage region where they reflected on the session of the Lulama's magic blanket.



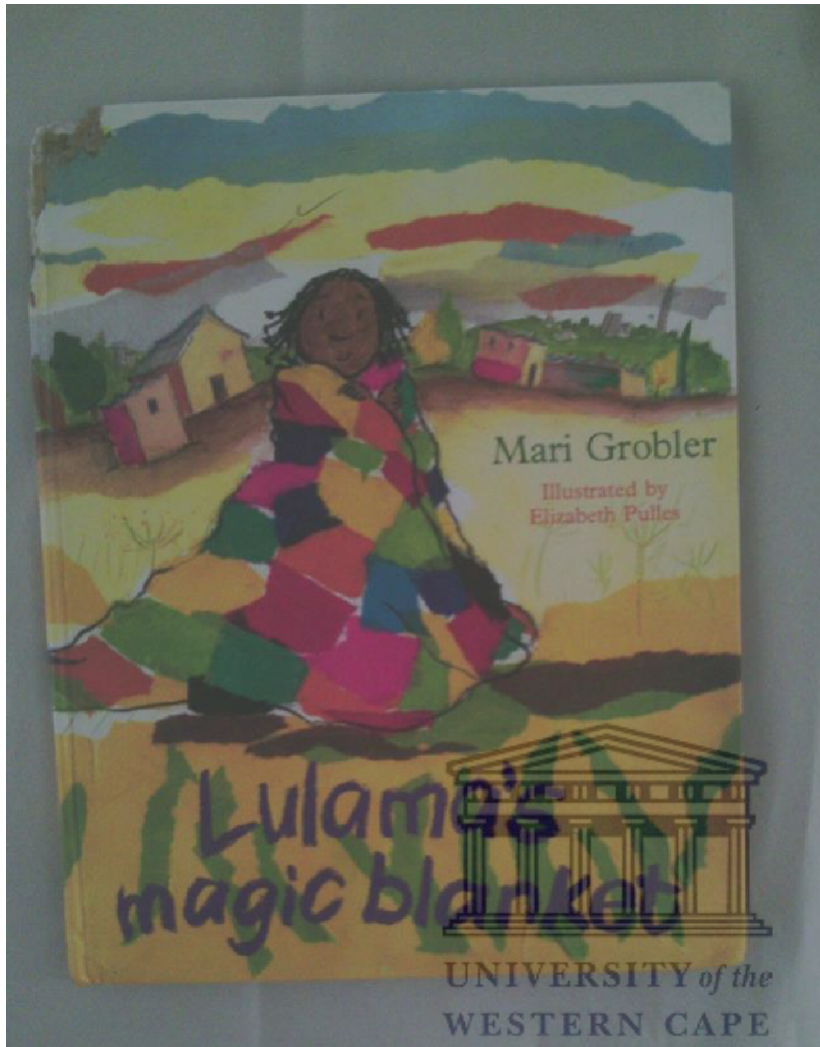


Figure 8: The cover of the story book 'Lulama's magic blanket'.

The first link of the text-chain starts on 6th July 2016 in the WhatsApp group chat of the volunteers with the following message:

2016/07/06 21:15 – Sis Lihle: Greetings I am narrating a story and the name of it is Lulama's magic blanket. I will narrate the story with Thandeka" (WhatsApp data, 2016).

Here Sis Lihle is informing other reading club volunteers about the story which she is choosing and the person she will read with (note that Thandeka was replaced by Athi on the actual day).

Her informing of the story to be read and the person to read with, plus the initiated discussion, marks the beginnings of Lulama's magic blanket text-chain. This link as a starting point will connect and inform later texts and activities with each stage of practice, thus meaning making is resemiotized and "shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next" (Iedema, 2003: 41).

The second link of the text-chain is on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2016 where Sis Lihle read the story with Athi, during the main activity in the Saturday session. The textual recontextualization of the first link moves from the back stage to the front stage where in a "construction of reality' it traverses and exploits a range of realizations and practices" (Iedema, 2003: 40), as the story is read in English and then translated into isiXhosa. The textual recontextualization in the first link as it moves into the front stage of the club for the Saturday session – its "construction of a reality" takes account of the varied ways in which meaning making is achieved and acted out at this time. And this link is multi-semiotically realised as they read the story using "modes and systems of making meaning other than language". Action (Martinec, 1996) is shown when children laugh as "Athi takes a piece of fabric in front of them to cover himself as he pretends to be a tortoise hiding its head inside the shell" (FN, 2016). Visual communication (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) involves the constant engagement with the book pictures when Sis Lihle and Athi now and then show the images in the story-book to the seated group of children – an example, "Athi showing children the different fabrics sewn together as he translates his part" (FN, 2016). And lastly, music/sound (van Leeuwen, 1999) comes into play when Athi does an indirect translation to evoke certain meanings/understandings associated with sleeping, by singing a lullaby 'thula bhabha umama uyeza' in isiXhosa. An example of this, "Athi: singing the thula thula baba song in the background" (FN, 2016) when Sis Lihle was reading.

Third link. This link and the fourth link are on the same day and involve meaning making and creativity.



*Figure 9: Announcement of the story activity.*

After the reading of the story with Athi, Sis Lihle created a story-activity/statements by writing it down into an A4 printing paper. The story-activity/statement is “the making of the blanket” (FN, 2016), which acts as a guide to the story related activities that children in their age groups complete for the story-activity.

Thus, the gradual progression of the links in the text-chain for Lulama’s magic blanket reveals that “resemiotizing processes described thus far all move from the relatively negotiable and readily available towards increasingly durable, resource-intensive and scarce semiotic materiality” (Iedema, 2003: 43). The ‘negotiable and readily available’ is the afforded

materiality of the mobile device that the volunteers use in the interaction during the first link as they plan and prepare backstage for a reading club session. The use of the phone is completely naturalised in these engagements, the language use is very informal and often interspersed with emoticons and there is often much to-ing and fro-ing in discussion. Whereas, the ‘increasingly durable, resource-intensive and scarce semiotic materiality’ are the limited but creative means through which volunteers and children are able to create meaning in the links occurring between the second, third and fourth link. Here the phone is decidedly not present, and material resources like wool, cardboard and even cloth are drawn on. These are scarce (even expensive) resources in the impoverished area in which the club is situated and they are used to create material objects that ‘fix’ the meanings which are negotiated verbally and consensually in the activities.



The fourth link of the text-chain starts during the story activity part. This permits for a series of recontextualized activities to emerge as the children in their different age groups resemiotize and take hold of the story. The focus here is with the children in their three age groups as they recontextualize the story of Lulama’s magic blanket into multisemiotic story-activity texts. Following the text-chain shows that with each unfolding of the step/link – then “the process [it] was taken into a new participant framework” (Kell, 2017: 543), where ‘from one stage of practice to the next’ the meaning, meaning maker and the material to realize it changed. The link(s) can be “... defined simply as a point of intersection, connection or redistribution” (Kell, 2017: 532).

The series of activities of how the story is resemiotized and taken hold of in the three age groups under the fourth link is as follows:

#### Younger age group

The younger children, seated with the two visitors, used coloured papers to make Lulama's magic blanket where the patchwork of Lulama's blanket is represented by different squares of coloured paper: red, blue, green, yellow etc. For each pasted square the children had written their names and a message to Lulama. The different colour papers were cut into little squares before the session by a volunteer, Lelehtu, and an A1 sheet was used to paste together the little square colour papers into a patchwork. This is shown in figure 10.



*Figure 10: Story activity part: making Lulama's magic blanket.*



*Figure 11: Completed magic blanket.*

Middle age-group: As the middle age-group is divided into two groups; each of the middle groups had a different approach. One of the groups seated with Funeka were knitting using different wool colours, and another group were making drawings of the patched magic blanket - an image of this is shown in figure 12 below. The group making drawings used different colours to mark the different patches of the fabric in the story. Seen in figure 13a, the story-book of 'Lulama's magic blanket' is placed on the floor as the children copy to their A4 printing papers, while 13b, has an incomplete image of the magic blanket belonging to Lulama.

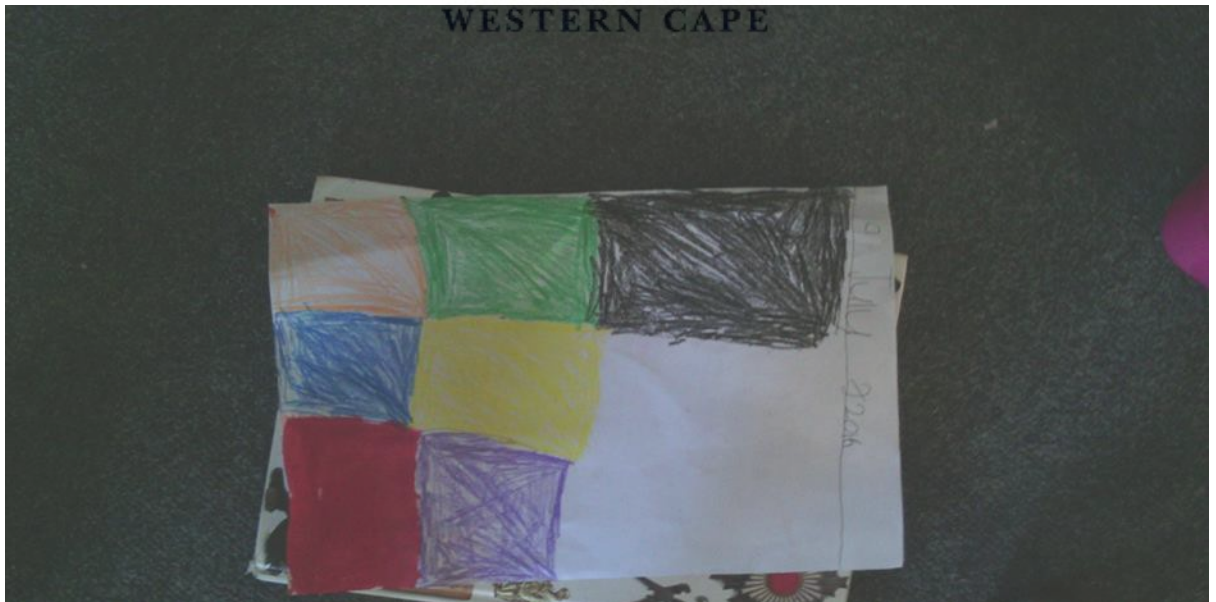


*Figure 12: The middle age children with the help of the Funeka a volunteer is busy knitting.*



*Figure 13. a: The making of the magic blanket.*

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*Figure 13. b: an incomplete magic blanket.*



Older age-group: the older children seated with Sis Lihle were sewing together different patches of cloth which Sis Lihle had brought from home, as well as sewing materials which can be seen in figure 14 below.



*Figure 13: Children from the older age group are busy sewing together the patches of the magic blanket for Lulama. The sewing material are cloths provided by Sis Lihle.*

In the fifth link of the text-chain, the story-activity artefact is taken home by the children at the end of the Saturday session. Here, too, meaning making shifts and the practices are different. For example, some of the children in the older age group who were sewing asked for the remaining cloth to take home as they wanted to continue with the sewing. Stein (2008) believes “that the resemiotization processes transform not just the meaning as it shifts between different material realizations but the meaning-maker as well”. When the story artefacts move into the home context the resemiotization process will shift the meaning, the material used to realise it and the meaning maker, since that context can and might contribute to the making of the texts children brought with from the club to the home.

The sixth link of the text-chain is back into the back region/WhatsApp group chat with volunteers:

In two days following the Saturday session, volunteers take hold of their phones again to reflect on how the process unfolded in the WhatsApp group, using very relaxed but celebratory language, and often translanguaging. In this, they build the ‘team’ in very different ways from the Saturday performance.



“2016/07/09 19:10 – Simphiwe: Story of the week” (Masifunde reading club WhatsApp data, 2016).

And 2016/07/10 1:49: Siphon: Eish comrades not sure whether Athi is part of the group (referring to the WhatsApp group chat), but Sis Lihle your narration of the story was on point. It was also interesting and entertaining” (Masifunde reading club WhatsApp data, 2016).

Overall, Lulama’s magic blanket text-chain is indicative of the move ‘from practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next’ as meanings are recontextualized across space and time in

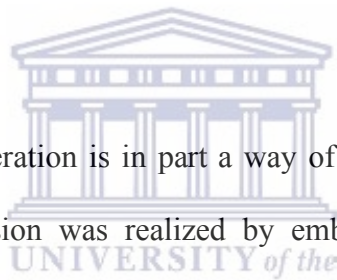
the two regions of the Masifunde reading club. Moreover, in looking at this text-chain “resemiotization is crucially interested in how materiality (‘expression’) serves to realize the social, cultural and historical structures, investments and circumstances of our time” (Iedema, 2003: 50). Interestingly, the mobile phone is absolutely central to the planning of the session and the building of the team, but it is completely excluded in the Saturday session. The phone itself goes “off stage”, as it were.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

As I conclude this section, Iedema’s (2003) resemiotization and Ker’s (2015) text-chain concepts “... offer a feasible way of studying meaning making as fluid and complex social processes (Kell, 2017: 533), that reveal how in each stage of practice the meaning maker shifts with the meaning being created and the material used to achieve it as meanings are created and recreated across the regions of the club, which were connected and traced using the concept of the text-chain. I used the example of Lulama’s magic blanket in exploring and connecting the back and front regions of the Masifunde reading club. Through the text-chain analysis I was able to exemplify the mobility of meanings across space and time, when the volunteers had honoured the dramaturgical circumspection which obligated the volunteers to determine in advance how best to stage and present the activities of the club. This occurred in the back stage then moved across space and time into the Saturday session in the front stage for a performance that was co-operated between the children and volunteers, in spite, of it being regulated by the volunteers.

