Author address

Katja Frimberger, PhD, Lecturer in Theatre, Department of Arts and Humanities, Brunel University London, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH, United Kingdom, Tel. +44 (0) 1895 268710, Email: Katja.Frimberger@brunel.ac.uk

Title

'Struggling with the word strange my hands have been burned many times':

Mapping a migratory research aesthetics in arts-based research

Abstract

The following paper maps a migratory research aesthetic within four arts-based research workshops, which explored international students' intercultural 'strangeness' experiences. Using a neo-materialist framing, the article argues that an emphasis on social-aesthetic 'production' in social science research allows for a rhizomatic knowledge topography that accounts for the materially entangled nature of intercultural experience and prioritises relationship-building, collective learning experiences and aesthetic experimentation over the researcher's epistemological mastery of the topic. The article takes as examples two movements of multimodal translation in the drama workshops. 1) The first data example shows how a 'real' experience of sensory awkwardness - of burning your hands under British taps - triggered other performative modalities by research participants 2) The second data example shows how a more 'fictional' creative writing piece triggered a pragmatic discussion around street trash and 'real' problem-solving strategies. It is argued that a rhizomatic knowledge production in arts-based research necessarily oscillates: between semiotic and embodied modalities, individual and collective experience, as well as between 'real' and 'fictional' modes of philosophising. Whatever the movement of 'translation' however, these acts of aesthetic making and philosophising around

intercultural 'strangeness' are always 'becoming' within a wider map of interactions between human and non-human agents.

Disclosure Statement: I do not have any financial interest or benefit arising from the direct application of my research.

Author bio: Katja Frimberger is Lecturer in Theatre at Brunel University London, Uxbridge.

Introduction

An experienced traveller
I had the privilege of being somewhere others haven't
Is it a glorified hobby?
The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined
Struggling with the word strange
My hands have been burned many times
But it is actually a door because it has a door number
It is near the library
A white door very high
There is no staircase.
(Marta)

It's the last drama workshop in a series of four arts-based sessions exploring international students' intercultural 'strangeness' experiences during the grey month of November in 2010, at the School of Education/the University of Glasgow in Scotland, UK. As part of this fourth and last session I set up four 'rehearsal stations' for my research participants. Each station contains material that we, a group of 10 international students (plus me) have produced over the last three weeks. The 'texts' in these stations include participants' creative writing pieces and selected transcriptions of conversations which emerged out of our various theatre-based activities. Amongst other things, we devised a body sculpture that drew on participant Jamal's act of philosophising about the nature of stranger-ness (Frimberger 2016b) and 'translated' Lin's participant account about an unexpected street encounter into a Brechtian playtext (Frimberger 2016a). Now in our last workshop, I ask participants to browse the 'data' that emerged out of our previous aesthetic engagement and re-work it performatively. They are invited to read, re-write and re-present their 'new texts' to a camera, which is set up in the rehearsal stations. Marta's 'montage text' (quoted above) is created out of multiple materials. Her re-representation devises new meaning out of the data material of transcriptions and writings, inviting her listeners to read between the 'metaphoric gaps' (Carney 2005: 57) of her poem. Her montage- making cannot be thought of a 'linear' representation of migratory experience, or an 'accurate' reflection of our preceding workshop activities and conversations. Her poem might be better described as a

'slippery kind of translation'; one that aesthetically resonates the collaborative, social acts that underpinned our research encounters without making these fully linguistically graspable. Marta's approach to the data is 'productive' rather than representational and full of 'dialectic ruptures' (Carney 2005: 29). Her poem-making manifests as an individual creative act but, at the same time, reference the wider map of our collective, arts-based engagement beyond her individual experience. Marta's poetic 'voice' is entangled in the groups' preceding performative makings and acts of philosophising around the nature of intercultural 'strangeness' experiences.

