

**Towards a Brechtian research pedagogy for intercultural education:
Cultivating intercultural spaces of experiment through drama.**

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PHILOSOPHER: (...) I see what he's getting at now. He's worried that we're going to turn him into a civil servant or a master of ceremonies or a revivalist preacher operating by 'artistic means'. Cheer up; that's not the plan. The art of acting needs to be treated simply as an elementary human utterance which contains its own purpose. That's where it differs from the art of war, whose purpose is external to itself. The art of acting is one of society's elementary capacities; it is based on a direct social asset, one of humanity's pleasures in society; it is like language itself; it's really a language of its own. I propose we rise to our feet to make that tribute stick in our memory.

All rise.

(Brecht, 1964:172)

ABSTRACT

This PhD thesis develops a Brechtian research pedagogy for intercultural education. Taking its lead from progressive intercultural educators and researchers who conceptualise intercultural experiences as being ‘radically embodied’, this thesis is underpinned by a concept of culture as fluid and constantly ‘in the making’. In order to give ethical and pedagogical consideration to such a performative view of culture, Brechtian thinking and theatre practice is employed and translated into the intercultural education research space. Placing Brechtian *Verfremdung* - ‘estrangement’ - at the heart of methodology, such research pedagogy works from within the precarity of intercultural spaces. Based on an immanent ethics that emerges from and shapes within the relationships built in the research space, the researcher’s role is that of the facilitator and co-producer of data. A Brechtian research pedagogy is thus considered a mode of production; one that does not conceptually presuppose ethics and pedagogy, but considers them as ‘becoming’ and integrated within its methods.

It asks two questions i) can a Brechtian informed approach to pedagogy create and change experiences of ‘strangeness’ and ii) if so, how is this achieved and manifested? The focus of this thesis is international students’ dynamic and in flux experiences of strangeness. During four half-day workshops in consecutive weeks, a group of ten international postgraduate students encounter a Brechtian research space, where, using drama, creative writing and filming methods, they engage in an open, embodied conversation on ‘intercultural experiences’. I trace participants’ process of intercultural learning and ‘intercultural making’ through the embodied methods used in the drama research workshops. These embodied methods stimulate a variety of reflective modes and produce multilayered data for analysis: pictures, conversations, creative writing pieces and even non-verbal gestures.

In order to prevent an early reification of these ‘texts’ into academic ‘strangeness knowledge’, they are in turn estranged and used in a mode of artistic production. This allows for active thinking about the research question as well as aids reflection on the modes of encounter within the research space. ‘Estrangement’ draws attention not only to the content of intercultural stories used, but to their inherent discursive structures and the effects these can have on participants’ well-being. The research project’s main emphasis, then, is on the process of research and starts to work towards a respective Brechtian representational practice by developing the term ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’. It is suggested that representations should be equally seen as modes of production, dependent on an audience’s active reading between the research’s ‘metaphoric gaps’. Future research would seek to develop this more product-oriented focus further, so as to test and develop concrete artistic, representational practices for a Brechtian research pedagogy.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

"I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature _____

Printed name _____Katja Frimberger_____ "

NOTE ON TRANSLATION

In this thesis, I refer to all literature with their translated English titles. Where there is no translation available, I give the original German book title and provide my own translation for respective quotations.

GLOSSARY

Dialogic aesthetic framing:

Describes a representational practice that integrates principles of 'estrangement' and emphasises co-creation and relationship-building as basis for academic, representational work.

Gesamtkunstwerk:

Describes the synthesis of all dramaturgical elements of a theatre production (music, acting, stage design) into an aesthetic 'whole', with the aim to fully emotionally immerse the audience into the action on stage. Traditionally found for example in Wagnerian opera.

IC:

Stands for Intercultural Communication; the term intercultural education is used interchangeably.

Immanent ethics:

Stands in opposition to a universal ethics which functions as meta-narrative and pursues moral and pedagogical endpoints. Immanent ethics works instead from an ethics that is contextual and evolves from the immanence of relationships, thereby allowing for an open discursive terrain.

Lehrstücke:

translates as 'learning plays' and comprises a collection of plays that Brecht wrote mainly for amateur theatre groups and with a view to exploring the possibilities of learning through participatory theatre.

Praxis:

Used in a Freirean (1996) sense, it describes a way of thinking and debating that works from within an integrated dialogic model - moving constantly between intellectual analysis and practical application.

Strangeness:

Used for its ambiguity of term and requiring context-specific interpretation, it references Butlerian (2005) 'precarity', Ahmed's (2000) 'contested community' as well as Brechtian (1964) 'Verfremdung' and draws attention to the 'contested' creative and democratic potential of intercultural spaces.

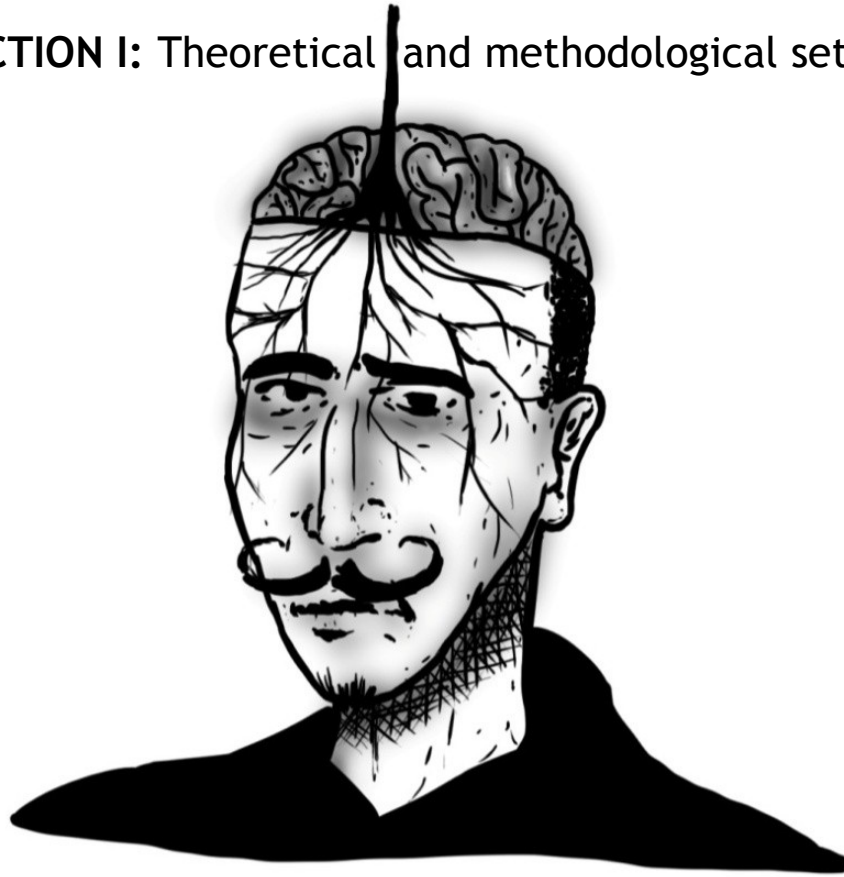
Verfremdung:

Coined by German theatre maker Bertolt Brecht, *Verfremdung* in its modern translation usually denotes 'distanciation', 'estrangement' or 'defamiliarisation' (Mumford, 2009). On a theatre stage, this can be a moment of breaking fourth wall illusionism. The terms are used interchangeably in this thesis.

Verfremdungs-effect:

A Brechtian artistic device evoking *Verfremdung* - for example a direct address by an actor which interrupts the audience's close emotional identification with a typified character and provokes them to reflect on the character's social reality instead.

SECTION I: Theoretical and methodological set-up



[HERR SCHMITT: komisch, ich habe so unangenehme gedanken im kopf.

ZWEIER (zu einser): kopf absägen.

Sie sägen ihm die obere kopfhälfte ab.

HERR SCHMITT: ja, jetzt ist mir viel leichter. Nur, es friert mich sehr am kopf.]

[HERR SCHMITT: strange, I have such uneasy thoughts in my head.

ZWEIER (to einser): saw the head off.

They saw off the upper part of his head.

HERR SCHMITT: yes, now I feel much lighter. Only now, I am a bit cold on my head.]

(The Baden-Baden lesson on consent)

Introduction: Why this thesis?

Sensations

Giggles, preparing food, tense silence, the smell of coffee and home-cooked food, bubbly chats, singing lullabies, playing with plasticine, improvising, sharing stories, feeling sticky tape on my cheek ...

The above is not a nostalgic sketch of some summer camp experience from when I was little. It is, I admit, a rather random collection of memories stretching over the last 3 years. All of them describe in-the-moment experiences or activities that still linger in my mind in the form of sensations. All of these embodied memories are also intimately connected to my doctoral research. They point towards the praxis-based nature of my intercultural education research project which took as its starting point my interest in drama methods as well as my curiosity about ‘international students’ experiences of strangeness’.

Sarah Pink writes in her book *Sensory Ethnography*:

In some research contexts, interviewing might turn out to be a less fruitful exercise in the search for knowledge that is better accessed through participatory and apprenticeship method (Pink, 2009: 89).

Sarah Ahmed, in her book *Strange Encounters*, adds:

A philosophy that refuses to privilege mind over body, and that assumes that the body cannot be transcended as such is a philosophy which emphasises contingency, locatedness, the irreducibility of difference, and the worldliness of being (Ahmed, 2000: 41).

These two scholars are central to my research and sum up my desire to explore radically embodied experiences, such as strangeness, by employing methodologies and research methods that enable me to conceptualise the body as an important site of dialogue within intercultural education research. Atkinson (2003) calls such ‘research from the body’ a postmodern positioning of educational research, as it allows “unpredicatbilty and uncertainty to be recognised as crucial aspects of the research situation” (2003: 39) and acknowledges “transgressive forms of validity” (ibid), which reflect the complexity of intercultural spaces. An embodied research approach doesn’t easily accept the Cartesian separation of thought and action inherent in the traditional scientific ethos and thus denies a radical separation between researcher and subject (Levin & Greenwood

2001: 103). Instead, an embodied research paradigm, in accordance with the principles of “pragmatic action research” (ibid), emphasises the need for research that is not only “context-bound, collaborative and co-generative” (ibid: 104), but also measured according to the research instruments’ pedagogical and ethical impact with regards to the discursive processes taking place within the research (ibid).

My main embodied research method to explore strangeness experiences is drama; especially those techniques found in Bertolt Brecht’s actor training methods. The reason why I am particularly interested in a Brechtian research method to understand strangeness as intimately connected to our everyday ways of being, goes back to my own experiences of living interculturally.

Living and acting interculturally

When studying for my MA in Drama and Theatre Studies at University College Cork, Ireland, I developed two particular interests: re-reading the works of German theatre-maker Bertolt Brecht and swearing in Hiberno-English. The latter stands, although true, more as a symbol for the highly personal, emotional and embodied experiences that accompanied my living and studying in a foreign country for the first time at an extended period. I truly felt between worlds. I was acutely aware that my daily, intercultural dramas were not solely caused by the linguistic challenges I faced, that would, if mastered, lead me back into an emotional balance and a quieter intercultural life. Living interculturally was instead an ongoing emotional and intellectual struggle.

[Living interculturally] is a living process of constant deconstruction and reconstruction of opinion, knowledge and feelings and therefore not only intellectually but emotionally challenging also. And of course it is a never-ending story! (Frimberger, 2009: 9).

This multi-level experience of living in-between cultures seemed to defy simple categorisation but instead unfolded its own ‘aesthetic of contradiction’ through my embodied, everyday intercultural encounters. The necessary skills to not only survive but also flourish in this new reality required linguistic competence and even more so the ability to form relationships, self-reflect and improvise within this all-encompassing and partly unpredictable strangeness experience. At the same time I felt that many of the hands-on drama exercises and subsequent reflections that were part of my MA degree in Cork challenged me on an equally embodied-intellectual level. I have for

example long entertained a love for improvisational theatre but had only ever engaged in it in German.

Doing improvisation in my course left me often feeling, understandably, adrift and slow-witted, as my body and mind were struggling to act and react in-between the many gestures, references and vernacular that make up a 'good', flowing improvisational scene. With improvisational theatre's 'ethos' strongly rooted in relationship-building and trust rather than perfected performance, I was however allowed to stagger and act my way through my bodily and intellectual discomfort and into a more fluid improvisation. Respected as an 'equal' partner in the game and protected through the strong, relationship-based focus, I was able to overcome my inhibition and soon felt bold enough to create a scene, even when temporarily artistically blundering and misunderstood.

In a way, my dramatic experience bore a remarkable resemblance to my everyday intercultural experience. Both involved a degree of bodily discomfort which required in turn a practice of 'working through' this experience of strangeness. Having been trained as a language teacher in my first life, I was intrigued how little foreign language classes really prepared students for such embodied strangeness experiences that were after all part and parcel of living interculturally in our globalised world. Also, I recognised the potential of drama, especially of those approaches rooted in relationship formation, to offer a space to rehearse the 'whole-body skill' of 'being in-between' and 'working through strangeness'.

What was it about drama and about Brecht's methods in particular, which made intercultural encounters with strangeness more pedagogically dynamic and durable, than the competence and cognition models? What was it about engaging the body so completely in practice that changed the qualities of awareness and understanding? After finishing my MA, I took a job as language teacher at a German international school in Caracas, Venezuela. Hoping to apply my newly-found wisdom to this new teaching context, I soon found that the extensive pressures of a full-time job, including a quite rigid curriculum and a school's need for standardised assessment did not leave me much breathing space to explore the potential of these methods in everyday teaching practice. Feeling that I had somehow compromised the creative experiential foundations that I had argued for theoretically, in my own language classes, I grew more frustrated. I craved a space where I had the time to apply my theoretical insights to a practice-based project.

The PhD research inquiry

A year later, I was given the opportunity to create such a space and moved to Glasgow to undertake a PhD. Starting where I felt my MA thesis had left off, I was now curious to explore experiences of strangeness in a wider context, with other international students and, most importantly, practically through devising and testing Brechtian-inspired research methods. As pointed out by Levine & Phipps (2011), Phipps & Guilherme (2004), Giroux (2004), Ahmed (2000) and other researchers, the question appeared as not being simply about the 'right' one-and-only, watertight, progressive research method - but about the kind of educational spaces these methods facilitate. This provoked wider questions about the ethical and pedagogical nature of these spaces and how we would like to live, learn and teach in them?

Henry Giroux (2004) describes this process-oriented thinking about method intercultural education's 'burden'. It takes into account people's life contexts at the same time as challenging educators to take an active position on the kind of societal space they hope to build through their pedagogical actions.

If [intercultural] pedagogy is to be linked to critical citizenship and public life, it needs to provide the conditions for students to learn in diverse ways how to take responsibility for moving society in the direction of a more realisable democracy (...). The burden of pedagogy is linked to the possibilities of understanding and acting, engaging knowledge and theory as a resource to enhance the capacity for active action and democratic change. (Giroux, 2004:20)

I seek to connect aspects of progressive intercultural methods, as for example outlined in Byram and Fleming's book *Language Learning in Intercultural Perspective: Approaches through Drama and Ethnography* (1998) with Giroux's 'burden of pedagogy'. Working within this overlap of method and critical pedagogy - I aim to create a research space that allows for methodological 'experimentation' and is grounded in and 'protected' by political-pedagogical-ethical thinking. The connection between intercultural method and such an ethical positioning through political-pedagogical arguments however is not unproblematic. It can hold the danger of relying on mere 'universal moralisms'.

These might include buzzwords such as tolerance, emancipation, transformation - which can guarantee a sort of 'conceptual' trump card, but do not serve for an intercultural education discourse that deliberately emphasises the immediacy of relationships -

rather than all-encompassing concepts - as their determining factor. And given that paradox, what kind of ethical underpinning is then needed for an intercultural education discourse that seeks to ground itself in messy intercultural praxis rather than pre-conceived concepts?

What is the kind of political-pedagogical-ethical thinking that could ensure that intercultural methods cannot be easily appropriated into 'strategic' educational outcomes or effects, but instead could facilitate (again, as Giroux 2004 suggests) a 'protected' environment where intercultural method can be experimented with and 'tested' without suffering the pressures of instant instrumentalisation? In order to answer these questions more profoundly, I employ in my thesis the principles of Brechtian theatre. I will draw on Brechtian thinking and practice as the connective element between an intercultural education discourse that arises from the immediacy of intercultural relationships - and intercultural methods that might be able to facilitate protected 'spaces of experiment'.

Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into five sections and eleven chapters. There is the theoretical and methodological set-up in section one (the introduction and chapters one and two); my practice-based analysis of drama workshop one and two in section two (chapters three and four); a reflection on ethics and pedagogy in professional applied drama practice in section three (chapters five and six); my praxis-based, ethical considerations which prepare drama workshops three and four, in section four (chapters seven, eight, nine and ten); and the conclusion in section five which highlights my contribution to the field of intercultural education (chapter eleven).

Section I

The introduction explains the personal backdrop to the research, rooted in my own experiences of living interculturally and working with drama methods. I connect these personal motivations to the theoretical outlook of the thesis in chapter one. The argument develops from a discussion of culture as deeply rooted in relationships, to questions around the kind of intercultural education methods such a view on culture entails. I also highlight the web of problems that an ethical positioning of these ‘new’ methods in intercultural education discourse brings forth.

In chapter two, Brecht’s artistic-pedagogical concept of ‘*Verfremdung*’ is employed as the means to bring into dialogue intercultural education methods and questions of ethics and critical pedagogy. The chapter also connects Brecht’s and theatre anthropologist Victor Turner’s ideas on ‘ethnographic acting’ - stressing the potential of Brechtian methods to not only provide representations in flux but, more importantly, to facilitate “teaching space of human relationships” (Carney, 2005:106). Devising theatre is shown to integrate both - the pedagogical concern for ‘reflective teaching spaces’ as well as the aesthetic concern for complex representational praxis.

Section II

Following on from the theoretical and methodological framework set out in section I, section II constitutes a praxis-based testing and analysis of my Brechtian research methodology. It comprises of chapters three and four. In chapter three I assert relationship formation as the key principle for the planning and realisation of the drama-based research workshops. I outline the individual exercises employed in workshop one and put them in context to the pedagogical-ethical discourse outlined in section one. Chapter four discusses drama workshop two and highlights participants' creative writing pieces as acts of production and poetic exploration of intercultural reality, not as explanatory models of it. Evolving themes such as 'culture shock' and 'ethics as practice' are connected to other group conversations and theoretical considerations concerning an immanent ethics.

Section III

Section three explores how applied drama practitioners working in intercultural fields today might integrate an immanent ethics in their work. Chapter five focuses on the complex ethics debate that underpins applied theatre's conceptual reliance on a Universal Human Rights discourse. Steeped in a universalist, de-politicised language; one that integrates ideas of humanity and evolving moral principles - applied drama discourse poses questions about its concrete ethical and pedagogical positioning. Chapter six discusses the ethics that might instead arise from a 'paradigm of embodiment' in applied theatre work. Drawing on critical pedagogy and sensory ethnography, amongst others, I argue that a paradigm of embodiment might retain applied theatre's radical potential to initiate open dialogue and embodied reflection.

Section IV

Section IV translates the debate on an ‘immanent ethics’ practically into my drama research workshops. In the context of our rehearsal exercises, I discuss, in chapter seven, the possible risks of the intercultural education research space to emotionally harm participants. Chapter eight describes the ‘translation’ of Lin’s verbatim account into a Brechtian script. Considering Lin’s own acts of ‘estrangement’ when telling her story, I also focus on the ‘estrangement’ devices I added to the script. The pedagogical implications of such ‘added’ ‘estrangement’ devices for intercultural education are also explored here. Chapter nine develops the term ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ and discusses a possible Brechtian representational practice. I describe the group’s rehearsal of Jamal’s text ‘Being born strange’ and explore the difference between reified representations and representations that evolve from an immanent ethics. Chapter ten analyses workshop four as a continuing exercise in ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ and creating representations in flux. As workshop four worked from four independent rehearsal stations, each one is analysed in praxis from my double positioning as researcher and performer.

Section V

Chapter eleven is the conclusion in which I sum up my praxis-based contributions to the field of intercultural education. I analyse my own learning process during the research and discuss the implications of a Brechtian pedagogy for future intercultural education research.

Chapter 1:

Intercultural education and the need for 'real messy languaging'

1.1 Introduction

Cultures are messy, heavy, people-ridden; culture - or culture packaged - is light and universal. (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 61)

In this chapter, I will review the literature on intercultural education and in particular contributions by key scholars such as Byram & Fleming (1998; 2006), Phipps & Gonzalez (2004) and MacDonald & O'Regan (2012). I will also draw on literature from related fields, such as Performance Arts Education (Fels, 1998; Fels & McGivern, 2002; Axtmann, 2002), Performance Ethnography (Bacon, 2006) as well as Critical Theory and Cultural Studies (Ahmed, 2000; Butler, 2005). Although these are usually not brought into the same research field, the theorists and educators reviewed, all operate in the field of 'immanent ethics' and intercultural pedagogy. Synthesising the literature allows an interdisciplinary look on how these fields approach crucial questions of ethics and intercultural education. I will introduce key terms in the field, including 'immanent ethics', 'linguaging', 'intercultural being' and 'strangeness' in order to show how different discourses are at play within the literature.

1.2 Packaged culture

Many voices in the area of language and intercultural education criticise the still existing dominant, technicist approaches to the teaching of foreign languages and cultures in secondary and higher education (e.g. Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004). These critics point out that cultural education is still taught as a separate entity - a mere add-on - to the linguistic core activities of studying vocabulary and learning the language's grammar (Byram & Fleming, 1998: 5). In this critical view, culture modules appear as linguistic's handmaiden - providing learners with the crucial cultural background nuggets, in the form of pre-selected historical and sociological information.

Such consumerist views of cultural learning, in which customs and key literature can be neatly packaged and taught accordingly, promote a mere cognitive model of cultural learning in lightweight "off-the-shelf packages" (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 57). Intensified by sustained, extensive budget-cuts and managerial pressures, language departments might be forced to streamline their teaching according to current labour market demands. Advantaging the 'add-on' approach - language courses might have to justify their educational value by acting as 'enablers' for other, more seemingly market-relevant subjects, such as law or business, to perform on an international stage.

Cultural learning that can be packaged, consumed and easily applied to such market-needs, so the critics state further, is in danger of becoming a mere commodity. Detached from human ways of being (ibid: xv), a packaged cultural learning doesn't account sufficiently for the complex, performative nature of cultures. Shaules reminds us:

Cultural differences that are easy to explain are often the easiest to deal with. Rules of etiquette or a list of cultural taboos (...) are relatively straightforward to learn but provide little guidance outside of very peculiar situations (Shaules, 2007: 229).

Cultures often defy easy categorisations and definitions and - rooted within ever-changing human interactions - might be better described as supercomplex (Barnett, 2000); or as Kramsch puts it "as heterogeneous and heteroglossic as language itself" (Kramsch, 1996: 12).

Languages are not even clear "key signs of belonging" anymore (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 18) and terms such as 'home' and 'abroad' become increasingly obsolete terms in today's globalised, multilingual world. Instead, culture can't be easily geographically determined. 'Internationalisation' and 'globalisation' have brought the intercultural dimension to our doorsteps (Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991: 8). Intercultural encounters now take place in our neighbourhoods and communities than when travelling around the globe in search of ever more novel experience. Chasing new, exotic adventures and equipped with the same backpacker guides or heading for the same holiday resorts, we might travel far "only to find ourselves face to face with ourselves" (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 115).

Given culture's performative and in flux nature - the unpredictable, even precarious spaces opened by intercultural experience should be seriously taken into account when thinking about intercultural education. This involves methodologically acknowledging the deeply relational aspects of living interculturally - at home as well as abroad. The challenge seems to develop counter-consumerist views and strategies; ones that promote not 'culture packages' but a way of actively 'living in between' cultures. Given the unpredictability of cultures - interwoven with our human ways of being - intercultural encounters are challenging on an emotional level. Bart van Leeuwen (2001) reflecting 'on the affective ambivalence of living with cultural diversity' (in an article of the same title), states that feelings of fascination or fear towards the unfamiliar are very closely related (2001: 148) and often triggered unconsciously.

In his model of 'deep' intercultural learning, Shaules equally describes this implicit nature of intercultural difference that can provoke positive and negative responses on an unconscious level. Acceptance of other worldviews is thus challenging because of the often 'hidden nature' of cultural experiences (Shaules, 2007: 233). Taking this diverse potential of intercultural experiences into account, the 'relational' challenge for intercultural education poses the question - "shall we be, intimately and subjectively, able to live with the other, to live as others, without ostracism but also without levelling?" (Kristeva, 1991: 2).

Shaules strongly emphasises that living 'with the other' - relationship formation - is not only a core part of intercultural learning "as we try to make sense of the new environment and relate to cultural hosts" (ibid: 233) but also counts as a measure of success. Given that 'functioning' relationships are the key to a successful life 'in-between cultures', language learners, need an understanding attitude towards different ways of being "as they're embodied in the language to be learnt" (Byram & Fleming, 1998:12). Again, these ways of being cannot be easily accessed cognitively or expressed in linguistic terms. Instead they occur in different forms: language can be spoken, written, danced [or acted] into being" (Fels & McGivern, 2002: 22).

Developing language fluency thus entails more than the accurate use of a linguistic system. It involves attuning one's body to the multiple, sensory worlds residing within language. This might allow for active cultural makings as well as momentary 'glimpses' of understanding - "brushing by otherness, without giving it a permanent structure" (Kristeva, 1991: 3). Relationship formation as an organising principle in language and intercultural education, Shaules maintains, should enable learners to critically and reflexively engage with their own personal and cultural identity (ibid: 234). Living in-between cultures would then also entail acknowledging the stranger within ourselves: "(...) the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder" (Kristeva, 1991: 1).

An acceptance of those ‘uncanny’, implicit elements of our self, might also dissolve the dichotomous perception of strangeness - as romantic fascination or felt threat - and “return everyone to his or her otherness or foreign status” (Kristeva, 1991: 147). Bhaba describes such precarious intercultural spaces as “interrogative spaces of psychic ambivalence and social contingency” (Bhaba, 1994: 59) which hold the opportunity for active reflection on concepts of self and otherness. Lead by Bhaba, the intercultural education literature refers to this space usually as the ‘third space’ - an “in-between realisation of cross-cultural conflict” (Kramsch, 1996: 13). Considering the unpredictability and precarity of intercultural spaces consequently requires a focus on procedures rather than on product-oriented skills and abilities (Phipps & Gonzales, 2004: 2f).

Process-oriented methods which can enable learners to live ‘in-between’ cultures, are however not simply realised by exposure to another culture. Coleman (1998) and also Byram & Nichols (2001) suggest that even where the opportunity for extensive travelling is available, it does not necessarily break down cultural barriers. On the contrary, it was found that pre-existing notions about a culture were sometimes even more likely to be confirmed than diverted. The European Language Proficiency Survey, carried out in 1993 (quoted in Coleman, 1998) among third level language students returning from their year abroad, found that, among 3000 student respondents from the UK and Ireland (the study was replicated in 1994 with similar results), definite stereotypes of other European nationalities were held. Residence abroad had not resulted in more openness and new cultural learning, but instead led to a reinforcement of existing stereotypes.

Comparisons with German/Austrian students of English/French suggested similar findings. The study further showed that up to 30% of students returned with a more negative view of the target language community than held by those who had not yet undertaken residence abroad. Resulting from these findings, Coleman highlights intercultural experience as a strongly relationship-dependent phenomenon. Students’ intercultural ‘attitudes’ grew and shaped within and against their personal interactions while abroad.

The European Language Proficiency Survey is the first to demonstrate the sometimes negative outcome of students’ residence abroad on intercultural perceptions. The finding is both counter-intuitive and disturbing, given the resources presently devoted to exchange and study-abroad schemes and the number of students undertaking part of their degree course (...).
(Coleman, 1998: 59)

The question arises how teachers can prepare their students to work through the 'affective ambivalence' posed by intercultural encounters. Given the complex embodied nature of intercultural experience, this could include fostering skills such as self-reflection and even an awareness of non-cognitive, emotional dimensions. The process of working through strangeness is thus a 'whole-body' skill that requires improvising in-between the values and attitudes deeply ingrained in us.

There is no identity without a struggle against the constrictions of the forms inherited from 'tradition'. [...] The aim is not to identify oneself with a tradition, but to construct a nucleus of values, a personal identity, both rebellious and loyal, towards one's own roots. (Bhaba, 1994: 197f)

Intercultural learning seen this way might entail more embodied, relationship-based methods. These could enable a critical engagement "with a multiple of thoughts, values and historical visions" (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 120) and self-reflective exchanges that might result in a modification of monocultural awareness (Byram 1998: 137; 1990: 19).

1.3 Embodied intercultural skills

Living successfully in-between cultures requires skills that can't be solely cognitively learnt but have to be rehearsed and reflected in praxis. Intercultural education thus has to provide the "creative and experiential foundations" (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 114) for such embodied skills to develop. This requires educational spaces in which active reflection and interaction is not only encouraged but regarded as an integral part of the learning process.

The educator's task is consequently to facilitate teaching spaces in which learners are encouraged to actively engage with 'strangeness'. As the European Language Proficiency Survey implies, reflective thinking does not necessarily develop from mere exposure to a different culture, it is an active, self-reflective process of engagement with strangeness, here, in the immediate physical environment, abroad and indeed within oneself; "it is about living out the network of diverse human relationships - not just abroad, but down the road as well" (ibid: 115).

1.4 Ethnographic methods for intercultural education

Progressive intercultural education methods already integrate these experiential aspects of intercultural learning (e.g. Barro, 1998). Ethnographic approaches to language learning are for example employed to encourage a learning from within a language community's cultural practices. Adopting an inquiring rather than consumerist view, ethnographic methods regard cultures as "localised, heterogeneous and fragmented rather than national and monolithic" (Cunico, 2005: 23). Involving observational methods and reflective written accounts, such critical engagement with culture focuses on 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) - where detailed observation, rather than subjective response is combined with interpretation.

Thick descriptions are more likely to open up an emplaced conversation on cultural practices rather than relying on thin description that provide 'quick' explanatory models - in the vein of for example 'Germans have a strong work ethic' (Oltermann, 2012). Thick descriptions instead make connections between one's own cultural practices and the ones of the community being studied - thus opening up an inquiry into more specific patterns of behaviour rather than fostering generalisations. Asking more open questions ultimately replaces the stereotypical binary 'us versus them' to cultures with an open discourse that focuses on individuals' specific cultural practice. Barro (1998) gives an example of an ethnographic intercultural education method that is integrated into a university language course.

As part of a 'mini-fieldwork' students are asked to describe their journey to university as if they were complete strangers. Focussing on their embodied practice, students describe for example the way they manage the space between themselves and others in a crowded train or bus. These observations are then used for wider theoretical reflections on social space. Through self-reflective observation, students experience and reflect in praxis the embodied knowledge required to manage even the most mundane everyday activities and social interactions. Combining intellectual and experiential processes (Roberts, 2001: 3), ethnographic principles can enrich a language education that "takes seriously the cultural dimension and regards communication and interaction as valid objectives within the discipline" (Byram & Fleming, 1998: viii).

With such methodological emphasis on procedures, social competencies such as ‘decentring’, ‘negotiating’ and ‘comparing’ gain more relevance than linguistic perfection. The model of the traditional mono-lingual native speaker, “the benchmark against which to measure linguistic abilities” (Byram & Nichols, 2001: 5), might even be replaced by more relationship-based models.

Because intercultural speakers need to be able to see how misunderstandings can arise, and how they might be able to resolve them, they need the attitudes of decentring but also the skills of comparing (Byram & Nichols, 2001: 6).

1.5 Drama methods for intercultural education

An exploration of interculturalism is likely to require more than intellectual enquiry, reasoned arguments and acquisition of knowledge. (Fleming, 2003: 97)

Resulting from a view of cultures as ‘in the making’, cultural identity becomes an equally complex term; one that even acts between reality and fiction - “I could have easily been you or you could have been me” (Kramsch, 1996: 4). These fictional aspects of cultural identity require intercultural education methods that allow for inquiry into human situations and cultures in ways that are not possible in real life. Byram and Fleming emphasise the pedagogical potential of drama to initiate an active deconstruction of cultural practice through embodied play (e.g. Byram & Fleming, 1998: 144). Drama can provide the ‘safe’ educational spaces in which the embodied exploration of cultures - fictional and real - is encouraged.

The practice of embodied exchange - the negotiation of ‘facts’ and testing of assumptions within the relationships of the play - might lead to a self-reflective, embodied ethnographic habit. Phipps also reminds us about the importance to “play languages” (2007 ii: 126). This involves nourishing the courage and reducing the fear of making linguistic mistakes in language classes as well as in real life situations. Regarding ‘language lack’ as a social concern rather than a linguistic shortcoming - it offers an opportunity for creative intervention and collective improvisation.

Without the element of the game, the language might be learned but never played, never unmediated and connected to others for whom the sounds of the words, the hanging phrases are intended. It can have neither practical, nor beautiful consequences. (Phipps, 2007 ii: 127)

Drama approaches in intercultural education which provoke the individual to join joyfully into collective improvisation and negotiation of familiar concepts of culture, could even prise open challenging spaces for new research methods to develop.

1.6 Space moments of learning

‘Performative inquiry’ and ‘Performance ethnography’ are, in my view, excellent examples of such new, ‘playful’ research methods in intercultural education. Both work from a ‘paradigm of embodiment’ and employ participatory methods, often drama-based, to stimulate collective improvisation and embodied reflection. ‘Performative inquiry’, developed by performance arts educator Lynn Fels, is an interdisciplinary mode of learning and research which acknowledges and explores students’ emotional reality through drama. ‘Performance ethnography’, suggested by Jane Bacon (2006) is a research methodology in the field of drama education and, like performative inquiry, underpinned by the ‘enactivist view’ that only through body and mind interaction can meaning-making be achieved (Bacon, 2006: 139ff).

This leads to researcher and participants negotiating an embodied research language. As process-oriented approaches, such as performance ethnography and performative inquiry, encourage researchers and teachers to think critically and responsibly about their own roles and expectations within the devised drama. To give an example: Fels’ role drama “Find Ourselves on a Map” created for a conference in 1995, reflects the embodied learning process inherent in devised play. Fels’ initial question radically stresses the group’s collective responsibility for such acts of creative making:

How do we create community-place in an art environment given only our memories, our anticipation and our present actions/interactions? Could we create, in sixty minutes, a community that is ours? ... a place to map on the landscape? (Fels 1998: 31)

Seeking to create a “space on the edge of the ocean in the shelter of the mountains” (ibid), Fels spreads out a blue sheet on the floor asking the group to pile cardboard boxes into a mountain range. As Fels, the facilitator, starts to move the ocean further from the group’s mountain range to create a strip of land, there is protest. Imagined realities have clashed and strangeness unfolded its potential.

A woman defends her image of the landscape in which the mountain comes down to the edge of the sea. Fels moves the sea back, accommodating and admiring the woman's independent imagination. When later in the role drama, Fels again tries to regain control of the situation that has unfolded unexpectedly, she has to reconsider her action again. By taking down the boxes from the mountain range and instructing the group to build houses for a community with them, protest arises: the group is accusing her (in role) of abusing their land and clear-cutting their forests. The safety of the drama opened a space for self-reflection. Fels writes: "That's what it is to destroy somebody's land without thinking of others" (ibid: 32).

Facilitating spaces for embodied, dramatic exploration, Fels invited participants to take on imaginary roles, interact with each other and negotiate the unfolding conflicts. Working within the relationships built in the drama resulted in "space moments of learning" (Fels & McGivern, 2002: 21) or what Axtman (2002: 82) calls "transcultural recognition". Fels' bodily felt guilt/shock/shame when intruding into the other's space resulted in self-reflection - "how did I feel when this moment occurred? How did you feel?" (Fels, 1998: 32). Reflecting this bodily dimension of learning, Axtmann similarly asks embodied research questions: "How is the body reacting to space, to nearness, to distance? What does personal space mean to you? In general how close do you want to get to other people?" (Axtmann, 2002: 47).

Given the highly embodied, experiential nature of such research inquiry - responses might have to take on an equally embodied language; one that can "speak from, through and with the body" (Bacon, 2006: 136). These might be given and shared in the form of poems, drawings, journal entries and acting, thus documenting the bodily-felt dimension of the inquiry. Drama concepts that consciously generate strangeness and stimulate embodied inquiry into intellectual and emotional areas of human being, could then provide the "creative and experiential foundations" (Phipps & Gonzales, 2004: 114) that allow for a playful, self-reflective engagement with culture - in other words enable "real messy languaging" (Phipps, 2008).

1.7 The ethics of intercultural communication

The social ethic at stake in deep play with languages, with the unmediated, speaking, singing body, is one that affirms that languages, despite all and after all, are inalienable goods. (Phipps, 2008: 127)

At the core of 'successful' intercultural learning then stands an intercultural speaker (as termed by Kramsch, 1998; Byram, 2008) who works towards relationship-based, transformative intercultural experiences. Byram & Fleming (2006) suggest that such successful intercultural learning involves quite specific, social aims:

- Questioning the conventions and values we have unquestioningly acquired as if they were natural;
 - Experiencing the Otherness of Others of different social groups, moving from one of the many in-groups to which we belong to one of the many out-groups that contrast with them;
 - Reflecting on the relationships among groups and the experience of those relationships;
 - Analysing our intercultural experience and acting upon the analysis.
- (Fleming & Byram, 2006:1)

Following on from their view on what it means to live interculturally, Byram and Fleming also recognise the need to identify the general ethical issues surrounding such pedagogical claims. They further seek to understand more specifically how general questions of ethics and concrete 'political' action might correlate and stimulate each other (ibid: 3). Four elements are identified as important for what is called an 'education for intercultural citizenship': "experience, reflection and action on the basis of experience and attention to values" (Fleming & Byram, 2006: 7). The attention to values is stated as being of special significance to the debate (ibid).

With the aim to embed their educational vision ethically, Byram and Fleming suggest that "a relativist perspective on values is not tenable" (2006: 7) but they also "recognise (...) that a simple universalism isn't attainable either" (ibid). In order to resolve the 'universalist values versus relativist values' debate, the authors suggest a process of "democratic debate and negotiation, which is usually considered the province of politics rather than morality" (ibid).

They further argue that “an intercultural approach does not mean abandoning value positions but it means recognising the importance of understanding and negotiations” (Fleming & Byram, 2006: 8). With reference to Berlin (1990), Byram suggests that a distinction should be made between the ‘judgement of facts’ and the ‘judgement of values’ using a pluralist approach (as opposed to a relativist one) that keeps the possibility of communication open (Fleming & Byram, 2006: 125):

His [Berlin’s] point is that one can enter into the other’s judgment about facts - and accept the judgement to be correct - without accepting their judgement about values. (ibid)

Byram even goes a step further by making a distinction between those values that “one can condone and those which are ‘beyond the pale’ of human reason and value, beyond what it is to be human. In such a case, one does not condone but condemns” (ibid). Acknowledging that a clear definition of what is essentially ‘beyond the pale of reason’ is a tricky undertaking, Byram refers us, even if just ‘as a starting point’, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (ibid: 125). To sum up: Byram and Fleming have already drawn our attention to the ‘tricky terrain’ of ethical questions which underpin the intercultural communication discourse. The authors have stated a rejection of ‘universalism’ but also of ‘relativism’, referred to the need for ‘democratic debate’, emphasised ‘the importance of understanding and negotiation’ and distinguished between the ‘judgement of facts’ and ‘the judgement of values’.

They also referred us to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for an initial definition on what could be considered as values that count as ‘beyond the pale of human reason’. Despite such rigorous theorising, I agree with MacDonald & O’Regan (2012) that, despite Intercultural Communication’s attempts to position their pedagogical claims ethically, implicit postulations of universality partly remain unacknowledged and unproblematised. Despite the stated rejection of a universalism of values for example, Byram and Fleming still refer to universal concepts - such as ‘democracy’ or the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ for ethical guidance. It seems as if, IC discourse is implicitly, if not explicitly, driven towards a universal ethics that pursues pedagogical and moral endpoints - e.g. the working towards ‘understanding’ or harmony or the ‘oneness of cultures’ (Mac Donald & O’Regan, 2012: 1f).

The authors further point out that such an implicit reliance on a concept of universal consciousness could undermine the very concept that intercultural education is built on: the separation between self and other (Mac Donald & O'Regan, 2012: 1f).

By this we refer to an implied desire for conceptual fulfilment and purity in the discourse, in the process of which the consciousness of the intercultural speaker is transformed and the difference between the self and the other is erased. (ibid: 3)

The 'transformations' critical interculturalists often invoke are thought to be brought about by an active interventionist attitude to intercultural being, or what Guilherme calls 'critical cultural awareness' - aiming to "promote cooperation, reduce conflict and improve human rights" (ibid: 4). Again, Mac Donald & O'Regan point out the ontological paradox: transcendental ideals such as 'emancipation', 'social justice' or the more specific concept of 'tolerance', which are said to underpin 'critical cultural awareness', might instate preconceived concepts of truthfulness - "which may become organising principles, i.e. 'truths', against which the claims of others can be judged" (ibid: 8). The crucial point of criticism for MacDonald & O'Regan however is not that Intercultural Communication aims at positioning their discourse ethically.

On the contrary, their main concern is IC's lack of making its ethical stance more concrete and viable in intercultural life praxis; IC stays instead on the level of moral universalism. The authors fear that the kind of Kantian 'moral theism' suggested in Intercultural Communication discourse might serve well as an intercultural meta-narrative but could, on the downside, lead to ethical inertia when faced with concrete "exorbitant acts of the other" which require "ethical judgement as part of a necessary and ongoing reflexive intercultural praxis" (ibid: 6). A consultation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when encountering values 'beyond the pale', might after all not help to make 'better', on-the-spot, ethical, everyday life decisions.

MacDonald & O'Regan poignantly exemplify the danger of conceptual purity:

The Western alliance's 'War on Terror' and the Jihadism of Al-Qaeda are both examples of claims which are being used in this [universalising] way. They each represent a will to truth which colonises the discursive terrain according to its own perceptions, based as they are on the presupposed obviousness of their own moral privilege. (ibid: 8)

In order to escape the captivities of a moral universalism, MacDonald & O'Regan suggest IC to be grounded in an ethics that arises from the "immanence of the relationship with the other rather than through a Kantian appeal to a transcendental moral signified" (ibid: 10). With reference to Levinas and Derrida, they propose a focus on the ethics of 'responsibility for the other' which might allow for an open discursive terrain and a non-normative ethics (ibid: 11) where the separation between self and other is maintained. Based on an immanent ethics of responsibility, the radical otherness of the other is preserved; "for a critical intercultural praxis keeps the space between self and the other open in expectation and hope without ever needing arrival and acceptance" (ibid: 12).

1.8 Streamlining versus languaging

Seen against the background of the current crisis in language teaching (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004), implicit universalist arguments might also unintentionally aid the aforementioned 'packaged' approach to the teaching of culture in higher education institutions. Under the pressure to market language courses, ethical positionings might be equally streamlined and 'packaged' into clearly definable universal skills and objectives. As a consequence, these culture and ethics packages might advance more static educational frameworks which could then run the danger of serving more instrumental economic goals. The 'ethical inertia', described by MacDonald & O'Regan (2012) with regard to the individual's intercultural praxis, might then take a wider form. As a more institutionalised inertia, it might even stifle new, more embodied approaches (e.g. Byram & Fleming, 1998) and debates in intercultural education discourse.

The difficulty is that this new and potentially invigorating debate is taking place against a background of crisis and is under extreme pressure to develop along pragmatic, performative lines. (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 29)

Seen in the light of MacDonald & O'Regan's (2012) criticism, an ethical positioning that draws on universals rather than an immanent ethics, might be - especially in a time of crisis - more prone to be appropriated into preconceived educational frameworks, based on 'efficient' business models, rather than 'best pedagogy'. In opposition to an instrumental approach to language and culture education, Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) have developed the term 'languaging'. It expresses the more "existential, personal and human" (ibid: 3) profit residing in the study of languages.

Rejecting any variety of the cost-benefit argument and with it the commodity view of language departments as “service-units” (p. 8) for language or intercultural skills, they argue for a radical emphasis on the more ‘messy’, relationship-based aspects of language education. Pointing towards an immanent ethics, ‘linguaging’ embodies an ethics that does not arise from pure, universal concepts but from the mess of living in-between cultures. ‘Skilling’ is not seen as a definite outcome but as an individual process. Students act as “reflective sojourners, translators and border crossers” (ibid) and enter asymmetrical intercultural relationships, all the while becoming active agents in creating their human environment within a supercomplex reality.

Instead of drawing on Kantian concepts, such as the existence of a ‘universal consciousness’ or a ‘transcendental moral,’ that are thought to exist outside of human relationships, the authors describe an ethics that is ‘becoming’ within the challenges and risks of living out intercultural relationships. Based (implicitly) on an immanent ethics of responsibility, ‘linguaging’ acknowledges the language student as being involved in encounters of idiosyncratic exchange, there to be enriched by a multiple of expressions whilst at the same time developing a reflective and critical position. Linguaging might then lead to ‘ethical judgements’ as part of, what MacDonald & O’Regan (2012) call a vibrant, reflective intercultural praxis.

Languagers are able to move in and out through words, smells, sights and tastes, make meaning, find laughter and loveliness, and ask questions of cruelty and oppression. To be intercultural is to be beyond the captivities of culture.
(Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 168)

Victor Savicki, in his book on intercultural competence, gives an account of students’ experiences studying abroad, referring to the same immanent ethics that Phipps and Gonzalez’ linguaging implies. Savicki suggests that asymmetric relationships, and with that self-reflexivity and personal growth, are at the ethical core of intercultural experience.

Students who return from a study abroad experience often say it has transformed their lives. By and large, they do not attribute this change to learning to conjugate verbs in a foreign language or to visiting an art museum. Rather, they focus on interactions with host nationals, the shock of confronting a set of different values and attitudes, and their ability to sort through the myriad

of cultural differences and not only survive but thrive. These are growth experiences (...). (Savicki, 2008: xv)

The insight that intercultural learning is an experience involving the whole person languaging in idiosyncratic ways might pave the way for an Intercultural Communication Discourse that positions itself within an ‘immanent ethics of responsibility’ (MacDonald & O’Regan, 2012).

1.9 Academic stranger discourse

My search for an intercultural education discourse based on an ‘immanent ethics’ ties in with a more general criticism - what Sarah Ahmed calls the danger of a ‘reified stranger discourse’ in academia. Both Ahmed (2000), MacDonald & O’Regan (2012) object to the reification of intercultural relationships and knowledge about the ‘stranger’ but instead describe intercultural encounters as places for negotiation and contestation, in which ethics arise from the moment of the encounter itself. For Sarah Ahmed these ethical concerns relate specifically to the act of representation in the academic ‘stranger discourse’ in postcolonial theory, feminist theory or postmodern ethnography.

Ahmed challenges these fields’ reliance on ‘explanatory models of strangeness’ which can endorse what she calls ‘stranger fetishism’. Such reified representations are created “by taking the individual out of her/his context, and concealing “processes of inclusion and exclusion, incorporation and expulsion” (2000: 26). Rejecting ontologising the stranger, Ahmed instead calls for an understanding of identity as formed through lived embodiment and within our everyday encounters, similar to the ‘languaging’ processes discussed above. She describes the intercultural encounter as a place of negotiation, and a place where theory is created through, and is ultimately embedded in, praxis.

The encounter is understood by Ahmed as a stage, shedding light on the role of the actors involved, producing knowledge imbued with past and present stories, the circumstances of their meeting and their relationship. Ethics then becomes a question of praxis - of “how one encounters others as others and, in this specific sense, how one can live with what cannot be measured by the regulative force of morality” (Ahmed, 2000: 138). It seems then there can be no adequate ‘strangeness discourse’ without considering its embeddedness in praxis and its brimming-over with particular stories,

particular emotions and particular people that defy easy categorisation or representation.

With MacDonald & O'Regan (2012) as well as Ahmed (2000) in mind, I would like to translate this concern for an 'ethics as praxis' into my empirical research and neither justify my project by universal moralisms nor support in my thesis a reified stranger discourse that aims towards an explanatory model of (in my case) 'international students' experiences of strangeness'. Instead, I seek to create a space for intercultural experimentation which works against universal moralism and reification in stranger discourse. This is to ascertain if it is possible to develop a fluid praxis in intercultural pedagogy. I attempt to keep in mind the way that 'strangeness discourse' might emerge as a relation between bodies in the moment of meeting.

This in turn presupposes a view of the self that is fragmented, unfinished and considers the self as 'becoming' rather than representing a set of reliable, monolithic features. The illusive substance of cultural identity thus appears as dependent for its emergence on social relationships. This links identity with the responsibility and precariousness of dialogue within an 'ethics of praxis', in the vein of a Levinian 'ethics of responsibility' (1998). Judith Butler writes in her *Giving an account of oneself* (2005):

The ethical valence of the situation is thus not restricted to the question whether or not my account of myself is adequate, but rather concerns whether, in giving the account, I establish a relationship to the one to whom my account is addressed and whether both parties to the interlocution are sustained and altered by the scene of address. (Butler, 2005: 50)

Sarah Ahmed similarly suggests what impact such an immanent ethics of responsibility might have on intercultural praxis:

The lack of common identity becomes reinscribed as the pre-condition of an act of making: How can we make a space that is supportive? How can we become friends? The process of estrangement is the condition for the emergence of a contested community, a community which 'makes place' in the act of reaching out to the out-of-placeness of other migrant bodies. (Ahmed, 2000: 94)

In search of an intercultural 'ethics as praxis', I employ a research pedagogy that can facilitate languaging. Such pedagogy takes into account the precariousness and contestation that underlies active human encounters rather than aiming to provide explanatory models of intercultural experience. I am seeking a method that integrates 'estrangement' empirically and for pedagogic praxis within its conceptual make-up and representational practice - in other words, does not seek conceptual purity but works from within the mess of intercultural relationships. As such I am working with the potential for intercultural ethics in Bertolt Brecht's work.

Placing 'estrangement' at the core of his theatre, Brechtian methods invite actors and spectators to reflect on the complexities of social reality and the mess of human relationships. Brecht refuses an imitative theatre that simply reproduces society on stage in the most 'truthful' way. Instead he draws attention to the constructedness of reality through the use of interruptive, aesthetic devices. It is to a review of the potential for developing an intercultural praxis through Brechtian pedagogy and method that I will now turn in chapter two.

