

Bridging Emergent Spaces: art, writing and identity

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“All art begins [as] a calling forth of life in its still concealed mysteriousness.”
(Lou Andreas-Salomé)

Outline

1. Introduction / Background
1. Defining 'the third space'
2. Practitioner case study scenarios: In-between and emergent variables:
 - a) International student cohort
 - b) Practice-Led Research (PLR): Methodology in the creative arts
 - c) The Exegesis: Writing in the creative arts
 - d) Communication within relationships: between academics, the supervisory team, students and LLAs.
 - e) LLA practitioner's practice that supports the transformative process across these domains
4. Conclusions, outcomes and recommendations for *the future*.

Research Question

How can 'the third space' paradigm, help frame our understandings of the multiple parties involved in the experience of writing the MCA exegesis?

Are you be able to use this paradigm to represent the variables inherent in your LLA practice?

1. Introduction

Deakin art and performance research

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/communication-creative-arts/research/art-and-performance-research>

Members of this group generate knowledge through creative, critical and theoretical inquiries, which are conceptualised through ideas about embodied cognition, material logics, curatorial rethinking, and by *thinking through making.*



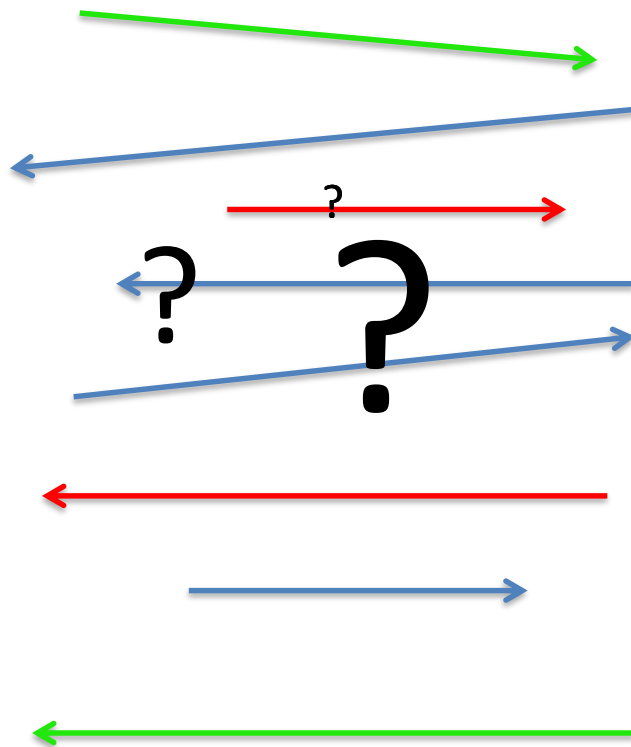
Writing in the creative arts

MCA Project guidelines

Creative Project

- The project is the core focus of the Practice-Led Research.
- May build on, contribute and or critique knowledge in the field, (or multiple fields) through the creation, process, production, reflections related to one or more aspects of the technical, artistic or professional practice.
- The project may take the form of an animation, an exhibition, a film, a dance production, sound work or software design.
- It may be multiplatform, multidisciplinary, and /or collaborative if relevant to the practice-led inquiry.

'the third space' Practice-Led Research (PLR)



Writing: Exegesis

- Connect theory with practice.
- Illuminate the practice through writing.
- Provide evidence of the practice.
- Make clear statements about the relationship between theoretical, technical, socio-political and /or cultural frameworks.
- Methodological frameworks selected that contribute to creating the project.
- Reflexivity is part of the writing as a form of analysis
- Explain and explore the technical and or conceptual elements of the project thus grounding the project in the broader field of literature, art practitioners and art practices.

Creative art disciplines and writing across these domains....

- Performance, **dance**, drama, theatre, production
- Public and installation art
- **Visual fine art**: Painting, printmaking, sculpture, multimedia, photography
- Screen and Design: Film, television, animation and design studies
- Music improvisation/classical / composition.

