

Theatrical language: in search of an Alternative to Speak

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Introduction

Theatrical language is a multifaceted and designed approach of ideas spreading, physical expression and human experience, which has been usually used by artists and practitioners alike. Theatrical language is capable of embodying the very core and fulfilling the potentials of a theatrical performance, allowing theatre artists to dig in and express the deepest and abstract aspects of human experience. The function of theatrical language has an unlimited potential of transcending a narrative language and transforming a symbolic idea into a readable concept which can resonate with human experience, more importantly, theatrical language further highlights the precious and distinctive aspects of live performance in theatre. The dissertation aims to analyse the function and use of theatrical language, comparing the effects in various performance contexts and using my experimental theatrical performance of Macbeth as a case study for analysis.

This dissertation will begin with a literature review to examine the various definitions and applications of theatre language in existing literature. Subsequently, we will further explore these theoretical foundations by reviewing existing theatre performance cases, analysing and comparing their respective applications of theatre language. We will then delve into how to effectively apply theatre language in artistic works to achieve possible ritualistic effects. My own theatrical work, Macbeth, will be used as an analytical case study to explore the infinite possibilities and diversities of theatre language in theatre performance.

The research questions that this dissertation seeks to put forth are:

1. What is the difference between theatrical language and spoken language?
2. How can the use of theatrical language transcend the boundaries of human experience?
3. How does my work, Macbeth, utilise theatre language to create a performance that surpasses the richness of language logic?
4. What are the methods to utilise theatrical language with greater diversity, in order to transform human experience and enrich the quality of theatrical performance for actors?

The aims and objectives of my dissertation encompass several aspects. Firstly, it aims to explore the methods of using theatrical language to transform human experiences and investigate how theatricality can be employed to achieve greater efficacy. Secondly, it aims to investigate the theoretical frameworks in existing literature that support the advantages of using theatrical language. Thirdly, it analyses my theatrical work, *Macbeth*, and demonstrates how theatrical language can create a more theatrical and immersive experience than that achieved through narrative language. Furthermore, it explores how theatrical language can be used consistently under the circumstance that performers use different languages.

Ultimately, this research aims to summarise the ways in which actors can effectively utilise theatrical language to enhance performance quality and highlight the boundless potential of theatre as a creative platform.

In the design of the research methodology, this study includes theoretical research, references to multiple performances, and my own practical creation. Specifically, I created Shakespeare's *Macbeth* as material for my creative and experimental theme, departing from the narrative language-based approach commonly found in Shakespearean works, I put the emphasis on the experimentation of theatrical language. I deliberately used multiple languages to increase the importance of using theatrical language to create consistency. Finally, I analysed the content of my creative material and summarised whether the theoretical research supports the importance using theatrical language.

In summary, this study aims to delve deeper into the research and application of theatrical language, exploring its potential in transforming abstract concepts, enhancing theatrical performance, and representing human experience within the theatre. Through analysis and exploration, it provides insights into how theatre creators and performers can effectively use theatrical language to create an optimised theatrical experience. Furthermore, the research will contribute to a greater appreciation of the unique power of theatre as a form of art.

Literature Review

In order to conduct a proper analysis of theatrical performance, it is necessary to have a solid foundation of theories. The purpose of this section is to review previous theories on theatrical language, including their definitions, concepts, and application. This review will encompass the perspectives of theatre artists as well as productions that utilise these methods. In addition to analysing their approaches, I will also emphasise how these methods can transcend the conventional theatrical experience, retell the story in an unconventional way, and reshape the audience's perception of the performance. I will examine previous productions as examples, taking a closer look and analysing them.

As I review these theories and previous research, I will specifically focus on Macbeth's research, investigating how several artists retell this Shakespearean tragedy and the methods they employ to present it. I will also analyse how performers visually and bodily physicalise narrative senses. By exploring the variety in creating this linguistic-basis context, we can acknowledge that an actor or a director can create different dynamics to convey meanings by using physical skills, imagination, and theatrical intelligence.

Once these methods and perceptions are consolidated, we will investigate whether they form an effective theatrical language that can be utilised to physicalise narrative contexts and transform a performance into a more immersive theatrical experience. And for actors, how to practically use theatrical language to activate their inner awareness and hidden creativity to create different dimensionally theatrical aspects for a performance.

Definitions and concepts of theatrical language

It is becoming increasingly popular for theatre pieces to convey meanings through the bodies of performers. As performers develop their own language to express their transformative experience, spectators concurrently construct the meanings received from performers using their embodied imagination. Therefore, the comprehension of the audience is critical to the

effectiveness of theatrical language since the forms of conveying rely on mutual understanding. As an actor or a director, the task is to physicalise the narrative with an attuned sensibility through corporeal skill, dramaturgical intelligence, and embodied imagination (Simon, John 2007).

When it comes to comprehending a method in theatre, there is always a boundary between intelligence and sensation. When language is spoken, the audience intelligently understands the meanings conveyed directly to them. Nevertheless, in theatre, spoken language serves only as a means of communication with the audience. It is supposed to be a more dynamic, flexible, and transformative organism that embodies performers' psychophysical energy and theatrical experience. If theatrical language is capable of transcending spoken language to another dimension beyond intelligence, the performance will merge both audience and actors into an experience that is physically and psychologically understandable.