The theory of estrangement, which always takes off from the numbness and familiarity of everyday life, must always estrange us from the everyday; the theory is thus itself an acting out of the process. (Jameson, 1998: 26)

Chapter 2:

Bertolt Brecht and Intercultural Education

2.1 Brecht: Making Strange the Familiar

What appealed to most of us [. . .] was strangeness and incomprehensibility. Our real element was the element of chaos challenging our simple minds to sort it out. (Brecht, 1964: 20)

Contradiction and change seem recurring themes, as much in Bertolt Brecht's own life story, as in his theatre work. Born to bourgeois, Protestant parents in Augsburg at the turn of the 20th century, he died in 1956 in East Berlin as the GDR's 'own' Marxist theatre maker. In 1933, following Hitler's rise to power, Brecht spent 15 years in exile - - Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the United States - where he produced most of his plays (e.g. *Mother Courage*, 1939; *The Good Person of Szechwan*, 1939; *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, 1941) and some of his theoretical writings (e.g. *Das Buch der Wendungen/The Book of Changes*, 1935-1939; *The Street Scene*, 1940) before being given his own theatre, the Berliner Ensemble, in the newly established GDR, in 1947. With an ensemble and crew made up of many of his former colleagues, friends and lovers, he would develop more systematically his experimental, activist approach to theatre - and coin what would become known as Brecht's original dramaturgy: the 'epic' or later 'dialectical' theatre (Mumford, 2009: 167).

Bertolt Brecht's theatre and culture critique connects to those critical voices in intercultural education today that call for a renewed, creative, ethical and experiential foundation in the field. Brecht's writings embody a 'linguaging approach', expressed for example in his ideas demanding a focus on the actor as an active social agent within a multi-faceted world. "Some exercise in complex seeing is needed - though it is more important to be able to think above the stream than to think in the stream" (Brecht, 1964: 31). In order to provoke his actors and audiences to think above the stream and look behind taken-for-granted and seemingly static concepts of society, such as class or gender perceptions, Brecht sought out and generated *Verfremdung* to a degree that would expose these concepts as being, not 'eternal' and true, but rather constructed through human acts of repetition and normalisation over time.

There is an important parallel connection to the way critical intercultural pedagogy attempts to engage with these issues methodologically. Brecht's process of 'making strange' exposed normalised power-structures and revealed 'everyday oppressions' by opening up a space for questioning, for example, existing class or gender relations. It turned both spectator and actor into active observers and invited a re-adapting and restoring of human relationships through what Brecht called *eingreifendes Denken* - 'interventionist thinking' (Brooker, 2006: 210). *Verfremdung* then acts as a critique of everyday representations through an "aesthetic of contradiction" (Jameson, 1998: 25) on stage, that portrays reality, and with it the self, as fragmented, constructed and ultimately changeable. Brecht's views parallel with critical voices in intercultural education (e.g. Kramsch, 1996) who call for a similar, methodological acknowledgement of the instability of cultural identities and the fluidity of concepts of culture.

Brecht's 'aesthetic of contradiction' ultimately creates a space for the production of praxis-based cultural knowledge. A more 'fluid' aesthetic is reflected in an artistic production in which the traces of rehearsal haven't yet been eradicated and been turned into a slick, easily consumable production - or what Brecht called *Gesamtkunstwerk* (Brecht, 1964: 53) - the synthesis of all elements of a production (music, acting, stage design). In order to counter-act a performance aesthetic of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which absorbs the spectator into the spectacle completely, Brecht practiced what Mumford calls the "separation principle" (Mumford, 2009: 85). This way of working is also sometimes called a montage approach or tableaux aesthetic. Instead of arranging scenes and episodes within these, in a linear, harmonious fashion, Brecht put them in juxtaposition.

Introducing interruptive devices - a reflective song, a direct address - the audience was led to reflect on the events on stage and make their own conclusions. A static model of performance was thus "replaced with a more unstable or dialectical unity of contradictions" (ibid). *Verfremdung* was applied to all moments shown on stage. It involved actors, stage technique, dramaturgy and music, and created what Brecht called "the three threads of epic theatre - playing in quotation marks, the portrayal of complex processes and creating a detached unemotional style" (Brecht, 1964: 17). Brecht's dramaturgical experimentations could serve as starting points for the creation of equally experimental - and ultimately actively political - spaces in intercultural education settings.

Brecht's embracing of contradiction within his rehearsals and performances stems from his view that art has the political function of revealing contradictory social reality (Mumford, 2009: 89). The *Verfremdung*-effect "doesn't just act as an aesthetic device but as a social device" (Wright 1989:20) which is thought to ideally lead to an interventionist behaviour. As Carney points out - "A thinking which doesn't advance our human preparedness for action and change, is of no concern for Brecht" (Carney, 2005: 118). Shomit Mitter describes Brecht's 'Systems of Rehearsal' as follows -

(...) where the power structures that underlie social situations become invisible when considered natural, Brecht will attempt to make startling what seems obvious, curious what seems self-evident (Mitter, 1992: 43).

Mitter uses the description "metatextual irritant" (ibid: 45) in relation to Brecht's rehearsal methods. Together with the quote above, this reveals Brecht's critical, pedagogical intent: Brecht's methods are metatextual irritants - 'estrangement' devices that seek to provoke an attitude of inquiry into the social implications of the way reality is constructed. As rehearsal devices they assist the actor in distancing herself from the character she portrays, developing an attitude of inquiry into the character's social stance. The actor is thus transformed into a metatextual irritant herself - standing between the audience and the text "like a quotation" (ibid: 47) and required to embody a social ambiguity that ultimately produces an antipathetic performance.

This style of acting in Brecht's theatre, the playing in quotation marks, involved what Brecht called '*Gestus*' (Brecht, 1964: 104f). The performer, holding herself remote from the character portrayed, is just showing the characters' behaviour, relatively unemotionally, thus maintaining the make-believe of the situation and allowing for inquiry into the social context.

Just as the actor no longer has to persuade the audience that it is the author's character and not himself that is standing on the stage, so also he need not pretend that the events taking place on the stage have never been rehearsed, and are now happening for the first and only time. (Brecht, 1964: 194)

'Strangeness' within the 'gestic' style of acting was created by performing the character as if in third person or in quotation marks, including all the sub-text the actor herself brought to the text. Every gesture shown and sentence spoken thus appear as mere 'choices' that have been made, and provokes in the audience a re-imagining of these choices, when at the same time reminding actor and audience alike that "we are all actors and that acting is an inescapable dimension of social and everyday life" (Jameson, 1998: 25).

(...) a single gesture aims to project not only what will shortly have been done - that is to say, what is being done in front of us - but what might just as well not have been done, what might have been something else altogether, or simply have been omitted. (Jameson, 1998: 58)

Brecht's rehearsal techniques evoked distancing and helped the actor to develop a habit of inquiry into the character that was necessary for a 'gestic' acting style. British playwright Edward Bond (1980) translates Brecht's concern for 'gestic' character inconsistency into his poem 'Advice to Actors':

Actors
Don't try to make your character possible
Men don't do things that ought to be possible
Don't say 'he'd never do this'
Men don't behave in expected ways
Don't make the character one man
Unfortunately a man is many men
Don't worry when an action isn't consistent
Men aren't consistent
Ask why they're not consistent
(Bond, 1980: 99).

The 'gestic' acting style, despite being of an intellectual nature, would not however deny emotional engagement. An antipathetic performance was not regarded as the polar opposite of an empathetic performance; on the contrary: "alienation ['estrangement'] is not a static condition but the result of a series of transitions" (Jameson, 1998: 59) that allow empathy as well as standing away from the character and thus allows the actor to hold two realities at the same time (ibid: 60).

The critical intercultural education literature (e.g. Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004) equally describes language students as intercultural 'double agents' - required to act in-between multiple realities and constructively cope with processes of emotional and intellectual 'estrangement'. In order to prepare for such 'double' acting, Brechtian actors were urged to get acquainted with the play and their respective characters in the first stages of rehearsal. In the second phase, they were to empathise with their characters, seeing the world through their eyes. In the third phase, they distanced themselves from their role. At this final stage, actors were supposed to look at the characters as strangers - from outside of their own and society's point of view. To support this transition from empathy to the distancing phase, Brecht's third-person-exercise - one of many exercises evoking 'distanciation' - served an important purpose.

Stage directions such as 'said the man' or 'said the woman' were read aloud and these enabled the actor to distance and develop a detached attitude towards the character. Again, the aim was to open up inquiry; the exercise was not intended to deny emotional engagement to audience or the performers but to "open up the view that the actor's emotion does not have to coincide with the character's" (Thomson, 2000: 105). Brecht was an eager director, creating highly entertaining plays and touching performances. As Carl Weber reminds us - referring to the scene in 'The Mother' (1965), where Vlassova receives the news of her son's execution - "it was emotional beyond all expectations; there was hardly a performance without an audience gasping and openly in tears during the scene" (Weber, 2006: 180).

Aiming to allow for inquiry into emotions, not just to stimulate unreflecting empathy into the characters of a play, Brecht saw reasoning and emotion as inseparable (Brecht, 1964: 162). The constant deconstruction of facts and assumed necessities within the playing of a character brought forward what Brook (1969: 76) calls Brecht's idea of the "intelligent actor". This actor requires a deep knowledge of theatre craft and considerable political education to be able to act out the complexity of a character within his social constraints (Thompson 2000: 106). In critical intercultural education discourse we find the same refusal of 'unreflecting empathy', expressed for example in its underlying 'separation principle'. The reflective space between 'self' and 'other' is kept open, so that 'empathy' might be negotiated within an open discursive space.

In order to observe one must learn how to compare. In order to compare one must have observed. By means of observation knowledge is generated; on the other hand knowledge is needed for observation. (...) Your task, actors, is to be explorers and teachers of the art of dealing with people. Knowing their nature and demonstrating it you teach them to deal with themselves. You teach them the great art of living together. (Brecht, 1964: 70f)

Instead of disappearing into the role of the character, the actor takes on the responsibility of what could be almost regarded as 'a curious researcher', revealing reality's powerful sub-structures and switching between imitation and critical comment, never offering definite alternatives but fostering an attitude of inquiry.

"By embodying the attitudes of both oppressor and oppressed at once, Brecht's actor defamiliarizes each as relative" (Mitter, 1992: 60) and thus shows them as changeable.

The 'intelligent actor' was supposed to use 'strangeness' as an artistic device in order to show human existence as multi-faceted and ultimately dynamically embedded in social reality. Brecht accentuates the actors' curiosity, as a tool of critical inquiry into a reality that is marked by fragmentation, instability and competing ideologies.

Instead of defending a determined social reality through the actor's 'submission' to a coherent character portrayal in a Stanislavskian sense, Brecht expects his actors to look and act beyond assumed truths - "seeking to inculcate dissent" (Mitter, 1992: 43). This call for 'distanciation' and an active, reflective practice correlates with ideas in intercultural education. Considering culture as an 'in the making' phenomenon, critical intercultural educators equally formulate the importance of embodied, praxis-based intercultural skills. With a methodological emphasis on procedures and social competencies, language learners are called to acquire the skills of "decentring, negotiating and comparing" (Byram & Nichols, 2001: 6) and rehearse towards a vibrant intercultural praxis.

Because he doesn't identify himself with him he can pick a definite attitude to adopt towards the character whom he portrays, can show what he thinks of him and invite the spectator, who is likewise not asked to identify himself, to criticize the character portrayed. (Brecht, 1964: 139)

In one of Brecht's rehearsal exercises - intended to sensitise actors to the potential of everyday strangeness - he asked his players to be observers of common domestic scenes such as this one: A group of women and a group of men are folding linen - others watch the scene interrogating: "Do women and men do things differently? Why? Is doing things with linen a female thing? Who determines that?" (Brecht, 1964: 122). Everyday attitudes were deconstructed and questioned, opening up a view beneath the surface of the ordinary. The tameness of this domestic situation was also combined with disruptive elements such as a wild quarrel by the women defending their husbands. The orderliness of the folding and the disorderliness of the speaking evoked strangeness and gave a further insight into the complexity of human transactions (ibid: 129).

The point of this substantial discussion of Brecht's methods is, of course, to demonstrate their potential for intercultural education. Could my research participants be equally encouraged, just as Brecht's actors were, to use their own sub-texts (their life experiences, values, etc.) to explore what it means to live interculturally and thus act as Brechtian 'double agents'? What Joseph Chaikin says about Ekkehard Schall, the 'ultimate' Brechtian actor, illustrates the point:

I never believe he is the character by name. Nor do I believe that he is playing himself. He performs like a double agent who has infiltrated two worlds. (Chaikin, 1991: 16)

Could a Brechtian research method open similar languaging spaces for thought and questioning - and encourage my research participants, all experienced intercultural 'double agents' in real life already - to use their own life contexts in order to explore what it means to live interculturally? This is an empirical question requiring methodological engagement, using Brechtian methods, in spaces of experimentation. In the process, we may 'language' - "find laughter and loveliness" but can also be empowered to "ask questions about cruelty and oppression" (Phipps & Gonzales, 2004: 168). It is to these ethical dimensions and the potential of Brecht's method for an ethical and critical intercultural practice that I will now turn.

2.2 Brecht and ‘ethics as praxis’

Our being in the world is described by Brecht as an ambiguous venture, a site of contradiction and struggle, but also of hope. Despite refusing the consolation of a determined worldview, Carney ascribes a kernel of hopeful utopianism to Brechtian thinking; as “to perceive history dialectically is to see the seeds of positive change as latent in the moment of negativity” (Carney, 2005: 53). In Brecht’s approach to making theatre - refusing to portray an easily consumable, imitative reality on stage - I find the same suspicion towards a reified knowledge as Ahmed described in relation to an academic ‘strangeness discourse’. Brecht’s method could be said to be based implicitly on an ‘immanent ethics’ or enact what I called above an ‘ethics as praxis’.

It regards human identity and therefore social relations as fragmented and ‘becoming’, rather than static and finished. In this Brecht shares a lot with Judith Butler (2005; 2011) and Sarah Ahmed (2000). He equally emphasises ‘estrangement’ as the precondition of an act of making - and rebuilding human relationships in a process of de-alienation. Brecht considers the self not as given but as formed and ‘becoming’ within contested social relationships.

‘I’ am no person. I come into being in every moment and scarcely last. I emerge in the form of an answer. The only permanence in me is what answers that call for an answer, what thereby remains permanent.

(Brecht, quoted in Jameson, 1998: 78)

‘Strangeness discourse’ emerges then as a relation between bodies in the moment of meeting, producing a self in flux within the praxis of everyday performance. It is a necessary precursor to critical acting, rather than an element for disguise. Based on this view of a praxis-based discourse, the methods of Brecht’s “theatre of the scientific age” (Brecht, 1964: 121), as he called it, represent people in their indeterminacy and liveliness - and their ultimate changeability, rather than portraying human identity as universally given. Refusing a reified discourse and acting out an ethics as theatre praxis instead, Brecht demands a ‘fresh, curious eye’ on what is being represented about human behaviour in his theatre.

He wants spectators and actors to read the represented, familiar stories “twice over” (Wright, 1989: 57) and recognise these human stories as man-made, produced by a society that allocates in “a code of social relations” (ibid: 17). Brecht’s emphasis is on a method that is capable of representing the liveliness of being human and acts as a creative-pedagogical force that might not only reform intellectually but transform social practice as well (Buck-Morriss, 1977: 36). This is expressed in this quote from ‘Brecht on theatre’:

The theatre of the scientific age is in a position to make dialectics into a source of enjoyment. The unexpectedness of logically progressive or zigzag development, the instability of circumstances, the joke of contradiction and so forth. All these are ways of enjoying the liveliness of men, things and processes, and they heighten both our capacity for life and our pleasure in it (Brecht, 1964: 277).

At the heart of Brecht’s theatre lies a praxis-based approach that seeks to unite theory and practice. *Verfremdung* is thus best understood as an “acting out of the process, in which dramaturgy itself is the drama” (Jameson, 1998: 79). The theory of *Verfremdung* is then ultimately part of the production itself, and doesn’t simply constitute a range of acting and stage techniques. In fact, rather than serving as instrumental devices, these *Verfremdung*-techniques take on symbolic and social meaning. In such a view on ‘*estrangement*’, the process of deconstruction is not separated from the enjoyment of the theatre event itself. Instead, it involves a making strange of habitual ways of looking at the world resulting in a ‘joyful’ “recovery of perception” and a newly gained “freshness of experience” (ibid: 39).

Brecht’s work connects to theatre anthropologist Victor Turner (1982), who was influenced by Brecht and who also calls for methods that don’t separate (in his case) anthropological research from the liveliness of human existence.

Anthropology should be about, in D.H. Lawrence’s phrase ‘men and women alive’, this living quality frequently fails to emerge from our pedagogies, perhaps to cite Lawrence again, because analysis presupposes a corpse. (Turner, 1982: 89)

It seems that Turner refuses, just as Brecht and Ahmed do, a method that contributes to a reified academic discourse which does not consider knowledge as arising from the sociality of human relationships.

Turner equally emphasises the need for methods as pedagogies that acknowledge the embodied, interactive and social dimension within research. He writes that anthropological research should consider “the threefold structure of experience, which is at once cognitive, conative and affective” (ibid). Again, similar to Brecht (1964), Ahmed (2000) and MacDonald & O’Regan (2012), Turner regards the liveliness and indeterminacy of human existence, which cannot be easily fixed in representation, not as a flaw or lack of being but stresses its inherent potential for personal growth and positive change:

Indeterminacy should not be regarded as the absence of social being; it is not negation, emptiness, privation. Rather, it is potentiality, the possibility of becoming (Turner, 1982: 77).

It is especially in his notion of ‘communitas’ or what he calls ‘social drama’ that Turner describes the potential of an ‘immanent ethics of responsibility’, that does not dissolve the separation between self and other, but emerges, almost spontaneously, from our contested social relationships. “Communitas is an unmediated relationship between historical, idiosyncratic, concrete individuals; communitas preserves individual human distinctiveness” (ibid: 47). As such communitas holds the potential for “deep personal interaction and has something magical about it, subjectively there is in it a feeling of endless power” (ibid). And communitas might then bring with it also an ‘ethical consciousness’:

When the mood, style or ‘fit’ of spontaneous communitas is upon us, we place high value on personal honesty, openness and the lack of pretensions or pretentiousness. We feel that it is important to relate directly to another person as he presents himself [herself] in the here and now, to understand him in a sympathetic way, free from culturally defined encumbrances of his role, status, reputation, class, caste, sex or other structural niche. (ibid: 48)

This escaping of the ‘captivities of culture’ and experience of a profoundly personal, human connection reminds of Phipps & Gonzalez’ (2004) languaging and describes more concretely how an ‘ethics as praxis’ might actually manifest itself. Turner helps us to understand how Brecht’s theatre practices are present in everyday life and are important in creating an ethical consciousness through communitas; but Turner does not then make a further step into pedagogy.

2.3 Teaching spaces of human relationships

The act of re-reading the culturally familiar through *communitas* experience is close to Brechtian thought - which understands 'contradiction' as a relational and synchronous concept (Carney, 2005: 115) that acknowledges the moment of strangeness on stage (as in life) as a moment of possibility and change. From this 'ethics as praxis' as described in *communitas* experience emerges a critical, pedagogical potential which is important for critical intercultural pedagogy. Assumed ways of human relationships are presented as dynamic and changeable - capable of operating outside of the normative - or what Carney calls "the law" (ibid: 106). Carney's interpretation of Barthes (1977) reading of Brecht, hints at an evolving critical pedagogy. "Barthes sees Brechtian thought as relevant in establishing a teaching space which is a space of human relationships and not of law" (Carney, 2005: 106).

The research space that Turner seeks, the space opened by languaging, the space of Ahmed's 'ethics as praxis' - all of these are ultimately seeking teaching spaces of human relationships and not of law, in which reflexivity and personal growth can find legitimate places. The nature of these spaces is important in laying a foundation for a critical intercultural teaching practice. Carney, with reference to Barthes (1977: 200), further describes this Brechtian teaching space as a dis-arranged space "holding the potential to move discourse by clashes" (Carney, 2005: 109). Human relationships in Brechtian theatre are deconstructed and reassembled so as to interrupt the flow of the performance and act as 'metatextual irritants' of everyday representations. Equally, Turner ascribes the same potential for disruption of everyday life flow to '*communitas* experience' or 'social drama'.

Social dramas suspend the flow of normal everyday role playing" (...) and force a group to take cognizance of its own behavior in relation to its own values, even to question at times the value of those values. (Turner, 1982: 92)

Social drama can "induce and contain reflexive processes and generate cultural frames in which reflexivity can find a legitimate place" (ibid: 109). Turner's search for a representational method that can communicate the complexity of being human and stimulate reflexivity into familiar cultural concepts leads him into the realm of theatre. Turner envisions a (very Brechtian) actor who could enact ethnography by learning "the cultural rules behind the roles played by the characters he is representing" (ibid: 94).

In collaboration with theatre director Richard Schechner (1985; 2003), Turner developed his 'theatre anthropology', in which he expresses the same Brechtian criticism to a purely psychological acting.

(...) an actor tries to realize 'individual characters' but takes partly for granted the culturally defined roles supposedly played by that character: father, businessman, friend, lover, fiancé, trade union leader, farmer, poet (...).
(Turner, 1982: 92)

Turner's 'ethnographic actor' bears similar characteristics to Brecht's 'intelligent actor' as both are urged to integrate a questioning attitude towards fixed cultural concepts in their acting style. To Brecht it seemed indispensable to educate actors to embrace *Verfremdung* in their acting style and develop an almost Turnerian 'ethnographic acting habit' which could represent human existence itself as a 'living art form in flux'. Brecht's prologue to his *Lehrstück* 'The Exception and the Rule' illustrates this point:

(...) Examine carefully the behaviour of these people:
Find it surprising though not unusual
Inexplicable though normal
Incomprehensible though it is the rule.
Consider even the most insignificant, seemingly simple
Action with distrust. Ask yourself whether it is necessary
Especially if it's usual.
We ask you expressively to discover
That what happens all the time is not natural
(Brecht, 1977: 37).

As I stated in the beginning - my twin concerns are methods and pedagogy. My emphasis lies on the potential of Brechtian method as a research method that might enact an ethics of intercultural praxis. Creating a teaching space of human relationships, languaging might be encouraged and "contested community" (Ahmed, 2000) built. I am not looking to employ Brechtian methods in order to be able to enact ethnography in Turner's sense. I will not undertake anthropological research and then use Brechtian theatre methods in order to represent my findings in a way that shows the complex interrelation between the individual and societal mechanisms. My concern applies to a research method that might be built on an immanent ethics; one that does not produce a reified academic knowledge but instead enacts critical pedagogy and can lead to a vibrant, reflective, intercultural praxis.

Taking these aims, my approach to Brechtian method is led by my interest in intercultural education first and foremost. The literature presented in this section has, however, laid the foundations for the planning of a series of drama research workshops. I used a range of methods - some originally Brecht's, others more contemporary devising theatre techniques - which integrate the same political-pedagogical approach in their practice. Devising theatre approaches reality, just as Brechtian theatre does, through an embodied habit of deconstruction and sees the act of (self-) representation as a political one. Devising theatre thus promotes a similar attitude of inquiry into the familiar as can be found in Brecht's work. It is to a description and review of devising as a method that I will now turn.

2.4 Devising

Devising or collaborative creation is a widespread mode of making performance used by many theatre companies and widely taught in schools and universities across Europe, America and Australia. (Heddon & Milling, 2006: 1)

Although there is no 'received' way of devising theatre, there are certain shared values and recurring characteristics that resonate with my objectives outlined above: the rejection of universal, reified discourses (in politics, ethics and art alike) and the search instead for a praxis-based ethics, embedded in the theatre practice itself. Most of the common 'western' conceptions around devising theatre can be traced back to the 1950's and 1960's. As the ideology of participatory democracy gained international importance in the 60's, theatre sought to contribute to the formation of a new society by integrating the praxis of participatory democracy, thus reflecting a model for a democratic arts practice (Heddon & Milling, 2006: 17; 101).

In the light of global events which suggested a 'disillusionment' with existing concepts of morals and ethics, the 'liveliness' of the performance moment, its ephemerality and indeterminacy - and focus on process rather than product - facilitated a new, politicised theatre that sought to counteract the commodification of the art medium. The 'avant-garde' then began their explorations into devising work through an interest in the possibilities of acting, actor training and the performer's relationship with the audience (Heddon & Milling, 2006: 29).

As core practice they used improvisation and games and were led by the idea of intuition, 'chance', 'mistakes' and 'accidents' as the structuring element in the devising process. The possibilities of using personal story and personal belief both, as source for and within performance, also contributed to the "political aspects of the performances in an era that was discovering that the personal was political" (ibid: 62). As a consequence, devising theatre groups usually advocate a collaborative, creative process and artistically democratic ways of working organised around visual structures. Instead of a writer setting the plot structures, it is the creative artists themselves who decide about elements of the creative process.

Devising theatre can be said to harness group dynamics and nurture an ensemble's relationships and interactions as the basis for its improvisational work, in which the body is the primary signification of text. Devising can be understood as a way of questioning and reassembling the world for an ensemble - who then communicate their 'findings' - in an intellectually and emotionally complex way to an audience. Devising theatre's emphasis on ensemble work and collaboration then also connects to Brechtian ideals.

Within all these processes lies another crucial aspect of Brecht's idea about the business of acting: that it must be part of a collaborative, collective process, all the actors working towards a common goal, and that the specific intention and style of performance should be allowed to emerge during this interactive rehearsal process in which the whole company participates.

(Eddershaw, 1996: 36)

Devising's performance vocabulary is imbued with *Verfremdung* in that it employs a 'gestural' language: a combination of visual narrative, text and the use of objects and physical movements (Oddey, 1994: 172). This reveals the Brechtian legacy in devising methods today. Devising generally empowers the technical side of theatre. Veering away from text-based theatre, devising engages with text in a deconstructive rather than purely representational manner. A central aspect of the devising process is a problem-solving approach that seeks not only to democratise the performers' relationships with each other, but also blurs the separation between performer and spectator. Devising is characterised by curious experimentation - e.g. with spatial relations, text etc. - in which an ensemble develops ideas at its own level and pace.

Devising is a process of making theatre that enables a group of performers to be physically and practically creative in the sharing and shaping of an original product that directly emanates from assembling, editing, and re-shaping individuals' contradictory experiences of the world. (Oddey, 1994: 1)

Devising's dramaturgical style enables compartmented or fragmented performances with multiple layers and narratives which reflect the collaborative creative process. Devising theatre altered our comprehension of 'narrative', as well as our perception of the possible shapes by which narratives can and should be represented. Devising has re-conceptualised our understanding of the theatre industry, and specifically of the role of the performer in it (Heddon & Milling, 2006: 62). Whilst one common element to devising is the collaborative creation of work, there is of course no streamlined model for collaboration. Devising's ethical value is therefore dependent on each individual company's manifesto, constitution and work practice (ibid: 223) and cannot be claimed universally for the art form. In the following section, I will take the ethical and methodological considerations from chapter one and two, in order to describe how I plan and apply my own 'Brechtian' model of a devised drama workshop for intercultural education research.

SECTION II: Practice Based Research for cultivating spaces of intercultural experiment through drama



[(...) der Gedanke wird beim Sprechen verfertigt.

Alles, was nicht akademisch abgestanden, abstrakt und eigentlich wertlos ist, ist etwas, was aus einem Erfahrungswissen heraus entsteht.

Damit ist es auch nicht ablegbar und abrufbar, sondern immer etwas sehr Verletzliches, sehr Fragiles und sehr Flüchtiges.]

[(...) thought is formed through the act of speaking.

Everything that isn't academically stale, abstract, and rather worthless, is something that develops from experiential knowledge.

For this reason it can't be filed and called up, but is always something very vulnerable, fragile and rather ephemeral.]

(Müller, 2009: 72)

Chapter 3:

Getting to know each other

3.1 Introduction

(...) the real space of Brechtian theatre is not on the stage but in a teaching space free of the tyranny of institutionalised language. (Carney, 2005: 109)

Underpinned by the theoretical and methodological considerations outlined in the previous chapters, I develop a practice-based research project that works towards the cultivation of ‘spaces of intercultural experiment’. Seeking to base the research on an immanent intercultural ethics and critical pedagogy, underpinned by the work of those scholars that conceptualise ‘from the body’, I design a series of four drama workshops. The methods, exercises and games used within the drama workshops are rooted within a Brechtian approach and thus allow for a merging of intercultural drama method and critical pedagogy into an intercultural ethics as drama practice.

Employing a Brechtian research approach and integrating related methods, taken from devising theatre and creative writing, *Verfremdung* resides at the core of my experimental, intercultural research space. This conceptually and practically ‘ensures’ the maintenance of the separation between self and other, as well as resisting universalising claims. This means that I do not seek to ground my research within a universal intercultural education discourse which might undermine my ‘contested’ research space. Glossing over the separation between self and other - ignoring the tensions and precariousness of dialogue that occurs within such an experimental, intercultural space - may halt the building of a contested community as envisioned by Sarah Ahmed (2000).

My main objective is to facilitate a space where we - the emplaced research participants and the emplaced researcher - have the time and space to be apprentices of each other’s sensory and intellectual worlds. Aligning our bodies and tastes through drama and shared meals, we work towards building ‘contested community’ and Turnerian ‘*communitas*’. As I described above, my research approach is informed by my positioning as an intercultural educator seeking to facilitate an experimental research space. The research inquiry thus unfolds within this research space and develops from our mutual embodied engagement in the sessions. My initial research question regarding ‘international students’ experiences of strangeness’ is deliberately open.

It acts to stimulate conversation and to initiate a process of embodied inquiry into the subject. Using devising theatre's problem-solving approach, I find it useful to think of the research question as a stimuli to create, de-construct and re-construct our thought processes and struggle for meaning around the subject. My concern as an emplaced intercultural education researcher is to keep the research space open, experimental and intercultural. With David Graeber (2007), bell hooks (1994) and Paolo Freire (1996) in mind, I seek to facilitate a protected, non-functionalist space in which the emplaced research participants can be apprentices, practitioners, learners and teachers and create meaning through their embodied participation. Within that process, we might also experience the possibilities and limits of creating a contested intercultural 'research community'.

Basing my research on an immanent ethics that acknowledges 'estrangement' and with it the separation between self and other as the precondition to the building of an intercultural research community - how does this impact on my findings and what can be expected of them? With the research inquiry strongly rooted in the specificities of our relationships, our individual intercultural experiences and the encounters created within the drama workshop, it will be difficult to abstract any findings concerning 'international students' experiences of strangeness' into universal statements. Findings will have to be seen in the context of our 'intercultural space of experiment' - revealing the possibilities or inhibitions of such a contested research space, in which knowledge cannot be uncoupled from the circumstances of their emergence.

In order to enable the reader of this thesis to see my interpretations and findings as closely linked to the 'research habitus' that evolves from our engagement in the drama, I provide a description and analysis of our encounters as well as of the methods employed. These contextualise my findings and thus emplace them firmly within the immediacy of our intercultural encounters. As a result, 'estrangement' also resides at the core of my representational practice. With reference to Sarah Ahmed (2000), I intend to avoid a reified academic stranger discourse that might produce stranger fetishism and delivers an explanatory model of 'international students' experiences of strangeness', independent from the intercultural space of experiment in which the research conversations emerge.

Instead, I seek to place ‘estrangement’ - and thus the collaborative, creative processes of meaning-making - at the heart of my representational practice. Drawing attention to the non-neutrality of representations and their locatedness within the circumstances of their emergence, the intercultural research space of experiment is extended to the dissemination stage. The whole process of research is regarded as ‘becoming’, in which research output cannot be easily consumed as a closed, expert piece of academic research but is to be read as an ‘open script’ and requiring a conscious act of meaning-making on the side of the reader. My interpretations and findings thus have to be seen in the context of Butlerian precarity (2011), evolving and growing with the reader’s - equally contested - interpretations.

Placing ‘estrangement’ at the heart of academic research then becomes a highly political affair; what Elizabeth Wright states for Brechtian *Verfremdung* in his theatre practice then also applies to the research: “V-effect is political through and through, for it shows that the spectator is never only at the receiving end of a representation but is included in it” (Wright, 1989: 19). An intercultural ‘ethics as praxis’ as the defining factor of my drama research methods as well as representational practice might then lead to ‘tentative representations’ that do not presuppose docile bodies in submission of my expert knowledge, but involve instead the act of co-creation with ‘men and women alive’.

Such acts of co-creation in research practice, as I explain in more detail later in the chapter, involve a constant shift of ideas and concepts when these are applied to the complex, specific context of postmodern educational research. It is especially the carefully constructed workshop plan itself, which mustn’t serve as a closed model that can guarantee an easy, acontextual application of education and research methods. On the contrary, the ‘template’ itself has to reflect the ‘precarity’ of intercultural education research in its’ structure, so that it can practically integrate the ongoing reflective processes that are crucial to research with ‘men and women alive’. I thus suggest a template layout that contains, in addition to the more ‘traditional’ columns useful in the planning stage,

| <u>Phase</u> | <u>Aim</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Effect</u> | <u>Material</u> | <u>Reflection</u> |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|

two additional rows, called 'Reflection' and 'Adaption' and ideally structurally set-apart at the bottom of the workshop plan.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| REFLECT- ION | | | | | |
| ADAPTION | | | | | |

The reflective column allows the researcher-facilitator to make praxis-based notes on aspects of the workshop plan that might not work in actual practice. And following from that, the adaptive column might serve as a pre-planning device, where the researcher translates her observations into the next sessions' adapted methods and discursive procedures.

How, then, did such reflection and adaptation occur in my research practice?

3.2 Workshop Plan I

| <u>Phase</u> | <u>Aim</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Effect</u> | <u>Material</u> | <u>Reflection</u> |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| (First part) Arriving 20 min. | Informal introduction | Chatting | People will get a first feel for the group | Coffee and biscuits, name badges | |
| House-keeping 15 min. | Inform participants about research aims/signing of consent form. | Group is asked into a circle. I will explain framework of the research. | Participants can decide their involvement in the research/ have more clarity on the scope of it. | Consent forms, pens | Questions, are you worried about anything? |
| Getting to know each other 20 min. | Develop trust, relax, develop openness to playfulness | Speed dating with a twist, then 'serious' introduction with clay. | The group will feel more comfortable working together | 6 Tables, flowers, cards, moulding clay | |
| Energy game 10 min. | Heighten energy, alertness | Pass zip through circle, follow zip, zap, boing game. | Group alertness will be heightened. | | |
| Warm up 10 min. | Loosen muscles | Walk through space, follow instructions. Group is split in actors and observers | Group will get a first feel for body sculpting and the meaning it produces | Music expressing different moods (Jazz) | How did it feel following instruction? Difference observer-actor. Did meaning change? |
| Trust in pairs 10 min. | Develop alertness and trust, following and leading | Mirror image; Leading by sound | Partners will have to trust their partner/ listen carefully | | How did it feel following – leading? |
| BREAK 20 min. | | | | | |

| <u>Phase</u> | <u>Aim</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Effect</u> | <u>Material</u> | <u>Reflection</u> |
|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| (Second part) Picture and Story sharing 10 min. | Sharing 'quirks' of intercultural experience | Pictures are numbered and exhibited in circle. P. sit in circle and note down thoughts, stories. | Pictures serve as basis for sharing thoughts on intercultural experience. | Pictures | |
| Experiences in clay 20 min. | Aim is to deliberately concretise opinions and feelings on experiences of strangeness in touchable material. | Mould in (modelling) clay what strangeness <i>means to you personally</i> /write short statement on your strangeness clay. | The process of moulding clay opens space for reflection on the 'nature' of intercultural experience. | Modelling clay, pen and paper | Can you put abstract definitions (e.g. what means strangeness to you) into concrete material? |
| Discussion 10 min. | P. share their sculpture in a small group and take it as starting point for general discussion on strangeness. | Participants exchange views/ opinions, bullet points on poster | Transition back from clay into a more abstract discussion. | Posters, pens, clay figures, pictures | How is it reflecting back from concrete and personal material to general 'bullet points'? |
| Individual sculpting 20 min. | Individuals sculpt their understanding of the term using the rest of the group (or just one person or two...) as clay. | The sculpture fills their position with emotion leading to inner monologue (or sound). | P. express and experience their understanding of strangeness/culture shock in their bodies. | | Differences sculpting clay/sculpting people/ feelings about inner monologue in comparison to abstract description of clay |
| Collective sculpting 10 min. | Reflect differing, similar views on the term through bodies | The small group creates a sculpture together (similar to sound machine)/ with inner monologue | Collective, moving image, consisting of movement and sound to express abstracts | | Can the other group find a name for the collective sculpture? |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Gallery space/final reflection | Enable space for final reflection | Half circle of chairs in front of gallery space. | P. can visualise, reflect about the course of events. Name themes in relation to intercultural experience. | Pictures, clay figures with descriptions as well as name of the group sculptures and poster with bullet points are exhibited. | Did you feel comfortable working this way? |
| 20 min. | | | | | |
| ADAPTIVE | | | | | |
| REFLECTIVE | | | | | |

3.3 Getting to know each other

It was this moment, the enfolded moment of taking pedagogy into the body that stood out for me (...). (Fassett & Warren, 2007: 26)

Aiming to facilitate an intercultural space of experiment where we were able to work towards building ‘contested community’ and rehearse towards a vibrant intercultural praxis, I included ‘get to know’, ‘trust’ and ‘movement’ exercises in the research sessions. I thought it crucial to establish a research atmosphere that was relaxed, friendly and welcoming and would offer enough possibilities for people to get to know each other during the course of the day, outside of the core exercises. Acknowledging that our space of intercultural experiment grew out of our relationships, it could not be confined to our encounters during the workshops.

To this end I organised coffee and biscuit breaks and lunch in the middle of the day. Fischer-Lichte adds with regard to the importance of the building of community: “The creation of a community out of actors and spectators based on their bodily co-presence plays a key role in the generation of the feedback loop” (2008: 51). And thinking back to what Sarah Pink (2009) claimed above - sharing food is a form of apprenticeship. Sharing food was a way to participate in other people’s worlds - taking time to arrive, tune into each other’s worlds (e.g. food routines) and ‘being there’ in a shared physical environment (2009: 67).

3.4 Research participants

I invited all EU and international students at the University of Glasgow to take part in my series of drama workshops exploring their experiences of 'strangeness' and culture shock (Appendix I). My research participants were thus a self-selected group of University of Glasgow postgraduate students who were willing to share and reflect on their intercultural experiences and spend four hours (from 10am to 2pm) on four Saturday mornings in November 2010 fostering new intercultural relationships and engaging in drama activities. My research group is thus an elite and intelligent group of internationals who have had the privilege of higher education and possessed a wide range of critical and analytical skills already.

In order to enable the reader of this thesis to perform an 'emplaced' reading of my descriptions and analysis, I will include pen portraits of those participants who attended all drama workshops. They are the core group of research participants who are active in the co-creation of the research and provide most of the 'embodied data' for my subsequent analysis. Their names were anonymised by the use of pseudonyms and will re-occur throughout the thesis when analysing the multiple texts produced.

Sonja: a colleague of mine. She has an equal interest in creative research methods. We have shared many hours discussing our ideas. Sonja has carried the research with me through her intellectual support and also helped me practically during the session - to set-up the space and prepare food for the workshops. She is Canadian and has done her PhD research on 'Inuit writings'. After the drama research project, Sonja, Marta and I coordinated a documentary film project together.

Jamal: has a keen interest in creative writing methods. He runs a school for girls in the tribal areas on the Pakistani/Afghani border. He worked as a police officer in Pakistan but wished to learn more about teaching and thus came to Glasgow to undertake a Masters in Education. When I met him first he told me about his disappointment with the course. He expected to learn more practically about pedagogy and teaching, and felt instead left alone with his questions and learning needs. Jamal was enthusiastic about attending the drama workshops, hoping to learn new methods that he could apply in his own school at home.

Aleksandra: has completed her Masters in the United States before coming to Glasgow to undertake her PhD research. She is originally from Siberia and has also lived and worked in Moscow. She has travelled extensively. Aleksandra has never attended drama-based activities before and giggled a lot throughout the first workshop, seemingly 'amused' about my choice of research approach. She researches on the educational impact of the Olympic Games.

Karolina: moved from Poland to Glasgow 5 years ago, first to undertake a Masters degree and then to do her PhD research. She was curious to take part in the sessions and offered her practical help to set-up and tidy up the space every time. Karolina also volunteered to take on the role of camera operator in workshop three. Her PhD research is on constructions of masculinity.

Amy: like Sonja, Amy has carried out the research with me from its inception and supported me practically throughout the workshops. She is from Canada and has worked many years as an adult educator in different contexts. She has run a company for employment services for 20 years. She is passionate about critical pedagogy and her PhD research is on transformative learning.

Lin: is from China; her PhD is in Politics. She has never worked with drama before. She is very open to engage in every exercise but I got the impression that she also finds it difficult to 'be creative' on the spot. She did not write a piece but shares her 'strangeness story' spontaneously in the small group after the exercise. Later in the workshop she shared a personal story and allowed me to turn her account into an (estranged) script for session three.

Marta: her PhD is in film studies. She is from Columbia. When she first enrolled for the research she told me that she had never experienced culture shock and felt she might not be able to contribute anything of interest. I explained that a culture shock experience was not a precondition to attend and that it would be great if she would like to share her intercultural experiences on a more general basis - which she did very generously. Marta was also generous in preparing food for our sessions and contributed with detailed descriptions of her intercultural cooking ventures. At a later stage, after the drama research, Marta, Sonja and I coordinated a documentary film project together.

Areebah: her PhD is in Education and focuses on critical thinking skills. She is from Saudi-Arabia and initially came over to Glasgow with her family to undertake a Masters at Strathclyde University. Areebah generously prepared food and real (golden) Arabic coffee for our workshop lunches. When she shared her intercultural experience of the 'two taps' in workshop two, she evoked a passionate 'rant' about the 'two taps' from Amy. Areebah's writing piece and Amy's rant were re-performed by Jamal and me in workshop four.

3.5 'Messy data'

Each of the four drama workshops are described and analysed separately. Like a Brechtian tableaux, the workshops can be read as pedagogically and aesthetically self-contained. At the same time however they constitute my wider research narrative. Each workshop 'logically' follows on from the preceding one in that it builds on the group's collectively produced texts. Every workshop script thus organically grows out of our intercultural research encounters bringing forth a variety of different texts, a selection of which provide the basis for my analysis. These texts are eclectic, represent a multiple of styles and reflective modes and were recorded on different media - in a journal, on camera etc.

The 'messiness' of my data thus reflects the multileveled and embodied nature of intercultural experience which can only be adequately captured by equally multileveled intercultural methods. Workshop texts range from notes on devising exercises to creative writing pieces, a devised script text, transcribed conversations, participants' journal entries, personal reflections and verbatim accounts that were employed as rehearsal texts.

Due to the wide range and variety of research texts that is stimulated by my choice of creative methods, I also decide not to undertake an exit interview at the end of the research sessions. The triangulation that might be normally gained from such final, interview in a more traditional social science research context, in my case, would compromise my embodied methodology based on 'immanent ethics'. My stance as researcher researching from 'in-it-ness' and 'precarity' requires a clear focus on research as production and not as collection of data; one that considers the immanently democratic processes of co-generating data through creative practice. An exit interview could compromise my chosen methodology and instead promote a stance of the more traditional researcher who collects or even 'extracts' data. This would not only reinstate the more hierarchical roles of researcher and subject, but also disregard the

triangulation that is already inherent within the multileveled texts produced within our sessions. Employing a diverse range of creative methods (filming, writing, acting, text montage) stimulates research conversations (non-verbal gestures, poetic reflection, verbatim accounts, discussions etc.), which allow for a more 'self-directed' form of triangulation through participants' ongoing critical reflection in various text-based, verbal and non-verbal formats.

In the following I will describe and analyse some of the devising exercises and get-to-know games that make up most of workshop one.

3.6 Games: Speed dating with a twist

Pairs A+B are sitting on tables set in a circle. There is a flower and six cards on each table. 'A' has one minute to ask 'B' as many questions on the cards as possible, their answers are filmed. Pairs swap after one minute, 'A' moves to left, 'B' moves to right to next tables.

Questions on the cards:

- 1. Who was the first person you talked to today?*
- 2. What was your dream profession as a child?*
- 3. What lullaby or nursery rhyme do you remember from your childhood - sing the first verse.*
- 4. Describe what you had for breakfast this morning.*
- 5. Describe the way you came here this morning.*

This was the very first game in the workshop (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 1 - Speeddating). It was thought of as a fun way to get to know each other through a 'mock interview' situation as well as serving to introduce the camcorders as part of our collaborative work method. It became clear that it was easier for some people to pick up the camera and start filming of their own accord, whereas others felt shy at the beginning. The exercise required however that the roles of interviewer/ camerawoman and interviewee changed throughout, so as to give everybody the chance to get used to being in front, as well as behind, the lens. I allowed only one minute for the questions and answers. This kept everybody moving and mingling and sustained the energy of the game.

People were giggling, sharing mundane incidents and personal anecdotes. That asserted the importance of relationship-building within the research. Re-watching the footage, I take much pleasure in people's giggles and their boldness to recite their childhood lullabies. Listening to their songs in Greek, Polish, Arabic, Spanish, Pashto and Chinese, I felt as if I got a glimpse of a side of people's personalities that I do not normally have access to in the normal course of 'professional engagement'. Drawing on bell hook's engaged pedagogy (1994), I intended to "enter the classroom [research space] with the assumption that we must build community in order to create a climate of openness and intellectual rigor" (hooks, 1994: 40).

In this context, hooks also speaks of the importance of 'pleasure' in the creation of classroom community which presupposes the acknowledgment of everybody's bodily co-presence. hooks writes: "As a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognising one another's presence" (ibid: 8). Introducing each other playfully in small groups, listening to each other singing in our mother tongue, sharing giggles - all these playful activities emplaced us into each other's universes of meaning and asserted relationship formation as the crucial, pedagogical element of the intercultural space of experiment - "as one way to build community is to recognise the value of each individual's voice" (ibid).

3.7 Introduction in pairs with modelling clay

The group sits around a table - each person receives a multi-coloured pack of modelling clay. People match up in pairs, introduce and get to know each other and mould an appropriate figure for their partner. They introduce their partner to the rest of the group through the plasticine figure (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 1 - Speeddating).



(Participants conversing and modelling clay)

Introducing modelling clay into this second exercise put an emphasis on the process of creation. Sitting in pairs on the floor tinkering, people entertained a variety of lively conversations. The shared activity focussed participants' attention onto the material (the clay) and the crafting itself and took the spotlight away from them. As a result, conversations flowed more naturally, and as a by-product of making a plasticine figure. The actual introduction at the end was as much a playful sharing of the many colourful clay figures created as an informative introduction of group members.

And more than just a presentation of people's job-related qualities (as in many official rounds of introduction), the purpose of the exercise was to facilitate moments of encounters through a collaborative, playful process of creation.



(Participants crafting together)

Tim Ingold (2000) describes 'habitus', following Bourdieu (1984), as a pattern of thought-feeling that develops and shapes through our practical engagement with the environment. By 'getting lost' in modelling clay figures with others - we were emplaced into a 'childhood habitus' that triggered our giggles and transported us into a playful mode. And by allowing our bodies to play and take on such childhood habits, letting the act of making clay shape the flow of our conversations and giggles, we might have resisted the functionalisation of our intercultural space of experiment. Instead of simply introducing ourselves formally by our 'professional' persona, we entertained more embodied and playful encounters. The creation of our plasticine figures could then even be seen as an 'apprenticeship method' in Pink's sense; a way of 'making place together', aligning our bodies in the rhythm of our modelling and (...) "achieving flexibility, resonance with other practitioners and an attunement of the senses" (Grasseni, 2004: 53, quoted in Pink, 2009: 71).

Example of plasticine figures:



(Plasticine figure for Marta)



(Figure for Jamal)



(Figure for Aleksandra)



(Figure for Lin)

3.8 Devising exercise: body sculpting and making meaning

The group is divided equally into spectators and actors. Spectators sit around the 'stage' where actors walk and follow my instructions. I introduced different ways of walking (e.g. walk in right angles, slow, fast...), various ways of greeting each other (hug, handshake...) and multiple ways of interacting on stage (pointing at somebody, hand on other person's shoulder, finding somebody with closed eyes ...). Instructions are combined with a variety of music. Spectators note down observations/ ideas on storylines that emerge from watching the actors' bodies on stage. The emphasis of this exercise is on the emergence of meaning through concrete expression such as music/bodily presence and interaction (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 1 - Speeddating).



(Acting and interacting 'on stage')

Marta, who acted as a spectator during the exercise, associated an overall setting for the scene and came up with a different character for each person on stage. She wrote in her journal:

The scene is like the busy main square in Bogota. It is always full of people and pigeons, lots of movement. There are many things around it: the Congress, the main library, schools, shops, etc. I thought that everyone in the group was going about their lives in the roles you would expect to meet there. They were all part of a mechanism - a social structure that works like a computer circuit. And then someone had got hold of a 'synchronising ray' that sent a pulse through the square making everyone do an action at the same time. The lives I imagined for everyone were:

Amy was a tourist on holidays.

Aleksandra was a diplomat from the nearby ministry on her lunch break.

Jamal was the guy who sells corn for the pigeons.

Areebah worked in a hat shop on the high street.

Sonja was a journalist covering the parliament.

Lin was a high school student coming to the library.

(from Marta's journal)

Devising theatre, as Heddon & Milling (2006) as well as Oddey (1994) described above, is based on collaborative-creative processes in which the performer's body is the main signification of text. Narrative - which can occur in fragmented, multilayered forms - develops from performers' bodily interactions and takes the form of visual structures. As in our devising exercise, Marta's associations sprang from her watching the group's spatial positioning and bodily interactions. It did not develop from a pre-conceived idea before the exercise. Meaning has thus derived quite literally from the relations between bodies; it was located within the group's relationship and cannot be separated from this moment of emergence.

With this strong link between performance narrative and its rootedness in the collaborative-creative group process, devising theatre could be said to work from within an ethics as drama praxis. The principles of devising theatre gained relevance as intercultural education methods. They worked alongside Brechtian concerns by combining method and critical pedagogy. Resisting universalising, coherent narratives by building narrative from within the precariousness of relationships, 'estrangement' resided at the core of our devising exercise.

