

Grade 11 Learners' Engagement with Representations of Violence in Athol Fugard's Novel, *Tsotsi*

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in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education by Research

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Abstract

Literature such as *Tsotsi* has been introduced in public schools in South Africa, with the intention to provide learners with literature with which they are able to relate. However, few studies have been conducted to establish how the learners view the representations of violence within these novels, whether they are able to identify these violent acts within their own lives and whether the violence they have experienced has affected their perceptions of violence within these novels and their lives. This study sets out to answer these questions using a critical paradigm, qualitative approach, and a single case study of 76 grade 11 learners in a school in Newlands East, Durban. This study was anchored in the ideologies of Freire's critical pedagogy which includes constructing knowledge through the facilitation of meaningful discourse on the power relations and social justice issues in society. In order to generate data for this study, three data generation methods were used which includes an open-ended questionnaire, a written task, and a visual data task, allowing the learners the opportunity to express themselves fully, while ensuring triangulation takes place. The data was then collated and through the structures of the thematic data analysis method, the data was thematically grouped and interpreted. The data indicated that many learners have been exposed to various types of violence, with physical violence being the most easily identified and commonly experienced of all. Sexual violence was commonly identified but seldom experienced by the learners. Learners were also able to identify types of violence found within the novel which included physical, emotional, and sexual violence, as well as abuse and crime. This study emphasises the impact that representations of violence in communities have on the learning and teaching of literature and recognises the importance of teaching literature by understanding learners' backgrounds and through the ideologies of social justice.

Keywords

Tsotsi, representation, violence, grade 11 learners, critical pedagogy

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

It has become significantly difficult to ignore the violence within our societies. According to Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi and Lozano (2002), violence is one of the leading causes of death in the world, for people between the ages of 15-44. This violence may occur within their homes, in their communities and even at their schools (Karaman, Tomakin, Kilic & Yilmaz, 2016). Learners may also be exposed to violence through their prescribed literary networks. These literary works are especially important as they educate the learners on “history, economics and social conditions in their own and other cultures” (Lundfelt, 2012, p.4). The way in which learners experience these representations of violence could have a lasting effect on them, could tie in with their own experiences and could mould their ideologies of the world and the violence which occurs within it. It also influences their ideas of social justice and how it may be implemented in their communities and the world. With these ideas in mind, this dissertation explores grade 11 learners’ engagement with representations of violence in Athol Fugard’s novel, *Tsotsi*.

The novel *Tsotsi* was written by Athol Fugard, who was born in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, on 11 June 1932 as Harold Athol Fugard (South African History Online, 2021). Fugard began studying at the University of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal) but later dropped out to explore the world. After two years, he returned to apartheid South Africa. He began writing and directing plays which gained popularity and used a multicultural and multiracial cast, even though it was prohibited under apartheid laws (South African History Online, 2021). In 1980, Fugard wrote *Tsotsi* which was

later turned into a film by Gavin Hood. The film won the 2005 Academy Award for the Best Foreign Language Film (The Fugard, 2020). In 2010, a theatre in Cape Town was renamed *The Fugard*, after the writer.

Dovey (2007) describes the novel *Tsotsi* as a story about a young boy who is compelled to a life of crime after being left homeless through the implementations of the apartheid government and the effect it has on his family. As a homeless boy, Tsotsi soon joins a gang and eagerly assumes the role of the leader of his gang while showing no hesitation to act violently towards others, including members of his community. However, after a physical fight with a gang member named Boston, Tsotsi runs into a nearby area and after an interaction with a young woman, finds himself as the primary caregiver of a baby. Tsotsi has to make many decisions to care for the baby, journeying from a background of gangsterism to caring for an infant. Through the influence of the baby and Boston, Tsotsi slowly begins to remember his past and realises that violence is not the answer to all situations. In a complete turnaround of Tsotsi's life, he sacrifices his life as bulldozers come to demolish where the baby is hidden.

1.2.Rationale

The rationale for this study is based on a personal and professional interest. My personal interest comes from my experience as a teacher of English in a secondary school. In grade 11, the learners are required to read and analyse the novel *Tsotsi*. Through the reading and discussion, I noticed that the learners had what I believed was a very peculiar reaction to the violence in the novel. I had expected a sense of discomfort or uneasiness from the learners as the violence was described in a gruesome manner. However, the learners were rather nonchalant when reading and

discussing the novel and indicated very little alarm to these violent events. This took me by surprise because when I had first read the novel, I was disturbed by the violence described and by how often it occurred, and I had expected a similar response from the learners, but this was not the case. I then tried to open up the discussion around the novel, including the various forms of violence which are found within it, but the learners were hesitant to contribute. I realised that I needed to approach the topic differently and to re-examine my assumptions about the issues within the novel.

This led to my professional interest. I began asking the learners questions relating to violence and their experiences of it and I realised that I needed to study this topic further, and more formally, in order to fully understand my learners' reactions to the novel and the violence within it. Studying the novel and the learners' representations of violence in the novel would allow for an understanding of the reactions of the learners, to explore their experiences of violence as well as how we might expect other learners to react to the novel.

This study would also allow me to bridge the gap between the Department of Basic Education's prescription of novels which should be taught in the classroom and the lack of guidance on how to teach the novel. While the Department of Basic Education names the novel, it fails to outline what aspects of the novel should be taught and the impact it may have on learners. A guideline on the way the novel should be assessed would also have been of assistance and would have provided guidance on the way the novel should be taught. While teachers of English should be equipped to teach all aspects of literature, the content presented in many literary texts might require greater guidelines. For this reason, the findings of this study may

be of assistance to other teachers of English or to those who are tasked with choosing the networks which should be studied in the English classroom.

1.3. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore how learners engage with representations of violence in the novel *Tsotsi* and to understand how their past experiences have shaped their understandings of violence.

The Department of Basic Education (n.d) prescribes literary networks for each grade via subject advisors, annual workshops, and online documents. These documents are expected to work together with the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document to guide teachers on the best way to teach their subject matter. However, the CAPS document has found to be challenging to teachers and often does not assist teachers who are not adequately trained or sufficiently prepared to teach the subject matter (Maharajh, Nkosi & Mkhize, 2016). In the teaching of English, little information is provided to the teacher on the way in which to teach literature and yet it is vital for the teacher to be competent in English literature studies (Lundfelt, 2012). A lack of competency may lead to a lack of understanding of the novel (or any other literary text) itself as well as the core issues within it. The way in which the novel is taught, as well as these core aspects, is commonly left to the discretion of the teacher. This might not be the best solution. It is therefore of importance to conduct studies such as this as there is currently a lack of sufficient information concerning the teaching of literature, such as the novel *Tsotsi*, and the way it should be taught and discussed with learners.

This study could be important to teachers teaching *Tsotsi* as it could provide an understanding of the way that a group of learners interpreted the novel and the

discussions that arose because of it. It could also open dialogue around teaching literature and what teachers may do and ask, when teaching a novel.

1.4. Background

According to Cappy (2016, p.120),

In a context of high levels of inequality and racism, South African education has been publicly tasked with promoting social justice, democracy, and social cohesion. While curricula and textbooks were re-written after apartheid to reflect the values of the new country, teachers play an oft-underappreciated role in fostering social change.

Cappy (2016) points out that, in response to a post-apartheid imperative for redress, textbooks and curriculum needed to change. While the change occurred at that level, it is also important to understand what the new curriculum expects from the teachers who implement it. The Department of Basic Education (2011, p.4) states that the curriculum is based on “active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths”. This aim allows for the education of learners who not only become critical thinkers, but who are also able to express their opinions on various matters and are equipped to challenge ideologies which may have been fed to them, especially within their societal norms and beliefs. Furthermore, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy (The Department of Basic Education, 2011, p.5) states that it aims to effectuate the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1997) in order to create a society which is grounded in the ideologies of social justice while being “sensitive to issues of diversity such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age, disability and other factors”. The CAPS document therefore aims to prepare learners to be

members of a society in which respect for all people is observed while providing the learners with enough knowledge to guide them through a sustainable life. The CAPS document uses aspects such as literature to drive these aims.

In terms of teaching literature, it is expected to be taught for four hours in every two-week cycle (The Department of Basic Education, 2011). The texts to be taught are selected by the Department of Basic Education as outlined in a document known as Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM). This Excel document contains a variety of literature which includes anthologies and novels in the various languages to be taught within a particular province. In the LTSM document for KwaZulu-Natal, for the period of 2020-2021, *Tsotsi* is documented as a novel for grade 11 English Home Language learners. The novels, such as *Tsotsi*, are expected to be assessed in the form of essay writing and contextual questions. However, the pedagogy which could be used to teach the novel is at the discretion of the teacher.

1.5.Location and Context

This study was conducted with learners of a high school within the Newlands East area. Newlands East is a previously designated coloured area in KwaZulu-Natal. The term “coloured” generally refers to a racial group of people as identified under the Group Areas Act of 1950. Although it may be difficult to describe coloured ancestry, coloured people may be considered as those with “mixed-blood”, and may originate from “Black-White, Black-Asian, White-Asian, and Black-Coloured unions” (Brown, 2000, p.198). Thus, coloured people originate from a mixture of races and there is no one way to identify the race. Under the Group Areas Act of 1950, each race group lived in designated areas.

According to Greene (2000), the Group Areas Act “forced many South Africans out of their homes, mandating they live in specific government designated racial enclaves” (p. 27). White people were given the space to stay in the middle of cities “while Indians and coloureds provided a ‘buffer’ zone in between white and black areas” (p. 27). This was done in order to prevent black people from entering white areas. Newlands East would therefore be considered as a buffer zone for areas such as Kwa-Mashu and Ntuzuma, which, by the Group Areas Act, were designated as black areas.

The area of Newlands East, according to the Consensus (2011), states that the area is approximately 14.81km² with a population of 52566 people and 12634 households. The area is made up of 52% females and 48% males with the majority of the population falling within the age group ranging from 15-29 years old. In other words, the majority of the population is young. While Newlands East was previously designated for coloured people, it now comprises of a range of races with 69% Black, 24% Coloured and 6% Indian residents. The languages which are spoken within the area is 58% isiZulu, 32% English and 4% of other languages which includes isiXhosa. The school, in which the study occurred, is within the Newlands East area.

The school, which functions as the setting of this study, currently has 1200 learners and 36 teachers. Thirty four of these teachers are state workers while the remaining two are School Governing Body (SGB) paid teachers and are not paid by the state. There are six English Home Language teachers and one English First Additional Language teacher (often referred to as English Second Language internationally). Prior to 2021, English was taught as a Home Language only, but as of 2021, English

First Additional Language was introduced as a subject. English teachers meet when necessary to discuss the curriculum and possible teaching strategies. However, very seldom do the English teachers meet to discuss aspects of literature teaching. This may be due to the organisation of the English department which does not have a set meeting structure in place, resulting in teachers not meeting regularly and not discussing teaching strategies for teaching learners English in general and literature in particular.

At the school, a large number of learners come from neighbouring areas such as Kwa-Mashu and Ntuzuma, while a minority comes from the Newlands East area itself. Many learners come from poor backgrounds, and as the government permits, many apply for exemption from paying school fees as many learners are wards of guardians or relatives and many live-in child-headed households. They are therefore unable to pay school fees.

The school where the study is located uses a school building that is secure but many classes house over 50 learners each. The school also has facilities such as laboratories, although they are not fully functional, as well as a school hall and outer fields for sports and recreational activities.

The school has a library on its premises, but it is not functional as the school has been unable to secure a teacher or community member who will be able to assist with the library, during and after school hours. The school does offer extra-curricular activities. However, these activities are not compulsory for the learners, nor is it compulsory for the teachers to run any activities. The activities which are run are done so at the discretion of the teachers and the willingness of the learners to participate.

In the Code of Conduct (2018), it states that the school does not condone any form of violence or crime committed by the learner, both within schooling hours, on the premises or outside of school hours. The Code of Conduct is in agreement with the Mission of the school (2018), which states that the school aims to “provide a sound ethos based on universal values where each learner recognises the need to respect himself and others”. The Mission of the school also states that it encourages learners to become “responsible adults and contribute positively to society” which reinforces the idea of a violence-free society. As both documents state, the school encourages non-violent resolutions to conflict; however, violence is still present within the school. This includes verbal disagreements, mainly between learners, as well as physical fights, mainly by learners, but occasionally, between a learner and a teacher. Although there are security measures which have been put in place, such as caretakers who aid in security, learners are still caught in possession of illegal substances and weapons on the school premises. Many are caught in searches organised by the school and the community watch, who assist the school on a regular basis.

Few disciplinary measures have been put in place by the school as most of the discipline that is implemented is at the discretion of the teacher. If teachers want to discipline learners, they will implement a form of discipline of their choosing. This may include getting the learners to complete additional work or, if the learner is a distraction to the rest of the class, the teacher could ask the learner to leave the classroom and go to another class. However, when it comes to serious offenses such as violence or possession or use of illegal substances, the school implements a suspension period of two weeks. During this time, the learner is expected to stay at home and complete work from home. After two weeks, the learner is expected to

return to school for a meeting, accompanied by a parent or guardian, where the learners' actions are discussed, and a way forward is sought. Once this meeting has occurred, the learner is permitted back into the school. The preceding information sets the scene for the study which considered issues of violence in the novel, *Tsotsi*, and issue of violence in learners' lives.

1.6. Overview of key studies related to representations of violence

This study builds on various research studies. However, the following studies have been identified as key research that shapes and informs this study.

The theory underpinning this study is critical pedagogy. While a variety of definitions of the term 'critical pedagogy' have been suggested, this dissertation will use the definition suggested by Sarroub and Quadros (2015) who saw critical pedagogy as a means of constructing knowledge and how the power relations within society influence this knowledge. The idea of critical pedagogy is attributed to Paulo Freire who noted that once we prepare learners to be critical thinkers, we are freeing them from oppression. Critical thinking may be realised through purposeful dialogue (Freire, 2000) which could include discussions around a "socially just world" (Cappy, 2016, p.121). This is further emphasised by Aliakbari and Faraji (2011) who state that learners who have become critical thinkers become empowered and advocate for social justice within their communities. These ideas are associated with Freire's critical consciousness which sets out to emancipate learners from forms of oppression they may be facing.

Encouraging learners to become critical thinkers is done through Freire's problem posing education which requires the teacher to be a partner to his/her learners where they are able to learn from each other (Freire, 2005). Problem posing

education presents problems to the learner and allows them the opportunity to discuss a solution in the best interests of everyone, while considering the power relations that exist within society (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015). This method of teaching, according to Freire, could result in a society comprised of individuals who aim for social justice within their communities. Social justice, according to Blake (2015), is about creating equity in society and a socially just society cannot be inequitable but could become so when violence permeates it. In addition, Makombe (2011) notes that young people are lured by a life of violence.

Violence comes in many forms and according to WHO (2002), violence has become an inevitable part of life. This violence includes violence within schools. Such violence in schools may be between learners, between teachers and learners and even between managers of the school (WHO, 2002). However, violence is also present in literary texts that learners study at school, and it is important to understand the role that literature plays in the way learners perceive violence. Priebe (2005) explains that violence in literature has become common and is widely accepted. However, these representations of violence are “a printed representation of a real violence and the two are closely related, yet different” (Knight, 2012, p.2). Therefore, the violence which learners read about in the literature could be a depiction of the violence which surrounds them.

While these studies are explored in detail in the Literature Review, the studies are mentioned at this point to contextualise the research related to the topic and objectives of this dissertation.

1.7. Research objectives and questions

The objectives of this study are to explore the issues of violence that grade 11 learners identify as being represented within the novel *Tsotsi* and distinguish the issues of violence with which they identify. Further objectives are to understand why the learners identify with these representations of violence and finally, to explore how they engage with issues of violence both in their lives as well as in the novel.

In line with the objectives, this dissertation seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What issues of violence do grade 11 learners at a school in Newlands East identify as being represented in the novel *Tsotsi*?
2. With which issues of violence from the novel do they identify in their lives?
3. Why do they identify with those representations of violence in the novel?
4. How do they engage with issues of violence in their lives and in the novel?

1.8. Overview of the research process

In order to answer the four research questions, this study was guided by a critical paradigm which incorporates ideas of social justice, together with a qualitative research approach which allowed the researcher to understand the ideas of the participants within their context and in their own words. A purposive sample of 76 grade 11 learners in a school in Newlands East were included in this single case study design which was conducted through total population sampling. This was conducted using three data generation methods which included: an open-ended questionnaire, a written task and a visual task (See Appendix A: Open-ended questionnaire; Appendix B: Written task and Appendix C: Visual task). Once the data was collected, thematic data analysis was applied to the data to be organised and

analysed to answer each of the four research questions.

It was important for the correct ethical procedures to be followed. This study was conducted in a school where many participants were under the age of 18, therefore it was vital for the correct consent to be granted by the participants' parents/guardians in order for them to participate in the form of consent forms which were provided in English and isiZulu, to allow for full comprehension of what the study would entail for each participant (See Appendix D: Parental Consent and Appendix E: Learner Assent). All data instruments were designed to hide the identities of the participants as well as to allow them to feel comfortable in answering the questions posed to them.

Gatekeepers' permission (See Appendix F: Gatekeeper permission letter) was granted by the principal to allow the study to take place at the school and the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal granted full approval for ethical clearance (Protocol reference Number: 00004989) (See Appendix G: Ethical clearance letter).

These aspects will be discussed in greater detail in the methodology chapter.

1.9. Researcher's stance

As the researcher, I decided to write this dissertation, from chapter two onwards, in the third person as it allows me to discuss the study from a measure of distance and not potentially inflict my biased views upon it. Before conducting this research, I had been a teacher of English, teaching the novel *Tsotsi* for two years. In those two years, I noticed the reaction of the learners, which is what initially sparked my interest in the topic. The learners seemed to be nonchalant about the violent incidents within the novel, a reaction which was unexpected.

In my second year of teaching the novel, I made the effort to form a bond with my learners and began to find out about their backgrounds, many of whom had experienced a violent trauma within their lives, prompting me to wonder if their experience had an influence on the way they engaged and identified with the representations of violence within the novel. I then decided to conduct the study on my next group of grade 11 learners in the following year. I had not taught this group previously and had no knowledge of their backgrounds prior to conducting the study. However, I knew that I would be teaching the group of participating learners the following year (in grade 12) and would be able to discuss and build on the findings with them. I also knew that I had to reflect on my own engagements with violence in my own life.

When I am exposed to violence, either on television or through novels, I usually become uncomfortable and prefer to avoid the violence altogether. This may be due to the lack of exposure to violence in my adolescence, therefore leading to my difficulty in accepting violent situations. However, in my teaching of novels which contain violence, I ensure that I become familiar with the violent acts in the novel through my preparation and reflection on the novel. When teaching, I find that I share my views with learners that violence should not be acceptable in social settings. I find that the representations of violence in novels then becomes easier to consider as the exposure to the violence is done with the intention of using it as a teaching moment.

I have also been exposed to much violence in my time as a teacher. In my first year of teaching, I was exposed to many fights in my own, as well as neighbouring, classrooms, which was a result of gangsterism in the area which then spilled over

into the school environment. These fights were often violent, physical fights, and I would have to ask the other male learners in the class to stop the learners who were fighting, as I was unable to do so myself. As the teacher, I should have been able to stop the fights myself. However, the ability of the other male learners to stop the fight made me feel safe and allowed me to create a greater bond with the learners as I knew that there would be no imminent danger once they were around. I have also encountered many acts of violence which included stabbing. In one incident, many of the learners had to be rushed to the nearest medical facility, which is a clinic. In another incident, a learner died after he was stabbed by a classmate. It was later learnt that this incident was gang-related. The death of this learner became a turning point for the school. The school became stricter with the discipline of learners who were caught fighting, regardless of the severity of the fight or whether there was any affiliation with gangs. Suspensions for fighting have become standard procedure and parents or guardians have to be called in to the school, where the matter is addressed. If the matter persists, the school recommends that the learner be transferred to a neighbouring school where gang violence is not as prevalent and may be contained. It is from this perspective and point of view that I engaged with the study.

1.10. De-limitations

This study included the grade 11 learners in one school and did not consider learners in any other schools. This study did not consider learners who had previously learnt the novel (for example, grade 12 learners) as it was important to include the learners who were studying the novel at that time and would give their initial impressions and reflections of the novel and the violence within it.

A second de-limitation is that I did not draw on the Grade 11 learners' engagement with representations of violence in other texts, especially those which were taught and discussed in other grades. These discussions may have had an influence on the way in which the learners perceived representations of violence within literature.

Another de-limitation is that although there is a film of the novel available, the film was not shown to the learners, nor was it referred to at any point. However, the learners were not consulted on whether they had previously seen the film outside school hours, and whether this influenced the way in which they perceived the characters or their actions when discussing the novel.

1.11. Organisation of the dissertation

This dissertation has been divided into six chapters.

The first chapter explores the background of the study, the motivation for conducting this research, as well as the research questions which assisted in conducting the research.

The second chapter discusses the theoretical framework which underpins the study as well as the literature upon which the study is based.

The third chapter explores the methodology through which the study was conducted, which includes the paradigm, approach, design and sample group. This chapter also includes the three instruments which were used to generate data from the participants.

The fourth chapter goes on to analyse the data obtained from the instruments and organises it according to the thematic data analysis method, as guided by the four research questions.

Finally, the fifth chapter concludes the dissertation. This chapter concentrates on the main findings of the study as well as the theoretical, methodological and professional practice implications of this study. It then goes on to discuss the limitations which may have influenced the study and lastly, recommendations and areas for future research are included.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter focusses on the theoretical framework and the literature review. The theoretical framework is underpinned by Freire's critical pedagogy and his concepts, critical consciousness, and dialogic and problem-posing education. The literature review focusses on various issues of violence and how they are understood within a classroom setting.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

This study was underpinned by critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is defined by Sarroub and Quadros (2015, p.252) as a theory which “embodies the practice of engaging students in the social construction of knowledge, which grounds its pillars on power relations”. Through the use of this theory, the teacher is required to involve the learners in meaningful discourse. Discourse within the classroom is vital as it teaches the learner to understand the power relations between the teacher and learner, and thereafter, the power relations in society. Within the context of this study, violence in society may shape or be shaped by power relations in society.

However, discourse on its own is not sufficient to create this change. According to Cappy (2016, p.120), “through pedagogical practices that encourage reflection on students’ environments, teachers may promote social transformation and help develop respect for others”. This critical understanding and praxis will allow and teach learners to make informed decisions in order to take action, which will enable them to transform the conditions in their lives (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). It will also teach them that their decisions have the ability to change the power relations within

their society. Therefore, critical pedagogy could play a part in helping learners to “develop a sense of confidence and efficacy” (Mazdaee & Maftoon, 2012, p.27).

However, it is important to note the role of the teacher in this process. Cappy (2016, p.121) states that “teachers understand their roles as agents of social change primarily as encouraging respect, morality, and racial reconciliation among learners”. This is vital in ensuring critical pedagogy within the classroom and through the recommendations of Paulo Freire, would allow for the most appropriate form of teaching and learning to take place.

