Martin Blaszk[1]

From the Concept of a Third Culture to the Reality of a Third Space. A Possible Model for a Research Practice That Traverses Disciplines

In the article, the proposition of a third culture is discussed in connection with research practices that exist on the borderlands between disciplines. In the first part of the article, an outline of the third culture is presented, as well as its significance and relevance for present-day forms of inquiry. In connection with this, an image from Translation Studies is given where networked knowledge is described, which is seen to be a productive way of viewing the possibilities for a third culture. This proposition is then linked to a strategy that arises from performance inquiry – research-based practice (RBP) – which exists within a third space. In the second part of the article, an outline of this third space inquiry is given in terms of the focus of its research and its basic concepts. The model is then applied to the author's research into performative education – happening as a form of investigation and research in secondary and tertiary education – in order to elucidate its concerns and the mechanisms that underly it. In the conclusion, a third space for inquiry is viewed to be a productive concept, while the concept of a third culture, although outdated, still serves as a provocation to thought about possible strategies for research practices that do not fit comfortably into one particular branch of human inquiry or the disciplines that exist within them.

Keywords: branches of knowledge, disciplines, third culture, third space, research-based practice, performative education

Introduction

This article arose from my professional practice and research interests. I work as an academic teacher, second language education (SLE) teacher and researcher. With regard to this, I am interested in implementing a performative educational practice

---

[1]   University of Gdańsk, martin.blaszk@ug.edu.pl.

and also research into that practice as a way to understand it more fully as well as develop it. I am also aware that my professional practice and the research into it (which also supports the practice) exist in the borderlands between branches of human inquiry and their different disciplines. In terms of the performative educational practice, these domains include the arts in connection with performance (happening), the social sciences in relation to pedagogy, and the humanities with regard to SLE. The research, meanwhile, reaches across these different domains in search of theories and results from empirical inquiry to try and understand more fully, as well as facilitate, the development of the educational practice. In terms of methodology, it is located in a qualitative paradigm that uses participatory action research (PAR) as a mode of inquiry. This, in turn, is supported by a wide-ranging and inclusive research strategy informed by *bricolage*, which uses a variety of research tools including, for example, ethnographic observation, qualitative interview and analysis of artefacts. It also includes a constructivist-interpretive reading of the collected data.

A more detailed account of the focus of my inquiry and some of the research that has been carried out will be given in the second part of this article. To begin with, however, consideration is given to a concept that first appeared in the 1960s – the "third culture" – which was supposed to offer a "place" for inquiry into those phenomena that could not easily fit within the humanities and the sciences. This is looked at in order to make apparent some of the problems that can exist when a research practice does not fit "snuggly" into one particular branch of knowledge or its attendant disciplines. Reactions to the concept are given, ending with a description of an image from Translation Studies concerning networked knowledge that would appear to offer a productive and relevant mode of inquiry for the present-day. Stepping back from the more ambitious scale of a "third culture", research-based practice (RBP) is then described. This offers a "third space", a site at the center of different disciplines into which questions and findings can be placed and then investigated by the different stakeholders involved in a given research project. Its smaller scale, therefore, along with the possibilities it opens up for joint "ownership" of a research project, makes it a pertinent model to be able to understand better my own professional practice and research into it.

The third culture

Charles Percy Snow (1964) formulated the concept of the third culture in the 1960s[2]. It was his proposition for a way to bridge the gap between the humanities and science which, according to Snow, had an adverse effect on the life of many

---

[2]   The term was first used in his book published in 1964, *The Two Cultures: and A Second Look: An Expanded Version of the Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution.* However, Snow had been

groups in society. A third culture, he felt, would offer a platform for intercultural dialogue and, therefore, ameliorate the distance and conflict that existed. The loose conceptual framework that he offered, however, has been generative of debate rather than anything more solid and lasting. In connection with this, recent discussion has focused on the fact that the concept of a third culture is either no longer relevant or simply unproductive. In the case of the former, science is viewed to be the only source of the new cultural paradigm because of its dominance in society. With the latter, the third culture model is perceived to perpetuate a myth of two elitist cultures towards the propagation of a third, while it ignores the existence of the many different groups existing in society that could and should be part of the cultural dialogue.

The third culture at present

In his introduction to *W stronę trzeciej kultury* [*Towards the Third Culture*], Ryszard W. Kluszczyński offers an update on the state of the "dialogue" between the humanities and science, which, by the mid-1990s, had seen the world of the humanities overwhelmed by the world of science. According to John Brockman (1996), as Kluszczyński writes:

> the world of science has become the only source of the new cultural paradigm and the intellectual life hierarchies constructed in (…) scientific circles are to serve as a role model for new social relations. (…) Thus [the unwillingness of the humanities] to take up a dialogue with the world of science, have been replaced (…) by the world of science being totalitarian towards culture. The idea of dialogue and cooperation that was fundamental for Snow's discourse has been lost (2016: 8–9).

