

X-European

Negotiating Identities in the Third Space



Edited by
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X-European

Negotiating Identities in the Third Space (X-ENITS)

Coordinating Organisation | Volkshochschule (vhs) Aalen (Germany)

Partner Organisations | Border Crossings (Ireland)
| Siilinjärven Kansalaisopisto (Finland)
| The Migration and Development Research Centre (Turkey)



**BORDER
CROSSINGS**



E-book edited by Aydın Çam and İlke Şanlıer Yüksel (The Migration and Development Research Centre)

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“By exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves”

(Homi K. Bhabha: The Location of Culture.
1994 p.56)

INTRODUCTION by Nicole Deufel - vhs Aalen

In 2020, vhs Aalen initiated an Erasmus + Strategic Partnership in Adult Education. We joined forces with Border Crossings, an Irish theatre company; with Siilinjärvi Community College in Finland; and with the Migration and Development Centre at the University of Çukurova in Turkey. In the face of rising populism across Europe in the preceding years and concepts of identities that were based on othering migrants and those with migrant roots, our project aimed to strengthen practices within cultural and education sectors that promote social inclusion and intercultural dialogue.

In particular, our group was interested in the concept of Third Space (see below for an overview). We wanted to explore the potential and usefulness of the Third Space format for the purposes of social inclusion and intercultural dialogue, while acknowledging the impact of each partner's particular social and political context.

The Third Space Theory proposes that individuals from different cultures or social groups can create a "Third Space" where they can negotiate their identities and cultural practices. This theory can be particularly important for immigrants who have to navigate and reconcile their cultural identities in a new country. Our project on Third Space Theory involved training courses to explore experiences of negotiating cultural identities. The project also included collaboration with migrant and local communities to develop strategies and interventions that support the creation of third places and the negotiation of cultural identities.

To this end, we held three training sessions in Germany, Finland and Ireland, with the team from the Migration and Development Centre providing theoretical input and evaluation. Each of the non-academic partners also developed an activity which sought to apply the principles of Third Space within their specific organisational purpose.

The original purpose of this project was to investigate the potential and benefits of the Third Space format for social inclusion and intercultural dialogue. In this context, our aim has been to bring new perspectives to practical and theoretical debates on migration/refugee issues and/or disenfranchised people, and to provide practical recommendations for governance and policy. The following questions were addressed:

- How does the Third Space concept affect the European identity negotiation process?
- How do people utilise the Third Space to facilitate social inclusion in the host community?
- How do cultural, social, and economic factors shape the Third Space experiences of people such as migrants?
- To what extent does the creation and sustainability of the Third Space facilitate social inclusion between migrants and local communities?



CHAPTER 1 – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE X-ENITS PROJECT: APPROACHES, PRINCIPALS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE THIRD SPACE(S) by the Editors

1.1. ON SPACE: THE MATHEMATICAL SPACE VERSUS THE EXPERIENCED SPACE

The problem of *time* in human existence has dominated the discourse to such an extraordinary degree over recent decades that one could almost describe it as the fundamental problem of mainstream philosophy and sociology. We note especially Henri Bergson with his concept of *durée* and his followers such as Georg Simmel, Martin Heidegger etc. The question of the temporality of human existence is at the centre of this concept. Mainstream philosophy, thinking, and social sciences have a wide concept of pace, tempo, temporality, speed, acceleration etc. that are all related to time. From this point of view, space is only the static physical form of matter, the physical form of the mass: just a stage for human existence.

This understanding is so strong that, in everyday life we think about space in the same way. In everyday life, when we speak without further consideration of space, we usually think about static mathematical space – for instance, we talk about the dimensions of our field; our distance from points of arrival or destination. Even though we mostly determine this distance by time instead of kilometres or miles, when we talk about the interval between two points or our position in space in terms of mathematics, we mean mathematical space. When we think about how to furnish our new apartment, we make a sketch noting its dimensions in meters. Our cars' smart navigation systems inform us of the distance to our destination in kilometres; and the global positioning systems in our smartphones determine our position on earth, by latitude and longitude – in other words those devices indicate the angular distance between the Equator, the prime meridian and our point mathematically. All these expressions are stated in terms of predefined and agreed mathematical principles – this referential system is a given.

But apart from this referential system, and in contrast to it, it is also possible to speak of a perception of space which exists through human experiences and which also shapes our existence. Just as Henri Bergson conceptualized time beyond mathematical terms as *durée* – expressing time as it is actually experienced by people –, so a perception of space beyond its mathematical definition is equally conceivable. Space understood in this way would also be perceived through experiences (subjectivity) and would be expressed in singularity or multitude. German philosopher Otto Friedrich Bollnow (1903–1991) expounded an outline for a theory of experienced space in his great book, *Man and Space* (1963).

In contrast to mathematical space, the experienced space is not a neutral, static medium, but is full of meanings, and these meanings change and according to the various locations and areas of space.

1. Basically the space is a platform or a stage for the human act: events, facts, personality, identity, etc. are all situated in this space.
2. But on the other hand, the space is not only a platform or a stage for human action: it also takes an active part in life itself. It becomes a part of the collective, and more importantly of personal identity. It shapes, and even constitutes identity.
3. The space and society together, being in mutual interaction, constitute economic, political, cultural, social, ideological, etc. power struggles and relations.
4. Space is a transformative force that alters social groups, relations and interactions etc. So, if we transform the space, we also can transform the rest.

1.2. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THIRD SPACES

The concept of "Third Space" refers to the idea that individuals can exist in a space that is not entirely their own culture or the dominant culture, but rather a space that is a mixture of both. This can be seen as individuals and groups simultaneously identifying with different cultural traditions and practices and moving between different cultural spaces and contexts. This concept has been discussed in various academic disciplines, including sociology, education, and cultural studies. One of the most influential advocates of Third Space theory is Homi K. Bhabha, a cultural theorist who argues that the Third Space allows individuals to challenge and subvert dominant cultural narratives and create new cultural identities and meanings.

In the field of education, Third Space theory has been applied to the study of multilingual and multicultural classrooms where students can create a Third Space between their own cultures and the dominant school culture. Researchers have found that the Third Space can be a space of linguistic and cultural negotiation, where students direct and negotiate their identities in relation to dominant and minority cultural practices. Other scholars have applied Third Space theory to the study of online communities and virtual spaces, arguing that these spaces can provide a Third Space for individuals to explore and express their identities.

Overall, Third Space theory provides a way to understand how individuals negotiate and direct their cultural identities in contexts where they are exposed to multiple cultures. It emphasizes the dynamic and fluid nature of cultural identity and asserts that individuals have agency in constructing and negotiating their cultural identities.

As a socio-cultural concept used to indicate social spaces, as it is theorized in this project, the concept of Third Place was depicted by Ray Oldenburg in his book *The Great Good Place* (1989) as a space where people can socialize and communicate outside their homes (first

place) and workplaces (second place). According to Oldenburg, third places are places where individuals come together with "regular, voluntary, informal and happy expectations," such as "cafés, bookstores, barbers," which also constitute the "heart" of society. Edward Soja (1996) provides a different perspective on space and spatiality within the framework of this concept introduced by Oldenburg. According to Soja, the first and second places are two different and potentially conflicting spatial groupings where individuals interact both physically and socially. Third Spaces are hybrid and in-between spaces that emerge from the interaction between the first and second places. With this approach, Soja expands upon Oldenburg's concept.

With this approach, unlike Oldenburg, Soja has focused on the relationship between space and identity, arguing that a space determines how our identities are represented. In other words, the space we occupy culturally and physically influences how we represent ourselves and plays an important role in the formation of our identities and identity negotiations. Homi Bhabha also emphasizes the importance of finding hybrid identity or hybrid culture in the Third Space, which is created by the coming together of the first and second spaces, in his work *The Location of Culture* (1994).

The concept of the Third Space, which has been conceptualized and theorized in these three important works, and which has a "transformative" effect on our self, identities, and relationships with others in our social life, serves as a basis for research in many disciplines today, from sociology to architecture, from education to political science.



This Shisha Bar is an example of Ray Oldenburg's Third Place

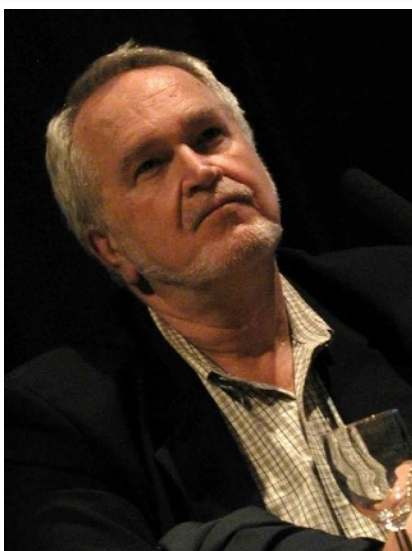


Ray Oldenburg: Oldenburg identifies Third Places as public places on neutral ground where people can gather and interact. The main conceptualizing of Oldenburg is to classify spaces in three aspects: home, workplace and Third Spaces. In contrast to first spaces (home) and second spaces (workplace), Third Spaces allow people to put aside their concerns and simply enjoy the company and conversation around them. Third Spaces “host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.” The Third Space is the place that we are all equal. They can be churches, cafés,

gyms, beauty salons, main streets, bars, breweries, bookstores, parks, community centres, and gift shops – cheap places where people get together, and life happens. In simple terms, they are the living room of a community.

These common spaces are important for civil society, democracy and civic engagement interactions. Providing the foundation for a functioning democracy, Third Spaces promote social equity by levelling the status of guests, providing a setting for grassroots politics, creating habits of public association, and offering psychological support to individuals and communities.

On the other hand, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, we all had a changed experience of home, not as a space that is clearly separated from the workplace or from Third Spaces. We live at home, but now we also work there, and we socialize in our homes too. So the borders between

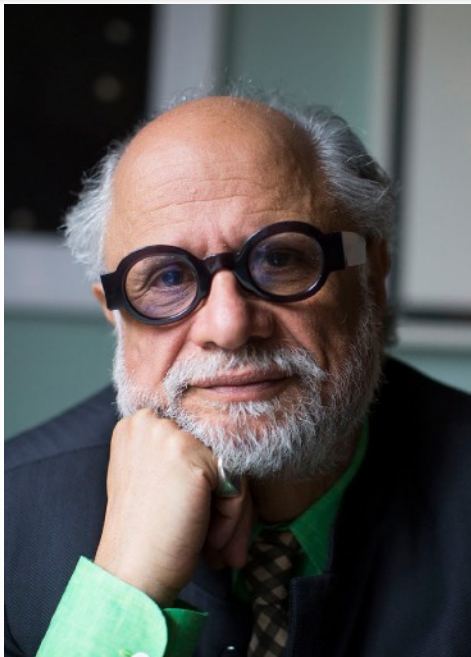


Edward Soja: According to Soja, Third Space includes both material and mental spaces, the real and the imagined, what he described as first space and second space, but also something more, something “we can begin to understand only by widening the scope of our geographical imagination”. As Soja outlines, there are three main aspects to explain social, cultural, economic or ideological structures: Historical, Social, and Spatial aspects. In this way, identity is determined by historical, social, and spatial context. If identity is expressed in acting or action, space determines a great deal of how we act. The space affects, not only culturally but physically, the way we act. It is able to create or negotiate our identities. Historical, social, and spatial contexts determine identity. We are insiders or outsiders, according to these contexts.



Jürgen Habermas: The concept of the Communicative Space was developed from the critical social theorist Jürgen Habermas. According to Habermas' theory of communicative action, communication is always embedded in situations and relations that rely on co-operation in a common framework of interpretation; people relate to each other through co-operative interpretation of their experiences, during which they understand

them. In this way, Habermas legitimized lay knowledge and valued people as capable of acting on that knowledge. In addition, communicative action is open, free communication that is not imposed on others by those with power.



Homi Bhabba: His cultural Third Space theory has a post-colonial perspective. The first space is the cultural space of home. The home of the Indigenous, the native people of the land. Also the space is tied with identity, so in this perspective the first space goes with the individual wherever they go. The second space is the imposed colonial structure. So, in this proposal the second space never comes together with the first space and does not allow the people to act with their native, Indigenous identity. They cannot act as they act in their first spaces. The second space does not allow the articulation of the identity of the first space the native or Indigenous people have. Even if they really struggle to act in the second space, by its structure, by its rules, it's impossible because they have barriers such as race, the colour of their skin, language etc. But things have to come together: that's the

nature of civilization. One way is to find historical, social or cultural elements in common, but generally this is also very hard to find. So what is needed is to find a hybrid kind of identity or culture where the first and second spaces may come together, which is the Third Space. According to this theory, some hybrid cultured films show great instances of Third Space. For example, the Turkish-German (or German-Turkish according to your point of view) director Fatih Akin's films include some great instances of hybrid Turkish-German culture.

1.3. CHALLENGES

1. There are always some people who have more social capital, and this controls or determines the rules of the space. Who will determine the rules of the Third Space? Who will introduce people to others and to the space?
2. How can we create neutral spaces? Is it possible to create a space without (e.g. cultural) identity?
3. How could collective identity be strengthened in space?
4. What is the interplay between communication practices, especially social media, and the use of Third Spaces? Is it possible to create Third Spaces in-between cyberspace and physical space?
5. Is it possible to consider cyberspace as a Third Space?
6. How is thinking out of the box/norms/identities possible?: e.g. binary vs. non-binary identities.

1.4. COMPONENTS THAT FACILITATE OPENNESS AND EMERGENCE OF THIRD SPACE ACTIVITIES

1. *Distance/Proximity*

Distance has also been recognized as a function of separation and segregation. This means that individual-based territorial mechanisms have replaced collective strategies, where distance is used as a buffer and safety measure. Third Spaces are social environments that exist outside traditional spaces of home and work, and they are characterized by their ability to bring people together and foster social interaction. The physical distance between individuals and the proximity of the Third Space to their daily routines and social networks play a significant role in the success of these activities. When Third Spaces are conveniently located and accessible to people, they are more likely to frequent them and participate in the activities that are offered. Additionally, when individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities are brought together in these spaces, they are more likely to engage in open and constructive dialogue, which can lead to the emergence of new ideas, perspectives, and solutions to common problems. Ultimately, shared environment is a key factor in the success of Third Space activities, as it facilitates social interaction, encourages inclusivity and diversity, and enables the emergence of new and innovative ideas.

2. Participation and engagement

According to Imms et al.¹, participation consists of two crucial elements: attendance, which refers to the act of being present and can be measured by the frequency or variety of activities attended, and involvement, which involves the experience of participating while attending. Involvement encompasses factors such as engagement, motivation, persistence, social connection, and emotional investment. While attendance is a necessary component, it alone is not enough to ensure involvement, which is an integral part of the attendance dimension. When individuals actively participate in the activities offered by Third Spaces, they create a sense of community and belonging, which can lead to the formation of long-lasting social connections. Additionally, participation and engagement promote inclusivity and diversity, as they encourage individuals from different backgrounds and communities to interact and share their experiences. This can lead to the emergence of new ideas, perspectives, and solutions to common problems, as individuals collaborate and co-create in an open and constructive environment.