1.4.1 Critical Consciousness

When teaching generally, but more importantly when teaching about sensitive or controversial issues, it is important for a teacher to create an environment in which learners feel encouraged to voice their opinions on incidents, such as those which occur in the novel *Tsotsi*, as well as on their own experiences. This may be done through the ideas inherent in critical pedagogy. The concept, critical pedagogy, is attributed to Paulo Freire, a Brazilian teacher and philosopher who states that, “students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge” (2005, p.81). This challenge may be attributed to the oppression the learners feel or have experienced, whether directly or indirectly within their lives. The only way which this oppression may be challenged is through meaningful education. Cappy (2016, p.121) notes that “...education can also transform society to create a more socially just world” and goes on to explain that education is the method through which learners would be able to achieve true liberation.

Freire knew that the only way in which we may move forward as a society and achieve this liberation is to critically engage with knowledge to understand how to be critical thinkers, and how to make decisions based on well thought out ideas and beliefs, and not simply what people have been conditioned to believe. This belief may only occur within the right public setting; therefore, the classroom is of utmost importance in order to pave the way towards critical consciousness and the teacher is the perfect facilitator. Cappy further reinforces this by stating that “teachers are in a unique position to act as agents of change to further efforts of social justice” (p.122) and to enable critical consciousness.

Critical consciousness will give the learners the opportunity to better their lives as critical pedagogy “challenges any form of domination, oppression and subordination with the goal of emancipating oppressed or marginalized people” (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p.77). The aim of critical consciousness is therefore to give learners the physical and mental freedom that they need in order to progress in life and to be emancipated from any ideologies that may have previously and might currently be oppressing them.

Gerwitz, Ball and Bowe (1995), as cited by Hlalele (2012, p.112) argues that “theories of social justice advocate mechanisms used to regulate social arrangements in the fairest way for the benefit of all”. This idea is reinforced by Hytten and Bettez (2011, p.8) who agree that “social justice education encourages students to take an active role in their own education and supports teachers in creating empowering, democratic, and critical educational environments”. It is therefore the responsibility of the learners and the teacher to ensure that social justice education takes place in the classroom. The teacher is simply the facilitator

who promotes social justice and assists the learners in achieving liberation. According to Hlalele (2012, p. 112),

...social justice is concerned with equal justice, not merely in the courts, but in all aspects of society. This concept demands that all people have equal rights and opportunities; everyone, from the poorest person on the margins of society to the wealthiest.

Social justice is therefore all-inclusive of all members of society and “supports a process built on respect, care, recognition and empathy” (p. 112). This indicates that social justice needs to be prevalent in all contexts. The classroom is a suitable space to engage with liberating ideologies, but it is possible that these ideologies may extend to the communities via the learners. If they do, they could create change in communities, especially where communities have experienced much oppression, as in the case of the communities from which learners in the study come.

In terms of this study, to enable critical consciousness, the learners and the teacher explored how the public settings in learners’ environments shape the material and ideological conditions of their lives. They started the process of understanding what shapes their thoughts and beliefs and through this, endeavoured to achieve the main goal of critical pedagogy which is to “emancipate and educate” all people for the betterment of their lives (Vandrick, 1994, as cited in Sarroub & Quadros, 2015). The learners were asked questions which made them identify any violent experiences within their school, their homes, and their community, after which a discussion was facilitated in the classroom through which the learners were able to identify whether their own experiences shaped their response to violence in the novel. The discussion also dealt with issues of power relations.

1.4.2 *Power Relations*

The way in which we interpret and understand societal relations is largely based on the power relations we have experienced and witnessed within our lives and in our own communities. Balan (2010, p.38) defines power as “the capacity of an agent to impose his/her will over the will of the powerless or the ability to force them to do things they do not wish to do”. This power is generally that of the oppressor and their power is forced upon the oppressed, which is generally the powerless. Witnessing these power relations unconsciously constructs the knowledge we have of society and the power relations within it. Hlalele (2012, p.111) states that “injustice and subjugation shape people’s experiences and understanding of the world”, therefore, the way in which one can understand the power dynamics within the classroom is to first examine the activities and ideologies of the community in which the classroom/school lies; thereafter one may gain a better understanding of the interactions and ideologies of the learners. Once the teacher is more aware of the ideologies and the construction of knowledge of the learners, s/he would be able to encourage critical thinking within the classroom. Grant and Gilette (2006) reinforce the idea of the teacher being more aware of the context within which s/he teaches in order to be a truly effective teacher.

The only way for learners to be more aware of these social constructions of knowledge and power is through the use of meaningful discourse which should be encouraged within the classroom, paving the way for critical thinkers. Encouraging discourse within the classroom, which can be considered a safe and facilitated environment, would “empower participants in their contexts, calling educators to

open spaces for marginalized students to voice their struggles in political, social and economic spheres” (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015, p.253).

This may be conducted in a variety of ways through which the teacher would be able to encourage the learner. Cappy (2016, p.121) concurs with this idea by stating that “when the youth relate to teachers’ stories and course material, they engage in the process of *moral transformation*. In other words, the youth rework their lessons into ideas of how they should behave as moral human beings”. Learners from different backgrounds would be able to share a variety of experiences, past behaviours, and current ideologies in an environment where they not only feel a sense of safety, but also may relate to or find some similarities with their peers, allowing them to feel more comfortable and empowered, and encouraging even more discourse which would lead to the acquisition of more knowledge.

The aim for equality in the power relations within the classroom is vital in the discussion around cultural norms, including violence, both in the novel *Tsotsi* and in the lives of the learners. Learners should be given the opportunity to view the power relations within the classroom and attempt to relate it to their own community. It is therefore important, according to Naiditch (2010), for there to be a link between the text and the real world. The text cannot be studied independently but should hold relevance to what can be considered as the learners’ reality. The text *Tsotsi* presents ideas that learners see or hear about in their lived worlds and thus holds relevance to South African learners.

1.4.3 Discourse and Dialogic Education

In order to successfully better the lives of the learners, it is important for teachers to understand their roles within the classroom. Cappy (2016, p.120) asserts that, “the

ways in which the youth take up teachers' efforts to promote change depends upon how teachers' practices speak to students' own life circumstances". In line with critical pedagogy principles, therefore, the promotion of change must be encouraged openly by teachers in order for learners to know that their opinions would be not only permitted but would also be encouraged. This may be done largely through the actions of the teachers. The teachers would need to function as facilitators who encourage meaningful discussion and debate and discourage any mockery or resistance towards topics being discussed. Critical pedagogy expects teachers to aim to transform themselves (Izadinia, 2011). The teachers would therefore have to transform into facilitators who encourage learners to voice their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and experiences. Teachers would have to put aside or suspend their own judgements which may contradict that which was said by the learners until all voices are heard. However, this can only be done once the teachers accept that learners have something to offer. Freire (2000) states that teachers do not simply teach but are also taught by learners through meaningful dialogue. Teachers who are unwilling to allow learners to contribute to the process of learning and are unwilling to learn from the learners, will be unable to have meaningful discussions and respectful discourse, and will therefore find it very difficult to practice critical pedagogy in their classrooms.

The relevance of the text can also be seen and understood through discourse. By encouraging discourse in the public setting of the classroom, learners may feel more at ease while sharing their thoughts (even in writing) on the violent incidents in the novel as well as their own experiences of violence (direct or indirect), allowing other learners as well as the teacher to learn from and with each other. In order for this discourse to be effective, it needs to follow a certain criterion - it should be based on

the needs of the learners, it should be respectful of the cultures that are followed by the learners, and it should focus on the needs of the community and ways in which the community may be uplifted. It becomes clear that critical pedagogy aims to empower the learners (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011).

The presence of the teacher, to function as the facilitator, would be to encourage the learners to open up to one another and understand that it is a safe space where their experiences and beliefs would be heard and respected by both their peers and their teacher. The teacher would begin by explaining to the learners that it is indeed a safe space where each learner's opinion will be respected, and intolerance will not be accepted. This will open the door for discourse between the learners and the teacher. However, it is also important to note that the learners co-operating with and participating in the discussion within the classroom is largely dependent on how the teacher is able to relate to the learners as well as their experiences (Cappy, 2016). As the first learner begins to share ideas, so others will feel more comfortable with expressing themselves. Cappy (2016, p.130) notes that "teachers who recognised their role as agents of change primarily practised three pedagogical forms: narrative instruction on what students should do, use of personal stories and materials to elicit emotional responses, and encouragement of debate on social issues." It is important to note that both the learner and the teacher participate in actively learning through this process in order to advocate for change and thus share power in the classroom. It is also important to note that not only should discourse take place, but debate as well. Learners are not expected, nor are they required to agree with the experiences or opinions of their peers. However, the teacher should facilitate an environment where the experiences and opinions of the learners are shared and respected. This gives the learners the opportunity to learn from one another as their peers may have

had different experiences and therefore have different understandings of the ways in which they think society works. Meaningful debate allows learners, even those who are not verbally participating, to identify the reasons why these beliefs have been embedded within them. Once they are in a situation to explain to others why they think the way they do, they may begin to see the flaws or the strengths within their own beliefs and through the discussion or debate in the classroom, may be given the opportunity to make an informed decision of what is best for themselves and for society. Once they are able to problematise their own ideas and recognise the difference between being fed information and ideologies and thinking critically and independently, they will be able to take an important step in unpacking power relations in various contexts in which they find themselves, including the classroom.

1.4.4 Problem Posing vs Banking Education

Freire (2005, p.71) explains banking education as the process where teachers “fill the learners with the contents of their narration - contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance.” Freire states that the problem with the banking method of education is that teachers believe that the more they are able to “fill” the containers - which are the learners - the more they are seen as effective teachers. Banking education is seen as a method through which “knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing” (Freire, 2005, p.72). Mazdaee and Maftoon (2012, p.27) argue against the banking method of education by stating that learners are “not passive receivers of knowledge but act as active participants in creating knowledge”. Learners have the

ability and the opportunity to contribute their own knowledge resources, forms of which the teacher may not possess.

Freire explains that the only way that we would truly be able to gain knowledge is “through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (2005, p.72). The teacher has to enable critical discussions and engage learners to share and interrogate his/her knowledge resources. Similarly, learners should be encouraged to share the knowledges which they possess, knowledge which the teacher may not know. Very often, learners have more to contribute about the communities and societies in which they live and may be able to contribute first-hand experience on the topic. The teacher would therefore be learning from the learner through facilitating the discussion. It is through this that we learn the true value of the learners’ knowledge. Valuing learners’ knowledge might prove freeing and empowering for learners as well as the teacher. Freire asserts that teachers “must be partners of the students in their relations with them” (2005, p.75). The teacher will be creating an ethical society, as highlighted by Mazdaee and Maftoon (2012) in which its citizens are aware of how important their ideas and beliefs are, as well as the knowledge of how these same ideas and beliefs may change a society for the better. This method allows for self-reflection on the part of the learners as well as the teacher, something that banking education might have failed to do.

The method which Freire (2005, p. 79) advocates is problem posing education. He states that in order for this to occur,

They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their

relations with the world. 'Problem posing' education, responding to the essence of consciousness intentionally, rejects communiqués and embodies communication.

This is the method through which both the learner and the teacher learn through each other by asking questions, presenting scenarios, engaging in dialogues, and establishing links with learners' worlds. Freire goes on to explain that "the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow". Freire notes that in this method, everybody advocates for, and moves towards liberation.

Through a problem posing education, learners have a better understanding of the way in which knowledge is constructed and the power relations in society (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015). They are able to learn from examples relevant to their lives and which they themselves have given, and they are able to learn by engaging with the questions and dialogue surrounding such examples, resulting in their understanding of the issues in a more engaged way. Such practices may result in learners understanding the importance of being critical thinkers and they may see the direct positive impact it could have on their lives as well as the lives of those in their communities. It must be reinforced and understood that critical pedagogy aims to not only empower the learners, but ultimately, through the learners, to empower the community.

A problem posing education will guide the learners and encourage them to be critical thinkers, allowing them to process information, assess the validity of it, and consider how they could make changes in their own lives. This form of education advocates

for a change in society where learners become adults who are more conscious of their experiences, decisions, and the impact they have on their own lives as well as the lives of others. The learners will also be more mindful of the way in which they behave and the example they set for others. A problem posing education also shapes the teachers using it as they will have a better understanding of their learners and their learners' experiences. A better and mutual understanding should make for an effective teaching and learning experience and could yield greater understanding, positive results, and reflections on how to do better in and out of classrooms.

1.4.5 Praxis

Freire believed that "education should encourage reflection and change unequal social structures" (Cappy, 2016, p. 122). He advocated for freedom within all contexts and among all people. Freire (2005, p.88) reinforced this idea by stating,

Human beings are not built in silence, but in work, in action-reflection.

But while to say the true word - which is work, which is praxis - is to transform the world, saying that word is not the privilege of some few persons, but the right of everyone.

Freire (2005) referred to the concept 'praxis' to involve both reflection on how to transform situations and circumstances, and the actions needed to accomplish it. Praxis creates awareness in learners, so they understand the social realities of their lives better. However, awareness should lead to action and further reflection.

Praxis can therefore be seen as a vital component of a liberated society, in which the learners and teachers are able to grow and gain knowledge, slowly transforming society into a more aware one. Freire (2005) explains that "there is no true word that

is not at the same time a praxis. Thus, to speak a true word is to transform the world” (p. 87). The teacher should constantly be aware of the idea of praxis within the classroom where one would constantly be reflecting and taking action to repair the injustices of the past and address issues of the present.

1.4.6 Critiques

While critical pedagogy provides important insights, it also has limitations. According to Sarroub and Quadros (2015), there are many instances where critical pedagogy may prove to be ineffective. One such example is the lack of understanding of the teacher of what being critical entails and how s/he would effectively incorporate it into the curriculum. In order for the teacher to have the ability to use critical pedagogy within the classroom, s/he must first enforce it within her own practices and beliefs. Many teachers may be unwilling to do this as they may feel it would undermine their authority. The teacher must also be fully aware of the diversity of his/her learners and be sensitive and respectful to the variety of understandings and beliefs.

Similarly, many learners may have beliefs and ideas which have been instilled in them since childhood and may be unwilling or even afraid to accept any ideas or beliefs that go against their own. Some learners may be unwilling to completely participate in becoming critical thinkers as they may be unable to accept the fact that the reality of one learner may be different to the reality of another (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015, p. 254). It is therefore imperative that the teacher makes it known that critical pedagogy aims to empower the community which includes the school and the community in which it resides, therefore creating better citizens for a better society.

It is also important to note that the implementation of critical pedagogy within the classroom may not be as simple as it may seem. The school itself and more importantly, the community, may not be accepting of learners questioning and challenging what was accepted as 'a normality' for many years and therefore may pose some resistance towards the school and the curriculum or the teacher (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015, p. 254) encouraging the learner to do so as well. This could create a barrier to the empowerment of the learner. It is therefore the responsibility of the teacher to make the intentions of the process clear to the school, the parents, and the learners in order to have support throughout this process of encouraging and guiding learners to become critical thinkers. Even though there may be some resistance to the implementation of critical pedagogy, it is important for the teacher to be upfront and transparent with the community at large.

Overall, critical pedagogy makes it clear that in order for effective learning and teaching to take place, one must first consider the social injustices within one's community. Social justice plays a vital role in all contexts, especially within the classroom and may be facilitated through the use and implementation of critical consciousness. A concept advocated by Paulo Freire (2005); critical consciousness works to emancipate the oppressed. However, in order for this to occur there must be effective discourse within the classroom, in which both the learners and the teacher share knowledge equally with each other. Power relations in the classroom must be considered and confronted and may be made possible through the use of a problem posing education. This method ensures that the ideas of social justice are enacted through the use of praxis.

2.3. Literature Review

1.4.1 Violence

According to the World Health Organization (2002, p.1), more than 1.6 million people lose their lives due to violence each year. Violence may be considered as a “universal phenomenon” and needs much attention as it involves the lives of humans (Knight, 2012, p.1). Violence is defined by Thompson (2001, p.2) as “the personal, physical use of force”. This physical force is seen regularly in our everyday lives and has the intention to “hurt, damage or kill someone or something” (Knight, 2012, p.1).

The World Health Organization (2002, p.4) states that violence can be divided into three categories, depending on who commits the crime. These categories include, “self-directed violence; interpersonal violence; and collective violence”. Self-directed violence usually involves suicide (including attempted suicide and suicidal behaviour).

There are many types of interpersonal violence which have been experienced in society. One such type of violence is violence against women. According to UNICEF (1999), violence against women is generally experienced in the form of sexual assault (p. 77) which may occur in many forms. Good (2003, p.5) states that the most obvious case of violence by men against women, is rape. One such example is evident in the rape of Rosie in *Tsotsi* (Fugard, 1980, p.21) where two gang members, Die Aap and Butcher, proceed to gang rape Rosie after she became intoxicated while sitting in a local shebeen.

Another common form of interpersonal violence is family and intimate partner violence. This type of violence occurs between members of the same family and

generally takes place within the home (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, Zwi & Lozano, 2002, p. 6). This may include spousal abuse.

Collective violence takes place within a community with an individual that the victim may be familiar with or may have simply seen before. This includes instances which occur outside the home and may be by a known individual or a stranger (Krug et al., 2002, p.6). These forms of violence are usually committed by a single perpetrator although collective violence may also occur and is committed by a group of individuals (Krug et al., 2002, p.6). This type of violence is commonly committed by group of people or a gang, such as that seen in the film, *Tsotsi*. These violent acts may be “physical, sexual, psychological, deprivation/neglect” (Krug et al., 2002, p.5).

Physical violence, according to Krantz and Garcia-Moreno (2005, p.819), may be considered as, “physically aggressive acts such as kicking, biting, slapping, beating or even strangling”. These physical acts may be the most easily recognised of all violent acts.

However, other violent acts such as sexual violence have also become increasingly common. Krantz and Garcia-Moreno go on to explain sexual violence which may be defined as “forced sex through the use of force, threats, and intimidation, forced participation in degrading sexual acts...” (p. 819). Sexual violence may be difficult to recognise by person not involved in the violence.

Another form of violence that is difficult to detect is psychological violence. Jackson and Ashely (2005, p.114) explain psychological violence as “bullying, threats, intimidation, sexual harassment” amongst other forms.

Lastly, a form of violence which, while seen, might not be recognised as violence, is deprivation/neglect. Sarri, Evans, Stansfeld and Marcenes (2012) explain that the two concepts are often used interchangeably. Neglect links directly to deprivation and is often caused by poverty.

As there are so many types of violence, we must understand that violence is “often seen as an inevitable part of the human condition - a fact of life to respond to, rather than to prevent” (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi & Lozano, 2002, p.1). It is of great importance to discuss how this violence has an impact on us and how we react to and interpret these violent acts as well as the conversations that arise from it, such as conversations about social justice. This begs the question; how do we react to these violent crimes?

Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, Zwi and Lozano (2002) state that we are not obliged to accept violence as a part of our everyday lives; it is up to us as a society to stand up against it. It must also be noted that violence is a sensitive topic. Krug, et al. (2002, p.1) state that people find this topic difficult to discuss as “it raises uncomfortable questions about their personal lives”. Talking about violence requires the appropriate discourse, as violence may be aligned with intimidation, as intimidation is a form of violence, and generally plays a part in the reason why so many violent acts are not reported. It is important that we stand up against social conventions (Krug et al., 2002) which dictate that violence is a taboo topic which cannot be spoken about, resulting in victims of violence being expected to remain silent about their experiences. This view on violence must be addressed as those who experience violence in their own lives tend to suffer from psychological issues at a later stage. It is also important to note that these violent incidents may have long term side effects,

such as mental harm (UNICEF, 1999) or even prolonged alcohol and drug abuse. It therefore becomes imperative to discuss not only the violence which occurs, but representations of violence and the effect it has on our lives.

1.4.2 School and Youth Violence

It may be seen as especially important to identify the violence which occurs among youth. As violence may be considered as one of the largest societal issues being faced in our societies (Karaman, Tomakin, Kilic & Yilmaz, 2016), it is vital that we identify how this may be affecting the youth in both the school and the community. Karaman et al. (p. 45) define violence in schools as “threats and physical attacks between students and students, and students and teachers or school management/personnel”. According to Clark (2012) the majority of learners who engage in a form of violence are between the ages of 12 and 22 in South Africa. Clark’s findings indicate that this age group involves school going youth who are either the victims of violence or the perpetrators. Clark notes that young people’s contact with and experience of violence in various spaces such as educational institutions, homes and communities are usually the underlying cause of youth violence in South Africa. Young people’s exposure to violence could therefore result in a never-ending cycle of being exposed to a context of violence, using violence themselves to solve problems, and then exposing other young people to the violence. Constant exposure to violence, using violence and exposing others to violence may become a cycle that is difficult to escape.

In terms of the present study, I am aware, through prolonged interaction and conversations with the participating learners, that they come from varying backgrounds; some having been brought up in violent homes where gender-based,

and other forms of violence, is a normality, while others commit crimes, even violent ones, themselves. Overall, youth crimes have become increasingly violent (Clark, 2012). By understanding learners' contexts, teachers should recognise the importance of facilitating conversations in the classroom around sensitive issues such as violence and to engage with representations of violence to consider effects and consequences of violence in the learners' lives, in their immediate communities, and society in general.

The effect of learners' homes and communities could result in young people wanting to mimic what they have witnessed themselves. They could also be influenced by the lifestyles which are shown to them by external influencers, such as celebrities and performers. One such example is the praising of the lifestyle of a thug or a gangster, exemplified by some rappers. Many young people live by the motto "thug life", a term used in rap songs (Haupt, 2008, p.386). Similarly, in South Africa, many young people may be aware of the thug life. Their local Tsotsi may be considered as their role model just as the characters in *Tsotsi* respected or were terrified of Tsotsi and his gang as they walked through the street. Unless conversations are held in classrooms and other spaces and until learners learn that there are alternatives to violence, they may continue to perpetuate the cycle of violence as a normality and the only way of life in society. Teachers are well-placed to set up a dialogic space to enable conscientisation of how power structures work and of the various alternate possibilities to violence in order to succeed in life (Freire, 2000). According to The South African Department of Education Norms and Standards for Education (2000) as cited in Ogina (2011), a teacher needs to fulfil seven roles, including a pastoral role. Ogina explains that a pastoral role includes showing affection and concern for learners, providing a safe space to study, learn and express views, and enabling an

all-round holistic education for the learners. It is therefore important for the teacher to facilitate discussions with learners about how to act and live in safety and with respect to themselves and to others. It is equally important to open up discussions, using problem posing and dialogic education, about the consequences and repercussions of resorting to violence to solve problems and the importance of knowing that they do not need to accept violence as a norm. Such discussions may use fictional representations of violence as catalysts to drive the process, as was done in this study.

1.4.3 *Fictional Representations of Violence in Literature, including in Tsotsi*

The novel *Tsotsi*, which includes many violent acts, forms a part of the prescribed literature in South African schools for grade 11, English Home Language learners (Department of education, n.d). Priebe (2005) states that the occurrence of violence in African literature is on the increase, as seen in novels such as *Tsotsi*. These novels are often prescribed for study by South African youth as they are said to be relatable. But why is this so? What makes these violent novels relatable to the youth? What does the violence represent?

