
Article:
Harvey, L orcid.org/0000-0003-4726-4428, McCormick, B and Vanden, K (2019) Becoming at the boundaries of language: Dramatic Enquiry for intercultural learning in UK higher education. Language and Intercultural Communication, 19 (6). pp. 451-470. ISSN 1470-8477

https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2019.1586912

Becoming at the boundaries of language: Dramatic Enquiry for intercultural learning in UK higher education

This article reports on a co-produced project introducing an innovative, drama-based method for enhancing UK HE students' intercultural learning. We ran two workshops for a mixed cohort of students and demonstrate in our analysis how these decentred language as the chief vehicle of communication, treating language as one of many materials in the communicative assemblage. This facilitated new ways of knowing-through-being for the participants, which enabled them to move across perceived intercultural boundaries and to bring new boundaries into existence in an ongoing process of *becoming*. We offer this analysis as grounds for a more ethical internationalisation of higher education.

Este artículo informa sobre un proyecto coproducido que presenta un método innovador, basado en el drama para mejorar el aprendizaje intercultural de estudiantes de Educación Superior en el Reino Unido. Realizamos dos talleres para una cohorte mixta de estudiantes y nuestro análisis demostró que el lenguaje descentralizado es el principal vehículo de la comunicación, y se trata como un recurso más en el montaje comunicacional. Esto facilitó nuevas formas de conocimiento por medio del ser para los participantes, permitiéndoles cruzar los límites interculturales percibidos y traer nuevos límites en un proceso continuo de *devenir*. Ofrecemos este análisis como base para una internacionalización más ética de la educación superior.

Note on authorship

This article reports on a co-produced project between University of Leeds and theatre company Cap-a-Pie, and is therefore jointly authored. However, different pronouns are employed according to the authors' roles in the project: the academic background and analysis is written in Lou Harvey's first-person voice, and the methodological procedure and findings are written in a collective voice in the first-person plural.

Introduction

The recent European Parliament definition of HE internationalisation as 'the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education' (de Wit, Hunter, Egron-Polak and Howard 2015), illustrates the semantic link between internationalisation and interculturality (see also Young, Handford and Schartner 2017). Internationalised HE is of course, by definition, based on national boundaries: internationalised universities inhabit a necessary-and-impossible space, being inherently dependent on, while simultaneously attempting to transcend, national borders (see Marginson 2013). As a consequence, 'interculturality' in the institutional sense, or what Collins (2018) calls 'top-down interculturality', tends to align with essentialist definitions of culture based on nationality (ibid; see also Young et al. 2017). The necessary-and-impossible tension of internationalisation is manifest in the framing of students as *domestic* or *international*, where their political and administrative status and subsequent university experience are modified by their national citizenship. This dichotomy provides a key fulcrum for studies of interculturality in HE and research narratives of students' experience are frequently framed within this binary, often with the intent to acknowledge and address structural disadvantage (see e.g. Kearney and Lincoln 2017).

Research into the domestic/international student experience has illustrated the routine 'othering' of international students (Marginson 2013); the discrimination they can encounter based on national citizenship (Lee 2017); and the unwillingness of domestic students to engage with international students academically or socially (Dunne 2013). Further studies have drawn attention to internationalisation as a process of 'cultural colonisation' (Marginson 2006, p. 25), highlighting international students' perceptions of internationalisation as 'Westernisation' which displaces other intellectual traditions (Guo and Guo 2017), and which promotes the assumption that intercultural education is for international students who must adapt to the host country and benefit from the knowledge and wisdom of the West (Ryan 2013).

The global HE market has led to the 'widespread anglicisation of higher education' (Bornman and Potgieter 2017, p. 1467), and HE internationalisation is now tied to English as a medium of instruction. As a result, English has become both a terrain for market competition, whereby universities with English medium of instruction can enjoy improved standing in university rankings, and a gatekeeping mechanism for university entry, which insists that students must learn English as the 'natural and neutral medium of academic excellence' (Piller and Cho 2013, p. 24). Consequently, (English) language is a key site of tension in intercultural and internationalisation discourse in the university (Badwan 2017). International students are too often conflated with 'second-language' or 'non-native' English speakers (alongside the assumption that domestic students are native speakers) (E. Jones 2017), and are positioned as linguistically and culturally deficient (Preece and Martin 2010). This deficit orientation leads to reified positions of difference which fail to account for students' complex intersectional experiences (Sidhu and Dall'Alba 2012; E. Jones, 2017), reinforce cultural essentialism and structural disadvantage (Young et al. 2017), and can limit students' learning (Lehtomäki, Moate and Post-Ahokas 2016). And greater numbers of international students alone does 'not necessarily reflect a higher degree of beneficial intercultural interaction or education' (Young et al. 2017: 189). A particular concern in recent years, and especially since the 'second wave' of international student mobility (Choudaha 2017), has been relations between domestic and international students, in English-dominant countries and beyond. This concern has led to various recommendations about how better to 'integrate' local and international students on internationalised university campuses (Spencer-Oatey and Dauber 2014), including focus on the roles of students, academic and support staff, and the institution (Guo and Guo 2017), and calls for focused intercultural education for all students (Ladegaard and Cheng 2014).

However, while such initiatives may meet with positive outcomes locally, I suggest that they will only ever be of limited and short-term success unless the issue of the binary – *domestic/international*, *native/non-native speaker* - and the 'othering' it inevitably entails, is fundamentally addressed. This article presents just such a radical approach, which excavates and challenges the premises on which these binaries are founded. I situate this theoretical intervention in consideration of an issue at the crux of internationalisation, interculturality, integration, and binaries: language.

Language, representational logic, and critical intercultural performance

My interest in language here is not in named languages, and my approach is not 'critical' in the sense of challenging the English-language hegemony in internationalised HE (see Preece and Martin 2010). Rather, my focus is on the primacy of language in higher education, where it is both the primary tool of learning (Bayley 2016), and primary in

the study of identity (de Freitas and Curinga 2015). In HE language is the privileged sense-making mechanism, our foremost 'professional means of making sense of and to ourselves and others' (Phipps 2013, p. 339). New materialist and post-humanist philosophers argue that this primacy has arisen from a prevailing Cartesian representational logic in which the subject is consciousness isolated from the material world, the 'languaging' subject separate from the 'languaged' object (MacLure 2013). This separation is apparent in HE, where the learning subject is different from the learned object (Bayley 2016): students learn about something 'out there', to critique or engage with or change, and develop solutions to apply to problems (Barnett 2012). Education is a 'passive rehearsal space' (Bayley 2016, p. 47) for a world beyond the ivory tower, as evident in, for example, increasing focus on demonstration of enhanced and measurable graduate employability. In this sense, then, HE can be said to be representationally orientated: in general, we 'study a "thing", to observe it, perhaps to inter-act with it, but the strict divide between [knower and known] – although open to vital critiques of power and placing - remains' (ibid., p. 44).