3. Critical thinking and reflexivity

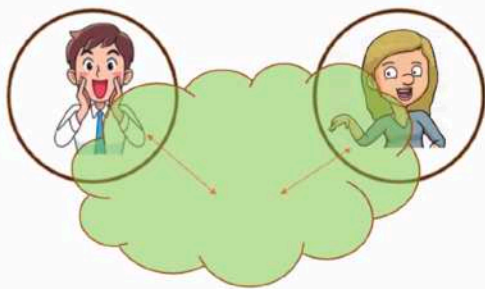
Critical thinking is a mental process of actively analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information to form a reasoned judgment or conclusion. It involves using logic and reasoning to assess the reliability, credibility, and relevance of information and arguments, as well as the underlying assumptions and biases that may affect their validity. Critical thinking helps individuals to identify and challenge their own beliefs and assumptions, consider alternative perspectives and possibilities, and make informed decisions based on sound reasoning. Reflexivity, on the other hand, is the process of examining and questioning one's own assumptions, biases, and values in relation to the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which they exist. It involves being aware of the influence of personal and social factors on one's own thoughts, actions, and beliefs, and considering how these factors may shape one's understanding of the world. Reflexivity is essential for critical thinking because it helps individuals to identify and analyze their own biases and assumptions, which can affect their ability to think critically and objectively. By being reflexive, individuals can become more self-aware, open-minded, and critical in their thinking, leading to more informed and thoughtful decision-making. Critical thinking and reflexivity enable individuals to engage in constructive dialogue, consider alternative perspectives, and co-create new ideas and solutions in Third Space.

¹ Imms, C., Granlund, M., Wilson, P.H., Steenbergen, B., Rosenbaum, P.L. and Gordon, A.M. (2017), Participation, both a means and an end: a conceptual analysis of processes and outcomes in childhood disability. *Dev Med Child Neurol*, 59: 16-25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dmcn.13237>.

Third Space activities may include:

1. Physical activities
2. Collaborative processes (e.g. collaborative performance, collaborative collage)
3. Shared meals
4. Field trips
5. Group critiques and exercises
6. Collective activities
7. Creating neutral spaces (spaces without social, cultural, religious and/or racial identities).

Third Space (Homi K. Bhabha)



Introducing Bhabha's ideas in an online meeting

CHAPTER 2 – DESIGNING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE X-ENITS PROJECT by the Editors

Canvass to Review the Activities and the Space

On a physical level, Third Space is understood as a space arranged and furnished so as to invite diverse groups to use it as they see fit. This understanding of Third Space may be traced back to American sociologist Ray Oldenburg, who named the home the *first place* and one's work environment the *second place*². Beside these two *places*, Oldenburg referred to another, *third place* which he described as 'informal public gathering places'³ that were '*inclusive and local*'⁴. The primary function of a third place for Oldenburg was to unite the neighbourhood⁵.

In Germany, libraries in particular have adopted the concept of Third Place ('Dritter Ort') with reference to Ray Oldenburg⁶. The Kompetenznetzwerk für Bibliotheken (Competency Network for Libraries) identify the following characteristics of the Third Space⁷:

- **Neutrality**, defined as no-one having responsibilities toward the other person
- **Inclusivity**, which is characterised by a lack of specific access requirements
- **Availability and accessibility**, e.g. through long opening hours and a central location
- **Exchange and conversation**, promoting contact between citizens, thus strengthening social cohesion and democracy
- An **open, positive and informal atmosphere**, so that it feels like a second home to visitors
- **Continuous development**

On a more practical level, Third Space is understood as a *practice* which actively creates and enables equal and full participation by diverse groups, especially those facing systemic risks of discrimination⁸. Tracing its roots back to post-colonial studies, this concept of Third Space

² See Oldenburg, R., 1989 (1999). *The Great Good Place. Cafes, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community*. New York: Hachette Books.

³ Ibid, p. xvii.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See Kompetenznetzwerk für Bibliotheken, 2020. *Was ist der Dritte Ort?* <https://bibliotheksportal.de/informationen/die-bibliothek-als-dritter-ort/dritter-ort/?cn-reloaded=1>, accessed 22.12.2022.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ See especially Bhabha, H., 1994 (2004). *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge

acknowledges the existence of (historic) power imbalances that continue to undermine equality and thus social inclusion. In consequence, Third Space as a practice seeks proactively to facilitate an environment that allows power imbalances to be addressed and equalised. From this process also stems the ultimate aim of creating joint futures that transcend the (colonial) past.



Border Crossings' THE GREAT EXPERIMENT:
a play dealing with colonial histories in India, Mauritius and Ireland

Within X-ENITS, we agreed that while the appropriate physical composition of a space was necessary to ensure ease of access and usability for a group's particular needs, the facilitated aspects of Third Space as a practice were even more central. In consequence, and through discussions during trainings and project team meetings, the team from the Migration and Development Centre developed a set of questions that help approach a definition of a Third Space, while crucially taking account also of the differences in context which invariably change what makes a space or activity a *Third Space*. These questions are:

Distance/proximity

- a. What kind of a space to be used? (Ambulant, hall, open-air etc.) You can provide pictures.
- b. Can you define the space as a social space? How so? (Public, common, nature etc.)
- c. Can we say “the space is neutral” or can we talk about the neutrality of the network?
- d. Is it open to anybody, easy to get, inclusive etc.?
- e. What are the physical components of the space? (Size, flexibility, accessibility, mobility etc.)

Participation

- a. Who is included? And who is not?
- b. Please provide the demographic information of the participants including conveyors and yourself.
- c. Can you reflect on power structures? Are they diminished? (Facilitation instead of regulation etc.)
- d. What is the level of involvement of participants? (Such as corporal performance, mobility etc.) Did every participant attend to all components of the activity?
- e. Please describe the decision-making process on the space.

Interactions

- a. What are the activities?
- b. Do activities include all participants? How so?
- c. Can we talk about a multimediatized environment? (Physical space blended with digital media; activity includes music and corporal performance etc.)
- d. Please explain whether the activities make way for community-building? (e.g. demand for democracy; historical bonds; expectations etc.)

Reflexivity

- a. Is there a defined feedback activity? (Scales, diaries, mind-mapping etc.)
- b. Are the activity outcomes defined at the beginning?
- c. What are the activity outcomes?
- d. How do you evaluate the impact of the activity? It doesn't necessarily have to be a quantitative measurement, but rather qualitative review how participants and yourself experience the activity.

The case studies in this e-book use these questions to discuss our activity.



Training in Aalen:
a guided tour of the city - at the Marktbrennen

CHAPTER 3 – CASE STUDIES

3.1. VOLKSHOCHSCHULE (VHS) AALEN - BY NICOLE DEUFEL

As a Volkshochschule, our purpose is to offer education. We are regulated by the Weiterbildungsgesetz Baden-Württemberg (Act for Further Education within the State of Baden-Württemberg). While we cover a large percentage of our expenditure through course fees, we also receive a considerable amount of public funding without which the organisation could not survive. For this reason, we are also tied into the funding parameters of the State of Baden-Württemberg, which distinguish between Unterrichtseinheiten (teaching units) that can be funded, and those which cannot. This is also subject to a minimum number of participants. For all courses, their educational content must be clearly demonstrable. This can pose a challenge, particularly for activities that are aimed primarily at social inclusion.

We offer further education primarily for adults, although there is a limited offer for young people also, particularly in the areas of art education and additional coaching in core school subjects. Within our offer for adults, we cover all areas from professional development, computer skills, sustainability, health and sports, cooking, languages, and personal development. A considerable number of courses are certified.

An introduction to Bring Dich Ein – Your Voice Matters

In 2021, vhs Aalen was one of six Volkshochschulen in Baden-Württemberg that had applied and were subsequently chosen to participate in a project promoting political engagement by those without the right to vote. The key aim of the project was to inform about ways in which people could participate in German democracy despite lacking voting rights. The project was funded by the Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Ministry of Migration and Refugees) and the Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg (State Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports Baden-Württemberg). Each participating Volkshochschule was asked to plan and deliver ten activities. We chose one of these activities as our activity and case study for X-ENITS.

THE CASE STUDY: SYMBOLIC ELECTIONS FOR THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

1. Description of activity

On 26th September 2021, the day of the German parliamentary elections, we organised a symbolic election for people without voting rights, as well as a poll for all those with voting rights on whether voting rights should be extended on a communal level. Anyone living in Aalen and over the age of 18 could participate in person.

A 'voting tent' was erected on Aalen's central market place next to the main fountain. This area is pedestrianized. Although it was a Sunday, the area was busy due to the large number of cafés, restaurants and ice cream shops surrounding the market place and adjacent streets.

The tent was framed with vhs Aalen beach flags as well as posters for the symbolic elections in multiple languages. These had also been used alongside flyers in the weeks prior to the event and handed out to community groups, particularly those with migrant roots. Signs regulating access to the tent due to COVID restrictions at the time were also posted at the entrance. On the outside of the tent, information about the German electoral system as well as voting rights for foreigners in other EU countries and beyond was displayed.

The ballot box, clearly marked with the logo for the symbolic elections, was placed on a table outside of the tent. Ballots identical to the official ballots, but bearing the logo for the symbolic elections, were also placed on this table, as well as tables inside the tent.

On a second table outside the tent were ballot papers to vote 'Yes' or 'No' to extending voting rights to non-citizens on the communal level. Another ballot box for this poll was on this table as well.

The voting was open from 10am to 5pm. A group of volunteers, individuals as well as representatives from community groups, actively invited passers-by to participate. They would generally approach people with a neutral question, 'Have you already voted?' Depending on their answer, revealing that they either did or did not have the right to vote, they were then invited to participate either in the symbolic election or in the poll on extending voting rights.

At the end of the day, both the election ballot papers as well as the poll submissions were counted and a press release was issued. Some months later, the ballot papers were also handed to the elected members of parliament for Aalen in a press conference.



The symbolic election: Aalen

2. Organising the activity: Power-sharing and setting goals

The idea for organising symbolic elections during the parliamentary elections came from a member of vhs Aalen's advisory board. The idea had been circulated amongst the migrant communities previously, but had not been realised. We therefore saw our role as enabler. Our managing director, Dr. Nicole Deufel, subsequently took the idea to the city's Integrations Ausschuss (Committee on Integration) and invited members to become part of an organising project team. In the end, the project team consisted of eight individuals mostly from the Integrations Ausschuss, as well as our managing director.

We were in charge of arranging and facilitating the meetings of the project team. Within the meeting, we presented the tasks that needed to be undertaken according to information that we had received from Freiburg, where symbolic elections have taken place since 2002. Both our managing director and the member of the advisory board who had originally suggested the activity had attended the meeting with the representative from Freiburg. Therefore, from the beginning, this member of the advisory board played an almost equal role in facilitating the group meetings.

Members of the project team discussed all tasks and decided how to proceed. Most organisational tasks such as obtaining permission to erect the tent or print posters were delegated to us. Other tasks, such as providing translations in multiple languages for the poster, were undertaken by individual project team members and their respective group.

However, while we as a constitutional member of the project team provided most of the practical support, most of the actual decisions were made within the project team as a whole. As such, this structure proved key in sharing power over the event and enabling participation by people outside of the vhs. The project team also set the goals for the activity, which were as follows:

- To make those without voting rights aware of how the system works
- To give those without voting rights a voice
- To raise awareness of the fact that over 8,000 people within our city are excluded from voting
- To reach at least 500 people with the symbolic election.

Despite this co-creative nature of the project team, we did feel that a slight power imbalance remained in our favour. This seemed to arise from the fact that there was an unspoken understanding that if we withdrew our support, the project, i.e. the symbolic elections, would not be realised. No actual conflict arose, but it is not impossible that partners more readily deferred to our views than they would have others', simply because of the possibility that we would drop out of the project. This is a dilemma that we did not feel we could entirely solve even through encouraging an open discussion. The reality of red lines does exist for an institutional partner like ourselves. We feel that in this situation, it is important to

be completely transparent on this aspect from the beginning to enable an open negotiation of where the partners can meet to move forward together.

3. The Space: Distance/Proximity

The market place in Aalen by the main fountain, or Marktbrunnen, is one of the most recognisable spaces in the city. When the project team discussed where the tent should be situated, the market place came second after the town hall (which, as an official voting station, was not a real option). The entire group felt that in placing the tent in the market place, we were making both a statement about the importance of the issue as well as making the tent as accessible as possible by placing it where most people who come to the city centre pass by. It was also felt that because the surrounding area is enlivened by the many cafes, restaurants and ice cream shops, the voting tent would feel part of everyday life and not owned by any one entity or group.

As such, the decision for this location was made quite deliberately by the project team. It was viewed as being accessible and open to all, without any structural barriers, visible or non-visible.

On the day itself, the reasoning of the project team proved correct insofar as observation confirmed that most participants had not specifically come for the symbolic election but stumbled across it and felt comfortable to be approached or approach the tent directly. The fact that one did not need to enter the tent to find out about the activity or indeed to participate in it also proved to make participation easier. Most people filled in their ballot forms at one of the tables instead of seeking the tent's privacy.

For us as an educational organisation, it was also particularly exciting to leave our own premises and bring an activity directly to where people are, especially those who might not normally seek us out. It was also good not to be within a classic educational setting such as a closed classroom, but instead offer learning outside right in the centre of our community.

4. Engaging People: Participation and Interaction

Due to its nature as an election, our activity itself was highly structured with no opportunity for participants themselves to change what they were able to do, i.e. vote using the mock-up of the official ballot and a polling card, respectively.

However, with regards to the learning goals set for the activity, this procedure proved perfect, as it enabled those who had never been allowed to vote in Germany before to experience themselves how the process works. Our volunteers stood by to answer questions and provide explanations. In many instances, there also ensued conversations about the parties and individuals on the ballot paper. One woman's comment is illustrative of the effect this had: she explained that she had never before bothered to engage with German politics because she had never felt a part of it.

The poll on extending voting rights had a similar effect. While the activity itself allowed little flexibility, people began conversations both with our volunteers as well as with each other. One instance was particularly remarkable, when two friends apparently for the first time started to talk about the fact that one of them was not allowed to vote. The other had never given much thought to extending voting rights. In this regard, too, the activity, though highly structured and predetermined by the project team, achieved the goal of raising awareness, and facilitating conversations about the issue.

5. Engaging People: Facilitation

It quickly became clear on the day of the symbolic election that our team of volunteers was essential in inviting people in, making them feel at ease and being partners for conversation about the electoral system and voting rights.

We also felt that it was particularly helpful that our volunteers came from the networks of project team members, including their family members and children. Especially considering those without voting rights whom the activity tried to reach, the fact that many of our volunteers themselves were from migrant backgrounds (with or without German citizenship) meant that they could recognise themselves in those facilitating the activity. At the same time, having volunteers from mainstream German society meant that people asked to consider the extension of voting rights also felt invited as part of a community and without any pressure to decide in a certain way, as may otherwise have been the case.

The conversations that took place around the activity itself proved an important aspect of the activity, and one which the participants shaped themselves according to their own contexts and wishes. Conversations ranged from the political system of Germany, parties and political representation, to ways in which people can shape our community without having the right to vote. It was in these conversations that much of the learning and social cohesion happened.