The way in which an action is represented can influence the way the audience perceives the action or even acts on it. Representation, therefore, plays an important role when interpreting violence in novels. According to Young (1999) the most important part of a representation is that it stands for something. This raises the question of what the violence in the novel *Tsotsi* stands for. Does this violence echo a neglected reality? Is this reality one which has been accepted by society? Why are we quick to accept a fictional violence but reject non-fictional violence? Fictional violence is simply a “printed representation of real violence and the two are closely

related, yet different”, states Knight (2012, p.1). Similarly, Thompson (2001, p.1) states that a represented violence can be “considered morally justifiable and even gratifying”, whereas non-fictional violence can be said to cause “distress”. He notes that fictional representations of violence are largely accepted by audiences who view them as forms of entertainment, such as in novels and films, but non-fictional violence, such as that reported in newspapers, must be morally justified, such as to play a part in history, in order for others to accept it. But why is this so? Why are we more inclined to accept a fictional violence rather than non-fictional violence which we experience so often? This fictitious violence has been said to be on the increase, especially in literature, and is becoming more graphic yet still widely accepted by society (Maulini, 2016). Maulini explains that fictional violence is more accepted as it provides the reader with a sense of relief for any unhealthy aggression or emotion, which can then be dealt with in a more acceptable way and removes any sense of guilt.

In the novel *Tsotsi*, the violent acts presented represent a reality yet may still be considered separated from reality because it is fiction. However, we tend to be more accepting and even encouraging of these represented realities. When violent crimes are committed in reality, we recognize and are ashamed of the brutality and pain caused to the victim. Persons affected do not understand it any other way. It has an immediate effect and consequence for those involved. It is no longer a representation but rather a reality. Our representations of violence mirror our reality more and more each day, yet these two aspects of violence are still viewed as separate entities that have no apparent and overt relation to one another.

Violence presents itself as a recurring theme in the novel, *Tsotsi*. It depicts a very realistic idea of the lives of those who live in many townships of South Africa, as

violence plays a major role in their lives (Marshall, 2015, p.15). The township, according to Pernegger and Godenhart (2007, p.2) may be defined as “underdeveloped, usually (but not only) urban, residential areas that during Apartheid were reserved for non-whites (Africans, Coloureds and Indians)”. These townships were understood to be low-income and high poverty areas (p.3). The idea of the township was enforced through the Group Areas Act of 1950 (p.7) where citizens were separated according to their race. In the township in the novel, many types of violence are represented, including gender-based violence.

The reality of violence is exemplified in the novel, an example of which is the gender-based violence in the rape of Rosie (Fugard, 1980, p.21). Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla and Rafele (2009, p.1012) state that violence is the second leading cause of death in South Africa, with 46% of this violence being interpersonal and a large contributing factor of this interpersonal violence is due to “patriarchal notions of masculinity” (Seedat et al., 2015, p.1011). This idea of masculinity includes the notion that a man must show his strength in one way or another, including, and very often experienced, through violence. This includes fictional violence in the township, as represented in the novel, *Tsotsi*, and real-life violence, a well-known South African example being the murder of Reeve Steenkamp by her then boyfriend, Oscar Pistorius (Grogan, 2013, p.173). With violence playing such a large role in South Africa, especially among males, it becomes important that appropriate discussions around this violence needs to take place, especially with the youth, both male and female, as they may form a warped perception of what masculinity really is or how it may be measured in society. It also becomes imperative to engage with issues of gender-based violence.

A large portion of violence in South Africa includes gender-based violence which can be defined as “a host of harmful behaviours directed at women and girls because of their sex” (Heise, Ellsbery & Gottmoeller, 2002, p.56). Good (2003) identifies the most common form of gender-based violence being rape, which includes fictional or non-fictional instances of male-generated violence. Every (2016) agrees with this statement by stating that novels which include incidences of rape and murder have, since 1994, formed a large part of literature in South Africa as they have become popular. In the novel, *Tsotsi*, this is seen in the violent acts against Miriam and Rosie.

In the novel, the rape of Rosie highlights issues of sexual consent. According to Lutz-Priefert (2015), rape may be defined as sexual activity which occurs without consent and generally through intimidation or force. In relation to Rosie, Fugard represents the sexual act ambiguously in terms of consent. As readers, we ask: does the victim have to say “no” in order for it to be considered rape? Do the thugs in the novel care about consent? Haupt (2008, p.387) states that a thug’s lifestyle revolves around “accumulating wealth, drugs and alcohol as well as sexual power”. Haupt points out that it is a conscious decision to gain sexual power by any means necessary. These are important issues that need to be discussed with the youth, allowing engagement to understand various ideologies as well as to discuss issues of social justice pertaining to respecting a diversity of people in various contexts. With gender-based violence being so high in South Africa, it is essential to present options that might be different from a norm.

Even in literature, the story line always seems to stay the same - man plus woman equals violence (Good, 2003, p.6). These very common occurrences of violence

raise many questions concerning violence in literature. Do these occurrences of violence within novels help to solve the problem or do they encourage and legitimise the violent acts? Whose responsibility is it to advise communities and society on the actions that should or should not be taken in order to create a better, non-violent society? The answers are many, but the consensus should be that issues of violence need to be critically discussed in order for an informed stance to be taken. In a literature classroom, this informed stance can only be taken once the issues of violence, especially those which we find in South African, and other, novels, are discussed and evaluated thoroughly together with the context within which it is located. According to Makombe (2011, p.5), writers “have a responsibility not only to expose social injustices, but also participate in the struggle for a better society”. Such advocacy, as espoused by critical pedagogy, is what helped drive the current study which focuses on Grade 11 learners’ engagement with representations of violence in Fugard’s novel, *Tsotsi*.

The novel represents many types of violence driven by various reasons. Dovey (2007, p.149) points out that Tsotsi is forced into a life of violent crime after being left homeless, as a young child, through the violent laws and actions of the apartheid government. From a very young age, he is brutalised. After Tsotsi takes up the role of gang leader, he shows no hesitation in acting violently towards and against others, including his fellow gang members. However, after a physical fight with a fellow gang member, Tsotsi finds himself as the primary caregiver of a baby. This was the first time he could not and did not resort to violence to solve his problem. This was also the first time that he was expected to care for anything or anyone besides himself. Through the impact of the baby in his life and the words of his fellow gang member, Tsotsi begins to remember his past and realises that violence is not necessarily the

answer to all situations. In a complete turnaround of Tsotsi's life, he sacrifices his life for the life of the baby in order for it to be saved instead of him. This was his final and most significant act of selflessness. However, while the end of the novel is significant, the present study focuses more especially on representations of violence in the novel and how learners respond to them.

Representations of violence in the novel, *Tsotsi*, occurs from the very first chapter with the brutal murder of Gumboot Dlamini (Fugard, 1980, p.12) where the gang took Gumboot's possessions by stabbing him with a bicycle spoke through his chest (p.12-13) and left behind his lifeless body. Dlamini was an upstanding citizen who left his pregnant wife to make an honest living and just before he was set to go home to his wife and child with his savings, he was murdered by Tsotsi and his gang. The novel's beginning frames the concept of ruthless senseless violence in preparation for other instances of physical and other forms of violence to follow. As Tsotsi and his gang walked through the township, people would step out of their way and mothers would call their children inside (p.9), showing the power the gang possessed within their community and the fear of the community members. This is ironic as the mothers are afraid of the gang members and what they might do to their children while the children themselves want to emulate the ways of the gang and be able to, one day, instil fear into the community themselves. This fear is a form of psychological violence, which is defined by Jackson and Ashley (2005) as verbal abuse and bullying, as the people of the township knew that if they did not show Tsotsi and his gang respect, the gang would inflict physical violence onto them. Learners were also required to engage with the social justice issues regarding Gumboot Dlamini. Through the introduction of this violent act, among others,

learners became familiar with the issues of social justice and were encouraged to air their opinions on it.

Sexual violence is then shown through the gang rape of Rosie by Butcher and Die Aap. Sexual violence is defined by Krug et al (2002, p.149) as “any sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work”. This sexual violence, although present in one section of the novel, plays a significant role in allowing the reader to identify instances of sexual violence within our communities. It also raises consciousness about power relations in our physical and psychological lives.

The rape of Rosie is also an important event in the novel as it is very controversial (as discussed earlier). Rosie was intoxicated when she was approached by Die Aap and Butcher for sexual intercourse. She did not agree to it but also did not verbally disagree. After Butcher’s advances, Rosie pleads by saying, “Not in here. Please. Not in here.” (Fugard, 1980, p.21) Could this be considered as adequate consent for sexual intercourse? Does Rosie being intoxicated influence the response she had given? Does it matter that Butcher “pulled her to her feet and pushed her to the door” (p.21)?

The second incident of psychological violence is evident as Boston, a fellow gang member, is warned to never ask Tsotsi any questions, creating fear within Boston. However, Boston fails to abide by these warnings and continues to question Tsotsi about his past and what it means to be decent, resulting in Tsotsi physically assaulting Boston (p.23-24). After this incident of psychological and physical

violence, Tsotsi begins to run from his act of physical violence and from his psychological trauma, hoping to rid himself of the thoughts running through his head. He finds himself in the Bluegum trees where he crosses paths with a young woman. It is unclear what his intentions are at this point, and we do not know whether he intends to be sexually or physically violent with the woman when he grabs her (p. 34). Tsotsi grabbing this woman results in her thrusting a box at Tsotsi and running away. The result is that the baby in the box is now left in the care of Tsotsi. As Tsotsi approaches Cassim's shop for baby milk, we see Cassim's fear, a form of psychological violence instilled in Cassim and his family based on the reputation of Tsotsi. However, in this instance, Tsotsi was not representing his usual violent self. He was, in fact, doing the opposite by caring for another.

In chapters six and seven, Tsotsi follows a disabled Morris Tshabalala and steps on his hands (p. 59). As Morris tries to move away from Tsotsi, Tsotsi seems determined to act violently towards Morris and Morris tries to defend himself by throwing rocks at Tsotsi (p. 73). However, Tsotsi has a change of heart brought on by the haunting flashbacks of his past which plague him daily. Such repeated flashbacks indicate the psychological violence of Tsotsi's physically violent past. Tsotsi eventually realises that he does not have to be physically violent towards others and instead, is able to have a conversation with Morris without causing him any harm.

Tsotsi once again exemplifies psychological and possible pending physical violence by forcing Miriam to feed the baby (p. 101). In chapter 9, we understand why Tsotsi enacts these types of violence when he recalls his childhood in which he experienced both psychological and physical violence. When Tsotsi was younger,

his mother was forcibly and physically removed from their home by the police who inflicted physical violence on his mother, a scene witnessed by Tsotsi, which in turn served as psychological violence on him. After his mother was taken from their home, Tsotsi's father returned home and was infuriated that his wife was not there and proceeded to become physically violent towards the dog, who Tsotsi refers to as the "yellow bitch", resulting in the father breaking the dog's back. This act by Tsotsi's father shows how he was unable to manage his anger as he took his frustrations out on Tsotsi's dog rather than against those with whom he was angry, the apartheid policemen who took his wife away. This act did more than injure Tsotsi's dog but opened the gateway for Tsotsi to feel unsafe by his primary caregiver. This betrayal is the event which led him to run away and find his own way in life. These events, by the apartheid policemen and by the father, also provided examples of how people with power wield such power, using violence, for violent ends. These violent acts indicate how powerful displays of violence impact and shape a young child and the way the child becomes conditioned to understand a life of violence as the norm. The consequences of this display are serious and permanent, and resulted in Tsotsi, who already lost his mother, losing a father and caregiver and a home, and his father losing a son.

After becoming aware of Tsotsi's life, we understand why he chose to act out the various forms of violence throughout his adult life. According to Makombe (2011) many young people choose a life of violence to make a living in order for them to survive. This life choice may be made to enable a way to make money and build a reputation and respect in the township through belonging to a gang. Haupt (2008, p.9) states that the priorities of a gang lie in "the acquisition of money, women, wine and a love for violence", all of which become evident within the novel. The gang in

the novel follow this definition of a typical gang almost precisely, under the leadership of Tsotsi, who Marshall (2015, p.15) describes as a “typical township gangster”.

Without the prospect of work, there is a growth in the number of gangsters, such as Tsotsi, who resort to make money through crime and violence (Makombe, 2011). Becoming a gangster is therefore seen as a way to make a living and gain a reputation where they are feared and respected in the townships in which they live. This allows a gang member to gain a sense of power which they would be unable to easily attain in an “ordinary” job. The physical and psychological violence works together with gender-based sexual violence, what Grogan (2013, p.174) calls “phallic violence”, which has become commonplace amongst gangsters in townships. Representations of violence such as discussed above open engagements with issues of social justice in classrooms.

1.4.4 Engaging with Issues of Social Justice Including Violence in the English Classroom

In order to deal with issues of social justice in an English classroom, it is important to introduce a novel in which these issues may arise, in order for the learners to have a greater understanding of what a social justice issue may be. This is the benefit of introducing the novel, *Tsotsi*, in South African schools. The novel enables a conversation about violence and once the teacher is aware of the associations learners have with violence, it would be easier for the teacher to address the topic.

The aim of teaching social justice within the classroom is to foster a positive outcome from the discussion with the learners, through which issues of social justice may be reinforced or taught. Blake (2015, p.1) defines social justice as “a hope to build a

society in which individuals have equal access to resources and receive equitable treatment regardless of race, gender, religion, sexuality, income level or disability". A lack of social justice is evident in the novel *Tsotsi* with the characters, including the protagonist, experiencing a lack of resources, and being prejudiced because of who they are, but, at the same time, stripping others of resources (material goods, lives, dignity, safety, among others). Similarly, many participating learners in the present study live lives filled with injustice especially, but not restricted to, their race, gender, and income levels.

It is important to note that teaching issues of social justice must be dealt with sensitively and with great consideration of all learners. Alsup and Miller (2014, p.195) state that teachers must be prepared for a diversity of learners and should encourage a sense of respect and equality among all learners. This is especially important within the South African context as South Africa is known for its rich diversity, especially within schools. Therefore, it is imperative that the teacher not only encourages a respect for this diversity within the classroom but also educates the learners on being respectful to others, others' views, and to themselves in their everyday lives. Hayik (2011, p.96) states that an English teacher's responsibility is "to educate students to social justice issues in addition to the responsibility of teaching them the English language. This is done through teaching students to be critical thinkers" (p.195). This is reinforced by Alsup and Miller (2014, p.195) who state that injustices in society are constantly portrayed in the English syllabus and should be confronted. English teachers, therefore, have the opportunity to foster a clearer understanding of the violations as well as common issues of social justice within a society while teaching the core ideas of the English language. Through this, the teacher may be able to pave the way for learners to become critical thinkers.

Rapps, Riegel and Glasen (2001) identify critical thinking as an act which requires both skill as well as disposition. Critical thinking is developed over time and with experience. A critical thinker will not simply accept all that he/she has been told, but will seek to gain a greater understanding, from the context as well as their own experiences. This would allow learners to understand the consequences of a society in which issues of social justice are not reinforced. Aliakbari and Faraji (2011, p. 79) emphasize the idea that social justice may occur when learners learn to be critical thinkers thereby creating a society where learners are responsible and respectful of others as well as practice social justice in all contexts. To enable learners to become critical thinkers, teachers will need to teach skills of analysis and judgement, among other skills, and should empower learners with critical consciousness, as suggested by Freire (2005), in order to confront injustices.

An example of a way in which critical pedagogy can be used to foster critical thinking is through the teaching of novels such as *Tsotsi*, which may include a culture which the learner may not be aware of or used to (Hayik, 2011, p.96). This will be done through the teacher

addressing social issues that are relevant to students' lives, asking critical questions, and conducting critical discussions of stories to encourage students to critique the characters' and their own social practices and question stereotypical behaviours (Hayik, 2011, p. 97).

This will allow the learners to not only enjoy the novel, but to think further about each character, and ask relevant questions. Questions could be designed to make judgements (Do they see this character as a good or bad character and why?), or to find points of relatability (Which character do they most see themselves as? Why is

this so?). These questions bring about discussions and debates on the actions of characters within the novel and how they may be judged. However, the judgment that arises may be one-dimensional by pitting good against bad. Therefore, it is important to facilitate discussions around the incidents and the characters (Hayik, 2011), to gain a deeper and more complex understanding. For example, in the novel being studied, *Tsotsi* reveals that he was subjected to violence throughout his life which led him on to a path of violence himself, as it was the only way that he knew.

Through the implementation of critical pedagogy within the classroom, learners will be given the opportunity to contribute to the sharing of knowledge within the classroom, which will in turn, influence their ideologies within their homes and their communities. The learners would be able to gain confidence in their ideas and beliefs as well as to broaden their understandings by obtaining knowledge from the perceptions of others. This will be particularly important in the discussion around the novel *Tsotsi*, and the violence found within it. Learners will be able to analyse the violence and decide whether they feel like these representations of violence do indeed reflect an unspoken reality, whether in their own communities or in South Africa as a whole. These representations of violence, especially those found within the novel, portray actions of people within the community. This will allow the learners to perceive the life of these characters not only from their own view, but from the view of the characters themselves, creating a better understanding of why the characters would choose to behave the way that they do. These discussions would focus on issues of social justice in learners' homes, schools and communities and allow them to understand the impact of these actions on society as a whole. It would also allow the learners to understand that they have the power to adjust the trajectory of not only their lives but the lives of others, through their beliefs and

ideologies. It must also be understood that engaging with issues of social justice could be met with resistance from various sectors including the learners, school, community and/or teachers as challenges to long-held ideologies are difficult to accept and change may be painful. However, not engaging with social justice issues could make the process of learners becoming critical thinkers very difficult. If learners do not become critical thinkers, they might continue to accept the status quo of their communities, thus reducing the chances of improving the social justice within that community.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the theoretical framework and the literature review used in the study. The theory underpinning the study is critical pedagogy with its focus on critical consciousness, power structures and relationships, dialogic and problem posing education and praxis. These concepts emanate from Freire's ideas on education and the concepts were adapted to suit the present study.

The literature review unpacked issues related to violence and then considered school and youth violence, understanding that the study works with learners in a high school and with how they understand and experience violence in their various lived contexts, including school. Thereafter, the literature review focussed on fictional representations of violence in literature especially in relation to the novel under study, *Tsotsi*. Finally, there was a discussion of issues surrounding social justice in the English classroom. The next chapter discusses the methodology used to conduct the research in order to answer the four research questions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the way in which the research was conducted. This was done using a critical paradigm and its ideas of social justice, ideas that underpin the study. A qualitative research approach assisted the researcher in finding meaning in the textual and visual data which was collected. This chapter then discusses a single case study of grade 11 learners within a school as well as the process involved in the use of purposive sampling. It will then proceed to discuss the three data generation methods used and to explain how thematic data analysis will be used to interpret the data. Finally, the ethics regarding the permission to conduct this research, the storage of data and the way in which feedback will be given to the participants, will be discussed.

3.2. Research Paradigm

This study will be underpinned by a critical research paradigm. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a paradigm in terms of how the researcher sees and interprets the world.

The critical paradigm is embedded in issues of social justice and how to bring about an improvement in the world or even just the community or society surrounding participants (Kivunja & Kuyini , 2017, p.35). Shah and Al-Bargi (2013, p.259) note that a critical paradigm “tries to emancipate people by changing their social, political and cultural setting”. In this study, this was engaged with through the use of the concepts of critical pedagogy which served as a theoretical framework and through the processes involved in introducing the ideology of social justice to the learners.

According to Asghar (2013), the critical paradigm has to conform to the criteria of (a) providing a sufficient explanation of what social justice is, (b) to identify how to bring about change and (c) to provide means to bring about this transformation. Through fulfilling these criteria, it would be possible for the researcher to work with the participants to create a better society for them to live in and create for others. These criteria were fulfilled in this study through the teacher-researcher opening up a discussion about the various types of violence with the participants, as well as the idea of social justice and what it entails. The researcher and participants then discussed how they would be able to apply the ideas of social justice in order to create change within their contexts and lastly, the researcher and participants identified the knowledge needed to become mindful of their words and actions and those of others and to decide on how to lead socially just lives in order to create a socially just society. The research process also probed long held beliefs and questioned ownership on long held ideologies. This reflective process opened up discussions and enabled deeper engagements with possible ways to change, if necessary.

Asghar (2013) also reinforces the idea that the critical paradigm “challenges the status quo and strives for a balanced and democratic society” (p. 3123). The status quo may only be challenged once the researcher understands the power relations within society, more specifically the “interaction of race, class, gender, education, economy, religion and other social institutions that contribute to a social system” (p. 3123). It must be understood that through acknowledging power relations, the researcher and participants may face discomfort as they try to strive for “liberation and emancipation” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 35). The researcher’s responsibility

“goes beyond mere recording observations, and strives to reform for a better world” (Asghar, 2013, p. 3121).

It must be clearly recognised that through this process, the researcher should remain respectful of all cultural norms (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) and should be mindful of the cultures and traditions of the community in which the study is carried out so as to not disrespect any person or their culture. This was especially important in this study as the participants are often vulnerable and violence is a very sensitive topic within the communities surrounding the school. Therefore, in this study, the researcher made sure to listen to the opinions and beliefs of the participants and was able to provide insight and new ideas to the participants who were able to make subtle changes within themselves and their communities, without disrespecting or going against any cultural beliefs or traditions. The researcher also made sure to be familiar with the various cultures of the participants within the school and did some research into them, in order to be sensitive when dealing with the participants in the classroom. This process should also be done in an ethical manner to “promote human rights, and increase social justice, and reciprocity” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p.35), thereby ensuring that participants’ best interests are foregrounded while addressing issues of social justice.

However, the ideas behind the critical paradigm may not always work out as planned as the critical paradigm could stereotype participants as having the same ideas and that they all may be transformed in the same way, through the use of the same methods (Scotland, 2012). It is therefore important that the researcher understands and is made aware that s/he may not acquire the results which s/he may expect (Shah & Al-Bargi, 2013). The critical paradigm does not acknowledge that the

participants have various levels of understanding and may not respond to the researcher and his/her ideas in similar ways, if at all. It is also important to note that although the researcher may have what s/he presumes as solid methods to conduct the research with a social justice agenda, it is not guaranteed that this will happen in that particular way, or even at all (Scotland, 2012). Shah and Al-Bargi (2013, p.259) agree with this statement by noting that although the researcher may not achieve the expected results, it is the process and attempt that should be the most important in attempting transformation.

This also shines the light on the researcher. It is important for the researcher to go into this study for the right reasons. The researcher should not have any ulterior motives (Shah & Al-Bargi, 2013) and should always take into consideration the “desires and needs” of the participants. In this study, the researcher had been the learners’ teacher for two years and was therefore able to have an understanding of many of the needs and concerns of this community.