The performance workshops

Marta's poem is entangled in the three preceding performance workshops that took place in the School of Education's gym hall and the large seminar room with the wooden floors, which were peopled, for four Saturdays, by my core participant group and me: a female, German PhD researcher with a background in language and theatre pedagogy and, at the start of the project, a novice to field of 'research'. My participants were a group of 10 international PhD and Masters students, between 25 and 54 years old and from a diverse range of countries (Canada, Russia, Pakistan, Poland, China, Columbia, Saudi-Arabia, Greece, Germany). Each participant had personally responded to my university-wide invitation to the research project and, although all pursued their own research endeavours in the areas of film studies, political science and education, none of them were familiar with the format of the performance-based research workshop. Their reason for participating in my project can be roughly summarised in two main motivations: participants were either keen to engage in and learn more about arts-based research or wanted to meet other internationals to share their 'strangeness experiences' since coming to Glasgow (UK).

I introduced the performance pedagogy that underpinned the workshops slowly in order to make participants feel comfortable to participate in the workshops. Workshop one and two build the playful mode of engagement that were the basis of the research aesthetic, through improvisational theatre games (Spolin 1999) and creative writing tasks. Students were, for example, asked to take a picture of something that occurred 'strange' to them when they first came to Glasgow. The pictures were shared and taken as stimuli for a creative writing exercise - with 'I find strange that ...' as the starter sentence. All written pieces were read and discussed in small groups ,'reported back' to the whole group and 'responded to' through a series of simple body sculptures/tableaux.

Workshop three revisited some of the 'data' (the creative writing pieces, transcribed conversations) that were produced in the preceding workshops one and two. A participant's (Lyn's) verbatim account about an intercultural strangeness experience, when walking home from the supermarket one Sunday morning in Glasgow, was translated (by me) into a short playtext. I drew on German theatre maker Bertolt Brecht's (Brecht and Willet 1964) dialectical concept of 'estrangement', his 'not-but' acting technique (ibid: p. 184ff.) and rehearsal exercises (ibid: p. 129) to modify Lyn's original verbatim account. Her first-person intercultural narrative was turned by me into a dialogic text with three speaking parts, translated into third person narrative, and additionally 'estranged' by adding stage directions as well as rhythmic and spatial estrangement effects (Frimberger 2016a: 10). The dialectical aesthetic engagement with Lyn's intercultural narrative, through my treatment of the text and its subsequent performance by three participants, opened a space for the group's collective, embodied reflection on the affective and visceral dimensions of intercultural experience as well as aesthetic concerns about the play's development (ibid). In workshop four, the text was reworked based on participants' ideas for sound effects and music, video projections and stage arrangements.

Another verbatim intercultural account (Jamal's) was aesthetically 'transformed' throughout the workshops. Jamal's verbatim account, which I entitled 'some people are born strange', had

emerged in the post-creative writing discussion in workshop two. His account playfully philosophised around the 'possible relationship between identity and stranger-ness' (Frimberger 2016b:7). In workshop three and four, it was translated into a collectively enacted body sculpture, which drew on Brecht's somatic rehearsal exercises (Brecht and Willet 1964: 129) to play with the text's temporal and spatial expectations (Mumford 2009: 136) and enable reflection on the production of meaning associated with certain ways of reading and performing texts.

The group's and my continuous acts of aesthetic translation of Lyn's and Jamal's intercultural narratives into different creative modalities and materialities (data-playtext-body-sculpture-rehearsal), asserted the ontologically becoming nature of migratory experiences as an aesthetic and methodological guiding principle.

As a result, the rehearsal stations in workshop four, which are the focus for this paper, did not turn more 'representational' because they were the last in the series. Instead, all forms of arts-based engagement throughout the workshops, as exemplified in Lyn's and Jamal's 'translated' accounts, were regarded as modes of rehearsal and continuous (aesthetic) translation.

A migratory research aesthetic

My arts-based research thus drew on a variety of performative modalities (e.g. creative writing, drama), which privilege a 'productive' research mode and foreground 'the sensuous, the experiential and the participatory' (Lockford and Pelias 2004: 431) as the basis for explorations around intercultural strangeness experiences.

'Strangeness' in my workshops is thus not understood as a form of negative difference that allows for the categorisation and analysis of 'what is strange out there in the world'. Throughout my arts-based workshops 'strangeness' is conceived as an ongoing, ontological, aesthetic practice; one that 'produces, alters, transforms, creates and invents as an ongoing metamorphosis' (Braidotti, in an interview with Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012: 107).

