‘The People’s Glossary’:

Using dialogic art to create a common language for User-led Museum practice

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Much of the data presented in this thesis was obtained in collaboration with multiple groups of people and collectives. Some of the data was collected through an investigation carried out by myself and Quad Collective at Tate Exchange, Liverpool where I played the major role in the preparation, execution, the data analysis and interpretation. Any contributions from people engaged in the research is explicitly referenced in the text.

Consequently, I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where I state otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

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1.1. List of Abbreviations

AA: Active Agents

CC: Community Collective

COP: Community of Practice

IAE: International Art English

mima: Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art

OUA: The Office of Useful Art

PAR: Participatory Action Research

PRM: Participatory Ranking Methodology

QC: Quad Collective

TE: Tate Exchange

TL: Tate Liverpool

TPG: The People's Glossary

1.2. ABSTRACT

It is understood that language is a powerful mediator of social hierarchy with great influence to emancipate, educate or exclude. Meanwhile, discourses centred on expertise, representation and authorship have re-emerged as priorities in collections of contemporary art due to pressures for them to be reinstated as dialogical resources. This is especially true for those where participatory practices are being challenged due to their failure to prioritise public discourse over dominant, institutional ones. Even after attempts to democratise collections via processes to co-write interpretation, they struggle to represent community co-authors ethically and transparently.

This thesis argues that language use and misrepresentation prevent publics from using collections of contemporary art and feeling like they belong in them. Using discourse theory and participatory action research, this study interrogates the processes used by collections to co-author the interpretation of artworks to create 'equitable plurality' and offers up a toolkit of arts-based practices to engender usership. Drawn from dialogic practices and qualitative research, the investigation examines the politics of discourse and plurality of speech – spoken and written – to contribute a unique focus on language generated and used by publics to create a common language. Undertaken with multiple communities of practice associated with Tate Liverpool's collection 'Constellations', this research concludes in the production of a crowd-sourced digital resource titled *The People's Glossary*. By revisiting and reinterpreting keywords with publics as a dialogic practice, this body of work contributes processes and research to embed plurality in collections of contemporary art.

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Lastly, this thesis is for my Uncle Bob, who passed away whilst I was writing up and would have been proud to read the final manuscript.

1.4. List of Images

2. INTRODUCTION

Beginning my career in the arts as an assistant at an arts criticism magazine, I have long been aware of the power of language to include and exclude people simultaneously (Dijk, 2008, pp.85). This power dynamic has long been hyperbolised in the discourses of art since art became considered 'modern' (Wright, 2013, pp.3) and later, in its dominant understanding as 'contemporary' (Bishop, 2013, pp.6). Whilst undertaking an under-graduate degree in fine art, I found that I struggled to decode complex language used by university-approved theorists; eventually finding that my process to dissect, understand and emulate their discourses did not produce authentic work. Still, I desperately wanted to be an 'author'. For me, it was about belonging to a community where I could share opinions, ideas, and values with others by virtue of our shared interests; otherwise known as 'a community of practice' (COP) (Eckert, 2006, pp.683) in sociolinguistic circles.

COPs are a rich area to study the use of language due to their social grouping on account of their interests[1] and their proximity to specialist subjects. In this thesis, the communities that I examine bring together the users of museums and galleries; ranging from specialists to first-time users to produce a 'common language' (Williams, 1983, pp.11). Herein lies a paradox; as museums struggle to argue their relevance to general publics (Sheikh, 2006, pp.142) even after the social and participatory turns (Bishop, 2005; Simon, 2010) they continue to use specialist, art-world autonomous language or 'artspeak' (Rule and Levine, 2012, no pagination) that creates a dialogical world (Cornwall, 2007, pp.471). Also, whilst many professions have developed a 'growing arsenal of jargon' (Zinsser, 2006, pp.18), contemporary art relies on publics to support its production, collections and exhibitions, hence the need to justify art museums' use-value (Sheikh, 2006, pp.142). Still, in public debate and in the media it is argued that contemporary art is irrelevant (Groys, 2008, Pp.18) and unjustifiable in current conditions of austerity (Knell and Taylor, 2011, pp.7). Intrinsic to these opinions is the idiom that contemporary art 'just isn't for me' (Sayle, 2018, no pagination); a phrase that I have

[1] As opposed to abstract grouping e.g. age, gender, class (Eckert, P. (2006) Communities of Practice. In: Brown, K. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics (Second Edition).* Oxford: Elsevier. pp. pp.683-685.).

discussed often with family, friends and members of the public who've come into contact with my work during projects and residencies.

Defining myself as a collaborative artist and action-researcher, this work is what relational art theorist Grant Kester might call 'dialogical' due to its locus to encompass 'differing meanings, interpretations and points of view' (Kester, 2005, no pagination). This is emphasised by conducting work with multiple stakeholders - artists, collectives, academics, curators, administrators – though collaborating with local people is my priority. This group is diverse and underrepresented in the arts (Brook, O'Brien and Taylor, 2018, pp.11) and cause me to pay close attention to the language that I use in these settings. Reflecting on the attention that I give to speech, voice, vocabulary and text has led me to concentrate on creating frameworks to facilitate discussion on language and its relationship to power; it is at this point that this research manifests as a practice-based research study.

Emphasising my concern in 2012 an article titled *International Art English* (IAE) (Rule and Levine, 2012, no pagination) was published. The authors set out to scientifically prove the exclusivity of artspeak by publishing quantitative data collected through the production and dissemination of e-flux articles and press releases. The essay ignited a worldwide debate provoking respected artist-researchers Hito Steyerl and Martha Rosler to respond a year later in the e-flux journal titled *Language and the Internet* (Aranda, Kuan Wood and Vidokle, 2013, no pagination). In their articles *International Disco Latin* and *English and All That,* Steyerl and Rosler problematise IAE as a misguided attempt to blow up the discourse of contemporary art theory. Arguing for the multiplication of creative discourses as 'a gift' (Steyerl, 2013, no pagination), whilst also emphasising the history of the English language as a tool of control and instrumentalisation (Rosler, 2013, no pagination), their articles emphasise the criticality of exploring discourse as both a tool and a weapon. Subsequently, these articles influenced me to navigate such arguments using a collection of contemporary art as a locus. Hence, this research emerges from a field of productivity; both to create a qualitative research study[2] and to interrogate the conflicting discourses between expertise and inclusion.

[2] Using qualitative research methods was important to oppose IAE's quantitative methodology.

In the following thesis, I describe practice-based Participatory Action Research (PAR) that queries the 'art isn't for me' idiom, whilst also problematising the artspeak debate. Using a social and arts-based method to understand 'belonging' in the gallery, I argue that this feeling is underpinned by the way that text is used in galleries; the assumptions that are made by the 'author' and its recipients (Fairclough, 2003, pp.40); and the effects of the representation of institutional hegemony on publics.[3] Furthermore, I also examine why the development of COPs might contribute to the further exclusion of some groups, whilst legitimising others.

According to professors Linda Candy and Ernest Edmonds in their 2018 article *Practice-based research in the Creative Arts: Foundations and futures from the front line* (pp.63-9), an embedded approach is necessary to procure a research process where 'research questions arise from the process of practice' (pp.63). This continuum of practice-based research creates a bespoke method of investigation that is embodied through TPG's four-stage methodology. Methodically punctuated by practice and reflection, the continual analysis and reanalysis of this study's research questions comprise a toolkit and a series of artworks, including a website and three zines.[4] These outcomes are directly informed by an ethical investigation of the language used in museums and how people use language when they collaboratively interpret artworks. Hence, this study fulfils another principle of practice-based research to produce new knowledge created through practice. In part this is done by undertaking the practice itself using methods associated with principles of the topic – in this case, art and language – then, the outcomes of the practice are scrutinised, analysed and reflected on in this thesis.

Reflecting the 'growing discomfort and dissonance about the perceived benefits of participation' (Lynch, 2012, pp.146) the advancing field of Usership (Wright, 2013; Aikens et

3 Recent research has found that disagreements about the interpretations of art are 'found to be class-based, but other differences, particularly those of gender, age, ethnicity, intersect and at times change the inflictions of class.' (Bennett, T., Savage, M., Silva, E.B., Warde, A., Gayo-Cal, M. and Wright, D. (2009) *Culture, Class, Distinction*. London: Routledge.) This work brings to light the lived experiences of local people; women, people of colour, working-class, queer and 60+ people, to challenge institutional narratives upheld in sites of hegemonic power; in this case, art and its museums as contested sites of homogeneity. In this scope, language becomes a crucial tool to problematise inquests around social and political work; demonstrating coding and social stigmas attached to language in cultural and arts-based public spheres.

4 At their core, zines are 'self-published periodicals' with roots in 'fan fiction, literary small presses, underground comics and mini-comics' (Lovata 2012, pp.324).

al., 2016) has created further possibilities to investigate the use of language at work within collections of contemporary art. To this end, it is a central hypothesis that the uses of language in museums prevent them from becoming useful resources. To test the validity of this suggestion, this research explores how authority, authorship and misrepresentation are all factors that might prevent people from feeling like they can comfortably use a collection of contemporary art. Artist and educator Pablo Helguera summarises why this might be when he observes;

> *In contemporary art and in art history in general, the voice of the public is generally missing; it is the voice of the artists, the curators and the critics that appears to matter.* (Helguera, 2011, pp.73)

Emphasising Helguera's proposition that the voice of the general public 'is missing' in conversations around contemporary art, publics have often been talked about as invited guests, or participants, rather than 'users' (Wright, 2013, pp.1).

Consistent with the theories of political scientist Chantal Mouffe, 'too much emphasis on consensus, together with aversion toward confrontation, leads to apathy and to disaffection' (2016, no pagination) with participation. With heritage museums such as Derby Museums (Henley et al., 2018, pp.12) and art museums such as mima attempting to create museums as civic or democratic buildings (Gogarty, 2017, pp.121), in their collections the inequity of their discourse is being contested by curators, publics and academics (Wray, 2019, pp.316). Consequently, this research sets out to create dialogic interventions with users to 'mobilize passions towards the construction of a 'people' so as to bring about a progressive 'collective will' (ibid) to add to current interpretation strategies. For Mouffe, what is important is that this conflict 'does not take the form of 'antagonism' (struggle between enemies), but the form of 'agonism' (struggle between adversaries) (2016, no pagination). Mouffe's combination of acknowledging the value of plural passions, views and voices and her theorisation of agonism creates an opportunity to complement museum discourse transmitted through collections of contemporary art. Hence, TPG's methodology pursues the inclusion of voices who are rarely heard in collections, alongside those whose voices are already established to challenge 'authoritarian order' (Mouffe, 2000, pp.16)

When pursuing methods of plurality, considering the term 'voice' is essential. In this thesis I debate 'voice' in multiple, conflated senses. Theoretical deliberations reflect the complexity of 'voice' in relation to educational activism (Fassett et al., 2018, no pagination), performing identity (Butler, 1996, pp.204) and self-advocacy (Goodley, 2005, pp.333). In these conversations, 'voice' is used in relation to listening, hearing, empowering, policing and silencing, and 'as a pledge, a declaration, a gift, an appeal' (Dolar, 2006, pp.8). Standing at the intersection of language and the body (ibid), the voice 'upholds language without belonging to it' (pp.73). In this sense, like philosopher Mladen Dolar, I frequently discuss the voice as an object (ibid). Principally, I do this when referring to the mediation of language through text.

In another sense, I use voice to refer to 'person-centered' (Goodley, 2005, pp.341) expressions which advocate for the articulation, multiplication and reproduction of language. Accordingly, whilst I discuss voice as an object, I cannot separate it from the body due to its implications for human speech, or, articulation where living and language occurs (Agamben and Fort, 1997, pp.95). For this reason, when I refer to 'voice' I am also referring to language as a deeply personalised product; one that is learned through relationality, intimacy and singularity that creates infinite interpretation and understanding (Berardi, 2012, pp.21). Thus, relating to Foucault's theory of 'subjugated knowledges' (Foucault et al., 2003, pp.7), I theorise that contested 'hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition' (ibid) could be unearthed to disrupt totalitarian discourse (Schotten, 2015, pp.168). This manifests through my recommendation to diversify 'intertextuality'[5] (Kristeva, 1980, pp.36) to recognise difference (Fairclough, 2003, pp.40) in interpretation texts.

Lastly, I have considered my authorial voice. Candidly, it has been one of the greatest challenges of the research to unlearn and relearn language as 'an instrument' to shape for my own purpose (Orwell, 1946; Orwell, 2013, pp.6); still, it is a continuing journey. On reflection, the process of finding my voice has benefited this thesis in that it has encouraged further

[5] On the basis that text is a productive apparatus that distributes written speech to readers, intertextuality is the understanding that text can be permutative. Or, in the context of collections of contemporary art, 'several utterances' might be used from other texts, speech or speakers to intersect and be used to represent discourse to 'neutralise one another'. (Kristeva, J. (1980) *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*. New York: Columbia University Press.)

exploration of what it means to use a 'borrowed' voice; a pertinent subject for collections and their communities.[6] Consequently, key in the development of this thesis is my choice to use the pronoun 'I' to establish a clear subject position. This is especially necessary when investigating the production of discourse, discursive micro-interactions and the construction of a social order through research (Tirado and Gálvez, 2008, pp.224). Additionally, developing this position is critical to avoid participating in research that speaks through the privileged and disembodied voice of western academia (Potts and Price, 2002, pp.109).

2.1. Thesis Structure

The structure of this thesis demonstrates multiple perspectives to engender its user-driven approach. Subsequently, it prioritises users distinguished by archetypes to capture the breadth of publics (Warner, 2002, pp.7-8). Framed around institutions, professionals, critical friends, users and active agents, these archetypes provide the structure as 'co-producers'[7]. This narrative method sets the tone for a holistic, person-centred understanding of co-production in social and arts-based research (Squire, Andrews and Tamboukou, 2013, pp.3) which recognises 'the need for blended spaces of inquiry (…) to draw up divergent pathways for illuminating reality' (Rolling, 2013, pp.59). Making this approach explicit engenders reflexivity.

[6] *The People's Glossary* suggests that developing an appropriate and common language; through practice and the development of a resource for users could provide a route to rethinking ways that museums disseminate 'expert' knowledge. Furthermore, making this resource accessible in collections could contribute new knowledge toward increasing Usership in collections of contemporary art.

[7] In this work I use the term 'co-produce' as opposed to 'co-create' to reflect the formal, academic outcomes for this research to produce research and a participatory art project agreed on before the project was realised in its entirety. In public services, the term co-production has been used to recognise people's opinions as valuable when strengthening public services and reflects the practice-based project that prioritises input from local 'people's lives and needs'. (Govier, L. (2010) Leaders in co-creation? Why and how museums could develop their co-creative practice with the public,

building on ideas from the performing arts and other non-museum organisations. [online],

Available at: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/rcmg/projects/leaders-in-co-creation/Louise%20Govier%20-%20Clore%20Research%20-%20Leaders%20in%20Co-Creation.pdf

[Accessed: 19/03/18])

In the following, I establish the research questions, discuss case studies and illustrate the archetypes. Crucially, I describe methods of discourse theory and PAR to ground the methodology and examine ethical implications and frictions created by this work.

The first chapter is framed around 'Institutions' and provides an insight into the key texts that influenced the creation of the PAR project; *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*[8] (Williams, 1976a) and *Toward a Lexicon of Usership*[9] (Wright, 2013). Significantly, this section also investigates political theorist Chantal Mouffe's concept of 'agonistic pluralism' (Mouffe, 1999) in opposition to 'deliberative democracy' (Benhabib, 2002) defined by philosopher Seyla Benhabib. Underpinned by an investigation into critique, the section also considers 'utopia as method' (Levitas, 2013, pp.xi) and how this ideology might generate 'instituent' practices (Raunig, 2006, no pagination).

The second chapter covers the role of the Professionals in this work through analysing interviews with staff members and observations from current museum practice. In this section, I also explore a sub-category created to analyse 'critical friends' (Lynch, 2011, pp.8) - a term borrowed from museum specialist Bernadette Lynch to describe museum educators and intervening perspectives. Supported by a practice of discourse analysis, this chapter also comprises arguments toward renegotiating museum ethics and 'radical transparency' (Marstine, 2012, pp.14).

The third chapter features the role of 'Users' at Tate Liverpool (TL). The term user is borrowed from the field of research concerned with Usership (Wright, 2013, pp.66-68), and is employed to consider people who engaged in the research at TL via the *Shared Language* project at Tate Exchange (TE). Mostly, users who were interviewed have an insider perspective, are artists themselves or are working in the field. This chapter features an analysis of TL's 'word clouds' and an evaluation of *Shared Language.*

[8] From this point, I refer to *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* simply as Keywords to ensure clarity for the reader.

[9] Similarly, I refer to *Toward a Lexicon of Usership* as the *Lexicon*.

The fourth chapter analyses 'Active Agents', or, publics who are constituent[10] (Sheikh, 2004; 2006; Byrne, 2018) at TL. Defined by their increased activity as co-creators they are the key COP to examine and are unified as a pre-formed group titled Community Collective. In this thesis, I give them the title 'active agents'[11] to draw attention to researcher Bernadette Lynch's work on 'active agency' (Lynch, 2011, pp.19) to encourage museums to make space for people to 'make free choices' (ibid). The fifth chapter comprises the central evaluation of the PAR and describes the processes by which it was enacted.

Chapter Six concentrates on the outcome of the research; a website and user resource titled *The People's Glossary* (TPG) which can be accessed through www.thepeoplesglossary.co.uk. Arguably, from my perspective, the process of facilitation and implementation of TPG to work within a creative community is the most crucial contribution. Therefore, I have chosen to feature a section that focusses on the work undertaken to produce an outcome before the conclusory remarks. This decision is echoed by the field that states; 'the process of participatory projects can be potentially more significant than the final product – the display, text, resource or other tangible output' (Bunning et al., 2015, pp.5). The conclusory remarks evaluate the research period, revisit the research questions and imagines how TPG could take shape in future manifestations.

This thesis is unique in its format as a funnel. Reflecting the heuristic process of the investigation, using a funnelling method enabled me to collect, develop and condense the data

[10] I have used the term 'constituent' here in regards to the body of research surrounding 'The Uses of Art: The Legacy of 1848 and 1989' and its mediation task force during its five year research programme concerning institutional experiences in contemporary art; where, 'as museums begin to see themselves as sites of collaborative knowledge production (…) it began to seem more apparent that museums could do little more than 're-brand' their existing relationships with audiences (…) unless museums were prepared to open themselves up to the reciprocal possibility of change.' (Byrne, J. (2018) *The Constituent Museum*. Amsterdam: TRANCITY X VALIZ.) Therefore, the terms; constituent/constituency/constituencies have been used in this thesis to further address how museums are currently demonstrating the evolution of the relationship between publics and museums; considering this research's case studies, and my understanding of this through my action-research.

[11] In the following these, I use the abbreviation AA to refer to active agents.

into a focussed argument to feed into the toolkit and outcomes of the research. Due to its complex methodology, I describe in detail how the research took place in four stages; in the planning, acting, observing and reflecting. To emphasise the importance of reflection, I accentuate three outputs of the research; the thesis, the outcome and the appendices[12]. Writing the thesis in this way reflects some of the key paradoxes when producing different types of knowledge. The method questions legitimacy twofold; via its examination of knowledge dissemination via written text, and via the production and inclusion of counternarratives of those whose voices are suppressed when discussing contemporary art.

2.2. Points of Friction

Three points of friction must be stated; the first resides in the language used in my written research. Whilst it is important that this research is relevant to co-producers whose narratives have informed TPG, this thesis sits within the academic field and therefore my use of language reflects that. For this reason, this work acts with duality between the developed online resource intended for users and the thesis as a site for scholarly rigour. Similar struggles have been conjectured as 'high level theorising' (Walmsley and Johnson, 2003, pp.15) when disseminating inclusive work to an academic audience. Consequently, this thesis is sensitive to its ethical implications. With this in mind, it has been useful to revisit the slogan 'nothing about us, without us' (Walmsley, 2004, pp.3) when producing this thesis.

Secondly, Mouffe's 'constitutive outside' (Mouffe, 2005a, pp.15) is also paradoxical for this research due to its theorisation that reconciles total inclusion as an impossibility in our current democracy (Mouffe, 2000; Mouffe, 2013a). For Mouffe, the formation of collective identities 'attempts to constitute a 'we' in a context of diversity and conflict' (Mouffe, 2014, no pagination). Subsequently, exclusion is permanently present due to the distinction between 'they' and 'we' (ibid). Due to my focus on literacy as a tool, I have also reconciled the exclusion of those who are intellectually restricted from reading and writing; thus excluding some of the

[12] To access the appendices please refer to the OneDrive folder accessed through the web address: https://ljmu-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/lsaecurd_ljmu_ac_uk/Evz-dk-3HARCoWrnr3JzkJIBf5lG_5ERh6BUHCBW0C0VgA?e=mDnfkl

most vulnerable groups.[13] By choosing to focus on Mouffe's theorisation of conflictual agonism 'to establish the we/they discrimination in a manner compatible with pluralism' (ibid), I also encourage participatory, representational and civic devices within the processes of TPG, while knowing that there will always be a constituent outside.

Thirdly, the development of toolkits and utopian idealism[14] is considered contentious in political spheres 'especially radical intellectual ones' (Gordon and Davis, 2004, pp.113). Specifically, 'toolkit mentality' (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010, pp.122) is criticised as being overly alluring[15] and a simplistic way of problem-solving. Hence, I have been mindful not to position TPG as a quick-fix solution to re-instate collections as useful resources or to eradicate hegemonic discourses. Instead, the following thesis reveals the conditions, restrictions and complications towards a theory of 'equitable plurality'. TPG is one possible process of 'engaged scholarship' (Donnellan, 2014, pp.293) that could be used to construct the 'actual generation of new perceptions, explanations and inventions' (Johnson and Cooperrider, 1991, no pagination). In summary, by providing disclaimers like these I hope to express ongoing researcher reflexivity.

[13] This research does not attempt to reconcile this issue, but instead offers several examples that could expand this type of practice with young children and disabled publics whom were unable to participate. An example of this could be demonstrated by *Auto Agents*, a project and exhibition curated by a group of learning-disabled curators at the Bluecoat in Liverpool. Curators opted to produce a collaborative film as their interpretation strategy instead of using a conventional text-based method (French, J. (2017) *Art as advocacy: exploring curatorial practice by learning disabled artists as a site for self-advocacy.* thesis Ph.D., University of Leeds.). This model is significant because there is little research that addresses how intellectually challenged individuals might interpret contemporary art in non-traditional ways and examine different ways 'to know about art'. (Ibid.) From this view, there is potential to explore inclusive approaches to interpretation in terms of film, audio, touch or play, but this is not the objective of TPG.

[14] In my research I imagine these two ideologies intersecting due to their parallel struggles towards improved, desirable – unattainable – futures.

[15] Under the pretenses that they are 'easily replicable in different geographical contexts and equably applicable to different art forms and diverse audiences.' (Belfiore, E. and Bennett, O. (2010) Beyond the "Toolkit Approach": Arts Impact Evaluation Research and the Realities of Cultural Policy-Making. *Journal for Cultural Research*, 14 (2), pp.121-142.)

2.3. Research Questions

This research offers an investigation of language use inside the gallery with the aim to shed new light on the differences between institutional and public discourse. Additionally, it critiques current knowledge production devices implemented by leading dialogic institutions such as TL, which requires asking these questions;

1) What processes are undertaken to co-write interpretation?
2) What are the ethical implications of co-writing interpretation?
3) How could collections resist misrepresenting the voices of their publics?
4) How do museums ascribe authorship to producers?
5) How could educational 'spatial strategies' (Christensen-Scheel, 2018, Pp.103) provide tools to intervene in the production of institutional text?

By undertaking research that challenges these problems, I critically analyse guidelines and ethical practices to challenge the integration of participatory methods in practice and in policy. Moreover, after working closely with publics, my concern moved from 'who speaks on behalf of communities'[16] and 'how do we document alternative voices' to 'how do we document these voices ethically and transparently'? Necessary in this conversation is the acknowledgment of the relationship between public and institutional power and knowledge; which in turn creates renewed ethical demands for rigorous user-led practices. Consequently, the integration of consultation and collaboration to influence policy is a growing area (McCall and Gray, 2014, pp.20). These are areas where this study could contribute new thinking.

[16] In conversations aligned with the disability rights movement (DRM), it has been understood that 'when others speak for you, you lose' (Driedger, D. (1989) *The Last Civil Rights Movement: Disabled Peoples' International*. London: Hurst & Company.:28). This understanding has paved the way for community-led research movement; 'Nothing About Us, Without Us', and is crucial to readdress the power hierarchy between researchers and 'subjects', and to give control back to people regarded as participants. See: Charlton, J.I. (1998) *Nothing About Us Without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment*. Berkley: University of California Press.

2.4. Case Studies

Two institutions were selected as potential sites where this practice could be implemented; TL and Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima) and are used as case studies to observe and practice this research. Having already identified these sites for analysis due to their evolving interpretation strategies to include public voices within their collections; TL's *DLA Piper Series: Constellations* and mima's *Middlesbrough Collection*; it was my objective to interrogate their embedded approaches to working with local communities. Additionally, I observed that both museums were trialling active and open project spaces that invite publics to rethink what 'a museum could do, really'[17]; for TL, *TE*; and mima, *The Office of Useful Art*. Both architectures are situated alongside their collections to complement and assert the museum's promises as a place for dialogue. Participation critic and academic Irit Rogoff has challenged such idealistic gallery models as a consequence of the emergence of 'pedagogical aesthetics' (Rogoff, 2010, no pagination) – or, spaces with the promise of conversation. This research investigates the potential for these sites to be used by publics to 'speak back' to the collection; its artworks and artists; to become part of the collection itself (Kester, 2000, no pagination).

Selecting case studies was influenced by a methodology utilised by critic Claire Bishop in her text *Radical Museology: or, What's 'Contemporary' in Museums of Contemporary Art?* (Bishop, 2013). In her manuscript, Bishop discusses experimental models to 'rethink' how museums consider the canon of contemporary art using their collections. This approach is reflected through this research to consider the practical and ethical workings of institutions trialling 'dialogic' practices – like TL and mima – and their degrees towards implementing 'Museum 3.0' (Wright, 2013, pp.39-41).– or, useful museum practices. Therefore, although TPG takes place primarily at TL as its foundational subject of inquiry, the data also comprises fieldwork undertaken at mima, which is additionally supported by further observational

[17] See appendices O for interview transcription with Dr. Michael Birchall (pp.3).

accounts at Tŷ Pawb[18] in Wrexham, Arnolfini in Bristol and Manchester Art Gallery.[19] In sum, this thesis considers the efforts that TL and mima make toward the creation of user-generated approaches in collections, whilst also using ethnographic research methods to exemplify new methods of embedding practice. Significantly, these case studies represent differences in size, methodology and structure, but are each attempting to co-produce new narratives with publics in different ways.

2.5. ARCHETYPES

This section provides an overview of the publics who have contributed to the research and draws attention to the term 'participant'[20]. The label is a term of controversy for researchers engaged in public practice for whom 'participation implies an imbalance of power, where participants perform a function for someone else's agenda' (mima, 2015, no pagination). Knowing that the terms I use are not without bias or indication of my own philosophical subjectivity (Edwards and Holland, 2013, pp.4) reflecting on terminologies or 'labels'[21] for communities is an especially important exercise. In the context of participatory art, problematic power relationships between 'the artist', 'the insiders' (curators, critics, researchers and collectors) and 'the other' or 'the non-exclusionary audience' (Hirschhorn, 2010; Bishop, 2013, no pagination)[22] are significant. In this work, I redefine 'participants' as

[18] Translated as 'Everybody's House' in English from Welsh.

[19] These institutions were selected in regard to their efforts towards reinterpreting collections, redefining the 'rules' of their engagement with publics and their alternative methods to co-create knowledge. See Appendices A for photo diaries of the research.

[20] Recent papers have explored the use of terms like 'participant' and 'subject' as coded terms to indicate the philosophical inclination of the researcher who is conducting research, as well as indicate how people have participated; ranging from active to passive. (Edwards, R. and Holland, J. (2013) *What is qualitative interviewing?* London: Bloomsbury. Pp.4-5).

[21] I have been mindful when using labels in writing up this research knowing that it will not eliminate the undeniable hierarchies that exist between myself and the co-authors of TPG.

[22] See Appendix D for Thomas Hirschhorn's *Spectre of Evaluation*, 2010.

producers, contributors and collaborators[23] by developing four categories to identify their differences and provide further context.[24]

In this thesis, the term 'Professionals' constitute a group who are currently or formerly employed by TL and are considered important in the development of interpretation. Individuals were interviewed to provide a deeper knowledge of the institutional infrastructure. Connections with them were crucial when obtaining institutional documents and their names are listed below:

- Francesco Manacorda - Director (2012-2017)
- Lindsey Fryer - Head of Learning
- Mike Pinnington – Content Editor (2013-2018)
- Alison Jones - Programme Manager for Public and Community Learning
- Michael Birchall – Curator of Public Practice
- Jessica Fairclough – TE Coordinator (2015-2017)

To explore dissenting perspectives within this group, I developed a sub-category called 'Critical Friends'.[25] Aligned with artist Amet Öğüt's theorisation of interveners (2015, pp.4), I interviewed artists whose practices sit outside of decision-making at TL, TE or Tate Modern. They were selected via their association with TL, TE and for their work with community groups, and include a community activist, a former Tate Modern Resident Artist and a former Tate

[23] In the context of doctoral research, negotiating terms of consent and knowledge production is a prerequisite. Structures of academia also demand projects fulfil an agenda; therefore it has been challenging to renegotiate the terminology assigned to 'participants'.

[24] See Appendix E for digital map, or visit https://graphcommons.com/selections/a035f69e-bf3d-484c-b16a-441ca4317dbf

Graph Commons is an interactive website that has been useful to map and analyze collaborative networks throughout the project. Via the platform, its creators have advised that it could be used to conduct data research, civic activism and archival exploration. During this research I have used it to map collaborators, enhance workshops and input discourse data to create visual representation for the action-research project.

[25] As outlined by Lynch in her report 'Whose Cake is it Anyway?' a 'critical friend' is a person who helps to bring about change in museums (Lynch, B. (2011) *Whose Cake is it Anyway? A collaborative investigation into engagement and participation in 12 museums and galleries in the UK* [online]
Available at: [Accessed: 28/06/19]).

Collective member. Both categories – Professionals and Critical Friends – are explored in greater depth in Chapter Two.

Another group titled 'Users' is made up of thirty-two individuals who engaged with *Shared Language* at TE in 2017 and range from first-time users to established artists. Through workshops, this group co-created some of the outputs for TPG. Five young people united by their interest in the distribution of social goods, interpretation and inclusion were interviewed. Typically, these users are defined by their engagement in artist-led activity and their education in the arts. Identifiers include titles such as artist, designer, fundraiser, writer and activist[26]. They are described in greater detail in Chapter Three.

In this research, AA form a unique circle aligned by their interest in contemporary art and are comprised of a pre-formed group called Community Collective[27]. Initiated on the basis of collaboration, Community Collective[28] was formed with a group of local adults through a skills course called 'Making Sense of Art'[29]. Now self-led, it was initially supported by artist Jonty Lees and activist Nina Edge. Due to their pathway to art, members of CC access TL in a distinct way which is opposed to people who access art through university or art school. This means that this COP is unique because prior to CC, they had not developed language associated with 'artspeak'. Seventeen producers in this group engage in the research in two ways; the majority of the group undertake workshops, and five are interviewed. This group forms the key data set due to their involvement with all aspects of the project; having co-produced content, undertaken workshops, undertaken a site visit and made decisions to create TPG.[30]

[26] In Chapter Three on Users, I analyse contributions from users using the initial from their first name.

[27] AAs are the only true COP in this research. Other groups are formed conceptually and may know each other in person but do not meet regularly on their own accord. These groups were brought together by this project alone and whilst the language used by these individuals might be similar to one another, they do not fall into the unique definition of a COP.

[28] In this thesis I refer to Community Collective using an abbreviated term; CC.

[29] The "Making Sense of Art' course was instigated by TL and Liverpool City College in 2014.

[30] See Appendix F for comprehensive list of fieldwork; site visits, interviews and workshops.

In this section I have described the producers of TPG by developing social categories to aid the understanding of public ecologies underpinning the PAR, supported by semi-structured interviews with members from all four archetypes.[31] In my view, categorisation of groups expands the potential for producers to become communities 'of narrators and translators' (Rancière, 2009, pp.22) to emancipate publics from contested terminologies like 'participant' (mima, 2015, pp.5-8) or 'non-expert' (Cairns, 2013, pp.107). This decision represents researcher reflexivity and is illustrated by the thesis structure. Some research criticises the development of categories as a method to identify communities, arguing that this could further other groups of people 'by the way they speak or the words they use' (Lynch and Alberti, 2010, pp.14). Whilst there is validity to the idea that 'sometimes people are marginalised by being placed into an existing or newly created category' (Drabek, 2014, pp.38), recognising difference in identity, education and class has been instrumental in TPG's creation. Hence, in this work making difference visible is necessary to represent a 'plurality of meanings and interpretations' to 'question the validity of single claims to truth' (Aasgaard, Borg and Karlsson, 2012, pp.2).

2.6. Methodology for The People's Glossary

Much is given away in the ways that institutions communicate with their publics via language; both in institutional text and in oral consultation (Dijk, 2008, pp.54). This methodology begins with a fundamental idea to look at how language is used and planned within institutions of contemporary art; to reveal how authority and power move between the institution and its users to prevent or produce usability. Subsequently, I have used two interdisciplinary methods to investigate COPs, including discourse analysis (Ballinger, 2003, pp.67) and PAR; also conceived as 'reflexive dialogical action research' (Ripamonti et al., 2016, pp.55). Both methods have been useful to reflect on the micro and macro implications of the uses of language and to suggest new tools to develop usable knowledge (Coghlan, 2010, pp.17).

[31] See Appendix O for all interview transcripts.

Discourse analysis produced an area of praxis 'to create conditions to study language, in use, through spoken and written words' (LeGreco, 2014, pp.67). Influenced by looking at language as a system of signs (Saussure, 1966, pp.7), discourse analysis aligned with my ambition to study the distribution of social goods - knowledge, status and power via museum discourse (Gee, 2014, pp.8). Post-Marxists Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau further discourse theory in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* where they reason that 'every object is constituted as an object of discourse' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, pp.108). This is a crucial concept for this methodology in that it reinforces the idea that meaning can never be permanently fixed to any 'thing' due to its discursive assignment. Hence, Mouffe and Laclau's hypothesis allows for 'a multiplicity of competing discourses' (Rear, 2013, pp.6), meanings and knowledge, contributed by different groups 'as a result of discursive, political processes' (pp.4); a premise that underpins the ideology for this research.

Building on this methodology, PAR was developed to create collaborative processes to rethink how museums communicate with their publics; positioning them as *equal to* rather than as *recipients of*. This is reflected in a defining quality of PAR as an 'enquiry with people rather than research on people' (Altrichter et al., 2002, pp.130). Equally, the COPs and I have actively engaged in producing data, processes and artworks in varying degrees[32] to produce techniques to generate knowledge democratically; another principle condition of this method (Coghlan, 2010, pp.4). Through discourse analysis and qualitative methods such as interviews, the subject of this action research is identified collectively; 'to give voice to local voices in the gallery' (*My Bed Audio Interpretation*, 2016, no pagination).

In the literature, discourse analysis is described as working within the 'micro-social' (Canagarajah, 2006, Pp.153) due to its close bearing with text, interviewing, having conversations and 'living' the research (Canagarajah, 2006, pp.153). From this perspective, the study of discourse can reveal the 'macro' systems that we operate under (Fairclough, 2003,

[32] This is articulated throughout the thesis, but also echoes many participatory art practices that have developed multi-layered participatory structures. One example is Helguera's, where he developed four categories; nominal, directed, creative and collaborative (Helguera, 2011, Pp.14-15). For Museological participation, Nina Simon has also developed similar categories; contribution, collaboration, co-creation and hosting. (Simon, N. (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz: Museum 2.0.)

pp.31). Additionally, it can expose the impact of institutions on the 'voice as culturally constructed (…) and the multiple processes or determinants of feelings of agency' (Fischer, 1991, pp.529). Using PAR as a methodology, this research aims to provide a series of processes to speak to the macro-social implication represented by TL's policies and *Tone of Voice Guidelines* to instruct a 'spoken or written code' (Cooper, 1989, pp.30).[33]

During my research, imagining myself subjectively as a 'critical friend' (Lynch, 2011, pp.8) allowed for reflexivity through notetaking, drawing and remapping workshops and outcomes in the studio.[34] In practice, this methodology enabled me to enquire from the margins of institutions, whilst also embedding myself within communities of practice like a 'partner' (Wisker et al., 2001, pp.183) or 'ally' (Ware and Greenberg, 2017, pp.142-154). Consequently, I enjoyed additional institutional objectivity to a 'native' researcher[35] (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007, pp.59-74); affording me opportunities to build alliances with users and AAs. Often, we were united in our criticisms of institutions – which ranged from the 'Tate world' to 'the art world', coded language to sexist programming, lack of representation to curatorial practices - in ways that I reason would have been difficult if I had been a member of staff due to their imposition as 'rational agents'.[36]

[33] See appendices for Tate's *Tone of Voice Guidelines.*

[34] See appendix for H studio photographs, drawings and phone notes.

[35] I am aware that there may be benefits to working as a staff member whilst facilitating research. For example, Sylvia Lahav published a thesis in 2011 titled 'Interpretation in the Museum: authority and access' as a result of her sixteen years of employment in the 'education department of the Tate Gallery' and then 'as curator of adult programmes in the National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and Victoria and Albert Museum' (Lahav, 2011, pp.10). As a result, she had 'privileged access to archive material' and 'continuing institutional support and encouragement' (pp.11) from the Tate franchise. I am also sure that she was privy to many over the table meetings in both education and audience team meetings. Differently from Lahav's research, my work puts into practice new processes to further develop the manifestation of research that has gone before mine.

[36] When using the term 'rational agents' (Mouffe, 1999, pp.755) in this research I am referring to curators and people who are regarded as experts. During the action research it was suggested that restricting these agents might cultivate confidence amongst collaborators who otherwise might have been apprehensive to speak their mind; especially if their view conflicted with what was seen as empirical information. Consequentially, recording and representing voices that countered expertise was a vital way to enable collaborators to renegotiate their idea of legitimacy and feel comfortable to express their thoughts.

Nevertheless, this analysis would be incomplete if I were to ignore the criticisms of PAR as being 'threatened internally by (…) unexamined biases of its practitioners' (Maguire, 2009, pp.82). As a consequence, I have used this thesis to recognise that neither research or museums are neutral (Dickson and Green, 2001, pp.245) and that researchers and museum workers are driven by their own ideologies (Janesick, 1994, pp.41). In this view, I emphasise the combination of discourse analysis and PAR to make a political way to research due to their proximity to hegemonic struggles (Fairclough, 1993; McIntyre, 2008). For these reasons, I selected their methods to challenge institutional 'common-sense'[37] practices constructed through discourse (Mouffe, 2008, pp.4). Together, the methodology I outline here contribute towards a practice of resistance that interrogates museum neutrality mediated by interpretation texts and wall labels.

In the scope of practitioner reflexivity, it is important to emphasise that I am influenced by my identity as a white, British woman; an artist, administrator and researcher; and the privileges that come with these titles. Consequently, I have undertaken this work because of my embodied experiences of knowing and not knowing about art. Moreover, I draw on my own experience of co-operation, alienation, exploitation and organisation within the practices of contemporary art. John Law, the eminent social scientist, describes this way of researching as 'situated enquiry' and encourages this method to 'find ways of knowing the indistinct and the slippery without trying to grasp and hold them tight' (Law, 2004, pp.3).

[37] Mouffe describes 'common sense', hegemonic practices as the 'articulation through which a given order is created and the meaning of social institutions is fixed, are what we call "hegemonic practices".' For collections of contemporary art, this could describe the order of behaviour that is directed by the gallery, or the hierarchy that is ascribed to actors via its dominate narrative (Mouffe, C., (2008) *Critique as Counter-Hegemonic Intervention* [online], http://eipcp.net/transversal/0808/mouffe/en/print [Accessed 26/01/2019]).

