SPECIAL FEATURE CALL FOR PAPERS
Third space roles and identities in educational settings
For publication from Summer 2024

Edited by Celia Whitchurch and Grace Healy
Expressions of interest accepted until 17 July 2023
Deadline for draft papers 15 January 2024

The roles and identities of personnel in educational spaces are changing as they develop their practice to meet the needs of contemporary students and evolving contexts, through, for example, learning support, employability initiatives and the online environment. These roles are increasingly being theorised using the concept of *Third Space,* which has its roots in the field of cultural studies (Bhabha 1990). In relation to organisations, it highlights the significance of in-between spaces, which are likely to be invisible in that they are not written into organizational charts or have dedicated physical space. As a result, systems and structures can become "a site of struggle" (Law, 1992: 386), generating the "constructive disruption" of binary thinking (Morley and Leyton 2022). McAlpine and Hopwood (2009) apply the concept of third space to higher education learning environments that are outwith established structures, Zeichner (2008) draws on it to examine the interface between practitioner and academic knowledge of educational methods and practice in schools, and Daza, Gudmundsdottir and Lund (2021) use it to explore professional practice in initial teacher education.

The concept of third space has gained currency internationally in the last decade, following earlier work by Whitchurch (2008, 2013, 2018) (Bossu and Brown 2019; Ryttberg and Geschwind 2019; Stoten 2022; McIntosh and Nutt 2022; Veles 2022, and McKay and Robson 2023). It has been applied to collaborative work in higher education environments such as:
- educational development, including study skills, academic writing and employability, particularly for underserved students
- educational practice in relation to, for example, the professional development of teachers in higher education
- the development of the digital learning environment
- public engagement, alumni relations, charitable and humanitarian work
- the promotion of research enterprise, impact, knowledge exchange and transfer
- strategic planning and institutional research.

There is, however, a gap in the literature in relation to people working in adult, further and school education, some of whom may not have mainstream teacher status. Examples include classroom assistants, counsellors, careers advisors, and people responsible for apprenticeships, in-service training, supervision and assessment in workplace settings. Furthermore, new areas of third space activity continue to emerge, and there is an ongoing need to develop understandings and examples of how it might be facilitated and optimised by institutions rather than, as at present, being in the main

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recognised and principally driven by those working in it (Baré et al 2021, Whitchurch 2023a and b). Thus, people working in third space are likely to be dependent on self-identification (Avenali et al 2022; Grant 2021), and the concept will be used in this special issue as a way of exploring groups of staff in educational settings who do not fit into existing structures or descriptors.

Submitting contributions

The special issue aims to bring together high quality conceptual and empirical papers that build on the existing literature in developing understandings about what it means to work in third space, while at the same time giving a voice to those working in a range of educational settings.

The Editors are seeking comparative case study material, set within a theoretical frame, and leading to generalisable conclusions. We welcome submissions in the following areas:

- The identification of settings where joint working in third space occurs, for example, between academics, teachers, workplace supervisors and other professionals supporting educational outcomes; between different types of institutions; and between educational institutions and workplace or outreach settings.
- The identification of 'what works' in practice for different people in different types of third space, together with critical success factors.
- The management of tensions, in particular identity strain, by those in third space.
- Career development for individuals working in third space.
- Achieving recognition of third space activity by those outside third space environments, such as senior managers, as well as those working within them.
- Establishing a 'third track' between academic, professional and other progression routes.
- Developing job descriptions, reporting lines, promotion criteria and career pathways appropriate to this 'third track', and regulatory processes associated with these.
- Ways of achieving a third space environment for a specific activity where it does not exist, but where it is felt that it would be beneficial.
- Exploration of types of Mode 3, 'situated' knowledge arising from practice in third space, involving stakeholders and users (Carayannis and Campbell 2016).
- The identification and management of boundary objects (Star and Griesemer 1989) within third space projects that will engage a range of different actors.
- The establishment of models of collaborative learning within third space.

Please consult the notes for authors on the journal's webpage of the UCL Press website.

The **deadline for early expressions of interest is 17 July 2023** in the form of an abstract of 300-500 words, up to six references, and a 50-word biographical statement should be sent by email to the handling editors, Celia Whitchurch and Grace Healy: c.whitchurch@ucl.ac.uk; grace.healy.18@ucl.ac.uk

The **deadline for submission** of articles is **15 January 2024**, through the journal's *submission site*.

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