In this philosophy of difference, difference [strangeness] is understood as a practice rather than defining identity in relation to another (Lenz Taguchi 2013: 712).

Such strangeness practice asserts a dialectical relationship between 'form' - the aesthetic representation of intercultural 'strangeness' experiences in the performative workshop modalities - and the 'content' of participants' shared migratory experiences. Thinking about migratory 'strangeness' experiences not as a topic but as an aesthetic and dialectical movement in my research, links ontological and aesthetic concerns through the continuous displacements of form and content (Bal 2007a, 2007b). Cultural theorist and video artist Mieke Bal terms this dialectical movement of migratory experience in art-making practice a 'migratory aesthetics' (Bal 2007a: 23). My research can be understood as 'migratory aesthetics' because its pedagogical and aesthetic forms of engagement were shaped through the various manifestations of contemporary, migratory experiences that my participants brought to (or discovered within) the workshops (Bal 2007a b). Dasgupta (2011: 91) adds that migratory aesthetics (e.g. in my evolving workshop format) acts as a 'social cipher' (Dasgupta 2011: 91) because it blurs the distinction between 'migration as content' and the 'migration of aesthetic form' (Bal and Hernández-Navarro 2011).

This dialectic movement between the ontological and the representational, also exemplified in Marta's poetic 'translation' of participants' 'data', aesthetically references the 'becoming' nature of human migration and intercultural experience. Such aesthetic 'strangeness' practice is not foremost concerned with 'identity politics' as representations of negative difference, but with aesthetically exploring 'communality as a process' (Dasgupta 2011: 113). Migratory aesthetics in my workshop practice then functions as an 'operative concept rather than a generic descriptor' (Bennett 2011: 118); it is not an analytical frame of analysis but applied as an aesthetic strategy in my 'lived' workshop space (ibid).

Two taps translations in the lived workshop space

(insert image 1a: a separate hot and cold water tap in the UK)

Workshop 1 and 2: We sit in a circle and look at the strangeness pictures that people brought. Pictures of umbrellas, rain, a pub, a postbox, coins, food and various images of street 'events' (cars, rubbish, street signs, ads) are displayed in the middle. Participants choose a picture that 'speaks to them' and take it as the stimuli for a 3 min. creative writing exercise. I took the picture of the 'two taps' in the School of Education's bathroom as my own visual/material example of strangeness experience. In the workshop, the picture is taken up by Areebah as a stimuli for her creative writing piece, in which she reports on her own domestic 'strangeness experience' with the two taps.

They still have two taps, I don't know why. I've been in Glasgow now for four years and I never asked why they use two taps. Actually, I faced that difficulty when I was in my previous flat. I had two taps in the kitchen. And honestly, I hated washing dishes, because I know I should use them both, so I moved from tap to tap (…) I have burned my hands many times (Areebah).

When sharing the 'two tap' experience in her group, Areebah's piece triggers another 'two tap' outrage, this time as a verbal comment by Amy who shared our (my, Areebah's) confusion about this 'strange' piece of British sanitary engineering.

I didn't write about the two taps but the two taps are just crazy. I don't understand the two taps. It's one thing in the old times when people didn't know but now, they refurbished the bathroom on the second floor and they are really nice but: two taps? (Amy)

The lively chain of intra-actions and translations triggered by the 'two taps' - from material form, to visual representation, to writing and verbal commentary - revealed the meaning-making agency of non-human agents (for example of objects, like the two taps) in our workshop space.

The meaning-making agency of matter

In a post-human orientation to research, neomaterialist scholars (e.g. Hickey-Moody and Page 2016; Barad 2003; Dophijn and van der Tuin 2012; MacLure 2013; Martin & Kamberelis, 2013; St. Pierre, 2013; St. Pierre and Lather 2013) emphasise the anti-hierarchical, proliferating structure of knowledge in which human agents and matter produce meaning in intra-action (Barad 2003: 814). Due to the 'materially entangled' (Lather 2013: 630) nature of knowledge production, as shown in my 'two tap' example, language, bodies, objects and the environment are seen as involved in a constant, meaning-making process.

