Theatre as a tool for engagement with the curriculum in an empathic educational environment

Application of theatre principles into school design

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Abstract

The thesis aims to explore the possibilities of incorporating theatrical principles into education design in order to provide a common world for children coming from all corners of the planet, while fostering confidence, mutual understanding and respect. Such educational space should spark creativity, spatial awareness and courage to experiment with the environment producing flexible individuals who accept life as ongoing and in constant flux. Thus we will examine methods of TIE (theatre in education) movement whose achievements were summarized by an educationalist Paulo Freire: ''The best TIE work increasingly offered a view of the world as 'a reality in process' (Freire, 1972, p. 56) that the pupils would be empowered to objectify and question.'' (Wooster, 2016, p. 68)
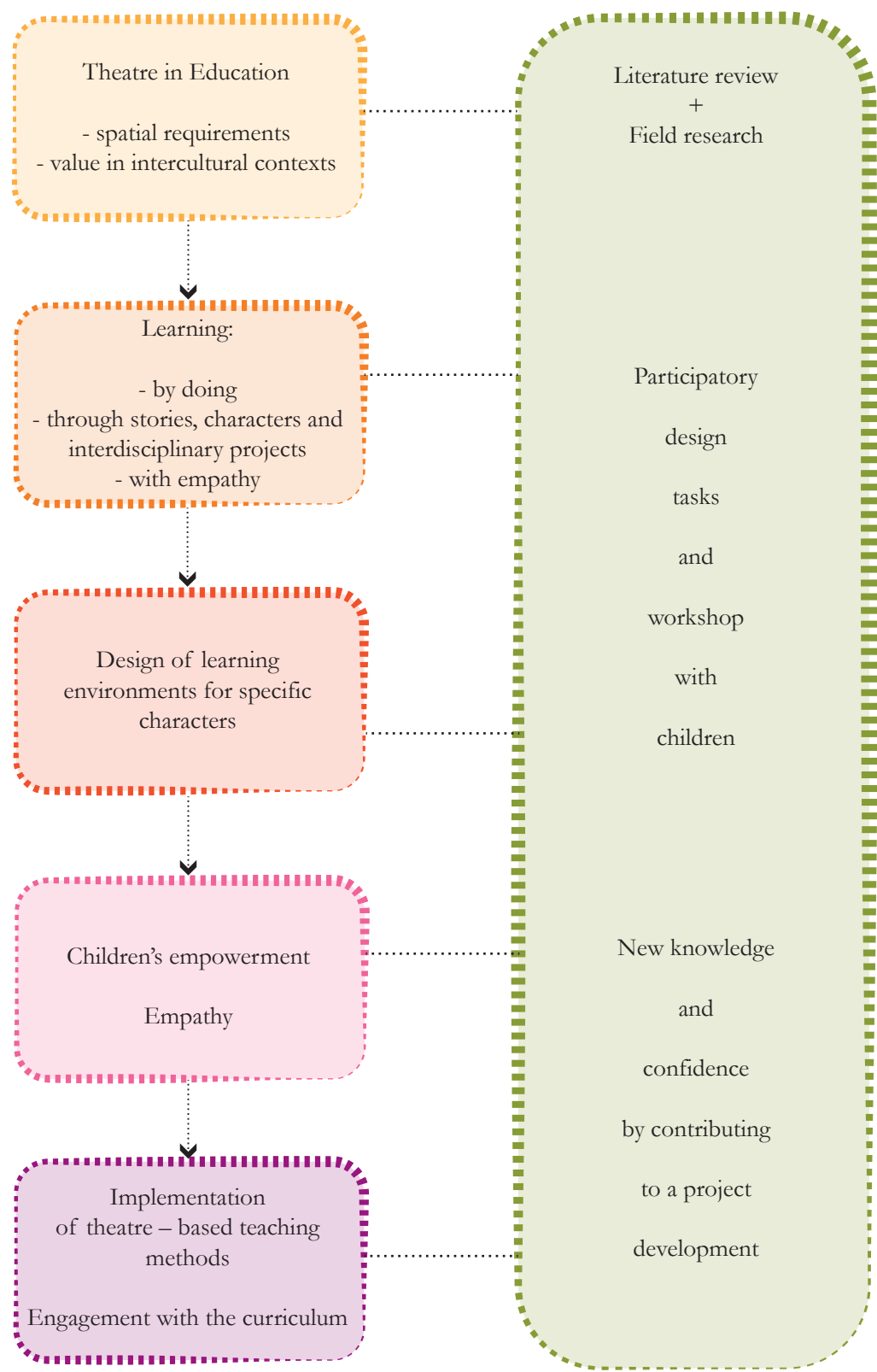
In theatre, space comes alive thanks to the interaction of people with it. Based on this principle, architectural elements can be manipulated by humans, restoring their relationship with the tangible world in an increasingly virtual environment. This option strengthens the belief that each individual is responsible for creation of their own world, having a chance to change it even if coming from difficult circumstances. Therefore community participation in modification of the built environment is, I believe, a key method of integrating different cultures into a whole. The temporality of space that can be animated by human activity, always offers one a choice of expression. This right should be nurtured from a youngest possible age.

The research feeds into a studio design project – The Intercultural School in Lisbon, located on a waterfront in the vicinity of the most multicultural neighbourhood Mouraria. The project attempts to tackle integration of a high immigrant population in Portugal and use the school to create an empathic community with the help of theatre-based methods.

In order to test the findings and filter the research question through the children's minds, drawing tasks were assigned to pupils from my former Primary School L.Novomeskeho, Kosice in Slovakia in the course of the project development. Moreover, a two-day workshop was conducted with the pupils from 1.C class in April 2017 with the aim of presenting and interacting with the project by using theatre-based educational techniques in practice. Findings from the workshop will further inform the design project, thus establishing a constant idea exchange between the children and myself.

Word count: 9823

Fig 1 - Areas covered by the document and their relationships

Theatre in Education

- spatial requirements
- value in intercultural contexts

Learning:

- by doing
- through stories, characters and interdisciplinary projects
- with empathy

Design of learning environments for specific characters

Children's empowerment

Empathy

Implementation
of theatre – based teaching methods

Engagement with the curriculum

Literature review
+
Field research

Participatory

design

tasks

and

workshop

with

children

New knowledge

and

confidence

by contributing

to a project

development

Foreword

The thesis has been completed in the final year of a Masters course MArch at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. It tackles a topic of the implementation of theatre practices into school design and their advantages in a multicultural setting. The research has been conducted with the assistance of professionals from Education, Theatre and Architecture fields. Therefore, I would like to thank class teachers from my former Primary School L.Novomeského 2, Košice in Slovakia - Dáša Sojková (1.C), Dana Kováčová (3.C) and Ľudmila Medvecová (4.A), for their help in assigning the drawing tasks to their pupils in the course of three months. Special thanks belong to Dáša Sojková, who helped me conduct the workshop with her class 1.C consisting of twenty first grade children and who supervised all the activities. I would also like to thank Ella MacFadyen, a schools' relationship manager at the Unicorn Theatre for providing me with feedback materials related to workshops and teachers' training sessions linked to the Iron Man play. Moreover, I would like to thank my thesis tutor Simon Carter for his advice and constructive criticism while developing this project.
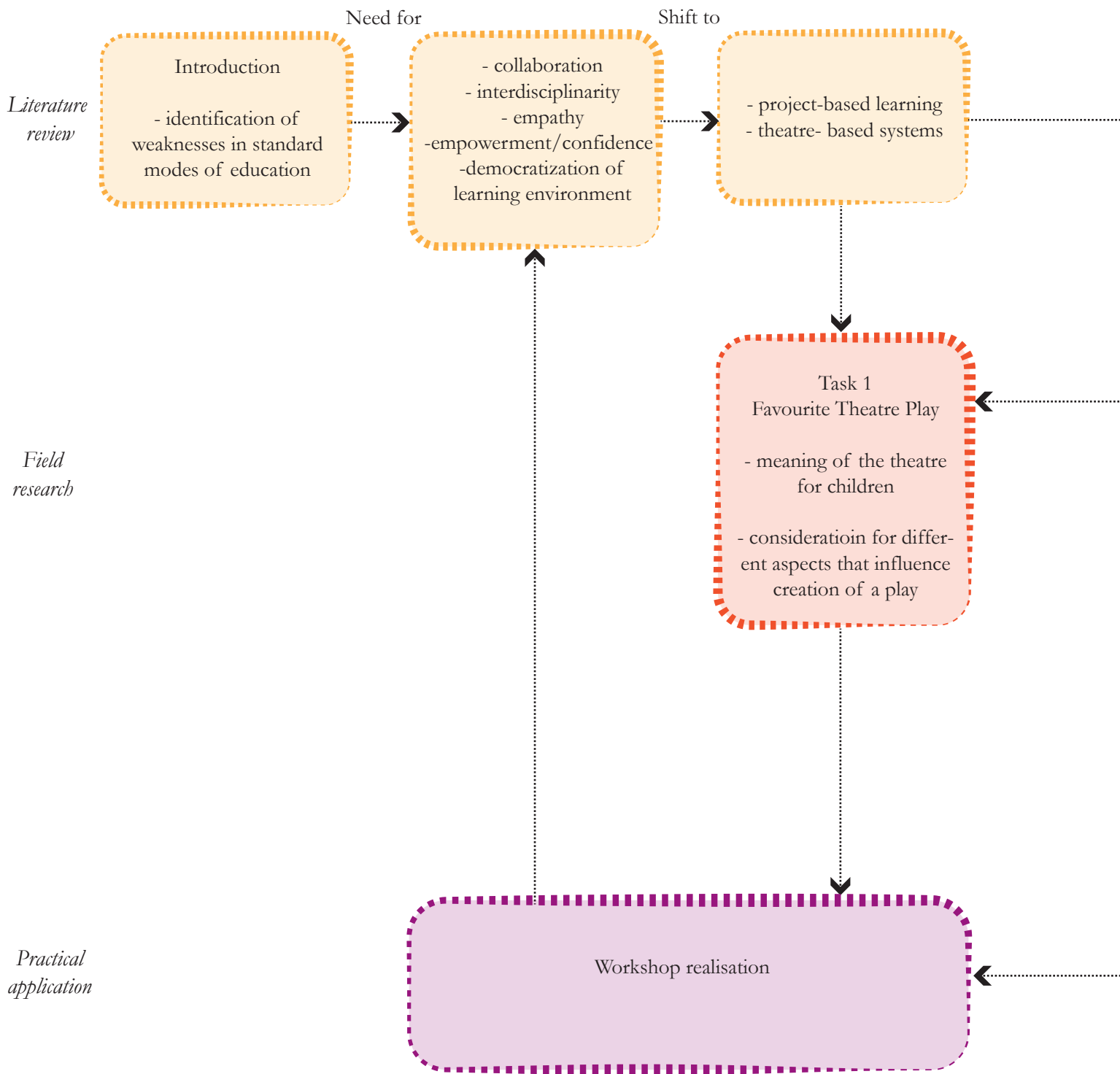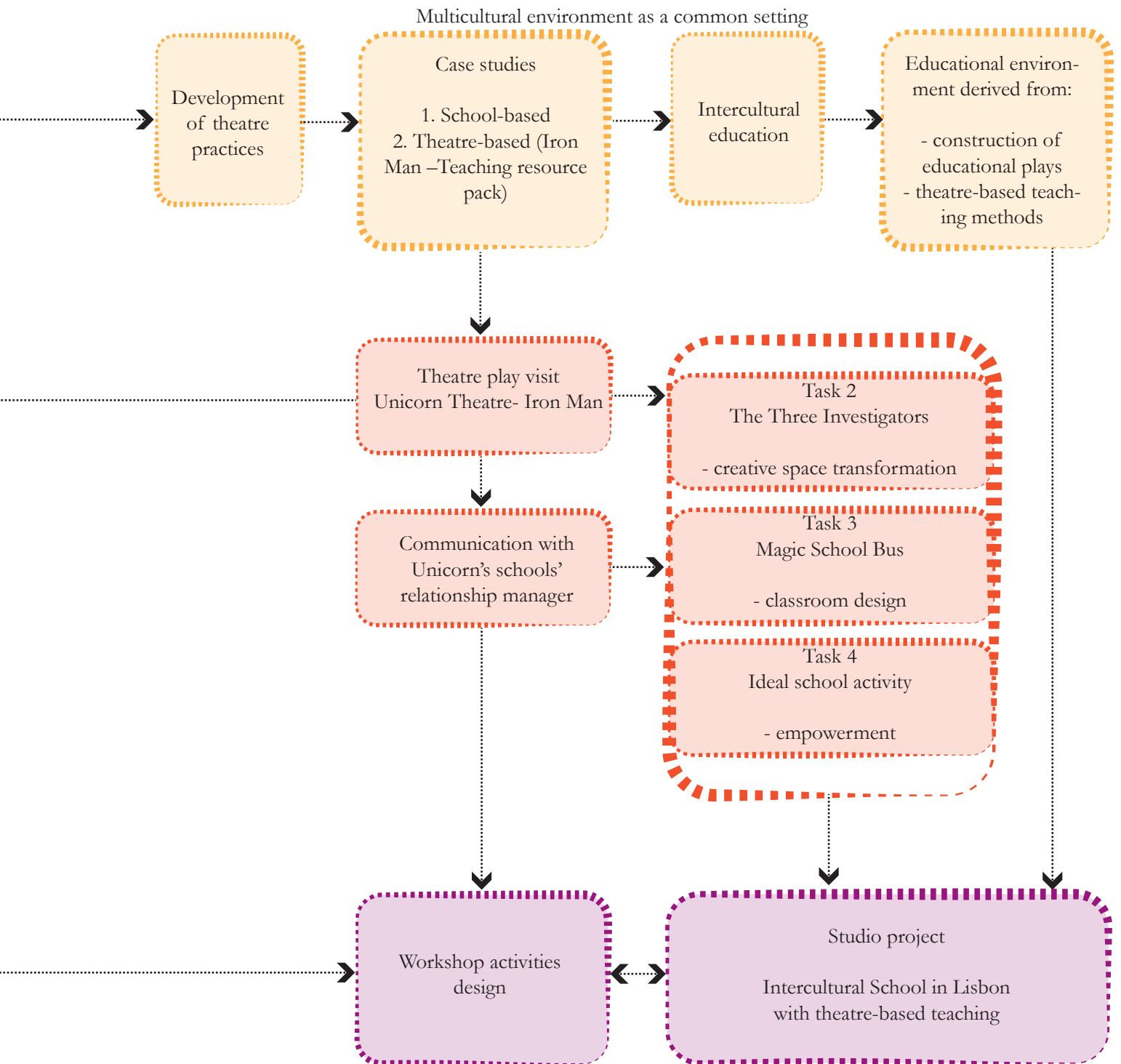
Ethics

The research was conducted in accordance with UCL Research Ethics Committee's documents (http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/forms/guidance1.pdf). All the research participants from the Primary School L.Novomeského 2 were made aware of the nature and purpose of the tasks in advance and agreed to take part. The workshop activities with 1.C were approved and supervised at all times by the class teacher Dáša Sojková, who can be contacted via email at daska.sojkova@gmail.com.

