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The Discourse of 'Thirdness' in Intercultural Studies

Introduction

It is now thirty years since Homi Bhabha first developed his influential notion of the 'Third Space' (1988; see also 1990, 1994). The Third Space is a concept which emerged from the field of postcolonial studies and was then rapidly incorporated into other disciplines, including geography, 'modern and foreign languages', education, applied linguistics, and our own field of intercultural studies. By the end of the 1990s two other metaphors of 'thirdness' had also become prevalent in our field: 'third place' (Kramsch, 1993) and 'third culture' (Kramsch, 1993; Useem, 1963; Useem et al., 1963). My own time spent over the past twenty years attending conferences, teaching postgraduate students, and latterly editing a journal in intercultural studies has suggested to me that these three terms are used unevenly within our field, and often in a contradictory fashion. Moreover, the delocation and relocation of any term inevitably brings about a 'transformation' in its meaning, '... because every time a discourse moves from one position to another, there is a space in which ideology can play' (Bernstein 2000, p. 32).

In this paper, I will first revisit the autochthonous conceptualisations of the three terms which are associated with this 'discourse of thirdness': 'third culture', 'third place' and 'Third Space'. Then I will review some criticisms of Third Space theory: both early critiques emanating from the field of cultural studies (e.g. Moore-Gilbert, 1997); and more recent criticism within our own field (e.g. Crawshaw, Callen & Tusting, 2001; Kubota, 2016). While I am not the first to undertake this endeavour (see also Batchelor, 2008; Bruschauer, 2013; Kramsch, 2009a), I hope to add to these re-evaluations by using techniques of corpus analysis and discourse analysis to undertake an empirical investigation of the ways in which the discourse of 'thirdness' has been recontextualised within the field of intercultural studies over the past forty years.

Third culture, third place

The 'discourse of thirdness' is commonly associated with the last decade of the twentieth century during which the political ideology of multiculturalism came to dominate social and political policy across Australia, Europe, New Zealand and North America. However, in fact the notion of 'thirdness' has a rather older provenance, starting as a metaphor for the social experience of cross-cultural working and modulating to a pedagogical metaphor for intercultural learning. The phrase 'third culture' was first coined to theorise the social experiences of expatriate Americans working in India and Vietnam, and those Indians and

Vietnamese who worked within the remit of the expatriate groups (Useem, 1963; Useem, Useem and Donoghue, 1963).

The Useems' project was set squarely within the remit of cross-cultural studies as a 'study of patterns generic to the intersections of societies'. They define a third culture as: 'the behavioral patterns created, shared, and learned by men (*sic*) of different societies who are in the process of relating their societies, or sections thereof, to each other' (Useem et al, 1963, p. 169). At time when 'hybridity' was not yet common parlance within the social sciences, the Useems talk of 'men in the middle', cultural actors who somehow straddle the behavioural patterns of two cultures.

The binational third culture is not merely the accommodation or fusion or two separate, juxtaposed cultures. As men continue to associate across societies while engaged in common enterprises, they incorporate into the ethos of their ingroups, standards for interpersonal behaviors, work-related norms, codes of reciprocity, styles of life, networks of communications, institutional arrangements, world views, and on the individual level, new types of selves. These composite patterns differentiate a third culture from the cultures it transcends (ibid, p. 170).

The ideas expressed here are prescient of much of the contemporary discourse of thirdness in intercultural studies. A generation later, the Useems' conceptualisation of 'third culture' was drawn on explicitly by Pollock and Van Reken in their self-help book, *Third Culture Kids* (1999), to describe the experiences of expatriate children brought up and schooled in cultures different to those which might be expected from their family origins or ethnicity.

The phrase 'third place' was initially conceived of as a metaphor for a pedagogic space where learners can develop 'interculturality' in the language classroom (Kramsch, 1993, p. 206). At a time when *Landeskunde*, or the transmission of facts and knowledge about 'other cultures' (usually conceived of as being circumscribed by the nation state), was still prevalent in the teaching of modern and foreign languages, Kramsch's notion of the third place was imagined as a metaphorical site in which learners could realize difference, 'not only between self and others but between one's personal and one's social self' (1993, p. 234). Not unlike the Useems, Kramsch (1993) proposed that language learning required an engagement between two bounded cultures 'C1' and 'C2', but here in a pedagogic site (such as the classroom) rather than in a social one (such as the workplace). However even then, Kramsch was careful to point out that 'cultures' are not confined to the boundaries of the nation state, but also include aspects relating to a person's 'age, gender, regional origin, ethnic background, and social class' (p. 216). In a later reprise of the definition of the 'third place', Kramsch engaged more broadly with the notion of 'thirdness', referring also to 'this third culture' and also culture 'of the third kind' (1993, p. 235; cf. Spielberg, 1977). Here, again similar to the

Useems, the 'third place...grows in the interstices between the cultures the learner grew up with and the new cultures he or she is being introduced to' (1993, p. 236).

Third Space

The notion of 'Third Space' is set out by Homi Bhabha occurs in a seminal essay entitled *Commitment to Theory* (1994, pp. 18-40). The second half of this essay, where the concept of the 'Third Space' is proposed, problematizes the role of critical theory within the postcolonial project (ibid, pp. 18-31). On this argument, European critical theory has engaged with texts produced in 'other', non-European contexts only to reduce them to their own terms. In so doing, critical theory ends up reproducing the very 'relations of domination' which it professes to expose and confront. Bhabha therefore argues for a 'translation and transformation' of the role of critical theory within postcolonial critique in order for it to realise its full, even revolutionary, potential.