Although it would be in the best interest of the participants and their families for the researcher “to promote human rights, and increase social justice and reciprocity” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 35), it must be understood that not everyone will be willing to allow for this transformation and could pose much resistance which the researcher should anticipate. This resistance may come in the form of parents, the participants or even the gatekeeper, who may be unwilling to allow the participants to participate in the study. These are some of the many limitations to the critical paradigm. The researcher was aware of such possible limitations and worked together with the participants with their best interests in mind.

3.3. Research approach

This study used a qualitative research approach. The qualitative approach to research may be defined as, “a form of systematic empirical enquiry into meaning” (Shank, 2002, as cited in Ospina, 2004, p.5). Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacy (2016) state that a qualitative study would “involve the systematic collection, organization, description and interpretation of textual, verbal or visual data” (p. 499). This idea is further explained by Shank (2002) through the idea that qualitative researchers can be considered as “discoverers and reconcilers of meaning where no meaning has been clearly understood before” (p. 5). Hammarberg et al. (2016) further add that this type of research is “often from the standpoint of the participant” (p.499) and is largely based on the human experiences of the participants (Shank, 2002).

According to Queiros, Faria and Almeida (2017), qualitative research deals with participants’ belief systems which provide for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This phenomenon is usually a part of a social context which would influence the study, or the participants’ experiences in one way or another and hopes to identify “how things work in particular contexts” (Mason, 2002, p.1). It is therefore imperative for qualitative researchers to have an adequate understanding of the phenomenon as well as the social context of the participants (Asghar, 2013). According to Mason, “most of the key decisions about research are made by researchers contextually” (2002, p.2). The objective in understanding this phenomenon is for researchers to understand the experiences of others (Ospina, 2004). This is done through obtaining a holistic understanding of the social context and the phenomena, while remaining sensitive to the experiences of others (Shank, 2002).

In order for qualitative researchers to fully understand the phenomena being explored, they would first need to become acquainted with the participants and their lives and will thereafter simultaneously become the subject of the study and the object being researched (Queiros, Faria & Almeida, 2017). The researchers need to submerge themselves in the social context of the participants and inevitably become a part of that society in order to obtain the required results. It is only once the researchers are able to view the participants and their experiences from the view of the community, will they have a complete understanding of their experiences. It is therefore imperative that researchers are continuously respectful and mindful of the cultural norms and traditions within that society/community so as to not offend the participants but rather to encourage the participation of the participants. The researchers should, if not already familiar with the culture and traditions within the prospective community, familiarise themselves with this, in order to have adequate knowledge of these traditions to understand the community and have the opportunity to efficiently conduct the research. Researchers should also have an understanding that cultures and traditions are not enacted in the same way within a community and that the same response cannot be expected from every participant (Hammarberg et al., 2016). A diversity of responses would prove to be beneficial as to broaden the understanding of that particular community or group.

It is important to take into consideration the disadvantages of qualitative research. When using this research approach, it must be understood that there is much “liberty and flexibility” for the researcher (Silverman, 2005, as cited in Asghar, 2013, p. 3122). This may, at first, seem like an advantage for the researcher. However, too much freedom in research may lead to uncertainty, especially for a novice researcher. One of the main disadvantages, according to Asghar (2013), is that

qualitative research may only be conducted using a small group of participants and may be ineffective when conducted in a larger group. As the researcher would be required to be submerged in the social context of the participants (Ospina, 2004), a limitation that may occur is that the researcher may become biased in the findings of the study and may feel a sense of belonging to that particular social context. This would greatly influence the results therefore rendering the study untrustworthy. The researcher needs to be able to follow the structure of the qualitative study but be mindful enough to remember that s/he is a researcher and that s/he needs to fulfil those obligations to the study through always ensuring that actions taken are appropriate. Hammarberg et al. (2016) also identifies the need for the data and the interpretations of data to support one another. When these two aspects are incongruent, the study can no longer be trustworthy or credible.

While understanding the limitations of a qualitative research approach, it was found to be appropriate for this study as it allowed the researcher to establish a greater understanding of the perspectives and experiences of the grade 11 learners concerned, with regard to the violence they identify with in the novel and how it has been represented. It also provided the researcher with a greater understanding of the community which surrounds the school. Qualitative research was appropriate as it was carried out with just one grade in the school. The approach helped the researcher to understand how the learners interpreted the violence in the novel and created an understanding of it through their own social context. The researcher also gained a greater understanding of the violence the learners have experienced in their lives, be it through their family or their community and how they engaged with this violence.

In this study, before the research was conducted, the researcher had informal discussions with the grade 11 learners concerning some of the cultural norms and traditions which the various race groups follow. These discussions allowed the researcher to find out about participants' lives in a respectful manner while also creating a greater understanding of the way the research may be conducted so as to not offend anyone.

3.4. Research design

This study used a single case study research design. The term 'case study' refers to using real people in their natural settings, allowing the reader to fully understand the ideas and beliefs of the participating people (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This is reinforced by Yin (2009), as cited by Rule and John (2015, p.3) who states that a case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". This provides the researcher with the opportunity to transform the phenomenon into research questions (Heale & Twycross, 2017), thereby creating the opportunity for the researcher to obtain more understanding of the phenomenon as well as the context.

In this study, the grade 11 learners within English classes studying one text in one school in one location comprised the case. Rule and John (2015) state that in order to have a case study, there should first be an aim which the researcher wants to achieve through the use of a case study. Baxter and Jack (2010), as cited in Yin (2003), state that a case study is relevant to answer 'how' and 'why' questions and when the participants are unable to be influenced or manipulated into altering their responses for the research being conducted. They go on to indicate that contextual

conditions are significant in a case study and have a great influence on the responses from the participants.

In this study, the researcher wished to understand how grade 11 learners at a high school in Newlands East, Kwa-Zulu Natal understood violence. This was done through an exploration of the learners' own experiences with violence and how and why those experiences had shaped their perceptions of violence, both in their social contexts and in other aspects of their lives, such as when reading the novel, *Tsotsi*. Participants could relate the novel to their own lives and that understanding shaped their ideas of violence and issues of social justice. Through the exploration of the study, the researcher gained a greater understanding of why the learners viewed violence the way they did and could open up conversations about the concept of social justice and how to possibly incorporate it into their pre-existing ideologies.

This case study was specifically a single case study. Gustafsson (2017) states that a single case study is used when the researcher wants to study a single group of people in a particular context. In this study, a single group of grade 11 learners participated in the study within the context of the school generally and the English classroom specifically. A single case study assists the researcher to gain a greater understanding of not only the participants, but also of their context (Gustafsson, 2017).

An advantage of using a case study is that it allows the researcher and the reader to clearly understand the phenomena being researched in the participants' context (Cohen, Manion & Morrison). This assisted the researcher to not only get a better understanding of the participants, but also of the participants' social contexts, and the reasons for their experiences. For a case study to be effective, it should be

conducted in the context of the participants in order to yield results which would provide insight into the phenomenon within a context. As a case study deals with phenomena, people, experiences and contexts, it is important to be sensitive and respectful to the topic itself as well as the ideas of the participants (Rule & John, 2015).

When conducting research using the case study, the researcher must be aware of possible limitations. According to Zainal (2007) and Starman (2012), the most common limitation to the case study design is the high possibility of bias from the researcher. As the researcher has to be familiar with the context of the participants, it is understandable to have an opinion of the participants as well as their context. Starman goes on to explain that this bias is “the impact of a researcher’s prior knowledge about the case and ... possible favouritism toward hypotheses” (p. 36). This potential bias was recognised, and the researcher aimed to overcome such bias in the study by inviting all grade 11 learners to participate in the study, thus ensuring a diversity of learners within the context. It must also be considered that the participants may have been exposed to more violence than the researcher, thus creating a possible bias. Reducing bias was also uppermost in the researcher’s mind by being consciously aware of actions and words chosen when working with the participants, and by drawing conclusions as objectively as possible. Other limitations, according to Yin (1984), as cited by Zainal (2007), includes generating a large range of data, which the researcher may be unable to organise. Heale and Twycross (2017, p.7) concur with this by stating that “the sheer volume of data is difficult to organise and data analysis and integration strategies need to be carefully thought through”. This places a lot of responsibility on the researcher when dealing with the data and the way in which it is processed. Yin reinforces that this data must be

organised “systematically” in order for the data to be trustworthy and

effective for the study. This problem was overcome by using the systemic processes of thematic analysis (discussed below).

3.5. Purposive sampling

This study used purposive sampling. When conducting research, the quality of the research done is greatly dependent on the sampling that has been used (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The sample can be considered as “a portion of a population” (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim (2016, p. 1). Etikan et al. (2016) explain that purposive sampling is conducted when the researcher has selected participants with specific criteria for the study, through “identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed with a phenomenon of interest”. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) concur with this idea stating that purposive sampling will assist the researcher and the study by working with participants who have knowledge of the research topic. It is the prerogative of the researcher as to which participants to include in the study in order to provide the researcher with accurate data based on the sample group.

The criteria for the sampling of this study were that the participants needed to be grade 11 learners, from one school (therefore the same context) who had already studied the novel *Tsotsi* within their current year. The learners therefore had enough knowledge of the novel in order to participate in the study and provide noteworthy feedback to assist the researcher in the study. It is also important, according to Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016), for the researcher to include individuals who show a willingness and availability to participate in the study.

In addition, this study used a specific type of purposive sampling called total population sampling. This method is considered as the “best method” (Etikan, Musa

& Alkassim, 2016, p.3) and is conducted when all participants in a specific population are chosen to participate as they meet the criteria for the study. It may be defined as “a technique where the entire population that met the criteria (e.g. specific skills set, experience) are included in the research being conducted” (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016, p.3). Total population sampling was used as all the grade 11 learners in the school were invited to participate (as they all had studied the novel, *Tsotsi*, and had discussed issues of violence with the teacher).

Total population sampling could be used as all grade 11 learners fulfilled the sampling criteria of the study, reducing the possibility of missing any vital information (Laerd, 2012). According to Laerd (2012), total population sampling must be conducted in three steps. The first step is to decide on and identify the target participants, who, in this study, are the grade 11 pupils. The next step is to then acquire a list of the participants. The final step is to contact all participants for their willingness to participate. These three steps were followed, the study was discussed with them including what the study would entail, and they were asked if they would be willing to participate.

It must be acknowledged that there are disadvantages to total population sampling. Although a researcher will include the total population, this does not mean that every participant will present the researcher with information which will be useful for the study, but rather that it will increase the chance of obtaining useful information.

The sample in this study consisted of grade 11 learners. A total of 160 learners were requested to participate in the study but in the end, only 76 chose to be participants. The ages of these learners ranged from 16 to 19 years old. Of the 76 learners, 26 learners were 16 years old, younger than the expected age at this level, while 28

learners were of the expected age of 17 years old for grade 11. Above the average age were 17 learners who were 18 years old and five learners who were 19 years old.

Age of learners in sample				
Age	16	17	18	19
Number of learners	26	28	17	5

In terms of gender, 43 of the 76 participants self-identified as male and 33 of the 76 self-identified as female.

Gender of learners in sample		
Gender	Male	Female
	33	43

In terms of race, nine learners self-identified as coloured while 67 learners self-identified as black.

Race groups of learners in sample
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Race	Black	Coloured
Number of learners	67	9

The learners were asked who they resided with and who was responsible for them. This was asked in order to get an idea of the norms within the communities of the school and if the learners' home lives and who they resided with, would in some way affect the way in which they perceive violence within their homes as well as their communities. Through this, it could be established that the majority of the learners resided with their mothers (32 learners) while only two learners resided with only their fathers. It is also important to note that 20 learners resided with both parents. Sixteen learners resided with their grandparents while only 6 resided with an aunt or uncle. It was also important to establish how many of the learners lived with an adult as well as their siblings. Of the 76 participants, 38 participants lived with siblings as well as adults within their homes.

Who the learner resides with	
Mother only	32
Father only	2
Both parents	20
Grandparents	16
Aunts/Uncles	6

Live with siblings	38
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The learners were then asked who was responsible for them. This was considered important as it allowed for an understanding of the living situations of the learners and the way in which their communities were set up. It is interesting to note that a substantial 40 of the 76 learners stated that their mothers were solely responsible for them while only four learners indicated that their fathers were responsible for them. This is particularly interesting as it becomes possible to note that mothers are seen to have the main responsibilities in participating learners' lives and who also live with the learners. Of the 76 participating learners, 18 believed that both parents were responsible for them, while eight identified grandparents, one identified a guardian and five identified aunts or uncles as being responsible for them.

Responsible for learner	
Mother only	40
Father only	4
Both parents	18
Grandparents	8
Guardians	1
Aunts/ Uncles	5

3.6. Data generation

The data in this study was generated using three methods: an open-ended questionnaire, a written task, and a visual data generation method and was carried out in this order.

- *Open-ended questionnaire*

According to Wilson and McLean (1994), a questionnaire is suitable instrument “collecting information, providing data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher, and often being comparatively straight forward to analyse” (as cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 317). Hyman and Sierra (2016) state that the researcher must ensure that the questions are precise and must assist the participant in answering in the easiest ways possible.

In this study, the anonymous questionnaire had a limited number of closed questions for the collection of personal information from the participants such as their age, gender and home circumstances in order to have a better understanding of the sample and their background. The close-ended questions could be answered quickly by the participants giving them the confidence to continue to answer the open-ended questions in the questionnaire (Hyman & Sierra, 2016, p. 2). This data generation method was designed to answer all four research questions. The open-ended questions allowed the participants to respond in their own way and did not persuade them to answer in a specific manner or with specific information. The participants were given an adequate amount of space in the open-ended questions to give them the opportunity to write as much as they would need to provide “a wide range of answers” (Hyman & Sierra, 2016, p.3) allowing them to add useful information and to open up about their lives and experiences in an anonymous space.

There are possible limitations to this form of data generation. The participants may put the incorrect information in the closed-ended questions therefore giving the researcher the incorrect information. According to McGuirk and O'Neill (2016), the researcher may assume that the participants are able to answer the close-ended questions, but this may not be so, as some participants may be unable to understand the words or questions or may interpret them in different ways. Hyman and Sierra (2016) state that it may also be common for the participants to not feel comfortable enough to explain their true feelings in the open-ended questions and would therefore prove more difficult for the researcher to interpret this information. They may also write very short and vague answers where the researcher would have expected extensive details (Hyman & Sierra, 2016). For this reason, the researcher needed to have more than one data generation method in order to acquire the needed data. McGuirk and O'Neill (2016) also state that the researcher should ensure that the questionnaire is not too long, or the participants may lose focus or not answer to the best of their ability. These possible limitations were noted and acted upon by devising a compact questionnaire, by being available to explain questions, if necessary, and by designing other data generation methods.

- *Documentary research (Written task)*

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) indicate that documentary research may take many forms including samples of learners' work, among many others. They note that any written source may be used in documentary analysis. The use of students' written work, in the form of extended responses to open-ended questions, was used to ascertain learners' understandings of examples of violence in the text. In the written task, the participants were able to respond to the questions without undue

prescriptions. The written task allowed the participants the freedom to answer questions as they pleased with no influence on what they needed to say. It allowed the researcher to understand the thinking of the participants as it asked participants for personal responses to characters with motivations.

As with the open-ended questionnaire, the written task took longer than expected for the participants as they answered according to their own experiences as they “write a free account in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 321). The written task also allowed the participants to open up about how they truly felt about the characters within the novel through questions such as “Which character in the novel do you relate to? Why?”. This required an in-depth analysis of the characters and their actions. If the participants felt an affinity to a specific character, they needed to justify this and state how they felt the character’s actions were similar to their own. It also gave the researcher a greater understanding of how the participants viewed violence as well as if the participants were aware of issues of social justice and how it might impact on their community. The written task also questioned if participants had experienced a form of violence such as those present in the novel. This question was asked in order for the researcher to understand the background of the participants and possible reasons for how they viewed violence. The final question asked the participants which character they would like to be. This question gave the participants the opportunity to decide who they would like to become and if this would require a change in the way their lives were progressing, and it spoke to their ideas about social justice. This written task aimed to answer research questions three and four.

A possible limitation to this form of data generation is that some participants were unwilling to complete the task especially as it required much analysis and writing based on the novel and their own experiences. Long written pieces of data did prove to be a limitation to the data generation among some participants. Ahmed (2010) states that another common limitation in documentary research is bias. As the researcher may not be in the context of the participants, certain aspects of the responses may not be considered as significant and may be left out. The understandings and experiences of the researcher could impact the way in which the researcher interprets the data and may be seen as a limitation on the data generated from the responses. A further limitation, according to Ahmed (2010), is that the participants may have provided inaccurate responses or may not have understood the questions fully. These limitations must be considered by the researcher in order to produce sound responses.

- *Visual Task*

The final data generation method was the visual task. This task aimed to identify how the participants recognised violence as it was represented in their lives. The visual task provided the participants with the freedom to respond to the topic in a manner with which they felt comfortable, while providing the researcher with the knowledge that learners have of violence. Glaw, Inder, Kable and Hazelton (2017) state that “visual methods enhance the richness of data by discovering additional layers of meaning, adding validity and depth, and creating knowledge” (p. 1). This method was used with the participants as conventional methods “might be off-putting for many respondents, particularly children” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 337) or young people. The participants were given the opportunity to draw a picture or a

diagram in order to answer the set questions pertaining to violence and the forms of violence that they identified in the novel. Glaw et al. note that it is through this method that the researcher would have a better understanding of the findings as this form of data generation “facilitated communication, enhanced rapport building, enabled the expression of emotions and tacit knowledge” (p.2). This data generation method was used to “increase the trustworthiness of the findings” (Glaw et al. 2017, p.1). The visual task set out to answer research question two, identifying issues of violence within the lives of the participants.

This form of generating data may have a limitation. It is possible that participants do not have enough knowledge on the phenomenon to produce a visual task or are unwilling to produce a visual text, but this was not the case in this study.

To compensate for potential gaps in participants’ knowledge about the phenomenon, various methods of data generation need to be used (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In this study, through the use of three data generation methods, the researcher had the opportunity to generate a range of responses from the participants and also to obtain information from one source in order to compensate for where another source may fall short through a lack of responses.

3.7. Thematic data analysis

This study used thematic data analysis to analyse data. This refers to, “a process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data” (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3352). A theme may be considered as an interesting or important idea found within the data. Braun and Clarke (2012, p.57) state that the method of thematic data analysis “is a way of identifying what is common to the way a topic is talked or written about and of making sense of those commonalities”. Sandelowski (2004), as

cited in Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017, p.1) concurs with these ideas but mentions another important aspect of thematic data analysis, which is the objective of thematic analysis which is “intended to generate knowledge grounded in human experience”. Human experience is an important aspect of this form of analysis as this aspect contributes to making it a significant and complex part of research (Nowell et al., 2007; Thorne, 2000).

Thematic data analysis may be conducted through six steps, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), as cited in Maguire and Delahunt (2017). The first step is to become familiar with the data by reading the information from the participants. This will be done by reading through the data generation from the three methods of data generation. The second step is to generate codes which include organising the data from the participants in an organised or systematic way which would make the process of analysing the data simpler for the researcher. Once this has been completed, the third step is to search for themes or patterns within the findings/data. Thereafter, the fourth step is to review the themes and begin to analyse the data from the participants, attempting to make meaning out of it. The fifth step is to clearly define the themes that have been identified and identify useful information for the study that may be taken from each theme. The final step of thematic data analysis is to complete the write up. This would entail the researcher writing the results of the findings from the analysis of the data for the study, looking for potential similarities and differences, and identifying information that would assist in answering the research questions.

Thematic data analysis is important and useful for this particular study as it involves a novice researcher. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that this form of analysis “does

not require the detailed theoretical and technological knowledge of other qualitative approaches” It therefore “offers a more accessible form of analysis, particularly for those early in their research career”, as cited in Nowell et al. (2017, p.2).

The flexibility of thematic data analysis may also be a disadvantage as it may lead to a “lack of coherence when developing themes derived from the research data” (Holloway & Todres, 2003, as cited by Nowell et al. (2017, p.2). This indicates that although this method assists the researcher by being flexible, it may also hinder the researcher as there still needs to be structure in order to adequately derive the meaning of the data.

As the study uses a qualitative research approach, it is useful to consider the use of qualitative data analysis which includes understanding the data of the participants and noticing regularities within their responses (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This is especially important in a study such as this one as the study uses three methods of data generation from which the researcher is to generate useful information and the study works seamlessly with both qualitative and thematic data analysis. An advantage of qualitative data analysis is its ability to conform to the needs of the study and researcher, which is an advantage of thematic analysis as well (Nowell et al., 2017). This is especially important when conducting research with human participants as the researcher cannot expect the participants to respond in the same way and provide the same data. As the researcher works with a variety of participants, so should s/he expect a variety of responses. Another advantage and simultaneously a disadvantage of this is that the qualitative approach to research is widely open to interpretation and therefore is largely dependent on the researcher

(Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This opens up opportunity for bias, which the researcher should be aware of.

3.8. Ethics, gatekeeper permission, recruitment, storage of data, feedback to participants

Ethics may be defined as a method of avoiding all harm with the intention to do good (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001). These ethics are applied to research in order to protect the participants during the research being conducted. Aluwihare-Samaranayake (2012) states that it is imperative to find the best way for the researcher and the participants to work together, in order for both to benefit from the study being conducted. The researcher must have a sense of “critical consciousness” (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012, p. 66), by being transparent throughout the entire study, and by allowing the participants to have a full understanding of the research being conducted and the part that they play in it.

In addressing ethical concerns, the researcher needs to identify the problem and find the best way to solve or address the problem while respecting ethical structures. Such ethical structures require that the vulnerable are protected and allowed to feel empowered through the study (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012). To ensure ethical behaviour, the participants should have full “comprehension” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p.52) and should be fully aware of the study that is being conducted (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). They should have the “full information” (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012, p.52) of what the study’s objectives are, as well as what their role will be in conducting this research. This must be done through the use of an information sheet and consent form which should be fully explanatory in a way which the participants and their parents or guardians from various backgrounds

would understand (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, p. 69) and if need be, in their language of understanding. For this reason, an isiZulu version of the information sheet and consent form was used for those participants/guardians who required it. The participants need to be assured of confidentiality and anonymity of themselves and of the school. The study will be done through full “voluntarism” (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012, p.52) and the participants will be allowed to withdraw at any point without consequence to themselves. The four aspects of competence, comprehension, full information and voluntarism, as guided by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), were put into place to ensure that ethics were considered thoroughly and done to respect the participants and their involvement in the study.

The participants were only asked for anonymous written data (open-ended questionnaires, a written document, and a visual task) and were not exposed to interviews or focus group interviews as this may have proven threatening and/or exposing. The participants may have been concerned about opening up to the researcher when discussing issues of a sensitive nature. Anonymous written tasks engendered greater freedom and safety therefore encouraging the participants to share more of their experiences, beliefs and ideologies. They also understood that this research had no intention to do any harm to them, whether emotionally or physically, and that their responses would not be traceable under any circumstances. Once the study was concluded, the data was stored with the supervisor in a safe location and locked away so there was no accessibility to anyone except the supervisor and researcher.