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Introduction

In order to ensure a successful information and cultural exchange within a school environment, there is a need for educational strategies facilitating this aim. Sir Ken Robinson, an internationally recognised pioneer in innovative education, brings our attention, in his latest book 'Creative Schools', to the faults of the currently most prevalent educational models. He points out that public education in developed countries has been based on industrial principles in the nineteenth century as a means of producing factory workers taught to conform and fulfil repetitive tasks without questioning them (2016, pp. XIV,XV). However, as opposed to mass produced goods, pupils cannot be organised linearly performing tasks within equal time segments with a strictly defined age transitions between school stages. Such methods leading towards repetition and compliance, are a basis for a failure of educational models (Robinson, Ken; Aronica, Lou, 2016, pp. 35-37).

As Robinson puts it: "Educating children by age group assumes that the most important thing they have in common is their date of manufacture" (2016, p. 37).

He also criticizes a narrow classification of school subjects and their hierarchy with STEM disciplines at the top and arts and other practical subjects at the bottom, due to an emphasis being put on academic education. Moreover, direct instruction often overshadows interactive projects (2016, p. 12). Way of communication between teachers and pupils in a standard teaching model is again based on a factory principle of " transmission", where the knowledge is directly transmitted from a teacher to a pupil. This principle then translates into a classroom layout with pupils all facing the front looking at a teacher instructing them (OWP/P Architects, VS Furniture, Bruce Mau Design, 2009, p. 56). Robinson thus advocates the importance of a school design when it comes to its influence on teaching methods and subject hierarchy. He emphasizes the necessity to democratize all the curriculum areas, to create spatial connections enabling interdisciplinary teaching and flexible spaces for different learning arrangements (2009, p. 58). Robinson defines education as an "organic" system in which all the parties need to be able to "adapt and evolve" (2016, p. 62).

Since antiquity, there has been a belief, that specific educational processes should take place in specific educational environments that would best facilitate the explanation of the curriculum, states Jan Prucha, a researcher in pedagogy (2002, p. 62). In this thesis we will attempt to address the relationship between the physical environment of a learning space and meanings it can convey, through theatre-based education practices and educational theatre plays.

The word 'play' in Western societies refers to children's activity through which they can learn, but also to theatre pieces, which enable one to learn by watching someone else 'play' in front of an audience. Actors thus practice being in someone else's shoes, thus empathise with them. It will be demonstrated how a child's and theatrical play has been explored in the past in connection with education and advantages such symbiotic relationship can bring into a learning environment (Wooster, 2016, p. 25).

There are two main aspects we will be preoccupied with while establishing links between theatre and education. These are:
1. content of a play
2. aesthetics of a play

How could theatre play principles translate into teaching and physical school environment in order to communicate curriculum and foster empathy among pupils?

Chapter 1:

Theatre-Based Education

Fig 3: Puppet
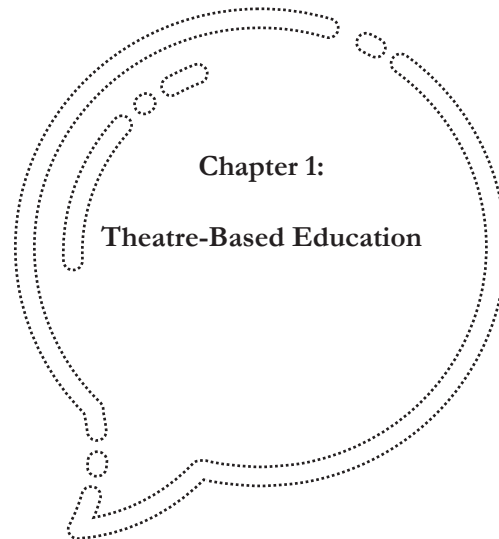
1.1   Historical development

Experiments with theatre in an educational environment always reflect needs of a society in a particular era and attempt to communicate ideas for future social and educational changes (Nicholson, 2009, pp. 12,13). TIE (Theatre in Education) movement was developed in Britain after the Second World War. It was born from a desire for a society with equal opportunities and suitable conditions for future progress. These were mostly facilitated through changes in education systems, thus innovative ideas from theorists and psychologists were sought after (Wooster, 2016, p. 1). As Wooster points out, one of the most advanced pedagogic approaches was the "fusion of child play and theatrical play" (2016, p. 1). Therefore TIE encouraged a child's self-expression within an environment less restrictive than that embodying a standard school system (Nicholson, 2009, p. 14). By 1988, TIE was developing educational plays intrinsically linked to the curriculum and offered to schools for free (Wooster, 2016, p. 4). Nowadays, there are contemporary practices with the same intentions of fostering respect and empowerment to make pupils aware of having the capabilities to improve the world they live in. These include for instance Leeds TIE, Big Brum, Theatre Company Blah Blah Blah and others (Wooster, 2016, p. 8).

The model of TIE was influenced by many educationalists and dramatists. Significant educational theorists included Pestalozzi, Vygotsky, Froebel, Montessori and Dewey (Wooster, 2016, pp. 20,21). Dewey stressed the importance of merging education with the arts as a means of integrating a child's own world into a school (Nicholson, 2009, p. 14). This relationship, according to him, enables children to express their feelings, contributing to a more empathic environment (Dewey, 1934, p. 279).

When it comes to the theatre influences, the techniques of positioning a child into a role or letting them express their opinion were derived from the work of drama practitioners such as Brecht or Boal, who encouraged audience participation (Wooster, 2016, p. 3). Influential drama theorists who combined the aims of pedagogy and theatre, included Harriet Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook (Wooster, 2016, p. 21). Johnson emphasized the link between the aesthetics of a play and its educational value in terms of decisions a child is able to make, thus communicating their own ideas instead of just following a teacher (Finlay-Johnson, 1911). Furthermore, as Wooster points out (2016, p. 32), according to Peter Slade, there was a need to combine the profession of a teacher and that of an actor for TIE to achieve its aims (Slade, 1954).

"...in TIE children are empowered to both spectate and participate and to adopt behaviours outside their intrinsic self and thus to explore new ways of being." (Wooster, 2016, p. 75)

This notion defined the years 1976-90 of TIE's pedagogical maturity. Notable figures included Jerome Bruner, Lev Vygotsky and Dorothy Heathcote. Wooster brings our attention to a common thread in the work of Vygotsky and Heathcote, the technique of providing children with a particular theatrical setting with characters to enable them to build on their existing knowledge within a fictive, therefore safe environment (2016, p. 73). Vygotsky defines it as ZPD- 'Zone of Proximal Development', which a teacher expands by providing a so-called 'scaffolding' to enhance child's knowledge; while Heathcote emphasizes, that a child is thus positioned into a role, that frames the nature of the investigation (Wooster, 2016, p. 72). Her educational model embodying this principle has been termed 'Mantle of the Expert' and we will elaborate on it in the next sections.

1.2   Dorothy Heathcote's theatrical educational model- Mantle of the expert

'Mantle of the expert' (MoE) refers to an educational technique created by Dorothy Heathcote in 1980s. Pupils are given an assignment in a role such as a particular profession that they imagine to have an 'expertise' in. Thus they have an opportunity to examine a problem from a different angle and are required to adopt a way of thinking and behaviour of a particular character who they are representing, thus empathise with them (Taylor, 2016).

Heathcote defines it as follows:
"Expert means opportunity to work at knowledge and master the skills.
Mantle means I declare my calling and live up to what is expected of me in the community."
(Heathcote, 2002, p. 3)

The assignments are akin to running an 'enterprise' thus pupils and teachers share the responsibility for what is delivered. It requires a multitude of different activities including and therefore differs from a standard mode of direct instruction in which a teacher speaks and pupils listen. Another advantage is the possibility of integrating multiple curriculum topics within one project thus enabling children better see connections between the disciplines (O'Toole, et al., 2009, p. 185). On the website ' Mantle of the Expert' compiled by educationalists practicing this teaching method, we can find feedback on the learning outcomes (2016). Teachers attest to the fact that when children learn within a specific context, they are more motivated as they can a see a purpose of their work and gain new life skills. Moreover they confirm that pupils get more excited about the curriculum, it increases their confidence and levels of participation and those from poorer backgrounds can engage better with learning when this method is used (Anon., 2016).

"It provides a powerful and meaningful learning context, engaging pupils at a deep level and developing them as thoughtful, enquiring and empathetic individuals." Class-Teacher, Yr. 1/2 (Anon., 2016)

One pupil summarised the approach as follows: "Instead of lots of lessons it's like one big lesson that teaches us all sorts of things. The teacher makes it very exciting because she pretends to be other people and asks us questions." (Anon., 2016)

Fig 4: MoE in practice - West Denton, Newcastle, 2006

1.21   Case study within a school building – Eltham College of Education

Let us now look at how can such drama-based method be implemented within a school project at the History Centre at Eltham College of Education, Melbourne, Australia.

The College comprising all the classes from kindergarten to the end of high school, was founded in 1974 with an intention of developing innovative teaching focused on interdisciplinarity achieved through narrative and collaborations with drama teachers.   Since then, different subjects have been taught together and the teaching framework built around a common story resulting in a project. Duration of such endeavour varies between a few weeks and a whole term. An environment specific to a project is always built by pupils and teachers, physically transforming the classrooms (O'Toole, et al., 2009, pp. 183-4). History Centre, a specialised space, was designed to accommodate these projects. It consists of a central space connected to four classrooms, enabling cooperation between pupils of different ages and their teachers. The importance of its "built environment" is especially stressed as they create a unit that operates within a certain "theatrical set" specific to each project (O'Toole, et al., 2009, p. 186). This contributes to "building belief" and strengthens building of the community because of all the shared effort that goes into materialising the ideas (O'Toole, et al., 2009, p. 191).

In the project 'St. Rhyio by the Sea', for instance, a fishing village was created on a model of an existing one that the pupils had visited together. It consisted of long pier made out of wooden pallets serving an assembly point, a fishing net displaying handmade underwater life and murals explaining the narrative (O'Toole, et al., 2009, p. 187).

David Warner, Eltham principal, points out that whatever the project, its development serves to blur hierarchical boundaries between pupils and teachers thus creating an empowerment tool. Teachers adopt a so-called "twilight role" defined by Heathcote and akin to a term guide-on-the-side (O'Toole, et al., 2009, pp. 189-90). While teachers are in the "twilight", pupils get a chance to adopt a leading position. Alternatively, when support is necessary, teachers provide help thus "scaffold learning", a termed coined in the Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert model (O'Toole, et al., 2009, p. 191).

Fig 5: Eltham college logo

Chapter 2:

Educational plays

Fig 6: Puppet

2.1   Unicorn Theatre

In contrast to the previous case study of a school incorporating theatre-based teaching methods, there are also theatre companies, who provide educational plays within a purpose built theatre.

An example of such company in London is the Unicorn Theatre. Its ambition to provide a new type of plays for the young, has its roots in TIE of 1940s and 50s while being under a supervision of Caryl Jenner (Harman & Ireland, 2016, p. 17). Nowadays the Unicorn collaborates with numerous schools in London with an intention of "...deepening both teachers' and pupils' understanding of and response to live theatre, whilst providing a rich stimulus for meaningful learning across the curriculum." (MacFadyen, 2016)

Current partnerships include:
1. Eleanor Palmer Primary School, Camden
2. Woodcroft Primary School, Barnet
3. Anson Primary School, Brent
4. Hill Mead Primary School, Lambeth
5. Rokeby School, Newham

Fig 7: Unicorn theatre logo

The common thread between all the schools is their ethnically mixed environment with a large amount of children from low-income families and often with a majority having English as their second language (MacFadyen, 2016). As many teachers from the above mentioned schools state, this is not a characteristic that would fit a typical theatre-goer, therefore such exposure to the arts can have a huge impact. Following testimonials from the school teachers can be accessed through the above cited 'Unicorn Theatre School Case Studies' document compiled by Ella MacFadyen (2016).

Nancy Cummings, a class teacher at Eleanor Palmer, brings our attention to the fact that her pupils enjoyed "... exploring their own feelings and emotions in a safe place, ...contributing to the story and themes of the performance." (2016)

Craig Tallon, a headteacher at Woodcroft, stresses the importance of this partnership when it comes to incorporating creativity into the curriculum (2016).

John Waters, a class teacher at Anson, mentions the "cultural relevance" and increase in "... confidence and independence, a broadening of outlook and experience, improved vocabulary, empathy and understanding for other people." He also applauds the scope of the curriculum Unicorn's performances cover including " ... English, History, PSHE, Religious and Moral Education, Music, etc." (2016)

Becky Lawrence, a deputy headteacher at Hill Mead, points out that the theatre visits impacted on their whole school system as they adopted "learning through theatre". Children are thus encouraged to perceive arts as being intrinsic to their everyday life (2016).

Gerry Canning, a head of drama at Rokeby, says it helped increase pupils' knowledge of theatre and make them see "... links between theatre and the world around them, including ideas about justice, history, choices, politics and identity." (2016)

2.12   Case study within a theatre building – 'The Iron Man'

Having taken interest in how such educational plays are put together and presented, I myself attended one as part of the field research - The Iron Man. The play was constructed together with a resource pack incorporating background information about the story and the making of the theatre piece. The pack also includes various activities for teachers to do with their pupils before and after the show (Greenwood, 2017).

Pre-show activities enable children to familiarize themselves with the story and characters in order to better understand the play when they see it (Greenwood, 2017, p. 9). In an interview with Matthew Robins, the creator, we find out what elements physically construct the play. As he says, the intention was to create a layered environment similar to a "collage" by incorporating "... object manipulation, puppetry, animation, ...choreography and ... singing." (2017, p. 7) Post-show activities then make children consider all the elements the show was composed of and create their own animation as a reaction to that (Greenwood, 2017, p. 9).

Furthermore, I contacted Ella MacFadyen, a schools' relationship manager at the Unicorn Theatre with an intention to get information about how the play and accompanying resources were received by the schools involved. This way I gained access to the feedback on the teachers' training, resources and the theatre visit. Out of 37 attendees, 97.3% came from a government or state funded school and all teachers agreed that the training made them understand the show better, thus motivated them to plan new lessons in response to the play (MacFadyen, 2017, pp. 5,8). A question whether pupils would be brought to see the play to support curriculum work or for other reasons, received 31 confirmations with 1 respondent stating that the reason was an "Experience of theatre for high social deprivation school" (MacFadyen, 2017, pp. 6-7).

Post show survey data showed that out of 31 teachers who had attended the Iron Man with their classes, 87.1% stated that it was important to link the show with the curriculum (MacFadyen, 2017, p. 7). All of them agreed that the show engaged pupils, they enjoyed and understood it (MacFadyen, 2017, p. 9). Concerning the ticket funding, 23.4% was fully sponsored by the school while 63.4% was partly or fully paid by the parents (MacFadyen, 2017, p. 18).


Fig 8: The Iron Man performance

Thus we can observe that thanks to the teachers' training sessions and learning resources that Unicorn provides to schools, deeper understanding of the plays is ensured. In addition, with their play themes suitable for various ages and relaxed performances on offer for children with special needs, they provide every child with a chance to participate.