For us as an educational organisation it was particularly interesting to pursue a more open approach to teaching through conversation, to be an enabler and facilitator rather than a teacher at the front of a class. Volunteers reported that this could at times be demanding because they had to sometimes use prompts, ask questions or respond spontaneously to comments and questions. Overall, however, it was felt that this level of flexibility was a perfect addition to the more structured and embodied activity of the election and poll themselves, and made the learning more intimate and relevant to each person's circumstances.

6. Conclusion

Responding to a suggestion from within the community and working as a facilitator alongside members of that community to make an activity happen was a great way for us as an organisation to engage in participatory planning and co-creative delivery of learning. It

enabled us to respond to a need within the community, and develop further as facilitators of learning rather than teachers.

It was very helpful to have established clear goals for the activity in order to assess its success. Overall, we did achieve our goals, with the exception of actual numbers. Instead of 500 people, we were only able to engage 275.

Setting these goals also ensured that all aspects of the activity were carefully planned accordingly. This planning, although perhaps counter-intuitive to the desired openness and flexibility of a Third Space, to us proved essential for giving structure not just for ourselves, but also for participants who appeared to require some formal input before they felt comfortable to engage more freely according to their own interests. We believe that some such structure will be required for the foreseeable future, but that, depending on the (educational) goals in question, the structure itself can be jointly changed if the needs of the group require it.



Nicole Deufel presents the symbolic election during the training in Aalen

3.2. SIILINJARVEN KUNTA - BY MARI PUTTONEN

Art project in landscape - Spring 2022 FINLAND

Background

What is the Finnish identity – how do we define it through art, or can we even do so? How is art connected to nature changes in different times and seasons? Why and how nature is so important to Finnish people?

Finnish identity has a strong relationship to nature⁹. It defines our mentality. We appreciate quietness, personal space, pure nature, seasons and the healing impact of the forest. These might be clichés but that's the question – where do clichés come from if they're not true?¹⁰

From the beginning of this Erasmus project planning the connection to nature was clear. The Finnish part of the project would be art in the landscape.

The hypothesis in the project was that art activity will strengthen teachers' skills and networking globally and our students' cross-cultural capacity by bringing "Europe to Siilinjärvi", not to mention promoting art as a means of communication. Broaden the mind, breaking the invisible boundaries that might restrict life, creativity and mutual relationships – these were the key goals that the art project might reach. This project was assumed also to strengthen the wellbeing of teachers and students and maybe give them new perspectives to their daily work, no matter in which sector.

This is how project was described in the project plan in its early stage:

"(Mari) would like to do the project in the nature with other participants from Europe plus my students: we create a lesson concept in nature where is combined the traditional art to "the sense based, out-of-the classroom lesson". The work that would be done in the nature is such that it gives also pleasure for the people that pass the art piece. We have talked here a lot how we could for example reach those people that don't go to the exhibitions, but who could get pleasure just walking by. These works could be such that they're independent pieces of art but also art pieces together."

⁹ [Suomalaisten luontosuhde -tutkimusraportti \(sitra.fi\)](https://sitra.fi/suomalaisen-luontosuhde-tutkimusraportti)

Survey: Almost 90 per cent of Finnish people consider nature important to themselves – there is a wide range of relationships with nature, no single right one - Sitra

¹⁰ Yle Luonnon kysely: Suomalainen on yllättävän vahvasti luontoihminen – sienestys, kalastus ja kansallispuistot eivät silti kiinnosta useimpia | Luonto | yle.fi

Space and the Third Space



The place was an open-air space beside the lake, in a small forest. In summertime it's the backyard of a summer theatre. Part of the activity was held in that summer theatre area (choir singing, warm up, concert in the evening) and painting was done beside the beach which is close to the summer theatre but in an independent forest area.

It's a public natural area even though it's also the backyard of the summer theatre. People go there for a walk, in summertime sometimes fishing, and in wintertime to sledge and ski. Close to the theatre area there is a common beach. Beside the beach there is a public sauna plus in wintertime an open water for ice swimming. The theatre area is also often used for other occasions like concerts and sometimes the same natural area is "seized" by young people in summertime to hang out beside an unofficial fireplace.

So, in this perspective, it's a social space. And it is definitely a Third Space.

The space is neutral, if the space can ever be neutral.

A forest is always a certain type of forest: it may be meant for a particular activity e.g. hiking or picking berries or hunting or economics (forestry). Is the forest easy to access (close to the people or do you have to drive a long way)? Is the forest open or grown tight (there are three different basic types of Finnish forest)? Or is it owned by someone (possibility to be there but is it appropriate – like too close to the housing etc)?

Thinking of the forest in general from this point of view, no spaces are completely neutral.

But in the way that this space, a small forest beside a lake, could be reached by anyone, easy to access in many ways, an open-air space, close to a village and not owned by anyone – in this perspective, it's neutral.

The space is not super huge but it's also hard to define exactly because the area doesn't have any boundaries. There is no specific start or end. The lakeshore makes a natural border that you could cross (by all means) but it changes the activity immediately when you end up in the water. Also, the sandy beach is a kind of boundary because there the forest changes to the beach. The activity changes the same way then as when you move into the water.

The theatre stage and auditorium also "line up" the area – marking a change in the activity.

The specific activity the area where the activity was held was mainly the small forest beside the water.

Participation – profile of the participants

The activity was targeted to half structured participants. The main group was art students and volunteers who already had experience of another Erasmus project (10). We also invited music students, because they would broaden the project to a larger scale of senses (voice, hearing), and would bring a non-visual arts perspective. The total amount of adult music students in the project was six, plus one piano student from local junior high school invited four other students to participate. We also invited 10 Ukrainians to join the art project but they couldn't come¹¹.

The teachers that were involved with the project were music teacher Anna, Siilinjärvi community college headteacher Anita and art teacher Mari.

In the beginning the idea was to invite also citizens from Siilinjärvi to participate to the art activity.

The channel for the invitation would have been a local newspaper. But it's so insecure a channel because we never know how many readers it reaches and how many we would have spontaneously got to the activity. This was bit risky. Either we would have got too many or none, and with the resources that we had; it was better to build the main group on those people that we could count on.

The students ages from adult choir and art classes were from 42 up to 87 years. The junior high school students were (all of them) fifteen years old.

The basic idea of participating to the activity was that it's free of assumptions - capability, disabilities, former experience, language, age etc.

¹¹ There were clearly significant numbers of Ukrainian refugees in the area at this time. This group had intended to join the training, but were prevented by bureaucratic demands on their time. The activity took place as Finland was applying to join NATO, and the location was close to the Russian border.

Mari made the groups for the art activity, using her organisational power so that equality and diversity stay in groups. But the activity itself was made so that it didn't put the participants in the roles that were expected. Art students weren't in the leading role in the activity. Or they were supposed not to be. But maybe the experience that they have led them to boost the beginning of the activity.

Of course, there is in a group project always some power structures. Some must take the leader role, so that the actual activity goes on and result is done. But in this way power structure is not such that it diminishes others but rather makes the activity work.

While watching the activity from group to group, it seemed that most of the groups worked equally, doing things together and communicating together with or without the same language. And relationships between participants were equal.



The art activity – what and why

The **main idea of the activity** was:

- to do art together in groups that contained one art and one music student plus one foreigner that did not speak the same language (diversity)
- to make art in nature from natural materials (nature, space, sense of touch, sense of seeing)

- art activity includes music, voices, sounds (small concerts in the activity and after activity, sense of hearing) and lunch outside (sense of taste, sense of smell)
- activity also represents as a whole day activity the Finnish nature culture/bondage ("Finnishness")

All participated in all activity parts: warming up, bonding, art activity, lunch, community singing, exhibition and wrap up in the afternoon.

All participants were also invited to the joint dinner, evening concert and public sauna after the day activity.

The art activity started with **general explanation of the activity:**

1. *why we have gathered*

- a. background of the project

2. *timetable in activity*

- a. structure of the day (warm up, painting)
- b. lunch breaks and timetable for that (first painting time was around 1,5 hours, lunch at midday (includes typical Finnish hiking/camping food (sausages, small salad, bread, coffee) and music as performed and sing-a-long (songs: same songs as in the morning plus sing-a-long Kalliolle kukkulalle)
- c. painting time and exhibition (building and introducing the group work; in the end -> art exhibition was made together in between the trees. So that the big papers looked like that we have hanged bed sheets drying in between the trees)
- d. evening program with dinner, concert, sauna (volunteer)

3. *who is involved with the activity*

- a. who is involved: art student/music students/Erasmus guests
- b. how the groups are formed who make art together.

Before the art activity started there were two short Finnish songs (Sinisiä, punaisia ruusun kukkia (Blue, red roses) and Katselin taivaan tähtiä, (Looking the stars in the sky)) to bring the participants to the nature environment and to that moment (which was exceptionally cold in that day 17.5., around plus seven).

Warm up before art activity was a sound improvisation with music students.

All participants standing in a circle, back-to-back the inner circle. Listening the nature around us, getting inspired from that and making their own sounds.

Sound of kantele (Finnish zither) was the starting sound that led to the other voices. Own sounds were inspired from the others around us, and the tune of the voices that changed. The point was to sense and hear the others and make bondage with the others.

Then the **art activity** was explained:

a. *materials:*

i. **bamboo paper**

a. size 1 m x 40 cm

ii. **natural colours**

a. from the ground (sand brown)

b. leaves (green)

c. flowers (yellow)

d. hibiscus juice (purple and blue/green)

e. coal (Black/grey)

f. aronia juice (purple and red)

iii. **salt and soda** to change the colour

iv. **gum arabic** to bind the colours together

v. **water**

vi. **brushes**

a. nature branches, like sticks, straws, leaves, feathers etc

b. normal ones, watercolour brushes

b. *technique:*

i. **how to make** natural colours

a. grinding with stones the leaves -> green

b. digging and grinding with stones the soil -> brown

c. hibiscus juice was made like tea and aronia juice made by squeezed berries-> blue, red, green, purple colours

ii. **how to mix** colours and how to use different mediums

- a. colour plus gum arabic -> watercolour
- b. blended with water -> different shades
- c. if soda or salt was added to the juices, how it changes the colour

iii. how to paint without brushes

- i. pressing the paper -> getting prints from the earth by stepping on the paper or using other pressing materials from the nature
- ii. colouring hands and painting with fingers
- iii. painting with sticks and feathers and pure flowers using as brushes etc.



Mari's role in the activity was mainly to answer when she was asked but not to interfere with the process. The result wasn't the main thing but rather the process to doing things together, communicating via pictures.

Reflections – how it went and what we learned

The activity here hopefully led to a loosening of the boundaries between:

1. different subjects that are taught in classroom
2. known and unknown, either the question is in technique or other people
3. skills and incompetence, learning about the process rather than result
4. strange and familiar, learning communicational skills without mutual language
5. other groups in the municipality and promote the co-operation with local operators like the local theatre.



This activity showed for example that:

1. this could be easily transformed e.g., to a marketing event where our students meet people to whom they show what we do in our school - like peer mentoring for art.
2. this same activity could be done for example with refugees or in events for homeless people etc. No high expectations of quality art but doing some art together so that each participant is equal. The materials should be such that also those who might be more experienced will be at the same level with other participants.

Examples of further activities that are based on this activity:

1. All make their own brushes from the materials that could be found at home or outside (yarn, feathers, fabric etc) and paint pictures with food colours
2. Try to find printing materials from home (toilet paper roll, pen heads, bottles, fruits etc.) and print with finger colours on a gift-wrapping paper
3. Fingerpaints from natural materials (e.g. quark and aronia, potato starch and hibiscus) and paint with fingers on large paper on the wall of your feelings

The point wasn't to do the scenery painting but rather doing paintings in nature and with the help of nature. Using colours from nature, sensing the environment, communicating with pictures, doing something together and studying yourself doing something together with strangers and in the process making art pieces.

In a nutshell it went as it was planned. The activity and its content has been almost the same ever since from the beginning of the Erasmus project. Some progress has happened and some changes too.

Past winter season (2021) showed that there are many natural possibilities for making the activity. In Siilinjärvi community college art lessons were made some juice paintings with good results and also nice eco prints with garden plants. These experiments led to the choice that was used in the activity: natural colours straight from the nature, plus possibility to try to make marks to the paper without normal pencils and brushes.

This activity was also a small way back to the inner child. There is creativity what we lose easily in this technological society. Making art hasn't actually changed so much from the ancient times when people made marks on cave walls to show other people what they have achieved in their hunting trips. It needed only the rock and the piece of red ochre and no art education. That's many times forgotten in a world that is filled with possibilities.





Theatre exercise during the training at Glencree

3.3. BORDER CROSSINGS - BY LUCY DUNKERLEY & MICHAEL WALLING

Devising Theatre with Diverse Communities (Dublin 2022)

This Case Study is an account of a workshop led by Border Crossings in Tallaght, South Dublin, during the summer of 2022¹². Tallaght is the most culturally diverse neighbourhood in Ireland, and a portion of participants in this workshop was drawn from that local community. There were also a range of theatre professionals from across Ireland, France, Italy and Sweden. Although English was the prime language of facilitation, not everyone spoke English well, or in some cases at all. This complex composition of the participating group made the workshop very much a Third Space project. The account that follows details the exercises which Border Crossings used to facilitate the multiple encounters of the week, and offers some sense of the many unexpected and wildly creative results. Many of the exercises detailed here were also used in the Third Space training undertaken for X-ENITS in late 2022¹³, but we have chosen to use this account here so as to give a fuller picture of our work with diverse communities, and to reflect the relevance of Third Space ideas to our work beyond the specific needs of the X-ENITS project.

Day 1

Warm - up and Group Building

It was important to make new people feel immediately at ease and welcome. The need to establish positive energy, shared experience and enable a group to get to know each other quickly should never be underestimated. This means they then feel safe, creative and open to more complex work. The CRE-ACTORS group in Dublin was a large group of 29, with varying degrees of experience.

All the following games are done in a circle, standing up.

1) Name and gesture

The facilitator starts by saying their name making a small gesture three times. E.g., clapping or clicking fingers. E.g., Lucy + click, click, click.

The group repeat the name 3 gestures, three times. Then person next to the facilitator then says their own name and does a different gesture, which the group repeats 3 times. This is done in quick succession until everyone has had a turn.

This is a very simple game and should be done without pausing or talking. In an intercultural setting, it is best practice if the facilitator demonstrates the game rather than using words to explain it, as that way everyone can understand.

¹² For the context of this training and related commentary, see the CRE-ACTORS e-book: https://issuu.com/border-crossings/docs/cre-actors_e-book

¹³ See Section 4.3 below.

The exercise is also a good way to learn names quickly. It is claimed that if you say a name three times you remember it! A simple name game is a good method to put people at ease as it doesn't require any language to understand and it is easy for everyone to pick up.

2) Bing Bong Bing

The facilitator stands in the middle of the circle and points at someone – they are asked to say “Bing”. The person to their right is asked to say “Bong”, the next person says “Bing”, and then the next person says their name. This pattern repeats around the circle. If someone gets the sequence wrong, or hesitates, they are “out” (and could sit down). Once the group gets confident at the sequence the leader changes it. It can get increasingly long and difficult, e.g.:

-Bing, bong, bong, bong, bong, name

-Bing, bong, bong, bong, name

Each time the facilitator changes the pattern it is helpful to get the group to repeat the sequence in unison.