3.9 Transforming the object

Taking up Marta's ideas for characters and setting, I thought it interesting to further experiment with her ideas by introducing an object (a simple sticky tape roll). Participants were asked to take on the roles Marta envisioned for them and to transform the sticky tape roll into an object of use-value for the respective character.



(Participants transforming sticky tape)

Loosely based on Viola Spolin's improvisation exercise 'transforming the object' (1999: 195f) from her pioneering book 'Improvisation for the theatre', participants stood in a circle and turned the sticky tape roll into 'performance vocabulary'. Each performer transformed the object into a character-based accessory, which they played with for a moment and then passed on, to be transformed by the next performer into another commodity. Rehearsing the 'character-defining' object as well as its transition between characters, I filmed the small scene emerging (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 1 - Speeddating).

All characters are facing the camera. Amy uses the tape as if she is looking through an imaginary camera lens framing her holiday pictures excitedly and wanting to share them. The camera-object is passed on, with Amy and Aleksandra now 'playing' the object together. Aleksandra looks through the lens on Amy's invitation and then transforms it into her own object - a briefcase. She brings her object to life for a moment - walking in a hurry with the briefcase swinging on her side. She turns towards Marta, swings the briefcase into her hand with an abrupt stop. Marta, who decided to put herself into the scene as a little girl, takes the object out of her hand and transforms it into a roll of string holding a kite.

Passing on her kite, the sticky tape roll is transformed into a newly finished hat by Areebah. After scrutinising the quality of her hat-making one last time, she passes on her object to Lin who starts to dance with the tape like a ballet dancer holding a prop. After performing her ballet moves, Lin throws the tape towards Jamal who catches it and, in slow motion, transforms it into a dish holding the corn to feed the pigeons. His precise and slow movements evoke a vivid but peaceful image of a man calmly feeding the pigeons in a busy main square. Sonja, the last in the row of performers, gently receives the dish with both hands open, as if accepting a precious and fragile gift from Jamal.

Through bringing to life the objects, handling and playing with them, participants started to create their fictional character's physical worlds. Creating such embodied performance vocabulary might be seen as taking sensory apprenticeship methods to a fictional level. Inserting ourselves into the (made up) trajectories of the characters that Marta invented, allowed for empathy with their fictional, physical world. As Ingold (2000) describes it, participants were taking on their characters' 'habitus' as it was instantiated in their performance of the object. Through this, a pattern of 'thought-feeling' might have been evoked that allowed participants to gain a practical sense of how their character might do things.

In a way, creating the character's identity through embodied drama practice as well as applying apprenticeship methods toward the emerging fictional persona, radically referenced the instability and sociality of human identity in real life. Kramsch (1996), Butler (2005) and Ahmed (2000) see the instability of a self that is only 'becoming' within the precariousness of human relationships, as the precondition for an 'ethical' intercultural praxis - one that "escapes the captivities of cultures", as Phipps & Gonzalez (2004: 168) describe it. Devising could be seen as the experiential analogy to their concerns, as identity (of our fictional characters) emerged through collective improvisation.

3.10 Opening up the conversation on 'strangeness'

Before the beginning of the first workshop, I had asked people to take a picture of something that occurred strange to them when first coming to Glasgow. I had thought of this as a way to stimulate initial reflection on 'experiences of strangeness' before the actual beginning of the workshops. Again, with devising methodology in mind, these stimuli did not intend to close down thinking around strangeness experiences or provide ultimate explanations. The pictures rather served as a springboard for "complex seeing" (Brecht, 1964: 31) at the same time as creating a space for discussion and meaning-making. The process of framing and 'judging' a slice of reality by taking a picture of it, is a subjective activity, and was in no way thought of as some kind of gathering process for 'hard information', helping me to make an inventory of 'what there is strange in the world'.

Neither did my request for a picture aim to promote the stance of the 'ideal observer' and 'detached researcher' who can be the "eyes on the street" (Sontag, 1977: 122). Susan Sontag refuses to value the camera as a documentation device able to "make reality atomic, manageable, and opaque and confers at each moment the character of a mystery" (ibid: 23). In her critique, she points out the ethical conundrum that such a view of the 'camera as pen' entails - where pictures become part of the "general furniture of the environment" (ibid: 21) that reinforce the status quo by turning reality into an easily consumable subject. Sontag's criticism correlates to Brecht's refusal of an imitative reality in the theatre space.

Denying a submission of dramaturgical elements - from stage design to acting styles - to a static, consumable view of reality, Brecht equally seeks dialectical images that invite active reflection and provoke 'acts of making' rather than passive consumption. With Sontag's critique in mind I considered our images also as dialectical images for pedagogical devising - or what Sean Carney calls "dialectics at a standstill" (2005: 52), performing "between stasis and change, between inactivity and movement" (ibid: 58f). With a view to devising theatre, these pictures might be the starting point for our collaborative exploration on strangeness experiences in the sense that they required our active, personal interpretation but did not furnish some instant, consumable 'strangeness knowledge'.

Asking people to communicate their experience through a picture thus was not an exercise in 'social documentation' creating 'superficial' photographic knowledge based on sentimentalism - whether cynical or humanist (Sontag, 1977: 23). Sontag also calls such knowledge a "knowledge at a bargain price: a semblance of knowledge, a semblance of wisdom, as the act of taking pictures is a semblance of appropriation, a semblance of rape" (ibid). Sarah Ahmed similarly refuses such a photographic, all-explanatory model of 'strangeness' that appears uncoupled from its context of emergence. Pictures seen as 'dialectics at a standstill' however do not pretend to be able to capture a sort of mysterious, unglimped human reality (Carney, 2005: 58f). Connecting also to Brecht's criticism of mimetic reality, the photo does not necessarily bring us closer to a 'real' understanding of strangeness (ibid: 59).

The image cannot be considered as an imitation of reality but presents instead "the construction of a new historical form of human experience", as Carney puts it (2005: 59). Like the reading of the *Verfremdungs*-effect, the photograph is production, not imitation and can thus be best understood as part of a devising approach to research. The picture was only the beginning of our conversation, the opening up of a dialogue that allowed participants to enter a collaborative, creative process and momentarily be a tourist in their own (and other people's reality) without furnishing "instant history, instant sociology, instant participation" (Sontag, 1977: 75). The pictures were starting points, not closing statements, for our collaborative narration of reality.

3.11 Participants' pictures



(Sonja)



“I am sending you a picture of a pub. When I came to Glasgow 5 years ago, the Scottish culture that I call 'pub culture' seemed to be so strange, new and different from my previous life experiences. It was strange to observe and difficult to become a part of the culture based on polarities. For me people here are sober and wild, traditional and innovative, inhibited and emotional”. (Karolina)



“Here’s a picture I just took for the workshop. It shows two things that are strange about Britain. On the right side, there’s something I love: the Royal Mail. Behind it, something that shocks me: how people throw perfectly good stuff out, and leave it in the rain to get damaged instead of at least donating it to a charity. The amount of waste in this country still surprises me”. (Marta)



“Keep the umbrella in my bag, because it is raining most of the time”. (Areebah)

3.12 Reflections after the first workshop

Establishing relationships as artists, sharing the stage with respect for one another - providing comfort and safety keeps improvisation from falling flat. This is why so many performers speak of the need to develop trust with their partners. (Lockford & Pelias, 2004: 434)

I was very glad to have had Amy and Sonja volunteering to help me with the set-up and the food preparation. There were so many facets to the preparation of this research workshop that I truly could not have done it without the participants' voluntary help and work to create a 'communitas' (Turner, 1982: 48; 90). Undertaking research with a pedagogical focus, based on an immanent ethics of responsibility, required attention to our encounters as a whole and not just in the context of a tightly pre-planned set-up. Taking our relationships and mutual encounters as a starting point to the planning process led me to consider the kind of spaces we would enter together when sharing food or engaging in drama. The preparation for and set-up of these spaces could not be fully accomplished by myself.

The praxis-based ethics that underpinned the research asserted itself already in the planning stages. As an 'emplaced researcher', I was not fully self-contained but already emplaced in a network of relationships of close allies that had 'carried' the research with me from its inception - first through the sharing of ideas and now through practical support in the project's set-up. The realisation of Giroux's "burden of pedagogy" (2004: 20) in my research space preconditioned a pedagogical approach to the planning phase, too. The intercultural space of experiment thus was not confined to the drama exercises or even the lunch breaks alone - it already unfolded within the planning phase.

Providing several levels of engagement for people - over coffee, lunch and within the interactive workshop itself, helped the group to relax and get to know each other. Participants started to build community and relieve some of the 'performance angst' to be 'good' research participants/a 'good' researcher or 'good' actors. This tension between my aim to set up a research space of experiment and the pressure to work along more performative lines, became obvious after introducing the aims of the workshop to the group. I felt afterwards that I could have explained the research better; that somehow I should have communicated my aims as part of a stronger theoretical framework.

I felt I had to justify why we dedicated a whole day to playful exploration which I insisted on calling 'research' (Appendix II, Address to research participants). Different conflicting research paradigms came into contact in the meeting of the participants, as students at the University of many different subjects, and an explicit acknowledgement could have reduced the 'strangeness' they felt when encountering my own embodied, critical practice-based research experiments. It could be argued further that too detailed an explanation might have equally promoted a seemingly conceptually perfected research approach. This in turn might have prevented research participants from freely interacting within an open discursive terrain and would thus have 'streamlined' my findings to an unacceptable degree.

However, I found it challenging to communicate clearly the benefits of a research approach based on an immanent ethics; one that would not deliver a tightly framed 'research question' and lead to straightforward statements and representations. This was largely because the benefits were to be discovered through the experimentation, the drama practice and our shared reflections. I was putting theory into practice. Translating to the group the benefits of a 'research from the body' that prioritises our mutual 'playful' engagement and shifts reflection and theorising to the outcome stage, required to some extent their 'trust' in such alternative methodology. Most participants had never engaged in a drama-based activity before and were mostly unfamiliar with alternative research methods, but well-versed in traditional qualitative research.

Whilst introducing the workshop, I became aware that I was confident arguing for alternative methodologies on paper or in discussion with like-minded researchers. Facing my fellow PhD students, and asked to explain why alternative methodologies were part of my research project, I felt much more out of my depth. Allowing PhD students to play with plasticine and involving them in drama improvisations left me with the nagging feeling of having to justify my approach more stringently. This involved proving that our playfulness did not just serve our own entertainment but was part of a properly scientific research endeavour that could match their interview and questionnaire-based approaches in rigour and value. Phipps (2013) in her article on Intercultural Ethics however led me to recognise my yearning for scientific neutrality as fallacy.

She writes:

Intercultural ethics and methods are never 'neutral' or 'objective' as such, and poststructuralism has revealed the fallacy of such assumed positions of neutrality. No method is in and of itself neutral or objective (Phipps, 2013: 20).

Again, I felt it was my being emplaced within a network of relationships of equally minded researchers - two of whom, Amy and Sonja, attended my project - that didn't make me lose my confidence to proceed with an embodied research approach. The precariousness of dialogue that Ahmed (2000) and Butler (2005) talk about already played out in this initial research discourse. It reminded me of the contested nature of our research space. Our 'research community' would have to be worked for and couldn't be considered as given. Byram & Fleming (2006) state that being intercultural involves a 'questioning attitude' towards unquestioningly acquired conventions, reflection on the experience of moving between in-groups and out-groups as well as an 'interventionist' attitude towards the insights gained from such analysis of intercultural experience.

Given the tensions I described here, 'being intercultural' already appears as an integral part of the intercultural (research) space of experiment - even at the beginning of the workshop. But rather than being universal attitudes and knowledge that I acquired in the safety of careful thinking, preparation, or pedagogically worked towards through pre-planned rehearsal situations, it was more that I was at 'interculturality's mercy'. I was struggling within the contested research space in which failure and success seemed too close an ally. Thrown into reliance on the group's preparedness to 'make a research community' - would we be able to improvise in this precarious intercultural space?

Would we be able to "keep the space between self and other open in expectation and hope without ever needing arrival and acceptance?" (MacDonald & O'Regan, 2012: 12).

I will seek to answer this question by focusing on Jamal in the next section.

3.13 Jamal's intercultural improvisation

All participants for my workshop were women, with the exception of Jamal, a Pakistani man with an eager interest in creative teaching methods. Thinking about how contested community in Sarah Ahmed's sense has been built during this first workshop, a devising exercise came to mind. The group walked around the room freely. With music playing in the background, they followed my instructions about how to engage with each other and the space, based on some previously agreed gestures and movements: hug, freeze, form a circle, lie on the floor. Without expecting anybody's inhibition, I shouted the instruction 'hug'. Jamal slowed down and seemed slightly shy and apprehensive to perform a hug without violating his sense of respectful behaviour towards women.



(Hugging gestures during the devising exercise)

It felt as if the precariousness of intercultural relationships and with it the contested nature of our research space manifested itself within the exercise. However, instead of refusing to engage or even leave the exercise, Jamal instead improvised an alternative movement, one that could 'act in-between' his sense for decency and his wish to offer a friendly greeting. He performed an open 'hugging gesture' without making actual physical contact and finished his pose with a friendly handshake. Recalling Sarah Ahmed:

The lack of common identity becomes reinscribed as the pre-condition of an act of making: How can we make a space that is supportive? How can we become friends? The process of 'estrangement' is the condition for the emergence of a contested community, a community which 'makes place' in the act of reaching out to the out-of-placeness of other migrant bodies. (Ahmed, 2000: 94)

In my mind, Jamal's alternative greeting gesture (quite literally) 'reached out' to his partner whilst similarly preserving his own sensibility and thus 'made a supportive space' in which the separation between self and other was kept open. Brought down to a practical level, this separation then varied in degree. Although there was an improvised physical separation to be maintained for Jamal to preserve his personal ethics, his gesture allowed a connection on an emotional level.

3.14 Giggles

The group's many giggles - some nervous, some joyful - contributed to a supportive environment and emerged as an important form of communication in the research space. Our laughter helped to reduce the nervousness of engaging in the unfamiliar drama activities. For me, our giggles were also an expression of Turner's (1984) and Brecht's (1964) 'men and women alive', asserting our research as a teaching space of human relationships and not of docile bodies. This teaching space or what I called above 'intercultural space of experiment' was continued during our post-workshop lunch after the workshops - with everybody sharing more 'strangeness stories' and giggling over cups of tea, freshly made coffee and home-made food.

I think of bell hooks (1994) and how she describes the acknowledging of each other's bodies and voices in the classroom as the starting point for an act of 'transgression' - "(...) a movement against and beyond [institutional] boundaries" (hooks, 1994: 12). Our playing together, our giggles, our coffee-house-mode of sitting, eating and listening to each other - I consider in this context of transgression and movement which "makes education the practice of freedom" (ibid).



(Giggles during the plasticine figure introduction)

3.15 Pace

The structure and amount of activities planned for the first workshop had to be modified according to the pace and level of the group. As I mentioned above, most of the participants had never worked with drama before and so needed more time and space to experiment and get used to this way of engaging creatively. As a consequence, the second half of the workshop that I had planned for the first week, postponed until the following week. Originally, I had designed the first workshop to be split into two parts - the first half until lunch and the second half after the break. The first part of the session was to be dedicated to trust-building and the second to the exploration of 'strangeness' through creative writing. Going with the pace of the group and respecting their need to settle with each other and the space, I decided to allow this first workshop to be solely focused on trust and community building exercises, including extended lunch breaks. The intercultural space of experiment is not a functionalist space but works from an immanent ethic. As a consequence, the building of relationships from within our contested research space took time.

Individuals' preparedness to engage and share and the group dynamics that follow as a result, dictated the pace of the workshop. I could only facilitate the space for us to meet. The pace of our making 'place' together grew out of everybody's willingness to engage and could not be fully anticipated beforehand. For me, as facilitator, it was thus important not to panic and try to force through all the exercises I had planned for the day (Appendix III, Workshop plan 1). Working from an immanent ethics, I had to allow the group's bodies to move my concept for that day and prioritise their need to settle in the space and find a rhythm with each other (Pink, 2009) as an essential part of my research pedagogy. Preparation was crucial, but completion of an itinerary was far less important than attention to the pace of the group. This was as true for the work of building trust within the space, and for exercises which involved physical embodiment and contact, as for the more reflexive exercises of individual creative writing.



(Group improvisation)

Chapter 4: Creative writing

4.1 Introduction

Embodied storytelling, the acting out, which appears to be the central pedagogical technique of Brecht's theory, works from the understanding that narrativisation is the means by which the human processing of reality and daily life is carried out. (Jameson, 1998: 27)

In workshop two I used the pictures which I had requested from participants previously, and a range of pictures I brought myself (Appendix VI), as stimuli for a free-flowing creative writing exercise of 5 minutes. Sitting in a circle, we exhibited the pictures and participants were asked to take one of the images (it did not have to be their own) as a starting point for the creative writing exercise. I offered the starter sentence 'I find strange that ...' and asked people to intuitively write - without stopping the flow of writing or thinking too much about structure - for about 5 minutes. After the writing was finished, small groups were formed; participants read their pieces to each other and reflected on themes, thoughts and ideas that had developed in their written pieces.

Pelias and Lockford describe the poetic as a site of knowledge and emphasise the joyfulness of the "inescapable elusiveness of language" (2004: 266). Creative writing thus becomes a languaging method that places 'estrangement' at its conceptual heart and thus denies a reification of 'strangeness experience'. It rather recognises the research event as a site of production, emphasising the inherent poetics (and thus fictionality) of life and liberates participants from having to produce explanatory models of 'strangeness experience'. As a devising method, creative writing instead encourages a 'writing in between' fiction and realism.

Participants are therefore not unlike Brecht's 'intelligent actors' - using strangeness, in this case through creative writing, as an artistic device, sketching out human experience as multi-faceted and ultimately dynamically embedded in social reality. Such writing method might then facilitate spaces for an embodied inquiry of intercultural experience. Tapping into participants' intercultural life experiences as travellers between worlds and words (in the sense of 'intercultural double agents' if you like) through a method that equally works 'in-between', invites a poetic sharing of the emotional and intellectual complexities that living interculturally entails. This also connects to the descriptions of *communitas* given by Turner (1982).

Echoing our particularities and complexities in our writing, listening to each other when sharing the written pieces and recognising each other's voice, we resisted the functionalisation of our relationships within the research space. Resisting an exchange that uses, as in Brecht's poem (1976) below, 'the driest words' and treats the other person 'merely like reality itself', we might language instead and enjoy each other's 'particular nature'.

When I Speak To You

When I speak to you
Coldly and impersonally
Using the driest words
Without looking at you
(I seemingly fail to recognise you
In your particular nature and difficulty)

I speak to you merely
Like reality itself
(Sober, not to be bribed by your particular nature
Tired of your difficulty)
Which in my view you seem not to recognise.

(Brecht, 1976: 140)

4.2 Creative writing pieces

In the following I will present some of the pieces that emerged from participants' creative writing. In the same way as Sarah Ahmed (2000) and Susan Sontag (1977) deny an explanatory model of lived experience - be it conveyed through a picture or academic knowledge - I will consider the group's written pieces as a production of reality rather than an imitation or explanation of it. As a consequence, I will include my subjective reading and interpreting of these texts which led me to emphasise certain themes that I saw evolving from the writing. The themes I read into participants' written pieces included *strangeness and beauty; learning from the strange; reverse culture shock and the negotiation of knowledge within relationships of care*.

As part of the final reflection of this second workshop, I will also outline a more non-verbal theme that evolved from Karolina's 'acting' of her piece and connects to Amy's concern with an ethical negotiation of knowledge. Lin and Marta's dialogue serves in this context as an applied example for such ethical negotiation of knowledge and puts flesh on how an 'ethics of responsibility for the other', as envisioned by Mac Donald & O'Regan (2012), might look like in the context of the research. I conclude the chapter with the group's overall reflection on their written pieces which also, in Amy's vein, reflected the embodied and non-normative nature of 'strangeness discourse'. These themes do not stand as explanatory endpoints but illustrate instead the vibrant and in flux nature of 'strangeness knowledge'. Similar to the forms of knowledge presented to us in Brechtian performance or devising theatre, an active stance of meaning-making is required on the side of the audience/reader.

4.3 Sonja wrote

I find it strange that there was a pigeon who went shopping for a hat.

It was a rainy day so I understand there was the need to stay dry but I still found it to be unusual.

I find it strange that an uncomfortable silence filled the room considering there was an openness to love and a disregard for all things which were awkward.

I find it strange that a different person would act in a different way in similar circumstances. I found it difficult to understand which was the right way.

I found it strange that the furniture sat on the street but I found it also to be beautiful and resembling art.

Even the toilet paper in the trees blowing in the wind seemed to create a sense of flow and aesthetic to the tableau. In some ways it can represent the beauty of a strange space which, looked at from another perspective, one of environmental concern, can be considered as ugly and wasteful.

I find it strange that we spend time commenting on the quality and differences between sandwiches sometimes.

Instead of looking for good things about this new place, we often seek to point out and highlight what is worse in comparison from home.

I often wonder why we do this and what's the 'best' way to appreciate and love both places and cultures. (Sonja)

I personally really like Sonja's piece. She writes intuitively, in a stream of consciousness and lets the flow of the writing dictate the rhythm of the piece. The sentence 'I find it strange' is repeated almost like a mantra or the chorus of a song that gives the piece its pensive tenor. It dips in and out the realm of fiction - 'the pigeon that went shopping for a hat' - but even her seemingly factual reflections on the 'uncomfortable silence that filled the room' and 'the different person that acts in a different way in similar circumstances' reflect something lyrical and dream-like. Sonja's piece references the ambiguous space of intercultural experience, reflecting through its cadence and fictional-style the very ambiguity, artifice and depth of these strange 'intercultural' moments in our daily lives that act somewhere in-between reality and fiction.

Sonja's poetic writing thus allows for my tentative interpretations, which in turn, have to be also seen as acts of production on my part. Such interpretation is also present in Brecht, more poignantly of course, in the epilogue to his play 'The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui'. Brecht presses his audience to take an active stance of meaning-making towards his fictional play and, even more importantly, in real life. He requests an 'immanent ethics' as integrated in the audience's practice of reading.

Therefore learn how to see and not to gape.
To act instead of talking all day long.
The world was almost won by such an ape!
The nations put him where his kind belong.
But don't rejoice too soon at your escape -
The womb he crawled from still is going strong.
(Brecht, 1981: 99)

Sonja refers in her writing to the picture she brought - a green sofa on the streets of Glasgow, the tree standing next to it covered in toilet paper. She describes the ambiguity of the picture. The convergence of wastefulness and beauty, embodied in the reality of the big, green sofa on the street and the toilet paper-covered tree, is a starting point for reflection about the 'strange beauty of space' as well as 'environmental concerns'. An ambiguous, strange reflective space is opened to the street observer by this unusual aesthetic composition. Can something ugly and wasteful - something 'ridiculous' as a toilet-covered tree - be beautiful? Sonja's last paragraph depicts a very mundane incident ('criticising the quality of sandwiches') and highlights its significance in a wider context of intercultural understanding through comic effect.

I find it strange that we spend time commenting on the quality and differences between sandwiches sometimes.
Instead of looking for good things about this new place, we often seek to point out and highlight what is worse in comparison from home.
I often wonder why we do this and what's the 'best' way to appreciate and love both places and cultures. (Sonja)

The trivial, concrete activity of spending time musing over the difference of sandwiches is contrasted with the overall desire to appreciate the new cultural environment. How can we not get caught up in nit-picking the many 'othernesses' we encounter, but develop an attitude of openness, curiosity and appreciation of the new place and people?

Sonja has touched at the heart of my own enquiry about the possibilities of a vibrant intercultural praxis. After watching Sonja's piece to camera and reading it over, I thought of the other conversations on 'fly-tipping' we had in the workshop. Glasgow's street recycling rituals appeared a 'strangeness experience' many group participants shared.

4.4 Fly-tipping

Amy: Too bad I don't have a car cause I really like it (laughter).

Marta: That's my culture shock, the most shocking thing I find every day.

People just throwing things away that are perfectly good. They just leave them in the rain.

Amy: Well, they leave them out but they expect people to take them and other people expect to go and get them.

Marta: Yeah, but why do they let them in the rain, I mean, they can call a charity and they pick it up.

Sonja: I don't think they leave it 'cause people take it, it's actually called fly-tipping, it's like a criminal offence to do this here.

Amy: I thought so, but then on my street on Mondays they pick up things. So they say, 'put it out on Mondays', because it's bulk.

Marta: Yeah, but bulk is for trash anyway, I mean it's the council that picks it up for trash, the bulk refuse. So it's going to trash anyway, whereas they could donate it or something.

Sonja: The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined.

Marta: Yeah, once I was looking at some clothes that were out there and somebody shouted at me - guys from the council - so that really confused me, so I have never known if it's allowed or if it's there for a charity to pick it up and you are actually stealing it from a charity, or what? But then it rains and it's ruined.

Sonja: I know, it is hard to know.

Marta: Anyway, sorry.

Amy: Maybe us entrepreneurs we can do a newcomer's guide to Glasgow.

Marta: Yeah.

Sonja: And also you could just pick it all up and sell it, like fix it and sell it. It's also a good business idea.

Sonja's poetic piece which allows for an exploration of street trash as aesthetic compositions stands in contrast to that subsequent dialogue, in which Sonja, Marta and Amy report on more concrete personal experiences with fly-tipping. This reflects the manifold ways intercultural experience might be shared within different encounters. In relation to MacDonald & O'Regan (2012), I maintain that working from an immanent ethics, through a diversity of methods that take into account individual embodiment and group dynamics, will result in a range of reflective modes. The dialogue between Sonja, Amy and Marta represents for me - not the ethical inertia that MacDonald & O'Regan ascribe to universal moralism, but instead the liveliness of a reflexive intercultural praxis, in which reflection, ethical judgment and problem-solving can occur.

That's my culture shock, the most shocking thing I find every day. (Marta)

Why do they leave them in the rain? (Marta)

We can do a newcomer's guide to Glasgow. (Amy)

You could just pick it up and sell it. (...) It's a good business idea. (Sonja)

4.5 Jamal wrote

I find it strange ...
How people dress in Scotland.
How people eat and behave in Scotland.
Why are they so good in conducting their activities?
Why don't they fight over petty things?
Why don't they get jealous
Like we do in Pakistan?
Why is my country not like theirs?
Why are my people not like them?
Why are the roads here cemented?
Why do they have discipline?
Why do they have peace here?
Why are they educated?
These questions just confused me and make me think.
And I started thinking and thinking and thinking.
But found no appropriate answer to these questions.
Then decided to do something which could bring the change which my sisters and
brothers wish to have in Pakistan.
They wish to have standard education.
Like them.
They wish to have peace and tranquillity.
Like here.
They wish to have health facilities.
Like we have here.
They wish to have a moment spent in happiness
Like we have here.
But I found and now find strange that we can bring the change but there is no
one to accept it.
Isn't it strange that I was born in a strange people?
Who are quite strange to strangers and don't want to accept them.
Life is risk taking.
And we take risks to accept the strange, and that's how we bring the change.
I find it strange to be with strangers but I hope these strangers will bring the
strange change in me. (Jamal)

In Jamal's poetic piece, he communicates the startling aspects of arriving in Scotland. Stating first of all the seemingly obvious differences in dress and culinary style, he then continues to ask more pressing questions. The power of the following series of questions, lies, I feel, in their brevity and immediacy. They range from over-idealisation ("why don't they fight over petty things?") to factual comparison ("why are the roads here cemented?") and it is through this sketch of almost childlike queries that Jamal communicates a mix of criticism, hope and puzzlement. It does not even matter if this is what Jamal 'really' thought about Scotland. His stylistic composition again (like Sonja's piece) opens up a realm of elusiveness and enquiry - where we are allowed to ask 'childlike' questions and voice our anger and confusion about the unjust state of the world: "Why do they have peace here [and we don't]?".

In the next part of the poem, Jamal describes his own thought process, conjured up by this intercultural experience, and leading him to a comparison between Pakistan and Scotland and questions about the 'right for development' and the part he might play in bringing about the desired change. Given Jamal's privileged position in his society, he seems very conscious about the responsibility to do good and care for the needs of his "brothers and sisters". Despite stating the very concrete things people in Pakistani society wish for (education, peace, health facilities, a moment spent in happiness), Jamal also points out the difficulties of 'bringing about change': "But I found and now find strange that we can bring the change but there is no one to accept it".

Despite his own enthusiasm and willingness to invest time, energy and money to 'make a difference' and open himself to learn from 'the (Scottish) other', Jamal encounters criticism and suspicion with regard to his ideas: "Isn't it strange that I was born in a strange people? Who are quite strange to strangers and don't want to accept them." Jamal concludes his piece on a hopeful note, suggesting that risk and 'strangeness' are essential elements of positive change. Holding the potential to cause 'personal' change in the individual and ideally leading to an attitude of responsibility and care - societal change, so he reckons, will eventually follow.

Life is risk taking.

And we take risks to accept the strange, and that's how we bring the change.

I find it strange to be with strangers but I hope these strangers will bring the strange change in me. (Jamal)

Unlike Sonja's piece, Jamal's reflection references more strongly his own views and questions with regard to 'development work' in his home country. He names the needs and problems and even implies concrete ethical reflection: "Why is my country not like theirs? Why are my people not like them? Why are the roads here cemented?". At the same time, he does not offer ultimate solutions based on universal moralism or pedagogical-ethical endpoints. He keeps instead the separation between self and other open by thinking from within immanent ethics - where the 'solution' lies somewhere embedded within the precariousness of intercultural relationships.

But I found and now find strange that we can bring the change but there is no one to accept it.

Isn't it strange that I was born in a strange people?

Who are quite strange to strangers and don't want to accept them.

Life is risk taking.

And we take risks to accept the strange, and that's how we bring the change.

I find it strange to be with strangers but I hope these strangers will bring the strange change in me. (Jamal)

4.6 Aleksandra wrote

I find strange that the sun has come out today as it's not typical for Glasgow.
I find strange that I can still find myself thinking strange of something, as I'm quite an experienced traveller and have been to so many places.
I find strange that I don't experience culture shock in a normal way, as others do.
I find strange that my expectations and perception of place change all the time. I'm struggling with the word strange actually.
As I think that, at the end of the day, it's just the way it should be.
What is actually strange and what is norm?
Everybody has got their way of doing things as normal, and it's only the reflection of our interpretation. (Aleksandra)

Aleksandra begins by commenting on the unusual fact that the sun broke through the grey skies of this mid-November morning. Opening her piece with this factual statement, she strikes a more self-reflective and even meta-reflective note in the rest of her writing. It seems as if Aleksandra's self-reflection leads her into questioning the very experience of labelling something as being strange. She "finds strange that she still finds herself thinking strange of something", despite her extensive travelling experiences. It brings up the question of how much you can get used to living interculturally. Is it desirable to stop thinking of things as being strange? Relating back to the discussion in chapter one, Phipps & Gonzalez (2004) criticised the danger of treating cultures solely as something consumable and 'lightweight'.

Instead they emphasised "cultures are messy, heavy, people-ridden" (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 61) and in constant flux. Aleksandra writes for example: "I find strange that my expectations and perception of place change all the time". Aleksandra stresses precarity, the changing nature of intercultural experience which makes it difficult to produce any finite statement on it. Representations on intercultural experience should bear the mark of precarity as these experiences are highly personal and in flux. In the light of Aleksandra's statement, a consumerist approach to intercultural experience might simply deny those more precarious aspects. Living interculturally then becomes mere 'trophy hunting' for exotic novelty experiences that can be instantly shared on facebook.

A consumerist research approach to intercultural experience is then equally inadequate to understand these embodied, precarious dimensions academically. The intercultural education researcher in turn cannot be solely seen as a 'collector' of data that already exists in the world in a 'consumable format'. On the contrary, the researcher's stance is not that of the neutral collector or objective analyst, but that of the 'subjective', emplaced researcher. Ulrike Woitsch (2011) in her PhD thesis gives an example of such emplaced, non-consumerist intercultural research. She invites her research participants on an intercultural walk.

During these walks she learns about people's intercultural experiences within the natural flow of their conversations. She is taken to significant sights by her participants and encourages them to take pictures during the walk. Phipps (2013) comments on Woitsch's non-consumerist intercultural research method as working from an immanent ethic.

Here we see a method in action which is not based on deficit, does not assume what will be found, or judge the items and places, but works in a mode of exploration and embodiment, to allow a flow of action, impressions, natural conversation, showing and relationship. (Phipps, 2013: 19)

4.7 Culture shock

As against a static, consumerist view on intercultural experience, Aleksandra reflects on those more 'messy' ways of intercultural experience and describes the deep personal changes and challenges that intercultural living brought about for her. Reflecting critically on the effects of intercultural experience on her own personal and cultural identity, she points out particularly the impact of what she calls "reverse culture shock". Aleksandra states that she "doesn't experience culture shock in a normal way, as others do". After reading her piece in the small group, she amplified this point. I will insert here some of her later comments on her experience of culture shock, expressed in conversation with Amy, Sonja and Marta.

For me personally, I felt like experiencing culture shock - if it's culture shock or reverse culture shock - especially reverse culture shock for me, helps me to understand myself better; helps me to develop.(...) I feel much easier for myself if I don't expect anything, don't idealise, just go for it and that's it. (...) That's exactly what I experienced when I came back home from America. I just felt I don't fit in, I just don't. I felt people don't understand me. I think differently, I feel differently, I am different. That's the strangest feeling I ever experienced, honestly. (...) I think every time you go somewhere you experience different things. (Aleksandra)

Given these additional comments, it is much easier to get closer to an understanding of what Aleksandra means when she writes in her initial piece that she experiences culture shock differently from other people. The main issue for her is what she calls "reverse culture shock", an experience she had when returning to Russia after spending several years living in the United States. Aleksandra felt she was suddenly out of place at home and did not fit in. Communication with friends and family back in Russia had changed to an extent that she felt they did not understand her anymore. Living interculturally had an all-encompassing effect: Aleksandra now *thinks* differently, *feels* differently, and *is* different.

She describes reverse culture shock as "the strangest feeling" and, abstracting from her own experience, attempts to give an explanation for this sensation: our perception of places and things (even at home) changes all the time when we live interculturally. The temporal and embodied aspect of intercultural being which Aleksandra alludes to - and with it the view that intercultural being is a constant process of adapting our bodies and minds to new physical environments - stands in opposition to a purely consumerist view of cultures. If our perception of 'strangeness', of culture, changes all the time, as Aleksandra says, it cannot be fathomed or consumed without actively partaking in its production.

Engaging with such (again with Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004) 'heavy, people-ridden' intercultural experiences then requires 'apprenticeship', patience and time for reflection and developing individual ways of coping and creating 'contested' spaces that can be supportive and where "we might become friends" (Ahmed, 2000: 94). In the last six lines of her creative writing piece, Aleksandra gives a meta-reflection on the word 'strange'; a word she "struggles with", as it has many connotations and can potentially contain an element of judgement.

Labelling something as being strange could mean assuming a norm that presupposes a hierarchy of 'right, accepted, normal practices' and excludes certain ways of life as deviating from that assumed norm. Aleksandra points out the danger of fixing and labelling something or somebody as strange and asks, "What is actually strange and what is norm?". Again, abstracting from her immediate experience she concludes (in my words): Given that there is no truthful norm, the practice of labelling strangeness simply reflects our own tendency to categorise and judge. And it bears witness to our own sense of bias, more than it predicates any 'objective strangeness' about the legitimacy or rationality of other ways of being in the world.

4.8 Culture shock and 'estrangement' pedagogy

Following from Aleksandra's reflection, intercultural learning is an experience that involves, and at times even threatens, the whole person's bodily-emotional and intellectual make-up. And given these complexities, which unfold within the network of intercultural relationships and encounters entertained in a new environment, ethics becomes a question of praxis - of "how one encounters others as others and (...) how one can live with what cannot be measured by the regulative force of morality" (Ahmed, 2000: 138).

As I think that, at the end of the day, it's just the way it should be.
Everybody has got their way of doing things as normal,
and it's only the reflection of our interpretation. (Aleksandra)

Intercultural experience thus cannot be easily contained within explanatory models, abstracted from personal experience or taken out of a person's context. These 'estrangement' elements that evade easy universal categorisation and which make intercultural experience a radically embodied phenomenon, might find their expression especially within what Aleksandra calls above "culture shock" or "reverse culture shock". The embodied nature of intercultural experience which becomes especially obvious within a culture shock experience, poignantly reminds us that "migration stories are skin memories" (Ahmed, 2000: 92). The disorienting nature of culture shock that occurs within new physical environments might then be thought of in terms of Ingold's interpretation of Bourdieu's (1984) 'habitus'.

The embedded patterns of thought-feeling within habitus thus require time and a 'safe environment' to adapt and develop into a new way of being in the world. These embodied patterns then also evade explanatory models. Located within the body, habitus is difficult to break down "in terms of any system of mental rules or representations" (Ingold, 2000: 162), because "even the simplest and most routine of everyday tasks are refractory to codification in propositional form" (Ingold, 2000: 164). In the following section, I will outline the reflective potential and often highly emotional dimensions of culture shock as they were discussed by the research participants. Their thinking around culture shock connects to those scholars - such as Ingold (2000) and Pink (2009) - who claim knowledge as 'emerging from bodies'.

This view of knowledge (about intercultural experience) as emerging from bodies then also reaffirms a Brechtian research pedagogy. This is a pedagogy that works from a 'paradigm of embodiment' within intercultural education research.

[This is] a philosophy that refuses to privilege mind over body, and that assumes that the body cannot be transcended as such. This is a philosophy which emphasises contingency, locatedness, the irreducibility of difference, and the worldliness of being. (Ahmed, 2000: 41)

4.9 Culture shock and reflective spaces

I think that strangeness makes you describe things. It makes you describe things. I feel something is strange, therefore I describe, describe (...). (Jamal)

Aleksandra and Jamal both hint at the reflective space opened by culture shock experience, which enables an 'active self-understanding' ("reverse culture shock helps me to understand myself better"), and also triggers (in a Jameson's vein) an 'active narrative processing' ("something is strange, therefore I describe") of reality. Interestingly Aleksandra suggests that it is especially 'reverse culture shock' - or what Kagitcibasi (1987) describes as 'deculturation' - that brings about self-reflection and a sense of self-development. Aleksandra's ability to harness reverse culture shock experience positively, might imply her already established sense of self-reflection. When experiencing reverse culture shock, Aleksandra is able to fall back on previously acquired mental and physical coping strategies on how to 'deal constructively' with 'strangeness'.

Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) suggest in this context that ‘sojourners’ with a stronger sense of identity and self-perception might suffer fewer adjustment problems when returning home. The negative and more crippling potential of reverse culture shock that is experienced by most sojourners however, might be ascribed to their ‘false expectations’ of a stable and ‘unchanged’ culture when returning home (Searle & Ward, 1990). The individual might be less expectant of and therefore less prepared for the changes, challenges and difficulties occurring within their supposedly ‘familiar’ home environment (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Weissman & Furnham, 1987).

Intercultural experience, and with it culture shock and reverse culture shock, are thus not inherently enriching experiences, holding an all-encompassing potential to be training grounds for critical thinking and personal growth. I will look more closely at what culture shock can do to a person’s ability to reflect. In the following conversations which occurred during the second drama workshop, Amy, Sonja, Marta and Aleksandra refer to its twofold potential:

Amy:

It’s interesting. I was just thinking with culture shock and ‘strangeness’, being a stranger in a new place and things. It happened to me at quite a young age and I think back, even at other times, even before, that I recognised this feeling of feeling strange and not understanding. And in some stages it’s incredibly uncomfortable, alienating and sad and all that. But in another way it’s like this self-feeling. Like I’m by myself with me, and there is only me, and I’m relying on me.

Sonja:

And in some ways, that’s a strength.

Amy:

Ya, and it’s this sort of lovely break where I don’t have to engage with other people, because I don’t know how, therefore I don’t have to.

And so, having been submerged in another culture at a young age where I didn’t speak the language, and having the language sort of come to me, I kind of like that being away. I like being a stranger, sometimes. I guess what I don’t like is sort of being submerged in it and then it getting really confusing and then it being too much. But there is a part of me that likes being (...) like I know a lot of people that don’t do this. I like to go places where I’m not known, because it’s the only time I don’t have to engage. You know, and I get to just be.

Aleksandra:

But it's actually different when you want to be, when you choose it, and the other side when you don't have the chance to choose but you are forced into the situation.

Amy:

And that's a whole different thing. I was thinking what is culture shock? I know what it is, I even have a fairly good idea what's happening in our brains because I did some study on the brain. But when I'm in it, all that knowledge doesn't matter. It doesn't connect with me. I don't know that knowledge when I'm in it, I'm just in it.

In this first part of the conversation, the group makes crucial points with regard to the impact culture shock can have on the individual's capacity to reflect and learn. Amy describes 'strangeness experience' as a twofold process. Similar to Aleksandra, Amy refers firstly to its enriching potential. 'Strangeness experience' brings with it a certain freedom of being momentarily released from one's habitual ways of engaging: "It's this sort of lovely break where I don't have to engage with other people, because I don't know how, therefore I don't have to" (Amy).

Amy describes this 'break' almost as a breathing space - a time for just 'being' and stepping beyond the restrictions of everyday responsibility: "I like to go places where I'm not known, because it's the only time I don't have to engage. You know, and I get to just be" (Amy).

Further she points out an experience of self-reliance and enjoyment of a 'strangeness experience' that brings with it possibilities for acquiring new perspectives and new languages:

It's like this self-feeling. Like I'm by myself with me, and there is only me, and I'm relying on me. And so, having been submerged in another culture at a young age where I didn't speak the language, and having the language sort of come to me, I kind of like that being away. I like being a stranger, sometimes (Amy).

This 'skill' of being able to not only enjoy 'strangeness experiences' but to learn from it requires practice. Its effectiveness also varies according to context. It depends on whether 'strangeness' is experienced voluntarily, sought out or imposed on the individual:

It's actually different when you want to be, when you choose it, and the other side when you don't have the chance to choose but you are forced into the situation (Aleksandra).

Culture shock might aid self-development but it can also inhibit growth or even traumatise an individual. This crippling potential of culture shock, which involves feelings of being "uncomfortable, alienated and sad", is reinforced when 'strangeness experiences' are imposed on the individual (for example through forced migration).

Further, the negative effect of culture shock might be experienced more strongly if the individual has not yet developed the mental and physical coping strategies in order to deal with, and integrate positively, the various challenges of culture shock. This feeling of being overwhelmed can cause confusion and ultimately stall the individual's capacity to distance herself and reflect: "I guess what I don't like is sort of being submerged in it and then it getting really confusing and then it being too much" (Amy).

Culture shock also remains a volatile phenomenon. Despite an individual's well-developed coping strategies and even considerable medical, psychological or even emotional knowledge on its effects, it can cause the individual recurring experiences of disorientation: "But when I'm in it, all that knowledge doesn't matter. It doesn't connect with me. I don't know that knowledge when I'm in it, I'm just in it" (Amy).

4.10 Culture shock as skin memory

Sonja:

Say it again, I think I see it the opposite. I feel culture shock when I notice it.

Marta:

When you can name it. When you can say, this is culture shock.

Sonja:

And when I'm not naming it, then I'm not experiencing it.

Amy:

You see, I think it's the other way. You almost need to be away from it to say- oh, that's what that was. That's what that flurry of emotion and feeling was.

Aleksandra:

Because sometimes, when you are in the midst of it, you can't reflect on that.

Amy:

It's within the reflection that it is what it was.

Culture shock seems to inhabit an ambiguous, almost contradictory place. On the one hand it can be consciously experienced. Various 'strangeness experiences' might be 'named' as culture shock and reflected on by the individual: "I feel culture shock when I notice it. (...) When you can name it. When you can say, this is culture shock" (Sonja).

On the other hand it can have a more immediate, temporary and performative effect. The individual might be thrown into a stream of emotions that makes distanced reflection impossible: "You see, I think it's the other way. You almost need to be away from it to say- oh, that's what that was. That's what that flurry of emotion and feeling was" (Amy).

Marta:

Because I think in the moment it usually feels like anxiety or shyness for example. I don't know, I think banal experiences like paying in a bus and not knowing when are you supposed to pay and how, that sort of thing. I think it's very culturally specific because it's different everywhere in the world. How you pay for the bus is different in any place.

Amy:

And they don't give you change here, so it's this piss-off. You pay five pounds for a one pound trip.

Marta:

You are in a rush and people are waiting behind you. It's like this anxiety thing, but you just experience it as anxiety or stress.

Marta and Amy's description of this very physical experience of 'strangeness' as anxiety or stress, whilst paying for the bus, illustrates that "migration stories are 'skin memories': memories that are felt on the skin" (Ahmed, 2000: 92). Accordingly, "the physical sense of moving through space is enough to trigger a memory of another place" (ibid). Also their description reveals the immediate, embodied nature of culture shock experience. Thrown into real-life situations that provoke disorientation and anxiety in one's body, the individual's habitus is challenged to 'figure things out', 'improvise' and cope practically within the dualistic space opened by culture shock. The individual is, similar to Brecht's double agent-actor, acting 'between realities'.

Especially in the initial phases of culture shock, these experiences of a dual reality can be emotional and frightening. Unlike the Brechtian actor, the individual might be ultimately unprepared to encounter such embodied 'strangeness experience'. A state of bodily felt 'shock' might be felt when moving through an unfamiliar environment and having to deal with the practical requirements of daily life. 'Strangeness' is thus imposed on the individual, not 'sought for' or 'created' as within the safe rehearsal space that the Brechtian actor moves in. This immediacy of culture shock is a very emotional experience: "It's like this anxiety thing, but you just experience it as anxiety or stress" (Marta), as it is physically disorienting, requires improvisation and the development of practical as well as mental coping strategies.

Within this 'flurry of emotions', it might be difficult to find a 'safe space' for reflection or applying any pre-existing, theoretical knowledge or coping strategies. The body has not settled and is struggling to adapt. The safe, supportive space that Ahmed speaks of - one, in which we might become friends - has yet to become material reality because when the individual is immersed in culture shock, "all that knowledge doesn't matter. It doesn't connect with me. I don't know that knowledge when I'm in it, I'm just in it" (Amy).

The experience of leaving home in migration is hence always about the failure of memory to make sense of the place one comes to inhabit, a failure that is experienced in the discomfort of inhabiting a migrant body that feels out of place. (Ahmed, 2000: 91)

Adams (1975) 'classic' definition of culture shock affirms Amy's and Ahmed's point.

Culture shock is primarily a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences. It may encompass feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fears of being cheated, contaminated, injured or disregarded. (Adams, 1975: 13)

4.11 Karolina wrote

I found strangeness related to educational environment, social environment and work environment. Education environment: it was strange that expectations are completely different than expectations in Poland. They were related to assessment and as well as to the notion of critical thinking. When I came here I just didn't know 'what do they mean by critical thinking'?

With social environment I found strange that consumption is so high here, that people consume each other. What's more is the pub culture. People spend so much time socialising outside their own places. The same with the work environment. The culture of work seems to be completely different to Poland. And finally, strangeness of space - the architecture, the nature. Everything seems to be so different, and strange. (Karolina)

Karolina distinguishes three areas that caused her to feel strange when coming to Glasgow first: educational environment, social environment and work environment. In her piece, Karolina doesn't expand on the meaning of these areas in more depth. As a consequence, when reading her piece after the workshop, more questions were raised. I was curious to meet Karolina again and ask her to put her writing into the context of her own experiences. A few weeks later, we met in the library and read her creative writing piece once more. I asked her to contextualise these areas that seemed such a significant part of her intercultural experience. I will include here the more in-depth descriptions that Karolina shared that day.

As already stated in her participant pen portrait, Karolina is originally from Poland and came to Glasgow about five years ago to work. She undertook a Master's degree and is now studying for a PhD at the University of Glasgow. She describes the academic expectations that she encountered in Glasgow as initially causing confusion: "What do they mean by critical thinking?". She also stresses the amount of time and hard work it took to understand and practise what university staff in the UK called 'critical thinking'. When first doing her MA, critical thinking was something she hadn't in the same way practised in Poland. Karolina points out the struggle to find her own 'critical' voice and develop the confidence to express herself academically. In that context, she also emphasises the importance of the library - "a constant source of inspiration" - and a place she visits very regularly and that 'keeps her' in Glasgow.

In relation to Scotland's 'strange' social environment, Karolina mentions the Scottish pub culture. When she came here five years ago, the fact that "people spend so much time socialising outside their own places" seemed very different from her previous life experience in Poland: "In Poland people invite each other into their own houses rather than go out all the time". In addition to that, Karolina expresses a concern with (over-)consumption in Scotland: "Consumption is so high here, that people consume each other". I asked her in our later conversation what she meant by the phrase 'people consuming each other'. She referred to the relationship between people's consumption behaviour, as for example expressed in Scottish drinking culture, and their identity formation.

In her own PhD thesis Karolina explores the role such consumption behaviour plays in relation to male identity formation. Watching Karolina share her creative writing piece with the small group (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 2 - I find strange that) is fascinating, as there also seems a non-verbal narrative pervading her reading. The meaning of the last few lines doesn't seem to lie fully in what Karolina actually reads out to the group, but evolves from her acting 'in between the lines': "Everything seems to be so (*pause*) different and (*pause*) strange" (Karolina). One of the striking moments when watching Karolina on camera, occurs after she has finished her reading. The last two lines of her piece are delivered almost theatrically; Karolina's voice and facial expression convey that she isn't confident she 'made sense' or 'struck the right note'.

After finishing her reading, Karolina looks imploringly at her group members for reassurance. Then a second of almost contemplative silence follows. She seems to gather her thoughts, still trying to make sense of her own words and still waiting for reassurance. Karolina appears to express doubt that she has ‘produced’ a ‘valid’ piece of writing for the research. Through inflection and posture, she communicates the desire for her knowledge to be imbedded as part of a relationship; for it to be reaffirmed through the group’s resembling experiences. Unfortunately, the camera did not capture the group’s reaction and I can only speculate if they responded to her ‘plea’ - maybe with a nod, an encouraging smile or just attentive silence (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 2 - I find strange that)?