There are no 'sovereign' individuals who act upon the world; there are only bodies that are produced through their contexts and connections with the world.
(…)
Matter teaches us through resisting dominant discourses showing us new ways of being. Bodies resist dominant modes of positionings, political acts defy government rule, sexuality exceeds legal frameworks – resistant matter shows us the limits of the world as we know it, and prompt us to shift these limits (Hickey-Moody and Page 2016: 4 - 5)

New materialists urge us to rethink traditional notions of validity, which presuppose an accordance of reality and language-based description, in light of a world in which language cannot be 'dis-entangled' from its material processes of emergence. Following from such neomaterial positioning, my arts-based research workshops then sought to enable a research environment that methodologically accounted for the 'materially entangled' and 'becoming' nature of intercultural experience.

(…)
Workshop 4: Jamal browses the transcribed conversations and the groups' creative writing pieces. Areebahs' writing piece resonates his own strangeness experience of washing his hands under

British taps. He decides to re-read Areebah's two-taps-piece for the camera which is set up in the 'rehearsal station'.

 (insert audio clip 2a)

They still have two taps, I don't know why. I've been in Glasgow now for four years and I never asked why they use two taps. Actually, I faced that difficulty when I was in my previous flat. I had two taps in the kitchen. And honestly, I hated washing dishes, because I know I should use them both, so I moved from tap to tap (…) I have burned my hands many times.

Jamal reads Areebah's piece to the group inserting his own 'dialectical ruptures' (Carney 2005: 29). It causes Jamal difficulty to articulate the word 'tap' and he is amused about the group's effort (off and on camera) to teach him how to pronounce 'properly'. Whilst re-reading Areebah's writing piece, Jamal carefully articulates the word 'tap', performing his 'linguistic efforts' for the enjoyment of the group, rather than presenting the text as an 'aesthetic whole' for the recording camera. His reading gesture of distinct pronunciation becomes a 'social cipher' (Dasgupta 2011: 91). It playfully references Jamal's social efforts to 'please' his self-proclaimed 'teachers' as well as hints at the many social-aesthetic acts that preceded this specific encounter. His playful re-reading testifies to the trust that has developed in the group: 'getting it wrong' – 'trying' – 'rehearsing-' 'playing' are the social ciphers of our migratory research aesthetic (Dasgupta 2011: 91). Jamal's overemphasis of the word 'tap' when re-presenting the text is not a conscious 'artistic' decision on his part, but evolves from the social context of the rehearsal situation. Jamal inquired about the pronunciation of the word 'tap' and was eagerly taught by us (the group) how to 'improve' his reading performance on the spot. This spontaneous teaching situation did not however emerge within a hierarchical teacher/researcher-learner set-up, in which Jamal might have felt patronised, nervous or self-conscious about his linguistic performance. His playful negotiation of the teaching situation, marked by his estranged reading of Areebah's text, references the research's 'operational' playful discursive structures. Jamal embraces his learner

role joyfully whilst reading the text and 'naturally' integrates this linguistic rehearsal moment as a 'dialectical' artistic device.

Rhizomatic validity

'Rhizomes are ever-growing horizontal networks of connections
among heterogeneous nodes of discursive and material force (Martin
and Kamberelis 2013: 670).

Jamal's re-reading of Arrebah's written piece asserts the 'rhizomatic nature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) of intercultural strangeness knowledge, which cannot be conceptually or linguistically dis-entangled from its embodied, affective materiality and process of emergence in specific environments. In my workshop example, such knowledge production involved multiple processes of translating the embodied and material experience of *washing your hands under a hot and cold water tap in the UK:* from materiality to visual representation, to writing, to reading and re-reading. Given such rhizomatic emergence, validity criteria for my research need to be based on the postmodern rejection of stable truths. In other words, knowledge about intercultural strangeness experiences cannot be fitted easily into the post-positivist categories of content analysis (Newman and Benz 1998). Intercultural strangeness knowledge emerges from a continuous process of intra-action (Barad 2003) and material, embodied translation and thus becomes through 'the crossings, the overlaps, the meanings with no deep roots' (Lather 1993, 58) rather than from an act of 'deep' interpretation. Such affirmative focus on 'difference' foregrounds 'transgressive forms of validity' in research (Lather 1993, 2009a, 2009b, 2013) that question a positivist scientific ethos and instead value participants and researchers' bodies and the agency of materiality as significant sites of dialogue.