This game is useful for groups who don't speak the same language. It is fun to play, doesn't rely on people knowing each other's names (and helps you learn them) and, as it only needs a couple of simple words, it is very inclusive for people who don't feel confident speaking the host language. The game continues until there is a winner, or (if working with a big group) a small group of winners.

3) Story of your life/ introduce yourself with a match

In a large group some people naturally speak more than others, and it can be difficult to give everyone the space to introduce themselves, especially if time is limited. This technique helps people focus on what they really want to say and limits the length of time that people talk. It gives people a relatively equal time to speak in a fun way.

With international groups, some people might not be confident in speaking English (or any other host language) so it is good for the facilitator to encourage people to do the exercise using the language in which they are most comfortable. It doesn't matter if not everyone can understand what is being said: it is more important that everyone is heard. This is also useful for the group to get used to hearing and using more than one language. Once people have permission, and feel accepted to use any language, they are more likely to use their own language in later activities, which is very freeing and sets the tone for the whole project.

Each person lights a match (a glass of water or a fire bucket should be at hand to drop the match!). They introduce themselves and talk for the length of time that the match burns.

4) Guess who's leading

This is a good game to start a group moving and working together. One person is selected to go out of the room for a moment. Another person is selected to be the leader- they start to move, and the rest of the group must copy them, moving all at the same time. The group must keep moving. The person outside comes in and they have up to 3 guesses to see if they can work out who the leader is. The person who was the leader is the next to go out the room to guess.

Working with Images 1

Before the training began, each participant was asked to find 3 images. For the CRE-ACTORS training, at least one of these showed an intercultural and/or devised performance in which they had been involved, and at least one showed what they understood by "interculturalism". They brought these in printed form, and also emailed them to the facilitator. The Exercise also works with paintings or other images.

The group divides into pairs, with each person showing their images to the other, and explaining a little about them¹⁴. The person seeing the images for the first time chooses one which appeals to them, and takes the printed copy, which they keep hidden from view. The images not chosen are discarded.

Each person then finds a second, different partner. They decide who will be "blind" first. This person is blindfolded¹⁵. The "sighted" person then communicates the picture they have to the "blind" person - but they cannot use words or language. They can move their partner or otherwise apply touch; they can make non-verbal sounds with their voice or body: the only rule is that they must not use words.

Once the sighted partner feels they have communicated the picture, the roles are reversed. The images remain concealed.

The group re-assembles, with a chair facing the "audience". Each person in turn sits in the chair and describes the image that they have been led through when they were blindfolded. The facilitator may assist this process by asking questions, particularly when people describe the experience rather than the picture.

It works really well if there is a screen behind the chair, as the image can be projected where the audience can see it but the person speaking cannot. If there is no projection available, then the partner can stand behind the person speaking and hold the printed image for the audience to see. This activity is hugely freeing in terms of creativity, and helps people to move beyond language into other forms of communication.

¹⁴ Language barriers should not be an issue, as at least one of the images will almost certainly speak for itself

¹⁵ If people are resistant to being blindfolded, or there are known issues around trauma in the group, then it is possible to do this with eyes closed. The only reason for the blindfold is that it's very tempting to open them.



Theatre exercise during the training at Glencree

Working with Images 2

Part 1 - Image Theatre

This practice starts with a technique adapted from Augusto Boal's "image theatre". As a practice in his "Theatre of the Oppressed"¹⁶, it is intended to facilitate genuine and deep collaboration on the basis of equality.

Participants work in groups of four or five. The facilitator gives them key words or concepts, in response to which they will create a physical image using their bodies. For intercultural and multi-lingual groups, the choice of words is really important, as this will enable (or prevent) full participation. For CRE-ACTORS, we used three words which are very similar in the three core languages of the project, and which also relate to some of the main issues around intercultural practice and policy in Europe:

ENGLISH	FRENCH	ITALIAN
Host	Hôte	Ospite
Hostile	Hostile	Ostile
Hospital	Hôpital	Ospedale

The fact that there are slight differences of meaning between these words in the different languages is a bonus: for example "Hôte" and "Ospite" can both mean "guest" as well as "host".

The group of four or five need to make a physical image which they all agree embodies the word. Each individual in turn steps out of the image they are creating and "sculpts" the others to fit their sense of what the image should be. They then insert themselves into the image, and someone else takes their turn to do the same. This should be done without talking. The image is finally agreed when all the members of the group have stepped out and back in again without making any adjustment.

This technique requires time, as people often disagree quite strongly on what the image should be. There can be "arguments", when people keep changing something back and forth. Cultural and political differences can very often be revealed quite starkly. The need to find consensus is actually an exercise in democracy.

Once the images have been found, it's good to share them with the full group. This can often lead to productive discussions.

¹⁶ The technique is most fully recorded in Boal's book "The Rainbow of Desire" (Routledge 2015)

Part 2 - Devising from Images

The second part of this practice is for the groups to take their three images and to create a short piece of theatre which includes all three. For this part of the process, talking is permitted (and indeed encouraged), so translation may be needed. The images can appear in any order during the performance, and they do not have to be highlighted (although they can be). The original words may or may not be considered. Participants may speak during their performance, but they do not have to.

During the CRE-ACTORS training, it was very useful to use this approach early in the process, when we had our full team of community participants present. The images and scenes that emerge from this practice are often very telling as a form of research. It was very striking how the scenes made in this workshop were very multilingual, and how they all dealt with very dramatic conflicts, whether in serious or comic modes.

Day 2

Warm-Up

The aim of this warm-up is to get the group to move together as a company. It starts slowly and can build to become quite physical.

Each person finds a space to lie down. The facilitator asks them to allow their body to feel the floor below them, and, as they breathe, to let the body sink and have more contact with the floor.

The facilitator encourages the group to breathe together in a slow meditative way: e.g. breathe in for 4, hold for 4, breathe out for 4. Eventually they are asked to start moving their fingers, when they breathe out, then moving on to include their wrist, their arms etc., moving then to the toes, feet, and eventually moving to a standing position.

They are asked to observe the other people in the room and try to move at the same tempo and style. Participants are encouraged to explore the space but should move while observing each other, trying to keep breathing together and moving in the same tempo and style as the rest of the group. They are then asked to connect with another person and maintain physical contact with one other at all times, whilst still observing the whole group. They are then asked to connect with two people and should be connected to one at all times. This will then eventually go back down to touching one person, then being on their own, and finally just breathing together again.

Music is played and the tempo is changed to reflect the group. The exercise needs to be given enough time to develop and to allow the group to come together.

Working with Languages 1

The exercise is useful for intercultural groups to explore the cultural and languages in the room and to use difference as a strength to create theatre. They are encouraged to spend time exploring and finding ways to communicate with each other which then can be used to create a scene.

Border Crossings' play CONSUMED had 3 characters: one who spoke only Mandarin, one who spoke only English, and one who spoke both. The actors in the company reflected the characters and the director spoke only English. The play had some scenes with a couple in love trying to communicate despite not speaking the same language, and used a variety of methods such as Google translate, or a translator.

The CRE-ACTORS participants were asked to get into smaller groups of 3-5 with least one person who spoke a different language from rest of the group.

There were asked to create a scene around "A meal" and told that the scene should explore understanding and misunderstanding, when people do not speak the same language. The meal was chosen as a setting, because food is an excellent way to bring people together and can highlight cultural difference.

Participants were asked specifically to think about how we can play with understanding or misunderstanding of language, as well as thinking what the audience would be able to understand. It's helpful for each group to explore how they have seen others try to communicate across languages. The groups were given 20 minutes to prepare their scene.

The scenes were performed back to the rest of the group.

Working with Languages 2

This technique is open to variation according to the cultural and linguistic make-up of the group. It works very well if you can divide the group into threes, two of whom speak one language which the third does not speak, particularly if the third person speaks another language which is not known to the other two.

For example, in the CRE-ACTORS project, we had these examples:

- Edward and Hanna worked in Swedish, with Dominique working in French
- Thais and Amanda worked in Portuguese, with Kunle working in Yoruba
- Andrea and Romi worked in Spanish, with Xevi working in Catalan
- Sandra and Bronwen worked in Irish, with Jonathan working in English
- Micky and Nicola worked in Italian, with Lucy working in BSL



Theatre exercise during the training at Glencree

It is good if the facilitator acknowledges that there is a politics to the language combinations, and that the participants should be sensitive to this.

The participants are given a VERY short time to prepare a scene - 2 minutes maximum. All they need to decide is what the situation is that they will present. The scenes are then performed to the full group as improvisations.

What is particularly exciting about this approach is that the performance is REAL. When people don't understand what another performer is saying, that is useful for the drama. The challenges posed by an intercultural, multilingual group are turned into something advantageous. The exercise also generates scenes that raise important questions about the relationship between language and power structures.

Kabosh and the North

Day 2 of the CRE-ACTORS training ended with a talk by Paula McFetridge about her intercultural theatre work in Belfast.

In response to her discussion of working in and with specific places and spaces, each participant was invited to send the facilitator overnight an image of a particular (non-theatrical) place that they found in some way stimulating. These could be images from their time in Dublin, their home town or elsewhere.

Day 3

The Seven Levels of Tension

Part 1

This technique is based on the work of Jacques Lecoq.

The group moves through the room, and the facilitator leads them through various physical "states" or "levels of tension". It is important that there are objects around the room with which participants can interact, and these should not be valuable or breakable. Chairs, tables, bags, water bottles and shoes are all very useful.

The levels are:

1. Pond Life. There is no tension at all in the body, which is inert.
2. The Californian. The body is deeply relaxed, and as a result the performer feels very much at ease, laid back and friendly. It's a bit "druggy" really. When you meet people, you love them.
3. The Stage Manager. This level is clear-thinking, efficient and organised. Nothing is a problem. If something has to be dealt with, you go to it without rushing but without

dawdling. If something needs to be fixed, you fix it. When you meet people, you greet them politely.

4. The Baby. This level is perpetually excited and stimulated by everything, but cannot concentrate on any one thing for more than a second or two because there's always something more exciting to see next. When you meet people, you probably want to know whether their hair is real - or something like that.
5. Late for work. This level is getting pretty tense. Everyone else seems to be a bit useless, and you really have to impose your will on them otherwise nothing will get done. The world feels like it's moving out of your control and you have to assert yourself to get it right.
6. Bomb in the room. Panic, rushing away, screaming.
7. Rabbit in the headlights. Paralysed with fear, you're so tense.

It works best to start from level 3 and to introduce the other levels one at a time, going back to 3 whenever it's necessary to explain. Once the group have got the idea of each level, there's a lot of fun to be had by shifting around between them.

Part 2

Once the group know the seven levels, the facilitator can set some improvisations in motion. The group gathers around a space, and music is played: lighter, dancey pop music works best. The facilitator sends participants into the space one at a time, specifying a level of tension for them to work with. Make sure there's always an interesting mix. If someone seems to be getting tired or in a rut, bring them out of the scene. People learn as much from watching this as from doing it. The key is the dramatic conflicts that arise between the different levels of tension.

Working with the Body and Space

This technique works well just after participants have done Seven Levels of Tension, and also when they've been thinking about place and space.

The facilitator creates a PowerPoint presentation of images which show a range of different places and spaces. For CRE-ACTORS, many of these were the images that the participants themselves found in response to Paula's presentation about site-specific work in Belfast. Images of theatres and performances should not be used. Images without people in them work best.

As in the previous exercise, the group gather around an empty space. There is a screen behind the space, so this is an end-stage exercise. The facilitator puts on a playlist of music - spacey, open sounds work best for this. For CRE-ACTORS, we used Mogwai, Sigur Rós, Pink Floyd, John Adams and Arvo Pärt.

The images are projected. Participants are encouraged to go into the space and to improvise in response to the image and music. The facilitator changes the image when they feel the need for a new energy.

Make sure you allow time for discussion at the end of this. It's very helpful for people to say which moments they found particularly powerful or striking - that way they are "banked" for future use.

As with many of these techniques, language is not an issue here. You don't have to speak during the improvisation - and if you do, then the fact that others may not speak the same language is a given.

Beginning a Text

For this technique, the facilitator needs a supply of "seed lines". These are pairs of lines, which can either be especially written or taken from existing texts. It's important that they should be quite "open" (no specific references to time, place etc), and in a variety of different styles.

For the CRE-ACTORS training, we used two sets of seed lines. The first were a wide selection of paired lines that are particularly suited to the exercise. Here are some examples:

A: I have been searching for the stream all night.

B: It is the other way.

A: Right, we'll indulge him. Let's start.

B: Just a moment. I'll bring some of them.

A: He forgot, even his language.

B: It's as if nothing happened.

A: Went that way. To church.

B: Right. Sunday.

The participants work in pairs (a group of three can also work, but is more complicated). They take the two seed lines and write a six-line play that includes them - so they write four further lines. The point is to "disguise" the seed lines, so that others won't spot the initial stimulus. The seed lines can come anywhere in the scene, but they must stay together - you can't put another line in between. This is really useful when the two lines are apparently



Theatre exercise during the training at Glencree

unrelated: it gets people thinking about the open nature of good, succinct theatrical dialogue.

For multilingual groups, the seed lines (or just one of them) can be translated into the participant's own language. It's obviously important that the partners can speak the same language as each other - but they do not have to make a piece that can be literally understood by everyone in the room. In the CRE-ACTORS training, there were some really strong pieces that communicated even though the six lines were in languages other than English.

The scenes are presented to the group, who have to guess which were the seed lines. Translation can be useful for this, but it's best not to do it immediately. Getting a sense of the scene in the language in which it was made is more useful.

The second set of seed lines we used in the CRE-ACTORS training were taken specifically from Irish plays, and dealt with some of the key issues arising across the project, particularly in relation to land, occupation and identity¹⁷. Here are some examples:

A: Couldn't you say that at first without making a song about it?

B: I don't believe there's horses in the stable at all.

A: Men like you, says I to myself, is getting scarce nowadays.

B: I wasn't going to let myself be maligned by a chancer.

A: Seven years. That's all it's been. Some seven years.

B: You've no notion of what it was all about, have you?

A: Trading, buying and selling. What I'm so good at.

B: God. The years I've spent wondering what you'd hit me with next...

A: I'm the one who lives here, if you recall. I'm going nowhere, I've only just got home.

B: We're not talking personal issues, not any longer. This right here is Nazi [name of place¹⁸] now, and it's us playing the Jews.

¹⁷ During the Glenree workshop, we used things that had been said by participants during earlier sessions of the X-ENITS project, so provoking some powerful explorations of identity politics.

¹⁸ Note that the last example slightly breaks the rule about specific reference to place. In the original (Stewart Parker's "Pentecost") the reference is to Belfast - but the participants can add any place name here.

The texts that are created in this way can often be very rich and suggestive. It's often possible to combine two scenes into one. Here's a piece which was created by putting together two pieces written by Hanna and Kunle, and cutting two lines (as it happened, the seed lines) from the second one:

A - Pablo?

B - Went that way. To Church.

A - Right. Sunday.

B - You ready?

A - Are you sure you know what to do?

B - Be careful.

A - Will you try to get them to talk?

B - When do you think?

A - This is doing my head in!

B - I have no more ideas.

Day 4

Non-Verbal Warm-Up

The group is in a circle.