As texts are connected to previous as well as later texts – then Lulama’s magic blanket was used to project and explore the connection between the back and front region of the reading

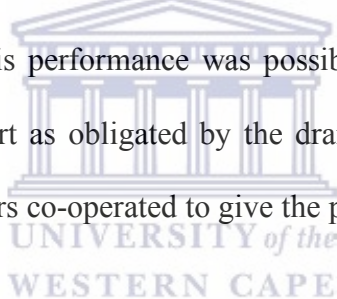
club as they make up the interaction order of the Masifunde reading club. At the same time, the connection between the two regions speaks to Goffman's dramaturgical model in claiming that certain behaviours take place at specific places and people 'be' and act according to that specific place/context but technology or the club's WhatsApp group chat permitted the mobility of meanings to and from the two regions of the club. In exploring this connection between the front region and back region, I assessed how resemiotization as an analytical framework provided the means to trace the translation and transportation of semiotics from one stage of practice to others as they move to and from the two regions of the reading club. So each region signifies the nature and manner of an interaction where the back region/ WhatsApp group chat functions as a backdrop to the practices occurring in the front region/ Saturday sessions.



Moreover, the concept of co-operation is in part a way of defining a situation in which the construction of a Saturday session was realized by embracing Goffman's dramaturgical conventions which paid attention to the co-operative team performance in presenting a front stage performance in the course of a session each Saturday in the club. Through the dramaturgical conventions it allowed for an understanding of the social interactions at the Masifunde reading club with each dramaturgy regulating the interactions of the children and volunteers. For example, for a performance to take place –the three dramaturgy conventions must come into play. Under dramaturgical loyalty – everyone in the reading club must take responsibility for what happens in that space, while, dramaturgical discipline specified that in staging a performance everyone must remember and know their parts to avoid making mistakes. And finally, dramaturgical circumspection obligates the volunteers to plan prior how best to present a performance for a session each Saturday. Goffman's dramaturgical metaphor allowed volunteers to take up a line then maintained it as they foster a particular image for an

audience, for instance, the warm welcome or the Chinese clap staged for an audience – a visitor to the club. The audience involves the children but at the same time children are part of the performance team, hence, the dialogue and interplay between two teams: children and volunteers. More so, the performance was projecting a certain image to the visitor, hence ‘impression management’.

The Chinese clap or warm welcome, as used to welcome the visitor, fosters and administers inferences associated with the ‘home’, and this highlights and constructs the reading club as a ‘home away from home’ space (as stated in Chapter 2). Hence, when Thandeka asks the children to assist her in giving the Chinese clap or warm welcome they were playing into the ‘home away from home’ image in order to allow the visitor to feel part and welcomed into their informal learning space. And this performance was possible because each one of the team performers remembered their part as obligated by the dramaturgical circumspection, at the same time, children and volunteers co-operated to give the performance.



Constructing the reading club inside the space of the church was realized through using movable resources as representational means which had aligned and positioned that religious space into an informal learning space every Saturday. A range of the movable resources which came to transform and position the church as an informal learning space included but were not limited to the interactions, representations, artefacts and improvisations with each framing the church into a particular setting, for example, the act of displaying books on the floor, the display of printing paper on the wall such as the Ivekhi yam ibinjani? /How was your week? And children choosing and reading books – all points to this transformation.

The construction further alludes to the team performance amongst the volunteers – as the reading club volunteers co-operate under dramaturgical circumspection where they are required to plan and prepare how best to stage a performance for a Saturday session, and their collaboration constitutes what Goffman calls a team. I further used Goffman’s routine and ritual concept to interpret and identify the practices/activities of the club. Through Goffman’s interaction order I noted that the Masifunde reading club has its established orders and rules; and these administer the ‘spatial organization of the setting’ where a range of ‘interactional resources’ are channelled.

Finally, here in this section I identified and mapped the interaction order of the Masifunde reading club, prior to the introduction of the mobile phones. Informed by the Goffmanian concepts – the practices of the club were examined and interpreted using the ritual and routine concept, which reveal the club as having an established order and rules, while the crossover over space and time between the two regions of the club as constituting the Masifunde reading club interaction order was understood by adopting Ker’s text-chain and exemplified using the story of Lulama’s magic blanket in showing the linkage between the two regions. It is this scene then that the introduction of mobile phones, the FunDza mobi stories and the mobile reading practice come to exist in after they were introduced during the second sets of observation. I look at how they get appropriated into the club’s already established interaction order in Chapter Five.

## 5. Chapter Five: Mapping the interaction order after the introduction of the mobile phones

### 5.1. Introduction

After having noted and demonstrated the club's interaction order; and the relationship between the online and the offline social orders of the club, I shift to examining how these established orders influenced and shaped the practices of reading online and the ways of taking hold of the mobile phones. I explored the ways in which digital literacy practices emerged within the already established interaction order of the Masifunde reading club.

The introduction of the four provided mobile phones at the reading club was met by its own fair share of problems, in such that “consequently, we are facing ‘placed resources’ here resources that are functional in one particular place but can become dysfunctional as soon as they are moved into other places” (Norton and Williams, 2012: 317). Maybe dysfunctional is stretching it a bit far but rather their appropriation within the club's routine is locally situated and influenced by the specificity of the context. As a result, “even if technologies are the same when they enter a context compared with other contexts, an essential dimension to any research on technologies (and new literacies, for that matter) is how local specificities point to divergent practices” (Rowse, Saude, Scott, and Bishop, 2013: 351). At the reading club ‘local specificities’ and the ‘divergent practices’ are exemplified in what I called ‘make-do strategies’ adopted in order to continue with the mobile reading practice after the mobile network connection failed, as well the different ways of appropriation by the children and volunteers.

‘Make-do strategies’ were adopted after finding out that the connectivity in the church was bad and that it was taking longer to download the FunDza mobi-stories than anticipated. This made the volunteers uncertain and reluctant to engage with the mobile reading practice as delays in connections tended to disrupt the order of the club. When I suggested they can read using their personal/individual WhatsApp accounts – volunteers preferred this option, and this is how reading of the FunDza mobi-stories by the volunteers was conducted. Regardless of the difficulties with the mobile reception the children started to adapt and took hold of the mobile phone in ways applicable to them and their interests. Thus, my research at the Masifunde reading club as explained in Chapter One shows how mobile reading as distant’ literacies are ‘taken hold’ of in particular local ways whether integrated into the known local practices or used to mediate the outside and inside (Street, 2004).



## **5.2. Constructing the reading club after the introduction of mobile digital literacy**

As seen in Chapter Four, the children and the volunteers perform a variety of different types of actions and these constitute “the building blocks for the different types of ... tasks and activities” (Kääntä, 2010: 13) that take place during each Saturday session in the club. These ‘types of actions’ form the ‘pre-established pattern of action’ that unfolds over the course of a performance in the two-hour session of the club. The mobile phones came to exist and be used within and along these five identified parts of the Saturday routines and rituals. As shown in Chapter Four, this construction of the club occurs at three levels: constructing the Saturday sessions, the volunteers as a ‘team’ and the activities which constitutes the club’s routine structure that unfolds in the course of two-hours.



### The Saturday session

As the introduction of the phones gets interjected into this print dominant space – the below field note captures their presence in the club. The first instance happens on the first Saturday:

The mobile phone in a group of four children is moving around their hands as it is pulled from one side to the other (see figure 16). The three girls and one boy constantly negotiate by pulling from and to for viewing the mobile phone screen. The children in the middle are the ones pressing and touching on the mobile screen, and this negotiation is mostly between them. The group, after struggling to connect to the FunDza mobi site, eventually abandons mobile reading and switches to print (FN, 6 August 2016).

And, a second instance:

Two other girls are also trying to read from the provided mobile phone (see figure 15). One girl is sitting up straight as she holds the phone closer to her lap and the second girl reclines towards the phone on the girl's lap. They are both checking the mobile screen, pressing on the screen then waiting, whilst looking at the screen. As in the first instance, the girls also abandon mobile reading due to the inability to connect and load the FunDza mobi-stories satisfactorily (FN, 20 August 2016).

And, a reading club volunteer had this to say about mobile phones/the FunDza mobi stories at the club:

Yes, mobi-stories do have a place at the reading club. It will help to know a phone can be used for other purposes other than playing games. Its presence could result in a change of behavioural practices involving the usage of the mobile phone, in such that, maybe when a child borrows their mom's phone, they may not use it to play games but

rather to read stories, and the child will start to see the phone as a reading object (Volunteer interview, 2017).

### *The volunteers as a team*

The reading club volunteers co-operate under the dramaturgical circumspection in assuring a good performance for the administering of the ‘spatial organization’ of the reading club every Saturday. And so, the notion of the co-operative, team-performance was extended to me when I was forced to adopt a ‘make-do strategy’ in enabling the continued use of the mobile phone when the connection was bad. In this instance, I co-operated with the volunteers in using their personal/individual WhatsApp accounts for sending the different options of the FunDzamobi-stories to be used each week. After the initial plan failed, I needed to co-operate with them in order to foster impression management, because “it would seem that a team-performance is in progress, any member of the team has the power to give it away or disrupt it by inappropriate conduct” (Goffman, 1956: 50). If I had not opted for the ‘make-do strategy’ and a mobile reading by a volunteer failed during the main activity, then this would have disrupted the order and given the performance away. But because I was able to ‘co-operate’ with the volunteers we were able to ‘define a situation’ involving an engagement with new literacies and, at the same time, fostering and maintaining an impression.

Furthermore, the role played by the volunteers continued when this device was used by the children. During this time volunteers constantly regulated its presence in the club so as to keep order and be able to manage an impression in the front region. For example, during the main activity: read aloud and storytelling of the FunDza mobi-story of ‘How tortoise’s nose became crooked’ I had asked if the children could keep the phones in that activity so that they could

follow the reading of the story, but the “principal of the reading club said that she preferred not to” (FN, 6 August 2016).

### *The activities*

I noted in Chapter Four that the Masifunde reading club has its established orders and rules which regulate the flow of activities; whether occurring in an online or offline social interaction order of the club. Either of these social orders can be said to be “socially constructed through the beliefs and value systems of different groups who work together to achieve social cohesion” (Marsh, 2011: 102). Then and there, the introduction of the mobile phones, the FunDza mobi-stories and the mobile reading practice came to exist in this ritual and routinized social order, where these routines and rituals both refer to specific, repeated practices that involve two or more of the members of the reading club (Fiese, Tomcho, Douglas, Josephs, Poltrock, and Baker, 2002). In the following section I give a description of the five activities outlined in Chapter Four, and what happened to these after the introduction of phones. This is to show how these FunDza mobi-stories, mobile phones and the mobile reading practice were appropriated into the club’s orders, whether offline or online, and to discuss and propose how they could have been used in other parts of the routine, had the reception been better, or had the volunteers been more relaxed about their usage.

The Masifunde reading club routine follows this order:

1. Individual reading: 6 August 2016, on this day, 50 second hand donated children’s books are brought to the club by Simphiwe. This day was also the first day for the introduction of the mobile phones. As can be seen from the two below images (see figure15 and 16) – the uptake of digital literacy came to exist within and alongside the

already established print order of the club. Usually when the mobile phones were used for reading – it happened in pair-reading or in a group, involving not only the children participating as research participants but other children from the younger age groups.



*Figure 14: : A print text and a mobile text exist side by side at the Masifunde reading club as the children were reading from a book and a provided mobile phone for the research.*



*Figure 15: The two images are showing two different interactions with the phone by the children.*

2. Icebreaker: games and songs: During the icebreaker the mobile phones were not used. Even so, this is not to say they cannot be used in the future. Since this time is for singing and playing games, had the connection been better, the mobile phone could have been used for browsing and connecting to the net in searching for songs and games (with such content coming in a variety of ways from audio to video or pictures as a step-by-step guide). An example of a literacy initiative that they can make use of in the icebreaker is the Nal'ibali mobi-site which allows a search for a "rhyme library" that has rhymes available in six of the South African languages including isiXhosa.
  
3. Circle seating: Circle seating is a time for announcements, introducing of visitors to the club and also a chance for children, volunteers and visitors to share in the big group about their weeks. Some of the announcements that were made at this time include a focus on 'World Storytelling Day' and 'Mother Tongue Day' where a volunteer shared briefly about the contents of each and children contributed comments on what they

knew and understood about these. In supplementing what volunteers and children know and understand about such announcements, mobile phones could be used to look up more information on these two global events, involving pictures, videos or live streaming of such activities as part of bringing in distant literacies and information to their micro and very localised informal learning space.

4. Main activity: read aloud and storytelling: the introduction of the mobile phones did influence a new way of reading the stories at the club. Volunteers like Thandeka read using their personal/individual WhatsApp accounts after the initial intended way had failed due to difficulties in mobile connection. Initially, the volunteers were meant to read from the FunDza mobi site but were unable to. As a result, I was forced to adopt a workable ‘make-do strategy’ that allowed the mobile reading practices to continue with the volunteers. So I copied the different mobi stories from the FunDza webpage then I sent the different options for the story for that week to the chosen volunteer for that week using their individual/personal WhatsApp accounts. Then the volunteer would choose between the story options and would read the story out at the Saturday session using her personal WhatsApp account, rather than waiting for it to download using the internet (or fail to download as a result of the bad reception in the area of the reading club).
5. Funeka sat at the front of the group in the usual performance with her mobile phone instead of the usual story book. In the first Saturday she explicitly introduced the FunDza mobi-story: “ah ibali lethu ndizokufunda apha efowunini njengoko nisazi uSis Zandi wenza iresearch so fukena amabali ethu siwafunde efowunini ibali lethu lanamhlanje lithi Goat, the false king. (FN, 20 August 2016). / “ah our story will be read using a phone as you know that Sis Zandi (for Zandile) is doing her research so

we must read stories using a mobile phone, and today's story is Goat, the false king.  
(FN, 20 August 2016).



