

R&D-Report

Theatre meets school children - a study of the international project *I Will Be Everything ...*

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Nord University
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Prosjekt: <i>"I will be everything ..."</i> - et møte mellom teater og skoleelev	Oppdragsgiver(e) Nordland Teater	
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Sammendrag: Prosjektet <i>I will be everything ...</i> går over perioden fra 2017 til 2020, og er finansiert av Creative Europe Culture Program. Med i prosjektet er teater fra syv ulike Europeiske land, Nordland Teater er den norske partneren. Gjennom prosjektet vil skolebarn fra de syv landene møte profesjonelle instruktører, og sammen prøve å forestille seg fremtiden og sin plass i den. Med utgangspunkt i fortellingene som barna skaper vil en forestilling for barn bli laget, med skuespillere fra alle deltakerinstitusjonene, som skal vises i alle deltakerlandene året 2019-2020. Teaterinstruktør Kristin Jørgensen er ansvarlig for workshopene som har gått i skoler i Helgelandsregionen, førstelektor Anne Lise Wie deltar i prosjektet som følgeforsker. Hennes forskning vil ta utgangspunkt i problemstillinga <i>Hva kan skje i møtet mellom teater og skoleelev?</i>	Emneord: Skolebarn, teater, kreativ skriving, følgeforskning	
Summary: The project <i>I will be everything...</i> runs over a three year period, between 2017 and 2020, and is funded by the Creative Europe Program.	Keywords: School children, theatre, creative writing, accompanying research	

Partners are theatre institutions from seven European countries, Nordland Theatre is the Norwegian partner. This project celebrates children's creative writing and their imagination. Theatre instructor Kristin Jørgensen held a series of workshops at primary schools in the area. The children's ambitions and imaginings have been interwoven into a high quality theatre production, that will be showed in all participating countries 2019-20. Associate Professor Anne Lise Wie has been invited to participate in the project as an accompanying researcher. Her research will be based on the question *What may happen in the meeting between theatre and school pupils?*

Acknowledgments

Stage director Kristin Jørgensen from Nordland Teater invited me to participate as a researcher in an international project Nordland Teater was part of. I am a senior lecturer at the university, teaching esthetical and creative teaching methods in teacher training. I have experience from international projects and working with amateur theatre groups prior to this; so this project would be right up my alley. And what a journey this has been, from the meeting with hundreds of school children locally to the performance at Nordland Teater. Thank you, Kristin, for bringing me along; it has been an adventure.

Thanks and appreciation go also to Sabine Zieser, Helle Ankerstjerne, Hannah France Whelan, Tina Ditlefsen and Hilde Stensland for their contributions and support.

And a very special thanks goes to my colleague and husband Patrick Murphy, for your help and feedback during the process.

Nesna, Norway, April 2020

Anne-Lise Wie

Innhold

1.0 Introduction	5
1.1 Aesthetic and creative learning processes, and internalization, in schools and teacher education	5
1.2 Method and design	7
2.0 On tour with Kristin, the Norwegian theatre instructor	12
2.1 The first workshops	12
2.1.1 Tasks from the workshops	12
2.2 The next workshop: the Pen Pals	20
2.2.1 The Pen Pals	20
2.3 The exhibition at Vinterlys 2019	22
2.4 Time, space, body, and text	25
2.5 Some thoughts around the first part of the project	29
3.0 Stories told and written through the project	30
3.1 Stories from the Norwegian children	31
3.1.1 Text Material	32
3.1.2 About the texts and point of development	47
3.2 What do European children think about the future?	47
3.2.1 Texts and drawings from children in IWBE	48
3.3 European children writing the future	56
4.0 From text to stage	58
4.1 Hilde recounts how the play was developed	58
4.2 I Will Be Everything – on stage	61
5.0 Conclusive comments	69
Bibliography	72

1.0 Introduction

I Will Be Everything ... asks children to imagine their future selves and future world. In schools across Europe, young people will take part in theatre, creative writing, film-making and drawing workshops. The material will then be transformed into an immersive theatre show and exhibition touring to each partner's home venue and beyond in Denmark, Germany, Norway, Poland, Austria, and Spain. (IWBE project description).

The project *I Will Be Everything...* ran over a three year period between 2017 and 2020, and was funded by the Creative Europe Program. Partners were theatre institutions from seven European countries:

- NIE UK from Cambridge, England
- Odsherred Teater from Nykøbing, Denmark
- Theater Mumpitz from Nuremberg, Germany
- Teatr Figi from Krakow, Poland
- Theater am Ortweinplatz from Graz, Austria
- Sala Barazza Aretoa from Victoria -Gasteiz, Spain
- Nordland Teater from Mo i Rana, Norway

Through this project, children from these seven countries were invited to meet professional instructors, and with them try to imagine the future and their place in it. The children were given the opportunity to communicate with children from other countries participating in the project through stories and artwork. Based on the stories the children created, the work would end with a performance for children to be shown in all participating countries in 2019-2020.

I was invited to participate in the project as an accompanying researcher (Christensen et al 2016). The project has been followed through initial workshops in Helgeland to the finished performance. My research has been based on the question *What may happen in the meeting between theatre and school pupils?*

1.1 Aesthetic and creative learning processes, and internalization, in schools and teacher education

One of the project goals for *I will be everything...* (IWBE) was to develop collaboration between theatre and schools presently not so much involved with theatre and drama. 2,000 children

from all of Europe were involved in this project, where 400 of these came from Norway. The Norwegian stage director Kristin Jørgensen is employed at Nordland Teater, and has led the workshops in Norway. She has also led some workshops in Spain, Poland, and Austria. She talks about her motivation for participating in the IWBE project:

To work with creativity, play, (...) for children to have the pleasure of creating something. I believe in the creative being. I know that many of my exercises give children who do not feel comfortable behind a desk the feeling of well-being (Interview Jørgensen, January 2019).