Bhabha confronts this aporia by proposing a new 'location' for critical theory. Bhabha's first move is to distinguish between what he calls 'cultural diversity' and 'difference', in order to problematize the former. I understand 'cultural diversity' here to signify the relationship between cultures proposed by the liberal doctrine of 'multiculturalism', a doctrine which not only informs the relationship between between nation states with diverse values, attitudes and belief, but also between various hypostatised cultural groups within the state. However, to achieve this variegation between groups within the state, the notion of 'cultural diversity' must necessarily assume a fixity in the meanings, values and traditions of the cultures which are posited as 'diverse'; and it is this static, totalising conceptualisation of 'culture' which Bhabha challenges in this essay. Contra 'cultural diversity' is proposed the notion of 'cultural difference' which, it is argued, is the 'lost territory' of critical theory at the historical time of writing. For Bhabha, the moment of critical engagement can only take place:

... at the significatory boundaries of cultures, where meanings and values are (mis)read or signs are misappropriated. Culture only emerges as a problem, or a problematic, at the point at which there is a loss of meaning in the contestation and articulation of everyday life, between classes, genders, races, nations (ibid, p. 34).

In his essay therefore, the problematic of 'culture' is articulated as a problematic of signification. It is in the interstices that open up between different semiotic realisations of 'culture' that cultural hegemony can be challenged.

For Bhabha, there is an ambivalence in any cultural meaning which emerges from the nature of communication. He refers to the act of communication as a 'moment of enunciation', and argues that there is always a 'split' or a 'disjuncture' between what he calls the 'subject of a

proposition' (énoncé) and the 'subject of enunciation' (enunciation, ibid, p. 36). This 'split' is based on the view that the énoncé ('statement' or 'proposition') is only the material realisation of the performative act, but is not the totality of meaning itself. Meaning is only fully realised through its enunciation, glossed by Robert Young as the 'what is said', or the 'said' (2001, p. 401). In my view, it is here - within the 'moment of enunciation' – that the 'what is said' is subject to the cultural and historical conditions in which the statement or proposition is realised.

On this argument, the gap that can open up between the realisation of a statement or proposition and its enunciation is where cultural hegemony, or what Bhabha calls 'cultural authority', can be challenged by adopting alternative readings of authorised statements about culture.

The pact of interpretation is never simply an act of communication between the I and the You designated in the statement. The production of meaning requires that these two places be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance... (ibid, p. 36).

Here, an 'ambivalence' arises within the 'pact of interpretation'. On the one hand, it is not possible for a proposition to totally circumscribe its meaning within what can be mobilised from the resources of language; on the other hand, the conditions of interpretation cannot totally be determined by the proposition. Meaning is therefore a dialectic that emerges from the interplay between the performative act (by the writer) and the act of interpretation (by the reader). The 'Third Space' is that moment of synthesis: between the proposition (realized in linguistic pronouncement) and the interpretative act (realized in cultural meaning), which remain are not reducible either to the one or to the other.

Now the power of the Third Space theory is that the resources of language themselves challenge, confront and destabilise what was being critiqued at the time as the 'cultural authority' of the colonising European nations (e.g. Said, 1979). For Bhabha, the idea of the Third Space opens up the possibility for the 'subaltern' to reinterpret, and indeed appropriate, the cultural documents of the coloniser in order to destabilize the appearance of temporal stability in the traditional frameworks of hegemonic cultures: 'the historical identity of culture as a homogenising, unifying force, authenticated by an originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People'.

It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricised and read anew (ibid, p. 37).

Reception and recontextualisation

Unsurprisingly, This infusion of poststructuralist theory into postcolonial critique received considerable criticism: not only from Marxist critics and those working within the field of cultural studies as his ideas become more widely received in the late 1990s (e.g. Moore-Gilbert, 1997); but also from progressive interculturalists (e.g. Crawshaw et al, 2001) and critical applied linguists (e.g. Kubota, 2016). Three major lines of critique have been made of Third Space theory: ethnocentrism, essentialism and universalism (Moore-Gilbert, 1997, pp. 127-9). First, Bhabha's indebtedness to European poststructuralist sources has been seen as giving Third Space theory a Eurocentric bias which is incompatible with the orientation of postcolonial theory to the Periphery. These include the discourse theory of Foucault, the psychoanalytic theory of Lacan, as well as other European critical theorists who position themselves very much as reacting against the humanism of in European enlightenment thought. This grafting of postmodern theory on to postcolonial criticism has been viewed as diluting its specifically postcolonial focus. Secondly it has been argued that the 'split' between statement and enunciation, and the notion of temporal displacement or 'time-lag' are not confined to postcolonial texts, but can be extended to interrogate and realign the construction of relations in texts which are created within any social situation which gives rise to asymmetries of power. Finally, the construction of hybridity which is core to Third Space theory can be seen as succumbing to the dangers of essentialism. Not least, the concept of hybridity iself suggests a relationship between different opposing forces, which Bhabha characterizes in terms which might seem inimical to many intercultural scholars.

However, it is the spatiality of Bhabha's central metaphor of theory which has presented a particular difficulty for applied linguists and critical interculturalists. For Crawshaw et al. (2001), exploring the potential of the metaphor to symbolize the experience of their participants on a study abroad programme, the bounded nature of the metaphor presents a particular point of contention.