*Figure 16: Main story activity during the reading of the FunDza mobi-stories.*

6. Story-activity: As noted in Chapter Four, in the course of this activity, children sit according to their age groups. How an activity for the story gets completed depends on the choices made by the volunteer reading on that particular Saturday or a volunteer facilitating an age-group.

### 5.3. Routine and ritual in the Saturday session

As shown in Chapter Four, the Masifunde reading club has an already established pattern of action which channels the unfolding of the five identified activities in each Saturday session. As documented in Chapter Four, these “rituals and routines are distinct, and they are interwoven into the daily interactions” (Spagnola and Fiese, 2007: 285) of the club members. This is shown by the “... nature of the relationship between the social dynamics of off- and online activities” (Mansell, 2002: 264) in the interaction order of the Masifunde reading club. In chapter four, I identified the ‘repeated regularly’ and ‘established patterns of action. It is into these that the mobile phones are introduced in the Masifunde reading club. This will be illustrated by three examples of how the mobile phone existed as a placed resource in the Masifunde reading club (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 277) and adopting Prinsloo’s concept of “placed resources” (2005).



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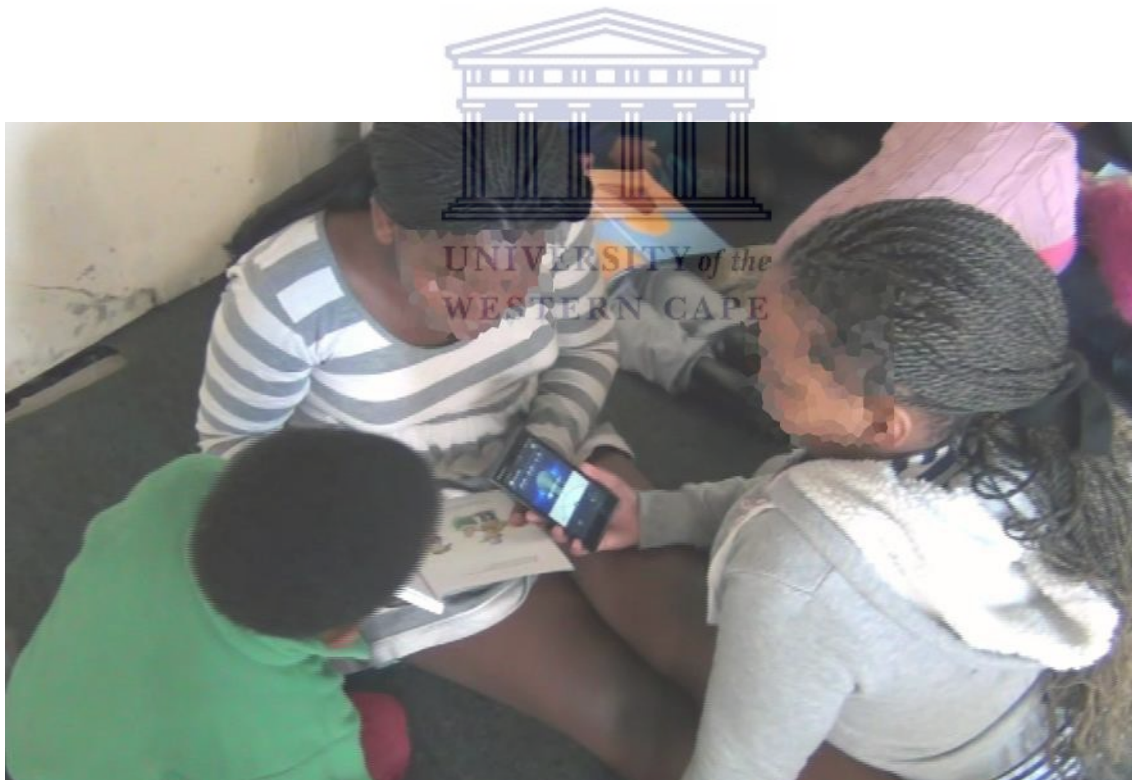
#### Example one : Individual reading time

Natasha and Mhlali are seating with a boy from the younger age group. As Natasha is reading from the provided mobile phone Mhlali is busy playing with Natasha’s hair however Mhlali quickly jumps in to translate the part Natasha has read into isiXhosa as follows: ‘njengokubana egeza kuthiwana ukuba makaqale aqhubhe before aye kumakhulu wakhe’/ ‘the naughty child was told to go swimming before visiting grandma’. After sometime, the two girls abandon mobile reading of the FunDza mobi-story to reading a story-book for the boy. During the reading of the story-book then the mobile phone moves from Natasha to Mhlali, and Mhlali is using it as a voice recorder to record Natasha reading to the boy (FN, 6 August 2016).





*Figure 19: Natasha reading from a mobile phone to a child from the younger age group while Mihlali is playing with Natasha's hair during the individual reading part.*



*Figure 17: After mobile reading of the FunDza mobi stories failed the children adopted the mobile device as a recorder.*



*Figure 18: Children appropriating the mobile phone in ways applicable to them after the reading of an online mobi stories failed.*

The images in figure 19, 20 and 21 show clearly what happened as the children moved from ‘mobile reading’ of the FunDza mobi-stories to a storybook taken from the book display on the floor after the mobile connection failed. In figure 20 and 21 the two older girls after changing to the storybook, took hold of the phone as a voice recorder, showing the mobile phone usage in the reading club as mirroring “... both possibilities and limitations associated with this new digital resource ...” (Norton and Williams, 2012:315).

The difficulties experienced by the children and the club as a whole, could be looked at not so much as a problem and “rather than being simply accounts of deficit or disadvantage, however, these studies open up the space for us to enquire what further can be understood about digital literacies and new media from these settings than is explained in studies where such resources appear to operate seamlessly, in settings that are well known” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012:

272). Therefore, the missed chance or the difficulties that came as a result of the poor mobile reception can somewhat be overlooked, and the focus can fall more on how the children adapted and adopted it, for example, deciding to use it as a recorder, such that “new literacies of screen-based and internet communication work in particular ways in low technology and socially distinctive African contexts” (Prinsloo, 2005: 87).

The children, as seen with Natasha and Mihlali, took hold of the phone in a way that is applicable to them by using it as a voice recorder while Natasha continued with a local practice, that of reading a storybook. As a result, how the phone gets taken hold of by the club members is not predetermined but socially shaped in the context of use as explained in literature review by showing the unintended consequences and unanticipated possibilities, thus, enabling the phone to exist in the local but not without constraints. As a result, “like all communicative resources, digital technologies are ‘placed resources’: their use is shaped by local contexts, needs, practices, the material conditions of the everyday and the larger political economy” (Prinsloo, 2005). The mobile phone is a ‘placed resource’ because upon the failed intended purpose that it was brought for in the club –as a ‘mobile reading tool’, then children reshaped its usage to address a new need and the afforded materiality of the device permitted for this, hence the recording done by Mihlali. For that reason, “whenever sociolinguistic items travel across the globe, they travel across structurally different spaces and will consequently be picked up differently in different places” (Blommaert, 2003, 612).

#### Example two : Individual reading time

On the other side of the chapel – the researcher/volunteer is chatting with two children who are the research participants. The two girls are given a mobile phone and instructed

to go share it “hambini niyokushare ke”/ “go and share it”. After taking the phone from the researcher, the girls settle down not far off from the chapel with each of them touching and viewing the mobile screen. After the ‘paging’ through of the mobile screen, Thuliswa, one of the children, comes to ask me (the researcher/volunteer) if it is okay if they can copy from the phone to their pages, and my response is yes – you can do anything you want. The girls start writing by copying the contents of the text from the provided mobile phone, a called “On his blindness” onto their A4 pages.

As they write the phone is placed in between them and each has an A4 printing page to write on, and a box full of crayons and other stationary material and another pack of crayons on the floor. Copying or rewriting of text from one mode to another is not an unusual practice amongst the children at the reading club but today it’s different or a little unusual as the copying is from the provided mobile phone to an A4 printing paper (FN, 20 August 2016).





*Figure 19: During individual reading these two girls were reading from the FunDza mobi-stories, and here they are copying from the phone into their pages.*

As exemplified by the above field note then, the two girls used the mobile phone to carry out the known literacy practices of the club. By doing that, the children could be said to be taking

away the ‘unfamiliarness’ or the ‘foreignness’ of this new literacy tool and enculturating it as they perform with it known practices such as copying or rewriting of text from one mode into the other. So how the mobile stories are taken up is by using the mobile phone to carry out familiar practices such as the copying of text. The two girls are using the mobile phone during ‘individual reading part’ as they would use any chosen storybook at this time. Yet again, this emphasizes the claim that mobile phone usage and how the mobi-stories are taken up is in line and consistent with the club’s print-based interaction order; hence, the phone usage in the club is within placed-based practices.

Accordingly, the taking hold of the FunDza mobi-stories illustrates that mobile technology and platform usage as complementing as opposed to changing the pre-existing print literacy practices in the club. For that reason, the mobile phone usage is placed within the context of the reading club based on engagement with print literacy material and the mobi-stories are taken up to carry out pre-existing practices/literacy events using a new and somewhat foreign literacy tool in the club. This could mean as “... resources are assembled they get adapted in distinctive ways” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012). As well, Prinsloo and Rowsell (2012: 271) argue that “communicative resources of all kinds, in their uses and functions, are shaped by context and place ...”. From this then, the way the children encounter and engage with the mobile phones and mobi-stories suggests the digital media resources are engaged with in ways that make sense, are familiar and pre-existing within the club’s interaction order. Hence, shaping and reshaping their usage into known print-based practices. In addition, the use of mobile phone and digital platforms in the reading club could also be read similarly to that of the Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) as explained in literature review (Sasman and Prinsloo, 2014) where its usage ‘does not challenge the orientation to teaching language and literacy that the teacher (a volunteer or how the children get to use it) brings to her work’ and in addition,

‘they do not introduce any new dimensions of language use that might be associated with the affordances of digital media’.

As an alternative to print however, I believe that in the case of the Masifunde reading club the mobile and digital platforms are adding to the scarce literacy resources. At the same time, they are diversifying the available literacy text available to children not only in terms of content but in terms of the materiality of the literacy tool at their disposal. How one uses a book to read is different to the afforded materiality of the mobile reading tool, so once the mobile phone is used often enough the children and the volunteers I believe will explore it differently and play around with it more than they did during the study.

But then again how the mobile phone is used as a literacy resource in the reading club implies “the contextualization of new ICT in the older processes and the dynamics of the introduction of new communication technologies” (de Bruijn et. al, 2009: 12) which are shown as placed resources in the club. The ‘placed resources’ construct as a relatively new field of study is an approach used to pay attention to specificity of the context/place in beginning to understand how new literacies are taken hold of. Similarly, it is to promote a range of ideas and research that is concerned to study new media in peripheral settings with no predetermined assumptions but rather under prevailing conditions of globalisation (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 272) such as that of the Masifunde reading club.

Example three : Thuliswa at home

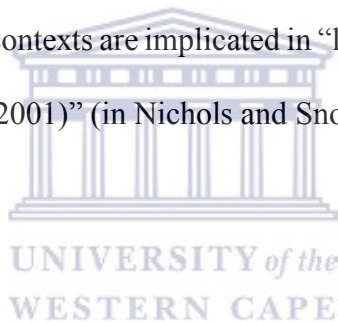
Thuliswa – “yes, I used to use my mobile phone but I lost it and now I am using my mom’s phone. In using my mom’s phone, I take a story from the reading club then take

pictures of the book pages, other times, I would use the book pictures to write-up maybe a paragraph then take its pictures. Then after, I would read the photographed book pictures or the written up paragraph. Whereas in my phone, I would make videos by taking pictures of each book page, and the phone has a section where it allows me to click on the slide show. Then I would read the sliding pictures of the story I got from the reading club as a video text” (Children’s interview, 2017).

Here, Thuliswa recalls how after the introduction of the FunDza mobi stories/mobile reading in the club she started making photographs and videos of stories received from the club. In her making she knows what the affordances and constraints of the two mobile phones she had been using were. So, Thuliswa’s taking hold of the mobile phone or mobi-stories reveals that “the consumption and use of media on the social periphery consequently does not necessarily result in passivity, but can evoke creativity, resistance, agency and opportunity of diverse sorts ...” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 247). What is more, Thuliswa’s make-do strategy in creating her own form of mobile reading let alone the differences to how it is done by the FunDza initiative, shows how mobile phones (in the case of Thuliswa permitted for the “do-it-yourself practice” (Ito 2011) “where people (such as Thuliswa) ‘just do things’ with technologies, regardless of constraints” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 277). As a result, her usage of either phone is able to account for an argument put forward by de Bruijn et al. (2009: 70) that an interpretation of the phone is socially shaped in contexts of practice and the meanings of how the phone is taken up can be understood from these ‘local interpretations’ which serve to inform of the phone’s function in the local context.



So societies / community of practice (reading club) / individuals (Thuliswa) have agency as to how the phone / technology finds meaning in the locale context, for that reason, the “new communication technologies are not seen in deterministic terms: the introduction of the mobile phone does not automatically dictate changes in society” (de Bruijn et al. 2009: 70), since “the way in which the phone has been integrated into society cannot be separated from specific culture, economy and history of a society” (de Bruijn et al. 2009: 51). And so practices by Thuliswa are indicative of the ‘do-it-yourself’ practice. She says: “yhoo I enjoy reading from the phone I even copied that and I do it at home but I do not make the same as FunDza does it”. This reveals how the socio-economic cultural context is at play when new communication technologies travel to these spaces in such that “digital literacies are placed resources in the globalised periphery” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012). On that account, “context is not simply the background to a text. Rather, contexts are implicated in “large economies of communication and textualization” (Blommaert, 2001)” (in Nichols and Snowden, 2017).