2.6.1. PLAN, 'DO', OBSERVE, REFLECT

In the view that 'what's good for the practice is good for research' (Altrichter and Posch, 1989, pp.29) TPG's methodology follows the accepted 'action research cycle' in four moments to 'plan, act, observe and reflect'[38] (Kemmis, 2014, pp.54). Hence, it is structured around four non-linear periods of process-driven research.[39] This methodology is reinforced by research that decentres the role of the practitioner as an 'educator' (Trent, 2003, pp.295) and is influenced by emancipatory theorists Paulo Freire (1970) and Jacques Rancière (1991). By continuously repeating, reflecting on and amending planned activities at individual stages different types of knowledge (practical, useful and social) have been acquired (Waterman et al., 2001, pp.iii-iv). Due to the ongoing collection of ethnographic and qualitative research throughout these stages, each methodology is bespoke to each group.

The first stage researched textual and visual interpretation at TL between November 2016 and January 2017. Using TE as my base, I explored discourse in the collection by gathering all written data including descriptions, wall panels, word clouds and the printed guide titled 'Compass'. This research was conducted in the seven galleries that made up seven 'constellations' activated by one 'trigger' work by a celebrated artist; George Groscz's 'Suicide' (1916), L.S Lowry's 'Industrial Landscape' (1955), Barbara Hepworth's 'Single Form' (1937-8), Louise Bourgeois 'Mamelles' (1991), Joseph Beuys' 'Felt Suit' (1970), Cindy Sherman 'Untitled A, B, C, D' (1975) and Glenn Ligon's 'Untitled' (2006). Photographing, archiving and inputting the data digitally, I analysed this information to identify specialist terms, key words, patterns

[38] Four types of action research were initially innovated by Kurt Lewin in 1946; diagnostic, participant, empirical and experimental action research (Lewin, K. (1946) Action research and minority problems. *Journal of social issues*, 2 (4), pp.34-46.) Lewin developed these types to feed into a process of social change rather than to be regarded as a whole. More recently, these singular types of action research were then expanded to develop a cycle by Kemmis and Taggart (Adelman, C. (1993) Kurt Lewin and the origins of action research. *Educational action research*, 1 (1), pp.7-24.)

[39] In the spirit of this research, I chose to adapt Kemmis and Taggart's cycle to replace the noun 'act' with 'do'. I made this decision due to the implication of the word 'act' in the arts; to perform, usually to an audience. By 'doing' sessions instead of acting them out, the sessions that I led were guided, not scripted, and required improvisation and sensitivity to the social and cultural differences of individuals.

and repetition in the discourse.[40] Close reading provided insight to develop questions for interviewing professionals, whilst also furthering my knowledge of interpretation within the Tate franchise. In preparation for *Shared Language*, I assembled a 'word index' comprising 121 featured words from Constellation's word clouds, as well as 136 hand-selected words from the accompanying written interpretation[41]. Words were selected on the basis that they were either specialist, repeated or for their similarity with other words[42] and was informed by the discourse analysis I had previously conducted. Whilst in the gallery I asked for input from visitor assistants to contribute to the selection process; asking 'what words are you unsure about in the gallery?' and 'what words do visitors pick up on?'[43] In total I assembled 257 words. At this point it was important to differentiate what texts the words had come from[44], and therefore word clouds were represented on white record cards and other interpretation on coloured cards.[45]

Overwhelmingly, the objective for the interviews during this period was to engage with professionals to investigate infrastructure, processes and policies at TL to form a rounded understanding of their interpretation strategy. Interviews were initially conducted with Lindsey Fryer, Mike Pinnington and Francesco Manacorda, and then were returned to later with Jess Fairclough, Alison Jones and Michael Birchall. Interview questions were informed by my research around Museum 3.0 (Wright, 2013, pp.39) and the processes of Useful Art. Hence, I

[40] See Appendix I for the word index. Originally titled 'word archive', in the view of usership I chose to reframe the tool as an index.

[41] I did not collect data from *Compass*, TL's user guide to help lead visitors through the entire gallery, written by Mike Pinnington. I decided to omit any kind of data content from this source due to their display asking for contributions of £1 to take a copy. As well as this, Compass is not solely a mediation on the collection and therefore featured more specialist vocabulary and is arguably directed at a specialist audience.

[42] This required a high level of interpretation, which is considered as one of the limitations of discourse analysis.

[43] In retrospect, if I were to conduct this study again, I would have asked learning and curatorial staff members to select terms to contribute to this list. However, in keeping with a reflexive approach to the research, I asked artists and researchers to contribute to the list before delivering the workshops.

[44] Later on, this stipulation was not so important due further work with *The People's Glossary*.

[45] Later on, this differentiation is not considered as an important contribution.

structured the interview questions to examine potential ways to co-produce interpretation with users including experimental techniques such as Blunden's 'linguist in residence' (2014, no pagination), Lynch's approach with 'critical friends' (2011, pp.8) and processes to embed 'user stories' (Bunning et al., 2015, pp.3). When analysing the transcriptions, I emphasised contested key words to raise with users later in the study; a major influence for this work considering its alignment with Keywords (1976a). Essentially, this is where the initial 'planning' took place although this was refined throughout the research period.

Almost immediately after planning the research, I embarked on the first instance of 'doing'. This phase signifies the second stage of data collection where I met and developed relationships with users at TE. Based on Stephen Wright's *Toward a Lexicon of Usership* (2013), three workshops took place at TE across a three-week period between January and February 2017. Informed by two pilot studies undertaken with Quad Collective[46] (QC) in 2015 and 2016, the workshops were open in the centre of the collection like a drop-in session for users. Titled *Shared Language*[47]*,* to encourage a collective approach, the workshops were intended to gather data and provoke conversation between users. To do this, contributors were presented

[46] It is important to note that one of the reasons that this research could take place is due to the collaborative work undertaken with QC between 2013 and 2017. Co-founded as a result of meeting at Liverpool John Moores University during studying for a master's in fine art, Evelyn Broderick, Jess Fairclough, Aimee Harrison and myself formed a collective and Community Interest Company (C.I.C). Initiated as an answer to our ongoing frustration with the proliferation of top-heavy museums, institutions and art festivals in Liverpool, we wanted to create a sustainable and accessible place for young artists, students and everyday publics to question the language of contemporary art.

[47] This methodology was originally piloted in 2015 with QC and a group of under-graduate Fine Art students at Liverpool John Moores University, with a group of experts at OUA in 2016 and then again at the TL exhibition titled *Art Gym* in 2016. *Art Gyrn* provided a testing bed for some of the ideas facilitated in this research. The exhibition took place in March 2016 was curated by TL's young person collective; Tate Collective. Influenced by the idea that art should be freely accessible and education focused, Quad was invited to submit proposals to Tate Collective to determine drop-in station that could be watched over by *Art Gym* 'instructors' (*Art Gym*. (2016) [online]

Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/display/art-gym

[Accessed: 20/06/19]). *Shared Language* differs from the *Art Gym* pilot because of the lack of constant facilitators, which in hindsight made it dialogically restrictive. For the purposes of this research, the task was critically limiting due to amendments made to the categorization of words. I have not analyzed the outcomes of these pilots due to lack of ethical approval. See Appendix J for QC photo diary.

with the 'word index' gleaned from TL's collection and asked to assign their words into categories to 'keep', 'reject' and 'discuss'; creating a mural of language to infiltrate the white walls[48]. Instructions were presented around the workspace, spread onto tables and on a projection to inform users of how they might use the space. Users were also encouraged to suggest their own words to add to the walls (pencils and paper were also supplied). To support users, I remained in the space; sitting at a table, speaking to users or documenting the activity. I struck up conversations with individuals to discuss their choices to encourage users to engage critically in this task; encouraging some to record their observations and decision-making process on the back of their cards. In many cases, contributors spoke amongst themselves, which I reflected on later when possible. This exercise underpinned the next research stage where activities consisted of 'presenting participants with a series of statements on large cards, which they are then asked, as a collective exercise, to rank or assign to different categories.' (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999, pp.13). This formed the foundation for the research and where the idea for TPG originally evolved from.

Throughout, I conducted participatory interviews with TE users between January and May 2017. The method of interviewing is influenced by a rudimentary concept conceived with QC in 2016, commissioned by TL's young person's collective Tate Collective[49] for a participatory project titled *Art Gym.*[50] These semi-structured interviews with Users (and then later with CC)

[48] In this research, I have considered the aesthetics of collection displays that perpetuate systemic and embedded institutional memory to exclude ordinary people (Bianchi, J. (1999) Changing the frame: access and exclusion in gallery education. *Women*, 21..)

[49] TL has a long history of collaborating with young people through their education and learning programme and can be demonstrated by the initiation of the first Tate-led, young people's group *Young Tate* in 1994. Now known as Tate Collective, each Tate site – TL, Tate Modern, Tate Britain and Tate St Ives – has its own dedicated group of Young Producers whose agenda is to influence Tate's curatorial programmes and exert their creative freedom to transcend institutional barriers. (Tahir, L. (2012) Tate Collective. *Criticism, Communication and Curation* [online],

Available at: http://www.curaonline.co.uk/tate_collective.html

[Accessed: 06/07/2019])

[50] In response to the pressures on institutions to become sites for production instead of spectatorship, in 2016 Tate Collective hijacked the top floor of TL to form an alliance project in collaboration with Turner Prize winning, multi-disciplinary collective Assemble. Through *Art Gym*, it was the collaborative objective of Tate Collective and Assemble to hold 'the gallery hostage'

were conducted using prompts informed by the social research field that advocates for multiple stimuli to generate non-hierarchical data collection. This is crucial to 'engage people in discussion without the researcher providing any vocabulary or terminology' (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999, pp.12). Originally, this method was created to mirror a 'Rorschach test' where users would react quickly to images of artworks in the collection via a tablet screen. I would then record their responses to contribute to the 'word index'. After repeating this format several times, it became clear that people struggled to find words quickly in response to the artworks, and that more time and thoughtful questioning was needed to extract personal interpretations of the works. As a result, a gentler interview structure was refined to concentrate on seven trigger works; to limit pressure on the contributors and limit the length of the sessions. Simple questions were also developed as prompts to encourage the contribution of local and personal knowledge and memory recall. At the end of the interview, contributors were also presented with a selection of keywords informed by the *Shared Language* workshops to select and expand upon.

The third stage of the research forms the most substantial processes at TL with CC. Another cycle of action research was implemented with this group, comprising a site-visit to a studio complex, a focus group informed by *Shared Language*, five prompt-led interviews and five processes of action-research with CC between May 2017 and December 2018. Underpinning this moment, I also facilitated a week-long project at TE titled *Art, Activism and Language; Feminist issues in Museums and Galleries* across November and December 2017. The programme comprised two significant public events; one where CC shared their reflections on developing interpretation with TL, supported by Alison Jones and Nina Edge. Second, an event that shared the research of three inclusion researchers and activists; Jade French, Maggie Matić and Liv Wynter. By the means of the residency, I was also able to programme

(Birchall, 2017, pp.57) to produce a series of participatory, learning projects where users were encouraged to create their own art-based 'workout plan'. The project manifested in an assault course of activity-based interventions, programmed talks, performances and discussions with local and community-based artists (ibid).

several ancillary events including a 'making' workshop with Leah Jones, a learning-disabled advocate and campaigner, called *Celebrate Me* (Jones, 2018, Pp.12); and two reading groups[51].

2.6.2. Art-based Methods

To develop different types of knowledge as per PAR and to contribute to TPG, I utilised five processes to engage with users and AA as workshops or to stage as co-productive interventions:

> Grassroots practices such as *Zine-making* have provided a route to facilitate ownership and personal creativity in institutional, monolithic settings (Lovata, 2008, pp.326) with CC.[52] Compiling and editing a zine was a prime way to facilitate communication between CC and TL staff members.[53] Particularly, it was important when thinking about the relationship between authors and audiences; procuring the question 'who gets to make content?'; one of the essential considerations in this thesis.

> In the *How We Work Together* workshop, CC and I developed a collaborative set of values that were deemed important when working with communities. This was important to develop an understanding of deliberative democracy (Benhabib, 2002, pp.19) 'to listen to others' and 'respect differences in opinion'. The outcome of this workshop culminated in a zine and currently guides our ongoing collaboration.

[51] In this thesis, I have selected the pertinent discussion points from the residency, and whilst the additional events were excellent opportunities to consolidate learning, to network with peers and make research findings public, the motivation for this thesis is structured around AAs as the focus. For this reason, I have chosen not to discuss the events run by critical friends and professionals in detail.

[52] Zine-making as a methodology can also be demonstrated by the Tate Collective project and zine *You Feel Like a Threat, Don't You?* made in collaboration with Ruth Ewan and design collection Åbäke, as part of the exhibition (*Art Turning Left: How Values Changed Making* in 2013.) The zine can be viewed in appendices H (images 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).

[53] See appendices K for 'How We Work Together',' IMAGINE (if you made the rules?)' and' (finding) Our Voice' zines.

Another session that I delivered with CC involved an adaptation of Tim Etchells' *Ten Purposes* #4. In the workshop titled *Dialogical Co-writing,* I asked members to tour the gallery and select artworks that they would be happy to 'write an alternative label for' (Etchells, 2016, pp.4). As part of the activity, members were encouraged to discuss their selections with the group and then develop their own written interpretation.

Alongside the *How We Work Together* workshop, I designed an activity called *IMAGINE (if you made the rules?).* Influenced by a comments wall that I had contributed to at the Arnolfini, this activity was facilitated as part of a workshop with CC. After the activity, outcomes of the workshop remained in TE as a provocation for users to continue to use.

A process of *System Mapping* provided another useful tool to enable 'system thinking' (Flood, 2010, pp.269-284) to visualize CC within the whole body of Tate and TL. Using mapping activities as a process and artefact proved a powerful model when recalling inquires that CC had previously explored (Burns, 2018, pp.869) Individuals from CC found this method particularly helpful to understand their own identity as a self-organised COP and to share overlooked knowledge with new members.

Using photography to credit authors is an established method in this research; to encourage participation and to share artistic authorship whilst developing TPG and other accompanying artworks.[54] Influenced by artist Christopher Klein's method of collaborative authorship for *O.K. – The Musical* (Klein, 2017) – a musical and participatory project hosted by TL in 2017 - I was prompted to reflect on how authorship would be described via the website[55]. Consequently, having a contributors' section and dedicated pages within zines signifies the collaborative principles that guide this project.

[54] See appendix K.

[55] See Appendix L for examples of the website.

Digital crowdsourcing was another tool that allowed for publics to contribute to the research using devices such as Mentimeter[56] and Survey Monkey[57]. Using these tools widened participation by encouraging people who could not access the gallery to contribute, too their playful mechanisms stimulated people to log their thoughts online; via a tablet in the gallery, using a mobile phone or a computer at home. Their use provided another variation of data collection and facilitated another 136 users to participate online; more than I could talk with personally at TE. In total, these methods comprise much of the 'doing' of the Action Research Cycle. Importantly, I was able to make observations throughout these interactions as a fully embedded researcher.

2.6.3. Practitioner Reflexivity

Practitioner reflexivity is a foundation for methods approved by discourse analysis and PAR. It is arguably a practice that 'is never complete' (Ballinger, 2003, pp.67). This expression feels particularly true for the final moment of this methodology due to its characteristics as an art-based, action-research project; signifying its richness to be drawn upon, revised and refined in my ongoing work. This process is enduring and is demonstrated by this thesis. In this methodology I consider three components of reflecting on the research; the thesis, the outcome, and the appendices.

The process of writing this thesis is 'itself an action research project' (Coghlan, 2010, pp.151) and therefore, has been an exercise in intense, conclusory reflection. By telling the personal story of how I came to be invested in the uses of language and how this research came about, it has provided a foundation to understand the validity of subjective data (McCrae,

[56] Mentimeter is a software programme that enables interaction with audiences. Typically used in teaching, facilitation and presenting research, Mentimeter provided an excellent tool to generate data in the gallery to create word clouds and use real-time voting strategies. See appendices for an example of a user-generated word cloud. See appendix V for examples of mentimeter facilitated during *Art, Activism and Language: Feminist Issues in the Gallery.*

[57] Survey Monkey is an established survey software for academic, education and public research.

2016, pp.4). By using an integrated approach in the practice 'by, with and for people' (Reason and McArdle, 2004), PAR has enabled me to create connections between three voices; the first-person voice (myself), the second-person voice (the users) and third-person voice (the field). To me, finding all three voices in my writing feels like excavation. It is a process of searching for what is beyond the surface to access situated knowledge (Elton, 2010, pp.152). It feels uncomfortable to write because it describes tacit knowledge or 'knowing-in-action' (Schön, 1995, pp.29) as a result of the practical research. Many times during the processes of this research, I have put myself at the centre of conflict and my own doubts (Merickel, 1998, pp.83) to find perspectives and ways of working 'that were not visible before' (van Engen, 2009, pp.382). Writing this thesis is no different, and arguably the confrontation and reflection of the practitioner on feelings of discomfort defines the spirit of reflexivity (Finlay, 2008, pp.4).

TPG is an outcome of the multi-layered processes of action research and demonstrates the transformation of the processes as a 'knowledge project' (Rolling, 2013, pp.108). As a result, the project is difficult to define because it does not exist within its isolated mechanisms; the title, the outcome or the appendices. In its most graspable, it exists within its pedagogic processes that arguably have 'no image' (Bishop, 2012, pp.241) and therefore, the website is a performative representation of the work.

The design process of TPG signified a reflective moment to make sense of the knowledge that was concealed within the physical and digital archives of the research.[58] Wanting to stay as close to the processes of TPG as possible, I commissioned a colleague who I trust to build an online resource; graphic designer, Thom Isom. After getting to know Thom between 2013 and 2015 whilst we were both studio members at Static Gallery[59] in Liverpool, he was already aware of my doctoral research and had a wealth of experience in developing

[58] In April 2018, I received an anonymous response to the survey that I had conducted that confirmed my approach to creating a resource; *'At least give me a glossary and stop making me feel stupid and unwelcome*.' This demand was reminiscent of the comment cards written by publics and described by staff members at TL; and the countless conversations I'd had with users during workshops over the years.

[59] The site that housed QC's studio between 2013 and 2015.

accessible and usable graphics for institutions committed to socially engaged work[60]. I had already established that developing an identity for the resource would be paramount because it would have to credit co-producers, be appealing to users, limit my artistic authorship and above all, be useful. Subsequently, Thom's skills in co-design were essential and manifested in several meetings, facilitating user-sessions with members of CC and feedback sessions with professionals at TL. In these meetings we discussed practicalities such as a logo, colour palette, fonts and typography, implementing hand-written components to the design, usability and accessibility. These conversations raised messy theoretical questions pertaining to authorship, the editing process, discourse hierarchy and contemporary conversations around free speech, political correctness and dissent.

To prepare for the design process, I organized the digital data using the methodology from *Shared Language* in folders labelled 'keep', 'reject' and 'discuss'. Using NVivo[61] throughout, I created word clouds and hierarchy tables drawn from previous analysis to ensure the work reflected common themes, patterns and codes appropriated from the interviews. This relied heavily on my independent work as a practitioner to make distinctions between public accounts and my own as a prominent method[62], thus forcing me to consider my 'multiple positionalities' as a practitioner yet again (Herr and Anderson, 2005, pp.29-48). During the process I had also noticed that my tasks had become editorial and consisted of proof-reading crowd-sourced content while balancing two variables to make text consumable. The first required me to keep close to transcriptions to ensure the intent of the contributors. The second variable demanded that spoken language needed to be 'decluttered' before

[60] Notably, Thom works with Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool to produce design and graphic work that has been informed by work with young people titled 'Our North'. This is of note due to Open Eye Gallery's new mission to 'becoming a more useful gallery' and to put 'socially engaged photography practice at the heart' of what they do. (*Why We're Here*. (2019) [online]

Available at: https://openeye.org.uk/about/

[Accessed: 03/06/19])

[61] NVivo is a software that enables the organisation, management and interpretation of qualitative data.

[62] Influenced by this, I also decided to use an interpretative method to capture meaning from the data at a descriptive level. This allowed for me to interpret symbolic gestures from users to add complexity to the data.

publishing. Both tasks raised serious questions regarding authorship and cultural democracy and are reflected on in the epilogue.

The appendices are comprised of the substantial multi-media culminated over four years of research and represents an observational account of the research. Via research diaries, researcher drawings, photo diaries, the 'word index', collective artworks and institutional paraphernalia; turning these visual data into an appendix has been a practice in reflection itself. Notably, ethnographic research undertaken at mima and other sites[63] is reflected on in the appendices. At mima, I recorded observations and interactions over five site-visits between May 2016 and October 2017. These encounters took place at an initial site visit with Senior Curator Elinor Morgan and former Director Alistair Hudson, the Arte Útil Summit, *Working with Constituents* conference and two community days. Specifically, during this moment of the research I chose to concentrate on recording data with counterpublics[64] and therefore I leant towards capturing data dialogically; by visiting the markets, striking up conversations and 'hanging out' as a research methodology (Pfaelzar, 2010, pp.140).The raw data in these appendices are not restricted to these sites only and are auto-ethnographic to document the project holistically (Chaplin, 2011, pp.241).

In this section on reflection, I have clarified three components of reflection during this research comprising the appendices, the outcome and the thesis. Represented within these components are different types of reflexivity; observational, performative and conclusory. In

[63] During six site visits to Tŷ Pawb between November 2017 and May 2018, I participated in the opening weekend Dydd Llun Pawb (translated as Everybody's Monday), attended the revealing of Wal Pawb with artist Katie Cuddon and interviewed the Creative Director Jo Marsh.

[64] Counterpublics are individuals who do not actively seek out or visit contemporary art galleries. Theorist Michael Warner defines 'counterpublics' in terms of gender and sexuality (Warner, M. (2002) *Publics and counterpublics*. 1st ed. Cambridge: MIT Press.) and I have chosen to readopted the term to describe the subculture envisioned by museums as 'hard-to-reach' (*Culture on Demand: Ways to engage a broader audience* (2007) [online]

Available at: https://www.raeng.org.uk/RAE/media/Grant-applications-and-guidelines/Culture-on-Demand-summary.pdf

[Accessed: 28/06/19]). Individuals in this group are creative in their habits and interests but they have little association with TL and may not have ever visited a museum or gallery before.[64]

sum, the components and reflection make up the process that I have named TPG. Importantly, it does not define a set of rules or aspire to police language. Instead, it is a series of processes created to challenge our ideas of legitimate and illegitimate speakers[65] (Rancière and Panagia, 2000, pp.115), to think critically about how institutions use language and encourage plurality within them. Inherently, this flow of PAR created two types of 'messiness' (Askins and Pain, 2011, pp.9). The first 'refers to the materialities of doing participatory art' (pp.9) and the creation of a 'messy social space' (Torre, 2009, pp.110) to unpick and reflect on.[66] Second, it created an unwieldy methodology resulting in crossovers (within the research periods), knots (obstacles with institutions and their resources) and friction (conflict between myself, professionals and the producers). In this view, my methodology has sought to bring order to the chaos of action research, but also emphasises that messiness has enabled me to 'learn a lot more about a far wider range of realities.' (Law, 2004, pp.10)

2.7. Ethical Implications

It has been said that 'in any art that uses people as a medium, ethics will never retreat entirely' (Bishop, 2012, Pp.39). Consequently, the ethical implications of TPG have been crucial to reflect on. From planning workshops and co-production sessions, to preparing interview questions and submitting proposals to the board of ethics at the University; this research has

[65] In Rancière's hypothesis, this is known as the 'poetics of politics', whilst the 'poetics of knowledge' is the process of the reintegration of discourse 'into a generally accessible mode of reasoning or form of language so that everyone may partake in this creative activity of invention that allows for a redescription and reconfiguration of a common world of experience', which this research also seeks to achieve (Rancière, J. and Panagia, D. (2000) Dissenting Words: A Conversation with Jacques Rancière. *Diacritics*, 30 (2), pp.113-126.).

[66] Artist Rosalie Schweiker has hypothesized the messiness of dialogic art practices by characterizing two different types of artists: 'mince artists and sausage artists' (Schweiker, R. (2018) More mince, less sausage: making art that doesn't look like art. [online],

Available at: https://www.a-n.co.uk/news/mince-less-sausage-making-art-doesnt-look-like-art/

[Accessed: 06/07/19].) For her, dominant 'sausage artists make easily recognisable, tasty art sausages, like solo shows or performances', whilst mince artists 'get asked to shape their mince into 'the education project', 'the panel discussion', 'the tote bag'' (ibid). In this thesis, TPG sits in the 'mince' category and reflects its ideology as a useable and open-ended practice.

interrogated ethical conduct at every point. In January 2017, this study was approved for ethical conduct from Liverpool John Moores University to ensure that informed consent was given by all contributors engaged in the research. Where possible, each individual who gave consent for interviews and co-production sessions has also been contacted since their participation to ensure their ongoing consent, in an effort to expand institutional, ethical guidelines that this study proposes to further. This has been the model to ensure ethical participation, whilst allowing for dissenting voices to be represented via TPG.

2.8. SUMMARY

This introduction described TPG*;* it's aims, methodology and producers. It also defined the thesis and its critical issues concerning structure, research questions, points of friction and ethical implications. Chiefly, this text reflects the entwined manner of arts-based and practice-led research which has been reflected throughout the methodology and rest of this thesis. In this view, the PAR project is revisited consistently using reflection, analysis and evaluation, and is accompanied by a multi-disciplinary appendix to illustrate the research.

3. Chapter One: Institutions

Chapter One provides a thematic overview of the field of research that the practice-led research has engaged with concerning discourse, collaboration and the exchange of speech. Framed around physical and metaphorical 'institutions', the chapter finds intersections between institutional and commons-based research fields, and as a result concerns three central themes; voice, authority and democracy.

Significantly, exploration began with ethnographic enquiries of two divergent interpretation approaches at TL and mima. Selected for their experimental methodologies seeking to unite local people and publics through reciprocal dialogue, their collections are key to their objectives to 'foster a spirit of collaboration and exchange' (*Tate Collection*, no pagination) and to reconnect the 'modern art gallery with its context and constituents' (*Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art*, no pagination). In this chapter, I outline a brief history of their collections and current methodologies to contextualise their practices in relation to language and publics. Supporting this is an examination of two key texts for the research; *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Williams, 1976a) and *Towards a Lexicon of Usership* (Wright, 2013). Thereafter, I centre Mouffe's theorisation of agonism and agonistic pluralism to discuss collections of contemporary art as potential public spheres where equitable discourse might be engendered. Lastly, I situate my research as part of a movement toward dialogic and 'instituent' practices to discuss feminist, counter-hegemonic methodologies for public-centred practice.

3.1. TATE LIVERPOOL

Tate's national collection of modern and contemporary art is arguably the most prominent, public collection of art in the United Kingdom, demonstrated by the 2015-2016 Tate report defining Tate as 'the world's most popular modern art gallery' (Findlay and Jones, 2016, pp.5). My geographical and relational proximity to TL and its network of constituencies made it the prime candidate as the foundational case study. My justification for this can be defended both nationally and locally; primarily through Tate's national mission to 'increase public access to the collection and reach new audiences' (Tate, no pagination); and locally due to Tate

Liverpool's legacy as an institution that cares about creating 'meaningful' interpretation with its publics (Pinnington, 2016, no pagination).

Opened to the public in 1988, Tate Liverpool was originally established as the 'Tate of the North' in a renovated warehouse on the post-industrial Albert Docks; envisioned with a distinct local and youth-influenced identity (*History of Tate Liverpool*, no pagination). Consequently, it is expected that TL's collections should represent the identities of Liverpool's local publics and their strong and defined relationship to contemporary art (Price et al., 2019, no pagination). Additionally, TL's specific interest in interpretation is demonstrated by pedagogical projects that I have inferred as trialling 'user-generated'[67] approaches within their collection galleries. For example, within *DLA Piper Series: Constellations*[68], 'word clouds' are exhibited to illustrate the collection via collaborative 'thought images' (Manacorda, 2016, 1:33).[69] In each gallery, a 'constellation' of crowd-sourced keywords generate a word cloud to accompany each trigger work and its associated artworks. My consideration of word clouds comprises a significant section in Chapter Two due to former Director Francesco Manacorda's introduction of word clouds. These devices, he argued, would give the collection additional context without the need for long wall texts and would aid in characterising TL and its collection as a 'learning machine' (Manacorda, 2016, pp.6). The implementation of word clouds and Manacorda's pedagogical ambition is correlated in the literature, where it has been argued that word clouds might be used as participatory cues for knowledge production[70] (Campolmi,

[67] Interestingly, Tate now use the term 'user-generated' on their website to describe any uploaded or shared public content that may include text, photographs, graphics, video or audio-visual material. By contributing to the website in this way, Tate outlines, the user waives any moral rights they may hold in regard to the material, thus permitting the institution to edit the material as appropriate.

[68] In this thesis, I refer to *DLA Piper Series: Constellations* as *Constellations.*

[69] See Appendix B for examples of word clouds.

[70] Ultimately, 'word clouds' were intended to be used as a participatory cue for knowledge production and to emphasize multiple ways for people to make meaning (Pinnington, 2017). At the time of implementation and in support of this reformed, participatory approach to interpretation, TL created opportunities to co-produce content for 'word clouds' with one of their constituent groups; the Community Collective. As such, the 'word cloud' methodology demonstrated a reformed practice of interpretation; away from a practice of spectatorship and towards a radical 'user-led' model. TL's experimentation with digital technology to create word-clouds is also a subject of interest due to the addition of interactive devices in the galleries.

2017, pp.77). Subsequently, word clouds are studied as a device with great significance to impact publics in this research. Specifically, it is my objective to investigate how publics use word clouds to generate knowledge for and with *Constellations.*

Structural changes at TL additionally offer it as an industrious research resource. In 2016, across all four institutions, Tate implemented its first *Tone of Voice Guidelines* to inform and instruct staff members in the production of institutional text. Thus, integration of this policy presented an opportunity to investigate the policy and the motivation behind such a transition.

3.1.1 TATE EXCHANGE

In 2016, the development of TE - a project space situated within the collection at TL - creates another line of research inquiry. Dedicated to ongoing dialogical programming, TE provides a 'test-bed' for practitioners, collectives and associates[71] cultivating projects to engage 'with the public' and 'those who may not think art is for them' (*2016 05 03 TEX Associate Programme Guidelines TL*, 2016, pp.1).[72] An initiative created in tandem with its sister project at Tate Modern in September 2016, a TE programme and area was opened at Tate Liverpool in the heart of *Constellations* (Cutler, 2018, no pagination); situated between two galleries on the first floor. TE was initiated with the pretence that it annually explores a different theme proposed by an established artist; in 2016 'Exchange' with Tim Etchells; in 2017 'Production' with Clare Twombey; 2018 saw 'Movement' with Tania Bruguera; and in 2019, 'Power' is explored with Hyphen-Labs.[73] Since its initiation, TE Liverpool has collaborated with more than sixty associates including institutions such as Liverpool John Moores University, University of Liverpool and Hope University, which are required to pay an annual Associate fee. Ancillary to these associates, the programme is also contributed to by local artists, non-profit organisations, health charities and social justice projects.

[71] To undertake the residency at TE, I also signed a co-operation agreement which can be found in Appendix C.

[72] See Appendix C.

[73] Hyphen-Labs is an international collective working within the intersections of art, technology and science.

Arguably, this model could potentially alter routes to interpretation and act as a 'walk-in toolbox for usership' (Wright, 2013 pp.40). In its current iteration it is used to platform socially engaged projects, commission curatorial experiments and create space for communities to share their work. Transitions such as the ones outlined here demonstrate TL's processes to advance local and collaborative mediation (Bunning et al., 2015, pp.3). Consequently, TL and TE Liverpool provided the 'laboratory' in which this research was conducted.

When applying to TE in 2016 to undertake this research, I negotiated their guidelines for "Associates" via my respective roles within community organisations like artist collective; QC, or via the artist-led studio organisation; The Royal Standard, Liverpool. Significantly, these collective groups are funded publicly and privately via bodies such as Arts Council England and Liverpool John Moores University, and it is due to this kind of financial support that I was able to undertake the research. These are crucial aspects to consider when criticising the framework of educational strategies such as TE. In this view, I maintain that my intervention at TE was accepted because it was financially self-sufficient and due to its temporal 'change-making' capacity, rather than because of its long-lasting potential. In principle, although the system is designed to value input from publics, its structural competence makes it difficult for collection interventions to be truly meaningful.

In my proposal to TE, I identified the words "co-production" and "co-creation" as subjects requiring analysis due to their aggregated use by museum professionals in practice and in the field of research. My ambition for the residency was to investigate the ethics of co-labour, exchange and reciprocity between Tate Liverpool and community producers when undertaking processes to co-write interpretation for the collection. Specifically, it was my intention to create a potential "toolkit" to engender agonistic interventions, as well as finding out how the institution ascribes authorship to content producers and, at the same time, resists co-opting community voice.

3.2. MIMA

In relation to TL's more entrenched institutional practices, fieldwork was undertaken at mima - otherwise known as *The Useful Museum* - to provide an observational account of usership.[74] Previous to former Director Alistair Hudson's appointment to the museum in 2014, mima's prior remit was to provide 'great art and culture for everyone' (Arts Council England, 2013) since its establishment in 2007. Influenced by ideologies informed by social and education reformers John Dewey and John Ruskin, Hudson's ambition to redefine mima as a site for usership was driven by the ideals that art must be 'accessible to everyone' and be used as 'a tool for education and enhancing the world around us' (Meaker, 2014, no pagination). Owing to mima's relatively young age, size and malleability that opposes TL's 'Tate-ness'[75] the institution has since proven responsive to structural change and contemporary progressions such as the 'Useful Art' movement; its collection included. mima's receptiveness is demonstrated by the relaunch of *Middlesbrough's Collection* in 2018, which updates the city's collection to reveal new narratives about the artworks, objects and artists.

Due to my affiliation with mima, as a former constituent of the Uses of Art project[76], it was crucial to reflect on my experiences whilst laying the foundations for this research. Additionally, mima's use of Wright's *Lexicon* as a methodology for Museum 3.0 practice (mima,

[74] mima uses communal frameworks to engage local groups in museum activities including weekly community days and lunches, ESOL courses, gardening, fabric-based activities such as weaving and knitting, as well as screenings. Since 2014, former director, Alistair Hudson, began developing mima as an institution framed around usership. Based on the argument that art should be used as a tool to encourage social change and further education, the team at mima devise exhibitions as a direct response to social and political issues. Responding to its immediate location, mima reacts to the conditions of Middlesbrough, Teesside and its neighbouring communities. In particular Gresham, a district where racial abuse, housing and poverty are critical issues (Halliday, J. (2017) Different worlds, 300 metres apart: how two areas sum up Middlesbrough's fate. *Cities* [online],
Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/apr/26/different-world-middlesbrough-tees-valley-mayor-election [Accessed: 28/06/19]). As such, mima's institutional values prioritise civic principles and provision for marginalised groups to resist the current political and social status quo.

[75] See appendices O for interview transcription with Lindsey Fryer (pp.4).

[76] A considerable sum of my preparatory research for this research is informed by the practices of the initiators of *Asociación de Arte Útil* including Tania Bruguera, Grizedale Arts and L'Internationale museum confederation, all of which are associated with mima.

2015; Villegas, 2016, pp.151) makes their collection a valuable comparative study, especially in reference to their objective to 'reflect the voices of its users' (Villegas, 2016, pp.152).[77] Objectively, mima's user-generated approach differs from TL's due to their already established methodology to credit artefacts and artworks with the identities of the people that propose, loan or select artworks to be displayed in their curated exhibitions. Notably, the 2015 exhibition *Localism* sought to reinstate publics as users in moving 'away from using authoritative, institutional voice in both content and interpretation' (*Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art*, no pagination).

3.3. Key Texts

Throughout this research, I have been guided by undertaking multiple critical readings of Williams' *Keywords* (1976a) and Wright's *Lexicon* (2013) in order to utilise them as 'toolkits' to instruct the action-research project. Subsequently, I discuss their influence here.

3.3.1. Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society

Published in 1976, *Keywords* remains a crucial resource for cultural and social criticism due to its examination of active words in culture and debate through essays (Durant, 2006, pp.2; Project, MacCabe and Yanacek, 2018). Benefiting from a resurgence of writers concerned with 'exploring the complex uses of problem-laden words' (Bennett et al., 2005, pp.xvii), *Keywords* has been updated and expanded on over the past fifteen years in reaction to shifts in political, social and economic conditions (pp.xvii).[78] Sometimes described as a 'glossary' (MacCabe and

[77] In part this was done by a complete overhaul of mima's website and visual identity by graphic-design studio Kellingberger-White, paired with a restored approach to their gallery interpretation.

[78] As recently as 2018, there have been new texts published that extend the legacy of Keywords. The most recent is titled 'Keywords for Today; A 21st Century Vocabulary' and is led by Professor David McCabe, linguistic Holly Yanacek and supported by a collaborative research group; The Keywords Project. Originally a project taken up by Tony Bennet, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris in 2005, then revised in 2010, 'New Keywords; A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society' argued that words change over time. Williams himself even published a revised version of Keywords in 1983 to include a further 21 words,

Wright, 2018, no pagination), the text has been a cornerstone in my practice since the touring exhibition *Keywords: Art, Culture and Society in 1980s Britain* took place at TL in 2014.[79] Thus, the text activates my research enquiry; first as a reference in my masters dissertation[80], and now as a formative philosophy for this research. Significantly, I was drawn to Williams' rationale to elucidate vocabulary used in multiple senses; showing how words can be used as vehicles to attach multiple meanings. Famously for Williams, this was epitomised by the word 'culture' which he had heard used in two senses;

> *one at the fringes, in teashops and places like that, where it seemed the preferred word for a kind of social superiority, not in ideas or learning, and not only in money, or position, but in a more intangible area, relating to behaviour; yet also, secondly, among my own friends, where it was an active word for writing poems and novels, making films and paintings, working in theatres.* (Williams, 1976b, pp.12)

This passage is particularly relevant because it elucidates the proposition that words change depending on where they are used, when they are used and who they are used by. For example, when used in the context of a contemporary art museum, words like 'radical', 'labour', 'collective', 'development', 'community' and 'work' are changed from their usage in society generally. It could be argued that their political potency might melt away (Rule and Levine, 2012, no pagination); or, they could become coded to address people (Kinsley,

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reflecting the open-ended nature of the Keywords proposition (Williams, R. (1983) *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society*. Flamingo ed. London: Fontana Paperbacks.).

[79] The exhibition showcased British art from the 1970s and 1980s produced by artists such as Sonia Boyce, Sunil Gupta, Lubaina Himid, Derek Jarman and Stephen Willats. Hung around culturally significant keywords borrowed from Williams' essays such as 'criticism', 'exploitation', 'technology' and 'media', over sixty works were used from Tate's collection to reimagine how a collection could be hung and informed by common word usage (Searle, A. (2014) Keywords at Tate Liverpool explores 1980s Britain. [online],

Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/feb/28/keywords-tate-liverpool-exhibition-williams

[Accessed: 04/06/19]

[80] Titled 'Reimagining the Landscape of Language Used by Contemporary Art Institutions' my master's dissertation provided a critical analysis of two press releases from TL and Van Abbemuseum as an example of how institutions are attempting to engage with new audiences and communities in order to open up a structural dialogue for change.

Middleton and Moore, 2016, pp.58); or, feel alien when applied to other fields of discourse (Williams, 1976a, pp.64). Williams illuminates this for us;

> *If representative, for example, is set in a group of political words, perhaps centring on democracy, we might lose sight of a significant question in the overlap between representative government and representative art.* (Williams, 1983, pp.25)

Like Williams - and his peer, linguistic Norman Fairclough – I would argue that language is 'important enough to merit the attention of all citizens' (Fairclough, 2001, pp.3). Consequently, in the early stages of the research I found it frustrating to be dismissed for my interest in 'just' the words'.[81] Arguably, ideologies associated with 'the participatory museum' (Simon, 2010, no pagination) and the 'social turn' (Bishop, 2005, pp.178) have moved the focus away from text as primary interpretation devices. Other methods that visibly embrace the 'architecture of participation' (Simon, 2006, no pagination) such as live, social interactions with visitor assistants, tours and events; or technological devices websites, iPads, films and audio guides are now prioritised (Simon, 2010, pp.152). By reframing their focus this way it is my argument that collections are failing to acknowledge the constructivist effects of written discourse to produce 'social identities' (Fairclough, 1993, pp.64) and 'subject positions' (ibid). Hence, collections maintain their authoritative tone and their regulation of social hierarchy. By this I mean, the roles of curators as 'experts' and users as 'laypersons' are sedimented and remain contingent on how individuals are able to understand the discourse used by curators – which some have called 'curatorspeak' (Waldmeier, 2017b, no pagination).