As the researcher was their teacher and would be their teacher the following year, she had a sound relationship with them and had built a foundation of trust. She

aimed to ensure that all aspects of ethics were adhered to and opened up feedback and debriefing sessions with them to voluntarily share their thoughts on the different processes. This encouraged the learners to open up and understand that this study intended to do good rather than harm. They also understood their roles in driving the process.

The researcher also gained permission from the gatekeeper, the principal of the school, who provided permission for the participating learners of the school to participate in the study. The gatekeeper was given complete knowledge of the process to be followed, how the learners would be involved in the study and at which times they would be required to participate. The gatekeeper also had full knowledge that this would not impact on their work or pose any threat or harm to the learners in any way. He also understood that the learners would be allowed to withdraw from the study at any point, if they so wished.

In this study, all of the grade 11 learners within the school were recruited for the study. A total of 160 learners were asked to participate and the study was explained to them, but in the end, only 76 learners were able to fully participate in the study, due to various reasons. These reasons included some learners felt uncomfortable in answering questions about violence as well as some learners not being granted permission by the parent/guardian.

At the end of the study, the participants were provided with feedback from the study. The teacher-researcher always aims to build a relationship of trust with the learners and were assured that the researcher and study would have no bad intentions. The many classroom discussions, debates and questions around violence in the community and in the novel *Tsotsi* enabled the participants to grow in trust of the

process and their willingness to share ideas and experiences about violence grew. Therefore, once the study was completed, the participants were willing and eager to receive feedback about the findings of the study. During the sharing of feedback, the participants were asked to provide additional clarity or raise concerns, if necessary, so that concerns could be addressed, or findings could be corrected or clarified.

3.9. *Trustworthiness*

Hammarberg et al. (2016) states that while qualitative research entails “the systematic collection, organisation, description and interpretation of textual, verbal or visual data” (p. 499), the research process needs to be viewed as “ethical, important, and intelligibly described” by using “the appropriate and rigorous methods” (p.499). Trustworthiness needs to be ensured in a study in various ways. Anney (2014) states that trustworthiness in research should assess the authenticity of findings in qualitative research.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), in order to ensure trustworthiness in research, it should follow the criteria of having “credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability” (p.3). Credibility is ensured through providing a true understanding of the opinions of the participants. This may be done through the proper analysis of the data obtained from the participants. This is assessed through the ability to be recognised by others who share a similar experience to that of the participants. The participants’ responses should be gleaned through a variety of methods which should include verbatim quotes from the participants in order for the researcher to support how the interpretation of the responses (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). It is imperative that the researcher uses triangulation, which Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) define as “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the

study of some aspect of human behaviour” (p. 141). This method brings the researcher closer to an understanding of human behaviour as it provides more than one aspect to generate data, therefore providing a holistic view of the participants’ understanding of the study. This reduces the risk of bias and ensures the integrity of the participants’ responses by having the opportunity of comparing the results of each of the methods of data generation with the other two. This has been ensured in this study as there were three methods used to generate data through an open-ended questionnaire, a written task and a visual task. These tasks were set up to provide the participants with the opportunity to answer questions in a variety of ways, allowing them to express themselves in a way which suits them best. These three methods also allowed the researcher to generate data from the participants and ensure that they fully understood the questioning. The various forms of data provided answers necessary to answer the research questions. This assisted in increasing the credibility as well as confidence in the findings in this research.

The second criterion of trustworthiness is transferability which refers to the ability for the research to be applied in various contexts and should yield results (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The transferability of the study indicates that the findings of the research should be applicable to other contexts and if other researchers find the study to be meaningful, the study could be used to contribute to their own studies. Transferability is important in this study as the novel *Tsotsi* has been set as a novel for grade 11 learners by the Department of Education and would therefore relate to many other learners and teachers within the South African context, including those studying similar novels.

The third criterion of trustworthiness is dependability which refers to the study providing enough details in order for other researchers to understand and learn from it and apply the study elsewhere to yield results (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This is important in research as it is imperative for other researchers to have the ability to depend on your study in order for them to build on the phenomenon, creating a greater awareness through obtaining more knowledge on the topic.

Lastly, the final criterion of trustworthiness is confirmability which refers to the responsibility of the researcher to reduce bias as much as possible, in order for the study to be trustworthy. Ghafouri (2016) states that research findings should be without bias and prejudgment from the researcher. The transparency within a study, which makes explicit all details about the study, ensures that it is trustworthy and holds its integrity.

The trustworthiness of the study can also be reinforced through prolonged engagement in the field of research as it will allow the researcher to fully understand the participants and their thoughts and opinions (Anney, 2014). This is beneficial in the context of a teacher-researcher working with learner-participants as the teacher-researcher would gain a better understanding of learner-participants' thoughts and actions while always aware that the teacher sits in a seat of authority and holds a position of power in the research and teaching processes.

To enable trustworthiness, it is also important for the researcher to have adequate knowledge of the research topic (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In this study, the researcher needed to study the novel as well as its instances of violence thoroughly, before conducting the research. In addition, research into violence and social justice and locating and engaging with the relevant literature, theory and methodology used

was imperative. This was done in order for the researcher to enter the research process with knowledge.

3.10. Conclusion

In this chapter, the choices behind the use of a critical paradigm and a qualitative research approach were discussed. Thereafter, motivations for a single case study and purposive sampling were made. The three data generation methods were then discussed, and the use of thematic data analysis was explained. Lastly, the ethics and trustworthiness surrounding the study as well as the issues of permission, recruitment, storage of data and feedback to participants were explained.

Chapter 4: Discussion of Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss and analyse the data which was derived from an open-ended questionnaire, a written document, and a visual data task. The data was analysed thematically and aimed to answer the four research questions. The themes identified include Understanding Violence, Learners' Identification of Examples of Violence in the novel, *Tsotsi*, Learners' Identification of Issues and Representations of Violence in the Novel and in Life, and Learners' Engagement with Violence in their Lives and in the Novel.

4.2.1 Understanding Violence

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked what they understood by the term "violence". To engage with the sample group of 76 participants, the first exploration was to establish the differences in the opinions of the male and female participants in order to identify if there were differences in their understandings of violence and how this might impact their beliefs about violence. Differentiating between the male and female participants could also show the differences in power relations between the two genders.

Figure 1: Pie chart indicating the various types of violence as defined by male participants

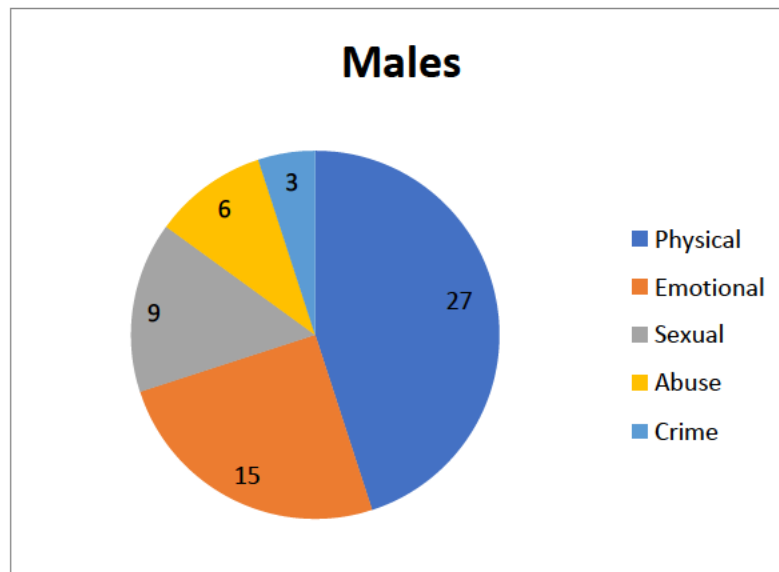
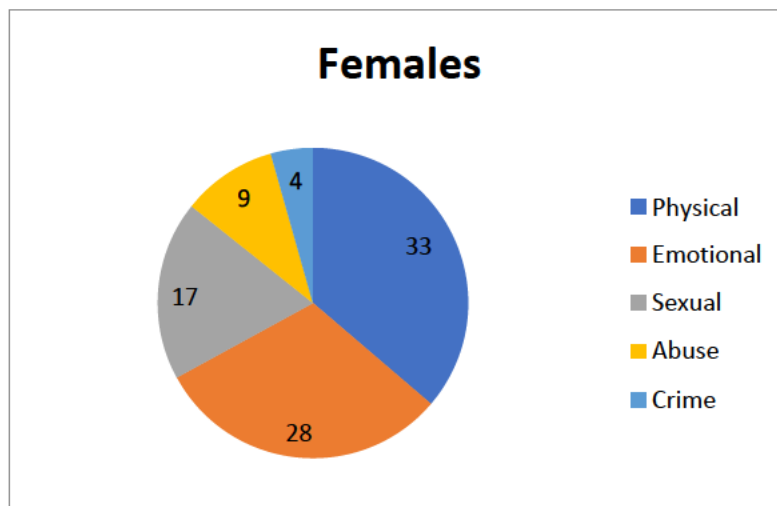


Figure 2: Pie chart indicating the various types of violence as defined by female participants.



The questionnaire revealed that 60 of the 76 participants identified violence as being physical. Of those 60 learners, 27 males and 33 female participants identified

violence as being physical. Although the difference of six participants may not seem very significant, it is an indication that female participants may be more exposed to or aware of physical violence. Explaining their understandings of violence, a male participant stated that, “*violence is when you hurt someone in a forceful way*”, demonstrating an adequate knowledge of the term through the use of the word “*forceful*”. A female participant stated, “*violence is force that does harm or damage*”, a similar definition to the one provided by the male participant, both who identified physical violence as displaying their power over the powerless. However, the male participant reflected violence as an act against a person whereas the female participant reflected violence as an act that harms or damages without indicating to whom the violence is directed. Despite the variations, it is clear that both participants understood that violence required force. As Balan (2010, p.38) notes, power is “the capacity of an agent to impose his/her will over the will of the powerless or the ability to force them to do things they do not wish to do”. This is also in line with the definition by Thompson (2001) that violence is a fight with and for physical power. Physical violence is also the most overt and easily seen and therefore features highly. What is also important is that the participants, of both genders, recognised the importance of power relations in violence through the use of force to hurt, harm and damage.

Emotional violence was of secondary importance as 28 female participants identified emotional violence while only 15 male participants identified it. This is not necessarily an indication that male participants lacked exposure to emotional violence but, rather, it could indicate that the female participants had a greater awareness and understanding of emotional violence, which may stem from experiences within their homes or their communities (Hlalele, 2012).

A male participant defined emotional violence as “*cursing and swearing*”, identifying emotional violence as something vulgar, while a female participant stated that “*violence is a violation that a person commits against you or is a violation against someone physically or even verbally*”. This indicates that this female participant understood that violence included elements of abuse, disrespect, harm and oppression. The fact that participants could recognise that violence went beyond the physical indicated a measure of critical consciousness (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011) which meant that such acts of violence could be challenged. As Freire notes, when working with critical pedagogy, “students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge” (2005, p.81). The fact that more female students identified emotional violence could indicate that they may have been more exposed to such violence in its various forms and experienced more emotional subjugation than the male participants.

Like results for emotional violence, a greater number of female participants identified sexual violence as a form of violence than the male participants, with only nine male participants and 17 female participants identifying sexual violence. This may not only be an indication of the male participants’ lack of knowledge or lack of critical thinking when considering sexual violence, but may also be reflective of the way that ideologies have been forced upon and imbibed by the male participants in their homes and communities. This finding needs to be considered against Good’s (2003) findings which found that states that most violence is male-generated. This male-generated violence is closely linked to the social context in which the male was raised. Jewkes (2002) states that in many social contexts, masculinity is taught through the ideas of misogyny and the ability to commit crime. Jewkes emphasises

that violence against women “is not just as an expression of male powerfulness and dominance over women, but also as being rooted in male vulnerability stemming from social expectations of manhood” (p. 1424). Jewkes makes it clear that the home, social, community environments of males, including the male participants in this study, have largely guided the way that men perceive violence, especially against women.

In terms of sexual violence, male participants could only define sexual violence as rape. Rape may be defined as a sexual activity without consent and generally with a form of intimidation or force (Lutz-Priefert, 2015). In contrast, the female participants provided a variation of definitions of sexual violence. One female participant defined sexual violence as *“touching someone in a way that they don’t feel comfortable around you or having sexual intercourse with someone without the person allowing that”*. Another female participant stated that sexual violence is *“to rape someone or touching their body parts without allowing them to do it”*. These various forms of sexual violence, which were provided by the female participants, indicate that they have probably been more exposed to sexual violence and are more likely to have heard of or experienced oppression and domination by others, in this form. They were conscious of and could recognise that sexual violence involved discomfort in a sexual situation, lack of sexual consent, or unsolicited physical contact. In order to challenge this power exercised through oppression and domination, the need for a critical pedagogy involving critical consciousness must be understood and taught to allow learners to be emancipated from imposed and pre-conceived ideologies (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). Knowing about sexual violence is not enough; it also requires knowing that it is not something to be endured but, in fact, needs to be

challenged. Critical pedagogy enables facilitation of such dialogues to see alternatives to long-practiced ways of living.

Living with abuse was also mentioned by some participants. The term 'abuse' was mentioned by six male participants and nine female participants in the questionnaire. They understood that abuse takes on many forms. A male participant stated, *"violence is when people abuse others who don't have the power to fight for themselves, they abuse them physically, emotionally, verbally..."*. In this statement, the participant understands the unequal power differentials that result in abuse and that such abuse may involve force, emotions and/or words. The abuse may be related to oppression and the lack of physical, mental and emotional freedom. A possible way to be liberated from oppression and abuse, is through education (Cappy, 2016). This education would enable knowledge of and possible enactment of a socially just society.

The final aspect of violence mentioned by the participants was crime. Of the 76 responses, three males and four females mentioned crime, and identified aspects such as robbery, drugs and alcohol, and gang violence. The low numbers of responses to crime may be attributed to the fact that it is not widely identified as a form of violence to the learners. In addition, these forms of violence could also be regarded as physical violence. According to Clark (2012), crime has become increasingly violent and common, yet only seven participants identified crime as a form of violence even though there is a direct relation between the two. This is a direct response to societies becoming more accepting of crime, in its various forms, as a part of daily life due to the frequency with which it occurs.

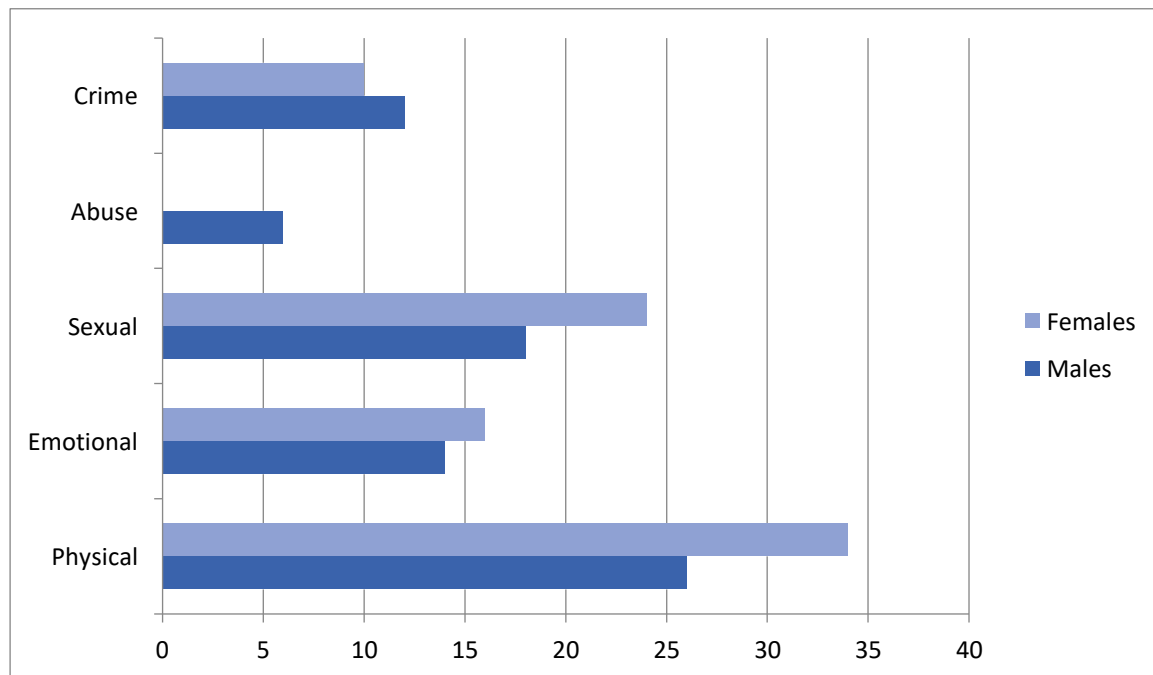
Ruggiero (2015, p.3-4) explains that crime “results from the inability of communities to take collective action, engage in meaningful interactions and improve the general conditions of their everyday life”. Such inabilities would encourage a society in which crime is prevalent and seen as a social normality, where the criminal activities are intensified yet still widely accepted. Krug et al (2002) explain this by stating that “some people mean to harm others but based on their cultural backgrounds and beliefs, do not perceive their acts as violent”. In other words, such criminal activities would not be seen as aberrations but as normalities.

In this question of the questionnaire, only two participants left this question blank, indicating that the majority of the participants were equipped with adequate knowledge and understanding of violence and its various definitions and felt confident enough to answer the question. This also points to the fact that violence, in all its forms, is known to the participants, either directly or indirectly.

4.2.2 Learners’ Identification of Examples of Violence in Tsotsi

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked which type of violence they identified as being present in the novel, *Tsotsi*.

Figure 3: Bar graph indicating the number of males and females who identified the types of violence in the novel Tsotsi.



This question required nothing more than a list of the types of violence identified in the novel, which made it easier to group and find commonalities between the various types. In the responses, 26 male participants and 34 female participants identified physical violence as being present in the novel, a total of 60 of the 76 participants. This is an expected response as physical violence is the most common and easily identified form of violence in life and in the novel. Emotional violence proved to be not as common as only 14 males and 16 females identified this form of violence in the novel. However, slightly more female participants identified emotional violence than the male participants.

When comparing the responses of this question to the first question, it is seen that many participants were aware of what emotional violence is but when asked to identify it within the novel, were unable to do so. Thus, what was witnessed in the

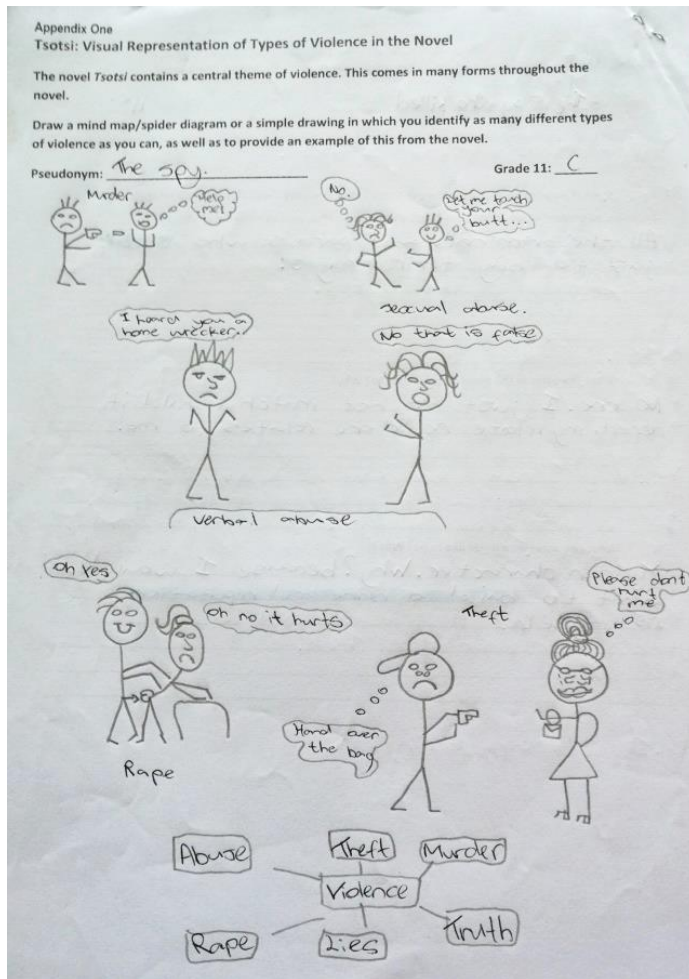
novel might not be recognised as emotional violence. It is possible that participants know what emotional violence is but cannot recognise it in practice. Since emotional violence occurs when one individual makes another feel less worthy, in one way or another (Goldsmith & Freyd, 2005), it points to the fact that emotional violence is not overt and may be difficult to see in others or even in oneself.

The number of participants who identified sexual violence could also be seen as significant as only 42 of the 76 participants (18 males and 24 females) could identify sexual violence as being present in the novel, with the most obvious example being that of Rosie being raped in Soekie's shebeen (Fugard, 1980). However, the ambiguity related to consent or lack of it could have clouded participants' responses as Rosie did not explicitly refuse the sexual advances (p. 21), thereby generating much discussion around whether it may be considered a rape or not. The lowest number of responses, yet most notable response, is the identification of abuse. Only six male participants and no females identified abuse within the novel. This is an interesting observation as many female participants were able to identify rape and sexual violence, yet none were able to identify abuse in the novel. In fact, crime was identified more often than abuse, but still not as common, considering the recurrence of crime within the novel. Crime presents itself as a central theme in the novel and yet the participants did not identify it as being present within the novel. Even the title of the novel, *Tsotsi*, refers to attributes of a person who has chosen crime and violence, as a way of life (Makombe, 2011). It is possible that by the participants identifying the other forms of violence, those forms constituted crime and was therefore not explicitly identified. However, in obtaining a holistic view of the responses of the participants, only four did not answer this question, indicating that even though the participants were unable to identify all the types of violence within

the novel, the majority had enough knowledge of violence in general as well as in the novel to provide an answer.

This question allowed for a measure of critical thinking to take place as it allowed the participants to reflect on what they would identify as violence in its various forms and if they believed it was present. As the question requested little explanation, it allowed the participants to be reflect on their personal understandings of the different forms of violence and then apply those understandings to the novel. Their personal understandings needed to be engaged with in order to provide answers. The fact that the answers provided were anonymous allowed for a measure of trust in sharing personal understandings of the phenomenon. In the long term, critical thinking emanates from and enables reflections on what would be needed for a more just society. As Aliakbari and Faraji (2011) state, critical thinking allows for a more responsible society where individuals are aware of and aim for social justice.

To further verify participants' responses, the participants were given a visual data task which asked of them to identify the different types of violence found in the novel. This method proved to be very effective for some participants as they were able to express themselves through a simple drawing while others were able to organize their thoughts through a mindmap. This method provided an opportunity for the participants who were unable to express themselves fully in the written document or the questionnaire and provided a platform through which they could express themselves in ways which required less writing and more creativity.