### *Dramaturgical conventions*

In Chapter Four I discussed the construction of the club using Goffman’s dramaturgical metaphors, dramaturgical loyalty, dramaturgical discipline and dramaturgical circumspection. In this section then, I look at the three dramaturgical conventions in relation to the presence of the mobile phone at the club. The old church as a social setting permits for social interactions to take place and in the course of this time, the temporarily constructed Saturday sessions were disrupted by the phones. The dramaturgical metaphor helps in understanding how the volunteers tried to manage the presence of technology by regulating its presence in the reading club. The volunteers were therefore trying to maintain the ‘defined situation’ in which Goffman claims “... for the interactants to successfully stage the performance of everyday life (or within the club’s practices) they must have a consummate grasp of the dramaturgical “arts of

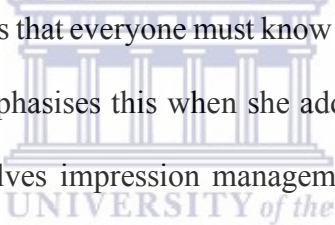
impression management” (Michie, 2000: 406). And Tseelon (1992: 117) further argues that “Goffman’s emphasis, however, was on the subtle ways in which actors’ project or convey a definition of the interaction situation as they see it”. These dramaturgical conventions are then assisting the club members to convey a defined situation after the introduction of the phones into the Masifunde reading club.

Dramaturgical loyalty would imply that the club members must take responsibility for the performance in the club, while dramaturgical discipline obliges everyone to know and remember their parts, and finally, dramaturgical circumspection asks that the volunteers plan and prepare how best to stage a show during a Saturday session. The latter, speaks to “social relations as no longer restricted to condition of physical co-presence, but they are increasingly lifted out of ‘local contexts of interaction’ and stretched across time and space. Communication technologies are central to the experience of this reorganization of time-space” (Deumert, 2014: 10). The dramaturgical circumspection shows this by the crossing over between the social orders of the club – the back stage and front stage as volunteers plan and prepare using the online social order. As a result:

“Impression management refers to the many ways by which individuals attempt to control the impressions others have of them... The impression management perspective assumes that a basic human desire is to be viewed by others in a favourable manner” (Rosenfeld, Giacalone and Riordan, 1994: 602).

Part of fostering impression management implies that every club member be dramaturgically co-operative in order to master the ‘arts of impression management’. In relation to dramaturgical loyalty, everyone contributes to the fostered impression by respecting the do’s

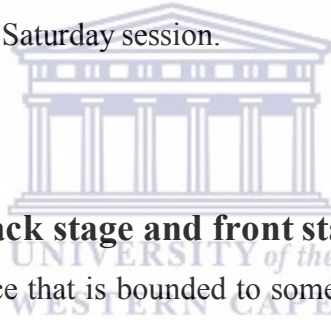
and don'ts of the club. For example, children are not normally allowed to bring in their phones to the club. This was challenged however after the introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories, as some of them started to bring their personal phones to the club, once the research phones had appeared. The implications of this were that the club's defined situation under dramaturgical loyalty (concerning the do's and don'ts and taking responsibility for the club's performance) is compromised. The below field note is an address given by Thandeka as she emphasized the rules of the club concerning the carrying of mobile devices, and her act is to foster the defined rules of the club by reminding everyone to take responsibility: "apha ereading club asiyiphathi ndicela nindimamela guys apha ereading club asiyiphathi iphone"/ "please listen guys, here in the reading club we do not bring phones" (FN, 6 August 2016).



Dramaturgical discipline stipulates that everyone must know and remember their parts in giving a performance and Thandeka emphasises this when she addresses the carrying of the phone. Dramaturgical co-operation involves impression management, so everyone must know and remember their parts. In this way, the children who had brought their personal phones to the club, did not know or remember their parts, hence, acting outside of dramaturgy.

And lastly, the metaphor of dramaturgical circumspection is directed to the reading club volunteers as it obligates them to plan and prepare prior coming to the club on how best to stage a performance as a way of assuring an impression. The introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories/mobile phones was met by difficulties as club members struggled to connect to the FunDza mobi-site due to bad mobile reception. Maybe the 'make-do strategy' adopted in using their personal WhatsApp account to send the different options of the FunDza mobi-stories prior the Saturday, worked in favour of the volunteers since it helped them to be

able to prepare and plan in the existing online social order of the club. The reason I am saying this, is because if mobile reading had worked as intended, then the volunteers would not have planned in the online back region as the phones (as material objects) were only brought to the club on the Saturday. But because I adopted the ‘make-do strategy’ after the initial intent failed, the volunteers were provided with mobi-stories prior to the Saturday session. This is shown by the below field note where I acted as a supplier of the FunDza mobi-stories to the reading club volunteers. This meant that a volunteer like Thandeka was able to share in the WhatsApp group chat in the back stage because I had sent the stories to her individual/personal WhatsApp account. The sharing of the supplied FunDza mobi-story (as done by Thandeka into the reading club WhatsApp group chat) allowed for a discussion amongst the volunteers to emerge. This then supported the dramaturgical circumspection which involved the reading club volunteers in planning and preparing for the Saturday session.

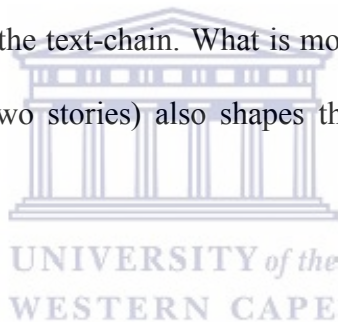


#### **5.4. Moving between the back stage and front stage**

Goffman calls a region “any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception” (1956: 66). As part of the club’s interaction order – the WhatsApp group chat has redefined the limitations of the bounded region (the back region and front region) by allowing for the mobility of texts and meanings across the social orders of the club. The WhatsApp group chat as a mediated interaction order has “transcended the time-space constraints of co-presence” (Duemert, 2014 30), and now meanings or “... stretches of discourse can be lifted out of interactional settings and moved into new ones” (Kell, 2017: 535).

As done in Chapter Four, in this section I look at the linkage between the back stage and front stage which make up the ‘interaction order’ of the club. I take the example of the FunDza mobi-

story ‘How tortoise’s became crooked’ and explore it as a text-chain that connects the regions of the reading club. This analysis is aimed at making evident the mobility of texts/meanings as they are ‘lifted out of interactional settings’ and moved into new participation frameworks across the links of the FunDza mobi-story text-chain. As in Chapter Four, resemiotization provides a theoretical frame for understanding the ways in which meanings are translated into other semiotics “as texts proceed along the text-chain from the ... (reading club WhatsApp group chat to the Saturday sessions), they are resemiotized at each stage” (Ker, 2015: 171), and this resemiotization process materializes differently in each stage of practice in the links in the text-chain. I do this by detailing the ways in which we “see directly how someone can go from action to action to get from here to there in this discursive world” (Leander, Phillips and Taylor, 2006: 337). The moments from ‘action to action’ are signified by the links which enter new participation frameworks within the text-chain. What is more, “the setting (being the links in the text-chain of either of the two stories) also shapes the types of activities that will be possible” (Ker, 2015: 80).



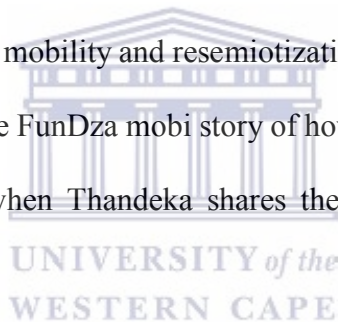
*The text-chain of the FunDza mobi story : ‘How tortoise’s nose become crooked’*

Prior to the introduction of the FunDza mobi stories, I approached a volunteer, Thandeka, who was going to read a story on the Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and I asked her if she could read her story using a provided mobile phone for the research using the story from the FunDza mobi site. Once she agreed to read a mobi-story and having noted the mobile reception issues, I told Thandeka I would send the different options she could choose from to her personal/individual WhatsApp account; in case reading directly from the FunDza mobi-site failed then she would be able to retrieve the same story from her personal/individual WhatsApp account. Nevertheless, all volunteers, including Thandeka, preferred to read from their WhatsApp

accounts rather than from the FunDza mobi site, perhaps because of the uncertainty in not knowing whether the mobile phone would connect or not.

I therefore copied different options of the FunDza mobi-stories from the children's section and I sent the different selections to Thandeka. She decided on 'How tortoise's nose become crooked'. However, in sending the different choices of the FunDza mobi-stories to volunteers such as Thandeka, I had to make a choice of whether or not to send the stories with illustrations. Because internet data/bundles are something the volunteers often remark on as being expensive, I decided to remove the illustrations and only send the contents of the mobi-story.

The following analysis shows the mobility and resemiotization of meanings with the unfolding of the links in the text-chain of the FunDza mobi story of how tortoise's nose become crooked. It starts from the second link when Thandeka shares the entire story in the reading club WhatsApp group chat.



**Firstly**, on 2016/7/22 at 15:30 pm: After having noted the mobile reception issues and opted to use volunteer's personal/individual WhatsApp accounts to send the different options of the FunDza mobi-stories. The first link is when I sent to Thandeka the different options of the FunDza mobi-stories and here, she decided on 'how tortoise's nose become crooked' mobi-story.

**Secondly**, on 2016/7/27 at 19:47 pm, Thandeka shares in the reading club WhatsApp group chat the entire FunDza mobi-story that she chooses from the options I sent to her. Then after, she asks to be assisted with coming up with story-activities or story-questions for the story-activity part.

The FunDza mobi story shared by Thandeka without illustrations:

### HOW TORTOISE’S NOSE BECAME CROOKED

Once upon a time, Tortoise and Squirrel were very close friends. One day, Squirrel said to Tortoise, “My friend, we have no money, but market day is getting close. What business can we do to make some money?” Tortoise responded, “You know I can make clay plates. I want you to join me in making plates to sell.” “Okay my friend, tomorrow evening I will join you to make the plates,” Squirrel said.

How tortoise’s nose became crooked – Page 2, on the day of the market, Tortoise went to the marketplace. He saw two people fighting in the distance. He put down his clay plates and went to watch the fight. When Tortoise got there, he saw that it was his friend Squirrel fighting with Mole.

How tortoise’s nose became crooked – Page 3, immediately, without finding out what caused the fight, Tortoise took a big stick and began to beat Mole. “Leave my friend alone!” shouted Tortoise. Mole turned to face Tortoise and bit him deeply on the nose.

How tortoise’s nose became crooked – Page 4, Tortoise’s nose began to bleed. Tortoise had impatiently entered into the fight. Since that day, Tortoise has a crooked nose to remind him not to be so hasty (Masifunde reading club WhatsApp data, 2016).

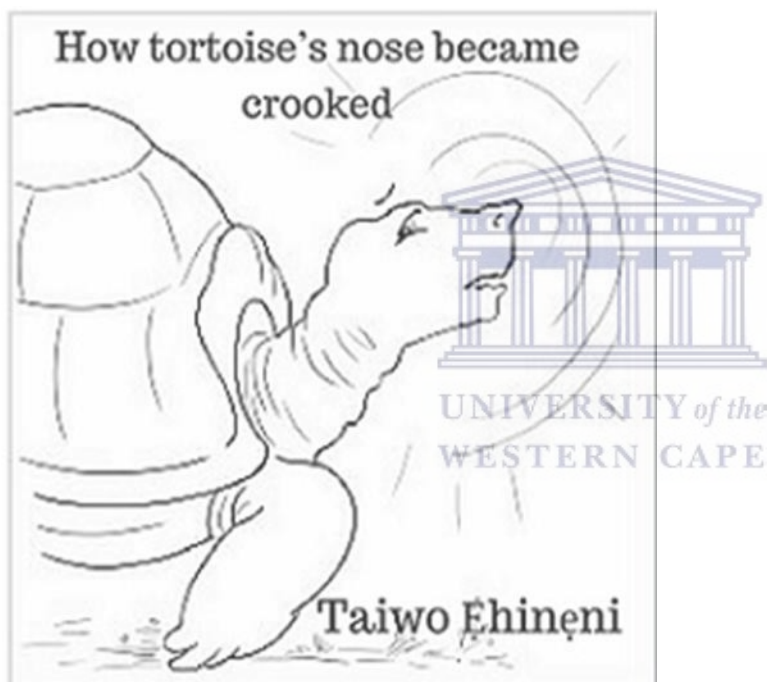
**Thirdly**, on 2016/08/06, at 11:05 the story moves from the back region into the front region when Thandeka reads the FunDza mobi story in English, simultaneously translating it to isiXhosa.

**Fourthly**, 2016/08/06, there is a story-activity question that derives from the read FunDza mobi-story of how tortoise’s nose become crooked. Contrary to the story-activity in the text-

chain of Lulama's magic blanket here each age group of the three will recontextualize the story differently since they have different story-activity statements/questions.

**A fifth point**, 2016/08/06, children in their different age groups take hold of and resemiotize the FunDza mobi-story into different story-activity texts.

**And finally**, 2016/08/06, after the session the story-activity text is taken home and I would assume there too are discussions initiated as the text is brought home by the child, and it is likely to change the meaning and the material used to achieve it.