In Fairclough's manuscript *Language and Power* (Fairclough, 2001, no pagination) he borrows keywords from Williams to illustrate that 'a word is not an isolated and independent thing' (pp.94). Chiefly text-based, Fairclough's theory of Critical Discourse Analysis[82] helps us to understand that 'power is partly discourse, and discourse is partly power (…) they flow into each other' and 'can be internalised' (Fairclough, 2010, pp.4). When used within the context

[81] Documented throughout this research, I have kept an ethnographic diary which documents interactions with staff members and professionals that dismiss text and wall-based interpretation.

[82] Mouffe and Laclau's conception of discourse theory views the social world as being wholly constructed by discourse whilst 'CDA distinguishes between discursive and non-discursive social practices' (Rear, pp.12)

of an art museum, words enter into relationships that assert power by condensing, simplifying and assimilating; creating a system that puts ordinary people last (Harvey, 1996, pp.83). Considering recent efforts to multiply communicatory and productive experiences with publics to generate knowledge (Sitzia, 2018, pp.74), this raises the question; do 'those at the heart of museum representational practice (…) resist the dialogic turn?' (Styles, 2011, pp.12)[83] This is a question that I return to throughout this research when investigating the efficacy of dialogue to collaborate with publics.

Lastly, Williams sees *Keywords* as a collective opportunity to discuss knowledge and difference. In the text, he requests his readers share our own interpretations of words by leaving blank spaces. He adds; 'that the author will welcome all amendments, corrections and additions' (Williams, 1983, pp.26). Above all, Williams wanted *Keywords* to be useful (Bennett et al., 2005, pp.xxv)[84] to speakers of 'our common language' (Williams, 1983, pp.26) and to relay the idea that 'this is the only spirit in which this work can be done' (ibid).[85] TPG shares this philosophy.

3.3.2. Toward a Lexicon of Usership

[83] In reference to TL's various interpretation strategies 'word clouds' to demonstrate the gap between good museum intentions; where 'word clouds' are co-developed with constituent groups using non-specialized terminologies, and their failings; when 'word clouds' are developed with constituencies in mind, but in truth are collated by curators and content editors.

[84] This excerpt from Keywords illustrates William's intent for keywords to be used as a malleable interjection; '*This is not a neutral review on meanings. It is an exploration of the vocabulary of a crucial area of social and cultural discussion, which has been inherited within the precise historical and social conditions and which has to be made once conscious and critical – subject to change as well as continuity – if millions of people in whom it is active are to see it as active: not tradition to be learned, nor consensus to be accepted, nor a set of meanings which, because it is "our language", has a natural authority; but as shaping and reshaping, in real circumstances and from profoundly different and important points of view: a vocabulary to use, to find our own ways in, to change as we find it necessary to change it, as we go on making our own language and history.'* (Williams, R. (1976a) *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.)

[85] In this attitude, each entry made via *The People's Glossary* acts as a metaphorical page where one's own meaning, use or definition is produced and represented. It is 'not a neutral review of meanings' (Williams, R. (1983) *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society*. Flamingo ed. London: Fontana Paperbacks. pp.24) but a representation of plurality and social enquiry.

A second linguistic study influences this work.[86] Constructed by cultural theorist Stephen Wright, the *Lexicon* evaluates existing terms within art's vocabulary 'to be retired', and proposes emerging concepts to be added to 'retool' the 'conceptual lexicon' (Wright, 2013, pp.3). Wright proposes that by withdrawing some of the 'vocabulary inherited by modernity' (ibid) from our institutions, we might emancipate our practices to make way for further 'relational and dialectical' practices that are contingent on usership[87] (ibid). This argument is pertinent in opposition to modernism's understanding of the viewer 'defined by their epistemological lack' (Kester, 2005, no pagination). Accordingly, Wright's text has been used for its emancipatory implications to overhaul the monophonic conversation between viewer and artwork (Bishop, 2004, pp.54; Buckner, 2013, no pagination).[88] Corroborating my initial

[86] Although there are many more examples across the field that could've been used to inform this research, such as *Impossible Glossary* Querol, M. and Villa, Á. (ed.) (2018) *Impossible Glossary*. Madrid: hablerenarte. , the *Glossary of common knowledge* (Badovinac, Z., Carrillo, J. and Piškur, B. (2018) *Glossary of common knowledge*. Ljubljana: Moderna galerija.) and the *Glossary of Institutional Prefixes (*Beery, T. (2018) *Glossary of Institutional Prefixes* [online]

Available at: http://www.talbeery.com/2017_glossary-of-institutional-prefixes.html

[Accessed: 21/06/19].)

[87] Whilst there is a growing field of literature on Usership and use (Aikens, N., Lange, T., Seijdel, J. and Thije, S.t. (ed.) (2016) *What's the Use? Constellations of Art, History and Knowledge*. Amsterdam, Eindhoven: Valiz.

, Byrne, J. (2016) Social Autonomy and the Use-Value of Art. *Afterall* (42), pp.61-69.

, Ahmed, S. (2018) *Uses of Use: Diversity, Utility and the University* [online]

Available at: http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/gallery/video/sara-ahmed-uses-of-use-diversity-utility-and-the-university

[Accessed: 21/06/19]) – most notably influenced by Marx (Bourriaud, N. (2005) *Postproduction : culture as screenplay : how art reprograms the world*. New York: Lukas & Sternberg. Pp.23) – due to the length of this thesis I am not able to discuss the conversation in depth. Subsequently, I have chosen to focus on Wright's *Lexicon* as a touchstone for the discourse that I have framed TPG around. Discourses on use and production are present throughout the work and are formative in that they have influenced the PAR research cycle.

[88] Hence, I have considered Greenberg's assimilation with the popularization of autonomous 'artspeak' that Fraser opposes in her statement. (Rule, A. and Levine, D. (2012) International Art English [online],

Available at: https://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/international_art_english

[Accessed: 11/01/2018]).

hypothesis that the use of specialist terminology prevents usership in museums, Wright's *Lexicon* guides me in challenging dominant, institutional concepts such as 'expert culture', 'ownership' and 'spectatorship'.[89] Also included in the *Lexicon* are terms that have been discussed through PAR, such as 'authorship', 'autonomy' and 'expertise'.

Significantly, the term Museum 3.0 is established in the *Lexicon* to propose Usership as a methodology for thinking and acting beyond participatory models. Since Wright coined the term, mima have used Museum 3.0 as a conceptual foundation to become a 'place that is created and given meaning by the sum actions of all its users' (mima, pp.4). Declaring 2.0 culture[90] as 'both a promise and a swindle' (Wright, 2013, pp.40) due to its lack of reciprocity, Wright defines Museum 3.0 by hypothesising participation as a movement that has yet acknowledge its users (pp.39). In this investigation, it is my objective to look at how participatory methods might restrict personal agency and perform a type of co-production without acknowledging its authors. In this view, Wright advocates a third methodology to repurpose overlooked 'modes of use' to be used as methods to inform practice. Borrowed from discourses associated with Web 2.0, user-focussed concepts like 'hacking' and 'piggybacking' are introduced to encourage 'terminological cross pollination' (Wright, 2013

[89] Developed in collaboration with Tania Bruguera at Van Abbemuseum as part of the exhibition; *Museum of Arte Útil*. The printed publication was available to users of the exhibition between December 2013 and March 2014 to act as a handbook to decipher user-driven concepts articulated in the exhibition. Now existing in multiple editions, the text has created a catalyst for discussion amongst institutions and artist-led fields. Significantly, it has been criticized for its 'ultimate strangeness' by doing exactly what it theorizes against; 'by scaling down complex ideas in order to make them more readily accessible'. (Sholette, G. (2015) A User Is Haunting the Art World: Stephen Wright. Toward a Lexicon of Usership . Eindhoven, Netherlands: Van Abbemuseum, 2013. 68 pp., no ills. *Art Journal*, 74 (1), pp.98-101.)

[90] In 2006, Nina Simon developed a blog titled Museum 2.0 to apply theories of Web 2.0 philosophy to museology. In her theorisation, Web 2.0 provides a way to re-envision passive receivers of information – or for our purposes, visitors – as users to 'generate, share, and curate the content'. Furthermore, she distinguishes the difference between Web and Museum 1.0 and 2.0 by drawing likenesses between transitions made in both fields from authoritative information sharing (1.0) to participatory, non-authoritative content providers (2.0). In her view, in the culture of Museum 2.0, visitors are re-defined as participants because 'you determine what's on site, and you judge which content is most valuable' (Simon, N. (2006) What is Museum 2.0? *Museum Two* [blog], 01/12/2006

Available at: http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/2006/12/what-is-museum-20.html

[Accessed: 01/12/2006]).

pp.36). Through critical reading, I have 'borrowed and poached' (Wright, 2013, pp.47-49) ideas and methodologies to support the TPG's processes. Unrestricted to Wright's texts, his ideology legitimises dialogic practice to sneak 'through holes' and climb 'over fences' (Swartz, 2008, no pagination) to establish new networks of power. Hence, when creating TPG I reference the *Lexicon* – like a map, blueprint or toolkit (Wright, 2013 pp.3-5) – to avoid modernist and avant-garde vocabulary; oft, a barrier to useful art projects (Wright, 2013, pp.1).

Keywords and the *Lexicon* are connected in two senses; they are written in defence of usership[91] and they encourage the tasks of altering, redefining, adding, subtracting and modifying vocabulary to examine language 'not tradition to be learned, nor consensus to be accepted' (Williams, 1983, pp.21). These tasks are reflected in the outcome of this research and in the spirit of the PAR. Their separate approaches to general and specialised vocabulary engendered my intuition to know when 'not to be an expert' (Horton and Freire, 1990, pp.128) in workshops.

[91] This research has a tendency to conjure utopian imagery due to its references to socialists Raymond Williams and William Morris, whose resounding voices advocate for democratic participation in culture; for 'art as a necessity of human life' (Morris, W. (1891) *The Socialist Ideal: Art* [online]

Available at: https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1891/ideal.htm

[Accessed: 01/07/2019]

, Morris, W. (2007) William Morris, The Socialist Ideal: Art. In: Bradley, W. and Esche, C. (ed.) *Art and social change: a critical reader.* London: Tate Publishing. pp. pp.47-53.

Available at: https://www.academia.edu/283830/Art_and_Social_Change_a_Critical_Reader

[Accessed: 06/07/2019]).

It could also be argued that the *Lexicon* has been driven by Wright's aim to revisit ideologies that seek out alternative futures; an inherently utopian project. Therefore, in this section of the thesis I will explore my hypothesising between use and utopia, using the established key texts by Williams and Wright as instruments in my personal toolkit. For me, these tools have considerable use-value to apply to processes within my practice and are positioned in this thesis as two core motivation. Firstly, to envision routes to reproduce 'ordinary' language and secondly, to challenge post-modernist language use, toward a utopic vision of institutions of the future; in the interest of 'publicness' (Christensen-Scheel, B. (2018) An art museum in the interest of publicness: a discussion of educational strategies at TE. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 37 (1), pp.103-119.)

Finally, their influence reinforces the idea that vocabulary is malleable because 'to use a product is to betray its concept' (Bourriaud, 2007, pp. 24). Put simply, if we are to reimagine the discourse of contemporary art then we must subvert, critique, challenge and divert it's uses to create a new system that benefits users, over authors (ibid).

3.4. Mouffe's Agonism

In the field of museum activism, curator Lynn Wray argues that Mouffe's theorisations of agonism and agonistic plurality are utilised by curators of exhibitions to identify what 'restricts others from speaking' (Wray, 2019, pp.317). Derived from the Greek work 'agon' (Roskamm, 2015, pp.385), in Mouffe's theorisation it is the 'task of democracy is to transform antagonism into agonism' (Mouffe, 2016, no pagination) to defuse antagonism that exaggerates the us/them dichotomy (ibid). For our purposes, agonism acknowledges conflictual discourse as a constructive asset; to recognise unequal power dimensions, to embrace discourse-centred knowledge production and 'to make room for dissent' (Mouffe, 2000, pp.17). Moreover, agonistic plurality proposes that 'plurality of values and interests must be acknowledged' (Mouffe, 2000, pp.6) to coexist alongside dominant discourses. In this research, I draw on Mouffe's agonistic plurality to negotiate relationships between unheard and "restricted speakers" (i.e. publics, users and AAs) and rational agents (i.e. professionals) who govern collection discourses.

Within agonism, Mouffe's advocation of 'articulation' (taking things apart) and 're-articulation' (putting things back together again) additionally presents an alluring model for our purposes due to museums' aptitude for bringing together words, people, objects and place (Wray, 2019, pp.317). Intrinsic to re-articulation – where hegemonic order is intervened with (Mouffe, 2008, no pagination) – is the inclusion of repressed voices; both to constitute multiple identities, and to pluralise notions of essentialized publics (Mouffe, 2000, pp.17). For these reasons, progressive curatorial models such as those identified at TL and mima are investigated to examine what it is that represses 'other' voices, whilst additionally creating opportunities for re-articulation in forms of acknowledgement, representation, visibility and reciprocity.

Through this research, I advocate for such practices to create an altered collection culture where equitable pluralism is offered and valued.

Though it is understood that 'agonism implies a deep respect for the other' (Erman, 2009, pp.1041), professor and political scientist Eva Erman has criticised agonistic plurality for its contested tendency to "mystify" the other (pp.1057). In her view, 'carried to an extreme, the other is treated like an extra-terrestrial being who is always violated by being misunderstood' (ibid). With this in mind, TPG's methodology problematises the meeting 'between the "I" and the "Other"' (pp.1044) via the development of four player archetypes outlined earlier; to dissuade against categorisation that might exaggerate this binary. Consequently, this study pursues multiple forums of dialogue to investigate the politics of debate, agreement and conflict, whilst also interrogating the impact of language to construct identities (Legett, 2013, pp.303).

3.4.1. Agonistic Plurality and the Public Sphere

Intrinsic to producing a 'common language' is the production and the utilisation of multiple voices and vocabularies. Moreover, the word 'common' insists that a multiplicity of interlocutors – spread across various networks - make up a 'public discourse' (Asen, 2017, pp.1). Currently, it is expected that diverse categories of people take part in public discourse associated with museums create a 'public sphere' exploring many opinions and representations of thought (Boast, 2011, pp.56). Naturally across these networks and relationships there is 'the potential antagonism that exists in human relations' (Mouffe, 2016, no pagination). In Mouffe's view, agonism between adversaries could reformulate the foundation of a public sphere where conflict is identified, represented and made useful. In this thesis I argue that there is a lack of opportunity for users to articulate contradictory opinions about collections of art, even after the participatory turn (Tufte and Hemer, 2016, pp.11). Therefore, a public sphere and common language is yet to be publicly formed.

Aligned with political processes to 'listen and respect' (Shoup and Monteiro, 2008, pp.328) publics, museums are expected to achieve 'rational consensus' (Mouffe, 1999, pp.4)

in the production of content and interpretation. This is a model aligned with an ideology associated with Sociologist Jürgen Habermas toward communicative interaction and 'deliberative democracy'[92] (Benhabib, 2002, pp.19) that has failed to make way for representations of conflict and therefore 'provides an illusion of participation' (Lynch, 2016, Pp.6). In the following, I review agonistic plurality against the dialogically celebrated Habermasian theory of 'communicative space' (Kester, 2005). To illustrate, I theorise two examples of eminent public spheres, arguing their inadequacy to inform dialogic practitioners work from the perspective of three feminist theorists Nancy Fraser, Jodi Dean and Bonnie Honig.

Habermas positions the public sphere as an arena for consensual discourse in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989b). In the literature, action research is identified to open up 'communicative space' (Habermas, 1990, pp.297; Kemmis, 2006, pp.459) between people and institutions to discuss lived experiences to unify, bring consensus and 'overcome their merely subjective views (Habermas, 1989a, pp.10). This thought is based on 'interaction orientated towards freely agreeing on consensual understanding' (Godin et al., 2007, pp.452).

Who is it that is thought to be participating in Habermas' public sphere? Conveyed in Fraser's essay *Rethinking the Public Sphere* (Fraser, 1990, pp.58) the class and gender identity of interlocuters is contested. Her argument reminds us of the subtext of Habermas' sphere enquiring in bourgeois and liberal networks to observe the 'rise and decline of a historically specific and limited form of the public sphere' (Fraser, 1992, pp.58). What is meant by this is that Habermas' model conceives the public sphere at the emergence of public discourse within European coffee shops and salons of the eighteenth century (Dean, 2003, pp.96) – in an age of enlightenment (Slaven, 2012, pp.615) – where social and physical access to discursive agents is restricted. Now, when we speak of Habermas' public sphere, we are restricted to a limited

[92] In deliberative democracy, it is the focus for stakeholders to 'come to the table and talk as equals.' However, it has also been argued that this model articulates a universal principle of equality, which is unlikely to be attained 'in situations where some stakeholders have more investment in the issue, others more political power, and yet others a stronger sense of historic injustice.' (Shoup, D. and Monteiro, L. (2008) When Past and Present Collide: The Ethics of Archaeological Stewardship. *Current Anthropology*, 49 (2), pp.328-333.)

definition of who is and who is not able to participate. For the purposes of this work when we draw relationships between multiple identities to include 'difference' in class, race, gender and education, Habermas' model is overly simplistic and relies on a foundation of patronage to 'enlighten' rather than produce agonism.

In addition, I focus on Hannah Arendt's public sphere to draw parallels between the construction of persuasive speech and her vision of plurality. Similarly to Mouffe, Arendt emphasises the expression of commonalities and differences between stakeholders as the vital principle for plurality (Abelson et al., 2003, pp.241).[93] It has been argued that Habermas and Arendt are united in their condition that remembers historical public spheres where 'action and deliberation, participation and collective decision-making' once took place, but 'today there no longer is one' (Benhabib, 1997, pp.1). This is emphasised by Arendt's formulation of democracy using the ancient Greek 'rise of the city-state' to produce 'a sort of second life'; a political life (Arendt, 1998, pp.24-25) which is distinct from private life (Honig, 2010, pp.135). As I have alluded, Fraser's work criticises Habermas' public sphere because it is based on 'masculinist gender constructs' (pp.59). This argument implicates Arendt due to her focus on ancient ideals of democracy (Dean, 2003, pp.95) that exclude 'women and slaves from the

[93] An example of this type of voice articulation can be demonstrated by the ongoing 'Protest Lab' (*Protest Lab*. (2019) [online]

Available at: https://phm.org.uk/collaborations/how-have-you-protested-we-want-your-objects/

[Accessed: 06/07/2019]) at The People's History Museum (PHM) in Manchester. Via the development of a 'creative space' ibid. in the 'Disrupt? Peterloo and Protest' exhibition, users are invited to share their objects, plans and memorabilia that tell singular stories of direct action and protest. However, as PHM discovered, the lab symbolises the complexities of facilitating plural, user-driven political discourse when a transphobic sticker was added to the wall of the space. After complaints were made via social media alerting PHM to the hostility of the sticker, the museum removed the object and shared a statement that 'any such images/material will be removed from the Protest Lab' Adams, G.K. (2019) Controversy over PHM's removal of "adult human female" sticker. *Museums Journal* [online],

Available at: https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/04062019-phm-in-sticker-removal-controversy

[Accessed: 06/07/2019]. Since then, Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists (TERFs) have claimed that PHM are censoring some of the views of women and responses include comments such as: "If by 'protest' you meant 'protest that no one disagrees with' you should have said so' (ibid). Including this example highlights the importance of anticipating oppositional viewpoints when facilitating plurality in museums. Importantly, this reveals the criticality of Mouffe's 'drawing of frontiers' when engaging in political discourses to delegitimize the voices of hateful rhetoric.

realm' (Condorelli and Gordon, 2013, pp.2). Similarly, her work is challenging for feminist theorists when debating social justice, gender and sexuality (Honig, 2010, pp.135). For Arendt, pluralism points to the right for humankind to produce speech and deeds as the production of 'unique' self-expression (Triadafilopoulos, 1999, pp.748). However, Arendt's ultimate view on pluralism seeks to enlist 'listeners to sublimate their individual differences in favour of some set of collective similarities' (pp.753). Arendt sees the speech act as a persuasive one. Simply put, the end goal of Arendt's agonism is to produce agreement (Mouffe, 2007a, pp.4).[94] This contests Mouffe's view of agonistic plurality that challenges hegemony, without any possibility of reconciliation (Mouffe, 2007a, pp.3).

In some research, Arendt and Habermas' public spheres are aligned due to their commitment to 'replacing antagonism with unity' (Honig, 2017, pp.89) and because of this it is argued that their 'language of publicness disguises the class conflicts to which talk of the commons calls attention' (ibid). Both conceptions of the public sphere are imagined in worlds where publicness is limited via a refusal to discuss the complexities of identity. Subsequently, neither are suitable to base an argument toward Museum 3.0 practice. Though, analysing them in this thesis is useful to visualize differing spheres, their consensual topography and their 'insiders' and outsiders'.

In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001), Mouffe and Laclau conceive communication, or discourse theory, as an ideology that defines the world through dialogical mediation. Or simply, through the production of language. Their theorisation – for our purposes – gives space to the central idea that text communicates hegemony through its author's hand. This is also true for the production of language in collections of contemporary art where authoring is restricted to privileged agents.[95] Theorised as 'the drawing of political frontiers between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'' (Howarth, Norval and

[94] Mouffe's theorisation of agonistic plurality provides a route to challenge consensual, communicative action by recognising and legitimising conflicts between users and institutions to resist 'authoritarian order' (Mouffe, C. (1999) Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism? *Social Research*, 66 (3), pp.745-758..)

[95] Arguably, we could liken this phenomenon to the Habermasian understanding of the Bourgeoisie public sphere where only the most privileged actors are able to participate in public discourse.

Stavrakakis, 2000, pp.5) to reduce the possibilities of 'surplus meanings' (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001, pp.111) all visible language prioritises insider knowledge to exercise power (Howarth, Norval and Stavrakakis, 2000, pp.5; Rear, 2013, pp.6). Paradoxically, contemporary art and its institutions have yet to publicly acknowledge the friction between insiders and outsiders in their progression towards a 'public good' without scrutinising how a common language may be formed with multiple authors. Whilst museums attempt to emancipate themselves and their users from the production of hegemony via multi-mediation, the 'them' and 'us' dichotomy 'continues to undermine the learning and participatory efforts (…) of well-meaning museums and their staff members' (Lynch, 2016, pp.4). Therefore, if we are to think of progressive, user-led museums as the agonistic public spheres that Mouffe advocates for, work must be undertaken to transform the 'us' and 'them' relationship to a productive one.

Attempting to combat the outlined struggle, museums have sought to redefine their visitors as active citizens and interpreters to increase inclusion and to renegotiate their purpose to educate the general public (Wintle, 2013, pp.186). This is demonstrated by the development of consultation groups aimed at specific categories of underrepresented people – young, old, local and racially diverse – to create 'invited spaces' (Fraser, 1992; Kidd et al., 2016, pp.87). In the field, it is argued that listening and respecting consultants is not enough to constitute a public sphere seeking 'to exercise voice and influence' (Cornwall, 2008, pp.282). Sometimes described as 'empowerment-lite' (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007; Lynch, 2011, pp.20), in the context of this study, deliberative democracy represents a form of discourse that relies on Mouffe's ideology of rational liberalism[96] that is unable to grasp the multiple conflicts of plurality (Mouffe, 2007a, pp.2). Hence, visualising the representation of plurality in museums

[96] Mouffe describes liberalism is terms of rationality where 'the dominant tendency (…) is characterised by a rationalist and individualist approach which is unable to adequately grasp the pluralistic nature of the social world, with the conflicts that pluralism entails; conflicts for which no rational solution could ever exist, hence the dimension of antagonism that characterises human societies. The typical liberal understanding of pluralism is that we live in a world in which there are indeed many perspectives and values and that, due to empirical limitations, we will never be able to adopt them all, but that, when put together, they constitute an harmonious ensemble' (Mouffe, C. (2007a) Art as an Agonistic Intervention. *Art and Democracy* [online], Art as a Public Issue,
Available at: https://www.onlineopen.org/download.php?id=226
[Accessed: 25/06/2018]).

is not so much a 'technical issue to be resolved by experts' (Mouffe, 2007a, pp.2) but a negotiation of intellectual control that 'has largely remained in the hands of the museum' (Boast, 2011, pp.58).

In the PAR study, despite its parallels to produce 'communicative action', its methodology provides a 'contact space' (Askins and Pain, 2011, pp.1) to enable conflictual representations of discourse aligned with Mouffe's agonistic public sphere. Furthermore, the study is undertaken through a process different to 'deliberative democracy' without the proximity of rational agents that might 'eliminate passions or to relegate them to the private sphere' (Mouffe, 1999, pp.755). It is in this view that the research project explores the creation of common language that takes agonism as its model to reflect conflicts and passions.

3.4.2. Can Collections of Contemporary Art Be Agonistic And Pluralistic?

Where collections of contemporary art are renegotiating their relationships with publics as 'relational, as specific and localisable, and as articulatory and communicatory' (Sheikh, 2006 pp.149) developing practices to represent agonistic plurality is persuasive. Key in Mouffe's theorisation of agonistic plurality is the development of democratic, dialogic practices to confront deliberative democracy that could influence people to speak to power in 'acceptable' ways' (Barnes, 2007; Cornwall, 2008, pp. 282). In Mouffe's view, exchanging these practices for methods that might allow for citizens to participate in discourses that are critical of consensus is key in undermining hegemony (Mouffe, 2013c, pp.17). For the purposes of this research, current museum hegemony is directed by the voices of rational agents who invisibly instruct discourse and consequently shape the ideologies of local people and users (Sabatini, 2015, pp.106). Therefore, vital in this investigation are the questions; 'who speaks?', 'how do they speak?' and 'how are new voices represented?' When asking these questions historic, exclusionary practices of contemporary art are called into question (Clover, 2015, pp.310). Fundamentally, we must assess collections of contemporary art as 'Places of Power' (Hardt, 2000, pp.212) due to their competencies to emulate colonial practices; to collect, exhibit and educate (Ashley, 2005, pp.32). In this section, I examine whether collections of contemporary

art are best placed to ask these questions and debate their capacity to produce and represent agonistic plurality.

Arguing against the influential notion that 'institutions of the art world have become complicit with capitalism and that they can no longer provide a site for critical art practices' (Mouffe, 2013b pp. 66) Mouffe posits contemporary art museums as sites to challenge hegemony (Mouffe, 2007a, pp.1) and resist discursive occupation (Mouffe, 2013c, pp.20). In this debate, postcolonial critics have theorised routes to avoid collusion with institutions by fleeing, escaping, exiting, withdrawing or departing from the institutional, hegemonic landscape[97] (Deleuze, 1988, pp.456-457; Virno, 2004, pp.66-71). In contemporary art, recent waves 'of art strikes, boycotts, and occupations' (Szreder, 2017, no pagination) demonstrate that this may be the favoured tactic to avoid complicity with museum empiricism and their perceived neutrality (Mouffe, 2013c, pp.15). Despite trends to blacklist Places of Power, I have made the collection at TL the primary location to confront hegemonic discourses and their resulting social stratification with the view to include unheard, public voices. This is supported by Mouffe who suggests that to disengage with Places of Power would be 'to ignore the tensions that always exist within a given configuration of forces' (Mouffe, 2013b, pp.66). In my view, it is the practitioners most engaged with dialogical practices that could activate opportunities to represent and mediate agonistic plurality.

bell hooks in her essay *On the Language of Power* (1994, pp.167), theorises language as an instrument to conduct counter-hegemonic action. For her words have power to 'challenge' and 'assist', include and exclude, dominate or emancipate. An example of this can be demonstrated by Fred Wilson's early critical intervention; *Mining the Museum* (Wilson, 1992, no pagination) where he used dialogue and critique to conceive a counter-hegemonic practice to expose colonialist tendencies and 'redefine art history demarcations of gender, race and class' (Wilson and Halle, 1993, pp.171). By confronting visitors with neglected objects, stories and local histories 'of blacks and Native Americans' (Houston, 2017, no pagination), Wilson mimicked processes of contemporary curatorship; to include rewording, relabelling and rewriting descriptors to bring to light the 'institutionally codified oppression' (Wilson and Halle,

[97] In this thesis, I call this method of escape the 'exodus' theory.

1993, pp.171) of exhibition making. His is just one example that intervenes in the 'comfortably white, upper-class narrative' (Houston, 2017, no pagination) of museums via the examination of discourse.

Revealing what has been excluded in the timeline of modern and contemporary art history is also influenced by feminist ideologies.[98] Art historian Griselda Pollock is persuasive in her questioning of the hegemonic, art-history discourse that presents artists as 'the singular, solitary genius whose creativity is recorded almost exclusively in a biographical or autobiographical mode' (Pollock, 1987, pp.2) which contemporary art struggles away from (McCartney, 2017, pp.64). Argued as a figure that reinforces the imagery of 'the universal, classless Man' (Pollock, 1987, pp.2), feminists maintain that producing interventions within contemporary art is not just about women[99] but about the 'radical revision of the very notions of subjectivity and otherness' (Hein, 2007, pp.32). Certainly, this is true for decolonial artist collective Mujeres Creando[100], who position themselves critically 'towards the system in which museums, galleries and official art histories are inserted' (Galindo, 2018, pp.47). For Mujeres Creando, one cannot separate colonial practices from patriarchal ones, and in their view, working decolonially can only be done through creating new vocabularies to rethink 'every

[98] In her prominent essay *Why There Have Been No Great Women Artists*, art historian Linda Nochlin also encourages feminist artists to 'reveal institutional and intellectual weakness' (Nochlin, L. (1992) Why have there been no great women artists? *The feminism and visual culture reader*, pp.229-233.). to increase the representation of people who have been excluded from the western ideals of art history (Eckert, P. and McConnell-Ginet, S. (2003) *Language and Gender*. Cambridge, UNITED KINGDOM: Cambridge University Press. pp.37)

[99] Despite this ongoing argument, the canon continues to be defined in this way and necessitates the definition of 'other' artist identities to recognize a different narrative from the white male artist. Some activist researchers and artists have suggested the elimination of some words and letterings within decolonial discourses such as replacing 'women' with 'womxn' to challenge the dominance of patriarchal and colonialist vernacular (Matandela, M. (2017) Redefining Black Consciousness and resistance: The intersection of Black Consciousness and Black feminist thought. *Agenda*, 31 (3-4), pp.10-28.Pp.11). Influenced by activist Silvia Federici, I have not ascribed to this doctrine due to my not wanting to 'be without a language to express [my] ideas' and or to be in a position to invent an entirely new vocabulary. (Mies, M. and Federici, S. (2014) *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*. 3 ed. London: Zed Books. pp.47) Moreover, I have discovered when working with community members at TL that this kind of language is paradoxically non-inclusive of people who are not associated with radical ideals of gender politics.

[100] Mujeres Creando are a feminist art collective that formed in 1992 in La Paz in Bolivia.

word' within the 'field of language and poetics' (pp.47). Common use of words like 'genius' and 'pioneer' are synonyms for words – colonist, coloniser, discoverer – and are central to sexism, as well as the colonial vocabulary of Western, modernist discourse in its construction of a progressive, linear idea of art history.

Some researchers have demanded the end of 'contemporary' due to its implications within 'the negation of multiple pasts, of multiple histories and 'in the erasure of other worlds of meaning' (Vázquez, 2017a, no pagination). In this way, decolonial research opposes the 'single truth' of modernism that assumes itself as universal, pioneering and progressive. Instead, decolonial thought 'asks for what has been lost: what has been exploited, extracted, denied dignity, denied existence?' (Vázquez, 2017a, no pagination). Presently, collections of contemporary art are asking themselves these questions. In 2017, the Van AbbeMuseum hosted a symposium organised by L'internationale titled *Collections in Transition: Decolonising, Demodernising and Decontralising*? Opening the symposium, the sociologist Rolando Vázquez posed the enquiry;

> *Can modern and contemporary art institutions (…) forego the privilege of controlling the locus of enunciation, overcome its epistemic enclosure and listen to the pluriversal?* (Vázquez, 2017b)

The reflexion foregrounds this research by emphasising the task of modernist discourses to exclude and conceal the relationality of art history, objects and mediation (Vázquez, 2012, pp.6). Unequivocally, decolonial feminism proposes 'the reconstruction of museums' due to its argued 'open-endedness and inherent pluralism' (Hein, 2007, pp.31). Some argue that feminist, pluralistic mechanisms have already been adopted in collections of contemporary art since the emergence of radical feminist interventions such as the Guerrilla Girls[101] to

[101] Sometimes referring to themselves as the 'conscience of the art world', the Guerrilla Girls formed in response to the diminution of interest in 'active' feminism, the growth of academic and theoretical feminism and a frustration with the exclusion of women and artists of colour from exhibitions, collections and funding (McCartney, N. (2017) Complicating Authorship. *Performance Research*, 22 (5), pp.62-71.).

undermine the canon (Hein, 2007, pp.39; McCartney, 2018). However, this has also been conjectured by the understanding that although we 'have seen a change of consciousness about the need for intersectional[102] diversity in the arts (…) we haven't seen the system change very much' (Chandrakumar, 2018, no pagination).

In his book *Art Power,* critic Boris Groys complicates the outward relationship between contemporary art and pluralism due to the vast, theoretical discourses that promote or criticise modern and contemporary art where 'there are nothing but differences as far as the eye can see' (Groys, 2008, pp.1). In his view, contemporaneity is reactionary between the 'inclusion of everything' and 'exclusion of everything that was not somehow controversial' (pp.2). If we are to understand the term 'contemporary' as different, challenging or progressive – as it is widely used in the field – then we must also ask to what extent does it exclude or deny outsiders that have aided in its construction? This is pertinent when discussing art that is considered useful or dialogic, for the social involvement of publics can 'only be knowable through processes of mediation' (Silverstone, 2000, pp.189; Thumin, 2010, pp.291).

Groys criticises contemporary art due to its mechanisms that 'favors anything that establishes or maintains the balance of power and tends to exclude or try to outweigh anything that distorts this balance' (Groys, 2008, pp.9). Thus, we can clearly draw similarities between the ways that modernity has been constructed and how contemporary art excludes anything that operates outside it (including people and their productivity).[103] Arguably, collections of

[102] In 1990, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term 'intersectionality' in the eminent essay 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color' (Crenshaw, K. (1990) Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stan. L. Rev.*, 43, pp.1241.) to theorise the multi-layered and intersecting oppressions experienced by women of colour. Taking into consideration multiple identity representations such as class, race, gender, sexuality and age, Crenshaw provides us with a tool of analysis that previously had gone unrecognized by feminist, anti-racist activism and scholarship throughout the 1970s and 1980s. When used in this context, the phrase 'intersectional diversity' refers to the continuing, systemic hegemony that is characterized by collections of contemporary art.

[103] Paradoxically, the book 'Culture, Democracy and the right to make art' (Jeffers, A. and Moriarty, G. (2017) *Culture, democracy and the right to make art : the British Community Arts Movement*. London: Bloomsbury.) describes the perspective

contemporary art are not as pluralistic as one could assume. With this in mind, I also venture that institutions exhibiting collections of contemporary art have averted more rigorous processes of implementing plurality due to their commitment to 'contemporaneity'. By exhibiting diverse collections of contemporary and "liberal" art, they are able to claim that pluralism is constituent to their aims.

By the same logic, textual mediation within contemporary art collections are not yet aligned to embrace the 'vocabulary of relationality' (Vázquez, 2012, pp.9). Arguably, due to pressure of indigenous groups (Mel, 2018, pp.78), heritage-focussed and ethnographic museums are already undertaking this processes to challenge modernity's vocabulary of objectification, exploitation and autonomy (Thumin, 2010, pp.291-304). Whilst Mouffe does not specifically reconcile decolonial practices in her early writings, her critique of western liberalism lends itself to highlight the complicity of colonial practices with the erasure of voices (Kapoor, 2002, pp.478). This is clear through her work that suggests that institutions could become mediators of conflict to achieve engagement with a greater multiplicity of publics – including feminists, people of colour, workers, the LGBTQ+ community and young people (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001, pp.170). Mouffe does not expand on is how these conflicts might be recognised and redistributed (Fraser, 2005, pp.295-307; Barnes, 2007, no pagination) in collections. In the context of this research, agonistic plurality provides publics opportunities to 'tell it how it is' (Barnes, 2007, no pagination), but this only raises more questions of how this might work within the contingencies of working museum life.[104] This is where theory might be

of the Community Art Movement in the UK, which its authors argue is often jettisoned in the lineage of art history in favour for contemporary understandings of social, dialogic and participatory art.

[104] A high-profile example of how conflict could be represented in a collection is demonstrated by the intervention made by Sonia Boyce at Manchester Gallery in 2018. Prior to her retrospective at the museum, Boyce initiated the temporary removal of John Williams Waterhouse's 1986 painting 'Hylas and the Nymphs' to engage a 'much wider group of people than usual in the curatorial process' and letters that were sent to the gallery and post-it notes that recorded direct responses. A diverse selection of these responses have since been exhibited in the collection as part of the gallery's 'feminist revision' programme. (Boyce, S. (2018) Our removal of Waterhouse's naked nymphs painting was art in action. *The Guardian* [online],

Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/06/takedown-waterhouse-naked-nymphs-art-action-manchester-art-gallery-sonia-boyce

expanded on to provide processes to challenge contemporaneity in collections of art via intertextual representation, problematising museum neutrality and challenging the co-option of voices.

To summarise, the exodus approach to institutionalism could be seen to reinforce the reactionary cycle of contemporaneity outlined by Groys in *Art Power* as a pluralism that is informed by the avant-garde (Groys, 2008, pp.114). Put simply, it is a reactive method. Additionally, the pluralism used to describe collections of contemporary art is a prescriptive term that tells us how it 'wants or insists that it be' (Orsi, 2004, pp.879). It minimises differences, assumes common held values and beliefs, and hides unarticulated embedded thought processes (pp.880). Instead, agonistic pluralism demands that conflictual differences must be recognised, represented and be 'seen as a fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark like a dialectic' (Lorde, 2003, pp.1). If we are to consider institutions of art as truly pluralistic or agonistic, then these contingencies must be regarded to inform collections.

In this section, I focussed on collections of modern and contemporary art and the biased histories that they construct via their mediation and their alleged pluralism. Focusing on the use of language as a way to confront authoritarian forces, I described examples of practitioners and communities best placed to challenge discourses of modernity and emphasised that these can only take place whilst rejecting the 'exodus' theory. Where, not only is 'the act of speaking is inseparable from the act of listening' (Lenkersdorf, 2011, no pagination) but recognition, representation and redistribution are also required to challenge the canons of modernity and contemporaneity. Later, I will also expand Vázquez's theory of 'Translation as Erasure' (Vázquez, 2011, pp.27-44) to critique the mechanisms of collections when representing public interpretation; how this might erase vernaculars, reduce dignity and problematise ethics of relationality.

[Accessed: 27/02/19]) and to challenge the idea of censorship. This intervention sparked a heated public debate from many vantage points across media platforms including articles and blogs that were published online and in print, and via emails. See appendix A for photographs of the 'feminist revision'.

3.6. Words as Tools and Weapons

Audre Lorde's often-cited text; *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* reminds us that the master's tools 'will never enable us to bring about genuine change' (Lorde, 2003, pp.27) but 'they may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game' (Lorde, 2003, pp.27). Despite this proposition, I argue that practitioners are positioned as critical players when challenging common-sense practices to make change[105] and are arguably well positioned to exercise artist privilege to 'answer back' (Wilson, 2017, no pagination). Whilst there are examples of museums who are currently attempting processes to co-write interpretation with publics – and these are problematised throughout this thesis - in this section, I propose that it is dialogic and instituent practitioners who are best placed to pirate institutional tools to create counter-hegemonic actions.

3.6.1. Dialogic Practices

Differently from 'traditional' art, TPG is an example of art that is hypothesized as 'other' because it encourages and performs progressive, ethical action within a collection. This is opposed to the epistemological understanding of 'the aesthetic' where 'the artist must never attempt to realize these alternatives through direct action' (Kester, 2000, pp.3).[106] When considering this work in relation to the collection at TL, TPG is 'other' to the artworks that are hung, installed, screened or performed; essentially, it doesn't look or act anything like work traditionally theorized as 'art'. Potentially described as 'littoral', alternatively I advocate for Wright's theorisation of *1:1 scale* art to hypothesize TPG due to its useful intent; proposed as

[105] Recent examples include; artist group *Liberate Tate* opposed Tate's funding partner BP, by actively creating dissenting performances and interventions in the institution until Tate disbanded the partnership in 2016. *Disabled Avant-Garde*, created an artist organisation to critique the traditional stereotyping of disability artists in institutions via performance works and interventions. Whilst *Black Death Spectacle* acted as a gallery intervention in which artist Parker Bright protested the inclusion of a contested painting in the 2017 Whitney Biennial 2017 (D'Souza, A. and Lumumba, P. (2018) *Whitewalling: Art, Race & Protest in 3 Acts*. New York: Badlands Unlimited.).