(...)

Workshop 4: Listening to Jamal's re-reading of Areebah's text reminded me why I had taken the picture of the two taps and brought it to workshop 1 in the first place: *I had burned hands under the hot tap, endured freezing-cold hands using the blue tap only; performed rapid attempts at washing my soaped-up hands to avoid burning etc. A plethora of memories triggered by this simple but 'strange' phenomenon of British sanitary engineering!*

'Migration stories, Ahmed (2000: 92) reminds us, are 'skin memories': memories that are felt on the skin'. Inspired by Jamal's re-reading performance, I decided to acknowledge the embodied nature of our shared migratory experience by re-reading Amy's verbal 'outrage' (workshop 2) but emotionally heighten her initial, impassioned reaction to Areebah's domestic strangeness experience. I read it as my own playful 'outrage' and expression of solidarity with the group - performatively remembering the many times all of us had burned our hands under British taps - *when washing the dishes, washing our hands, washing for prayer.*

(...)

(insert audio clip 2b)

I didn't write about the two taps but the two taps are just crazy. I don't understand the two taps. It's one thing in the old times when people didn't know but now, they refurbished the bathroom on the second floor and they are really nice but: two taps???

My performative response to our shared, skin-felt migratory experience asserts a productive, affirmative focus on strangeness. By charting the various moments of embodied translation through workshop vignettes, text, image and audio-based data and reflections, I seek to curate an epistemological uncertainty that can account for our - the participants' and my - state of constant ontological becoming in intercultural experience.

An experienced traveller
I had the privilege of being somewhere others haven't
Is it a glorified hobby?
The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined
Struggling with the word strange
My hands have been burned many times
But it is actually a door because it has a door number
It is near the library
A white door very high
There is no staircase. (Marta)

Marta's montage poem hereby marks another productive approach to writing *about* and *through* strangeness experience. Bringing into dialogue various fragments of data in workshop four, Marta embeds the singular material experience (of burning your hands under British taps) within the plethora of other material experiences that were touched on throughout the workshops: *the luxury of free movement, the surprise of 'unusual' architectural features and the problem of 'fly-tipping' on the streets.* By re-working Areebah's embodied skin memory (burning your hands) as a textual, poetic metaphor, the poem comments beyond a singular experience, and aesthetically marks the very ambiguity and artifice inherent in the act of making sense of 'strangeness experiences': *'Struggling with the word strange, my hands have been burned many times'* (Marta). Instead of re-reading an original text using somatic elements, as Jamal and I had done, Marta quotes a variety of texts and devises 'metaphoric gaps' in writing (Carney 2005, 57). Her montage text blurs the real-fictional distinction and positions its meaning within the groups' preceding collective creative acts and shared migratory experiences.

Mixing real and fictional

Materiality as performance can be applied as a method that offers a way of stepping back from the real without losing sight of it and hence imagining alternatives that are rooted in, but not limited to, the present. (...) The transformative potential of materiality - blurs distinction between the real and imagined, practice and representation. (Sachs Olsen 2016: 37- 42)

Marta's material translation process moves through and mixes real and fictional and blurs the boundaries between 'real, imagined, practice and representation' (Sachs Olsen 2016: 37). Her poem allows a fresh look at the complex, contradictory reality of strangeness experience (e.g. as luxury *and* pain). 'The real must be fictionalised in order to be thought', Rancière (2004: 34) states and designates the fictional to the empirical realm of reality (ibid: 31).

Commodities must be torn out of their trivial appearances, made into phantasmagoric objects in order to be interpreted as the expression of society's contradictions. (ibid: 30)

By referring to Marx's (1999) theory of fetishism, Rancière (2004), not unlike Brecht's (Brecht and Willet 1964) Marx-inspired 'epic' or 'dialectical' theatre (Mumford 2009), envisions a creative practice that aesthetically draws attention to what Law (2009: 241) calls 'the hinterland of [discriminatory] practices' that can underlie everyday representations (in theatre, in society). Seemingly 'neutral' societal arrangements (in relation to class, culture, gender, race, language) and assumed 'universal values' (e.g. in codes of research or work practices) are revealed in their contradictions and opened out for scrutiny and ideally change. In our dialectical mode of de-familiarising everyday strangeness experiences in the workshop space – through Marta's poem and our collective two tap translations - the contested nature of 'talking about', researching', and 'representing' intercultural strangeness experiences is manifested aesthetically.