In reviewing previous theoretical research, one of our primary objectives is to clearly distinguish the distinction between "language" and "theatrical language." The reason for differentiating between the two is that they play different roles in theatre, whether it is traditional, physical, popular, experimental, or surreal, all of which are typically based on language. Here, language refers to the logical and semantic language constructed by "text," even the most avant-garde style of performance is supported by a narrative dramatic structure. The role that "language" plays in performance is to convey meaning and express ideas. Its functionality is direct and purposeful, making it the fastest and most effective means of communication. On the other hand, the role played by theatrical language is to convey artistic meaning. Compared to pure language functionality, it emphasises this artistic "packaging" and can create a dialogue between the audience and performers visually, emotionally, and physically in an empty space. Such a dialogue does not rely on the logic and substantive meaning of language, but rather on the senses and feelings of both parties towards art viewpoints, thereby achieving the effect of bringing the audience closer to the performance.

However, to create theatrical language that is different from pure language functionality, the most direct association may be physical theatre, where performers use their bodies to find another channel of communication. However, even physical theatre is based on the logical narrative of text, and the scope of theatrical language is not limited to bodily expression alone. As Simon and John (2007) has said, it emphasises the importance of other theatrical elements and does not allow language to monopolise the stage. All elements should be expressed equally, and the task of performers and directors is to find a way to effectively integrate these elements into a language system that expresses themselves.

In summary, theatrical language has multiple dimensions of artistry and functionality, which are difficult to achieve by language alone. It possesses the key to transforming a theatrical performance into a more immersive experience.

Simon and John (2007) also stated some particular tropes of performance making and some elements contained. A heightened and stylised gesture and vocal languages of performance, performers' skills and dispositions to transform their bodies which is able to draw upon mime techniques into physical objects and other forms, and a willingness to tell a story in a non-linear way where audience is given interpretation and capable of working on the construction of meanings on their own.

Applications of theatrical language by actors

An Actor's task is to design the performance through physical techniques and intellectual interpretations. There are abundant approaches for them to build up a character or to fit in a play. They are the directors themselves, which means the process of designing their performance is the process of creating their theatrical languages. An actor is able to translate the play-text into performance-text through their techniques, having their own aesthetics in their ways of acting. In addition, they are trained to engage other theatrical elements into their acting, making them performative. An actor's job is not only being a tool to accomplish a narrative achievement, but becoming a embodiment of space, narrative, energy, design,

perception and a specific aesthetics. Therefore, for actors, by using a effective theatrical language can facilitate the process of performance-making.

In actor's craft, several theories and practices have been put forth that acting can not only engage both physical and psychological conditions, but the spatial and spiritual dimension are being taken into consideration. Phillip Zarrilli(2013) has indicated that performance is an embodied action that involves both the physical and psychological aspects of the performer. It is an organic fusion that can be trained and activated. In the dimension of performance, the embodiment of the performer opens up a channel for embracing more diverse and spontaneous creative expressions, thereby enhancing the diversity of performance.

Yoshi Oida (1997) also deconstructs performance into various elements for analysis. In his discourse, performance is not solely composed of technical skills, but rather encompasses space, time, emotion, energy, self-awareness, and body, which is further divided into external and internal body. These elements complement each other during the execution of a performance. Oida emphasises the importance of "inner practice" in his discourse on performance. The internal energy needs to be harmonised with external skills to achieve a state of body-mind coordination in performance. Therefore, actor training should also focus on cultivating inner skills to attain an inner "emptiness," which refers to a state of complete integration of mind and body. This "emptiness" does not imply nothingness, but rather a state of complete engagement of mind and body, without excessive rational intervention. It allows for the most direct and authentic response based on artistic intuition in performance, free from excessive rational interference or preconceived design.

Oida, as an actor, possesses a rich theatrical language. This richness enhances the quality of performance and helps actors explore performance energy beyond realism and naturalism, creating diverse forms and styles of performance.

However, developing a unique theatrical language requires training. Oida (1997) points out that the actor's "inner training" takes time and practice. An actor is not merely a physical entity executing performance tasks precisely, but also a guide leading oneself and the

audience to experience the time and space within the theatre. Once the actor's internal energy is established, performance becomes filled with infinite potential. This also reflects the variability and flexibility of theatrical performance within the same art form. The theatrical language "tells" the story of theatrical performance within this spectrum of variability.

Another practitioner who develops his unique performance theatrical language is Theodoros. His performance method combines anthropological research with Greek mythology and culture, resulting in a comprehensive actor training system. The training is based on "breath" and encompasses the actor's body, voice, and improvisation. In his work "The Return of Dionysus," Theodoros states that after completing comprehensive training in body and voice, actors engage in "infinite improvisation." (Terzopoulos, 2020) I will analyse the content of this complete training based on my own training experience and use his theoretical framework to analyse the upcoming discussion on my creation, Macbeth.

According to Theodoros's theory, the actor's body is an organic entity, here the "Body" of an actor is indicated by uppercase "B". These deconstructed and trained organic elements are collectively presented in a unique theatrical language. In an ideal pattern of expression, the body eventually naturally reveals itself through "improvisation," without relying on rational thinking or excessive design (Terzopoulos, 2020). This is similar to Oida's concept of the "invisible actor," where the actor, in a focused and immersive state, forgets the use of the "body" itself, yet the presence and energy expressed by the body are tremendously significant. Another aspect of Theodoros's approach is his understanding of improvisation. In his discourse, improvisation is the exploration of bodily memories within the human subconscious, without relying on familiar language skills or predefined movements and postures. It involves constant collisions with the notion of "normal." Regarding language, actors explore the ways of expression in a state of open communication between mind and body, uncovering various possibilities. In this natural and intuitive state, creativity naturally discovers different potentials through these explorations.

The text finds its physicality dimension, becomes a map of various actions and behaviours, it is dissolved, de-rationalised and reconstituted, so as to give meaning again-this time

energetically and not necessarily mentally- to the psychosomatic behaviour of the performer. The speech loses its normal, daily life function; the nuclear rhythm of the speech is sought, its vibrations that penetrate the body, opening many interpretative possibilities. Small ideas subside, theoretical information is removed from the sphere of illuminated as long as process requires, through the energy of the body and the particular spaces and times it creates. (Terzopoulos, 2020)

Once the language for theatre is found, performers are likely to reveal the hidden creativities within the content, and they are infinite.