Additionally, through the advent of a myriad of technological and scientific advances: for example, the internet, computers and ICT, genetics, bioscience and nanotechnology, robotics and artificial intelligence, but mostly, digital technology, the intellectual elites that might have performed the role of mediators in a dialogue between the humanities and science (and for this read science and technology together) have been left floundering (Kluszczyński 2016: 9).

---

interested in the theme of seeming indifference between the world of culture founded on humanistic values and that of science which favors the cognitive since 1956, when he published an article in the *New Statesman* and then 1959, when he presented it in a Rede Lecture.

A place for the third culture

With regard to this situation, Kluszczyński remains optimistic, as he views the idea of a third culture as still valid for the present. For, even though the term "third culture" may seem a little archaic in a world in which hybridization and pluralism are a growing trend, if not, in some cases, the norm, the concept of a third culture does more than simply provide a space for a dialogical exchange between the "the order of symbolic values (humanities) and cognitive ones (science)" (Kluszczyński 2016: 10). It can also be inclusive of many of the diverse cultures that exist in the contemporary world, which "absorb and in their own way process not only paradigms of the humanities, science and technology, but also concepts and structures of information and networking society as well as determinants of participation orders" (Kluszczyński 2016: 10). Offering this point of view, Kluszczyński also sets the stage for the role of artists in such a dialogue, "who transfer everything to real activities, making postulates a practiced reality" (2016: 11). It is also worth adding that by developing the concept of a third culture that facilitates a discussion open to different groups existing in society and not only between the two cultures of the elite, the ensuing dialogue may go some way to alleviate the problems either bypassed or even caused by the dysfunctional relations of the humanities and sciences.

A moribund concept

In spite of Kluszczyński's optimism, there are also voices that question the whole notion that a third culture actually can or should exist. In connection with this point of view, due to epistemological and methodological differences, the fact that knowledge construction over the previous centuries has taken place through the evolution of distinct disciplines is significant. Meanwhile, the way society and institutions are organized has resulted in the fact that meaningful interaction – a truly dialogical exchange – is difficult to achieve. In connection with this situation, Roger F. Malina makes a valid observation when he writes: "What is gained? What is lost? When two cultures interface there can be constructive or destructive interference. What knowledge is being transferred, or constructed, by whom and to whom?" (2016: 23). This implies that exchange of this kind has both positive and negative effects, while those engaged in such exchanges should be cognizant of the fact that there will be covert interests at play. Additionally, for Malina, when it comes to digital culture and the ways in which knowledge is shaped by it, society is in the "dark ages" (Malina 2016: 23). As a result, a great deal of time is needed to learn the new cultural tropes that arise from the application of such technology

(Malina 2016: 23). Malina concludes, therefore, that the concept of a third culture is not productive but rather it fulfills the need for a "quick fix" which, in the long-term, may prove to be detrimental (Malina 2016: 24). Interestingly, rather than pursue the idea of the third culture model in terms of an as-yet-unknown but desirable place to be, Malina proffers a model that uses a metaphor from Translation Studies.

A productive image from Translation Studies

As Malina (2016: 24) describes it, translation is not a straightforward act of moving a set of signifiers from one culture to another in an isometric transformation – where the properties of the elements to be transformed are preserved in a one-to-one transaction. Rather, the process involves a complexity of networks which means the translated text may undergo many changes. To gain a clearer understanding of what this entails, Malina builds on Rainer Schulte's concept deriving from the fact that the German word to translate is "übersetzen", which at a very simple level can mean "to carry something from one side of the river to the other side of the river" (Malina 2016: 25). This image is productive for Malina because it allows him to show how a text to be translated might be viewed as a set of goods to be transported from one riverbank to another: some of the goods can be transported with few problems, others may not survive on the other side of the river, while others may simply be untransportable. Additionally, the journeys back and forth may have an effect on the goods being carried, while the duration of the transportation, the weather and the state of the river itself may also have an impact. Moreover, the skills and disposition of the boatman play an important role, and it should not be forgotten that the act of transportation is not to bridge the gap between the two banks but to "encourage trade and barter" (Malina 2016: 25) with the resulting richness of interaction that it might entail. Malina also extends the metaphor by suggesting that the two banks of the river should be replaced by the image of a river delta with areas of mud flats and a tangle of tributaries, where "The riverbeds themselves move with time and silt can create new banks and territories" (Malina 2016: 25). Therefore, instead of an "easy" dichotomy of the two sides of a river a more complex picture is presented, one that is more in keeping with the reality of the relations between science and the humanities: there is networked knowledge rather than transdisciplinary practice and where the boundaries between disciplines "are fuzzy and shifting" (Malina 2016: 25). To see how a researcher/practitioner might actually operate in the space this creates, I now want to describe Pil Hansen's RBP.