The second link of the text-chain starts on 27th July 2016 in the reading club WhatsApp chat of the volunteers with the following message:

“2016/7/27 19:47 – Thandeka: How tortoise's nose became crooked [*the entire mobi-story text is truncated*]” (Masifunde reading club WhatsApp data, 2016).



The beginnings of the FunDza mobi story text-chain start when I send this story and other optional FunDza mobi-stories to Thandeka's individual/personal WhatsApp account. It then switches to the reading club WhatsApp group chat on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016, and with the help of other volunteers, she prepared for the club's Saturday session. The informing usually takes place in the week of the coming Saturday session, and sharing prior to the Saturday session helps other volunteers to prepare and be knowledgeable of the plan for Saturday.

The recontextualization of meanings across contexts was realized differently from the spoken language (which I used in speaking to Thandeka), to the written text (when I sent the different story options to her personal/individual WhatsApp account) and it moved to the front region where it made use of 'the visuals, gestural and embodied expression' (Kell, 2017) during the main activity read aloud and storytelling part, and finally to the different ways the FunDza mobi story is multi-semiotically taken hold of in the three age groups. Also, the ways in which the story is taken hold in the three age groups is "illustrated by how the children in this study (in the case of the Masifunde reading club) work easily and seamlessly across a variety of materials (as limited as they may be in the reading club) and modes, using semiotic modes available in their environments, to create imaginary worlds and express meanings according to their interest" (Bock, 2016: 2). And all this started when I asked Thandeka if she could read from a provided mobile phone to the resemiotization process that saw the mobility and a 'shift of meanings across contexts which drew from a range of codes and semiotic modes' (Iedema, 2003).

The third link of the text-chain is on 6th August 2016 when Thandeka reads the FunDza mobi-story during the main activity – reading aloud and storytelling part:



Figure 20: Thandeka reading the story on the phone.



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At 11:05 am the read aloud and storytelling starts when Thandeka reads the FunDza mobi-story in English then simultaneously translates it line by line to isiXhosa. As a consequence, the online reading club WhatsApp group chat as a mediated encounter in the back stage can be seen as an interaction order. Although Goffman only saw face to face encounters as the genuine interaction he did note that “presumably the telephone and the mails provide reduced versions of the primordial real thing, which is that of two or more individuals who are physically in one another's response presence” (Goffman, 1983: 2). My argument is that the reading club WhatsApp group chat is a mediated encounter in the back stage, and is an extension of the concept, made applicable by the function and the role it serves in the work of volunteers as they prepare and plan as obliged by dramaturgical circumspection. In such that the existence

of the reading club WhatsApp group chat asks for the reconsiderations of Goffman's views, because:

“The mediated interaction order is no longer an exception, but integral to our lives.. And as “we engage with each other and with these new technologies, we create new types of texts and establish new social practices” (Deumert, 2014).

The fourth link of the text-chain is the story-activity part and the progression of the previous text-chain link/ and part thus making this link, the third and fifth occurring in the same day but in new participation frameworks.

Here children completed different story-activity questions, not like the story-activity link for Lulama's magic blanket, which only had one story-activity statement/question. So in part the links in both text-chains share similarities and differences where “... several examples of resemiotization and the apparent similarities between each stage of the text-chain ...” (Ker, 2015: 75) are evident in the unfolding of the text-chains. And so the story-activity question/statement is different for each age group, and this is controlled and managed by a volunteer facilitating that particular age group for the completion of the story-activity question/statement. At the same time, the story-activity statement/question for the three age-groups was communicated by a volunteer facilitating that particular age-group.

The fifth link of the text-chain is a progression of the two previous links/ and a part of the routine, and it starts during the story activity part:

As noted in the previous link that through the process of resemiotization then the two text-chains do share both differences and similarities. The shared parallel can be seen from the ways in which the FunDza mobi-story gets taken hold of, because the practices in spite of being a mobile story, are not showing any new extents but continuing with the known practices in other words, the presence of the FunDza mobi-stories/the mobile phones and mobile reading practice are still generating localized practices, that being the case, it then shows that this distant practice ‘mobile reading’ in arriving at the reading club is shaped and reshaped by the local and the already established print-dominated space.

The different ways in which the FunDza mobi-story is taken hold of in the three age groups only accounts for the multiplicity and creative ways of the uptake of the mobi-story, so too, the meaning making process in the unfolding of the links in the text-chain indicates the different ways it materializes as it gets “... encoded in different semiotic artefacts” (Stroud and Mpendukana, 2009:371) in the making of the story-activity texts. At the same time, the links in the text-chain “... create its own unique meaning making opportunities, a nexus for the patterned movement of ideas, texts, and practices” (Campano, Paula and Welch: 2016: 69), for that reason, supporting the claim that distant literacies became assimilated into localised practices.

The series of activities of how the story is resemiotized and taken hold of in the three age groups:

- A. The younger children were given colouring pages with the story characters to colour in and then afterwards to write their names.



Figure 21: Final products of the story colouring of the characters in the FunDza mobi-story of 'How tortoise's nose became crooked' by the little children.

B. The middle group had to create a front page newspaper article where the newspaper would have a headline, picture and the story. The newspaper is named as ‘KVRC news’ in full, the KVRC stands for the club’s full name which I cannot refer to since I gave it a pseudonym.



*Figure 22: Thandeka is explaining the instruction for the story-activity for the middle age group. This is before she divided this group into small groups.*



Figure 23: The middle age group was asked to do a front page newspaper about the story - and this image is final product made by one groups in the middle age group.

A. Lastly, the older age group reinterpreted the story of how tortoise's nose became crooked' by writing a summary statement using both isiXhosa and English. The older children were seated with Simphiwe, a volunteer, around a white flipchart. Simphiwe has one child writing ten statements describing what the story was about on the flipchart, while being assisted by the seated children, and together working on translating the statements into English.





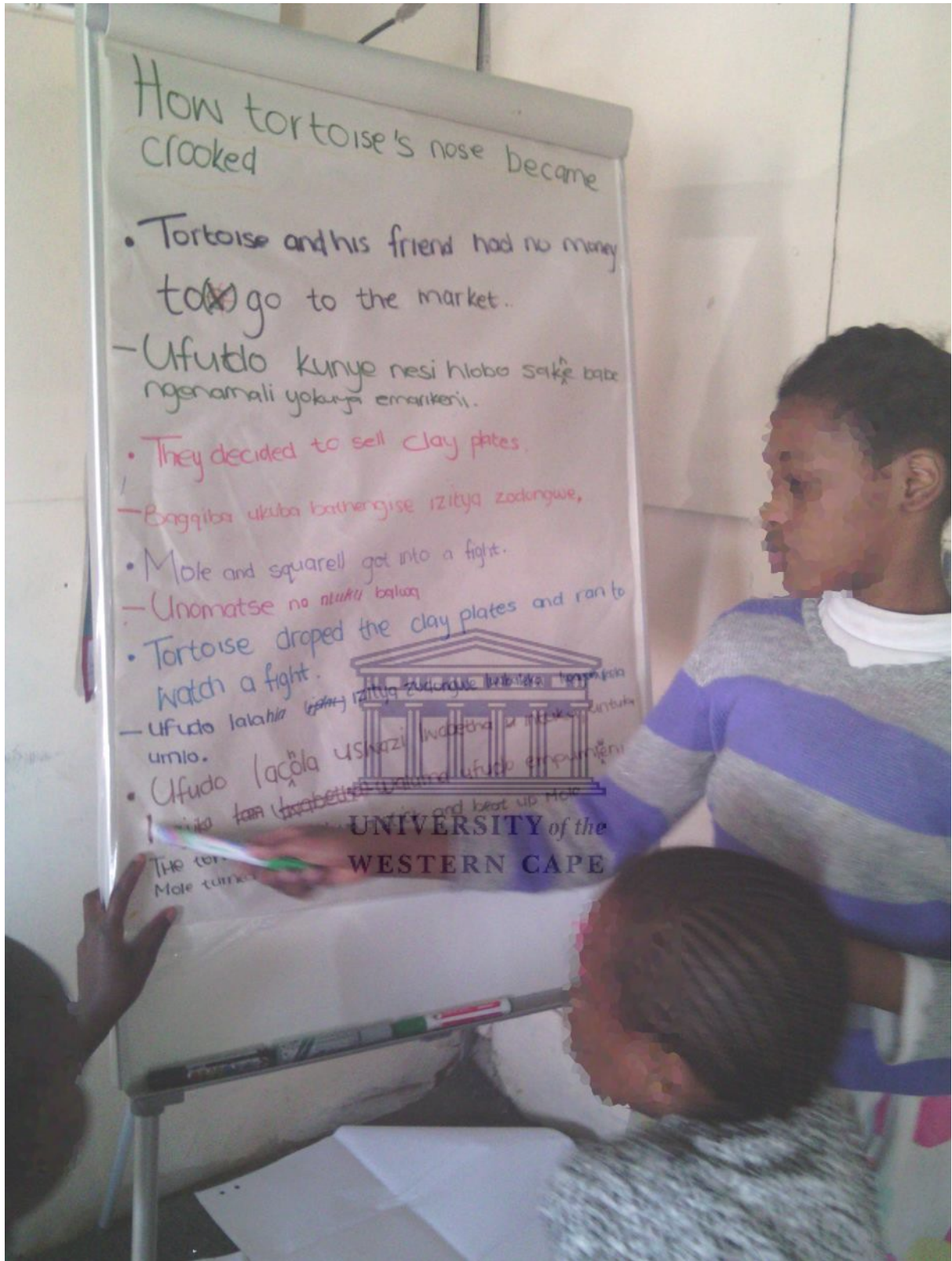
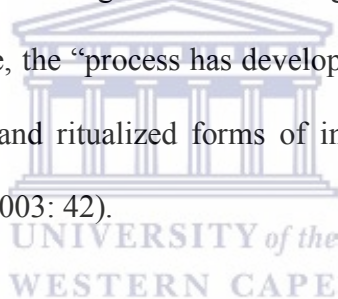


Figure 24: The writing stand has statements both in isiXhosa and English explaining the story given by the children.

The fifth and final link of the FunDza mobi-story text-chain is taken home.

As done with this link in Chapter Four, once the session comes to a conclusion, children take the story-activity text home with them. This could be the actual text (if it had been an individual work) or a material object or through discursive practices as the meanings are taken home. What is more, part of the text-chain analysis has shown that “literacy itself cannot travel but when used as a mode of representation in a particular medium it can enable a meaning to travel and that meaning may or may not be ‘legible’ in the context in which it arrives” (Kell, 2017: 166). Even when it is taken home ‘legibility’ will be applicable as the realization of meaning is dependent on the meaning maker and the availability of the materiality to be used in encoding a new text whilst at home.

As the links are resemiotized across the regions of the reading club until the point when children take the story-activity texts home, the “process has developed from situated and quite ‘local’ kinds of talk, via more formal and ritualized forms of interaction involving different and perhaps more people” (Iedema, 2003: 42).



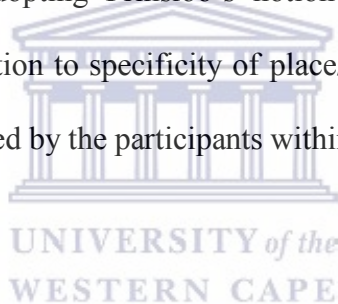
The text-chain of the FunDza mobi-story demonstrates that the practices occurring in the front region during the Saturday session were made possible by the mobility of texts/meanings, and were facilitated by the links in the text-chain.

## **5.5. Conclusion**

The introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories, mobile phones and the mobile reading practice within this already established clubs’ interaction order showed that “people take hold of literacy in ways that are consistent with existing social and cultural patterns” (Kell, 2009: 24). The three examples showed how children adopted and adapted to the arising circumstances, which

revealed them as “...individuals who improvise with the technologies that they have, and of groups of people who use these resources in ways that at first reading might appear novel and in particular cases are sometimes less than successful”. (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012: 272). For instance, Thuliswa, after being introduced to the mobile reading practice, took it with her and improvised using the two phones accessible to her and their different affordances.

In her different usage of each of the phones Thuliswa understood their affordances and constraints. Hence, how she took hold of them was also permitted by the materiality of the mobile device she had been using. On the other hand, the ‘taking hold of’ is further extended in revealing the different ways digital stories become resemiotized into the shared practices of the club members. Then by adopting Prinsloo’s notion of “placed resources” (2005) I recognised the need to pay attention to specificity of place/context in how the mobile phone and mobi stories were appropriated by the participants within their print-dominated interaction order.



As well, when looking at both text-chain analysis, the mobile phone is extensively used in the back region/online social order for the planning and preparing as noted under dramaturgical circumspection. Their usage was seamless, making them domesticated and embedded within the needs and interests of the reading club volunteers. However, when the same domesticated mobile phone in the back region/online social order entered into the clubs’ offline order during the Saturday session as literacy tool, it was met by resistance and constant regulation, as shown by the example involving the principal who had asked that children not be given the mobile phones to read along with the volunteer during the main activity. It is clear from this analysis that many of the social frames that “underpin human interaction in the offline contexts can be

identified within” (Marsh, 2011: 14) the volunteers’ planning and preparing in the online reading club WhatsApp group chat.