[106] Due to the way that this work manifests, it is also fair to associate the project with differing forms of cultural politics and 'artivism'.

a device that could be used without the realisation the project is also an artwork (Wright, 2013, pp.3). Wright theorises *1:1 scale* work with a double ontology to enact 'a function already fulfilled by something else' (Wright, 2013, pp.4). In this sense, TPG is intended to function as other glossaries might and can be used as such, however, it can alternatively be used as a process to enact discursive interventions in a collection or be considered as a gestural work; as is proposed in this thesis.

Describing TPG as a dialogical project is fitting due to its subjective objective that values dialogue with general publics who have historically been estranged from art, its practices and canon. Kester elucidates in *Conversation Pieces: The Role of Dialogue in Socially Engaged Art* (2005) that the concept of a dialogical art practice argues for artworks to be 'viewed as a kind of conversation' (no pagination) between artists and publics. Influential in this is the work of language philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin who developed the term 'heteroglossia' to advocate for the inclusion of multiple representations of points of view when understanding artworks (Bakhtin, 1981, pp.272). Originating from his opposition of the unification and centralisation of language, Bakhtin argues that stylistic formations of language – or "private craftsmanship" (i.e. stylistics informed by the academy) – ignore 'the social life of discourse outside the artist's study' (pp.269). His work stands in opposition to the contemporary art canon that has been limited by what Kester calls 'Modern and Postmodern Anti-discursivity' (Kester, 2000, no pagination), or the idea that general publics should not, could not and would not have a meaningful – or critical – understanding of art. A deeply patronising and oppressive framework to postulate publics, this view is based on the 'belief that art must define itself as different from other forms of culture (…) precisely by being difficult to understand, shocking or disruptive' (ibid).

Reflexively, TPG's dialogical methodology challenges anti-discursivity in collections of modern and contemporary art; and thus, criticises its insidious and outdated practices that prioritise experts. By recognising the philosophy that the intersection of identities – gender, class, race and sexuality – inarguably affect how art is interpreted and personal taste is informed, TPG offers an area of praxis that encourages, legitimises and pluralises multiple ways of knowing about art. Consequently, this research ideally sympathises with the conjectures

made by Kester and Bakhtin, and through them, I justify my objective to reunite usership with the discourse of art.

3.6.2. Instituent Practices

By situating the practices of TPG within the discourse of 'instituent practices' (Raunig, 2006) and 'artivism' (Mouffe, 2007b) it is my aim to express the 'actualisation of the future in a present becoming' (Raunig and Ray, 2009, pp.xvii). In Raunig's hypothesis, instituent practices are designated by their pluralistic methodologies to create ways for us 'to lower artistic resistance' and enable 'the messy, heteronomous realm of political, social and economic life' to rush in (Sholette, 2015, pp.100). In this realm are women whose practices centre on complaint to affect institutional change. Sara Ahmed, for instance, is a researcher whose work revolves around 'complaint' as a way to 'identify and challenge abuses of power' (Ahmed, 2017a) to learn about the ways that power silences people. For the purposes of this research, her description of complaint as 'sick speech' (Ahmed, 2017c, pp.407) is powerful because it describes how complaint can chip away at 'a wall of indifference' (ibid). In this following I describe some practitioners who have used complaint to increase public co-authoring techniques.

Responding to the viral #MeToo movement in 2017 that encouraged women to create public narratives to show the magnitude of sexual misconduct, the Guerrilla Girls (GG) produced a text-based artwork titled *3 Ways To Write A Museum Wall Label When The Artist Is A Sexual Predator* (2018). The poster 'reimagines museum responses to the #MeToo movement' (Pes, 2018, no pagination) and encourages them to re-write appropriate wall labels for collections that include artists accused of sexual harassment. While this work does not actively co-write interpretation, by using public text-based critique such as fly-posting, distributing postcards and creating counter-hegemonic museum activities since 1985, GG's public works aim to create dialogue to challenge the exclusionary practices of art institutions (McCartney, 2018, pp.117).

GG use public complaint as their major weapon (Foster, 1999, pp.100). Without it, they argue, they would've been ignored (Kahlo and Kollwitz, 2010, pp.203). Their public attempts to co-write interpretation is demonstrated by the development of a learning resource in 2004 (Kahlo and Kollwitz, 2010, pp.206) titled *The Guerrilla Girls' Art Museum Activity Book*.[107] In it they identify and challenge the invisible authorial narratives behind institutional text to 'repurpose museums' (ibid) using language as a tool (McCartney, 2018, pp.123). In their parodied learning activity, they encourage 'everyone to criticize museums' by using GG developed techniques to produce 'ideas for actions' (ibid).The activity *How to write a feminist wall label* states; 'those little labels next to paintings tell us as much about the person who wrote them as about the art they describe' (ibid). Via asking publics to 'find some wall labels at your favourite museum that could use a face-lift!' (ibid), users of the activity book are encouraged to rewrite texts for artworks in their own words, which are then sent back to GG and posted on their website.

Also subverting museum communication, ongoing project *Uncomfortable Art Tours* (Procter, 2017, no pagination) are developed by tour guide Alice Procter to challenge museums to 'display it like you stole it' (Minamore, 2018, no pagination) in collections of British art.[108] Also known as 'The Exhibitionist', Procter facilitates tours that reveal hidden colonial narratives by scrutinising museum labels and wall texts (Procter, 2017, no pagination). During tours, Procter interrogates post-colonial links to empire using techniques advanced by the work of practitioners; Andrea Fraser and GG. Aligned with Mouffe's view that critical practices can 'in a variety of ways, play a part in the process of disarticulation/rearticulation which characterises a counter-hegemonic politics' (Mouffe, 2013b, pp.67), this project straddles a multiplicity of spaces; in the museum via tours, in print via The Guardian and other news sources, and online via Procter's prominent twitter page (pp.68). All of which express the project politically and situate the work to counter the museum as the 'only source of support' (Lorde, 2003, Pp.27). Emphasising the method of complaint, Procter also created a public engagement tool that

[107] See appendix N for reference.

[108] Locations include Tate Britain, the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, British Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum, all of which are London-based.

replicates visitor feedback cards commonly found in institutions of art. Titled *Dear Art Gallery/Museum…* (Procter, 2018)[109] the postcards are designed to provide feedback on written labels that need improvement. Indicated by tick boxes for language that denotes racism, colonialism, classism, homophobia, sexism, trans-erasure, gender-essentialism, ableism and 'totally impenetrable', publics are invited to select their complaint and provide 'additional comments' to be delivered to museum front desks.

Conceptually, the development of these forms of instituent practices supports 'the master's house' analogy by suggesting that by using a multiplicity tools and weapons - whether they are newly developed or taken from the master's house - we can hinder authoritarian modes of instituting (Raunig, 2007, pp.6). In Raunig's explanation, he does not advocate for the closure of the museum as the master's house analogy might suggest, but instead offers a situation of permanent new beginning, supplemented by the persistent use of tools to maintain it. This way of thinking about institutional practices has been most beneficial for this research due to its fluidity. Consequently, I align this method with the creation of a metaphorical 'toolkit' as part of the PAR; where historical, contemporary and institutional tools have a role to play in the creation of 'instituent' practices. Consequently, this analogy positions 'tools' as 'instruments' and advocates for complex thinking and action research (Davis and Sumara, 2009, pp.358).

In summary, it has been useful to imagine the practices of critique and complaint colliding with the everyday practices of museums, collections and publics 'in the swampy lowland' where 'messy, confusing problems defy technical solutions.' (Schon, 1987, pp.3) This research responds to a 'real-world' (pp.4) condition that problematises discourses associated with art and collections. Proposing resolutions to 'rethink' (Morin et al., 2000, pp.4) or 'unlearn' (Choi and AKraus, 2017, pp.66-74) institutional systems is common in the field[110] and this

[109] See appendix N for reference.

[110] In recent years, across the contemporary art museum field, there have been numerous articles, books, workshops, conferences, events and interventions that have attempted to unlearn the systems of institutions, and their tendency to 'forget'. This can be demonstrated by a mass of events such as; 'Un-learning language in museums' at Tate Modern (2018), 'Demodernising the Collection' at Van Abbemuseum (2017), 'Rethinking Museums Politically' at Berlin's Altes Museum (2017).

thinking has been criticised due to its limitations from engaging in physical change making (Byrne, 2018, pp.12). One of the ways I have attempted to make sense of this chaotic, dysfunctional eco-sphere is by the development of PAR to make new knowledge acquired 'more readily accessible' (Sholette, 2015, pp.101). Hence, creating a TPG toolkit enables high-level theorising and action research to function symbiotically as a form of 'engaged scholarship'[111] (Donnellan, 2014, pp.293). Using this method, utopia is understood better 'as a method than a goal' (Levitas, 2013, pp.xi) and is an important instrument to demand the utopian ideal; for equitable plurality.

3.7. SUMMARY

This chapter is critical to contribute to critical and theoretical contextualisation of the field which I build on throughout the thesis. Here, I describe metaphorical institutions; literatures (Keywords and the *Lexicon*), ideologies (agonistic plurality and deliberative democracy) and practices (Fred Wilson and GG), whilst discussing collections as physical sites to navigate Wright's vision of Museum 3.0 practice.

By emphasising dialogical, relational and collaborative discourses, I have argued that agonistic plurality provides methods to challenge modernity's vocabulary of ownership, collecting and education. Additionally, I debated that further intervention within these terms might offer an alternative to the current model of 'insider' and 'outsider' roles that publics are currently torn between. Crucially, I introduced the concept of equitable plurality; the idea that public opinion, interpretation and experience might be considered equal in value to empirically

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One of the gaps in this research is the understanding that institutional unlearning has roots in organisational theory which argues for unlearning as a way to produce new knowledge.

[111] Engaged scholarship is described as a practice that unites academic research and participatory community work. Specifically, it is valued for its approach that obtains 'the views of key stakeholders to understand a complex problem' (Donnellan, B. (2014) Engaged Scholarship. In: Coghlan, D. and Brydon-Miller, M. (ed.) *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research.* London: SAGE. pp. pp.293-294.Pp.293). Its core values focus on citizenship and social justice and therefore is applicable to this practice-based research due to the aim of TPG to make change and center publics voices that are not usually heard.

presented knowledge. In the view that interpretations and rules are neither fixed nor constant, and are dependent on the experiences that individuals create (Williams, 2001, pp.34) this method creates a renewed consciousness for collections as creative, useful places. Currently, this is impossible to imagine due to deep and as yet 'impassable barriers' (Hall, 2002, pp.34) that prevent public and discursive emancipation. For the purposes of this research, I have argued that the most entrenched barrier presents itself in the usage of discourse that maintains art-world autonomy, influenced by modernity's propensity to exploit and conceal knowledge of anybody considered 'other'. Moreover, I emphasised that this language prioritises artists associated with the avant-garde (Groys, 2008, pp.47) and accentuates the common – but misled – understanding that contemporary art is unquestionably plural in its present state. In the following chapters, I describe the PAR project that interrogates these barriers.

4. Chapter Two: Professionals

In this research, I use the term 'professionals' to describe two groups of contributors; staff members from TL and critical friends who are consulted as freelancers. Different to publics – but nevertheless important – they are distinguished within the context of the PAR project as peers (Harding, Whitfield and Stillwell, 2010, pp.318).

This chapter is critical in resisting the binary model of power to divide staff members and artists into two categories; good/bad, powerful/powerless, friend/enemy (Mouffe, 2014, no pagination). By discussing the data collected during both sets of interviews in this chapter I hope to represent conflictual complexities of power (Jelinek, 2013, pp.65-6). In the first section, I describe the interviewed contributors using a semi-structured method to comprise two analyses. The first considers word clouds and their implications for users by looking at two conflicting educational theories by Bourdieu and Rancière to analyse how language might be experienced via Constellations. Later, informed by Rancière's *The Ignorant School Master* (Rancière, 1991), I draw on interviews with Francesco Manacorda, Alison Jones and Mike Pinnington to understand the processes and limitations of this pedagogical framework.[112] To summarise, I compare the implementation of a digital word cloud with the co-production of knowledge via online internet-mediation platform, Wikipedia.

Another analysis is thematic and provides a 'bigger picture' of ethics and transparency in the collection at TL. To do this I assess institutional, aesthetic and academic narratives that are distributed discursively via interviews. Lastly, I investigate the practices of critical friends to narrate collections, drawing attention to their processes of critical pedagogy. Although this chapter focusses on professionals, its intent is to provide a foundation to prioritise the experience of users.

4.1. WHO AND WHY?

As previously outlined, interviews with professionals make up an important part of the research to provide deeper institutional knowledge of the organisation and to find the 'red-

[112] See appendices O for examples of interview questions.

hot issues' (Björkman and Sundgren, 2005, pp.406) in interpreting collections with communities. Because PAR is based on building relationships (Grant, Nelson and Mitchell, 2008, pp.592), I maintained a friendly rapport with all contributors via email, social media and in person.

4.1.1. Staff Members[113]

Connecting with the team at TL was significant in gaining access to institutional documents such as Tate's *Tone of Voice Guidelines*, meeting CC and being invited to apply to TE. Significantly, I was not considered a fully embedded 'insider' within the team. Feasibly, I was considered similarly to the group of 'critical friends' observed in the next section. This gave me unique vantage to challenge entrenched systems at TL and suggest 'new kinds of actions' (Chandler and Torbert, 2003, pp.13) via the toolkit. Unlike research with users, the data collected via these interviews are strictly analytical and do not feed into TPG as outcomes. Instead, this category of interviewees provide criticality to ensure that the work doesn't just 'point fingers' (Lind, 2010, pp.26).

My initial contact at TL was Lindsey Fryer, *Head of Learning*. In interviews, Lindsey establishes that interpretation for collections should be accessible, consistent and should provoke new questions for publics. In our first meeting, she recalled a comment made via the visitor comment system at TL stating, "I don't want to feel old, and I don't want to feel stupid". Accordingly, this comment is symptomatic regarding the development of the *Tone of Voice Guidelines* created in 2016 and resonate 'right throughout the organisation.' In the data, Lindsey debates TL's capacity to respond to ordinary users:

> *But have we done anything about that, you know? And I think we have to keep those people in mind that you might be a professional, but you might come in here and not have a clue what you've just read.*

[113] In this chapter, I use professional's first names when referring to their input. My theorising behind this is due to PAR's preference to regard participants as peers – or, equal collaborators. Whilst it could be argued that this is contradicted when formally addressing authors (e.g. Wright and Mouffe), I would argue that the identities of 'professionals' and 'authors' play divergent roles in my research and therefore the contradiction is not pertinent.

Hence, Lindsey's primary concern was 'how does TL engage with the public using language as a tool to mediate the collection?' Drawing an end to the interviews with peers in 2018, I interviewed Lindsey again to explore what had changed since the research started.

Another member of the team whose input has been invaluable is Mike Pinnington. As *Content Editor* at TL between 2013 and 2018, Mike oversaw all written content in the public collection and undertook work to expand the idea of traditional interpretation. Significantly, Mike was my primary contact whilst undertaking methods of discourse analysis in 2016 and is present throughout, as he was during the action research. Significantly, Mike's interview revealed why his role evolved from 'Interpretation Curator' which was limited to 'wall texts, captions, labels and gallery guides'. Through interviewing Mike, I was able to scrutinise the development of institutional roles, digital devices and the gallery's 'user guide' to embed user-generated processes within the collection. Additionally Mike's inclusion was important as someone who writes about art from a different perspective. In Mike's words;

> *When I first came to the role, obviously I came as someone who was used to being on the other side of the fence, who writes about art from a business perspective. You know I've never really thought of myself as a critic because I don't have an academic art background, but I'm certainly someone who wants to experience exhibitions and not be alienated by them, so I wanted to bring that to the role to make sure me, who might have at one point needed to google this that or the other terms, I didn't want to make new visitors feel like they had to go away and google stuff as a result of my interpretation.*

By interviewing Francesco Manacorda, I examined the implementation of 'word clouds' in the public collection. As Director at the time[114] and author of 'the magazine principle', his input was necessary to determine the potential for user-driven approaches to interpretation. In the interview, Francesco refers to the magazine principal as a curatorial metaphor to draw

[114] In September 2017 Francesco Manacorda resigned from his directorial role at TL. He was replaced by the new director Helen Legg in April 2018.

similarities between exhibition-making and the format of a magazine. By publicising exhibitions, the collection and the learning programme using this model, he argued that the format actively discouraged hierarchy between programmes and teams. Another supportive figure in the research, interviewing Francesco was essential in understanding curatorial developments in reference to Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster; Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (1991) and Benjamin's 'constellations'.[115]

Alison Jones - *Programme Manager for Public and Community Learning* – is my primary conduit to mediate the collaborative partnership with CC. During our interview, Alison provided fresh insight into previously collected data to reveal user-driven approaches to written interpretation. For example, she recalled an event where 'we had some artists who were working with the general public to develop the word cloud', which is also supported in the literature (Campolmi, 2017, pp.77). Alison expressed how public input might legitimise knowledge 'coming from a whole range of different vantage points'. Alison's contribution supports the exploration of institution and community ethics via her involvement in public events with CC and TE.

Jess Fairclough provided expertise as TL's *TE Co-ordinator* between 2016 and 2018. Her experience with associate artists and organisations made her essential to provide information on how visitors experience TE and how TL measures and reports participation. For example, she recalls:

> *When people bring their socially engaged practice into Tate Exchange and have those conversations with the visitors. So, to give an example (…) Vic McEwan was here a few weeks ago, and he was presenting his artworks and he was demonstrating how his artworks were having an impact on health and healing spaces. (…) And through him being in the space and having conversations (...) people [were] having experiences that*

[115] An apt term to describe the result of these activities is the *constellation*, a word used by Walter Benjamin to describe a Marxist project of bringing events together in new ways, disrupting established taxonomies, disciplines, mediums, and proprieties. (Bishop, C. (2013) *Radical museology or, what's 'contemporary' in museums of contemporary art?* London: Koenig Books.Pp.56.)

you wouldn't expect to have in an art gallery and having those conversations about what impact can art have on your life.

Additionally, Jess' involvement in the development of the OUA and *Art Turning Left: How Values Changed Making 1789-2013* between 2013 and 2014 revealed how Museum 3.0 theory might have contributed to the implementation of TE.

Finally, due the convergence of curating and interpreting (Robinson, 2018, pp.521), I interviewed Michael Birchall, Curator of Public Practice. His specialism in community and participatory practices make him a vital contributor on the incorporation of collaborative methods to collections and their interpretation. Our interview concentrated on curatorial ethics to explore the potential of dissolving knowledge hierarchies between experts and 'non-experts'[116]. For Michael;

Though we might speak in terms of where all experts are democratic, that's sometimes not the case. There are always going to be experts and people that possess a greater deal of knowledge about specific topics. I wonder where, in converging a non-expert then becomes an 'othering', which is then problematic.

Necessarily, Michael's input was valuable because it provided a critical view of the extent that co-authorship can be a democratic process.

[116] In the past, the term 'non-expert' has been used by museum academics to research publics (Cairns, S.s.c.u.e.a. (2013) Mutualizing Museum Knowledge: Folksonomies and the Changing Shape of Expertise. *Curator*, 56 (1), pp.107-119.) and how they produce knowledge (Mase, K., Kadobayashi, R. and Nakatsu, R. (1996) Meta-museum: A supportive augmented-reality environment for knowledge sharing. *ATR workshop on social agents: humans and machines*of Conference.). From this reviewing the research, I can see that it is not the author's intention to belittle public assumptions as `merely subjective' or `incompatible with the facts' (Ulrich, W. (2000) Reflective Practice in the Civil Society: The contribution of critically systemic thinking. *Reflective Practice*, 1 (2), pp.247-268.). However, in the converging of museum publics as non-expert it could be argued that as 'othering' occurs in the practice. As a result, it is now widely accepted amongst practitioners that the use of 'non-expert' in this sense implies an implicit inequality between those regarded as 'experts' (artists, curators, museum workers) and 'non-experts' (publics, community figures, AAs).

4.1.2. Critical Friends

As the research developed to involve multiple voices from within TL, I introduced what might traditionally be described as 'artist-educators' or 'critical friends' to add further dimension and to personify instituent or dialogical practices[117]. With intent, I explored the passions of people who are considered both insiders and outsiders, and those who participate in interpreting collections with communities (Mouffe, 2005a, pp.30). In this study, critical friends are held in equal regard to their peers at TL. The data collected here explores the potential for actors outside the institution to act as interpreters within the gallery and 'directly intercede when it comes to matters of communication' (Öğüt, 2016, no pagination). Their voices are essential to provide reflexivity and rich narratives describing direct experiences with users.

Local artist, community activist and educator, Nina Edge, was interviewed due to her affiliation with CC and fellow instigators; PhD researcher Jonty Lees and local artist Kevin Hunt in 2015. Since then, Nina has led a *Making Sense of Art* course; an eight-week collaborative and alternative arts education programme established in partnership with The City of Liverpool College and TL. The course engages with local people living in areas that had community-oriented 'skill centres', including Woolton and Belle Valle. Comprising the course, community members are immersed in a module-led pathway consisting of components such as '*Working as Part of a Team*', '*Working toward a Goal'*, and *'Community Action'*. The programme concludes with a registered accreditation from The City of Liverpool College, as well as an invitation to join CC at TL. Mediating the relationship between TL, the College and CC, Nina considers the interface with an audience in improved ways by using text to research inclusion, diversity and anti-racist discourses. Consequently, Nina is embedded in this research due to her proximity to CC and her criticisms of curatorial models at TL.

Local artist and curator, Sufea Mohamad Noor, was identified as a critical friend due to her long-term collaboration with Tate Collective from 2010-2017. At the time of the research,

[117] Though I outline the personal details of critical friends in this introduction because inclusion of their contribution is important to this study, I have taken efforts to anonymise their data after this point due its sensitivity and per our ethical agreement.

there were crossovers between TPG's useful methodology and Sufea's advocation for Useful Art, inclusion, and diversity politics; invaluable aspects of this research. Procured as a member at Tate Collective by an outreach programme to recruit young people, Sufea joined Tate Collective with the ambition to advise the gallery on how to be inclusive of young people. For the purposes of this research, Sufea's involvement was important when considering interpretation as an inclusion device to engage young people of colour.

Lastly, I met and interviewed Liv Wynter, an artist and activist from South London, invited by TL's curatorial team to present at TE in January 2017. They[118] have assisted in the development of community projects across Liverpool including 'Womxn is Work' (2018) at the Foundation of Art and Creative Technology in collaboration with Grrrl Power Liverpool and 'HOW MUCH ARE THEY PAYING YOU?' (Wynter, 2016) at The Royal Standard, an artist-led studio and gallery in Toxteth. Formerly, Liv was *Artist in Residence* at Tate Modern until they publicly resigned to oppose the disputed views of Director Maria Balshaw[119] (Mclaughlin, 2018, no pagination). I invited Liv to contribute due to their organised interventions at Tate Modern under the collective; WHERE IS ANA MENDIETA? whose purpose is; 'to draw attention to the erasure of women from art spaces'[120] (Wynter, 2017). Liv's work exploring exclusivity and inclusivity in language made them a crucial interviewee.

Including *critical friends* in this research allows for further examination of those who hold values and beliefs in opposition to "neutral" institutions.[121] Each interviewee embodies

[118] Liv identifies as gender non-conforming and therefore uses the pronouns 'they/them/their'.

[119] This interview was undertaken prior to Liv taking up the post at Tate Modern and therefore their resignation was not a foreseen motive for the interview.

[120] The protest was organised by Wynter 'as an angry gesture in solidarity with her [Ana Mendieta]' (Liv Wynter, 2017) and to critique Tate Modern's choice to include a work by Carl Andre; *Equivalent VIII* (1966) for their inaugural exhibition at the new Tate Modern wing - Switch House - in 2016. The artwork and imagined emancipatory device was carried out on the opening night of the new building and made use of Ana Mendieta's death as a symbol to demonstrate institutional silence on politicized histories including sexual and physical violence against women, focusing predominantly on women of colour. (Mclaughlin, R. (2018) *Ana Mendieta: Artist or Martyr? :ArtReview*: ArtReview Ltd.)

[121] In an interview, Lindsey Fryer referred to TL as a neutral site of enquiry, without any kind of party or political view.

the role of 'artivism' (Mouffe, 2013b, pp.69) to 'contribute to the subversion and destabilisation of the hegemonic neoliberal consensus' (ibid) through their interests in communicating with publics. Through my observations, I theorise this group's work as a critical device due to their refusal to assume neutral positions and for their potential to further expand on the traditional role of artist-educators.

4.2. Interpreting the public collection: Word Clouds

In this section I consider the current written interpretation for *Constellations* as the principal tool for public engagement with the collection. Concentrating on the collection is significant due to two ideals prioritised by CC; to develop public ownership[122] and collective empowerment. For Alison;

> *There's ownership, knowledge, inclusion, and empowerment. If we go back to ownership, that's very much because we house the National Collection, everybody who pays their tax own the collection. It's about encouraging people to come in and get involved in gallery activity, but so they feel that they have that emotional connection to the collection.*

These objectives were articulated by Alison when discussing TL's motivation to develop their constituencies to include local people who might 'see it [TL] as a tourist destination, something [that is] not for them'. In Alison's view, caring for the national collection means that Tate is obliged to engage with the local community 'because everybody who pays their tax owns the collection'. Alison's view contradicts Francesco's for whom debunking public ownership of the collection is a crucial mission (Manacorda et al., 2014, 01:40). Instead, he suggests that institutions might develop processes to transfer binary ownership to an emotional and

[122] Shared ownership is commonly cited as an objective for museums wanting to engage with their local communities. Along with sharing power and active participation, it is an objective that is not restricted to contemporary art and its institutions and can be found as an ideal across the cultural sector (Fouseki, K. (2010) 'Community voices, curatorial choices': community consultation for the 1807 exhibitions. *museum and society*, 8 (3), pp.180-192.).

productive reconfiguration (Manacorda et al., 2014, 01:41). Wright infers a direct correspondence in this debate;

> *Ownership describes a legal institution that codifies a relationship of exclusivity with respect to an object, or any property construed to be an object, in terms of rights and control.* (Wright, 2013, pp.45)

Arguing for visitors to be configured as users of collections instead of owners, Wright considers ownership as a mediator for exclusion and control. Consequently, discussing ownership as an objective for exchanges with communities emphasises the lingering principles of modernity and restricts institutions from renewing their passive relationship with publics.

Citing the late economist Elinor Ostrom, essayist Matthew Stadler suggests that 'common-resource pools'[123] such as literature – or collections – might exchange ownership for tools of belonging (Stadler, 2013, pp.179). For example, instead of seeing the collection at TL as publicly owned, we could regard it as a 'shared space of meaning' (ibid). This philosophy confirms the prominent idea that art is socially and constituently produced (Wolff, 1981, pp.93). In his theory, the collection may not be described as being owned by an institution to be shared with the public. Instead, we must reconsider art as Barthes considers text where 'it is language which speaks, not the author' (Barthes, 1977, pp.142). This would mean renegotiating art as a communicator of multiple meanings 'issuing from several cultures and entering into dialogue with each other' (pp.148). Thus, I argue against public ownership as an ideal to aim for – and this transverses across authors that attempt to give a 'true' meaning to art; artists as authors, curators as authors or interpreters as authors.

[123] In this instance, by understanding knowledge as common goods such as art and literature are also theorised and aligned with non-subtractive 'common-pools' where 'the more people who share useful knowledge, the greater the common good' (Pp.5). Finite, traditional 'common-pools' might be associated with subtractive commons such as a forest or a fishery (Hess, C., Ostrom, E. and Ostrom, E. (2006) *Understanding Knowledge as a Commons : From Theory to Practice*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.)

Stadler also suggests 'where we used to speak of ownership, we should now speak of belonging' (Stadler, 2013, pp.179). If we are to replace TL's ideal of ownership with belonging; because we collectively make up their multiple meanings to produce greater common goods (Hess, Ostrom and Ostrom, 2006, pp.5); usership is emphasised because 'increased use breeds increased resources' (Stadler, 2013, pp.177). In Francesco's view, word clouds were implemented to reconfigure public ownership via the co-production of new, multiple meanings. Using this mechanism users are not treated as spectators, audiences or visitors (Manacorda, 2016, pp.7). Therefore, it is crucial to analyse word clouds as a device for usership by asking how people use them. The next section investigates their potential to be used as productive devices.

Via interviews with staff I learnt that the definition of interpretation at TL is broad. Comprising tours, audio guides, programmed events, multimedia guides, website programmes, smart-phone apps (Scott, 2013, no pagination) and the programme at TE, its breadth contributes to create a picture of plurality. However, due to the convergence of textual interpretation with public collaboration, word clouds are the object of this investigation based on questionnaire responses that investigated how people use interpretative tools in collections. Through which I found that 45.2% of 104 publics consider wall-based textual devices extremely or very important to their experience in collections. Another 41.35% claimed that they are 'somewhat important'.[124] For Francesco, the use of language has a crucial role in re-thinking the collection at TL;

> *For [Constellations] the language used needed to be much more, not accessible, but much more broken down than traditional interpretation allowed it to be. Then the invitation to generate the knowledge into the rooms needed to be clarified.*

This poses a paradox; how do museums make language accessible without 'lowering the textual complexity of the collection and artwork?' (Manacorda, 2016, Pp.5). This question is

[124] See appendices P for survey outcomes.

echoed across the field (Barr, 2005, pp.98)[125] and was emphasised constantly in conversation with professionals.

One interaction stands out particularly when a colleague working in education shook her head and sighed 'if one more person asks me the "dumbing down" question, I'll go mad!'; her voice conveyed exasperation and exhaustion. Through this exchange it was inferred that this debate is ongoing, though it has been argued since the emergence of Britain's New Labour contested social inclusion policies in 1997 (Sandell, 2003, pp.47). Representing a backlash, the publication *Art for All?: Their Policies and Our Culture* (Wallinger and Warnock, 2000) was produced and edited by a cohort of intellectuals 'who see in them [policies] an oversimplification or dumbing down of complex ideas and artworks' (Barr, 2005, pp.98). Through the publication, a principal case is argued; that the introduction of new policies spell the complete integration of capitalist objectives to increase consumption of art and their institutions (Hetherington, 2000, pp.450) by using 'the fantasy language of the new elite' (Ryan, 2000, pp.16). Though their conjecture is supported by the neoliberal trend for participatory museums to be reduced to sites for consumption (Mouffe, 2013b, pp.70), Mouffe reminds us that art institutions could play a part in rearticulating counter-hegemonic struggles through neglected voices of the dominant discourse (pp.71). This is supported by gallery educator Liz Ellis who implicates the editors of *Art for All?* in the further marginalisation of groups who feel like they don't 'belong' in museums (Ellis, 2002, pp.42) due to 'the complete absence of any but the curatorial voice from their displays' (O'Neill, 2004, pp.198). Ellis points to the numbers of female gallery educators and learning teams to argue the covert sexism of the 'dumbing down debate'. Campaigners of which also claim that learning teams facilitate soft and interpersonal social work (ibid), while their counterparts maintain 'the spirit of intellectual experimentation' (Furedi, 2003, no pagination).

[125] This argument is summarised concisely by adult education expert Jean Barr when she suggests that the critics of social inclusion policy - like sociologist Frank Ferudi, who wrote 'Where have all the intellectuals gone?' (Furedi, F. (2006) *Where Have All the Intellectuals Gone?: Confronting 21st Century Philistinism*. Bloomsbury Publishing.) – should at least 'listen to and talk to others who are unlike himself' (Barr, J. (2005) Dumbing down intellectual culture: Frank Furedi, lifelong learning and museums. *museum and society*, 3 (2), pp.98-114.) to counter his argument that criticizes the understanding that 'there is no universal truth' popularized by Foucault (Furedi, F. (2006) *Where Have All the Intellectuals Gone?: Confronting 21st Century Philistinism*. Bloomsbury Publishing. pp.4).

Provocatively, the debate calls into question the representation of public knowledge; how it might be collected and displayed. Some have suggested that 'perhaps it is *expertise* rather than conservation of objects' (Barr, 2005, pp.104) that is at stake when considering their representation. For this research, a question is raised over art's hegemonic narrative. What might the insertion of public voices - and importantly, their language - do to authority within the linear manifestation of contemporary and modern art history? Will expert and curatorial knowledge be devalued? These questions reveal themselves in analysing technical language in TL's collections – informed by social inclusion discourses (participation, engagement, community) and the technical sphere (abjection, uncanny, sublime). Recently in museum research, language use is queried by illuminating its problems (Louise, 2015, pp.9-12), unpacking terms (Kinsley, Middleton and Moore, 2016, pp.57), integrating new roles[126] (Blunden, 2014, pp.1) and creating opportunities for 'playing with words' (Patel et al., 2016, pp.69). This section challenges the productivity of word clouds by interrogating their use and their potential to create public belongingness.

4.2.1. 'HABITUS' AS A METHODOLOGY FOR CRITIQUE

Renowned sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's conception of 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1984, pp.170) is critical in the investigation of 'belonging' in the world of contemporary art. Determined by social class, habitus is one reason that people might feel discomfort in a collection because of how norms have been constructed around them, influenced by their lived experience and individual trajectory (Bourdieu, Darbel and Schnapper, 1990, pp.111-2). Speaking from my own experience, a reason that I am comfortable in museums and in their critique is because I have

[126] Linguistic and museum professional Jennifer Blunden recently developed and assumed the role of 'linguist in residence' at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Sydney, Australia. When undertaking the role her objective was to put words – instead of works – under the microscope to understand them better. (Blunden, J. (2014) Language Under the Microscope: A Linguist in Residence. *Museum Education and Public Practice* [online],

Available at: https://www.academia.edu/11839171/Language_under_the_microscope_a_linguist-in-residence_at_the_Metropolitan_Museum_of_Art

[Accessed: 20/03/14])

been socialised – or 'inculcated'[127] (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991, pp.51) – to accept and use them from a young age. In Bourdieu's theory, I feel accepted because I find myself legitimated by my privilege (Bourdieu, Darbel and Schnapper, 1990, pp.113) which has been oriented and reflected by how individuals speak, think, and act in particular contexts. This is also conjectured by my gender and sexuality which could affect my 'bodily hexis' (Thompson, 1991, pp.13) to speak and act differently from the dominant discourse. Thus, habitus can be understood as an embodied and cognitive way to describe belonging or not belonging; or to 'know your place in the world' (Waite, 2013, pp.427). Of course, this does not prevent barrier-crossing in collections, but it can confirm our internalised beliefs that signal where and when we are welcome.

To further understand habitus and the codes maintained by contemporary art through discourse, it is important to describe cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984, pp.17). This can be understood via Bourdieu in three forms. The first is embodied and can be demonstrated by investments in the self 'in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body' (1986, pp.17). The second is objectified and can be demonstrated by physical cultural goods such as books and artworks (ibid); and our understanding. The third state refers to the institutionalisation of objectification via symbolic accreditation (i.e. educational qualification or cultural job) (Grenfell and Hardy, 2007, pp.30). From surveying recent research, museum text is described by researchers as an object of cultural capital (Lahav, 2011, pp.28). My research takes this suggestion one step further by theorising that museum text is decoded more effectively by those with an institutionalised stock of cultural capital. Having studied for both a Bachelor's and Master's degree I accept the discourses used by institutions of modern art. Accordingly, this research is configured through a broad range of contributors to identify discourses that assume competency 'associated with the ability to decode or recognise the field' (Newman, Goulding and Whitehead, 2013, pp.460) that create COPs and those outside them.

[127] Inculcation describes a gradual process of habitus that is constructed via socialisation 'in which early childhood experiences are particularly important ' (Thompson, J.B. (1991) Editor's Introduction. In: Bourdieu, P. and Thompson, J. B. (ed.) *Language and symbolic power.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. pp. pp.1-31.).

Understanding that habitus and cultural capital influence public interpretations of contemporary art is significant when analysing TL's word clouds (Silva, 2006, pp.141-158). This is due to the generation of 'dialectic connections' (Manacorda et al., 2014) made between text, artwork and people. This is supported by Bourdieu for whom linguistic expressions are produced relationally in response to contexts and objects (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991, pp.18). Through this research I have found that it is precisely those contexts and objects that silence publics because 'speakers lacking the legitimate competence are *de facto* excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence' (pp.55).

In this research, I refer to word clouds as one of the influencing objects and unknown words as cues for exclusion. This is demonstrated later in the thesis in workshops where publics ask; 'what does that even mean?!' Their contributions contradict the potential for word clouds to produce plurality and different 'ways of classifying and appreciating art' (Newman, Goulding and Whitehead, 2013, pp.476). Consequently, I suggest that habitus could be a productive device for producing divergent knowledge due to its confrontation with taste, class, social mobility, gender, age and ethnicity to counter hegemony (pp.458). Hence, in this thesis, I regard the collection as 'a market on which the products of linguistic competence are offered' (Bourdieu, 1977, pp.647).

In Bourdieu's theory, discourse is legitimised by powerful bodies (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991, pp.19). Hence, linguistic capital operates accumulatively to benefit speakers that possess multiple stocks of communicative capital acquired via sociocultural experiences (Yosso, 2005, pp.75). At TL, actors of ultimate legitimacy are those who have secured a 'profit of distinction'[128] (Thompson, 1991, pp.18) to legitimise artworks, artists and ideas. For example, 'legitimacy in the field of contemporary visual art is defined by those who have dominant field positions, such as certain artists, curators and critics' (Newman, Goulding and Whitehead, 2013, pp.460); they decide the dominant discourse. Those who have accumulated minimal linguistic capital (i.e. "ordinary people") (Thumin, 2010, pp.291) are not able to

[128] 'Profit of distinction' is theorised as a goal of maximum profit, and is associated with actors negotiating their field with ease and naturalness (Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. pp.139).

operate equally. In reality, the linguistic marketplace of contemporary art is inherently undemocratic; its discourse acts as a vehicle for unexplored power dynamics (Kinsley, Middleton and Moore, 2016, pp.57). Subsequently, positing word clouds as devices for knowledge production to contribute to the 'learning machine' (Manacorda et al., 2014) – as Francesco puts it – raises substantial barriers. This is confirmed by Bourdieu, for whom;

> *Only a few have the real possibility of benefiting from the theoretical possibility, generously offered to all, of taking advantage of the works exhibited in museums.* (Bourdieu and Johnson, 1993, pp. 234)

This sentiment is echoed by a critical friend when prompted about the efficiency of word clouds and their co-production capability;

> *People find the word clouds difficult, obscure and a complete barrier (...) Even when I would draw the Tate curators into conversation about them, their capacity to explain them or to reveal them was extremely limited.*

This example demonstrates how word clouds can affect experiences in the collection. In this view, a barrier manifested by the lack of context given to describe, explain and justify the words used to create them. Linguistic capital also explains how curatorial knowledge and their technical language integrate in word clouds because it is 'only possible for individuals to see within (…) their own system and their own identity' (Lahav, 2011, pp.30).[129] Subsequently word clouds create COPs due to their legitimisation of cultural workers, artists and curators, whilst also creating a gentle, invisible form of exclusion of anyone deemed other (Thapar-Björkert, Samelius and Sanghera, 2016, pp.149). This is supported by testimonials[130] of those who feel exclusion subjectively due to the absence of tools to decode language. Through analysing word clouds by employing discourse theory, I created four themes; 1. Words that were

[129] While there are procedures in place to prohibit the uses of technical language at TL such as the 'Tone of Voice Guidelines', technical words manage to creep into the common vocabulary due to assumptions that are made by their authors.

[130] See appendix P for survey responses.

unrecognisable to me, 2. Problem-laden words informed by the field, 3. Semantically conspicuous words[131] (Van DIJK, 1980, no pagination), 4. 'Technical language' (Mills, 2017, no pagination; Waldmeier, 2017b, 07:22). This process is described in the PAR project as the 'doing' stage and is described in Chapter Three.