The first example of the visual task was answered under the pseudonym “*The spy*” and consisted of a variety of types of violence found within the novel. This drawing is graphic but proves to be important as it shows the way that the participant understands violence in the novel and possibly, in his/her life. By providing examples beyond the novel, the participant reflects a knowledge of the various forms of violence either because of direct or indirect knowledge. The visual task also reflects the power dynamics involved in acts of violence, where one individual takes advantage of a less powerful individual (Balan, 2010). The more such oppression is experienced within communities, the more it becomes common and thereafter is seen as a normality. In such understandings of normality, individuals, such as the participants, relate this to be the way the world operates normally, and do not

recognise an injustice which needs to change (Hlalele, 2012). It is also understood that violence reflected in literature has become more violent over the years and therefore has become more acceptable within society (Maulini, 2016) and this graphic drawing reflects such.

In this data generation method, 28 of the 76 participants identified sexual violence/rape in their visual responses, including the involvement of power relations in the novel. This is dissimilar to the responses in the questionnaire where 42 of the 76 identified rape or sexual violence as being present. It is clear that while a significant number of participants recognised sexual violence in the novel, and stated this in the questionnaire, depicting such visually was avoided by a number of participants. However, in both data generation methods, sexual violence in the form of rape was identified by a significant number of participants. This finding reinforces Good's (2003) finding that the most common occurrence of sexual violence is rape. Krug et al. (2002) explain that rape is more often determined by poverty and "poor women and girls may be more at risk of rape in the course of their daily tasks than those who are better off" (p. 158). The finding from Krug et al. (2002) resonated with the present study as most participants lived in socio-economic precarity. Krug et al. (p. 160) also explain that men who have been raised in typically patriarchal environments, are more likely to commit rape in their society. Findings from the Krug et al. (2002) study, while possibly over-generalised, made it imperative that dialogues on this issue, as emanating from the novel, were held. Asking such questions in an anonymous environment and then opening discussion about the findings provided the platform for participants to glean relevant information and to see that there were alternatives to ideas about normalities.

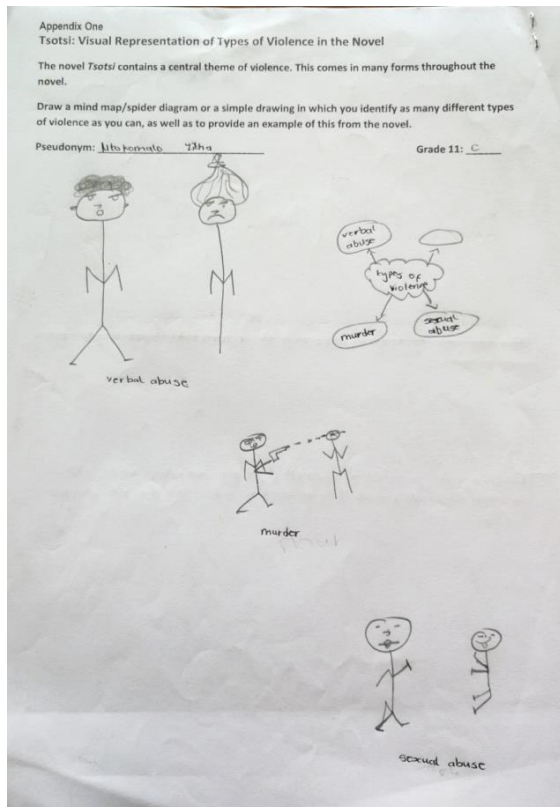
The spy also exposes us to other forms of violence such as theft, through a drawing of man holding a gun at a seemingly afraid woman. This falls under the 'crime' category. Eleven participants identified crime as a form of violence in the written task, which required them to discuss forms of violence they had witnessed or experienced, while 22 identified it in the questionnaire. The discrepancy within these two instruments may be due to the participants being unable to fully account for the crimes they mentioned in the written task. In the questionnaire, the participants were simply required to list the types of violence they had identified. Listing crime as a form of violence is an easier task than explaining the crimes which they have witnessed or experienced. It is also possible that fewer participants witnessed or experienced crime or that they found it difficult re-living experiences of crime. However, although not many participants identified crime within the written task, a substantially high number identified it in the questionnaire revealing how relevant this aspect of violence is to society.

The spy included verbal (emotional) abuse as a form of violence which correlates with the other 21 participants who identified verbal abuse as a form of violence in the written task and 30 participants who identified this category within the questionnaire. This participant was able to provide various forms of violence and demonstrated having a holistic understanding of the novel and the different forms of violence which were present within it. This identification of the various forms of violence indicates that this participant understood the aspects of violence which are present in the novel.

It may also be significant to consider the finer details within *The Spy's* drawing. In his drawings, *The Spy* included speech bubbles which were indicative of what would

have been said in a real situation. In the depiction of verbal abuse, the perpetrator states “I heard you a home wrecker”, something that may not be easily identified as verbal abuse. However, this participant was able to identify that the perpetrator was bullying the victim, making the situation an example of verbal abuse (Jackson & Ashley, 2005). In many of the illustrations, the victims are calling out for help in one way or another with statements such as “Help me!” and “Please don’t hurt me”. *The spy* also put meaning into the gestures made through his/her illustrations. In three of the five illustrations, the victims have their hands up showing that they surrender while, as mentioned previously, asking for help. There is also a lot of meaning in the facial expressions of the characters. One illustration which stands out is that which portrays rape. The perpetrator is shown with a smile on his face while the victim is visibly sad and upset. This is significant as it shows a deeper understanding from the participant, on the power the perpetrator attains through this act of rape. Lutz-Priefert (2015) reinforces the idea that rape occurs through intimidation, which may explain the expression on the perpetrator’s face.

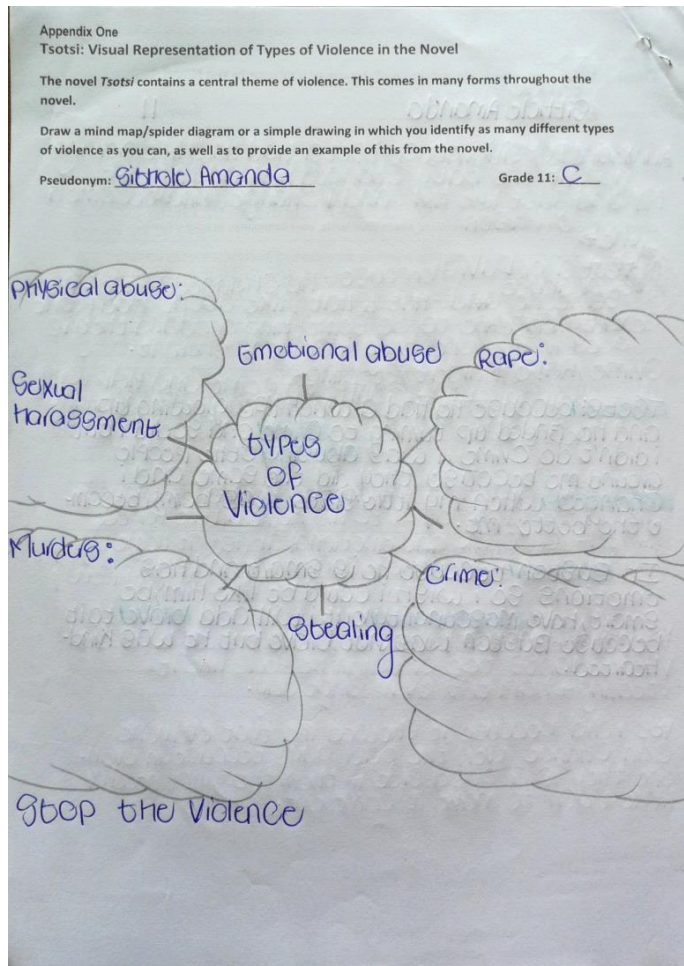
Another participant, *Nontokomalo Zitha*, was unable to provide as much detail as *The Spy*, however, s/he was also able to portray his/her ideas throughout the use of drawings and a small mind map.



Nontokomalo Zitha's drawings are simple and without much detail, yet they still had the ability to identify verbal abuse, murder, and sexual abuse within his/her response to the question. It can therefore be seen that this participant has a baseline of knowledge on not only the various types of violence but also the violence that occurs within the novel.

Although *Nontokomalo Zitha* has simpler drawings than *The spy*, there are still details in these illustrations which portray the way that the participant understands violence. In the illustration depicting verbal abuse, the two figures' facial expressions show unhappiness, even though the reader is unable to identify who the perpetrator and victims are. The illustration which depicts murder shows the perpetrator with a gun in his/her hand, and what seems like a smirk on his/her face. This facial expression depicts a satisfaction in the murder that is being committed. The victim has his/her hands and arms up, in what seems to be an act of defence. The last

illustration portrays two characters. Although we cannot be sure who the perpetrator and victim are because it is not explicitly portrayed, we do see one character with a serious face and the other depicted with a tongue sticking out, reinforcing the idea of enjoyment.



Another participant, under the pseudonym *Amanda Sithole*, preferred not to draw but produced a mind map to indicate the types of violence s/he found within the novel. Although the mind map seems to be incomplete and lacking explanations, *Amanda Sithole* was still able to clearly indicate violent acts such as physical violence, sexual harassment, rape, murder, emotional abuse, as well as crime/stealing.

Physical violence seemed to be a popular response, with 30 participants identifying this as a form of violence within the novel in the visual data task. It is important to recall that in the questionnaire, 60 of 76 participants identified physical violence as being present within the novel. This discrepancy in the two tasks may be due to the participants feeling more comfortable responding to the questionnaire as it is a form of questioning which they are familiar with, especially when completing tasks for school. However, at a grade 11 level, they may be uncomfortable with completing a task which asks them to draw, as it is very uncommon and rarely forms a part of their curriculum.

This consistent identification of physical violence in both tasks is the highest number of similar responses found within all data generation methods representing physical violence as a quintessential response to the questions which helps to understand the frequency with which it is presented in the novel and the frequency with which participants are exposed to it directly or indirectly in their lives.

Another category mentioned by *Amanda Sithole* is crime. Although s/he does not explain it further, we are still able to identify crime as playing a significant role within the novel, with a further 11 participants identifying it is as present in the visual data task.

Thirty four of the 76 participants left this question blank, a higher number than any other response. This shows how the participants may have felt unable to present their thoughts in the form of a drawing or a mind map. It may have simply been that they felt that they did not possess enough knowledge on the topic to answer the question. It must also be remembered that violence is seen as a difficult topic to discuss as “it raises uncomfortable questions about their personal lives” (WHO,

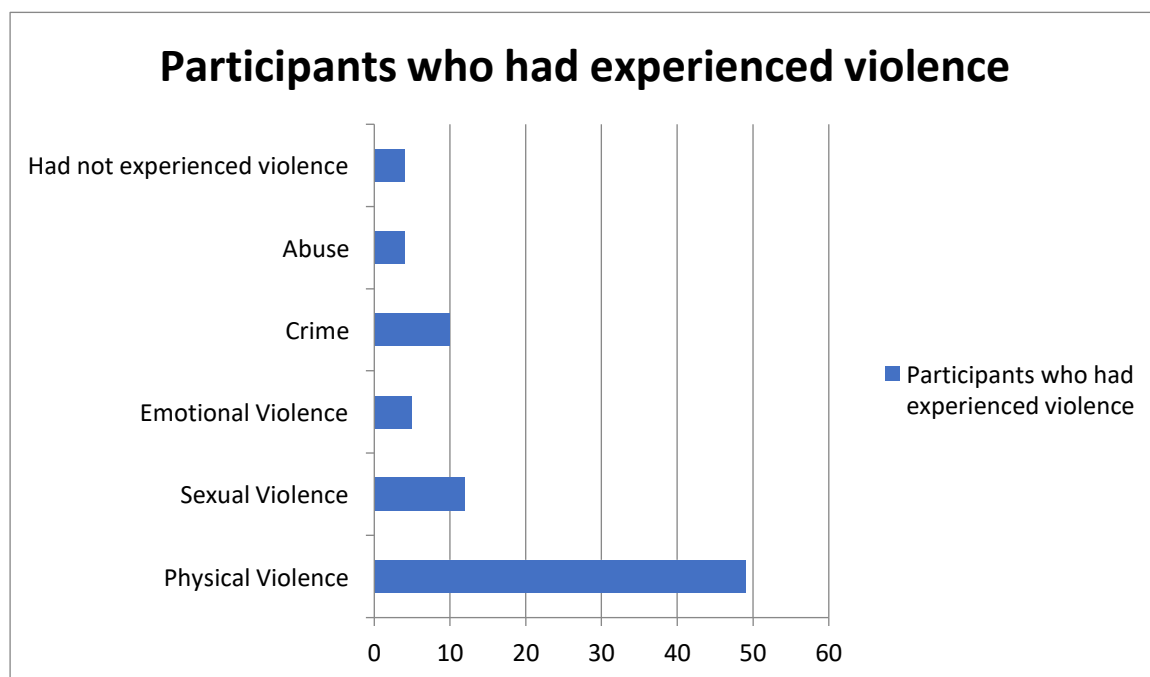
2002, p.1). The identification of violence within society relies on the emancipation of previously accepted thoughts and ideologies through which we accept violent acts within society as it may be common occurrences. The participants may have also chosen not to answer the question to avoid possible ridicule from their peers even though it was a task that used pseudonyms and was confidential. In many high school classrooms, teenagers tend to mock one another, usually when they are feeling unsure of an activity themselves, which may have occurred when they attempted to answer this question.

The visual data generation method proved to be important to identify the core acts of violence within the novel, as identified by the participants, as well as to compare these results with that of the questionnaire and the written task in order to ensure triangulation.

4.2.3 Learners' Identification of Issues and Representations of Violence in the Novel and in their Lives

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked about their experiences with violence and whether they had experienced any of the violent acts which were mentioned within the novel *Tsotsi*. These experiences could have occurred within their homes or even within their community and the participants were asked to provide a brief account of their experiences.

Figure 4: Bar graph indicating the participants who had experienced/ heard of violence within their home/community.



Of the 76 participants, 49 stated that they had a personal experience with physical violence. This number is noteworthy as it is a large number of participants who had something in common with each other. One of the participants provided their experience by stating,

I have experienced violence in my community when a police van ran over a six year old boy and the community went wild and burnt tyres and closed the road with them and when the police came to make them stop, they hit the policemen with stones. Then the police threw teargas.

In this instance, the community proved to be fighting against the domination of the police and the physical violence against a community member and therefore felt as if

they needed to fight back at the police with physical violence, in order to be emancipated from the hold of the police on the community. The community would have expected the police to respond to an incident such as a child being run over, rather than being the cause of it. This shows how the community of the participant believed that mob violence would solve the problem caused by another form of violence (Krug et al., 2002). This mob violence is defined by Yeboah-Assiamah and Kyeremeh (2014, p.2) as a group of people, sometimes equalling hundreds of people at a time, who “take the law into their hands to injure, maim and kill a person or persons accused of wrongdoing”. Another participant had a similar experience stating, “*There was once a time where my uncle was beaten by the community because he was accused of stealing traditional healers’ money*”. This account of violence from a participant shows not only physical violence but mob justice where the residents of a community decided to take actions into their own hands. These accounts from the participants reveal how frequent these acts are and that it may not just be considered as a once off occurrence but should be recognised as normality, even though the violent act itself may vary. Clark (2012) reinforces the idea that exposure to violence in a community is a significant factor which contributes to youth violence, especially within South Africa. The experiences of the participants within their communities help to explain how participants view violence and why they hold such views. This finding is similar to those of Hlalele (2012) who found that participants viewed violence based on their personal experiences with it.

Other experiences shared by the participants included stabbings. One participant stated that there were stabbings to obtain “*drug money*”. Another stated that, “*There’s a lot of Uber attacks in my area*”, while a third stated that s/he was “*held at gunpoint and robbed*”. Another participant stated that s/he was “*almost stabbed and*

robbed'. This is an interesting observation as the participants were able to identify the above acts as physical violence but did not identify them as crime. This may be due to the ideologies which the community holds of these incidents, of how the incidents are defined and how they are not reported nor acknowledged due to conditions in the community which normalises such incidents. These environmental conditions may be used to justify the incidents. Krug et al. (2002) note that sometimes, crime is justified if it is committed by the unemployed, poverty-stricken or the uneducated. According to Krug et al., such crimes may be seen as a necessity to provide for families and when the crimes occur with regularity, the community may no longer recognise the incidents as crimes, but rather as part of a way of life. Violence may also be controlled by the domination of criminal activities and how regularly they occur, as well as by whom. The number of participants who said they experienced crime was small with only 9 participants identifying crime occurring within their community, compared to the 49 participants who identified physical violence in their communities. However, it is possible that participants recognised physical violence to be a part of crime.

Another form of violence which was identified was sexual violence. Krug et al (2002, p.149) identifies sexual violence as

any sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

Twelve of the 76 participants identified or recognised the sexual violence present within the novel. The number could be understood by understanding that the

participants might have been uncomfortable sharing details of this form of violence as it relates directly or indirectly to their experiences, and it was not easy to establish how participants, or their communities deal with accusations of sexual violence. This observation may also be due to the oppression felt or put upon the victims of sexual violence who, according to Krug et al. (2002, p.165) “sometimes blame themselves for the incident” or feel humiliated about it, and therefore the participants may have been uncomfortable acknowledging or opening up about the sexual violence which they might have experienced or heard about. The participants who opened up about their experiences provided accounts through which we have a glimpse of participants’ experiences. What is most significant to note is that the majority of these responses were related to rape. This is an expected response as Good (2003) states that rape is the most common form of sexual assault. One participant stated, *“Yes, my friend was once raped by her uncle...”*, another, *“A girl was raped by her uncle and she was murdered”* and a third participant stated, *“In our community there was a man who raped his child”*. These statements of sexual violence show that rape is commonly committed by an individual that the victim is familiar with. These accounts of sexual violence are of instances of the participants who knew someone within their community who had been raped, referring to a form of community violence (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg & Zwi, 2002). Another participant said, *“There was a 43 year old woman that was also raped by two gang members”* which is reinforced by Krug et al. who states that sexual violence committed by young men especially, has been commonly linked to gang affiliation. According to Da Silva, Woodhams and Harkins (2013) gang rape is committed by multiple perpetrators and due to a myriad of reasons, including one group expressing their dominance over an individual/another group. One participant shared his/her own experience by stating,

Yes I have and that is rape by someone I thought I liked. He told me to go to his home and he forced himself onto me...". This statement shared by a participant indicates that young people, much like the participant, are coerced into thinking that an individual admires them, but rather uses that as a façade to be violated through rape. This is significant as it is an indication of one of the various ways in which an individual may fall victim to rape.

From the above it can be seen that rape is a common occurrence within the participants' experiences and although only 12 participants acknowledged sexual violence, it is still an important aspect that relates to the actions within the novel, referring directly to the rape of Rosie (Fugard, 1980), and to actions related to participants' lives.

Of the 76 participants, five identified emotional abuse as a type of violence they have experienced within their community with one participant explaining, "*There was a child who wasn't very strong in their schoolwork and their parents would emotionally abuse them by telling that child they would be nothing and they are stupid instead of helping them*". This statement is significant as emotional abuse is not commonly acknowledged. It was therefore important that the participant was able to identify this as a form of violence even though there were not many other participants who identified emotional violence. Emotional abuse and mental freedom are concepts which are not commonly discussed in many communities, as according to Goldsmith and Freyd (2005), they may be considered as taboo topics, which may explain the lack of responses concerning emotional abuse. It is also important to note that emotional violence/abuse has a lasting effect on an individual's life as Krug et al. (2002) state that a lack of emotional support is more common among violent

offenders. This emotional abuse, according to Krug et al. (2002, p.60), is the “failure of a caregiver to provide an appropriate and supportive environment and includes acts that have an adverse effect on the emotional health and development of a child”. However, the participant who explained his/her experience with emotional abuse had good comprehension of what emotional abuse is. An even smaller number of participants had identified abuse within the questionnaire. These four participants included domestic abuse with one stating, *“I have experienced violence at home like being a slave. Every time, I am the only one who is doing all house chores”*. This statement is significant as it is not easy to understand the extent to which this perceived abuse has been enforced on the participant. This participant understands that s/he has been marginalized by what s/he understands as abuse within the household and does not agree with it. Although this may not be considered as physical abuse, the participant recognises it as such as it prevents the participant from progressing in life (Krug et al., 2002).

In the questionnaire, four participants of the 76, stated that they did not experience any violence within their homes or community. It is significant to note this small number as it implies that the other 72 did experience some form of violence in their homes or communities. Thus, only 5% of the participants have not been exposed to violence, and 95% who have experienced violent occurrences in their homes or communities, explaining why violence can be seen as a “universal phenomenon” (Knight, 2012, p.1).

The participants were then asked whether they were able to relate any part or character in the novel to their lives. The results for this question proved to be interesting. Many of the participants had already stated that they had experienced

violence in their homes or communities, many of their examples were similar to those in the novel, especially examples of physical and sexual violence. However, when asked about relating to events or characters in the novel, 29 of the 76 participants had answered “No”. According to WHO (2002), violence is seen as an inevitable part of life around the world. It is possible that participants were uncomfortable making the link if such links were present. WHO (2002) explains that when questions are directly related to people’s personal lives, people find violence related questions uncomfortable to answer. Fifteen of the participants also left the question blank, further demonstrating that 44 of the participants (the 29 who answered “no” and the 15 who left the question blank) had decided that they were unable to relate to any part or character within the novel or were simply unwilling to answer the question. This finding could indicate how apprehensive the participants were to answer this question. It is also possible that participants did not want to delve into aspects and issues that brought forward pain and discomfort and so decided to avoid responding to the question. That, in itself, was revealing.

Of the participants who were able to identify and explain parts within the novel which they were able to relate to, one aspect that was considered was violence. A total of nine participants stated that they could relate to the violence in the novel, with some being stabbed or held at gunpoint. One participant stated that s/he had experienced violence as *“My big brother was killed on his way back home on the train like how Tsotsi and his gang had killed Gumboot Dhlamini”*.

A further five participants stated that they were able to relate to Boston as, just like him, they too liked to *“plan”* before any action is taken. One participant stated that he could relate to Boston because he also had friends who engaged in the *“wrong*

things", referring to a life of "*gangsterism*". Haupt (2008) notes that often a gangster lifestyle is presented in the South African media as "black masculinity" (p. 378) and is therefore admired by the youth. The participant explained that he decided to leave the gang to find new friends, and consciously made the decision to live a different lifestyle after reflecting on the way his life was progressing. This participant demonstrates praxis (Freire, 2005) by using deep reflection on his life, and through this reflection and action, was making the move to transform his life and "transform the world" (p. 87).