This representational orientation, where language stands in for some kind of meaning that we want to access, engages what Deleuze calls an *arborescent* ontology (2007): it is hierarchical, like a tree with roots and height, where some things stand above others and some things are underneath others waiting to be excavated. Language is representationally central here, our route to accessing meaning. Language within this ontology maintains what Karen Barad calls a 'colonising logic' whereby the self sets an absolute boundary between itself and what it takes to be 'other', excluding, erasing or dominating the other in order to establish and maintain its own hegemony (2014, pp. 169, 170). This logic simplifies difference and holds binaries in place - between learning subject and learned object, between the learner and the world, between learning and being, between self and other - and fails to recognise the differences and similarities *within* the concept of difference (following Trinh Minh-ha 1988; see also E. Jones 2017). In contrast, new materialist thinkers (MacLure 2013; Mazzei and Jackson 2017) understand language as one of many materials which are mutually implicated, or entangled with each other, on the same ontological plane. This engages a *rhizomatic* ontology (Deleuze 2007): a flat surface, with no hierarchies or binary oppositions. This is an ontology in which 'language is deposed from its god-like centrality in the construction and regulation of worldly affairs, to become one element in a manifold of forces and intensities that are moving, connecting and diverging' (MacLure 2013, p. 660). In other words, language is part of *assemblages*: 'states of things, bodies, various combinations of bodies, hodgepodges … utterances, modes of expression, and whole regimes of signs' (Deleuze 2007, p. 177). Thinking language in terms of assemblages enables a move away from thinking representationally, in terms of what language *means*, and towards thinking performatively, in terms of what it *produces* when it is understood as one element among many. Language as a material ontologically inseparable from other materials within the assemblage means that it is not at the top of a hierarchy and does not create or erase difference; rather, it is entangled among and within the inseparable entities which make up assemblages. This orientation disrupts binary logic and complexifies difference, in a coming together of 'opposite qualities within' (Barad 2014, p. 175). This is understood not as an erasure or effacement of difference - difference 'is not opposed to sameness, nor synonymous with separateness' (Minh-ha 1988, p. 75) - but as 'a relation of difference within' (Barad 2014, p. 175).

In recent years a concern with the ethics of binaries and difference has emerged in the field of critical intercultural communication (MacDonald and O'Regan 2013; Ferri

2018). This work has pointed out that the intercultural communication field has been based on a totalising boundary between *self* and *other* (MacDonald and O'Regan 2013), and an assumption of essential sameness or difference within or between groups (based on, for example, national or religious identity, or traits such as collectivism or assertiveness). Recent studies situated in UK HE have taken relational and contextual approaches to theorising the 'relation of difference within' in different ways (e.g. Collins 2018; Holliday 2016), exploring ways in which intercultural encounters can generate an immanent ethics based on face-to-face engagement with an *other*, rather than a transcendent ethics based on assumptions of essential sameness or difference (Frimberger 2016; Harvey 2016). My own previous work engaged with these ideas by bringing a dialogic perspective to intercultural learning for multilingual UK-based students, based on the philosophy of Mikhail Bakhtin (1981; see Harvey 2016). I developed a relational approach to intercultural learning as a process of *ideological becoming* with the other in, with and through language, an ongoing, unfinalised process of learning to be in the world with others which takes place through 'finding the other in oneself' (ibid.) (or finding the 'difference within'). This approach takes the utterance as the unit of analysis, the place where the immanent, material relation between *self* and *other* is manifest in the 'simultaneous unity of differences' (Holquist 2002, p. 36) the utterance expresses. The project reported here builds upon and extends this work theoretically by expanding analysis of the utterance beyond language; and methodologically, following studies of intercultural arts and arts-based methods (Burnard, Mackinlay and Powell 2017; Frimberger, White and Ma 2017) and performance-based research methods and pedagogies (Crutchfield and Schewe 2017; Harvey, McCormick, Vanden, Collins and Suarez, 2019) which implicitly and explicitly engage an immanent ethics. In particular I follow the work of Katja Frimberger and colleagues, which employs a new materialist lens to understanding language as part of the material entanglement of experience, enabling engagement with the affective, embodied and aesthetic aspects of intercultural encounters which traditional research methods do not account for (Frimberger 2016; Frimberger et al. 2017), and enabling the complexity of different differences to emerge.

The study reported here therefore employs a drama-based methodology, Dramatic Enquiry, as a novel approach to understanding HE students' intercultural learning and experience. Through the lens of a new materialist approach to language and the ethics of difference, I examine how language is 'one of many material factors at work in the process of *becoming*' (de Freitas and Curinga 2015, p. 250, my emphasis), or one's learning to be in the world, to make sense of and to be intelligible to others. I conclude with consideration of how this approach may contribute to addressing concerns around integration and interculturality in internationalised UK HE.

Materials and methods

Dramatic Enquiry (DE) is a participatory, reflective approach to education developed and pioneered by theatre company Cap-a-Pie (based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne). This project was therefore co-produced by myself, Brad McCormick (Artistic Director), and Katy Vanden (Producer). This project was the first time DE has been employed in an intercultural learning context, and aimed to investigate

a) students' perceptions and experiences of internationalisation and intercultural communication;

b) the potential of DE as a tool to enhance students' intercultural learning and development.

Procedure

Using my dialogic perspective on intercultural learning as a theoretical springboard (Harvey 2016; Bakhtin 1981), we created a fictional scenario imagining that all boundaries to communication no longer existed and everyone could understand everyone else all the time. In this scenario, the UN and the International Telecommunications Union had collaborated to create a device called 'The Translator', an integrated earpiece and contact lens that would automatically translate languages, dialects, jargon, gesture for the user, so that they would be able to understand anything and everything they saw or heard (see Figures 1 and 2). We then developed a role and script for Author 2 to act out this fictional scenario, and to lead participants in a series of facilitated creative activities to explore their responses to it by engaging their own experiences and values. We ran two half-day workshops for University of Leeds students (23 students across the two workshops), participants for which were self-selecting and recruited via an email distributed to all the Schools in University of Leeds. Students were included from a range of study levels, disciplines, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds – the only selection criterion was to be an enrolled student. On principle we did not ask participants to identify as 'home' or 'international' students, as this would have performed precisely the binary differencing that we were aiming to complexify. Ethical approval was granted by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee.

The workshop opened with the character Nathan (played by Brad), a scientist from the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, introducing The Translator and telling the participants they are a panel of scientific experts who have been assembled to consider the pros and cons of the device.