A third space – RBP in the arts

Hansen (2018) is based within the field of cognitive performance studies and her inquiries cover the areas of dramaturgy, perception and memory with a special interest in how the perceptual capacity of performing artists and spectators can be increased. She is interested in investigating artistic activity through the use of multiple research practices belonging to the arts, scholarly tradition and the sciences. To achieve this, Hansen aims to "establish reciprocal feedback channels that might advance all of these research practices" (2018: 32). This is done by establishing a third space (not a third culture) at the center of the different disciplines into which questions and findings can be placed and then investigated by the different stakeholders involved in a given project, something which Hansen describes as "collaborative exploration" (2018: 32). The stakeholders might include performing artists, cognitive scientists and dance and theatre scholars who create a "laboratory" where those involved are not afraid to break rules or engage in research practices that are alien to their particular discipline. Equally, the space is one in which "connection" and "contamination" are encouraged while, at the same time, the knowledge produced is also useful to the separate disciplines.

This is not without its challenges, however. The "different languages" of each field have to be negotiated and there are "naturally occurring" hierarchies established because of the allocation of resources and social validation of people's different roles. In connection with this, as Hansen reports: "the scientist is cast as a 'hard' researcher, the humanities scholar is considered the 'soft' communicator, and the artist is reduced to the research subject" (2018: 34). With her own work, Hansen aims to move beyond these scenarios. This is done by implementing a research practice which takes account of and embraces difference. This might mean, for example, that a question from a cognitive scientist concerning the movement of a dancer is answered by further movement from the dancer, or that researchers willingly work across different paradigms or acquire research skills in a number of them, so that they can function within different research groups (Hansen 2018: 35).

In the achievement of the third space, Hansen (2018: 33) also states the positions from which RBP arises. These are as follows:

- the ontology, or as Hansen labels it, the (n)ontology, is emergent. This means that phenomena do not exist as entities in their own right but arise relationally. Because of this, they cannot be comprehended using objective research methods;
- there is an epistemology of enaction/interaction. Phenomena can only be known "through active and embodied engagement" (Hansen 2018: 33). As a result of this, the ontology is epistemological: an entity exists only as much as we are involved with it and it is through this involvement that we know it;

- artistic inquiry is an equal to more established paradigms with well-defined terms of its own. This removes the danger of an "unproductive stratification of disciplines" (Hansen 2018: 33);
- the social importance of performance can be raised by research practices that foreground the values that "creative inquiries, processes and experiences" (Hansen 2018: 33) deal with. These are different to the external measures that are now applied to both the arts and sciences, for example, "entrepreneurial application, impact on policies, or health and education benefits" (Hansen 2018: 33).

These positions also have an impact on methodology:

- the research undertaken is not about reduction and generalization: "dance and theatre practices are inherently complex and deeply embedded in other cultural practices and it is the relationships between the parts of these performance ecologies that is of interest" (Hansen 2018: 37);
- insight rather than conclusive knowledge is sought in the inquiry process – this reflects "the ephemeral and relational nature of live performance" (Hansen 2018: 39);
- reflection and especially self-awareness in practice (self-consciousness) as well as articulation of this reflection is seen to be an essential part of the inquiry process (Hansen 2018: 38)[3];
- artistic inquiry is usually about creating something new and not about analyzing already existing connections. It inquires by "severing, isolating, reconnecting, or testing the breaking point of (…) connections" (Hansen 2018: 37). Its hypotheses, if they are used, are more usually a stimulus to become involved in a process rather than the starting point to prove a theory. Therefore, its mode of inquiry is abductive rather than deductive or inductive – it produces "novel ideas inspired by singular occurrences and associations that offer possible, but unqualified explanations" (Hansen 2018: 37).

In essence, Hansen perceives the differences between the various paradigms that exist in the research group that she is involved with in the following way: accumulative (scientific inquiry) – diversifying (scholarly inquiry) – emergent (RBP). However, she emphasizes the points of contact: scientists can make abductive leaps – eureka moments; scholars are involved in approaches that use self-reflective observation and emergence – performative writing, phenomenological analysis, auto-ethnography; artists use concepts proposed by scholars – theatricality, performativity and enaction (Hansen 2018: 39).

---

[3]   There are, however, arguments against this in connection with the production of documentation and analysis (Kershaw 2009).

In a schematic visualization of these ideas, Hansen places RBP as a mode of inquiry that underlies the third space. This, in turn, is seen to be about discovery and exploration and the possibilities afforded for making connections. In addition, the third space has relations of reciprocal feedback with RBP, artistic inquiry and empirical experimentation: the former supported by performance practice and production and the latter traditional research practice and dissemination. Moreover, the RBP third space is perceived to be a cyclical model of involvement, where discoveries facilitate "Continued exploration and reapplication in future RBP projects" (Hansen 2018: 40).