In conclusion, chapters 1 and 2 demonstrate that both theatre-based approaches to curriculum, school and theatre-based, can be very engaging and beneficial for the pupils, mainly those from culturally diverse backgrounds, who would often otherwise be deprived of a theatre experience. In the next chapter we will explore why theatre could be a useful method of educating in intercultural contexts.

Fig 9: The Iron Man collage

Chapter 3:

Theatre in intercultural education

Fig 10: Puppet
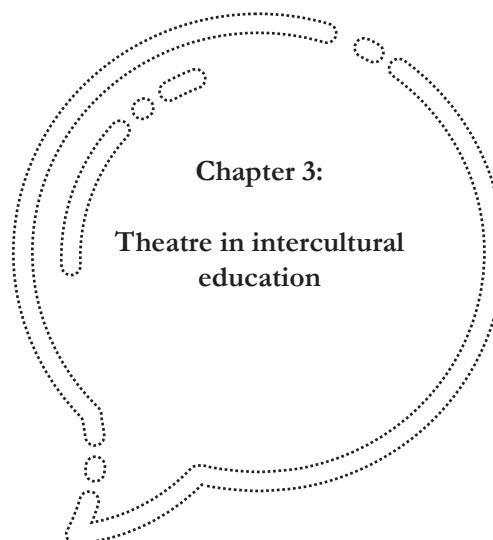
3.1   Intercultural education objectives

According to the UNESCO guidelines, the word 'culture' encompasses behavioural rules, values and beliefs of a particular group of people; rules describing their cooperation and cohabitation. Therefore culture is a vital component when it comes to defining social identity (2006, p. 12). In the current era of globalization, multiculturalism is omnipresent and so are difficulties associated with achieving equality and social inclusion. If the process of integrating minority groups is too inefficient, they are often left impoverished and marginalised. That is why Intercultural education is a significant tool for preserving a variety of cultural traditions and ensuring their harmonious coexistence from a young age and school buildings vital in facilitating the exchange of thoughts and feelings (UNESCO, 2006, pp. 12-16).

Intercultural learning is not only concerned with shared cultural differences but also with individual identities of those involved, their thoughts, feelings and actions (Jin & Cortazzi, 2013, p. 1). The preoccupation with the individual is reflected in the word 'inter' as one attempts to comprehend the others through their own cultural identity. In order to achieve this aim, one has to empathise with the others to see the world through their eyes (Jin & Cortazzi, 2013, p. 4). As discovered in previous chapters, theatre is an appropriate facilitator of learning in such context as one is put into a role of someone else. Thus theatre narrative and environment can be set up to create a common world for all the pupils. Without such world, the difference in decoding behavioural signs that stems from cultural differences can hinder the learning process (Jin & Cortazzi, 2013, p. 6) .

UNESCO defines suitable teaching methods in intercultural contexts as those that "are culturally appropriate, e.g. through the integration of traditional pedagogies and the use of traditional forms of media, such as story-telling, drama, poetry and song [and] are based on practical, participatory and contextualized learning techniques." (2006, p. 33) The document further supports pupils' "active participation in the education process," incorporation of both "formal and non-formal" techniques and "concrete projects, in order to demystify book/based knowledge and to give people a sense of confidence and to acquire cultural skills, such as the ability to communicate or to cooperate with others" (UNESCO, 2006, p. 34).

Fig 11: Inclusion and integration through intercultural education

3.21   Case study – Elmwood Comprehensive School, London

In a case study from a culturally mixed Elmwood Comprehensive School in London, we will show an example of a project addressing pupils' identities entitled 'Rivers of Life' (Rassool, 1999, p. 25).

In the first stage of the project, pupils were tasked to each produce a visual account of their personal history thus creating individual 'Rivers of Life'. This activity gave each child a chance to think about their past in terms of what it taught them. In the second stage, pupils had to present their stories in front of other children, who were allowed to ask for further details. The intention, as Rassool describes, was to raise awareness of one's self and to respect " … experience, needs and strengths of others." (1999, p. 25) Another important point was the hierarchical shift as pupils adopted a usual role of a teacher – one who explains, while teachers became the "listeners and learners". As a result, knowledge was generated through performing an activity in a collaborative process between teachers and pupils (Rassool, 1999, p. 25). Thus children's empowerment was ensured through a theatrical act.

The dichotomy between the inner and outer world is summarized in the following quote:
"As human beings, we all live in two worlds. There is the world that exists whether or not you exist. It was there before you came into it, and it will be there when you have gone. This is the world of objects, events, and other people; it is the world around you. There is another world that exists only because you exist: the private world of your own thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, the world within you. This world came into being when you did, and it will cease when you do. We only know the world around us through the world within us, through the senses by which we perceive it and the ideas by which we make sense of it" (Robinson, Ken; Aronica, Lou, 2016, p. 52).

In the next chapter, we will attempt to analyse some of the unique thoughts and perceptions offered by pupils from my former primary school L. Novomeskeho 2 in Kosice, Slovakia as a response to drawing tasks concerning theatre, empowerment and school environment.
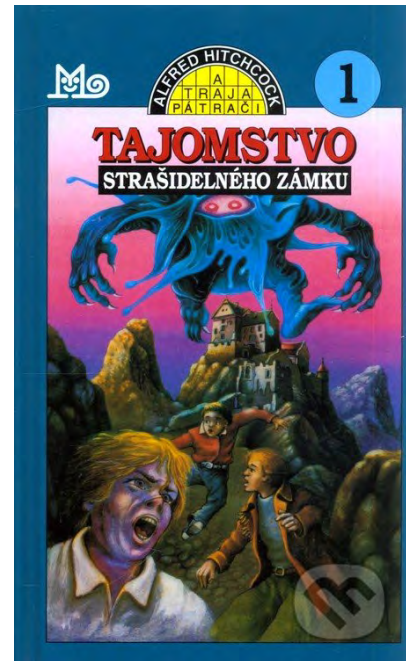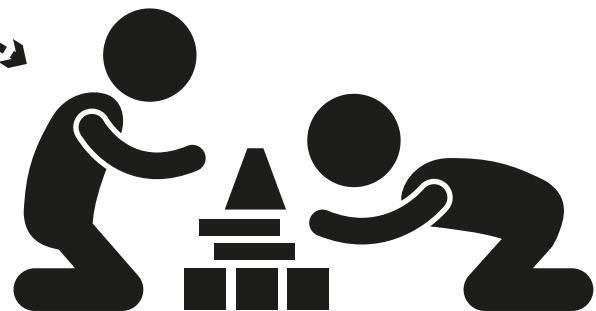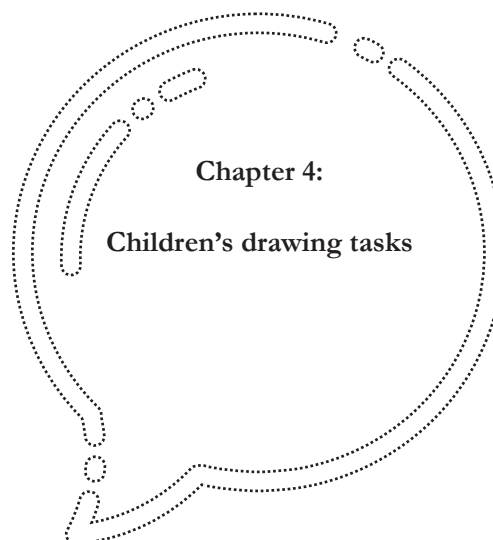
Task 1

Task 2

Task 3

Task 4

Fig 12: Children's tasks overview

Chapter 4:

Children's drawing tasks

Fig 13: Puppet

Taking clues from the Unicorn's Iron Man teacher resources (Greenwood, 2017), I compiled a series of 4 design tasks assigned to pupils in my former primary school in Slovakia (1st to 5th grade).

Prior to watching the Iron Man performance in the theatre, pupils are acquainted with its themes and characters in the classroom. It introduces children to a particular situation that they need to respond to, moreover, pupils need to empathise with the characters by imagining they are in their shoes (Greenwood, 2017, p. 9). Similarly, my tasks serve as an introduction to the topics of theatre, children's empowerment and learning environment, leading to a participatory performance involving fictional characters during a workshop conducted in April 2017.

Method of conducting the tasks

After responding to the assignment graphically, pupils were required to follow a set of questions and describe their artwork verbally as well. These tasks were gradually assigned to students by their teachers in the course of three months from January to March 2017. A full account of the written responses can be found in the Appendix.

4.1   Task 1 – Favourite Theatre Play

Classes involved: 1.C, 3.C (art lesson)
Teachers involved: Dáša Sojková (1.C), Dana Kováčová (3.C)
This task was based on a Favourite Theatre Play

Objectives

Raising awareness of theatrical devices:
1. Layering of environment
2. Representation of real life objects
3. Creation of atmosphere
4. Communication of meanings and feelings

Fig 14: Theatre masks icon

Assignment

Think about your favourite theatre play. What was the story about? Where did it take place? Who were the characters? What did the scene look like in terms of colours, lighting and costumes? How did it make you feel? What was the atmosphere like? Did you still think about the characters after you had left the theatre building?

Make multiple drawings on separate sheets of paper:
1. Setting/environment on a card as a base
2. Characters on layers of transparent paper

Responses (Figs 15-16)

In their written responses, many children identified the stage to be very colourful. Atmosphere was often identified as either pleasant or tense. Nadine noticed the change in lights and costumes throughout the play and Procivnak pointed out that the scene had strong reflectors in the sky, weaker in the surroundings and weakest on the house. Most of the children replied they were still thinking about the characters for the rest of the day after the theatre visit. This exercise made children analyse their theatre experiences and enabled me to collect a variety of interpretations for later discussions during the workshop.

Fig 15: Task 1- children's drawings 1.C
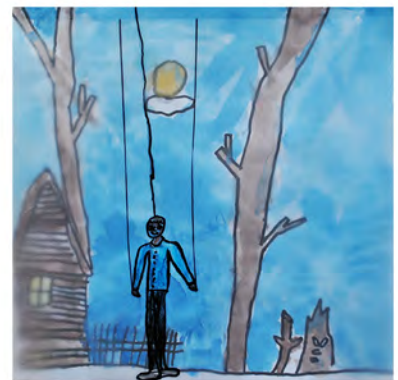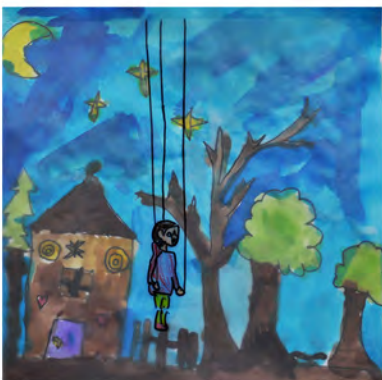
Fig 16: Task 1- children's drawings 3.C
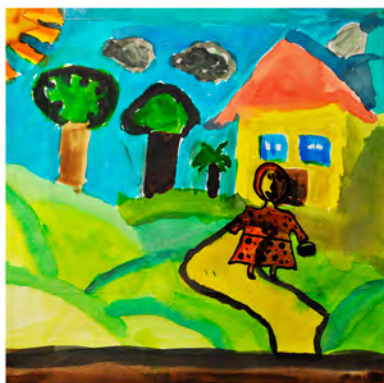
4.2   Task 2 - 'Alfred Hitchcock and The Three Investigators'

Classes involved: 1.C (art lesson), 2.A, 3.A, 4.A, 5.B (homework)
Teachers involved: Dáša Sojková (1.C)
This task was based on a book series - Alfred Hitchcock and The Three Investigators by Robert
Arthur Jr. (excerpts in Appendix C)

Story synopsis

In this series of books a group of three
teenagers create an office from which they
solve mysteries. The fact that their office
is situated in a scrapyard supports their
imagination and provides possibilities to
transform their environment. It has multiple
hidden access routes, therefore it is based on
a principle of a bunker or a tree house - a
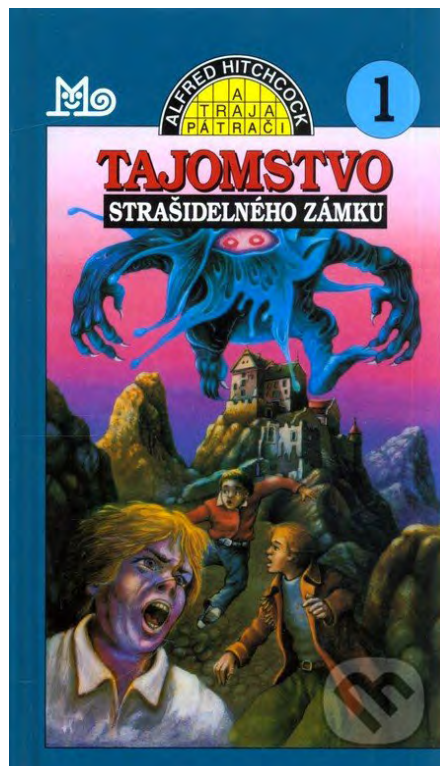secret children's space.

Fig 17: The Three Investigators and The
mystery of the terror castle

Objectives

Raising awareness of :
1. one's immediate surroundings
2. possibilities of space creation, colonization and transformation
3. creative use of available materials
4. children's abilities

Assignment

Read one of the stories about children's empowerment (In the case of 1st grade children, a
selected story was read to them by their teacher).

Draw how you imagine the headquarters of the Three Investigators:
a. What is surrounding you?
b. How much light is there?
c. How can you access it?
d. What technological facilities are there to enable investigations, research and learning?

Responses (Fig 18)

a. Pupils identified various objects that would be surrounding them in this setting, such as phones, tables, binoculars, computers, chairs, windows, lamps, books, chests of drawers, wardrobes, newspapers, sails, bookshelves, ladder, boxes and pipes.

They thus identified objects serving for communication, observation, storage, comfort, light access, and those serving as information source.

Simon from 2.A interestingly identified "stomping" to be surrounding him, thus reacting to hearing rather than sight when it comes to the senses with which one can perceive their environment. Sebastian from 3.A, by listing "wood", thought about materials and Ela from 3.A drew a ladder, reacting to the difficulty of children reaching things on higher shelves, thus considering scale.

b. Responses to the light conditions varied considerably. Most of the children imagined having "little light" either coming from a tunnel or a side window, Stelka from 5.B even defined the room as being completely dark. Only Ela from 3.A pictured an "enormous amount of light" coming through.

c. Entrances were identified based on a story as a pipe, space between planks in a fence and a cauldron. Circular shape of an entrance was emphasized by Sofia from 1.C. Simon from 2.A interestingly responded by writing "unzipping a zipper ", thus describing an activity rather than an object.

d. Objects facilitating learning and research included flashlights, cameras, rucksacks, magnifying glasses, typewriters, test-tubes, a printing press, paper and building and drawing tools. Remote access of information would be enabled either digitally by the use of a computer, phone, radio, television and ipad, or physically by the use of a rented car as defined by Sofia from 1.C. A few children identified a need for a small adjacent room such a dark chamber for induction of photos (Stelka and Peter from 5.B), and a laboratory for performing chemical experiments (Jan from 3.A and Peter from 5.B).

