

Bachelor's thesis

Performing Arts

2018

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# THE STRUGGLE IS PRESENT

– radical pedagogy in drama work

BACHELOR'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

TURKU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Performing arts

2018 | 24 pages

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## THE STRUGGLE IS PRESENT

- radical pedagogy in drama work

This thesis is an overview to radical pedagogy: what it is, what are the benefits of it in drama work and how to create radical spaces.

Radical pedagogy is an umbrella term for pedagogies that aim for social or political change. One of the most known radical pedagogies is the Pedagogy of the Oppressed created by Paulo Freire. In this thesis I will discuss radical pedagogy by concentrating mainly to Dorothy Heathcote's essay *Drama as a process of change* and bell hooks's essay *Towards Revolutionary Feminist Pedagogy*. These essays identify a radical classroom as a space that aims to change, as a space that acknowledges struggle, and give ideas how to create a radical spaces and processes.

As an example of a process that aimed to radicality I am using an experience of a drama process facilitated at Oakwood Primary School in Easterhouse, Glasgow in fall 2017.

The main argument of this thesis is that the process of creating is always a process of change, and therefore a drama process is always radical. The aim of this thesis is to encourage Drama Instructors to be bold, loud and not afraid of identifying the struggle, the politics, and the radicality of their work.

Other sources for this thesis are Richard Schechner's *Performance studies: An introduction* and *Performance Analysis - an introductory course book* edited by Colin Counsell and Laurie Wolf.

### KEYWORDS:

radical pedagogy, applied drama, struggle, risk, radical space, drama work, drama processes, performance, performing arts

OPINNÄYTETYÖ (AMK) | TIIVISTELMÄ

TURUN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

Esittävät taiteet

2018 | 24 sivua

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## THE STRUGGLE IS PRESENT

- radikaali pedagogia draamatyössä

Tämä opinnäytetyö on katsaus radikaaliin pedagogiaan: mitä se on, mitä hyötyjä sen käyttämisessä on draamatyössä, sekä kuinka luoda radikaaleja tiloja.

Radikaali pedagogia on yläkäsite sosiaaliseen muutoksen tähtääville pedagogioille. Yksi tunnetuimmista radikaaleista pedagogioista on Paolo Freiren Sorrettujen Pedagogia. Tässä opinnäytetyössä käsittelem radikaalia pedagogiaa pääasiallisesti Dorothy Heathcoten esseen *Drama as an process of change* sekä bell hooksin esseen *Towards Revolutionary Feminist Pedagogy* kautta. Nämä esseet tunnistavat radikaalin luokkahuoneen tilana, joka pyrkii muutokseen ja tunnistaa vaikeuksien olemassaolon, sekä antavat esimerkkejä radikaalin tilan ja prosessin luomiseen.

Esimerkkinä radikaaliuteen pyrkineestä prosessista käytän Oakwood Primary Schoolissa, Easterhouseessa, Glasgow'ssa syksyllä 2017 fasilitoimaani draamatyöpaja-sarjaa.

Opinnäytetyöni pääargumentti on että luomisprosessi johtaa väistämättä muutokseen ja täten draamaprosessi on väistämättä radikaali. Tämä opinnäytetyö pyrkii näyttämään, että teatteri-ilmaisun ohjaajan ei tarvitse pelätä vaikeuksien, politiikan ja radikaaliuden tunnistamista työssään, sekä rohkaista teatteri-ilmaisun ohjaajia olemaan äänekkäitä, rohkeita, ja hiukan röyhkeitäkin.

Opinnäytetyöni muita lähteitä ovat Richard Schechnerin *Performance studies: An introduction* sekä Colin Counsellin ja Laurie Wolfin editoima *Performance Analysis - an introductory course book*.