Theoretical Framework

The research framework of this study provides a multidimensional and comprehensive theoretical foundation for analysing theatrical language and exploring its potential for enhancing performance. The theoretical framework of this study is also applied to analyse the feasible applications of theatrical language in theatre. Subsequently, using personal creative practice in the production of Macbeth as a case study, this research utilises multiple theories to validate and support the practical application of the creative process, including training in early stage, reference works, rehearsal practices, the performance itself, and post-performance analysis. In addition, past Macbeth productions will also be referenced. This sequential theoretical analysis process aims to comprehensively and in-depth investigate the utilisation and effects of theatrical language, as well as its potential and significance in theatre. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks presented below will constitute the theoretical framework of this research analysis:

Psycho-physical Performance

Performance theory provides the fundamental understanding of theatrical language in this study. Theatre performances possess diverse and rich characteristics that vary across different forms and cultures. Despite these variations, there are common "languages" that connect different techniques and forms. The concept of "psycho-physical performance", as known as, embodied performance, is mentioned in the theories of various references and creators. It refers to the integration of skills, physicality, and spirituality that actors embody when entering (or prior to entering) the realm of performance. The concept encompasses the actor's presence, embodiment, cultural representation, and spirituality. In different cultural contexts, it provides a common platform for performers to freely and naturally utilise various performance elements in theatre, creating a harmonious relationship with the audience. I will analyse the theoretical foundations mentioned by Zarilli and support them with Oida's theories to explore how psycho-physical performance becomes the basis for performers to create theatrical language.

Language

Language is the foundation of performance and one of its most important elements. It can be categorised into narrative language, which refers to the language spoken by actors during the performance. Peter Brook's theories address the role of narrative language in theatre and its artistic and symbolic significance. Furthermore, we will explore theatrical language, which means using specific theatrical techniques to "speak" the textual content. The theories of Theodoros and Oida will be utilised to investigate the feasibility of employing theatrical language. Finally, we will examine the functionality of language in the specific theatrical performance case of Macbeth through practical creative examples.

Physical Theatre

The body is not only a visual image on stage but also the tool through which performers convey the essence of the performance. Physicality in theatre includes text, stage, form, spirit, and language. It explores how the body, even when actions rely less on verbal communication, maintains its presence and functionality, embodying the core ideas and creative concepts of the text in a narrative-based context. We will analyse the practice of Macbeth using physical theatre theories to examine the significance carried by the body as a crucial element in theatre within a performance framework.

Practice: Training and Actor's craft

Next, we will employ a series of theories, including the discourses of Theodoros Zarrilli, and Oida, to analyse performance training and the search for "commonality" and "rituality" within a group. These elements constitute key components of theatrical language. We will further explore the practical application of training and performance processes, whereby theatrical language gradually forms a shared "linguistic channel." In my actual creative case, while each individual employs different languages to present Macbeth, we examine how we can communicate within a shared theatrical language, space, and audience. The theoretical analysis will delve deep into the outcomes of these practical processes, including their

limitations and hidden potentials. We will further explore how theatrical language “transcend” performance by analysing the outcomes of my independent project, Macbeth.

The functionality of theatrical language is rich, as it not only serves as a narrative technique for performers and creators, but also possesses the transformative power of human experience in terms of artistic expression. For directors and creators, theatrical language allows them to assimilate and represent the conceptual ideas of the performance text. For actors, it provides a multidimensional creative channel within the state of unity between their physical and mental faculties. At a cultural level, theatrical language establishes connections between different languages and cultures through its theatricality, fostering a harmonious relationship between spectators and the collective consensus of artistic aesthetics. Although the creation of specific theatrical languages is challenging to define (due to the extensive exploration and experimentation required), theoretical analysis and practical application allow us to investigate the potential of theatrical language and its ability to optimise the conditions of theatrical performance. Furthermore, it empowers performers with independent creative capabilities.

Methodology

The purpose of this research paper is to explore the use of theatrical language to transcend theatrical performance through analysis and application. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to provide an experimental material that can serve as a theoretical basis for analysis. My work, "Macbeth," will serve as such material to analyse whether the use of theatrical language can achieve theatrical effects beyond narrative language, and to examine how theatrical language can transform narrative content and abstract meanings into a theatrical experience that is sensorially comprehended by both performers and audiences. Through this method, not only can the potential of theatrical language itself be examined, but also how it can be used as a creative approach to optimise text-speaking tasks and to create a transformative as well as immersive experience in theatrical performance, or to help performers establish diverse interpretations of text. This method also provides an alternative perspective of theatrical experience for the audience, especially when linguistic logic is not relied upon.

Research Design and Approach

The research design employed in this study utilises my theatre work, *Macbeth*, as a case study. The work involved five actors, including myself, who underwent a series of physical training and vocal experiments during the early rehearsal stage, followed by textual analysis in the middle stage. The study also investigated how to use theatrical language as a creative tool to transform the text into a performance, and how to organise the framework of the play to ensure consistency in the performance style. The entire process was the research methodology design, with each stage involving the exploration and application of theatrical language. Apart from that, despite the fact that this research design is experimental, it also aims to examine the limitations that could be aware by theatre artists.

The approach is a combination of methods, including extensive and intensive works with performers, analysis of the rehearsal process, and comparison with the previous works of *Macbeth*.