4.2.2. WORD CLOUDS: MEANING-MAKING OR KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION?

The literature suggests that TL is a noteworthy contributor in co-production and representing equal knowledge (Campolmi, 2017, pp.81). From interviews with professionals, I learnt that word clouds were initially formed to 'develop a capacity for intellectual freedom' (Sitzia, 2018, pp.74). Informed by the 'critical pedagogy' (Lambert, 2012, pp.211-227) of Jacques Rancière[132], Francesco posits his theory of 'equality and intelligence as synonymous terms' (Rancière, 1991, pp.73) to progress museum learning based on constructivism[133] (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000, pp.13). Francesco explains;

> *So the principle was like can we design rooms in Constellations whereby whether you have knowledge or not, you can still ask the right questions. The equality is in the ability*

[131] For example, the word 'functionality' was raised by a member of Community Collective as a 'pretend word'.

[132] Too, word clouds were influenced by the thinking of philosopher Walter Benjamin who suggests 'constellations' as the notion that 'ideas are to objects as constellations are to stars' (Auerbach, A. (2007) Imagine no metaphors: the dialectical image of Walter Benjamin. *Image [&] Narrative* [online], (18),

Available at: http://www.imageandnarrative.be/thinking_pictures/auerbach.htm

[Accessed: 21/06/19], no pagination). Sociologist Theodor W. Adorno expands on Benjamin's constellations theory to explore the related 'dialectical image' (Helmling, S. (2003) Constellation and Critique: Adorno's Constellation, Benjamin's Dialectical Image. *Postmodern Culture*, 14 (1). no pagination). In interviews with professionals, these theoretical infrastructures support the creation of Francesco's curation of Constellations and his word clouds as critical models for mediation.

[133] Opposing the transmission model of learning, constructivist learning considers knowledge as independently created through personal, social, intellectual and physical access, George Hein's *Constructivist Museum* also highlights the importance of 'prior knowledge' in learning situations

(Hein, G.E. (1998) *Learning in the museum*. Abingdon: Routledge. Pp.155)

to generate questions rather than in the ability to answer with facts or with the existing interpretations.

Belonging to radically different institutions, it is important to elucidate 'knowledge production' from 'meaning-making'. Recently, it has been argued that knowledge production might empower and emancipate learners from their dependence on explication through its collaborative philosophy that creates knowledge between equals (Sitzia, 2018, pp.75). On the other hand, meaning-making focusses on the transference of information via an object-oriented decision made by curators - or what Rancière might call the explicative method (Rancière, 1991, pp.12). As a whole, knowledge production focusses on the experience of learners rather than the value of the art-object (Sitzia, 2018, pp.78). Rancière uses a text book 'in the hands of a student' (Rancière, 1991, pp.4) to show us that explication does not create understanding. In his view, restrictions to learning comprise the learner's will to understand and their capacity for emancipation because 'there is a will that commands and an intelligence that obeys' (pp.25). Emphasising this, Rancière describes how receivers of explication might leave the classroom with poorly digested knowledge (pp.7). Meanwhile, learners who learn through dialogue, practice and use are able to retain concepts, words and theories. Steyerl, when citing translator Aileen Derieg in her article *International Disco Latin* (2013, no pagination), supports Rancière by arguing against the simplification of language due to the assumption that 'the person reading it can't be bothered to make an effort to understand anything they don't already know' (Steyerl, 2013, no pagination). Hence, Rancière's approach has been celebrated across the field for its approach that 'assumes a degree of equality' (Bell and Pahl, 2018, pp.111).

In practice, Rancière's theories haven't translated well via word clouds. This is a subject of contention for Francesco, for whom;

I'm still not totally sure that we got it right now. We had moments in which that [the] experiment worked fine, like you know, we first of all opened all the constellations with curatorial knowledge (…) Which to a certain extent works but also doesn't work because at the moment, if you go and see, it's really much more fragmented.

Altogether, word clouds were created in several stages. The first saw word clouds created by the curatorial team to inform the institutional narrative (Bal and Janssen, 1996; Sitzia, 2018, pp.78). Francesco describes the second attempt to represent critical pedagogy via inviting 'different people to reinterpret every constellation' with the view to integrate them to become 'the official word cloud that was on the walls'. The third produced a digital, user-generated constellation[134] 'that would allow people to come up with constellations' with the aim to challenge the supremacy of expert knowledge. This is what Francesco refers to when he cites the fragmentation of the word clouds which he sees as 'a sort of collective scholarship'. When interviewing Francesco, he describes Constellations as an experiment in equitable knowledge production;

> *Essentially what I think I was trying to do with constellation was trying to design a tool that would enable those people who don't have the expertise of writing art history to still be able to participate in the, a sort of collective scholarship.*

However, complications concerning agency and transparency intervene in Francesco's methodology. This is due TL's failure to understand that 'education cannot be neutral' (Giroux, 2010, pp.718). Influenced by Freire (2000), Giroux elaborates on critical pedagogy as a practice that expands 'the capacities necessary for human agency' (Giroux, 2010, pp.718). Whilst Francesco's ideology towards equity of intelligence is a radical one, word clouds have yet to create an efficient co-production model due to their non-confrontation with educational biases; theory problematised by sociologists Freire and Bourdieu.

The efficacy of TL's current methodology is restricted by the lack of agency that users have over them. This is confirmed by how they were initially authored - meaning that ongoing maintenance of clouds is required to integrate user-generated words. When reviewing the literature I learnt that the integration of user-generated knowledge 'was not repeated more than a couple of times, and did not become integral to the museum's curatorial approach' (Campolmi, 2017, pp.77). Meanwhile, TL's curatorial ethics are referred to positively due to

[134] See appendix B for example of the digital word cloud.

their construction of a new tool that facilitates the togetherness of user-generated and expert knowledge (pp.81). Identifying these contrasting narratives has been important to examine institutional transparency and to emphasise the lack of agency that public voices have in the collection, despite the co-productive work undertaken. Additionally, due to the lack of any public authorship, I was unable to follow up with any contributors of the initial experiment. This emphasises the potential productivity of sharing authorship to disrupt the dominant discourse. Consequently, I demonstrate several problems that collections have with taking up critical pedagogy as an ethical practice, requiring increased visibility and representation.

It has been argued that *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (1987) is symbolic of Rancière's complete rejection of Bourdieu's construction of habitus. Theoretically he argues that Bourdieuian discourse promotes the idea that people with less cultural capital 'do not succeed academically because they cannot formulate scholarly discourse, as a consequence of their habitus' (Pelletier, 2009a, pp.145). Alternatively, Rancière argues that people 'do not succeed academically because their discourse is not treated or 'heard' as scholarly' (ibid). Whilst I theorise Bourdieu's account of habitus and cultural capital to describe how publics respond to collection discourse, I use Rancière's account to expand Bourdieu's to argue how we might multiply discourses to 'reduce the authoritative, elite and object-based quality of museums' (Jung, 2014, pp.332-3). In addition, it has been noted that Rancière's assumption of equality, whether regarding knowledge or otherwise, is likely to be undercut when 'co-producers are from disadvantaged, marginalised or oppressed communities' (Bell and Pahl, 2018, pp.111). This is supported by feminist approaches that recognise in Bourdieu's work 'great importance in the task of identifying the hidden conditions of existence of intellectual communities that have prided themselves upon their openness and objectivity' (Lovell, 2000, pp.27). For the purposes of this research, Bourdieu allows me to identify and critique symbolic 'gestures of welcome' (Meszaros, 2008, pp.159) such as word clouds. Whilst Rancière permits the production of a common language. Uniting the scholarship of Rancière and Bourdieu might seem controversial due to their oppositional viewpoints, but by employing co-production through the PAR study I create an area for praxis where common discourse may produce equitable plurality.

4.2.3. Digital and Web Mediation

Digital technologies and web mediation offer routes to hypermediate discourse (Patel et al., 2016, pp.69) and are considered potentially transformational in collections. Development of devices to assist transitions from meaning-making to knowledge production are particularly useful due to their communicative properties that enable 'limitless creative exploration of the notions of "producer" and "consumer"' (Kidd, 2011, pp.65).[135] Likewise, it is understood that their implementation might create increased collaboration with publics to anew and represent co-produced knowledge. At TL, the digitisation of word clouds demonstrates this. In 2016, a tablet was installed in the Lowry constellation to facilitate user-led input via the submission of words to the word cloud to represent practices influenced by Rancière. Mike Pinnington recalls;

> *A new digital interactive word cloud has been installed in a display triggered by a L.S. Lowry work, so that we can hear directly from our audience rather than via a curatorial mediator.*

This method determines a new strategy to embed co-produced knowledge on the physical walls of the collection. Via the tool, publics are encouraged to enter their own word-based responses to the constellation of artworks into a pre-existing word cloud. For example, in the

[135] An example of this is the online platform *Broadcasting the Archive* that currently acts as a toolkit to 're-activate and mediate the Arte Útil's archive within and beyond the museum's context' to ensure the legacy of the project after *Museum of Arte Útil* at Van Abbemuseum closed in 2014. The project works on multiple levels; not only providing meaning-making much like a physical collection may do, but also producing knowledge immediately via the web using online multimedia such as PDFs, articles, videos and guided tours that offer 'publics a way to break the physical walls of the institution'. Crucially, BTA represents co-production by inviting users to propose their own projects to be included in the archive, albeit if policed by a board of experts. Although this project does successfully generate new knowledge around a collection – to activate the archive with a printable PDF resource – it is not without an invitation. Here, further interrogation is needed if we are to understand the hegemonic power struggle that exists in relation to 'gift-giving' from 'service and how digital technologies could traverse this border at TL toward a reflexive process of knowledge production. (Medina Estupiñan, G. and Saviotti, A. (2016) Broadcasting the archive. *Arte Útil* [blog], 14/06/2018
Available at: http://www.arte-util.org/studies/broadcasting-the-archive/
[Accessed: 14/06/2018]. no pagination)

Lowry constellation, words such as industry, labour, class and the city were initially embedded. Originally intended to be accessible via user-owned smartphones or tablets via a URL; the software allows for discourses associated with the collection to be multiplied and dislodged using quantitative data. This is significant due to the algorithm in the programme that allows for word popularity to establish alternative hierarchies via the inflation of repeated words or the disappearance of unpopular words. This method prioritises crowd-sourced content that opposes the traditional hierarchy system that prioritises rational agents.[136] For Mike, this digitisation intends to override all discourses prescribed by rational agents to rupture the collection's authoritative narrative (Kidd, 2011, pp.65). Thus, as Mike suggests, making 'it necessary for us to revisit our in-house wall text with the aim of acknowledging the new words – and therefore new links identified by visitors'. To date, in July 2019, this has yet to take place.

Largely, the analysis of word clouds is one-sided due to the production of research led by Francesco and Tate-aligned academics; Dany Louise (2015), Hannah Niblett (2015) and Irene Campolmi (2017). The conference panel *Radical Museology: Working with the Collection* (2016) chaired by Claire Bishop, is just one example where Francesco concentrates on the emancipatory implications of the clouds without rigorously engaging with the experiences of users. Additionally, articles written to create research on collaborative exhibition design fail to draw from public interactions (Manacorda, 2016; Campolmi, 2017). Correspondingly, I enquire into the discursive differences between user-generated and curatorial word clouds. The diagrams on the next page demonstrate this.

[136] Similarly, this is reflected in discourse analysis and its associated programmes like NVivo and mentimeter, which have been useful tools in the development of the research.

Curatorial:

User-generated[137]:

[137] This word cloud is a visual reproduction of the user-generated word cloud that Francesco presented at *Radical Museology: Working with the Collection* at Nottingham Contemporary in 2014. I recreated the word cloud using mentimeter to provide a like-for-like diagram of the word cloud.

The diagrams were created in response to Marina Abramović's 1974 work *Rhythm 0*[138] in 2013.[139] Predictably, there are few overlaps between them. Crucially, the discourse produced by users refers to arts capacity to produce emotional discourse via experiential language (stress, communicate, extreme); unlike the technical terminology produced by curatorial teams (feminism, performative and body as material). This observation supports the argument that visual art produces other forms of knowledge acquisition to generate discourse that reflects emotional and relational thinking through images (Maharaj, 2009, pp.4). From analysing the results, one might suggest that they reflect the discourse of ordinary people – using what Foucault calls 'discursive formation'[140] – that takes into account public consumption of language. Included in this are words associated with the production of creativity (provocative, contradiction) and empathy (exploitation, sinister) (Gokcigdem, 2016, pp.89). This is demonstrated by descriptive terms that reveal the attitudes, knowledge and identities of users that produced them; and contradicts the authorial voice of rational agents. These findings are important in fostering experiences that shape people's morals, interests and values, as the boundaries between collections and people blur (Soren, 2009, pp.235).

[138] The artwork *Rhythm 0* comprises seventy-two objects and sixty-nine slides displayed on a table. The slides are projected onto the gallery wall from a projector which sits on a stand. A framed description of a performance of the same name also accompanies the objects. The slides document the performance that took place at Studio Morra in Naples in 1974 and the objects replicate the original props used, which she instructed should be used on her by participants. Objects include a gun, lipstick, flowers, bread, a kitchen knife, a hat, a chair and a flute; to name a few. (Tate. *Rhythm 0* [online]
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/abramovic-rhythm-0-t14875
[Accessed: 27/03/2019])

[139] It is worth noting that in this instance, the word cloud was produced via person-to-person conversations with 15 members of the public and a facilitator, instead of using a digital device.

[140] Foucault's definition of discursive formation relates to his understanding of language to provide a vehicle to produce knowledge (Hobbs, M. (2008) On discourse and representation: reflections on Michel Foucault's contribution to the study of the mass media. . *Annual Conference of the Australian Sociological Association University of Melbourne* [online],

Available at: https://nova.newcastle.edu.au/vital/access/services/Download/uon:6048/ATTACHMENT01?view=true

[Accessed: 28/06/2019] pp.7). whilst taking into account the discourse that people consume via physical and online media; articles, newspapers, blogs and forums (Rodney, S. (2015) *Museums, discourse, and visitors: the case of London's Tate Modern*. Doctorate thesis PhD, Birkbeck, University of London. pp.22-3).

In the long-term, integration of user-generated content at TL did not continue within *Constellations*. Across the field, resistance to the integration of public content is justified via complaints over increasing workloads, the introduction of further policy and even the view that they may intimidate users (Fisher, 2008, no pagination). Differently, I'd argue that institutional authority is antagonised by integration (Saunders, 2014, pp.1-13). Emerging from this is Rancière's view of discourse as 'mésentente'; 'which signifies through alliterative opposition: "disagreement", rather than mis-knowing' (Pelletier, 2009b, pp.275) – as theorised by Bourdieu. Due to differences in the envisioned word cloud and the actual results, hesitation to represent public discourse reveals a propensity to delegitimise public vocabulary – as something other than speech, like 'noise, or as ventriloquism' (Pelletier, 2009b, pp.276). For Rancière, mésentente represents a different type of knowing. Whereas the non-integration, non-identification and misrepresentation of public speech could reveal an ideology associated with Bourdieu's 'mis-knowing' (Pelletier, 2009b, pp.275) or, what it means to speak against hegemony. Theorised by Rancière, mésentente explains why minoritarian voices are not truly heard by producers of dominant discourses. This rescinds any potential toward Mouffe's model of agonistic plurality.

In the essay *For Whom Do We Write Exhibitions? Towards a Museum as Commons* (2016), Francesco draws methodological similarities between the digital word cloud and Wikipedia to collaborate with 'lay persons' (Oeberst et al., 2017, pp.1). This possibility of crowd-sourcing content at TL supports the Rancièrian ideal to offer possibilities to disrupt 'categories in educational practice' (Pelletier, 2009b, pp.281). By 'tapping the wisdom of crowds to solve complex problems' (Tripathi and Khazanchi, 2016, pp.1), Francesco emphasises his desire to 'turn exhibitions into pedagogical environments in which questions are asked and answers are constantly renegotiated' (Manacorda, 2016, pp.6). In the data collected, Francesco notes that digital word clouds did not engage users in the way that the team hoped;

> *Like a lot of words, there are not many words that become bigger because the sort people generate allow for repetition. I think, that's what they're trying to come up with, new ideas. So I'm not sure that that is the best way of visualising the ambition of generating knowledge with the audience but that was the ambition.*

Since 'people generally did not allow for repetition', 'not many words became bigger' because users did not use the algorithm to create multiple tags. Like Wikipedia, user's habits produced new knowledge rather than bolstering preconceived ideas. Consequently, inputted information overloads the mechanism because 'everyone can speak' (Benkler, 2007, pp.10) and therefore, 'no one can be heard' (ibid). Popularised by critics of the internet's democratic offer, it is argued that this phenomenon creates unmanageable quantities of data to fragment discourse and create polarisation (pp.234-5). In the case of word clouds, surplus data is produced with discursively little common ground; also known as 'semantic diversity'[141] (Shi et al., 2019b, pp.7). Subsequently, the automated algorithm systematically banks data instead of creating it publicly. In summary, we are left with a system of gatekeeping that consumes and stores user-generated information.[142]

From surveying the literature, gatekeeping data is omnipresent across the world-wide web, collections and knowledge banks (Gregson et al., 2015, pp.7). It has been argued that early Wikipedia editors allowed for 'the prejudices and ignorance of its creators' (Cohen, 2008, no pagination) due to over policing that imposed on the generation of information. Despite the promise that online social networking platforms could democratise diverse information (Brabazon, 2008, pp.226-7) due to inbuilt biases and collaborative filtering users must pass through 'macro-gatekeepers' (Laidlaw, 2015, pp.52) to generate information. Additionally, we see this in collections attempting to emulate 2.0 processes; where curators are consistently described similarly due to their active decision-making responsibilities (Acord, 2009, pp.19). As we have already seen, this prevents user-generated content from entering word clouds in the collection due to fear that the addition of voices will attack 'standards, professionalism and scholarship' (Flinn, 2010a, no pagination).[143]

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[141] Semantic diversity refers to words that cover a wide range of contexts on diverse topics. On the other hand, lexical diversity captures the number of ways people discuss distinctive topics by talking more about less (Shi, F., Teplitskiy, M., Duede, E. and Evans, J.A. (2019b) The wisdom of polarized crowds. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 3, pp.329–336).

[142] On asking for the data collected from the device, I was told that it would not be possible for me to access them due to privacy regulations.

[143] An illustration of this was problematised in an interaction during the conference *Do It Together: Participatory Governance in Cultural Institutions* (2017) in Rijeka, Croatia. After presenting my research I was asked whether my proposal to integrate multiple - 'non-expert' - interpretations might undermine the value of collections. Through connecting the crowd-sourcing

Since the early 2000s, Wikipedia's editing pool has expanded exponentially. Recent research suggests that the cooperation of ideologically diverse groups might produce more meaningful content than homogeneous groups (Swain, 2019, pp.10). One study explores the talk pages of Wikipedia – 'where the work of editing and debate occurs' (Shi et al., 2019a, pp.2) – to illustrate the construction of 'an environment through which motivated conflicts' (pp.12) can create constructive processes of knowledge production. Titled *The Wisdom of Polarized Crowds* (Shi et al., 2019a), the article proposes that lexical diversity is created when discussing contested subjects with diverse editors with high levels of motivation (pp.7). This finding creates plausibility for TL to develop Wikipedia's editing pool as a case study for user-driven content. Such a proposition is contingent on an increase in the number of editors 'with balanced and diverse perspectives' (pp.12) to create quality user-generated content. At TL, this would suggest the loosening of gatekeeper's role in decision-making due to the understanding that 'it is possible to contribute authenticity, without demanding authority' (Trant, 2008, pp.290). Secondly, Tate must acknowledge that 'ordinary people are (…) not compensated for information taken from them' (Lanier, 2013, no pagination). Thus, acknowledgement and remuneration are vital to create a community of motivated players to contribute toward co-authorship.

In summary, in analysing word clouds I created praxis to undertake PAR with users. Utilising these initial enquiries, focused provocations and guidelines emerge to create a fruitful collaborative enquiry which focusses on remuneration via authorship and the multiplication of collaboration with diverse groups to produce meaningful outputs. By accessing motivated players – users and active agents – TPG is developed via cross-collaboration where recognising difference creates new knowledge (Wright, 2008, no pagination).

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methodology and Wikipedia, a peer suggested that the method might even produce mistrust and create further divides between publics and the institution (May, C. (2010) Openness in academic publication: The question of trust, authority and reliability. *Prometheus*, 28 (1), pp.91-94.

, Roberts, P. and Peters, M.A. (2011) From Castalia to Wikipedia: openness and closure in knowledge communities. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 8 (1), pp.36-46.). In response I argued that due to art's interpretability, making sense of an art object is a discursive process which benefits from multiple and even contradictory interpretation. On reflection, this was a critical point for my research because it emphasized the ideological differences between cultures of authority and usership. Too, the focus on crowd-sourced information enabled me to concentrate on trust and mistrust in my analysis.

4.3. Thematic Analysis

In the following analysis, there is a focus on ethical responsibility and institutional transparency. These themes emerged from interviews with professionals to shape the thesis when questioning institutional memory. In interviews, it was my priority to ascertain how the public collection could be used as a common resource. Word clouds were not such a focus for these interviews but investigating possibilities and limitations for user-generated content was discussed. Due to the literature concerning power distribution and authority-sharing, I explored the roles that staff members play in facilitating new methods to co-write text. Consequently, the terms 'curator', 'authority' and 'expertise' are prominent.

Differently for critical friends, interviews were informed by practice. Also semi-structured, our conversations examine their motivations when working with communities to interpret art. When devising the interview questions for critical friends, I considered their experience in broadening the scope of interpretation to integrate public dialogues.

4.3.1. Professionals; Memory, Ethics and Transparency

Traditionally, museum ethics pertain to a 'code of norms and rules that museum curators and staff (…) follow for the good of the institution's operation' (Campolmi, 2016, pp.70). As collections move toward dialogue-focussed practices their responsibilities need to be negotiated to integrate 'difficult topics'; including the absense and presence of voices and communities (Tali, 2017, pp.28). Due to pressures for museums to act as agents of social change (Kidd, 2017, Pp.494) there is an increased pressure for collections to revisit historical narratives that have been accumulated, stored and recovered by institutions and the state (Merewether, 2006, pp.10). As discussed in the previous section, enquiries into authorship, ownership and data generation are emphasised due to the digitisation of collections and discourses. Together, this makes for an 'ethical landscape of great complexity' (Brown, 2014, pp.178). As research has shown, transparency plays a crucial role. Ethical specialist Janet Marstine is prominent in this conversation. For her, transparency designates accountability,

acknowledgment and responsibility for the actions of institutions (Marstine, 2012, pp.14). In her view equitable practices are not possible without these correlatives.

Marstine emphasises textual subjects as mediators for what she calls 'radical transparency' where in her example; 'a radically transparent wall text would additionally engage the ethical issues of exhibiting works' (ibid). If we are to apply her concept of radical transparency to word clouds at TL, representation of contributors must be given heightened visibility. From my investigation, I have not found an example of TL making authorship data visible via wall-based or digital word clouds. Whilst Marstine's concern is directed towards anthropological displays where cultural objects are 'consistently mischaracterised by the dominant culture's classification schemes' (Hein, 2007, pp.34), I argue that user-generated data is consistently mischaracterised at TL because their co-production is not publicly enunciated. Consequently, making 'possible actualisations of exhibitions for audiences of different backgrounds' (Manacorda, 2016, pp.4) is ethically complicated because 'certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses' (Foucault, 1980, pp.98) are not acknowledged.

Meanwhile, TL's rethinking of museum interpretation to produce polyphonic[144] text is highly important. This is triangulated in interviews and in the literature. Francesco states that texts should be 'successfully read with different levels of competence' to envision more than one 'model reader' (Manacorda, 2016, pp. 4-5). Borrowing from semiotician Umberto Eco's *The Role of the Reader* (1979), Francesco applies the characteristics of the model reader – a subject envisioned to decode and interpret text – to museum text to argue against seeing publics as 'empirical readers' (Manacorda, 2016, pp.4-5). Through speculation, he argues that pedagogic devices should create a 'progressive path of increasing competence' (Manacorda, 2016, pp. 4-5) using publics' experiential knowledge.

When undertaking this research, I have found that the characteristics of the 'model reader' paradoxical due to its assumptions that refuse to engage with identity. On the one

[144] The term polyphonic is a border-crossing term that is mostly used in musical composition. It is an adjective that describes the production or involvement of many different sounds and/or notes, but in this instance, is used by Francesco to describe the inclusion of multiple tones of voice, and or the involvement of different voices.

hand, the model reader does not discriminate by the powers of birth, gender or sexuality that postulates equal intelligence as its ideal (Rancière, 2006, pp.301). As I have argued, this theory does not compensate for embedded hierarchies of pedagogic museum practice or textual habitus. Marked by the construction of institutions and their propensity to comply with hegemony and erase identity (Lynch and Alberti, 2010, pp.13-4), I argue that the creation of polyphonic text demands for renewed collaborative processes with publics whose identities are minoritarian in the collection. Differently from consultation – arguably a tokenistic gesture – transparency[145] could become a working process to involve multiple identities 'in reality rather than in name' (Hall, 2004, pp.9). This is crucial when remembering that museum texts are institutionalised instruments of representation (because they reflect the people who create them). When they are not transparently co-authored, institutions risk 'embezzling' (Bourdieu, 1991, pp.232) public voices. Thus, when texts are redistributed as cultural capital user-generated content is homogenized; and we are unable to differentiate between public and expert terms. To expand on this claim, I identify three conflictual legacies concerning word clouds at TL to challenge success and how it is measured.[146] Through assessing what TL means as public - 'as what is visible and manifest' (Mouffe, 2005b, pp.152) - it is critical to describe the institutional narratives as follows;

Institutionally, I found that TL's memory was variable. Through interviews with professionals, I recorded a culture of narrative reproduction but no physical representation of the outcomes of co-production in the gallery. Freire has described performative interactions between educators and learners as representative of 'false generosity' (Freire, 2000, pp.54). By bestowing soft power to communities to perform a co-productive exercise, it is argued that the subject in power 'buys peace' for themselves (pp.146). Fundamental to this idea is that the powerful subject benefits from the interaction; the status quo is preserved, and authorship is

[145] It could be argued that TL delivers a different type of transparency to its audiences based on an exchange known as 'transactional transparency' in the form of the sharing of visible or online data and policies that TL make public via their website, demonstrating good professional practice and are obligatory under UK law (Garsten, C. and De Montoya, M.L. (2008) *Transparency in a new global order : unveiling organizational visions*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.).

[146] Notably, this investigation continues with users and AAs who contribute their engagements as users of the word cloud devices later on in the research.

absorbed. Linked to Bourdieu's theory of embezzlement, practitioner Sophie Hope describes false generosity as a top down approach that seeks to deliver empowerment to individuals by generosity (Hope, 2011, pp.176).

Aesthetically, there is a lack of transparency concerning the integration of word clouds in the physical gallery. This is demonstrated by the absence of public visibility and authorship. Consequently, word clouds are perceived by users as an institutional product due to their conformity with TL's clean, homogenised aesthetic. Aligned with Tate's nationwide brand, all textual interpretation within the *Constellations* is created with the intention to transform; 'the idea of a gallery from a single, institutional view, to a branded collection of experiences that share[d] an attitude' (Wolff Olins, 1997, no pagination). Commissioned by consultancy firm Wolff Olins in 1997, Tate's brand identity relies on clarity and cohesion to communicate with their users. Many argue that their branding enables Tate to communicate with their audience in a friendly, welcoming and inclusive manner (Lahav, 2011, pp.36) however, whilst this may hold value, I found that its branding erases individual, localised identities.

Academically, the numerous referenced articles cited in this chapter reinforce the positive, curatorial narrative for *Constellations* and its word clouds. This has been contributed to by the promotion of theoretical research around the 'reader/viewer/learner' dichotomy informed by authorial theories by Umberto Eco, Roland Barthes and Jacques Rancière. Arguably, hypothesising them distracts from the efficacy of co-production in practice. In his article *For Whom Do We Write Exhibitions? Toward A Museum of the Commons* (Manacorda, 2016) Manacorda celebrates collections as 'learning machines'[147], however there has been no research that tests how word clouds enable equitable pedagogy.

[147] Francesco's presentation at Nottingham Contemporary titled *Radical Museology Working the Collection* chaired by Claire Bishop (Manacorda, F., Bishop, C., Carrillo, J. and Dziewanska, M. (2014) *Radical Museology Working the Collection Chaired by Claire Bishop* [online]

Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCoqhN9Q9vE

[Accessed: 12/06/2018]) also supports this.

In summary, from undertaking research during the 'planning' stage of the PAR project, I argued that the institutional narrative popularised via word clouds benefits TL's legacy more than it has centered users. Additionally, from reviewing the literature and interview transcriptions, one can assume that co-production is a totally embedded practice at TL. Publicly, this idea is accepted;

> *Tate Liverpool is a remarkable example of an art museum that has conceived knowledge production as a process driven by (…) curatorial ethics.* (Campolmi, 2017, pp.81)

Significantly, though TL consistently develops new processes to encourage the production of user-generated knowledge, word clouds are limited in terms of representation and recognition. Furthermore, it is 'absence from' and 'misrepresentation in those narratives' that engenders 'a sense of alienation and non-identification' (Flinn, 2010a, no pagination). Moreover, by discussing collections of contemporary art through drawing parallels with 'readers' (Eco) and 'learners' (Rancière) – who might be regarded as beneficiaries –I question whether we overlook embodied experiences of belonging in the collection. In the next section I unpick how artists might mitigate these restrictive definitions of engagement.

4.3.2. Critical Friends: Artists as Translators or narrators?

Critical friends represent some of the individuals who work 'on the ground' in collections to facilitate communication with users. Since all three artists work with communities at Tate[148] each spoke powerfully about their ethical motivations to work with publics. Undertaking significant measures to create collaborative processes, their ideologies are indicative of practice informed by situated learning techniques and feminist, anti-racist epistemologies. Individually, they define themselves as activists, facilitators or change makers; or – in my view – as people who might assist others to 'speak truth to power' (Committee, 1955, no pagination). This is reflected when one contributor describes their experience with publics as dialogical; 'to create conversation and to create language'.

[148] See appendix O for examples of interview questions.

By analysing their responses, a theme emerged that emphasised trust as a product of discourse. Discussed in relation to equal intelligence and the plurality of discourse, one artist stated; 'I try and always be honest to how I would speak'. Across the group, this was a method undertaken to make themselves and their collaborators feel comfortable and like they belong in the gallery. Knowing 'when not to be an expert' (Horton and Freire, 1990, pp.128) was also a crucial method for artists to reassure publics and portray themselves as 'narrators' and 'translators' (Rancière, 2009, pp.22) instead of explicators. Consequently, in the following I explore the ethical implications of what it means to self-define as a translator.

Lately, the theory that artists might best act as translators for contemporary art is reflected in the literature. Academic Martin Waldmeier investigates the role of artists to 'shift between multiple cultural and linguistic zones' (Waldmeier, 2017a, no pagination) in an increasingly globalised context (Connelly, 2015, pp.115). In this investigation, a critical friend found that 'translating' was a requirement during their time working with TL. They explain:

> *I felt that [my] purpose was to be that bridge between art galleries and young people (…) to basically translate all the exhibitions, all the artworks and programmes that are happening in the gallery into an activity or a language that would be welcoming and enticing to young people.*

In this instance, the artist recalls their interaction with a young refugee when they explained why he could not touch an artwork.[149] In the interview they emphasise that they 'didn't try to use [their] conservation knowledge or any kind of expert terminology' when discussing the object. This supports the literature that theorises the use of familiar language to rationalise collections and their safeguarding responsibilities by using words to 'revisit them with participants as an exercise in open, reflective practice' (Lynch, 2017 pp.22). Importantly, the critical friend does not attempt to transmit knowledge didactically but uses dialogue to ensure collaborative knowledge production.

[149] Whilst multi-linguistic translation is not the core focus of this research, it must be contemplated whilst considering the dismantling of cultural and stratified barriers to understanding contemporary art.

The ‘artist as translator’ model is supported by Rancière when he argues that ‘understanding is never more than translating’ (Rancière, 1991, pp.9). For him; ‘there is nothing behind the written page, no false bottom that necessitates the work of an *other* intelligence, that of an explicator’ (pp.10). With Rancière in mind, I theorise the role of the translator versus the role of the explicator. Where the explicator might attempt to explain their understanding of ‘the true meaning’, the translator offers relevant information and opportunities for discussion to verbalise thoughts and opinions (pp.62). Aligned with the action research cycle, it is this aspect of the translator’s practice that most supports Rancière’s.

Critical friends open up communicative space for understanding. This was commented on by one of them;

> *I think that if an institution really cares about getting people in, it needs to allow people to translate for them.*

Related to this excerpt the use of the words; care, empathy, trust and solidarity. In response, I am reminded of theory of philosopher Gilles Deleuze that ‘authors, artists, like doctors and clinicians can themselves be seen as profound symptomatologists’ (Deleuze, Smith and Greco, 1998, Pp.xvii). For the purposes of this research, when considering the ideological differences between explication and translation, the explicator presents themselves as an expert, and the translator as an empath.

Alternatively, it has been argued that translating for publics; ‘learners’, ‘beneficiaries’ and ‘visitors’; is deeply patronising. Lynch leads this argument when she describes outreach projects as gifts to be distributed to receivers (Lynch, 2017, pp.12-29). In collections of contemporary art this theory is hyperbolised by the idea that art speaks “a different language” and therefore requires translation. When performed by professionals or critical friends this theory might reinforce the colonial idea that language can be defined as property of the speaker or author (Vázquez, 2011, pp.38). In this view, perhaps it is Rancière’s narrator archetype that is best positioned to pluralise - instead of translate - within systems that silence publics. Accordingly, whilst museum educators are perpetually honing their craft to re-position

themselves less as explicators (Pringle, 2009, no pagination) and more as translators, their role should be aimed towards embedding publicly driven narration as a methodology for dialogical representation.[150] This is what separates critical friends from traditional gallery educators.

In summary, interviews with critical friends were useful in alerting me to the hegemonic demographic of TL's collectives. This is reflected on in greater detail when investigating the creation of counternarrative interventions to contribute pluralism. Notably, the data collected with critical friends also challenges recent research that advocates for artists to act as translators. Instead, I have discussed the need for artists to be rethought as narrators when co-producing knowledge to contradict methods that reinforce modernist autonomy and explication. Hence, TPG uses storytelling and narration as a device for producing a 'common language'.

4.4. Summary

This chapter identifies my contribution to knowledge through the creation of a rounded evidence base in which to situate my intervention in the field. Additional chapters contribute specific evidence to build on the indication that increased ethical interrogation is necessary to create co-authored interpretation devices in collections. Additionally, I have provided descriptions of staff members and critical friends to analyse how discourse is used with publics theoretically and in practice. Doing this emphasises active processes to co-produce text; revealing multiple ethical struggles concerning representation, acknowledgement and authorship.

The provision of an in-depth analysis of word clouds interrogates the device and their ability to enable knowledge production. Reflecting on Rancière's theory of equal intelligence

[150] For users, speaking clearly and opening up space to define and redefine terms, and to ask questions like what does that mean? And, how do can we use it? are essential processes of reflection to make language and collections useful.

enables this thesis to theorise the efficacy of word clouds. Meanwhile, I contraposed this with how text is experienced using Bourdieu's theories of cultural capital and habitus. By drawing on research pertaining to digital archives, I demonstrated crowdsourcing as a methodology for co-producing knowledge. Through my analysis, it is clear that authorship 'needs to be acknowledged as a constructive problem' (Whitehead, 2011, pp.175) and could be reflected on publicly when discussing curatorial and public labour. In other words, communication with publics must convey porous spoken and textual interpretations for any one artwork; the curator's, the artist's, the multiple publics. These must be negotiated transparently in exchange for traditional gallery and brand-led aesthetics.

5. Chapter Three: Users

Publics who engage with archives and libraries are referred to as 'users' (Flinn, 2010b, pp.39). In this chapter, I use this word to shift the focus away from discourses driven by research on visitors (Falk, 2006, pp.151), audiences (Hooper-Greenhill, 1997, no pagination) and consumers (Krauss, 1990b, pp.3). These identifiers of 'visitor studies' are at odds with this research and for the purposes of this research, I reference them infrequently. Alternatively, I explore data collected from thirty-two[151] users who actively produced content through the research. Titled *Shared Language*, the methodology includes three workshops facilitated at TE and five interviews. Defined by active forms of contribution, collaboration or co-creation (Simon, 2010, pp.185-7), this chapter describes the first of the 'doing' moments in the action-research to create the word index. Initially informed by a co-produced criterion[152] crowd-sourced via a survey, the word index was edited and reproduced by users during this process.[153]

In this chapter, users are distinguished via two categories:

1. The first refers to twenty-seven users who contributed to workshops and signed consent agreements ensuring their anonymity. Their contribution is considered a soft-

[151] Approximately 80 people participated in the activity without giving formal written consent to use their responses towards this research project. To align with ethical procedures, these contributions have been omitted from the findings.

[152] Historically, the development of a criteria has been important in the way that people have made decisions about and measured democratic processes (Hadenius, A. and Teorell, J. (2005) Cultural and economic prerequisites of democracy: Reassessing recent evidence. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 39 (4), pp.87-106. pp.88). Too, creating criterion has a long history of use in museums and policy and can be aligned with the production of guidelines, rules and etiquette to critique language in relation to interpretation. These instances largely focus on poor quality writing in terms of access and readability. Two examples are demonstrated by Stephen Bitgood's *Eight Deadly Sins* (Bitgood, S. (1989) Deadly sins revisited: A review of the exhibit label literature. *Visitor Behavior*, 4 ((3)), pp.4-13.) and Dany Louise's 2015 *The Interpretation Matters Handbook* which revisits seven problems with art writing (Bitgood, 1989; Louise, 2015). Commonly framed around bad writing, I wanted to investigate was would be useful for publics. For useful art practices, the co-production of Arte Útil's criteria developed with Tania Bruguera, mima and *Asociación de Arte Útil* (Byrne, 2016, pp.61) provides a measuring apparatus to decide what projects are considered useful and subsequently added to the archive. Valued for their practical and democratic aspects of decision-making, developing a criterion that valued use was an initial development for TPG. See appendix Q for the crowd-sourced criterion produced using outcomes of TPG survey.

[153] See appendix I for word index.

touch approach to museum co-production but is not considered any less meaningful.[154] On average users spent between five to twenty minutes engaging with the activity individually, in discussion with myself, visitor assistants or collectively. Many users engaged intuitively due to TE's location within *Constellations*. Responses were recorded using studio-based materials and digitally (McNiff, 1998, pp.37). All physical contributions were filed in the word index; archived physically and digitally. After collecting data materially, I created visual representations using *Graph Commons*.[155]

2. The second category analyses five users who actively co-produced this research via interviews and art-based public engagement methods. I refer to these users using the first letter of their name to ensure their anonymity. Recruitment for this group was done based on local interest from artists, activists and writers at drop-in sessions at TE or via social media. I ensured their continuing collaboration via email and invitation to associated events. Through close reading and subsequent analysis of their interview transcripts, I developed 149 codes via NVivo and created word frequency queries to create visual data.[156] Notably, this group of users share similar educational backgrounds – all are undergraduates or graduates of arts degrees – most identify as women. In surveying the demographics of users, this group was the most diverse in terms of sexuality and race.

In the following chapter I reflect on the outcomes from both groups to compare how users utilise different processes of interpretation in the gallery, how they used *Shared Language* and to analyse emergent themes concerning identity and authority. For clarity, I have analysed the data sets separately.

[154] Due to the light-touch approach used in this methodology, I considered it inappropriate to track user's ethnicity, age and social class indicators.

[155] Please see appendix S for diagrams or visit https://graphcommons.com/emmacurd

[156] See appendix T for word clouds (WC).

5.1. Shared Language

After preparing for an action research cycle, I facilitated *Shared Language* during the residency at TE with QC. To recap, the workshops were based on a concept created whilst working closely with QC in 2014 and were designed in response to Wright's *Lexicon* that proposes to keep, retire and discuss terminology. Designed with the ambition to promote dialogue between publics, the workshops were undertaken 'to understand better' how users engage with institutional discourse in the collection with the aim to produce 'a glossary of terms with audiences'.[157] In the following I describe the processes of the activity.

5.1.1. The Processes: Co-creation, Categorization and Facilitation

On the 14th, 21st and 28th of January 2017, I hosted three six-hour drop-in workshops. Open to visiting publics at TL, the workshops were advertised online via TL's and Art in Liverpool's websites, via events pages on Facebook and using an A-board in the downstairs foyer. Publics were encouraged by visitor assistants to drop into TE to engage in the activity. By giving the workshop the title *Shared Language*, users were encouraged to engage collectively in the task. Supporting users to be attentive of the language used by TL, I sought to create space where dialogue could take place; 'an essential element to enhance communication and collaboration' (Thomas and McDonagh, 2013, no pagination). When undertaking the workshops, I prioritised three vital processes; co-creation, categorisation and facilitation.