The only – purely semantic – drawback to Bhabha's figure of 'the third space', which he associates with that of 'hybridity', is the word 'third' which, if interpreted in a narrow sense, could be seen to imply a dynamic involving only two cultures, one of which is predominant. Even if the term is understood as a trope signifying the 'space' between two interlocutors, it implies that each is somehow representative of a unified cultural 'position' (p. 104).

On this reading it is, with some irony, precisely the anti-colonial and potentially revolutionary trajectory of Third Space theory which appears to fall back upon itself and reproduce the very discourse of cultural boundedness, and even essentialism, so railed against by critical interculturalists.

Methodology

The empirical part of this paper will combine techniques of corpus analysis (e.g. Baker, 2006) and discourse analysis in order to investigate how the three concepts – 'Third Space', 'third place' and 'third culture' - have been recontextualised within the field of intercultural studies. While I do not carry out a systematic chronological analysis of the changes in, and distribution of, concepts over time (c.f. Hunter & Smith, 2012), I use corpus-based techniques to yield insights into how, within particular contexts, certain 'regularities' of lexis might imbue distinctive terminology with specialised meanings within the field, and how a particular term might feature more in certain fractions of the field than others. My specific focus is therefore:

- how are the central concepts of the 'discourse of thirdness' constituted in the field of intercultural studies;
- what is the relationship between the central concepts of the 'discourse of thirdness' in the field of intercultural studies;
- and how have central concepts of the 'discourse of thirdness' been delocated from their original context and relocated in the later discourse of intercultural studies?

Later, I will go on to discuss the possible ideological implications of the transformations in the meanings of these terms in the process of recontextualisation (after Bernstein 2000).

Twelve international, peer-reviewed journals with accessible content, amenable for download, were identified which either had the term 'intercultural' in their titles or as a keyword (Table 1). Journal websites were then searched individually using the separate phrases 'third culture', 'third place' or 'third space'. A total of 220 articles were identified, downloaded in PDF format, and then converted to text files. These fell into three genres: research articles, review articles and editorials. The earliest article published was in 1977, the most recent in 2017. Text files were then cleaned in order to eliminate data not strictly related to the main content of each article, and to eliminate repetitions of key terms and phrases within the documents.2 Eliminated data included article titles, abstracts, reference lists and section headers. This corpus therefore constitutes a comprehensive collection of all the research articles in intercultural studies relating to the 'discourse of thirdness' up to 30 April 2017. The corpus was analysed using Wordsmith version 7 (Scott, 2016) to generate wordlists, keyword lists, collocation analyses, cluster analyses and qualitative sampling of concordance data. Where necessary, grammatical analysis was carried out using the terminology and categorisation principles of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004).

Discourse of thirdness

In the corpus, the noun phrase 'third space' occurred most (Fig. 1): a total of 362 times compared with 'third culture' (322 times), and 'third place' (95 times).

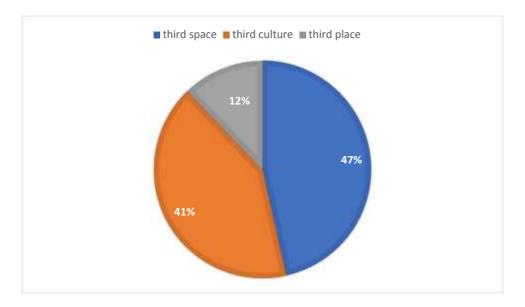


Figure 1: Distribution of texts according to search terms

While this distribution does not reveal much about the usage of these three terms, it does however shed some light on the relative influence of these three different concepts within intercultural studies as a 'discursive formation' (after Foucault, 1972).

Two thirds of the articles selected were published in either the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* (IJIR) or our own Association journal *Language and Intercultural Communication* (LAIC) (Table 1). However, different search terms predominated in the two journals: 'third culture' in *IJIR* and 'third space' in *LAIC*. These two terms are dispersed less markedly amongst the other journals, with 'third place' also occurring slightly more in *LAIC*, although much less frequently across the corpus overall.

² Cleaning of texts was carried out to fine-tune the data for publication, after the presentation of working papers at Hong Kong Polytechnic University (20/5/2017) and Edinburgh Napier University (22/6/2017).

³ Since it is only the singular forms which occur in the original formulations of the 'discourse of thirdness', I did not include the plural formations 'third cultures', 'third places' and 'third spaces' in my search.

Table 1: Distribution of the terms across different journals

Journal	third space	third place	third culture	Tot
Language and intercultural Communication	40	12	8	60
International journal of intercultural relations	0	9	49	58
Intercultural education	14	8	4	26
Journal of intercultural studies	20	2	3	25
Journal of intercultural communication research	3	2	8	13
Journal of international and intercultural communication	3	2	7	12
Journal of multicultural discourses	6	3	0	9
The translator: studies in intercultural communication.	5	3	1	9
Multilingua	3	3	0	6
Journal of intercultural communication	0	0	1	1
Journal of linguistic and intercultural education	1	0	0	1
Intercultural pragmatics	0	0	0	0
Download total	95	44	81	220

Article selection

While much corpus analysis focuses upon the usage of lexical items, insights can also arise from the examination of grammatical formations featuring non-lexical words such as prepositions and conjunctions. The collocation patterns of different articles ('a'/'the') in relation to the three terms under investigation can yield information as to the degree of specificity with which each noun phrase is used within the 'discourse of thirdness'.

The definite article emerged as the top collocate of 'third space', being used to premodify the noun phrase (in L1 position) in just under half the total occurrences of the term (Table 2). While the indefinite article was also a top collocate of 'third space', it premodified the noun phrase (in L1 position) far less frequently – in only around a fifth of its total occurrences.