In order to analyse potentially the application of theatrical language in performance, the selection of texts, presentation of performance style, and utilisation of language have been meticulously designed. Shakespeare's play, *Macbeth*, possesses a rich narrative logic, rhythmic text, and diverse metaphorical meanings. I deliberately chose Shakespeare's work as the material for my application of theatrical language, which has the advantage of exploring the transformation of Shakespearean language into highly expressive artistic techniques during the rehearsal process. It can also serve as a good comparison for previous productions of *Macbeth*. Before entering the rehearsal process, performers participate in a series of workshops on body and voice, developing the possibility of using the performer's body as a tool for creating theatrical language, and exploring alternative channels for expression beyond speech. Even a text as linguistically sophisticated as Shakespeare can achieve an equally, or even more, immersive theatrical experience through these creative tools. The use of language is also deliberately chosen to be multilingual instead of monolingual. The five actors each use their own mother tongue, including Chinese, French, Portuguese, Turkish, and Japanese. In terms of the logical construction of the play, in order to connect the entire performance, it is necessary to rely on techniques other than verbal language to achieve consistency. Apparently, the role of theatrical language is even more prominent in highlighting its importance.

Methods

The primary method for analysing theatrical language involves a series of workshops and rehearsals with performers. The performers are observed for their use of their native language in a play and how foreign languages can be flexible and varied in sounds and structures. Additionally, they are encouraged to explore their mother tongue and transform it into a theatrical experience for the audience. During this trial, performers use their bodies as a creative tool, searching for "unfamiliar" gestures and positions that facilitate the delivery of their spoken texts.

Simultaneously, this method involves the experimentation of using multiple languages in a single performance. Exploring the physicality of different languages is an intriguing approach based on the hypothesis that language is one of the elements of theatre. To analyse all the data and materials of theatrical language, we design methods to deconstruct all the components of theatre, including sound, spoken languages, movement, gesture, and the physicality of objects. These components are then reconstructed into various theatrical experiences for performers and audiences. Embracing the diversity of theatrical experiences, this method aims to explore more possibilities and gain a comprehensive understanding of using theatrical language.

A series of workshops on physical, vocal, and improvisation training are applied at each stage to explore how performers transfer theatrical experiences to the audience using their bodies as a creative tool. From Butoh dance to the method of Theodoros, this approach uncovers hidden creativity within performers' bodies. By embracing the diversity of theatrical experiences, this method aims to explore more possibilities and gain a comprehensive understanding of using theatrical language.

Limitations

In this study designed to examine theatrical languages, several limitations can be predicted. Firstly, the material used, *Macbeth*, is a scripted play that is brilliantly written and familiar to performers. Therefore, practically speaking, it requires significant effort for performers to deconstruct the well-organised linguistic and narrative context into various theatrical elements. Secondly, to put this experimental piece into practice, extensive and intensive workshops and trainings are required, and performers' bodies need time to get used to these methods in order to explore them fully. However, with limited time, performers may end up complying with the instructions rather than conducting them with a comprehensive understanding of the methods.

Thirdly, translating Shakespeare's language into our mother tongues is complex in terms of the sounds and structured words. Although the goal is to transcend language into a more

theatrical experience, the rhythm in the original text can only be heard when spoken in English. Performers are encouraged to keep this rhythmic perspective alive through a theatrical language presented through body, sound, or the use of an object. Additionally, since the entire play of Macbeth needs to be compressed into a shorter version, some parts may be cut off and abandoned. The decision to delete several parts of Macbeth might compromise the audience's perspective on the play. Lastly, collecting data requires observation through rehearsals and workshops. However, performers' statuses are continuously changing, and their dynamics are challenging to objectively describe.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study employs practical works and uses Shakespeare's play as material to be examined. The practices are supported by theoretical analysis and references from previous works of Macbeth to explore the transcendence of theatrical performance through the use of theatrical languages.

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Findings and Analysis

The essence of theatre language lies in its versatility and potential for theatricality, where different theatrical elements can be varied and embedded to create completely different theatrical effects and meanings. Theatrical language is the creative language of creators, directors and actors, and it is also the language they use in dialogue with the space, the audience and themselves. Further, theatrical language is often even used by creators as a tool to optimise their performances, as it has the potential to transform innovations and ideas into performative ones, as well as the art of transforming narrative textual contexts into visual and aural ones. In this chapter, I will use my case studies of Macbeth as the material for a practical analysis of how the theatrical language is progressively produced from early training, reference to the work, creative process and rehearsal, and the final performance.

Early Stage: Corporal Training, Vocal Training, Improvisation Training

For Macbeth, I cast five artists (including myself) as the actors. Before we started the rehearsal phase, we had a series of training sessions to build up an aesthetic consensus and communication channels for the subsequent rehearsals. Some of these channels are just basic elements such as voice and body gestures, which may seem irrational in terms of narrative, but are a good foundation for the artistic process and a bridge for the actors to communicate as a group in terms of creativity.

Corporal training

During the training phase, I mainly use the psycho-physical training method, which is based on my studies of the Butoh and Theodoros training methods, combined with my previous theories on Zarrilli, to develop a set of training. I have divided the training into body, voice and improvisation, starting with body training. In the Theodoros Method, the performer's energy comes from the lower abdomen(diaphragm), which is known as the triangle, where all energy originates, is dispersed and absorbed, and is circulated by the air. This provides the

body with a permanent constant flow of energy. I will quote the following description of the Theodoros Method, which I also use as part of my training with actors:

“Before the exercise, the rehearsal and the performance, the actors prepare themselves for about an hour with the following circle of exercises. During the exercises the performers, concentrated, warm up body and voice and train their breath and diaphragm. They inhale and exhale all together. This function helps the actors communicate and coordinate themselves during the training, which is performed in a circle, at the same tempo, from the whole group. The exercises cultivate the sense of teamwork, which is transferred to the practical work of rehearsal and performance.” (Terzopoulos, 2020)