Figure 1. The Translator earpiece

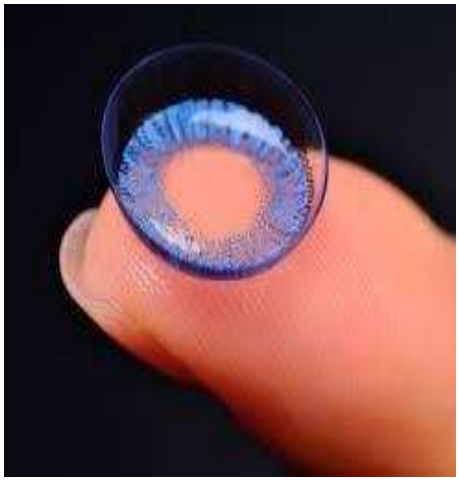

Figure 2. The Translator contact lens

He then asked them to think about a time when they had not understood something. After the participants related their stories, Nathan asked them to elicit themes related to their stories and the device (Figures 3 and 4; Table 1). This was done quickly and spontaneously, with participants calling out the first themes that occurred to them, and all answers were accepted:

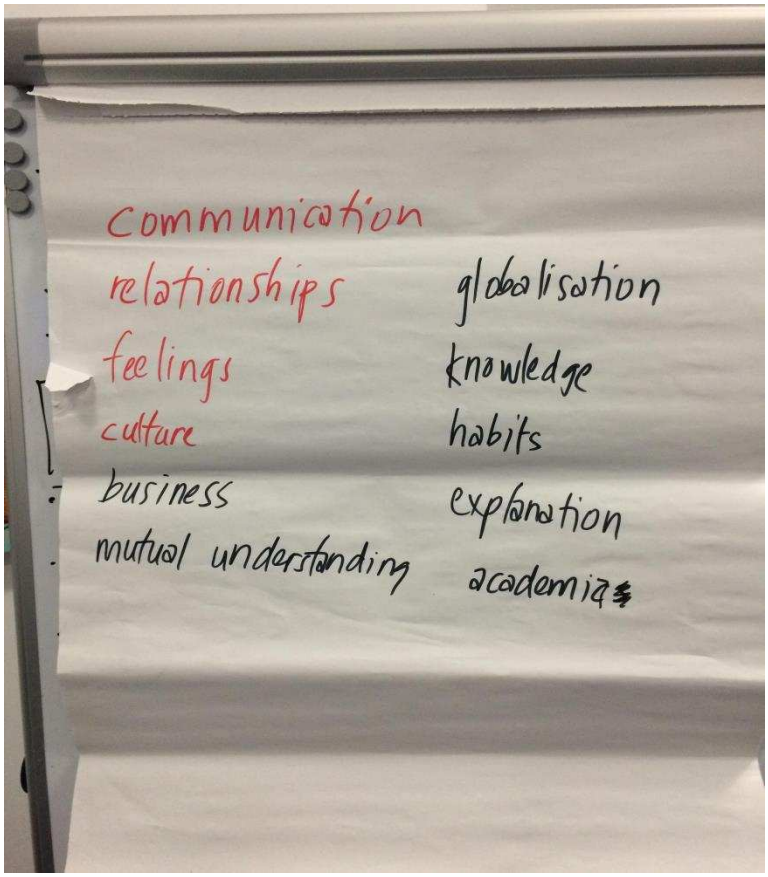

Figure 3. Themes from Workshop 1

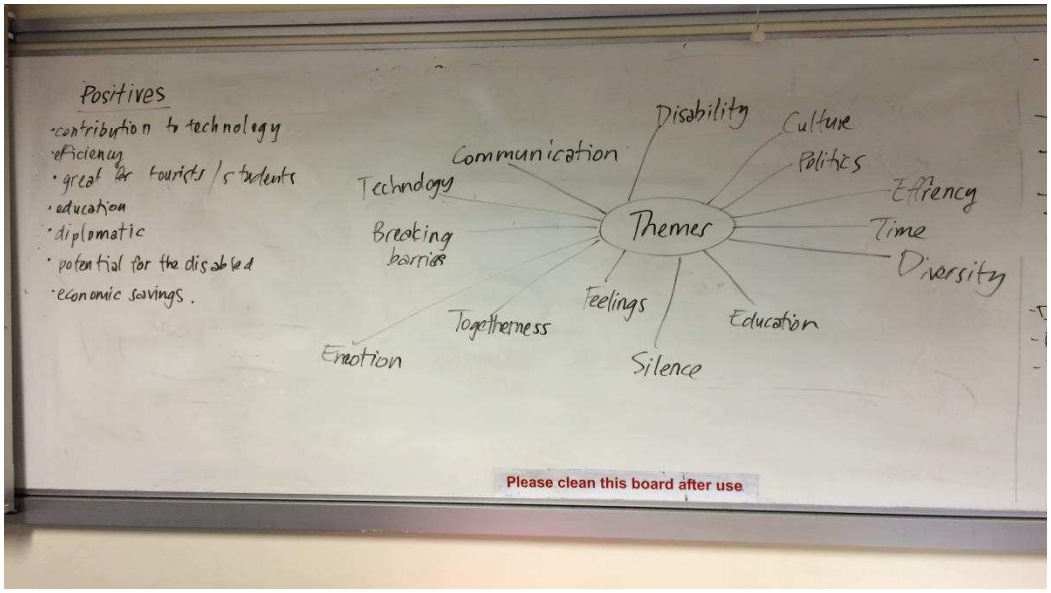

Figure 4. Themes from Workshop 2

Workshop 1	**Workshop 2**
Communication	*Communication*
Relationships	*Disability*
Feelings	*Culture*
Culture	*Politics*
Business	*Efficiency*
Mutual understanding	*Time*
Globalisation	*Diversity*
Knowledge	*Education*
Habits	*Silence*
Explanation	*Feelings*
Academia	*Togetherness*
	Emotion
	Breaking barriers
	Technology

Table 1. List of themes from both workshops

He then led the participants in a series of activities to creatively explore the themes, which are described in *Results* below. After the workshop participants were asked to complete a structured written reflection for 20-30 minutes, and were invited to individual or pair interview, which ten students attended. The workshops concluded with refreshments and mingling. The complete dataset comprised the script, videos and photographs of the workshops, participants' poems (from one of the workshop activities), workshop observation notes, participants' written reflections, and interview transcripts.

Analysis

This article is a theoretical contribution which analyses the workshop as an enactment of the theoretical concerns articulated above. I have therefore employed Dramatic Enquiry as a methodology in the sense that it draws attention to and exemplifies these

theoretical perspectives; it not an empirical methodology as such. I was also conscious that to perform a traditional, representational analysis of the data would be a performative contradiction to the entangled and relational nature of the assemblage, and would therefore not only not do justice to my theoretical approach, but actually undermine it. I therefore 'plugged in' the data (following Jackson and Mazzei 2012; Deleuze and Guattari 1987) to new materialist theory, to explore the notion of the *boundary* which was at the heart of our concept, and its relationship to learning. This theoretical perspective takes a relational and entangled approach to the data, which understands the researcher and the data as mutually constituted (Hultman and Lenz Taguchi 2010), and understands the boundaries we draw in analysis as having ontological implications (Hekman 2010). This process entailed thinking the data *with* theory through my writing in order to 'open up potentialities' (Mazzei and Jackson 2017, p. 1096), rather than coding and categorising in order to pin meaning down (MacLure 2015). This thinking is presented below, as part of an entangled *Results and Discussion* section.

Results and discussion

Body sculpture

The first activity for the participants was to explore the themes through body sculpture (an activity based on the work of Augusto Boal, e.g. 2000). This was a non-verbal activity carried out in pairs, in which one partner moved the other body into position as though they were sculptor and clay, in order to perform one of the themes. In Workshop 1, the themes to be performed were chosen by Nathan, partly because we were doing this for the first time and our nerves led to us controlling the activities rather than trusting the participants; partly because there were fewer participants and the group dynamic was less energetic, and we were concerned about how they would take to the activity. This may have been a factor in these participants' comparative discomfort and confusion with the activity (see discussion below). Between workshops we reflected that participants would be more comfortable with this activity if they were choosing the themes to perform themselves; we were all more comfortable with what we were doing the second time around, and this, coupled with the livelier group dynamic, may have contributed to the more engaged participation in this activity in Workshop 2.