During the workshops, users were presented with the word index. Guidelines for how to use the activity could be accessed by users via posters, leaflets and a projector which read:

[157] Please see appendix C for TE evaluation. From reviewing my evaluation that I wrote in 2017, I was still using some of the terminology that I now avoid such as 'audience' and 'non-expert'. This is important to reflect on when thinking about how my own use of terminology reflects the implicit power imbalances between researcher and 'subjects'. Interestingly, my use of language was not commented on by TL's staff members, but by changing the way that I refer to people in this research I have endeavored to embrace research as a participatory process.

1. Grab a selection of words
2. Place them in a category
3. Develop your own words and phrases
4. Have a chat with the person next to you!

The outcome of the workshops created a visual representation of shared language; like a mind-map or 'word-wall' to establish keywords, concerns and to document the qualitative research effectively (Burgess-Allen and Owen-Smith, 2010, pp.407).[158] Furthermore, users were encouraged to suggest words that they had encountered in the collection, but also words that they thought were 'problem-laden' or those as a product of 'discursive formation' (Foucault, 2002; Hobbs, 2008, pp.33). Importantly, it was an objective to encourage users to create content themselves instead of relying on the word index. This process was designed to disrupt the power imbalance between myself and the users of *Shared Language* and required a high level of communication between us, at a range of levels (Holland et al., 2010, pp.373).

Vital to the methodology was the categorisation of terms.[159] Categorisation as a research method was initially influenced by Wright's *Lexicon* that catalogues words into groups; emergent concepts (keep), conceptual institutions (retire) and modes of usership (discuss). By carrying over this methodology in an attempt to dislodge the 'fixed meanings' (Rudloff, 2012, pp.38) of words, artworks and practices, I discovered that this model drew similarities with another method used in PAR titled Participatory Ranking Methodology (PRM). Also referred to as 'the card game' (Kitzinger, 1990, pp.332), PRM assisted me in engaging users in action and in dialogue to assign, confirm, amend and prioritise words using prompting

[158] See appendix U for documentation of *Shared Language.*

[159] Recent research undertaken with school children in Finland explores a similar ranking methodology titled 'diamond 9' (Niemi, R., Kumpulainen, K. and Lipponen, L. (2015) Pupils as active participants: Diamond ranking as a tool to investigate pupils' experiences of classroom practices. *European Educational Research Journal*, 14 (2), pp.138-150.) An active way to involve people in the research-process, the activity involves asking users to rank words and images out of nine in a diamond shape. By 'ranking them by position so that the preferred picture is at the top and the most disliked is at the bottom' (pp.140), the task is used to enable users to analyse, compare and evaluate their experiences. Whilst there are similarities between this method and *Shared Language*, I only discovered diamond 9 after undertaking the activity with users. In future manifestations of *Shared Language* I would consider testing the method due to its flexibility that allows for users to annotate the work with explanation and descriptions.

cards and questions. This process allowed me to reveal user's desires to construct their identities through word-choice. This is significant when visualising TE as a place that brings together COPs due to my interpretation of the data to that some people want to be regarded as experts and others as critics (ibid).

During the sessions I took on the role of a facilitator. This required me to establish what kind of facilitator I am. Critical to this was my proximity to the study. Due to my researcher ideology to challenge 'objective' methods (Ackerly and True, 2010, Pp.26), I elected to operate as an 'fully participating co-inquirer' (Yorks, 2015, pp.258). This meant that I was able to introduce and guide inquiry into word selection through initiating discussion with groups and individuals (Yorks, 2015, pp.257). This gave me an opportunity to lay foundations to develop a COP between users with a shared interest in creating a common language. When employing this facilitation method, my proximity to users was problematised because they often assumed that I was the 'expert' in the room. This wasn't a problem when TE was busy due to the presence of other users. Yet, when it became quiet, I recorded apprehension in users. After investigation, I identified the worry that users might 'get it wrong'. After recognising this fear, I employed autonomous methods to allow users to make their own selections and interpretations (Heron, 1999, pp.10).

5.2. Shared Language Analysis

Using *Shared Language*, I analyse the discourses encountered by users using critical and thematic analysis. Different from a 'descriptive' form of analysis (Fairclough, 1985, pp.739) – which might be documented quantitatively or 'scientifically' (Gee, 2014, pp.8) – my goal is not to describe how sentences, grammar and patterns are formed. Instead, I scrutinise how users engaged with the vocabulary at TL to challenge the relationship between power and institutional discourse. Using this analysis method, specialist language is under scrutiny due to its ability to express one's identity as an authority (Gee, 2012, pp.21). When discussing TL's tone of voice I refer to it as 'the voice of reason' (Gee, 2014, pp.10) due to its use of technical

language and its dominating curatorial strategy. Hence, *Shared Language* creates a critical praxis to analyse common-sense practices at TL.

Critical practice creates possibilities to analyse institutional methods of discursive legitimacy through enquiries into text and authorial identity.[160] By coalescing critical analysis and co-production, I analysed user response. In addition, users suggested words they felt were missing such as 'culture', 'co-create', 'uncanny', 'nuance' and 'disenfranchised'. Taking their aim at TL, some contributors bemoaned the use of modal adverbs – colloquially known as 'weasel words' (Jason, 1988, pp.169) – such as 'possibly', 'maybe', 'may' and 'could' due to their potential to be ambiguous and misleading.[161] Additionally, suggestions extended further to broadly challenge language in common use such as 'Brexit', 'fraternisation', 'power', 'gentrification', 'diversity', 'equality' and 'multicultural'. In this analysis it is important to distinguish words suggested by users. These words reflected people's vernaculars, their word preferences and their personal experiences. Consequently, words associated with conversational and emotive language like 'paradise', 'energy', 'love', 'awe', 'anarchy', 'peace' and 'forever' were added to the word index. These additions confirm the formative observations made in Chapter Two where I identify differences between institutional and user-generated word clouds. Lastly, there was some variation of the English language during *Shared Language* including terms in Welsh and Spanish languages. For example, one contributor

[160] In TL's *Tone of Voice Guidelines,* the term authoritative is considered as one of the four tonal values to aspire to when developing interpretation on artworks. Adversely, Museum Educator Olga Hubard suggests that being perceived as an authority 'could take away from the spirit of collective meaning making' (Hubard, O.M. (2007) Productive Information: Contextual Knowledge in Art Museum Education. *Art Education*, 60 (4), pp.17-23.) whilst undertaking participatory work.

[161] Similarly, on Wikipedia, content where the source is not obvious, is missing or is too vague is called a weasel (Ganter, V. and Strube, M. (2009) Finding Hedges by Chasing Weasels: Hedge Detection Using Wikipedia Tags and Shallow Linguistic Features. *Proceedings of the ACL-IJCNLP 2009 Conference Short Papers*, pp.173-176.) (Vincze, V. (2013) Weasels, hedges and peacocks: Discourse-level uncertainty in wikipedia articles. *Proceedings of the Sixth International Joint Conference on Natural Language Processing*, Nagoya, Japanof Conference.). Used to reinforce authority, weasel words are used in academic writing to give the impression of objectivity when writing about a research topic (*Use the active voice* (2018) Directed by Sainani, K. California: Stanford University (05:27). To counteract the use of weasel words, I have used citations to reinforce any assertions I have made in this thesis.

suggested the term 'diwylliant' which translates to 'culture' in Welsh; another suggested the term 'amor' which translates to 'love' in Spanish.

In the next section of analysis, I identify three emergent themes whilst looking at the keywords selected by users. A thematic approach was used in combination with critical discourse analysis due to its common usage in qualitative research (William and Brown, 2009, Pp.128). This method reflects the coding process that undertaken when preparing for *Shared Language* via excel.

5.2.2. Thematic Analysis: The Political, Identity and Authority

This section identifies three crucial themes that emerged from the research undertaken at TE. Particularly, all three themes – the political, identity and authority – speak to Mouffe's theorisation of museums as sites for 'fomenting agonistic forms of participation' (Mouffe, 2013b, pp.74). Evidently, these terms are conceptually and thematically entangled and my analysis responds to their overlapping relationships. These themes were indicated by documentation left by users when recording interpretations of language and are described in relation to Mouffe and Laclau's discourse theory (1985; 2001) and 'nodal points' (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001, pp.113). Theorising key themes as nodal points has enabled me to map the outcomes for *Shared Language;* physically in my studio and digitally using *Graph Commons*.[162] During analysis, nodal points served as visual signs around which discourse revolved (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pp.26). This is clarified by academics Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Philips who describe them as;

> *In medical discourses, for example, 'the body' is a nodal point around which many other meanings are crystallised. Signs such as 'symptoms', 'tissue' and 'scalpel' acquire their meaning by being related to 'the body' in particular ways.* (2002, pp.26)

[162] See appendices H and S.

Similarly using this methodology, crowd-sourcing techniques are visible in relation to associated nodal points via an option to view 'related terms'.[163]

The primary nodal point for *Shared Language* is The Political. Taken from Mouffe's definition of 'the political' as constituted by its antagonistic dimensions (Mouffe, 2005a, pp.2), I use the term here to refer to users whose responses scratch away at 'post-political'[164] definitions in order to question the 'common-sense' (ibid) order of objectivity created by institutional text. For example, the words 'revolution', 'truth', 'propaganda', 'utopia', 'democracy' and 'community' appeared – and were repeated – most frequently in the category to 'keep'. Given the United Kingdom's political context of 'salutary shock' (Mouffe and Confavreux, 2016, no pagination) underpinning the Brexit vote of June 23rd 2016, I was unsurprised to find that users were concerned with the use and mis-use of terms that encompass our understanding of 'The Political'. More so, the first of the *Shared Language* workshops took place days after Donald J. Trump was inaugurated as the forty-fifth President of the United States of America on the 20th of January 2017.

In his enduring essay, *The Politics of the English Language*, Orwell defines the political usage of language as 'designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind' (Orwell, 1946; Orwell, 2013, pp.17). Purposely, I use this example to capture the spirit of interactions had with users during *Shared Language*. Illustrating this, one user's response to the word 'truth' testified its necessity; especially in relation to 'Politicians and newspapers'. Subsequently, it was suggested that 'fake news' should be added to the glossary. Another user deliberated the term 'mass media' and left the description 'all media is mass media in a world with the internet' in response. Outcomes of the workshops also identified the word 'revolution' as a common term. One user stated that its

[163] Refer to www.thepeoplesglossary.co.uk.

[164] When using the term 'post-political' I am indicating the vocabulary of neutrality produced by the dominant narrative at TL. It is this consensual prose of democracy that allows for institutions to regard themselves as progressive, liberal, contemporary, while also refusing 'to acknowledge the antagonistic dimension constitutive of "the political"' (Mouffe, C. (2005a) *On the political*. Abingdon: Routledge. pp.2).

‘meaning and use should be multi-faceted’. In response to the suggestion that one could introduce their own phrase or word to the work, ‘Brexit’ was also added to the word index.

Through conversational interaction, I established identity as an emergent theme. This is demonstrated through the selection of words such as ‘class’, ‘representation’, ‘race’, ‘marginalisation’, ‘migrant’, ‘feminist’, ‘intersex’ and ‘queer’ via *Shared Language*. Within discourses concerning identity, public space ‘causes great turmoil in the register of representation’ (Braidotti, 2015, pp.248). This is accentuated via the outcomes of *Shared Language.* Indeed, identity and experience cannot be separated when discussing problematics of power, language and democracy (Giroux and McLaren, 1992, pp.8); and this is emphasised in the self-identification of users who selected terms that express their class, race, sexuality and gender. Referring to identity as a ‘relationship, not a thing’ (Brah, 2007, pp.141), the results range from broad definitions of class such as ‘working-class’ to personal self-identification like ‘queer’. Feminist scholar Sara Ahmed defines the criticality of representation in terms of institutions which she describes as ‘orientation devices’ (Ahmed, 2007, pp.157) that ‘take the shape of ‘what’ resides within them’ (ibid) and are ‘shaped by the proximity of some bodies and not others’ (ibid). For the purposes of this research, institutional language reflects the bodies and speech of those who inhabit and care for collections; many of whose identities are unrepresentative of the rest of the population (Brook, O'Brien and Taylor, 2018, pp.25). When reflecting on *Shared Language* and identity, Ahmed’s concept of orientation is persistent due the potential flexibility of spaces to be ‘freed up when they are inhabited by those for whom they were not intended’ (Ahmed, 2017b, no pagination). Due to the self-identification of users who define themselves as ‘black’, ‘queer’ or ‘feminist’ there is a call to disrupt what is reproduced via institutions and their discourse. In Ahmed’s words, this may be done by processes of vandalism because to ‘vandal is to damage what you are supposed to revere, to bring to an end what you are supposed to reproduce’ (Ahmed, 2017b, no pagination). In these terms, whilst *Shared Language* was only an act of temporary vandalism – much like to temporarily graffiti a contested monument which will be scrubbed away – users left signifiers of their identity in the hope to centre themselves ‘in “minoritarian” terms’ (Lankshear and Peters, 1996, pp.11).

For one contributor 'identity means uniqueness – we are all unique.' This comment captures the knowledge that personal experience and creativity could contribute in resisting hegemonic reproduction of identifications represented via text. Recently, projects challenging cultural histories via the representation of alternative identities have developed. An example of this is demonstrated through Leicester's New Walk Museum 'Museum Takeover' titled 'Identities – a relabelling project'. During the project, museum researcher Angela Stienne engaged refugees from the local community to produce a series of events 'including a re-labelling of the Museum's collections, presenting new interpretation of the objects on display' (Stienne, 2018, pp.5). Emphasising the concentration paid by heritage museums to disrupt the curatorial gaze in collections, public areas were created for 'diverse cultures and communities' (ibid) to come together.

For some, this focus on identity and self-representation through relabelling collections fosters individualism (Meszaros, 2007, pp.18) and a culture of therapy over democracy (Thumin, 2010, pp.302). Museum consultant Cheyrl Meszaros challenges individual learners' stories as a product of the 'whatever' turn (2006, Pp.16) 'where museums engage the idea that 'whatever' interpretation the user comes away with is paramount, regardless of message ascribed to' (Meszaros, 2007, pp.17) the object. Astutely, Meszaro identifies that without received ideas to draw on 'there is no way to generate individual interpretation' (pp.18). Whilst I concur that interpretation is a relational act – not 'individualised, private or personal' (ibid) – Meszaros fails to appreciate the power of counternarrative representation to making the unfamiliar intelligible (Giroux et al., 1996, pp.vii). In Meszaro's eyes, it is discourse produced by collections that provides groundwork for interpretation. Conversely, I argue that through 'adapting narratives' (Rogaly, 2011, pp.18) via exercises like *Shared Language,* self-representation could become central to making collections familiar and useful.

Authority was raised as a discussion theme during workshops where associations with 'authorship', 'censorship', 'appropriation', 'modernism', 'patriarchy' and 'hierarchy' were also drawn. The terms 'submissive' and 'passive' were also raised to challenge authority. Some conversations revolved around curatorial decision-making and another identified artist privilege (Reiss and Pringle, 2003, pp.216). One comment card queried 'who gets to create work?' enabled thinking around authority as a sedimented system imbued and consolidated

by the collection and its display. Its inclusion prompted understanding that users consider artists – not just curators and staff – as authoritarian voices. Poignantly, the comment evokes Joseph Beuys' acclaimed statement that 'every man is an artist' (Beuys, 1978, no pagination). In this context, Beuys' conjecture expresses the privilege of artistic authority rather than utopic ideology. Certainly, the 'who gets to?' question is prominent when considering authority sharing with co-producers. When referencing interpretation, not only does it relate to artmaking but also storytelling. Whilst it is recognised that many users might have something to say through the provision of digital engagement devices, recognition of dialogical value is overly determined by what the institution is willing to share. Sharing words, not stories, is limiting. Hence, the conversations and comments that were shared by users through this activity are valuable to contribute to the findings of TPG.

5.2.3. USE AS MIS-USE

Taking a step back from analysing themes created by users, I discerned the activity revealing differing processes of how users made sense of the word index and its instructions. Chiefly, I observed conflict between users when discussing how to 'correctly' respond to the activity.[165] Although many users fulfilled the task – what is understood as being a 'good informant' (Shokeid, 1988, pp.34) – the activity enabled users to respond autonomously when I wasn't available to facilitate the task individually. This outcome addresses Wright's *Lexicon* where 'from the perspective of users, everywhere, so-called misuse is simply... use' (Wright, 2013, pp.26). Hence, use manifested across a spectrum of how much or how little people followed

[165] This idea has also been theorised in terms of socially engaged practices and cultural democracy by academic Sophie Hope in her PhD thesis (Hope, C.S.a. (2013) *Participating in the 'wrong' way? : practice based research into cultural democracy and the commissioning of art to effect social change*thesis Thesis (Ph.D.), Birkbeck (University of London).). Differently to Hope's research which problematises participation in the Habermasian perspective to 'self-transform' (Pp.53), this research offers the perspective that collective use might engender – and multiply – opportunities to transform the institutions around us where increased usership 'neutralises the sacred' (Wright, S. (2013) *Toward a Lexicon of Usership* [online] Eindhoven: Van Abbemuseum.

Available at: http://www.arte-util.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Toward-a-Lexicon-of-usership.pdf [Accessed 07/07/2019].(pp.50) and repurposes tools and institutions for new means.

the instructions. Some users manipulated the rules, some challenged them and some simply ignored them. One user stated;

> *A lot of the words we want to stop using are negative words. You know… like atrocity, mutilation, depression, corruption. They're all things that conjure up really nasty images.*

This user identifies a common way that others misused the activity - to express their moral positioning on phenomena attached to words, instead of the word itself. Though I had facilitated this workshop previously, I had not anticipated for this outcome. This was due to my prior experience where I was able to tightly define the parameters of the workshop. Hence, the 'dropping-in' aspect of the workshop allowed for users to take part autonomously. However, most retained the activity framework and altered it's constraints to expand words beyond their intended scope to encompass relational developments. In this sense, users took isolated words and applied meaning using their experiential definition of those words as 'symbolisms' for a 'thing'. This 'first glance' engagement is theorised by Wittgenstein in terms of what a word might propose;

> *At first glance the proposition – say it stands printed on paper – does not seem to be a picture of the reality of which it treats. But nor does the musical score appear at first sight to be a picture of a musical piece: nor does our phonetic spelling (letters) seem to be a picture of our spoken language. And yet these symbolisms prove to be pictures – even in the ordinary sense of the word – of what they represent.* (Wittgenstein, 1947; Wittgenstein, 2006, pp.10)

Considering Wittgenstein's symbolic theorisation of words, I would argue that this explains how users interpreted *Shared Language* divergently. By describing what happens in the 'meta-physical' realm, Wittgenstein emphasizes the everyday use of language which this study supports (Wittgenstein, Hacker and Schulte, 2010, pp.53; Rorty, 2013, pp.4). In this theorisation, users created a picture of an image on first glance, then they then made a moral decision based on their conjured image. This understanding explains why words such as

'racism', 'oppression' and 'prejudice' appear in the list of rejected words.[166] In turn, this led me to question how I might change my approach to support critical engagement with words instead of images.

When users engaged 'in the wrong way' I prevented myself from intervening due to the understanding that 'there is something queer about use; intentions do not exhaust possibilities' (Ahmed, 2018, no pagination). Through creating the activity, I did not consider that I would create another set of behaviours that might further ostracise *Shared Language* from its democratic design. This is emphasised by TE's descriptor as a 'common space' (Cutler, 2017, pp.34) designated by its pedagogical aesthetics. Arguably, these aspects of TE could put 'the public in the potential predicament of not knowing how to answer the questions asked' (Campolmi, 2017, pp.80). Nevertheless, I unintentionally created an image of a 'good citizen' (Biesta, 2011, pp.142) who would engage with TE and the research agenda to call into question my understanding of user/facilitator autonomy.[167]

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[166] In another example, while in conversation with a user who selected the word 'feminism' we discussed his choice to 'retire' the word, leaving an annotation underneath; 'hopefully, someday we won't use this word anymore (same rights and equality)!' This is reflected in TPG, but from my perspective, it sits within a contested category. This was also reflected by many users who actively opposed the categorization due to the ideological relevance of the term. In this users' eyes, he indicated that the word points to a larger societal problem, which was deemed as a conceptual problem rather than a semiotic problem.

[167] Whilst undertaking this research, I completed a course on facilitation run by the University of Liverpool's Doctoral College Development Programme. The course included two webinars and two workshops that reinforced my knowledge of facilitation and enabled me to plan and facilitate two sessions on action-research with other post graduate researchers. Before this point, I planned and facilitated workshops with groups using knowledge that I had cultivated through close readings of texts on practitioner development (Schön, D.A. (1995) Knowing-in-action: The new scholarship requires a new epistemology. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 27 (6), pp.27-34.), facilitation (Heron, J. (1999) *The complete facilitator's handbook*. London: Kogan Page.) and moderation (Greenbaum, T.L. (2000) *Moderating focus groups : a practical guide for group facilitation*. CA: Sage.). In retrospect, undertaking this course earlier in the research would have benefitted the study and my practitioner development. However, through a process of trial and error, I learnt a great deal about facilitation that would have been difficult to learn using textbooks alone. Due to revelations made via experiencing the practicalities of facilitation (e.g. creating a workshop plan, undertaking the workshop and reflecting on the outcomes) I'd argue that facilitation is not only a skill, but an art (Fierro, R.S. (2016) Enhancing facilitation skills: Dancing with dynamic tensions. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2016 (149), pp.31-42., pp.31). In my experience when working with institutions of contemporary art comprehension of facilitation is commonly overlooked. Many artists recruited to facilitate participatory work are not given the tools to develop a coherent facilitator practice. Additionally, I'd argue that employing artists without a critical understanding of facilitation may even further alienate users or make them feel instrumentalised (Helguera, P. (2011) *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials*

In summary, hosting *Shared Language* at TE was crucial to unpack how publics might engage with agonistic discourse and to challenge users to articulate their decision-making process (Holliman, 2005, pp.2). In the view of agonism it is important to include conversations that counter TL's homogenous, 'neutral' wall panels, as well as those whose opinions might oppose popular, liberal discourse. In Mouffe's view, this is central to the understanding of agonism, where opportunities to listen and be heard are essential.

5.3. Interviews with Users

Following on from *Shared Language*, I set up five interviews with users between January and June 2017. Building on what I had discovered when piloting interviews with professionals at TL, I researched further techniques to develop a schedule for semi-structured interviews. In ethnographic research 'prompts are as important as the questions themselves' (Leech, 2002, pp.665) and therefore I chose to use an iPad to support users when facilitating interviews.[168] In the following, I consider the interview questions used to frame our conversations, the schedule of the interview and the process by which new knowledge was produced. Within thematic analysis, analysing key words is a common method to identify patterns in the data (Cain, 2017, no pagination) and consequently, I chose to tackle three prominent keywords – 'expertise', 'curating', 'community' and 'trust' – as a technique that reflects the research ideology. Not only is this selection driven by my own researcher perspective – which triangulates with the field through papers such as Lynch's *Reflective debate, radical transparency and trust in the museum* (2013) and the publication *Words Matter: An Unfinished Guide to Word Choices in the Cultural Sector* (2018) – the aforementioned themes emerged via thematic analysis facilitated by NVivo. This process of analysis relied on my careful listening skills cultivated over the course of the research to listen to the 'polyphonic' voices of users (Gilligan et al., 2006, pp.254) during interviews and workshops. Additionally, quantitative word analysis was used to give prominence to discourses used most frequently.

and Techniques Handbook. Mexico City: Jorge Pinto Books. pp.48). This topic is under researched and would benefit from rigorous investigation in the future.

[168] See appendix O for examples of interview questions and prompts for users and AAs.

5.3.1. Interview Questions

The process of writing a schedule for interviews refined three types of questions to produce a staged interview schedule. The first were simple and were intended to enable users to feel at ease when answering to engender 'belongingness' (Bennington et al., 2016, pp.35).[169]

The second type of question focussed on trigger works. Intended to be open-ended, they focussed on gathering personal and experiential data, such as 'what words come to mind when you look at this work?' Necessarily, we relied on visual prompts via the tablet. This decision remains contentious due to my stipulation that interviews should be hosted away from TL's premises to equalise the scales of power between myself, users and the institution (Elwood and Martin, 2000, pp.649). In choosing to host the interviews at TL, I felt that opinions might have been formed that would endorse my position as an 'expert' (ibid) within the gallery. Additionally, due to contributors' habitus, the gallery could also be an uncomfortable site to share complaints, stories and feelings due to the overall atmosphere of the collection (Kirchberg and Tröndle, 2012, pp.439). Subsequently, I made the decision to interview people away from TL to enable publics to talk emotionally and personally without feeling like they were 'getting it wrong'. This approach suited my methodology to 'engage people in discussion without the researcher providing any vocabulary or terminology' (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999, pp.12). Additionally, I wanted to create distance between users and institutional text to provide reflexivity.[170]

[169] Structuring the interview schedule in this was informed by research that suggests that introductory questions can preserve the conversational nature of the enquiry (Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016) Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework. *The Qualitative Report*, 21 (5), pp.811-831.) Too, writing an interview schedule in this way was crucial to ensure that interviews did not overrun. Moreover, it reminded me to go over important details like participant information, consent forms, participant confidentiality and research dissemination.

[170] I noticed that users frequently required verbal prompts when we selected keywords from the word index to discuss. In hindsight, if I were to conduct these interviews again, I would be more confident in using silences during the interview to draw data from users, before offering up more information.

The third type of question focussed on the inclusion and exclusion of words in the index. Via this route, we identified problem-laden words to investigate. During the interview, I especially sought clarification and asked for examples and explanations of personal experiences had in gallery spaces. The combination of digital prompts and physical record cards enabled me to capture holistic responses to different types of questions. The provision of multiple stimuli is advocated by feminist social researchers to ensure non-hierarchical methods to refocus research on the user (Speer, 2008, pp.297-298).

5.3.2. Thematic Analysis and Keywords

In *Keywords,* Williams laments the useful-ness of drawing attention to certain 'problematical words' (1983, pp.23) to consider their development and structure. Similarly, I have chosen to 'unpick' several words from conversations with users that reflects the ideology of the research project to prioritise user voices in collections. Overall, when analysing these words through the scope of this research, power is the primary paradigm through which these words are clarified. Hence, their selection aims to challenge the current power imbalances identified through this study, and through the creation of user-generated content.

Expertise

During interviews, processes of interpretation differed and feelings of 'belonging' were dependant on contingent factors like education, class, race and the assessment of legitimacy (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007, pp.171); or the measurement of distance between users and 'expert culture' (e.g. their proximity to critically-acclaimed institutions). This could be due to the understanding that 'within the habitus of participants are embedded ways of classifying and understanding art' (Newman, Goulding and Whitehead, 2013, pp.446).

Users in this group are accustomed to the daily consumption of 'high culture' (Chan, 2010, pp.82) meaning that they engage with art regularly. Hence, their experiences give them

confidence to use their 'legitimate voice' when talking about the collection. Moreover, I found that users were comfortable with the use of 'artspeak', even though they were sometimes resistant to its use due to their interest in inclusion politics. Responses such as 'prior to doing an art crit, it's not something that we ever looked at or saw' demonstrate this. Here, the use of specialised language discloses the user's educational attainment. Presuming that an 'art crit' formerly takes place at the level of higher education, it can be denoted that this user is comfortable with 'critiques' as a reflexive, educational tool to engage with art (Day, 2013, no pagination). For users, there was noticeable ease when it came to interrogating trigger works and their uses of language suggested that they were comfortable with the 'crit' format utilised at art school to decode works. Additionally, their responses indicated that some users saw the interview as an opportunity to critique work in the collection, as opposed to exploring the production of language in relation to the work. During the interviews it was confirmed that having an 'art background' was useful when deciphering work that had limited interpretation;

> *if you don't have an art background it can be (…) very off-putting and can be extremely complex, but that doesn't limit your understanding of that piece of work.*

Here a user infers that those who did not have an art background can provide another contribution to producing knowledge by making use of personal narratives and histories 'to attach the abstract to the concrete' (Acord, 2010, pp.452). Commonly, the process of interpretation emerged with either positive or negative uses of language, thus affecting the user and their overall experience of the collection. Words and phrases like 'nice', 'good', 'really good', 'so much', 'I like it' or 'I love this' emerged frequently and earlier in the interviews conducted with this group. This could be interpreted as an unwillingness to participate in the critical exploration of trigger works, or instead represent the user prioritising their level of enjoyment of the work.

CURATING

Significantly, curating emerged as an urgency when considering questions that alluded to authority and democracy in the gallery. In this excerpt, S talks about how she experiences curatorial storytelling through the exhibition of sculptural objects;

> *People might be embarrassed to approach such works, and I think that's when it becomes important where the placement of that piece of work, within a space, and kind of telling a story around it make it even more crucial because everyone should be able to engage with that no matter their age. (…) I think that says a lot about galleries in general, is how they deem some work to be acceptable and some not acceptable. Like, who should really decide that?*[171]

This comment emphasises what has been reflected in inclusion studies; that curators are considered gatekeepers by people who use collections, but also, their dominance can make people feel like there are barriers to 'expression and autonomy' (French, 2017, pp.24). Also referred to as 'taste-makers' or 'mediators of culture' in the field (Janssen and Verboord, 2015, pp.441), recent research shows us that cultural hegemony is created by these powerful members of society (Zaidi et al., 2016, pp.2). Notably S uses the word 'acceptable' in reference to the subscription process that curators are perceived to roll out to artists and artworks. Historically, this understanding of 'the curator' is confirmed by Bourdieu, who describes curators with a kind of 'cultural nobility' (Bourdieu, 1984, pp.2). S emphasises that from her perspective, this understanding of curating continues to be prominent. This is stressed by her desire to challenge artistic competence (Wright, 2013, pp.16) when she exclaims 'who should really decide that?!' What I interpret from S's perspective is the question; whose narratives should take precedence over others? Why should artistic competence be given priority whilst institutions attempt to democratise public experiences of art? In *Active Agents*, I focus on the inclusion of counternarratives to begin to answer these questions.

[171] This comment was made in relation to Barbara Hepworth's 'Single Form' (1937-8).

TRUST

Throughout interviews, users spoke directly and indirectly about the importance of trust with institutions, artists, curators and staff members. The cultivation of trust is debated across the field in collaborative practices (Sánchez de Serdio Martín, 2018, pp.115) and in museology (Lynch, 2013, pp.2), but to what extent do users actually feel like they trust or are trusted in collection? In one example, R spoke about the symbolic trust that she shares with one of the artists we discussed;

> *I do trust her as an artist. (…) Yes, so I guess that's where the trust thing comes from. Like we've come to the same conclusion and we feel the same way, so I trust you to take me on this journey.*[172]

Specifically, this comment demonstrates that this user values trust with artists highly. In the collection, this relationship is conducted via choices made by curators at TL and their responsibility to 'tell a story' through the collection. Recently, it has been argued that the 'institution and the public enter into a relationship of mutual trust: one in which each party learns something from the other' (Campolmi, 2017, pp.75). However, what I found through this research is that the entrenched systems at TL do not fully allow for what Freire describes as 'horizontal dialogue' (Freire, 2000, pp.91) between equals, where trust can be fostered mutually. For Freire, the relationship between learner and 'the dialogical man' (ibid) – or, for our purposes, the institution - is argued as a faith commitment that can only be reconciled when we trust in people and their ability 'to make and remake, to create and re-create' (2000, pp.90). What is uncovered here is that trust is contingent on allowing users to create content. To the same effect, users cannot trust institutions until trust is a reciprocal offer. For Freire, 'without this faith in people, dialogue is a farce which inevitably degenerates into paternalistic manipulation' (ibid). This is emphasised by the interaction with R when she highlights that trust is more commonly created through artists than it is through institutions. Subsequently, if TL is to become a dialogical institution then it must make visible its ideology that users add value to collections. As Freire proposes, this must be the starting point for work that focusses dialogue

[172] This comment was made in relation to Louise Bourgeois' 'Mamelles' (1991).

and democracy. Repeatedly, this subject is discussed through interviews with publics and critical friends as a core finding.

COMMUNITY

It is common consensus in museums that 'we need a tighter definition of community' (Simon, 2016, pp.87). This was reflected in interviews with users where they identified and challenged the ambiguity of the word in relation to the collection;

> *S: And the idea of what a community is...? I don't think that anyone has a clear definition of that.*

In interviews, users challenged the idiom 'for the community' on the basis of 'the promise of dialogue' (Ahmed and Fortier, 2003, pp.252) rather than actual, sustained dialogue with the institution, its curators and other stakeholders. Further, issues pertaining to speech and the loss of voice were raised when we discussed how we might describe the experience of community in the collection. Mainly, this was due to the understanding that 'in the silence of the museum space visitors create themselves as proper or acceptable' (Holt, 2012, no pagination). Hence, even though users in this group are highly engaged in the collection and its programmes, they still felt like they were a side-lined, silent community – because, as Wittgenstein reminds us, 'what we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence' (Pears and Wittgenstien, 2002, pp.89) - rather than a community of people brought together by the idea that 'it's good to talk' (Ahmed and Fortier, 2003, pp.252). In this research, I have found it helpful to conceive the term community in the Rancièrian view for whom a community concerns a group of subjects that similarly understand the language that is being spoken. As with COPs, they have a language in common. In effect, the people who make up a community do so because they speak the same language (Rancière, 1998, pp.2). This could not be further from the truth in the collection at TL where users feel that they have no language in common. This was made clear by user's desires to engage in TPG because they want to encourage the production of common language over a process of one-way broadcasting.

5.4. SUMMARY

This chapter asserts my contribution through the expansion of research via my critical and descriptive analyses. Thus, it also provides a specific rationale for creating my own interventions within the field. Additionally, I redefined engaged publics as users and described the processes of *Shared Language* to create a 'common language'. Using critical analysis, users and I demonstrated the conflict between technical and descriptive language use individually, collectively and institutionally. Crucially, this emphasised how discourse produced by users evokes art's capacity to produce emotional discourse via experiential language. This observation supports the argument that visual art produces other forms of knowledge acquisition to generate discourse that might reflect emotional and relational ways of thinking through images (Maharaj, 2009, pp.4). Thereafter, thematic analysis identified three major themes to draw attention to public thought on 'the political', 'identity' and 'authority'. Moreover, it was also revealed how users might mis-use collections and spatial strategies like TE for their own means. Importantly, this chapter revealed the agonistic struggle between post-political discourses and common-sense narratives active at TL. Subsequently, users raised themes around challenging legitimacy, repositioning identity and producing counternarratives. This brought into question TE's intent to create public debate 'in which diverse voices and views generate new ideas and perspectives' (Cutler, 2018, pp.34). In this analysis I have limited myself via discussing three keywords – 'curating', 'community' and 'trust' – though many more additions are reflected on via TPG.

6. Chapter Four: Active Agents

This chapter defines *Active Agents* and indicates the importance of observation in the PAR research cycle. It builds on what was learnt during *Shared Language* and tests, reflects and evaluates processes to feed into alternative, active ways to interpret collections. Using traditional qualitative research methodologies such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups, combined with arts-based research methodologies such as collaborative zine-making this chapter problematises the methodological toolkit that this research proposes. The data collected using these varied processes all contribute to the practice-based outcome of this research; TPG, which is discussed at the end of the chapter titled *The People's Glossary Toolkit*.

6.1. WHO AND WHY?

Defined by their engagement as the central COP, this chapter describes some of the AAs who use TL's collection. Already operating as a constituent group of TL's extended collaborators, AAs are aligned with Bernadette Lynch's research on 'active agency' (Lynch, 2011, pp.19). I choose to refer to them in this way due to their responsibilities to 'make free choices' (ibid) in the gallery. I have chosen to use the term COP specifically in relation to AAs due to their intentionality for learning and their commitment to TL as their domain of practice (Wenger, 2009, pp.1-2).

Making up the key cycle of the research, this group is critical to explore the potential for co-productive interpretation in the collection. They are involved with all processes of TPG; having co-produced content, aided in making decisions about the website and - separately from the glossary - governing themselves. As denoted by Alison Jones, this group is representative of TL's institutional agenda to increase engagement with 'inactives' (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007, pp.168) to increase inclusion, ownership, knowledge and empowerment within the collection and TL exhibitions. Prior to the 'Making Sense of Art' course, many of the individuals who form CC 'hadn't been into Tate before, or into the city centre'. As Alison describes, they are 'people who maybe thought, "Oh yes, I quite like the sound of visual art"'.

In this view, it is important that CC are included due to their highly engaged role in learning about contemporary art and their natural capacity to be observed as a COP.

Seventeen active collaborators from CC worked together to produce a series of artworks including contributing to the word index, zines and entries to TPG's website. Their names are visible in the zines and on the website, but in this thesis, I refer to them using the first letter of their name to ensure their anonymity. The demographic of this group is heterogeneous due to the wide range of social classes and age groups of the individuals (thirty and upwards[173]), but there was little diversity in terms of race.[174] Five of the most active members of CC were interviewed. Members H and D also took part in the proceedings of a day-long presentation and research-sharing forum during *Art, Activism and Language: Feminist Issues in the Gallery*[175], alongside Alison Jones and artist Nina Edge.

[173] PAR has emerged from movements that share a vision of society free from domination where adult education is viewed as an empowering alternative to traditional approaches to education. It is likely that this form of research would have been approved by Raymond Williams due to his dedication toward life-long education MacDonald, C. (2012) Understanding participatory action research: A qualitative research methodology option. *The Canadian Journal of Action Research*, 13 (2), pp.34-50.(Pp.37).

[174] A critical friend identified the lack of racial and class-based diversity across constituent groups at TL. When interviewed, they discussed people's motivation to join institutional collectives to gain experience in curating, to work in a cultural institution and to progress their career prospects. This interview confirmed my observations that constituent demographics are not representative of the nation's demographic. Consequently, though these groups undertake work to disrupt hegemonic narratives in the collection, they also contribute to the reinforcement of hegemony because they reproduce homogenous identities instead of multiplying and pluralising them. (Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M. (2018) Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries. [online],

Available at: http://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries1.pdf

[Accessed: 21/06/19](pp.11).

[175] See appendix V for documentation from *Art, Activism and Language: Feminist Issues in the Gallery*,

6.1.1. 'My Bed' Audio Interpretation

I identified the CC as a potential collaborator after experiencing their recorded interpretation project *My Bed Audio Interpretation* (2016) at the *Tracey Emin and William Blake in Focus* exhibition at TL. Framed around Emin's work *My Bed* (1998), the sixteen-minute audio work was available to listen to throughout the free, year-long exhibition from September 2016. The objective of the work was to produce a piece of community-led audio for *My Bed* that would be listened to in the gallery next to the artwork. Facilitated by Jonty Lees and Mike Pinnington, the work brought together plural perspectives about Emin's artwork, the work represents CC's voice both literally and symbolically. For the purposes of this research, the audio work exemplifies a decisive moment for TL in that it displays their active role in co-producing interpretation publicly, albeit temporarily, outside of the permanent collection. Whilst the integration of local voices should not be unexpected at TL, experiencing them reminded me of the lack of regional voices as a precedence in collections of contemporary art. This is supported by Alison for whom 'people really liked to hear local voices talking about art, it gives people a way in'.[176] However, some contributors recounted their experience of producing the audio negatively. An excerpt from my research diary demonstrates;

[176] An excerpt from my research diary demonstrates the breadth of their discussion;

> *They shared their opinions and gave the impression of listening to others. They discussed what Emin might've been feeling at the time of conceiving 'My Bed'. One member suggests that the bed is like a 'self-portrait from a time and place', and that 'it is like an open wound'. Another member refers to the 'suitcase in the corner that resonates with travelling, packing, going.'*

Contributors do not shy away from expressing criticism such as the work being too 'reactionary' (*My Bed Audio Interpretation*. (2016) [online]

Available at: http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/exhibition/tracey-emin-and-william-blake-focus/my-bed-audio-interpretation

[Accessed: 16/03/18], or expressing things that were not picked up on by the traditional interpretation; 'I think there is a suitcase in the corner that resonates with travelling, packing, going…' ibid.)

> *Some members were frustrated about the 'edit' of the audio work. We had a conversation where J and D spoke about how they felt like their views had been diluted in order to appeal to the general public, and to show Tate in a 'good light'.*

Thus, institutional policing, editing and censorship were barriers for CC in having their voices heard in the gallery. This is triangulated in an interview with J, who recounts 'we weren't allowed to talk about the money aspect. That was censored'.