According to Theodoros' description of breath training, it can be seen that during the training the performers are arranged in a circle, in other words, the training is very much about the collective action of a whole group, it is a ritual, in Theodoros' description it has the spirit of an ancient ritual of worship of the theatre god Dionysus by the performers. For me, it means that a group of people use their consciousness (not words) to connect to each other's spirit and sense of being. I often use breathing exercises in my actor training to develop a sense of understanding and presence among the performers, and in addition to this, breathing exercises are also an exercise in how to use energy. For the actor, the storage and release of breath and energy affects the expansion of the body on stage, not in terms of size, but in terms of spirituality, the physical sensation or imagination that is triggered by the visual and auditory impact on an audience and performer. Well-trained actors can therefore expand themselves in the theatre, they can influence the audience through their performance, amplifying or reducing the physicality of time and space, and exploring the inner sensations and artistic intuition. Theodoros calls it an impulse, which occurs naturally and intuitively in an unconscious way. The effect of this physical energy is infinitely creative and comes from the performer's physical and psychological intuition.

According to Oida(1997), even the subtle thing like the breath we take requires the process of embodiment. It takes imagination to transform this biological function into a more sensational layer. In short, we are biologically breathing from noses and mouths, but by

visualising the breath through different parts of the bodies and dimensions, it seems to open up other possibilities.

Another aim of the training is to transform the 'everyday' body into a 'performance' body. The everyday body, due to its habits and culture, has a loose centre of gravity or strength of expression without a specific goal. But in order to remove this habit and move into a performing body, the body has to undergo a 'cleansing' process and move into a state of unity between body and spirit. In Oida's terms, this is a state of 'emptiness'. It is a state in which the actor does not technically think about his body or his performance state. The actor's body will 'disappear' and what the audience hears and sees is the pure and exalted energy of the performer. Likewise, Theodoros refers to this as “the state of Dionysus”, which also describes the coordinated concentration of the actor's body and mind, a state in which the mind and body are able to generate a steady permanent flow of energy, an increased sensitivity to space, people and the environment, and a response that becomes sharp but natural, returning the civilised body to the biological instinct of the body.

In the training process with the actors, I have spent a lot of time and energy studying the bodies of the actors, both physically and culturally, taking into account the differences, but also trying to find commonalities in the group of actors (including myself) that resonate with the energy emitted by each other's bodies. As discussed in the previous chapter, finding commonalities between bodies of different cultures is the beginning of finding a common theatrical language. For example, during my training in the rehearsal space, I found that Actor A and Actor B were better at stretching their bodies and therefore deduced that they had a background in dance training. With this commonality, I try to consolidate it so that the two actors can be consistent and effective in certain movements. And the next step, All I had to do was to adapt their 'everyday bodies' to their 'performance bodies'.

Another example is that Actor B and Actor C have very different breathing habits. On the other hand, Actor C's breathing tends to be very 'shallow', which results in a limited extension of the body and energy, so I have to ask Actor C to consciously open up his breathing

muscular complex, and to have his imagination engaged during training to keep the body's energy expanding.

Both differences and similarities are important factors to observe during the training process, and they can even serve as inspiration for creativity, and of course the different cultural aspects of the body are beautiful in themselves. Through training, I hope to preserve these beautiful body cultures, but to reconcile everyone to a same page in terms of the performance energy, which is the starting point, the starting point for finding a common 'language' among us.

Vocal training

In theatre, voice is a direct influence on the expansion of the meaning of language (especially in a language as potent as Shakespeare) and a direct impact on the mind and thought of the audience. The actor's body is the instrument, and a good quality of voice affects all aspects of the performance. Spatially, a high energy voice can penetrate the entire space. In performance, the voice also has a direct impact on the meaning of language, both in terms of linguistic meaning and character motivation. In theatre theory, sound is also an instrument for carrying words and logic, and good sound can maximise the effect of theatrical elements.

A good voice is not just about the level of the sound and how well it can be heard, but about the penetration of the voice. The actor's energy comes from the triangle (diaphragm), which is the source of all energy, and the actor's body relies on this area for its stability and focus, and the actor's voice is related to the opening of this area. We have spent a lot of time on voice training, mainly working with the actors on the relationship between their breathing and their voice. For instance, actor B has a very loud voice, but this loud voice lacks transmission. Through training, we adjust the vocal habits of each actor to turn the body into a good resonator.

In terms of language, each language has a different way to speak, with the actors speaking French, Portuguese, Turkish, Japanese and Mandarin as their mother tongue. Each language has a different bite, vowel, vocal style and accent, but all have the potential for creativity.

In the course of the training, a series of exercises were conducted to focus on vocal projection. As each of the actors spoke a different language, we chose five common vowels, A E I O U, to find the resonant cavity of each body (from the lower abdominal “triangle” up to the head cavity) for projection of the larynx. We expect the actors' voices to be different from the ‘high level of sound’ of everyday life, but rather the ‘corporal sound’.

During the training, different languages have very different auditory effects, involving biting, mouth shape and curling of the tongue, but this diversity of voices caused by different languages can find moments of resonance with each other during this training, not only with the actors' bodies but also with each other's voices in space.

Improvisation Training

The goal of improvisation training is to help the actor to be able to react instinctively and naturally to an imaginary situation. But with my improvisation training I scale it up to be spatially relevant. I use a combination of Theodoros' training, which builds on previous physical and vocal training, and Butoh, which is a series of descriptions that integrate the flesh into the spatiality of theatre through embodied imagination.

Whichever element of training I use, the main aim is to integrate the performer's body, the theatre space and the performer's energy (voice, sense of presence).