Owing to the layout of the rooms and the participants' movement, the video recording could not capture all the participants making their sculptures nor all the performances of the sculptures themselves – some of these were obscured by other participants, and some took place off-camera. The pictures presented below are therefore the sculptures that were visible on the video recording, which have been sketched from the video recording by an artist in order to protect the participants' anonymity. While this necessarily limits the data that can be presented here, I would again state that this is not meant to be a representational analysis, and my purpose is not to 'interpret' the sculptures. Rather, this partiality draws attention to the material entanglements of the project's production - the space, the equipment, the constraints of my own embodiment and inability to take notes and operate the video camera at the same time – and offers a resonance of the complex assemblage in which my analysis is produced, even if these aspects are not explicitly foregrounded in the discussion.

Figures 5-7 below illustrate the participants in the act of making their sculptures in Workshop 1:

Figure 5. Making body sculptures 1. Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

Figure 6. Making body sculptures 2. Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

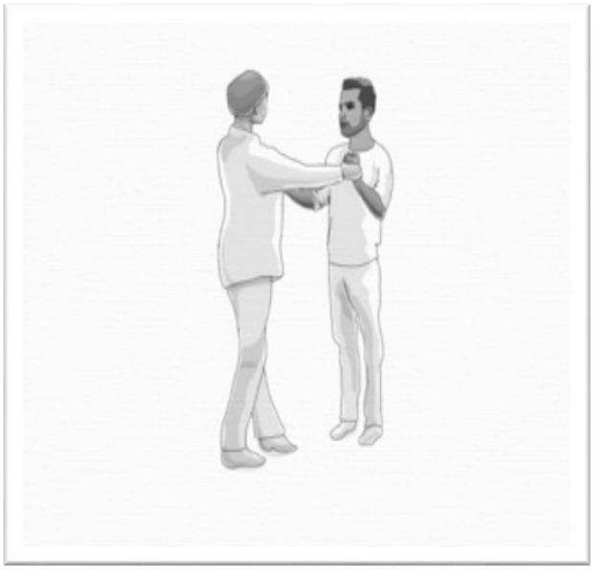

Figure 7. Making body sculptures 3. Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

The following pictures are some of the sculptures (Figures 8-11). The first three are performing the theme of *communication* – in the first picture, for example, the sculpture is performing the way in which the sculptor uses music to communicate her feelings. The final picture is a participant performing the theme of breaking barriers, reflecting in her performance on how the making and the breaking of the barrier are mutually dependent:

Figure 8. Body sculpture: 'Communication' (Workshop 1). Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

Figure 9. Body sculpture: 'Communication' (Workshop 1). Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

Figure 10. Body sculpture: 'Communication' (Workshop 2). Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

Figure 11. Body sculpture: 'Breaking barriers' (Workshop 2). Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

Most participants generally responded very positively to this activity, and almost all of them had much to say about it in the written responses and interviews:

> I really like the sculpture one, because some ideas you try to explain and it's hard to explain in words, but through action, or their emotions through the sculpture, you kind of express it, do it that way.
>
> that way for expressing is very creative for us … to be honest I think that part is very difficult for me, I don't know why. I was trying to use the clay to express my opinion for this, is very hard for me to describe my ideas by this tool and this body gestures, but I enjoyed that.

Nathan also asked the participants to create small group tableaux, with one sculptor moulding a group of students as clay. As for the sculptures, in Workshop 1 the themes to be performed were chosen by Nathan, and in Workshop 2 they were chosen by the participants. For the same reasons outlined above, the tableau presented in Figures 12 and 13 was the only one clearly visible from the video recording.

Figure 12. Tableau: 'Diversity' (side view). Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

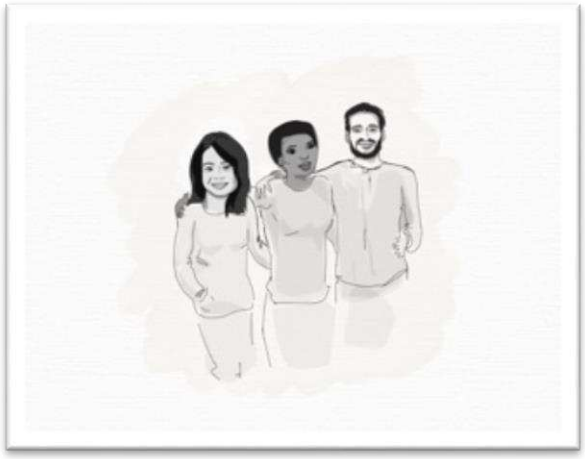

Figure 13. Tableau: 'Diversity' (front view). Illustration: Willow Langdale-Smith

This tableau performs the theme of *diversity*, with the participants jointly creating a performance with their bodies. As with the individual sculptures, this activity was non-verbal, demanding only physical and affective engagement from the participants. In the interaction, the bodies all constitute each other to make the tableau. There was much talk about these sculpting activities in the written responses and interviews, regardless of the participants' feelings towards them. The participants reflected on the different kind of engagement this produced:

> I think it was good in the sense that it was then more sort of physical, I don't know, and yeah, you were sort of more engaged with the people, you don't just talk at them.
>
> I enjoy the part when we have to act as a sculpture and clay and also tableau. It reflects that communication does not always in speaking and writing. When we just keep silent, we are actually communicating.
>
> Maybe body language will express something more than what you say.

There were also less positive responses to the sculpture activities. Some confusion and irritation arose in the first workshop:

> Participant: Sorry – I'm very confused.
> Nathan: Yes.
> Participant: We move his body and to communicate?
> Nathan: So that the piece of art is called communication … Yeah, perfect. So move … so physically touch him … so if you need the feet to move you can get down and just tap his feet.
>
> Nathan [asking the participants to perform their statues/tableaux in sequence]: So now go back in to your habit statue, your habit statue. And now into feelings.
> Participant [annoyed]: Seriously?
> Nathan: Seriously. I'm very serious, all the time. OK, and relax. Let's make one more.

Some students found them confusing and stressful, and unsure what they were about:

> Sometimes I feel confuse about what I need to do.
>
> Sometimes I felt stressful to follow those various activities. It is because I have to think hard with people who I didn't know before.
>
> [at the end of an interview] I still don't know what the statue activity was about. Can you ask Brad?