By mapping the workshops' material translation processes as performances which move, like Marta's poem, in and out of the realm of fiction, I chart a knowledge topography that does not presuppose my getting a (linguistic/epistemological) grip on the reality of intercultural experience. My 'productive' researcher stance decidedly recognises that I am part of the performance of translation. In other words, my researcher subjectivity is just one material node on the research map and is embedded in its wider, intra-active working. As a result, I cannot stand outside of this wider map to curate data's 'deeper meaning' but am limited by my own 'Sinnfeld' [area of sense perception] (Stegemann 2015: 59). My language *about* and epistemological mastery *of* intercultural experience must necessarily slip away (St. Pierre 2013: 651) and all I can do is to continue to chart data's flat, performative movement across modalities and materialities in the workshops to maybe find meaning in the emerging cracks, ruptures and overlaps (Lather 2009a,b).

Collective acts of philosophising around strangeness

Workshop 1 (again): Sonja sits in the circle with the other participants and looks at the strangeness pictures on the floor. Her image shows a street trash tableaux which she takes, together with my starter sentence 'I find strange that …', as the starting point for her poetic writing:

(insert image 1b)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sonja writes intuitively, in a stream of consciousness. She lets the flow of the writing dictate the rhythm of the piece. The sentence 'I find it strange' is repeated like a mantra or the chorus of a song that gives the piece its pensive tenor. It dips in and out the realm of fiction - *'the pigeon that went shopping for a hat'* - and even her seemingly factual reflections on the *'uncomfortable silence that filled the room'* and 'the *different person that acts in a different way in similar circumstances'* reflect something lyrical and dream-like. Sonja's piece reflects, through its cadence and fictional-style, the very ambiguity of describing 'strangeness'. At the same time however, her poetic text opens out these strangeness experiences for further philosophising. Sonja writes in response to the picture she brought. It is an intra-action with the objects and environment depicted in it: a green armchair on the streets of Glasgow, the tree standing next to it covered in toilet paper. The convergence of wastefulness and beauty, embodied in the reality of the big, green armchair on the street and the toilet paper-covered tree, is a starting point for Sonja's poetic philosophising about the 'strange beauty of space' as well as 'environmental concerns'. The presence of the material agents (sofa, tree, toilet paper, drawer) and their 'strange'

aesthetic composition in the open air, triggers Sonja's reflection. *Can something ugly and wasteful – something as 'ridiculous' as a toilet-covered tree - be beautiful?*

(…)

After Sonja has finished her writing, she sits back in the circle. Participants read their individual pieces to each other. Several of the pictures people brought had depicted rubbish on the streets (street trash). Sonja's poetic writing triggers the group's reflection about this shared strangeness experience. Amy is the first to comment on the good quality of 'street furniture' expressing her regret about not being able to pick up the disregarded armchair depicted in Sonja's picture.

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

Marta: That's my culture shock, the most shocking thing I find every day. People just throwing things away that are perfectly good. They just leave them in the rain.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sonja: I know, it is hard to know.

Marta: Anyway, sorry.

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

Marta: Yeah.

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

Sonja's individual act of poetic writing around her encounter with the tableaux of street trash, invited other, collective acts of philosophising around the practices and ethics of 'fly-tipping' on Glasgow's streets. The fictionality of Sonja's poetic piece, written in a language that seems to be constantly 'slipping away' (St. Pierre 2013, 651), led to a rhizomatic knowledge production, in which the 'real' (problem of fly-tipping) could be addressed collectively. Amy and Marta, stimulated by Sonja's piece, share their own personal experiences, opinions and concrete problem-solving ideas in relation to the 'fly-tipping' problem. Sonja's poetic writing has allowed them to take a fresh look at the familiar, everyday presence of disregarded furniture and clothing on their streets. It evoked the group's playful mode of philosophising around possible, strategic actions to take in the real world. *How do you ethically salvage clothes and furniture that are still perfectly good but discarded on the streets?*