(A moment of silence)

Karolina’s ‘estranged reading’ draws attention to the bodily and relationship-based aspects of sharing knowledge within our research space. Following from Karolina’s non-verbal ‘plea for recognition’ there are ethical questions with regard to how knowledge was negotiated as a relation between bodies. Did I work towards an open discursive terrain, in which Karolina could feel confident to express her views, without having to comply to a presupposed concept of how to write a contribution to research?

I will use the following two pieces - Amy’s creative writing piece, as well as a dialogue that took place between Amy, Marta and Lin - to pick up on these immanently ethical questions that evolved from Karolina’s estranged reading. I will discuss Amy’s piece first, as she contextualises the question around an ‘ethical negotiation of knowledge’ within her own experience and wish for the creation of ‘relationships of care’. She touches on aspects that are theoretically and methodologically relevant for my thinking around the ‘pedagogical burden’ of intercultural education research.

4.12 Amy's piece

I find strange that

when I know what others are just learning, I feel a bit guilty in that I had the privilege of being somewhere others haven't.

I often want to share these experiences but now know that others are rarely interested so I need to keep them mostly to myself, which makes me listen more, then more privileged, then more guilty.

There is this swirl of thoughts, images, feelings - 'what is the purpose of all this knowing?'.
If it is not to share, to somehow make the world better, for individuals I care about, for the people everywhere, especially those in real need, then, just to have this knowledge for myself, is selfish.

BUT (in capital letters) if no one is really interested or in need of my knowledge, then I can just use it for my own JOY (in capital letters) and perhaps by spreading this JOY (in capital letters) I am making this world a better place for some.

Or perhaps that is just rationalization for not working on social justice issues and using my privilege positively, for the good of all. IS JOY ENOUGH (in capital letters)?!? IS HARD WORK TOO MUCH (in capital letters).

Is my social construction in my head anywhere near reality?
What value has money?
Is there a way of life not based on currency exchange?
How much would I want to give up my privilege? Is that even a legitimate question?

Knowing that the church-culture of selflessness was sometimes used to rip people off, so protection from greed, opening up to a free flow of ideas and planting gardens to bloom, may need to start with the basic. Back to Mezirow and cane work and all that sometime - to give hope. (Amy)

Amy used the writing exercise to reflect on the ethics of her interaction with people and the role 'knowledge exchange' plays in these everyday encounters. She considers herself privileged and also feels guilty about this position - having had extensive opportunities to travel - "the privilege of being somewhere others haven't" - and having been able to acquire 'knowledge' that furthers her privileged status.

I often want to share these experiences but now know that others are rarely interested so I need to keep them mostly to myself, which makes me listen more, then more privileged, then more guilt. (Amy)

The type of knowledge Amy refers to is not simple 'book knowledge' (although she might mean that as well); she emphasises a type of experiential knowledge that comes with being able to be a 'middle-class flaneuse' who enjoys the space and (political) freedom to move, linger and dwell in places for recreational, inspirational and educational purposes. Amy brings up and questions the power of this knowledge and the purpose it might serve. In order to assist people with their learning process and maybe help them not to make the same mistakes she made, Amy would like to share this knowledge and harness it in ways that could solve "social justice issues". Not to share this knowledge, Amy considers as "selfish".

Amy sees knowledge as embedded in sociality. Having value only as part of a relationship (which she defines as including an interconnected world full of social justice issues), this knowledge can and should be used as a progressive force fostering individual and collective growth - for a better world. The potential application of this type of progressive knowledge for the 'good of all' is then dependent on a 'willing and open-minded receiver', one who recognises the knowledge as educationally 'useful'. At the same time, Amy describes this potential as being inhibited by that same concept of relationship, in which knowledge might not be valued and people do not listen.

In Amy's reflection the value of knowledge can unfold its progressive potential only within relationships - however messy and complicated - that are built upon similar ethics and recognise the power of knowledge as a catalyst for change and growth, as well as personal and collective enjoyment. Amy voices a very concrete ethical stance which references MacDonald & O'Regan (2012); both embed 'work on social justice issues' within the precariousness of intercultural relationships. By emplacing 'the power of knowledge' - which might affect social change and personal growth - within an ethics of responsibility for the other, Amy also thinks as a critical educator, stating that critical thinking cannot take place in "ivory-tower isolation" (Freire, 1996: 58).

Regarding education as becoming rather than as a static, universal concept, Amy seeks, in a Brechtian vein, “a teaching space of human relationships and not of law, in which reflexivity and change and personal growth can find legitimate places” (Carney, 2005: 116). Amy is somebody who cherishes these enriching aspects of critical thinking and gaining knowledge herself, to such an extent in fact that she is able to use her knowledge for her own JOY (she even puts it in capital letters). The capitalisation of the word JOY almost functions like a Brechtian ‘interruptive’ placard, playfully drawing attention to Amy’s stance and internal thoughts.

(...) then I can just use it for my own JOY (in capital letters) and perhaps by spreading this JOY (in capital letters) I am making this world a better place for some (...). (Amy)

Although this would make her happy, as she recounts, and possibly even creates some positive effects on the environment around her, Amy describes it as a selfish activity. Again, it becomes clear that Amy sees the real value of knowledge flourishing only within a relationship that shares a similar concept of an interconnected world, in which people care and share responsibility towards each other and their environment. Even in Amy’s last paragraph she reveals how she prioritises relationships as the seedbed for change and wishes to create an alternative reality that places care and mutual responsibility, instead of monetary relations, at the heart of our way of life. It is also evident from Amy’s reflections here that I dealt with a group of research participants who were not only highly reflective but ethically minded and eloquent in their self-expression.

Is my social construction in my head anywhere near reality? What value money?
Is there a way of life not based on currency exchange? How much would I want to give up my privilege? Is that even a legitimate question? (Amy)

Amy’s concrete ethical concerns reflect the theoretical-methodological concerns around immanent ethics and intercultural pedagogy that I outlined in previous chapters. In that context, I see Amy’s piece also as a ‘successful’ act of emplaced intercultural research. Using a creative writing *Verfremdungs*-method, Amy used her ‘own hopes, doubts and fears’ (in a Freirean vein) as a springboard to bring into dialogue more extensive issues evolving around the ethics of knowledge construction.

4.13 Amy's ethical concerns in practice

The following conversation about the 'door near the library' illustrates concretely the ethical concerns that Amy voiced in her written piece. It is an example taken from a conversation that occurred during the post-writing reflection phase in the second workshop. This conversation between Lin and Marta shows how knowledge might be negotiated within what MacDonald & O'Regan (2012) referred to as an ethics of responsibility for the other. This 'everyday' conversation between Lin, Marta and Amy contextualises my methodological points, as well as Amy's concerns, within a situation of knowledge exchange that took place in our research space. The risk taken in dialogue by Lin and Marta reflects an intercultural ethics arising from their moment of encounter. After sharing their creative writing pieces in the small groups, Lin posed a question to the group. It wasn't anything she had written about, but rather seemed to have occurred as a sudden memory; one which Lin was now eager to share and get immediate clarification on.

Lin:

Do you remember this door near the library which is white and which is also very high? It is very, very strange. When I first saw the door I felt very curious about that because it's so high that no one can really go through the door. But it is actually a door because it has a door number.

So I don't know why it's here. What's the room for behind this door? Is there anybody who knows that? Just near the library, a white door, very high.

Amy:

There is no staircase.

Marta:

That's the Macintosh house. Have you heard about Charles Rennie Macintosh? He was a famous, Glasgow-born architect from the end of the nineteenth century, beginning of the twentieth. He was very famous; he made several pretty buildings in Glasgow, like the Glasgow School of Art in the city centre. So he used to live there, where that door is. But that street was not like that, the level of the street was higher a hundred years ago, where that door is now. He built that house and he also did interior décor, so he designed all the furniture inside the house. But that house was demolished in the 20th century, the 30's or whatever. So what they did, they reconstructed it as it used to be before, and put all the original furniture in. You can go in there, through the Macintosh gallery and see how the house used to be. And that used to be the door over

there but it's not used as a door anymore. It's just a reconstruction of the house.

Lin:

So that room now is for ...

Marta:

It's like an exhibition, so it's a house ... like a museum.

Lin:

Really?

Amy:

You can't go through that door though, you have to go through the gallery.

Lin:

Nobody can go through that door.

Marta:

You have to pay though, but it's nice. It's pretty.



(After the workshop, Lin and I went to take this picture of the Charles Rennie MacIntosh door)

Watching this conversation on camera after the session, I kept thinking how brave it was for Lin to ask. She is so genuinely confused about this strange door in a strange space, and the fact that it defies any functional purpose. Lin shares her confusion with the group seeking the 'mystery's' resolution: "So I don't know why it's here. What's the room for behind this door? Is there anybody who knows that?" (Lin). And she receives a genuine answer. Marta takes her question seriously and shares in great detail what she has learned about the Charles Rennie Macintosh door and its history. Listening to Marta on camera is insightful as she explains things I myself didn't know about that door before (and would have been too cowardly to ask and would have tried to bluff that I knew the circumstances of the door well). Marta does not make Lin feel inferior because she was ignorant about the door.

She just takes her inquiry seriously and responds in a respectful and helpful manner. Lin made herself vulnerable by admitting to her fascination and confusion and Marta does not abuse that vulnerability, but honours Lin's openness by replying to her request. As Karolina drew attention to the vulnerability of embodied dialogue and Amy voiced her hope for an ethical negotiation of knowledge - Lin and Marta represent both aspects within a 'relationship of care'. They language (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004), as they open out to each other to meet, listen and learn from each other. Lin and Marta's encounter reaffirms our intercultural research space of experiment as a 'teaching space' of human relationships - drawing focus back to the importance of relationship formation as an organising principle within intercultural education research (Shaules, 2007).

4.14 Reflections after the second workshop

It was much easier to co-ordinate and plan the workshop in a more realistic timeframe this time. It proved to be best to allow relationship formation to become the organising principle and dedicate the previous week's entire workshop to getting to know everybody and making the group feel comfortable in the space and with each other. I felt we now had an ethical basis to interact and started to rehearse towards an intercultural praxis together. As we had become apprentices (Pink, 2009), listened to and learned from each other, aligned our bodies in play and found resonance as practitioners, I was more confident, in this second workshop, to employ the creative writing exercise that was originally planned for the first week.

Taking the fact that all participants were MPhil and PhD students used to expressing themselves through writing, I guessed that they would feel confident about a writing exercise to start our research conversation. As not every participant brought a picture, I added a variety of images to the ones I had received the week before (Appendix VI, Pictures for creative writing). These were simply pictures of things that I found strange or curious about Glasgow/the UK and consisted of very material things like a picture of coins, a taxi, a white bread sandwich, a bus etc. These pictures didn't intend to furnish instant explanations of 'strangeness' but acted as stimuli and starting points for our own poetic narrations.

The quite mundane pictures I chose to add to the mix represented things that somehow interrupted the daily routines I was used to operating in. They posed little dilemmas that took varying lengths of time and energy to get used to and integrate as part of my lifestyle. They were pictures of things that had made me feel the embodied nature of intercultural experience in the way Ahmed describes migration stories as “skin memories” (2000: 92). As Marta said during the workshop: “How you pay if a bus is different in every country” - and it needs time and practise to adapt to this new habitus and align our bodies within this new environment. The pictures thus allowed us to reference our intercultural experiences as being embodied and with it material and tangible occurrences, deeply interwoven with everyday life and everyday encounters.

Working with pictures then allowed us to claim the embodied and processual nature of ‘strangeness experience’ - where our living, momentarily out-of-place bodies had to become sites of dialogue and were considered “ways of going to work at the world” (Eagleton, 2004: 166). After a few minutes of sitting in a circle and contemplating the pictures that I had laid out in the middle of the room, I asked people to choose one that resonated with them the most, retreat to a quiet place in the room and continue writing the starter sentence ‘I find strange that...’ for five minutes, without stopping the flow of writing, or thinking too much about it.

Looking back on the exercise I would have limited the writing to 3 minutes as it is easier to sustain an intuitive flow for a shorter length of time. I noticed that after a few minutes participants began to ‘think’ too much about the quality and appropriateness of their piece, whereas I had hoped to almost produce a ‘naive’ piece that wasn’t polished and edited but could serve as a starting point for a shared conversation on how ‘intercultural strangeness’ affects our lives in various ways. The group was split into two smaller ones after the exercise, asking participants to read their pieces and record each other on camera. I had also given each group a poster with questions that served as stimuli and guidelines for their subsequent small group discussion: What is culture shock? Is culture shock always something negative? Who experiences culture shock? How is it experienced?

4.15 Group reflection

As a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognising one another's presence. (hooks, 1994: 8)



(Group reflection)

Sonja, Jamal, Aleksandra and Karolina reported on their 'strangeness discourse' back to the whole group, giving not a tightly explanatory definition of 'strangeness', but primarily expressing the complexity and in flux nature of the experience of strangeness. Describing strangeness as a highly contextual phenomenon, their feedback references not only the embodied nature of the discourse but also opens out their own questions.

This - the difficulty of defining 'strangeness' - was quite evident in our discussion because of Jamal noticing the positive and some of us noticing the more negative aspects of strangeness. And the idea of judging being incorporated into strangeness. Also we talked about going home and that also being strange. Or how when you travel quite a bit then nothing is strange anymore. Everything becomes normal. So we talked about it being negative and positive and also neutral. But then we also discussed here if it's neutral, is strangeness then something you need to notice? Or can strangeness occur and you just don't notice it, or does that make it not strange? (Sonja)

The group's thinking around 'strangeness' derived from their reflection on their creative writing pieces and strongly reflects the embodied nature of such discourse - as Eagleton (2004) and Ingold (2000) described it - interlinked with people's personal stories and life contexts and thus making their bodies 'a site of dialogue'. The group's comments also touch on crucial questions around what Jameson calls "perceptual numbness" (Jameson, 1989: 39) - and the "recovery of perception" (ibid), experienced when going through a process of 'making-strange' that distances the self from habitual ways of looking at the world. The experience of entering into another cultural context then could be described as a process that holds a potential for reflection and learning, very similar to those described in Brechtian dramaturgy.

These aspects of Brechtian 'strangeness' and those of culture shock 'strangeness' however are varied. As discussed above, culture shock might draw attention to the radically embodied and complex nature of intercultural experience. It can enable self-understanding and trigger an active narrative processing of reality. "I often wonder why we do this and what's the 'best' way to appreciate and love both places and cultures" (Sonja). But culture shock can also stall an individual's capacity for reflective thinking as well as cause recurring emotional disorientation - "because I think in the moment it usually feels like anxiety or shyness for example" (Marta). Through working with drama-based workshops, I would argue that 'intercultural strangeness' is conceptually different from 'Brechtian strangeness'.

Although both evolve from embodied 'estrangement' processes which might lead to a 'recovery of perception' through a distancing from habitual ways of doing and thinking - they differ in their pedagogical preconditions. Our Brechtian research space worked from an immanent ethics in that it took into account intercultural experience as an embodied phenomenon that cannot be easily abstracted from people's life contexts. As such, our research space provoked people's embodied reflection on these experiences through a range of games and exercises that were able to integrate a 'paradigm of embodiment'. The use of the term 'our' - as opposed to 'my' - research space is of particular significance here, as it terminologically centres the collaborative and embodied nature of 'data production'.

Our research space was thus grounded in what I called in the introduction a political-pedagogical-ethical thinking and thus provided a 'safe' space for people to experiment, share their stories and risk to engage in creative ways. Although the 'success' of the research depended on participants' preparedness to engage and couldn't be enforced, their interactions and conversations throughout took place within a pedagogically safe space - protecting participants' vulnerability and bodily integrity - by supervising the degree of emotional and bodily discomfort experienced during the sessions. Intercultural experience, and at its more emotionally challenging end, the experience of culture shock, does not necessarily take place within such a pedagogically safe space.

The 'out-of-placeness' experienced is, as Ahmed wrote, the precondition of an act of making of such a 'safe space'. But community or a supportive space is not given; it has to be worked for and made consciously, especially in contexts where community is eroded and individualism is a norm. Intercultural experience is thus a far more volatile phenomenon, as it places, in the vein of an ethics of responsibility for the other, the responsibility to 'make a safe space' onto each person moving within such intercultural space. The volatility of such a real-life intercultural space, in comparison to our pedagogically grounded research space, lies within this human interdependency. The out-of-place body is to some extent thrown at the mercy of other actors, so 'safe space' might be asserted together, despite, and in the face of fears and tensions that come with incomprehensibility and 'estrangement'.

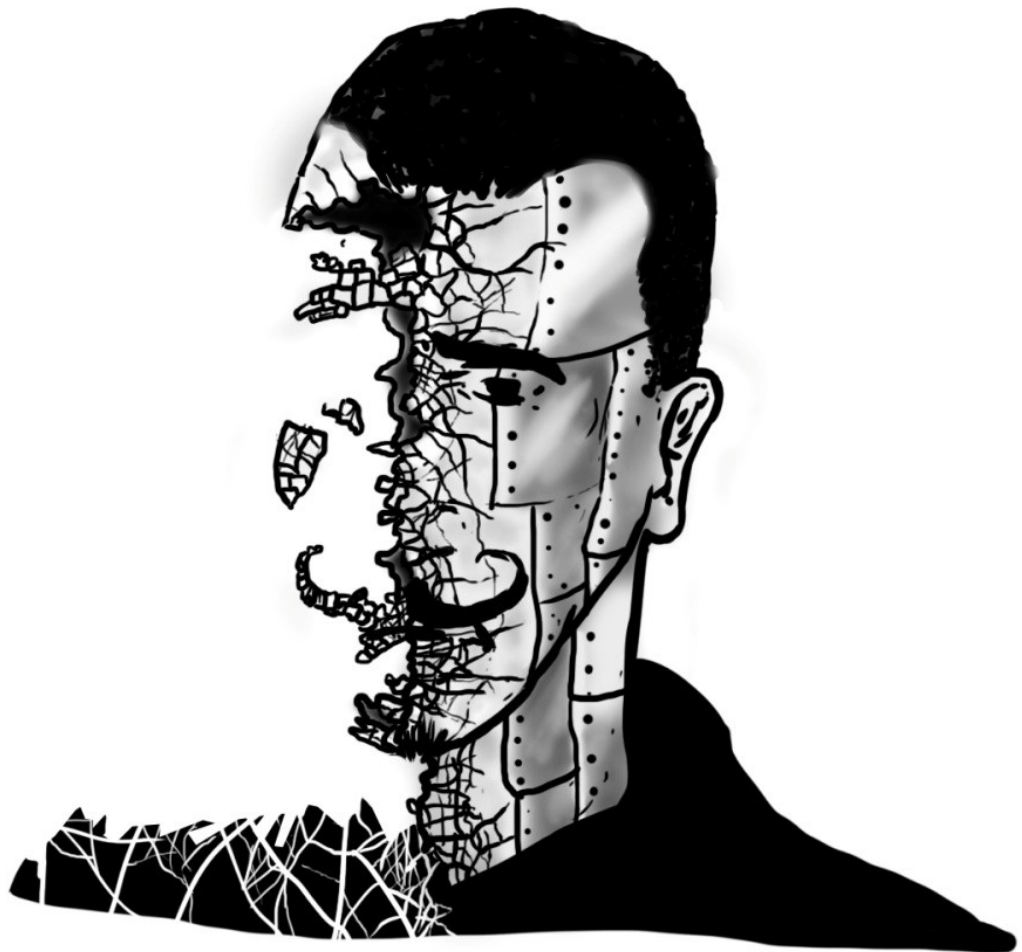
4.16 Cultivating safe spaces through drama?

Given such partly volatile intercultural spaces - how do professional drama practitioners methodologically integrate 'precarity' into their work? What is the underpinning framework that professional applied drama practitioners rely on today? How do they cultivate the kind of safe spaces that are the preconditions for creative acts from and within 'precarity'? The universal ideologies that underpinned the rhetoric of empowerment and participatory democracy in the 1960s, Heddon & Milling (2006) remind us, have been subject to challenge - not least because "the counter-cultural revolution appears to have massively failed, along with other Leftist alternatives" (2006: 230). But if these universal ideologies with their resulting 'rhetoric of empowerment' cannot be claimed as frameworks for a politically conscious applied theatre anymore, what is the discourse referred to by socially committed theatre-making today?

Have universal claims completely disappeared and rhetoric faltered? Has applied theatre made the step towards an 'immanent ethics of responsibility', in the way that MacDonald & O'Regan (2012) envisioned it for intercultural education? In the following section, I will discuss - in the same way I did for IC discourse in chapter one - the political-pedagogical-ethical underpinnings of an applied drama that seeks to further social justice today. Similar to my findings with regard to intercultural education discourse, I encounter a tricky ethical terrain. Applied theatre discourse, with a tendency to base its work on moral universalisms and 'conceptual purity', might equally run the danger of producing not only a reified knowledge, but also the streamlining of potentially radical methods into 'fundable' educational frameworks. My conclusion reflects MacDonald & O'Regan's (2012) criticism of IC discourse.

Submitting to a universalist underpinning, e.g. whereby there is an unquestioned belief in an 'inherently truthful' human rights framework, applied drama methods might unwittingly serve those 'instant' educational goals which I highlighted in chapter one. In leading me back to my twin concerns - method and pedagogy - I claim that thinking around applied drama methods might benefit from being connected to the same 'Brechtian concerns' for a pedagogy that works from precarity rather than purity, as applied drama methods are also intercultural education methods. These include a methodological grounding in an immanent ethics that does not have the goal of conceptual fulfilment, methods that facilitate languaging and a clear positioning towards critical pedagogy. This could ensure 'an experimental space' where drama methods are tested on the basis of 'best practice and pedagogy' - without suffering an instant instrumentalisation into fundable, educational or even economic agendas.

SECTION III: Bodies moving concepts



[Virginia: Der Mensch ist zu brüchig.
Galilei: Nicht brüchig genug]

(Das Leben des Galilei, 1938)

[Virginia: Man is too frail.
Galileo: Not frail enough]

(Life of Galileo, 1938)

Chapter 5:

Drama methods and ethics

5.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, I will discuss the ethical underpinnings of an applied drama practice that is seen to further social justice, or more specifically, that is meant to serve as a tool for furthering human rights implementation in intercultural contexts. I do so in order to elaborate the findings of the workshops presented in the two previous chapters and to deepen the contextual, theoretical and methodological relationship of this approach to intercultural education through Brechtian drama. I will also bring a new literature into dialogue with that of intercultural education through a discussion of key theoretical scholars of political engagement. I call this chapter 'Bodies moving concepts'. It draws on a variety of scholars from different fields - critical pedagogy, anthropology and theatre studies amongst others. All of these fields conceptualise 'from the body' and on the basis of an immanent ethics.

Synthesising these literatures 'creatively' then enacts the same active process of 'making connections' that underlies 'contested' intercultural encounters. The conceptual framework evolving from such 'estranged' reading across disciplines might be accordingly considered as 'becoming' and in flux rather than all-encompassing and self-contained. I will firstly describe the shift in the political language of applied theatre, from a belief in grand political narratives (in the 60s and 70s) to a concern for more local explorations of injustice. As this new 'de-politicised' language has been informed to a large degree by human rights vocabulary, I then go on to further explore the relationship between applied drama and different concepts of human rights. Following from this, I will discuss the static idea of 'culture' that emerges, especially from a relativist perspective of human rights.

Counter-proposing what Santos (2002) calls a re-conceptualising of human rights as radically multicultural, I suggest that his idea of a 'diatopical hermeneutic', David Graeber's (2007) notion of 'anarchist democracy' as well as Terry Eagleton's (2004) 'materialist universality', amongst others, are useful concepts for elaborating on the workshop material and the practice of understanding strangeness. These concepts might aid a review of the role of drama methods as tools for furthering human rights by re-conceptualising them 'from the body', where human rights are implicit in immanent ethics and in engagement with strangeness. I conclude that a Brechtian approach, based on an immanent ethics, might be able to integrate criticisms of conceptual purity into a critical drama pedagogy which could help to initiate a more robust intercultural dialogue.

5.2 Applied Theatre: betwixt and between concept and narrative

Idealistic young theatre workers today are far more likely to be interested in human rights issues than in starting revolutions. (Nicholson, 2005: 130)

In her book *Applied Drama*, Helen Nicholson (2005) describes a shift of political language in ‘socially committed theatre-making’. A belief in grand political narratives, as found in the language and abstract idealism of radical theatre students and practitioners of the 1960s and 70s, has been replaced by a concern for more local explorations of injustice. Idealism, she says, is now “tempered by an understanding of the material circumstances of participants and the local and regional conditions in which the work takes place” (Nicholson, 2005: 130ff).

This ‘new’, largely depoliticised language of applied theatre praxis, with its ideas of humanity and evolving moral principles, has been informed and influenced to a large degree by human rights vocabulary. Furthermore, the strong funding relationship between applied drama, charitable trusts and human rights organisations has influenced rights-based campaigning against torture, discrimination and the effects of poverty. Forms of popular theatre and especially participatory theatre are considered effective tools for change and consciousness raising, and have been used to provoke discussion in places where human rights have been abused.

Forming part of wider regional campaigns, local applied theatre work has been employed to help further an international human rights agenda (ibid: 130). Thus, following from the interventionist role of applied drama in human rights praxis and considering that applied drama workers often aim to base applied drama work on an ethical, rights-based agenda, it seems appropriate and timely to critically explore the tricky ethical terrain in which applied drama work is situated.

5.3 Human rights: Entangled in the capitalist web?

Human rights are supposed to be a strong answer to the problems of the world, so strong as to be universally valid. Now, it seems more and more obvious that our time is not one of strong answers. It is rather a time of strong questions and weak answers. (Santos, 2009: 3)

Political engagement as a Marxist critique in Brecht's theatre now manifests through active engagement with human rights issues and through a literature focused on human rights. The concept of universal human rights however has its critics. International interventions in the name of universal social justice, so the dissenters state, are based on a concept of human rights which mainly evolved out of a very specific historical idea of European liberalism. Equally, the concept of the 'human subject' inherent in human rights legislation derives from a Western philosophical tradition and thus reflects moral values - and a language of description (predominantly expressed in English) - which are not shared by all. As an example of what is being ignored when we view human rights from this perspective, Donnelly explains that "some societies for example have not even recognised 'human being' as a descriptive category (2003: 90)."

As the ethics set down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) are concerned with individual dignity, and the right for self-determination, they do not strive towards complete equality, as strived for by state socialism, for example. Therefore some have argued that such 'universal' human rights can only really be met in liberal democracies (George, 2003: 18). Cultural relativists explain that this individualistic vocabulary typical in discussions of human rights, is thus insensitive to and not inclusive of non-Western, local cultures because of their assumption of Western possessive individualism with its bias toward free market economies and globalisation. Contradictions and moral ambiguities concerning human rights practice, as reflected in the humanitarian rhetoric of corporate organisations and governments, for example, have led to a critical examination of what Santos calls "neoliberal hegemonic globalisation" (Phipps i, 2007: 1) and its influence on the implementation of human rights across the globe.

From this viewpoint, a promotion of human rights can then be interpreted as aiming to impose hegemonic values which could subsequently be argued as aiding the corrosion of local culture and language and thus paving the way for transnational corporations and capitalism to follow (Nicholson, 2005: 131). Donnelly follows the logic of this culturalist argument. Assuming that moral values are solely determined by culture (Western or non-Western) and given that the concept of 'human nature' is infinitely variable from culture to culture, he suggests that "there could be no human rights because the concept 'human being' would have no specificity or moral significance" (Donnelly, 2003: 90). As a consequence, the universal, ethical value of the Declaration of Human Rights, so Paul Rae (2009) concludes, might be more ambiguous and calling for an active mode of interpretation.

The concept of the human and the rights that follow from it may not be as self-evident as the drafters of the Universal Declaration believed them to be. A more active mode of recognition may be required. (Rae, 2009: 63)

5.4 Embracing the paradox: Relative universality

We must take seriously the initially paradoxical idea of the relative universality of international human rights. (Donnelly, 2003: 98)

Criticising the ethical universality of the Universal Declaration however doesn't automatically entail a stance of cultural relativism. There are equally strong arguments against the rejection by cultural relativists - often in the name of tolerance and the concern for cultural diversity - of the universality and justifiability of human rights as culturally exclusive. James Nickel insightfully sums up these arguments in his article entitled "Eight Responses to the Relativists" (Nickel, 2007: 68), and I elaborate on some of these as they are key to my own argument. It is, to begin with, a fact that human rights treaties have been ratified by most governments, in the process of which they have incorporated international norms into their constitutions, bills of rights and legislation. Nickel argues that "governments would not have accepted these treaties if they regarded their content as outlandish or totally alien to their vision of the future" (ibid: 178).

The Universal Declaration generally formulates rights at the level of a 'concept' - an abstract, general statement of an orienting value which insists that states share a limited but important range of obligations (Donnelly, 2003: 90). The language used in human rights formulation is thus broad, allowing latitude to local interpretation (Nickel, 2007: 175) and the formulation of constitutional and legal rights based on local conditions. Donnelly also argues for the definition of international rights as 'relatively' universal on this conceptual, theoretical level, and for recognition of its particularity on the level of interpretation and implementation (Donnelly, 2003: 90f). Such detailed discussion of the universality of human rights and its effect on actual praxis, reflects the complex ethical debates underpinning methodologies and methods operating in 'precarious' intercultural spaces.

The more explicit analysis in this chapter then acts as a continuation of MacDonald & O'Regan's (2012) criticism of an 'implicitly' universal intercultural education discourse, which I covered in chapter one of this thesis. By detailing the complex of problems underlying a reliance on universal concepts, I argue that a Brechtian approach which integrates an immanent ethics, might rupture universality. Giving examples from my drama research workshops, I show practically how the specificities of the research context and practices of my participants, necessarily act as interruptive devices to universal concepts on how to do research and ethics 'properly'. In other words, I show how drama praxis that works within and from 'precarity' can also aid a re-formulation of an 'immanently' ethical research framework.

Anthropologist Sally Merry gives examples of how local practices can rupture and put flesh on an abstract human rights' concept. Embracing the value of their local knowledge and personal experiences, native Hawaiians' campaigning for political sovereignty, looked on the 'Western version' of human rights as an open text, to be interpreted and reshaped according to their local situation. UN debates on indigenous rights have been influenced through local actions such as these which rethink and better contextualise human rights. This indigenous group showed that "it is possible (and necessary) for the global to become local and the local to be globalised" (Merry, 1997: 28f, quoted in Nicholson, 2005: 139). Neither human rights nor cultures can be easily categorised or commodified. There are no clear-cut boundaries; both are dynamic, in flux, "contingent in time and space, and have both porousness and specificity" (ibid: 139).

We need to recognise both the universality of human rights and their particularity and thus accept a certain 'limited' relativity, especially with respect to forms of implementations. (Donnelly, 2003: 98)

Donnelly accordingly encourages a similar complex view in which cultural relativism and universal human rights are not regarded as mutually exclusive.

5.5 Culture is trumps

All forms of cultural relativism fundamentally fail to recognise culture as an ongoing historic and institutional process. (Donnelly, 2003: 102)

The term culture as generally defined and used by cultural relativists, is taken to mean a given, homogenous entity. This is not a very defensible idea. Culture is never static; it is volatile, in constant evolutionary flux, affected by diverse ways of thinking, believing and acting and is shaped by local and global dialogues.

Trade, global media and communication systems, legions of travellers, extensive migration, international organisations and global governance systems have long breached the walls separating countries. (Nickel, 2007: 169)

And then, as Donnelly points out, there is an even further complicating factor; differences within cultures are often as striking and as important as between cultures.

The Western tradition for example, includes both Caligula and Marcus Aurelius, Francis of Assisi and Torquemada, Leopold II of Belgium and Albert Schweitzer, Jesus and Hitler - and just about everything in between. (Donnelly, 2003: 100)

It is thus rather difficult to claim a specific belief or practice for a civilisation, especially when relying on the evidence of political authority which might profit from the preservation of a certain cultural image or practice. Contemporary anthropologists consequently describe culture not merely as a domain where the sharing of common values takes place, but as a site of difference and contestation, in which "power struggles are constantly waged over the meaning and control of 'symbolic capital' and material wealth and power" (Donnelly, 2003: 102).

It is the encounters that take place in this intercultural space of difference and contestation that Sarah Ahmed (2000) asks us take as vantage point for our ethical deliberations - not the pre-conceived values inherent in a seemingly 'pure' cultural concept. In my drama research workshops I realised such relationship-based principles by integrating get-to-know, trust-building games as well as a lunch break in the workshops. This allowed participants to 'settle' in the space, get used to the drama methods and find resonance with other people in the room. The process of making participants feel comfortable in the research space was an important precondition for further creative work.

These methods pedagogically 'protected' the vulnerability of participants and allowed for a collaborative research practice within a 'contested' intercultural space where we could then share, compare and negotiate more freely what it means to live interculturally. The need to acknowledge 'strangeness' pedagogically in my Brechtian research approach was a crucial step towards a research pedagogy which does not promote purity in the discourse, but operates in-between conceptual universality and contextual particularity. Terry Eagleton is frank in his acknowledgement of the need for 'precarity':

Those today for whom culture is a buzzword, or who unequivocally celebrate cultural difference, should recall how much more peaceable human history would almost certainly have been if cultural differences had never sprung on the scene. (2003: 158)

We should thus remain vigilant of the fact that the culturalist accusation "of the corrosive individualism of Western values" (Donnelly, 2003: 102) could cloak selfish political and economic, if not downright criminal, interests. In the early 90s, Malaysia, together with other Asian countries, pressed for a shift in the 'universality' of the international human rights' agenda as it was argued that the document would not appropriately represent 'Asian values'. They proposed that the Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights (1993) places the rights for development on an equal footing with political rights and recognises that states could select standards for safeguarding rights on the basis of historical, religious and cultural particularities. Following this seemingly altruistic attempt to act in the interest of an economically and religiously diverse population, Malaysia then set up a body - the Script Evaluation Committee, which resulted in extreme restrictions of those artists who were seen as interfering with the state's political interests (Rae, 2009: 52f).

Such manipulations of human rights documents for the purposes of nationalist sentiment under cover of acting out of altruistic aims have also occurred elsewhere. As shown in Mobutu's practice of 'salongo' which was enforced as a form of communal labour, supposedly based on traditional African conceptions, in fact derived from colonial practices (Donnelly 2004: 102f). Culturalist arguments can thus be used to serve various self-serving purposes. They can be a powerful means to control "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 1990: 14f); to solidify a political, oppressive status quo and "lining government officials' pockets with the proceeds of massive corruption (...)" (Donnelly, 2003: 102f). Cultural relativism often cherishes a nostalgic image of the past - "the pre-colonial African village, Native American tribes, traditional Islamic societies" - and, ironically, is often invoked by economic and political elites that have long ago grown away from the traditional culture they adjure (ibid: 101f).

Accepting the cultural trump card, even

well-meaning Westerners with a well-developed sense of the legacy of Western colonialism indirectly support such arguments when they shy away from criticizing arguments advanced by non-Westerners even when they are empirically inaccurate or morally absurd (Donnelly, 2003: 100).

So what do these discussions of human rights tell us about an immanent ethics and the embodied practice of intercultural education? As MacDonald & O'Reagan (2012) pointed out in chapter one, an unquestioned acceptance of the conceptual trump card in intercultural education discourse, might lead to 'ethical inertia' in intercultural life praxis. The consultation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights might not automatically translate into a vibrant intercultural life praxis; one that requires improvisational skills when confronted with everyday, ethical dilemmas and the need for on-the-spot judgement and negotiation. How can we move beyond ideas of conceptual purity that are detached from our concrete ways of being human? This is one of the important questions of this thesis which I am looking to address.

I believe we can find answers to such questions when we integrate questioning, reflexivity and criticality within the methods themselves. Such practices facilitate an embodied rehearsal towards a vibrant intercultural life praxis. The improvisation and creative writing exercises used in my drama workshops are an example of methods that worked from the 'ways of being' of participants. By taking their bodily presence and concrete life experiences as the starting point for the facilitation of a discursively open research space, participants' intercultural experiences were shared and reflected upon in a mode of production and with a more immediate impact on intercultural life praxis. Sonja's creative writing piece, for example, was written in a stream of consciousness and 'between' fiction and reality. When shared in the small group, it led the group to not only discuss their real-life intercultural experiences with Glasgow's 'street recycling', but also to come up with concrete problem-solving approaches:

Amy: Maybe us entrepreneurs we can do a newcomers' guide to Glasgow.

Marta: Yea.

Sonja: And also you could just pick it all up and sell it, like fix it and sell it. It's also a good business idea.

Participants' lively discussion reflects the vibrant intercultural praxis that might emerge from approaches to research based on an ethics that 'becomes' within relationships, and isn't presupposed in a 'pure', conceptual form.

5.6 Boaventura de Sousa Santos: universalism versus relativism - a needless debate?

Describing the whole debate around universalism and cultural relativism as an "inherently false one" (Santos, 2002: 18), Boaventura de Sousa Santos seeks to shift focus instead. Rejecting the two extreme concepts as damaging, his ideal of human rights as an emancipatory script involves turning them into a cosmopolitan project that is based on a more immanent, ethical stance. His use of the word 'cosmopolitan' makes this endeavour more transparent and links it strongly to the concerns of intercultural education. "Cosmopolitanism is the crossborder solidarity among groups that are exploited, oppressed or excluded by hegemonic globalization" (ibid: 15). Santos doesn't use the word cosmopolitanism "in a conventional modern sense where it is associated with rootless universalism and individualism, world citizenship and the negotiation of territorial or cultural borders" (Mouffe, 2008: 7).

Instead he embraces a view of cosmopolitanism that is linked to a progressive emancipatory politics. Santos, similar to Ahmed as I discussed in chapter one, rejects the reification of an abstract human rights discourse but seeks instead an 'ethics as praxis'. Santos calls for a dialogue on human rights between people, or who hooks calls "historical beings" (hooks, 1994: 40) - people embedded in the concrete realities of social contestation. Santos suggests that a tentative discourse about human rights which emerges from a contested intercultural space rather than from purist efforts of implementation, might contribute to a "counter-hegemonic form of globalization" (Santos, 2002: 16).

Santos envisions a re-conceptualisation of human rights and a practice of human rights that is rooted in the same concerns for an immanent ethics which MacDonald & O'Regan suggest (2012). There are some key premises of this theoretical perspective which I would like to highlight in relation to my own methods utilised within this research. The 'universalism vs. relativism debate' must be transcended and the focus shifted onto an understanding of human dignity as conceptualised by diverse cultures - even if not labelled as human rights (Santos, 2002: 18). Striving to find what Santos calls "isomorphic concerns" (ibid: 30) among peoples, another core premise involves the acknowledgement of the incompleteness of culture.

Cultures are incomplete and problematic in their conceptions of human dignity (...). The incompleteness derives from the very fact that there is a plurality of cultures. If each culture were as complete as it claims to be, there would be just one single culture. (Santos, 2002: 18)

In other words, Santos refuses the idea of conceptual fulfilment and instead promotes a languaging approach, involving the willingness to engage in more 'messy' intercultural encounters - "with one foot in one culture and one in another" (ibid:20). He calls this a "diatopical hermeneutic" (ibid). I took this 'diatopical hermeneutic' into account within my drama research workshops, translating this practically into the research space. Using methods that allowed the group to creatively hold and bring into dialogue complex and sometimes conflicting ideas and experiences, a Brechtian approach enabled respectful research languaging - without working towards pedagogical or moral endpoints. The separation between self and other accommodated the perspective that cultures are incomplete thus allowing for an open, discursive terrain.

A concrete example of what is meant by 'diatopical hermeneutic', and the practical application of such a concept within my research workshops, is the drama group's conversation on culture shock experience. Despite their differing experiences of culture shock, participants listened to each other and negotiated their complex views, striving to find 'isomorphic concerns' that correlated with their own life praxis. In the following example, one can see the struggle of these isomorphic concerns and the participants engaging with each other on what these concerns mean in their own unique life praxis.

Amy:

And that's a whole different thing. I was thinking what is culture shock? I know what it is, I even have a fairly good idea what's happening in our brains because I did some study on the brain. But when I'm in it, all that knowledge doesn't matter. It doesn't connect with me. I don't know that knowledge when I'm in it, I'm just in it.

Sonja:

Say it again, I think I see it the opposite. I feel culture shock when I notice it.

Marta:

When you can name it. When you can say, this is culture shock.

Sonja:

And when I'm not naming it, then I'm not experiencing it.

Amy:

You see, I think it's the other way. You almost need to be away from it to say-oh, that's what that was. That's what that flurry of emotion and feeling was.

Aleksandra:

Because sometimes, when you are in the midst of it, you can't reflect on that.

Amy:

It's within the reflection that it is what it was.

Marta:

Because I think in the moment it usually feels like anxiety or shyness for example. I don't know I think banal experiences like paying in a bus and not knowing when are you supposed to pay and how, that sort of thing. I think it's very culturally specific because it's different everywhere in the world. How you pay for the bus is different in any place.

Amy:

And they don't give you change here, so it's this piss-off. You pay five pounds for a one pound trip.

Marta:

You are in a rush and people are waiting behind you. It's like this anxiety thing, but you just experience it as anxiety or stress.

Participants' negotiation of isomorphic concerns within the research space reflects the vulnerability, or what Santos called above the incompleteness, involved in forms of open dialogue. It has to be considered that even a languaging approach focused on open dialogue, especially in the context of a more specific human rights discourse, might still produce preconceived agendas, if this aspect of vulnerability is not taken into account. Vulnerability or what Butler (2011: 20) also calls our "condition of precarity" is a methodological precondition but also a methodological challenge for an experimental space of intercultural dialogue. It is a challenge because a position of 'cultural precariousness' might be open for exploitation and the prevailing of hierarchies, even if, as Santos states, it is also a sine qua non in inter-cultural dialogue. Individuals located largely within a Western culture, for example, might be well able to afford the privilege of being vulnerable and admitting cultural incompleteness, given their economically and historically superior positions.

On the other hand, individuals belonging to non-Western cultures might be rightfully cautious regarding depicting cultural vulnerability, especially in the context of past, destructive 'intercultural' encounters. As such encounters have in many cases led to cultural distinction for the purposes of exploitation of indigenous peoples in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, India etcetera which one could argue is the ultimate forced-upon incompleteness, admitting to a condition of precarity may equate to "cultural conquest" (ibid: 27). Judith Butler draws on Emmanuelle Levinas (1998) and Hannah Arendt (1963) to emphasise this point. She highlights humankind's "ethical obligation of co-habitation" (2011: 1) which arises not from cultural, national, religious or racial sameness but precisely from our 'estrangement' and vulnerability to each other.

The fact that all of us are born into the highly heterogeneous population on earth implies an obligation to the safeguarding of that plurality and an ethical bond to those that are other to ourselves. To elaborate further, Butler (2011: 23) explains that "since we do not choose with whom to co-habit the earth, we have to honour those obligations to preserve the lives of those we may not love, we may never love, we do not know and did not choose (...)." In such a discussion, as Santos (2009; 2002) does, Butler also assumes our vulnerability - our being thrown at each other's mercy without our own choosing - which is at the heart of any ethical, intercultural encounter.

But going further, Butler recognises the difficulty of an ethics of vulnerability: “Precarity names both the necessity and difficulty of ethics” (Butler, 2011: 9). A commitment to protect the vulnerability of others thus also includes a commitment to the struggle for the kind of political and economic (and in my case methodological) frameworks that help to establish the equality of all social life. In that, “we struggle in, from, and against precarity” (ibid: 24). Vulnerability then stands as the reason for an ‘ethics as praxis’ at the same time as pointing towards the aim to reduce this very vulnerability so that it will not be exploited.

In relation to my research, the question emerges how our intercultural space of dialogue can remain a teaching space of equal human relationships; one that “struggles in, from and against precarity” (ibid) and wherein this perspective on vulnerability within the intercultural encounter is considered in its full paradoxical complexity. In such work, it is firstly important to ground intercultural methods strongly within an ‘ethics as praxis’ framework that can protect the experimental nature of the dialogic research space ethically, pedagogically and politically. As Butler (2011: 20) presents it:

(...) precarity is indissociable from that dimension of politics that addresses the organization and protection of bodily needs. Precarity exposes our sociality, the fragile and necessary dimensions of our interdependency (Butler, 2011: 20).

The political nature of such an ‘ethics as praxis’ framework might be best understood through David Graeber’s (2007) re-reading of the term ‘democracy’. Looking especially at his anarchist notion of democracy allows a process-oriented understanding of the term; one that outlines “the struggle in, from and against precarity” (Butler, 2011: 20) within intercultural spaces as the ultimate struggle for democracy. In Graeber’s view, democracy should not be seen as a static, closed concept but rather as the result of a process of collective intercultural improvisation. In other words, Graeber is concerned with the democratic potential that results from what he calls “zones of cultural improvisation” (Graeber, 2007: 356). I will next briefly consider how his discussion of democracy has furthered my own understanding of spaces of cultural improvisation.

5.7 David Graeber: spaces of cultural improvisation

Graeber would probably describe Santos' (2002) striving for a diatopical hermeneutic and Butler's (2011) 'struggle in, from and against precarity' as a form of retrieving democracy. In this retrieval, one could say that we are "returning [it] to the spaces in which it originated: the spaces in between [cultures]" (2007: 367). In his book "Possibilities - Essays on Hierarchy, Rebellion And Desire" (2007), Graeber looks into the origins of the word 'democracy' thereby distinguishing its genesis as ascribed to the "Western literary tradition" (ibid: 336) and resituating democracy as deriving from what Graeber describes as "zones of cultural improvisation" (ibid: 356). His embodied understanding of the term democracy claims a liberatory, radical potential arising from the immediacy of relationships, much on the same lines as Ahmed (2000) and Butler's (2005; 2011) immanent ethics.

Further contributing to my understanding of spaces of cultural improvisation, Graeber refuses a purely conceptual morality that is independent of the relationship-dependent act of 'working things out together'. Given Graeber's reclaiming of the term for 'on-the-ground' democratic practices rather than a conceptual democracy, he claims as democratic even those "processes of egalitarian decision-making" (Graeber, 2007: 336) that arise outside of systematic frameworks. In order to be able to claim Graeber's notion of 'embodied' democracy for intercultural education discourse, however, it is vital to firstly clarify the complexity of meaning the term has inhabited over the course of history. What is the difference between a purely conceptual view of (typically) Western democracy and Graeber's immanent, embodied perspective on it? I will turn to addressing this question in the next section in my discussion of the evolution of the term 'democracy'.

5.8 Democracy

When first coined, democracy described a system in which citizens of a community made decisions by equal vote in a collective assembly.

(Graeber, 2007: 330)

Interestingly, for most of its history, the term democracy was also largely synonymous with what we today associate with anarchy - “political disorder, rioting, lynching, and factional violence” (ibid). Graeber suggests that only relatively recently has the word become recognised for a state structure in which citizens elect representatives who bring to bear state power in their name (ibid). However, democracy and democratic practice are now commonly associated with Western civilisation and culture, presupposing the fact that there is such a thing as the West. Graeber argues to that effect that the West as an entity does, simply put, not exist. An assumed coherent concept of Western culture and civilisation relies on the fact that “it constantly blurs the line between textual tradition and forms of everyday practice” (ibid: 336).

The Western tradition though refers more to a concept: an intellectual, ‘abstract’ tradition, a compilation of thoughts and ideas “taught in textbooks and discussed in lecture halls, cafés, or literary salons” (ibid). As typically conceptualised, democracy as derived from a Western intellectual tradition promotes the illusion that democracy can be conceptually ‘owned’ by a certain culture. In turn, this culture is then imparted with an ethical superiority and imbued with the responsibility to be the bearer and guardian of democratic practice. Looking back at framers of the American constitution shows indeed that they are identifying with the literary, classical tradition. At the same time, however, their hostility towards what we would today recognise as democratic practices also undermines the conceptual purity of that very tradition.

Graeber cites John Adams and his *Defense of the Constitutions* (1787), which clearly rejected the more immanently democratic Indian practices that “determined that real sovereignty resided in the body of people” (Graeber, 2007:352). Adams thought that egalitarian societies were an undesirable and unworkable concept due to the fact that monarchical, aristocratic and democratic elements (ibid) divided most societies. The Indians’ immanently democratic way of decision-making, Adams argued, only worked with populations scattered in a large territory.

They [the constitution framers] identified democracy with untrammelled liberty, equality and insofar as they were aware of Indian customs at all, were likely to see them as objectionable for precisely the same reasons. (Graeber, 2007: 330)

‘Democracy’ as practice is not bound to the purity or coherency of a concept - be it a constitution or a cultural tradition. It springs instead from what Graeber calls the “zones of cultural improvisation” (2007: 356), regularly outside of a state’s immediate control. Such intercultural spaces are usually “messy, heavy and people-ridden” (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 61) and hold an interplay of multiple languages and a diversity of experiences and traditions. Within such zones of cultural improvisation, people might indeed be challenged to live from and within a state of precarity as they are thrown ‘at each other’s mercy’ and compelled to find a productive and peaceful way of living together. Graeber gives concrete historical examples for democratic practices that evolved from such ‘people-ridden’ intercultural zones:

Frontier communities whether in Madagascar or Medieval Iceland, pirate ships, Indian Ocean trading communities, Native Americans on the edge of European expansion are all examples here (Graeber, 2007: 356).

Democratic practices can occur everywhere and are not bound to a certain culture or tradition. They do, however, as Graeber reminds us, often arise outside of systematic frameworks (ibid) in new surges of egalitarian practices, as observed within the current global social movements, for example. And with that, “egalitarian forms of decision-making in rural communities in Africa or Brazil should be as worthy of the name democracy as the constitutional system (...)” (ibid). Taking the terminology from Graeber, where ‘frontier’ has been used to denote new practices of democracy, my drama research could equally be described as a ‘frontier’. Operating on the fringes of education research with a range of alternative, eclectic methods and involving a diverse group of participants, we equally had to ‘work out’ a way of being and researching together.