In the sculpture activities, then, participants were stimulated to think about themselves *in relation to* others through practices of communicating with and trying to understand others in ways alongside and alternative to language. Language was no longer the chief route to accessing meaning: instead it was mutually implicated with gesture, touch, affect, fiction, emotional resonances, future imaginings, in an assemblage of many materials operating on a flat ontological plane (MacLure 2013). The fictional scenario enabled us to avoid linear storytelling from a particular position (Frimberger et al. 2017), in contrast to much intercultural research which uses students' stories as *representations* of their identities (e.g. the story of an international student or a Chinese student). The sculptures offered opportunities for *performing* identity, producing identities which were not tied to pre-existing categories of difference, and stimulating students to think about themselves in relation to others through the physical and affective means of communicating and trying to understand. However, this learning was not predicated on the participants' enjoyment of the activities: it may not always have made sense or been comfortable for the students, but in this very discomfort the sculpture activities were an affective experience of the complexities of communication. This experience was not premised on a priori categories of difference, into already-languaged binaries of native/non-native, home/international, or Chinese, British, French; but rather drew attention to the difference within themselves, the strangeness which arises from being unable to understand (see Harvey et al. 2019).

Poems

Following the sculpting, Nathan asked the participants to explore the negative aspects of the fictional device, and the downsides of everyone being able to understand everything all the time. To do this, he asked them to write sentences predicting the impact of the Translator on social life, economics, health, and education. He then asked them to cross out all the function words in the sentences, leaving only the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs to use as their 'toolbox', and to form a poem from the remaining words. Figure 14 presents some of the poems:

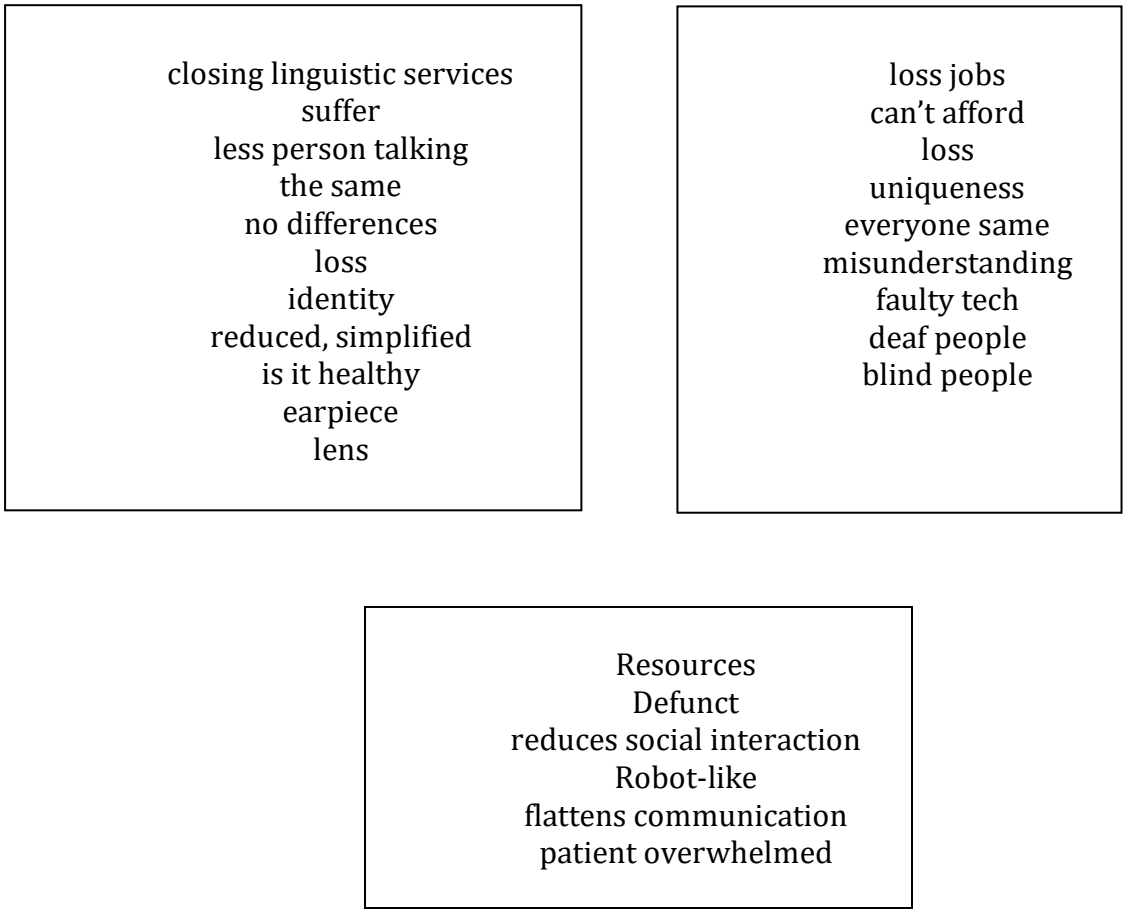

Figure 14. Poems about the negative aspects of the Translator

These poems were produced in response to Nathan's provocation to think about what might happen if we could all understand each other, all the time. Using the limited words in their 'toolbox', the participants hewed out their poems in a process attending to the materiality of language. Having written them, they did not mention them again, despite having active opportunities to reflect on the workshop – it was almost as though they had never happened. They communicate a powerful feeling of bleakness and absence which is impossible to express in language, thereby enacting the loss of language that the participants expect to take place as a result of this technology. The poems are examples of 'words which were present in their absence' (Mazzei 2013, p. 733), or what Maggie MacLure might call a paralinguistic silence (see 2013), which qualitative method does not offer tools to account for. This analysis therefore enabled me to listen to what the poems produced – a material enactment of the loss of language. My focus on what the poems did, rather than what they meant, brought to the foreground what they *performed* rather than what they *represented*. They drew

attention to the limits of language for explanation, understanding and knowing; the language here only makes sense when it is attended to alongside the silences, feelings, and imaginings with which it is entangled.

The poems therefore drew attention to language as performative, as first-order materiality which entangles with bodies and other materials to bring something into existence. They highlighted that in contrast to representation, which fixes boundaries, performativity moves across, through, and beyond, each time generating a new boundary which will itself be transgressed and re-made. Language became reconfigured as a material in relationship with other materials and thereby unsettled from its representational primacy, in a process which Deleuze and Guattari define as 'movements of *deterritorialisation*', (1977, 1987, p. 4), where the world becomes remade through different and differencing *lines of flight* or 'iterations of performances' (Bayley 2016, p. 46). This enabled a different kind of engagement with boundaries and borders for the participants: their considerations of what the fictional device might lead to stimulated reflection on the implications of moving across, through and beyond the boundaries between themselves and others – their perceived boundaries of language, culture and nationality - and how this movement then brought new boundaries into existence, such as boundaries between the known and the unknown, conscious and unconscious knowledge, between understanding and non-understanding, and between sameness and difference itself.

Philosophical questions and participant reflections

This movement across, through and beyond for the participants can be understood as a process of trans-ing (Mylona 2016; A. Jones 2016; Harvey 2019), where trans' describes 'a mode of performing complex relationships between one site, identification or mode of speaking/doing/being and another' (A. Jones 2016, p. 2). The performance of complex relationships entails fluidity and porosity of boundaries, without effacing boundaries completely; *trans-* is implicitly relational and ongoing (as performed by the hyphen) (ibid., p. 1). Jones claims that when *trans-* is understood as a *process* of moving across, through, and beyond, it highlights 'our relationship to knowledge creation as performative' (2016, p. 4) – it allows for 'an understanding of a field of knowledge in a momentary and processual way', which 'enables rather than confirms or fixes knowledge about the world' (p. 5, citing Gotman 2016). This fluidity of knowledge was explicitly exemplified in the workshops through the final activity, the creation of philosophical questions. Participants were asked to form small groups and to come up with an open question, with no right or wrong answer, which had emerged from the workshop for them. Brad and Katy listed the questions on the whiteboard (Figures 15 and 16), and then asked the participants to take a blind vote as to which they wanted to discuss. The question with the majority vote was then discussed by the whole group, led by Brad (now out of character).