2. Defining 'the third space'

Background

- Different interpretations exist in the literature.
- Leona English (2005) writes of Homi Bhabha:
The third space practitioner en/acts hybridity, which is described by Bhabha (1990) as being ... “precisely about the fact that when a new situation, a new alliance formulates itself, it may demand that you should translate your principles, rethink them, extend them...
- *English (2005, p.87)...the third space practitioner strategizes and shifts to meet the needs of the situation.*

2. Defining the ‘third space’

Key Authors	Situated in	Key terms and strategies used to describe and enact third spaces
Homi Bhabha (1990, 1994)	Post-colonial theory	“...a site of resistance to more dominant, often colonial, cultures” (Garraway, 2017, p. 73). Emergent; identity; fluid and open ended by nature.
Gayatri Spivak (1990, 1992, 1999)	Post colonial writer (English, 2005, p.87);	“...attention to power structures, essentialism and inequality; they (Spivak & Khan) bring to the table a specific interest in race, diaspora, colonisation... interest in probing notions of the third space, hybridity, liminality and interstices ; an attempt to engage in more dynamic conversations of paradoxical and contradictory ways that identity has too often been coded” (English, 2005, p. 87).
Shahnaz Kahn (1998, 2000)	Women and gender studies; immigrants	Becoming <i>“To be in a space of always becoming”</i> (English, 2005, p. 91 citing Kahn, 2000, p. 129).
Edward W. Soja (1980)	Cultural geography	“Spaces made up of physical and social dimensions, but are also potentially transformed through the actions of people who inhabit them.” (Garraway (2017, describing Soja, 1980).
Helen Benzie (2015)	International students; postgraduate coursework	“...students may be in a third space, a liminal space where they engage in a complex process of becoming....required to negotiate a world shaped by different, and often conflicting discourses” (Benzie, 2015).
Leona, M. English (2005)	Social justice; power structures, essentialism; inequity; international adult education; identity, post colonialism; local and global contexts.	Draws on Bhabha, Spivak and Khan; Third space qualities- hybridity, liminality and interstices “... the third space practitioner subverts the old by using it in a particular way.” (English, 2005, p. 90) Positions “... radical third space position as a standpoint for social justice....” (English, 2005, p.86) “... the capacity to act and be as third-space practitioner who pushes the existing boundaries...and resists polarization, binaries and labels” (2005, p.86).
Tracey Bretag (2006)	International student education	“...possibility for a negotiated re-imagining of cultural identity” (2006). Transformation rather than transmission.
A. Liddicoat, C. Crozet & J. Lo Bianco (1999)	Education	Understanding cultural space in language education classroom and more generally in higher education” (Benzie, 2015, p. 20). “...a hybrid space” (Briguglio, 2014, p. 28 referring to Lo Bianco et al 1999).
Celia Whitchurch (2008)	Professional staff identity; blended roles with academic domains.	Blurring boundaries; fluidity of identity; moving laterally across boundaries to create new professional spaces, knowledges and relationships.
Carmela Briguglio (2014)	Higher Education; interdisciplinary collaboration /	“...a space where academics can come together to explore teaching and learning ideas to create new ideas, strategies and activities that would be difficult, if not impossible for each to create in their own ‘space... refers to room for interdisciplinary (ID) collaboration and its concrete and positive results in terms of teaching and learning” (Briguglio, 2014, p. 28).
J. Lo Bianco et al. 1999; Gutierrez 2008; Kramsch 2009.	Education; intercultural interactions	“...refers to the ‘third place or space as a point of merger of two or more realities, which create a third reality” (Briguglio, 2014). A dialectic exchange.

Helen Benzie

- ... *third space, a liminal space, where they (International students) engage in a complex process of **becoming** (2005).*
- ... *sees them (international students) in an **in-between space**, having completed study in their home country and not yet fully inducted into an Australian higher education institution (2005).*
- *Traces Bhabha's third space ideas from **intercultural situations** most often with **immigrants** via Khan (1998) or **intercultural workers** through English (2005), to **education** (Bretag, 2006; Kramsch, 1999, 2006; Leask, 2004; Liddicoat, Crozet & LoBianco, 1999; Moje et al. 2004).*
- Contradictions promote discussion and further research.