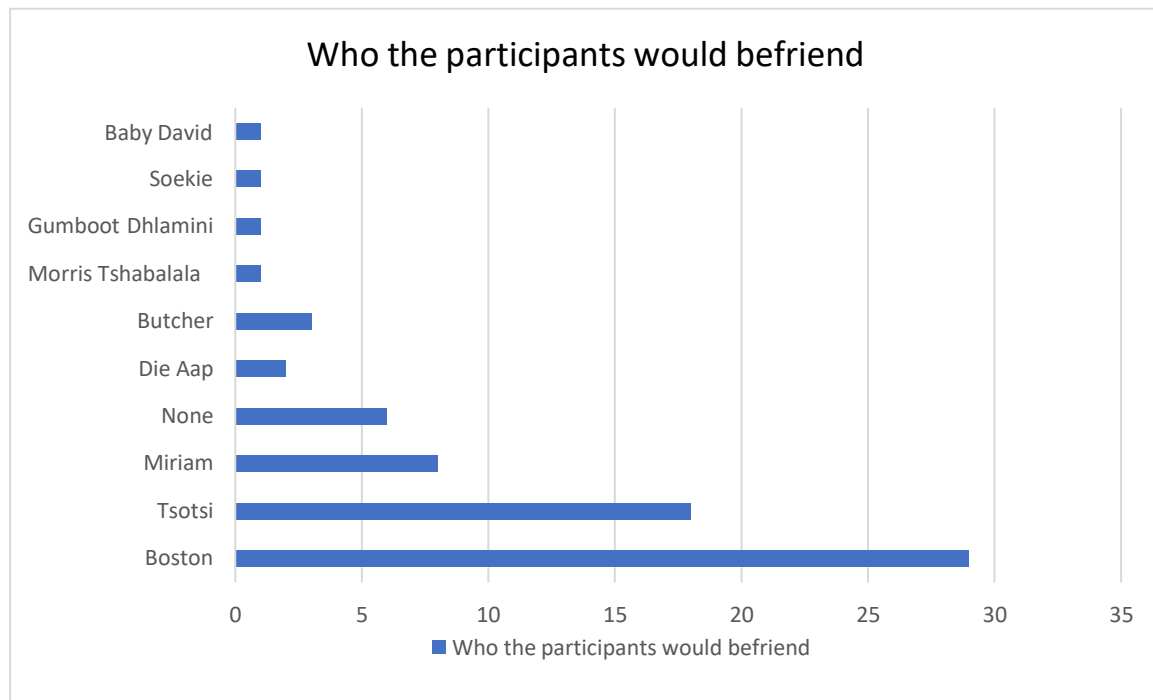
In the written document, participants were also asked which character they felt they could relate to. This was done to ensure triangulation within the study as the written document and questionnaire were administered separately and at different times. Twenty-one participants stated that they could relate to Boston's character, as opposed to five who said, in the questionnaire, that they could relate to him. The changes in responses may be attributed to the time between the administration of the two instruments or the impact of the dialogic engagements with the participants. One participant stated, "*Boston has feelings. He had a guilty conscience just like me. When I have done something cruel, I always feel guilty*". This statement is significant as it shows that the participant is able to reflect on his/her actions and is able to recognise wrong actions. Feeling guilty could imply that the participant knows the action is wrong and feels a sense of remorse or shame for doing it. Such recognitions by the participant implies the ability to identify right from wrong and could imply the ability to make better choices. In line with Freire's (2005) ideas of praxis, the participant is moving towards making better decisions and enacting better actions that will not impede the lives of others. Many of the participants stated that Boston is seen as the "*smart*" character who always had the "*ability to plan well*" and

was generally *"kind to others"*. It can therefore be concluded that the participants who identified themselves as being able to relate to Boston are, or aspire to be, people who are intelligent, strategic, organised and caring towards others. The 21 participants who could relate to Boston were also identifying Boston's positive traits. Identifying and recognising positive traits could indicate that the participants recognised such traits in themselves.

Tsotsi was also a character which four of the participants were able to relate to as one stated he had a *"hard life"*, just as Tsotsi did. Another related to Tsotsi being *"homeless"* and stated that he was *"forced to do the same"* while another participant stated that he had a brother who behaved similarly to Tsotsi. A participant stated that she felt a strong relation to Miriam as she too was a *"mother who would do anything for her child"*. In their answers to this question, the participants tended to provide very brief answers possibly because sharing such might be painful or because it is a topic that is difficult to share in some way. Sharing information about violence may also be seen as breaking confidences participants may have with others. This reinforces the idea that violence in the participants' lives may be seen as a taboo topic to speak about to others (Krug et al, 2002).

In the questionnaire, the question of who they would want as a friend and reasons for their choice was to identify the thoughts of the participants on who they would feel would possibly be an asset to them in their daily lives, or to emancipate themselves from their current struggles. Their answers could also enable a greater understanding of the participants.

Figure 5: Bar graph showing participants' choices of characters from Tsotsi to be a friend



Many participants stated that they would befriend Boston. These 29 participants provided a variety of reasons which explained why they felt this way, with many stating that they wanted Boston as a friend because of his *“bravery”*. One participant stated that s/he wanted a friend like Boston as *“he would have my back and tell me if I’m doing wrong”*. Another stated that Boston *“can come up with a solution without violence”* and therefore wanted him as a friend. It thereafter became clear that many of the participants wanted a friend like Boston who they saw to be loyal and honest, and to act as a moral compass and guide them in doing what is right in their lives.

Of the 76 participants, 18 stated that they wanted a friend like Tsotsi and surprisingly, stated that the reason for this is his *“bravery”*, just as Boston. However, the other reasoning provided by the participants differ, stating that Tsotsi would be a good friend as they would always be *“safe around him”*, that *“he could fight for me*

when someone wants to hit me" and how *"everyone is afraid of him"*. Another stated that Tsotsi *"fights for what is his. He's not a coward"*. An interesting response by a participant stated, *"He is a well-known gangster in his community so if I have a problem in school or someone bullies me, I can just call him to beat that person up so no one would worry me"*. It may therefore be concluded that the participants, who wanted Tsotsi as a friend, wanted this for a form of protection against others and for others to know about this form of protection. What is important, is that the responses indicate a form of admiration for and aspiration towards being like Tsotsi. As Marshall (2015, p.15) notes, young people may live by the ideologies present in their communities and may aspire to live a life similar to a "typical township gangster". Opening up a dialogic space to engage with issues of whom is admired by learner-participants, and it is that they aspire to become necessary even though long-held ideologies prevailed.

The eight participants who stated that they wanted Miriam as a friend stated that she was a *"kind woman"* who *"always thinks of others"* and is *"down to earth"*. These participants wanted a friend who was a good-hearted, caring and honest person and with whom they might share similar qualities. Three participants stated that they wanted a friend like Die Aap and another three wanted a friend like Butcher. The participants stated that both characters exhibited much *"loyalty"* to their *"friends"* and to *"the gang"*, something that impressed them and which they found important. One stated that Die Aap had proven to be *"trustworthy, strong, and helpful towards the others in the gang"* while a participant who opted for a friend like Butcher stated, *"He can protect me and scare people that want to do bad things to me and sometime kill them just for troubling me"*. This was echoed by another participant who stated that s/he wanted Butcher as a friend as *"I could ask him to kill my enemies"*. The ease

with which the participants considered killing enemies or people who troubled them seemed to imply knowledge of such occurrences or may indicate the frequency with which murder occurs in their communities. This indicates that these few participants wanted Die Aap, and especially Butcher as a form of protection from others, presumably within their community. This may be especially important in township areas as, according to Makombe (2011), townships are dominated by gangsterism and violence and gangsterism is simply a way of life. The choices by participants who wanted to befriend Die Aap and Butcher as a form of protection could reflect the violence which occurs in the communities of the participants. Hlalele (2012) states that the way we see the world is guided by our experiences of injustices. These participants could be reflecting their need protection in order to survive.

The other characters who were mentioned were Morris Tshabalala, Gumboot Dhlamini, Soekie and Baby David, each with only one participant aspiring to have them as a friend. The participant who stated that s/he wanted Morris Tshabalala as a friend stated that s/he wanted this friendship as s/he wanted “*to be able to help him get where he wants to go*”, showing that the participant wanted the friendship not for his/her own gain, but for the betterment of the life of the disabled Morris. This learner reflected compassion and kindness towards someone who was dealt a blow in life because of a disability. The friendship was not aimed at gaining anything, except a friend.

However, the participant who wanted to make friends with Soekie stated that s/he would be able to make money off Soekie but failed to mention how s/he would go about doing so. This participant saw a friendship as something to gain from in a material sense. The friendship served an end.

Gumboot Dhlamini was seen as a friend who would be beneficial in teaching the participant about “*taking care of your own family*”, something this participant felt strongly about. This participant recognised the friendship as positive in that the participant would be able to learn a positive trait from Gumboot. The last participant, who stated that s/he would want baby David as a friend, stated that this was simply because “*I love babies*”.

The answers to this question, within the questionnaire, provided insight into the ideologies of the participants and allowed the participants to think critically about the way in which they could alter their lives. The question allowed participants to become critically conscious of options and choices. They could potentially reflect on how to “emancipate and educate” themselves, and maybe their communities to create a better society for all (Vandrick, 1994, as cited in Sarroub & Quadros, 2015). Importantly, six of the participants declared that they wanted none of the characters in the novel to be their friends, as one participant stated, “*I want to be a good person*” and another noted, “*I want to do what’s right*”. This indicates that these participants felt that none of the characters were a positive influence on them and they wanted to live a better life without any of the characters from the novel to influence them to do otherwise. By stating that s/he wanted to be “*a good person*”, the participant was possibly implying that the characters in the novel were not good. Similarly, by wanting to do “*what’s right*”, the participant could recognise much that was wrong in the novel. The choices or non-choices of the six participants are important as they reflect abilities to discern what is right or wrong and to make choices about how to live their lives. The participants were able to reflect on their lives and the impact certain characters would have on their lives and take action

(albeit in a questionnaire) to reflect, make choices, take action and finally, transform their lives and possibly their society for the better (Freire, 2005).

Ten participants felt they could relate to Tsotsi. Some stated that they were able to relate to his “*difficult upbringing*” and the way he had to “*face hardships head-on*”. Such statements reflected the lives that some of the participants lived. They recognised that they had challenging childhoods and backgrounds and also understood how they dealt with the challenges. One participant explained,

Tsotsi had a tough life growing up and he ended up turning to crime. So did I, but I didn't do crime, I was just abusing other people around me because they did the same. But I changed when my little sister was born. I became a better me.

This statement shows many things. Firstly, the participant saw the links with his/her life and Tsotsi's life, both of which were challenging. Secondly, s/he accepted that s/he was “*abusing*” people but did not consider that a crime. Thirdly, the actions of the participant appear to be in line with the actions of those around him/her in the community and s/he seems to believe that the abusive actions were acceptable because others were doing it. Finally, the participant recognises that s/he changed for the “*better*” when his/her sister was born. Even though Tsotsi had a bad reputation, many of the participants who stated that they could relate to him were critically conscious about their lives and had made or were making decisions which would improve their ways of life. This critical consciousness (Freire, 2005) is reflected in their decisions to face their difficult situations, address their challenges and make changes towards transformation. In the case of this participant, s/he decided to transform him/herself once his/her sister was born, as the challenge of

being a role model was presented to him/her. A further participant stated that s/he was able to relate to Tsotsi because s/he too had grown up without parents. S/he stated, *"I can relate to Tsotsi because he also grew up with no parents. He didn't have any role models and that's why he had no sense of direction"*. This participant sees a link with Tsotsi in their lack of parents and role models. S/he also recognises that how they lived their lives resulted in their having no focus and guidelines on how to live. Importantly, these 10 participants have, like Tsotsi, aspired to make something different of their lives despite their challenges and their past bad decisions, despite living in townships that may be dominated by gangsterism and violence (Makombe, 2011).

Miriam is also seen as a character to whom participants could relate. Miriam is seen to be a character who, according to the participants, has *"a good heart"*. Of the six participants who chose her, they stated that she *"thinks for others first"* and is *"kind and down to earth"*. These sentiments indicate that they could relate to positive characteristics in the character, Miriam, and thus reflect their own characteristics. Four participants said they could relate to Gumboot Dhlamini because he was a *"hardworking family man"*. One participant stated that he was able to relate to this character as, *"I would do anything to take care of my family and give everything I have"*. These four participants all stated that they related to the family values that Gumboot Dhlamini possessed and reflected how they would want to care for their families in the future.

Five participants felt they could relate to Die Aap because he is *"a good listener and is loyal"*, qualities which this participant could relate to. Another participant was able to relate to Die Aap because he, *"was a man you could trust and rely on"*. However,

another view was from a participant who could relate to Die Aap because “*I always have enthusiasm to fight someone if he/she messes around with me*”. The participants were indicating the complexity of characters and possibly of their own lives by pointing to wanting loyalty and trust while also being able to fight back, if necessary. The sentiment of “*enthusiasm to fight*” is echoed in one of the three participants who related to Butcher and stated, “*I love poking (stabbing) people and I even bought a knife for myself*”. This response from the participant is an indication of how nonchalant the participant is about stabbing people and carrying a weapon around with him, as well as telling others of these activities. It is, however, a possible example of bravado on the part of the participants who reflected enjoying fighting and stabbing. What the two participants also reflect is the knowledge and experience of what threats are present in their environments. If the statements are not bravado, then the participants are reflecting a dangerous and life-threatening reality of their lives. The statements from the two participants reinforce the words of other participants who identified how comfortable they appear to be with violence and see it as a means to solve a problem. As Karaman et al. (2016) note, violence is one of the largest societal issues affecting the youth. It might mean that when the affected participants turn to violence, it is not examples of isolated incidents, but rather a normality in many communities.

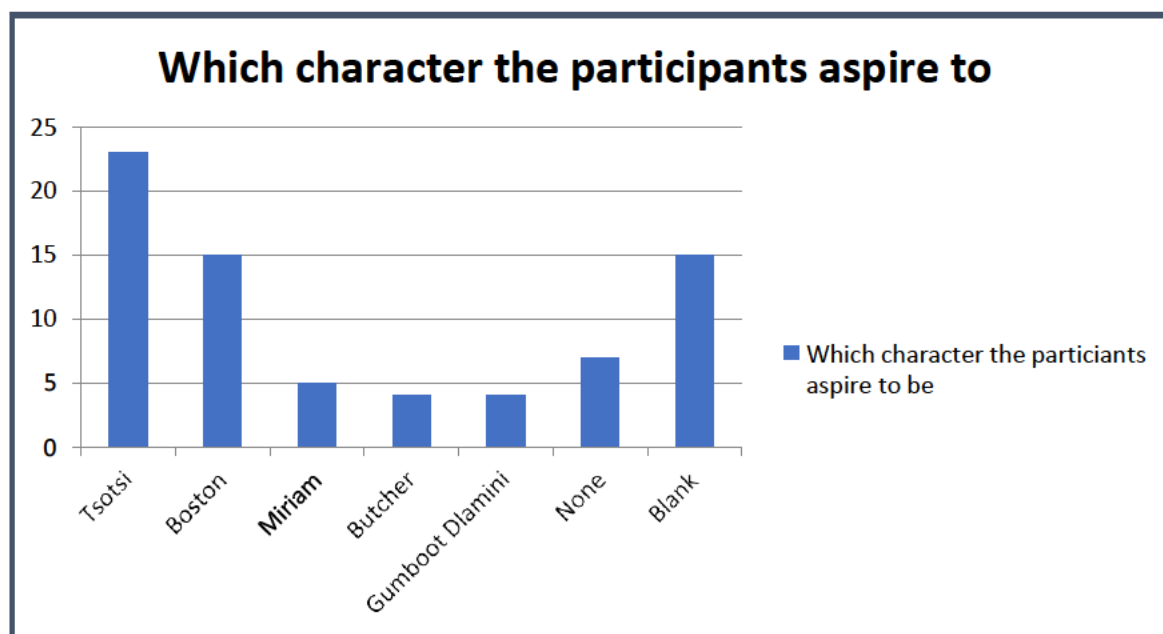
There were 13 participants who chose to leave this question blank showing that they either did not find any of the characters relatable or that they were simply unable to answer the question.

It may be concluded that of the characters which the participants could relate to, most participants were able to identify positive characteristics which they found as

similar to ones within themselves. The ability to recognise good in each character is notable and significant, showing that even if participants are surrounded by negative models in their communities, they recognise positive qualities in characters and aspire to those positive qualities. The minority of the participants who identified with characteristics which incorporated violence shows that this behaviour might be a conditioned typical ideology within their community. WHO (2002, p.1) identifies violence as “an inevitable part of the human condition” and, as a society, we have become accustomed to violence. Instead of trying to prevent it, we should find appropriate methods to respond to it. It is also important to consider that these participants have responded to the violence within their communities, with their own forms of violence, through which they are protecting themselves and their families. Seedat et al. (2009) state that violence is the second leading cause of death in South Africa and therefore individuals, such as the participants, would need some form of protection for themselves and others, or instil a fear in others which would also act as a form of protection.

The next question in the written document required the participants to identify which character they would want to most be like and to provide a reason for this.

Figure 6: Bar graph indicating the character which the participants aspire to be.



This question had 23 participants stating that they would like to be Tsotsi. This was unexpected as Boston had been a popular choice as a friend. However, the participants were able to clearly state their reasoning which explained their choices. The aspiration to be Tsotsi is clear with a participant stating, *“I want to be respected in my community, I want people to be scared when they see me coming”*. This response demonstrates the participant’s need for respect from his/her community, an aspiration that is understandable. However, the participant equates respect with fear and respect is gained through fear. This a significant finding and resonates with Makombe’s (2011) finding that the youth feed into the idea of gangsterism within their communities as they want to be feared since it provides them with a sense of power. A second participant stated that Tsotsi’s dominant personality is what s/he desires through the statement, *“He is the boss, everyone listens to him and does what he tells them to do”* and *“He is not afraid of anyone”*. These statements show that the participants who aspire to be Tsotsi want to feel powerful and respected

amongst their community and to have others admire, as well as fear them. The issues of power emerge in these statements, and they demonstrate an understanding that power, coupled with fear, result in desired actions.

Participants who aspired to be like Butcher did so for chilling reasons. One participant who aspires to be Butcher explained that *“the reason behind this option is because I enjoy the killing. It makes people fear you and makes them know you are heartless”*. With this participant, the focus goes beyond just instilling fear. It focusses on violence that is not only physical but callous and cruel. It is possible that the participant is presenting a persona hidden behind the mask of anonymity. However, if this is not the case, it is of concern. The four participants who aspire to be Butcher demonstrate the respect they want to possess with the members of their community. This respect may come in the form of violence conducted by the participants in order to assert power over others (Balan, 2010). While respect for people is a form of social justice, the ideologies that the participants reflect may be defined as social injustice. Hlalele (2012) notes that injustices occur when violence is enforced forcibly by people onto others within their own communities. This, in turn, conditions them to believe that violence and instilling fear are the ways in which people can obtain respect.

A significant response was by 15 participants who aspired to be Boston. One participant stated, *“It’s Boston because he is smart and has emotions so I wish I could be like him. Be smart, have masculinity, but I will add brave to it because Boston was not brave, but he was kind-hearted”*. This participant could recognise the dynamic of being able to show emotions and being able to be kind while still being *“masculine”*. The participant also aspired to being intelligent like Boston. A second

participant noted that s/he wanted to be Boston because *“I like to correct people when they are wrong and hurting others”*. This participant indicated needing to put right any wrongs being presented or seen but noted that s/he “liked” correcting people, a characteristic that might not go down well with people. However, what emerges is that those participants who aspire to be like Boston aspire to kindness towards others in contrast to participants who aspire to be like Tsotsi and Butcher who aspire to gaining respect within the community through fear and violence.

Participants who share similar sentiments to those related to Boston are those who aspire to share characteristics with Miriam. One of the five participants stated, *“She’s the only actual decent person in the novel”* while another reiterates the idea that Miriam is *“kind”* and for that reason, she would *“like to be her rather than any other character”*. This is echoed in the four participants who would like to be Gumboot Dhlamini as he is also seen as *“good-hearted”* and *“He is loyal to his family, trustworthy, he is supportive, working hard for his family”*. Although participants do acknowledge the good characteristics of Gumboot Dhlamini, it must be noted that a very few participants aspire to have characteristics such as he does, indicating that the aspiration for fear, respect and a life of gangsterism in the community (Makombe, 2011) is much greater than those with characteristics such as Gumboot Dhlamini.

Seven of the 76 participants made it clear that they did not aspire to be any character in the novel. One participant made his/her intention clear as s/he stated, *“I feel that I am perfectly fine as myself”* and therefore indicated that s/he feels comfortable as s/he is. Other reasons were similar and included ideas that they simply did not wish to be any of the characters in the novel but were happy with being themselves and the way that they conduct their lives and make decisions

surrounding it. Such sentiments are important in highlighting that some participants recognise their agency in how they live their lives. While the seven participants provided a reason why they did not want to be any character from the novel, 15 of the 76 participants simply left the question blank.

4.2.4 Learners' Engagement with Violence in their Lives and in the Novel

Participants were asked, anonymously, about their experiences with violence within their homes or community. Forty one of the 76 participants stated that they generally *"stayed away from violent situations"* by either *"avoiding it completely"* or *"watching"* the violence transpire. One of these participants stated, *"I stay away because it not my business to get into something dangerous"*. Another participant stated that s/he does not like being a part of anything that may cause him/her harm either *"physically or emotionally"*. The relatively large number of participants who said they stayed away from violence in their homes or communities possibly reflects their need for self-preservation to stay safe and protected, and to avoid danger.

Fourteen of the participants stated that they usually call for help when violence erupts. This was explained by a participant who said, *"I run away and go to get help from an older person so that he/she could separate them so that they do not end up hurting each other"*. However, many more participants made it clear that they would call for help within the community rather than phone the police for assistance. It is significant that the participants tried to stop the violent situation from escalating by turning to others for assistance. It is probably more significant that the participants would rather turn to elders in the community than to the police. If communities do not have faith in the police, it reflects a policing system that is not serving the people.

Thirteen participants said that they would try to help or to stop the violence themselves. One participant stated that s/he would initially try intervening but if it fails and s/he gets hurt instead, s/he would walk away and ignore the situation completely. A participant explained, "*If the violence is directed at me, I act back to protect myself in every way possible, but if it's not, I quickly remove myself from the violent activity taking place*". Only four participants stated that they would encourage the violence and 10 left this question blank.

It is important to remember that the participants are teenagers but are dealing with issues of self-preservation, being aware of the safety and protection of themselves and others. They have learned how to read a situation to know how and when to act, and they know whom to call and whom to avoid. They even need to know how to protect themselves. They have been shaped by their experiences and have had to become prepared to be streetwise in order to survive.

Using the written document, participants were asked if and how they could relate the story in the novel *Tsotsi* to their everyday lives. Thirty three participants left this question blank with no explanations provided. Twelve participants made the link between violence in the novel and violence in their lives. Of this number, while some referred to violence in general, many referred to "*xenophobic attacks*". There was not a clear indication of who committed the xenophobic attacks and at whom they were directed. What is important is that participants had a clear knowledge of such attacks.