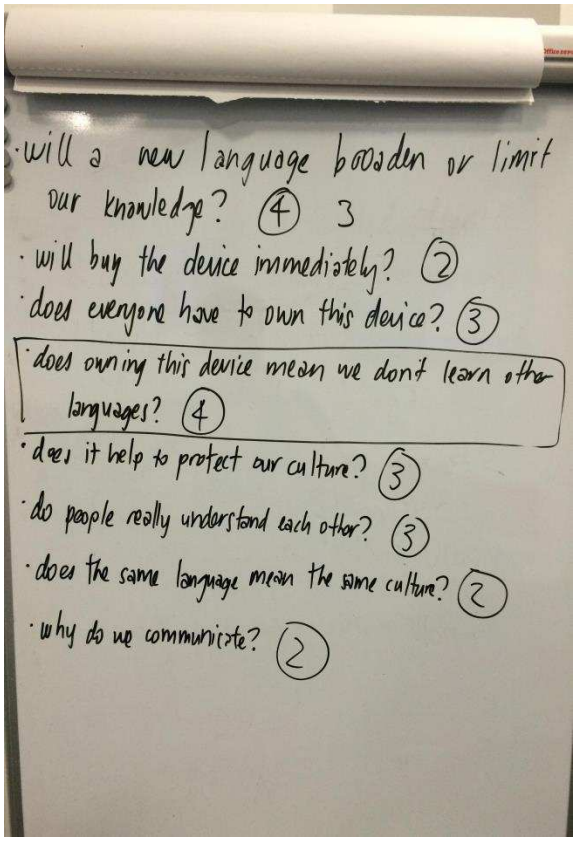

Figure 15. Philosophical questions from Workshop 1

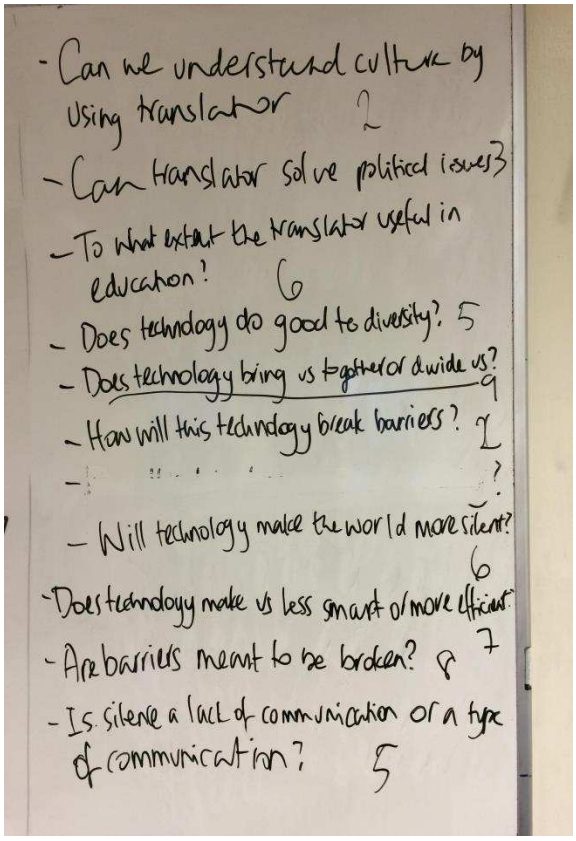

Figure 16. Philosophical questions from Workshop 2

Asking participants to generate questions, and the questions themselves, demonstrated that there was no particular learning outcome for the workshop, and that knowledge was unfinalised, not fixed or reified. For some participants, this was uncomfortable and confusing, and they expected more instrumental knowledge:

> I would want to talk about how to make international and UK students closer.
>
> Still not very clear of what it was meant to achieve in terms of day to day application to intercultural education.
>
> [I wanted to hear] specific cases caused by some misunderstandings caused by cultural boundaries or cultural barriers. Maybe something happens between the Chinese and the British people and also British and French people from different nationalities … how does it happen and what we can learn about this.
>
> I'll like more workshop activities where I can improve my confidence level communicating and understanding to the native people.

Other participants began to reflect differently on their understanding of intercultural learning, reflecting on the productivity and the pleasure of difference and asking further questions of their own:

> [Understanding everything all the time] would take away that sort of enjoyment of learning about things that you don't know.
>
> Maybe the barriers or boundaries is just natural thing. What we can do is just work on this and try to find the interesting things in there.
>
> Is it a good thing to remove the obstacle in language around the world?
>
> There's always two sides for a thing. And we can assess it from different perspectives. It generates a very interesting topic that I want to discover more, like 'should the barriers be broken'?
>
> I'm not sure that translation means understanding.

Some participants considered the kind of learning that was taking place through the workshop, reflecting on its affordances for knowing differently:

> Actually from the beginning when I learned about the workshop, I was thinking that the workshop was about how to understand others, or maybe some tips or some ways more practical to understand other, but it was different. But I think the way it was, way better. Because it was just like how to do it, but we applied it … you can tell people how to do it or you can let them do it by themselves.
>
> I realise that if we want people to know or think about something, we don't have to use an explicit way. It can be implicit and unconscious. Maybe 'to feel' is sometimes better than 'to learn'. It is inspiring for my teaching.

> I'm not sure what you want us to know in this workshop, but if you tell me something explicitly, it's just not as good as you give with this topic and within this workshop … when I discuss this topic, though I know it's not true, but I still think hard in this workshop, so I think about many things by myself, maybe related to this topic … maybe sometimes not on the way you want us to, but I try hard to understand this topic … so if you tell us what you want us to know in the end, I think it will be very good, but if you don't, I learn what I want to learn, I think what I want to think, and I believe what I want to, so I think it's still okay for me.

The participants' processes of trans-ing therefore enabled embodied, affective, and unfinalised ways of knowing which acknowledged, and worked within, the entangled relationship between knowing/epistemology and being/ontology, drawing attention to the performative nature of education by highlighting that '*how* we learn is instrumental to *what* we learn' (Bayley 2016, p. 47). Not all the participants recognised or welcomed these ways of knowing, and their unfamiliarity and difference from participants' expectations enacted an experience of their own difference within the workshop. For others, these ways of knowing produced reflection on complex, non-binary understandings of difference, working against the closure of difference (see MacLure 2015) and instead enabling the recognition of difference within and across boundaries between languages, cultures and national backgrounds. Thus the participants, consciously or unconsciously, were learning about difference differently – they were *doing differencing* - through the onto-epistemological entanglements (Barad 2007) of the assemblage.