This warm-up has been developed through Border Crossings' work with young people and women's groups from refugee backgrounds. Many of the vulnerable people we work with are not used to theatre or group work, and there is often no common language. It is good practice to use as little language as possible in explaining exercises, so as not to overwhelm the participants. It encourages a group to listen and respond to each other through nonverbal communication. It is useful way to develop acting and interacting with others. It has also proved very effective with deaf groups.

1. The facilitator starts by smiling at the person next to them, and then encourages that person to pass the smile to the next person. So the smile is passed all around the circle and back to the facilitator. They receive the smile from the last person, but then change the emotion. It's helpful that they contrast. The interaction should get longer and have more of a dialogic feel as the task progresses. Example of emotions and ideas to pass include:

- Anger
 - Sadness
 - Excitement
 - Flirting
 - Needing help
 - Having a secret to tell
2. The facilitator takes a piece of imaginary chewing gum out of their pocket and chews it, plays with it and passes it on around the circle.
 3. The facilitator takes a deep breath and passes it to someone across the circle. They encourage the person to take the breath in and pass to someone else. Depending on the experience of the group the facilitator might demonstrate different way to do this. The breath could be shot across the circle- which would involve the receiver to reacted strongly as if hit by a bit gust of air - or lovingly blown and received. The group is encouraged to experiment and get physical.
 4. The more experienced the group, the less the facilitator needs to do. It is helpful for all exercises if a more experienced or confident member of the group is the second person in the circle.

Working with Space and Place: A Further Development

Many of the vulnerable people we work with do not always feel welcome, or feel like they belong. They can feel out of place in a setting they do not know. Dramatically potent conflict and tension can be created through using space and place to develop how characters behave and so to tell stories.

The facilitator asked the CRE-ACTORS group to get into 3s (if numbers don't work out exactly have a 4 rather than a group of 2). Each group was asked to select one of the images of place or space that the group had sent in at the end of day 2.

The facilitator asked them to think about how places can feel different at certain times of a day; e.g. a school at midnight. There are places where we are not supposed to be or go into, and places we are not welcome in. We behave differently in spaces at different times of the day. For example, a beach feels very different on a sunny morning than at 2am. How light or dark a space is, the time of year or who is occupying it can make us feel and behave very differently.

The groups were asked to create a scene that used the place at a time of day when the characters would not usually occupy it or when they would not be welcome or shouldn't be there.



Theatre exercise during the training at Glencree

Working with Difference

This is another very useful activity to do when engaging with community groups, and we had hoped to do it earlier in the week so as to take advantage of the Tallaght participants' presence. However, it also works very well with a diverse group of professionals.

The group divides into pairs. It's important that partners should be able to talk to one another, but it's best to avoid people you know well if possible (so for CRE-ACTORS, we made sure everyone's partner was from a different organisation).

Each person tells their partner a personal story about a time when they, in some way or another, felt "different" or were made to feel "different". It's important to emphasise that nobody but your partner will hear this personal story, and to give people a sense of having to care for the personal story that is told to them. This part of the practice can be done quite quickly - detail is less useful than overarching narrative and emotional content.

The full group re-assembles, with the chair facing them again. Each person in turn tells the full group the story that they have HEARD - **BUT** they tell it as if it were their own. This can involve huge changes to the narrative - and that's the point. So a story about a woman may have been told to a man, and he must now tell it back to the group in a way that makes it credible and meaningful that it could have happened to him.

The stories are told in whatever language is most comfortable for the teller - translation is used throughout.

The facilitator should point out the challenges inherent in the exercise:

- What happens when you retell the story in the first person?
- What choices do you make when there is no easy transposition?

Participants then divide into groups of three or four, avoiding working with the person whose story they told, and mixing up the national and linguistic groupings. Each group chooses a story which particularly struck them, but which is not one they told to the group, or one which originated with them. They create a piece of theatre which tells all or part of that chosen story. As with the previous stage of the process, they should make the story credibly their own.

The pieces are performed back to the group as a whole and discussed.

Day 5

Warm-Up - working through the “other”

- a) The facilitator asks the group to walk around the space in “neutral”, standing tall and walking at a medium pace.
 - a. As they walk, they are asked to observe someone else. Look at how they walk, any specific mannerisms etc.
 - b. Copy how that person walks
 - c. Exaggerate it by 10 %
 - d. Exaggerate it by 50 %
 - e. Exaggerate it by 100 %
 - f. Repeat the exercise again observing a different person.
- b) The whole group will end up doing the same walk together as everyone is copying someone who is copying someone else etc.
- c) The Group is asked to walk in neutral again. The facilitator asks them to find another person to observe. They are asked to get as close to them as possible without running, and without touching them.
- d) The Group is asked to walk in neutral again. The facilitator asks them to find another person. They are asked to get as far away from them as possible without running
- e) The Group asked to walk in neutral again. The facilitator asks them to find two people to observe. They are asked to get as far away from one of them as possible, and as near to the other as possible without running, and without touching anyone.

Structure and Consolidation

This is a technique we’ve developed to help turn the material generated through devising tasks into something more like a play. It’s great to do on the last day of a week-long training, because it brings together a lot of what’s been covered, and gives people a strong sense of achievement.

Participants are divided into groups of five or six. The facilitator should be very careful about how the groups are made up - it’s not a good idea just to let people drift into a blob. In multilingual groups, you have to take care that everyone can participate in discussion - so if there are people who don’t speak the main language of the project, make sure there is

somebody with them who can translate. Be careful also to ensure that each group includes some more experienced and some less experienced people. Mix up the national teams. If there are people who have worked very well together during the week, try to put them in the same group. If there are dramaturgs or writers, distribute them across the groups so that those skills aren't all concentrated in one team.

Each group has a pile of Post-It notes. Everyone thinks back across the week's work, and writes down the pieces of theatre created that have made a particular impression on them. It doesn't have to be work you have made yourself, or even work made by people in your group. Just things that you liked or admired.

This might be complete "pieces" - like the six-line pieces made in response to seed lines - but it could also be specific moments, for example something seen during the place and space exercise with projected imagery. Use on Post-It to write down each thing you liked.

At the end of a rich week, this process tends to involve a lot of Post-It notes...

Discuss the notes among the group. Take particular note of work that several people have chosen. If there are any "lines of thought" that seem to run through the group's choices, point those out and discuss them.

As a group, sift through the materials and decide which elements are most resonant with you as a team.

Next, work with the Post-It notes to create a possible structure for a play. Think about an order in which the different moments could come in order to tell a "story" (in the widest sense of the term). Don't look for consistency of theatrical form - diversity is at the heart of this process. You can move the Post-Its up and down the emerging storyline and see what emerges. You may find that you need something you had previously discarded to bridge a gap, or (just possibly) that you need to write something new.

Look for through-lines. It may be, for example, that the character Dominique played in one scene could also be the character that Pauline played in another. Don't feel you have to explain every detail - audiences are good at working out what may have happened in between two scenes involving the same person.

Once you have created your structure - rehearse the play and perform it back to the group as a whole.

In the CRE-ACTORS training week this process led to an extraordinary set of very different pieces, drawing off a wide range of styles and forms. Some were comic, some were definitely not - but all of them enabled participants to see their work being developed, repurposed and structured towards a possible performance.



Seminar on theatre during the training at Glencree

Evaluating within the Third Space framework

The key questions generated by our academic partner, the University of Çukurova, form the basis for this evaluation of the activity chosen for this Case Study.

1. Distance/proximity

• What kind of a space was used?

An airy, open room in a shared community facility, in a very diverse area of South Dublin. A number of people live in the building, many of whom are disabled or vulnerable in other ways.

• Can you define the space as a social space?

Yes. We not only used the hall for work, but also took breaks and meals in the shared community canteen. The canteen and outdoor spaces were employed for breakout work.

• Can we say “the space is neutral” or can we talk about the neutrality of the network?

The space is not neutral: it is deeply coloured by the community who use it. No space is neutral. In spite of what Peter Brook said, theatre is not an “empty space”.

• Is it open to anybody, easy to get, inclusive etc.?

Yes.

• What are the physical components of the space?

The space is open, flexible and fully accessible.

2. Participation

- **Who is included? And who is not?**

Our work included theatre professionals from a range of countries, and community members from a broad range of backgrounds, both migrants and native Irish with a range of different heritages.

- **Can you reflect on power structures? Are they diminished?**

The approach used was one of facilitation rather than instruction or direction, with participants continuously encouraged to generate their own creative outputs. Facilitation was shared between two leaders, one female and one male. Both were white people, which could be considered to reflect broader political power structures, but the self-reflexive nature of the activity deliberately highlighted this, so as to enable wider consideration of such issues.

- **What is the level of involvement of participants?**

All participants who were present on each day participated fully in activity. There was no division of participants: professional theatre-makers worked closely with community participants.

- **Did every participant attend to all components of the activity?**

Yes, with the proviso that some community participants were not able to be present every day.

- **Please describe the decision-making process on the space.**

The facilitators outlined the exercises to participants, who were then jointly responsible for the creative response.

3. Interactions

- **Do activities include all participants?**

Yes.

- **Can we talk about a multimediatized environment?**

Yes. The work blended live and digital elements, with music and images being used as stimuli as well as language.

4. Reflexivity

- **Is there a defined feedback activity?**

All participants submitted a detailed questionnaire generating quantitative and qualitative data. Professional participants also submitted a written report. On the last afternoon, the dramaturgical partners facilitated an open evaluation session.

- **Are the activity outcomes defined at the beginning?**

No.

- **What are the activity outcomes?**

Short performances. New skills. Political and cultural thinking, Creative ideas. A sense of being valued. Respect for the "Other".

- **How do you evaluate the impact of the activity?**

Ongoing discussions with participants and partners about the way they have responded to the work and the use they have made of what they learnt.



Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

A response to the CRE-ACTORS workshop

This response was written by CRE-ACTORS workshop participant Micaela Casalboni, Joint Artistic Director of Teatro dell'Argine (Italy). Her organisation is an experienced exponent of Third Space methodologies in relation to theatre and community engagement practice.



*

The week in Dublin was alternatively centred on and mixed theatre and politics, practices and reflections-in-practice, exercises and games apt to potentially involve anybody in the discussion and in the action, and complex structures for collective creation in intercultural contexts.

We started every session with playful and very varied theatre exercises that may represent both a wonderful starting point for a group of theatre beginners and a great warm-up and training for professionals: exercises on rhythm and relationship, on imagination and focus, exercises that run without words or are based on exchanges of stories and thoughts in couples... All these tools can well be used, with only a little translation and mediation, while working in intercultural contexts with people who don't share the same language or theatre experience. I think of adopting them for example in those groups including people with a migration or refugee background who have just arrived to Italy, and with whom we are working at the moment.

Next to these ones, we were offered practices and structures for creation (both in playwriting and in direction) that are at the same time very strong politically and very elegant theatrically:

- Sharing and experiencing pictures: each of us has brought and is asked to share 3 pictures with another person. One is linked to our theatre work and two mean "intercultural" to us. Each one in the couple chooses one picture belonging to the other, then s/he chooses another person, and try to make her/him "experience" the chosen picture while blinded, without using words, but all of the other senses plus space. After that, the blinded person tells everybody what s/he has "seen" or experienced while the original picture is projected behind her/him.*
- Collective image theatre: 4 groups of 4-5 people have to create 3 group images titled Host, Hostile, Hospital, and have to do that collectively. Each person is a part of the picture, but, in turn, each one is the director, watching from outside and adding/correcting the image. This goes on as much as needed until a final image is found on which all agree.*

- *Understanding-Misunderstanding 1: building a scene with actors/characters who don't (or don't all) speak the same language and play on understanding and misunderstanding.*
- *Understanding-Misunderstanding 2: in groups of 3, 2 speak the same language, the 3rd doesn't. This time it's forbidden to use translation on stage and there's only time to think of a situation, not to build the entire scene, that will be improvised.*
- *Place and Space: using pictures of spaces and places that the participants have taken around, interact with them as they are projected on the wall, and interact with other participants in the same space.*
- *Writing a scene starting from 2 lines: we are given 2 lines; we have to invent a scene adding other 4 lines. We cannot separate the 2 given lines, we have to possibly write in the same style because the others have then to guess which were the seed lines. The structure has different possible developments.*
- *Exchanging personal stories: in couples, we share our personal story of feeling "different". Then we retell all the others the story of our partner, keeping the deep sense of it but adapting it to ourselves so that it is credible to others as of our own.*

This second group of practices is also of extreme interest for me, as a practitioner working since many years in intercultural contexts, and I will for sure make use of many of them, too, especially those dealing with the use of images and the mixture of languages. Many of them were new discoveries, and this is also very exciting after 30 years of theatre practice!

What makes these ones different from the exercises of the first group, is their multilayered structure and deep meaning, that for sure requires more mediation when working, for example, with professionals coming, as myself, from a different theatrical and cultural background, but especially with people having no, or little experience in theatre, and with people who don't share the same language or are less educated or illiterate. They also require more focus and a longer time for building the final creation, a play or a performance, of course.

So, in the end, it would be so interesting to me now, to go on and see how BC works using these structures with professional theatre-makers in the longer and deeper process of rehearsals: to see how these structures are seeded, how they grow and build up things, how things built are then kept or thrown away in order to build and rebuild different things and so on, in the marvellous, continuous and unique circle of devised theatre creation.



CHAPTER 4 – TRAINING ACTIVITIES

4.1. TRAINING ACTIVITY 1: VHS AALEN

DAY 1, 27th January 2022	
9:30	Welcome and Getting to Know Each Other
10:00	Introducing Our Dialogue Playbook
10:30	A Short History of the Volkshochschule
11:00	Introduction to Third Space
12:30	Lunch
14:00	Presentation and Discussion “Bring Dich Ein – Your Voice Matters” – project
16:00	Short Break
16:15	Meeting participants from the “Bring Dich Ein – Your Voice Matters” - project
DAY 2, 28th January 2022	
9:30	Reflections on yesterday
10:45	Guided Tour of the City with city guide Johann Dietrich Meeting Point: Tourist Info, Reichstätter Str. 1, 73430 Aalen. <i>We will attempt to take our virtual attendees along via mobile phone.</i>
12:30	Lunch
14:00	Introduction to an “Orientation Course”
14:30	Meeting participants in a current “Orientation Course”
16:00	Discussion: reflections on the concept of the “Orientation Course” as well as landscapes and cityscapes as Third Spaces.
DAY 3, 29th January 2022	
9:30	Brief introduction to UtopiAA and KubAA
10:00	Meeting representatives from UtopiAA – a grass roots Third Space in Aalen
11:15	Meeting representatives from KubAA – an ‘official’ Third Space

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¹⁹ Bring Dich Ein was a project related to voting: see Chapter 3, where the activity forms the basis for the VHS Aalen Case Study, and <https://www.volkshochschule.de/bildungspolitik/jahresschwerpunkt-zusammen-in-vielfalt/zusammen-in-vielfalt-projektbericht-vhs-aalen-bring-dich-ein.php>

12:30	Lunch
14:00	Discussion about UtopiAA und KubAA
15:00	Art Workshop: painting your identity
16:45	Wrapping Up

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4.1.1. EVALUATION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY 1: VHS AALEN

by Aslı Ilgıt, Alper Ecevit, Aydın Çam and İlke Şanlıer Yüksel (Migration and Development Research Centre)

I. Evaluation of the Organization

The meeting was well-structured and time-efficient. The host team introduced and described the content and flow of the meeting in an understandable way. There were ample opportunities to participate in the discussions. Yet it was up to the participants' individual efforts to participate, which was difficult at times, leading to discussions stalling. It might have worked better and provided a more active participatory environment if there had been sessions with discussions in small groups of 2-3 people. We could not interact with the host group as much as we would have liked, as they were quite busy with the program and the overall organization. But we did have a good interaction with the team from Ireland.