My own practice and research –
happening in relation to RBP and an ensuing methodology

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, I am interested in performative education. One of the strands of my practice and research relates to happening in education, where I have proposed a number of characteristics for that performance strategy which guide the choice of activities and materials used in the preparation and planning of happenings in an educational setting. These characteristics are based upon the ideas of a number of different authors (Pawłowski 1982; Kirby 1966; Morawski 1971; Schechner 1982; Garoian 1999) and have been outlined in other publications by this author (for example, Blaszk 2017b: 54–56). In brief, the characteristics include:

- **participation**: active involvement of participants – both the "actors" (happeners) and the audience are involved;
- **indeterminacy**: promotion of equality between participants;
- **multicentrism**: encouragement of different points of view;
- **chance, paradox** and **dream logic**: the possibility that something unexpected will occur, that seemingly impossible combinations will arise and that there do not have to be links between ideas;
- **reflexivity**: allowance for a personal perspective upon what is done;
- **process**: concentration on what is being done (in the "here and now") and not just a final product;
- **body intelligence**: encouragement of physical engagement in the learning process.

In connection with the positions from which Hansen's RBP arises, there are a number of points of "intersection" with the characteristics for happening given above, which would appear to make a third space inquiry model sympathetic to the nature of happening and therefore an appropriate model to elucidate my professional practice as well as the concerns and mechanisms which underly my

research practice. For example, the focus away from a final product and concentration on activity (**process**) and the emphasis upon the different forms of relationality in happening: the unexpected (**chance**), the illogical and strange (**dream logic**) and the juxtaposed (**paradox**), connect with Hansen's emergent (n)ontology, in which phenomena cannot be known as definite entities but come into being relationally. Additionally, the emphasis on embodied (**body intelligence**) and active engagement (**participation**), as well as reflection upon that engagement (**reflexivity**), relate to Hansen's epistemology of enaction/interaction, where the world is known through existence in it and active involvement with it, rather than through a passive accumulation of knowledge about individual entities. Moreover, knowing the world is not done in isolation; the active engagement that is part of happening allows for multiple points of view (**multicentrism**) where no one viewpoint is necessarily predominant (**indeterminacy**). In addition to this, because happening originated in the visual arts but is open to explore and use other art forms (**interdisciplinarity**), it can be viewed to be a strong representative of the arts in general. In connection with this, therefore, it promotes those creative values which Hansen contrasts with the types of measurements that are now used to gauge the efficacy of a broad range of human activity.

The nature of happening also has an impact on the methodology chosen to research into it as an educational practice and this too intersects with Hansen's model. In general terms, as with the areas of performance and dance that Hansen is interested in, the enactment of happening can be a complex phenomenon. Similarly to Hansen, the interest in my own research, which is based in education, is about the relations that exist between the different entities that are involved in an enactment rather than to quantify and classify and thereby reduce and generalize. Linked to this, understanding the processes that are at play rather than knowing them with the aim of conclusive knowledge production is important, as is the promotion of a space of inquiry where the researcher/participants as researchers, are aware of, can reflect upon and then articulate their ideas with regard to the processes in which they are involved. As well as this, my inquiry into involvement in happening in education is an artistic process; the inquiry is always the creation/development of something as that something is being inquired into. This, of course, has an impact on the chosen methodology. For example, my research practice uses PAR, which originated in the social sciences (Lewin 1946) and has been put to different uses and developed across different disciplines (McIntyre 2008: 1–2). It is chosen as a research methodology here because it is based upon partnership between researchers and subjects which enables collective investigation and reflection upon issues important to them as a group or community, a position which is in agreement with Hansen's model where all those involved in a research project are viewed as equal stakeholders rather than positioned in

hierarchical relations. It also allows for joint solutions to be agreed upon and implemented leading to further and continuing cycles of research and implementation (McIntyre 2008: 1).

Differences to RBP

As well as the similarities between my own research practice and that of Hansen's model for RBP, there are also differences. Rather than the field of cognitive performance studies and inquiries into areas of dramaturgy, perception and memory, I am interested in how participants are involved in an educational practice that is informed by happening and performance practices and, up until this point, across the following branches of inquiry:

- arts;
- humanities;
- social sciences;

and in the disciplines of:

- performance;
- applied linguistics – second language education (SLE);
- pedagogy.

Indeed, with the inclusion of the social sciences, it might be said that my practice of inquiry already exists in a type of "third culture", one which this branch of science was supposed to facilitate long before Snow presented **his** third culture: as early as the nineteenth century, when the first papers were published in the social sciences, it was believed it would bridge the gap perceived to exist between the humanities and the other sciences (Lepelletrie 2016: 50). However, due to the area of research in which I am involved, with its interplay of branches and disciplines, I believe there is a need to go beyond the boundaries of the social sciences and create, like Hansen, a "laboratory" that is inclusive. This means that it includes different domains, as well as methodologies, strategies and tools for the collection of data. It also constantly questions what represents data, the ways in which it can be presented and interpreted, and by whom. Moreover, in order to negotiate this complex space of inquiry I have, like Hansen, developed a broad skills base and collaborated with a range of partners: the range of my professional involvement spans artistic practice, SLE, academic teaching and research, while in connection with cooperation, I have worked with artists, learners and teachers as well as people from various walks of life[4] who have been interested in creative, performance-based engagement.