Table 2: THIRD SPACE - top collocates

N	Word	Total	Total Left	L1	<i>L2</i>
1	THIRD SPACE	392	0	0	0
2	THE	317	233	160	11
3	OF	212	146	32	78
4	A	147	113	74	20

The definite article also emerged as the top collocate of 'third culture', but was used to premodify the noun phrase (in L1 position) proportionately much less than 'third space', occurring about only a quarter of the time (Table 3). The indefinite article was also a top collocate of 'third culture', and also premodified the noun phrase (in L1 position) only about a quarter of the time (Table 3).

Table 3: THIRD CULTURE - top collocates

N	Word	Total	Total Left	L1	L2
1	THIRD CULTURE	324	0	0	0
2	THE	231	173	78	7
3	OF	182	141	57	43
4	A	148	112	76	9
5	TO	99	65	5	10
6	AND	95	50	18	5

By contrast, the top collocate of 'third place' was the indefinite article, also being used to premodify the noun phrase (in L1 position) in a little over a third of its occurrences (Table 4). Here, 'third place' is directly premodified by the definite article around a fifth of the time.

Table 4: THIRD PLACE - top collocates

N	Word	Total	Total Left	L1	L2
1	THIRD PLACE	95	0	0	0
3	THE	48	31	20	0
4	IN	38	23	6	0
5	OF	29	19	1	0
6	AND	26	18	2	0
7	FOR	23	9	0	0

This would suggest that the three concepts under investigation are constituted with declining degrees of specificity in the 'discourse of thirdness'. In particular, 'third place' is constructed as a concept with considerably less specificity than 'third space' or 'third culture', perhaps suggesting that the term is used in a more generic sense.

Premodification

The patterns of premodification withinin which the three phrases under investigation occur can also yield insights into the attribution of the term under question.

Third space

A cluster analysis of the noun phrase 'third space' reveals the term occurring predominantly in prepositional phrases. Within the prepositional phrase, the prepositions 'of' and 'in' were almost exclusively used to premodify the phrase, along with 15 occurrences of the possessive noun 'Bhabha's' (Table 5). By far and away the most frequent representation of 'ART + third space' was that preceded by the preposition 'of' (totalling 47 occurrences), suggesting some form of attribution; by contrast the cluster in which featured 'in + ART + third space' – which might suggest some form of spatialisation - occurred about a quarter as many times (totalling 17 occurrences).

Table 5: cluster analysis of the NP 'third space'

N	Cluster	Freq.
1	OF THE THIRD SPACE	47
2	IN THE THIRD SPACE	17
5	BHABHA S THIRD SPACE	15
6	OF A THIRD SPACE	13
7	IN A THIRD SPACE	12

An L1 analysis of the phrase 'of * third space' reveals the following terms which immediately preceded the prepositional phrase (Table 6).

Table 6: L1 analysis - 'of * third space'

Word	Texts	Total	L1
NOTION	4	8	7
CONCEPT	3	5	8
GENRES	1	4	4
PEDAGOGY	3	4	3
CREATION	2	2	2
APPLICATIONS	1	2	1
DEVELOPMENT	2	2	1

Seven texts altogether used the nouns 'notion' or 'concept' to premodify 'of * third space', suggesting that it is some form of an abstract idea; while slightly less frequently occurring nouns suggest that the 'third space' was being constituted as some form of educational technique or approach, as is evidenced slightly by the occurrence of *pedagogy of * third space* (n=4 across 3 texts), *applications of * third space* (n=2) and *development of * third space* (n=2). It is also intriguing that one of these papers constitutes 'third space' as a 'genre' (n=4); however, this only occurred intensively in one text.

The following concordance data illustrates the usage of the phrase concept(s) of * third space (Fig 2):

Figure 2: concordance data - concept of * third space

inked to the <u>concept of the third space</u> (Papastergiadis 2005 ion of the <u>concept of Bhabha's Third Space</u> is somewhat remov abha's (1994) <u>concept of 'the third space'</u> and Bakhtin's (1981 abha's (1994) <u>concept of 'the third space'</u>, within which the econdly, the <u>concept of the third space</u> can be applied to th lify Bhabha's <u>concept of a third space</u>", two questions must lation, the <u>concepts of the third space</u> and the time-lag thu

e to Bhabha's <u>concept of a third space</u>, and the question the of Bhabha's <u>concept of the third space</u> to translation theor develops the <u>concept of the third space</u> in relation to the a

These examples would suggest that 'concept * of the third space' is a formulaic phrase within this discourse, which is often in turn premodified by the possessive proper noun attributing the idea to 'Bhabha' as its originator. By contrast, the more spatialised prepositional phrase 'in + ART + third space' occurs much less frequently across the corpus. Here, the lexical patterns are very much less regularised, and do not really yield a substantive list of L1 collocations.

Third place

While a cluster analysis of 'third place' also reveals the term occurring predominantly in prepositional phrases, both the selection of the prepositions and their dispersion differ considerably from those of 'third space'; and afford us an insight into the ways in which the two concepts are textured differently within the lexico-grammar. Here, not only do 'in the place' and 'of a third place' emerge as the most salient clusters, but 'for' also appears as a distinctive feature, although being rather more dispersed in its positioning within the clusters. Thus, the pattern of dispersion of these prepositions is rather different to that of 'third space'. While 'in' features as a top collocate of 'third space' (n=38, see Table 4), its position is highly dispersed (e.g. L4=6, L2=8, R1=9), with the result that the prepositional phrase 'in the third place' only occurs 8 times. The preposition 'for' is also a top collocate of 'third place' (n=23), but it occurs more tightly framed around the focal noun phrase (L2=4, R1=10), as reflected in the patterning of the cluster analysis below (Table 6).