Working from such mode of production where ethics is conceptualised as ‘becoming’ within contested relationships, the participants of this research rehearsed towards an embodied, democratic praxis. Intercultural education research thus became a zone of hopeful, practical utopianism (Carney, 2005) and, I am claiming, a frontier movement. Butler equally describes the spaces ‘in between’ cultures as potential, if fragile, breeding grounds for an ethical praxis:

(...) the question of ethics emerges precisely at the limits of our schemes of intelligibility, the site where we ask ourselves what it might mean to continue in a dialogue where no common ground can be assumed, where one is, as it were, at the limits of what one knows yet still under the demand to offer and receive acknowledgement: to someone else who is there to be addressed and whose address is there to be received. (Butler, 2005: 21f)

Democratic values then cannot be naturally ascribed to certain political structures or cultures, but have to be considered as also evolving outside of systematic frameworks and within the ‘mess’ of intercultural relationships. In accordance with Ahmed’s (2000) claims for an ‘ethics as praxis’, Graeber reminds us that the struggle for ‘democracy’ is the struggle for ethical intercultural encounters. The crucial issues to consider for an immanent democracy then is “how one encounters others as others and, in this specific sense, how one can live with what cannot be measured by the regulative force of morality” (Ahmed, 2000: 138). Such an immanent, embodied understanding of democracy, where it arises as a relation between ‘estranged’ bodies, is also of crucial importance for my methodological deliberations on intercultural research methods.

Phipps (2013) in her article on ‘Intercultural Ethics’ formulates the need for an embodied understanding of democratic practice within intercultural research methods and it is this understanding which I turn to next. She emphasises particularly those methods that work ‘in, from and against precarity’:

Each intercultural situation is unique and has its own form and processes of embodiment which change through encounters with new others, through habituation and over time (Ingold, 2011; Fabian, 1983). Methods which enable this dynamic to be present and emerge include methods of participatory action research, where questions and problems are co-constructed and address needs present in the field of practice. (Phipps, 2013: 17)

Phipps suggests creative methods such as drama and devising as working from such an immanently democratic vantage point. They are described as methods which “(...) are sensory, embodied and which do not simply rely on verbal or textual data gathering in the form of transcripts or questionnaires” (ibid: 19). In the following chapter, I will look into applied drama methods’ potential to facilitate spaces in which the dynamic and embodied democratic potential of intercultural situations is present and emerging. With a particular focus on applied drama methods in development work as they are often used within the above described ‘zones of cultural improvisation’, I encounter a recurring theme.

The usefulness and ethical legitimisation of applied drama methods in development work is often justified by adherence to a human rights agenda. This reliance on a conceptual ethics however calls forth the same complex of problems as discussed throughout this chapter. Is there a danger that the embodied democratic potential of drama methods might be compromised by an adherence to conceptual purity? It is this danger which I have sought to avoid by utilising methods within my research approach which allow research participants to negotiate an immanent ethics in praxis.

Chapter 6:

Bodies and Pedagogy in Applied Theatre

6.1 *Docile bodies*

A fuller understanding of the relationship between theatre and human rights requires that we take a view that is at once more careful and more critical. (Rae, 2009: 33)

Syed Jamil Ahmed (2004) has analysed the complexities of an applied theatre that aims to work within a human rights agenda. Writing about theatre in development in his home country of Bangladesh, he points out the inevitable alliance between globalisation and drama work. Nicholson (2005: 133), with reference to Ahmed's work (2004), criticises the fact that theatre practice is mostly funded by aid agencies "whose human rights agendas are driven by the economic imperatives of capitalist donors of the West." Nicholson voices here the same concerns as critical interculturalists (e.g. Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004; MacDonald & O'Regan, 2012) who warn against the streamlining of potentially embodied, democratic intercultural methods into preconceived conceptual frameworks.

These scholars describe the subtexts that often underlie such efforts towards conceptual purity, often driven by economic or rigid educational frameworks, rather than ethical interests. In my drama workshops such an interplay of subtexts meant adapting my detailed workshop plans, which to some extent aimed to also pedagogically presuppose our interactions, to participants' needs to 'settle' in the space. My 'research agenda', which could have potentially closed down the discursive terrain by 'overburdening' participants, had to be ruptured and readapted. Working from an immanent ethics then consisted of finding a balance between my 'agenda' to pedagogically provoke 'strangeness' and the need to protect participants' vulnerability within a precarious intercultural space.

Speaking further of the context of applied drama work in a development context, Ahmed (2004) criticises the neglect of local viewpoints and complexities in favour of issue-based theatre derived from an NGO's decisions on acceptable, 'fundable' topics, such as social injustice, dowries, polygamy, illiteracy, gender discrimination etcetera. Such a criticism of neglecting local viewpoints is important to consider in my argument for a Brechtian pedagogy. Despite their seemingly unproblematic alignment to an international human rights' framework, local people, Nicholson argues, have no part in setting the agenda for the theatre plays.

Such disregard for the embodied potential of drama methods, to hold a complexity of viewpoints, might then result in an over-simplification of issues or result in “crude pieces of agit-prop” (Nicholson, 2005: 133). Against the principles of a Brechtian pedagogy, which embraces an ‘aesthetic of contradiction’, these pieces might not only not reflect the ‘mess’ - the problems and contradictions of complex, local human rights - but also result in the ‘domestication’ rather than emancipation of participants. This kind of imposed human rights’ advocacy and the resulting colonisation of an open discursive terrain through drama forecloses the development of an emancipatory, immanent ethics on the grounds of conceptual purity.

In his analysis of this theme, Ahmed portrays the rendering of ‘docile bodies’ through drama in development work where the common will is unconsciously subverted by the power of ‘expert’ knowledge (Foucault, 1991:194) which impresses and convinces with power-buzzwords such as ‘transformation’ and ‘self-improvement’ and in the service of pre-conceived concepts. Without facilitating an ‘ethics as praxis’ that questions the driving force behind such rhetoric and engages in the messy process of felt change, applied drama can be used as a way to become complicit in the creation of docile bodies (Nicholson, 2005: 134). In this discussion of applied drama, Ahmed stresses the need for a ‘protected’ space in which drama is allowed to unfold its embodied democratic potential. Drama should then be tested and experimental for its own sake and as a form of cultural literacy, rather than serving instant goals of development.

As experienced within this research, cultivating these experimental, intercultural spaces and acknowledging their potential to bring forth an immanent ethics might result in complex interpretations and even alternatives to static ethical and pedagogical frameworks. Drama as an emancipatory practice “moves bodies which were rendered docile” (Nicholson, 2005:135) and might help participants to more meaningfully inhabit ‘zones of cultural improvisation’ “in which the tensions between competing values of a world in a permanent state of transition are continually played out” (ibid: 135).

6.2 *Can bodies move concepts too?*

(...) it is the mortal, fragile, suffering, ecstatic, needy, dependent, desirous, compassionate body which furnishes the basis of all moral thoughts.

(Eagleton, 2004:155)

Inhabiting a zone of cultural improvisation and moving away from seemingly impervious concepts and pre-determined issues, applied drama methods work in, from and against precarity by taking the 'precarious' embodied 'being in the world' experiences of individual participants as starting points. If moral universalisms have, as Jamil Ahmed (2004) suggests, the power to move material bodies, render them docile and divest them of their creativity, autonomy and potential for emancipated practice, is it possible to reverse this dynamic positively? Can bodies move concepts too? Connecting to the main concerns for this thesis - methods and pedagogy in intercultural education research - and given the discussion up to this point, in this section I present my understanding, which provides the answer that 'yes bodies can move concepts'.

Graeber's (2007) 'spaces of intercultural experiment' offer concrete examples of 'bodies' moving the concept of democracy into an 'ethics as praxis'. In the drama workshops for this research, participants equally 'moved' the concepts of research. By using Brechtian methods which facilitated such 'movement' from the body - my pedagogical and ethical expectations changed, shaped and grew through the interactions and dynamics within the group. Lin's personal story about her 'street incident' for example changed my plans for workshop three. Her story had 'moved me' and, responding to this, I devised Lin's story into an 'estranged' script and gave it back to the group as a rehearsal piece. During rehearsal, Sonja was 'moved' by the 'estranged' use of sticky tape in the scene and seeking clarification, Marta responded to her inquiry. She interpreted the sense of the tape 'from the body' explaining to Sonja how her bodily interaction with the 'estrangement' device allowed for an embodied interpretation of the story.

Such constant ‘movement’ of bodies and ideas, not towards docility but towards the liveliness of active, embodied reflection, cannot as easily be achieved it seems under the shrill pressures of functionalist, universal approaches, be they morally or economically driven or driven from both motivations. One could say that historically, so Graeber (2007) explains, these spaces of cultural improvisation which include, for example, frontier communities, pirate ships, Indian Ocean trading communities and locations where Native Americans existed on the edge of European expansion, fell through the cracks of universalising ethics geographically. Driven into messy, contested intercultural spaces, individuals existing within these spaces had to figure out a way of living and functioning as a community of diverse individuals.

As shown in the drama workshops, the process of ‘working out’ and rehearsing how to live and function as a group takes time. Bodies have to settle, attune and find rhythm. Mistakes have to be made and concepts readapted and tried out again. The question posed for an intercultural education discourse is then how time and space can be ideally utilised in order to facilitate experimental spaces. Further, I question, how can these spaces be protected, as far as possible, from instrumental pressures and universal moralisms so that the space between self and other can be kept open “in expectation and hope without ever needing arrival and acceptance” (MacDonald & O’Regan, 2012: 12)?

It is therefore, as Phipps & Gonzalez (2004), Ahmed (2004) and Nicholson (2005) suggest, not enough to employ new, creative and pedagogically progressive methods in substitution of the old functionalist ones. Rather we must struggle for the kind of methodological frameworks that allow for the cultivation of protected experimental spaces, in which these methods can be tested and developed in praxis and devised with participants. Otherwise, these pioneering creative methods might be just as easily appropriated into functionalist educational frameworks that they then have to ‘serve’ in order to provide ‘quick’ pedagogical fixes. MacDonald & O’Regan’s criticism regarding an immanent ethics thus remains the cardinal point in my search for methods and pedagogies which can facilitate experimental, intercultural spaces in which ‘bodies are allowed to move concepts’.

Instead of pursuing, even implicitly, methods that serve a discourse of moral and pedagogical endpoints, the discourse of intercultural education “should be grounded in an ethics that arises from the immanence of the relationship with the other rather than through a Kantian appeal to a transcendental moral signified” (MacDonald & O’Regan, 2012: 12). Such a grounding in an immanent ethics would in turn allow drama methods to unfold their radical potential to initiate dialogue and languaging in a protected space of experiment. Referencing Derrida and Levinas, MacDonald & O’Regan suggest that a grounding of intercultural education discourse within an ethics of responsibility for the other allows for an open discursive terrain and maintains a separation between self and other.

In the following section, I will continue to aim for such a grounding of an intercultural education discourse by drawing on scholars that work on the basis of a materialist universality and who are opposed to conceptual or idealist universality. What unites these scholars is their firm grounding in an immanent ethics. Taking our concrete materiality as ‘human beings in the world’ as starting points for their methodological and theoretical deliberations, they provide an underpinning to my proposal of an ‘intercultural space of experiment’. I will devise this space of experiment by drawing on the fields of critical pedagogy, anthropology, sensory ethnography and, finally, a basing in Brechtian thought and practice - which underpins this thesis.

6.3 Having a body is a way of going to work at the world

Terry Eagleton (2004) claims our body as a site for dialogue. Our body is what we share with humankind and it is actually what makes dialogue possible in the first place: “Having a body is a way of going to work at the world [and interpreting it]” (2004: 166). He continues by saying that our body is also what marks us as distinct from humankind, explaining that “the body of the other is at once strange and familiar” (ibid: 161). This contradiction - familiarity and alienation played out between our bodies - is thus part of our common nature and should be taken into account by every genuine attempt to formulate universality (ibid). Assuming this materialist, rather than idealist universality, Eagleton also claims our bodies as the first paradox to consider when striving towards an ethical positioning. “It is the mortal, fragile, suffering, ecstatic, needy, dependent, desirous, compassionate body which furnishes the basis of all moral thought” (Eagleton, 2004: 1).

An immanent ethics then starts from the living body or as Victor Turner (1982) and Brecht (1964) suggest from the premise of ‘men and women alive’ and not as Jamil Ahmed (2004) feared from ‘the docile bodies’ on the coat-tails of a universal ethics. Critical educator Paulo Freire’s (1996) pedagogical considerations evolve from such a view, as well, as they are based upon preserving and promoting the ‘liveliness of men and women alive’ and a rejection of educational concepts that render living bodies docile. He claims the encounter as a space for dialogue and personal development.

At the point of encounter there are neither utter ignoramuses nor perfect sages; there are only people who are attempting, together, to learn more than they know now. (Freire, 1996: 71)

6.4 Freire: *Learning as becoming*

Connecting with Graeber’s notion of an embodied democracy which arises from intercultural encounters, Freire equally trusts “in the oppressed and their ability to reason” (Freire, 1996: 48). In other words he promotes the notion that an ethical practice can be developed by everybody and as part of life praxis given a protected dialogic space. Such ethical practice as developed between participants in the drama workshops is what I call ‘relationships of care’. Whilst sharing the creative writing pieces in the small groups, Lin openly asked for clarification on a strangeness experience, shown in her discussion of the ‘door near the library’. Marta and Amy generously offered their knowledge, that the door was a piece of artwork by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, without making Lin feel insufficient.

In my understanding, they enacted an ‘ethics as praxis’ in which knowledge was not used to establish status but rather to ‘make connections’ and build relationships. The dialogic spaces created within the research, in this case during the small group’s sharing of their creative writing pieces, allowed for a discursive openness in which ‘ignorance’ wasn’t regarded as individual failure but as a social concern and as an opportunity for sharing and collective improvisation. Alternatively, without such open discursive terrain and confronted instead with a suffocation of ‘improvisational spaces’, for example through preconceived conceptual frameworks, intercultural dialogue through drama might run the danger to instead fall into “using slogans, communiqués, monologues and instructions” (ibid: 48).

Such examples of failures in the Freirean dialogic space calls to mind Ahmed's (2004) account of imposed human rights advocacy through drama methods which produced plays ending in "crude pieces of agit prop" (Nicholson 2005: 11f). Although Freire's binary logic of the oppressed versus the oppressors might appear at times overly simplistic and which has been criticised by a number of scholars including the feminist scholars Crabtree and Sapp (2009: 3) for neglecting gender issues, his thoughts on liberation are nevertheless crucial. bell hooks even suggests that his writings on critical pedagogy themselves invite a critical interrogation of this flaw in the work (hooks 1994: 49).

Widely cited as a key text of emancipatory and critical education, Freire's theory further illuminates my discussion thus far and I now focus on further explicating Freire's affinity to the discussion. Opposing any form of "banking education" (Freire, 1996: 52) where learners are seen as 'docile bodies' and no more than vessels to be filled with knowledge, Freire emphasises instead a student's role as responsible subject, open to be educated but also, more importantly, able to educate others. Knowledge, according to Freire, is dialogical and emerges from people's inquiring attitude towards the world and each other, leading to a democratisation of the learner-educator relationship. Learning, taken from this perspective, is revealed as dynamic and emerging 'from our bodies' and within our human struggle for meaning.

Education resulting from this view is claimed not as a fixed canon of things worth knowing but as an open process of struggle for meaning within a reality in flux and teeming with contradiction and uncertainty. Critical thinking, so Freire believes, evolves from thinking within our contested relationship with the environment and each other, and cannot take place in "ivory-tower isolation" (ibid: 58). Human activity, if given the space, operates between action and reflection. Theory and practice are both needed to illuminate each other in praxis and prevent an unhealthy drift to either "mere verbalism or mechanistic activism" (ibid: 106). Learners' creativity, in Freire's view, is dependent on an education as a practice of freedom which considers people not as abstract and alienated from the world but involved in it.

Similar to Eagleton (2004), Santos (2002) and Butler (2005; 2011), Freire suggests the “unfinished character of human beings” (ibid: 65). Acknowledging the incompleteness of human bodies and with it the precariousness of dialogue, education itself has to be considered as an ongoing activity that is constantly ‘becoming’. As a consequence of taking this perspective in my research, reflection was integral to the methods that I chose to employ. Such reflective methods asserted education and therefore research ‘as becoming’. They offered reflective spaces between the metaphoric gaps of participants’ complex, embodied experiences. Taking these embodied experiences as starting points for deliberation, Brechtian methods stimulated multilayered modes of production and reflection on what it means to live interculturally.

As a consequence of such an embodied view on methods, and this is of crucial importance especially for intercultural education discourse, educational programmes can only succeed if they take people with their material, culturalised bodies as the starting point for conceptualising a project. Freire makes a strong claim for an immanent ethics of responsibility: the content of educational programmes has to be rooted in people’s ethical concerns - their “doubts, hopes and fears” (ibid: 77). Freire then aspires to the same ‘anarchist’ notion of embodied democracy as developed by David Graeber. Seeking cultural synthesis rather than cultural invasion, intercultural spaces of experiment are not sought so that a superior one can “teach, transmit or give anything [to the other] but rather to learn with the people, about the people’s world” (ibid: 161) - to the mutual enrichment of both.

6.5 Teaching to transgress

I celebrate teaching that enables transgressions - a movement against and beyond boundaries. It is that movement which makes education the practice of freedom. (hooks, 1994: 12)

Following on from Freire, it seems natural to bring in the work of bell hooks who equally argues for more embodied educational methods. Throughout her work hooks proudly and passionately states the influence Freire’s thoughts had and still have on her work. In her book “Teaching to transgress” (1994), she expands on Freire’s ideas on education as liberatory practice by basing it on critical feminist pedagogy - or what she calls an “engaged pedagogy” (hooks, 1994: 206).

In the following section, I will refer particularly to four aspects of her engaged pedagogy that might furnish a grounding of intercultural education discourse within an immanent ethics of responsibility. These four aspects - *voice, body, language and silence* - enlighten, as based on an immanent ethical positioning, the role of education as 'a practice of freedom'. Reviewing institutionalised education from her experience as a student as well as a teacher, hooks exposes most higher education classrooms as rather reactionary, undisturbed spaces. She strongly criticises the liberal ideal of a harmonious diversity in which multiculturalism does not upset social relations but is imagined to flow smoothly "within cultural forms of uninterrupted accords" (ibid: 31) finding forms of expression in the "comforting melting pot idea" or the "rainbow coalition" (ibid: 30).

Donnelly's criticism of the denial of culture as a site of difference and contestation, when discussing the cultural relativists' concept, aligns with the "social amnesia" which hooks (ibid) calls this way of thinking. Drawing the focus back to intercultural encounters as a stage where cultural capital is constantly and powerfully negotiated, intercultural educators are challenged to work from within this contested space. *Voice, body, language and silence* might act here as guideposts for an immanent ethical stance that ultimately resists the idea of an 'undisturbed' multiculturalism.

6.6 Undisturbed multiculturalism

The project of multiculturalism poses serious challenges to liberal democracies, to their fundamental aim to protect the freedom and equality of individuals. (Prato, 2009: 13)

In order to be able to contextualise hooks' criticism it is essential to look closer at what she calls an 'undisturbed' multiculturalism and why it has met with such criticism. Such a multiculturalism is what Turner (1994) calls 'difference multiculturalism'. In this view, multiculturalism - as described, for example, by cultural relativists is seen as a mere political goal that celebrates or even presupposes diversity (Turner, 1994: 40f) - possibly to the detriment of an individual's rights. In its extreme form, so critics point out, such 'difference multiculturalism' "exacerbates ethnic differences, essentialising them and limiting the individual's scope for the definition of self-identity" (Prato, 2009: 2). A view of cultures as closed, self-perpetuating entities that are possessed by a strictly defined group of people then runs counter to the idea of an individual's liberal freedom and right of choice (ibid: 3) to reinvent oneself, negotiate one's identity and even reject one's own 'inherited' culture.

Multicultural policies have thus sometimes been described as being mere acts of tokenism that exoticise otherness (ibid: 2) and emphasise group rights in a form of cultural determinism. This criticism of cultural determinism as expressed in multicultural policies is reflected by those critical educationalists and interculturalists quoted throughout this thesis. Ahmed (2000), Phipps (2013) and Macdonald & O'Regan (2012) for example oppose such static view of culture and reject multiculturalism's equalisation of cultural relativism with moral relativism. They emphasise instead culture's processual aspects, seeing it as constantly in the making and existing only in the act of being performed. Resisting a view of culture as something abstract - a universal set of values that can be conceptualised and ultimately essentialised into a policy document - these scholars focus instead on 'ethics as praxis'; one that evolves from people's complex, concrete everyday practices.

6.7 Back to hooks' critical education methods

Taking people's concrete being in the world as a starting point for methodological thinking, bell hooks seeks out education methods that don't deny the complex reality of living interculturally. Our voices, so hooks states for example, instantly reveal us as historical beings and embed us within the realities of social contestation: "Who speaks? Who listens? And why?" (hooks, 1994: 40). Instead of allowing the educational space to be an undisturbed place, hooks suggests an emphasis on the building of a 'contested' community. Far from denying or playing down differences, she aims instead to "create a sense of shared commitment and a common good that bind us" (ibid).

Listening to each other and acknowledging the uniqueness of each individual voice represent meaningful acts on the way to building a community characterised by mutual respect. Giving examples from her own teaching praxis, hooks encourages her students to keep journals or write paragraphs during class which are then read to one another (ibid). Further addressing the existing mind/body split in the academy, hooks describes the potential challenge that talking about the body could pose to the existing status quo:

Once we start talking in the classroom about the body and about how we live in our bodies, we're automatically challenging the way power has orchestrated itself in that particular institutionalised space. (hooks, 1994: 136)

Recalling the traditional notion of the teacher standing behind a desk or, immobilised, in front of the class, hooks parallels this picture with the fixed, unchangeable body of “knowledge as part of truth itself” (ibid: 137). The teacher’s body is deliberately rendered docile within the romantic ideal of the teacher - but instead of being stripped of his or her power, “the person who is the most powerful has the privilege of denying their body” (ibid). Challenging these hierarchies, an ‘education as the practice of freedom’ emphasises instead the necessity to move the body, to consider its limits and to “work with and against them” (hooks, 1994: 138). Reminded of Eagleton who argues for a materialist universality which takes the body as a basis for all moral thought, a discourse from the body challenges existing assumptions about neutral, ‘objective’ forms of knowing which do not take into account who is sharing the information (ibid).

Refusing the assumption of the docile, invisible body then leads to rejecting “the teaching of information as though it doesn’t emerge from bodies” (ibid: 139). In accordance with Santos (2002) who sees the acknowledgement of cultures’ incompleteness as a prerequisite to a robust dialogue, hooks envisions embodiment as a stance of criticism - that can enable the questioning of biases and fixed power-relations within a learning environment. Also directing her attention to the value of people’s first language and the role of the vernacular in resisting and challenging the status quo, she states: “Standard English is not the speech of exile; it’s the language of conquest and domination” (hooks, 1994: 168). Reflecting on the former struggle of displaced, enslaved Africans forced to speak English, the language that they often associated with shame and humiliation, hooks inquires into their speaking English as a space of resistance.

The process of appropriating the “language of the oppressors” (ibid: 169) and using it as a means of bonding, so hooks says, inspired a culture of resistance which would aid a recovery from the trauma of enslavement (ibid). As a way to reclaim personal power, they worked through and with the limits of their bodies - the fragmented grammar of their vernacular and the words of their ‘Black spirituals’ reflecting their fragmented realities - “making their language conform to the truth of their many selves” (ibid: 172).

Nobody know de trouble I see - their use of the word nobody adds a richer meaning than if they had used the phrase no one, for it was the slave’s body that was the concrete site of suffering. (hooks, 1994: 170)

Creating a different speech, a “counter-language” (ibid) also opened up pockets for an alternative cultural production and unconventional epistemologies - crucial for counter-hegemonic viewpoints (ibid: 171). In the research workshops such alternative cultural production happened for example in workshop four when the group sang the nursery rhyme ‘three blue pigeons’ in Pashto, Polish, French, Spanish and German. Singing in our mother tongue asserted everybody’s complex, intercultural ‘double’ lives as well as ruptured the academy’s dominant (English) discourse. Sitting and listening to the ‘new’ words and phrases - connections were made not on an intellectual, linguistic level first but on an emotional, embodied level. We attuned to each other through the rhythm and playfulness of the song.

We recognised the discursive purpose of the song through habitus - remembering our own childhood experiences of singing - rather than through the ability to linguistically decode every individual language. In order to work towards multiple perspectives, hooks equally encourages her students to use their first language and translate it, thus refusing the assumption that higher education alienates from one’s mother tongue. Reversing the traditional mechanics of who speaks - who listens - and why (see above), hooks seeks to cultivate Graeber’s spaces of cultural improvisation and harness their embodied democratic potential.

Quoting June Jordan (1985) and her book *On call*, hooks insists that ‘true’ democracy evolves from the “spaces in-between”, when diverse people are thrown together and try to find a way to live together. “If we lived in a democratic state our language would have to hurtle, fly, curse, and sing; (...) (June, 1985: 30, quoted in hooks, 1994: 173). The recognition of everybody’s voice, the call for an embodied spirit, and the valuation of the richness of a multi-linguistic community, however, doesn’t deny the essential role silence plays in educational contexts.

[As an act of resistance to] a culture of capitalist frenzy and consumption that demands all desire must be satisfied immediately, it is crucial to keep in mind that we learn from spaces of silence as well as from spaces of speech (hooks, 1994: 174).

6.8 A *'paradigm of embodiment'*

Learning is not a transmission of information but an 'education of attention'.
(Gibson, 1979: 254, quoted in Ingold, 2000: 22)

Equally critical of a Cartesian ontology that separates the activity of the mind from that of the body in the world (Ingold, 2000: 165), Ingold argues that the mind is not given prior to entry into the social world. Rather, it develops throughout a lifelong engagement with the peculiarities of the world and its people. He suggests that cultural symbols, and with it cultural knowledge, do not emerge from culturally specific schemata and concepts stored within the mind and brought into use within experience, but rather, are socially constructed. Ingold draws especially on the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977; 1984; 1990), and expands on his concepts of 'habitus' and 'body hexis', to provide further philosophical underpinnings for an intercultural education discourse based on an immanent ethics.

The claim for a 'paradigm of embodiment' in intercultural education discourse, which takes seriously people's concerns and considers intercultural dialogue as a prerequisite to an embodied democratic practice, strongly correlates with Ingold's notion of the formation of knowledge. Culture, says Ingold, is an embodied phenomenon rather than a pre-determined, static entity. Due to the fact that people respond practically to the features of their environment, they develop a certain "habitus" (Bourdieu, 1984: 101) which "exists only as it is instantiated in the activity itself" (Ingold, 2000: 162). Habitus, suggests Ingold, can be understood in the sense of a practically developed skill, which cannot be acquired through formal instruction, but is shaped through bodily training. Located within the body, habitus is difficult to break down conceptually (ibid).

Nevertheless, our habitus shapes our relationship to the environment and vice versa and could thus "be described as a pattern of thought-feeling" (ibid), or what Bourdieu calls a practical sense of doing things (Bourdieu, 1977: 78f). Evolved from our carrying out of specific postures and gestures - "a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and using implements" (Ingold, 2000: 162), habitus leads us to become versatile, successful social agents, navigating the world around us. Our "body hexis" (Bourdieu, 1977:82) then describes the ingrained, embodied patterns, developed over time, of being and doing: "a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking" (Bourdieu, 1990: 70).

It refers to our performing identity in the world, making our body a site of “incorporated history” (ibid: 66). Working from Ingold’s and Bourdieu’s description of habitus, I introduced the ‘modelling clay’ exercise in workshop one. When participants sat on the floor and modelled clay, they were transported into a more playful ‘childhood habitus’. Connections were made on a more personal level and through the activity of the game. The playful ‘plasticine’ approach thus relieved momentary research performance angst and instead took as its vantage point the participants’ emotional well-being and their need to ‘settle’. Feeling and thinking then, according to Ingold, does not take place within the “interior subjective space of images and representations” (Ingold, 2000: 162), but emerges from people engaging and interacting.

Thinking is seen as closely interlinked with doing; or, to state another way, “thought is embodied and enacted” (Lave, 1988: 171, quoted in Ingold, 2000: 162). Taking this perspective on knowledge construction as linked to enactment, Ingold draws conclusions which could be essentially important for any approach to intercultural dialogue. The fact that people from diverse backgrounds differ in their perception of the world is not explained by assuming cognitive schemata or cultural models which produce different interpretations of sensory experience. It is rather due to a different body hexis, to “previous bodily training,” that individual “senses are differentially attuned to the environment” (Ingold, 2000: 162). Rather than seeing the body as a mere receptor for sensory data, which the mind then interprets, Ingold suggests that processing is instead an integral affair “not confined within the skull, but freely penetrating both the body and its environment” (ibid: 165).

This is particularly important for our discussion concerning an immanent ethics that arises from our bodies and our mutual relationships. If intercultural communication is not just a matter of de-coding and understanding the cognitive systems or cultural concepts particular to a specific culture, any approach to dialogue should embrace a ‘paradigm of embodiment’. Attuning one’s body to the practices of others in the same ‘space of cultural improvisation’ might allow an embodied understanding that could then be compared with the kind of knowing particular to one’s own cultural ‘bodily training’ (ibid). Grounded in practical activity, there can be no hierarchy of cultural knowledge assumed, not only because this knowledge is ultimately incomplete, but because it also only exists ‘in the making’.

As Ingold explains:

The world becomes a meaningful place for people only through being lived in, rather than through having been constructed along the lines of some formal design (Ingold, 2000: 168).

6.9 Sensory ethnography

Ingold's 'paradigm of embodiment', which requests intercultural communication to take into account radically immanent concerns, such as performative and embodied dimensions of people's thinking in the world, affiliates to Sarah Pink's view on the ethnographer as apprentice. The ethnographer is seen as somebody "who learns about another culture by engaging and learning first-hand the practices and routines of local people" (Pink, 2009: 69). In the same vein as Ingold, Pink suggests that culturally specific perception is a matter of bodily training. Suggesting a practice of "emplaced ethnography" (ibid: 25), which attempts empathy "by trying to insert ourselves into the trajectories of others" (Pink, 2009: 40), Pink's argument involves tapping into another's body hexis.

By aligning our bodies, rhythms, tastes, ways of seeing and more with theirs, we begin to become involved in making places that are similar to theirs and thus feel that we're similarly emplaced. (Pink, 2009: 40)

Ethnographic fieldwork is regarded by Pink as a multisensory, embodied engagement. It is important to consider that sensory ethnographic fieldwork sees ethnographic place as event, permanently negotiated by its authors - the researcher and the participants alike (ibid: 30). Aligning to the view of cultures as sites for negotiation and often contestation, research through apprenticeship seeks to initiate an embodied dialogue between diverse ways of knowing. Encouraged to quite literally step into somebody else's universe of meaning, the researcher, whom Pink calls "the emplaced active participant ethnographer" (ibid: 69), takes on the habitus appropriate to the environment. As a result, new perceptions could be compared with those rooted in one's usual body hexis and "creatively construct correspondences between our own and other's experiences" (Pink, 2009: 40).

For me as researcher, this emphasis on relationships then means an acknowledgement of forms of ‘emplaced knowing’ as they evolve from “emplaced engagement with the practices and identities that one seeks to understand” (ibid: 71). In workshop three of my drama research workshops, such forms of emplaced knowing occurred during script rehearsal through what I call later the opening of a ‘not-but’ moment. During the rehearsal, verbal elements were subordinated to more somatic elements - the script would be read in a ‘staccato rhythm’, for example. Such Brechtian methods for script reading unfolded those forms of ‘visceral empathy’ outlined by Grasseni:

through participation in a practice, one eventually achieves flexibility, resonance with other practitioners and an attunement of the senses.

(Grasseni, 2004: 53, quoted in Pink, 2009: 71)

6.10 Summary

In the previous chapter I discussed the tricky ethical terrain that underpins applied drama methods that seek to further human rights. Since such drama methods are also intercultural education methods working within contested intercultural spaces, they are enmeshed in the same tensions between universal concepts and immanent ethics, as described in chapter one. Underpinned by a universal concept (in this case human rights) that might give prevalence to preconceived educational and economic agendas, how can applied drama methods retain their radical potential to initiate open dialogue and embodied reflection?

In my discussion of intercultural education discourse I argued that applied drama methods and intercultural education methods might both benefit from being grounded in an ‘immanent ethics of responsibility’ rather than moral universalisms. Connecting to my earlier discussion of an immanent ethics as evoked by MacDonald & O’Regan (2012), I sought to flesh out an alternative philosophical underpinning by drawing on a variety of scholars - from the fields of anthropology and critical pedagogy mainly. What united these scholars was the way their theoretical and often pedagogically powerful deliberations all worked from the premise of an immanent ethics or what Ahmed (2000) called an ‘ethics as praxis’.

I explicated Graeber's (2007) notion of an embodied democracy, referred to Eagleton's materialist universality, and translated both those concepts into critical pedagogy's concerns for education as a practice of freedom. Working from a 'paradigm of embodiment', these scholars, mentioned throughout the chapter, all implicitly endorsed Ingold's (2000) view that feeling and thinking - and thus knowledge itself - emerge as patterns of thought-feeling from our bodily engagement with our physical environment and each other. Given this embodied view on knowledge construction, intercultural understanding and empathy become matters of 'apprenticeship' (Pink, 2009) which require an active participation in people's everyday physical worlds.

This theoretical and conceptual ground-clearing was a necessary transition to my second praxis section. The ethical-pedagogical-political considerations position my research firmly within an 'ethics as praxis' model and act as the 'foundation pillar' to build a protected research space of experiment.

6.11 Where do I stand? - back to Brecht and pedagogy

Pink suggests a view on ethnographic research that takes seriously this embodied dimension and envisions a researcher who actively participates in and practically learns about other people's being in the world. This 'emplaced' researcher thus works from an immanent research ethics - an ethics that is changing and appropriately shaped to the demands of the respective environment she participates in. I understand myself as such an emplaced intercultural education researcher. Therefore, I do not intend to 'enact ethnography', as Turner (1982) does, with a focus on a complex representation of ethnographic data. But neither am I employing Sarah Pink's (2009) sensory ethnography in the sense of an 'alternative' ethnographic research method.

My research approach derives in the first place from my positioning as an intercultural educator and applied drama practitioner seeking a research ethics as drama praxis. My choice of research method is just naturally mixed - downright eclectic even - and cannot be easily allocated to just one field of scholarship. My discussion draws on various fields, as I explicated above, such as anthropology, critical pedagogy and theatre studies - choosing in the process those scholars who conceptualise 'from the body' and thus on the basis of an immanent ethics. The eclecticism, messiness and interdisciplinary nature of the ethical and methodological considerations that underpin my research then find their natural home in a Brechtian method.

Brecht, as I described in chapter two, places ‘strangeness’ at the very heart of his theatre concept and his resulting ‘epic theatre’ practice. In this epic theatre, Brecht makes an immanent ethics as theatre praxis his cardinal conceptual point. Brecht cultivates, not perfected universally applicable theatre methods, but rather ‘spaces of experiment’, or what Graeber (2007) calls ‘spaces in between’, in which bodies might be challenged to indeed fracture and move universal concepts. As a methodological consequence that emerges from Sarah Ahmed’s (2000) criticism of a reified academic discourse and MacDonald & O’Regan’s (2012) call for an immanent ethics, my own utilisation of Brechtian research method allows an understanding and exploration of international students’ experiences of ‘strangeness’ through their active participation in such Brechtian spaces of experiment.

Within these ‘protected’ spaces of experiment, my research participants and I, as the emplaced intercultural education researchers, co-create the direction of the research together, and enable my creative research methods, or “intercultural makings” as Phipps (2013: 18) calls them, to emerge as “a highly productive way of collecting, analysing and reflecting on the visceral dimensions of human life (...)” (Phipps, 2013: 19). Working and researching ‘from the body’ and considering knowledge as something that emerges as a relation between bodies within the drama workshops, we become apprentices of each other’s worlds. “By aligning our bodies, rhythms, tastes” (Pink, 2009: 40) we step into each other’s universes of meaning.

Taking time to share food and have chats over cups of coffee could even be described as a Brechtian *Verfremdungs*-device, because it provides a space for reflection and breaks the flow of the event, changing its tenor from one of doing-creating to one of being-dwelling. Lulled into a kind of relaxed, coffee-house mode of thinking (and researching) - possibly similar to Brecht’s cigar-smoking, detached observer (Brecht, 1964: 44) - pressures are momentarily abandoned, bonds created, fresh thoughts developed and wits recovered. In other words: relationships are relished. In this coffee-house-mode of researching,

the sensory ethnographer can benefit from being attentive to the possibility of learning through the sensory sociality of eating with others, and recognising how the sharing of tastes, textures, eating practices and routines can bring otherwise unspoken meanings to the fore (Pink, 2009: 76).

With a view to Victor Turner's ideas, the sharing of food as research then asserts 'the liveliness of knowledge' emerging from such spontaneous "communitas" or "social dramas" (Turner, 1982: 48; 90). Sharing food celebrates our aliveness and the process of attuning our senses to each other and enjoying each other's company. And it celebrates the lively knowledge that emerges from such celebratory encounters. Given that this new 'drama environment' was not anybody's 'natural habitat' during my series of research workshops, our apprenticeship could not be considered a stepping into a pre-existing, or in any way 'stable', sensory universe. Research participants and researcher came to the 'strangeness' of the research and the drama as novices, only bringing their preparedness to 'align their bodies' and participate in the event.

By aligning our bodies and rhythms in the drama exercises, as well as our tastes when sharing food, we were in apprenticeship: we were learners getting comfortable with each other's ways of being and interacting. As we started to language, struggle for meaning and find a rhythm together we also created new meaning. It is important here to emphasise this stance of active 'creation', because it distinguishes my positioning as intercultural education researcher from that of an ethnographer. My approach to sensory apprenticeship is steeped in critical pedagogy first - what hooks (1994) calls 'engaged pedagogy'. This type of engaged pedagogy focuses on the pedagogical potential of those 'research spaces of cultural improvisation' as teaching spaces of human relationships, or as Freire (1996) might call them, spaces that allow for education as the practice of freedom.

My underlying research ethics as drama practice thus work within the premises of an engaged pedagogy that regards sensory apprenticeship methods - e.g. hook's ideas about listening to each other's voices, practising and talking about embodiment in the research space - as methods within a 'pedagogy of resistance'. These ideas are set against the rendering of docile bodies and methods that, in a time of educational and financial crisis, might be instrumentalised into more static educational frameworks infused by universalising claims and implicit agendas. And this leads me back to where I started out in my introduction: with the intention to marry critical engaged pedagogy to intercultural drama methods, so that these methods might contain their 'experimental status'. Grounding intercultural drama methods within critical pedagogy and an immanent ethics might create 'spaces of intercultural experiment' resilient against 'cost-benefit' arguments as well as nurture instead education and research as a practice of freedom.

These intercultural spaces however are contested spaces, working within the precariousness of intercultural dialogue and the complexities of human identity. There can be no given, or easily achieved 'community' assumed; but it might be hoped and worked for on the ethical basis of our mutual incomprehensibility. Through active, intercultural praxis then, with no ethical and pedagogical endpoints promised, my intercultural drama research space might stand its ground as an experimental space, in which knowledge is regarded as emerging as a relationship between bodies. Holding the potential to affirm people's 'liveliness' - as opposed to rendering their bodies docile - we rehearse towards a vibrant, intercultural praxis and begin to put into practice Giroux's (2004: 20) "burden of pedagogy".

SECTION IV: Halt!



[“Meine Frage ist tatsächlich immer:
Aus welcher Perspektive wird eine Geschichte erzählt?
Wer erzählt die Geschichte, in wessen Namen und für wen?
Wer maßt sich an, unser aller Geschichte zu erzählen?”]

[“My question is actually always:
From which perspective is a story narrated?
Who narrates the story, in whose name and for whom?
Who claims to tell all our stories?”]

(Müller, 2009: 6)

Chapter 7:

Emerging ethical questions

7.1 Introduction

Interruption is an important aspect of Brechtian theatrical pedagogy, according to Walter Benjamin (1992: 147) and German director Heiner Müller (2009: 6). It is important to stop, pause, and look back at the stories told, question them again and ground them in a political context. Chapter five and six have stopped the flow of the workshop description and looked again at what this work means in the context of applied drama, human rights education, and critical pedagogy. Looking ahead to workshop three, it is important to stop yet again and define more closely what kind of safe space my research provided. Although the workshops were carefully planned and games and exercises chosen with consideration of people's bodily comfort and previous experiences, an element of risk could not be fully excluded.

When working from an immanent ethics where bodies are allowed to encounter and shape and shift pre-planned concepts, the emotional affects on participants cannot be fully anticipated. In the following chapter, which serves as a prelude to workshop three, I will use two concrete examples of stories that evolved from workshop two to show that, despite a pedagogically safe space, reflections on ethics require an ongoing concern. In the following, I will describe how an improvisation exercise 'accidentally' acted as an interruptive device to the smooth flow of workshop two, thereby posing questions regarding the 'ethical conditions' of the research. The improvisation exercise triggered Lin and Jamal to remember a personal, traumatic event which they shared within the group.

These remembered events, in their potential to cripple the teller's capacity for reflective thinking, might be described in terms of a culture shock experience, as discussed in chapter four. Despite my pedagogical-ethical grounding and the 'safe and supportive' research space claimed above, I was confronted with several ethical questions. Did I, even if unintentionally, harm Lin and Jamal, by asking them to relive an emotionally disturbing event? At the same time, I was tempted to transcribe Lin's story into a script and use it for further exploration in our next workshop, especially when I considered how inherently dramatic it was in a storytelling sense. But was it ethical to use such an emotionally laden story for the sake of academic and artistic exploration? Did I claim to be able to tell others' stories without considering the effects of such acts of telling?

In my search for an answer to these questions in praxis, I will turn again to the critical applied drama literature. Here, I find James Thompson's (2005) 'telling links', and Heddon's (2008) criticism of too easily relating storytelling to therapeutic models, useful starting points for my own ethical considerations and reflections on my responsibilities as facilitator and researcher. Both scholars think from within an immanent ethics in that their own ethical dilemmas and subsequent reflections in writing evolve from situations of drama praxis. Their self-positioning as 'reflective practitioners' (Neelands, 2006) thereby reflects my own. As an emplaced intercultural education researcher, I am also discursively interwoven in the research event. Researching from a position of 'in-it-ness' and of praxis, I reflected on the concrete ethical and pedagogical questions that arose from our encounters while keeping in mind the concepts put forward in the critical applied drama literature. How can I deal with immanent ethical dilemmas arising from our encounters within (and despite and because of) a pedagogically grounded teaching space?

7.2 Stories emerge: Lin and Jamal

One bad experience I had when I was leaving the Barclay residences, you know the student accommodation. It was a Sunday morning, 11am, but it seems no one is in the street. All the streets are empty. I don't know why. And I went to Tesco to buy something and when I came back, there's a big street and I notice that there are four or five teenagers, or guys, who walk on the other side.

I just go on my way but when they noticed me, they suddenly came to me and surrounded me, you know four or five guys. And they said two sentences.

The first one is: 'Hi, can you help us' and the second one is 'We are hungry'.

Now, at that time, I just wanted to throw my plastic bags and run away, I didn't know what to do.

And I was so afraid at that time.

And then the third sentence.

'Can you tell me if there is any restaurant or supermarket near here?'

I felt so safe at the time.

And I said: 'Yes' and I gave them directions and they left.

After that I still felt very uncomfortable.

I can't stop thinking 'what if...' something happens, what am I doing?

There was no one on the street that time. (Lin)

Prior to workshop three, I had reread everybody's creative writing pieces, watched the footage recorded in the two previous workshops, and listened over and over to the many conversations we had had. Two of last week's conversations that had taken place outside of the creative writing exercises especially haunted me. The first was 'Lin's story'. During an improvisation exercise, Lin found herself in a tableaux which constituted her being 'confronted' by a group of three. It seemed that through this particular grouping of bodies, Lin was reminded of a real-life incident where she had been confronted by a group of strange teenage boys whilst walking home from Tesco one Sunday morning.

Connected to her feeling of fear whilst grouped in the tableaux, Lin told her Sunday morning experience openly to the group between the drama exercises. Lin was still quite emotional about the event and still moved by it. I was worried that I might have caused her to dwell on this potentially traumatising experience through my choice of drama exercise. Questions of personal security in Glasgow still preoccupied Lin, despite the 'happy ending' of her story. As she says in her account - "I can't stop thinking what if... something happens, what am I doing? There was no one on the street that time" (Lin).

After listening to, transcribing, and reading Lin's story, I was struck by its inherent dramatic suspense. The way Lin narrated the story revealed an almost classic dramatic structure. Was this a sign that it was not the first time she had told the story? Maybe by re-telling the story several times already, it had changed shape and now almost intuitively communicated Lin's anxiety as well as holding the audience's attention. It was a good piece of storytelling suitable to use for drama-based exploration in our workshop. But was it ethical to 'use' a story that had caused Lin maybe considerable trauma as a piece of drama? By reliving her story again would Lin's trauma be consolidated rather than transformed?

Or did Lin's already 'dramatically' structured telling of the story reveal that she was 'over' it and able to distance herself to an extent that she was not harmed by her memory anymore? And what would the alternative be of not telling the story she had chosen to tell? Of perhaps thinking this belongs in a different therapeutic space, but one which would cost money? Acting on the story - or not - would both be ethical actions firmly fixed in the dilemmas of immanent ethics, and with no transcendent answer. To complicate matters, it wasn't only Lin who had a flash of memory during the improvisation exercise.

Equally, when Jamal was positioned within a body sculpture (which included people lying on the floor), the grouping of bodies triggered a painful memory for him. He described the scene of the shooting of a young girl, compared the alignment of bodies, and talked about his attempts to help. I do not remember any more details of his account. I do remember though the tense silence in the group, careful gestures of listening and everybody's loss for words. Again I strongly asked myself: was I causing Jamal trauma or indirectly harming the group who had to 'carry' the story after being exposed to the trauma that came with it? James Thompson writes in his book 'Digging up stories: applied theatre, performance and war':

Stories can't be separated from how they constitute and reconstitute the tellers and the listeners. Playing with stories becomes a play with the bodies of participants! (Thompson, 2005: 30).

7.3 Risk in the Brechtian research space

Considering Thompson's quote in relation to my own questions brings to mind the fact that storytelling is not automatically an innocent, naturally transformative, or even 'healing' endeavour. A pedagogically and ethically grounded intercultural research space does not prevent further ethical or pedagogical questions. On the contrary, our Brechtian research space - as it takes seriously the embodied dimension of 'strangeness experience' - fosters that element of risk and volatility. It emerges from a research community that is not given but has to be built and worked for. Following MacDonald's and O'Regan's lead (2012), I chose not to ground the research space and its storytelling methods in pedagogical universals that would serve to protect them from ongoing scrutiny.

On the contrary, since I worked from a stance of immanent ethics, there could not be any assumed ethical or pedagogical endpoints; instead, ethical and pedagogical concerns emerged from the workshops themselves and had to be negotiated within that specific research context. Without such universal pedagogical safeguarding, 'estrangement' - and with it risk and volatility - can become acknowledged elements on the way towards building a research community: "The process of estrangement [and with that an element of risk and volatility] is the condition for the emergence of a contested community" (Ahmed, 2000: 94).

Despite setting up pedagogical conditions, e.g. through drama exercises that take relationship building as an organising principle and working from an immanent ethics, these methods require, due to their inherent element of risk and volatility, ongoing ethical-pedagogical reflection. Without such considerations, could the intercultural research space of experiment be potentially harmful to people?

Stories can unburden. They can become the triumphant mode for denouncing violence and having oppression heard, challenged and resisted. However woven within them are tropes, forms, iterations and mystifications that are also capable of re-marking violence or constructing new relationships of division, anger or bitterness. (Thompson, 2005: 6)

In addition, bell hooks's (1994) engaged pedagogy suggests that the act of listening to one another's stories in our research space is a method of resistance against the reification of our - the researcher's and participants' - relationships, as well as one that acknowledges our historicity, and, with it, our bodies, as sites of dialogue. The refusal to reify academic 'strangeness discourse', or research relationships that position bodies as docile, means that data cannot then be treated as if it does not emerge from the bodies themselves. bell hooks sees such a 'paradigm of embodiment' within liberatory education not only as a stance of criticism, but as a chance for an alternative production. An education as the practice of freedom emphasises the necessity to move the body, to consider its limits and "work with and against them" (hooks, 1994: 138). In this last phrase, hooks takes into account the risk and volatility that emerges within the intercultural space of experiment and recognises the complexities of working from an immanent ethics.

Aspects of pedagogy - methods and ethics are 'becoming' and changing within the context of the embodied research. The body's limits are worked with and against whilst participants and researcher experiment with unfamiliar methods and working out their research ethics. Within this process of working with the limits of the body, there is a need for ongoing, active reflection on the side of the researcher-facilitator, so that she can reassess, rethink and adapt the conditions of the 'safe space' in a way that is appropriate to the intercultural space of experiment. With such a view on pedagogy and ethics as 'becoming', I, as reflective practitioner, turn again to applied drama scholar and practitioner James Thompson (2005; 2009). I discuss my ethical questions in the context of his work, which produced similar ethical dilemmas, in order to actively reassess the pedagogical-ethical set-up of the intercultural space of experiment for workshop three.

7.4 Digging up stories

In the background of Thompson's research and teaching of applied theatre in war-torn Sri Lanka, lies a deep concern that the process of 'digging up' narratives in drama contexts cannot only initiate dialogue, respect, and comfort, but also bear the potential to enact blame, aid revenge, and foster animosity (Thompson, 2005: 25f). Although I am not working within an immediate context of war or conflict, I find Thompson's careful considerations nevertheless relevant to my research because some of my participants are working in the aftermath of conflict. For this reason, it is important I take into consideration the more negative dimensions of 'digging up' narratives. The creating together of stories, and thus also their reverberations, as alluded to above, are at the heart of my Brechtian space.

My practice-based research takes as its pedagogical basis Ahmed's idea of an 'estranged community' and combines it with a Brechtian view on *Verfremdung*. Following from this is a strong emphasis on together-creation and stories as performative gestures that might build and negotiate a contested intercultural community. As illustrated in the two examples from the second workshop above, this seemingly altruistic and 'empowering' idea to build community through stories, when applied to practice, suddenly becomes a more complex ethical issue. During the improvisation exercise, Jamal remembered a traumatising incident experienced in his native Pakistan. With Thompson's quote in mind, it was obvious that that this story 'moved' Jamal: it constituted and reconstituted him as well as the listeners. The story played with the bodies of participants.