### ASIASANAT:

Radikaali pedagogia, soveltava teatteri, vaikeudet, riski, radikaali tila, draamatyö, prosessidraama, draamaprosessi, esitystaide, esittävä taide

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

bell hooks	The correct spelling of the writers pseudonym is without capital letters (hooks, b. 1988. <i>Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black</i> )
RCS	The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland ( <a href="http://www.rcs.ac.uk">www.rcs.ac.uk</a> )
TIO	Points to the Finnish drama instructor, abbreviation of the word teatteri-ilmaisun ohjaaja
they	Instead of <i>he/she</i>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

During my studies in the Turku Arts Academy a definition of a drama instructor, a TIO, started to form in my mind. TIO is a pedagogical artist, in other words an artist whose arts practice considers different methods and activities of teaching. TIO is a facilitator, a performer, a teacher, an expert. TIO constructs performances in social environments, and uses drama as a tool in order to offer an alternative way of understanding the world and its happenings.

To be a pedagogical artist is to understand how learning takes place in artistic processes. In the beginning of my studies in Turku Arts Academy I did not feel comfortable with pairing artistry and pedagogy together, for I had not experienced pedagogy and arts existing in the same space. Of course my experiences in a youth theatre, and later on in a student theatre, were learning experiences, but in these processes I did not acknowledge the changes I went through as learning. For me pedagogy and learning existed only in classrooms and auditoriums, in places where a Teacher was Teaching the Students and acquiring knowledge from the teacher was the main aim. How could something so free as drama and theatre be pedagogical?

During my studies in Turku Arts Academy I familiarised myself with the theories of Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire and I started understanding how teaching will affect the student and even the society. The feeling of artistry and pedagogy being something that could not exist in the same space started sifting and I found myself considering more often the empowering element of dramawork and performance making.

In autumn 2016 I started my studies as an exchange student in the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland on the Contemporary Performance Practice –programme. During the course of my studies I came across with the term Radical Pedagogy. Something in me opposed this pair of words in the same way I had opposed the term pedagogical artist. Similar kind of questions started flowing to my mind: How could something that aims to give stability in teaching be something that aims to change?

Slowly I started to make a connection between the way radical pedagogies aim to look at facilitation and teaching and why in my youth I felt that there was no apparent pedagogy in my drama education. It was because I was not forced to learn and because the people in these learning processes were free to express their experience. The

processes were empowering and completely different than the experience I had of learning in a classroom. After a while of studying I realised that radical pedagogy is not just one theory of learning, radical pedagogy is an umbrella term for pedagogies that aim to political or social change. One of the most known radical pedagogies is the Pedagogy of the Oppressed created by Paulo Freire. Even though Freire's work is ground breaking, this thesis is dedicated to shed light to the modern classics after Freire, thus I will discuss radical pedagogy mainly through Dorothy Heathcote's essay *Drama as an process of change* and bell hooks's essay *Towards Revolutionary Feminist Pedagogy*.

This thesis explores radical pedagogy and gives an overlook to what radical pedagogy is, what are the benefits of using radical pedagogy in dramawork and how to create radical spaces. For the purposes of this thesis I use the term *politics* in a wider sense. Politics does not mean just party politics. Politics is not only about who voted for whom and why. Having a politic means that a person is aware that their actions reflect a certain ideology. Every action has an effect on this world. By acknowledging that we carry the opportunities to change in ourselves, and that we are allowed to show up, be loud, and have an opinion, we start to create situations in which barriers are broken. Conversation is the only thing that is needed for a politic to show. And we should not be afraid of it. Creating radical spaces where conversations happen in a way that allows everyone to have a voice is what leads to empowerment.

## 2 WHAT IS RADICAL PEDAGOGY?

The Cambridge Dictionary defines the word radical in following ways:

believing or expressing the belief that there should be great or extreme social or political change

or:

a person who supports great social and political change

(8.2.18 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/radical> )

With this logic Radical pedagogy is a pedagogy that aims to “great or extreme social or political change”.

In her essay *Drama as a process of change* Dorothy Heathcote gathers three ideas that a teacher who wants to use drama tools in their classroom should never abdicate from. These three ideas support the ideology of radical pedagogies and I will use these ideas to outline what radical pedagogy is and what are its aims. Dorothy Heathcote is a true legend in classroom drama work and her work has influenced generations of teachers to use drama as a tool in education.