Table 6: cluster analysis for 'third place'

N	Cluster	Freq.
1	IN THE THIRD PLACE	8
2	A THIRD PLACE FOR	6
4	OF A THIRD PLACE	5

Concordance analysis revealed that in almost all instances, the phrase 'in the third place' is used as a discourse marker and not as a lexical spatialisation of meaning of the phrase. By contrast, the collocation of the preposition 'for' sheds rather more light on the meaning of 'third place' in the corpus. The preposition 'for' features not only as a term strongly associated with 'third place', being a top collocate (n=23); but also in a cluster analysis of the phrase, although somewhat dispersed (Table 6). Coding of the concordance data for the combination 'third place + FOR' would also suggest that the phrase is associated with a stronger sense of intentionality than 'third space'. In two instances, there is a firm expression of pedagogic purpose: one suggestive of a generalised pedagogic site of language learning and intercultural communication, and the other emphasising more the aspect of conflict resolution:

a "third place" for language and intercultural learning

a <u>third place for</u> language learners with purposeful tensions that lead learners to deal with ambivalence and contradictions.

The internet is also posited as an environment in which the 'third place' can be constituted, not only for communicating across cultures, but also for enhancing symmetrical social and political relations:

The online gaming environment is posited as a convivial "third place" for intercultural communication

the expectation of the digital media in general, the Internet in particular, as a democratizing 'third place' for equal communication

Finally, literature is constituted intensively in just one text, as a 'third place':

a corpus of literary texts as a 'third place' for intercultural exploration of dialogues between China and the West

'migratory' literature as a 'third place' for intercultural communication

Here, it not only facilitates intercultural dialogue, but also enables both language and intercultural education.

Third culture

The collocate analysis in Table 2 revealed that while the prepositions 'of', to' and 'in' remain top collocates of 'third culture', the noun phrase is premodified by prepositions (in L1 position) proportionately far less than 'third space' or 'third place'. Furthermore, in contrast to 'third space' the spatialised prepositional phrase 'in * third culture' hardly ever occurs (n=10). This is confirmed by a cluster analysis in which premodifying prepositional phrases feature far less than in the previous two expressions (Table 7).

Table 7: cluster analysis for 'third culture'

N	Cluster	Freq.
1	OF THE THIRD CULTURE	20
2	THIRD CULTURE BUILDING MODEL	14
3	THE THIRD CULTURE EXPERIENCE	11
4	LEVEL OF THIRD CULTURE	11
5	DIALOGUE AND THIRD CULTURE	10

An L1 analysis of the phrase 'of * third culture' also reveals a less clearly defined pattern of prepositional premodification than with the other two terms. Only 'detriment of the third culture' (n=3), 'aspects of the third culture' (n=2) and 'attributes of the third culture' (n=2) emerge with any degree of regularity. The negativity of the first phrase gives us a hint of the deficit nature of this 'model' of returnee expatriate children in these early intercultural studies. These patterns are confirmed by extending our collocation analysis for 'third culture'. Here we can see 'building', 'kids' and 'model' emerging as the most frequently occurring nominal collocates of the noun phase, placed predominantly either in the R1 or R2 position (Table 8).

Table 8: collocate analysis for 'third culture' (contd.)

N	Word	Total	Total Left	Total Right	L2	L1	Centre	<i>R1</i>	<i>R</i> 2
7	BUILDING	77	6	71	2	0	0	70	0
8	AS	70	29	41	10	8	0	7	6
9	IN	60	32	28	10	2	0	6	3
10	THIRD-CULTURE	58	0	0	0	0	58	0	0
11	KIDS	51	4	47	1	1	0	45	0
12	IS	51	16	35	3	2	0	11	13
13	INDIVIDUALS	41	2	39	0	0	0	32	1
14	MODEL	41	4	37	2	0	0	2	27

As the cluster analysis suggests, 'third culture building model' can be identified as a formulaic phrase which is constitutive of this strand of the discourse. However, it is narrowly dispersed, occurring in its three forms ('third culture', 'Third Culture', 'third-culture') in only 9 texts altogether. More widely dispersed is the occurrence in early intercultural studies of the curiously condescending term 'kids' (n=97) to refer to children brought up as part of missionary work ('missionary kids') or in international schools ('third culture kids'); and even more derogatorily, the term 'brats' to refer to children brought up on US Army bases ('military brats').

Process types

The process types (after Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004) associated with each of our designated terms were also analysed by reviewing their collocation patterns. In the event, only the third person form of the verb 'to be' emerged from the texts as a salient process type associated with 'third space' and 'third culture', occurring as the top collocate of both terms (n=54; n=52, respectively).

Concordance analysis revealed that around half the occurrences of 'is' (n=22) were positioned immediately after 'third space' (Table 9). This suggests that a principal rhetorical strategy in the discursive constitution of this term was to work towards establishing its meaning.

Table 9: Occurrence of 'is' in R1 position (n=26)

Process	No	R1 Category	No	Concept	No
Relational	22	Noun Phrase	13	Spatialisation	14
Mental	3	Verb Phrase	8	Evaluation	8
Verbal	1	Adjectival Phrase	5	Identification	4
Total	26		26		26

Of these, most were quite straightforward defining relational clauses, with half of them followed the structure NP + Art + NP (n=11). Analysis of concordance data suggests that around half of the corpus with 'is' in the R1 position related to some sort of spatial conception of the metaphor (Fig. 3).⁴

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⁴ Here I have sometimes expanded the concordance window – indicated by [...] - in order to bring out the full meaning of each clause.

