“Let’s massage the curriculum and have more swag”
Re-imagining Third Space in Workshops and Technical Spaces

Dr Tomasz John
Cross-cultural communication skills workshop with technical teams
Exploring how technicians can work together to internationalise the Technical spaces to ensure good academic outcomes and positive Feedback from international students.
Technicians often deal with internationalization on the ground with no training.
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)
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.
“In order to allow creativity to happen, English language criteria should be removed to embrace student diversity”

Prof Bashir Makhoul (UCA VC)
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?
Q1: In your opinion, how do international students cope with the language of instruction in your workshops?

Answered: 28   Skipped: 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too bad</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badly</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very badly</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>64.29%</td>
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Total Respondents: 28
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”
Question 2: Has working with international students added value to your work as a technician?

Answered: 28   Skipped: 0

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<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely yes</td>
<td>39.29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probably yes</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't think so</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitely not</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>Responses 39.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 28
Technicians’ transcribed Q2 responses in Wordcloud
“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**

- I slow down: 57.14% (16 responses)
- I speak up: 10.71% (3 responses)
- I try not to use colloquial language and use simple English instead: 64.29% (18 responses)
- I repeat key information: 60.71% (17 responses)
- I provide visual aids, e.g. handouts, presentations, etc.: 75.00% (21 responses)
- I communicate with the course leader in advance to understand the needs of the students: 17.86% (4 responses)
- I use concept checking (I confirm students actively listen to my instructions): 60.71% (17 responses)
- Other (please specify): 39.29% (11 responses)
Technicians’ transcribed Q3 responses in Wordcloud
“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”
Question 4: How could successful internationalisation of creative arts workshops be supported by the university?

Answered: 27    Skipped: 1

![Bar chart showing responses to Question 4]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff development (cross-cultural communication skills)</td>
<td>62.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of key information/instructions for international students</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English for Specific Purposes sessions (language of instruction and interaction, key vocabulary) preceding the session in the workshop</td>
<td>51.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreter (simultaneous translation in workshops)</td>
<td>14.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional videos with English subtitles played at the beginning of the workshop session</td>
<td>29.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>48.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 27
Technicians’ transcribed Q4 responses in Wordcloud
“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”
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

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Bibliography