A further 11 participants stated that they had experienced theft on a regular basis, making the link with theft in the novel. A participant shared his/her story by stating, "*I have experienced this, people in my community get mugged every day and they are*

always beaten", indicating situations not just of theft but also of physical violence. Of greater significance is that such occurrences take place on a regular basis. The participant recognises that s/he has "*experienced*" theft and beatings vicariously. Such experiences, whether in real time or vicariously, would shape how participants live their lives and how they expect to live their lives.

A further seven participants could relate to the instances of murder in the novel, with a participant sharing,

What I experienced in my life is that they killed my cousin who was a junkie. He was stealing at someone's house and sold it. After they found out it was him, they hit him till death.

This participant's experiences and realities involve concepts of theft, drug addiction, and murder of a family member. The participant refers to an anonymous "*they*" who meted out what "*they*" considered to be justice. The sharing of the experience appears to be accepting with no judgement of the theft, addiction nor murder. Of course, the presentation of the experience in this way might be a coping strategy of what must have been a traumatising situation. The experience also demonstrates how communities take the law into their own hands to deal with persons considered deviant. Another participant shared that there was

A rape and murder story in my neighbourhood when an uncle raped his niece and murdered her. He threw her in the river. When he was asked about it, he denied everything.

While it is not clear if this is an incident known to the participant or if it is an urban legend, what is important is that the participant has heard about and been exposed

to stories such as this one. They have been exposed to violence directly or indirectly. Four of the participants stated that they were able to relate to “*the gangs*” within the novel and within their communities but did not explain anything further than that. This question was left blank by 33 participants with no explanation. It is possible that discussing violence is avoided as it could make participants uneasy, or they may see violence as a taboo topic that should not be spoken about outside the boundaries of those who experience it. Overall, it became clear that the participants engaged with and confronted issues of violence on a regular basis and they saw the links between their experiences and those in the novel.

After each data generation instrument was administered, the participants and researcher used dialogic engagements to understand the data. As findings were shared, further problem posing scenarios were presented to make them reflect on and consider alternatives to create better lives for themselves and their communities. Such praxis presented important inputs from the participants, but those inputs were not used in the study as the study was designed to work within the boundaries of the three data generating instruments. Overall, the dialogues opened up possibilities for change and many of the participants understood that transformation and social justice were possible.

4.3 Conclusion

Through the use of the visual data generation method, the questionnaire and the written document, much information was generated on violence within the novel *Tsotsi*, but also the ways in which the 76 participants responded to it. While the data emanated from learners’ responses to violence in the novel, it also provided insights into learners’ understandings of violence in their homes and communities.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This dissertation aimed to explore grade 11 learners' engagement with representations of violence in Athol Fugard's novel, *Tsotsi*. To understand this phenomenon, the researcher first ascertained which issues of violence the participant-learners recognized in the novel, *Tsotsi*. Thereafter, the researcher identified which issues of violence they identified in their own lives. Through this, the researcher was able to establish why the learners had identified those issues of violence within their lives and how they corresponded to the various types of violence which the learners believed to be present in the novel. Through the analysis of the data, the researcher was able to understand how the learners engaged with issues of violence in the novel as well as instances of violence within their own lives and communities.

This study was important as *Tsotsi* is a novel which has been introduced relatively recently into the curriculum for grade 11, English Home Language learners. It is a novel deeply steeped in issues of violence, social justice, and self-redemption. There has been little research done on how learners engage with the novel and whether they would be able to identify with these aspects in the novel or not.

The presence of violence in learners' lives could not be ignored within the classroom and needed to be explored in a safe space using the novel as a springboard. The discussion and activities on the novel allowed for discussions about the importance of social justice, especially in communities experiencing violence on a regular basis.

This concluding chapter will explore the main findings of this study, as well as the implications of this study. This chapter will also consider the limitations of the study. Finally, recommendations for future research will be discussed.

5.2. Main Findings

This study has allowed the researcher to understand the way in which learners engage with representations of violence within the novel *Tsotsi*. The findings were able to answer the research questions guiding the study.

5.2.1 Understanding Violence

Most of the participating learners recognised and understood violence as being physical. As this type of violence is explicit, it is easy to identify. More than half of the participating learners recognised an emotional aspect to violence and could name emotional violence while a smaller number recognised a sexual aspect to violence and what it entailed. Other lesser cited examples of violence included abuse and crime.

These responses have clearly indicated which forms of violence are most commonly experienced within the communities of the participants which has shaped their ideologies of what violence is and how it may be interpreted.

5.2.2 Learners' Identification of Examples of Violence in Tsotsi

In terms of identifying examples of violence in the novel, *Tsotsi*, physical violence was the most obvious finding to emerge from this study. Half the number who identified physical violence were able to identify emotional violence. These results were to be expected as the incidences of violence within the novel were blatantly

physical and, to a lesser extent, emotional, making them easy to identify. However, more participants could identify sexual violence in the novel than they could identify emotional violence. Much smaller numbers could identify crime and abuse. It is important to note the similarities and differences of the findings of learners' understandings of violence and their identification of violence in the novel. A similar number of participants were able to identify physical violence while a lesser number identified the emotional violence within the novel. A much higher number of participants identified sexual violence within the novel, compared to those who were able to define violence as including a sexual aspect. This indicates that although the participants were initially not able to identify sexual violence, the novel might have shown them that it is indeed a form of violence and was distinctly portrayed within the novel. Abuse, as a form of violence, was identified by a small number of learners both in their understandings of violence and as examples in the novel. A much more substantial number of learners identified crime as a form of violence in the novel as opposed to learners' understandings of violence as crime was portrayed continuously in the novel, making it effortless to identify.

5.2.3 Learners' Identification of Issues and Representations of Violence in the Novel and in their Lives

In terms of learners' identification of issues and representations of violence in the novel and in their lives, it was found physical violence was experienced by the majority of the participants, which included aspects of mob violence and sexual violence. However, not all forms of violence were experienced.

Their responses to which character they would want as a friend, the majority of the participants wanted Boston as a friend for many positive reasons. There were also

the choices of Butcher and Die Aap for the protection they could provide and their ability to harm others. These choices pointed to participants' understandings that having a friend who could provide protection in their lived realities was important.

The participants' responses to the question asking for the character they could relate to, showed that most participants related to Boston because of his willingness to do the right thing with only a minority choosing Butcher for his violent acts.

Participants' choices of characters that they aspired to be included a large number who chose Tsotsi. Participants aspire to be like him as he was respected within his community, a response which resonated with the few participants who aspired to be like Butcher. This response allowed the researcher to realise strongly participants feel that they need protection in their homes and communities which may be an indication of the violence that occurs. Those participants who chose Boston saw him as a guide which would navigate them to better decision in life, and to move away from a life of violence.

5.2.4 Learners' Engagement with Violence in their Lives and in the Novel

The final part of this study was aimed to gain further knowledge on the participants engagement with violence in their lives and in the novel. This was first done by identifying which character the participants were able to relate to. Most participants felt they could relate to Boston for his willingness to always do the right thing, regardless of the complications which arise from those actions. Smaller numbers related to Tsotsi in their identification of their similar difficult upbringings and in their being able to turn their lives around.

5.3. Theoretical Implications

This study was underpinned by critical pedagogy. The study was able to rely on the ideologies of discourse and dialogic learning, and on the emphasis and understanding of power relations within society. Working with the core principles of critical pedagogy, enabled engagement with and awareness of issues of social justice. Using critical questions, the participants were made to think, reflect, and rethink choices. Debriefings unpacking the findings led to many questions and requests for clarity from participants. Participants started reflecting on their ideologies of violence and what social justice entailed. It was also important in providing safe spaces to talk about the previously taboo topic of violence and how it affected participants and their communities.

This step towards critical consciousness was the responsibility of the teacher-researcher who needed to introduce dialogic learning while maintaining an environment of trust and being sensitive about examples shared by the participants. By the end of the study, many participants could recognize previously held ideologies about oppression and inequality as sometimes being flawed. They stepped out of their usual response modes and reflected critically on what they could do to transform themselves and, possibly, their communities.

The participants realised that an awareness of violence and social justice relies heavily on the understanding of power relations within society. These power relations have been shaped by the societal relationships which the participants have experienced throughout their lives. However, through dialogic learning, critical consciousness, and praxis, they moved towards greater understanding, different forms of knowledge, and the openness to learn from others. It was also important for

the teacher-researcher to recognize that teaching and learning move back and forth using a problem posing education, and teachers learn from learners and learners learn from teachers. This praxis could lead to learners making informed, well-thought-out decisions that could transform themselves and possibly their communities into being more aware of the current social injustices. Such transformations could have a bearing on the communities in which learners live.

A final implication of using critical pedagogy is the increased knowledge required to enable the use of critical pedagogy in a classroom. The teacher-researcher needed to be fully aware of concepts being used and reasons for using the concepts. Using a critical pedagogy also requires a sense of responsibility when facilitating and supporting the ideas of critical pedagogy in a classroom. It is also important to understand the community within which learners live and be aware of how the community expects their children to behave. In this regard, it is essential to teach learners how to question and how to be critical without unsettling the communities within which they live and the families whose support they need.

5.4. Policy Implications

As this study revolves around the education system, it is important to note how this study speaks to current policies. A policy which was considered when conducting this study was the CAPS document. This document states that a novel should be taught in grade 11 and according to the LTSM document in English Home Language classrooms, the novel which should be taught is *Tsotsi*. However, not many more guidelines are provided.

To the researcher's knowledge and to the knowledge of her colleagues, there are no teacher support programmes for English Home Language in Kwa-Zulu-Natal. It

becomes clear that a teacher should not teach this novel without considering the ideas of social justice and how they tie in with the novel and the violent acts which occur within it. There is, therefore, a definite need for the Department of Education to guide teachers on the way in which they should encourage their learners to become critical thinkers in relation to the issues of social justice and the way in which they would be able to consider or re-consider current ideologies. The way in which to do this should be explained in the curriculum document or in other supporting documents sent to teachers. Being silent in policy means that a status quo may be replicated, or insensitivities could be enacted in classrooms. Being silent in policy also means that opportunities to have influence may be lost.

The results from this study have suggested that there is much work to be done in updating current policies to include the ideas of social justice and critical pedagogies, especially in a country like South Africa with many social inequalities. While issues of social justice underpin the CAPS document, how, when, and why to enact social justice is left unsaid.

5.5 Methodological Implications

As this study was embedded in the critical paradigm, it allowed the researcher to focus on issues of social justice as well as to help learners consider their own transformation. The effects of using critical dialogues facilitated discussions of social justice and how to bring about changes in actions and beliefs. The qualitative approach enabled much writing and some visual data. The learners' textual and visual engagement and responses allowed for the generation of much rich data. As the topic was potentially sensitive, the choice to use written anonymous data allowed the learners to express themselves freely which may not have happened had they

been asked to respond verbally. This was a conscious decision to prevent learners' potential discomfort. The decision not to use oral means of gaining data was considered sound as I enabled participants to share ideas and experiences freely. However, debriefings resulted in many more experiences being openly shared, but this data was not used as it was not defined in the study nor was consent given.

The consequence of using a case study research design was effective as it allowed the researcher to solely focus on a single case of grade 11 learners within one school using various means to generate data. The three data generation strategies allowed for a variety of questions and forms of questioning to be presented to the participants. Although the intention of the various tasks was to ensure triangulation, to obtain the most accurate results, the various strategies resulted in much data. The coding, sorting, and categorizing of the data was also more difficult than anticipated especially considering repeated questions, albeit in different forms. Closely following the steps needed in thematic data analysis assisted in this regard.

The findings of the study sometimes became difficult when responses from the different data generation strategies were analysed. The participants did not provide the same or similar responses in the three data generation methods, drawing attention to the difficulties of the subject matter and the various dynamics associated with discussing sensitive issues of violence and experiences of it.

The ethics of the study presented an issue when participants were provided with consent forms. Many participants did not believe that the consent forms were necessary and decided not to give their parents the forms to sign or took the liberty to sign the documents themselves, even though they were below 18 years old. As the researcher recognized the handwriting of the participants, they were provided

with new forms and requested to have their parents/guardians give consent. This reflected that this was possibly a practice conducted with other documents, or it could reflect the sensitivity of the study which they did not want parents to know about. In any event, each form was signed by a parent or guardian with no questions or requests for clarity.

5.6 Professional Practice Implications

The findings of this study have several important implications for the researcher's present and future practice.

As a practicing teacher and a researcher, it became clear how research and professional practice were intertwined. As a professional, this research placed much emphasis on the pedagogy used within the classroom and the impact of the pedagogy on learners' understanding. Critical pedagogy proved to be significant both in the study as well as in professional practice as it enabled the facilitation of more discussions and questions in the classroom, assisting the learners to voice their opinions and, more especially, to question ideologies which they had been accustomed to. The ability of the teacher to encourage critical thinking proved to be significant as their writing improved, and it became more creative. As the research progressed, the changes in learners became evident but the changes in the teacher-researcher were felt even more. As learners progressed and as they gained confidence in finding their voices, the enjoyment of teaching grew. It became clear that critical pedagogy would assist in producing a generation who is able to think critically and reflect on, and challenge previous ideologies, to make for more socially just communities around South Africa.

However, it is significant to note that critical pedagogy might not be accepted by teachers as it encourages learners to be critical within their classrooms and it urges teachers and learners to provide knowledges. However, if teachers understand that being critical is not necessarily negative but asks for an evaluation of the positives and negatives in a situation, they might accept it. It would prove useful if the Department of Education conducted workshops for teachers, where the concepts and ideas surrounding critical pedagogy were unpacked together with concrete examples to improve teachers' professional practice.

The implications of using critical pedagogy in practice was shared with fellow teachers and the positive results of the practices associated with critical pedagogy could be understood in its ability to help learners progress. The implications of this new professional practice needed to be role modelled so that other teachers could recognise the benefits of fostering critical thinkers to advance a socially just education. The current study encompassed both research and professional practice and each enhanced the other. This made the study meaningful and beneficial on many fronts.

5.7 Limitations of the Study

An important limitation of this study was the possibility that the data generation methods did not reflect the true feelings and experiences of the participants. Some might have been uncomfortable, embarrassed, or hurt to reflect their understandings and experiences of violence, even in anonymous writing. Some may have been presenting a persona, responding with bravado, or writing to shock. However, the many data generation methods aimed to mitigate this limitation. In addition,

discussions with participants, where participants appeared to corroborate other participants' experiences, seemed to reinforce the findings.

5.8 Areas for Future Research

Building on this study, a study looking at the same issues and working with the same text but across many schools in various areas, could provide important insights. As this study was conducted within a community that often experiences violence, it would prove interesting to note how the findings would differ and to what degree, in other schools.

It may also prove important to focus on and research one aspect of violence, for example, sexual violence or emotional violence or any other, and explore how learners identify with the representations within the prescribed novels which have been prescribed by the Department of Education. This may indicate whether the perceptions found within this study may be associated with the novel *Tsotsi* only, or whether it may be considered in terms of other prescribed novels.

Further, studies could focus on and build on the many studies, local and international, done on the use of critical pedagogy in various subject classrooms across contexts.

5.9 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore how learners identify the representations of violence within the novel *Tsotsi*. The study was able to identify learners' understandings and knowledge of violence, and they provided the researcher with the knowledge to establish how ideologies of the communities in which the learners were raised had moulded their perceptions and how they lived their lives. This study proved the

importance of critical pedagogy within the classroom and how it aids the teacher in producing learners who can question these ideologies for the sake of social justice within their communities. This study, although it had limitations, proved to be significant in opening the door for further engagements with critical pedagogy when teaching other aspects of the curriculum as well. Overall, the study provided the researcher with a new-found enthusiasm for teaching and for a deep respect for who learners are and what they bring to classrooms. The study also showed learners that change was achievable and that new possibilities existed.

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Appendix A: Open-ended Questionnaire

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: _____
3. Race: _____
4. Who do you live with?

5. Who is responsible for you?

6. (a) What do you understand by the term “violence”? (Different types)

(b) What types of violence are presented in *Tsotsi*?

7. (a) Have you experienced (or heard of) violence in your home or community? Please explain.

(b) Have *you* experienced (or heard of) any of the types of violence that are presented in *Tsotsi*? Please explain.

8. Did you enjoy the novel, *Tsotsi*? Provide a reason for your answer.

9. How did you respond to the violence within the novel?

10. Could you relate any part/ character of the novel to any part of your life?

11. Of all the characters in *Tsotsi*, who would you want as your friend?

Why?

12. When there is violence around you, how do you usually respond to it?

(What do you do?)

Appendix B: Written task

Tsotsi: Written Document: Identifying with Issues of Violence in the Novel

Name: _____

Grade: _____

The novel *Tsotsi* is a work of fiction, however, we see these events and characters within our communities as well.

1. In what way can we relate the story in *Tsotsi* to our everyday lives? This could be what you have experienced yourself or what you have heard within your home, your community, or your school.

2. What character in the novel do you relate to? Why?

3. What character would you like to be? Why?

Appendix C: Visual Task

Tsotsi: Visual Representation of Types of Violence in the Novel

The novel *Tsotsi* contains a central theme of violence. This comes in many forms throughout the novel.

Draw a mind map/spider diagram or a simple drawing in which you identify as many different types of violence as you can, as well as to provide an example of this from the novel.

Name: _____

Grade 11: _____

Appendix D: Parental Consent Form

DECLARATION OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

I..... (full names of parent/guardian) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to my child/ward participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw my child/ward from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE

.....

.....

Appendix E: Learner Assent

Informed Consent and Information form

Consent Form for Participation of Human Subjects in Research

University of KwaZulu-Natal

PROJECT TITLE:

Representations of violence in the novel *Tsotsi* by Athol Fugard, conducted with grade 11 learners at a school in Newlands East, Kwa-zulu Natal

RESEARCHER:

Miss Bronwyn Oldfield, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 212519794, last completed qualification was Bachelor of Education Honours (2017) and currently an M.Ed Candidate, contactable on 0848222277.

INVITATION

You are being asked to take part in a research study proposing to identify how violence is represented in the novel *Tsotsi*, as well as how learners identify with these issues of violence and relate it to their own lives. The study will focus on grade 11 learners at a school in Newlands east. This will include grade 11 learners for questionnaires. Your selection in this project was based on being a grade 11 learner, studying the novel. The purpose of this research is to complete a M.Ed at the University of KwaZulu-Natal duly supervised by Dr Ansurie Pillay. The project has been approved by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

Your voluntary involvement in this study will require you to complete 3 tasks provided to you. You will receive 2 questionnaires with both closed-ended and open-ended questions. You will also receive a written task which would need to be filled out through drawing or writing.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study typically takes 45-60 minutes of your time initially. An additional session may be required for clarity seeking questions.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn/ destroyed. You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you

You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome). If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

A summary report and explanation of the results will be made available to you when the study is completed, by means of an electronic copy of the research.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

Each individual's participation will be strictly confidential and nobody other than the researcher and supervisor will be allowed to discuss them. While the results will be published, no names or addresses will be revealed. The information will be kept under lock and key and stored securely and will be disposed of after a five-year period.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

My supervisor, Dr Ansurie Pillay will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact her at Pillaya3@ukzn.ac.za or (031) 260 3613.

Details of Supervisor:	Details of University Ethics:
Dr Ansurie Pillay	Research Office
Language and Arts Education, UKZN	<i>HSSREC</i>
Email: Pillaya3@ukzn.ac.za	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Telephone: (031) 260 3613	Westville Campus
	Tel: +27 31 260 8350
	Fax: +27 31 260 3093
	Email: snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

No

I consent to doing a questionnaire		
I consent to doing a written task		
I consent to doing a visual task		

I..... (Full names of participant)
 hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the
 research project, and I consent to participating in this research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so
 desire.

.....

Signature of participant

.....

Date

.....

Name of Participant

Appendix F: Gatekeeper permission letter

6 Ahrens road

Bluff

4052

1 August 2019

Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Bronwyn Mary Oldfield, a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, enrolled for a Master of Education Degree request permission to conduct research at your school. In conducting the research, I will request to speak to the grade 11 learners. The research will involve me asking the learners of their knowledge of the novel, *Tsotsi*, their understanding of the violence within the novel as well as how this may relate to any violence which they have experienced within their own lives.

The topic for this study is Grade 11 Learners' Engagement with Representations of Violence in Athol Fugard's Novel, *Tsotsi*

The purpose of this study is to understand how the learners understand the violence within the novel and if they are able to relate it to events within their own lives. The objectives of this study are:

1. Ascertain the issues of violence that grade 11 learners at a school in Newlands East identify as being represented in the novel, *Tsotsi*
2. Distinguish the issues of violence in the novel with which they identify
3. Understand why they identify with specific representations of violence in the novel
4. Explore how they engage with issues of violence both in their lives and in the novel

Furthermore, I wish to bring to your attention that:

- The identity of the learner will be protected in the report writing and research findings
- Learner participation will be voluntary
- Your institution will not be mentioned by its name, and pseudonyms will be used for all schools and participants
- There is no financial benefit towards the participants as a result of their participation in this study.

Should you have any concerns or queries about this study please feel free to contact my supervisor or the university Research Office, whose details are below:

Supervisor: Dr. Ansurie Pillay

School of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal Edgewood Campus

Tel no. 031 260 3613

Email: Pillaya3@ukzn.ac.za

Research Office

HSSREC

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Westville Campus

Tel: +27 31 260 8350

Fax: +27 31 260 3093

Email: snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

I hope my request will be considered.

Yours Sincerely

Bronwyn Mary Oldfield



e-mail: oldfield.bronwyn@gmail.com



Newlands East, Durban 4037

Marbley, 4035

Tel. (031) 577 1570

Fax. (031) 577 4919

NEWLANDS

SCHOOL

GATEKEEPER PERMISSION

I, MR P.S. NDLOVU, principal of

NEWLANDS

School do hereby grant permission to

B. OLDFIELD to conduct research with

GRADE 11 LEARNERS in the said School.

I understand that

- The identity of the learner will be protected in the report writing and research findings
- Learner participation will be voluntary
- The institution will not be mentioned by its name, and pseudonyms will be used for the School and participants
- There is no financial benefit towards the participants as a result of their participation in this study.
- Full consent will be sought from all participants, and in the case of minors, from their parents.

Yours faithfully

[Redacted Signature]

NAME

[Redacted Signature]

SIGNATURE

02/08/2019

DATE

NEWLANDS

[SCHOOL STAMP]

Newlands East
Durban. 4037

Ethical Clearance Letter



Ms Bronwyn Mary Oldfield (212519794)
School Of Education
Edgewood

Dear Ms Bronwyn Mary Oldfield,

Protocol reference number: 08004589

Project title: Grade 11 Learners Engagement with Representations of Violence in Athol Fugard's Novel, Tsotsi

Exemption from Ethics Review

In response to your application received on 3 December 2019, your school has indicated that the protocol has been granted **EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW**.

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol, e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited.

For any changes that could result in potential risk, an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited.

In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE:

Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours sincerely,


Prof Ansurie Pillay
Academic Leader Research
School Of Education

UKZN Research Ethics Office
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag 354001, Durban 4000
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Residing Campuses:  Edgewood  Newbold College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

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MED By Bronwyn Oldfield

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