Significantly, Thompson (2005) advises that one must not just examine the content of told stories, but must also look closely at the "structure of their telling and retelling" (ibid: 24). Assuming that the form in which stories are retrieved and told reveals "complex value systems that need to be considered" (ibid), the acts of performing, listening and retelling are "caught into a matrix of difficult and perhaps dangerous value assumptions and judgements" (ibid). An example from one of Thompson's Sri Lankan workshop situations might clarify the complexity of storytelling discourse. Within a training course for professionals working with young people affected by war, Thompson offers various experiential techniques, from which the group then chose those that would be most appropriate for their individual work situations.

Performed by Thompson as a critique of single narrative and complete accounts (which he considers crucial in war contexts), the living-mural exercise, for example, aims to give space to multiple stories, and show that there is no monopoly on truth, but respect for all stories (Thompson, 2005: 28). This mural exercise has its origins in Boal's image theatre - a theatre method that is rooted in critical pedagogy.

7.5 Image Theatre and the Theatre of the Oppressed

Augusto Boal (1998; 2000) was a Brazilian theatre maker, writer and politician. He is the founder of the Theatre of the Oppressed which developed out of the radical education movements of the 60s and 70s. His first book of the same title, written in 1974, was directly influenced by Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy as expressed in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and first published in 1970. Boal's method of 'image theatre' is one of many drama methods he developed with the aim to empower people to reflect on real-life problems and rehearse towards social and personal change through participatory theatre. Image Theatre is rooted in physical theatre. It explores abstract concepts or emotions through 'still images' which act as the starting point for critical reflection.

Thought is portrayed and stimulated in concrete, embodied form. Thompson's (2005) living mural exercise - as is the same for Boal's image theatre - works from such a mode of embodiment. Spontaneity and non-verbal physical expression are key elements of the exercise. The only rule is that bodies must touch and align themselves as flat as possible against a wall. As the image forms person by person, the audience looks on while the fresco appears in front of them. The moment the picture is complete, volunteers are requested to interpret it. "Be aware of the telling links" (Thompson, 2005). In the context of the use of this image theatre method within Thompson's Sri Lankan workshop, a Tamil participant read each statue as the twisted corpse of a person thrown into a shallow grave.

He read it as a precise act of violence known as the Chenmani massacre linking it to the 1996 discovery of graves of murdered Tamils in a place called Chenmani in the Jaffna peninsula (Thompson, 2005: 29). Thompson describes how this interpretation was met by a silence in the group which consisted not only of Tamils but also of Sinhalese. The man's reading caused a clear tension in the room and an anxiety that many participants referred to in later discussions (ibid). The Chenmani interpretation evoked multiple other, interrelated stories. It did not act as a single narrative solely. It provoked the memory of other notorious crimes against Tamils, and therefore affirmed the "Tamil sense of the conflict" (ibid) whilst simultaneously presenting a possible challenge to the self-concept of the Sinhalese participants.

'Digging up' this story (and its reverberations) in Thompson's workshop could have ended through the defending of certain positions in the conflict which would be an "echoing [of] the rhetorical battles between warring parties" (ibid: 34). The "playing with discursive constructions of cultural and ethnic identity" could thus become "involved in the dynamic of human suffering" (Kapferer, 1988: viii, quoted in Thompson, 2005: 30f), especially in a context where tensions have erupted into violence. This discursive impact of image theatre methods has relevance for my own understanding of an immanent research ethics. In an intercultural education research context, the negotiation of a 'contested' intercultural community through drama might similarly involve a partly discursive construction of cultural and ethnic identity.

Within this re-making, and the building and negotiating of intercultural community, there is also the potential for a deconstructive dynamic, especially if the links and reverberations of stories are not considered. With Jamal, for example, his memory of violence did not trigger a dynamic of suffering in the group. Despite carrying the story, it did not share the trauma of that same event. The group's intense listening (and intense silence) still hinted, however, at the telling links rendering the bodies of participants silent. In applying Thompson's 'tellings links' to Jamal's example within my own research, I was able to actively review my ethical questions and make more grounded ethical judgements on how to use participants' stories in workshop three.

Lin's story and her recounting of the confrontation with a group of teenage boys, which had obviously caused her some anxiety, did not trigger a severe 'dynamic of suffering' within the group. But one can question, had it helped her to 'unburden' herself? The telling of personal, sometimes traumatising stories through drama (or other expressive arts techniques) is often unproblematically linked to therapeutic impacts and curing effects. In the following section, I will discuss the ethical and pedagogical complexities of linking the confessing, the telling or the sharing of stories to claims for transformation and empowerment. This will further help me to ground my pedagogical decisions for workshop three in active ethical reflection.

7.6 Is storytelling inherently therapeutic?

The challenge of relating storytelling to healing becomes clearer when regarded in a wider historical context. Deirdre Heddon in her book on 'Autobiography and Performance' focuses in her second chapter (2008: 53ff.) on performances engaging with cataclysmic historical events. Living in an "age of testimony and bearing witness" (Felman & Laub 1992: 5, quoted in Heddon, 2008: 53) - typified for example by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as staged in South Africa, and in an age of persistent violations of human rights, what Miller & Tougaw (in Heddon, 2008: 55) call an age of trauma, one is often stated as the mechanism of recovery for the other. Testimonials and bearing witness have been used within recovery methods for traumas experienced through violations in human rights.

Arguing firstly from a psychoanalytical perspective where the therapeutic effect of narrating painful events is emphasised, Heddon reminds us to consider the individual not just as privatised subject but one which is embedded in the realm of public politics (Heddon, 2008: 57). The prevalent assumption that confession denotes liberation is also, according to Heddon, too often taken for granted in areas such as law, therapy, medicine, politics and popular media. In South Africa, for example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission gave voice to a multiplicity of personal stories which were however assimilated into a single narrative in order to project a unified, South African nation (Hutchison, 2005: 354ff, quoted in Heddon, 2008: 58).

The therapeutic model which relates to cure, fails to address or have an impact on the structural and historical problems (...) talking couldn't cure material social conditions. (ibid)

Sharing or confessing a painful story of the past might imply that there is no suffering in the present because “we have put the past behind us” (Heddon, 2008: 58). Performing stories could thus contribute to further oppression just as much as aid a better, reformed future. In the context of intercultural education, such instantly assumed curing effects might gloss over ‘precarity’ as the precondition of making contested intercultural community as such practices could be said to also work on the basis of a universalising ethics. By claiming ethical and pedagogical endpoints for the process of telling a personal story through drama, facilitators must be careful as such ‘curing methods’ might run the risk of undermining the very concept it is build on - the separation between self and other.

MacDonald & O’Regan (2012) have also criticised the reliance on universal ethics through pedagogical buzzwords such as empowerment and transformation. They explain that practices reliant on such ethics could be said to be working towards conceptual fulfilment and assuming purity in the discourse (MacDonald & O’Regan, 2012: 3). Acknowledging their criticism in a consideration of my own ethics within this research, I did not rely on ‘transcendental ideals’ and glossed over the ethical dilemmas which arose ‘on the ground’. Instead, I worked from an immanent ethics, integrating a mode of ongoing ethical and pedagogical reflection within my chosen, Brechtian research methods. Acting from my ethical positioning as an emplaced intercultural education researcher, I was not in a position to easily claim a conceptually presupposed transformative or even empowering impact on participants.

But on the other hand, as I argued drawing upon bell hooks earlier on, there *does* reside the potential for resistance within these methods of listening to each other’s stories and acknowledging each other’s presence through drama. In order to distinguish between methods with a ‘curing’ effect and a ‘resistance’ effect, Heddon (2008) makes a crucial point. She considers the performance of painful, felt experiences as bearing the potential - not so much with an aim necessarily for a cure - but for “the construction of cultures and publics” (Heddon, 2008: 58). hooks (1994: 12) similarly emphasises the creation of new learning and teaching cultures through resistance methods that take embodiment into account.

Regarding embodiment as a stance of criticism and resistance ‘from the body’, against institutionalised power-relationships within the university classroom, hooks does not easily speak in pedagogical and ethical universals. Resistance methods are those which do not gloss over the complexities and estranging aspects of building intercultural classroom community. Instead they allow for the acknowledgement of our mutual responsibility towards building contested community. Striving to hold a plurality of complex narratives and, in so doing resist dominant, grand narratives, ‘estrangement’ resides at the heart of resistance methods. Heddon gives an example of such resistance methods, which could be seen in opposition to methods conceptualised for ‘curing’, in the context of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s decision to reconstruct South African culture politics.

Instead of aiming to portray a singular South African identity for the future through a confessing and curing method, local theatre groups “enabled the presentation of plural, complex narratives and perspectives” (Hutchison 2005: 360, quoted in Heddon, 2008: 59) independent of state and law and in the vein of resistance methods as discussed by hooks (1994: 12). The theatre space as enacted by local South African theatre groups became a space of resistance. With the actors’ bodies as sites of complex dialogue which revealed them as historical beings, they resisted a universalising, single cultural narrative. Storytelling was not employed for testimonial purposes in search of cure or aiding the construction of a single South African historical narrative. Instead it was storytelling for the purposes of striving to resist and confront enforced conformity. It was used to perform complexity, not in order to alienate and divide, but to establish ‘estrangement’ as the precondition to an act of making contested community, recalling Ahmed’s (2000) understanding of the term.

7.7 Is it ethical to use Lin and Jamal's stories as dramatic pieces?

With regard to the situation when Lin and Jamal shared their stories during the improvisation exercise of the research workshop, in light of the understanding derived from the previous section, I could not easily claim and justify a 'therapeutic effect' and then appropriate their stories dramatically for the research. One could say, I was not ethically let off the hook because there was an inherent curing effect to confessing or 'dramatising' stories within drama practice. Through insights gained for my own research context by considering the analyses by James Thompson (2005) and Deirdre Heddon (2008), I decided not to use Jamal's story any further. The 'telling links' were too strong. Although his recollection of this particular memory did not unveil a landscape of memories of violence within the group, it nevertheless rendered the bodies of participants silent.

It had perhaps already done its work. Also, I was not in a position to decide that he had 'overcome' his traumatic experience enough for me to 'dig up' more of the story and use it as a dramatic piece. Moreover, I could not judge how much the group was affected by such a strong narrative of violence, even with the recognition that it was a second-hand experience for the majority of participants. And most of all, as Jamal comes from a war-torn background, I could not be sure what other memories might have been triggered by his initial one. My responsibility was 'not to mess' with his memory, to leave it alone and not to provoke further trauma for the sake of a 'good story' to experiment with.

Should Jamal feel the need to share more of the story, my responsibility would be to provide a safe space where his story would not be exploited but listened to and carried by the group. In discussing this in supervision, I was aware that my personal burden of ethics affecting and governing my actions and the formal ethical approval processes for the university were sometimes working against each other in complex ways. Ethical discourse is embodied in different ways in the researcher and for me there was a tendency to ascribe guilt to my actions. This is an important dimension of any research with human subjects and working with an immanent ethics means it is the responsibility of the researcher to learn to carry the messiness of research and to acknowledge that any actions may have untold consequences.

The key is to be able to ‘halt’, interrupt or pause the action so that choices can be made where these are possible. I could not have fully anticipated the ‘telling links’ even by ever more diligently thinking through the dynamics triggered by each drama exercise. But it also occurred to me that Jamal is an adult with his own abilities for thinking. He possessed agency and he had decided to tell this story. I had to respect his decision and trust his judgement. My responsibility as facilitator and researcher was to be conscious of the embodied and estranging elements of the research which required ongoing pedagogical and ethical concern on the basis of an immanent ethics and, for me, this meant discontinuing to use this story for research purposes.

Lin’s story was different to Jamal’s. Similarly, she recounted a situation of great discomfort but her story, in contrast to Jamal’s, was finally mitigated. Her feelings of fear seemed more temporary and context-specific. Lin told her story from a more emotionally distanced position and she was able to verbalise her memories in a narrative structure. Jamal on the other hand told his story in fragments and, he seemed to be still emotionally overwhelmed by his memory. Despite moments of feeling out of her depth and potentially physically threatened in the situation which Lin recounted, her actual physical safety was preserved though she recounted that she possessed a lingering feeling of anxiety.

Lin’s assessment of the precariousness of the situation was pacified and the teenagers were much less of an actual threat than she initially expected. Lin was confused and anxious but physically unharmed. And yes, the story reverberated in her body. As she stated: “I can’t stop thinking what if... something happens, what am I doing?.” Ultimately, however, she was able to distance herself from the event, reflect on it and name her fear. Through such reasoning, in my opinion, her experience seemed to have a much less damaging impact in comparison to Jamal’s account. Lin’s story was not one of uncontrolled violence and individual hopelessness. It was a story told in the context of a temporary culture shock experience that was successfully coped with and which did not harm her physically or emotionally. In the context of our research, hers was also a story that reflected to some extent what we had already talked about with regard to the impact of culture shock as a radical bodily experience. Lin’s culture shock experience connected to participants’ views which I will recount in the following section.

In chapter four, I quoted Amy, Aleksandra and Marta who had emphasised the twofold nature of culture shock, with its potential to open reflective spaces but also to emotionally overwhelm the individual. The group discussed that culture shock might be only consciously experienced and reflected upon afterwards, when one was at an emotional distance to events. During the actual experience itself, culture shock might manifest itself in terms of a stream of negative emotions - shyness and anxiety for example - which can make distanced reflection impossible.

Amy:

You see, I think it's the other way. You almost need to be away from it to say-oh, that's what that was. That's what that flurry of emotion and feeling was".

Marta:

"Because I think in the moment it usually feels like anxiety or shyness for example (...).

Lin's story itself conveys a sense of this twofold nature of 'strangeness experience', illustrating that "migration stories are 'skin memories': memories that are felt on the skin" (Ahmed, 2000: 92). In her vivid description of feeling out-of-place when encountering a group of youths on an early Sunday morning in the streets of Glasgow, Lin reveals the immediate, embodied nature of culture shock where one is thrown into a bodily disorienting situation and challenged to improvise and cope as best as possible. Lin's story also touches on the precariousness that underlies the making of intercultural community the way that Butler (2005; 2011) and Ahmed (2000) describe it. Lin's street incident, in its ambiguity and contestedness references the mess of intercultural being in which learning, personal growth and community are not guaranteed but have to be actively sought for and sometimes painfully lived through.

7.8 Lin's story and its Brechtian aspects

Indeed, it is in the street scene that Brecht's thoughts seem to matter most. (Carney, 2005: 115)

By sharing her story, Lin had already performed a sort of Brechtian 'third person' acting and living even before I consciously turned her story into a Brecht-type script. Lin narrated an 'everyday' incident that had affected her emotionally in the past. Through her retelling, she reflected and processed (as I discussed in reference to Jameson, 1998 above) her feelings at the time: "I was so afraid"; "I felt safe"; "I still felt very uncomfortable" (Lin). In drawing on such retellings, she was framing her narrative in an almost 'classic dramatic structure' which included an introduction, the rising action, a climax and the falling action. In that, Lin's story in itself already constituted a formal, narrative 'stepping back' from this particular event which had caused her shock before.

Her narrative, despite communicating traces of the situation's emotionality, also acts as the framework that enables her to reflect 'more soberly' on the situation. "After that I still felt very uncomfortable (...) ". Lin's own meta-comments on her feelings during the event were part of the storytelling performance. Just like in Brecht's example of an ideal, gestic performer - the witness and narrator of a street accident (Brecht, 1950) - Lin narrates as a witness to her own 'street incident'. In that, her telling is already partly gestic; it involves 'footnotes' on her emotional state at the time and referencing these back to the original text/event as it was happening.

Now, at that time, I just wanted to throw my plastic bags and run away, I didn't know what to do; And I was so afraid at that time; I felt so safe at the time; After that I still felt very uncomfortable; I can't stop thinking what if... something happens, what am I doing? (Lin)

By adding stage directions and translating her account into third person, I simply added another layer of *Verfremdung* which distanced the event even further and added more 'footnotes' (Appendix IV, Rehearsal texts: There was no one on the street that time). Allocating three distinct speakers to the different parts of her narrative, I also translated her first person account into third person, added stage directions and spatial elements (a trail of sticky tape, the grouping of bodies).

The application of these Brechtian ‘defamiliarisation’ techniques to Lin’s verbatim account also act as interpretive strategies, which to start to fix what Brecht called a ‘not-but’ performance. In such a performance, the implied possible alternative outcomes reside within the story: “I can’t stop thinking what if... something happens, what am I doing?” (Lin). Carney describes the process of ‘estrangement’ in Brechtian theatre as the “stepping back from habitual behaviour”, while also describing it as “the maintenance of thinking as a lived process” (2005: 118f). Carney suggests that third person narration might open a space for alternative thinking and ultimately change as it is less concerned with fixed concepts and rather with the “embracing of crisis and the enablement of a sense of non-identity” (ibid).

In relation to Lin’s story and our previous discussions around culture shock experience, the ability to ‘embrace crisis and enable a sense of non-identity’ also appears a crucial challenge for intercultural education. As I discussed in earlier chapters, strangeness experiences as they are radically embodied can disturb our habitual, embodied sense of a familiar world. They can, for example as with Lin, disturb our habitual sense of security and leave us with a ‘flurry of negative emotions’ and bodily discomfort. This leads to major improvisational challenges to ‘figure things out’, to navigate the space anew and to re-settle with the people in it. Our “body hexis” (Bourdieu, 1977: 87) needs time to adapt to the new physical environment. Strangeness experience thus opens spaces of crisis, non-identity and out-of-placeness which bear the potential for personal growth and development at the same time.

Within this crisis space, the individual might be emotionally overwhelmed and momentarily hindered in reflecting and thinking dialectically. In the process of living through such crisis and coping as best as possible, where an individual reaches out (and is reached out to), the individual might also develop a habit of ‘improvisational thinking’ or as Carney describes it, “thinking as a lived process” (2005: 118). The challenges for intercultural education then reference back to Giroux’s “burden of pedagogy” (2004: 20) as outlined in the introduction. The ‘maintenance of thinking as a lived process’ gains the same relevance for thinking through matters of intercultural pedagogy and research, in this case regarding the ethical, pedagogical and political concerns as ‘becoming’ within the context of the programme or the research set-up.

The burden of intercultural education is then to facilitate pedagogical spaces, be it in research or education which are rooted in participants' concerns - their "hopes, doubts and fears" (Freire, 1996: 96) - that can then act as training grounds for such dialectical thinking. Considering Ingold's (2000) discussion that feeling and thinking emerge from people's interactions, these dialectic, pedagogical spaces within intercultural education can be used to research and acknowledge 'estrangement' as the precondition of an act of making an intercultural research community. As a consequence, the pedagogical space prioritises the importance of 'aligning bodies in rhythm and tastes', and thus can be considered for relationship formation as an organising principle, so that we might make place together and step into each other's universes of meaning.

Based on an immanent ethics, such intercultural pedagogical spaces might then become a training ground for embodied, dialectical thinking that rehearse towards a vibrant intercultural praxis. Brecht in his *Messingkauf* dialogues (1965) refers to such embodied dialectical praxis as "everyday behaviour[s] as if being observed by an audience (Brecht 1965: 47, quoted in Carney, 2005: 127). The act of living dialectically seems like the "possibility of living in the third person, living with a manifest split or self-conscious gap between one's thoughts and actions (...)" (Carney, 2005: 127).

Chapter 8:

Adding Verfremdung -

Lin's story turned into a Brechtian script

8.1 Introduction

A critically engaged reading full of footnotes and turning back on the text, Brecht called complex seeing. (Carney, 2005: 33)

In chapter eight, I will discuss the dialectic, pedagogical spaces that opened in the context of specific rehearsal exercises in workshop three. By means of a post-performance conversation between Sonja and Marta, I show how our Brechtian script (Appendix IV: 'There was no one on the street that time') led to a concrete act of "thinking as a lived process" (Carney, 2005) and a socially constructed knowledge emerging from participants' embodied interactions. I conclude that such active acts of thinking also demonstrate that the 'estrangement' techniques used in the script acted as 'interpretive strategies' and not simply as formal, artistic devices. As such, they emplaced 'estrangement' pedagogically, in Sarah Ahmed's (2000) vein, as the precondition for an active stance of making contested community. I will then describe the shift from the more process-oriented rehearsal and collective reflection to more product-oriented considerations of a possible stage design for our performance.

In chapter nine, I will discuss the second rehearsal exercise employed - a verbatim account combined with the building of a sticky tape sculpture. Here, I employed one of Jamal's reflections from the previous workshop as rehearsal text (Appendix IV: 'Being born strange'), which playfully thinks through the precarious relationship between strangeness and development work. Describing the rehearsal of the text in combination with the building of the sticky tape sculpture, I find connections to performance artists' Peña and Cusco's 'Two Amerindians visit' (Fusco, 1995). Using Taylor's (1998) criticism of their show and documentary film (Fusco & Heredia, 1993) to discuss ethical matters around representation, I conclude that 'dialogic aesthetic framing' might be a useful concept to think through ethically the relationship-based processes underlying acts of representation.

8.2 First rehearsal exercise: reading Lin's script

(...) stage sets not like traditional ready-made constructions but constructions in progress (...) which require active interpretation. (Wright, 1989: 25)

I had booked the gymnasium for this third workshop. We needed enough space to experiment with words and our bodies. I started out with some warming-up exercises based on Meg Mumford's (2009: 141ff) suggestions on a contemporary Brechtian drama workshop. I used especially her exercise on the 'socialised body', which generated a simple Brechtian 'estrangement' effect and eased the group into practising the act of living dialectically, "(...) with a manifest split or self-conscious gap between one's thoughts and actions" (Brecht, 1965: 127). Every participant walked around as themselves in familiar social circumstances (e.g. a walk to university, a walk to the cinema, to catch the bus etc.). Once the walk was established, I asked participants to observe the physical features of their walk, and then to exaggerate these.

(Gait) What is the nature of your tempo and rhythm? Do you bounce, glide or march? Do you walk quickly, slowly, lightly, firmly? (Posture) How do you hold yourself? Are you upright or on a slight lean? Is your head tucked into your shoulders or jutting forward? - How does your gait and posture relate to your social roles? (Mumford, 2009: 143)

These physical warm-up exercises which involved us leaping around the gymnasium, served several purposes. They assisted to warm up our muscles on this cold November morning and helped us to settle in the new space - the gymnasium - which was much bigger than the drama labs we worked in before, and required, by nature, bigger movements and more physical exercises to 'inhabit' the space. Referring to Ingold (2000), Pink (2009) and hooks (1994) again, the warm-ups also attuned our bodies to each other's rhythms and helped us to find resonance. In addition to that, the exercise prepared our script rehearsal in that it introduced a simple 'third-person acting' exercise through self-monitored walking.

Following from our observations, we demonstrated our bearing in exaggerated form - commenting through our movements on comportment as a socially constructed phenomenon. After this initial warm-up exercise, I handed out Lin's story script to everybody (Appendix IV, Rehearsal texts: There was no one on the street that time). We read through the text. Participants started to inhabit the role of performers. They transformed some of the gym equipment - interestingly colourful plastic rings - into costume-like accessories such as hats and bracelets. A wooden gym bench was used to spatially mark out a playing area. Following from this eclectic, improvised nature of setting up our rehearsal space, there was an element of *Verfremdung* in our approach.

Theatrical elements such as costume or the set-up of our temporary stage were not employed under the pretence of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* and in view of a final performance. In 'Brecht on theatre' (Brecht, 1964: 53), using the example of Wagnerian opera, Brecht describes his turn away from a *Gesamtkunstwerk* approach to staging opera and theatre productions. A *Gesamtkunstwerk* - as in a traditional Wagner opera - hereby means the merging of all dramaturgical elements. Stage set, music and acting become an aesthetic, and as Brecht might say 'hypnotic' whole, with the aim to fully emotionally immerse the audience into the action on stage. Brecht's epic approach instead sought to separate these dramaturgical elements - music, stage design and acting - so that each would stand for itself and did not need to complement, but rather constituted a comment on the other elements.

The desired outcome of such dramaturgical separation would thus not be to enable complete empathy on the side of the audience but to trigger instead active, critical thought on the actions presented on stage (Brecht, 1964: 21ff). As with participants' move towards an improvised stage and costumes - these dramaturgical elements were 'epic' almost of necessity. They did not aim for an aesthetic merging of dramaturgical elements in the vein of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In our sessions costume and stage set-up were not carefully chosen to illustrate a specific script content and plot line, and neither did they intend to emotionally involve an audience. Instead, we were under no pressure to work towards a final performance.

Heightened by the processual nature of our research, costume and spatial arrangement constituted their own unfinished, improvised 'aesthetic' and at the same time pedagogical commentary on the dramaturgy of our research. We creatively inhabited a gym, transforming found equipment into temporary, contested, communal spaces of experiment and devising. My choice of rehearsal texts for this third session also reflects this separation of elements. Although 'Lin's story' and 'Jamal's anecdote' reference each other, as both reflect our general focus on strangeness experience, they were also inherently different. Lin's story evolved around a very personal and radically embodied, concrete 'street incident', whereas Jamal's text 'Being born strange' represents a more distanced and almost poetic reflection on the potential of 'being strange'.

His comment references his own life story (and that of his cousin) but does not foreground it in a way that deflects from his overall reflections on the potential of strangeness. In this workshop, the two rehearsal texts were treated as two separate pieces with no intention to merge them aesthetically. Each individual piece was to be explored by the group through performing/reading (Lin's text) and adding dramaturgical elements (Jamal's text). Because of my role as emplaced intercultural education researcher and facilitator, there was little time for me to reflect on our work process during the workshop itself. Within the session my focus was on production and maintaining the energy in the group.

Working from an immanent ethic in order to enable a flowing process of mutual engagement and building a temporary artistic ensemble - the act of practically 'making place' together, momentarily gained primary attention over more reflective and analytical modes. The following descriptions and reflections thus emerge from a more estranged positioning when watching the video footage of the third session afterwards. Karolina had been so kind to take on the role of camera operator during the session and thus enabled me to fully focus on my facilitator role. She supplied me with valuable video material to analyse. For the first rehearsal exercise - Lin's story - there were three volunteer performers: Sonja, Marta and Aleksandra. They took on the three characters outlined in the script.

Sitting on the wooden bench, ‘embellished’ with their improvised costume accessories, they inhabited the stage area, read, rehearsed and performed the ‘street incident’ (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 3 - Rehearsal).

Second person (*turns around, starts tapping*): There was no one on the street that time.

(pause)

(Everybody joins into tapping rhythmically).

(excerpt from the script: Appendix IV)

Sonja played the role of the second person. She read her stage directions aloud first and then performed the indicated actions: she turns around, starts tapping her feet on the floor and reads the sentence “there was no one on the street that time”. Then all three performers read the following stage direction and join into the rhythmic tapping movement. The repetitive sound grows louder. Marta, in the role as third person, reads her lines over the collective tramping sound and doesn’t align her reading voice to the dominating rhythm. There are two passages however where she recites in line with the tapping. Her reading turns ‘melodic’ but also ‘out of tune’ with the character of the text. Her previous textual emphasis is interrupted - ‘defamiliarised’. Marta reads:

(...) she noticed that there were four or five teenagers, or guys, who walked on the other side. She just went on her way but when she noticed them, they suddenly came to her and surrounded her, you know, four or five guys. And they said two sentences (...)

(excerpt from the script: Appendix IV)



(Script rehearsal)

The ‘defamiliarisation’ through rhythmic tapping can be found in a collection of rehearsal exercises that Brecht developed when in exile in Stockholm in 1940 (Brecht, 1964). His ‘Exercises for Acting Schools’ were mainly written to assist his actress wife Helene Weigel with her teaching of epic theatre to Swedish student actors (Mumford, 2009: 131f). In this relatively short list of twenty-four exercises, Brecht develops a range of concrete rehearsal activities which translate his performance principles into practice (ibid: 134). The rhythmic tapping sequence in Lin’s story script references exercise number (q), entitled ‘Rhythmical verse- speaking with tap-dance’ (Brecht, 1964: 29). Mumford elucidates form and function of these exercises in relation to Brecht’s writings and practice. Her analysis is helpful to understand this (as she calls it) ‘historic’ exercise in relation to our own rehearsal situation.

In order to disrupt familiar customs and habitual ways of performing, Brecht sometimes used somatic exercises that played with spatial and temporal expectations. (Mumford, 2009: 136)

Mumford writes further:

Rhythmical (verse-)speaking while tap-dancing alters the usual emphases, tempo and line flow of text, which in turn can generate awareness of the way the text was initially constructed, and of the assumptions underpinning dominant ways of reading it (Mumford, 2009: 136).

Shomit Mitter expands on the function of rhythmical speaking: “these temporal dislocations alter the text’s meanings and reveal its openness to different readings” (Mitter, 1992: 55). Listening to Marta speaking in rhythm with the loud tapping sound, it feels as if the text is disconnected from its self-contained meaning and instead subordinated to the immediacy of the action. For me, the tapping echoes the sounding of the teenager’s footsteps, the threat of their approach and the precariousness of the situation. The thumping for me also stands for Lin’s raised heartbeat when feeling encircled. Through reading in rhythm, the performative, somatic element of the story is allowed to subordinate textual meaning. The script, as I pointed out earlier, is also already removed from a first person empathetic reading.

The teller (Lin) had already partly performed a third person acting which was added to by my full translation of the script into third person narrative and adding stage directions. Marta’s reading in rhythm therefore does not constitute a ‘first’ break with an empathetic, first-person narrative. On the contrary, rather than distancing the event further, the somatic element - thumping footsteps possibly signalling a crisis - creates a space for ‘visceral’ empathy, in the sense of Sarah Pink’s (2009) apprenticeship model. Listening to the tapping and joining into the rhythm of the story - I automatically started tapping my feet as well - brings an element of physicality to the rehearsal that allows me to ‘tune into’ the immediacy of Lin’s situation (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 3 - Rehearsal).

The temporal dislocation of the textual element leads to a more concrete ‘physical’ empathy through a non-illustrative, somatic, dramaturgical element. Reminded of those scholars that conceptualise ‘from the body’, the ‘visceral’ empathy brought forth by the somatic, dramaturgical element illustrates how feeling and thinking (and thus understanding/empathy) emerge from people’s physical engagement (Ingold, 2000: 162). The somatic performance invited me (as the audience member watching) to tune in, model habitus - I tapped my feet too - and thus acquire a glimpse into Lin’s emotional state through a form of “emplaced knowing” (Pink, 2009: 35). Such emplaced knowing or “thinking as a lived process” (Carney, 2005: 118) then led me to interpret the tapping as raised heartbeat, as a moment of crisis (see above) and shows that I had indeed started to “creatively construct correspondences” between my own and Lin’s experience (Pink, 2009: 40).

8.3 Emplaced knowing: reflections after rehearsing Lin's story

Brecht's commentaries celebrate his belief that thought is a product of social interaction and the problem-solving energy of collaboration. (Mumford, 2009: 48)

The following conversation that took place after the rehearsal of Lin's script gives an insight into the forms of emplaced knowing that emerged during our sessions. More specifically, it shows how a concrete 'estrangement' device - in this case a 'trace of sticky tape on the floor' as a spatial dislocation technique - invited an embodied, collective meaning-making between the participant-performers Marta and Sonja. In this particular excerpt of dialogue, Sonja and Marta talk about my seemingly 'random' introduction of 'sticky tape' into the script/performance.

Did it make sense or was this just superfluous, aesthetic tinkering on my side? In order to explore this question, I will firstly present the part of the script that contains the 'sticky tape' reference and then discuss Sonja and Marta's conversation that followed from their performance. Marta read the stage directions aloud, then recited her lines 'pronounced' and 'slowly' and finally got up to trace the sticky tape on the floor. Her movements were graceful and dance-like:

Third person (*still speaking pronounced and slowly*):

I felt so safe at the time. And I said 'yes' and gave them directions.

(tracing the trail of sticky tape on the floor with light movements, then turning around again)

And they left.

(excerpt from script: Appendix IV)



(Tracing the trail of sticky tape)

8.4 Sonja and Marta's conversation after their performance

Sonja:

And the sticky tape, I mean that is the weirdest thing. That's the oddest thing to me. That's so odd. It just has no meaning.

Marta:

When you do it, it does make sense.

Sonja:

How does it feel like? How does it make sense?

Marta:

Because it's kind of a path, so it's giving the directions. When you've just come from Tesco, you are kind of retracing that path.

Sonja:

Ahhh...

Marta:

And also because you have to stand up and turn around, you sort of detangle yourself from that 'sticky' situation you thought you were in. That's how I feel like. Because when you have the other person peering at you; I suppose in the original story it's the feeling of being intimidated by these guys. And this is actually your way out. You're going to point out the way to the supermarket but you also find a way out of that situation; because you have to stand up and do something. You can escape from their eyesight.

Sonja genuinely didn't see much point in my idea for a sticky tape trail on the floor. As 'estrangement' device it didn't seem to make much sense. Interestingly, Marta gives a reflection from her performer perspective, explaining the 'sense' of the 'estrangement' device in relation to her concrete movements. The 'sense' of the sticky tape-trail seems to reside within the bodily movement provoked by it but doesn't constitute a stand-alone, meaningful symbol independent of its performance. It is rather a matter of "bodily poeticizing" and "specifying the performer's body as a site of knowing" (Lockford & Pelias, 2004: 431). Sonja is intrigued by Marta's suggestion that the sense lies in 'doing the sticky tape trail' - "When you do it, it does make sense" (Marta).

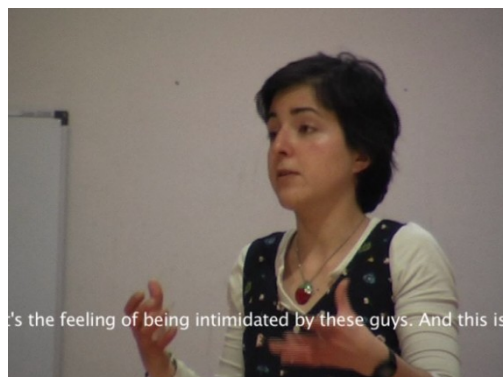
Eager to grasp this meaning, which seems to reside somewhere between the performer's body and the object itself, Sonja's question reveals an openness for the bodily level of making meaning - "How does it feel like? How does it make sense?" (Sonja). Sonja, in the same vein as Lockford & Pelias, "privileges the sensuous, the experiential, the participatory. [They] insist upon the act of doing as a way of coming to understand" (Lockford and Pelias, 2004: 431). Marta, in response, explains the process of meaning-making in the context of her standing up and tracing the sticky tape on the floor. Based on her acting-out, she creatively constructs meaning and interprets the trail as a 'path' that symbolises the act of giving directions in the story (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 3 - Rehearsal).

On a meta-level, Marta sees the gesture of getting up and tracing the trail also as a *dénouement* moment. Having sat abreast with the two characters (person 1 and 2 in the script) who not only uncomfortably homed in on Lin-Marta physically (leaning forward, peering) but whose intentions were ambiguous (and possibly threatening, from all we can make out) until now, Marta's rising from the bench is also a moment of 'liberation'. Her light, dance-like tracing the trail represents a *dénouement* - the mitigating moment in the story and Lin's (inner) sigh of relief. The rigid, 'oppressive' formation - Marta and the 'strangers' sitting in line on the bench - is broken up. As Marta (Lin) has broken away and pointed out the way by tracing the 'sticky tape path'; she has escaped their gaze.

It is a moment of mastering her anxiety that finds its expression in a ‘gesture of coping’ with the situation. - “and this is actually your way out. You’re going to point out the way to the supermarket but you also find a way out of that situation” (Marta). My intention here is not to create stereotypes or demonise youth. Describing the physicality of the rehearsal situation in such detail - including the emotional impact of body formations and spatial arrangements in the story, I seek to draw attention to the radically embodied nature of Lin’s strangeness experience - which finds its expression in Marta’s acting and acts of interpretation during the ‘street scene’ rehearsal.

Marta:

And also because you have to stand up and turn around, you sort of detangle yourself from that ‘sticky’ situation you thought you were in. That’s how I feel like. Because when you have the other person peering at you; I suppose in the original story it’s the feeling of being intimidated by these guys. And this is actually your way out. You’re going to point out the way to the supermarket but you also find a way out of that situation; because you have to stand up and do something. You can escape from their eyesight.



(Marta explaining ‘the sense’ of the sticky tape)

Lin’s real-life improvisational, ‘intercultural’ challenge is equally embodied. In order to hold, negotiate and at best resolve her bodily discomfort, she has to ‘act her way through’, adapt habitus and re-position herself so as to find a bodily gesture of coping with the situation. Strangeness experience thus poignantly reveals how (again from Ingold, 2000:161) thinking and feeling are intimately interlinked with doing and coping and shows how thought is embodied. Memories of strangeness experience, such as Lin’s story, are often ‘skin memories’ (2000: 92). They are stories about bodily-felt out-of-placeness.

Dealing with such skin memories, holding and possibly even working through the discomfort, is an equally 'gestural' affair. Lin's/Marta's 'gesture of coping' in the story, as it constitutes a *dénouement* moment, then also, seen on a meta-level, points towards intercultural pedagogy's burden: to consider a 'paradigm of embodiment' in its work.

8.5 'Not-but' moments of reflection

The moment of the 'not-but' on stage embodies a moment of contradiction - the portrayal of complex social behaviour. Within this moment of confusion, a metaphoric gap is opened; a space in which the spectator is invited to move in, think and produce the sense or meaning of the image. (Carney, 2005: 57)

The conversation between Marta and Sonja hints at a 'not-but' moment of reflection, that was opened through 'estrangement'. The 'meaning' of the 'distanciation' device could not just be grasped on a purely textual or formalistic level. It required the reflection of the performer on the act of embodying 'estrangement' as well as the openness and curiosity of the co-performer to question its meaning. And most importantly, the process of collective meaning-making required a 'sharing moment' of telling and listening. As Lockford and Pelias put it, "establishing a communicative connection insists that performers open themselves up to their bodies expressive potential (2004: 434). The 'not-but' moment on stage references and 'holds up for scrutiny' Lin's real-life experience. Through 'estrangement', Marta and Sonja were invited to think and produce meaning within metaphoric gaps, and thus gained a 'fresh' look on the complexity of the original street incident.

In that, the artificial, aesthetic 'not-but' moment of reflection could be considered an important interpretive strategy for intercultural education. It allows the performer-spectators, within the safety of the fictional, estranged play, to reflect on the complex social and embodied processes at play within real-life 'strangeness experience'. And more so, it might enable an 'other-doing' in real life - a gesture of coping - interventionist thinking (with Brecht) and acting upon the insights gained from 'not-but' reflection. At the heart of Brecht's 'estrangement' theory then lies a pedagogical technique which is of ultimate relevance for intercultural education, in that it "(...) understands that narrativisation is the means by which the human processing of [intercultural] reality and daily life is carried out" (Jameson, 1998: 27).

8.6 'Not-but': a pedagogical technique

In the following, I will look at 'not-but' acting as a pedagogical technique. Elucidating 'not-but' pedagogy in the context of Brecht's theory first, I will then reflect on its relevance within intercultural education pedagogy more specifically. In his endeavour to stimulate a critically involved way of seeing within the theatre space, Brecht worked towards introducing 'theatrical footnotes' into his performances (Brecht, 1964: 44).

These theatrical footnotes find expression amongst others in the acting of the 'not-but'. Here, the actor incorporates in her acting style possible alternative decisions. By acting one way, she reminds and refers to the alternative ways she could have proceeded, thus introducing, what Carney (2005: 28) calls "dialectical ruptures". This style of acting requires the actor to maintain a questioning attitude towards the character she is playing.

In order to bring about the moment of 'not-but', Brecht consequently sought rehearsal techniques which would help the actor to defamiliarise and hold on to the moment of astonishment towards the character's actions and remarks. Such aids of 'estrangement' would for example involve the use of the third person, putting the character's text into past tense, speaking relevant stage directions out loud, translating verse into prose or translating prose into the actor's native dialect (Mumford, 2009: 67). The 'not-but' as a tool to evoke this new way of complex seeing then seeks to estrange what might be considered a natural or given way of behaving in the world and calls into question a mimetic way of acting. With that it also defamiliarises an assumed act of 'mimetic' seeing itself, reminding us poignantly that there is no such thing as a seeing in an unmediated sense in the first place (Carney, 2005: 35).

The *gestus* of showing has the purpose to maintain a questioning character towards the actions and remarks of the character. Within a 'not-but' performance, every sentence and gesture signifies a decision, in which a possible alternative is implied: whatever the character doesn't do must be contained and preserved in what he does. (Mumford, 2009: 66f)

Mumford, in addition to Carney, further describes the ‘fixing the not-but’ in acting style as an interpretive strategy and distinguishes it from a simply ‘technical’ defamiliarisation of text. Translating a playscript into third person narrative or adding stage directions might run the risk of staying on the level of formalistic experimentation, without ‘fixing’ a critically involved way of seeing beyond the text. With regard to the conversation between Sonja and Marta above, I however argue that the ‘defamiliarisation’ devices used in our script worked on the level of an interpretive strategy and went beyond solely formal experimentation. They rather evoked “complex seeing” (Brecht, 1964: 31). This had to do with the kind of text that was estranged, as well as with the pedagogical conditions of the research workshop.

The basis for our rehearsal exercises were texts that were either creative writing pieces produced by the group or transcripts of verbatim accounts taken from the sessions. Unlike the Brechtian rehearsal room, we did not experiment with a full play script but instead used small, eclectic pieces that already bore the mark of *Verfremdung*; Lin’s verbatim account was for example already full of ‘footnotes’ on her emotional state. These ‘personal’ pieces served as the basis for our rehearsal and subsequent reflection. As we were not working towards a final performance but were able to exploit fully the processual character of our workshops, our ‘estrangement’ devices went beyond being mere mechanistic devices.

Participants were already emotionally more interwoven with the rehearsal texts, as these were either verbatim accounts or texts written entirely by themselves. Due to this pre-existing emotional connection to the texts, their ‘defamiliarisation’ acted more as a pedagogical technique in that it allowed a ‘fresh eye’ on these ‘intimate texts’ that were already partly estranged anyway. In comparison, using an external play script, as in the Brechtian rehearsal room, would have required a ‘double effort’. Firstly, the actor-participants would, in a Stanislavskian (2008) sense, have had to work towards an empathy with text and character. And secondly, the empathy would have had to be defamiliarised through formal *Verfremdungs*- devices.

Finally, the emerging contradictory elements of text and character portrayal could have been translated into a 'not-but' performance, which, at its best, would have acted as an interpretive strategy of the original, external play text. In our case, by using texts that 'naturally' connected to participants' emotions and universes of meaning - empathy with text and 'character' was already created and did not have to be 'worked for'. Because of the preceding process of devised text production, *Verfremdungs*-devices such as I employed in the script, had less of a technician role but acted more immediately as interpretive strategies. As I said above, this could also be ascribed to the nature of the rehearsal texts, that already bore the mark of *Verfremdung*, in that they were not created by an external playwright but constituted participants' own texts.

Verbatim accounts were told retrospectively, and were thus already told in past tense and sometimes even involved the teller's meta-commentary (on their emotional state at the time etc.). In that they already partly performed 'not-but' - reminding the audience of the possible alternatives residing within the story. As a consequence, Marta's 'tracing movements' do not simply illustrate or negate the moment of giving directions in the story. It is more that her performance quotes this moment without losing its own estranging, abstract, aesthetic form. The 'quoting gesture' opens up a reflective space for the performer (Marta) as well as her co-performer-spectator (Sonja). In that, it invited a gesture of questioning ("Where is the sense in that?") and curiosity ("What does it feel like?") on Sonja's part, as well as a gesture of interpretation on Marta's part ("When you do it, it makes sense"!).

Both performers subsequent 'collective' reflection unfolds as a possibility rather than an illustrative requisite. The act of complex seeing appears to embrace playfulness and linguistic ambiguity. As Lockford and Pelias observe similarly for improvisational theatre:

Embodying playfulness requires the actor to relish the inescapable elusiveness of language. They know that even when choices are made they're not the only choices available. (...) They embrace possibilities and proceed without linguistic certainty (Lockford & Pelias, 2004: 435).

8.7 'Not-but' in Marta's final speech

The following is my description of Marta's final speech in the script after I re-watched her performance on the video footage of the session (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 3 - Rehearsal). In relation to Brecht's idea of 'fixing the not-but', her speech/performance serves as a concrete example of how a moment of fixing the 'not-but' played out during session three. Her example also further emplaces 'not-but' as an interpretive strategy and pedagogical technique for intercultural education. Seen in the context of Lin's concrete 'strangeness experience' during her street incident, 'not-but' during our script rehearsal opened a reflective space on the complexities, challenges and coping strategies around living interculturally.

Third person

(pausing a moment, then looking smilingly at the audience/ into the camera)

After that I still felt very uncomfortable.

I can't stop thinking 'what if...' something happens, what am I doing?

(dark)

(Excerpt from the script: Appendix IV)



(Fixing a 'not-but' moment)

Marta reads the stage directions aloud, pauses, then looks into the camera. Her smile seems forced, as if she wants to affirm her gesture of coping - the *dénouement* moment - the absence of threat - the happy ending of the story. Her forced smile implies that she seeks to assure the audience that she is safe now, but her lines undermine the affirmative gesture - "After that I still felt very uncomfortable. I can't stop thinking 'what if...' something happens, what am I doing?" (Marta). Read in combination with her insecure smile, Marta begins to fix a 'not-but' moment. Within the dialectical rupture - the duality of her smile and the lines (full of concern), the happy ending of the story is jeopardised. Instead the dual gesture shows her still lingering anxiety.

In this final moment Marta embodies her relief as well as her anxiety in a performance gesture - a smile - which uncomfortably implies the unspoken alternatives. Her 'not-but' acting reminds us of the complexity of the situation: She got off lightly this time but the encounter could have potentially ended differently. Yes, she found a 'gesture of coping' but ultimately, the situation eluded her sole control. The 'not-but' echoes her vulnerability. How will she cope if similar circumstances occur again? "I can't stop thinking (...)". Marta's 'not-but' acting in this final speech references the complexities of living interculturally. It also reminds us how difficult it is to generalise the challenges of being intercultural, as the concerns and anxieties of an individual can vary according to specific circumstances, subjective perception and also change over time.

Lin's story is thus not a generalisable culture shock story about Glaswegian youth perceived as dangerous street bullies. It is a personal and radically embodied story about Lin's strangeness experience, her personal anxieties and the fears she had to hold and cope with during this particular street incident - and independent of the 'real' threat this group of teenagers posed to her. 'Not-but' as a pedagogical technique for intercultural education then works from a radically embodied view on strangeness experience as skin memories (Ahmed 2000: 92). By opening up a reflective space and referencing the alternatives residing within such complex migration stories - 'not-but' invites the processing of reality and daily life (Jameson, 1998: 27).

Regarding strangeness experiences as out-of-place experiences which do not presuppose or guarantee mutual comprehensibility or empathy per se, 'not-but' tentatively opens them out for sharing and mutual recognition and thus acknowledges the precariousness of intercultural dialogue. In that, 'not-but' works on the basis of an immanent ethics, taking the very precarity of communication as its aesthetic and pedagogical starting point. Following from that 'not-but' regards dialogue as an embodied phenomenon that is not solely reduced to the register of speech. 'Not-but' as a pedagogical technique can be seen as working rather with the concept of 'hearing as touch', the way Ahmed suggests.

To think of hearing as touch is to consider that being open to hearing might not be a matter of listening to the other's voice: what moves (between) subjects, and hence what fails to move, might precisely be that which cannot be presented in the register of speech. (Ahmed, 2000: 156)

An aesthetic-pedagogical method that is rooted within a concept of 'hearing as touch' is then more likely to reflect critically on the modes of encounter adopted within the research space. This involves reflection on the kind of methods employed to initiate research dialogue and create a supportive and at the same time pedagogically challenging space for participants. Such process-oriented research focus that takes into account the modes of encounter and embodiment enacted in the research space, might then allow for a more complex and less consumerist view on intercultural experience.

To describe, not the other, but the mode of encounter in which I am faced with an other, is hence not to hold the other in place, or to turn into a theme, concept or thing. (Ahmed, 2000: 145)

This emphasis on the mode of encounter also relates back to my initial research concerns. In chapter one I outlined my positioning within the overlap of intercultural methodology and critical pedagogy, so as to ensure a 'protected' pedagogical research space that however resisted universalising ethical claims. 'Not-but' as a pedagogical technique in intercultural education research also bears the mark of this overlap. It works from the precariousness of dialogue, invites emplaced knowing through its dramaturgy and thus resists the functionalisation of the research space pedagogically and ethically.

8.8 Research Gesamtkunstwerk

In the beginning of this chapter I outlined participants' 'estranged' approach to setting up the rehearsal space. I used Brecht's refusal of *Gesamtkunstwerk* as a reference point to explain our own eclectic and improvised attempts to set up theatre. As can be seen from my reflection in previous paragraphs, a 'separation principle' - rather than a synthesis of dramaturgical elements in the *Gesamtkunstwerk* vein - draws through, not only the initial setting up theatre space, but also the text rehearsal itself. 'Estrangement' devices such as the introduction of the sticky tape trail, the 'defamiliarisation' of text itself (through third person reading, the introduction of read-aloud stage directions, acting the 'not-but' etc.) all operate from such a denial of a synthesis of artistic elements in a Brechtian sense.

The separation principle however does not only come into being as a purely artistic device. As I have suggested in the previous section, the separation principle, as for example found in the acting of the 'not-but', also serves a pedagogical and ethical function. 'Not-but' seen as pedagogical technique for intercultural education research is the least 'functional' and most 'interpretive' of the aforementioned 'estrangement' devices. It asserts the separation principle in the intercultural research space of experiment on three levels. 'Estrangement' - with 'not-but' as a viable example - works as an artistic device within a Brechtian, non-illustrative performance approach as well as a technique steeped in critical pedagogy and concerned with relationship-based, educational spaces. In addition to that, 'not-but' also represents a form of ethical (in our case intercultural) praxis.

Working from the immediacy of our relationships, it fosters ongoing ethical reflection and adaptation through praxis. Such an intercultural ethics as 'becoming' is, for example, illustrated in my praxis -based reflection around the ethical implications of using Lin and Jamal's stories as rehearsal texts. 'Not-but' as a concrete example for a *Verfremdungs*-device in intercultural education practice, thus does not foster a merging of these three elements (artistic, pedagogical and ethical) into a research *Gesamtkunstwerk*. A 'merging' or thinking together of these elements can only happen under the separation principle itself, so as to allow the research conversation to be constantly 'becoming' and develop into " (...) a (research) philosophy that refuses to privilege mind over body, and that assumes that the body cannot be transcended as such (...)" (Ahmed, 2000: 41).