Figure 3: concordance data – 'third space is'

The notion of a third space is common here as an [intermediary place] in Wolf's analysis, the third space is the place in which Palestinians the hybrid third space is where they can make ction of self and other. Third space is where the production erstood in this way, the Third Space is more than an in-between space ir cultural capital; the third space is a space within which according to Bhabha (1991) 'third space' is a site of translation r mass organisation. The Third Space is not a space out there the concept of Bhabha's Third Space is somewhat removed from The Third Space is what we might call an [everyday space apart]

Here, 'third space' is complemented by a number of spatial conceptions - not least the rather tautologous 'space' - but also 'place', 'site', 'area' and 'where...'. These constitute a quarter of the collocations with the relational process type 'is'.

A concordance analysis of 'third culture + is' revealed that while over half the occurrences of 'is' were immediately right positioned, only 11 instances were positioned immediately after the noun phrase. As the following examples illustrate, these can be categorised into statements of definition or prioritisation, passive verb phrases and one noun phrase.

Example 1: Definition

The third culture <u>is a continuous process of negotiating shared meaning and the essence of relational empathy</u>.

Example 2: Prioritisation

Understanding what rules ... still exist in the communication language of the third culture <u>is of particular importance</u>.

Example 3: Verb phrase (Passive)

This third culture is shared with others who have had similar experiences...

Example 4: Noun phrase

<u>Lee's (2006) 10-item scale to measure third culture is</u> another instrument that facilitates the empirical testing of a theoretical concept...

These examples suggest that within this discourse, the focus on 'third culture' is also to some extent a definitional one. Further analysis of 'third culture + is' in R2 position suggests not only a drive towards defining the concept, but also towards establishing its importance in the field (e.g. 'particular importance', 'major aspect', c.f. Swales, 1990).

By contrast with 'third space' and 'third culture', there does not appear to be such distinctive patterning around any single process type for 'third place'. 'Is' occurs as a collocate (n=10) but there are only five occurrences of the verb 'to be' in the R1 position: the first two clauses are definitional, and the remaining three feature passive verb phrases.

Example 1: Definition

The third place is a place of accommodation between C1 and C2 which leads to a new cultural positioning

Example 2: Verb phrase (Passive)

this "third place" is not restricted to the crossing of geographical borders, but can also be applied ...to represent "social ruptures"...

However, the passive formation in Example 2 still has a definitional thrust, if rather oblique, with the verbal processes being used metaphorically in different ways to ascribe characteristics to the concept.

Discussion

In this paper, I have analysed some of the lexical patterns in a comprehensive collection of research articles drawn from the prominent journals in intercultural studies featuring the terms 'third space, 'third place' and 'third culture' to gain insights into the way in which these three central metaphors have been recontextualised from the sites of their original provenance and relocated in order to constitute a 'discourse of thirdness' within our field. My analysis of the different linguistic contexts within which the meanings of these three metaphors have been reconfigured has displayed some tensions, and even contradictions, with the meanings which are set out in the autochthonous literature from which the terms emerged. Here, I go on to relate the empirical findings set out above back to the autochthonous literature in order to consider: first, to what extent the usage of these terms has changed in their appropriation within a field of study which is related to, but nevertheless distinct from that in which they were originally conceived; and secondly, to consider just how ideology might be 'at play' within these transformations in meaning. Finally, I will set out some caveats about our engagement, moving forward, with the 'discourse of thirdness' in intercultural studies. But before I do all this, I would like to engage with some issues underscoring my use of corpus analysis techniques in this paper, techniques which have rarely been used to scrutinize the discourse of intercultural studies itself.

Language and meaning

In this paper, I have used a corpus-based approach in order to analyse a particular fraction of the discourse of intercultural studies, which I have dubbed the 'discourse of thirdness'. Two criticisms been raised regarding the use of corpus analysis techniques (e.g. Richards and Pilcher, 2016): that corpus analysis techniques appear to objectify text and lexis, and thereby fail to engage with the more subjective aspects of interpretation which, arguably, are a necessary condition of language (Voloshinov, 1973); and that the lexical items investigated using corpus analysis techniques are scrutinised without due regard for their linguistic, discursive and social context. First, I am sympathetic to the view that fixing a collection of

texts in terms of numbers of words, statistical counts and word classifications can potentially occlude due consideration of the interpretative act as a precondition for meaningful engagement with the text. However, in this study I have foregrounded the use of qualitative techniques such as collocation analysis, concordance analysis and cluster analysis (rather than, for example, a keywords analysis based on statistical calculations) which I argue has indeed enabled me to engage interpretatively with the lexical items under scrutiny. I also maintain that all text analysis necessarily involves some degree of hermeneutic engagement on the part of the reader with language and text, and I actually dispute the more radical claims that any machine-based approach to language analysis can ever totally eliminate the act of interpretation act. Secondly, with regard to potential charges of the de-contextualised nature of corpus studies, this study has entailed a focused, strategic investigation of certain specialised lexis within the delimited epistemological context of the discourse of intercultural studies; the paper does not make wider claims about the usage of the lexis under analysis elsewhere in language or society. Furthermore, the use of the qualitative affordances of corpus analysis, described above, have also enabled me to take into account, purposively, the linguistic context in which the lexical item occurs. In this, I dispute the claims made by more extreme structuralist linguists (after Saussure, 1959) that any lexical item is a totally freefloating signifier and interpretation is an act of pure subjectivism. In my view, there are constraints upon meaning which are the properties of words themselves - imbued by their linguistic, discursive and social contexts. Meaning therefore neither arises from the objectively verifiable features of the 'inert crust' of language, nor from a totally subjectivist act on the part of the reader – but as a process which emerges as a dialectical synthesis between the properties of the language and the reader's cognitive processing (and imagination).