The IWBE project aims to show how aesthetic and creative learning processes may have their place in school. Asking the question of what these terms include, we need to start with their origin. The term aesthetics comes from the Greek word *aisthesis*, which means "the knowledge that comes through the senses" [my translation] (Tjønneland 2018). The term creative comes from the Latin term creation, meaning bringing to the world, or creating something that was not there previously (Juell and Norskog 2006, p. 107). Brekke and Willbergh (2017) define aesthetic forms of work as learning tools based on artistic expression; it is all about learning with one's entire self.

The current Norwegian national curriculum is being renewed these days; a process that has been termed *the subject renewal*. The strategy document *Skaperglede, engasjement og utforskertrang (Creator joy, commitment and explorative curiosity)* indicates that an increased focus on science subjects in recent years has led to less attention on the practical and aesthetic subjects (Ministry of Education 2019, p. 34), while the 2011 school subject study shows that "the (practical and aesthetic) subjects have an impact on student learning in other subjects" [my translation] (Ministry of Education 2019, p. 8). Through the subject renewal, practical and aesthetic subjects, as well as aesthetic and creative forms of work, will be emphasized in both primary/secondary and teacher education.

The Government is seeking to raise the competence within and status of the practical and aesthetic subjects, the subject areas and the working methods in kindergarten, school and teacher education. (...) The strategy highlights the opportunities and inherent value of the subjects and disciplines. It also emphasizes the importance of aesthetic learning processes and practical working methods in all subjects [my translation] (Ministry of Education and Research 2019, p. 5).

The increased focus on aesthetical methods makes the IWBE project interesting also for us involved in teacher education. "The student should be able to facilitate creative learning through various expressions, dissemination, and performances that help develop learner self-confidence and identity." [my translation] (National Council for Teacher Education 2016); which requires the lecturers to possess the same competence.

Another focal point in higher education in Norway is internalization; mostly so through student exchange programs. Important as it is, this form of internationalization will often imply students abroad following courses offered at the host institution, and not necessarily a focus on the process of internationalization and its implementation in target areas for university programs. Internationalization as a method is an applicable approach within e.g. teacher training. What is also needed in teacher training is exemplifying how the target group, pupils from schools and kindergarten, can participate in an international project. IWBE is a very good example to how it can be done.

1.2 Method and design

The decision on where to conduct a research study will usually be the result of careful consideration, but sometimes the environment will be selected first, as one is given the opportunity to investigate interesting environments, write Hammersley and Atkinson (2004, p. 66). Such is the case with this study, where Nordland Teater participated in an international project funded by the Creative Europe programme. As a researcher at NORD University (Nesna), I received a request from stage director Kristin Jørgensen at Nordland Teater for a possible collaboration. Jørgensen is well informed about me and my interest in drama and theatre¹, knowing this was a project that would be of interest for me to participate in; both as researcher and teacher educator, in addition to the capacity of instructor at the local children's theatre.

When working so close to one's own research object, it may be complicated to keep the desired distance as an objective researcher. "Maintaining distance and impartiality is always

¹ I am engaged as an instructor in the local children- and youth theatre group here at Nesna, and have written two articles about my work: "Gilding granite - spaces of transition in the children's theatre", in *Annals of the University of Craiova, Series: Philology, English*, 1:2018. University of Craiova. (<https://www.cceol.com/search/journal-detail?id=1714>). "Vi skriver revy! Erfaringer fra en skrivesituasjon som for eleven avviker fra "den vanlige"." *Norsklæreren* 1/2003, pp. 55-58.

a problem in qualitative studies" [my translation] (Repstad 2007, p. 39). This is further emphasized when you have a personal relationship with someone in the environment to be studied. At the same time, it may be an additional motivation for the researcher to undertake research in an environment of interest. It is important to have this in mind and to think through during the process; it is about creating a balance and including this relationship in the report (Repstad 2007, p. 39).

My role in this project was carrying out *accompanying research*, a term used by Christensen, Hansen, Krøgholt and Stage (Christensen et al 2016). In accompanying research, the goal is to investigate and describe a process from the beginning to end². My task has been to participate both as a contributor in relation to academic issues and to together with other participants evaluate the project at the end of the project period. When entering an accompanying research project, it is the project per se that decides which approach to follow. Accompanying research is closely related to evaluation research, especially the process-oriented direction where the goal is to describe and influence a course of action during the project period. The direction is learning and knowledge-based, and therefore often requires the presence of researchers and a collaboration between researchers and those involved in the project (Sverdrup 2002, pp. 32-33).

Ida Krøgholt (2016, p. 19) suggests two points that may be important to consider regarding the relationship between accompaniment researchers and research objects [my translation]:

1. *Do not know where the process is going, but how to observe it.* It is a premise for the accompanying research that the researcher maintains a sensitivity to the partner's project. ...
2. *Communicate what you have in mind.* The accompanying research process cannot be controlled and structured as if it had been a completely autonomous process. ...