The first idea Heathcote presents is that the pupils are human, not ideas or manifestations of facts. This argument supports the ideology of radical pedagogy. People are people not resources. In dramawork the teacher is using the human conditions of the students, so the teacher has to use the pupils as they really are (Heathcote, Prenki, Preston, 2008, 202). This idea is quite straight forward. It implies that the teacher has to understand that the attitudes, the ideas and philosophies that the pupils carry with them will come apparent in a drama process, and that those attitudes, ideas and philosophies might not be suitable for the process that the teacher had in mind. This means that the teacher has to be able to understand that humanness is present in drama. Discussion will happen. People will have different opinions, interpretations. Plans will not come to fruition in a way that was planned. Even though the teacher is the power figure in the classroom, they will have to stay humble and not use their power to enforce a strict plan. Because drama work involves working with our imagination, everyone’s process will automatically be different. The teacher cannot assume any creative outcomes.



The second idea that Heathcote speaks about is about distortion. According to Heathcote “You can not make drama sound academic. The academic aspect is there, with all the bias, the distortion that people bring to it. Their readiness to change, of course, is part of this” (Heathcote, Prenki, Preston, 2008, 202). The teacher should not be afraid of creating distortion in the community, for drama cannot be seen academic. Still it has a place within the school building. As noted before, drama requires change, and a drama process might be completely different way of learning than a basic lesson. The class will be different and it might not seem academic because of the distortion. Once again this idea of disturbance and distortion outlines something true to radical pedagogy: learning and teaching is not easy. Learning is a process and by acknowledging that change is what makes us understand our growth, we give emphasis on the personal journey of change. Radical pedagogy is not about changing the world with grand gestures; radical pedagogy aims provide processes of self-realization and inner change. In the bigger scale this will lead to political and societal change, but only through the realizations the individuals have had, not because of a particular syllabus.

As bell hooks explains (1989, 47) teacher’s commitment to the idea of selfrealization is necessary and fundamentally radical. To create atmospheres where this kind of teaching is “accepted and used in a best way possible is radical pedagogy” (hooks, 1989). hooks’s pedagogy takes a feminist approach to teaching. Instead of acting as a power figure - the one with most knowledge - the teacher acts as an advocate of criticality and creativity. By seeing the ideas as not neutral, that ideas are subject to change and that learning is at its best when the student can discover freely how to come to a conclusion, the teacher allows change without domination (hooks, 1989, 47).

This kind of radicality acknowledges the different politics - discourses - and does not treat them as something trivial. It accepts and challenges everyone in the classroom and creates opportunities for change. Radical pedagogy tries to rise above those learning patterns utilise domination and provide something that is always evolving, changing, and will give the pupils a sense of self.

Dorothy Heathcote states: “The third area that you are going to be involved with is fighting for form to give shape to these ideas, so that as the shape is fought for and crystallized there is more reflective energy available in your groups of students” (Heathcote, Prenki, Preston, 2008, 202). This notion is the most important one for a TIO. Different forms of creating, games and tasks, will need to be held in a bigger form. This is the form that the facilitator brings with them. The classical class room setting - the teacher in the front of

the room and the students sitting behind their desks – is a form of learning, and carries all the learned ways of studying. However, if a TIO wants to brake the hierarchy of the classroom, just changing the order in the room will give a suggestion for a new form. Usually something else is also needed, in order to keep the students engaged. The framework of choosing a theme or an re-occurring object or character will offer a form. This allows the space for the creative to emerge, but the fascilitator needs to keep fighting that the form is not lost. The pupils will have more power, and they will use it. The struggle is to find the shape which can contain all ideas.

“Most specifically, I understood from the teachers in those segregated schools that the work of any teacher committed to the full self-realization of students was necessarily and fundamentally radical, that ideas were not neutral, that to teach in a way that liberates, that expands consciousness, that awakens, is to challenge domination at its very core. It is the pedagogy that Paolo Freire calls “education as the practice of freedom”

(hooks, 1989, 50)

What is the freedom that radical pedagogy aims to achieve? Radical pedagogies all around the world speak about the freedom from oppression. To be free of any oppressive power structures that are visible in our world and classrooms - racism, patriarchy, financial inequality, homophobia, sexism - in order to speak and act with out oppression is the freedom that radical pedagogies aim to accomplish. The teacher’s role as a political character is crucial in order to execute radical pedagogy. The teacher has to be able to critic these power structures and the teachers have to be ready to be critiqued by their students.