According to Theodoros, the core of the performer is in the lower abdominal and diaphragm, where the air vibrations (energy flow) of breathing and vocalisation come from. The actor's actions refer to the stage movements performed under a given circumstance, according to the

character's motives and goals. The actor's actions must be interpreted by the performer himself, and therefore the performer's instrument, the body, is the key element.

The main goal of improvisation training is to help the performer achieve consistency in body, voice and rational thinkings(action), to remove the symbols and habits of normal life, and to remove the extra thoughts of the mind, and to bring all elements of the performer into the same energy cycle, so that breathing, exhaling, action and energy can work effectively.

We know that any excessive interference with the mind is detrimental to the organic nature of the performance, but how can we remove these symbols through training? For example, in improvisation training, I ask the performers to choose a passage from a Macbeth character, give them an imaginary situation, then start with the initial training, breathing, sounding the first word, pronouncing the first sentence, moving the body, completing the passage, and progressively, their physical presentation goes through the most direct physical instincts of each moment, allowing the performer to embody body, sound, text, space, breath, and treat them all as one unit of performance.

In this way, we can bring our training from the body into the realm of language. So with language, my training never tries to train how to speak lines or how to use emotions to interpret them, but to build up the coherence between body, voice and speech, so that the performer is able to improvise in a given situation, and emotions are generated in the body. We don't need to worry about rhythm and melody because these performers have a hidden melody in their bodies, words have meaning in their language, and we use the trained body to create improvisation rather than a rational design.

I quote a passage from Theodoros on training to support my thoughts:

“The performer should not be based on the psychological and intellectual analysis of the role’s motives and of the text’s meanings, leaving the body inert and incarcerated in the prison of its daily habits. The emotion of the performer has its root in the depth of his structure, has its own special tempo-rhythm, its own score, shapes a mask and a corporality,

a special breathing pattern and way of speech, a special quality and quantity of energy. The performer's body is sculpted by every emotional state; from its side, the body also sculpts its emotional state and codifies it.”(Terzopoulos, 2020)

Butoh is also a language of the body, the dissolution and reconstruction of the flesh and spirit in space, and a guide for our future creative aesthetics, a good way to create a commonality between different cultures (languages). I have used a few passages from the Butoh workshop to guide the performers in exploring the use of the body and the imagination.

Hands of old women

Hands of demons

Baby's Face

Chimney's head with Buddha's hands

In general, the training is an important step for me. It has three main purposes: firstly, to meet the aesthetic needs of my work; secondly, to reintegrate the different cultural bodies and languages of the performers; and thirdly, to find a basis and consensus for collective work. These are the foundations for the subsequent rehearsals and creations, and an essential step in creating our own 'theatrical language'.

Previous research on Macbeth and the use of their “language”

As a classic Shakespearean tragedy, Macbeth is presented in various ways across different cultures and theatres worldwide. Each creator and each performer has its own "language" to narrate the story of Macbeth. From film to theatre, actors transform the same text and content into unique performance languages. In the following section, we will provide examples of Macbeth productions and attempt to analyse the theatrical languages employed in these works, as well as their methods of utilisation.

Macbeth 2023 at Southwark Playhouse

This is a very simple set design, a warehouse-like space with an empty stage, some dirt and dust on the floor, a row of percussion instruments at the back of the stage, a handful of actors, half-naked and in simple costume, the rhythm and language of the performance is consistent, the rhythm relies on the atmosphere created by the percussion instruments, the style of the actors follows the design of the set. Filling the 'empty' stage is a ritualistic process.

Although like other productions using English, due to the nature of the space (the barn) they have reduced the performance space to a three-sided stage, using this 'surrounded' feeling to create a ritualistic style of performance, which although not always appropriate, is very interesting in particular scenes, especially at any moment when three witches are present. For me, the use of space, the manner of performance, the presentation of the actors' bodies and voices, creates a special theatrical language.

Macbeth 2022 at Shakespeare Globe

In this classic theatre at the Globe, the performers, the nature of the space and the relationship between the audience are crucial because of its specificity. The way the three witches appear is impressive, with two large metal plates on the stage and a band in the first floor stands. As in the classic Big O, the language is faithful to the rhythms of the Shakespearean language, but the approach and aesthetics are still contemporary and theatrically innovative.

Macbeth 2021 at Royal Opera House

Macbeth at the Royal Opera House also has a particularly compelling theatrical language, presenting Macbeth in opera form, expanding the meaning of the original language through musicality, but I think the highlight is in the way the three witches appear, not as three actors, but as a group of actors, filling the space of the large stage.

The Creative Process and Rehearsal

Planning and rewriting of the play

In the early stages of planning, considering the highly experimental nature of Macbeth's work, I condensed the entire play into five main scenes to present the parts of the play where I wanted to experiment with theatrical language. For the purpose of the overall creation, I chose the key scenes: the appearance of the three witches, Lady Macbeth reading the letter, Lady Macbeth convincing Macbeth, Macbeth seeing the illusion of the dagger, the assassination of Banquo, the banquet, the reappearance of the witches, Lady Macbeth dreamwalking, and Macbeth's death. Subsequently, I rearranged them into five main acts, granting each of them with a title: Creating Evil, Sleep no more, Blood will have blood, Hell is murky, The devil himself. These titles not only helped me to plan the rehearsals, but also provided general guidelines for the design and performance style of the scenes. They also provide a general aesthetic direction in the design of the scenery and the style of the performance.

On the other hand, the use of different spoken languages in the same theatre language is one of the highlights of my work. In order to experiment with the possibilities of different cultural languages in the same theatrical language, I have kept the ratio of the witch's scenes (Portuguese, Japanese and Turkish) to the two main characters, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth (Mandarin and French), in order to avoid an imbalance in the ratio of languages.