This exercise aimed to introduce pupils to the idea of children being able to be creative when it comes to manipulation of their own environment, to make them consider how varied light conditions can be achieved and make them aware, that an entrance does not always have to appear in a form of an ordinary door. It attempted to make them realize how easily a space can be personalized by various objects and that there can be a big difference between interior and external environment in which it is placed, and most importantly, that a space and its equipment can be central to performing a specific activity. By fulfilling this task, pupils familiarised themselves with a group of powerful teenage characters whose achievements they could aspire to.

Fig 18: Task 2- children's drawings
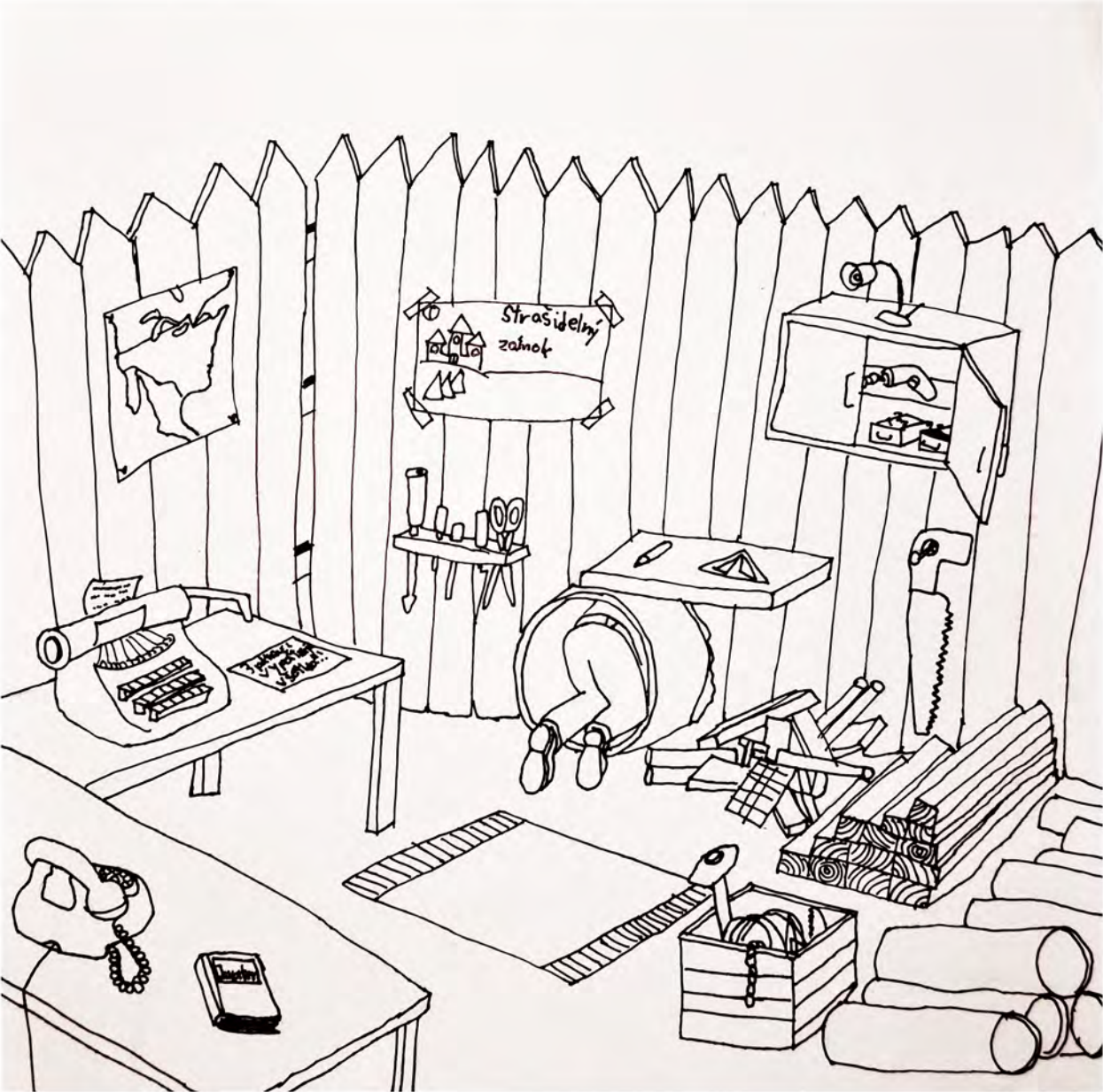
4.3   Task 3 - 'The Magic School Bus'

Classes involved: 3.C, 4.A (art lesson)
Teachers involved: Dana Kováčová (3.C), Ľudmila Medvecová (4.A)
This task was based on a TV series - The Magic School Bus

<u>Story synopsis</u>

In each episode, pupils are transported in a magical
bus to a different environment specific to what
they are learning about regardless of its size,
position in time or any other burden that a
'real world' travel could not overcome
(Figs 20-25).

Fig 19: The Magic School Bus logo

<u>Objectives</u>

Consideration of a classroom environment:
1. tailored specifically to a particular subject/topic in terms of facilities needed
2. conveying meanings necessary to communicate the curriculum through theatre sets

We can see a direct link between this concept and a Phenomenon Based Learning - PBL. This
method, widely practised in Finland, focuses on blurring the boundaries between an academic and
a 'real' world. It is built on a belief that children should see a connection between curriculum and
its practical application, thus putting knowledge into context. PBL also enables an incorporation
of a variety of teaching methods such as "inquiry learning, problem-based learning, project
learning and portfolios" while putting an emphasis not only on educational process but on an
environment it takes place in as well (Silander, 2015). Knowledge is thus often transmitted in a
collaborative way and increases by a number of cultures involved in this operation by bringing
together different points of view.

<u>Assignment</u>

Every pupil picks a school subject and is asked to design an ideal classroom based on this
principle.

Try to picture what a classroom specifically tailored to this subject would be like. Imagine that a
teacher explains something specific in the subject, imagine where you sit and what you see. Can
you interact with the space? How can a room evoke a specific country, species or a math problem
that you are learning about?

Focus on two questions:
a. What would you find inspirational to have around you in order to better understand the topic
taught?
b. Does it help you clarify the theme when you are surrounded by what is directly linked to it?
How?

Responses (Fig 26)

Children firstly came up with design ideas for subject specific classrooms. For Natural Sciences some pupils imagined a completely transparent space that would feel like a part of nature, some envisioned having access to specific ecosystems and plants they could take care of. Filip went further and came up with an idea of transformation of tree trunks into wardrobes and also thought about bringing the aesthetics of geometry found in nature into a room by arranging posters on the wall in a form of growing branches. Similar approach was adopted by Barbora, who would prefer her classroom to have a big bush serving as table and tree stumps as chairs. Ema thought it would be helpful to have a constellation of planets hanging from the ceiling while learning about topics in astronomy. Thus it is interesting to observe different area consideration, from external environment to furniture standing on the floor, to wall and ceiling decoration. Having an opportunity to hang things would be, according to some children, beneficial for music lessons as well, since musical instruments, such as bells, could be suspended to enable collective play while being decorative. Ceilings were also considered from an acoustic point of view, as pupils stated that a dome structure could enhance the experience. Laura pointed out the importance of a stage for children's performances while Stelka stressed the need for an interactive space enabling work with musical notation incorporated into a big communal table. Similarly, Nosian imagined such table to be used as a map for History/Geography lessons that would also require spaces for three dimensional models of different environments. Another option would be to express them by moulding the space itself, for instance with an area with a topographical change reminiscent of mountains. Martin would like to enter such classroom through an opening in the shape of a cave which would, according to him, create an impression of entering a secret world. Here we can see a link with the previous exercise in which entrance to a space was supposed to be considered. Another such factor was technology, which was mentioned by Teo and Natalka in the context of Computer Sciences and Mathematics as being integrated within furniture units. In terms of Fine Art, Olivia and Alzbeta saw it as a shared activity with a communal source of materials in the middle and walls serving as canvas for painting.

To summarize, sense of community strengthened by the spatial arrangement was a recurring desire. The importance of people involved was stressed by Matej and Samuel, who listed experienced teachers and friends as inspirational. Eva stated that an ideal learning environment would enable her to become a part of it and thus fit into a community in which everyone plays an important role.

This exercise aimed to introduce pupils to the idea of materialising taught topics into a physical environment, to make them focus on a content of a curriculum rather than a generic subject category it is put in, to help them see connections that span across multiple disciplines; the idea manifested in phenomenon based learning. While some children were preoccupied by a visual layer that would set the tone of the classroom, others thought about functionality of the space or technology facilitating learning. Moreover, as Palko pointed out with his comparison to a museum, learning space as such should have the ability to convey meanings. Therefore aesthetic, functional and semiotic side of the environment was touched upon, three main aspects of theatre set design and educational techniques linked to theatre practices.

Images from 'The Magic School Bus' episodes

Fig 20: In the eye

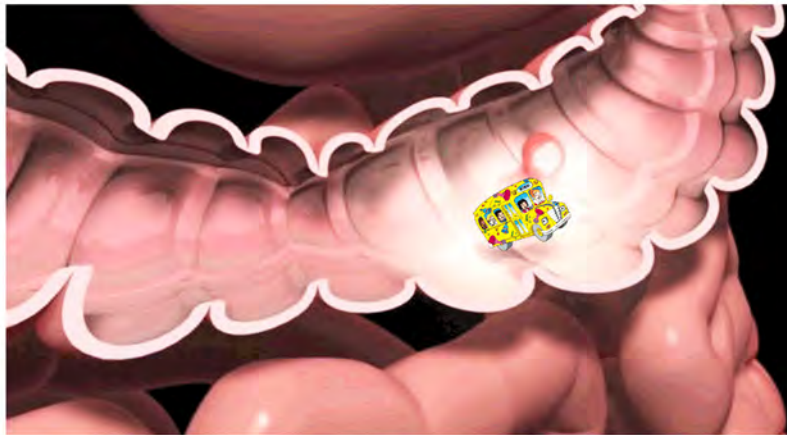Fig 21: In the universe

Fig 22: In the ocean

Fig 23: In the intestines
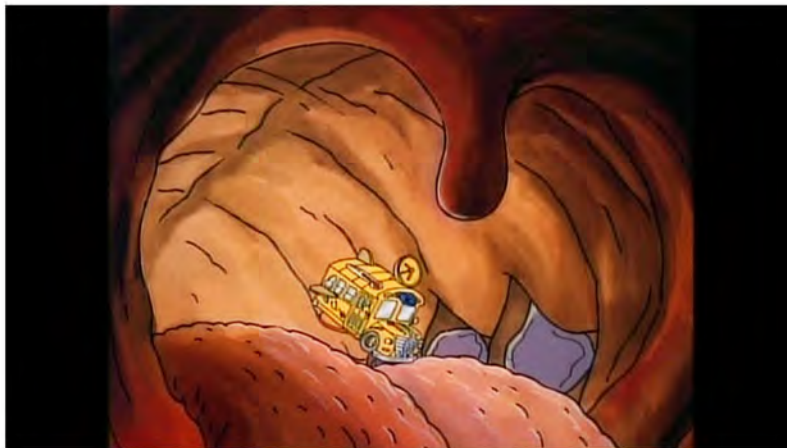
Fig 24: In the mouth

Fig 25: On another planet

Fig 26: Task 3 children's drawings

4.4   Task 4 – Ideal School Activity

Classes involved: 1.C, 3.C (art lesson)
Teachers involved: Dáša Sojková (1.C), Dana Kováčová (3.C)
This task was based on - Ideal school activity

Objectives
1. Make children imagine their favourite school activity
2. Gain an assortment of figures to incorporate into my design project for a workshop activity

Assignment
- Draw yourself during a school activity you like the best or wish you could do

Fig 27: Painting

Fig 28: Experimentation

Fig 29: Task 4 children's drawings

Chapter 5:

Project development

Intercultural school
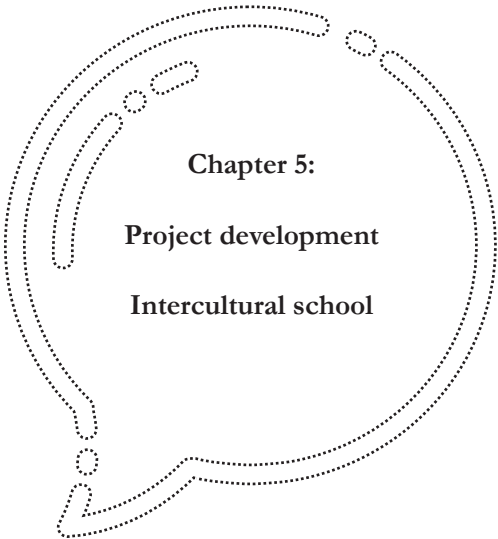
5.1   Brief

Project for an Intercultural School in Lisbon, located on a waterfront in the vicinity of the most multicultural neighbourhood Mouraria. The project attempts to tackle integration of a high immigrant population in Portugal and use the school to create an empathic community with the help of theatre-based methods.