---

4   Over the past twenty years, with regard to participants, this has included work with school-learners, students, teachers, and people from management positions in the education and corporate

Examples of research

Research thus far has involved working with fellow artists to produce a happening and inquire into its enaction in relation to a source text – Samuel Beckett's *What Where* (1984) (Blaszk 2017a), the application of a happening based procedure in SLE in secondary level education (Blaszk 2017b) and the provision of performative workshop at tertiary level, based upon personal interpretations of literary texts by the Polish author Stefan Themerson – the novels *Bayamus* (1945) and *Cardinal Pölätüo* (1954), as well as the play *Kość w gardle* (1953) (Blaszk 2019).

In all three of these projects the participants' ideas and involvement influenced the content as well as the form of what was finally enacted as a happening. In the latter two projects, they also influenced the content and form of the workshops through which the happenings were developed. For the project in a secondary school, the participants made more decisions about what they would like to do and how to do it in the second semester of the workshop's existence. At tertiary level, the project was more intense, as the workshop took place over five days with between five to six hours, so decisions about what to do and how to do it were also mediated by the energy the participants could bring to it. With regard to these two projects, the research involved analysis of the implementation of procedures to facilitate participants in the preparation and planning of a happening followed by the public enactment of what the participants had conceived. In both projects, the participants were engaged in dialogical forms of activity in which reflection upon their own and other people's contributions played a part and which have a correlation with practices known to pedagogy (Skidmore, Murakami 2016) and applied linguistics – SLE (McCafferty et al. 2006; Swain, Watanabe 2013) and which, additionally, might be seen to be linked to characteristics for happening as a performative practice – **multicentrism**, **indeterminancy**, **reflexivity**. Both projects also included the use of physical activities stemming from theatre practices (Rintoul 2011; Magni 2013; Johnson, Heron 2018) as well as drama based techniques used in SLE (Maley, Duff 2005), which connect with the **body intelligence** characteristic of happening. Furthermore, perspectives originating from psychology, pedagogy and semiotics are represented. In relation to psychology, participants worked across different intelligences (Gardner 1983): linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal. In terms of pedagogy, the participants used different symbol systems to represent situations (Barnes 2008: 7), ways of expression that can also, in connection with semiotics, be termed codes (Chandler 2007: 149–150): verbal,

---

sectors. In connection with general audiences, where the happening or performance involved open participation, the professional status of those people involved was unknown.

graphic, bodily and aesthetic. Meanwhile, this mixture of involvement rather than simply the cognitive, relates to the **interdisciplinary** characteristic of happening.

Brief summaries of a number of the activities used in the tertiary level workshops mentioned above, which called for participant involvement using different intelligences and across various symbol systems, are given below:

- participants drew small pictures about their lives which were then interpreted by other members of the group (Photo 1);
- participants worked in groups of four, where one person acted as a receiver and tried to copy the physical movements of another participant while also attempting to repeat a story and answer simple mathematical equations supplied by the other two members of the group (Photo 2);
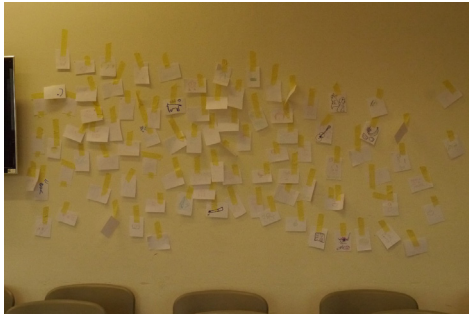

Photo 1. Small pictures drawn by participants which are interpreted by other members of the group

Source: the author.

Photo 2. In groups of four, participants copy physical movements, repeat a story and answer simple mathematical equations

Source: the author.

- participants sat in small groups and shared and discussed words, phrases, actions, events and images that they had found in personal explorations of literary texts and which they felt to be important – these "reactions" later became the basis for a happening (Photo 3);
- participants sat in small groups and used basic musical instruments[5] to create sound equivalents for words, phrases, actions, events and images that they had found in their explorations of literary texts. Then, the participants created visual symbols for the sounds which they wrote down in the form of musical scores. After that, the participants played the scores using the basic musical instruments and working together as a small "orchestra" (Photo 4);

---

[5]   These included household implements such as pots and pans, wooden spoons, bunches of keys for jingling and instruments for shaking, consisting of containers filled with rice or lentils. There were also basic trumpets, of the kind used by supporters at sporting events.
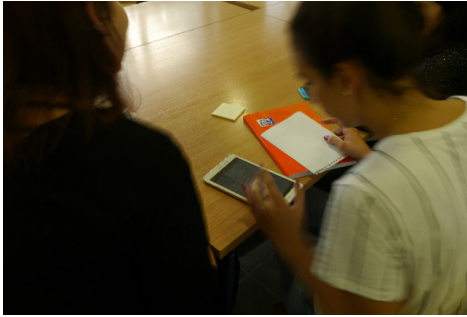
Photo 3. Participants share and discuss words, phrases, actions, events and images found through personal explorations of literary texts

Source: the author.