Tracey Bretag

The third space refers to:

- Reimagining traditional teacher-student relationship.
- *The construction and reconstruction of identity, to the fluidity of space, to the space where identity is not fixed... [It] is where we negotiate identity and become neither this nor that but our own. 'Third' is used to denote the place where negotiation takes place, where identity is constructed and reconstructed, where life in all its ambiguity is played out (Bretag, 2006, quoting English, 2002).*
- Mutual development: *It is a matter of mutual transformation rather than transmission...(Bretag, 2006).*

Leona English

Practitioners of every sort –

- intuitive practitioners (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000);
 - deliberative practitioners (Forester, 1999);
 - practitioner-researchers (Jarvis, 1999);
 - open space practitioners (Owen, 1992);
 - reflective practitioners (Schon, 1983);
 - contemplative practitioners (Miller, 1994)
-
- *The third space practitioner pushes boundaries... resists polarization, binaries and labels...*

Third space: Key qualities

Liminal, ambiguous space, one that denotes becoming, in between, change, hybridity, power, emergence and dialectical exchange or processes, fluidity of space where identity is not fixed.

Transcendence and transformation (rather than transmission).

Tacit dimensions (Polanyi, 1966, 2009; Jarvis 2007).

'Third spaces' in the creative arts

Creative Project

- Core focus of the PLR
- May build on, contribute and or critique knowledge in the field, (or multiple fields) through the creation, process, production, reflections related to one or more aspects of the technical, artistic or professional practice.
- The project may take the form of an animation, an exhibition, a film, a dance production, sound work or software design.
- It may be multiplatform, multidisciplinary, and /or collaborative if relevant to the practice-led inquiry.

Bridging practices

- Exploration
- Transformation
- Developing a sense of agency and identity
- Integrated reflection
- Emergent
- Becoming
- In-between
- Hybrid
- Liminal
- Tacit

Writing: Exegesis

- Connect theory with practice
- Illuminate the practice through writing
- Provide evidence of the practice
- Make clear statements about the relationship between theoretical, technical, socio-political and /or cultural frameworks
- Methodological frameworks selected that contribute to creating the project
- Reflect and reflexivity
- Explain and explore the technical and or conceptual elements of the project thus grounding the project in the broader field of literature, art practitioners and art practices.

3. Practitioner case study scenarios

a) International student cohort

- 7 International students
- Master of Creative Art:
Performance / comedy; film; animation; photography; visual art – drawing installation and multimedia
- 2nd year
- International cohort: Turkey, China, Peru, Japan
- Practice-led research methodology:
 1. Creative artifact: equivalent to 16,000 words (80%) +
 2. Exegesis: 4,000 words (20%).

Student Demographics

Title of the Exegeses and their visual projects

Name	Age	Gender	Nationality	Exegesis Title	Art Practice
1. Christine	Mid to late 20's	F	Thailand	<i>Production Blueprint.</i>	Multimedia; exhibition
1. Carmel	Mid to late 20's	F	Japan	<i>Wabi-Sabi and Zen philosophy in contemporary visual arts.</i>	Photographer; exhibition
1. Jennifer	Mid to late 20's	F	China	<i>Observing the female international student experience.</i>	Drawing / installation; exhibition
1. Bernadette	Mid to late 20's	F	Turkey	<i>The effectiveness of personal vs traditional filmmaking styles to explore the idea of psychological barriers.</i>	Filmmaker Comparing traditional and experimental filmmaking techniques.
1. Nathan	Mid to late 20's	M	Peru	<i>How to make a cinematic film that is directed towards social and political arenas.</i>	Filmmaker Exploring the student experience
1. Frederick	Mid to late 20's	M	China	<i>Steampunk aesthetic and redemption.</i>	Animator; 3 min animation
1. Thomas	Mid to late 20's	M	China	<i>Emotion express.</i>	Comedian; Situation comedy

*Student names have been changed.

3b) Practice-Led Research (PLR): Methodologies in the creative arts

- What is it about PLR that is different from other research methods?
- Recognizing 'third space' qualities such as **Emergence, discovery, in-between, becoming....**
- *Liminal* and *tacit* spaces of art practice and art writing in academia.