Whilst reflecting on *My Bed Audio Interpretation*, it is important to consider why this research has benefited from CC's voices and contributions. Firstly, their participation in the audio project highlighted their presence as a COP – something that I argue is vital to contribute to this research. Until CC, my engagement with publics was limited to users with similar educational backgrounds. Differently, the user group that I observe do not participate in a collectively developed dialogue to enable them to learn or 'think together' (Pyrko, Dörfler and Eden, 2017, pp.390). Secondly, from listening to the artwork, I discerned that CC had already done some of the work that was needed to 'speak truth to power' in the gallery. This was important to the research because it suggested that AAs have already developed a sense of belonging and self-confidence in the collection.

6.2. Shared Language with Community Collective

Due to CCs fixed meetings on the first Thursday of every month, it was arranged that I would arrive at TL on the 7th of May 2017 to facilitate a site visit to my studio at The Royal Standard where *Shared Language* would take place.[177] Here, it was established that I would facilitate another cycle of the workshop as a 'focus group', and AAs could continue to collaborate with

[177] TL provides transportation to the members of CC who need it. Mostly this is to facilitate the participation of older citizens and those who might have injuries or disabilities. This benefited the research project because it allowed for people to visit an area of Liverpool that might be considered 'inaccessible' due to the current road layout and building work in South Liverpool.

me via interviews if they desired.[178] This format afforded me the opportunity to 'hang out' (Pfaelzar, 2010, pp.140) with the CC to make initial observations and to engage in 'participatory dialogue' (Ingold, 2017, pp.87); which I would then record ethnographically. These conversations gave me an understanding of the group away from the confines of the institution. Embedding myself in this way furthered my approach to shift the power away from me and towards CC (Wilkinson, 1999, pp.64).

6.2.1. The 'Focus Group'

More formally structured than the drop-in format of *Shared Language*, this session with CC was limited to an hour and better resembled a focus group. Aligned with traditional qualitative research methods, I combined the activity used via *Shared Language* with a tested qualitative research method to record data via audio. This allowed me to prevent the workshop from becoming an 'authoritarian arena' (Kamberelis, 2013, pp.8) where powerful voices dominate. Typically moderated with a group of seven to ten people (Greenbaum, 2000, pp.4), I altered the structure of a standard focus group to accommodate the groups' size. By splitting the mixed crowd of seventeen into three smaller groups, I ensured that I was able to 'check in' with all the groups, without influencing their decision-making when ranking words and directing the conversations that surrounded the ranking methodology.[179]

[178] Organised as an 'exchange' in return for their collaboration, I offered members of CC a tour of the studios at The Royal Standard in Liverpool. After which, they went away to decide if they would like to continue to contribute to *The People's Glossary* project. This process took more time than originally planned but was absolutely critical to gain ongoing, ethical consent, and in terms of members maintaining their agency in co-productive environments. Prior to the session, all contributors were given a schedule for the three-hour site-visit that I had planned via email. In the email, everyone was made aware that they were expected to engage in a qualitative research project. If anyone decided that they did not want to participate they were also given the opportunity to drop out of the session after the tour took place and before the workshop started.

[179] See appendix W for outcome of the focus groups.

When facilitating the primary group-based discussions, the activity in the room exploded with voices, but not much movement. After checking in with each group, I realised that AAs were resistant to engaging in conflictual discourse about word use and were opting to express their thoughts singularly. To mitigate this, I encouraged members to support one another to introspect their thoughts, actions and to 'think out loud' (Walmsley, 2018, pp.277) in relation to words by talking through numerous and entangled meanings. This generated some confidence in a number of AAs to move, replace and question words that had been categorised in the 'keep', 'discuss', 'retire' sets by their peers. For the last twenty minutes, we returned to the focus group format to rationalise our decision-making in the enclosed area of the project space and to provide an additional arena where were all voices were equal. This was especially important to allow for silenced voices 'within the framework of the existing hegemony' (Mouffe, 2007b, no pagination) to come to the fore.

Importantly, several different languages, styles and vernaculars were used during the session due to the multi-cultural demographic of the group including Polish and Welsh languages, as well as featuring local dialects and working-class voices. The group's gender balance reflects the cultural field where women are highly represented at around 70%[180], but did not feature so much as the male voices in conversation; and in terms of racial demographic, one only one woman of colour participated in the focus group. This too reflects the cultural field where it is understood that 'arts are not diverse in terms of ethnicity' (Brook, O'Brien and Taylor, 2018, pp.13).

[180] In 2018, 'Panic, it's an Arts Emergency' (Brook, O., O'Brien, D. and Taylor, M. (2018) Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries. [online],

Available at: http://createlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Panic-Social-Class-Taste-and-Inequalities-in-the-Creative-Industries1.pdf

[Accessed: 21/06/19]) recorded that 68.4% of museum and galleries workforces are female workers. This number is consistent with this iteration of CC, with female members monopolising the group by five to twelve.

6.2.2. Challenging the Dominant Discourse

Historically developed to record 'audience responses' (Merton, 1987, pp.552), this method reflected my ambition to listen to, observe and equip AAs to challenge dominant discourses. In social research, focus groups are valued for their flexibility and for the access they provide people to draw out understandings in their own language (Lee, 2010, pp.130). Their ability to capture spoken discourse allowed me to listen to members using language they were comfortable with when adding to or resisting normative or hegemonic discourses. Due to their learning as part of a COP, I reason that this method provided AAs freedom to use colloquial language when engaging one another in discussion. In this extract, during one of the group discussions, adding new words to the archive was an exercise in learning and thinking together;

J:	*We found utopia, so we needed dystopia.*
D:	*What does that mean? … What does dystopia mean?*
T:	*Is that a new word?*
J:	*It's the opposite of utopia. It's like a dystopian future where everything is miserable, the world has gone to hell in a bucket.*
T:	*Does it not exist now, that word?*
Moderator:	*It does.*
H:	*Has everyone remembered to vote today?!*

Let us consider the four voices that are engaged in this discussion of joint decision-making to add 'dystopia' to the word index. First, J draws from her knowledge of language to propose a word that provides a counter-position to the word 'utopia'. J recommends the word 'dystopia' to provide balance. This enables D and T to express that they are not familiar with the word. By verbalising the discomfort felt by readers when engaging with an unfamiliar word, speakers can break away from the confines of habitus to come together to 'transform the given information into new understanding' (Mercer, 2002, pp.8) in collaborative articulation. J's colloquial description of dystopia as 'hell in a bucket' is accepted by the group. Perhaps due to

the reference made to 1980s pop-culture as a point of access[181], this method is employed most famously by the late Mark Fisher to 'wrestle with big questions about art's emancipatory potential' (Arcand, 2018, no pagination)[182]. Once the understanding of the word is grasped via J's articulation, H interjects to apply a level of practical relevance signifying further meaning for the word beyond the walls of the project space, emphasising the word's importance outside CC's linguistic circle.

The first example makes clear that individuals felt a sense of legitimacy to question the absence of words from the word archive. In the next excerpt we see that they were also comfortable in critiquing words that had been included in word clouds. Prior to this conversation, E muses 'that's the thing with words, you assume that everyone has the same meaning, but they don't'. Reflecting Mouffe and Laclau's 'field of discursivity', this deliberation reinforces their definition of discourse as 'an attempt to fix a web of meanings within a particular domain' (Rear, 2013, pp.6). Next I will show how the focus group challenged fixed meanings by visiting the word 'motherhood' as a term of conflict; asking what does it mean in the collection?

J:	*We talked about motherhood.*
A:	*Is that okay to talk about?*
J:	*It's just a bit of a stupid word because, what does it mean? The state of being a mother?*
T:	*It only describes one thing doesn't it?*
M:	*I guess… it's a bit old fashioned way to describe being a mother?*
J:	*Yes, it is.*
E:	*It's kind of like apartheid isn't it? That's something I learnt recently. Like the apartments in London which were a bit shit. Well, apartheid means*

[181] 'Hell in a Bucket' is a song that was released by the classic rock band Grateful Dead in 1987.

[182] In his text Capitalist Realism, Fisher references Kurt Cobain as a representation of the deadlock that we are presented with when rethinking the aesthetics of language – via citing Jameson (1993) - where we 'speak through masks and with the voices of the styles in the imaginary museum'. (Fisher, M. (2009) *Capitalist realism: is there no alternative?* Winchester: O Books.)

> *apart-hood – like you've got rich apartments and poor apartments, haven't they? So… apart-hood is similar to neighbourhood and then motherhood is the same. It's like a state or place, isn't it?*

Again, J was confident to kick off the conversation, while A seemed to question whether the topic was appropriate to discuss in the setting. Sensing A's reservation highlighted the sensitivity of discussion on motherhood – when conversation could easily turn to women's bodies, reproduction and family. Whilst facilitating this conversation I felt a sense of foreboding due to the potential difficulties that might arise. Especially, I was aware of the work in the collection signifying the term 'motherhood' pertaining to Louise Bourgeois' work *Mamelles* (1991). In the collection, 'motherhood' is used to discuss Bourgeois' preoccupation with the assumption that women take on nurturing roles within society. In this view, I was concerned J's discussion topic might reveal some of the 'unconscious personal and institutional biases and assumptions about concepts like "family"' (Kinsley, 2016, pp.57). However, when T agrees with J claiming, 'it only describes one thing', I interpreted his point as focussing on the suffix – 'hood' – and how it might describe a 'state' of being. Using his knowledge of etymology, E adds to T's comment to describe the correlation between the words 'motherhood' and 'neighbourhood'.

When interpreting this interaction, I think E is trying to articulate what the suffix 'hood' describes; a generalised connection to other people. In my view, this interaction defines the frustration that CC felt in the use of motherhood as a generalised term to encompass a broad range of people – specifically women. Both prescriptive and general, CC establishes its coded nature due to its account that 'only describes one thing'. Similarly, across the research, terms given to identify broad groups of people, like 'community' and 'family', were considered unhelpful due to their lack specificity; conjuring 'old-fashioned' tropes. Hence, we discussed how self-definition - what one means by the words one uses - could provide a useful route for TPG. By drawing out complexities and contradictions we demonstrate how *Shared Language* revealed 'the tip of the iceberg' (Kamberelis, 2013, pp.59) when discussing keywords, but also, that agonism between collaborators and a dominant author can be a productive device to create multiple interpretations of words and their meanings.

6.2.3. Group Consensus

Arts-based researcher Shaun McNiff suggests that some practitioners are 'beginning to see the classroom as a "research community"' (McNiff, 1998, pp.63). The field that advocates for focus groups as an 'established part of the methodological tool kit' (Williams and Katz, 2001, no pagination) reflects this. But, as with a classroom or art studio, the project space was inhabited by many voices during the research and therefore a 'pecking order' (Michell, 1999, pp.36) developed. This social structure depended on people who were happy to speak on behalf of others when justifying their decision-making. J, E, D and T were most prominent here and, subsequently, a high level of consensus was expressed; leaving quieter voices to fade into the background. This was due to size of the group, but also due to individualised intellectual access struggles. Consequently, collaboration was necessary to ensure that everyone's voice was aired, though I observed that as time went on some agents became increasingly disengaged or acquiescent.[183] Supported by the idea that 'language is power' and therefore 'illiteracy means lack of power' (Sik Hung, 2007, pp.119) by the end of the focus group some people were completely withdrawn whilst others would have liked to continue the activity for longer. [184] Ultimately, although conducting a focus group with CC was beneficial for developing our collaborative process, concentrating on the word index limited the methodology. Whilst discussing the index provided a tightly defined area of discourse, discussing it in relation to the collection was difficult due to our location. This suppressed empathetic development of discourse in correlation to art.

[183] In research the term acquiescence relates to the "tendency to respond affirmatively regardless of a question's content" (Carlson et al, 2002, p. 12)

[184] During the focus group, D and M's passivity allowed them to completely withdraw from the session. From revisiting the audio, I wouldn't have guessed that either were in the room during the discussion. Writing and reading based exercises were a hindrance to those who may have been intimidated by the heavy use of text during the session and put people off the interviews. When a sign-up sheet was offered around for interviews only eight individuals signed their names and email addresses. So, although the interviews were able to provide rich data to the data project, it became clear that only a certain type of member participated in them; those who had a lot of cultural capital and felt their education had primed them to talk in a certain way about art. However, workshops during the 'Art, Activism and Language' event at TE, allowed for individuals to open up using art-based methods by making maps, zines and experimenting with photography.

6.3. Interviews with Active Agents

The interviews undertaken with AA were consistent with those that I had facilitated with users. The questions, format, prompts and schedule remained the same, as did our location. Predominantly, we used my studio as the interview setting to ensure continuity and because the embodied experienced of being in a gallery has a tendency to – in J's words - 'shut you up a little'. Using thematic analysis, I identified patterns in the production of knowledge, pluralism and agonism, whilst also identifying mainstays of postmodernist discourse including the genius narrative and reliance on biographies to inform interpretation. Similarly, when analysing the data, I used the identification of key words and themes to draw out and evaluate the findings. Differently from the interviews with users, I analysed individual question responses using NVivo to run word frequency queries on each trigger work to gain a better understanding of keywords in relation to artworks. Additionally, I created another node for Emin's *My Bed* due to its reoccurrence in interviews. I put this down to CC's relationship with the artwork through the recording of the audio interpretation in 2016, emphasised when J states that they 'did it to death'.

6.3.1. Knowledge Production

At first, the words 'work', 'people', 'things' and 'words' were commonly used in interviews. This emphasises the cyclical conversation between gallery mechanisms and AAs to produce user-generated knowledge.[185] Processes of information provision and subsequent gallery learning are discussed in the field as 'dialogic' (Pringle and DeWitt, 2014, no pagination) and 'inextricably interwoven' (ibid) by education researchers Emily Pringle and Jennifer DeWitt. This is supported by my research with AAs who learn in ways that are divergent.

Confidence was an issue for contributors in that it took time to warm up to discussing works with little information. This was emphasised by N for whom there was 'not much you

[185] See appendix T for word clouds generated with AAs to demonstrate the keywords that emerged from each trigger art in the collection.

can make out from it without having some background knowledge, I don't think'. To counteract the lack of confidence, I gave contributors prompts if they struggled. By offering the date or title of the artwork, I attempted to offer access without mentioning my own subjectivities or the 'objective' interpretation provided by TL. Gradually, contributors felt comfortable to offer their own judgments based on their emotions, memories, experiences and knowledge. Occasionally I worried that AAs felt that I was 'testing' them. I attempted to mitigate this by offering feedback like 'thanks, that's great' and 'that's an original perspective'. When it was obvious that contributors were anxious over the unfamiliarity of certain works or topics, I observed that they looked for support from the 'expert in the room'; asking for my opinion. By halfway, contributors were happy to actively disagree with my observations or information that I provided.

AAs process of knowledge production was different from Users. For example, in this excerpt, D immediately asks for information that one typically receive from a wall text;

D:	*Is it a painting, what is it?*
Interviewer:	*No. It is a suit, made out of felt. It's hung on the gallery wall.*
D:	*Oh, it's an actual suit.*
Interviewer:	*It's got a Perspex box around it, to protect it, I guess.*
D:	*Is it somebody's suit, or just made...?*[186]

Evidently, this interaction demonstrates a reliance on explication as a method of interpreting artwork.[187] D expresses that she does not recognise the work – though she is a frequent user of the collection – which suggests its lack of relevance to her. This tells me that the artwork is one she might choose to skip over in the collection. This observation supports the definition of AAs to make free choices in the collection - to reject or re-use received ideas when creating knowledge. In this instance, D is unable to describe her subjective encounter with the artwork freely until she learns basic information about it. After which D describes her interpretation

[186] This discussion occurred in relation to Joseph Beuys' 'Felt Suit' (1970).

[187] It also signifies the barrier caused by using an electronic tablet to prompt people's memories of the collection.

that the work reminds her of 'Sunday best'. This suggests that the provision of material information allows D to articulate personal, creative and social meaning (Saunders, 2014, pp.1). Conjuring this identifiable image helps us to build a narrative that sheds light on the artwork and D's own identity. Hence, by analysing what different information contributes to knowledge production we can consider what the representation of multiple textual authors – and their identities – might do to challenge cultural explication.

6.3.2. Post-Modern Narratives

In interviews I found that when AAs didn't know how to engage with an artwork, they would habitually assume that the artist who made it is 'clever'. This is emphasised when agents learned the name of the artist. In the next excerpt R immediately recognises the name of the artist - Barbara Hepworth - as a famous figure and switches to the 'genius narrative';

R:	*Is it made of marble?*
Interviewer:	*No, it's made of bronze.*
R:	*Right, it looks like it's got a marble effect on it.*
Interviewer:	*It's untreated bronze.*
R:	*Yes, yes. I suppose it's symbolic. As I say, again, I think you'd need something at the side to explain it.*
Interviewer:	*Yes.*
R:	*If you just walked in, you'd just think, "Oh that's clever."*[188]

In other examples, when names were not recognised immediately, contributors were hesitant when making observations of their work. In the cases of Cindy Sherman's *Untitled A, B, C, D* (1975) and Joseph Beuys' *Felt Suit* (1970), R makes multiple inquiries before making judgments about the works. After learning that Beuys is a renowned artist, she concludes that *Felt Suit* is 'clever', and Sherman's untitled self-portraits are 'narcissistic'. This suggests a bias towards artists who receive critical legitimacy and exhibits subordination to the status quo. It has been

[188] This discussion occurred in relation to Barbara Hepworth's 'Single Form' (1937-8).

argued that simply exhibiting work in a collection encourages publics to canonise artists (Kam, 2001, pp.14) and this research supports this. In another interview J refers to Lowry's 'clever use of colour' when describing *Industrial Landscape* (1955). Historian Marjatta Hölz reflects on the training of audiences 'to look for well-known names', 'even when the collection is creatively varied' (Hölz, 2011, pp.2). Despite the growing number of collections confronting the genius narrative[189], users and AAs continue to be conditioned to trust in 'familiar names' (Hölz, 2011, pp.2). Through recalling a CC workshop focused on Jackson Pollock, J emphasises how narratives are entrenched through the presence of artist biography in learning and interpretation activates at TL. Stating 'Interesting chap. Interesting life' in reference to Pollock, she also remarks on Yves Klein - 'they were all characters, weren't they?'

Though it is professionally understood that 'biography is subjective' (McCartney, 2017, pp.62), these comments signify biography and genius as mainstays in the collection at TL. From my observations, when AAs are not supported through text or dialogue, they are inclined to consume information objectively. Sometimes referred to as 'critical monism' (Nehamas, 1981, pp.114), AAs automatically refer to a regulative ideal of interpretation that identifies 'the meaning of text with whatever is specified by that text's ideal interpretation' (ibid) rather than engaging with a subjective process that combines multiple perspectives into a comprehensible view (Bergqvist, 2016, pp.298). This supports the closed-off paradigm where traditional museum regulations reinforce our learning behaviors in museums because historically 'we have been conditioned to examine the artist's biography to better understand works of art' (McCartney, 2017, pp.62).

[189] One example of this is Manchester Art Gallery, where in the year-long exhibition *Speech Acts: Reflection-Imagination-Repetition* that ran from May 2018 - April 2019 a wall text read 'accounts of artists' works are often reduced to their biographies – a narrow field of engagement that most artists reject'. For me, this text demonstrates how public museums could re-examine the way that stories are told through exhibition text and shows how 'artworks can nurture new stories if they are shown in ways beyond the limited frames of biography and identity.' (*Speech Acts: Reflection-Imagination-Repetition*. (2018) [online]

Available at: http://manchesterartgallery.org/exhibitions-and-events/exhibition/speech-acts/

[Accessed: 12/06/2019]).

6.3.3. Production of Agonism

Taking into consideration the 'passions' and 'partisans' (Mouffe, 2005a, pp.6) of individuals when conducting research was critical to study agonism within the group. Intended as a route to override current museum practice, I used interviews as a mechanism to create TPG and inform its processes. Through interviewing AAs I found that there was potential to represent agonistic views and interpretations via TPG. This method allowed me to represent voices verbatim, to enhance authenticity and restrict co-option. For the purpose of this research, each interview has the potential to disrupt the official narrative at TL because they refuse to be neutral or post-political. The outcomes of which are challenging for TPG users due to the assortment of conflicting identities, ideologies and behaviours captured through my method. Subsequently, TPG reproduces the passions of AAs who steer the dialogue toward contested issues such as education, activism, feminism and censorship. This is demonstrated by anti-authorial AAs that dominated the conversations. For example, D describes herself as a 'militant' and N refers to himself as 'a bit of an anarchist'. In these responses I interpret their self-determination as actively rallying against their perception of TL as a system ruled by autocracy - 'no matter how wise, expert or benevolent' (Dewey, 1903, pp.193). In their eyes, the presence of the institution and its curators remains dominant (Longair, 2015, pp.1). Sequentially, I was able to determine their motivation to be involved in TPG due to their interest in becoming change-makers.

6.4. Summary

When considering AAs I observed two defining characteristics; desire and freewill. In interviews it was noticeable that they were influenced by their personal desire 'to choose and control his/her own learning' (Falk, 2004, pp.85), to change how the museum represents them, how it engages with local people and how it talks about art. Consequently, I imagined AAs collectively as a 'desiring-machine'. Borrowed from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's text *Balance-Sheet Program for Desiring-Machines* (Guattari, Lotringer and Dosse, 2008) that posits humans as 'a component part of the machine, or combine with something else to constitute a machine' (pp.91), I theorise AAs as one of the many 'moving parts' that make up TL. Though to

understand the power differences between the 'official power structure of an organisation and the informal power alliances found within that very same institution' (McKenzie, 2005, pp.28) we need to refer to TL as a 'socio-technical machine' and AAs as a 'desiring machine'. For our purposes the former presents a 'rigid, centralised' system 'governed by binary opposition' (ibid), while the latter have the potential to be 'supple, decentralised and attuned to much more subtle differences' (ibid). In this way, the rigid structures of Tate that sustain authoritative discourse represent the macro-politics of hegemonic order. Whilst the narratives, stories and discourse discussed with AAs and users represent the micropolitics – or as Rosalind Krauss muses, the 'textual, semiological' (Krauss, 1990a, pp.55) mediums of production that could override it.

In this chapter, I identify my contribution to knowledge via my activation and demonstration of methods to interrogate the initial research questions. Via these processes I also shed light on some of the localised problematics at TL. Developing the research in this way contributes to my own critical and collaborative interventions. In summary, interviews with AAs generated many of the definitions and interpretations for TPG that are represented as an outcome of this practice-based research. Lastly, exploring the interviews thematically meant that we have explored how knowledge is co-produced and discovered how users experience and react to postmodern narratives. Importantly, we also investigated the production of agonism – the insistence of dissonance (Raunig, 2010, pp.119). In the next chapter I analyse the facilitation and production of TPG as a toolkit of practices that provide the foundation for the website.

7. Chapter Five: The People's Glossary Toolkit

In Mouffe's essay *Critique as Counter-Hegemonic Intervention* (2008, no pagination) she argues that defining processes of re-articulation is crucial when challenging patterns of hegemonic strategies. I have interpreted 're-articulation' as an opportunity to redirect the dominant discourse towards publics in collections to create a toolkit.[190] By creating a series of 'hegemonic interventions' (ibid), this chapter describes the processes of TPG to establish a publicly generated discourse 'thanks to a process of re-articulation of new and old elements into a different configuration of power' (Mouffe, 2008, no pagination). In the following, I analyse the necessary antagonisms that occur through this process to unveil user-generated knowledge. During these interventions, I was acutely aware of the dynamics ascribed by 'the rituals of speaking' (Alcoff, 1991, pp.12). Drawing on the Foucaultian perspective that speaking for others is ethically undignified (Kay, 2006, no pagination) I considered the practical and consistent struggles between domination, exploitation and subordination when engaging in the processes of TPG. Within these exchanges, thinking about how location impacts on speech is critical (Howe, 2009, pp.162). For example, the private Clore studio at TL, the open gallery at TE or the project space at my studio, each had their own meaning attached. Each are public and restrictive in their own way. Hence during the sessions, avenues were opened for different types of discourse.[191]

In this chapter, I discuss five methodologies undertaken during the research with AAs and users; their processes and their analyses. In the view of usability, I also have omitted some methods that contributed to the creation of the toolkit that I undertook independently including an exercise titled *FAX-BAKing*.[192]

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[190] In this section, I describe five methods of intervening in TL's collection. These activities were undertaken with AAs only. This decision was made due to their underrepresented subject positioning in the collection, and is influenced by Pablo Helguera's suggestion that public voices are missing from the conversation on contemporary art (Helguera, P. (2011) *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*. Mexico City: Jorge Pinto Books., pp.73).

[191] For example, the bunting-making workshop undertaken with Leah Jones called *Celebrate Me* during *Art, Activism and Language* lent itself better for inclusive but informal conversation and for non-English speakers. Significantly, this workshop happened in TE; which was considerably more open than other locations. Differently so, during the system-mapping activity that took place in the privacy of the 'Clore' studio discussion was more prescriptive.

[192] This method takes Tate's most recent *Tone of Voice Guidelines* to understand how language is used to 'inform all written communications at Tate' (Baker, R. (2016) *Tone of Voice Guidelines*. London: Tate Modern.). In the document, former director Nicolas Serota states that 'invitation and dialogue, rather than Olympian instruction, have become the necessary voice of the

7.1. Collaborative Zine-making[193]

Typically self-published, zines have been a mainstay of the do-it-yourself creative movement and are often associated with anarchist politics, feminism and queer communities (Thomas, 2009, pp.27); but significantly, are theorised as a method of direct democracy (Jeppesen, 2011, pp.265). Due to the understanding that zines are used as a method 'to speak "in one's own voice"' (Fraser, 1990, pp.69), I have used collaborative and individual zine-making to create routes for the production and dissemination of counternarratives.

In the following processes I describe how three zines were created to document the processes of TPG and how these might be disseminated in the future. Popularly used by countercultures whose voices are not heard in the public sphere, zines have been a useful tool in providing a route to articulate the experiences of alternative narratives, subvert dominant discourses, call for heightened transparency and share knowledge created by their producers (Hvala, 2012, Pp.123; Zobl and Drüeke, 2012, pp.63). Moreover, due to their physical organisation bringing together ideas on multiple pages, zines encompass many voices, tones and conflicting experiences. In my experience, readers of zines are not expected to consume them cover to cover - like one might a book – instead, users are free to dip in and out of both

institution' (Serota, 2016). Using this sentence as a foundation for my enquiry, I adopted a playful art-based model to conduct critical discourse analysis of the document. My analysis was based on the renowned *FAX-BAK (BANK (1998) FAX-BAK [online] Available at: http://www.john-russell.org/Web%20pages/Artworks/Exhibitions/Bank/A_fbl.html [Accessed: 21/06/19])* project created by the artist collective known as BANK (who has since dispersed). The project's title *FAX-BAK* relates to a method by which the group annotated gallery press releases, marked them out of ten – the marks were always pitifully low - and faxed them back to the gallery they came from. BANK's motivation for this form of institutional critique was to challenge the increasingly corporate art industry and its usage of 'developmentspeak' (Cornwall, A. and Eade, D. (ed.) (2010) *Deconstructing Development Discourse: Buzzwords and Fuzzwords*. London: Practical Action Publishing in association with Oxfam GB.) that proliferated in the late nineteen-nineties and early noughties. In Mouffe's view a method such as this could be defined as 'artivism' (Mouffe, 2013b, Pp.69) due to its agitation of 'artspeak' (Levine, 2013, no pagination) which 'when used by the systems that support art, not only perpetuates certain power structures but also obfuscates or undermines the efficacy of critical discussion (Fox, 2006, Pp.31). Differently in this intervention, instead of focussing on 'artspeak', I considered the areas where the inclusion of user-generated content could contribute. See appendix X for an outcome of a *FAX-BAKing* activity.

[193] See appendix K for zines.

the written and visual stories; much like one might experience a collection. This is why they are a pertinent resource.[194]

Currently, collections host zine-making stations, workshops and facilitate their distribution by creating spatial furniture within galleries[195]. Associated with their efforts to decolonise, de-modernise or 'queer' the collection, zines have become a much-used tool in feminist, museum educators' toolkits to change the tempo of collections and their interpretation. Demonstrated by events utilising zines such as *Queering Space Study Day* hosted in 2019 at mima[196]; and in 2017 at the event *SEX TALK MTG* by education research collective Bedfellows at The Walker Art Gallery during the exhibition *Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity*[197]; the creation and display of zines as a method for altering how people

[194] In this research, three zines have been made and can be accessed via the appendices. The first two were made a product of two workshops that were undertaken with CC during the proceedings of Art, Activism and Language in 2017: How We Work Together, IMAGINE (if we made the rules) and (finding) Our Voice. Although collaborative, I consider the former works more passive than *(finding) Our Voice* due to their reliance on my editorial hand. In all zines, it was my aim to take a light-touch approach to my editorial duties, but ultimately, I could not shirk my artistic responsibilities completely. For *(finding) Our Voice* differently, where I created a three-hour long workshop to co-create a zine made from the outcomes of a system mapping exercise. In this workshop, members were asked to decide the layout, order and subject of the pages, whilst also determining the objective for the zine.

[195] Functioning like Grizedale's *Honest Shop* set up in 2012 – where goods are exchanged for donations using an unmanned stall – I have seen stations like these work on the basis of exchange where one zine is replaced by another zine-makers creation. In this way, zines have been used to avert traditional capitalist structures to avoid exchanging money, and to encourage cooperation and horizontal knowledge sharing.

[196] mima's exhibition *Living Beyond Limits* used zine-making and public workshops to queer interpretations of the Middlesbrough Collection in dialogue with local people and people from the LGBTQIA+ community. Curated with researcher Claire Mead and constituents from mima the exhibition queered 'the museum by reclaiming it as a communal and political space within which marginal voices will not be silenced' (*Living Beyond Limits*. (2018) [online]

Available at: http://www.visitmima.com/whats-on/single/living-beyond-limits/

[Accessed: 19/06/2019])

[197] This exhibition marked the 50th anniversary of the decriminalization of male homosexuality in the U.K. The exhibition was of particular importance for this research due to its provision of a glossary that described the use of the word 'queer', as well as other terminologies such as 'intersectionality' and 'safe space'. Using the Arts Council Collection, the exhibition revealed uncovered queer histories in the gallery, whilst also creating a programme of workshops to locate 'institutional blind spots' (*Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity*. (2017) [online]

engage with collections is prominent. On balance, the capacity for zines to encapsulate many voices, tones and conflicting ideas is unparalleled. In relation to resisting the co-option of public voices, collective zine-making provides a divergent strategy that allows for AAs and users to speak for themselves. Subsequently, in the following, I discuss how multiple voices manifested through the creation of zines and the processes of TPG.

7.2. How We Work Together[198]

The framing of this workshop was to explore how the group might work together to produce new terms for TL's collection. Taking creative democracy as a starting point, it was my aim to produce 'a series of micro-interactional rules' (Vail and Hollands, 2013, pp.356) which would be critical in avoiding feelings of exploitation and to encourage mutual creativity. A crucial foundation for any co-writing toolkit[199], establishing these ground rules engendered the rediscovery of micro-politics to enable everyone to the same rights as more privileged individuals in the group (Benhabib, 2002, pp.19-20).

Our discussion focussed on generating a set of collaborative values like 'being present', 'listening to others', 'respect differences in opinion' and 'taking responsibility', which were arrived at through asking the question:

Available at: http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walker/exhibitions/arts-council-collection/coming-out/

[Accessed: 19/06/2019].). One way this was done was via the inclusion of a queer library, which exhibited numerous zines; to be read and contributed to.

[198] See appendix X for documentation and facilitation documents for TPG workshops.

[199] This workshop was influenced by observations I had made at mima during the summer of 2017 when I was introduced to Isabel Lima's 'Working Agreement' in the *Gresham Horse Project* Lima, I. (2017) *Gresham's Wooden Horse* [online]

Available at: http://www.visitmima.com/whats-on/single/isabel-lima-greshams-wooden-horse/

[Accessed: 28/06/19]; a project created to bring together people from different cultural backgrounds and communities living close to mima in Gresham, central Middlesbrough. Consequently, developing a series of rules for interacting with one another was yet another way to ensure the creation of an area of praxis for the development of *The People's Glossary.*

'What is needed to work together well?'

It could be argued that CC's responses echo practices of deliberative democracy – which prioritise consensus – however, its production provided a 'contact space' (Askins and Pain, 2011, pp.1) to enable conflictual ideas, narratives and discourses to emerge.

For E, the words 'safe' and 'space' were suggested to discuss a place where publics might engage with collections in a low-pressure environment without fear of 'getting it wrong' or having a conflictual perspective[200]. Via these suggestions, we added to the process of building 'a new, collective vocabulary by articulating words with new meanings and stories' (Räber, 2013, pp.178). Also associated with the emancipatory politics of Freire (MacQuarrie, 2010, pp.214) this kind of process is commonly initiated with a group of people to create an atmosphere of 'looseness and informality' (Freeman, 2013, pp.231) to allow people to feel like they 'belong' in the collection.

Though this workshop did not engender a decision-making - and this was evident due to the groups' acceptance of all values - there was discussion around the benefits of collective and individual storytelling to reflect different identities. What emerged from this discussion was for the need for CC to flesh out their own identities and stories in a way that communicated the voices of those involved in the act of interpreting collections, in the gallery.

[200] The use of the term 'safe space' here points to 'the creation of a space or relationship created by artists' Sellman, E. (2015) Safe spaces, support, social capital: a critical analysis of artists working with vulnerable young people in educational contexts. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 34 (1), pp.60-72.(pp.62). In E's theorisation, a 'safe space' might be a place where publics can engage with collections in a low-pressure environment; and this is exactly what I had imagined for TPG. In a recent Tate Papers essay, the term 'safe space' is also used to describe a place that validates learners' interpretations 'through supported learning (…) to further the aim of building visitor's confidence' (Pringle, E. and DeWitt, J. (2014) Perceptions, Processes and Practices around Learning in an Art Gallery'. *Tate Papers* [online], no.22 (Autumn 2014),

Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/22/perceptions-processes-and-practices-around-learning-in-an-art-gallery

[Accessed: 11/05/2019].)

Over the last twenty years, projects outside of contemporary art such as the *Human Library*[201] have created opportunities for people to define themselves in their own words. Specifically, the objective of the *Human Library* is to challenge dominant discourse by redefining identity with people, words and voices. Still in collections of contemporary art, user-generated content infrequently enters into the gallery due to fear that curatorial expertise may be diminished. Hence, the question 'who gets to tell stories about art?' remains a pertinent subject. Consequently, I argue that by turning our view away from institutional language as a received output and replacing it with the development of a common and relational language, personal use might contribute to what Ahmed calls 'towardness' (Ahmed, 2004, pp.8). In relation to objects, this 'towardness' signifies a movement between user and collection 'from distance to proximity, where the strange can become familiar' (Golding, 2019, pp.128). This is relevant for users for whom 'relation is deeper than engagement' (ibid). This is demonstrated by users and AAs similarly when describing their connection to artworks as part of a journey, as illustrated by R:

> *To see that you have taken similar journeys [to an] artist [that has gone] before you is very warm.*

Alternatively from participatory practices, instilling relationality permits use by creating 'a movement from distance to proximity' where 'the strange can become familiar' (ibid) and this can only be done by the creation and dissemination of counter narratives.

[201] First developed in Copenhagen in 2000, the *Human Library* is a worldwide initiative that is 'designed to build a positive framework for conversations' that can challenge prejudices through dialogue. Through this method it has become 'a place where difficult questions are expected, appreciated and answered' (*Human Library* (2000) [online]

Available at: http://humanlibrary.org/about-the-human-library/

[Accessed: 19/06/2019].)

7.3. Dialogical Co-writing[202]

After identifying storytelling as a route to 'connect us to a much more dynamic set of narratives' (Rogaly, 2011, pp.29) and to avoid the co-option of voices to increase usership, I looked to create a way for AAs to put narratives into writing. Subsequently, I took inspiration from Tim Etchells' TE commission *Ten Purposes* (Etchells, 2016, no pagination). By appropriating one of ten instructions included below, I sought to activate a method of storytelling;

> *On the other side of this card write an alternative label for a particular work in the museum. It could be a new title, a question, or your own interpretation. Stand with the card on show, beside the work.*
>
> *Talk to people who stop by to read what you have written.*

Through conducting a tour of the gallery, the group chose artworks that they felt they could 'write an alternative label for' (Etchells, 2016, pp.4). Together, we discussed our reasons for and against our selections. During the activity, I noticed that AAs were commonly drawn to well-known paintings. For instance, selections included Pablo Picasso's *Goat Skull, Bottle and Candle* (1952), Piet Mondrian's *No. VI / Composition No. II* (1920) and most popular was *Bursting Shell* (1915) by Christopher Richard Wynn Nevison. Verbal observations were made confidently around these works (which are significantly all paintings) such as 'Picasso's work is geometric' and 'this work is abstract', 'this is different to some of Mondrian's other works' and – when referring to Nevison – 'this is one of his most important works'. Through discourse analysis, this signifies that the group felt most confident when they sensed that their knowledge could contribute to the "objective" narrative of the work.

[202] See appendix Y for documentation and facilitation documents for TPG workshops.

Differently, Gabriel Orozco's *Samari Tree* (2005) and Bruce Davidson's *Untitled, Subway, New York, early 1980s* (1980) series were also chosen and described as works that are 'contemporary'. These were most challenging for the group to talk about without interpretation. N was the only member to opt for a series of photographs rather than a painting. This suggests that the group felt most comfortable with experiencing art as a painterly practice – or, as it has been discussed in scholarly articles, it might suggest that they 'do not recognise the field' (Newman, Goulding and Whitehead, 2013, pp.460) of contemporary art as legitimate - even after long-term use of the collection. N's choice sparked a debate around the use of art as a provocation, versus the use of art as a representation of reality or an expressive device, as had been discussed previously. The series by Bruce Davidson - a photographer known for 'photographing communities usually hostile to outsiders' (Davies, 2014) - depicts people from all walks of life travelling from New York City to Harlem via the subway. Strikingly, when N spoke about the work as a "provocation" to discuss real-life problems like diversity and anti-racism. Differently from "provocation" in the avant-gardist sense that performs its emancipatory politics to an audience (Chukhrov, 2014, no pagination), N's suggestion offers a finding that we might use collections to challenge 'the return of sexist and racist language and practices in the public sphere' (Braidotti, 2016, no pagination) despite their contextualisation at places of power.

Although useful to generate data for TPG, this workshop format was not as conducive to producing counternarratives as previous methods such as interviewing and *Shared Language*. In this workshop, I found that Agents were overly concerned about 'getting the facts right'; thus, undermining processes of storytelling. Interestingly, the physical act of creating text actually replicated the hegemonic attributes of wall labels to mimic its discourses. This caused us to lose sight of the objective to produce a story that incited an 'on-going' dialogue between artworks and people (Golding, 2019, pp.128). Though, in dialogue, this was a different story where it was clear that talking was a more comfortable method than writing. This is emphasised in relation to Bourriaud for whom post-production 'becomes a lexicon of practice, which is to say, the intermediary material from which new utterances can be articulated, instead of representing the end result of anything' (Bourriaud, 2005, pp.24).

Altogether, we were overly influenced by the dominant vocabulary due to the focus of the workshop to produce written content. Consequently, we struggled to produce new, meaningful articulations for the collection. Although the activity did successfully produce new keywords such as 'realism' and 'creation' for TPG, it stifled contributors by using words that were descriptive rather than expressive. Words associated with colour were common - 'grey', 'black', 'red' and 'yellow'. In summary, the findings of this workshop show me that co-writing interpretation must be a discursive process, rather than a literary activity. Furthermore, it emphasised the importance of the facilitator when listening and responding to publics and highlighted the criticality of a reciprocal endeavour.