The choice of scenery is also related to my creative aesthetics. During the early stages of creation (including the training process), I was very interested in the presence, physical energy and verbal projection of the performers during training, so my initial intuition of the style of performance was also influenced by the energy of the trained performers. So the choice of scenes was based on this intuition, and I ended up with scenes that I felt had the

potential to allow me to present these high tension performance energies. The following is an example of a page from my script:

Act1: Creating evil

Scene1: Greeting

(Enter three witches)

First witch: Quando vamos nos reencontrar? Na chuva, no raio, ao trovejar?
(When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning, or in rain?)

First witch: Quando o tumulto terminar, E a batalha for perdida, e ganha.
(When the hurly-burly's done, When the battle's lost, and won)

First witch: Pouco antes que o sol se ponha.
(That will be ere the set of sun.)

First witch: Em qual lugar?
(Where the place?)

First witch: Num descampado.
(Upon the heath.)

First witch: Lá Macbeth será encontrado.
(There to meet Macbeth.)

First witch: O bem é o mal, o mal é o bem,⁴ O lusco-fusco não poupa ninguém.⁵
(Fair is foul, and foul is fair, hover through the fog and filthy air.)

Note: Three witches separate with 'z' sound

Witches Dance with the ropes

Macbeth beats the drum, witches stand up with 'e' sound

Note: Carlota says her text while witches make 'e' sound, meanwhile Macbeth beating the drums

Note: Macbeth jumps up, that moment witches drop the heads

(The Act1 of Macbeth in my script, written in Portuguese)

I believe that what happens when the three witches appear, how they appear, how they are portrayed and how they speak has always been the most intriguing part for Macbeth's creators. The mystery of the three witches, the impression of an empty wilderness, the sense of the end of a war. For me, it was the improvisation technique that was best used to guide the three actors in the physical portrayal of the three witches. The allegorical language of the witches in the scenes, the disembodied image, is also a good opportunity to recreate language. For my aesthetic, this is a deconstruction and dissolution of linguistic meaning, but the meaning does not disappear, but is reconstructed into a new look with a performative and

spatial sense of time. I think the first scene that was finally created is a very successful combination of elements and the performers have embodied the style very well.

By the same logic, I have chosen classic scenes such as the Dagger illusion, the Assassination of the King and the Haunting of the Banquet, all of which were chosen with a purpose. Some of the scenes have multiple characters, some have long monologues, which are a challenge for theatrical language. In detail, how to present a total of five actors, and what mode of presenting multi-talk scenes, are all problems I face in theatrical language creation. But because of the style of the first scene and the embodied performance (of space and body), I have adopted these principles in creating other scenes to achieve aesthetic consistency.



(Act1 Macbeth meeting three witches)

The use of spoken language and my aesthetic construction

Once the structure of the play is set, the next step is to set the rehearsal and performance style, but rather than setting it up at the beginning, I tend to find the energy flow of the actors during the rehearsal process and shape the style accordingly, meaning that the theatrical

language is also set according to the energy of the actors. The use of spoken language is the most difficult part of my rehearsals.

Initially, the aim of this study was to examine the function of theatrical language, to break down the limitations of spoken language in theatre performance, and more specifically, to expand the meaning of spoken language in theatre performance. The difficulty lies in the fact that this deconstruction and construction has to be reborn according to the characteristics of theatre, not just replacing the spoken language with theatrical language directly. In other words, the rebirth of a new theatre language relies on the further transformation of spoken language.

If we dismantle a spoken language, we find that it contains meaning, function, rhythm, culture, and that these fragments have the potential to be rearranged and reassembled. We have five performers, five different spoken languages, in other words, we have five rhythms, cultures, meanings, which may seem very diverse, but they also mean theatrical constructions, which are difficult to put together into a theatrical language. It was not until I read Oida's theory of words and language that I realised that language implies more creativity than I had thought:

“When you make the sounds, taste them, and observe how the inner dimension changes. Notice each sound’s particular character. The quality of the sound limits you, and shapes your interpretation. Different sounds evoke different inner responses, and your performance alters accordingly.”(Oida, 1997)

In rehearsals, I decided to embrace the different voices and textures of each actor, and I focused particularly on the internal reactions caused by hearing these unfamiliar languages, without understanding the logic of the language. These are particularly powerful in the case of a monologue, where the voice is made more projective by the force of the tongue rubbing between the teeth, and in the case of the Portuguese prophecy of the three witches, where the power between words and sound is very effective.

Likewise, the musicality of the Japanese and Turkish voices, where a single word is made up of multiple syllables, was utilised by asking the actors to repeat certain words in the script as a function of the atmosphere of the scene, adding a layer to the performance.

The two protagonists' (Macbeth and Lady Macbeth) speeches are spoken in Mandarin and French, and English is avoided being used because Shakespeare's language is written in English, so if one of the actors uses English but the others don't, these rhyming and musically rich Shakespearean words will come through in English but not in the other languages, creating an aural imbalance. But on the other hand, I also had to find the possibility of a dialogue between Mandarin and French. Linguistically speaking, Mandarin and French are very different, with a low degree of phonetic homogeneity, so I had to break down the dialogue in the script into a few words and syllables and 'play' with these sounds. In one of the scenes, 'Blood will have blood', this is a case in point. In this scene, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are talking to each other and Macbeth's lines are:

“We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it. Full of scorpions is my mind.”

And Lady Macbeth's lines are:

”Things without all remedy should be without regard: What's done is done. “

When we write in Mandarin and French, they are:

“我們傷了那條蛇，但沒有殺死它，千萬隻蠍子在刺我的心”

“On ne devrait pas penser aux choses sans remède, ce qui est fait est fait.”