3b. Comparison of qualitative, quantitative and practice-led research methods

Quantitative	Qualitative	Practice-Led Research
Assumptions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facts and data have objective reality Variables can be measured and identified Viewed from an outsider's perspective Innovative, yet historically constructed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reality is socially constructed Variables complex, interwoven and difficult to measure Events viewed from an informant's or other specified perspective Dynamic quality to life, often context dependent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reality is personally and creatively constructed Variables complex, interwoven and difficult to measure Events viewed from an informant's perspective Dynamic, interactive and innovative quality to life.
Outcomes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prediction Generalization Causal Explanation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretation Contextualization Understanding the perspective of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A creative artifact, theorized practice Contextualization of practice Understanding the perspective of self and others.
Method		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing and measuring- collection of numerical data Commences with a hypothesis and a theory Characterized by manipulation and control Deductive and experimental (from the general to the particular) Statistical analysis Statistical reporting Planned and predetermined method Objective representation and discussion of results Third person impersonal writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are many qualitative methods Commences with a research situation. Characterized by emergence and portrayal Inductive and naturalistic (from the particular to the general) Data emerging from the research process – theory arising from analysis of data or recognised as implicit in the data The method may also be emergent Interpretative discussion of results – hypothesizing Third and first person writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arising from, and predetermined by creative practice Commences with a problem Characterized by emergence, construction and individual expression Inductive Data emerging from the practice Theorizing of practice is emergent and often dependent on practice Method may be determined by emerging practice or pre-planned Reflective discussion of practice within the context of theory – hypothesizing and foreshadowing of future practice or new propositions Third and first person writing – sometimes personal
Role of the researcher		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researcher applies designed and formal instruments Endeavours to be detached Objective approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researcher is engaged directly in the research process Researcher being part of the research process, that is, the data is collected using participant observation. Acknowledges role on the research process Object and subjective elements in the approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researcher's experience is relevant to the research process and acknowledged. Researcher engages in reflection on own practice which is situated within the theories and practices of others.
Review of the literature		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research situated in existing theory and practices before the research begins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodology is situated within existing theory Emerging knowledge is situated within existing theory as research develops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice may be initially situated within personal and other existing practices Emergent knowledge is situated within existing theory and practices as research develops.

3c) Exegesis: Writing in the creative arts

Bridging context, artifact and process

- Methods
- Historically *hermetically sealed* (Jarvis, 2007).
- Process is often **repetitive, mundane, trial and error**, rather than revelatory, sublime.
- View from the inside; construct a dialogue
- Tacit
- Importance of self reflection so that theory and practice can be viewed as *mutually constitutive and dialectically related* (Jarvis, 2007; Carr, 1986).

3d) Communication: Relationship between Academics, Supervisors, Students and LLAs.

Evolving and becoming:

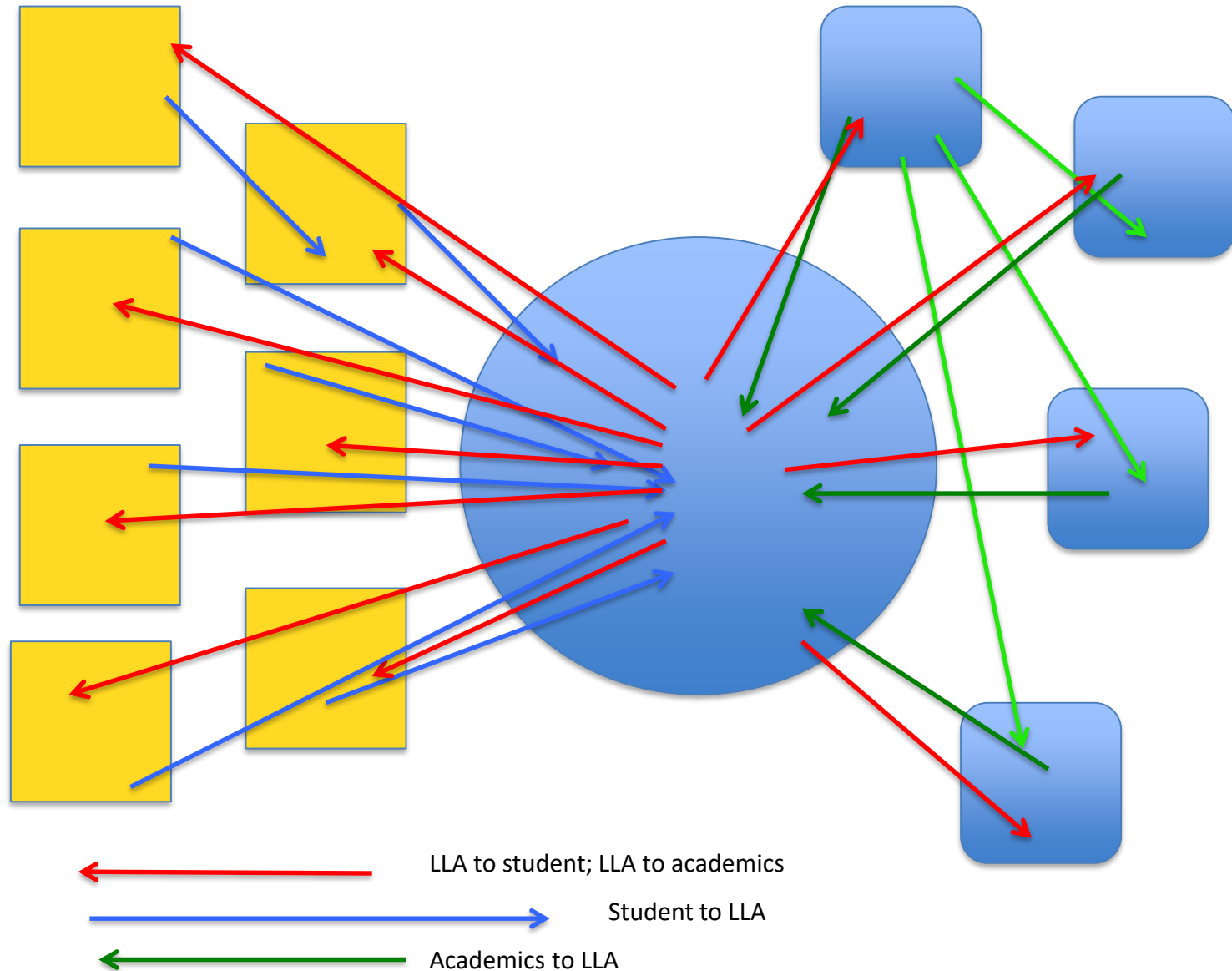
“To be in a space of always becoming” (Kahn, 2000).

This is true for the communication process and ongoing relationship between all 4 parties.

3e) The LLA practitioner's practice:
supporting the transformative process
across these domains.

My experience...

Practitioner experience



4. Conclusion: Emergent themes

1. Becoming more engaged: hybrid situations; change your principles (English, Bhabha).
 2. *“The third-space practitioner subverts the old by using it in a particular way....”* (English)
 3. Emergent: *“to be in place of always becoming”* (Kahn).
Exegesis, PLR, Students, Academics and LA.
-
1. Third space strategy of critical self-reflexivity (English, 2005 p. 93; Jarvis, 2007, p.204)
 2. The exegesis as a reflection of empowerment

4. Conclusion

Outcomes and Recommendations for *the future*

RQ. How can ‘the third space’ paradigm, help frame our understandings of the multiple parties involved in the experience of writing the MCA exegesis?

Third space interventions:

Continue to develop communication strategies with academics, students and wider university audience to:

- Share an awareness of third space qualities to enhance common goals, *mutual understandings* and early support interventions, especially with academics, local and international students.
- Identify writing as important constituent in developing practitioner identity.

Develop writing resources that target:

- Writing in the creative arts – artist interviews and writing snapshots about their practice.
- Being a ‘critically reflective practitioner’ in the creative arts – develop question and answer responses; prompts that stimulate an appreciation of subjective experience with art objects and individual practices.
- Develop plain language resources that explain the emergent nature of PLR alongside other paradigms, so students understand how they might be situated.

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