Photo 4. Participants use basic musical instruments to create sound equivalents for words, phrases, actions, events and images found through personal explorations of literary texts

Source: the author.

- participants sat in groups of four and shared previously discussed ideas (actions and events) for a happening. Two members of each group then left to join another group where they continued to discuss and develop ideas. This movement was repeated a number of times to allow ideas to be mixed and developed (Photo 5);
- participants rehearsed ideas for a happening before performing the happening in a public space (Photo 6).

Photo 5. In groups of four, participants share previously discussed ideas and then move on to other groups to continue sharing ideas

Source: the author.

Photo 6. Participants rehearse ideas for a happening

Source: the author.

This varied participant involvement was "recorded" to become data, using strategies and tools from different research practices. It was, for example, registered in photographs or on videotape, or made note of using ethnographic observation and description. The participants were also asked to share their ideas and views about the processes in which they were involved. On a more formal

level, this entailed the use of qualitative interviews and group discussions while, less formally, participants were encouraged to share their ideas by writing emails to the author as well as contributing to a blog. Analysis of artefacts, including objects, visual representations and documents produced by participants was also undertaken.

Analysis, meanwhile, was done following a constructivist-interpretivist path suggested by Thomas A. Schwandt (1998). This takes as its starting point the idea that people create meaning out of engagement with a world of phenomena and events, and where history, language and action all play a part in the social interactions that take place. It also believes that what people do and say should be taken at face value, while the researcher's role is to prepare an interpretation in which she/he applies personal and subjective judgement rather than a set of prescribed rules. This, in turn, involves "the delicate interplay of experience-near and experience-distant concepts" (Schwandt 1998: 232) which, for this author, has meant moving backwards and forwards between what participants (including myself) have thought, said and/or done in connection with a particular research project, and its elucidation through considerations of the immediate context or different discourses connected with the area under analysis. This complexity in previous research was brought together in a strategy that was defined after Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966: 20–21) as *bricolage*, in which combinations and re-combinations of items and events are analyzed in terms of open-ended sequence, where one particular viewpoint (closure-classification) is not sought after or desired. In terms of this author's research, the dynamic of such a process was elucidated by the application of **a rhizome-tumbleweed** model (Blaszk 2017b: 133–134). It also used a procedure suggested by Joe L. Kincheloe (2008: 340–346)[6], POET – point of entry text, in which data from empirical inquiry was analyzed in connection with conceptual maps arising from different domains, including theoretical knowledge from the different branches of inquiry and disciplines mentioned above (see also, Blaszk 2021: 26) for an account of the domains relating to a particular research project).

With regard to what has been outlined above, the third space inquiry that I am involved in, which takes as its starting point a model suggested by Hansen (2018: 40), is summarized in Figure 1.

In agreement with Hansen's model, my research practice in the third space allows for discovery and exploration with possibilities of connection. This supports performative education and artistic inquiry, as well as theoretical research and empirical experimentation, which takes the form of PAR. Meanwhile, the results

---

[6] This was part of a greater project by Kincheloe to extend the possibilities for *bricolage* in connection with qualitative research. As well as the article cited above, see Kincheloe (2011).

continued exploration and
re-application in future projects

production/praxis/dissemination

(participatory
action
research)