We set aside the grammar and meaning of the two phrases, broke the syllables of these phrases down into smaller units, and then we began to try to form these syllables into new melodies and musicalities. After this exercise, we find that sometimes these rhythms and sounds can produce a different kind of 'dialogue', of course, not a dialogue in which we

understand each other's meaning, but a dialogue in which the flow of these energies resonates as the sounds of the language are projected to each other and to space, creating a sense of aural harmony.



(Act3 Blood will have blood. The conversation between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, spoken in Mandarin and French)

In addition to the spoken word, I use the breath in our initial physical and vocal training as a tool for creativity. A strong projection of breath will result in a strong projection of sound. Again, what I mean by projection is not the loudness of the sound, but the effect of the sound transmission and the quality of the sound itself.

We try to explore the limits of the body in these breathing cycles, we try to explore all kinds of body postures and movements, but we do so without using excessive muscle power or violating the biological mechanism, because I hope that these movements and body postures can be expressed by the actor with ease and in a stable body state. It is in this stability that the actors are able to bring their own creativity and interpretation to the movements. The physicality that we create is sometimes perverse, but it is based on the body's instincts and immediate intuition, and is therefore the most 'faithful' to the body.

In the three scenes where the witches appear, I have used a lot of breath work and physical training elements in my work. In scenes where there is a lot of Macbeth interaction, they are the witches, but in other scenes they are one of the elements that build the landscape, influencing the minds of the two protagonists through their voices, or at the banquet scene, they are the waitresses, but they are also the witches that Macbeth imagines in his mind. They are not just three physical people, but a kind of presence on the stage. So often they don't speak 'words', but rather they are a voice that embodies their inseparable and elusive presence. For me, the way the three witches are presented is one of my theatrical languages. I may not be faithful to the portrayal and the lines of Shakespeare's witches, and often just use the 'voice' instead, but I can achieve an alternative image of the witches that is just as performative in the theatre, and can also serve the function of conveying meaning to the audience. Because more than just conveying meaning, I put more emphasis on the immersive relationship in the space and the high-tension energy of the performance, which must be achieved through the actors' training.





(Three witches are not only the witches themselves, they are also sometimes a landscape of the stage, or the presence of the evil, reflecting Macbeth's mind.)

Conclusion

In theatre, the main way we receive everything on stage is by watching and listening. The actors speak the language, the language conveys meaning to the audience, and the audience interprets the meaning to form perceptions and feelings. From this process, it seems that the actor speaking the language is a crucial step, as it is the link that gives information to the whole theatre. But we can always adapt the way in which the language is spoken, and it contains a thousand different forms of creativity. Once these forms and methods of giving information have been effectively designed, it becomes the language of theatre, and this is the 'narrative' that we really rely on to communicate with the audience.

This study examines the function of theatrical language, how it differs from spoken language, how it is formed and how it shapes theatre performance as a key factor in effectively changing the relationship between the audience and the performance. Moreover, I aim to explore how can the theatrical language be used as a tool to integrate different aspects of theatre into one performance aesthetic.

In the light of my theoretical analysis and the results of my practical work, it seems that we are getting the answers to these questions, although the theatrical language cannot be generalised, as it involves different interpretations of the theatrical language for different creative genres, nor can we say in a definitive way how to find it, as it will inevitably require a lot of time and effort to explore and experiment. However, from the results of my practical creative research, we can draw the following conclusions.

Firstly, the difference between spoken language and theatrical language is that the former is only one of the components of the latter. While spoken language is a tool for conveying the meaning of the playwright's words, theatrical language is a tool for conveying the playwright's (and the director's and actor's) concepts and aesthetic style to the audience using one (or more) effective theatre techniques and approaches. Since it is also called language, it has the function of communication, but this communication does not necessarily mean

speaking. Sometimes the creation of atmosphere, the design of the scene, the presentation of the body, these are all ways of 'speaking' and 'conveying'.

Secondly, the formation of a theatrical language requires the combination of a number of theatre elements, most notably space, people and materials (text). For the creators, the theatre elements are a large palette of colours in front of them, and the creators themselves decide which elements to use and which not to use, and which elements have the potential to be combined with others. Once we know which elements we have, we can begin to rehearse and experiment with the combination of these elements. This process is crucial because it is all about taking the lifeless words of the playwright and making them meaningful, and presenting them on the platform of a creative theatre space. Finally, through the imaginative participation of the audience, this theatrically packaged product is given meaning and becomes the audience's perceptions and feelings. Once the creators have experimented with theatrical language to their satisfaction and effectiveness, the nature of this language and the way they use it will gradually become the aesthetic of the work, and creators who are good at using specific theatrical language will gradually develop their own unique creative aesthetic. Thus, an effective language can shape an effective theatre performance, and effective theatre performance can expand the meanings of a work to the whole world.

Last but not least, the way in which the theatrical language is shaped is a matter of reference or rehearsal and experimentation. Some combinations may not always work, but they all have some potential, so that the performer or director can see the hidden creativity in them. In my process of creating *Macbeth*, I have found that there is no such thing as good or bad theatrical language. It is only useful when it is brought out and succeeds in creating an effective and artistic 'dialogue' with the audience. In my production of *Macbeth*, even though multiple spoken languages are used, I still use the theatrical language of physical and mental integration and embodied performance to integrate these different cultural orientations into a coherent artistic expression. By letting this theatrical language 'speak' to the audience and to ourselves, we never concern that people will not understand our mother tongues, as long as the theatrical language is effective and the audience can 'feel' our expression. In other words, although they cannot intellectually and rationally understand, their body can. This is also

what I expect the future theatre should be, in a more diverse world and society, the future theatre will definitely embrace these diversity and variety to its creative platform.

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