In a learning process that uses radical pedagogy as it core values the student is challenged to find their own voice. To give opportunities to speak one’s mind is one of the corner stones of radical pedagogy, but it is not only the action of speaking but the feeling of being influential and being influenced that might give the student the feeling of empowerment. To offer someone a sense of self becomes the most valuable learning objective.

### 3 WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF RADICAL PEDAGOGY

#### Empowerment

In September 2016 I started my exchange studies in The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in the Contemporary Performance Practice programme. After a while as an exchange student I was offered a chance to stay. I took that chance and continued my studies to the second year in Glasgow. As a part of the second year's Social Practice Studies at RCS, my year group was working in Oakwood Primary school, in Easterhouse, Glasgow. Easterhouse is one of the more underprivileged areas in the East of Glasgow. The pupils of Oakwood Primary School are a mix of children coming from different vulnerable backgrounds.

The aim of this learning experience was to enforce our skills as facilitators and social practitioners. We were to design a series of workshops aimed to Primary 6 groups – children between the age of 10 and 11. We were to theme our drama process with a theme that would interest us as well as the pupils. Our group of five performance students chose the theme of winter, for we felt that winter could carry many different meanings and stories and would be an interesting thing to study.

"Radical pedagogy aims to change, and it will support it", said one of our teachers Gary Gardiner at the start of the project, and it made me think long and hard. What is it that I am trying to change? Can I change anything? What will a drama workshop change in a 11-year-old's life and how can I support it?

As students leading children in a drama process we chose that the focus on the process would be to find moments of empowerment, whilst making the performance, in order to not feel like we are enforcing the change. Radical pedagogy is not about making someone learn – it is about creating situations that encourage those voices that usually stay quiet to come to life. Even the facilitator has to be willing to change in order to allow real change happen.

One moment has stuck with me as a perfect example of empowerment. During the very first workshop we set our group a task of writing down an answer to a question: "What keeps you warm?". These answers were to be presented in front of the whole class, but before the performative moment we went through everyone's answers to have a little

conversation about the topic. The group was quiet to begin with, but one boy, Norman, was especially shy to speak and for an understandable reason: he had a speech defect. When it was his turn to tell his answer to the question, Norman first just shook his head. He was not going to share his answer. His classmates started speaking for him, telling that he is a shy boy and never speaks.

We told to the pupils that in this process everyone will speak for themselves because we want to hear their lovely voices. We encouraged everyone to think that there is no right answers, and that we were to investigate together in order to create a performance. We told that sometimes there is no answer at all and it is fine not to have one but if so, we need them to tell us. We wanted to make it clear that the group had responsibility of themselves, and that we would listen. In Norman's case I can not know the situation for sure, but I can take an educated guess that teachers and people around rarely took the time to actually listen and wait that he finished a sentence, at least that was the impression that the little boy gave when he first was given a chance to speak. Others' willingness to help was not actually helping him. We wanted to make sure that he and every one else would be heard in a way that they normally were not.

Bell Hooks writes in her essay *Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness* in the following way:

Often this speech about the "other" annihilates, erases: "No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way."

(hooks, 1990, 145-53)

This notion of the "other", is something that radical pedagogy tries to acknowledge. Inherently we are different - everyone of us - but power structures are not born with people, they are created by people. Power structures create the 'us and them' thinking by placing other higher in the pecking order than others. In radical process there is no 'other' – there is a willingness of being free from oppressing power structures that can manifest in attitudes, assumptions and words. By acknowledging that a teacher or a facilitator has a certain power in the classroom the teachers' main task has to shift from being the superior source of intelligence and information to leading the pupils through the process and creating space for moments of self-actualization. In a radical process

the aim is to give everyone the opportunity to have a voice – their own. We could not make Norman speak if he did not want to, but we could understand his position and make sure that we as facilitators would not assume his willingness or ability to speak.

