"Let's massage the curriculum and have more swag"
Re-imagining Third Space in Workshops and Technical Spaces

Dr Tomasz John

University for the Creative Arts

Cross-cultural
communication skills
workshop with
technical teams

University
for the
Creative Arts

Exploring how technicians can work together to internationalise the Technical spaces to ensure good academic outcomes and positive Feedback from international students.

University for the Creative Arts

Technicians often deal with internationalization on the ground with no training
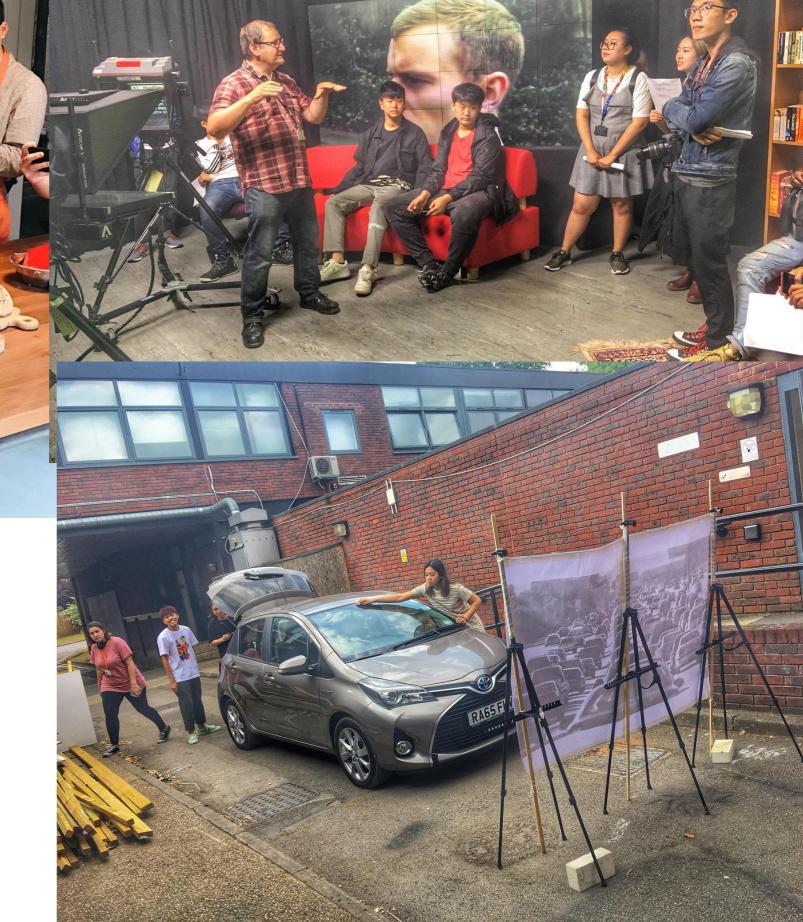
University for the Creative Arts

Teaching has become a key element of many technician roles and few would argue that technical instruction has become a critical part of the student learning experience (Savage, T; 2018)
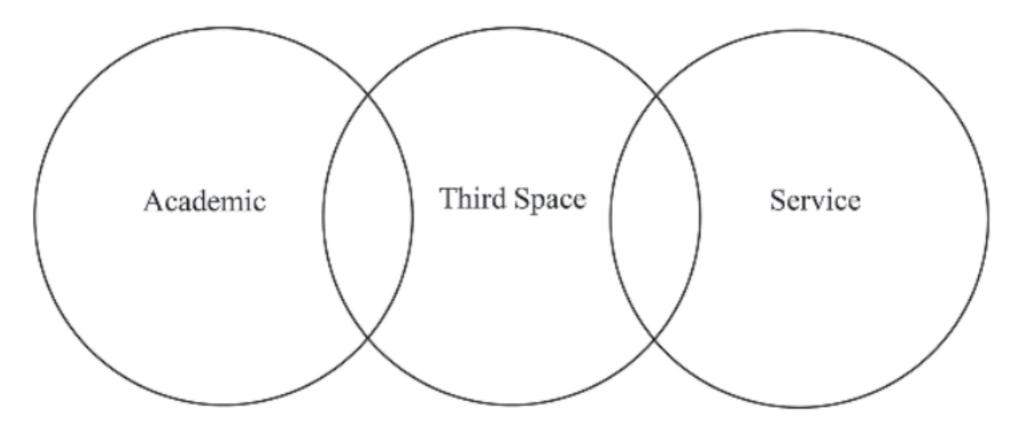
University for the Creative Arts

Figure 1: Whitchurch's third space.