The IWBE project was not mine, but I was given the chance to participate and gather knowledge from it. Qualitative research methods emphasize understanding and analysis of contexts in a process of the individual, rather than counting the phenomena or characteristics of a group of individuals, as in quantitative research. "... Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of what meanings people bring to them" [my translation] (Creswell 2018, p. 7). In this study it

² I entered the project as Jørgensen started making plans for her workshops.

was natural to use a qualitative method; it was about describing or characterizing the project. Fieldwork was the best method choice, as it is a method that "allows you to acquire knowledge through first-hand experience" [my translation] (Fangen 2010, p. 15), and it is concerned with developing a real-world understanding and collecting data by staying in the field which is being studied.

I have had different roles during different stages of the process. I was a participant-observer in the instructor's workshops in school, I actively participated as an assistant, and along the way I would retreat to observe from a distance and make notes. "The concept of accompanying research can capture mutual relationships where researchers and external executives meet to research and be researched" [my translation] (Krøgholt 2016, p. 16). After each workshop, I discussed and reflected with the instructor and teacher on the course of the workshop, on what worked, and on why some things did not work optimally. "You can get involved in the process through active interaction with others, practical facilitation of measures, and concrete solutions. In other phases, a more withdrawn role is taken as a spectator and (re)searcher." [my translation] (Olsen et al 2002). In a qualitative research project, different phases blend into one another, where "clarification of the problem takes place while new data is being collected and at the same time constructing an analysis" [my translation] (Repstad 2007, p. 19). The data material this study is based on are observations from the workshops, conversations with the participants, and drawings and various texts written by the children from different countries participating in the workshops, documents about the project, and interviews with instructor Kristin Jørgensen and Norwegian actor Hilde Stensland.

A dramaturgical analysis has been used in the analysis of the material. The term *dramaturgy* has its origin in Aristoteles' theory of theatre from the Greek antiquity, characterizing the theatre's narrative method, and is used to describe the structure of a play (Gladsø et al 2005, p. 25). According to Aristoteles, the action is to be built on the following dramatic tension curve: "an introductory presentation followed by a conflict or crisis, which intensifies towards a climax. This is followed by a drop in suspense towards a resolution" [my translation] (Meek 2018, p. 18). Today the term is used in a wider sense in the analysis of political debate, news distribution, architecture or urban development. "Dramaturgy is a term for all types of performance and staging, including the various forms of performance,

presentation and staging that take place outside the theatre, the film and the traditional fiction narratives” [my translation] (Allern 2015, p. 35).



Illustration 1: Aristoteles' dramaturgy.

“Creative people need time and space, mentally and physically,” [my translation] writes Buaas (2002, p. 24). Gladsøe, Gjervan, Hovik and Skagen speak of time, space, body and text as four important gateways corresponding to "impulses that we know are initiating for a theatrical process" [my translation] (2005, p. 189). In part 2 of the report, I take a closer look at how the instructor constructs and conducts the workshops in order to be able to say something about how her competence in dramaturgy is present in the workshops, where the four gateways will be in focus.

According to Østern (2014), the dramaturg seeks answers to two important questions: *What story do I want to tell?* and *why break the silence of the universe?* "Theatre must touch, have something at heart, otherwise theatre is dead" [my translation] (Østern 2014, p. 19). Similarly, the teacher must think through what to convey, how and why. The theatre's traditional

audience role is that of the spectator; a story is told on stage, with the audience as passive spectators. This is also the classic form of teaching, where the pupil sits at his or her desk and monitors what the teacher goes through at the blackboard. The open theatre made its final breakthrough in the early 1960s, based on a desire "to break the passive, consuming role the audience had in the theatre" [my translation] (Gladsøe et al 2005, p. 164). In this same manner, today's teachers are encouraged to implement learner active teaching methods. Through the workshops in IWBE, the children was activated, and thoughts and ideas for a future created which will form the foundation for the final narrative on which the theatre performance should be based. Narratology is a common term for various theories of storytelling, which shows how we can understand and analyze this type of texts. It will be the starting point for being able to say more about the quality of pupil texts. The genre *story* is defined by Skjelbred as a text that has

- orientation; i.e. an introduction with the background and the initiating action
- complication/conflict; i.e. a sequence in which action and counteraction based on conscious motive are central. These tend to peak, before we get there
- resolution; i.e. a solution / ending where the situation has changed in relation to the start of the story. [my translation] (Skjelbred 2014, p. 49)

Numerous pupils' stories lack the dynamic element and narrative grammar, and we use other terms to see the quality and growth point of pupil texts. This will be commented on later, where also the children's written and oral stories will be given a close reading in part 3. In this part contributions from other partners will be looked at as well, as several of the IWBE partners have provided a small selection of pupil work for me to consider.

Based on the narratives created in the workshops, the theatre performance was created, this work will be dealt with in part 4. During the week the performance was put on at Nordland Teater, I was present at four school performances to observe the children's reactions to what was happening on stage. I also talked to some of the audience, thirteen year old Anne, eleven year old Berit and eleven year old Carl to find out more about their reactions.³ This research has been assessed and approved by Norwegian Centre for Research Data, reference code 567475.

³ The names are fictive to protect privacy.

2.0 On tour with Kristin, the Norwegian theatre instructor

I Will Be Everything ... asks children to imagine their future selves and future world. In schools across Europe, young people will take part in theatre, creative writing, film-making and drawing workshops. (IWBE project description).

2.1 The first workshops

Kristin Jørgensen says that she in the construction of her workshops

... emphasizes a common start-up, to see everyone and get focus. Then the children must stop by the small group of two, three or four, thus new formations are created in the room. Then everyone is forced to create a thing on their own, be it a word or a small drawing. One alone. This is a sequence that cannot be kept for too long, as such teaching is all about timing. If the workshop is for adults, we can dwell on doing something individually, but with children one must be careful. There also needs to be a common ending (Interview Jørgensen, January 2019).