Conclusion

By mapping the movement of intra-actions in the workshop practice through the 'two taps' and 'fly-tipping' performative translations, I have shown how the production of meaning in my research is deeply embedded in its specific modes of social-aesthetic-material emergence. Dependent on the moment of intra-action, translation moved across modalities (writing, reading, conversation) and materialities (creative writing, verbal outrage, montage poem) and oscillated between real and fictional as well as individual and collective experience. Areebah's 'two taps' piece as a more concrete, 'real' experience of sensory awkwardness was moved into the realm of 'fiction' through Jamal's performance and Marta's montage poem. Sonja's writing piece, as a more

poetic, fictional piece, and triggered by a concrete fly-tipping encounter on the street, led to concrete, collective problem-solving ideas. Regardless of the material movement of the translation, the emerging acts of philosophising about intercultural experience across modalities, were always rhizomatic. A migratory research aesthetic thus operated within the concrete social-aesthetic-material discursive structures of the workshops and is at the same time embedded in, and a reference to, the wider *entangled* and *becoming* nature of our (intercultural) being in the world: as human beings in our bodies, in intra-action with other bodies and minds and the objects and environments that surround us. 'Ontology is [indeed] hard to think' (St. Pierre 2013, 650) and even harder to represent. With the aim to chart the rhizomatic knowledge topography of four arts-based workshops, I interwove workshop vignettes, participants' writings, image and audiodata with theoretical reflections on migratory aesthetics and neomaterialism.

My act of mapping the 'two taps' performance(s), for example, reveals the spatial, corporeal and temporal dimensions of a migratory aesthetics in everyday lived spaces (the kitchen, the bathroom, the workshop space). Migratory aesthetics in everyday spaces bodily 'becomes' in intra-action between human and non-human agents (spatial). It is a process of becoming that does not only require time (temporal) but also a person's continuous bodily practice (corporeal) in order to make such sensory 'strangeness' experienced 'workable' in everyday life. The sensory experience of burning your hands under a British water tap is of course a tolerable sensory irritation, easily 'negotiated' as part of a person's everyday bodily practice. Such specific, mundane example of material entanglement however also points towards wider, ethical questions.

Injury must at some point be understood individually because pain, like all forms of sentience, is experienced within, 'happens' within the body of the individual. (Scarry 1985, 2)

If conceptual thinking is always entangled in individual bodily sensations and specific environments, our small, specific, everyday actions matter. How do one's acts of 'structuring' and 'intervening' in the world in research and pedagogy impact on the individual's body?

Scarry (1985) poignantly reminds us that structures of war and violence are firmly based on the denial of this link between the conceptual and strategic and the concrete experience of pain in the individual's body.

An experienced traveller
I had the privilege of being somewhere others haven't
Is it a glorified hobby?
The hard thing is to catch it before it's ruined
Struggling with the word strange
My hands have been burned many times
But it is actually a door because it has a door number
It is near the library
A white door very high
There is no staircase. (Marta)

References

Ahmed, Sara. 2000. *Strange encounters: Embodied others in postcoloniality*, London: Routledge.

Atkinson, Elizabeth. 2004. "The postmodern prism: fracturing certainty in educational research", in Swann, J. & Prat, J. (eds), *Educational Research in Practice: Making Sense of Methodology*, London, New York: Continuum, pp. 35-51.

Bagley, Carl and Castro-Salazar,Ricardo. 2012. "Critical arts-based research in education: performing undocumented histories", *British Educational Research Journal*, 38(2), pp. 239-260.

Bal, Mieke and Hernández-Navarro, Miguel Á. 2011. (eds) *Art and Visibility in Migratory Culture*, New York: Rodopi.

Bal, Mieke. 2007a. "Lost in Space, Lost in the Library", in Durrant, Sam & Lord, Catherine. M., *Essays in Migratory Aesthetics: Cultural practices between Migration and Art-making*, Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, pp. 23-37.

Bal, Mieke. 2007b. "Translating translation", *Journal of Visual Culture,* 6(1), pp.109-124.

Barad, Karen. 2003. "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28(3), pp. 801-829.