The shifting boundaries between academic and technical camps are under-researched. Arguably most relevant is Whitchurch's concept of a 'third space' (Whitchurch, 2008) located between camps in which a new type of boundary-crossing hybrid HE worker resides.

UCA Internationalisation Strategy
in Wordcloud
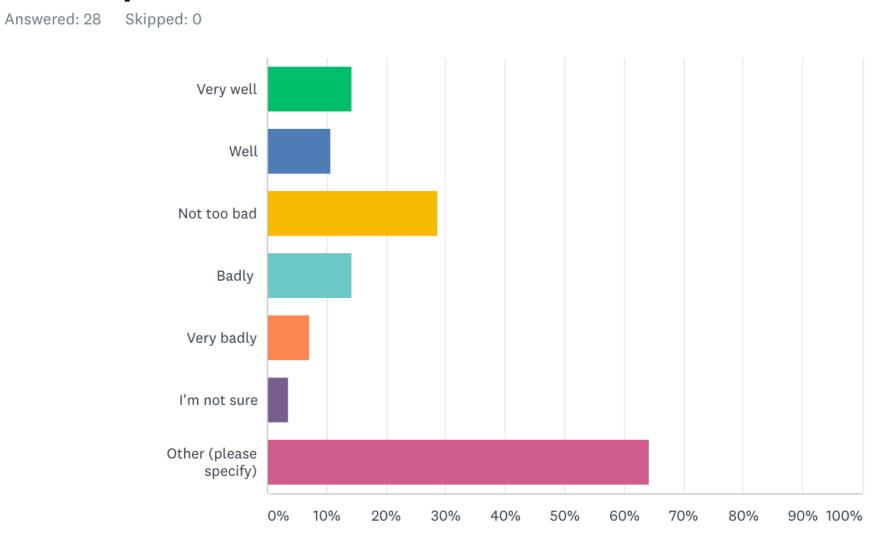

University
for the
Creative Arts

My ethnographic study: survey, focus groups, interactive workshops

Question 1: In your opinion, how do international students cope with the language of instruction in your workshops?

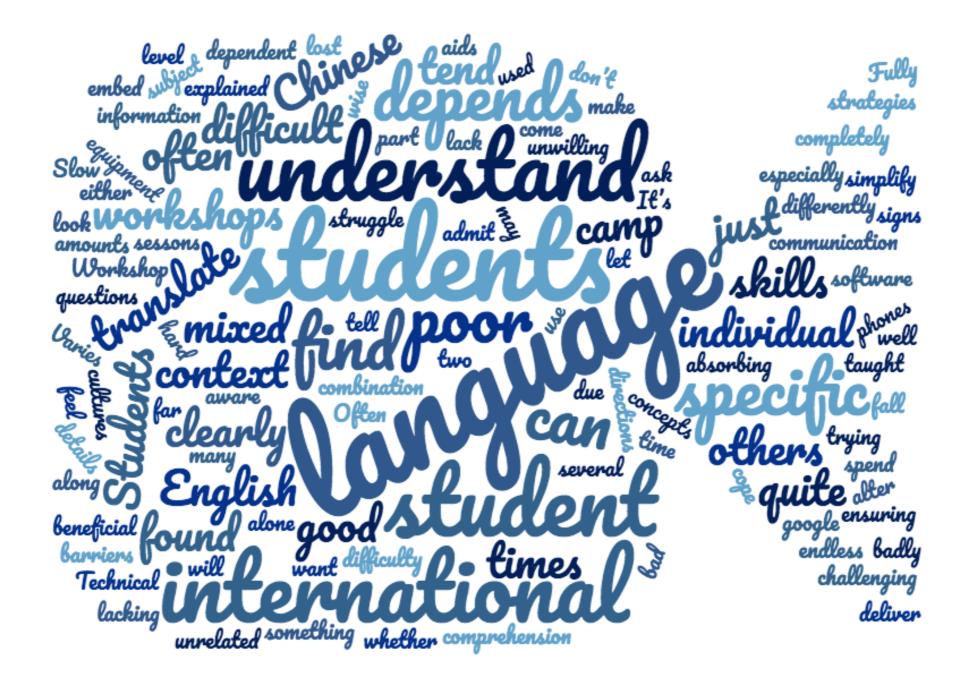**Question 2: Has working with international students added value to your work as a technician?**

Question 3: What strategies do you use to help students who do not speak English as their first language to maximize their learning experience?