Fig 30: Site location

5.2   Spatial principles derived from theatre-based learning

Canteen/ Kitchen

WCs

Communal spaces

Music room

Teachers' room/Office

Laboratories

Sports facilities

Theatre classrooms

Art classrooms

Classrooms

Designated 'theatre classrooms' suitable for long term projects create clusters together with all the other classrooms supporting interdisciplinatry theatre-based learning. This is built on a precedent of 'History Centre' in the Eltham college of education discussed in chapter 1.21.
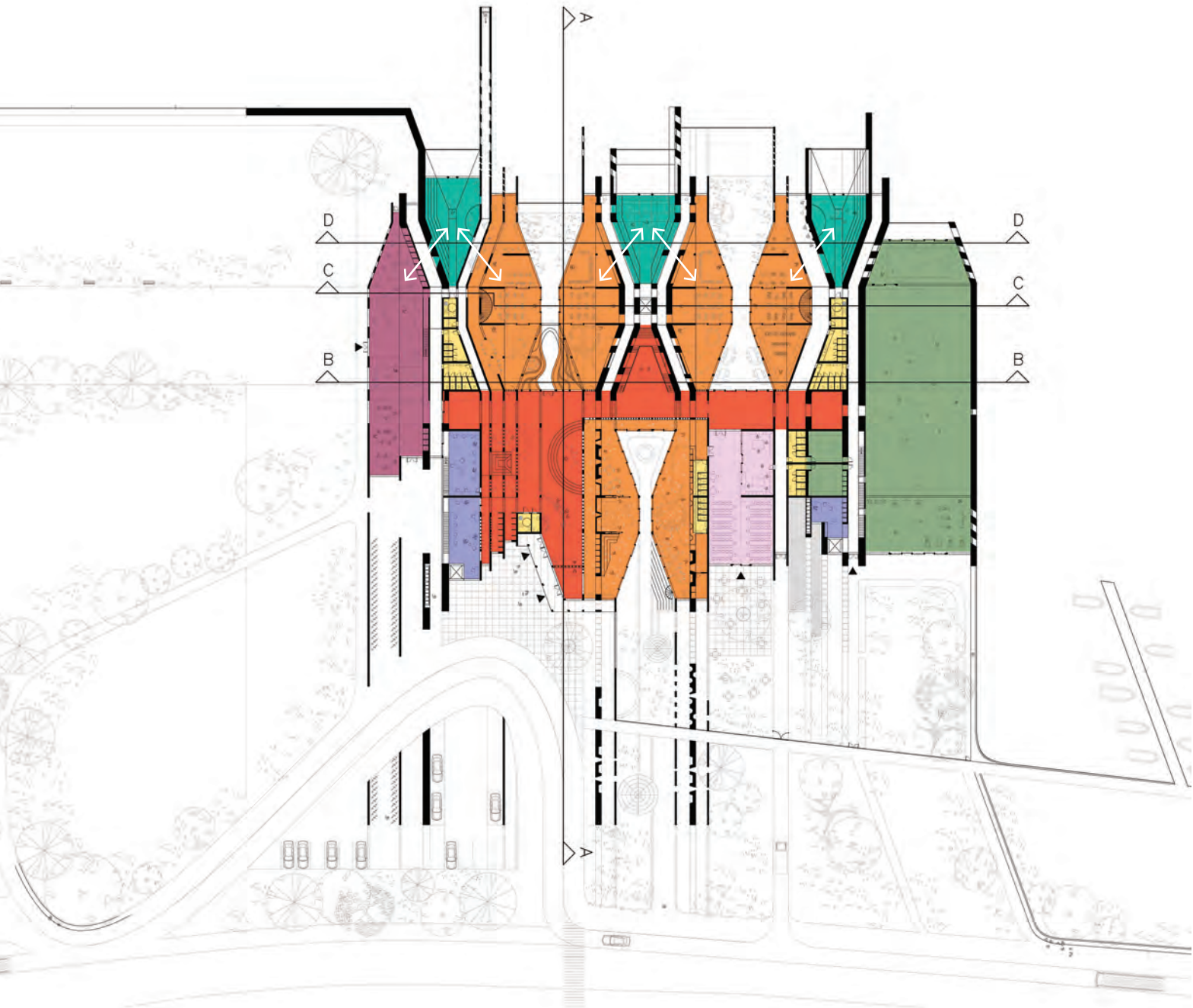
Fig 31: Ground floor plan 1-1000 @ A4

5.3   Wall layering concept
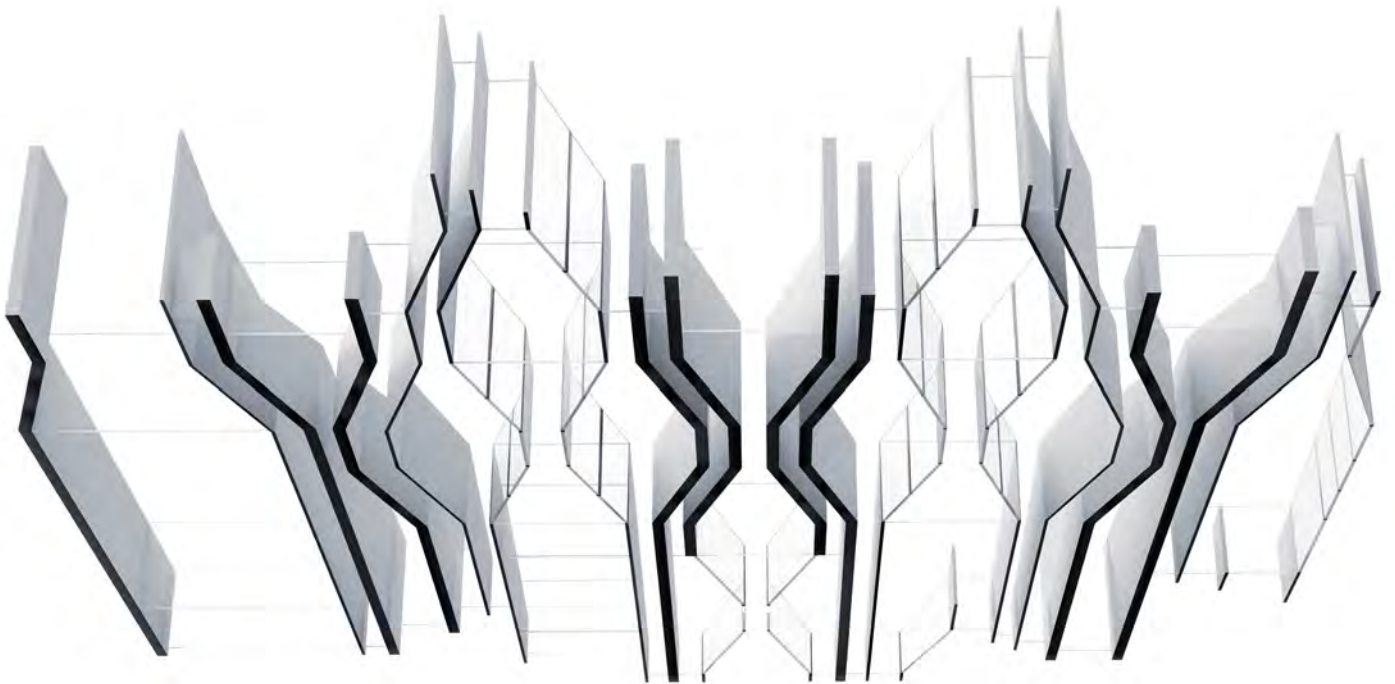
Fig 32: Concept render- Spatial arrangement of the whole buidling is derived from layering of theatre sets

Fig 33: Paper theatre precendent by Pollocks

Fig 34: Paper theatre precendent by Rebecca Sims
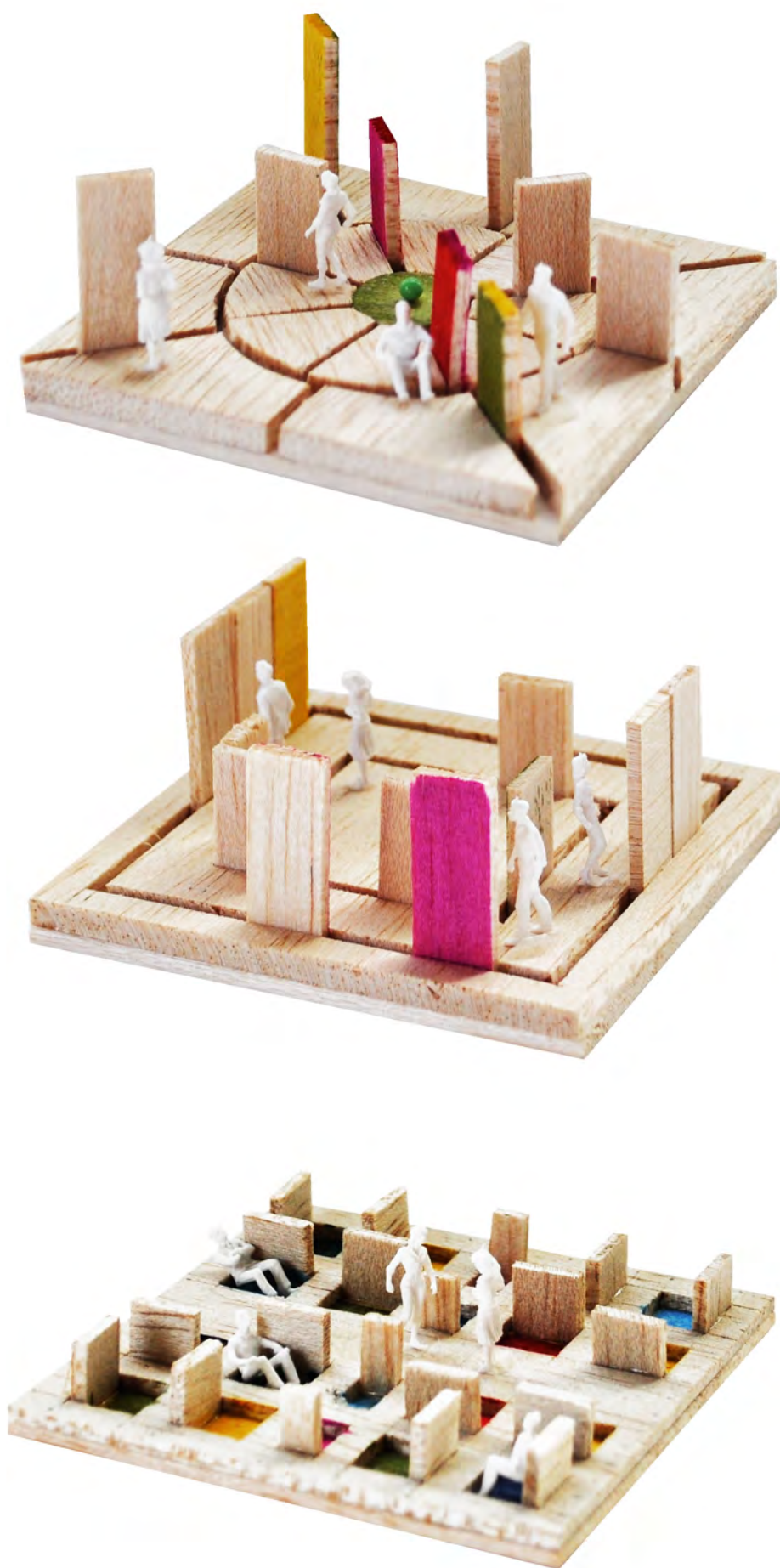
Fig 35: Balsa wood physical models - classroom concept
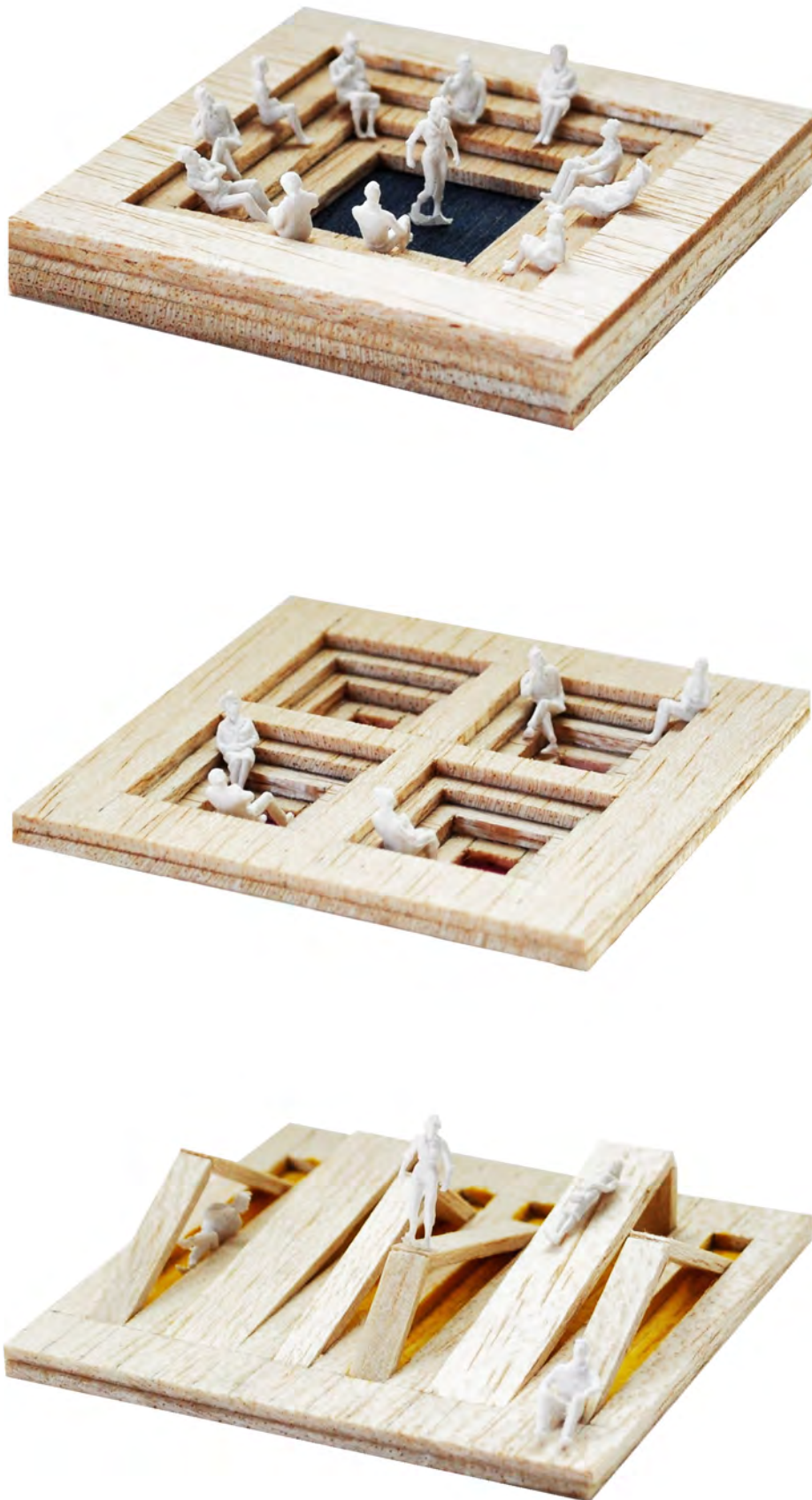
Fig 36: Balsa wood physical models - classroom concept