performative / artistic
education   activity

theoretical/empirical inquiry

supports

THIRD SPACE
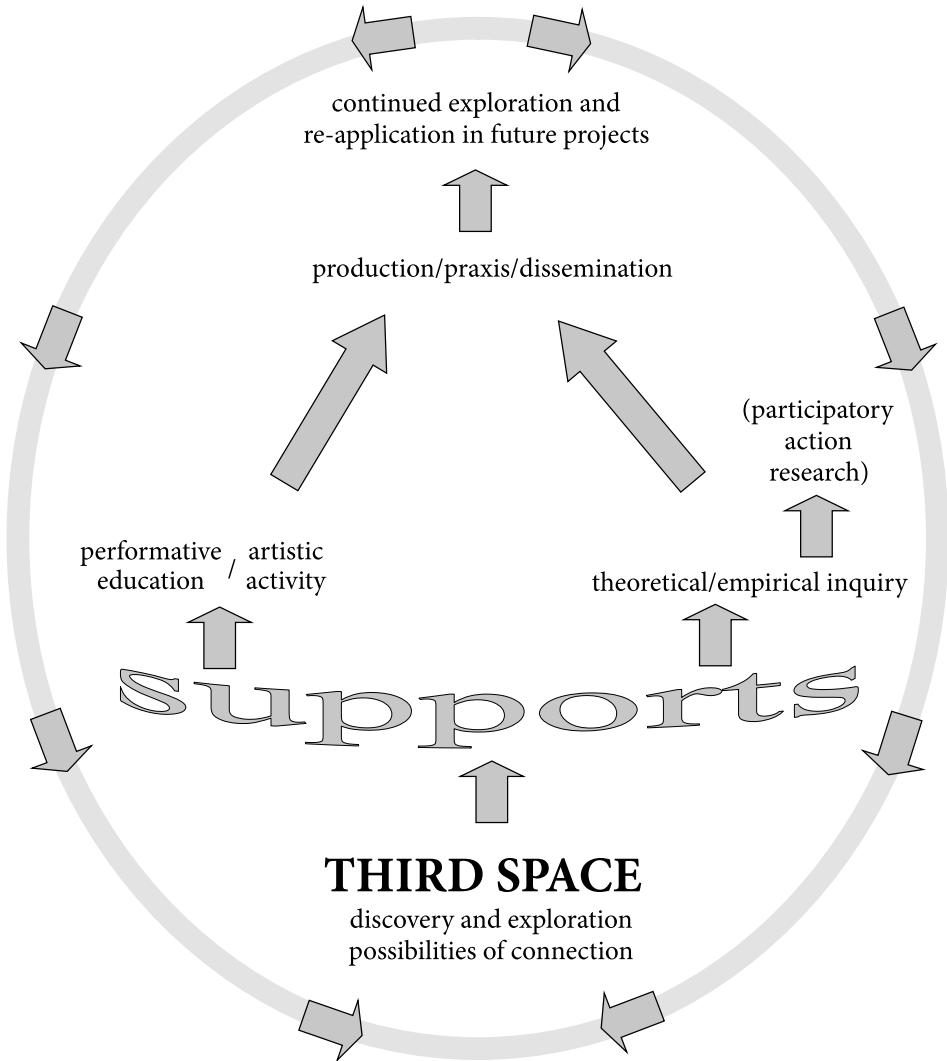discovery and exploration
possibilities of connection

Figure 1. A model for the author's research in connection with third space activity

Source: the author.

of these activities can be, as Hansen suggests, production, praxis and dissemination. In relation to this latter point, however, Hansen places praxis and production for her performance activity as separate from the praxis and dissemination of her research, while I keep them together in a loose configuration to emphasize the possibilities for overlap and interaction that can exist. Finally, similarly to Hansen's model, my research practice is cyclical in nature, where results from research projects generate further research.

Conclusions

In connection with human inquiry, there is a perceived need for a space in which different branches of knowledge and the disciplines which stem from them can work together in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of phenomena which may exist across boundaries rather than fit comfortably into one particular domain. In the 1960s, Snow proposed the idea of a third culture which would, he hoped, foster dialogue and cooperation between these different domains. In a more recent development, Malina, working with an image from Translation Studies, has proposed structuring inquiry around networked knowledge rather than transdisciplinary practice as a more realistic way for researchers to engage with phenomena that exist in the borderlands between different branches of knowledge and their disciplines. An example of a research practice which, according to this author, involves networked knowledge, is Hansen's third space model. This proposes that researchers from across different domains and disciplines work together in a non-hierarchical fashion to inquire into performance related phenomena. It is also a space in which the subjects of the research – in Hansen's case, dancers – contribute to an understanding of the phenomena in which they are involved, using the code – dance – which is relevant to those phenomena and with which they are able to comfortably express themselves.

With regard to my own professional practice, working as an academic teacher and SLE teacher, I want to implement a performative educational practice and also research into that practice as a way to understand it more fully as well as develop it. In connection with this, Hansen's third space model was used to elucidate the functioning of my own research practice. This showed that, similarly to Hansen's model, the third space of my practice takes into account different disciplines, a variety of involvements from its participants and a complex inquiry strategy. As in Hansen's model, I also aim to include participants in the research process as they are engaged in the development of ideas for a happening, by inviting them to comment upon their involvement through interviews and discussions, as well as written comments through emails and blog. My research into performative education is also cyclical in nature; the experiences and findings from the research not only reveal information about the phenomenon inquired into but also give information about how that phenomenon might be developed, further research that might be undertaken, and how the research might be implemented.

Finally, in a situation where the phenomenon that is being researched is complex and works across boundaries, a third space research practice is not only desirable but essential if the nature of the phenomenon under investigation is to be revealed in all its diversity. And, although the concept of the third culture may

be outdated or moribund, it is useful as a provocation to thought about how we view and position ourselves as researchers in a world that in its increasing complexity needs research strategies that will allow us to ask and answer questions about what that complexity entails.