Jørgensen has visited most of the schools in the area giving workshops, and I have joined her. The workshops have had the same structure, but with some differing content from workshop to workshop. The tasks that have been used in the various workshops have been selected based on the instructor's thoughts on which tasks are best suited for the group in question, based on age, space, time of day, and naturally on time available. Most of the activities that have been tried once or more will be described here, and in some cases samples of student work will be included.

2.1.1 Tasks from the workshops

Pupil task: Starting point

Jørgensen starts every workshop with gathering the children in a circle, then introducing herself and me. Then she walks around the circle, shaking hands with everyone, looking into their eyes and showing that she is trying hard to remember their names. She does remember most of their names, and if she forgets, she makes fun of herself, and everybody laughs.

A couple of games for warming up is a good starting point getting to know the group of children; and vice versa the children get to know Jørgensen. A typical start is an exercise where

the children need to keep focus; they have to clap or bow at the instructor's signal. Another exercise is walking and stopping in the room at the instructor's signal.

Pupil task: Rock Paper Scissors Evolution

Rock Paper Scissors Evolution is a popular game. The goal is to evolve from the lowest to the highest stage of life form, transitioning through the stages of amoeba, fish, dinosaur, bird, and monkey to man from stone age to spaceman. Each creature has its own movements, and all children start out at the same level as amoebas "swimming" around in the room. When bumping into each other, they use the game *Rock Paper Scissors* to determine who will develop, and who will stay on the level where they are; the game ending when the first player reaches the stage of spaceman. All the children involved love the elements of competition and the movements they make.

Pupil task: Alphabet Line

The Alphabet Line is another sample of a warm-up activity. The children are told to form a line, where they with the help of the first letter (and in some cases second and third) in their names have to place themselves in an alphabetical order. This is a task the children have to solve together, though once in a while they might need help from their teacher, and they all manage in the end. The children settle down doing this game, and it is a preparation for the next task.

Pupil task: Timeline

The children are standing in a line, now it is time to start exploring the time. First the instructor would like the children to explore the present. The children in the alphabetic line are now paired, they look at each other, greet each other, touch the floor, themselves, and maybe each other. The present is in the moment, here and now.

We then turn around and look at the same direction, at the past; what did the children do earlier today, or maybe one hour ago? What do they remember from yesterday, from last Christmas, or from last year? What have they heard about when their parents were children

or when their grandparents were young? Do the children remember the gifts they received last Christmas? The children then tell stories about their parents and grandparents. Some stories can be short and not so interesting for anyone else than the actual child, while some stories are likely to not have taken place, and yet other stories are maybe not meant to be told outside the family. The children tell numerous stories of mischief, and for some reason everybody loves a story where something nearly goes wrong. Then the children go further back in time. They have heard about the two world wars, they know of the Viking age, when Jesus was born, the Stone Age, and even the Big Bang. Jørgensen makes a timeline where the children have to act a scene from history, and freeze; thus ending with a number of children standing in line presenting the timeline from the Big Bang to the girl who brushed her teeth an hour ago.

Next we turn around and look towards the future. How old will the children be in fifty years' time? What do they think might happen in fifty years' time? The children have to use their imagination: what do they think, what do they hope, and what do they believe?

The concept of time can be difficult to fully comprehend, where especially the present may be challenging. What is the present, we ask, attempting to explain that it is only what is here and now, what you did a minute ago is already in the past. The past is more understandable, as children have heard stories about things that have happened earlier and about time periods in the past. In this task they start with the familiar, and then go into the unknown future.

Pupil task: Post-It Notes predicting the future

All children are given a Post-it Note and the task to write or draw an invention or a scene that will be present in fifty years' time. After collecting the notes, Jørgensen gathers the children in a circle telling them what she sees on each note. The children listen quietly, and as each story is short, it does not take long until their story is told. This is creative storytelling, where each simple drawing or words are the starting point for a small story, and together they create a longer story about the future as told by Kristin Jørgensen: "This might happen in the time to come ..."

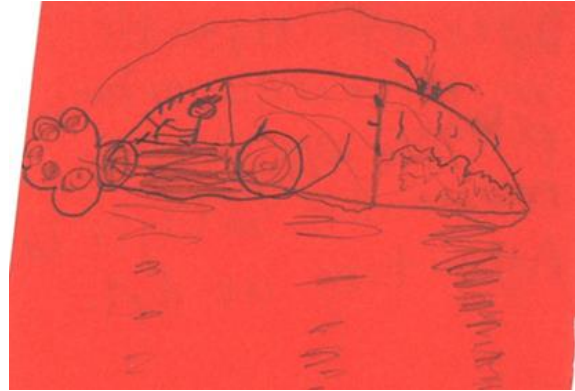
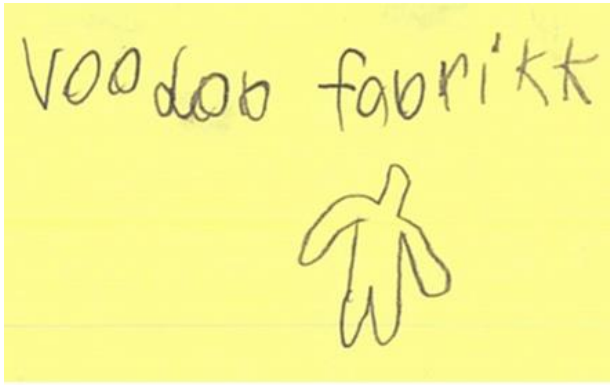


Illustration 2: There might be a Voodoo factory in the future, so if you want to be mean to someone, you can buy yourself a doll or something, and do mean stuff to this person. Wow, that is scary, but it might happen, who knows?