Acknowledging the entanglement of ontology and epistemology and the complex understanding of difference which arises has profound ethical implications, if we understand ethics as concerned with 'how humans should be in the world' (Tarc 2006, p. 44). These ethical implications are part of these participants' reflections on their learning in terms of their relationships with others, particularly as regards their own responsibilities for successful communication and understanding:

> What do I do when I don't understand what the person opposite me is saying, or if I'm hearing something that I don't understand … it did make me think of how I sort of react in those situations when you are confronted with something that you might not understand.

> I learned that I need to be more active or express my opinions in order for people to understand my situation.

> It is normal not to understand something.

> I got point to let the international students know that even the natives, sometimes they don't understand something, because sometimes we feel that we don't understand because of the language … we are the only ones … so I think it is good to know, to tell the international students that they are not the only ones.

These comments point to a crucial emerging understanding of multiple intersecting differences, and that not understanding is not only related to different named languages but is an experience everyone has, making it 'normal'. In this sense, they indicate a

recognition of the other *qua* other: in generating an experience of ethics based on the unique embodied and material engagement with an *other* in a particular moment, the workshops engaged what MacDonald and O'Regan (2013) call an immanent intercultural ethics, as opposed to an abstract ethics based on essential difference or sameness (see also Frimberger 2016). The DE did not simply see participants reflecting on the self/other boundary, but was rather a *performance* of the boundary being constantly made and re-made, in a process of emergent becoming in continuous difference with others (Davies et al. 2013; Deleuze 2004). Fundamental to the Dramatic Enquiry, then, and to its potential as a learning tool, was the intertwining of ethics, knowing, and being: learning itself, as an unfinalised and unfinalising process of *becoming*, was 'an experience of ethics' (Tarc 2006, p. 288). I therefore conclude that DE has the power to bring into existence different ways of knowing-through-being (following Barad 2007). I posit that it is in this dimension that DE might contribute to a more ethical internationalisation of higher education, one which meaningfully acknowledges both the necessity and impossibility of the boundaries on which it is based, challenges the reductive and oppressive binary framings to which students are too often subjected, and understands difference differently.

Conclusion

The Dramatic Enquiry workshops therefore afforded a space for participants to think safely and productively about communication and mis/understanding, and (their relation to) learning. They drew attention to learning as a relational and performative process of *becoming*, making visible the performance of ourselves and others in the world through a focus on process and making relationships, rather than product and outcome and individual perspectives. It decentred language as the chief vehicle for communication and unsettled language from its representational primacy, instead treating language as one of many materials in the communicative assemblage. Working with language as part of an assemblage facilitated embodied, material, and unfinalised ways of knowing for the participants, which enabled them to engage differently with boundaries and borders, moving across, through and beyond boundaries with various different others, and bringing new boundaries into existence in an ongoing process of becoming. This process drew attention to the entangled relationship between ethics, knowing and being, and generated an immanent ethics which has the potential to challenge the oppressive binaries which pervade international HE. The learning and the becoming has been my own, too – I am aware that my own analysis has fallen back on representational linguistic tools and analysis, particularly in the use of written reflections and interviews to help me understand the participants' engagement. I have come some distance as a researcher through this project, and ended up in a very different place from where I started.

The decentring of language and the resultant destabilising of binaries in this project has drawn particular attention to how language so often functions as a barrier in HE, and how 'provincialising' language as the chief vehicle of learning and knowing (Thurlow 2016; Bayley 2016) may offer a different depth and breadth of student interaction and engagement. This could perform a step towards becoming an international university which, though dependent on political borders, acknowledges itself as a borderland (Anzaldúa 1987) and attempts to engage with and challenge, rather than reinforce, those borders in its own practices. Such a university would be open to difference and the new, encouraging a 'loss of ontological security' (MacLure 2015, p. 108) as a result of university learning. It would engage with the moral

dimension of multicultural classrooms (Crosbie 2012) and value human qua human rather than human qua employable wealth creator (Phipps 2013, p. 337). It would value different forms of knowing and create space for knowing differently, through knowledges which can unsettle the dominant forms and systems of knowledge produced by the 'Westernised' academy (Grosfoguel 2012) and privileged in UK HE (Hall and Tandon 2017), and which do not disconnect students' knowing and learning from their material experience (Bayley 2016). It would not simply 'export' or colonise (Piller and Cho 2013) in 'disembodied flows' (Sidhu and Dall'Alba 2012), but actively work to transform all its students and its institutions by understanding that education *matters* – it is material and performative and makes the world (Bayley 2016), and we are all implicated and all entangled in this process. Annoushka Bayley (2018) suggests that developing practice-as-research methodologies for transdisciplinary settings is one of the ways in which we might start to effect such transformation, and I see this Dramatic Enquiry project as a contribution to that call.

Acknowledgements
This project was funded by a Society for Research in Higher Education Prize for Newer Researchers. My warmest thanks go to the SRHE for this valuable support, and to the opportunities and relationships it has generated; to the University of Leeds student participants who so willingly and graciously stepped out of their comfort zones; to artist and dear friend Willow Langdale-Smith for her representations of the workshop participants; to Professor Alison Phipps (University of Glasgow) for her generous mentorship; to my colleagues Jim Ryder and James Simpson for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper, and Loreto Aliaga Salas for her translation of the abstract; and to the DARE/University of Leeds Creative Lab 2015 for bringing Cap-a-Pie and myself together.

References

Anzaldúa, G. (1987.) *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza.* San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Badwan, K. (2017). 'Did we learn English or what?': A Study Abroad Student in the UK Carrying and Crossing Boundaries in Out-of-Class Communication. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* 7 (2), 193-210.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* edited by M. Holquist, translated by C. Emerson and M. Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning.* Durham, NY: Duke University Press.

Barad, K. (2014). Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart. *Parallax* 20 (3), 168-187.

Barnett, R. (2012). Learning For an Unknown Future. *Higher Education Research and Development* 31 (1), 65-77.

Bayley, A. (2016). Trans-forming Higher Education. *Performance Research* 21 (6), 44-49.

Bayley, A. (2018). *Posthuman Pedagogies in Practice: Arts-based Approaches for Developing Participatory Futures*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Boal, A. (2000). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. London: Pluto Press.

Bornman, E. & Potgieter, P. H. (2017). Language Choices and Identity in Higher Education: Afrikaans-speaking Students at Unisa. *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (8), 1488-1503.