8.9 Ideas for stage design

Participants' final ideas on stage design which occurred at the end of workshop three were an example of such an ongoing conversation marked by the 'separation principle'. After the rehearsal of Lin's story and Marta and Sonja's embodied reflection on the sticky tape 'estrangement' device, we continued our devising ideas:

Marta:

I was thinking we should have lots of plastic bags flying about, like with a wind machine and lots of plastic bags flying around.

Sonja:

Ya, and just have the stage with that, lots of plastic bags flying which is quite beautiful but it's also strange.

Katja:

Yes, and these bags can fly and make a sound and we could also tie them down with sticky tape.

Marta:

... or hang them. We can tie them together like bushes...

Sonja:

We could have balloons as well, to decorate (...).

There were several other suggestions emerging with regard to the scene's aesthetic. There were associations with a 'stand-off' moment as in a classic Western film. The plastic bags blowing were associated with tumbleweed blowing over desolated plains. Other ideas included the sound of pigeons played through loudspeakers in the middle of a bare stage. The Brechtian approach to the set-up of the rehearsal space at the beginning of the workshop was resumed in our final conversation on the possibilities of stage design. Again, our ideas - rather than attempting to illustrate Lin's street incident in a naturalistic way - took on the role of 'estrangement' devices (flying plastic bags as beautiful and strange) and adding meaning and our own artistic comment to the performance. On a meta-level, this conversation also shows practically how artistic, pedagogical and ethical elements interacted and stimulated each other in our sessions.

Reviewing our work in the third workshop in the light of devising theatre principles, it becomes clear how the nurturing of relationships within the research ‘ensemble’ became the basis for our artistic devising ideas. Pedagogical and ethical elements were the precondition for the artistic work. Aided by the strong relationship-based focus of the first session, which was underpinned by the concerns of critical pedagogy and an immanent ethics, the ensemble now started to develop concrete performance vocabulary together. Participant-artists started to drive the creative process employing a gestural language (plastic bags flying, pigeon sounds on a bare stage) not in a purely representational manner but thinking with the separation principle and an approach to dramaturgy that could enable more fragmented narratives. We were growing into a contested ensemble and curiously making artistic place together.



(Exchanging ideas for stage design)

Chapter 9: Second rehearsal text

9.1 Jamal's text - *'Being born strange'*

Either I am a strange person, I don't know, but I was born strange. Some people are born strange. If you see some people within your own culture and they are quite estranged from that culture. Either they are very creative or they are not acting according to the tradition of that culture. They are quite strange. I gave the example of my cousin. He was quite strange. He was born strange, believe me. I noticed there are some people, and they are quite strange. And they can bring change. (Jamal)

The second text we used for rehearsal in session three is Jamal's verbatim account from the previous workshop (Appendix IV, Rehearsal texts: Being born strange). Jamal gave this account after sharing his creative writing piece in workshop two, during the final group reflection on strangeness. In the next section I will firstly include my own reading of Jamal's account, followed by a description of the text's performance. Interestingly, Jamal's account plays with an idea that is potentially controversial - the thought that some people are 'born strange'. He goes on to expand on the statement that some people are 'inherently strange' by giving examples of 'those people's' behaviour. Jamal even gives a concrete example - his cousin (and himself) - who share the characteristics of people supposedly 'strange from birth on'.

The idea of 'being born strange' is conceptualised, unexpectedly, as a positive and even progressive trait, not a 'flaw' or 'lack' of some sort. In Jamal's account, 'strangers' appear instead as 'catalysts of change', subtle, 'creative' rebels within their own society. The fact that they are 'being born strange' seems to imbue them with a 'natural instinct for change' and authority to act 'against the grain' of cultural traditions. This almost missionary appeal of these 'natural born strangers' does not depict however a figure of an over-zealous saviour-type or extremist. On the contrary, there is a sense of strong, self-deprecating humour pervading Jamal's account which averts the emergence of a 'stranger figure', as criticised by Sarah Ahmed (2000) or Diane Taylor (1998).

Jamal plays poetically-satirically with the absurdity of the fact that somebody could have been born strange. His repeated labelling might also (satirically) imitate an 'institutional reply' to forms of 'resistance' involving the strategic labelling and social marginalisation of those who dare to ask and act for change. Highlighting the creativity and 'other-creation' of the stranger, Jamal subtly criticises a monolithic conception of culture which seeks to preserve the status quo. The 'strangeness' of these strangers in Jamal's account does not lie so much in a set of character traits or definable gestures. Instead the 'disposition' for strangeness is revealed through an active act of changing one's circumstances. This processual aspect of being a stranger then defies an emergence of stranger fetishism, as Jamal's stranger is revealed through a relationship-based doing-creating.

His idea of 'being born strange', which initially implies an almost doubly rigid essentialism, appears as an estranging device when juxtaposed with the idea of the stranger emerging through practice. The playful 'estrangement', that occurs when combining the idea of 'innate strangeness' versus its 'creation through practice' is even heightened when Jamal puts himself in relation to this paradox: "Either I am a strange person, I don't know, but I was born strange. Some people are born strange" (Jamal). By drawing attention to his own 'disposition' to be strange, he playfully explores the relationship between (his) identity and 'strangeness'. Suggesting that he, as well as his cousin, are seeking change, there might also be a hint at their open concept of cultural identity. As they are not exclusively relying on closed definitions of culture, they are not afraid to question tradition: "Either they are very creative or they are not acting according to the tradition of that culture. They are quite strange" (Jamal).

In that, they inhabit an ambiguous space. From the perspective of institutionalised tradition they might indeed be seen as 'natural' strangers with an almost genetic disposition to disturb the status quo. As a consequence, their strangeness could be treated like a 'disease' that befell them, rather than being regarded as an active response to socio-political circumstances. By playing with the idea of strangeness as a positively innate but at the same time actively constructed disposition, Jamal opens a reflective space for the sort of questions Sarah Ahmed referred us to.

How can we understand the relationship between identity and strangeness in lived embodiment without creating a new ‘community of strangers’? I suggest that we can only avoid stranger fetishism, that is, avoiding welcoming or expelling the stranger as a figure which has linguistic and bodily integrity, by examining the social relationships that are concealed by this very fetishism. (Ahmed, 2000: 6)

I venture that Jamal’s piece playfully draws our attention to the ambiguous relationship between the ‘commodity’ (‘innate strangeness’) and constructed, relationship-based strangeness in the sense of Ahmed’s (2000) ‘estranged community’. His text avoids ‘fixing’ the stranger by firstly confronting/shocking us with an exaggerated stranger fetish (supposedly biologically determined) which is subsequently defamiliarised through strangeness as emerging in sociality. Seen in relation to the creative writing piece Jamal wrote during the second workshop, this ‘double tension’ of strangeness appears as his recurring theme:

But I found and now find strange that we can bring the change but there is no one to accept it. Isn’t it strange that I was born in a strange people?
Who are quite strange to strangers and don’t want to accept them.
Life is risk taking.
And we take risks to accept the strange, and that’s how we bring the change.
I find it strange to be with strangers but I hope these strangers will bring the strange change in me. (Jamal)

In this extract from his piece, Jamal plays again poetically (similar to his verbatim account) with the meaning of the word strange, in order to make his point. By stylistically drawing attention to the word, he opens a space for reflection on how strangeness - in the sense of change/development - is negotiated (accepted, refused) within social relationships. Jamal highlights the ambiguity of wanting to bring about change and equally of not being welcomed to do so within his own cultural community. He expresses despair that change for example in the form of better infrastructure and education are not easily accepted within his society.

Again, at first glance, Jamal seems to 'label' his people as being (essential) strangers who just 'don't know what's good for them': "Isn't it strange that I was born in a strange people?" (Jamal). Reading further however, the repetitive use of the word strange complicates the picture. Jamal juxtaposes one group of strangers (his people who are reluctant) to other strangers (people like him and his cousin who want to change things). Drawing attention to the complexity around questions of development work, Jamal's frequent and contradictory use of the word 'strange' loses its 'labelling' power (to mark out certain people) as it (again poetically) collapses both groups (those for and against change) into one descriptive category (strangers).

By doing so, Jamal emphasises the precariousness of the relationship (we are all strangers) rather than the ethical shortcomings of one specific group. Both groups are 'strangers to each other' and to their respective viewpoints on development work. In that, he describes more the need for relationship-based negotiation in the vein of Santos (2002; 2009) in chapter five. Under the premise of regarding culture as 'unfinished' and 'becoming' rather than monolithic and static, 'isomorphic concerns' might be negotiated within relationships based on an immanent ethic. This would also have to involve a consideration of the sort of power relationships and hierarchies played out when it comes to deciding agendas and implementing change.

The 'risk to accept the strange and bring change' then is not a simple question of one group submitting to the other's agenda or ideology. The potential for change rather lies within the risking of relationship itself and working towards 'contested community' - within the tensions and uncertainties posed by people's mutual incomprehensibility. As Jamal wrote: "I find it strange to be with strangers but I hope these strangers will bring the strange change in me" (Jamal).

9.2 Performing and interpreting Jamal's text

The actor's bodily poeticizing isn't just about the body as an epistemic site; it is also about how the actor's body functions in an aesthetic way.

(Lockford & Pelias, 2004: 431)

As part of this last rehearsal exercise, 'Being born strange' was read as part of a body sculpture (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 3 - Rehearsal). Amy and Marta created a 'spontaneous' sculpture. Amy took a roll of sticky tape, marked a space on the ground and 'froze' into a sculpture. The sticky tape served as the connecting element to the second person (Marta) who took the tape from the frozen statue (Amy) and composed herself in relation to her predecessor. This exercise, as James Thompson's (2005) living mural exercise, has its roots in Boal's image theatre. The image is improvised with the help of a prop - a roll of tape - assisting to set up visual structures. But it is also different from Thompson's mural exercise, as there was no immediate reading of the sculpture by the audience.

The spectators Aleksandra and Sonja, instead of interpreting the emerging body sculpture, added their own performance element. Gazing at the emerging sculpture like visitors in a museum or modern art gallery, they gazed and walked around it, encircling and reading Jamal's text 'Being born strange' alternately. Although initially unrelated, by being performed together, sculpture and text seemed to quote each other. They did not complement each other in the sense of forming an aesthetic whole. Meaning was instead created through their estranging effect. Opening a metaphoric gap for my own associations and interpretations, the responsibility for making meaning was given back to me. Watching this particular footage of the body sculpture after the session, I was now properly able to embrace my positioning as spectator for the first time. As workshop three's focus was mainly on creating performance, my reflection on the visual structures of the scene as well as the methods employed, came only afterwards.

I am watching the footage:

Sonja and Aleksandra gaze at these two humans in sticky tape in front of them, walking around it whilst reading Jamal's account like a comment on the strange sculpture. I associate colonial gestures of encircling, gazing and commenting on strangeness. Their acting, together with the silently posing sculpture in the middle, references for me what Sarah Ahmed would possibly describe as 'expert gestures': commenting, explaining 'strangeness' and creating a 'commoditised stranger'. Looking at Aleksandra and Sonja in character, curiously eyeing up this strange sculpture, I am also reminded of two performance artists - Guillermo Peña's and Coco Fusco's - and their performance of 'Two undiscovered Amerindians visit' (Fusco, 1995; Fusco & Heredia, 1993).



(Performing 'Being born strange')

9.3 'Dialogic aesthetic framing'

The *Verfremdung*-effect is political through and through, for it shows that the spectator is never only at the receiving end of a representation but is included in it. (Wright, 1989: 19)

'Strangeness discourse', including its practices of representation, as Ahmed (2000) reminds us, should be seen as emerging as a relation between bodies. Such acts of representation through praxis, I will call here 'dialogic aesthetic framing'. They could be described as integrating consciously the principles of 'estrangement', as found especially in devising theatre, in representational practice. Thinking back to the core elements within devising theatre, this could involve the advocacy of collaborative, creative processes as well as the emphasis on nurturing an ensemble's relationships and interactions as the basis for its representational work.

This also means that the body would become the primary signification of text within representation. 'Dialogic aesthetic framing' might consider the bodies of artists (participants) and audience (reader) alike as sites of dialogue. Integrating an 'ensemble' approach to representation might emphasise more the relationship between artist-participants and audience in the vein of an immanent ethics. This could involve making transparent the 'purpose' of the performance/representation to the audience, as well as promoting greater transparency with regard to the artists' expectations - e.g. is the audience expected to respond actively to the representation or meant to 'accept' the 'fourth wall'?

Transparency with regards to 'representational expectations' might be particularly important if the audience is implicitly attributed the role as the *actual* performers in the piece. Giving the example of performance artists Guillermo Peña's and Coco Fusco's show 'Two undiscovered Amerindians visit (1995)', Taylor (1998) explains the complex of ethical problems that can underlie representational practice. Taylor suggests that the audience that attended Peña and Fusco's show, and those who watched their documentary film (Fusco & Heredia, 1993), were somewhat morally 'tested'. The performance artists wrote:

Our plan was to live in a golden cage for three days, presenting ourselves as undiscovered Amerindians from an island in the Gulf of Mexico that had somehow been overlooked by Europeans for five centuries (...)
(Fusco, 1995: 39, quoted in Taylor, 1998: 163).

The ideal audience attending the show, so the artists suggested, was expected to free the supposed 'undiscovered Amerindians' from the cage (Taylor, 1998: 166f). Unaware of their role as performers in the piece however, most people simply acted as a 'good audience'. Keeping to the conventions of being a museum visitor/attending a performance in a public space, this did not encourage an active ethical positioning or 'intervention' but at best an active playing along the presented fictional performance - by taking polaroids, feeding bananas etc. (ibid: 167).

Following from this the audience, so Taylor (1998) argues, couldn't be blamed for an overall 'lack of ethics' or reflective capacity with regards to 'inhumane' representations. Instead the artists themselves hid their own agenda (provoking, outing) behind artistic conventions (the camera as documenting the audience truthfully) and also produced a supposedly neutral ethnographic 'assessment' of the audience's reaction.

They [the artists] then decided to measure (collect hard data) the size and range of reactions of the audiences that attended the performance. This analysis led to certain conclusions about deeply held Western cultural stereotypes and anxieties that manifest themselves in certain forms of public behaviour on the part of spectators (chagrin, insulting and humiliating speech, etc.), which were then broken down and classified according to age, race, class, gender, and national origin. (Taylor, 1998: 172)

Taylor's point similarly applies to the danger of evoking notions of a 'false neutrality' within intercultural education representational practice. At the beginning of section two I pointed out how my positioning within an immanent ethics also has an effect on my representational practice. As our research inquiry is rooted in the specificities of our mutual relationships and individual stories, findings and therefore representations have to be considered in these contexts. In order to avoid a reified stranger discourse in the way that Peña and Cusco partly reproduced it through their 'ethnographic assessment' and documentary film (Fusco & Heredia, 1993), I asserted 'estrangement' as a crucial element at the heart of my representational practice. I drew attention to the relational processes residing at the core of the research and the circumstances from which representations might emerge.

As a consequence, there can be no neutrality assumed for the whole research process, but methodological and representational practice have to be considered as ‘becoming’ within our mutual, embodied engagement. Representations, when bearing the mark of ‘becoming’, cannot be easily consumed as pieces of academic expert knowledge in the sense of a research *Gesamtkunstwerk*. On the contrary, representations have to be read under the same Brechtian separation principle, as outlined for ‘not-but’ in workshop three - opening metaphoric gaps for the audience/reader. Acknowledging the separation principle in intercultural education representational practice then continues the principles of an immanent ethics, in that it places the responsibilities for interpretation and interventionist thinking onto the audience.

Inviting the mutual creation rather than the ‘banking’ of knowledge, such representation might be at best described as ‘tentative’ and celebrating the multilayered, complex knowledge emerging from the bodies (with Turner and Brecht) of ‘men and women alive’. It might be within the denial of Peña’s and Fuscos’ non-neutrality and their universal ethical claim for their ethnographic document which emulated the “ethnographer’s violence” (Taylor, 1998: 171) at the same time as critiquing it through their live performance.

While the performance sardonically mimics the gestures of ethnographic displays and dismantles the ‘real’ they purport to reveal, the video in turn wants to function as a ‘document’ of cultural behaviour. So is this reverse ethnography that sardonically shows up the violence inherent in ethnographic practice, or is it ethnography, complete with its own inherent violence? (Taylor, 1998: 172)

Taylor’s criticism also connects to Thompson’s considerations on destructive, discursive acts that can manifest within storytelling and even render participants’ bodies docile (Thompson, 2005: 30). The reverberations of stories - the ‘telling links’ as Thompson called them, might not only manifest in participants’ bodies but can even reconstitute them. As I described for our second drama session, Jamal’s account rendered the bodies of participants silent as they were listening and ‘carrying’ his story. Stories were discussed as having the power even to re-make relationships; with the potential to foster community as well as construct “relationships of division, anger or bitterness” (ibid: 6).

In relation to Fusco's and Peña's performance, the telling links of their performance also lead to the constructing of a new relationship between artist and audience - vividly expressed in the controversy surrounding their show (Taylor, 1998: 166). The reverberations of 'a couple in the cage' reconstituted bodies as it brought to bear feelings of anger and discomfort in the audience (Taylor, 1998: 170). Again with reference to Thompson, the power of the story's telling links did not just lie within the content of the story told - quoting the acts of ethnographic violence past. The stories' powerful reverberations resided within the structure and form of the representation which were "caught into a matrix of difficult and perhaps dangerous value assumptions and judgements" (Thompson, 2005: 24) - e.g. presupposing an audience of 'closet colonialists'.

The circumstances of the telling expressed through representation are thus an equally integral part of the 'ethical make-up' of a research performance; just as much as the actual story itself. Part of the complexity of this double layer of storytelling - *how something is told and what is told* - is that performers/facilitators cannot be easily let off the hook ethically. There is no neutral position from which one can narrate and there is equally no universal and conceptually guaranteed transformative/therapeutic effect to one's work. In his later book *Performance Affects*, Thompson (2009) discusses this ethical dimension using the term 'the end of effect':

The end of effect as a statement of limitation, therefore, has an ethical focus - it concentrates on how things are done - and a political focus - why things are done and what the problems with those aspirations might be.

(Thompson 2009: 6)

Although Thompson argues specifically from an applied theatre perspective, I find his arguments highly relevant also for intercultural education. Thompson argues for a transparent conceptualising of education practices with their political and aesthetic objectives. He suggests a questioning attitude on "how certain practices can be manipulated to help justify, at worst, forms of abuse and, at best, a maintenance of an undesirable status quo" (Thompson, 2009: 6). A critical inquiry, through an immanent ethics, into underlying political, aesthetic 'universalising' driving forces behind a project, might allow for a sharper focus on the 'politics of the encounters' within intercultural education research.

Addressing such process-based aspects and including questions about educational spaces which acknowledge “the radical potential of the freedom to enjoy [and create] beautiful things” (ibid), intercultural research encounters might be reconceptualised as places of negotiation, dialogue and making - “a place where theory is created through praxis” (Ahmed, 2000: 163). Thompson’s end of effect [and universal positioning] might then also be a statement of reorientation towards a ‘paradigm of embodiment’ within intercultural education research.

This could find its expression through a ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ practice - leading to ‘tentative representations’ - that consider the bodies and implied relationships between performers and audience alike. A ‘paradigm of embodiment’ might then suggest an opening up to a dialogic and social production of research knowledge through embodied, shared practice. This is a research practice in which representations might also take the form of (shared) sensations - laughter, a meal shared and enjoyed, something beautiful created together, or as Jamal sums it all up in his creative writing piece - “a moment spend in happiness together”.

Chapter 10:

***Keeping the intercultural research
space of experiment experimental***

10.1 Introduction

In chapter ten, I describe and analyse the final, fourth workshop (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 4 - Sticky Sculpture) which mainly revisits pieces and exercises from the preceding drama workshops. Four rehearsal stations are set up in three different rooms, encouraging participants to continue the embodied, collaborative work from previous sessions. As I also act as performer in this final workshop, my reflection combines the more distanced position of spectator-researcher when watching the video footage afterwards, and that of the performer reflecting from a position of 'in-it-ness' and embodiment. As a result, I will review in detail participants' individual acts of aesthetic framing during rehearsal from this double position of performer and spectator.

Rehearsal station one, *Space, Sound & Feel* (Appendix V: Station 1) is a variation on the third session's building of the body sculpture. Working from the separation principle, it allows a fresh look on Jamal's text 'being born strange' and a more conscious aesthetic framing of the body sculpture. Rehearsal station two, *Revisit & Represent* (Appendix V: Station 2), invites participants to revisit their own conversations and creative writing pieces through acts of playful 'estrangement'. Such making strange allowed participants to gain a fresh insight into the multiple meanings residing within their texts and experiment further with the forms of emplaced knowing created through the subordination of textual meaning to more somatic elements.

In rehearsal station three, *Multilingual Pigeons* (Appendix V: Station 3), participants translated, prior to the session, the English children's song 'Three blue pigeons' into their mother tongue. During the session, they perform the song in their mother tongue to the group and onto camera. This rehearsal game is reminiscent of our introductory game in session one, when participants remembered and sang childhood lullabies to each other. As in workshop one, *Multilingual pigeons* takes up a strong somatic element that subordinates textual meaning. Singing in our individual mother tongue renders the text strange but also creates 'visceral empathy', as the song's melody and rhythm resonate 'in our bodies' and with our own, personal childhood memories. This rehearsal station then also references exercise (x) from Brecht's 'Exercises for Acting Schools' entitled "Variations: a dog went into the kitchen. [A traditional song]" (Brecht, 1964: 12).

Asserting our individual voices, and at the same time our ‘mutual incomprehensibility’, by singing in our mother tongue, we also connect - ‘align our bodies’ - to the catchy rhythm of a nursery rhyme, sung in a variety of languages. The last rehearsal station *Revisit and Rehearse* involves the script ‘There was no one on the street’ in revised form, based on participants’ ideas for changes from workshop three. Integrating participants’ dramaturgical ideas, the script is shown as artistically ‘becoming’ through our mutual engagement. Grounded in the principles of devising theatre, pedagogical and ethical elements act as the precondition to our artistic creation. These elements however are seen not as functioning as a synthesis but under the separation principle.

10.2 Practicalities

I arranged three different rooms for each of the above described rehearsal stations. Each room was set up prior to participants’ arrival. After an initial coffee break and introducing the different stations, participants were asked to choose one of them. It was planned that, after each rehearsal exercise, participants would rotate to the next room until everybody had completed a whole round, ideally with varying partners every time. I had planned to finish with a reflection on people’s experiences whilst revisiting their own dialogue, engaging with their own body language and rehearsing last week’s script. Working with rehearsal stations gives participants more freedom to engage with the exercises independently - under the separation principle - and outside of an episodically structured session.

This allows a development of the creative pieces within each station independently, and thus prevents their merging into one overall, final piece in a *Gesamtkunstwerk* vein. As we were only five participants this cold Saturday morning, the group however decided to work through every rehearsal exercises together as a whole group. Although this was a change to my original plan, it meant in turn that I had the opportunity to take part in all the rehearsal stations myself. As we were a relatively small group, I relished my participant role and being able to step back to some extent from being a facilitator. This also enabled a double positioning for my subsequent reflection.

10.3 Research from the separation principle

Although this fourth drama workshop was the last in the series, there was no shift of focus away from the more process-based to the more product-oriented. There would be no research *Gesamtkunstwerk* emerging at the end of this session. Instead we continued our work under the separation principle by revisiting exercises, dialogue and verbatim accounts from previous sessions. Through these acts of re-visiting and re-presenting, ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ was at the heart of our representational practice. Representation was ‘becoming’ through our renewed mutual, embodied engagement and thus resisted fixed truth claims for the texts’ explanatory power. Instead, ‘estrangement’, and with that relationship-based organising principles, were given precedence in order to keep the intercultural research space of experiment fluid and experimental.

In that, the last workshop resisted the reification of the research space, or more specifically, that of our research relationships, research methods and research texts. Instead, it continued an immanent ethics for these acts of representation. In the vein of Taylor (1998) and Ahmed (2000), I intended to foreground the encounters residing within our intercultural space of experiment, rather than claiming an inherently ethical function for my research practice or any explanatory models for ‘strangeness experience’ which might result in fixed representation. This last workshop also references my initial concerns set up in the introductory section and the first chapter. Here I explained that questions of alternative research methods could not be explored independently of the respective research context and simply ‘applied’ in an ethically and pedagogically safe manner.

My insistence on ‘estrangement’ throughout the research illustrates such resistance against a reified research space which might produce what Ahmed called a “reified academic knowledge” (2000: 163). Underpinned by critical pedagogy and an immanent ethics, my chosen Brechtian methods took our individual stories and mutual engagement as starting points rather than as pedagogical endpoints. Intercultural education research methods were thus intimately linked to what Giroux (2004) called intercultural pedagogy’s burden. Focussing on the politics of encounter and the kind of educational spaces enabled by the employed methods, the intercultural research space of experiment was asserted as a teaching space of human relationships and not of law (Carney, 2005).

10.4 Facilitating encounters for emplaced knowing

Rehearsal station one revisited the body sculpture from the third workshop (Appendix V: Station 1). In the previous session, Sonja and Aleksandra had read Jamal's verbatim account over Marta and Amy's improvised sculpture. As illustrated in my association with 'Two Amerindians visit...', the two aesthetic elements - the building of the body sculpture and the reading of text - quoted each other and took on a meaning that could not be separated from my subjective interpretation of the scene, whilst re-watching it later on tape. This emergence of meaning within the encounter of quotable aesthetic elements, was previously described as a form of 'emplaced knowing'. Emplaced knowing does not merge into a *Gesamtkunstwerk* easily but requires active embodied meaning-making on the side of the performer-spectator.

In rehearsal station one I intended to continue to work under the separation principle, so as to keep the tension between the reading of text and the building of the body sculpture. Such estranged performance would open metaphoric gaps for the performers as well as the (potential) audience. As discussed in workshop three, emplaced knowing might only happen within an educational space that allows pedagogical, ethical and artistic elements to stimulate and comment on each other. Emplaced knowing then requires encounters that welcome and rely on the willingness and confidence of the performer-spectators to question and share, as well as promote an openness towards their bodies' expressive potential.

Rehearsal station one, in this last workshop, took as its starting point such a moment of encounter, bringing into dialogue our bodily gesture (building the sculpture), our textual gesture (reading Jamal's account) as well as participants' willingness to read within the metaphoric gaps opened by such 'contested' aesthetic dialogue. Facilitating these encounters of 'gestures' enabled participants to rehearse 'dialogic aesthetic framing' and develop what Mumford calls "rhetorically crafted gestures" (2009: 54) which acted as representations in the (re)making. With the intention to keep both gestures aesthetically separate but also devise them together into a small performance, the text was initially rehearsed on its own and only later combined with the separately rehearsed body sculpture. The combination of both bodily and textual gesture into a collective group sculpture brought forth a temporary representation 'full of footnotes' and metaphoric gaps.

10.5 Practicalities

In contrast to the third workshop, body sculpture and text performance were both presented by the whole group. Jamal's text was divided up into individual lines for each participant-performer. The lines were firstly learned by heart and then 'played' with, by subordinating a straightforward reading to a more somatic presentation. Walking through the room, reading and rehearsing lines in chorus as well as individually, chronologically and at random - with various intonations, volumes and speed - we kept a 'fresh eye' on the text (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 4 - Sticky Sculpture). Integrating somatic elements referenced the multiple meanings residing within the text.



(Walking text rehearsal)

'Singing the line', amongst other exercises, again referred to Brecht's 'Stockholm' rehearsal exercises (Brecht, 1964: 29). A making strange of text through somatic elements 'quoted' the text rather than consolidated a fixed meaning of it, putting the performer and audience in a position of active interpretation. In addition to text rehearsal, we also revisited and rehearsed more consciously the building of the sculpture through our bodily gestures. Experimenting with the spatial and sensory possibilities of sticky tape, meaning was created through marking out definite spaces with tape on the floor. Positioning our bodies towards these marked spaces, we set up a basic visual structure as an estranged aesthetic device.

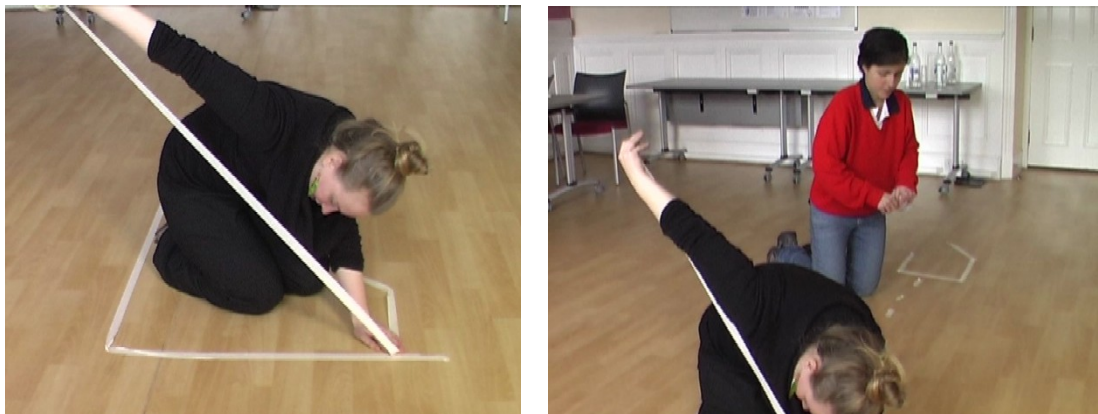
In the performance then, with textual and bodily gesture combined, the visual structures and the estranged reading of the text quoted each other and created a representation in flux. After the workshop, watching over the footage (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 4 - Sticky Sculpture), I allowed myself to interpret the metaphoric gaps of this representation in flux. Reflecting from my double positioning as performer and spectator/facilitator, my reading of the scene is radically embodied as well as observational from a more distanced stance of the researcher. Following from this double positioning, my writing will contain paragraphs of very detailed, embodied reflection on my positioning within the scene, as well as a meta-reflection on the meaning of our bodily gestures within the intercultural encounter in general.

The double reading of the scene functions as a representational act in the vein of an 'ethics as praxis' (MacDonald & O'Regan, 2012) - one, that references overall 'findings' only in relation to the specific context where they occurred. A detailed, subjective reading of our performance thus acknowledges the intercultural education research as a space of encounter, languaging and negotiation, in which theory is created through and embedded in praxis.

10.6 Reading within the metaphoric gaps

After our walking text rehearsal, I begin the devised scene by stepping into the rehearsal space with the roll of sticky tape. My intention is to perform an open gesture of exploration by integrating ‘not-but’. I unroll the sticky tape slowly, exploring its sensory qualities.

How does the sticky surface feel on my cheek? Sticking a straight line of tape on the ground I feel the non-sticky surface with my flat hand and smooth out the tape against the floor. I listen to the sound the tape makes when unrolling it with increasing speed, and then abruptly stop. Marking out a triangle with the tape on the floor, I then kneel within it and recite my line: “Either they are very creative or they are not acting according to the tradition of their culture...”. My sight is limited. I can’t see Marta when she enters the ‘stage’, but feel how she takes the roll out of my hand and walks away to my left. I can’t visually make out her actions but hear the sound of tape unrolling and being torn rapidly (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 4 - Sticky Sculpture).



(Building the sticky tape sculpture)

Watching over this clip, I am now able to relate my emplaced knowing (and ‘sensing’) as performer to a more general reading. Having been immersed in the scene, it was difficult to abstract from my individual perception which was sensorially limited by my physical positioning in the space. Due to my limited field of vision for example, I relied on other embodied ‘senses’ such as hearing, in order to orient the action on stage. My perception of the space was thus non-visual, auditory and tactile - relying on what Ahmed called “skin memories” (2000: 92).

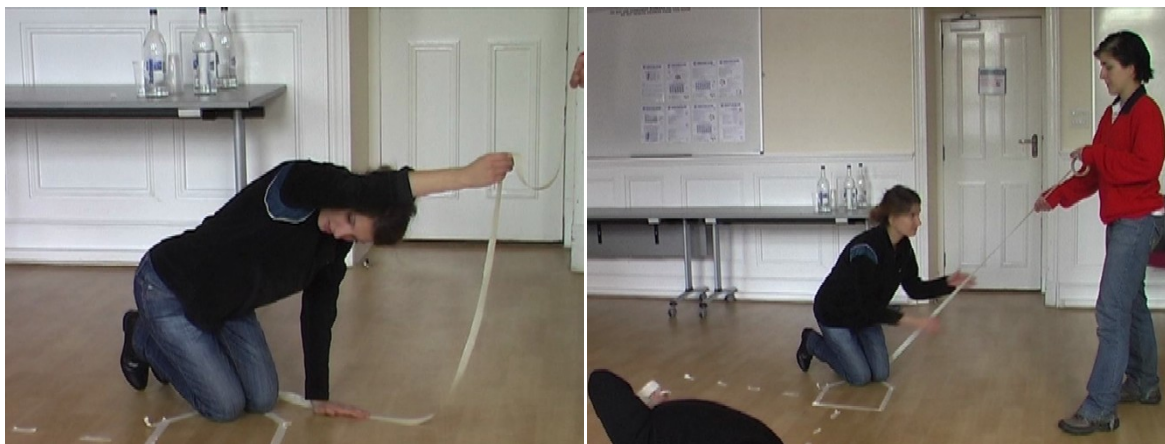
Amy had volunteered to step behind the camera to film our devised performance. With the help of her visual framing, I am able to re-visit our rehearsal and add further layers of interpretation:

To my left, still out of sight, Marta marks out space. I see it later on the footage. She creates a small sticky tape space. It looks like a house with an open roof on one side. Marta adds two intermittent lines which emanate from the house. One of the fragmented lines points in my direction. Marta, stands back from her tape trail on the floor, sings her first sentence. Her arms hang loosely on her side: "They are quite strange". She unrolls the tape further and sings: "I gave the example of my cousin". Marta pauses, then adds: "He was quite strange". Then she freezes. There are footsteps off-camera. Who is getting ready to enter the scene?

There was no set sequence to the devised sculpture. The emergence of the scene depended entirely on whoever decided to step in, continue the aesthetic framing and 'make place' with the other performers.

Karolina enters the frame. She stretches the tape in Marta's hand. Her movements are slow and gentle. She sings her lines: "And there are some people who are quite strange, and they can bring change". Karolina looks around nervously.

Watching over the footage and seeing Karolina's expression, I am reminded of Sonja's previous, questioning attitude: "And the sticky tape, I mean that is the weirdest thing. That's the oddest thing to me. That's so odd. It just has no meaning" (Sonja). Given Karolina's expressive facial gesture, she might think just the same. The sense of the sticky tape, as I explicated in chapter eight, lies after all in the performer's active, embodied interpretation. This constitutes the interpretative 'dilemma' of my emplaced research. Without the participant-performers' openness to the expressive potential of their bodies, there might be no 'enfleshed' meaning brought into being. The interpretative potential of estrangement devices thus fully depends on the willingness of the performer to actively engage with them and 'act' between the metaphoric gaps.



(The sculpture emerges)

After finishing her performance, Karolina looks around for affirmation. Does she wonder if her performance was ‘good enough’, ‘appropriate’ for my research or ‘aesthetically correct’? I am again reminded of the precarity of our intercultural research space. Participants, by taking on the active role of performers also take a risk. They take responsibility for their own creative acts and the meaning that is created through them. It is a ‘vulnerable’ stance, as there is no guarantee that our acts of creativity and making meaning will be understood the way we might have intended them.

Karolina’s non-verbal gesture of doubt expressed in workshop two and now four, become metaphors for my research. Ahmed (2000) described how ‘estrangement’ is the precondition to an act of making intercultural place together. The same elements of risk apply to our rehearsal situation. Artistic place can only be made together if the individual takes the risk of reaching out in the face of her own anxieties and the risk of mutual incomprehensibility.

Our improvised performance thus works from Butlerian (2005: 50) ‘ethical valence’ - or MacDonald & O’Reagan’s (2012) ‘immanent ethics’. Taking ‘contested’ relationship-building as the starting point for artistic creation, we might also rehearse towards a vibrant intercultural praxis.

Jamal enters the scene. He takes the tape roll from Karolina and then re-establishes the connection by putting his hand on her hand. Jamal carefully positions himself in the space, freezes and, in a mix of singing and speaking, recites his lines: "Some people are born strange. When you see some people in their own culture, and they are quite estranged from that culture". He pauses. The camera is shaking. Amy prepares her arrival in the scene by framing a slightly wider shot. She thus performs a 'double' aesthetic framing. On a technical level, she directs the camera frame so it can record her second, embodied, aesthetic framing - her performance as part of the body sculpture.

Amy's two acts of aesthetic framing reflect participants' as well as my own 'double positioning' as spectator-researcher and participants-performer. Amy framed the overall video 'documentation' of the body sculpture as well as acted as a performer in it. In a Freirean (1996) sense, this shows the fluid roles of researcher and participants within an intercultural education discourse which takes into consideration 'the politics of encounter' underlying the process of research. Within such research encounters there resides the potential for double positioning, where learners become teachers and researchers (and vice versa) carrying out their own aesthetic framing. Following from such double positioning, which changes and shapes within the dynamics of the relationships built, the intercultural research space is revealed as a teaching space of human relationships.

Amy's transition from the more distantly framing and filming stance to a radically embodied and fully involved stance of 'in-it-ness', aptly illustrates the challenges and tension within the research space. Despite my attempts to facilitate a research space as encounter, in which roles were fluid, my own role as researcher still has to be considered the most powerful one. My acts of final framing (by editing the DVD footage for example), create my distinctive narrative. The way I planned the research and decided which texts to represent and discuss in this thesis, perpetuate my own views and stance as researcher. A double positioning in the research space then disrupts the traditional power-relationships between researcher and participants partly - but cannot fully reverse them.

Following from my positioning as researcher - with all the privileges and power involved - there is no 'purity' in the discourse. There can be no ethical and pedagogical endpoints, for example the 'full' reversal of power-relationships within the research, assumed. These aims can only be worked towards from within the mess of (intercultural) research relationships, acknowledging participants as 'men and women alive' and rejecting the view of research participants as 'docile bodies'. From within this 'conceptual' mess and with the willingness to place 'estrangement' and relationship-building at the heart of the inquiry, we might rehearse towards a vibrant intercultural praxis. And following from our double positioning, we might also create emplaced knowledge and tentative representations in flux.

10.7 Representations as becoming

In rehearsal station two (Appendix IV: Station 2), participants were given the opportunity to revisit statements and conversations and re-read their creative piece from previous sessions. This was a way of sharing these texts and gaining a 'fresh eye' on them. With a view to Diane Taylor's (1998) criticism of Peña and Fusco's more 'hierarchical' representational practice, in which the artists analysed the visitors' statements as hard 'data', I sought to ground my subsequent analysis in our collaborative acts of (re-)framing the data. The revisiting and representing of participants' texts prevented me from turning their statements into a reified academic knowledge and explanatory model of what 'strangeness experience' might mean to international students. Subordinating the data instead to the research's 'estrangement' principles, I invited a making-strange of the familiar texts through more somatic elements. The estranged re-reading of the data then referenced the complexities and multiple meanings residing within our texts. Additionally, our acts of representation were firmly embedded within the context of our research and relationships.

10.8 Amy's estranged reading

Amy sings Sonja's creative writing piece in a repetitive, nursery-rhyme-like melody whilst moving her head from side to side in the same rhythm: "I found it strange that the furniture sat on the street, but I also found it to be beautiful and resembling art" (Amy). I read her performance as a child-like, non-judgemental marvelling at the strange and beautiful 'street art'? Amy pauses, then looks at the camera and smiles. She reads again. This time she holds Dorito crisps in her hand, munching and reciting the same lines with her mouth full. The munching dominates her speech pattern. She puts more crisps in her mouth.

The crunching gets louder. Pronouncing the word 'beautiful' as an expression of fine taste, the highly performative element gives the text a new meaning. I now read the munching as an ironic overemphasis of the 'beautiful' nature of the littered street, that draws my attention instead to its inherent wastefulness (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 4 - Sticky Sculpture). The difficulty and enjoyment of speaking with a mouth full of crisps turns into a somatic presentation of text. Amy, similarly to Brecht's (1964: 29) rehearsal exercise (q) 'rhythmical verse-speaking', subordinates the textual meaning to rhythmic singing as well as 'munching' (Amy's own somatic twist on it) - thus playing with the text's contradictory meaning and revealing its metaphoric gaps.



(Estranged reading with full mouth)

10.9 Marta's montage text

Marta has read through the transcribed dialogue and creative writing pieces and created this montage text which she reads straight to camera:

An experienced traveller
I had the privilege of being somewhere others haven't
Is it a glorified hobby?
The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined
Struggling with the word strange
My hands have been burned many times
But it is actually a door because it has a door number
It is near the library
A white door very high
There is no staircase (Marta).

Marta even goes a step further in estranging the data. Instead of simply re-reading an original text using somatic elements, she chooses to actively construct a new text out of a multiple of originals. By quoting a variety of texts, she produces new meanings and devises new metaphoric gaps for the reader to fill. Through her montage text, Marta composes a representation in flux around 'strangeness', and positions it creatively - and with her own distinctive voice - within the groups' shared experiences. In that her approach also resonates the collaborative creative process of the workshops. Given Marta's devising approach to the data, her text communicates the multiple layers and fragmented narratives residing within 'strangeness experience'. She references the radically embodied nature of intercultural experience that is difficult to abstract from its emergence as 'skin memory': "Struggling with the word strange. My hands have been burnt many times" (Marta).

10.10 Jamal's skin memory

Jamal decided to re-read a text that resonated with many when it was first shared in the second workshop. A seemingly mundane British 'anomaly' - the existence of a separate hot and cold water tap - had caused most participants some temporary, sensory awkwardness. Areebah had written the 'two taps' piece as a reflection on her own domestic 'strangeness experience', illustrating thereby that 'strangeness experiences' are indeed radically embodied. They can even burn your hands. Areebah wrote in her journal:

They still have two taps, I don't know why. I've been in Glasgow now for four years and I never asked why they use two taps. Actually, I faced that difficulty when I was in my previous flat. I had two taps in the kitchen. And honestly, I hated washing dishes, because I know I should use them both, so I moved from tap to tap (...) I have burnt my hands many times (Areebah).

Jamal reads out Areebah's piece to the group. It causes him difficulty to articulate the word 'tap' and he is (as can be guessed from his 'performance' on camera) amused about the group's effort (off and on camera) to teach him how to pronounce 'properly' (Appendix VII, DVD: Workshop 4 - Sticky Sculpture). Whilst reading the text, Jamal carefully pronounces the word 'tap', performing his 'linguistic efforts' for the group, rather than presenting the text for its own sake or for the recording camera. His gesture of distinct pronunciation communicates playfully his effort to please his self-proclaimed 'teachers'. Jamal's smile at the end of the clip speaks of the overall playfulness of this rehearsal situation, in which 'getting it wrong' - 'trying' - 'rehearsing-playing' are all essential part of the relationship-based process.

Jamal's reading of text was thus imbued with an almost unconscious 'estrangement' effect - his overemphasis of the word 'tap'. This estranged reading was not a conscious 'artistic' decision on Jamal's part, but evolved from the social context of the rehearsal situation. Jamal had inquired about the pronunciation of 'tap' and was eagerly taught by the group how to improve his reading on the spot. This spontaneous teaching situation did not however emerge within a hierarchical teacher-learner set-up, in which Jamal might have felt nervous or self-conscious about his linguistic performance. As we had already grown into an ensemble, teacher-learner roles alternated. Jamal embraced his learner role playfully whilst reading the text, and integrated it, even if unconsciously, as an artistic estrangement effect.

His performance thus shows how relationship-building can become the driving force for an act of artistic making.



(Re-reading 'the two taps')

10.11 My skin memory

I am inspired to take up Jamal's choice of text when it comes to my turn reading a piece to camera. When Areebah first wrote about the two taps and the confusion it caused her in her domestic setting, the taps seemed to evoke other people's skin memories too. Amy who had listened to Areebah sharing her piece during session two, was prompted to share her own 'two taps' anecdote, passionately attesting to the 'strangeness' of this British sanitary accessory.

I didn't write about the two taps but the two taps are just crazy. I don't understand the two taps. It's one thing in the old times when people didn't know but now, they refurbished the bathroom on the second floor and they are really nice but: two taps??? (Amy)

Playing back Areebah's piece and Amy's impassioned reaction after the workshop, I had remembered my own numerous 'skin memories' in relation to this mundane equipment. I had burned hands under the hot tap, endured freezing-cold hands using the blue tap only, performed rapid attempts at washing my hands to avoid scolding etc. A plethora of memories triggered by this simple but strange phenomenon of British sanitary engineering! I decided to re-read Amy's text and heighten her initial, impassioned reaction to Areebah's piece. I read it as my own intercultural 'outrage' against this sanitary obstacle - remembering the many times 'I have burnt my hands'.

My heightened reading communicates the group's embodied connection through a similar skin memory - 'burning our hands' under British taps. It also reveals playfully how 'strangeness experiences' are of an embodied nature which can literally provoke disorientation and anxiety in the individual's body. Skin memories challenge the individual on a sensory and spatial level to improvise within everyday life's routine acts (even when washing your hands). It requires an adoption of habitus to the new environment which entails a process of 'working through' the discomfort. The 'burning of hands' thus becomes a metaphor for the breadth of embodied 'strangeness experiences'. These can range from experiences of slight bodily discomfort for example caused by 'unfamiliar' household equipment - to deeper anxieties and fears of security (as in Lin's story). Conjured up by new, less controllable spatial situations (as in Lin's 'street incident'), embodied strangeness experiences might also result in culture shock.



(My re-reading of Amy's comment on Areebah's 'two taps')

10.12 Singing 'Three blue pigeons' in our mother tongue

Aleksandra:

What about having it the other way around, starting with the pigeon scene? Nobody is there but the pigeons, the sound of pigeons. And then the whole scene with the guys coming in could start (...)

Katja:

And you could have the loudspeaker in the middle and the pigeon sounds are coming out of that. And the plastic bags are slightly blowing (...)

Prompted by the group's dramaturgical ideas in relation to Lin's script in the third workshop, I had set out to find a pigeon sound effect to be integrated in our next script rehearsal. I wasn't able to source any satisfying pigeon sound effects online, but instead, came across this children's rhyme:

Three blue pigeons, three blue pigeons, three blue pigeons sitting on a fence.

Oh look! One has flown away!

Two blue pigeons, two blue pigeons, two blue pigeons sitting on a fence.

Oh look! another one has flown away!

One blue pigeon, one blue pigeon, one blue pigeon sitting on a fence.

Oh look! It has flown away too!

No blue pigeons, no blue pigeons, no blue pigeons

Sitting on a fence (Gagné Williamson, 2002).

The melody of 'Three blue pigeons' was so catchy and intuitive that I was curious to experiment with it as a dramaturgical element for our scene (Appendix V: Station 3). Unlike an actual sound effect that would have illustrated the 'deserted streets' in Lin's story, the use of the children's rhyme might not have an illustrative effect but rather acts as an aesthetic element in itself. As a dramaturgical device it might quote the presence of the pigeons as silent witnesses observing Lin's 'street incident' ('sitting on a fence'). At the same time the playfulness of the song, in which the pigeons are leaving one after another, might act as an effective *Verfremdungs*-device. It could be used in stark contrast to a moment of abrupt silence - in which we only hear the plastic bags blowing in the wind - thus resonating Lin's sudden feeling of threat and desertion at the beginning of the scene.

Additionally to its use as a dramaturgical element for script rehearsal, 'Three blue pigeons' also connected to our very first 'get to know game' in workshop one. During this game, participants had filmed and interviewed each other - being prompted, amongst other things, to recite a lullaby from their childhood. Listening to participants' songs in Greek, Polish, Arabic, Spanish, Pashto and Chinese on tape after the workshop, I had gained a more unmediated glimpse of people's personalities. In the English-speaking environment of the university, our first language is seldom put in use for educational or academic purposes. bell hooks (1994) suggested that there lies a personal power in the use of our mother tongue, especially in university settings, as it is the most personal position of embodiment.

It also reverses the "traditional mechanics of who speaks - who listens - and why (...)" (hooks, 1994: 171) within the classroom. Singing 'three blue pigeons' in our mother tongue in workshop four rounded off the research in the way it was initiated: by asserting intercultural encounters and with that relationship-building as the driving force for acts of making research, artistic place and subsequent representations. Our singing, beyond referencing bell hooks' engaged pedagogy, also refers to Ahmed and Butler's pedagogical arguments: Communication occurs not despite of our different languages but is a necessary task to work through our mutual incomprehensibility. "The differences between us necessitate the dialogue, rather than disallow it - a dialogue must take place, precisely because we don't speak the same language" (Ahmed, 2000: 180).

The act of singing and listening to each other in our mother tongue might be regarded in the context of such acts of reaching out and making place. Pedagogically speaking, there seems no immediate functional purpose to our singing in terms of a "banking education" (Freire, 1996: 52ff). In other words, no functional purpose can be extracted for the kind of universalising educational concepts, which work from a universal stance of 'fixing' precarity and 'implementing' such fixes, in order to govern 'docile bodies'. Such banking approach, I show throughout my thesis, does not serve the project of intercultural education. Instead, our singing is educationally less 'packagable'. We do not speak each other's language. We cannot join into each other's performance and likely will not remember the new words after the performance.

The acts of attentive listening and letting the new words wash over and touch us, are to be understood as a social event and in the context of an engaged, embodied pedagogy, not simply as linguistic or educational acts. Despite my incomprehension of the individual languages, I connect to the playfulness of the song and tune into its performative element. Connecting to the song viscerally, emotionally and performatively allows me an almost intimate understanding. I intuitively understand the 'purpose' of a lullaby's soothing tunes or the catchy melody of a nursery rhyme. This embodied understanding can be ascribed to my own 'skin memories' of having been soothed to sleep myself by my mum singing 'Guten Abend, gute Nacht', rather than to my actual linguistic comprehension of the songs' lyrics in the various languages.

My experiential knowledge emerges from the fact that I have lived through many instances of childhood singing. Learning in such a context can thus not be described in terms of a 'banking education'. Given such an embodied connection to our singing, it might be helpful to think, again with Ahmed, of our acts of listening to each other in a context of hearing 'as touch' (ibid: 156). The way we are moved by the singing and despite linguistic incomprehension, might then lead to a renewed, positive perception of people's complex personalities.