Question 4: How could successful internationalisation of creative arts workshops be supported by the university?

University
for the
Creative Arts

Q1: In your opinion, how do international students cope with the language of instruction in your workshops?

Answered: 28   Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very well	14.29%	4
Well	10.71%	3
Not too bad	28.57%	8
Badly	14.29%	4
Very badly	7.14%	2
I'm not sure	3.57%	
Other (please specify)	Responses 64.29%	18
Total Respondents: 28		

University
for the
Creative Arts

University
for the
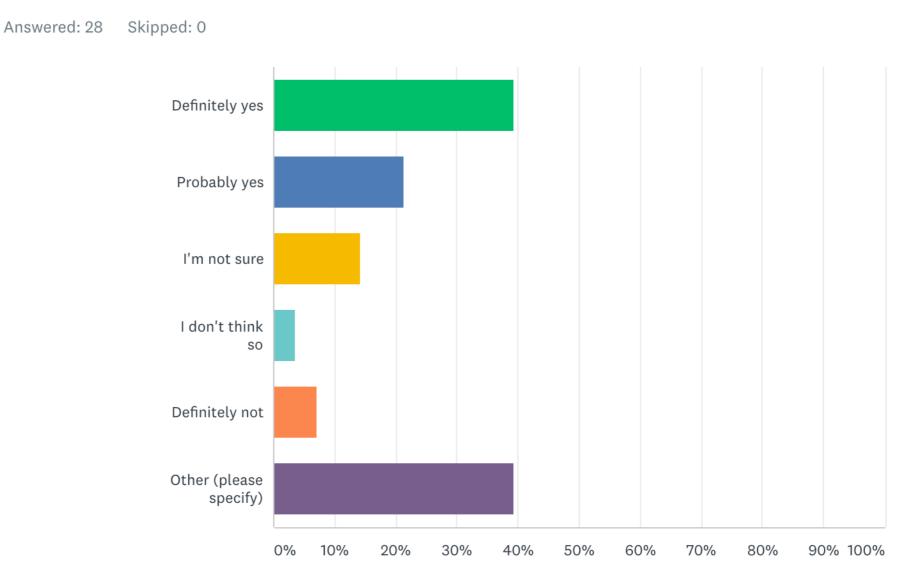Creative Arts

Technicians' transcribed Q1 responses in Wordcloud

"International students ability to cope with technical language appears to be very mixed. I feel that with language context is important and often in the workshops the context aids the understanding of process specific language"

"They tend not to make you aware if they do not understand"

University
for the
Creative Arts

Question 2: Has working with international students added value to your work as a technician?

Answered: 28   Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ Definitely yes		39.29%	11
▼ Probably yes		21.43%	6
▼ I'm not sure		14.29%	4
▼ I don't think so		3.57%	1
▼ Definitely not		7.14%	
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses	39.29%	1
Total Respondents: 28			

University
for the
Creative Arts

backgrounds aware Added upon definately often
Accommodating really practices
always difficult attached added
pedagogical difficulties much different lot role
methodologies make quite approach contrast
methods particularly Using try differently
point Working cache Rethinking
Demystifying differences specious though worked find terms used
efficacy approaches domestic value curriculum part
revise cultures types use now add provided
reflect time world students adds rethink encouraged
space polite read learnt induction manifestation various will
social better parts view resources mind teaching
utilised learn special far Yes support develop just
Challenging projects bit international embarrassed ensuring
benefit you're current
difference beliefs students/courses ideas opportunity
process self-worth broader inclusive methodology
way think handouts language enabled
Revisiting understanding working understand Japan
inclusivity Changing classes variation
existing aids practice