Third space

My corpus analysis has revealed that, in the process of recontextualisation, a discernible transformation has taken place in the meaning of the term 'Third Space', as it is delocated from Bhabha's original work (1988, 1990, 1994) and relocated in papers published within the field of intercultural studies. First of all, the discourse of intercultural studies appears to have – paradoxically - *consolidated* the aspect of spatialisation, which I would argue was only implicit in Bhabha's original conceptualisation of the term. This is suggested by the lexical patterns of prepositional phrases, and also some of the lexical collocates of 'third space' in our corpus. But more importantly, for the most part the term 'third space' appears to have lost its specific association with textual interpretation for which it was originally conceived. The idea of 'third space' has instead been reconfigured to signify a zone encompassing the complex identities of

subjects who inhabit more than one 'culture', or traverse 'cultures'. And this has entailed the loss of a key aspect of Bhabha's conceptualisation of Third Space: its transgressive and potentially activist nature. For Bhabha, it is in the interstices between the formal mode of signification (*enunciation*) and the signification of those signs (*énoncé*) that new, transgressive and, potentially revolutionary meanings, could be constituted within the context of the struggles for independence which were the bedrock of postcolonial theory in the second half of the twentieth century. My analysis suggests that the appropriation of this term within intercultural studies has led to the evacuation of its aspect of transgression and transformation in favour of a more harmonious, and arguably liberal, constitution of 'identity'. Identity has become conceived as a form of a 'hybridity' which is relatively frictionless and devoid of any sense of power relations. In other words, the term has shifted from its emergence within the ideology of a revolutionary postcolonial moment to its appropriation by an ideology of liberal multiculturalism, very much in accord with the state policies of late twentieth century Europe and North America.

This 'neutralizing' of Bhabha's original, post-colonial concerns (1994) may be attributable in part to the influence of information-age electronic communication upon our field, not least as our data has suggested, the sometimes euphoric appropriation of 'third space' as a metaphor for interpersonal and intercultural engagement in social media chatrooms.² It is possible that the novel, symbolic modes of communication practised via information-age electronic communication render asymmetries of power, which are more readily amendable to critique within real-time communication (Zhu and Kramsch, 2016), less visible. As Kramsch reminds us elsewhere, the spatiality of the digital age also entails a loss of a sense of the temporality of more analogue times: '... we have seen that our spatial metaphors have a way not only of subsuming time as in a footnote but of translating time into space, history, and memory into spatiality and visibility' (2018, p.113). And, arguably, with the atrophying of our sense of time under the famous 'time-space compression' which was condition of post-modernity (Harvey 1989, p. 240), comes the proclaimed as the abandonment of the hope of (and desire for) temporal transformation. Eponymously, to adopt a 'postcolonial' perspective on the discursive asymmetries between North and South, it is necessary to remember human lives expended – in 'real time' - under the conditions of colonialism (and other moments of exploitation). Although the stuff of modernity, memory and history remain the necessary conditions for critique and transformation.

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¹ My thanks to one notable reviewer for this term.

² Though for a more critical take on the affordances offered by ICT for ICC, see Chang and Chang in this issue.

Third place/third culture

In contrast to 'third space, 'third place' has actually exhibited fewer indications of operating as a spatial metaphor within the discourse of intercultural studies, than as the signifier of an *actual* or *virtual* space in which an intercultural pedagogy can take place. The examples set out above suggest that the 'third place' is transmitted and reproduced in the discourse of intercultural studies not so much as metaphor for a state of hybrid identity, but rather as a pedagogic site in which a relationship between language learning and intercultural communication can be fostered. On my interpretation of the linguistic data set out above, 'third place' is constituted as both a material 'place' (such as a university, school, or classroom) or as a virtual 'place' (such as an internet chat room or a virtual learning environment). However, this pedagogic site also appears to be constituted in relation to a constellation of civic values which we recognise from other constructions of 'intercultural competence' within our field: democracy, citizenship and critical thinking (c.f. Byram, 2008). In the discourse of intercultural studies, 'third place' therefore emerges as a term associated with the third space, but also distinct: as a pedagogic site where the 'hybrid' identity of the language learner/intercultural subject can be worked out.

Paradoxically, 'third culture' emerges as the least spatialised term within the corpus, not being constituted within the linguistic context of prepositional phrases which confer spatial locations, metaphoric or otherwise. In its original conceptualisation (Useem, 1963; Useem et al., 1963), the term 'third culture' appears to have been suggestive of a state of 'inbetweenness' which was strangely prescient of the forms of 'hybrid identity' that is talked of nowadays. However, over the years the term appears to have been appropriated into a rather 'harder' formation within the literature which develops out of the Useems' original work. Here, 'third culture' appears to become constituted as some form of 'model' which is 'built' (after Casmir, 1999), exhibiting the characteristics of 'solidity', 'rigidity' and 'scientificity' (in the style of Geertz, 1983). 'Third culture' is also constituted as an attribute which is ascribed to intercultural subjects, such as 'third culture individuals' or 'third culture kids', sometimes with pathological overtones. From this – and with due regard to the provenance of this term (Table 1) - I infer that the term 'third culture' has become recontextualised within one strand of intercultural studies in order to signify a form of cognitive process. Here, the well-worn cognitivist metaphors of 'model' and 'building' associated with 'third culture' contrast with the properties of 'flexibility' and 'fluidity' that are associated with the poststructuralist conditions of subjectification connotated by 'third space'.