Fig 37: Balsa wood physical models - classroom concept

Fig 38: Balsa wood physical models - wall use

Fig 39: Balsa wood physical models - wall use

Fig 40: Balsa wood physical models - wall use

Fig 41: Balsa wood physical models - wall use

Fig 42: Balsa wood physical models - wall use

Fig 43: Balsa wood physical models - wall use
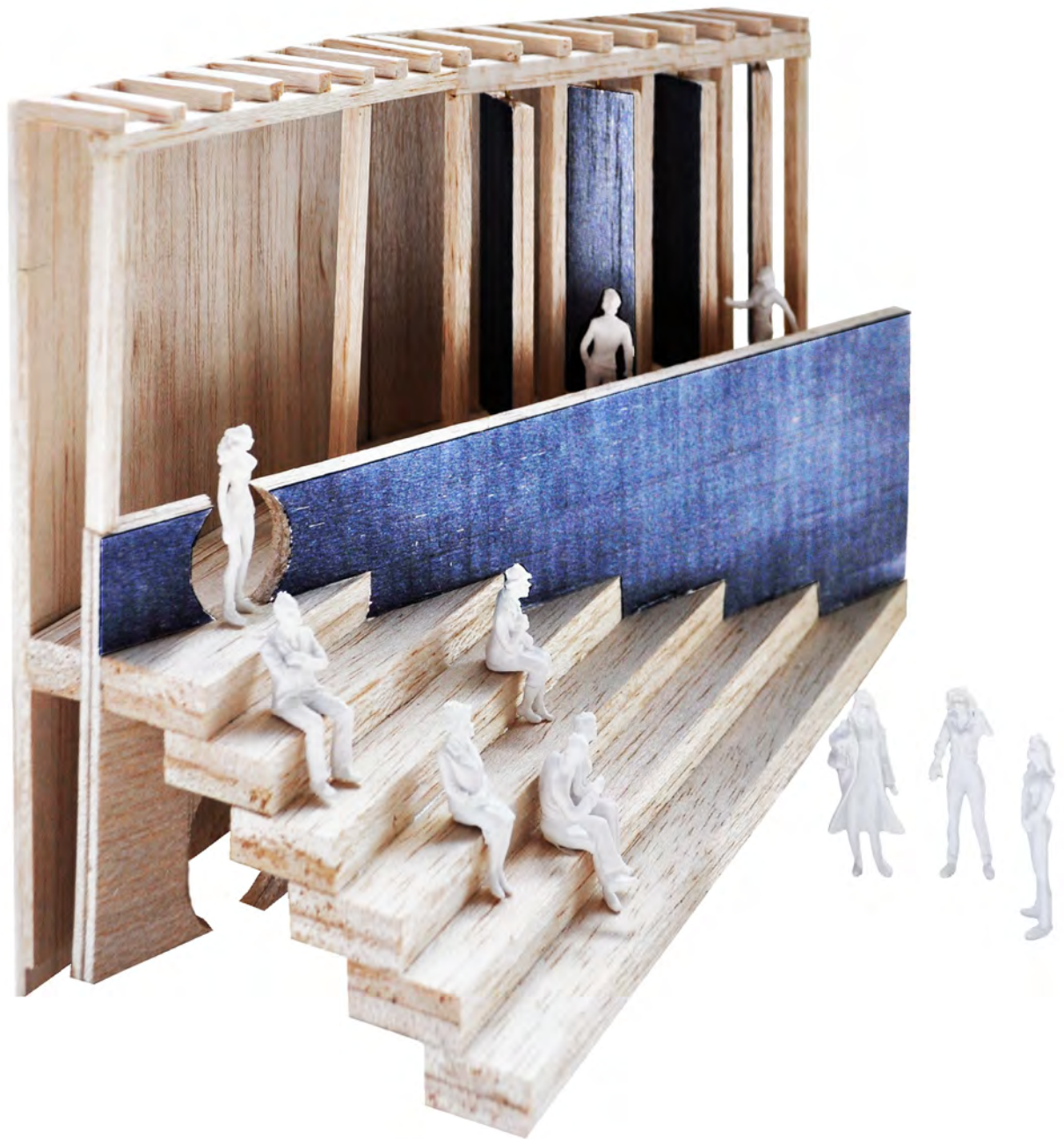
Fig 44: Balsa wood physical models - theatre classroom concept

Fig 45: Balsa wood physical models - wall use

Fig 46: Balsa wood physical models - playscape concept

Chapter 6:   Workshop realisation

The workshop has been inspired by the pre and post-show activities accompanying the Unicorn's Iron Man play, produced to enable children to design their own story based on the main character. They are required to collaboratively work on a stop motion animation and reflect on various layers creating the play such as puppets, lighting and sound (Greenwood, 2017, p. 9). The outcome of my workshop is a live narration of a story about four child characters during one day in school performed by the pupils with school visuals transformed by them serving as 'theatre sets'.

Fig 47: Class photo 1.C Primary school L.Novomeského 2, Košice, Slovakia

6.1   Objectives

1. Opening children's minds about a creative formation of space:
a/ through stories and characters that they were familiarized with by fulfilling drawing Tasks 1-2
b/ through identifying space functions on physical models and populating them with Lego figures

2. Generating ideas on school design and testing the successfulness of my own
a/ through a drawing Task 3
b/ through presentation of school designs

3. Enhancing the level of engagement
a/ with the curriculum - by incorporating previously covered subjects during the playful activities
b/ with the school project- by introducing puppets that children create an emotional bond with

4. Empowering children
a/ by incorporating their drawings into my school visuals
b/ by letting them make decisions about the puppet characters such as their names and toys

5. Using 'Mantle of the Expert' theatre practices
a/ by making children impersonate the puppet characters thus empathise with them
b/ by allowing children to adopt a position of an 'expert' in a certain topic and quiz other pupils on their curriculum knowledge
c/ by letting children influence the physical environment of the puppet characters' school

The workshop was realised with a pupils from 1.C (1st grade class) at a Primary school L.Novomeského 2, Košice, Slovakia and supervised by their class teacher Dáša Sojková.

<u>Participants (6-7 years old)</u>
1. Marian
2. Barbora
3. Branko
4. Darko
5. Lucia
6. Teodor
7. Michal
8. Richard
9. Stela
10. Martina
11. Lenka
12. Júlia
13. Tadeáš
14. Nella
15. Patrik
16. Alexej
17. Zoe
18. Sofia
19. Alžbeta
20. Nela

6.2   Visual materials

Materials developed prior to the workshop

1. Drawing tasks 1-4 (Figs 15-29)

2. Typology of school spaces shown on physical models and photographs (Figs 35-46)

3. Ground floor plan of the building (Fig 48)

4. Collage of the spaces populated by children's drawings of themselves in school (see Task 4 - Fig 49)

5. Four puppets (Figs 3,6,10,13) and their country of origin (Figs 50-57)

6. School visuals for different times of the day:

a. entrance (Fig 58)

b. classroom for a reading class (Fig 59)

c. classroom for learning about senses (Fig 60)

d. classroom– for adjustment by pupils to a theatre topic they previously worked on (see Task1- Fig 61)

e. central break space (Fig 62)

7. Cut-out objects and characters from Task 1 children's drawings (Fig 63-64)

Materials developed during the workshop

1. Drawings of objects meaningful for the child characters' identity (Fig 79)

2. Transformed entrance space (Fig 85)

3. Transformed classroom space (Fig 95)
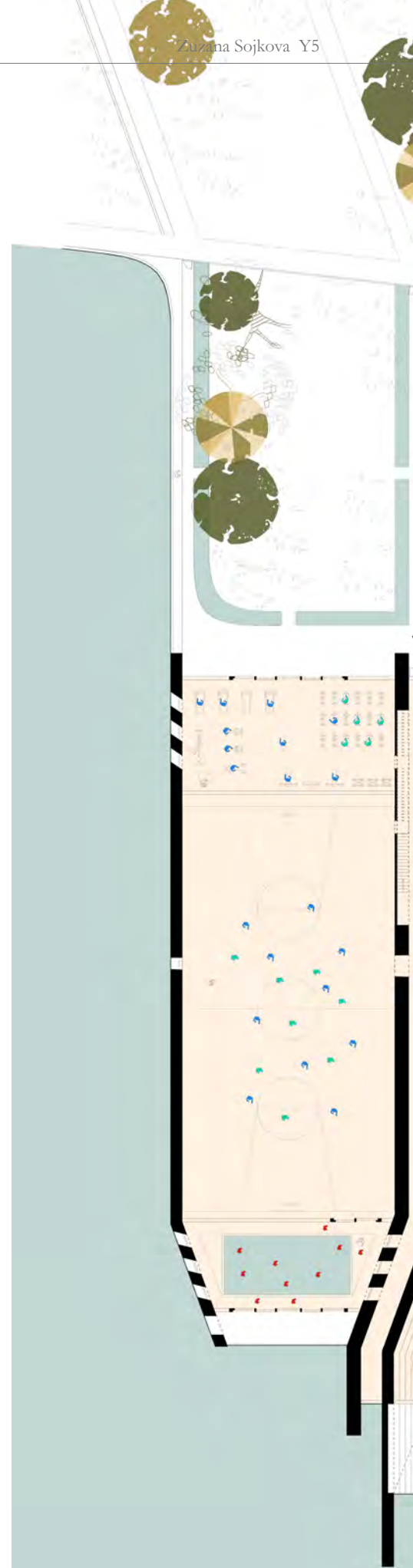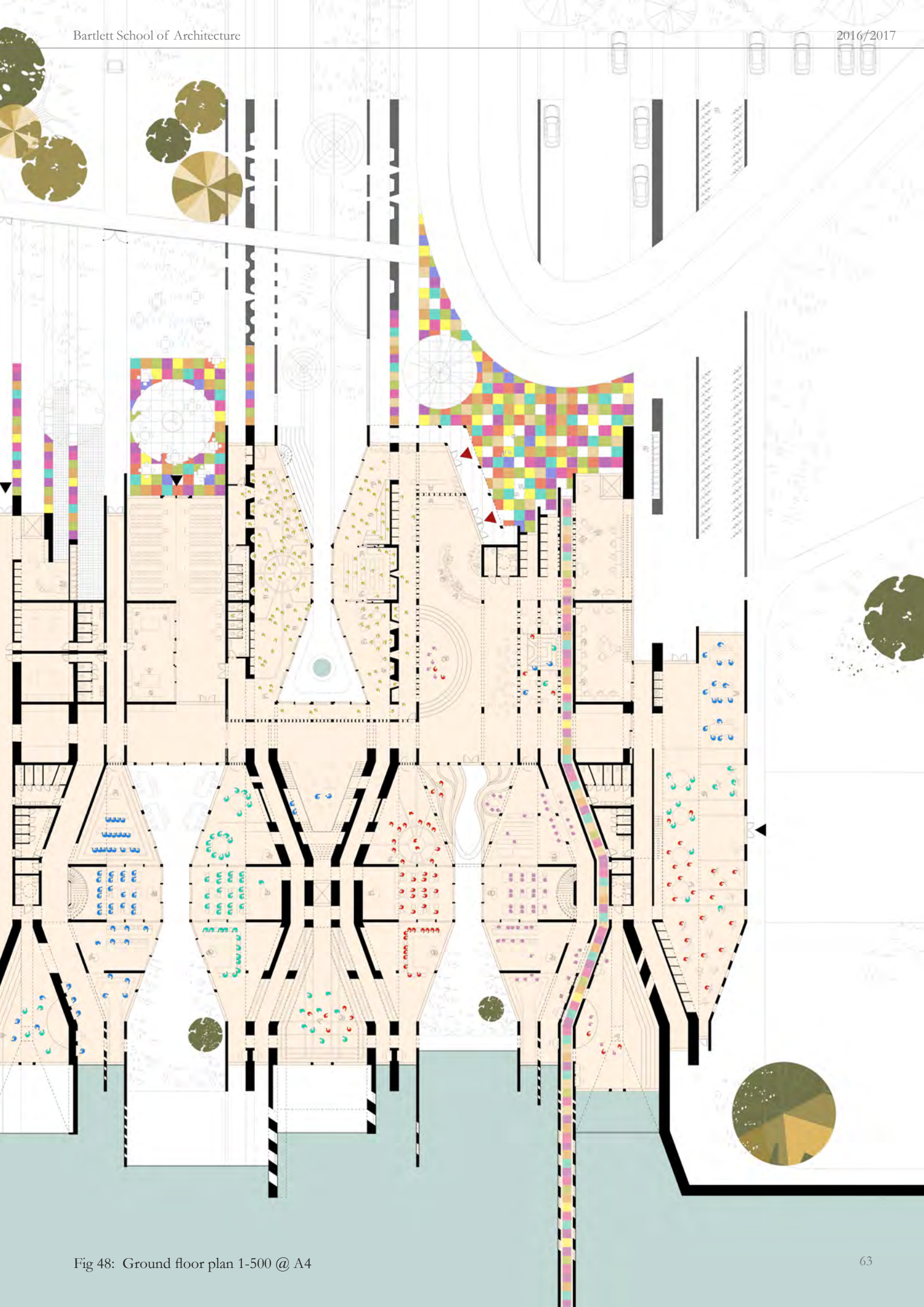
Fig 48: Ground floor plan 1-500 @ A4

Fig 49: Collage

Fig 50: Cape Verde

Fig 51: Fishing

Fig 3: African girl from Cape Verde

Fig 6: South American boy from Brazil

Fig 52: Brazil

Fig 53: Football

Fig 54: China

Fig 55: Chinese dragon

Fig 10: Asian girl from China

Fig 56: Ukraine

Fig 57: Folk dance

Fig 13: Europian boy from Ukraine

Fig 58: Entrance

Fig 59: Classroom for a reading class

Fig 60: Classroom for learning about senses

Fig 61: Classroom— for adjustment by pupils to a theatre topic

Fig 62: Central break space

Fig 63: Cut-out characters from Task 1 children's drawings

Fig 64: Cut-out objects from Task 1 children's drawings

6.3   Schedule

Day 1 (April 11th 2017)

Time	Activity	Description
9:30 - 10:00	Material preparation	Arranging models and children's drawings in a designated 'Lego room'
10:00 - 10:15	Introduction	Introducing myself, thanking children for their help with the drawing tasks, explaining upcoming activities
	Task 1 group discussion	Talking about a theatre play children saw together using their drawings
10:15 - 10:30	Task 2 group discussion	Talking about the Three Investigators story using the drawings
10:30 - 11:00	Space use identification	Identifying physical models through model photographs. Describing spaces and populating the models
	Task 4 figures identification	Showing each child's drawing on a collage and describing their favourite school activity
11:00 - 11:10	Relocation to the classroom	Break
11:10 - 11:25	Puppet characters introduction	Introducing puppets with their country of origin an interests and assigning names to them
11:25 - 12:00	Puppets' toys drawing	Drawing objects puppet characters would like to be surrounded with at school

Day 2 (April 12th 2017)

Description	*Activity*	*Time*
Arranging drawings in the classroom	Material preparation	9:30 - 10:00
Identifying subjects on classroom drawings and images from the Magic School Bus	Task 3 group discussion	10:00 - 10:15
Talking about classroom design	Idea generation	
Identifying each child's drawing from a previous day on a rendering	Puppets' toys identification	10:15 - 10:30
Locating spaces on a building plan, identifying puppet characters on renderings. Discussing displayed topics.	School spaces game	10:30 - 11:00
Adding cut-out drawings from Task 1 into a rendering	Classroom transformation	
Break	Material preparation	11:00 - 11:10
Recapitulating a typical day in school as a puppet show	School day narration	11:10 - 11:25
Providing feedback on the project and workshop activities	Survey	11:25 - 12:00

6.4   Day 1

Place: Lego room

Activity 1
- Discussing Task 1 - response to a play: 'Pernikova chalupka' (Gingerbread house) in terms of its story, characters, atmosphere, sets and lighting.
- Bringing attention to the fact that the sets change in the course of a play, which is reflected on the differences in drawings between the day, night, exterior and interior.
- Questioning the difference between architectural elements in real life and those on a theatre stage and stressing the importance of layers in set design. Explaining the connection between this (Freire, 1972) phenomenon and the multiple layers of paper the scenes were drawn on by the pupils.
- Asking children whether they enjoy theatre and how often they attend plays.

Objectives 1
- Refresher on components creating theatre scenes.
- Establishing what relationship children have with theatre.
- Children's empowerment by discussing their work.

Materials used
- Children's drawings (see Task 1)

Fig 65: Discussing Task 1

Activity 2
- Discussing Task 2 - The Three Investigators in terms of its characters and their headquarters.
- Identifying different elements on children's drawings such as light, entrances and objects facilitating research.