The phone was able to mediate and regulate interactions in the online social order of the club but then again it struggled to gain a standing in the practices within the Saturday sessions. Maybe this can be attributed to the mobile reception difficulties that emerged. These thus influenced the uptake and controlled usage, while at the same time making it shaped by the local circumstances. In other words, using the phone as a literacy tool at the reading club offered both possibilities and limitations. The possibilities are what could have been (which I outlined in Section 5. 2) and what was possible after the ‘make-do strategy’. The limitations are the unpredictable and unforeseen circumstances that tended to shape and reshape the usage of this new literacy tool at the reading club. Another notable limitation (even though not looked at extensively here) is the financial one, because when I decided to use the volunteers’ personal/individual WhatsApp accounts, I had to make a decision to strip out the illustrations in the stories as a way of limiting the financial costs or data of the volunteers. I discovered this issue during my Honours research paper, where I noted “the use of mobile phones in resource and financial constraint communities has enabled people to find creative ways to express and communicate whether in intrapersonal or interpersonal spaces” (Bangani, 2014). These financial difficulties at that time saw creative and unimagined ways in which the inexpensive mobile internet connected phones were taken up by the reading club volunteers as they used them in their day-to-day life whilst still supporting the work of the reading club.

This ‘taking hold of’ was also evident to the ‘make-do strategy’ I opted for in order to continue with mobile reading practice by the volunteers. The WhatsApp platform, normally used to co-

ordinate the planning for the club, was made use of in order to continue with the reading of the FunDza mobi-stories. When the bad mobile reception persisted, I then decided to use a volunteers' individual/personal WhatsApp account.

At the same time, through the adoption of the text-chain (Ker, 2015) concept, I was able show the phone was domesticated in the back stage practices of the volunteers however, for the sake of maintaining an impression management the volunteers regulated its presence during the time it was used for reading practices in the Saturday sessions. The text-chain analysis revealed the movement of meanings from the back region (WhatsApp group chat) to the Saturday sessions in the space of the church. As resemiotized meanings came to enter the church then this religious space was reconstructed and repurposed to an informal learning space which has transitioned to engage with digital literacy. This reconstruction of the church occurred at three levels: during the Saturday sessions, the team of volunteers and the five identified activities (individual reading, icebreaker: games and songs, circle seating, main activity: reading aloud and storytelling; and story-activity). The mobi-stories came to be used in these five identified activities and in the WhatsApp group.

Lastly, the use of the FunDza mobi-stories and the mobile phones at the reading club demonstrates clearly that “rather than asking what is the impact of literacy we ask how people ‘take hold’ of it to add it to their communicative repertoires” (Street, 2004). Hence, the mobile phones and FunDza mobi-stories can be seen as “digital literacies to be placed resources in the globalised periphery” (Prinsloo and Rowsell, 2012).

## 6. Conclusion

The study as an ethnographically-orientated intervention introduced mobile phones and mobile reading by providing four Hisense infinity pure 1 mini mobile phones in the attempt to increase the literacy resources available to the Masifunde reading club. This study was informed by the literacy crisis in the South African Basic Education system which was, and still is, characterized by public protests about unequal access to resources such as books, libraries and information technology and the underperformance of children and youths in standardized tests as noted by Prinsloo et al. (2014).

The Masifunde reading club, as part of a network of community literacy clubs across the country, aims at creating a conducive **inspiring and motivating** informal literacy space that will promote the use of the child's mother tongue language, isiXhosa, for the development of reading practices as children are immersed in the world of stories/books. This is particularly significant as the Masifunde reading club is located on the peripheries of Cape Town in one of the most impoverished and poorly resourced communities. The study engaged with a literacy initiative that uses digital media and resources to generate reading and writing practices using multiple languages – the FunDza Literacy Trust. It attempted to make accessible online mobile literacy material with the aim of improving literacy of children and young adults through getting them reading and writing for pleasure in poorly resourced communities. At the same time the research examined how the digital resources were 'taken hold' of in an informal learning environment in how they were used, developed, shared and adapted in particular ways by the club members using the four provided mobile phones in the Masifunde reading club.

Initiatives such as African Storybook project (ASP), the FunDza Literacy Trust and Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign have proven to be important sites for testing innovations that address the possibilities and challenges faced by digitally-based initiatives. Then the literacy and technological paradox facing South Africa with regards to being a 'book-poor and mobile rich' country' (Walton, 2010) suggests mobile reading/learning to be a promising avenue for the struggling education system and an out-of-school informal learning space that are looking for alternatives. This was also supported by Prinsloo et al. (2014) and Jones, Chik and Hafner (2013) who both argue that young people gain much of their experience and knowledge by creatively using technologies in out-of-school contexts in ways that had not been imagined nor thought of.

This research, as an ethnographically-orientated intervention, focused on how reading club members engaged and interacted with online fictional stories accessed by a mobile phone by examining the ways in which the Masifunde reading club 'took hold' (Street, 2004) of the FunDza mobi-stories/mobile phones, and the ways in which the FunDza mobi-stories became resemiotized into the group's print-dominated literacy practices. In investigating how the reading club takes hold of the FunDza mobi-stories/ the mobile phone and mobile reading practice within an already established interaction order, I adopted Goffman's concept of 'interaction order' (1983). In his concept of interaction order Goffman restricted himself to face-to-face interaction, which rendered mediated encounters such as the Masifunde reading club WhatsApp group chat irrelevant and overlooked. However, the mobility of texts and meanings that became visible in the two text-chains, in chapters four and five respectively, allowed me to reconsider and extend Goffman's limited definition to include online interactional spaces such as the Masifunde reading club WhatsApp group chat.

Thus, in this study ‘interaction order’ included the Saturday sessions that took place inside a church and the online WhatsApp group chat mediated by digital media resources/WhatsApp. In view of that, I extending Goffman’s (1983) definition of the interaction order to include mediated communication/the WhatsApp group chat, and this extension allowed me to apply it to Goffman’s concept of front and back regions as a way of accounting for the different contexts of the club, the behaviours of the volunteers and the usage of the phones.

Likewise, the mapping of the club’s current interaction order had been conceptualized using not only the concept of ‘interaction order’ (Goffman, 1983) but other relatable concepts such as ritual, routine, team, social interaction, front stage and back stage performances, setting, performance, social interaction and dramaturgical co-operation, dramaturgical metaphor, and impression management, (1956). The mapping of the Masifunde reading club revealed this informal learning space as co-created between the children and volunteers and showed how it became somewhat fragile after the introduction of the phones, despite the reception difficulties.

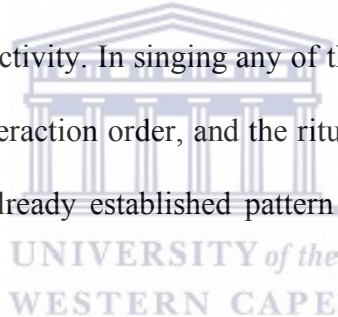
In the course of mapping the currently existing interaction order of the reading club, I was able to analytically construct the Masifunde reading club in three levels: constructing the Saturday sessions, the volunteers as a ‘team’ and the five identified activities which constitutes the club’s routine structure that unfolds in the course of two-hours for each session every Saturday. These temporarily repurposed and re-constructed the church into an informal learning space every Saturday for two-hours. This re-construction and repurposing is achieved through Goffman’s ‘co-operation’ notion that facilitates the staging of a single performance between the children and the volunteers hence, making this social interaction between the children and volunteers



co-created. At the same time, the staging of a single defined situation had been achieved through the impression management and the three dramaturgical conventions that of loyalty, discipline and circumspection. It was through these dramaturgies that the reading club volunteers achieved the definition of a situation, by co-operating with the children, who are either part of the audience or the performers, depending on the line adopted, to foster an impression. Their interchangeable role, the audience and /or the performers makes this co-operated team-performance a 'dialogue and an interplay between two teams: the volunteers and children. This was exemplified by the performance of the 'warm welcome' or the 'Chinese clap' which was staged for a visitor.

The concept of co-operation was in part a way of defining a situation in which the construction of a Saturday session was realized, by embracing Goffman's dramaturgical conventions which paid attention to the co-operated team performance in presenting a front stage performance in the course of a session each Saturday. The same, the construction of 'the Saturday session' was achieved through Pahl's (2014) "representational means". As the church was transformed into an informal learning space by using 'movable resources' belonging to the club which are stored in a neighbourhood house, and these assisted in constructing the 'temporality' of the two-hour reading club sessions inside the church. These representational practices vary from the interactions, the display of children's books in front of the chapel during the individual reading part, to an easel, pens and pencils, A4 printing paper used to write on, and the print literacy artefacts. For instance, the two A1 sheets of paper placed on the wall for each session with the question usually written in two languages (isiXhosa and English), "Iveki yam ibinjani"/ "How was your week", these and others have come to frame the church into a particular world that of informal learning space using stories/books to engage children.

Thus, ‘making the space created rather than made’, and within this created space the club’s social interactions can be understood as matter of routines and rituals. The routines are the five identified activities such as the individual reading, icebreaker: games and songs, circle seating, main activity: reading aloud and storytelling and story-activity. Similarly, these five activities are the already established pattern of action that regulate the spatial organization of the reading club, in which later on came to shape and manage the presence of new literacies in the reading club. What is more, the routines are linked and connected by the interaction ritual songs such as a sayivula- azwi’, ‘lixesha lebali’ or ‘qokelela’ song. These ritual songs were there to communicate a transition, for example, the qokelela’ song was used to notify children of individual reading coming to an end at the same time, acting as a move from individual reading to icebreaker: games and songs activity. In singing any of the three mentioned above songs it changed the Saturday session interaction order, and the ritual songs according to Kell (2006) function as ‘joins’ in the five already established pattern of action for each session every Saturday.



All the same, to be able to talk about the Masifunde reading club – one has to start with the club’s volunteers who according to Goffman are a ‘team’. This was constituted by their co-operation in staging a single performance. Moreover, under the ‘co-operation’ concept, the reading club volunteers worked together to ensure the functionality of the Masifunde reading club and in maintaining a single routine even whilst preparing and planning in the back stage for the Saturday routine. As the volunteers planned and prepared for a Saturday session using the WhatsApp group chat occurring in the back stage and obligated by the dramaturgical circumspection; then the linkage between the back stage and front stage was connected and

traced by taking examples of the two stories – a storybook of Lulama’s magic blanket and the FunDza mobi-story of how tortoise’s nose became crooked. These were explored as text-chains that connected the two regions or orders of the Masifunde reading club. Through the text-chain of each story I was able to trace the mobility of meaning making across the backstage to the front stage/ and at times back to the back region, as a result, meanings are recontextualized across space-time along the links of any of the traced stories of their text-chains.

What is more, the recontextualization of the two stories revealed the mobility of meaning making ‘from practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next’ as texts/meanings are recontextualized across space and time in the two regions of the Masifunde reading club. And what is of significance about the tracing of the two story text-chains, were that meanings are not situated but mobile across time-space.



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I used Iedema’s (2003) concept of resemiotization to provide an analytical frame for tracing the interface of semiotic resources in how they are translated from each stage of practice in the ‘moment to moment’ and ‘context to context’ interactions of the volunteers and children. Last but not least, the tracing of the meaning making of the FunDza mobi-story of how tortoise’s nose became crooked provided an understanding for how the mobile phone came to feature or enter into the Saturday session interaction order through the resemiotized meanings/texts of the FunDza mobi-story across the link in its text-chain. In the back region of the Masifunde reading club, the mobile phone is used freely and domesticated into the everyday practices of the reading club volunteers; and this had also been evident in my Honours paper (Bangani, 2014). Interestingly, the usage of the mobile phone by the reading club volunteers’ accounts for its domestication, which reflects the social shaping of technologies. Supporting Prinsloo’s (2005)

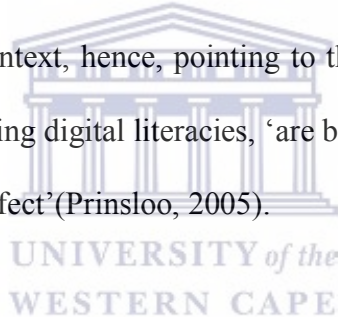
claim of technology/new literacies as functioning as ‘placed resources’ in different contexts, in the case of the Masifunde reading club, showed the appropriation of the mobile phone as deeply integrated into the practices of the club members’ print-based interaction order.

Similarly, volunteers’ and children’s uses of the four provided mobile phones were shaped by context and place, which made them ‘taken hold’ of in ways that made sense to the club members. In addition, to say that the four mobile phones functioned as placed resources took into account the specificity of the varying contexts where literacy/new literacies get ‘taken hold’ (Street, 2004) of; hence, new literacies are ‘placed resources’ (Prinsloo, 2005) at the Masifunde reading club. This ‘context’ was the already established communicative routine (back stage/ the reading club WhatsApp group chat) and the literacy practices (front stage performances occurring during the Saturday sessions in the premise of church), which make up the club’s interaction order. It was in this context that the introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories came to exist. Therefore, the introduction of the FunDza mobi-stories and mobile phones at the club were determined by examining how if any of the club’s already established interaction order changed with the arrival of new literacies.

How the club members, located on the outskirts of Cape Town in a poorly resource community, took hold of the FunDza mobi-stories/the mobile phone within an already established pattern of action reiterated Street’s (2009) claims that people take hold of digital literacy in ways consistent with an established interaction order of that social encounter –like the Masifunde reading club. This was illustrated by three examples of children who had adopted and adapted to the arising circumstances which shaped and reshaped how the online fictional stories designed to be access by a mobile phone were engaged and interacted with. For the reason that

the FunDza mobi-stories/the mobile phone was taken hold of in ways consistent with the literacy practices of the reading club. The introduction of the mobile phone therefore did not change the club's existing interaction order but worked around it.

At a broader level, the study helps with understanding how mobile technology can be used to improve children and young people's engagement with literacy from these communities located on the periphery. This research project therefore contributes to an understanding of the nature and manner of the varied ways digital literacies travel and are taken hold of in localised sites like the Masifunde reading club. What is more, the study showed how technologies like the four provided mobile phones are the same when entering the interaction order of the reading club in comparison to other context/places however through the social shaping of the phones in the reading club; it showed the mobile phones/the FunDza mobi-stories as taken hold of in ways distinctive of the club's context, hence, pointing to the claim that 'despite their global impact, the new literacies, including digital literacies, 'are best studied as resources situated in social practices that have local effect'(Prinsloo, 2005).