After the little speech in Oakwood, we came back to Norman and asked the question again. He seemed surprised that he was the center of sudden attention. We as facilitators were not sure what would happen, but we kept the group waiting in a soft, accepting silence until it felt right to ask softly again. This time he gave his answer but you could not hear his voice, so quietly he was speaking. The other students started talking during his speech, which we cut off by saying: “Please can we keep quiet, Norman has something to say”. After couple of conversational questions his confidence was growing. The fact that we demanded the answers but made it clear that there were no wrong answers and that it was not so serious if you could not come up with something immediately seemed to help every one to relax and share their thoughts. The conversation took a deeper level and soon everyone wanted to share ideas and memories.

Reflecting back, it would have been easy to just let the moment slip. Some times when facilitating it feels easier to not to start causing distortion. Unfortunately the facilitator of a drama process can not sit still and let the situation just continue. If the aim is to engage the participants, the facilitator has to be engaged in their own values and politics and their practice. The task is not easy, but one must try. Other wise the process is far from a radical process.

During the rest of the process at Oakwood we tried to support this quiet group by giving the pupils chances to actually use their voices in ways that the usual schoolwork does not require. For example one day we went out to the woods with the group and shouted our wishes for next winter in the wind. Sometimes during warm up we shouted together so hard that the windows started shaking. The idea was to show to the pupils that – yes – they can make sound even though in many places it is not allowed be loud, and that they do have a voice.

Dramawork offers these kinds of moments to the participants. Through a drama exercise one can actually see the change in their environment through their own action. Dorothy Heathcote speaks (2008, 200) about how the most important manifestation about drama is that it must show change. In Oakwood our group went through the process of creating a performance and rehearsing skills needed in the performance: they worked through a

problem. They struggled and tried and found some easement. They changed something and changed themselves. The little moments where the normal hierarchy of the classroom was broken seemed to be the most empowering moments for the pupils. After those moments the reflections were the brightest, the most articulate and the most honest. Their learning in those moments was not of a certain topic; the learning that happened was of the moment and their reflections a great part of the actual learning object: to re-inforce the sense of self.

Drama work that acknowledges that the classroom is filled with struggle and thus is political can offer processes of self realization through creation. When a pupil is given the chance to brake the norms of the classroom, they get a glimpse of their own ability to affect. Adding drama work in the syllabus, and teaching teachers more about of the benefits of would create more chances of self-realization in our schools for the pupils and help to fight the loss of empathy in our society.

Performing arts in its diversity can change views, politics and the world. But it is not theatre or drama that creates the change, it is the act of using ones imagination and presenting ideas, becoming something else for a while, seeing other realities. The human creates the change in drama.

Even a small moment of empowerment can give a person the feeling that they have the control over their lives, which influences all aspect of their lives. Even though art has many positive effects, it is not art in itself that has the power of changing the world. Art is art. It is not a force that magically changes people. People change people. To be included in a creative process will give new ideas for the participant and perhaps change how they see the world and give them the power to influence it differently. To witness artwork happening can be eye opening and create discussion on topics that otherwise would not be reached.

## **Awareness**

The focus on text book based learning in schools puts pressure to students to excel in answering questions with knowledge that is learned by heart, not by experimentation. It creates an atmosphere in which those who have the ability to conform easily to the methods used have a status of a higher class. Those pupils who are not as efficient in gathering knowledge by reading as the high achievers are, are usually those who start

to question the teacher's way of teaching by objecting the teacher's methods. Because the lack of time and resources in classes, the teachers often do not have any other way of taking control of the class room than to use their authority. The hierarchy that is created in these situations is something that has taught us that as long as we just shut up, try our best and just read our text books, we do not get into trouble.

Looking back on my own education, I feel that in my case it would have been beneficial if my teachers would have encouraged us to have conversations in a way that supports learning. What could we be if everyone would be encouraged to actively interact with the world that we live in and learn how it works by doing things, not by reading about doing things?

In a radical process the participant will have to take action, they will have to say something. They will have to express their opinion. In a radical drama process the emphasis is on the performativity of opinions, the emphasis is on the creative ways of expressing and conveying ideas and emotions. Radical process will make the participant aware of what they think of the topics that are being investigated.