Objectives 2
- Summary of ideas on creative use of space for purposes of learning.
- Engagement through empowered child characters.

Materials used
- Children's drawings (see Task 2)
- Excerpts from 'The Three Investigators and the Secret of Terror Castle' (see Appendix C)

Fig 66: Identifying elements on drawings

Activity 3
- Showing typology of models.
- Indentifying what the walls/elements serve for and finding them on a collage.
- Each child points to their drawn figure incorporated in a collage and describe what it is doing.
(Prior to the workshop children drew themselves in a school setting performing their favourite
activity- see Task 4)
- Interacting with the models by adding Lego figures to populate the spaces.

Objectives 3
- Generating ideas on use of unusual spaces in school.
- Cultivating ability to recognise the same object as a physical 3D model and in 2D as a catalogue
of typologies and in context on a collage drawing.
- Children's empowerment by including their drawings into a collage showing that their work
matters.

Materials used
- Physical models in 1:50 and 1:100 scale from balsa wood
- Images of models with scale figures
- Model collage with figures drawn by pupils in Task 4 attached
- Lego figures

Fig 67: Materials

Fig 68: Showing Task 4 fugures on a collage

Fig 69: Identifying 3D models based on 2D drawings

Fig 70: Discussing space potential using 3D models

Fig 71: Exploring light passing through the model

Fig 72: Populating the models with Lego figures

Fig 73: Exploring light passing through the model

Fig 74: Populating the models with Lego figures

Place: Classroom

Activity 4
- Introducing the puppet child characters who attend school together in Portugal, with their country of origin (China, Cape Verde, Ukraine, Brazil) and interests (Figs 50-57)
- Naming the characters (Figs 75-76)
- Drawing a toy for a chosen character that would remind them of home at school (Figs 77-79)

Objectives 4
- Creating a multicultural setting for the next day activities.
- Familiarization with the characters and creation of an emotional bond with them.
- Positioning children into the characters' shoes by making them think about objects important for their identity.

Materials used
- Puppets
- Images of puppets' home country and hobbies
- Paper and drawing materials

Abubu   *Ronaldo*   *Čun-či*   *Alexej*

Fig 75: Puppet child characters' heads

Fig 76: Puppet child characters

Fig 77: Preparation for drawing

Fig 78: Drawing

Fig 79: Activity 4 children's drawings

<u>Day 1 Conclusions</u>

During the discussions about the theatre, children talked about the play they had attended together with enthusiasm and they were skilled at identifying differences between their drawings. To a question how many times they had been to the theatre before, one child said never and one answered 'once', while 7 pupils visited theatre more than once and the remaining 11 more than 5 times.

Subsequently, ideas about the theatre with its characters and sets were tied together through imagining spaces in the Three Investigators story and through explorations of space typologies designed by me. Use of different media enabled discussions of various spatial qualities and children were very pleasantly surprised as they saw I had used their drawings in my collage. Children expressed admiration for the characters and they enjoyed having the story read to them on a daily basis after classes by their teacher. Some of them asked their parents to read them other stories from the series at home. Now, as they have finished learning all the letters of the alphabet, some of them are starting to read the stories on their own and were showing me the different books they had with them at school. It sparked their interest in reading about these inspiring child characters and their secret world.

Analysing some of the drawings made by older children from different classes provided a type of an information exchange between different ages, thus offered them something to aspire to. They expressed curiosity and asked questions about the spaces they did not understand. Pupils enjoyed exploring the models and the effects they produce when positioned against a light source. However, they were sometimes experiencing difficulties understanding the scale of a physical model. This was better communicated through model photographs incorporating scale figures. Children were nicely making connections between the various secret openings on the models with those found in the Three Investigators story.

Overall, children were cooperating well. In the occasion of one-to-one conversation, some of the children were getting restless as they did not feel involved. Therefore it was important to engage as many pupils at once as possible and offer multiple varied activities as their attention span was relatively short.

As a last activity, I introduced the puppet characters with a connection to Three Investigators as another group of friends who come from different corners of the planet, learn together and spend time in school spaces they can personalize for instance by bringing a toy or object, that is important to them and therefore would like to have around. This set the scene for the next day activities from an environment of an intercultural school (my design project). Children were asked to come up with characters' names and draw a toy for one of them. They assigned following names: Čun-či (China), Abubu (Cape Verde), Alexej (Ukraine), Ronaldo (Brazil).

Having seen their previous work included into mine, children were excited to draw an object that would be incorporated into my renderings. I believe that children were thus empowered through discussions about their own work and managed to empathise with the characters while drawing a toy for them – desired effects of theatre-based educational methods.
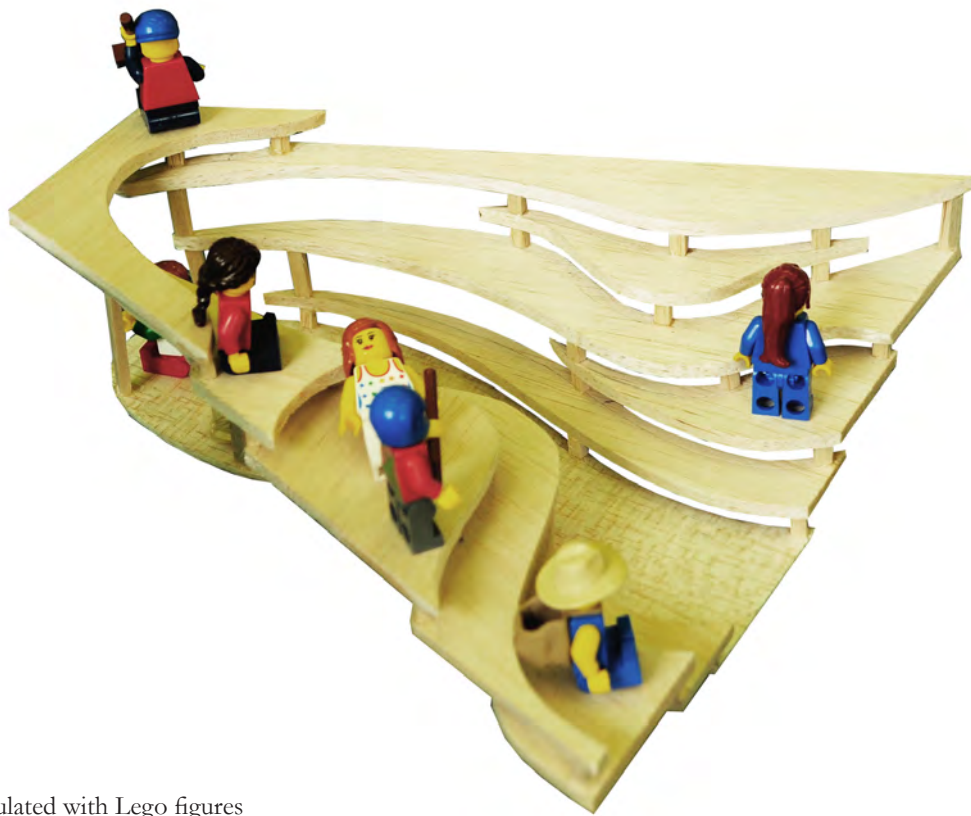
Fig 80: Model populated with Lego figures

Fig 81: Discussion

6.5   Day 2

Place: Classroom

Activity 1
- Showing images from Magic School Bus episodes and drawings of classrooms designed as part of Task 3 by older pupils from other classes
- Children identify the curriculum topic displayed on the image and explain what elements communicate it.
- Generating ideas for classroom design.

Objectives 1
- School design inspiration and idea generation.
- Identification of objects important in a school environment.

Materials used
- Images from Magic School Bus episodes (see Task 3- Figs 20-25)
- Children's drawings (see Task 3 - Fig 26)

Fig 82: Asking about the topic from a Magic School Bus episode

Fig 83: Children answering questions

Activity 2
- Showing a rendering of the school entrance hall with images of puppets' toys photoshopped in.
- Children are divided into groups according to which character's toy they drew and they come one by one to show it on the image.
- Showing renderings of classrooms transformed for different curriculum topics and a break space.
- Finding spaces on the building plan.
- Four children always volunteer to represent the characters and identify the puppets and their activity.
- Remaining pupils quiz the ones in a 'puppet character role' about the curriculum topic displayed on the rendering.
- Transforming a third classroom into a theatre topic from the Task 1 (Figs 15-16) by adding cut-outs from Task 1 drawings (Figs 63-64)
- Children narrating a story of the puppet characters as their typical day in school in front of the visuals serving as sets.

Objectives 2
- Decoding what a creative learning environment can offer through a game of finding puppet characters on school visuals
- Empathising with the characters as children become them during the game thus answering questions in a role ('Mantle of the Expert' technique)
- Children's empowerment by: including their drawings in the visuals, letting them transform a scene by adding cut-out elements and provide a summary in a 'puppet show'

Materials used
- Building plan at 1:100 (Fig 48)
- Children's drawings from the previous day (Fig 79)
- Renderings of school spaces (Figs 58-62)
- Cut-out objects from Task 1 (Figs 63-64)
- Puppets (Figs 3,6,10,13)

Fig 84: Children in 'puppet groups'

Fig 85: Entrance with added children's drawings

Fig 86: Čun-či's toys

Fig 87: Alexej's toys

Fig 88: Ronaldo's toys

Fig 89: Abubu's toys

Fig 90: Classroom - reading class

Fig 91: Classroom - senses

Fig 92: Break space
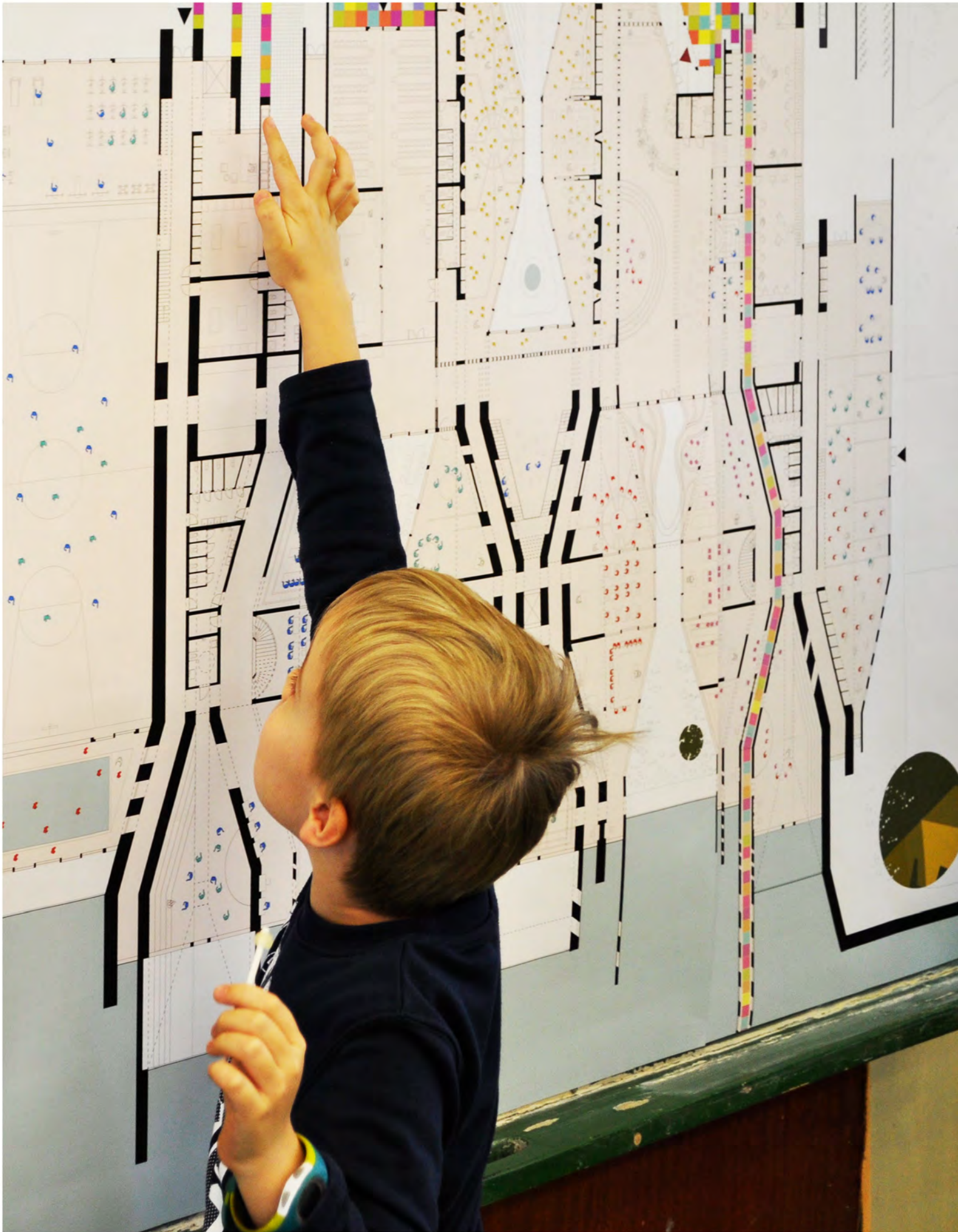
Fig 93: Navigating the plan

Fig 94: Classroom - theatre

Fig 95: Classroom - theatre - complemented with cut-outs

Fig 96: Narration - entrance

Fig 97: Narration - classroom - reading

Fig 98: Narration - classroom - senses

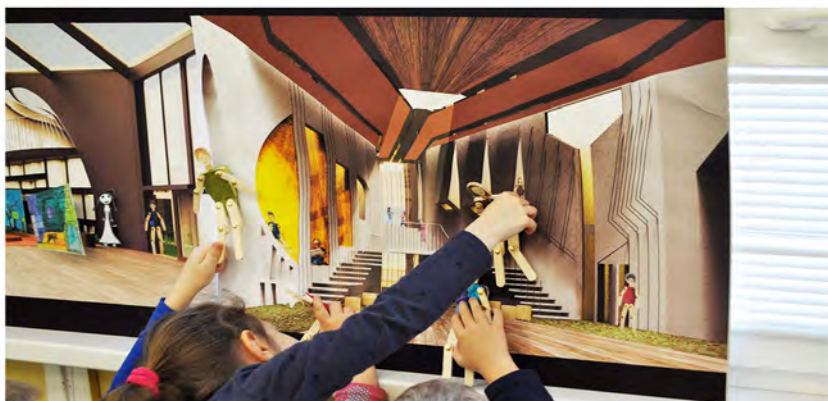Fig 99: Narration - classroom - theatre

Fig 100: Narration - break space

Activity 3
- Survey and Feedback session

Objectives 3
- Find out in what ways children find the proposed school unusual.
- Find out which workshop activity was the most interesting for them.

Survey responses
1. In what way is the school that Čun-či, Abubu, Alexej and Ronaldo attend different from yours?