Finally, future research projects looking to study engagements with online and mobile reading and writing resources under contemporary context/places may start by framing their studies as 'placed resources' (Prinsloo, 2005) in order to account for the varied ways in which new literacies can come to be taken hold of divergent contexts of practice.

In the same way, my research project of 'taking hold' of mobile phone stories in a Cape Flats reading club' is a contribution to this relatively new field of study anchored by Prinsloo (2005) that new literacies are best studied as placed-resources. Framing the study using this placed-based approach, I was able to ask and answer how the specificity of context/place of the

Masifunde reading club shaped and reshaped the usage of the mobile phone for accessing the FunDza mobi-stories. On the other hand, given the literacy crisis in the South African Basic Education system then digitally-based initiatives such the FunDza Literacy Trust, African Storybook Project and Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign the project has opened up a space for testing firstly what potential and opportunities are there for using digitally-based initiatives for literacy development. Secondly, whether they can they be a 'workable' alternative as suggested by the UNESCO (2014) report. In facilitating the use of mobile phones for engaging children and young people located on the periphery of resources with reading and writing practice. Such openings could encourage practices of reading/wring for-enjoyment, even more so given the consistent literacy crisis facing South Africa where other avenues that could work need to be tested and explored to help improve access to literacy material at a lower cost given that people already have access to mobile phones. However, as a promising alternative 'for addressing questions of quality and scale on the other hand their systemic potentials must still be engaged with' (Prinsloo et al., 2014), and the latter calls for more research that can generate an in-depth ethnographic studies especially from the global south in which digital literacies seem to work in ways favourable to the local context.

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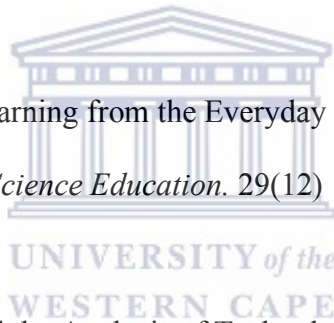
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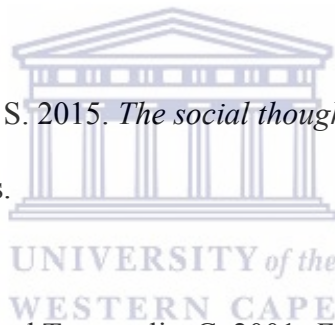
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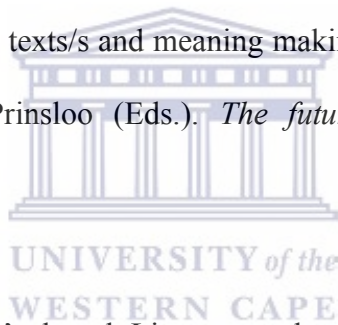
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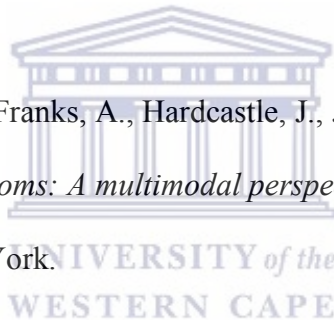
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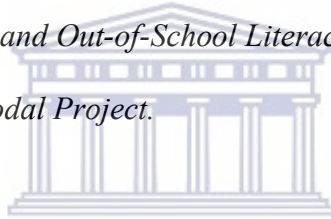
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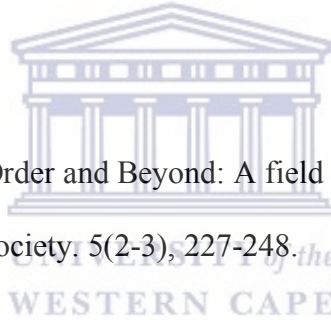
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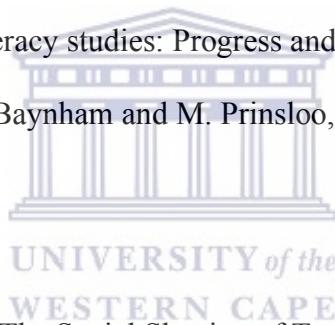
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## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Appendix A: Children semi-structured interview in English

1. Name
2. Age
3. Home language(s)
4. What language(s) do you use at the reading club, school and at home? The reasons for different language choices at the club if it is different from the home language?
5. How do you decide on the books to read during individual reading at the club?
6. In writing a story-activity what language do you use and why?
7. Which language do you prefer to use when you read and write at the Masifunde reading club?
8. How long have you been coming to the reading club?
9. Tell me what you really enjoy about the reading club?
10. Which story do you love best from the printed books? Tell me what it is that you love the most about that story?
11. Do you have access to a phone at home? Whose phone is it? What do you use it for?
12. Do you have access to a computer at school and home? What do you use it for?
13. Imagine that I had not been here before and I did not know about the Masifunde reading club. Explain to me exactly, step by step, what is involved and the different activities for each section in the reading club. What do you do first? Then what? And which activity do you prefer the most and why?
14. What did you expect after being told you will read stories from a mobile phone? How was the reality of it different?
15. What do you remember about your experience in using a mobile phone to read?
16. What did you not like about using a mobile phone to read stories in the reading club?
17. Which story from the digital stories you read would you have preferred to read as a print story, or was it fine to read it on the phone? If so why?
18. How does reading mobi-stories compare with reading printed books in the reading club? Was it the same? Was it different?
19. Did you tell anyone at home or at school about your experience of reading the FunDza mobi stories? And how did they respond?
20. If you had access to a phone and airtime at home, would you read the FunDza mobi-stories at home? Why? Why not?

## 8.2. Appendix B: Children semi-structured interview in isiXhosa

1. Ngubani igama lakho?
2. Mingaphi iminyaka yakho?
3. Luthini ilwimi lwasekhaya oluthethayo?
4. Loluphi okanye zeziphi ilwimi othi uzisebenzise ereading club, esikolweni kunye nasekhaya. Sithini isizathu sokuthi usebenzise ilwimi ezohlukeneyo?
5. Uthi uzikhethe njani incwadi zokufunda ngexesha lokuzifundela ereading club?
6. Ukubhala umsebenzi webali uthi usebenzise oluphi ulwimi okanye eziphi ilwimi kwaye sithini isizahtu soko?
7. Loluphi okanye zeziphi ilwimi othi ukhethe ukusbenzisa zona xa ufunda naxa ubhala ereading club?
8. Unexesha elingakanani usiza ereading club?
9. Ngandixelele ngento oyithandayo ngereading club?
10. Kumabali akhaya ereading club leluphi olithandayo? Sithini isizathu soko?
11. Unako ukusebenzisa umnxeba wasesinqeni ekhaya? Ngokabani? Uthi uwusebenzisele ntoni?
12. Unako ukusebenzisa icomputer esikolweni okanye ekhaya? Uthi uyisebenzisele nontoni?
13. Yenza ngathi ndiyaqala ukufika apha ereading club – ngokoke ngandixelele kuthi kwenziwe ntoni, ngeliphi ixesha? Ndixelele ngomgaqo olandelwayo. Wena yintoni oyithandayo kakhulu kwaye undixelele nesizathu sokukhetha lento uyikhethileyo.
14. Uye walindela ntoni emveni kokuba uxelelwe uzokufunda amabali ngomnxeba wasesinqeni? Oko kuye kwahluka kanjani kwinto ethe yenzeka xa nithe nasebenzisa umnxeba wasesinqeni?
15. Yintoni oyikhumbulayo ngokusebenzisa umnxeba wasesinqeni ukufunda amabali?
16. Yintoni othe awayithanda ngokusebenzisa umnxeba wasesinqeni ukufunda amabali?
17. Leliphi ibali kulana afumanake ngomnxeba onokuthi urhalele ukulifunda lisencwadini? Okanye wanelisekile ukufunda amabali ngomnxeba wasesinqeni?
18. Ngawenze uthelekiso phakathi kwebali lencwadi nelolufumaneka ngomnxeba ngokuthi undixelele umohluko othe wawuqwalasela? Iphinde ibeyntoni athi afane ngayo lamabali?
19. Ukhona umntu ekhaya nasesikolweni othe wamxelela ngokufunda amabali afumaneka ngomnxeba wasesinqeni?

20. Ukuba unganako ukufunda amabali akwaFundza ngomnxeba ekhaya ingayinto na onothi uyenze xa usekhaya?





### 8.3. Appendix C: Volunteer semi-structured interview

21. Name
22. Age
23. How long have you been coming to the reading club?
24. Home language(s)
25. Do you know any other language(s)? Do you ever use these other languages at the Masifunde reading club and for what activities? And your home language- what or which activities do you use it for at the reading club?
26. The Masifunde reading club has more than one language accessible to it – How do you as volunteers support and encourage a bilingual or multilingual literacy practices at the reading club?
27. What strategies are used to give children access to these other languages other than their home language (isiXhosa) at the club?
28. At the Masifunde reading club how as volunteers do you support and maintain the use of children's home language?
29. What aspect of a story do you look at in deciding on which stories to read at the reading club?
30. For each story read there is an activity done by the children. What do you notice about how the children recontextualized the stories?
31. Describe the routine that you follow each Saturday in the reading club's activities step by step.
32. Why did you follow that routine? (What are the reasons for the different activities and how they were sequenced? Individual reading, icebreaker, circle seating, storytelling and story-activity). Speak to me about these slots like "individual reading" what happens and why is the club set-up this way?
33. What can you recall about the use of mobile phones as a literacy tool at the Masifunde reading club?
34. From the stories read which did you like and why?
35. Tell me about the children's engagement with the mobile phone as a literacy tool and how was it different from a book?
36. In looking at how the children engaged with the mobile phone. Do you think the mobile phone/mobile stories have a place in the reading club or can they be integrated as part of the literacy practices of the club?

37. Have you used your phone to read any digital stories yourself since you were introduced to them? Tell me about this?
38. Prior the storytelling on Saturday – please explain the process involved in planning for each Saturday session?
39. How the reading club what's app group assist in the planning for the Saturday sessions? What happens during the group chats? And how do the group chats during planning translate into activities at the reading club?
40. What does the use of a mobile phone allow in the Masifunde reading club?



## 8.4. Appendix D: An overview of the activities in the Masifunde reading club what's group

### Adding of new members to the group chat

- “5/3/2016 19:47: Sihle added Elethu”

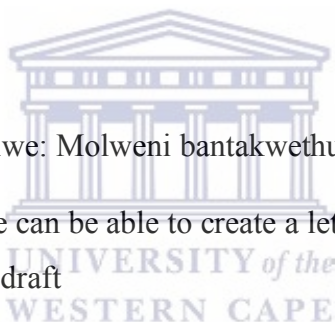
### Discussions

- “9/8/2016 07:06: Siphon: One of the ideas evele no sis Zandi for activity, sibene wish box then everyone abhale umnqweno wakhe nge reading club including volunteers, any great idea lyk this one to add up”
- “8/26/2016 20:06: Funeka: Ingayi activity yethu akhongxaki. Bayakuthanda ukwenza amakhadi.”

### Announcements

- 2016/10/18 13:36: Simphiwe: Molweni bantakwethu,

Sizama ukwenza iLogo so that we can be able to create a letterhead etc. The options endizozithumela are not final but draft



### Updates

- “8/26/2016 12:02: Simphiwe ...: <image omitted> [picture of donated books] 8/26/2016 12:02: Simphiwe ...: And we got those 😊 8/26/2016 13:17: Simphiwe ...: Australia”
- “7/20/2016 22:21: Simphiwe ...: Molweni bantakwethu. NgoMgqibelo andikho kwiqela lethu. Namhlanje ndiqutyuliswe nguAndy ngodliwano ndlebe olufutshane kuK-FM noSechaba. Ndicele iincwadi ke ndathetha nangomsebenzi omhle esiwenzayo. Enkosi”
- 2016/09/12 14:40: Funeka: Hello everyone. The bank account is opened. We've been sitting at the bank from 9:00--13:30.

## Meetings and setting up future meetings

- “5/13/2016 05:41: Simphiwe: Molweni bantu bakuthi masibekeni Agenda ya Sat.

Mna ndicinga: Feedback on registration Reflections on first term Adim- register taking and children registration Scheduling of stories (session storytellers or readers) June/July outing Library strategy”

## Enquiring

- “5/7/2016 18:36: Siya: Dear all. I'm going to Makro tomorrow. it will be a great chance to pick up some stationary items for JVRC. Please suggested items we are in need of. I'll get some writing pads and marking pens.”
- “7/13/2016 21:44: Lelethu: Ngubani obalisa ibali this week?”

## To inform

- Volunteers apologising for their absence “7/18/2016 09:34: Siya: Zihlobo. We had offered to do the story activity this weekend. Unfortunately, we cannot go ahead with this and request to move to weekend of 30 July”
- “6/15/2016 15:17: Portia: Molweni zihlobo ngomhla we25 kulenyanga imiyo sabesisenzelwa ibali nguHeather enkosi”
- 2016/04/12 12:35: Zandile R: Molweni nonke ngoncedo luka principal, I created a gmail account yase kwa-faku vulindlela reading club. Username: readingclubgmail.com password: Love. You are welcome to change the username ne password.

## Sharing of stories prior Saturday

- “9/8/2016 06:57: Siphoh: Molweni maqabane ndim kanene obalisayo this Saturday neh 9/8/2016 06:58: Siphoh: Thato’s Birthday Surprise.”