Illustration 3: There will be flying garbage-cars with hands, that pick garbage and crush it and make new stuff of it. I really hope you invent this, because it is a great idea, and much needed.

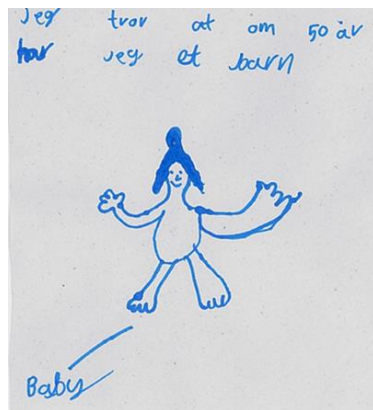
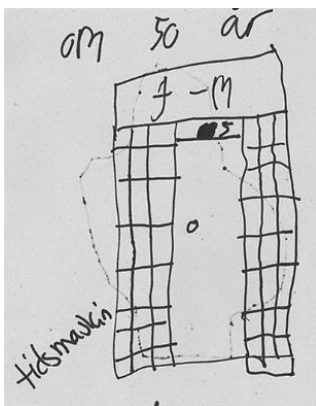


Illustration 4: In fifty years, we can travel in time using a time machine, that is just as interesting as travel abroad.

Illustration 5: In fifty years' time some of you will have children of your own. Yes, some of you might even be grandparents.

Illustration 6: In fifty years someone has invented medicine for lactose intolerance, which will please many.

Pupil task: What do we see looking out of our window in fifty years' time?

The class is divided in two groups, where one group is standing in a line in front of a "window", a square made of paper. Each child steps up on a chair, telling what he or she sees in his or her community in fifty years' time. The other group gathers around a large sheet of paper on

the floor, drawing what the first group sees. When all children in the first group have looked through the window, they switch roles.



Illustration 7: Children making drawing of what the other children see out of their window.

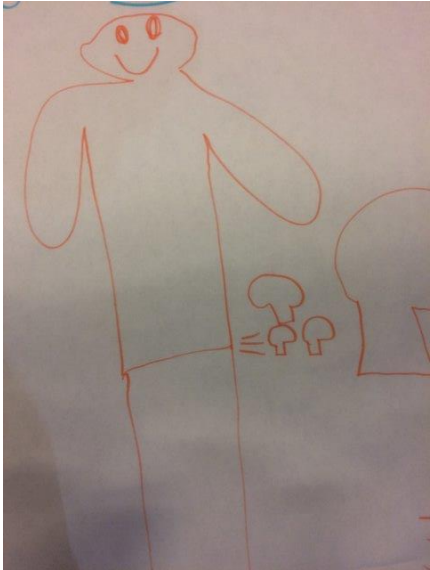
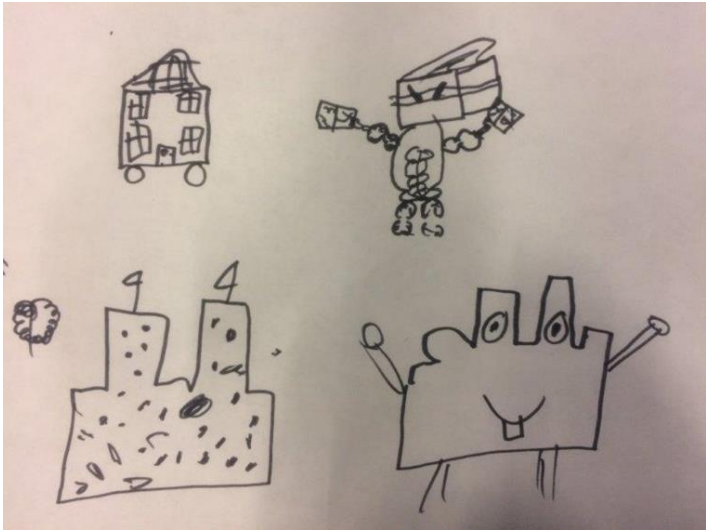


Illustration 8: Our town has living houses and a large museum made of cheese, robots who fly, and houses on wheels so they are easier to move.

Illustration 9: A giant has awakened in the mountain, he is pooping muffins.

Pupil task: Schema

Children entering the room one by one after a short break are instructed to find a form placed on the floor and stay in the spot of the form and accompanying pencil. They will then respond to the following task: write your name, age and name of a country; then draw a picture of yourself in fifty years' time, and write what you would like to become as an adult.



Illustration 10: When the children enter a room one and one like this, they enter in a much calmer manner, and they look for a space where they can be alone before they start to work on the task.

The children doing the drawings below, have an idea about how they will look as they get older, e.g. the boy with a moustache and the girl with glasses and wrinkles.



Illustration 11: Dentist or veterinarian, a 12 year old girl writes.