However, the term 'third culture' is taken up rather differently by Kramsch and - indeed without any apparent reference to the Useems' earlier work – used in her work (esp. 1993,

2009a) more or less synonymously with 'third place'. Not least, in its original iteration, 'third culture' appears to transfer to an intercultural pedagogy some of the attributes of criticality which have become disassociated with the recontextualised notion of the 'third space'. In her later work, Kramsch (2009a) expands the more narrowly pedagogic focus of 'third culture', to suggest that it can be used more broadly as a 'metaphor for eschewing other dualities on which language education is based':

Third culture does not propose to eliminate these dichotomies, but suggests focusing on the relation itself and on the heteroglossia within each of the poles. It is a symbolic place that is by no means unitary, stable, permanent and homogeneous. Rather it is, like subject positions in post-structuralist theory, multiple, always subject to change and to the tensions and even conflicts that come from being 'in between' (p. 238).

In this, Kramsch begins to envisage 'third culture' as a position where speakers can draw in the plethoric discursive resources of different symbol systems in order to use them, agentively, for the creation and re-creation of their selves.

Most recently, with a commendable capacity for self-reflection, Kramsch has drawn away from her original conceptualisations of both 'third place' and 'third culture', to abandon the metaphorical implications of 'thirdness' entirely. In The Multilingual Subject (2009/2013, p. 200), Kramsch suggests that using a spatial metaphor for the thirdness is 'too static' to do service as a means of capturing 'the experience of the symbolic boundary between NS and NNS'. First, it can no longer do service for a 'decentred subject that has to navigate several symbolic systems'. Second, the concept of a hybrid 'third place' lends itself too easily to become appropriated by a host nation's political 'ideology of cultural diversity'. And finally for Kramsch, neither the term 'third place' or 'third culture' can take into account the symbolic nature of the 'multilingual subject' – both as a signifying self and as a social actor who has the power to change social reality through the use of multiple systems. Thus, Kramsch proposes superceding the more bounded concepts of third place or third culture with the relatively open-ended idea of 'symbolic competence' (2006, 2009a, 2009/2013, 2011; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008). Most recently she has gone on emphatically to state: 'the notion of third culture must be seen less as a PLACE than as a symbolic PROCESS of meaning-making that sees beyond the dualities of national languages (L1-L2) and national cultures (C1-C2)' (2011, p. 255). On this argument, the ability for language learners and users to navigate their way amongst two or more symbolic systems (languages) is important not just in order to carry out a plethora of functional tasks in the classroom and society, but also in order for them to become 'multilingual subjects' in a world of superdiversity, where they will necessarily engage with a plethora of signs and novel symbolic systems as they move across a universe of different discourse worlds.

Conclusion

The corpus analysis carried out above, and a close reading of the intercultural studies literature which now stretches back for half a century, has revealed a complex shift in the three terms which taken together make up the 'discourse of thirdness' posited for the purposes of this study. Not least, these are suggestive of two paradigms which appear to be operating within our field and have become consolidated around the interests of divergent and sometimes ideologically competing trajectories of research. After a 'softer' beginning, one usage of 'third culture' seems to have become solidified through its appropriation by a largely social psychological approach to intercultural studies in order to incorporate a more realist, modernist discourse of cognitivism, calculation, and intercultural training. By contrast the supersession of a notion of 'Third Space' associated with postcolonial appropriation of hegemonic texts by a reconfigured 'third space' which connotes the hybridisation of identity heralds the more constructivist discourse of fluidity, hybridity and identity (re)creation which is the hallmark of one strand of contemporary intercultural studies. And most recently, there has been an explicit argument for superceding the spatialised use of the terms 'third place' and 'third culture' within the context of intercultural pedagogy with the a wider ranging notion of 'symbolic competence' (e.g. Kramsch, 2009/2012).

Where this leaves us, is that we still remain in danger of an evacuation of the critical and transformational aspects which were heralded by some of the autochthonous texts, particularly those relating to 'Third Space' and 'third place'. And given the ideologically laden nature of the use of language in any academic field, I would propose that in this time of an intercontinental resurgence of nationalism which has led to new policies of 'integration' within the nation state, we need to reinvigorate the critical and transformative spirit of Bhabha's original texts (1988, 1990, 1994), if perhaps not their sometimes opaque articulation. While the notion of 'symbolic competence' does good service in going beyond the shortcomings of the spatialisation, binariness and boundedness that was implicit in earlier metaphors of thirdness, we need to ensure that this supersession does indeed move beyond a pre-millennial 'discourse of thirdness' in order to capture *both* the potential for the (re)creation and (re)generation of our selves, afforded by our engagement with other languages and other 'cultures'; *and* the transgressive and transformative spirit of Bhabha's original conceptualisation of 'Third Space'. For both these properties remain vital for our shared project of (critical) intercultural communication.

⁵ To my mind both these principles are indeed captured forcefully in Kramsch and Whiteside (2015).

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Jan Walravens for encouraging me to write this paper many years ago; and to Duncan Hunter for inspiration and advice regarding the research design. An earlier version was presented to the research group at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

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