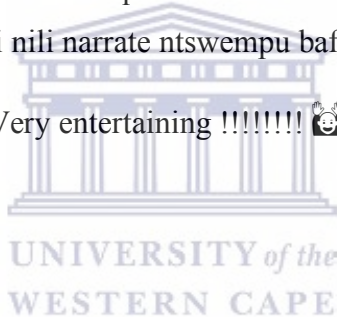
- “7/18/2016 21:57: Lelethu: Molweni ingabe ukhona umntu ongakwazi ukuya nam kwi workshop ka Funda Leader ngolwesine iqala ngo 9 till 4.”

### Asking for assistance

- “9/2/2016 19:41: Simphiwe ...: Now I forgot to do a register. Can anyone help?”
- 2016/05/06 17:24: Funeka: Ndicela activities zangomso. Ibali lithi "the river turtle". Ufudo olwaluhlala emanzini lwaza lwagqiba uphuma libone ilizwe. Ingxaki lalingakwazi uphila ngaphandle kwamanzi. Laphuma emanzini lahamba, lahamba. masidibane ngomso zihlobo.

### To give feedback on the reading club’s activities

- “7/11/2016 15:29: Siphoh: Ehh maqabane andaz ke noba uCebo ukhon aphe groupin kodwa ke sis Lelethu ibali **nili narrate ntswempu bafobethu interesting ndentertaining.**
- 7/11/2016 15:38: Zandi: Very entertaining !!!!!!! 🙌👏.”



### Celebrating each other

- “10/8/2016 20:12: Zandi: To Lelethu congratulations!!!!!! cc on your big day 🎉👏🎓.”
- 2016/05/19 15:11: Funeka: Siyabulela bhuti Siya and 2016/08/28 10:51: Portia: Wow, enkosikakhulu bhuti sithombe no Linda owam umntwana ufike onwabile kakhulu kwaye engavali umlomo ndlela le indlela ibiyiyo

### To give reminders

- 2016/08/06 9:47: Siya: Please ensure we have the easel today.

### Emotionally supporting each other

- 2016/08/30 10:40: Themba mayaya: Ngxesi sisi..Our deep condolences go out to you and your family
- 2016/09/02 16:32: My brother Thembi: My condolences to you Ta Themba

## Planning

- “10/11/2016 22:26: Simphiwe: Molweni,

I have better news. In our search to continue to look for a more 'appropriate' and close to the nature campsite: we have managed to get Apostle Battery (please google) near Camps Bay. Their rate is R80.00 per night. They have committed to 8% discount and free Kitchen use. We need to ASAP pay R1500.00 to secure this booking.

This means more work needs to be done.

2-4 Dec is the date. 70 people x 2 nights = R11 200.00 which is cheaper than the other site. Food: braai, 2 dinners, 2 breakfasts, 2 lunch, general fruit/snack and juice. Transport. Gifts for all children. Name tags. Indemnity forms for parents. Photographer or otherwise. Airtime. Fuel. Programme of the weekend. Anyway am putting this out there. We all need to engage so that we do not become surprise on the day or a week before. We will make a call. We still need a letter head. Zandile we urgently need to communicate parents meeting for.

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## 8.5. Appendix E: Children's consent form in isiXhosa



**Consent Form: Children in the club**

University of the Western Cape

**Title of research: Young teenagers' ways of 'taking hold' of online fiction in the interaction order of a Cape Flats reading Club.**

**Researcher:** Zandile Bangani

Contact details: Ph: 072 875 2526 and Email: [2961294@myuwc.ac.za](mailto:2961294@myuwc.ac.za)

**Please initial box**

1. Ndiyazi ukuba ukuthatha inxaxheba koluphando andizukubhatalwa okunye xa ndifuna ukuyeka ndivumelekile ukwenza oko, akuzukubakho manyathelo azakuthathwa.
2. Ndazisiwe ukuba impendulo endizinikezeleyo nengcaciso ngam ukuba ndingubani zizokuhlala ziyimfihlelo. Ndinikezela ngemvume kumalungu ophando ukuba angalujonga uphando. Phezukoko igama lam akuvumelekanga lipapashwe esidlangalaleni nakwezinye imbalelwano ezithi ziqulathwe leliphepha.
3. Njengomthathi nxaxheba koluphando ndiyayazi andizukuthetha okanye ndipapashe okuthethwe ngabanye abayinxalenye yophando.
4. Ndiyavuma ukuba oko kufumaneka koluphando ngam njengomthathi nxaxheba kungasetyenziswa kwixesha elizayo
5. Ndazisiwe ukuba oluphando luzaku shicilelwa kusetyenziswa irecorder kwakunye nevideo.
6. Ndiyavuma ukuba ndizokuthatha inxaxheba koluphando lukhankanywe ngasentla.

7. Ndiyavuma ukuba oko kufumaneka koluphando kungasetyenziswa kwixesha elizayo.

---

Name of Participant

*(or legal representative)*

---

Date

---

Signature



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\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person taking consent  
*(If different from lead researcher)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lead Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

*(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)*

*Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.*

**Researcher:**

**Supervisor:**

**HOD:**



## 8.6. Appendix F: Children's consent form in English



University of the Western Cape

### Children consent form in English

**Title of research: Young teenager's ways of 'taking of hold' of online fiction in the interaction order of a Cape Flats reading club.**

**Researcher:** Zandile Bangani

Contact details: Ph: 072 875 2526 and Email: [2961294@myuwc.ac.za](mailto:2961294@myuwc.ac.za)

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

(If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead research at any time)

UNIVERSITY of the

2. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

3. As a participant of the group discussion, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.

4. I agree that the data collected from me to be used in future research.

5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

6. I also understand that any video and audio recordings may be made during the period of data collection.

7. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

---

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
*(or legal representative)*

---

Name of person taking consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If different from lead researcher)*

---

Lead Researcher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
*(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)*



*Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.*

**Researcher:**

**Supervisor:**

**HOD:**



## 8.7. Appendix G: Assent form to minors in isiXhosa



Assent form for minors

University of the Western Cape

**Title of research: Young teenagers' ways of 'taking hold' of online fiction in the interaction order of a Cape Flats reading club.**

**Researcher:** Zandile Bangani

Contact details: Ph: 072 875 2526 and Email: [2961294@myuwc.ac.za](mailto:2961294@myuwc.ac.za)

**Please initial box**

1. Ndiyavuma ukuba ndifundile kwaye ndiyayazi okuqulathwe yiInformation Sheet   
apho ichaza banzi ngophando apho umntana wam uzakube ethatha inxaxheba okanye ndibenalo  
ithuba lokubuza imibuzo eyamanele no-phando.
2. Ndiyazi ukuba ukuthatha inxaxheba komntana wam koluphando akazukubhatalwa. Okanye umntana  
wam angayeka engakhange anikezele isizathu kwaye akukho manyethelo azakuthathwa. Ukongeza  
koku, umntana wam ukuba akafuni ukuphendula imibuzo, uvumelekile ukungaphenduli.
3. Njengomzali ndazisiwe ukuba impendulo ezinikezelwe ngumntana wam ziyimfihlelo, kwaye  
ndiyavuma amalungu ophando angalujonga uphando. Phezukoku igama lomntana wam  
aluzukusetyenziswa nakweyiphipina incwadi zasesidlangalaleni.
4. Umntana wam njengomthathi nxaxheba koluphando uyayazi ukuba akazukuthetha okanye  
apapashe okuthethwe ngabanye abantwana abathatha inxaxheba koluphando.

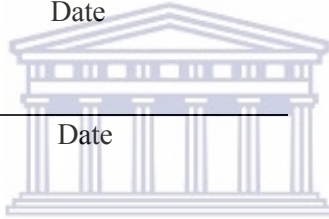
5. Njengomzali ndiyavuma ukuba oko kufumaneka koluphando ngomntana wam kungasetyenzisa kwixesha elizayo

6. Ndiyavuma ukuba umntana wam angathatha inxaxheba koluphando luchazwe apha ngasentla.

7. Ndazisiwe ukuba oluphando luzaku shicilelwa kusetyenziswa irecorder kwakunyenevideo.

---

_____ Name of Participant (or legal representative)	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Name of person taking consent (If different from lead researcher)	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Lead Researcher (To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)	_____ Date	_____ Signature



UNIVERSITY of the  
WESTERN CAPE

*Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.*

<b>Researcher:</b>
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<b>Supervisor:</b>
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<b>HOD:</b>
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## 8.8. Appendix H: Assent form for minors in English



Assent form for minors

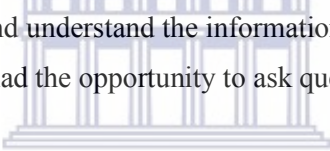
University of the Western Cape

**Title of research: Young teenagers' ways of 'taking hold' of online fiction in the interaction order of a Cape Flats reading club.**

**Researcher:** Zandile Bangani

Contact details: Ph: 072 875 2526 and Email: [2961294@myuwc.ac.za](mailto:2961294@myuwc.ac.za)

**Please initial box**

- 
1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
  2. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that she or he is free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead research at any time)
  3. I understand that my child's responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my child's anonymised responses. I understand that my child's name will not be linked with the research materials, and she or he will not be identified or be identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
  4. As a participant of the discussion, my child will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.
  5. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.





## 8.9. Appendix I: Volunteer's consent form in English



Consent Form – Adult volunteers

University of the Western Cape

**Title of research project: Young teenagers' ways of 'taking hold' of online fiction in the interaction order of a Cape Flats reading club.**

**Researcher:** Zandile Bangani

Contact details: Ph: 072 875 2526 and Email: [2961294@myuwc.ac.za](mailto:2961294@myuwc.ac.za)



**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead research at any time)
3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
4. As a participant of the discussion, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.
5. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

6. I agree for to take part in the above research project.

7. I also understand that any audio and video recordings may be made during the period of data collection.

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Name of Participant  
(or legal representative)

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Date

---

Signature

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Name of person taking consent  
(If different from lead  
researcher)

---

Date

---

Signature



\_\_\_\_\_  
Lead Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

*(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)*

*Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.*

**Researcher:**

**Supervisor:**

**HOD:**



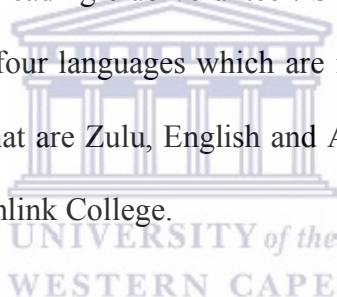
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## 8.10. Appendix J: Introducing the participants

### Reading club volunteers

Funeka is one of the longest serving reading club volunteers. Funeka like many of the volunteers is from the community where the club is situated. She speaks two languages isiXhosa and English as her second language. She is a student at the University of the Western Cape doing a Bachelor of Education degree. Funeka manages two online platform group – the WhatsApp group and the Facebook page. She facilitates either the middle age group or the older age children.

Thandeka also a longest serving reading club volunteer. She is the facilitator of the younger age group. Thandeka can speak four languages which are isiXhosa being her first language, and three additional languages that are Zulu, English and Afrikaans. She has graduated with financial management from Northlink College.



Themba joined the reading club in 2016 and as of year 2017 has been inactive due to his studies. He is registered as a first year Real Estate student. While still actively involved at the reading club Themba worked with the middle age-group. Themba speaks two languages isiXhosa and English.

### Children

Thuliswa is a 12-year-old multilingual speaker and her first language is isiZulu. Thuliswa's language practices vary according to the context, for example, at home she uses either isiXhosa or/and isiZulu in talking to her mother. At school, isiXhosa, English or Afrikaans is used. Thuliswa joined the Masifunde reading club in 2014. She loves the club as

it assists and support her language learning. She had access to two mobile phones –hers before she lost it and the one belonging to her mother. As for a desktop PC, her access to it is limited to the school for maths classes. She showed great enthusiasm for the use of mobile phone in the reading club, and her excitement was taken home when she shared with her parents about this new literacy tool at the club.

Sithandile is a 10-year old boy who speaks isiXhosa as his first language and English as his second language. Similarly, to Thuliswa, his language practices vary according to the context at school Sithandile uses English at home and in the reading club its isiXhosa. With regard to his use of isiXhosa at the reading club, Sithandile said he wanted to improve it. He started attending the Masifunde reading club in 2016. His mobile phone access at home is through his mother and aunt that he uses to either play games or sometimes for maths calculations while completing a school homework. Sithandile does not have access to a computer at home but is able to access it at school during the computer classes in the morning. His favourite literacy activities at the club are reading, writing and the playing games. Loyiso is the only male participant in my research.

Tina started attending at the inception of the club in 2011, at that time it was still held at a local primary school before moving to the church. Tina is a 13 year-old. She speaks two languages isiXhosa her mother tongue and English as a second language. At school, she uses English and at home and the reading club Tina prefers isiXhosa. Her favourite activities in the club include choosing of books, playing games and the story time. Like others she has no access to a desktop besides at school and she said she had use the computer at school to look up information like “global warming”. It is not only the computer that she does not have access to, but Tina has no access to a phone at home as well. Tina is the daughter of a reading club volunteer and the

principal of the club, Portia. Also the movable literacy materials belonging to the reading club are kept at her home.

Amanda is a 12-year old isiXhosa speaker. When asked which language she preferred to use at the club, Amanda said ‘English’ as she felt she struggles to read and write in isiXhosa her home language. Her language practice is also influenced by the context, at school the language used is English and at home its isiXhosa while at the reading club she uses both languages. She can only access the computer at school during computer classes, and like Thuliswa she too owns a personal mobile device – the mobile phone was bought early in 2016. She has used the phone to search school information and for the reading club. The keys for opening the church in which the Masifunde reading club sessions are held are kept at her home.