II. Evaluation of the Activities (in relation to Third Space)

The training meeting in Aalen was held in the midst of rising COVID-19 cases in Germany and elsewhere. The pandemic conditions forced the project partners to reassess the situation and turn the meeting into a hybrid format. Despite these challenges, the host team did an amazing job at integrating online participation into the on-site format; they were technologically well-equipped for such a hybrid event.

There were some minor issues that need to be addressed for future references: in the first introductory session, the participants and their background (and role in this project) was not clearly introduced. This was especially hard for the participants who joined the meeting online and were not part of the administrative team of the project, who have been in close contact regularly since the launch of this project. Related to this point, the objectives of the project, and the participant organizations were not clearly explained. Finally, it would have been better if there had been short instruction before the participants were asked to engage in the activities.

²⁰ UtopiAA is a physical space in Aalen used for the practice of global citizenship in the local space. KubAA is a new arts centre with a large social foyer space. <https://www.utopiaa.de/> <https://kubaa-aalen.de/>

In relation to Third Space

It was not clear how voting, KUBAA or the city tour examples corresponded to the concept of Third Space. These seemed to be very structured and rigid environments where fluidity was limited. For instance, in the mock election example, where candidates for mayorship were invited to a face-to-face meeting with representatives of migrants, arguably, the candidate from the AfD would have behaved differently when talking with migrants if his constituents were present. Thus, instead of a structured Q & A activity, which arguably would generate normative judgment, it would have been more interesting to have an example from a daily routine. It is a good idea to bring together a politician and an immigrant, but how would we replicate this in a “normal life”, for example in councils or other decision making mechanisms? This example made it clear how the context is important (the timing, e.g. right before the elections; the place, e.g. the school being a “neutral” meeting place where both politicians and immigrants would come, but for politicians, it would provide even a better advantage as he could see this place as a more “controllable” environment as opposed to meeting an immigrant in a less controllable place).

These activities also called attention to the emotional aspect of identities, and thus, of Third Spaces. Third Spaces can become functional and sustainable as long as they also generate the feeling among the participants that they share similar emotional experiences within or through these spaces. Put simply, Third Space involves emotional space too.



Migrant artwork seen in Aalen

4.2. TRAINING ACTIVITY 2: SIILINJARVEN KUNTA

Day 1: May 16 2022

Introduction to Finnish culture, to Siilinjärven Kunta and the art activity

Guided tour of Siilinjärven Kunta, viewing of art exhibition and meetings with students

Day 2: May 17

Art activity in the woods near Siilinjärven²¹

Visit to Youth Centre

Concert of Finnish music

Sauna

Day 3: May 18

Discussions around the previous days' activities and their relationship to the Third Space

4.2.1. EVALUATION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY 2: SIILINJARVEN KUNTA

by Aslı Ilgıt, Alper Ecevit, Aydın Çam and İlke Şanlıyer Yüksel (Migration and Development Research Centre)

I. Evaluation of the Organization

We were highly welcomed. We were properly informed about the schedule of the program and the activities. Room facilities were adequate and accessible.

In the first day's session, Finland's lifelong learning in relation to the country's history was discussed. Later that day, an excursion was organised where we could observe the phenomenon of nature and landscape, which was at the centre of the Finland activity. The sites visited (youth centre, municipality etc.) were also very relevant.

Despite the challenges around accommodation, the shared space which we found enabled us to bond with others in the project team. We had long discussions on identities and culture, accompanied by wine, cheese and Turkish olives. Some of those discussions were heated, for example regarding "liberal European values" vs the perceived conservatism of "The East". We also had very intimate and personal conversations, and we had a sauna and lake where we stayed, which meant we had a chance to practice what we had learned!

For the Turkish team, the fact that this training took place in the heart of the NATO debate made us want to be more informed about Finland. It allowed for more interaction around the topic of contemporary European identity and how it is framed within securitisation discourse. The visit to Mari's house, its history, and the fireplace opened up spaces for more informal discussions.

²¹ This activity is described in detail in Chapter 3, as the Case Study of the Finnish partner

II. Evaluation of the Activities (regarding Third Space)

It was eye-opening to understand difference in relation to landscape, environment, nature etc.

We observed diversity among the participants in terms of gender, language, disability, age, nationality, and language capacity, all coming from different strata and different backgrounds, from high school students to seniors. Skills and capabilities were also diverse (art students or non-educated etc.).

The activity started with an icebreaker, which was about listening to the body and the sounds connected to the surroundings and the landscape.

The art activity achieved what it intended to achieve. The groups were formed in a way that included diversity. It was both individual and teamwork. It was open to experimentation. The use of materials and the practice itself, and the exhibit itself were fully integrated with nature. Open and public space was used. It was a large space and very accessible. People who were not participating in the activity could also watch. Also, the project participants were active, which was an interactive process. It allowed us to experience the possibility of a Third Space personally.

The activity was an equaliser. No power structures were observed. There was good facilitation. But during the activity, we needed to understand what we were doing and going to do fully. The lack of information made us feel a bit insecure. Mari later explained that she gives little instruction so that it does not interfere with creativity, questioning, with letting the inner come out. Well, emotions came out!

It is possible to frame the discussion with T. S. Eliot's words about Andrew Marvell's verse 'making the familiar strange, and the strange familiar', also known as a methodological key for anthropologists. This perspective offers us a way to focus on the artist's agency, the agency of the landscape in which the artwork is produced, and the agency of the artwork while questioning not only the essence of the artwork but also how it is produced.

In both our formal and informal discussions and feedback from Finnish participants, in Siilinjärvi, drawing from our Third Space paradigm, when we look at the emotions felt and what may then inspire a participant, we find several temporal and spatial aspects that were held in common. These included emotions, memory, belonging and inspiration. We want to connect this discussion to our Aalen meeting a year ago in October 2021, where we had the excursion up to the hills. Nicole Deufel guided us into the entanglements of landscape, history and identity. Plus, the paintings of community members with migrant backgrounds exhibited during that meeting in vhs Aalen relate to the whole discussion.

We observed that the participants questioned a linear understanding of history by painting the past, present and future at the same time and attributing meaning to these temporalities. Every image and every choice was loaded with meaning, especially as expressed in the narratives during the exhibition. The art workshop was intertwined with

nature, so the physical movement was imbued with inspiration and emotion. Participants interacted to varying degrees with pebbles, muddy water, and natural colours derived from plants in the landscape that became the artist's studio. The premise of a sense of belonging to the landscape was also part of the discussion.

Throughout the workshop, the participants' integration with the landscape was manifested as expressing pleasure as well as discomfort. In addition to emotions, we observed that some actions could be related to conscious and unconscious processes. We witnessed together that discussions such as essence, memory, movement, and expression are shaped especially by landscape and space reflected in creative artwork activity.

It has a capacity for community-building. Not only the art activity but also the exhibition fostered this. The exhibition also enabled all of us to be self-reflexive. The choir in the evening also contributed to this community building. There was no defined feedback activity, but Mari collected feedback from Finnish participants. The 2nd day was a feedback and discussion activity among the project team.

This brings us to the last day of the activity and our discussion on European identity. From that discussion, one question arose: Is it OK to discuss European identity as a homogenous entity? Obviously, all of us will answer that question with a big NO. But the discussion led us to operationalise the term identity from a very essentialist point of view. Within our insecurities, while we normally feel the other as ourselves, we also felt the European Other in the Finnish context. Aslı said: "It made me realise there were other Others of Europe within us." It was discussed whether this activity could be turned into a Third Space methodology. We agreed on its capacity for participation, interactivity and reflexivity within physical and emotional proximity. Therefore the activity complies with all Third Space categories.



Artwork created collaboratively between Finnish and Irish participants

4.3. TRAINING ACTIVITY 3: BORDER CROSSINGS

Each training day included practical work in the morning, exploring how theatre can become a Third Space for working with diverse communities and people who do not share the same culture and language. The practical work was led mainly by Lucy Dunkerley, who is Border Crossings' Associate Director, specialising in Community Engagement work. The Wednesday and Thursday afternoons placed this work in context through seminar sessions led by Michael Walling, Artistic Director.

Day 1: November 30th

10.00 Introductions to Border Crossings and Glencree

10.15 Getting to know you through theatre²²

11.30 Working beyond words

12.30 Lunch

14.00 Talk: Border Crossings' theatre work as Third Space

15.45 Discussion in response

Day 2: December 1st

10.00 Warm-up

10.15 Working through tableaux

11.30 Working across languages

12.30 Lunch

14.00 Talk: Irish Theatre as Third Space

15.45 Discussion in response

Day 3: December 2nd

10.00 Warm-up

10.15 Creating conversations

11.30 Working from seed lines

15.45 Taking stock of the training

²² Many of these activities are replicated in the exercises detailed in Chapter 3, as part of Border Crossings' Case Study

4.3.1. EVALUATION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY 3: BORDER CROSSINGS

by Aslı Ilgıt, Aydın Çam and İlke Şanlıer Yüksel (Migration and Development Research Centre)

I. Evaluation of the Organization

Each team arrived in Ireland and the hosting place separately. We were greeted by our host, the program director of the Glencree Peace and Reconciliation Centre. As an Irish-based NGO, the Centre has served both as a host and a team member for the Irish project team. We not only stayed in their building and used their facilities, but also the director actively participated in the events and activities. Our historically significant and monumental location, which has been transformed over the last two hundred years from a military barrack to a children's reformatory and to a meeting and accommodation centre for the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, was perfectly chosen for the occasion. All project teams, except the German team, stayed together and the activities were also held there.

The training was a three-day long event. Daily sessions were divided into two: morning sessions centring on acting/playing and practical learning, and afternoon sessions focusing on discussions on Irish history and identity, theatre as a Third Space and Irish theatre's representation of Irish identity through history.

Both the training, especially the morning sessions that involved everyone interacting, collaborating and acting/playing with each other, and the accommodation facilities have further intensified the familiarity and bonding that began to develop particularly during the Finland meeting between the project teams.

II. Evaluation of the Activities (regarding Third Space)

The activities involved both practical and theoretical training around and through theatre. The role playing activities, group exercises, improvised and impromptu performances, working with different and several project members every time were great methods to think about and experience theatre and its transformative features. Each morning session involved at least two different scenarios or dialogues that highlighted the role of language, diversity, emotions, and identity brought together and conveyed through theatre as a Third Space. The training on Irish theatre and discussion on Irish identity in the afternoon sessions were not only informative about the role of theatre as a Third Space but also triggered highly productive and critical discussions about national and European identities. The presentation on the historical and contemporary Irish theatre highlighted some significant points regarding the nexus between the theatre and Third Space, some of which were underlined in debates on Third Space.

The combination of participatory sessions and seminars highlighted the following points regarding the connection between theatre and Third Space:

1. Every performance or theatrical action is in fact a Third Space because we as the participants were coming out of private life into the public realm. During the action,

whatever the scenario or story was, we also witnessed the politics of what was going on in the exchange between the players, and between the players and the directors. This points to the Third Space as a performative space. Similarly, the presentation and the following discussions on (e.g.) body images with distinct tattoos - photographs of people's tattoos inked in various forms, shapes, sizes - suggest how the human body can be a Third Space as people in the photographs were protesting about clothing and identity through tattoos.

2. Through theatre we understand what it feels to be in a particular place at a particular time.
3. The Third Space is often considered and talked about as something that is "safe". Yet the seminars showed how the Third Space could also be a "dangerous" place where people can be threatened, or even killed. Specific examples were given of Third Space activities which seemed to threaten the divisions inherent in the status quo, and so were subject to attacks and threats. In this way, the activities called attention to a much understudied aspect of the Third Space, i.e. its harmful, risky and unsafe outcomes and unintended consequences.
4. Theatre serves as a Third Space as it includes communal writing and acting with people from different backgrounds. It makes us aware that space is not neutral; it is problematic because of the shared history that may mean something different for the different people involved.
5. Thus, theatre makes you think or practice "how you enter into the mind of the Other". How do we represent history? Through the fictionalization of ourselves we can build trust. This is us negotiating with our shared history.
6. Similarly, theatre presents distinct moments with different dynamics such as being watched when languages are different or being watched when doing something intimate. "Theatre is the space where we meet the Other".
7. Theatre is also where we start to find out about ourselves from different spaces.
8. Theatre, especially in combination with music, is important in creating different worlds. Music makes things spiritual. It magnifies things from real life so that they come to seem clearer and maybe even mythic.
9. Finally, all these lead to the fact that theatre as a Third Space is filled with deep responsibility in connection with its presentation of reality and truth telling.



Finnish participants at Glencree

FEEDBACK LETTERS FROM TRAINEES

As well as formal evaluations from the Migration and Development Research Centre, Turkey, there were also informal evaluations from Finnish participants who were engaged in the trainings in Siilinjärvi and at Glencree. These letters are very telling in terms of the project's impacts, both foreseen and unforeseen, and the value of Third Space.

Hanna Laine

Initially, I was a bit sceptical about the whole project, but I decided to go with an open mind to see what Mäntyranta art workshop would have to offer. The experience was so inspiring and the people so nice that going to Ireland started to appeal very much.

I think meeting different people and having conversations with them was the biggest thing to me in the trip to Ireland. Over the years, I've tried to get over my shyness and strengthen my self-confidence and self-assurance also outside my work role. I've got lots of positive support for that personal mission during this project!

It was a great feeling to be part of a group, even if sometimes I retreated into my own space. Even then, I didn't feel like an outsider. A quiet observer has always been a very natural "role" for me, especially in larger groups. The "party" on the last night was the best thing in the sense that there was an opportunity for discussions and free time together in a different way than during the daytime program. I would have liked more moments like that, and it was a shame that the Germans had then already left.

In the past, I've seen theatre mostly as entertainment, and it was interesting to realize how much social importance theatre can also have. Otherwise, I believe that with this project I will be able to look at things and phenomena from several different angles a little bit better. Everything is not just what it seems at first. Many of the problems that came up in the exercises felt - and perhaps still feel - so big that it is difficult to understand and deal with them. The experiences and stories of people from different parts of Europe partly brought a better grip on things that are far away in my own everyday life. Sometimes I got the feeling that I am in a very privileged position, and maybe even a little spoiled, when I get to live my everyday life with relatively small problems.

All in all, participating in this project left a good feeling, and I would love to participate again sometime. I consider meeting different people and cultures to be the greatest part when it comes to international projects. The world view expands considerably when you actually meet different people and not just read about them (which is also useful and desirable of course!). And it's wonderful to actually be able to use the language skills you've managed to acquire over the years.

Hanne Riekkinen

First of all... I have never been involved in any "art" projects, so everything was new!!!