To help people find their voice and what they believe in, is bigger than drama. Finding one's voice is bigger than drama, or theatre or art, and it is needed for creation to happen. If a person does not feel the urgency of speaking or expressing themselves, if they feel that their opinion does not matter, they will shut down, unwind, and stay deflated. And that is depressing if something.

In text book based learning we learn to quote other people, and it might happen that we forget to think what we actually think of the subject ourselves. Every one of us carries valuable experiences that – when shared - can teach others to think differently, know how to do new things, and see from different perspectives. Finding one's voice means that the person finds out what matters to them; in a sense it is about becoming more aware of different discourses and politics around us.

Personal politics work as a mirror that provides a picture of the world that we want to live in. By being clear about our politics, about our views and beliefs, we create an atmosphere where conversation can happen, and where different voices can speak in harmony. In a radical process conversation is the most important part of the process, for it is in conversation when one can have the feeling of having a voice. It is notable to see that conversation can happen without words. A conversation can be had between a dancers' moving body and piece of music playing.

We all have our views of our experiences, and different ways of communicating those experiences. In the process of creating a performance TIO can utilise the experience of the ensemble by offering a process that allows the participants use those experiences as human beings as creative material. A supportive process gives the participants the feeling of being able to create the work they need and want. A supportive process offers different possibilities to communicate experiences, thus challenging the participants to offer their opinion to the space. By communicating these experiences the participants will get a feeling of how their beliefs relate to the world.

Making performance is tied to the culture and the communities of the performance maker, and so inevitably enters the arena of ideology (Counsell, Wolf, 31, 2001). It is inevitable that a performance carries and ideology - even though the maker is not aware of the ideology. If performance is seen as restored behaviour - behaviour that aims to repeat something that happened earlier - every action taken has its roots in the world outside that performance.

According to Richard Schechner (2006, 22-23) performance can mean for example ritual, play, sports, popular entertainment, theatre, dance, performance art, and political performance (demonstrations). All of these forms of performance that Schechner describes can be understood in relation to "being" "doing" "showing doing" and "explaining showing doing" (Schechner, 2006, 28). Performance as an art form is mostly related to the "doing" and "showing doing"; in these forms of existence, the one existing is projecting something in the space. They are performing something that they want to communicate for the people around them.

If all aspects of life can be seen as the performance of humanity, we can see ourselves as bodies performing 'the human'. This creates an atmosphere where every action we take is a creative expression. All the different ways of communicating have developed in the human interactions. Every action has a reaction. Every action can be recreated, reinterpreted, every action can be a performance. Every action is a manifestation of an inner thought, every action is political. Thus every performance is political. Why should a performance maker ever forget that their ideologies and actions are rooted in humanity, to our humanness? Radical processes will question the beliefs, ideologies and actions of the participants, and this questioning will lead into raised awareness.



## 4 HOW TO CREATE RADICAL SPACES

After all this talk of what radical pedagogy is and how one can benefit of it, the following question is apparent: how to create radical spaces? In this following chapter I will present some of the practices mentioned in bell hook's essay *Toward a Revolutionary Feminist Pedagogy*.

A radical space is an active space. A radical space invites to be active and take action.

Feminist education – The feminist class room – is and should be a place where there is a sense of struggle, where there is visible acknowledgement of the union of theory and practice, where we work together as teachers and students to overcome estrangement and alienation that have become so much the norm in the contemporary university.

(bell hooks, 1989, 51)

In this quote hooks speaks of feminist pedagogy, but a wider term could also be used: radical pedagogy. Feminism aims to change and is a radical movement, therefore the feminist class room hooks is describing is a radical space. Acknowledgement of struggle is the key ingredient in creating radical spaces. Simple actions can be taken in order to acknowledge struggle. What is this struggle? The struggle that hooks refers to is the struggle to gain women's rights, but it is not the only struggle present. Every one of us has a personal struggle, it can be social struggle of being able to express an alternative way of living and loving, it can be a financial struggle, a struggle against addiction, a struggle to find a purpose in life or a struggle with racial inequality.