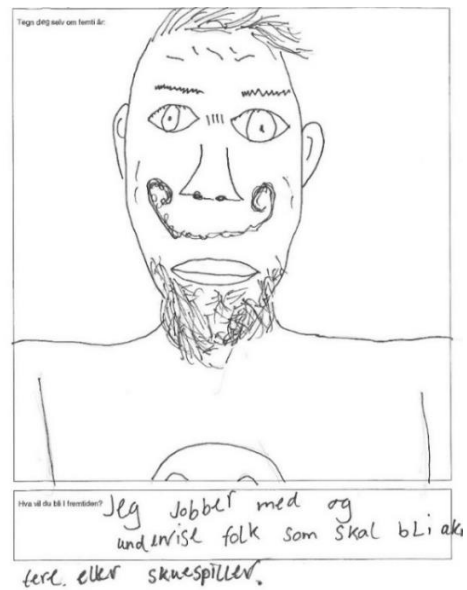


Illustration 12: I am teaching people who want to become acrobats or actors, a 11 year old boy writes.

Pupil task: The gift from the future:

The instructor brings in a large box, explaining it is a gift from the future; like one of those time capsules, but not from the past. Each child receive an item from the box, a thing from the future. Their task is to look at it and familiarize themselves with it, and then answer the following question as a text:

“What is this item, and how do we use it in the future?”



Illustration 13: A remote control you can use when you are hungry, then you don't have to make food yourself.

Pupil task: Write a diary from your life in 2069.

Each child receives a form with the title “Diary 2069” on. The task is to write about one day in fifty years’ time. The diary genre may be a sensible form of writing when under time pressure. This is a bed-to-bed text taking us from morning to evening, and there is no need to develop a conflict, rise of suspense or climax as would be expected in a story. The diary text format may start with the simple introduction of *Dear Diary* and ending with *Good night*.

Pupil task: Pictures as a starter

For this activity, the class is divided in smaller groups of four to five children in each group, where each group of children receives five pictures to build their story on. The children collaborate on the story orally, where they discuss the pictures, find names for the characters, and create the narrative. Then the story is written down, either by themselves or with the help from an adult.



Illustration 14: Pictures can be starters for an oral or written story, for instance *Sagolek* cards⁴.

2.2 The next workshop: the Pen Pals

Through participation in the IWBE project, some of the schools were given the opportunity to communicate with a similar school in one of the other participating countries. Two classes at Nesna school were selected to participate in an exchange of letters with similar classes from Graz in Austria and Nykøbing in Denmark.

2.2.1 The Pen Pals

As usual Kristin started by gathering the children in a circle and warm up with some games, which are fun, but also deal with focus and collaboration as a lead-in to the pupils writing. The pupils were well prepared, as they previously had been out taking pictures around Nesna to send to the recipients. The children were positively prepared to write letters, and looking

⁴ Sama Produktion: Sagolek. <http://www.sama.se/?pageId=4&childId=41>

forward to receive letters from unknown children in another country. Kristin told about the place the pen pals come from:

The story of Odsherred and Nykøbing in Denmark. I think everything has to be told as an "adventure", otherwise there will be a lot of information that is difficult to digest. I gather them around me and tell them about this place and the kids who live there, and also present images. (Jørgensen journal 2019).

Furthermore, Kristin had a brain storming session on the blackboard, where she and the pupils discussed the contents of the letter, what they could write about their own home, about their school and themselves. Letter writing follows a pattern that Kristin presented to the pupils. Afterwards, each pupil received an envelope in which they put their letter.

Writing letters is like creating a time frame; it is about writing about oneself in the present, i.e. who one is, where one lives, and what one likes to do. Writing a letter may also be about the future; what thoughts one has about the future, including wishes and desires for the future. The focus of the workshop was not on writing and grammar skills, but the ability to reflect on one's own life, as well as thoughts for the future one would like to share with another human being. Writing letters is also a way of working with storytelling, but in a format that is different from the traditional story. Nevertheless, the imagination may be present in the desire for how things will be in the future. What do children want in different countries; are they very different in their wishes and hopes for the future? Based on the letters we have read, we see that children are concerned with many of the same things regardless of where they come from. This joint community also creates interest in further writing.

After the third and last, visit in one of the classes, one of the teachers was asked if he felt that IWBE was stealing time from other subjects. He responded with explaining the further plan for teaching this week. In a couple of days they would be working with computers, and then they would continue working on these texts digitally. In this way, pupils learn the benefits of writing a draft before further developing the text digitally.

In another class, the letters had to be in English for the recipients to understand. The first letters were written in Norwegian by the pupils and translated into English by adults; but when receiving letters in English, the pupils had to read and try to understand their content. In the continuation, the pupils may write in English themselves. Having an actual and not merely an

intended recipient may help create motivation for both writing and working with English. For the teacher, it is about seeing the opportunities, and seeing how participation in a project like this can be linked to learning objectives in the curriculum.

2.3 The exhibition at Vinterlys 2019

Each year in February, Nordland Teater hosts the Winter Light Festival, which is one of Norway's largest theatre festivals. In 2019, an exhibition was set up at Nordland Teater's premises during the festival, with texts and drawings pupils from schools in Rana and Nesna had created.

The various workshops had resulted in a large number of drawings and stories. With such a large selection of material and so many fine products, it was a difficult task for the instructor to pick a few who would represent Norway in the international project. The idea of creating an exhibition where several of the products could be presented revealed itself. The exhibition was planned and put together by Kristin Jørgensen with assistance from Heidi Ingvalda Tandberg and Anne-Lise Wie, among others. The idea was to start with different expressions from different schools that had been visited so far. With Kristin Jørgensen guiding them, 150-200 children experienced the exhibition, which consisted of four different expressions during the period on display.