After all the 24/7 work, the crazy grind of four children (= a wonderful and difficult life), I now have time to let something of myself out, which I haven't done before 😬

For me, this project was, hopefully at least, the beginning of something new. BIIIGGG thing in my life!!

Of course, I know that the project has a bigger purpose, a research purpose, but I can't do anything else but emphasize how this really changes the life of just one small person. Somehow fear is starting to recede from my life, and that's a good thing...

In Finland, of course, we were closer to our own "area of expertise" when we were able to make visual art, because I have been practicing it for over 10 years in your good teaching. In Ireland, we went to such a strange and uncomfortable area again, some acting!!! Hello!!! The last time I played blind and lame at the primary school Christmas play... really...

And I had to talk in rally English 😊

And it was so much fun, the funniest ever 😂

About linking... I think it's wonderful when people are put in the so-called discomfort zone, i.e. it's nice when roles are mixed up. I can't really explain this right now...

And what's nicest, met new people. It's always just as inspiring to notice how, in the end, people are the same, nice, no matter where we come from.

And of course I would participate in any similar project. It doesn't matter where and what.



Sari Santanen

My Erasmus trip to Ireland started already in May 2022 when we met Erasmus students for the first time while participating in an art event in Siilinlahti. We went to Siilinlahti to sing with the choir members and throw ourselves "into something". Everything that was going to happen was only heard when we arrived at the place. Making art according to the given instructions and in between the performance of our choir was really rewarding. The positive light was that we could probably later in the same year participate to the trip to Ireland with the same Erasmus group!

It was exciting to start speaking English after a long time and everything went smoothly. I was encouraged to talk with others. Not perfect but rally English.

After May, we were anxiously waiting to see if it would be possible to go on the trip. After all, corona and others had already burdened the departure for a long time, and besides, could we still fit in? We met all of our travel companions at Kuopio airport for the first time face-to-face in the last day of November and we got along well with everyone immediately. The flights went smoothly, and green nature, sheep and narrow roads waited us in Ireland. We still didn't know exactly what was going to happen to us. The brave Finnish women were accommodated in a room for five people in the tower of the castle, and we saw in first evening that there are the same people who were with us in May in Finland. Now it was a little easier to start talking.

The following days went performing and others interpreting what they/we have wanted to convey through the performance. After all, the purpose of the trip was that there would be no need to have a common language in order to be understood. We mainly came there to singing, but when the feedback moment came, I noticed that I had found something for my own work in a psychiatric ward, where the patients sometimes don't speak the same language, but have to be able to interpret otherwise expressions and gestures, etc. So I noticed that I was already doing the same interpretation in my everyday life. And the setting for this interpretation was green and beautiful.

The course was pretty close-paced. Many would have liked to be outside more. So if there was a request for new projects from the Erasmus team, I wouldn't hesitate to go on the trip. Even if I don't know what the project would be! Life-long learning is eternal and experiences are always refreshing. Without forgetting that travel expands and gives experiences that are nice to remember for a long time. The trip to Ireland was just a memorable trip with good company. This More!!



Johanna Tingvall

The trip to Ireland was very rewarding. It was especially important in maintaining language skills, because I use English just occasionally, way too occasionally. The trip was important to me both in terms of understanding the language and using it every day.

Personally, I'm more of a music person, so all the exercises, both in Finland and Ireland, were more foreign to me. That's why it was really great to be able to express myself in a different way. It was great to notice that Finnish way of seeing, that you might embarrass yourself, was put behind in Ireland and I was able to throw myself into theatre tasks quite well.

I have previously guided activities for different people and groups, and I have also guided similar exercises. For my current job as an interpreter for the speech impaired, I also got a lot of ideas from the activities.

In Finland, painting with natural materials was nice. We had a really great group, because in addition to Finnish and English, we also used Finnish sign language.

What I remember most about doing various tasks in Ireland is how people from different parts of Europe see, for example, gender equality and its future. I thought about this for a long time afterwards.

Me personally, I brought both musical skills and maybe a hint of bad humour to the project, which is always needed. Of course, helping others and sometimes interpretation was also a small part of my own participation.

Such a project is important to me in this life situation. I am in debt settlement and suffered from depression for several years. Getting involved in such project is a big deal for my mind and of course it brought a unique opportunity to see life outside the borders of Finland. For me there is no other way to do so financially. Even so, the project was unobstructed.

If there are similar projects in the future, I am definitely interested in being involved.

Thank you for allowing me to participate.



Kerttu Kovanen

Project Ireland was an eye opener to me. It opened my worldview. The trip raised my tolerance.

The activities were really interesting, but as a person who doesn't speak any foreign language, it was challenging. Being a part of Team Finlandia, it was really rewarding.

I would go again, new experiences...without preconceived notions...with an open mind.

"My first flight opened my mind and eyes to the world"



Anna Räsänen

I think this getting to know other people and cultures through visual arts and performing arts and working together was a really effective thing. It was easy to participate in the activities and the atmosphere was immediate and open. In this Siilinjärvi activity, visual arts played the main role and music was, as it were, an additional spice. My own role was precisely to bring out this additional spice and Finnishness through musical performances. The soundscape exercise, which was done in the Siilinjärvi activity, is based on drama exercises and as such is not connected to culture and its music. I believe that music as its own art form would also be perfect for this. I mean an activity where the group would have delved more deeply into the music through joint activities. The art of dance would certainly work brilliantly in the concept.

The drama activity in Ireland was, at least for me, more challenging than in Siilinjärvi. But it was nice to notice that during the three days, participation became easier and easier. It was as if you got into the matter and what you were doing. I got memorable experiences from these days, met new people, got to know a piece of Ireland and its culture. I also certainly gained a new kind of courage to face people and it gave me more confidence to participate in a similar project in the future. The experience was personal development and empowering. It was great that I could participate as myself.



Ninni Rönkönharju

The project was, in a few words, a tremendously eye-opening experience. Although at the beginning I felt that joining was a leap into the unknown, I decided to join with an open mind, and I did not regret my decision at any point during the project in Finland or Ireland.

The project helped me experience and discover things that I would never experience and discover in my everyday life. I strongly felt that art exists for each of us, no matter what form it takes. It was an inspiration to all of us. We were a really mixed bunch, some were stranger to each other than others, but you didn't notice that in Finland when making art or in various activities in Ireland. Everyone was enthusiastically involved in each one, as speakers, the change of thoughts and ideas flew rapidly from culture and language to another. The atmosphere was liberated in both countries. In my opinion, this is what art is at its best, a factor that unites people and brings about changes.

At the same time, this project was a really great way to get to know other people and their cultures. Getting to know their way of thinking and acting and getting to know their different mother tongues, a real language bath. It felt as if with the help of the project I had been able to peer into cultures and people's minds in a completely different way, more deeply than in ordinary communication or everyday life. While getting to know others, you were also able

to mirror your own culture and the way how it works. I was also able to mirror my own feelings and thoughts as well as my prejudices and fears (I have enough of them as a perfectionist 😊). At the same time, I broadened my own worldview and thinking. The activities in both countries brought a new perspective to my thinking, my values and my attitude. They developed me as a person and because of that I got a lot to process far into the future.

Even though I don't consider myself narrow-minded, I felt that through the exercises I created space for myself to look, reflect and interpret things in a new way. They released something in me that I didn't even know I had. I don't feel like I'm a spontaneous person, but with the activities and the encouraging atmosphere, I freed myself from my formulaic activities. Throughout the project, I felt that I could safely throw myself into art creation, activities or discussions without fear of failure or being judged by anyone. I was able to bring out my own personality, my own values and perceptions.

I felt that I was also an opener of views, thinking and values during the trip. People from other cultures saw, heard and experienced that a person with a limitation, in my case mobility impairment, is able to participate in activities both inside and outside in nature as a full member. Maybe this is how I made their minds open to the unknown and the possibilities it brings in their everyday life as well. Maybe they too are now more open-minded to see what is the normal, real everyday life of a person living with limitations and at the same time saw a little of everything that a person living with limitations has to face in their everyday life. Prejudices towards assistive devices perhaps also decreased a little, after all, a normal person sits in a wheelchair just like them.

With these thoughts, I feel that I am braver and more ready for new projects. Participating in this project brought a lot of new things to my life in many different areas. This really empowered me and I want to experience all those feelings again. I don't want to participate in projects because it would just be fun, but I feel that projects have a greater multidimensional meaning for me. Through experiences that expand my new views, I feel that I can also be a "word as an escort" for other barriers to action. I can share my experiences with them and encourage them all to participate in activities outside of their comfort zone. It is surprisingly easy to let fear and prejudice take over one's mind, but overcoming them gives an otherwise limited life the so-called "salt of life". This project really gave and taught me a lot and I cherish the memories even for my bad days, when I might be diving in deep waters. Thanks for letting me be a part and experience all this ❤️.

CHAPTER 5 – POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS by Michael Walling

Introduction: From Poetry to Policy

In 1970, the Scottish poet W.S. Graham wrote THE CONSTRUCTED SPACE. It would be another three years before Scotland, with the rest of the UK, became part of the EEC, as it was then known. Half a century later, Scotland and Northern Ireland have both been forcibly removed from the European Union against the express wishes of their people. Dr. Nicole Deufel, who leads this Erasmus + project for VHS Aalen, experienced this rupture as a European citizen living and working in Scotland, and much of her thinking around Third Space practices has been influenced by that experience. So it feels appropriate to begin this discussion of our project's policy implications with Graham's provocative and empowering text²³.

THE CONSTRUCTED SPACE of the poem is the poem itself. It imagines an encounter between two people, "I" and "you", which the construction (or creation, or curation) of that space has made possible.

Anyhow here we are and never

Before have we two faced each other who face

Each other now across this abstract scene

The space, which is an artistic and cultural construct, enables these two subjects to move beyond difference, whether that be psychological, linguistic, cultural or political, and to engage with one another empathetically.

construct this space

So that somehow something may move across

The caught habits of language to you and me.

In this Constructed Space, what we would term a Third Space, difference can dissolve and new understandings emerge.

This is not only a potential in poetry, but in all forms of artistic and cultural activity. During the X-EUROPEAN project we have engaged with Constructed Spaces, or Third Spaces, curated by the different partners in their specialised fields, each of which offers at least the possibility of what might be termed a radical empathy. We have heard accounts of performative political interventions, particularly mock elections, to galvanise the public participation of minority groups. We have experienced how collaborative artistic activities,

²³ The poem is in Graham's 'New Collected Poems' (Faber and Faber 2004). It is copyright to his estate, but can be accessed at <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?contentId=27817> and in performance at <https://www.brinkerhoffpoetry.org/poems/the-constructed-space>

undertaken in and with the natural landscape, can overcome language barriers, enabling communication and creativity. We have explored how theatre and performance, through processes of collaborative creation and putting yourself in someone else's shoes, can and do serve to generate extraordinary encounters and unexpected connections.

We are all agreed that this kind of Third Space activity needs to be supported and indeed prioritised by policy-makers, both at local, national and European levels, in order to meet the key policy agenda of promoting cultural diversity, with a view to overcoming the potential for cross-cultural tensions and conflicts. This priority has been given added urgency during the period of the project by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the resulting forced migrations, which have added significantly to the numbers of displaced people across Europe. This is not, however, primarily a paper addressing refugee policy but wider questions of diversity across the continent, including intra-European cultural difference, and migrant communities present in European societies for whatever reason. We believe this diversity is a key part of Europe's cultural wealth, containing huge potential for positive development across a wide range of areas, including policy making, through the application of Third Space methodologies. We also recognise that current policy structures require reform in order to capitalise fully on this potential.

Graham's Constructed Space, even though it follows the language-based form of a poem, is paradoxically a call for a move beyond language, for silence.

I say

This silence here for in it I might hear you.

If we are truly to construct Third Spaces, spaces which do not belong to either "you" or "I", but which are genuinely dialogic and open to fluidity and dynamic creation, then we have to begin from that silence. The space is constructed, but it is all that is constructed. We cannot pre-conceive or programme what will happen within it. And this has profound implications for policy.

It is with this in mind that we offer the following recommendations.



Artworks created by Finnish participants

- **Educational and cultural programmes need to be re-structured so that project results are not pre-determined**

The vast majority of funding programmes in the educational and cultural sectors are currently based on application processes requiring a detailed project plan with predetermined results and outcomes, laid out before the work itself begins. This is incompatible with the nature of Third Space activities, which have to be open and loosely structured in order for a genuine and equal exchange to take place.

We therefore recommend that applications for such programmes should not be assessed on the basis of detailed plans, but should instead encourage the absence of such plans, and an open structure within which diverse participants can make contributions that would not be expected or envisioned by the organisation leading the application. This is particularly important for intercultural Third Space work, as the very concept of a project plan is in itself culturally specific and defined: it is characteristic of the neoliberal ideology currently dominant across Europe. True integration will not occur by requiring new citizens to conform to this ideology, but through processes of participatory democracy that allows them to affect change.

These open structures for adult education and VET projects are of particular significance for skills development. The skills required for our sectors to address and operate within a more culturally diverse Europe are not pre-existing skills in which people can be trained, but new skills that can only be acquired through dynamic cross-cultural interaction, enabling processes of personal and community growth.

In the absence of detailed and imposed planning, applications for project funds should be assessed on the basis of the relevant experience and proven commitment of the applicant and their partners. This might include evaluation of previous work in a similar area, the professional standing of key personnel, and the choice of partners to engage in the Third Space activity.

This does not, of course, mean that there should be no stated and clear aim for such projects, or that this should not be a major consideration in the allocation of funding. It is essential that applicants include a clear framework and basic structure for a Third Space project at the planning stage, but it has to be understood that this is only a way of generating the “silence”: an equal space and starting point from which a true exchange can develop.

- **The evaluation of projects within educational and cultural programmes should not be on the basis of pre-determined outcomes**

At present, most funding programmes evaluate projects on the basis of SMART²⁴ objectives set out before the project begins. Evaluation is essentially an assessment of whether these objectives have been met.

Third Space projects, as defined through the framing questions that have emerged in our project, do not respond well to such an Evaluation framework, as once again it requires the project results to be determined prior to the work being undertaken, according to a pre-conceived agenda. The nature of Third Space work is that evolves through mutual exchange and the contributions of multiple and diverse actors.

We therefore recommend that educational and cultural programmes shift their evaluation structures to allow the generation of key evaluation criteria within the processes of the projects themselves. For example, the SPICED approach (Subjective, Participatory, Interpreted & communicable, Crosschecked and compared, Empowering, Diverse) puts more emphasis on developing indicators that stakeholders can define and use for their own purposes of interpreting and learning about change, rather than simply measuring or attempting to demonstrate pre-determined outcomes. This approach actively engages diverse participants and beneficiaries in the assessment of achievement, encouraging them to establish indicators of their own which express how their diverse needs may be met. In this way, the process of evaluation & assessment itself comes to serve the policy objectives of encouraging civic engagement & participation, inclusion & diversity.

- **Educational and cultural programmes need to recognise that the cultural diversity of Europe is not simply a matter of national differences, but is rather an attribute of pan-European and intra-national diversity**

The European Union's educational and cultural programmes currently focus on collaboration between partner organisations based in different member states. However, such partnerships do not necessarily address questions of cultural difference in and of themselves. We believe that there is a case for prioritising projects that engage participants drawn from clearly distinct cultural groups, even if those groups are found within a single member state or indeed a single locality.