References

Barnes D., 2008, *Exploratory Talk for Learning* [in:] N. Mercer, S. Hodgkinson (eds.), *Exploring Talk in School*, Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage.

Blaszk M., 2017a, *A Happening in Relation to Beckett's What, Where: What, Where Re-Actions – Sopot Pier, 13th May, 2013* [in:] T. Wiśniewski, M. Blaszk (eds.), *Between Page and Stage. Scholars and Theatre-makers*, Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego.

Blaszk M., 2017b, *Happening in Education – Theoretical Issues*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Blaszk M., 2019, *The Performative in Second Language Education*: *An Example of the Complexity of the Discipline*, "Neofilolog", vol. 52, no. 2.

Blaszk M., 2021, *Happening in Education – An Empirical Study*, Berlin: Peter Lang.

Brockman J., 1996, *The Third Culture*: *Beyond the Scientific Revolution*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Chandler D., 2007, *Semiotics: The Basics*, London: Routledge.

Gardner H., 1983, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, New York: Basic Books.

Garoian C.R., 1999, *Performing Pedagogy: Toward an Art of Politics*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

Hansen P., 2018, *Research-Based Practice* [in:] A. Arlander, B. Barton, M. Dreyer-Lude, B. Spatz (eds.), *Performance as Research*: *Knowledge*, *Methods*, *Impact*, London: Routledge.

Johnson N., Heron J., 2018, *Mapping Beckett* [drama workshop], Samuel Beckett Laboratory, Teatr Atelier, Sopot, May 18.

Kershaw B., 2009, *Practice-as-Research: An Introduction* [in:] L. Allegue, S. Jones, B. Kershaw, A. Piccini (eds.), *Practice-as-Research in Performance and Screen*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kincheloe J.L., 2008, *Bricolage and the Quest for Multiple Perspectives: New Approaches to Research in Ethnic Studies* [in:] T.P. Fong (ed.), *Ethnic Studies Research: Approaches and Perspectives*, Lanham: AltaMira Press.

Kincheloe J.L., 2011, *Describing the Bricolage* [in:] K. Hayes, S.R. Steinberg, K. Tobin (eds.), *Key Works in Critical Pedagogy*, Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Kirby M., 1966, *Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology*, New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc.

Kluszczyński R.W., 2016, *Wstęp/Introduction* [in:] R.W. Kluszczyński (ed.), *W stronę trzeciej kultury / Towards the Third Culture*, Warszawa–Gdańsk: Narodowe Centrum Kultury, Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej Łaźnia.

Lepelletrie F., 2016, *Medytacje nad trzecią kulturą / Musing on the Third Culture* [in:] R.W. Kluszczyński (ed.), *W stronę trzeciej kultury / Towards the Third Culture*, Warszawa–Gdańsk: Narodowe Centrum Kultury, Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej Łaźnia.

Lévi-Strauss C., 1966, *The Savage Mind*, G. Weidenfeld (transl.), London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.

Lewin K., 1946, *Action Research and Minority Problems*, "Journal of Social Issues", vol. 2, issue 4.

Magni M., 2013, *Complicite Workshop* [drama workshop], Fundacja Between, Zatoka Sztuki, Sopot, November 26–28.

Maley A., Duff A., 2005, *Drama Techniques. A Resource Book of Communication Activities for Language Teachers*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Malina R.F., 2016, *Trzecia kultura? Od sztuki do nauki i z powrotem / Third Culture? From the Arts to the Sciences and Back Again* [in:] R.W. Kluszczyński (ed.), *W stronę trzeciej kultury / Towards the Third Culture*, Warszawa–Gdańsk: Narodowe Centrum Kultury, Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej Łaźnia.

McCafferty S.G., Jacobs G.M., Iddings A.C.D. (eds.), 2006, *Cooperative Learning and Second Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McIntyre A., 2008, *Participatory Action Research*, Los Angeles – London – New Dehli – Singapore: Sage Publications.

Morawski S., 1971, *Happening (2). Rodowód – charakter – funkcje*, "Dialog", no. 10.

Pawłowski T., 1982, *Happening*, Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna.

Rintoul D., 2011, *Drama Workshop* [drama workshop], Between Festival, Teatr Wybrzeże, Scena Kameralna, Sopot, May 19–21.

Schechner R., 1982, *The End of Humanism: Writings on Performance*, New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.

Schwandt T., 1998, *Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry* [in:] N.K. Denzin, Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*: *Theories and Issues*, Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage.

Skidmore D., Murakami K. (eds.), 2016, *Dialogic Pedagogy: The Importance of Dialogue in Teaching and Learning*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Snow C.P., 1964, *The Two Cultures: And a Second Look: An Expanded Version of the Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swain M., Watanabe Y., 2019, *Languaging: Collaborative Dialogue as a Source of Second Language Learning* [in:] C.A. Chapelle (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.