A wish for the future

Jørgensen used a sound recorder to collect wishes for the future in one of the classes we visited. The activity developed into one of beauty, as the setting became serene as the children thought carefully about what wishes for the future they should give, before entering the instructor's room. The footage reveals a boy telling that in the future he hopes to learn how to play clarinet, and "play music on stage and show it to my parents", a girl who wants a rabbit and another boy who wants a thing to shoot out cobwebs. Also in the footage, a boy says his wish is that in the future there will be no injustice, a girl wants a healthy earth, and a girl wants to become a superhero so she can "save other children who are not well". The recordings

became part of the exhibition, where visitors could put on earphones and listen to all the wishes.

Forms

After having visited most of the schools in the region and met many pupils, we have obtained a large number filled in forms with fun and wonderful drawings. Mounting them on a wall was one way for us to ensure their display, and sixty of the children's drawings of themselves in fifty years' time were selected and printed on two large banners hung from the ceiling.



Illustration 15: A selection of forms filled in by the children are printed on ceiling-hung banners.

The story book of Post-It Notes and stories from the future

The Post-it Notes with drawings of inventions of the future and the stories created based on the gift from the future were pasted in a story book; one drawing and one text to a double page. The drawings and texts came from two different schools, but together still created a whole. The product turned out to be a nice story book where both drawings and text tell an

individual story, as opposed to collectively in a traditional picture book. The completed book was placed beside a comfortable chair that became the chair of storytelling.



Illustration 16: Settle in the chair and read the book of illustrated inventions and stories of the future.

Animation

The project description encourages the making of videos. This is a good idea, but does require that those who are involved have the required expertise. This developed into an idea where adults involved tried out how to make simple animations using the children's' drawings. The activity "What do we see looking out of our window in fifty years' time?" has resulted in many fine drawings, inspiring us to create narratives from which we created animations.

One animated film was based on all the flying animals and objects that the children visualized. Here viewer looks through a window and sees animals and objects fly by. Another film was based on drawings of things seen in the fjord outside Mo i Rana. When a child was to draw the Megalodon seen in the fjord outside Mo i Rana, he drew not only the huge shark, but also the fish being chased by it. As the until now armless statue *The Man from the Sea* grew arms in the same fjord, the events became a narrative in which the Megalodon chased the fish past the statue.

Just as the instructor gives the children starters to begin their creative process, the children's ideas and drawings became starters for our creative process.

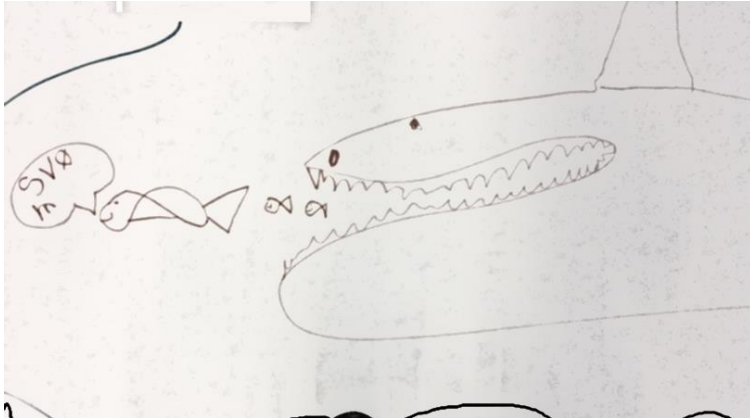


Illustration 17: A Megalodon, world's largest shark, is observed in the fjord.



Illustration 18: The statue *The Man from the Sea* has arms where birds build nests.

2.4 Time, space, body, and text

In their book *Dramaturgi*, Gladsø, Gjervan, Hovik and Skagen present *time, space, body* and *text* as important dramaturgical gateways or elements (2005). These are the same four elements Visky presents in his description of barrack-dramaturgy (2015, p. 468). The gateways or elements correspond to impulses that may trigger a theatrical process. "A gateway in our sense can thus be more or less concrete, but it is always focused and positively traced in relation to the creative process" [my translation] (Gladsø et al. 2005, p. 189). At the same time as the different gateways may be viewed one by one, they blend and influence one another.

In the theatre, we can delineate time, create space for action, a fictional space belonging to another time than the everyday. In this way, dramaturgy is working with the spatial and moving aspects of time. The time of the theatre is defined as a course with a marked beginning and end, but the time that passes between these marks can in many ways be experienced as out of time [my translation] (Gladsø et al 2005, p. 192).

Time may be looked at from different angles. The IWBE project is about time, where efforts are made to understand the concept of time, past, present and future. It is about being

conscious of time and building a timeline to look at the various historical events of a journey, and perhaps see one's role in the world of tomorrow. As Jørgensen explains, "the big idea of the future is somehow carried in community through Europe, so it has been natural to choose this as a theme. As a main goal, it has simply been knowing what is going on inside their heads in seven different countries when they think about the future" (Interview January 2019). Focusing on the workshops, it is the instructor's use of the time she has available for each group of children that is important. Although each workshop is constructed with somewhat different content, we find the same structure in each workshop: a narrative with an Aristotelian dramaturgy.

The workshops start with all the children gathering in a circle before continuing with a play or activity. Through the first exercises, participants physically warm up, they get into a good mood, and the instructor and the children get to know each other, thus creating an expectation of what is going on. After the first routine, the children join in the next exercises with joy; also the children who started out a bit shy, wishing to observe rather than attend.