🟥 🟥 🟥 🟥   They learn differently, have different lessons

🟥 🟥 🟥   School has different classrooms for every subject like ours for playing with Lego

🟥 🟥 🟥   The building, spaces and shapes are different

🟥 🟥 🟥   It has a wall composed of shelves with toys

🟥 🟥   I like it because it is weird

🟥   The break space is different

🟥   It is bigger

2. Which workshop activity did you like the most?

🟥 🟥 🟥 🟥 🟥 🟥 🟥 🟥   Playing with physical models

🟥 🟥   Looking for puppets in the images because it is fun

🟥 🟥   I liked activities with the classroom images

🟥   Adding cut-out pictures into an image

🟥   I liked talking about the wooden houses (physical models) because they are strange

Day 2 Conclusions
The activities focused on the idea of subject/topic specific classrooms and creative school environment in multicultural contexts.

Pupils were successful in identifying curriculum topics on older children's drawings and images from the Magic School Bus episodes. Following this exercise, children generated their own ideas about what they would like to have in school. Answers included: walls full of objects needed for every subject, special rooms designated to art lessons or robot-making. They wished to have a music box and a space for creation of new things by reusing old materials. Many pupils expressed a desire to have plants and animals in the classroom.

During the game with puppets, empowerment was achieved through' Mantle of the Expert' as children were switching between the roles of 'pupils' (4 child characters) and those of 'teachers'. Therefore children sitting at their desks were given the authority to quiz pupils representing the child characters currently in an imaginary classroom environment on my renderings. They were strictly addressed by the 'puppet name' to maintain the roles. Represented topics were chosen from those already covered in their tuition, so that children already had knowledge or 'scaffolding' to build on in a new situation. Moreover, we linked some of the spaces to the typologies seen on the models the day before.

Pupils were keen on complementing a classroom image with cut-out drawings they had previously made and again felt very proud when they could contribute. Especially one girl, who was at that point reluctant to cooperate, immediately changed her mind when her own work was chosen to be added to the scene.

In the end we recapitulated together with all the children what a day in such a school might be like, while 4 volunteers were moving from scene to scene with puppets following instructions. Thus children had a chance to summarize everything we had talked about and then reflected on the school and workshop activities in a survey.

Overall workshop assessment
Based on the survey, some children picked up on the fact that the learning is different because the classrooms differ based on a curriculum topic. A lot of pupils liked the activities with physical models, which thus seems to be the most engaging medium to communicate spaces. Overall, they were able to cooperate and answer questions, which shows the tasks were suitable for their age. The appropriateness of the activities was confirmed by the class teacher as children were very enthusiastic and willing to participate throughout the workshop.

The workshop enabled me to test some of the 'Mantle of the Expert' methods, and it was interesting to observe children's reactions to various activities and the levels of engagement. Since the interaction was spread over several months with the drawing tasks leading to the workshop, I imagine it is akin to a project preparation in a school employing these theatre-based methods, as both children and I were creating 'sets' (drawings, models, renderings) to be used in an educational experience during the workshop. This was an interactive exploratory process because one side always influenced the other (I was reviewing the drawings as I was working on the school design). The research question is thus filtered through the children's minds.

With more time invested, this could be developed into an elaborate narrative about fictional characters and their life in school, where they learn about various curriculum topics. Children could thus learn as if through someone else's eyes and by set-making as a response to the curriculum, which might make the whole learning experience more engaging. In the meantime, all the materials collaboratively develop during the workshop, stay exhibited in the classroom as a reminder of possibilities and pupils' capabilities.

Conclusion

Current state

In the first three chapters, different ways of employing theatre-based teaching methods have been discussed and compared by using case studies. One of the main differences is the location such initiatives take place in as some of them are integrated to the curriculum within a school building (e.g. Eltham college) and some offered to classes by professional companies in purpose-built theatres (e.g. Unicorn theatre). According to Ireland and Harman, in spite of the popularity and success of theatre professionals delivering educational plays in theatres, financial difficulties often stand in the way. They point out that youth oriented theatre endeavours tend to be the ones least subsidised by the state and thus the desired performance quality is hard to achieve, resulting in higher ticket prices (Harman & Ireland, 2016, pp. 24-5). This reluctance to subsidise arts in education has its roots in goverments prioritising STEM disciplines, as Ken Robinson emphasises throughout his book 'Creative Schools' (2016). The reason is mostly economic and it is " another example of market principles being applied to education." (Robinson, Ken; Aronica, Lou, 2016, p. 35) In spite of his efforts to promote innovative teaching, he concludes that: " Arts education is still under fire in the standards movement,..."(2016, p.70)

In the case of schools with pupils from ethnically diverse, often socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is of course inconceivable to expect families to cover the prices of the theatre tickets, providing the schools themselves cannot afford to fully sponsor them. Since theatre can be a very efficient way of learning in multicultural contexts, as we have already shown, it is important to consider benefits of theatre-based methods becoming integral to the curriculum, performed by the teachers themselves and within school buildings. Such approach is demanding in terms of specific teachers' qualification and facilities provided within the school as stressed by Wooster (2016, p. 52). However, integrating TIE within the National Curriculum would enable more radical changes in terms of the way meanings are communicated to pupils. He justifies this notion by emphasizing theatre's ability to provide space for personal expression, enquiry and creativity (Wooster, 2016, p. 243). Thus in order to facilitate this aim, design of educational institutions needs to encourage project-based learning, provide arrangements suitable for interdisciplinary exchange and easy space transformation.

<u>Findings and future promise</u>

Reflecting on interaction with children during the workshop, we could observe, that emptiness of an educational environment can produce fear akin to an artist's fear of the blank page. Thus it can be more efficient to provide pupils with materials they can contribute to. During the workshop, children were always more confident in complementing scenes or models as opposed to producing something by drawing or writing from scratch based on abstract instructions. This shows, I believe, the importance of a physical reference at hand, which provides a type of 'scaffolding' for children to climb on in order to make faster progress in new learning situations. As a result, interaction with the teacher is more empowering for the children as described in Heathcote's 'Mantle of the Expert' method already discussed.

Therefore, we could argue, theatre sets (the physical environment) provide clues for more efficient communication of the curriculum while the incorporation of narratives and characters enables children to create an emotional bond with what they are learning about, thus be more invested in the learning process. Such attachment to a story and characters provides certain stability but supports imagination at the same time, as the evolution of a story depends on pupils' decisions. The workshop proved the quality of activities that engage children manually as well as intellectually. They gained confidence by seeing physical results of their work in the end and felt proud of themselves. As a result, empowerment was achieved through activities rooted in theatre tradition.

Looking into the future, Wooster summarizes the power of theatre in education as follows: " It offers a safe, fictive context in which the complexities of social reality can be addressed, analysed and challenged. Young people can be invited to question the ways things are and dialogically consider the status quo." (2016, p. 254)

"[Theatre in education] encourages citizenship and understanding, alongside creative thought and a determination to make a better world." (Wooster, 2016, p. 254)

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Fig 28:   Pupil from 1.C, Primary school L.Novomeskeho 2, Kosice, Slovakia

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Figs 65-74:   Dáša Sojková, class teacher from 1.C, L.Novomeskeho 2, Kosice, Slovakia

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Figs 80-84:   Dáša Sojková, class teacher from 1.C, L.Novomeskeho 2, Kosice, Slovakia

Fig 85:   Author

Fig 86-100:   Dáša Sojková, class teacher from 1.C, L.Novomeskeho 2, Kosice, Slovakia

Appendix

A. Responses-Favourite theatre play

Questions
1. Environment
2. Stage (colours, light, costumes)
3. Feelings
4. Atmosphere

Stelka- 1.forest, 2.very nice, 3.weird but I was very interested in it, 4.quite good

Natalka-1.forest, 2. 3 houses from straw-bale, wood and brick, costumes out of cotton, light on the whole stage, 3.good, 4. happy

Sebastian – 1.garden in front of a castle, 2. clear sky and sun was shining, 3.happy, 4.tense

Alzbeta – 1.garden and a castle, 2.costumes were nice and everything was colourful, 3.pleasant, 4.thrilling

Ema- 1.village, 2.colourful, 3.peaceful, 4.nice

Jakub – 1.forest, 2.costumes were sewn, lots of lights, 3.funny, 4. happy

Sofia – 1.in a tower, 2.colourful, 3.good, 4.tense

David -1.meadow near a forest, 2.strong lights, vivid colours, costumes sewn and very colourful, 3.happy, 4.happy

Jakub -1. in a forest next to a dwarfs' house,2.strong reflectors in the sky, weaker in the surroundings and weakest on the house,3.tense, 4.tense

Teodora -1.in a castle, 2.red and pink, regal costumes, 3.good, 4.good

Laura -1.outdoors, 2.colourful costumes, 3.happy, 4.pleasant

Teo -1.forest, 2.lots of gold, 3.good, 4.very nice

Martin-1. forest, 2.bright, 3.good, 4.nice

Barbora -1. by a road under a castle, 2.yellow lights, colourful costumes, 3.pleasant, 4.nice

Florian -1. city, 3.good, 4. silent

Ivanka -1.castle, 2.colourful, happy, 3.happy, 4.a bit sad, a bit happy

Nadine -1.tower, 2.changing lights and costumes, 3.funny, 4.nice

Kiko-1. in a theatre, 2.colourful, nice, 3.peaceful,4.nice

B. Responses-The Three Investigators

Questions:
1. What is surrounding you?
2. How much light is there?
3. How can you access it?
4. What technological facilities are there to enable investigations, research and learning?

1.C Sofia
- surrounded by a phone, tables, binoculars, computer, chair
- little light from a tunnel
- enter through a tunnel, cauldron, circular door
-tech- flashlight, camera, rucksack, rented car

1.C Darko
- surrounded by binoculars, windows, tables, computer, lamp, plenty of books, chests of drawers
- little light from a window
- enter through a tunnel, cauldron, fence
-tech- radio, flashlight, camera

1.C Nelka
- surrounded by a wardrobe, books, junk, newspaper
-light from a window on the side
- enter through a tunnel, cauldron, fence, gate
-tech- flashlight, radio, camera

2.A Šimon
-surrounded by stomping
- little light
- enter by unzipping a zipper
-technology- video camera, magnifying glass

3.A Sebastian
-surrounded by wood and sails
- little light
- enter through a pipe
- tech- photos, film recordings, paper

3.A Jan
- surrounded by a ton of things
-medium amount of light
- enter through a pipe or metal bars
-tech- phone, table, chair, typewriter, laboratory, dark chamber, camera, ipad

3.A Ela
- surrounded by a ton of people, ladder to reach things placed higher, bookshelves
-enormous amount of light
- enter through a main entrance
-tech- phone, table, camera, ipad, tv, test-tubes

4.A Kamilka
- surrounded by a lot of junk
-a bit of light from outside
- enter through secret entrances - space between 2 wooden planks, cement pipe with a wooden door in the end, cauldron from a locomotive
-tech- induction of photos

5.B Stelka
- surrounded by a dark chamber, boxes, table
-no light
- enter through three secret tunnels
-tech- photo induction, eavesdropping

5.B Peter
- surrounded by a pipe, grilles, desk, printing press, swivel chair
- little light
- enter through a pipe and a fence
-tech- dark chamber, printing press, laboratory, typewriter, phone, tools for building and drawing

C. Excerpts-The Three Investigators in the Secret of the Terror Castle (Arthur, 2000)
Translated into English by the thesis author

(Arthur, 2000, p.8)
"Jones' second hand shop was proboably the most colourful collection point in the whole country."
"He walked approximately hundred meters and suddenly stopped close to a corner, where there was a green sea with a sail sinking in a storm, painted on a fence. He got off his bike and found two green planks in a fence, where Jupiter made a secret gate. This was the Green Gate number one. With his finger, he pressed on a fish's eye, that was painted next to the sinking boat, and the gate opened."

(Arthur, 2000, p.21)
"He climbed behind an old printing press and moved a part of the old iron bars, that were leaning over the legs of a desk. Behind the bars there was a long and voluminous cement pipe. He climbed into the pipe, closed the bars behind him and crawled through...This was a Tunnel number 2, one of the few secret entrances, which the boys were using to enter the headquarters.... It was a nine meters long caravan, that Mr Jones bought a year ago."

(Arthur, 2000, p.22)
"And nobody knew, that the boys established an office, laboratory and a dark chamber in this very well masked van with a various secret entrances....The whole equipment of the headquarters consisted of amended old things."

D. Responses-The Magic School Bus

Questions:
a. What would you find inspirational to have around you in order to better understand the topic taught?
b. Does it help you clarify the theme when you are surrounded by what is directly linked to it? How?

Natural sciences
- glass walls and ceiling so that we were directly in nature
- pool in the classroom with the organisms that we are learning about
- plants in the classroom that we can grow and take care of
- desk with attached microscopes

- Filip– plants (tree trunk) serve as wardrobes, posters are arranged like a growing tree (branching out)
- Ema – planets, plants and different environments hanging from the ceiling
- Barbora – big bush serving as a table, tree stumps serving as chairs, water with living organisms flows through, objects serving for experiments

Music
- historical musical instruments on display
- bells hanging from the ceiling so that we could play them
- drum kit in the classroom
- walls painted over with clefs
- seat sacks
- ceiling in the shape of a dome for good acoustics

- Tanja – seating configuration in the shape of musical notation
- Stelka– oval table configuration with an interactive space for musical notation
- Laura - stage for pupils' performances, speakers for better sound conditions, walls decorated with musical notations, horseshoe table configuration for all the pupils

History / Geography
- bouncy castle in the form of mountains
- cave that you can enter
- Martin - opening in the shape of a cave (impression of entering a secret world)
- Nosian - table in the shape of a map, spaces for 3D models of different environments, communal seating

Computer sciences
- Teo - desk directly incorporating a computer screen

Mathematics
- Natalka – ruler integrated within the desk

Fine art
- Olivia – communal source of paint in the middle with individual seating arranged around
- Alzbeta– communal drawing table, art on the walls, walls themselves become a canvas for pupils' creations

- Alzbeta - in the classroom there is everything that I need to learn, it helps me think and find connections

- Danka - I would like to have a swimming pool at school, it helps me understand the technique of swimming

- Tamara - It would help to have animals we're learning about around me, I could see animal parts

- Veronika - I would understand subjects by sport. I would be inspired by an environment where there is sport and animals. It would be helpful because I could imagine everything better when I see it.

- Matej - An abacus and experienced teachers. I can see and perceive the environment, thus faster understand the curriculum.

- Samuel - I would need sports facilities, friends, coach, shoes and clothes. So that I could learn t the sport better and faster and be successful.

- Matus -To have around me animals and plants. I can comprehend the topic faster.

- Kamila - Peace and quiet would help me learn, enough help and energy and if school was starting later. The environment would become a source of information.

- Dominika - To have living organisms around me. I can learn faster.

- Filip - It would help if each classroom had modern and multimedia facilities. I can comprehend the topic better.

- Timea - It would inspire me to have nature around me to better understand natural sciences. It would help me discover the world.

- Monika - There should be all the musical instruments and a teleport. It helps me learn new things.

- Richard - I would like have facilities for playing paintball. It would help if I could move.

- Eva - I would like to be surrounded by wooden spoons and ovens. It helps being surrounded by the environment related to the curriculum because it helps me fit in.

-Palko - I would like to have a museum to know meanings of things. Yes, I can learn more.