Barnett, David. 2016. "Dialectics and the Brechtian Tradition", *Performance Research*, 21(3), pp. 6-15.

Bennett, Jill. 2011. "Migratory Aesthetics: Art and Politics beyond Identity", in Bal, Mieke and Hernández-Navarro, Miguel Á. *Art and Visibility in Migratory Culture*, New York: Rodopi, pp.109-127.

Brecht, Bertolt and Willett, John. (ed and trans).1964. *Brecht on theatre*, London, England: Methuen.

Carney, Sean. 2005. *Brecht and critical theory: dialectics and contemporary aesthetics,* London, New York: Routledge.

Deleuze, Giles, & Guattari, Felix.1987. *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia,* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dasgupta, Sudeep. 2011."The Aesthetics of Displacement and the Performance of Migration", in Bal, Mieke and Hernández-Navarro, Miguel Á. *Art and Visibility in Migratory Culture*, New York: Rodopi, pp.91-107.

Dolphijn, Rick & Iris van der Tuin, I. 2012. *New materialism: Interviews and Cartographies*, Michigan: Open Humanities Press.

Frimberger, Katja. 2016a. "A Brechtian theatre pedagogy in intercultural education research", (2016) *Journal of Languages and Intercultural Communication,* 16(2), pp. 130-147.

Frimberger, Katja. 2016b. "Some people are born strange: A Brechtian theatre pedagogy as philosophical ethnography", *Qualitative Inquiry 1-12*.

Hickey-Moodey, Anna and Page, Tara. 2016. *Arts, pedagogy and cultural resistance: new materialisms,* London, New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Lather, Patti. 2009b. "Getting lost: Social science and/as philosophy", *Educational Studies*, *45*, pp. 342-357.

Lather, Patti. 2009a. "Getting lost: Feminist efforts toward a double(d) science", *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies,* 30, pp. 222-230.

Lather, Patti. 2009b. "Getting lost: Social science and/ as philosophy", *Educational Studies*, 45, pp. 342-357.

Lather, Patti.1993. "Fertile obsessions: Validity after poststructuralism", *Sociology Quarterly*, 34, 673-693.

Law, John. 2009. "Seeing like a survey", *Cultural Sociology*, 3, pp. 239- 256.

Lenz Taguchi, Hillevi. 2013. "Images of thinking in feminist materialism: ontological divergences and the production of researcher subjectivities"*, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26, pp. 706-716.

Lockford, Lesa and Pelias, Ronald J. 2004. "Bodily Poeticizing in Theatrical Improvisation: A Typology of Performative Knowledge", *Theatre Topics*, 14(2), pp. 431-443.

MacLure, Maggie. 2013. "Researching without representation? Language and materiality in post-qualitative methodology"*, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26, pp. 658-667.

Martin, Adrian D. and George Kameberelis. 2013. "Mapping not tracing: qualitative educational research with political teeth", *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 26(6), pp. 668-679.

Newman, Isadore and Benz, Carolyn R. 1998. *Qualitative-Quantitative Research Methodology: Exploring the Interactive Continuum,* Carbondale, Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

Marx, Karl. 1999. *Capital*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mumford, Meg. 2009. *Bertolt Brecht,* London, England: Routledge.

Rancière, Jacques. 2004. *The Politics of Aesthetics*, London, New Delhi, New York: Bloomsbury.

Sachs Olsen, Cecilie. 2016. "Materiality as performance", *Performance research*, 21(3), pp. 37-46.

Scarry, Elaine. 1985. "Injury and the Structures of War", *Representations*, 10, pp. 1-51.

Spolin, Viola. 1999. *Improvisation for the theater* (3rd ed.), Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Stegemann, Bernd. 2015. *Lob des Realismus*, Berlin: Theater der Zeit.

St. Pierre, Elizabeth. 2013. "The posts continue: Becoming", *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26, pp. 646-657.

St. Pierre, Elizabeth and Lather, Patti. 2013. Post-qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 26(6). 629-633.

<u>Figure captions</u>

Image 1a/ Caption: My picture

Image 1b/Caption: Sonja's picture

Audio clip 2a/Caption: Jamal performs Areebah's text

Audio clip 2b/ Caption: Katja performs Amy's 'outrage'