7.4. IMAGINE (IF YOU MADE THE RULES)

When it comes to collections, there are many rules that cannot be altered due their protective qualities that either protect the artworks or ensure that the 'museum remains a safe, welcoming place for visitors' (Simon, 2008, no pagination). However, embedded in the toolkit is the provocation *IMAGINE (if you made the rules*). This sentiment suggests role reversal; where the powerless might become the powerful. In this activity, I relied on a problem already created by the museum; that people feel like they had little-to-no say in how it operates or what it collects and exhibits. In reality, despite the turn towards democratic and inclusive practices, people still feel without agency. This is evidenced by one of the outcomes of this work that shouts 'LISTEN TO YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY!' Subsequently, I did very little to provoke people's imaginations but ask the question 'what would you do differently at TL? Intended to create dialogue on policy-writing, *IMAGINE* formed part of a workshop with AAs. Though, it also operated independently as an activity that could be used by anyone in the collection because of its 'self-service' format. Influenced by the sentiment that museums are currently tearing up 'the rule book that decides what a centre for contemporary arts should look like' (*New Rules*, 2017) , I wanted to test how this might be received at TL. In the following paragraphs, I analyse the outcomes of this method using discourse and thematic analysis, and finally identify the key interactions and comments when facilitating the workshop with AAs.

To analyse the responses of the activity thematically, I created four emergent codes:

1. Engagement with local people

2. Heightened access

3. Democratic practices

4. Curatorial models

Within each code are subsections that provide specificity. Within the call for Tate to 'think local!', users and AAs specified that they wanted to see artwork by local people and artists with more investment in opportunities for career development 'to make art as an accessible vocation'. For the purposes of this research, the demands for more provision of educational services or 'space for people's art and workshops' and different routes of communication is most pertinent. The call for every young person to be provided with 'an EDITING PERMANANT MARKER!' is provocative, but nonetheless important due to its demand that seeks tools to make change.

In the category for heightened access, users and AAs demanded 'more late night/early morning openings to cater to more people's schedules', as well as different access facilities such as 'changing places'[203] stating that 'using the loo is a right not a privilege'. Two other popular access demands focussed on the cost of visiting exhibitions – 'Free art for all!' – and that age shouldn't be a limit to access. The theme of democratic practices fell into four categories themed by listening, representation 'proportional representation – actual democracy', cultural democracy e.g. 'some people are poor and need ART' and plurality e.g. 'different styles of art' and 'performance'. The last meaningful category titled 'curatorial models' centred on co-curatorial models and co-authorship. One user suggested having 'an

[203] Changing Places Toilets are accessible toilets that meet the needs of people with multiple disabilities and are different to standard "disabled toilets". A Changing Places campaign launched in the U.K. in 2006 to push institutions and public places to share information about the location of these toilets, as well as what equipment is needed within them. Since this activity in 2018, a Changing Places Toilet has been installed at TL.

exhibition of works owned by Tate, and suggested by members of the public', to reflect some models that have already taken place in the field.[204]

In the workshop, I was interested in how AAs would respond to this activity due to their relationship with decision-making. I had already observed frustration around the lack of knowledge of CC in the gallery and relating to staff members. This is highlighted by the user-creator role that they contribute to at TL, demonstrated by demands like; 'display work by local artists. Even work from the community like schools etc'. Or were short and demanding; 'THINK LOCAL!' and 'BE INCLUSIVE!" It was clear that this was an active concern for AAs. From my perspective, the subtext of these interjections demands for the focus to be shifted towards 'US' (local people), rather than 'THEM' (the institution). Notably, new members were less antagonistic in their demands and some struggled to fulfil the task. Some of the newest members were simply happy to be invited. Lynch calls this 'indebtedness engineering' (Lynch, 2017, pp.12). In this theorisation, individuals are made to feel grateful for their inclusion and are therefore resistant to speaking agonistically towards the institution.

When analysing the results of the workshop, the findings correlated with the outcomes from the 'self-service' method. Demands for TL for increased engagement and representation with local people were popular. Differently, dialogue was expressed as a core concern for AAs.

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[204] Most significantly from reviewing the literature, I have been influenced by Per Hüttner's project *I am a Curator* – a process-based exhibition that took place at Chisenhale Gallery in London, 2003. The exhibition was created to invite visitors to become curators for a day – to enable publics to select work from a collection and arrange them to produce a new, temporary exhibition in the gallery Drabble, B.C. (2010) *Stop making sense : the ends of curating and the beginnings of the exhibition*. Doctoral thesis, Univeristy of Edinburgh.(pp.113). Collections have taken note of this form of curating, where one example is analysed in a study led by The Open University titled 'Co-curate: Working with Schools and Communities to Add Value to Open Collections' - 'where the learner creates meaning by being actively involved in the social learning process' Cotterill, S., Hudson, M., Lloyd, K., Outterside, J., Peterson, J., Coburn, J., Thomas, U., Tiplady, L., Robinson, P. and Heslop, P. (2016) Co-Curate: Working with Schools and Communities to Add Value to Open Collections. *Journal of Interactive Media in Education* [online], 2016 (1),

Available at: https://jime.open.ac.uk/articles/10.5334/jime.414/

[Accessed: 21/06/19](no pagination).

For example, P suggested that there should 'more dialogues about everything (for example, what someone sees by one's own rule, and how one has seen).' [205] Undoubtedly referencing the late John Berger (whose influential 1972 text *Ways of Seeing* (Berger, 2008) was referenced multiple times), he draws attention to the idea that 'dialogue is an attempt (…) to explain how, either metaphorically or literally 'you see things', and an attempt to discover 'how he sees things' (Berger, 2008, pp.9).

Agonistically, D and T made the suggestion that there should be 'galleries without words' and we should 'stop having useless things like this, we want art, not [to] talk about art'. These perspectives ignited some of the responses received from the survey that provided the opinion that sometimes mediation 'can be distracting for an art piece'. A debate ensued within the group, reflective of an argument made by AAs during the second research cycle in defence of the presence of word-use;

> *I don't think any of us can go into that and have any right to say, "I don't understand it", simply if you've not even made the effort to go and read the plaque or, at least, attempt to understand it.*

This was countered by the argument that;

> *If there isn't information there about it then it becomes pointless having it there because (…) it would be inaccessible.*

This is aligned with the research to facilitate and represent agonism – which came to an end when we 'agreed to disagree'. In many ways this interaction problematises the intent of this research via P's suggestion that we need to create opportunities to reveal the many plural ways that people know about art. Hence, we decided that we must intervene in the system that has created a one-way dialogue to challenge users of collections to experience discourse

[205] P is polish and speaks English well, however, in this excerpt I have had to interpret his contribution in line with what we discussed in the session due to its broken literary quality.

subjectively. After the workshop I compiled a zine that encapsulates the plurality of responses to the activity.

7.5. System Mapping[206]

System mapping is a process whereby individuals and groups are able to create visual representations of relationships, networks, terrain and resources (Hall et al., 2017, pp.7). In PAR especially, it is used to identify complex and component systems of information 'to depict specific patterns and dynamics which shed light on the wider dynamics' (Burns, 2014, no pagination). In relation to Foucault's relational understanding of power (1980, pp.249) discussed by Danny Burn as a 'force field' (Burns, 2014, pp.749), this method of image-making provided a route to situate agents within the system at TL. In my opinion, producing a zine and system mapping[207] are convergent practices due to their mechanisms that engender critical reflection to 'look for solutions for problems yourself' (Chidgey, 2014, pp.104). By combining two activities in this workshop[208], we created an opportunity to promote active reflection to identify common resources and the limitations to accessing them (Hall et al., 2017, pp.7) at TL. This process is considered a starting point when attempting to re-think dominant systems and was selected due to its attributes that could support CC to analyse what Lindsey Fryer calls the 'Tate-ness' of Tate Liverpool, outlined below;

[206] See appendix Y for documentation and facilitation documents for TPG workshops.

[207] Influenced by a Graph Commons workshop that I had undertaken at MIMA in 2016 at the conference *Working With Constituents*, I decided to use system mapping as an approach to discuss and begin to untangle the complex relations that impact the CC at TL.

[208] In the session on zine-making with CC in December 2018, I planned a session in two halves. The first concentrated on the use-value of zines in both art and activism, how and why one might make a zine, and a practical activity to make a folded zine. To give CC a better understanding of what zines might be used for, I distributed a small collection of them to the group. Featured in the collection were some examples made during *Art, Activism and Language* made by myself, and examples related to feminism and inclusion by artists Liv Wynter, Jade French and Amelia Beavis-Harrison. The subject matter was varied but was drawn together in their problematizing of power-political relationships and the promoting of change in hegemonic practices. Particularly, it was my aim to equip CC with zine-making skills to explore their view of the power relations at TL, using their own experiences as the starting point.

So Tate Liverpool, because of its Tate-ness, and the systems and structures being a national gallery in a locality, then it's much, much harder to kind of break through some of the systems and structures that would allow you to be more further forward on that journey to being a, you know, sort of, a Museum 3.0.

In the workshop, we approached system mapping from three group perspectives to create a collaborative zine. This was done via a 'soft' approach which explored the 'observer's perceived real world' (Checkland, 2000, pp.18) as a systemic process of enquiry (ibid). This is demonstrated by the production of 'mind maps' that create connections between people, places and things, and has been used in action research to enable community groups to better define their structure (Luke et al., 2014, pp.44). One group opted to produce a map titled 'Creative Connections' which provided the names of all CC members, their specific interests and their route to TL.[209] Another group analysed what they identified as the main objective of CC as 'giving the community a voice within TL'. Aesthetically, the maps resemble 'Soft System Mapping'[210] aligned with systems-thinker Peter Checkland's approach to implementing change (Checkland, 2000, pp.32). Notably one of the diagrams shows globular connections between 'communications', 'learning opportunities' and 'outcomes'; which are envisioned from the perspective of AAs and their contribution to greater institutional value.[211] A further two maps configure CC within the Tate system and provide a way of 'seeing the bigger picture'.

What became clear in this task was the understanding that system maps are subjectively created. For example, when one active agent identified a "blind spot" in my map – which I created in relation to the co-authors of TPG - they identified a disjunction between the "core" contributors and those who were perceived as less engaged. Hence, questions were raised that around whether TPG values some forms of labour over others (Kelly, 2013, pp.56). This demonstrated the micro-politics of collectively assembling a glossary and its complex

[209] See appendix K for *(finding) Our Voice* zine.

[210] See appendix Y for Checkland's diagram.

[211] When analysing these diagrams, I got the impression that members saw themselves as passive actors within the system; prevented from visualising themselves as constituent to the overall eco-system. When observing discussions whilst the diagrams were being produced, I found that members considered their engagement an afterthought.

implications on authorship. In turn, we reflected on how this might be demonstrated in the macro-politics of representation across institutional communication; and how we might engender potential routes for creating counternarratives. This interaction provided us with the possibility of seeing institutional reality as socially constructed in 'a rich picture' that 'includes the people involved, the problem areas, sources of conflict and other 'soft' aspects of the overall system' (Checkland, 2000, pp.44). Moreover, simply by observing system mapping as a visual tool, we encountered the benefits of using the wisdom of crowds in the creation of less dominant and multiple stories.

When compiling the zine, my role as facilitator allowed me to explore the access points between 'hard' and 'soft' systems where these methodologies might allow users to infiltrate the system. Consequently, I made it my mission to find 'invisible, secret systems' (Cutler, 2017, pp.12) to enable holistic understandings of Tate's eco-system. When planning how the zine would be used, we identified the problem that agents refer to throughout this research – that their presence is not represented via the collection – and discussed how to improve this. Subsequently, we settled on the title 'Our Voice' to signify common usage of the word 'voice'. Later it was suggested that we add '(finding)' beforehand; to signify the ongoing work to find a place for public voices within intersecting systems.

Whilst making decisions about the sequence of content there were three questions at the forefront of people's minds; 'who is our audience?', 'who do we want to read the zine?' and 'for what purpose?' D reminded us that CC had encountered these problems before and relayed her prior experience when attempting to produce a collective publication. She noted that collective production of any kind was limited due to Tate's lack of funding. D also recalled institutional resistance to distribute publications in the building;

> *We were setting up a magazine (…) They were saying, "Well, no we can't put it, actually, at the Tate.*

From her perspective, it seemed like there was little dedication on TL's part to enable production or distribution.[212] Further, some agents doubted TL's institutional knowledge of CC; what they are, what they do, and why they are necessary to everyday operations. Subsequently, it was decided that work should be undertaken with staff to share information about CC. One member exclaimed; 'how are the public supposed to know who we are, if staff at Tate don't?!' Subsequently, the group decided that the zine should be used as a learning resource for staff to convey who CC are and what they want. Hence, agents opted to create a zine that provides a forum for 'underrepresented points-of-view' (Gisonny and Freedman, 2006, pp.26) and to share information that is excluded from main-stream outputs.

One of the unexpected outcomes from designing a zine was the creation of a resource for CC to use in the future. B expressed the perceived benefits of creating a document for AAs to refer back to. The importance of listening and providing feedback was also emphasised as a critical and collective point for improvement. The group focussed on how their communication with Tate could be enriched in the future via a process of 'active listening' – where listeners give their full attention and hear what people are saying, rather than hearing what they want to hear (Ng, Ware and Greenberg, 2017, pp.145). For D, this was emphasised by advocacy work with artists such as Jonty Lees who enabled CC to 'tell them [TL] what you want, not them tell you.' Finally, we came to the conclusion that producing a zine could be a good answer for CC's main motivation; 'to exhibit artwork'. By using the format of a zine, the group realised that the pages of zines could provide an opportunity to exhibit their work either individually or collaboratively.

[212] Previously, I had discussed with Alison Jones whether a publication of TPG could be displayed and sold at TL's shop as part of an Arts Council England funded project. Although the project has yet to be undertaken, I received positive feedback about the likelihood of the zine to go on sale. Other locally produced zines such as 'Root-ED' are currently on sale at TL's shop and therefore I proclaim that 'The People's Glossary' would have a good chance of being accepted in the future.

7.6. SUMMARY

In this chapter, I discussed the processes of creating a toolkit for TPG to resist the co-option of public voices when co-writing interpretation and ascribe authorship to authors. The methods described are associated with qualitative and PAR and democratic art practices to enable equitable plurality. I have hypothesised the methodology as a 'method assemblage' (Law, 2004, pp.13), influenced by Deleuze and Guattari's theorisation that refers to networks as defined by amalgamations (Deleuze, 1988, pp.90). This definition helps us to 'disassemble bordered thinking' (Legg, 2011, pp.128) in terms of systems, philosophies, bodies and movement. In this research, it is used similarly to discuss the active methods of PAR that embrace a variety of competing components (Verran, 2009pp.170-1) to create an ongoing and evolving practice where messiness is seen as a virtue rather than an obstacle. To reiterate, this approach is partially informed by sociologist John Law for whom messiness enables researchers to 'learn a lot more about a far wider range of realities' (Law, 2004, pp.10). Hence, although planning, doing, observing and reflecting on these described interventions creates order, it does not prevent the disruption caused by institutional and research-driven lifecycles. Throughout the activation of the methodology I endeavoured to make the toolkit useful via highlighting keywords and phrases that emerged from interventions.

8. Chapter Six: Reflecting on The People's Glossary

The decision to reflect on TPG separately demonstrates my prioritisation of the whole body of work as a process, rather than the website as a product. Whilst advocating for this ideology, I accept that questions may be raised over the quality of the output. Community artist François Matarasso has suggested a criterion to discern the quality of co-creative projects via four categories; 1. Experience, 2. Authorship, 3. Empowerment and 4. Humanity (Matarasso, 2019, pp.101). Subsequently, in this chapter I reflect on how people experienced the workshops, how the project enabled co-creation, whether users felt listened to, what value users felt that they brought and whether the project made people feel validated (ibid). These questions were essential in developing, facilitating and reflecting when compiling the resource. Chiefly, TPG's quality is based on the condition that it represents equitable plurality in collections; and could be used as a toolkit toward generating user-driven interpretation. Consequently, its contribution lies not only in its representation of a common language but in the creation of a dialogical sphere to unite discourse and praxis.

At the beginning of this research I visualised the outcome of the practice in the creation of a publication that would mimic Raymond William's *Keywords*. Yet, due to the aim of the project to co-create TPG, its physical production was not fixed. Through instances in development, I concluded that the production of a physical text would not mirror the progress made by digital media and 2.0 culture to constitute representation toward co-authoring (Kidd, 2009, pp.167). This was emphasised by an AA who reinforced the importance of polyphonic word meanings and interpretations;

> *E: That's the thing with words, you assume that everyone has the same meaning. But they don't!*

With this in mind, the decision to create a website was one informed by the desire to echo *Keywords* within a 'virtual contact zone' (Purkis, 2017, pp.441). On the website – where data is mediated and collected to intervene in the original definitions – there is the possibility of enabling multiple enunciations, descriptions and usages of vocabulary. Thus, the outcome undermines the Habermasian understanding that public spheres assume 'every utterance can have a single meaning, understood in the same way by all speakers' (Breitbart, 2016, pp.221). This confirms Mouffe and Laclau's theorisation of discourse as a social phenomenon which is

unable to construct a total description of 'reality' (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pp.24). Via the construction of language to create a discursive sphere that centres users rather than experts, TPG has begun a process of change where users realign their subjectivities to look at language as a polyphonic device; instead of one that is designated by institutions or movements. Consequently, by grounding this research in theories of discourse I have ensured that the outcome of TPG is created from a foundation rigour. Pragmatically, creating TPG as an online platform enables visible user engagement via 'wear-and-tear' (Wright, 2013, pp.40) – demonstrated by the inputting of stories and references – to negotiate the value of new keywords and their definitions. Whilst democracy and the internet have a disputed relationship (Flinn, 2010b, pp.46), online platforms have the potential to ensure access to co-authors and future users. Ideally, in the future, TPG has the potential to be accessed through a porthole within collections. A progression such as this would enable TPG to 'gain more bite in the real' (Wright, 2013, pp.3) and contribute towards the activation of collections as walk-in tool boxes for usership (pp.40).

Finally, building a website was the most cost-effective route for this research. This is important when contemplating usership due to its consideration of sustainability and distribution costs. In keeping with TPG's ad-hoc 'Do It Together' ideology – which is also idealised by zine-makers – it is important that the platform is free to use. Ultimately, the creation of a publication could limit TPG as a 'private good' (Stadler, 2013, pp.175); to make way for private ownership via their sale. In markets, the authorship of a book is an essential aspect of making a 'sale' and relies on a market of single authors; an ideology that contradicts TPG's. For these reasons TPG is not conceived as a publication.

8.1. Artist as editor

During the creation of TPG I often thought that my aim should be to completely retreat from contributing, producing or authoring. However, I have learnt that 'in art, every participatory project has an author' (Hölz and Rollig, 2011, pp.30) and as much as I attempted to transfer authorship towards my co-authors, I remained the editorial and authorial gatekeeper. Especially in the context of practice-based doctoral research, this statement bears true. To

problematise this, I have relied on both quantitative and qualitative methods of discourse analysis to make decisions about the addition of keywords to TPG. By making the transition from facilitator to editor, I have used digital technologies such as NVivo, Excel and *Graph Commons* to make decisions for me. Additionally, I have selected pertinent keywords with the view that my agenda is important – as a user of collections – and due to the understanding that objectivity is a 'conquering gaze from nowhere' (Haraway, 1988, pp.581). This is demonstrated by discrepancies between NVivo word clouds and TPG. By emphasising my agenda, I put into practice Marstine's process of 'radical transparency' (Marstine, 2013 pp.8). By outlining my research biases with users at the beginning of the study, I made decisions informed by usership (i.e. correcting spelling and grammar mistakes) to enable access.[213] Spelling and grammar aside, I have edited TPG minimally to enable authenticity. These discursive struggles were notable when assembling zines. Implied in this discussion is the ethical problematic that I might be attempting to 'speak for others' (Alcoff, 1991, pp.5). To mitigate this argument, I have prioritised crediting co-authors where possible. At every point, personal reflexivity was necessary in producing all the research outcomes.

Aside from my relationship with co-authors, the website is also the physical representation of my doctoral work. Therefore, keeping the balance between TPG's many stakeholders is fundamental. Crucially, the website must be functional as a working resource for users and AAs; especially after the doctoral research is over. Consequentially, creating ways to share gatekeeping is the next step. Currently, I will regulate[214] any new additions to TPG via my authorial position until the examination period for this work is over. After examination, this will be revisited.

[213] In this respect, it has been critical to disclose and continue to make clear my research-driven agenda whilst working with CC. One way I did this by becoming part of the CC's Facebook group, where I regularly posted updates of the research, as well as keeping in contact with Alison Jones and users via email.

[214] On the website I have provided a disclaimer that alerts users to the examination period and describes why they are currently unable to create new content.

8.2. COMMISSIONING A DESIGNER

When commissioning Thom, I reminded myself of the core values of TPG; to be useful, to be reciprocal, to share knowledge and to affect change. Reflecting on these values redefined how I wanted change to happen at TL in two ways. First, the outcome and process set out to enhance professional practice in collections. Second, the website should encourage users to think about interpretation differently from the dominant model. Problematising TPG in this perspective provided additional reflexivity; which is also key in providing clarity in the website's creation. Subsequently, negotiating the credit given to authors with Thom was paramount. Consequently, our discussions focussed on authorship and finding design-based routes to resist co-opting people's words. We also discussed the aesthetic importance of reflecting TPG's processes. During the first meeting, I used images from the *Shared Language* workshops to enhance our discussion. In an interview conducted via email, Thom states that he was 'heavily influenced by the index cards'. He expands;

> *As the idea of TPG was conceived through workshops it was important to me to reflect this through the design. The index cards have a simple and functional purpose - this became my approach for the entire project, create a simple and functional design.*

The design of the logo reflects my desire to mirror the hand-written element of the index cards, the system maps, the personal interpretations; anything that required people to make visible their words. When considering handwriting across the project, its presence expresses the creation of counternarratives and diverting 'the author's hand'. Through TPG, I consider handwriting as a potential way for users to assert their authorial dominance as co-authors. After all, handwriting is a domain where 'almost every adult is more or less of an expert' (Knoblich and Flach, 2003, pp.621). Supported by the literature, identifying one's own handwriting creates an immediate sense of self as a result of one's own actions (ibid). Subsequently, including handwriting in the logo is a mechanism to promote belonging in users; although this is not represented to the extent I would like.

Lastly, transferring aesthetic decision-making to Thom was important to divert my artistic authorship. Importantly, this method benefitted my reflection when he became someone to answer to.[215] For example, when creating the design Thom considered the following priorities;

> *The project has to appeal to a wide audience, creating a logo, colour palette and choosing a stock typeface was important in giving the project a clear identity. A considered and informed aesthetic gives users familiarity when engaging with a website, this is important when presenting a new concept or idea like TPG.*

In this way, all aesthetic decisions were made utilitarianly; from the purchasing of index cards, to the way that the colours translated digitally. Hence, by asking Thom to develop a selection of different designs[216], the decision-making process with co-authors was simplified. This isolated example demonstrates my sparing use of artistic authority; only asking for their external input on the design that I felt best suited TPG. Thereafter, co-authors were asked for their initial feedback on the design that Thom worked on across the summer. Creating opportunities for inputting became a mechanism for the latter part of the research. Thus, between us we devised another user session in December 2018, and 'drop-in' feedback session with Tate staff members.

[215] Working with Thom in this way allowed for processes of objectivity when deliberating subjects such as editing and censorship. Additionally, through our collaboration, he challenged me to describe, interrogate and reflect on my thought processes toward TPG. Moreover, his presence provided rigor in relation to feeding back responses from AAs directly into TPG to create a truly usable device.

[216] See appendix Z for Thom's initial designs.

8.3. User Sessions

For AAs quality means usability, readability[217] and good representation of the workshops. Thom and I discovered this via their feedback during the user session in December 2018 – when content had been partially inputted to the website. A schedule of two feedback sessions were facilitated in two ways. The first required a presentation-style workshop and open discussion that I facilitated in September 2018. During the open discussion it became clear that individuals were uncomfortable with some of the limitations of the language used on the website. This is demonstrated in an extract taken from my research diary;

> *T was concerned with the term 'retire'. He was worried that when we used the word 'retire' we meant to 'get rid'. He said that he was not ready to be chucked away or forgotten.*

T's contribution created an opportunity for decision-making that would be reflected on TPG's website. In turn, the group confirmed that the use a different word would mitigate the exclusion of retirees or users over the age of sixty-five. By unpacking this, we revealed that often our everyday language incorporates 'subtle expressions of contempt and derogatory remarks about aging and older people' (Gendron et al., 2015, pp.997). Whilst linguistic research commonly focusses on sexist, racist and ableist coding of discourse, Sociology Professor Sik Hung Ng suggests 'ageism is also attracting attention as a result of population aging' (Sik Hung, 2007, pp.118). Querying ageist language appealed to the group due to their identification with this conversation. This was compounded by attitudes felt by individuals who recalled feeling restricted by society's view that learning about and contributing to culture is a

[217] This is one aspect of interpretation that I have avoided due to prominent discourses around age and readability described by researcher Jennifer Blunden as the 'sweet spot' (Blunden, 2017, pp.307). In her research, Blunden argues that centering age-based readability as is traditional methodology in collections cannot be relied on to convey the complexities presented through displays in modern museums (Blunden, 2017). Complicating this perspective Blunden argues that in focusing on readability, sentence structure and word length, the concept of information dissemination is condensed to a linear and binary way of understanding language, and the way that humans engage with text. In this view, identifying archaic approaches to written text in museums is not new; but arguably, this literary and linguistic impasse has remained the crucial challenge for museums and has yet to be overcome. (Blunden, J. (2017) The Sweet Spot? Writing for a Reading age of 12. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 60 (3), pp.291-309. pp.307)

youthful pursuit. This led me to question what role language plays in putting up barriers to older people in contemporary art. And, how might class and age intersect to impose rules that prevent marginalised voices from contributing to interpretation? Subsequently, we suggested other terms to replace 'retire'. Our conversation reflected mechanisms of digital disposal like: 'in the bin' or 'trash'. Alternatively, to avoid the permanence of 'trash', AAs suggested an 'out of office' or a 'suspension' to enable words to be put 'on the shelf'. We concluded that 'suspending' the use of a word would be preferable when contemplating problem-laden words. Consequently, this decision is reflected on TPG's website.

The second feedback session – or the 'usability session' – was managed within the system-mapping workshop. Thom and I planned the workshop to allow for AAs to individually feed their views of the website to him. Whilst I facilitated the system-mapping activity, Thom approached individuals with an iPad to explore the website for five minutes to gain their feedback and insights. We arranged to keep co-authors focussed on usability rather than content. This was more challenging than originally planned. Thom struggled to encourage co-authors to focus on usability due to methodological 'messiness' discussed in the previous chapter. One individual became particularly frustrated by the concept of TPG. As a new member to CC, this was F's first-time meeting us. Evidently, F had not been present through the processes of undertaking TPG with CC and was not familiar with its ideologies. Whilst efforts had been made to avoid knowledge gaps, it was unavoidable that new members would show up to workshops with no prior knowledge. [218] This was experienced most clearly when discussing her feedback on TPG. With me, she raised her anxiety around 'political correctness'[219] and confided that she was concerned that TPG was attempting to police the

[218] I attempted to mitigate this kind of problem via the use of sign-up sheets and the provision of information sheets throughout the research. I also provided a brief overview of 'where we are up to' each time I met with CC, however in this instance my overview was limited due to timing restrictions.

[219] The term 'political correctness' is often used in tandem with 'those using their right of freedom of speech to incite hatred and acting in essence with an antagonistic agenda towards democracy and its core values' (Cammaerts, B. (2009) Radical pluralism and free speech in online public spaces: The case of North Belgian extreme right discourses. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 12 (6), pp.555-575.). It draws on the populist concern propagated by right-wing academia and the mainstream media who identify and attack 'cultural Marxism' to delegitimize progressive, feminist and leftist politics such as intersectionality, identity politics and anti-racist ideologies (Duyvendak, J.W. (2018) Cultural Marxism and intersectionality. *Sexualities*, 21 (8), pp.1300-1303.).

uses of language, instead of open it up. This interaction revealed to me how publics may interpret TPG antagonistically. Certainly, throughout the project I had engaged in discussions around freedom of speech.

A critical example of this was when a young person challenged me when facilitating *Shared Language* by posing the question; 'so what do you think about free speech?!' Following his provocation, he also asked; 'what would you do if I wrote something racist on a card and stuck it on the wall?' I replied that Tate and I have a zero-tolerance policy on hate speech. Whilst the individual's question was hypothetical, for me, it sparked a very real engagement with the idea that by creating opportunities for agonism, TPG would also be confronted with what Professor Bart Cammaerts calls 'anti-publics' or people who place 'themselves at the political extremes' (Cammaerts, 2007, pp.5) with the intention to challenge progressive democratic rights. Furthermore, by creating a digital platform for the creation of equitable plurality there would be the potential that users might attempt to hack the device using their claim to free of speech. While it is true that 'the Web is a site for conflict' (Dean, 2003, pp.107), within this conflict is the potential for users to incite abuse; and so I asked myself how would TPG be different? To answer this, I reminded myself of Mouffe's theorisation of radical pluralism as based on democratic ideals towards equality that 'cannot treat those who put its basic institutions into question as legitimate adversaries' (Mouffe, 2005a, pp.120). Consequently, whilst I am an advocate for freedom of speech it cannot be prioritised over basic democratic and equality driven values (Cammaerts, 2009, pp.7). In this way, I delegitimise hateful rhetoric as outside of pluralism, which I identify as a major contribution to contribute to digital co-authoring. These challenging engagements in creating TPG provide this research with an opportunity to create 'frontiers' (Mouffe, 2005a, pp.120) toward my theorisation of equitable plurality; so as to safeguard the use of TPG as an locus for democratic practice.

In summary, the task of presenting opposing ideas, interpretations and uses via one format and without confusing people is challenging. From exploring the website with users, Thom and I noticed that agents differentiate user-generated definitions in opposition to what they thought were definitive, objective – even expert-generated - definitions. To ensure quality and to encourage people to use the site in a way that was helpful, Thom and I decided that a standard definition informed by the Oxford Dictionary should be provided alongside

contributors' inputs. Whilst this was a significant decision to make in the view of constructivist ideologies 'where the learner creates meaning by being actively involved in the social learning process' (Cotterill et al., 2016)(pp.1), it was clear that it was necessary to prioritise the 'useful' agenda over the conceptual edifices of TPG. This means that the content of TPG should be concise, streamlined and easily interpreted. Furthermore, by devising the representation of multiple inputs – rather than just one user-generated one – I hope that users will come away from the website with an altered perception of language usage and interpretation. Emerging from this problem was the need to create a 'disclaimer' for the website, which would advise people how and why the website was created in this model. These decisions are made visible on TPG's website.

8.4. Stories and Words

Akin to what is discussed by Williams in the opening chapter of 'Keywords', the problem of meaning is that it 'can never be wholly dissolved' (1983, pp.22). For this reason, in place of giving priority to singular definitions of words searched for on TPG's website or discussed in this thesis, I focussed on the finding that – for users and AAs – stories are similarly important to words.

This strategy was enforced during *Shared Language* where users challenged the popular, field-wide notion advocating for institutions to "share authority" (Adair, Filene and Koloski, 2011, no pagination) with their publics. Alternatively, it was suggested that TL's framework to co-produce formations of singular words, not stories, constrained equitable co-production due to embedded, systemic valuing systems at TL. Arguably influenced by Kester's theorisation of 'anti-discursivity' (Kester, 2000, no pagination), TL's installation of participatory digital word clouds limits rather than unlocks possibilities for users to contribute critical insights to collection interpretation. Based on decontextualized words, it could be argued that such an initiative reinforces the oppressive belief that publics will not understand 'what is signified' (ibid) and thus cannot formulate meaningful responses in the form of stories or narratives. Referentially, the decision to focus on usership – conceptualised through context, enunciating identity and storytelling - counters the argument to share authority with publics

through participation in pre-defined, word-based interpretation activities that leave users with little agency. For the purposes of this research, sharing authority within the collection at TL is based on individualised word choice, whilst giving context in the form of a story, identity or description provides meaning that influences users' sense of belongingness and mattering.

Referencing Williams again to emphasise this point, TPG's website includes actual localised and personal examples in recorded use. This is considered crucial to Williams' methodology to study word-use in practice and remains at the forefront of this work to restrict TPG's potential to be used as a device to police language. After doing this research, demanding which words are on and off-limits is counterintuitive to TPG which advocates for agency within language – to change it; to remake it; to rewrite it; to reinterpret it (Williams, 1983, pp.24); and extends to our interpretation of art history, its objects and artworks from profoundly different points of view. My argument here is that the dominant discourse of a collection is instructed and cultivated through the subjectivity of a privileged few agents i.e. curators, editors, critics and artists. When, considering our current institutional context that advocates for democratic forms of discourse, collaboration and change, these gatekeepers' roles could be loosened to create textual, lexical and word-based plurality. Much like 'Keywords' which could be seen as a collection of short stories about words, TPG is a narrative device that captures the fluidity and power of words on people to provoke discussion about the ethical responsibilities that museums have to their publics; not simply a 'glossary' that polices language.

8.4. SUMMARY

To conclude, I will draw the focus back to a comment made by D during the *Shared Language* focus group;

> *D:* *It shows you how different people see different words. I like juxtaposition… I love that word! But other people don't like it.*

This comment cuts to the core of a prominent issue when creating the website – that by asking users to 'discuss', 'keep' or 'toss' words, TPG is a controversial device. Significantly, this was not limited to contestation from staff members at TL and applies across all groups. In a way, the method was created to produce agonism on the basis that dissent is a productive mechanism to create counter-hegemonic discourses. Though, I have also found that this device sometimes outweighs its potential production value. Nevertheless, I decided to keep the original model to reflect the workshops but have understood that this might be considered a limitation from some perspectives.

In summary, in this epilogue I have drawn on my experience of creating TPG as an outcome of the practice-based research. Too, I have engaged critically with the ethics of co-production and co-authorship between professional, users and AAs. Moreover, I reflected on the collaboration between myself and TPG's designer, Thom Isom. Strikingly, this section also discusses my multiple positions as researcher, author, artist, editor and gatekeeper to seek how sharing authorship might be activated by critical friends when co-writing interpretation and processes in the future. Considering the limitations of the work has been an exercise in revelation; both in exposing the problems created when designing a digital platform to represent ongoing and past work, and when investigating how the theory manifests in the practice. This emerged most urgently in discussing equitable plurality as a theory that must be hinged on the creation of frontiers to delegitimise hateful rhetoric. Finally, by reflecting on the website I also learned how critical it would be to create a disclaimer for TPG's website.

9. Conclusory Remarks

Whilst undertaking this research I have been concerned about what the uses of language could reveal about 'belonging' in a collection of contemporary art. Initially, I wanted to explore how people use language to discuss art and what that said about how collections might be used instead of viewed or engaged with. By undertaking processes to co-produce a common language as a process of user-generated knowledge production, what I discovered is that use is contingent on publics feeling that they 'matter' in conversations about contemporary art. Moreover, I observed that the creation of pluralism and counternarratives emerge as correlatives. Recognising difference, disagreement and conflict in meanings and interpretations (Mouffe, 2000, Pp.16) is also crucial when undertaking processes to co-write interpretation. Consequently, authorship and authority remain central issues to be confronted when producing and embedding counter representations of public speech, voice and language. This is emphasised by two common questions that were asked of me throughout the research that concern authority differently. For publics; 'But what is the true meaning of the artwork?' And for professionals; 'But what happens to expert knowledge?' These questions show me that there is still much work to be done to challenge how authorial voices dominate collections of contemporary art and therefore, I introduced my concept of equitable plurality; the idea that public voices might be considered equal to empirical discourses. My observations through the research emphasise that dialogic practices must be prioritised to produce users as citizens, and galleries as a public sphere. By creating TPG as a process and a tool, I hope to have contributed to this work.

The development of categories enabled me to conduct research *with* publics. This influence from PAR is critical if institutions are serious about redefining participators as users, rather than as a rebranding exercise. This understanding is also reflected in my analysis of Tate's *Tone of Voice Guidelines* where I found that even after the participatory turn, institutions of contemporary art continue to promote authoritative dominance. One of the contributions this research makes is to suggest that reviewing policy could be a methodology toward the inclusion of user narratives to interpretation. In this regard, my examination of the *Tone of Voice Guidelines* is critical to envision how institutions might create space for co-productive elements within policies if we are to move beyond 'the participatory museum' (Simon, 2010).

Another finding of this research draws attention to the ways that institutions and publics use language differently from one another. In collections of contemporary art, formative efforts to co-author interpretation have not gone far enough to reproduce these differences. One assertion that has stayed with me throughout the research is Wright's view that useful art practices 'certainly don't look like art' (Wright, 2013, pp.4). For me, TPG holds a mirror up to Wright's statement to consider user-generated language as a discourse that does not sound anything like the language we are used to when discussing art. Thus, through my research, I have observed institutions and their tendency to prioritise visible speech - their speech - 'as discourse and another as noise' (Rancière, 1999, pp.27). Consequently, due to modernity's continual propensity to translate, conceal and gatekeep, ethical reciprocal processes of co-authoring interpretation with publics have yet to take place. Moreover, to change 'participating' habits to 'using' habits, collections must exchange traditional gallery aesthetics inherited from modernism (i.e. the white cube) for visual representations of plurality that are broad-minded in terms of authorship and language because 'increased use breeds increased resources' (Stadler, 2013, pp.177).

By facilitating TPG, I found that resisting co-option requires three crucial principles; active listening, recognition and redistribution. Revealing these processes explains why deliberative democracy has not impacted policy or processes of collaboration. Although TL continue to experiment and develop new processes that might encourage the production of user-generated knowledge, these remain ethically contentious due to methodological limitations. Furthermore, it is this 'absence from' and 'misrepresentation in those narratives' that 'can engender a sense of alienation and non-identification' (Flinn, 2010a, no pagination). Recently, Tate has taken a new approach to remedy the absence and misrepresentation of public narratives by instigating an online campaign that invites users to contribute interpretation. Titled 'Talking about our collection' (2018), the campaign is accessible online and reminds users that Tate is 'thinking carefully about the people and stories that have too often been absent or under-represented' (ibid). On visiting the webpage, users are encouraged to email texts@tate.org.uk if we find text that 'overlooks or misrepresents an important perspective, or uses language which you suggest we should improve or change' (ibid). In this research I have argued for similar methods of counter-storytelling to challenge dominant discourses – to provide an alternative story in another person's words – however, informed by

my research, this development is not adequate to undo the entrenched practices at TL. Significantly, the campaign fails to emphasise the ethical implications of co-authoring and leaves me enquiring how these new stories will be authored and edited? How will they be represented in the gallery? And, will these exchanges be reciprocal? Through developing TPG, I debated these questions and found conceptual slippages between author/editor/curator require complex processes which have not yet been made transparent. These are processes that I problematise most rigorously when reflecting on TPG.

Through TE, I found that it is possible to use pedagogic spatial strategies to create a common language via the engendering of instituent practices. Furthermore, during *Shared Language*, *Art, Activism and Language: Feminist Issues in Museums and Galleries* and via a process of creating the TPG toolkit, I found that language can be used as a tool for publics, users and AAs to 'have their say'. However, I also found that my interests – and complaints – were dismissed by museum professionals due to the mass of work that has been undertaken to problematise written museum interpretation. This feeling is supported by a recent interview[220] with Helen Legg – the current director at TL since June 2018 – where she states that 'a text on a wall is a relatively blunt instrument – it can't flex itself to the specific needs of each viewer' (Akaunu and Legg, 2019). Nevertheless, through discovering processes of discourse analysis and PAR at TE, I have asked the question; 'could the creation of a common, user-generated language re-conceive collections of contemporary art as useful – agonistic – sites?' This, I maintain, I have begun to do and will continue to influence my professional practice after this research.

Through doing this research I discovered that there is scope to examine counterpublics in greater detail but that this requires a closer look at mima as the supporting case study. In my facilitator role, I have started to investigate counterpublics as a crucial public when analysing the uses of language. This is a topic that is unexplored due to the difficulty of creating COPs who are also 'desiring machines'. Throughout the research, the presence of counterpublics is enduring. Theirs are the voices of ordinary people – friends, family and

[220] Conducted by Amber Akanu of the independent, Liverpool-based zine Root-ED.

citizens – that remind me why I am doing this research. Throughout, it is their voices that are persistent in challenging our too narrow definition of culture and encourage the production of a 'common language'; because 'culture is ordinary' (Williams, 1989, pp.3). It just that our uses of language have convinced us that it is not.

10. APPENDIX

This appendix page guides readers to documentation of the practice-based research which this thesis is informed by. They can be accessed through the web addresses below:

https://ljmu-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/lsaecurd_ljmu_ac_uk/Evz-dk-3HARCoWrnr3JzkJIBf5lG_5ERh6BUHCBW0C0VgA?e=mDnfkl

https://1drv.ms/u/s!ArKBEQlRjblpdqGdjeIS_nHeU88?e=g7fVks

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