What is most intimate to me - singing a nursery rhyme or a lullaby in my mother tongue - is most strange to you. But I have been sung to and been singing as a child. I have been comforted, put to sleep and entertained by my mum's singing.

bell hooks' accords the use of our mother tongues an even political, subversive purpose. I quoted her in chapter six:

If we lived in a democratic state our language would have to hurtle, fly, curse and [most important in this context] sing (...), in all the undeniable and representative voices of everybody here (hooks, 1994: 172).

Asserting our voice through singing in our mother tongue might then be seen in the context of a Brechtian ‘estrangement’ device, interrupting our everyday interaction as academics and students - allowing glimpses into our individualities beyond our professional persona.

Hearing Amy sing in French made me think of her growing up in Paris and then having to leave for Canada again as a teenager. How did she feel leaving her French language behind? I feel proud being able to recognise most of the Spanish words Marta sings and marvel at how different Karolina sounds when singing in Polish. Jamal sings gently and smiling in Pashto and I can imagine him singing lullabies and nursery rhymes to his own daughters ...

These moments of recognition through singing and listening within the intercultural research space of experiment might be also described in terms of Fels’ “space moments of learning” (Fels & McGivern, 2002: 21) or what Axtman (2002: 82) calls “transcultural recognition”, as described in chapter one. I will conclude with one of Jamal’s anecdotes from workshop four which sums up the potential of such moments of recognition.

He describes his ‘estrangement’, surprise and moment of personal learning when suddenly seeing his mother dance. He had never seen her dance before. Moved by the beauty of his mother’s dance, Jamal perceives her personality in a new light.

When I saw my mother dancing it was quite strange for me because I haven’t seen my mother dance before. And I was just looking at her. She knew how to dance and she was dancing quite nice. It was strange for me that it happened like this. In my mind, this person can only do these things. But if the person does that thing, it is quite strange, you notice they can also do that. (Jamal)

10.13 Working towards a final performance

Station four was laid out as a rehearsal of the new, revised script (Appendix V: Station 4). I integrated participants' ideas from session three - pigeon sounds, tumble weed, plastic bags, iconic Western music - as well as part of Sonja's creative writing piece from session two. These artistic elements evolved from the group's conversation in the third workshop and brought an artistic comment to the scene, rather than simply illustrating the original street incident. Adding these elements was an act of production not an act of illustration or even social documentation (Sontag, 1977). Our acts of representing Lin's street incident did not intend to turn the reality of the original 'strangeness experience' into an easily consumable performance of it.

On the contrary, the choice of artistic elements strongly resonated with the group's own reading and filling of the story's metaphoric gaps. 'Estrangement' devices then function as commentary on the story. Drawing on my own and the group's ideas with regard to dramaturgical elements, prior to their actual embodied performance, the script also points towards its inherent incompleteness. As there was no time to even rehearse the script in this last workshop, it only points towards its realisation in praxis. My reflection is thus only praxis-based with regards to the script's devised emergence from previous workshops, but not in relation to its actual performance.

Rehearsing the script towards a final, devised performance constitutes another task and is momentarily beyond the timeframe of this research project. It would require a more-product-focussed mode in which rehearsal can take place with a view to a final performance rather than open exploration. For my empirical research however, it was the processual element rather than the emergence of a devised, aesthetic product which was at the heart of the intercultural space of experiment. At the end of these four drama sessions, the condition for further ensemble work was created. If there had been time, our research space could now have transitioned into a more product-oriented theatre space.

10.14 The dramaturgical elements

The script mixes realistic and fictional elements in order to open metaphoric gaps for the audience's interpretation of strangeness experience. As in Brechtian performance, the script works from a separation principle or tableaux aesthetic, in which scenes are not arranged in a harmonious fashion but work in juxtaposition (e.g. scene 1 and scene 2) and "with a more unstable or dialectical unity of contradictions" (Mumford, 2009: 85). Starting with an announcement on the type of text the performance is based on (an international student's verbatim account), the script aims to evoke an interest on the side of the audience in the circumstances of the telling as well as in the 'outcome' of the story. The audience is led to reflect on the fictional events on stage in the light of the 'realness' of the original street incident.

As a dramaturgical device, the pigeon sounds from the loudspeaker quoted the presence of the pigeons as silent witnesses observing Lin's 'street incident' ('sitting on a fence'). Sonja's creative writing piece, which is played through the loudspeaker, talks about a 'pigeon with unusual shopping habits' - poetically resonating Lin's own 'unexpected' encounter when returning from her shopping trip on an early Sunday morning. The playfulness of 'Three blue pigeons', sung by the actors on the dark stage prepares this unexpected encounter. In the children's song, the pigeons leave one after another until there is only the bare fence left. The song's happy tune and catchy rhythm lulls the audience into the playful mode of a harmless children's song, but as the singing is abruptly stopped, Lin's feeling of isolation is heightened.

Adding to and commenting on the moment of silence that follows the playful singing, the loudspeaker plays another line from Sonja's creative writing piece:

Loudspeaker: I find it strange that an uncomfortable silence filled the room considering there was an openness to love and a disregard for all things which were awkward.

(excerpt from the devised script)

Acting between the playfulness of the nursery rhyme - which signals openness and play - and the awkward silence that follows the singing, the lines express the element of ambiguity and risk within interculturality. The last piece played through the loudspeaker poetically points towards the everyday intercultural challenges posed. In that, it prepares Lin's story as an ambiguous and personally challenging 'strangeness experience':

Loudspeaker: I find it strange that a different person would act in a different way in similar circumstances. I found it difficult to understand which was the right way.

(excerpt from the devised script)

The tumbleweed acts as a transition between scene 1 and scene 2. It prepares the setting of Lin's story by resonating the desertion of the streets on a Sunday morning in Glasgow. The girl's face (the actress playing Lin) appears on the screen. She tells her story in third person up to the point where the group of teenagers begin to speak to Lin. Their confrontation, the suspense of their reaction and intention (are they harmless or a threat?) is expressed by the iconic "Il triello (The Trio)" (Morricone, 1966) from the Good, the Bad and the Ugly's soundtrack in the final shoot-out scene. The cliché of such a highly theatrical stand-off moment taken from a classic Western and applied to a real-life-based event has a comically estranging rather than illustrative effect.

It references and 'exaggerates' the situation's emotionality comically as well as draws attention to the precarity of the event. A girl's face (the actress playing Lin) appears on the projection screen. She tells her story. In chapter six, I explained how Lin's original verbatim account already contained elements of *Verfremdung*, because it was full of Lin's own comments (footnotes) on her emotional state and thoughts during the street incident. Adding layers of *Verfremdung* to the script, for example in terms of read-aloud stage directions, thus didn't constitute a 'first break' from an empathetic, first-person narrative. Instead it worked from the separation principle that Lin had already introduced through her own self-reflective representation of her experience.

Following from this second break, I also argued that the ‘estrangement’ devices introduced - stage directions, translating the script into third person, spatial dislocation - acted as interpretive strategies rather than formalistic procedures. The rehearsal text emerged from within the group’s mutual embodied engagement and was not externally imposed. Participants were already emotionally more invested and acted ‘estrangement’ from a position of ‘in-it-ness’ which led to concrete interpretative acts. The integration of the video projection in this revised script references these acts of reflection that draw through Lin’s story - from its moment of telling in the workshop to Sonja’s and Marta’s post-performance conversation. Lin (the girl) tells her story from a place off-stage, appearing on a projection screen to the audience.

In that her telling is doubly estranged. Lin tells her story in third person and is also physically remote at the moment of telling. The employment of a projection screen thus further works from the separation principle, continuing to add layers of *Verfremdung* that build onto a script and performance that are already ‘full of footnotes’. The radically embodied nature of Lin’s ‘strangeness experience’ is not illustrated through the actresses’ physical presence on stage. Instead, her absence from the stage and her remote, doubly estranged telling of the incident merely quote the embodied nature of the original event. The immediacy of the screen which shows a huge projection of the girl’s face, as well as the somatic and playful elements introduced, at the same time resonate embodiment.

They invite the audience to tune in and align their bodies to the rhythms on stage - the repetitive rhythms of the telling, the soothing tunes of the nursery rhyme. The audience is invited to empathise ‘viscerally’ - and from such an embodied position - read into the scene’s metaphoric gaps. Encouraging the audience to tune into an embodied experience of the performance, whilst at the same time experiencing a doubly remote telling of the event, thus opens a precarious, reflective space. The performance, as a tentative representation of strangeness experience, rather than an explanatory model (illustration) of it, has the potential to open up conversation. What are these strangeness experiences people go through? What are the dangers (real or imagined) and the emotional impact of such experiences? What are their pedagogical implications?

SECTION V: Conclusion



[The discovery of conditions
takes place through the interruption of happenings.]

[Die Entdeckung von Zuständen
erfolgt durch die Unterbrechung von Ereignissen.]

(Benjamin, 1992: 147)

Chapter 11:

Representation in the making

11.1 Conclusion

The value of thought is measured by its distance from the continuity of the familiar. (Adorno, 2005: 80)

In an act of 'estrangement', I will use pieces of embodied data from the workshops as the projecting screen to review my thesis' contribution to the field of intercultural education, my own learning process as well as some implications for further research practice. Using pieces of embodied data as the linchpin to think through the academic impact of a Brechtian research pedagogy prevents a final reification of the data into a fetishised academic 'strangeness knowledge'. Instead, it grounds such insights in the specificities of my research and allows a reading of this knowledge between fiction and reality. In the vein of an immanent ethics, such writing with embodied data is also understood as an act of writing from, within and against the precarity of intercultural spaces.

These texts stand as symbols for our collaborative, embodied research engagement, resonating the many modes of encounter and reflection throughout the sessions. Letting participants' expressions set the final tone values their voices and creative work and firmly places my conclusion within the relationships built in the research space. As an emplaced intercultural education researcher researching in a mode of production rather than collection - I am necessarily discursively interwoven in the data.

An experienced traveller
I had the privilege of being somewhere others haven't
Is it a glorified hobby?
The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined
Struggling with the word strange
My hands have been burned many times
But it is actually a door because it has a door number
It is near the library
A white door very high
There is no staircase. (Marta)

[the researcher explains why her thesis is a valuable contribution to the field of intercultural education]

Marta's text which she created as a montage, using our transcribed conversations and participants' creative writing pieces, reflects the Brechtian research methodology developed in this thesis. Her piece is marked aesthetically by the very *Verfremdung* that is my contribution to the field of intercultural education. The Brechtian research pedagogy tested and translated pedagogically the criticism and ideas of those progressive intercultural educators and researchers who call for a view on culture as a highly embodied, relationship-based and 'in the making' phenomenon.

The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined
Struggling with the word strange
My hands have been burned many times. (Marta)

'Strangeness experiences', as being highly embodied, are difficult to abstract into words. It was a methodological challenge to work with such embodied data without 'ruining' its complex form. With the aim to hold and inquire into this meaningful, embodied 'mess' that is intercultural experience, I developed a research method that placed *Verfremdung* at its conceptual and pedagogical heart. My inquiry into 'international students' experiences of strangeness' was thus not an act of 'classic' data collection but instead an act of pedagogy and facilitation and devising of 'three-dimensional' data.

And I, the emplaced intercultural education researcher, was fully involved in 'it'. It is especially this act of researching from 'in-it-ness' which makes my original contribution to the field of intercultural education. Connecting to those scholars who call for an immanently ethical positioning of intercultural education discourse, I demonstrated practically a way of researching as creative, intercultural praxis; one that integrates an immanent ethics in its work methods.

When I saw my mother dancing it was quite strange for me because I haven't seen my mother dance before. And I was just looking at her. She knew how to dance and she was dancing quite nice. It was strange for me that it happened like this. In my mind, this person can only do these things. But if the person does that thing, it is quite strange, you notice they can also do that. (Jamal)

I underpinned my research not with a universal and conceptually 'pure' ethics but with an immanent ethics that can be more described in terms of Jamal's mother's dance. Her embodied performance allowed Jamal to rethink his familiar view of his mother - and be surprised by new, unexpected glimpses into her complex personality. Jamal's mother was given the space to dance; from that *Verfremdung* unfolded and - rupturing Jamal's familiar perceptions - new ones developed. Equally, a Brechtian research pedagogy - as a mode of facilitation - provided research participants with a space to 'dance' their complex, embodied intercultural experiences.

This invitation to dance stands as a metaphor for the 'acts of creative making' encouraged within our sessions: improvisation, creative writing, script rehearsal amongst other activities. The ethical dimension was not external but integral to these creative acts of making. Ethics were integrated in the methods themselves and grew and shaped within and against the experiences and ideas of people present. Jamal's mother's dance - as an inherently ethical act of 'spontaneous' embodied performance - couldn't have been pedagogically or ethically conceptualised or presupposed before the event.

Such streamlining would have 'ruined' the beauty and transformative power of her performance. Jamal's mother needed the freedom and space to dance, so that *Verfremdung* could unfold and 'do its work' on Jamal. My research pedagogy showed that Brechtian spaces of experiment have a similar potential to create embodied performances which stimulate renewed perceptions of what it means to live interculturally.

[The researcher maintains that participants' 'dance' shaped her research ethics]

Working from a stance of an immanent ethics allowed the relationships in my research to create an equally 'unpredictable dance'. The group dynamics unfolding in the workshops acted as 'interruptive devices' to my presupposed concepts of how to 'do' intercultural ethics and research conceptually 'proper'. 'Estrangement' instead enabled reflection on our discursive ways of 'dancing' - interacting and researching - together. Brechtian methods, by taking the complexity and precarity of human relationships as the starting point for creative acts of making and re-making, were the logical choice for my research.

Brechtian methods led me not only not to fear the ‘interruption’ of my concepts but to welcome the pedagogical and ethical potential of such process of ‘defamiliarisation’. In that, my Brechtian pedagogy demonstrated a creative and experiential research model for an intercultural education that takes seriously the need to “equip [students] for anticipation, arrival, meetings and deepening encounters, working alongside and within different systems of culture, language and thought” (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004: 114).

[the researcher asserts how the Brechtian research space is a teaching space of human relationships]

Sonja:

And the sticky tape, I mean that is the weirdest thing. That’s the oddest thing to me. That’s so odd. It just has no meaning.

Marta:

When you do it, it does make sense.

Sonja:

How does it feel like? How does it make sense?

Marta:

Because it’s kind of a path, so it’s giving the directions. When you’ve just come from Tesco, you are kind of retracing that path.

Sonja:

Ahhh ...

Marta:

And also because you have to stand up and turn around, you sort of detangle yourself from that ‘sticky’ situation you thought you were in. That’s how I feel like. Because when you have the other person peering at you; I suppose in the original story it’s the feeling of being intimidated by these guys. And this is actually your way out. You’re going to point out the way to the supermarket but you also find a way out of that situation; because you have to stand up and do something. You can escape from their eyesight.

This post-performance conversation between Marta and Sonja illustrates the immanently pedagogical and ethical potential of *Verfremdungs*-methods. Not unlike Brecht's 'gestic' actors, participants used their own 'subtexts' - their life experiences, existing values and questions - as a means to not only understand the 'nature' of intercultural experience but even as a way to question the sense of my chosen methods. Although such genuine scepticism, in the spirit of an immanent ethics, was 'theoretically' welcomed, when experienced in praxis, it could have threatened my stance as researcher 'authority'. It took trust into my chosen methods and discipline not to immediately jump in and justify my methodological framework to Sonja, but instead let *Verfremdung* 'do its work' and yield interpretative control to participants.

My embeddedness into a network of friends and colleagues, who 'carried' the research with me from its initiation, also helped to see such 'questioning' as inherently positive, rather than threatening. My methodology was discursively held through others' shared concerns for research methodologies that are not detached from our human ways of being. By allowing *Verfremdung* to unfold as genuine 'metatextual irritants', Brechtian methods also became more than just formalistic, artistic devices. They acted as pedagogical instigators facilitating teaching spaces of human relationships. Sonja's genuine scepticism about the use of sticky tape during rehearsal, as well as Marta's openness to interpret the sense of the tape 'from the body' [the sense lies in 'doing' the tape, she says] enacted a relationship of care, in which critical reflection and embodied, collaborative learning went hand in hand. Teaching spaces of human relationships and a mode of embodied reflection became an integral part of the research process.

[the researcher explains how 'fictional' creative writing liberates participants to reflect on real life]

I found it strange that the furniture sat on the street but I found it also to be beautiful and resembling art. Even the toilet paper in the trees blowing in the wind seemed to create a sense of flow and aesthetic to the tableau. In some ways it can represent the beauty of a strange space which, looked at from another perspective, one of environmental concern, can be considered as ugly and wasteful. (Sonja)

The 'free flow' writing exercise employed in workshop two is a further example of such pedagogical 'estrangement' method. It allowed participants to write and reflect between reality and fiction and relieved them from having to produce explanatory pieces for my research. Despite the fictional style of the writing, it often led to conversations on 'real' life experiences when sharing it in the small groups and during the final group reflection. Sonja's piece for example, written in a 'stream of consciousness' stimulated a group discussion on 'fly-tipping' and evoked people's individual, concrete life experiences with Glasgow's street recycling rituals. Brechtian methods thus provoked a variety of reflective modes that worked between reality and fiction - ranging from creative writing, to the sharing of anecdotes, collaborative thinking and even concrete problem-solving approaches.

A Brechtian pedagogy can thus be said to exploit the 'instability' of cultural identity for creative acts of collaborative making. Participants are not forced to give 'accurate' accounts of themselves for the research but are invited to think and act collaboratively and in-between the metaphoric gaps opened by their complex intercultural experiences. A Brechtian pedagogy then does not regard cultural instability as lack, but as an opportunity for collaborative, creative production within teaching spaces of human relationships.

[The researcher demands that precarious intercultural spaces need protection]

I was thinking what is culture shock? I know what it is, I even have a fairly good idea what's happening in our brains because I did some study on the brain. But when I'm in it, all that knowledge doesn't matter. It doesn't connect with me. I don't know that knowledge when I'm in it, I'm just in it. (Amy)

The aspects of precarity that pervade intercultural experience were pedagogically integrated in my Brechtian research space. Recognising the need to create 'community' and prevent 'culture shock', my research methods facilitated a protected space in which participants were valued as 'men and women alive'. Plans and schedules were shifted and shaped according to the group's dynamic, and bodies were allowed to attune to the new environment, the drama research methods and the new people in the room. In that context, the question also arose how professional applied drama practitioners actually methodologically integrate these aspects of precarity in their intercultural work. Applied theatre today, when working in an international context, often relies on the universal human rights framework as ethical framework.

I maintain that such reference to a universally applicable ethical concept can bear the danger of promoting a closed cultural model. As discussed previously for language education, it is clear that presupposed ethical objectives can aid the instrumentalisation of creative methods into e.g. static educational models or even economically driven agendas. This could inhibit applied drama practitioners from being able to work with the pedagogical and ethical potential of drama methods as ‘interruptive devices’ that open reflective spaces, and flourish best when not educationally streamlined. I argued that applied theatre discourse - in the same vein as intercultural education discourse - would benefit from a firm positioning within an immanent ethics.

This would entail the pedagogical protection of precarity in intercultural drama work, so that participants are not emotionally harmed and methods cannot be easily streamlined into educational models set out to ‘fix’ precarity or ‘presuppose’ participants’ ‘dance’ [with reference to Jamal’s mother]. Following from that, my theoretical discussion of applied theatre discourse led me back to practical questions of ethics and pedagogy in my own research space. In order to protect precarity in the research, it had to be strongly rooted in the work of those scholars who promote an embodied intercultural practice as well as recognise the need to protect the vulnerability of people acting in such intercultural space. The experimental intercultural space was then not only an inherently social but also a political space; one in which vulnerability required active protection.

[the researcher maintains that encountering ethical dilemmas proves the research methodology’s success]

After that I still felt very uncomfortable.

I can’t stop thinking ‘what if...’ something happens, what am I doing? (Lin)

Caused by the aligning of bodies during an improvisational drama exercise, two participants - Jamal and Lin - remembered a former, traumatising event. This raised questions not only about their emotional well-being but also if my research methods had in any way brought forth their discomfort. I had to question more in-depth the emotional impact that my pedagogically ‘safe’ space might have had on participants. This resulted in reflection on my role as facilitator of such presumably ‘safe spaces’.

I argued that my own acts of facilitating drama and ‘storytelling’ in the research space, couldn’t be regarded as an ‘innocent’, naturally transformative or even ‘healing’ endeavour. On the contrary, my pedagogical and ethical actions in the Brechtian research space - which fostered to some extent risk and volatility - require ongoing reflection. Critical reflection helped to reassess and, if necessary, rethink and readapt my methods, so as to guarantee a research space that was as safe and at the same as creatively and pedagogically stimulating as possible. This was not in contrast to my Brechtian research pedagogy.

On the contrary, critical rethinking (of ethics and methods) was already pedagogically integrated in my *Verfremdungs-methodology*. Encountering ethical challenges thus didn’t imply the failure of methodology, but instead proved its ‘success’. Acknowledging the precarity of intercultural spaces meant working with an ‘ethics as becoming’. This found its expression in an active problem-solving approach - rooted in the group’s context-specific creative makings, in which facing experiential ‘dilemmas’ was regarded as working towards embodied democratic habits.

[the researcher maintains that a Brechtian research pedagogy fosters embodied democratic habits]

Drawing attention to the potential of ‘precarious’ intercultural spaces as rehearsal spaces for embodied democratic habits, I argued that the protection (and experiencing) of people’s vulnerability is an integral part of such practised ‘democracy’. Using a Brechtian research pedagogy, I facilitated an intercultural space of experiment in which a rehearsal towards embodied democratic habits - or what interculturalist also call a ‘vibrant intercultural praxis’ (MacDonald & O’Regan, 2012) - was embedded within the research method itself. The research was thus a form of mutual apprenticeship or what in sensory ethnography is called an ‘emplaced ethnography’, in which reflection and learning through sociality found their legitimate places. Such sensory apprenticeship found its concrete expression for example in the Brechtian actor training technique - turned pedagogical technique - ‘not-but’.

[the researcher maintains that ‘not-but’ acting is a crucial pedagogical technique for intercultural education]

She noticed that there were four or five teenagers, or guys, who walked on the other side. She just went on her way but when she noticed them, they suddenly came to her and surrounded her, you know, four or five guys. And they said two sentences (...). (excerpt from Marta’s performance/script)

In the spirit of Brecht’s Stockholm rehearsal exercises, participant-performer Marta’s melodic reading altered the flow of text and subordinated the textual meaning of the lines to non-verbal, somatic elements of the story. In line with an ‘apprenticeship model’, ‘estrangement’ through rhythmic tapping opened a space for ‘visceral empathy’. Instead of distancing the event further, ‘estrangement’ through physical performance, counter-intuitively, invites a ‘tuning in’ to the embodied world of the script. ‘Estrangement’ devices in this context can thus have a highly emotional impact on performer and audience, as they speak with and through the body. They are not stand-alone symbols but unfold their interpretative function only through the actors’ and audience’s bodily engagement.

In the thesis, I called this moment of attunement, the opening of a ‘not-but moment’ which results in embodied interpretation and learning. Asserting an embodied discourse and working from an immanent ethics, ‘not-but’ acted as an important pedagogical-artistic technique for intercultural education. With a view to ‘not-but’ within the overall research, it stood as an ideal example for a Brechtian method that radically works from the precarity of human being. ‘Not-but’ instigated research from a Brechtian separation principle and against a *Gesamtkunstwerk* approach to research. Artistic, pedagogical and ethical aspects of the research were not merged into a universally applicable research approach. Instead, they were devised to crossover, complement and contradict each other, in order for reflective spaces to emerge.

[the researcher demands a Brechtian approach also for representational practice]

An immanent ethics model that employs pedagogical techniques such as ‘not-but’ was relevant during the process of research, but should also be considered for subsequent representational practice. An immanent ethics model can prevent a fetishisation of academic stranger knowledge as it integrates the principles of ‘estrangement’ and considers representations as ‘becoming’ within the relationships and mutual embodied engagement of performers (researcher and participants) *and* the audience or reader. In order to stress the need for a ‘becoming’ representational practice in intercultural education research, I developed the term ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’. ‘Dialogic aesthetic framing’ is a representational act - based on an immanent ethics model - which communicates transparently the purpose of the representation as well as the expectations directed towards participants and audience.

Accentuating the non-neutrality and immanently dialogic structure of representation, ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ does not produce expert pieces of knowledge. Texts might be full of metaphoric gaps which reflect the subjective and necessarily fragmented activity of giving accounts of others. The resulting knowledge is thus complex, tentative in its nature and demands a process of active reading within these metaphoric gaps.

The development of the term ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ for intercultural education research asserted a ‘paradigm of embodiment’ for representational practice. It recognised and sought to actively reference the social production of knowledge through an embodied and shared representational practice - as demonstrated for example in Jamal’s reading of Areebah’s piece:

They still have two taps, I don’t know why. I’ve been in Glasgow now for four years and I never asked why they use two taps. Actually, I faced that difficulty when I was in my previous flat. I had two taps in the kitchen. And honestly, I hated washing dishes, because I know I should use them both, so I moved from tap to tap (...) I have burnt my hands many times”. (Jamal reading Areebah’s creative writing piece)

First practical attempts at ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ were made in workshop four, conducted as a series of independent rehearsal stations, which revisited and represented texts and exercises from previous workshops. The data’s explanatory power of ‘strangeness knowledge’ was put in the context of participants’ embodied engagement with their own texts. Estranging their texts by for example using somatic elements (munching, singing, montage), the group asserted interpretative, representational control over their own texts and helped me to keep ‘a fresh eye’ on their data. Their acts of ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’ opened new metaphoric gaps within the already existing texts.

Jamal was for example taught by the group off-camera how to pronounce TAP ‘properly’. He deliberately over-pronounces the word whilst reciting Areebah’s piece - playfully referencing in his reading the discursive structure (teacher-pupil situation) underlying his performance. Jamal’s re-reading of Areebah’s ‘two taps’ piece emerged as a radically embodied act of representation in the sense of ‘dialogic aesthetic framing’. His reading - which stresses the word TAP throughout, resonated not only his own reaction to the text but illustrated his representational practice as deeply interwoven with the whole group’s discursive makings.

Outlook for future research

Scene 1

A darkened room. Pigeon sounds from a loudspeaker in the middle of the stage. Stage is littered with plastic bags

Text appears on projection screen: The following performance is based on an international students’ account of her experience of strangeness in Glasgow.

Three actors stand in line in the dark, between the plastic bags, waiting.

Loudspeaker:

I find it strange that there was a pigeon who went shopping for a hat. It was a rainy day so I understand there was the need to stay dry but I still found it to be unusual.

(Actor 1 starts singing ‘3 blue pigeons’ in the dark, actor 2 and three join in - all sing together and then stop abruptly)

(pause)

Loudspeaker: I find it strange that an uncomfortable silence filled the room considering there was an openness to love and a disregard for all things which were awkward.

(long pause)

Loudspeaker: I find it strange that a different person would act in a different way in similar circumstances. I found it difficult to understand which was the right way.

(tumbleweed blowing on a projection screen)

Scene 2

A girl's face appears on the projection screen.

Girl on screen: There was no one on the street that time.

(pause)

(The three actors in the dark start tapping rhythmically).

Girl on screen (speaks in rhythm of the tapping): One bad experience she had when she was leaving the student residences, you know the student accommodation. It was a Sunday morning, 11am, but it seemed no one was in the street. All the streets were empty. She didn't know why. And she went to Tesco to buy something and when she came back, there was a big street and she noticed that there were four or five teenagers, or guys, who walked on the other side. She just went on her way but when she noticed them, they suddenly came to her and surrounded her, you know, four or five guys. And they said two sentences.

(Tapping stops abruptly, iconic Western music playing, spotlight on the three actors)

First actor *(with hands in pockets, leaning forward, grinning)*: Hi, can you help us?

Second actor *(leans to the side, adds pathetically)*: We are hungry.

Girl on screen (*folds her arms, speaks slowly and well pronounced to the audience*):

Now, at that time, she just wanted to throw her plastic bags and run away, she didn't know what to do.

And she was so afraid at that time.

And then the third sentence.

Third actor (*shouts loudly as if addressing the screen*):

Can you tell me if there is any restaurant or supermarket here?

Girl on screen (*still speaking pronounced and slowly to the audience*):

I felt so safe at the time. And I said 'yes' and gave them directions

(Wider shot. The girl is tracing a trail of sticky tape on the floor with light movements, then turning around again to the audience)

And they left.

(composed, forcing herself to smile)

After that I still felt very uncomfortable.

I can't stop thinking 'what if...' something happens, what am I doing?

(dark)

It is the last station in workshop four - the rehearsal of Lin's devised script - which offers an ideal springboard for deliberations on further Brechtian research practice. The script used in workshop four aesthetically changed through our creative, embodied engagement, as I integrated participants' ideas for music, props and text into the original. However, as my PhD research project was restricted to four sessions, there was limited space to rehearse this newly devised script with participants. The devised but unrehearsed script thus stands as a symbol for my future research vision. I intend to further test and develop my Brechtian research pedagogy, next time with a focus on Brechtian *representational practice* for intercultural education research.

In such a project, Brechtian principles would again be applied to the process of devising and ‘conducting’ the research itself. Taking *Verfremdung* further into the terrain of academic representation however, I would now seek to develop a more product-oriented focus to my pedagogy. In practical terms, this would mean having the time and space to build an embodied research space which naturally transitions into a more product-oriented artistic space. This could involve planning and rehearsing towards a final performance based on our embodied research data which is devised into a Brechtian performance piece. With the purpose to stimulate embodied engagement and an active reading in-between the metaphoric gaps, such Brechtian piece would instigate an ‘intercultural encounter’ also between performers and audience.

Employing a range of techniques found throughout the creative arts, for example film, animation or sound - the research would ideally involve professional practitioners in these areas - who could advise and support its aesthetic realisation. A Brechtian research could develop in two ways. The data of this present research project could be used as the basis for a product-oriented piece of representation and be devised into a piece of theatre, film or even an artistic installation. On the one hand, this might involve continuing where the research ‘left off’ - taking Lin’s devised script as the starting point for the rehearsal towards a final piece. On the other hand, my whole body of data could be revisited and a new script developed.

This could also result in a more embodied installation; one that is not text-based but uses gestures, compartments and postures as the starting point for a solely visually structured piece. Following from such artistic representational emphasis, I would seek to open out the research into new, related areas of scholarship. This might include for example a more specific, in-praxis analysis of the pedagogical-ethical potentialities of Brecht’s *Lehrstücke*, considering contemporary drama scholars and directors who evolved Brecht’s ‘learning plays’ principles into working models of practice. Reiner Steinweg’s (1986; 1994) drama projects in the area of peace education, as well as director Heiner Müller’s (1984) attempts to translate the learning plays’ participatory principles onto the contemporary theatre stage might be starting points for an in-praxis analysis and synthesis.

Such transcending of scholarly boundaries would also continue my own principle of researching not from within a specific field of scholarship but from within a necessarily radically interdisciplinary stance of an immanent ethics and intercultural pedagogy. Following from this, future research could be created fully independent of the current research data. My Brechtian pedagogy - including these new angles of analysis - could be applied to new intercultural education research contexts with other intercultural 'double-agents', e.g. new migrants, asylum seekers or even researchers and educators working in the field of intercultural education. The research would then involve two stages - the research facilitation stage and the rehearsal stage towards a final performance. This would require resources.

Performance spaces might have to be hired, props and material bought and food provided - always having in mind that research should work from the premise of an immanent ethics; one that acknowledges 'men and women alive'. Developing such product-oriented focus within my Brechtian research pedagogy, which has been 'tested' so far mainly as a mode of facilitation, would allow a wider conversation about alternative research methodology and representation. Refining more 'consumable', visually-based representations (a drama piece, a film) could aid communication about the complexities of research 'from the body'. Developing alternatives to solely text-based research in a format that can be for example viewed on a stage or even online, would allow the praxis of alternative, embodied research to grow further through discussion with a wider audience.

This would also trace the work of Piscator's early screen projections during Brecht's performances. Audience interest in Brechtian, embodied research methods spans across academic and non-academic fields. It involves researchers and practitioners in the fields of language, drama and intercultural education as well as qualitative researchers in the wider field of social sciences who already work with creative methods or are curious to experiment with them. For those practitioners, an 'ethics as praxis' model within research might also be of use when having to apply for standardised ethics procedures in the academy. Standardised ethics forms, with their externalised ethical codes channelled into blanks and boxes, often cannot cope with embodied methodological approaches that defy simple categorisation on paper. Here, an 'ethics as praxis' model can stimulate a conversation about new strategies on how to ensure the 'protection' of participants' vulnerabilities in praxis - beyond a conceptually detached, blanks-and-boxes approach to research ethics.

In addition to that, a Brechtian research pedagogy might also be of interest to drama practitioners and researchers working in a human rights contexts. These reflective practitioners can use a Brechtian pedagogy to defend the radically embodied potential of their methods in an intercultural field. They could employ it for example as part of an active positioning within an embodied applied theatre discourse, resisting educational or economic instrumentalisation of their work. My contribution to the field of intercultural education thus comprises a methodology and method of 'praxis'. By synthesising literatures across a range of academic fields, which focus on ethics and intercultural pedagogy, I have shown that questions around immanent ethics are by their nature radically interdisciplinary.

Taking the precarity of intercultural spaces as the starting point for the formulation of an ethics that 'becomes' within lived-in intercultural relationships, an 'ethics as praxis' model is attractive for an intercultural education research that regards critical, embodied reflection as a valid objective within the discipline. Such a research model is not a rigid, static one that externalises its objectives and conceptualisations from the respective research context. It doesn't necessarily produce an easily-consumable ethics in the form of buzzword objectives (tolerance, emancipation etc.) that can satisfy tick-the-box managerial needs. It does however offer a way to harness and integrate the highly creative potential of intercultural spaces into an equally and necessarily creative way of enjoying, sharing and researching the complexities of intercultural life.

By using Brechtian theatre methods, which included originally Brechtian and also 'Brecht-style' contemporary devising methods, I practically demonstrated how such an 'ethics as praxis' model can grow and take shape when applied to a specific intercultural education research context. I also highlighted the challenges of such Brechtian research pedagogy - as questions of ethics and pedagogy have to be constantly reflected and, if need be, re-adapted to the changing dynamics of the research. By placing *Verfremdung* at the heart of my research pedagogy - I integrated such ongoing reflective practice within the methods themselves. The Brechtian research pedagogy is thus conceptually flexible and can be taken and adapted to other intercultural education research contexts.

The core hope of my research pedagogy is then, that it might stimulate other creative acts of making within research; ones that think from within the radically embodied nature of intercultural experience and practically seek embodied ways of sharing, understanding and representing these potentially enriching experiences - without ruining their complex form. In terms of my own development, I am also curious to venture into academic and non-academic areas where my research pedagogy could be used to practically assist international students - or other 'language learners' - in coping with the emotional and intellectual challenges of life abroad. I could see myself developing embodied pedagogies for student support services or similar intercultural support services beyond the university.

My Brechtian research pedagogy could thus make first steps towards realising 'intercultural education's burden'. It facilitates sensory spaces of collaborative learning and research and fosters the development of embodied democratic habits. In other words, it aids rehearsal towards a vibrant intercultural life praxis, and leaves researcher and participants with a collection of sensory research memories:

Giggles, preparing food, tense silence, the smell of coffee and home-cooked food, bubbly chats, singing lullabies, playing with plasticine, improvising, sharing stories, feeling sticky tape on my cheek

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Section Illustrations

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Research invitation

INVITATION TO ALL EU AND INTERNATIONAL PHD STUDENTS!

Often students experience 'culture shock' when moving into an unfamiliar environment.

Through drama, the strangeness of these new life experiences can be revealed and harnessed to become a valuable tool for reflecting and ultimately dealing with this emotionally and intellectually challenging process.

You are warmly invited to take part in a participatory workshop which is part of my PhD research on performance and intercultural education at the School of Education, University of Glasgow.

The workshop will explore themes such as strangeness and border crossing using drama, film and photography.

You don't need any previous experience in these areas in order to participate!

You will enhance your creative abilities by taking part in the creation of stories and improvisation, experiment with texts and actor training methods - bringing in your own viewpoint and experiences ... and get to know a lot of new people.

If you are an EU or international PhD student and are interested in taking part in a workshop exploring cross-cultural experience, please leave your email address and I will get in touch with you asap.

Once I have received feedback from interested PhD students I will arrange dates and places.

If you have any more questions concerning the project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Hoping to hear from you,

Katja Frimberger (School of Education)

k.frimberger.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Address to research participants

Address to research participants at the start of the first workshop:

“The research aims to explore intercultural experience using drama methods and other creative forms. I invited you because I am curious about your experiences - thoughts - views on the many facets of intercultural experience. I hope that through using a drama workshop format rather than ‘straightforward’ interviews, there will be more scope to express the emotional and bodily side of this experience. I hope that there will be also more possibilities for shared conversations. This first workshop will focus on getting to know the group. Another focus for today is sharing our views and experiences on strangeness. We will use pictures as a basis for conversation (concrete to abstract), as well as explore abstract terms through concrete body expression (abstract to concrete).

I have a journal for you to take notes during the workshop.

There will be pockets of reflection throughout the workshop, after every exercise, as well as at the end. Also you will take turns taking the role of actors and observers throughout the activities. It would be great if you could use the journal as a tool for reflection all the time.

The activities will be filmed using two/three cameras. During work in small groups, there will be one camera set up with each group.

For the second workshop next Saturday I will transcribe some of your stories and discussion into a script which we will experiment with in a rehearsal setting. We will be using improvisation and actor training techniques (esp. Brecht) to work with these scripts.

Appendix III

Workshop plans

WORKSHOP PLAN 1

| <u>Phase</u> | <u>Aim</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Effect</u> | <u>Material</u> | <u>Reflection</u> |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| (First part) Arriving 20 min. | Informal introduction | Chatting | People will get a first feel for the group | Coffee and biscuits, name badges | |
| House-keeping 15 min. | Inform participants about research aims/signing of consent form. | Group is asked into a circle. I will explain framework of the research. | Participants can decide their involvement in the research/ have more clarity on the scope of it. | Consent forms, pens | Questions, are you worried about anything? |
| Getting to know each other 20 min. | Develop trust, relax, develop openness to playfulness | Speed dating with a twist, then 'serious' introduction with clay. | The group will feel more comfortable working together | 6 Tables, flowers, cards, moulding clay | |
| Energy game 10 min. | Heighten energy, alertness | Pass zip through circle, follow zip, zap, boing game. | Group alertness will be heightened. | | |
| Warm up 10 min. | Loosen muscles | Walk through space, follow instructions. Group is split in actors and observers | Group will get a first feel for body sculpting and the meaning it produces | Music expressing different moods (Jazz) | How did it feel following instruction? Difference observer-actor. Did meaning change? |
| Trust in pairs 10 min. | Develop alertness and trust, following and leading | Mirror image; Leading by sound | Partners will have to trust their partner/ listen carefully | | How did it feel following – leading? |
| BREAK 20 min. | | | | | |

| <u>Phase</u> | <u>Aim</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Effect</u> | <u>Material</u> | <u>Reflection</u> |
|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| (Second part) Picture and Story sharing 10 min. | Sharing 'quirks' of intercultural experience | Pictures are numbered and exhibited in circle. P. sit in circle and note down thoughts, stories. | Pictures serve as basis for sharing thoughts on intercultural experience. | Pictures | |
| Experiences in clay 20 min. | Aim is to deliberately concretise opinions and feelings on experiences of strangeness in touchable material. | Mould in (modelling) clay what strangeness <i>means to you personally</i> /write short statement on your strangeness clay. | The process of moulding clay opens space for reflection on the 'nature' of intercultural experience. | Modelling clay, pen and paper | Can you put abstract definitions (e.g. what means strangeness to you) into concrete material? |
| Discussion 10 min. | P. share their sculpture in a small group and take it as starting point for general discussion on strangeness. | Participants exchange views/ opinions, bullet points on poster | Transition back from clay into a more abstract discussion. | Posters, pens, clay figures, pictures | How is it reflecting back from concrete and personal material to general 'bullet points'? |
| Individual sculpting 20 min. | Individuals sculpt their understanding of the term using the rest of the group (or just one person or two...) as clay. | The sculpture fills their position with emotion leading to inner monologue (or sound). | P. express and experience their understanding of strangeness/culture shock in their bodies. | | Differences sculpting clay/sculpting people/ feelings about inner monologue in comparison to abstract description of clay |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| Collective sculpting 10 min. | Reflect differing, similar views on the term through bodies | The small group creates a sculpture together (similar to sound machine)/ with inner monologue | Collective, moving image, consisting of movement and sound to express abstracts | | Can the other group find a name for the collective sculpture? |
| Gallery space/final reflection 20 min. | Enable space for final reflection | Half circle of chairs in front of gallery space. | P. can visualise, reflect about the course of events. Name themes in relation to intercultural experience. | Pictures, clay figures with descriptions as well as name of the group sculptures and poster with bullet points are exhibited. | Did you feel comfortable working this way? |

WORKSHOP PLAN 2

- I. Exploring strangeness through creative writing
- II. Exploring strangeness through body sculpting
- III. Taking on new roles: Maria's story

| <u>Phase/Time</u> | <u>Point of concentration</u> | <u>Activity</u> | <u>Camera</u> | <u>Material</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Arriving (10-11) | | Chat | no | Coffee, biscuits |
| Introduction | | Everybody reflects on their week/ last workshop/expectations for this week | no | Chairs in circle |
| Intro camera | Filming should be done by the group | Explain structure for the workshop – background framework. Reflect on use of camera. | no | Chairs in circle |
| I. Picture sharing | Short quiet time | A range of pics in middle of circle. Quite reflection on pics in relation to own life. | no | Chairs in circle |
| Creative writing | Writing flow, instinct | Writing instinctively: "I find strange that ... " | no | Journals, pens |
| Sharing written piece | Shared creativity | P. take their piece into small group and read it to each other. | One person filming, taking turns | Written pieces |
| Discussing strangeness/culture shock | Creation of poster | Are there similarities, stark differences around the themes of the written pieces? Discussion using (if wanted) 'guiding questions'. Main themes/thoughts of group on poster. | One person filming, taking turns | Written pieces, Guiding questions on poster, Posters and pens |
| Reflection | Presentation of group discussion | In circle: groups giving feedback (what is strangeness/culture shock) | One person filming, taking turns | Chairs in circle, Posters |

| Phase/Time | Aim | Activity | Camera | Material |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| II. Body sculpting Individual (+ inner monologue) | After sculptor has finished, she places a hand on each person's shoulder- reply with inner monologue | Back in former small groups. Without words, each individual sculpts their understanding of strangeness with the rest of group as clay. | One person filming, taking turns | 4 people in small group |
| Collective (+ inner monologue) | The observing group is allowed to place hand on individuals' shoulder – reply with inner monologue. | Groups sculpt a collective image (reflecting recurring – conflicting themes). Find name for group sculpture. | One person filming, taking turns | |
| Reflection | Discussion vs body sculpting | In circle: feedback on sculpting | | Chairs in circle |
| III. Taking on new roles | Build character through props | In circle: experiment with objects/props | no | Objects, props people brought |
| | Creating a new character | Walking exercise – how would character walk, greet, use objects | Filming in character | Music, |

Appendix IV

Rehearsal texts

WORKSHOP THREE: First rehearsal text

Script – There was no one on the street that time

(In this scene all stage directions are first read aloud and then acted)

Second person (turns around, starts tapping): There was no one on the street that time.

(pause)

(Everybody joins into tapping rhythmically).

Third person (*turning around looking at audience/camera*): One bad experience she had when she was leaving the student residences, you know the student accommodation. It was a Sunday morning, 11am, but it seemed no one was in the street. All the streets were empty. She didn't know why. And she went to Tesco to buy something and when she came back, there was a big street and she noticed that there were four or five teenagers, or guys, who walked on the other side.

She just went on her way but when she noticed them, they suddenly came to her and surrounded her, you know, four or five guys. And they said two sentences.

First person (*turns around, with hands in pockets, leaning forward, saying sweetly*): Hi, can you help us?

Second person (turns around, adds pathetically): We are hungry.

Third person (*with folded arms, speaking slowly and well pronounced*):

Now, at that time, she just wanted to throw her plastic bags and run away, she didn't know what to do.

And she was so afraid at that time.

And then the third sentence.

First person (*looking her directly in the eyes, smiling*):

Can you tell me if there is any restaurant or supermarket here?

Third person (still speaking pronounced and slowly):

I felt so safe at the time. And I said 'yes' and gave them directions

(tracing the trail of sticky tape on the floor with light movements, then turning around again)

And they left.

(pausing a moment, then looking smilingly at the audience into the /camera)

After that I still felt very uncomfortable.
I can't stop thinking 'what if...' something happens, what am I doing?
(dark)

WORKSHOP THREE: Second rehearsal text

'Being born strange'

Either I am a strange person I don't know but I was born strange.

Some people are born strange, if you see some people within your own culture and they are quite estranged from that culture. Either they are very creative or they are not acting according to the tradition of that culture. They are quite strange. I gave the example of my cousin. He was quite strange. He was born strange, believe me.

I noticed there are some people and they are quite strange and they can bring change.

Appendix V

Rehearsal stations

WORKSHOP FOUR

Station 1: SPACE, SOUND & FEEL (2- 4 people)

We started building a 'sticky tape' sculpture last Saturday.

This station is about experimenting with the spatial and sensory possibilities of sticky tape more in depth. Take your time exploring the potential of sticky tape when building the sculpture by re-building it several times:

- The spaces and patterns you can create with it on the floor and where your body is in relation to those?
- The way you handle the tape (light touch, firm grip ...) and move with it (light, robotic, dancing...)
- The sounds and tension it produces when unrolling it (slow, fast, erratic...)
- The way you can appropriate it (by writing on it, ripping it...)
- How the sculpture disentangles from the tape (careful, aggressive ...)

You could also try different ways of reading 'Being born strange' with the sticky tape

- Read whilst building sculpture
- Read in chorus
- Everybody reads one verse
- Write parts on the tape....

Station 2: RE – VISIT & RE – PRESENT (1 – 2 people)

I transcribed your creative writing pieces as well as most of the conversations we recorded on camera.

You are welcome to dive into the pile of documents and revisit ...

If you find an interesting piece that speaks to you, you can read it straight to camera. If you have thoughts about the piece you were reading you can speak those to camera as well. After you have read your text could you please revisit it again by 'making the text strange', for example

- Speak it rhythmically
- Add stage directions and read them out – e.g. (hums the words shyly)
- Read it in a certain genre (as a news broadcast, a sermon, a musical, ...)
- Read it in slow motion/speeded up
- Put it into third person ('she' instead of 'I')

If you like, you can watch it over on camera and reflect on the effect you produced...

Station 3: MULTILINGUAL PIGEONS

Please translate this nursery rhyme in your mother tongue and sing to camera ☺

Three blue pigeons, three blue pigeons, three blue pigeons sitting on a fence.

Oh look! One has flown away!

Two blue pigeons, two blue pigeons, two blue pigeons sitting on a fence.

Oh look! another one has flown away!

One blue pigeon, one blue pigeon, one blue pigeon sitting on a fence.

Oh look! It has flown away too!

No blue pigeons, no blue pigeons, no blue pigeons

Sitting on a fence. (...)

Station 4: RE –VISIT & REHEARSE (3-4 people)

Please rehearse the (devise) script. If you are more than three, one person could be watching and give feedback.

Please feel free to experiment with different stage directions and ways of reading ...

Scene 1

A darkened room. Pigeon sounds from a loudspeaker in the middle of the stage. Stage is littered with plastic bags

Text appears on projection screen: The following performance is based on an international students' account of her experience of strangeness in Glasgow.

Three actors stand in line in the dark, between the plastic bags, waiting.

Loudspeaker:

I find it strange that there was a pigeon who went shopping for a hat. It was a rainy day so I understand there was the need to stay dry but I still found it to be unusual.

(Actor 1 starts singing '3 blue pigeons' in the dark, actor 2 and three join in – all sing together and then stop abruptly)

(pause)

Loudspeaker: I find it strange that an uncomfortable silence filled the room considering there was an openness to love and a disregard for all things which were awkward.

(long pause)

Loudspeaker: I find it strange that a different person would act in a different way in similar circumstances. I found it difficult to understand which was the right way.

(tumbleweed blowing on a projection screen)

Scene 2

A girl's face appears on the projection screen.

Girl on screen: There was no one on the street that time.

(pause)

(The three actors in the dark start tapping rhythmically).

Girl on screen (speaks in rhythm of the tapping): One bad experience she had when she was leaving the student residences, you know the student accommodation. It was a Sunday morning, 11am, but it seemed no one was in the street. All the streets were empty. She didn't know why. And she went to Tesco to buy something and when she came back, there was a big street and she noticed that there were four or five teenagers, or guys, who walked on the other side. She just went on her way but when she noticed them, they suddenly came to her and surrounded her, you know, four or five guys. And they said two sentences.

(Tapping stops abruptly, iconic Western music playing, spotlight on the three actors)

First actor *(with hands in pockets, leaning forward, grinning):* Hi, can you help us?

Second actor *(leans to the side, adds pathetically):* We are hungry.

Girl on screen (*folds her arms, speaks slowly and well pronounced to the audience*):

Now, at that time, she just wanted to throw her plastic bags and run away, she didn't know what to do.

And she was so afraid at that time.

And then the third sentence.

Third actor (*shouts loudly as if addressing the screen*):

Can you tell me if there is any restaurant or supermarket here?

Girl on screen (*still speaking pronounced and slowly to the audience*):

I felt so safe at the time. And I said 'yes' and gave them directions

(Wider shot. The girl is tracing a trail of sticky tape on the floor with light movements, then turning around again to the audience)

And they left.

(composed, forcing herself to smile)

After that I still felt very uncomfortable.

I can't stop thinking 'what if...' something happens, what am I doing?

(dark)

Appendix VI

Pictures for creative writing





Appendix VII

DVD 'All Things Curious'

The DVD contains the workshops' video footage in an edited format.

DVD Menu

Speeddating: Workshop 1

I find strange that: Workshop 2

Rehearsal: Workshop 3

Sticky sculpture: Workshop 4

[Extras*: All things curious & Symbols, sounds and smells of home.]

*The Extras contain excerpts from group reflections and conversations discussed throughout the thesis.