Burnard, P., Mackinlay, E. & Powell. K. (2017). *The Routledge International Handbook of Intercultural Arts Research.* London: Routledge.
Choudaha, R. (2017). Three Waves of International Student Mobility (1999-2020). *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (5), 825-831.
Collins, H. (2018). Interculturality From Above and Below: Navigating Uneven Discourses in a Neoliberal University System. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 18 (2), 167-183.
Crosbie, V. (2012). New Pedagogies for the Cosmopolitan Undergraduate: Generating a Critical Space for Capability Development in the HE ESOL Language Classroom. Unpublished EdD thesis, University of Sheffield.
Davies, B., De Schauwer, E., Claes, L., De Munck , K., Van De Putte, I. & Verstichele, M. (2013). Recognition and Difference: A Collective Biography. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 26 (6), 680-691.
de Freitas, E. & Curinga, M. X. (2015). New Materialist Approaches to the Study of Language and Identity: Assembling the Posthuman Subject. *Curriculum Inquiry* 45 (3), 249-265.
de Wit, H., Hunter, F., Egron-Polak, E. & Howard, L. (2015). *Internationalisation of Higher Education*. Brussels: European Parliament. Available at http://www.europarl.efuropa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/540370/IPOL_STU(2015)540370_EN.pdf
Deleuze, G. (2004). *The Logic of Sense.* London: Continuum.
Deleuze, G. (2007). Eight years later: 1980 interview. In *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975–1995* (Rev. ed.). (A. Hodges & M. Taormina, Trans.) (pp. 175–180). Paris: Semiotext(e).
Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1977/1983). *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (R. Hurley, M. Seem & H. Lane, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Deleuze, G. (2004). *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press. (Paul Patton, Trans.)
Dunne, C. (2013). Exploring Motivations for Intercultural Contact among Host Country University Students: An Irish Case Study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37 (5), 576-78.
Ferri, G. (2018). *Intercultural Communication: Critical Approaches and Future Challenges.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Pivot.
Frimberger, K. (2016).A Brechtian Theatre Pedagogy for Intercultural Education Research. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 16 (2), 130-147.
Frimberger, K., White, R. & Ma, L. (2017). 'If I didn't know you what would you want me to see?': Poetic Mappings in Neo-materialist Research with Young Asylum Seekers and Refugees. *Applied Linguistics Review.* Advance online publication. DOI 10.1515/applirev-2016-1061
Gotman, K. **(**2016). Translatio. *Performance Research* 21 (5), 17-20.
Grosfoguel, R. (2012). The Dilemmas of Ethnic Studies in the United States: Between Liberal Multiculturalism, Identity Politics, Disciplinary Colonization, and Decolonial Epistemologies. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 10 (1), 81-89.
Guo, Y. & Guo, S. 2017. Internationalization of Canadian Higher Education: Discrepancies Between Policies and International Student Experiences. *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (5), 851-868.

Hall, B. L. & Tandon, R. (2017). Decolonization of Knowledge, Epistemicide, Participatory Research and Higher Education. *Research for All* 1 (1): 6-19.
Harvey, L. (2016). 'I am Italian in the world': A mobile student's story of language learning and *ideological becoming*. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 16 (3), 368-383.
Harvey, L. (in press). Entangled Trans-ing: Co-creating a Performance of Language and Intercultural Research. In *Translanguaging as Transformation: The collaborative construction of new linguistic realities,* edited by E. Moore, J, Bradley & J. Simpson. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
Harvey, L., McCormick, B., Vanden, K., Collins, R. & Suarez, P. (2019). Theatrical Performance as a Public Pedagogy of Solidarity for Intercultural Learning. *Research for All* 3 (1), 76-92.
Hekman, S. (2010). *The Material of Knowledge: Feminist Disclosures*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Holliday, A. (2016). Difference and Awareness in Cultural Travel: Negotiating Blocks and Threads. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 16 (3), 318-331.
Holquist, M. (2002). *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World.* New York: Routledge.
Hultman, K. & Lenz Taguchi, H. (2010). Challenging Anthropocentric Analysis of Visual Data: A Relational Materialist Methodological Approach to Educational Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 23 (5), 525-542.
Jackson, A. Y. & Mazzei. L. A. (2012). *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Viewing Data Across Multiple Perspectives.* Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
Jones, A. (2016). Introduction. *Performance Research* 21 (5), 1-11.
Jones, E. (2017). Problematising and Reimagining the Notion of Intercultural Student Experience. *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (5), 933-943.
Kearney, M-L. & Lincoln, D. (2017). Foreword to Special Issue on the International Student Experience: Voices and Perspectives. *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (5), 823-824.
Ladegaard, H. J. & Cheng, H. F. (2014). Constructing the Cultural 'Other': Prejudice and Intergroup Conflict in University Students' Discourses About 'the Other'. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 14 (2), 156-175.
Lee, J. J. (2017). Neo-nationalism in Higher Education: Case of South Africa. *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (5), 869-886.
Lehtomäki, E., Moate, J. & Post-Ahokas, H. (2016). Global Connectedness in Higher Education: Student Voices on the Value of Cross-cultural Learning Dialogue. *Studies in Higher Education* 41 (12), 2011-2027.
MacDonald, M. & O'Regan, J. (2013). The Ethics of Intercultural Communication. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 45 (10), 1005-1017.
MacLure, M. (2013). Researching Without Representation? Language and Materiality in Post-qualitative Methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 26 (6), 658-667.
MacLure, M. (2015). The 'New Materialisms': A Thorn in the Flesh of Critical Qualitative Inquiry? In *Critical Qualitative Inquiry: Foundations and Futures*, edited by G. Cannella, M. S. Perez, & P. Pasque, 93-112. California: Left Coast Press.
Marginson, S. (2006). Dynamics of National and Global Competition in Higher Education. *Higher Education* 52 (1), 1-39.
Marginson, S. (2013). Equals or Others? Mobile Students in a Nationally Bordered World. In *International Students Negotiating Higher Education*, edited by S. Sovic & M. Blythman, 9-27. London: Routledge.

Mazzei, L. (2013). *A Voice Without Organs*: Interviewing in Post-qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 26 (6), 732-740.
Mazzei, L. & Jackson, A. Y. (2017). Voice in the Agentic Assemblage. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 49 (11), 1090-1098.
Mylona, S. (2016). Trans-ing. *Performance Research* 21 (5), 65-67.
Phipps, A. (2013). Linguistic Incompetence: Giving an Account of Researching Multilingually. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 23 (3), 329-341.
Piller, I. & Cho, J. (2013). Neoliberalism as Language Policy. *Language in Society* 42, 23-44.
Preece, S. & Martin, P. (2010). Imagining Higher Education as a Multilingual Space. *Language and Education* 24 (1), 3-8.
Ryan, J, (Ed.) (2013). *Cross-Cultural Learning and Teaching for Home and International Students.* London: Routledge.
Sidhu, R. K. & Dall'Alba, G. (2012). International Education and (Dis)Embodied Cosmopolitanisms. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 44 (4), 413-431.
Spencer-Oatey, H., D. Dauber, & S. Williams. 2014. *Promoting Integration on Campus: Principles, Practice and Issues for Further Exploration*. Report for UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA): University of Warwick.
Tarc, A. M. (2006). In a Dimension of Height: Ethics in the Education of Others. *Education Theory* 56 (3), 287-304.
Thurlow, C. (2016). Queering Critical Discourse Studies or/and Performing 'Post-class' Ideologies. *Critical Discourse Studies* 13, 485-514.
Trinh T. Minh-ha. (1988). Not You/Like You: Post-Colonial Women and the Interlocking Question of Identity and Difference. *Inscriptions* 3-4, 71-77.
Young, T., Handford, M., & Schartner, A. (2017). The Internationalising University: An Intercultural Endeavour? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 38 (3): 189-191.