We also recommend that the Structural Funds are looked at again in the light of recent and ongoing migrations, so as to consider the possibility of Adult Education and VET being prioritised for funding in areas that are particularly multicultural in their demographics, and not simply on the basis of economic data. In this way funds can build social and cultural capital, encouraging more inclusive societies and learning approaches that are more suited to our increasingly diverse continent.

²⁴ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound

- **Public funding of Adult Education and participatory cultural activities is essential to social integration and positive development**

Our Finnish partner's Adult Education funding comes from a range of governmental sources: 51% from the municipality, 30% from national government, and only 19% from student fees. This funding model ensures that courses are affordable for all socio-economic groups, leading to 11% of the adult population being involved at any one time. Participation in Adult Education on this scale is hugely beneficial in terms of wellbeing, opportunities for personal growth, and social integration.

We particularly recommend that public funding prioritises participation in cultural activities. As Brecht remarked: "theatre is a transformative art, but those it transforms most, are those who make it."²⁵ Our Irish partner's training in participatory theatre practice underlined the immense value of participation in the arts as a catalyst for wider socio-political engagement and creativity. By undertaking theatrical creation within a Third Space structure, participants can find common ground and generate ideas for community growth and development.

This kind of social and cultural development can only be effective if it is built into the ongoing programmes of educational and cultural organisations. Funding Third Space activities as discrete projects does not allow for the necessary level of institutional change.

- **Capital projects are rarely necessary. The transformation of existing spaces is a more economical and effective way to house Third Space activity.**

As Dr. Aydin Çam said during our training in Ireland, what the move towards Third Space projects requires is not new spaces, but the transformation of existing spaces.

Through the course of the project, and particularly in Germany, we encountered a number of educational and cultural professionals who believed that a Third Space could be generated simply by opening up public areas in new buildings as cafés or similar. This completely misses the point that the Third Space is an educational and artistic methodology of participatory practice, which encourages the generation of new ideas and identities through dynamic and unpredictable interaction.

To build new spaces in order to achieve this is deeply counter-productive, for the same reason that the results of these projects cannot be determined in advance. A new building generates a set of expectations, even through its architecture, and these will inevitably affect what participants believe is expected of them. Buildings which are thought of as "functional" or "ideologically neutral" by their planners tend to be revealed as deeply ideological in hindsight.

²⁵ Quoted in Delgado M, Lease, B and Rebellato D (eds): Contemporary European Playwrights. London, New York, 2020 p.394.

By way of contrast, a building with a history, repurposed to house Third Space activities, can itself provide a powerful stimulus for social, cultural and political re-imagining. An example of this is the Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation, which our Irish partner used as the setting for its Third Space training. This space, which was originally built as a British colonial barracks and went on to serve as a Reformatory School and a home for German child refugees after 1945, is now a centre for peace-building, both in the island of Ireland and across the world. The heritage of this building, its “ghosts”, powerfully enhanced the experience of the workshop there. Such historical resonances do not have to fit with contemporary ethical agendas - they may be uncomfortable or disturbing, and care needs to be exercised over such associations. The key point, however, is that the Third Space is not a neutral space, but a deliberate intervention in an historical process.

This was markedly true of our artistic experience in the Finnish landscape. Landscape defines Finnish culture and identity, and is deeply coloured by its cultural construction. Working interculturally in a space which is recognised as affected and associative opens up both participants with local heritage and those from migrant backgrounds to a more nuanced understanding of their dialogue.

We therefore recommend that new builds for educational and cultural work are afforded a much lower priority, with infrastructural development being focussed on the revitalisation of existing spaces to encourage Third Space activities. In working to develop spaces for educational and cultural activities, architects need to work in dialogue with educators, cultural actors and community members in order to ensure flexibility and openness to dynamic, participatory learning projects.

- **European institutions have to recognise that their societies do not have all the answers, and that being open to change is essential.**

Current models of “inclusion”, “integration” and “intercultural dialogue” remain dominated by the assumption that minority populations, particularly migrants, have to adapt and assimilate into pre-existing social and cultural structures, with diversity being largely a matter of skin colour and perceived exotic practices, while fundamental values remain unchallenged and unchanged.

The Third Space has clearly demonstrated to us that real integration can only be achieved by an open process of dialogue and negotiation, with widespread participation in educational and cultural activities by both new citizens and longer established populations. Such processes are stimulating, enjoyable and a major benefit in themselves, as well as providing a laboratory for democratic participation.

It may be helpful to think of this recommendation in terms of the Bantu concept of “Ubuntu”, not least because this is a non-European philosophical approach with much to offer in addressing the needs of European societies today. The root of Ubuntu ethics is the belief that mobility is the principle of all being, that everything exists in “an incessant

complex flow of interactions and change”²⁶. The social implication of this is that our full humanity requires participation in processes of giving, receiving and passing on, operating always in relation to and interdependence with others, recognising collective responsibility.

This approach is diametrically opposed to neoliberal individualism, but it offers a more open, dynamic and ecologically sustainable model for our societies that responds to the challenges we face with hope and positivity. The Third Space will help us to incorporate such thought.



Border Crossings’ THIS FLESH IS MINE:

a Third Space theatre piece created with Palestinian partners. Photo: Richard Davenport

²⁶ Ramose, Mogobe B.: ‘Ubuntu’ in D’Alisa G, Demaria F and Kallis G (eds), *Degrowth: a Vocabulary for a New Era*. London and New York, Routledge 2015.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION by İlke Şanlıer Yüksel

In recent years, the concept of Third Space has gained increasing attention as a means of promoting diversity and inclusion in society. This space, both physical and methodological, provides an opportunity for individuals from different backgrounds to come together and engage in meaningful dialogue, exchange ideas, and build connections. In order to design effective Third Space activities, throughout our project, a number of key features evolved to help to promote inclusivity and collaboration.

One important feature of Third Space activities is accessibility. This means ensuring that the space and the activities are accessible to individuals with diverse abilities and needs. For example, this might involve providing alternative formats or languages for information, or ensuring that the space is wheelchair accessible.

Another important feature is the diversity of the group. It is important to bring together individuals from different backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives in order to facilitate meaningful dialogue and exchange. This can help to promote a greater understanding of the experiences and perspectives of others, and can help to reduce inequalities.

Inclusionary and collaborative practices are also important in Third Space activities. This means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued, and where individuals are encouraged to work together towards a common goal. By fostering collaboration and cooperation, we can help to create a more inclusive and equitable society. The arts-based activities we undertook in Finland and Ireland offered examples whereby people could create something potent and engaging through collaboration, even when they did not share a common language.

Acknowledging differences and diminishing inequalities is another important feature of Third Space activities. By recognizing and valuing the differences between individuals, we can work towards reducing inequalities and promoting greater social justice. This might involve actively challenging discrimination or creating opportunities for individuals who may have been historically excluded. The political elements in our German training emphasised the significance of participation in democratic processes for all.

Effective communication is also essential in Third Space activities. This means creating an environment where individuals feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions, and where everyone is encouraged to listen and learn from one another. By promoting good communication, we can help to create a more open and inclusive society. Again, the arts have a lot to offer in terms of modelling best practice in this area.

In order to lead Third Space activities, it is important to focus on facilitation rather than regulation. This means creating an environment where individuals feel empowered to take ownership of the space and the activities, rather than being governed by strict rules or regulations. The exercises undertaken in our Finnish and Irish activities were catalysts to participants' own creativity, and far from prescriptive.

Thinking out of the box is another key feature of effective Third Space activities. By encouraging individuals to think creatively and to explore new ideas and perspectives, we can promote innovation and foster greater understanding and collaboration.

Proximity is also important in Third Space activities. This means creating a space where individuals feel comfortable and connected to one another, and where physical proximity can help to promote greater social interaction and collaboration. The fact that many participants shared the same accommodation in Finland and Ireland helps to explain the level of trust established during these trainings, and this was reflected in the quality of the results.

Empowerment is also a key feature of Third Space activities. By empowering individuals to take action and to effect change, we can help to galvanize social movements and promote greater social justice.

It is also important to consider the relationship between Third Spaces, culture and landscape. Third Spaces can help to bridge the gap between different cultural perspectives, and can promote a greater appreciation and understanding of nature and the environment. Our Finnish activity was firmly anchored in the landscape, which so in itself came to be seen as shared space.

Finally, emotional attachment to the space and the activity is an important feature of effective Third Space activities. By fostering a sense of emotional connection and engagement, we can help to promote greater understanding and empathy, and to build stronger and more meaningful relationships between individuals. The theatre work undertaken in Ireland was deeply emotional, without losing sight of its rational basis, and this made it particularly inclusive and open.

In evaluating the effectiveness of Third Space activities, it is important to consider all these factors and also feedback. For example, it may be useful to conduct participant interviews in order to gain a better understanding of the impact of the activity on individuals' experiences and perspectives.

In conclusion, the concept of Third Space has gained increasing relevance in today's society as we strive for greater diversity and inclusion. Third Space refers to a place and a methodological approach where individuals from different backgrounds can come together and engage in meaningful dialogue, exchange ideas, and build connections. This space provides an opportunity for individuals to move beyond their own cultural perspectives and appreciate and respect the perspectives of others. Third Space, diversity, and inclusion are interconnected concepts that work together to create a more equitable and just society. By embracing Third Space and promoting diversity and inclusion, we can foster a more inclusive and accepting society, where everyone feels valued and respected, and we can continue to learn from one another.

APPENDICES

1. THE PARTNERS

As a Volkshochschule, vhs Aalen is deeply rooted in the tradition of Volkshochschulen in Germany, which were borne out of the desire to provide education for all. Accessibility of courses is at the heart of its organisational model, both in terms of financial affordability and the presentation of educational content. vhs Aalen was one of the first Volkshochschulen to offer online courses. It has strong ties with all stakeholders in the local community, including religious and cultural groups. vhs Aalen is currently also involved in working groups on Third Space and Audience Development hosted by the State Association of Volkshochschulen in Baden-Württemberg.

Border Crossings is a new organisation in the Republic of Ireland, established in 2019. Border Crossings was chosen for this partnership because of its focus on theatre and other cultural outputs that reflect the increasingly multicultural and international nature of Irish society. The company's approach embraces the international dimension of Irish life occasioned by the arrival of new citizens, and is developing cultural space where people of different backgrounds can encounter one another's cultures on an equal footing.

Siilinjärven Adult Education Centre in Finland was chosen both for its excellent physical learning environment, which is set up to meet learners' needs first and foremost and to provide an engaging and stimulating environment, and for the experience of its art department with innovative and unusual projects for diverse learners. Staff from the art department will be primarily involved in the project. They will provide training in developing inspiring art courses that also engage with social issues. In particular, Siilinjärven will offer an in-depth exploration of the ways in which Finnish identity is constructed around notions of purity and the natural environment and examine how this may support - or possibly hinder - the inclusion of 'new' citizens.

The Migration and Development Research Centre (MIGCU) at Çukurova University (Adana, Turkey) was chosen for their expertise both in terms of research into migration and evaluation methods. MIGCU has extensive experience in this area and as such is perfectly positioned both to undertake the work of evaluation and advise the other partners in the project, and also to provide a unique perspective on questions of identities and the formation of new identities in the context of migration and people with migrant roots.

2. THE PARTICIPANTS

vhs Aalen (Germany)

Nicole Deufel	Claudia Hinsen	Eva Schumm
Susanna Gaidolfi	Carola Moser	

Border Crossings (Ireland)

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Siilinjärven Adult Education Centre (Finland)

Anita Heino	Kerttu Kovanen	Hanna Laine
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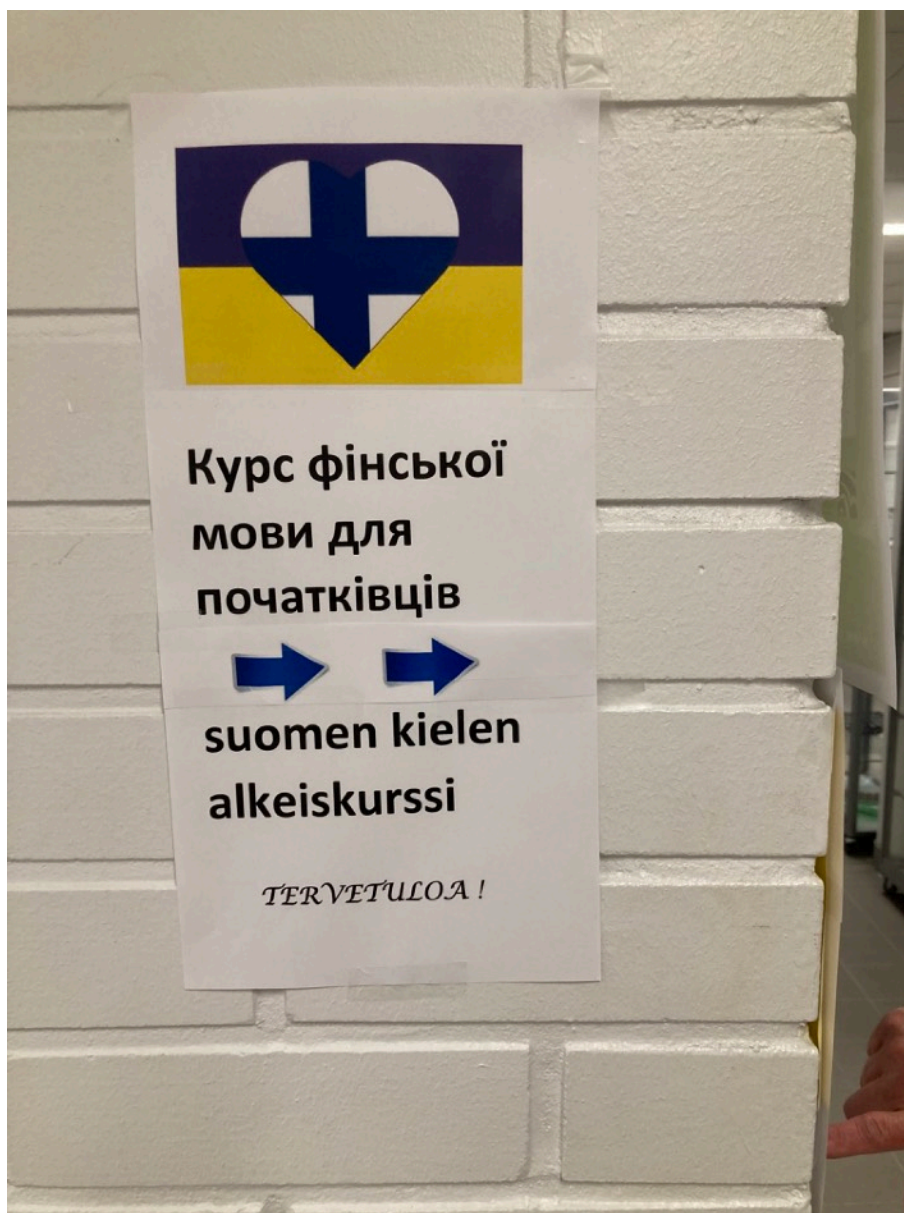
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Bilingual sign in Ukrainian and Finnish
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