Technicians' transcribed Q2 responses in Wordcloud

University
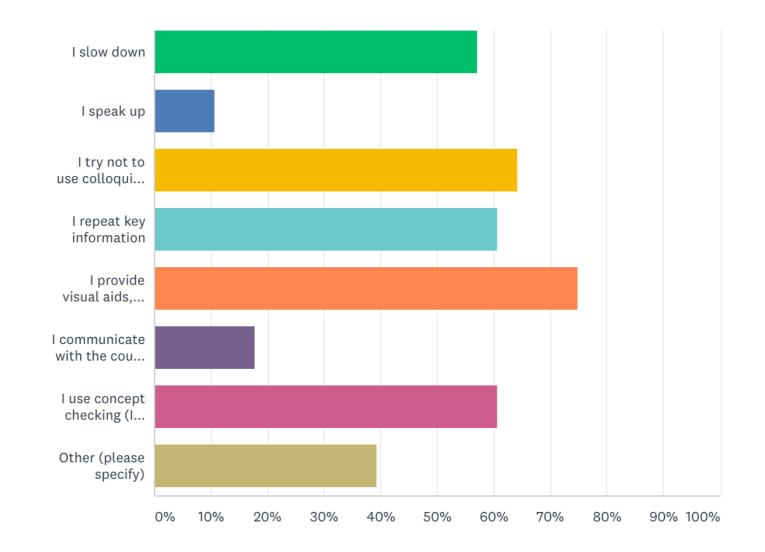for the
Creative Arts

"It's encouraged me to find ways to make my practice more inclusive, but more often classes add more difficulties than value"

"It has added variation, not value"

"Working with international students has provided the opportunity to reflect upon the efficacy of existing pedagogical resources utilised as part of the induction process. This aids in ensuring current methodologies are working with inclusivity in mind"

Question 3: What strategies do you use to help students who do not speak English as their first language to maximize their learning experience?

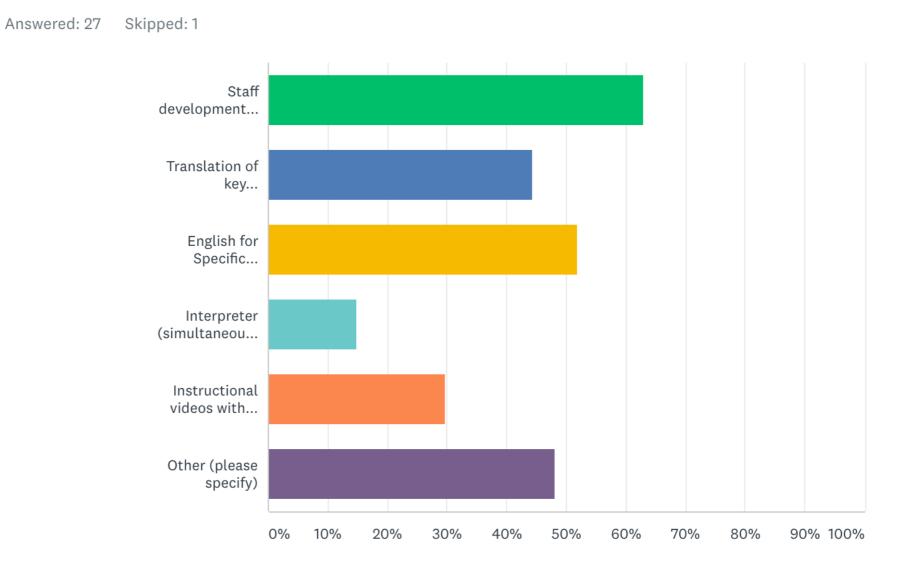| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I slow down	57.14%	16
I speak up	10.71%	3
I try not to use colloquial language and use simple English instead	64.29%	18
I repeat key information	60.71%	17
I provide visual aids, e.g. handouts, presentations, etc.	75.00%	21
I communicate with the course leader in advance to understand the needs of the students	17.86%	5
I use concept checking (I confirm students actively listen to my instructions)	60.71%	17
Other (please specify) Responses	39.29%	11

University
for the
Creative Arts

Technicians' transcribed Q3 responses in Wordcloud

University
for the
Creative Arts

"I try to speak slow and without using any big words. However this then comes across quite patronizing"

"I allow more time. Along side concept checking I talk with the group about what words mean, we all learn about each others language"

University
for the
Creative Arts

Question 4: How could successful internationalisation of creative arts workshops be supported by the university?

Answered: 27   Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼	Staff development (cross-cultural communication skills)	62.96%	17
▼	Translation of key information/instructions for international students	44.44%	12
▼	English for Specific Purposes sessions (language of instruction and interaction, key vocabulary) preceding the session in the workshop	51.85%	14
▼	Interpreter (simultaneous translation in workshops)	14.81%	4
▼	Instructional videos with English subtitles played at the beginning of the workshop session	29.63%	8
▼	Other (please specify) Responses	48.15%	13
Total Respondents: 27			

University
for the
Creative Arts

Technicians' transcribed Q4 responses in Wordcloud

University
for the
Creative Arts

"Stop letting in students that have such a poor level of English that it puts a massive burden on staff and fellow students on the course"