A good example of acknowledging struggle is the practice of asking everyone's pronouns. It is good practice to be aware that we all are not the same. By acknowledging that there is an alternative to the traditional way of thinking we include those who might feel excluded.

The idea of acknowledging struggle means also the acknowledgement of societal structures. In our project in Oakwood Primary we struggled as facilitators to find a way of acknowledging the struggle that would be suitable for a younger crowd. We came to the conclusion that we, as facilitators, can not go into the classroom and start to 'heal' the pupils. It is not the workshop leaders task or role to 'heal' or 'fix' the community they are working with. Our task was to try to create an atmosphere where we acknowledged

that the struggles we associated with this demographic might not be the struggles that were apparent. In other words we needed to start from a blank slate and give space to the pupils to let their struggle to show. In a radical space one has to challenge their assumptions and prejudices all the time, in order to give themselves the chance to change their views. This applies especially to the facilitators. By letting go of our presumptions, we create space for new observations. Bell Hooks writes: "To make a revolutionary feminist pedagogy, we must relinquish our ties to traditional ways of teaching that reinforce domination. This is very difficult" (hooks 1989, 52).

In order to relinquish our ties to traditional ways of teaching we need to relinquish our ties to our assumptions regarding ourselves, the society and the people we work with, Only then it is possible to build something from scratch and create something new, something that is created together, something that acknowledges that everyone struggles in their own way. By having open conversations about topics that usually are left to the shadows we will enter the muddy territory of liminalities. A liminal space is not here or there, it is the limbo between binaries. Where does the sea start and the beach end?

According to hooks (1989, 52) the first step to shift the power structures in the classroom and reshape the class room as a space free of domination is to '*focus on the teacher student relationship and the issue of power*'. The teacher or the facilitator is a power figure, and the role brings a certain position. In a radical space the teacher or facilitator acknowledges the struggle and actively looks for solutions to ease these struggles. A radical space is not radical because of the subjects discussed or represented in the space in the space are radical. Action is what makes the space radical. A question might be more radical than an answer. When facilitating the leader of the process can show where to look and, in some cases, what to look for but in the end the choice is the students whether they look to the pointed way.

In a radical process, or space the teacher does not assume the position of the most knowledgeable, vice versa, as a part of the radical process the teacher acknowledges that they do not have all the answers (hooks, 1989). Hooks writes about the importance of being clear that the willingness of being open and honest of what the teachers does not know is a gesture of respect for the students. This kind of openness leaves the teachers vulnerable for it may seem that they are unprepare. (hooks, 1989, 51.) This willingness of being vulnerable and ready to be confronted should always be apparent in a radical space.

Drama is a tool to get to know oneself and during the process of learning about drama and learning through drama the teachers most certainly does not have the answers. When facilitating a drama work shop the teacher has to acknowledge that the responses to the tasks will vary from student to student. Everyone is individual and the conversations about the topics at hand will depend on who is present. The facilitators role is to lead the conversation by asking questions and by trying to engage everyone to the conversation. The radicality of the pedagogy means that the questions might be provoking. A radical process in drama is a process of personal change and this means that the facilitator or teacher needs to create opportunities for moments of engagement and experimentation.

These kind of moment are the action that makes the space radical . In the process at Oakwood Primary, one of our very first works shops involved every one, one by one, climbing on top of on of the school desks and performing a sentence that they had prepared earlier. The seemingly small decision to use the school desk as a platform for performing, transferred the space. It was not just a classroom any more. Of course the pupils were not allowed to stand on the school desks on a regular day! By deciding to throw that rule away, we established a new rule that transformed the classroom into an experimental playground. We showed that it is alright to think differently and from that moment on the pupils started to bend the rules of the class room everytime we had a work shop.

hooks argues (1989, 54) that a revolutionary feminist pedagogy cannot be achieved without revolutionary feminists in the classroom. In the context of radical spaces this arguments can be read as following: "Radical people create radical spaces". Well who are these radical people? And the answer is: everyone. The biggest challenge for the facilitator is to recognize the moments of personal radicality, those moments when someone goes beyond their usual limitations and then nourish the growth that happens to the individual the moment of self-actualization.