"a successful model of internationalisation for the university in addition to staff development could be the abolition of fees creating a truly even start point for any artist from anywhere"
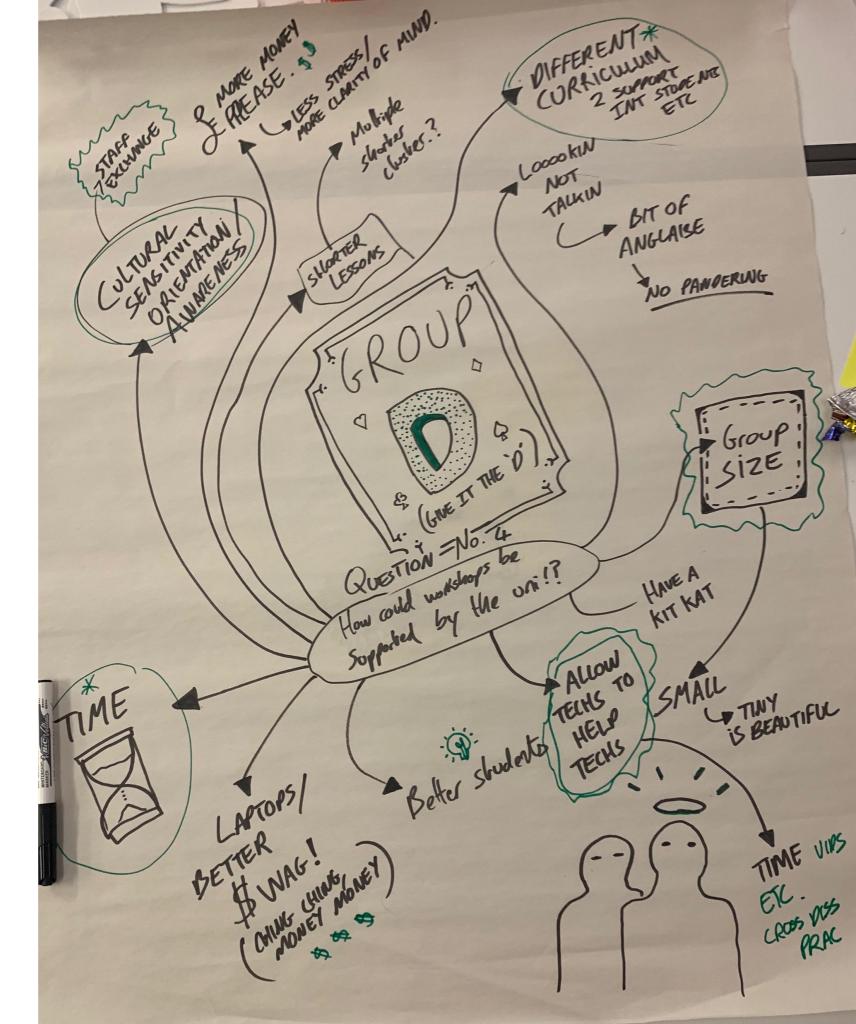
University
for the
Creative Arts

Summary

Technicians are more likely to engage with university staff management/development agendas, unlike academics who 'tend to be a culture of knowers rather than learners and for whom the benefits [of appraisal] are prioritized low' (McCaffery 2010)

While market forces, the sector and the institution generate opportunities, it is the agency and action of the individual staff member that is the most important factor in supporting internationalisation.

The participants of my study, technicians, demonstrated an intrinsic appetite for their own professional development while supporting international students in gaining technical knowledge in workshops.

Thank you / Dziękuję / Muchas gracias / 谢谢

Dr Tomasz John
tjohn@uca.ac.uk

Bibliography

Lewis, P. and Gospel, H. (2015), 'Technicians under the microscope: The training and skills of university laboratory and engineering workshop technicians', Journal of Vocational Education & Training, 67:4, pp. 421–41.

McCaffery, P. (2010), The Higher Education Manager's Handbook: Effective Leadership and Management in Universities and Colleges, 2nd ed., New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Savage, T. (2018), 'Creative arts technicians in academia: To transition or not to transition?', Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education, 17:2, pp. 237–53, doi: 10.1386/adch.17.2.237_1

Whitchurch, C. (2008), 'Shifting identities and blurring boundaries: The emergence of third space professionals in UK Higher Education', Higher Education Quarterly, 62:4, pp. 377–96.
—— (2012), Reconstructing Identities in Higher Education: The Rise of "Third Space" Professionals, New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

University
for the
Creative Arts