In her essay hooks describes some of her classes and how she does not let any one out from reading outloud paragraph that explore a particular issue. She tells that this makes her more aware of the information the students may not know, but she can provide. Reading outloud is also a method to give the students a sense of voice. In order to get a sense of pupils needs, she tries to talk to them either individually or in smaller groups. (hooks, 1989) These simple actions, practices, immediately change the student teacher

relationship. Hooks asks: "How can we transform consciousness if we do not have some sense of where the students are intellectually, psychically?" (hooks, 1989).

Creating a radical space requires the willingness to risk. In a drama context, for example whilst creating a performance, the facilitator might have to take risks and experiment with topics and practices. This experimentalism might feel unsafe, difficult and frightening to the participant, especially if they are new to this kind of practice. For this reason it is important that the terms of the learning and the process are clear to the participant. Hooks suggests (1989, 53) the facilitator to talk about pedagogical strategy, so every one knows a bit better what to expect. This talk works like a contract between the facilitator and the participant and it allows recognition of the methods later on, reassuring the the participant of purpose even when at times the process might not feel purposeful.

To create a radical space for learning and creating is a challenge. To quote hooks: "We must be willing to restore the spirit of risk – to be fast, wild, to be able to take hold, turn around, transform" (hooks, 1989, 54).

## 5 THE FEAR OF BEING POLITICAL

Using radical pedagogy in a process of creating performance is not an easy task. bell hooks speaks (1989, 50) about how she encourages students to speak up in atmospheres where they may be afraid or see themselves at risk. This notion of overcoming the fear of being loud, and taking a risk is at the core of radical pedagogy. The fear of having an opinion and representing something comes from the fear of being the 'other'. So many of us are afraid of being different or not belonging that we keep quiet in the fear. This fear is the worst of oppressors.

In an article *The Authentic teacher* Dorothy Heathcote writes: "Drama uses the person to bring it [the drama] into being". She continues by describing how the participator shapes the future of the drama situation "and in shaping the circumstance's future, the child's future is shaped, ready to be available in the real society". (Heathcote 198, 1991.) Heathcote talks about drama in education, but this notion underlines the fact that the role of the facilitator, the teacher or the leader of a dramatic process is political, whether or not it is the intention of the person.

The fear of being political is a struggle that the facilitator will face. If the facilitator does not name their beliefs or if they do not dare to acknowledge that they do not know everything the process might not reach the desired depth. If the process facilitated does not go into depth with the topics, how can the end result show depth, or have something new to offer? If the process is shallow, so will the end result be.

The political of the performance maker exists in the creative choices. I argue that for today's performance maker the importance of making conscious creative decisions, and creating processes of empowerment and realisation becomes more important than the attempt of mastering all the possible different disciplines. This is the reason why radical pedagogy is such a valuable way of looking into education. In radical pedagogy the discipline of awareness is the most desirable. By being aware that the process of creating new knowledge - or a performance or anything creative - is a process filled with struggle, it is possible to acknowledge the existence of differences. When given space all these differences can grow to represent themselves and have an authentic voice.

The aim of seeing the political - acknowledging the struggle - will help to create performances that go beyond self-indulgence, performances that try to find new

territories, performances that try to find connections between the mystical and the ordinary and the artist and the community. Understanding that every action carries a meaning - thus making every action political – helps to convey meaning through performance.

Learning to discuss about our differences - learning to disagree in a constructive way - allows the creative process to breathe. When the participants do not value their opinions or experiences as good or bad - when opinions are just opinions and experiences just experiences - the discussion and the creation is free from judgement and oppressions.

TIO who leads workshops, creates performances, texts and learning experiences has the pressure of presenting valuable and correct information: What is valuable information and how can one ever choose the right source for their information? Whose truth is the right one? How can one lead a work shop in a way that is structured, informative but still interesting and ethical?

We can confront ideas and concepts in a way that defies hierarchy. The one with the most information is not anymore the leader, they are just one source of information amongst others and we can discuss issues in a critical and constructive way. There is no need to be afraid of the risk or the struggle for it is the struggle that defines us and gives us purpose.

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