Working with the timeline, the children are invited to tell their own stories. The important element in this task is to give all children attention, spending time and listening to them. The instructor asks questions about their stories; each and every one having a story that is important, and the instructor is genuinely interested in listening. A teacher present tells us after the workshop that she saw children who do not normally raise their hands in class or answer questions were very active in this workshop. This might be because when the teacher normally asks a question in a class, the question is connected to the subject taught; a question which has a pre-defined answer. If a child does not answer this type of question, it could be because he or she is afraid his or her answer might be incorrect, or because he or she does not see the point of retelling something the teacher already knows. In the IWBE-workshop the instructor asks questions about something only the child knows, something that is unfamiliar to all but this child. The child can tell his or her story to an instructor who appreciates the child's story, which for the child creates a pleasure in sharing it. The knowledge and assurance that the story is important for the listener, makes the storyteller and the story important. The timeline task has a goal of first teaching the children about the past, then move into the unknown future, and it is also a goal to let the children start telling stories, as we do want the workshop to end up with good stories, according to Jørgensen.

In the next task, the children listen to Jørgensen's creative storytelling, stories she makes after reading or looking at their notes with inventions or scenes fifty years into the future. This moment is magic; the children listen very quietly. Each story is short, it might be serious or fun, and all children know that the note with their story will come around shortly. All these tasks about time and creating stories are input that the children bring along to the final task; writing their own stories about the future.

"Our experience of space depends on our body, our senses and our imagination" [my translation] (Gladsø et al 2005, p. 193). Different spaces provide different directions for what activity to take place there. A gymnasium with its equipment invites visitors to use the equipment, while an outdoor space invites exploring possibilities in nature. The Black box theater is a large, open room with high ceilings - both literally and in transferred meaning This black box is in many ways a room of opportunity: it is empty, it does not provide any clues as to what is going to happen inside, it invites to be filled by something, *something* that was not there before; it invites creative work⁵. The rooms chosen for the workshops are largely unfurnished, whether they are gymnasiums or other rooms where tables and chairs are removed before start-up. There should be no disturbing elements there, it is about the instructor's physical presence. She gets closer to the pupils when there are no desks between them, and it is easier to get their attention. She no longer talks *to* them, she talks *with* them.

In the second set of workshops, the pupils' classrooms were partially used at the teacher's request, as it would be easier for the writing to allow the pupils to sit at a desk. The classroom makes the physical activities difficult, with the consequence that there is more turmoil in the classroom than in the Black box. The classroom may be inferior in terms of acoustics, so what we experience as creative chaos in the Black box becomes a nuisance in a classroom. Also, the classroom's conformity creates a framework where the instructor's usual dramaturgy might not work as well. The activities must be adapted to the room, where the instructor moves around the classroom; she is close to the individual children and seeks eye contact, but the desks function as a boundary between her and the children. Øfsti compares the traditional classroom to a prison "Each prisoner is in solitary confinement - each pupil is isolated at his desk" [my translation] (Øfsti 2014, p. 89).

⁵ See definition in part 1.1

“We experience, sense and acknowledge the world through our body” [my translation] (Gladsø et al. 2005, p. 195). On the theatre stage, man himself is the primary means of expression, with body and voice. In the classroom, it is the teacher's physical focus that applies. “It is about having a presence, focused on the moment and vigilant dynamics that create focus” [my translation] (Østern and Engelsrud 2014, p. 74.). A teacher who moves around the room, who is generous with his or her own presence through the session, gets closer to all the pupils, making it easier to make eye contact with everyone in the room.

The body as a gateway is also about how the teacher or instructor engage the children in activity and what activities are used. Physicality is a term used attempting to unite the different sides of being human, and to see that it is through our body and physical presence we get to know the world around us. Knowledge can be at your fingertips even if you are not aware of it (Fredriksen 2013, p. 25). "The human body knows something about the world before a thought is thought and the word expressed" [my translation] (Buaas 2002, p. 25).

In a holistic view of learning one regards senses, emotions, memories, thought, and body as forms of expression and communication that are considered mutually interrelated. Not least, imagination is considered a fundamental force that drives learning [my translation] (Fredriksen 2013, p. 28).

Kristin Jørgensen says that "it is a goal that they [the children] should participate in the creating of a theatre performance (...) first the child narrates, and then the theatre narrates" (interview January 2019). In the dramaturgical structure we start with an introduction, where in the beginning of these workshops a seed is sown, and thoughts and ideas about the time aspect will grow and develop through the session. At the end of the session the children will have a greater understanding of the aspect of time, and also have warmed to their own creativity through various storytelling tasks in order to create a story about the future at the end of the session.

2.5 Some thoughts around the first part of the project

The IWBE project description states "In schools across Europe, young people will take part in theatre, creative writing, film-making and drawing workshops". Over 2,000 children throughout Europe have participated in the project, reflecting on what the future may bring. Instructor Jørgensen's goal was to meet 400 Norwegian children; a goal that has been reached, through 23 workshops approximately 250 children have participated in workshops, and 40 of these have also participated in the pen-pal project. In addition to this, the exhibition at the Winter Light Festival in Mo i Rana in the winter of 2019 was visited by more than 150 children. These meeting points were to be in addition to the instructor's regular job, which at times can be a quite a puzzle. In retrospect, one might say that the plan to meet such a large number of children over one year was somewhat ambitious, so the time period for workshops was extended in time to reach the desired number of children.

One of the important goals for the project was for the children to philosophize on the concept of *time*, as the project description stating that the project "asks children to imagine their future selves and future world". When asked about his thoughts on participating in this workshop, one of the teachers replies that it has a value that pupils spend time reflecting on the world, the future and *their own role in it*. While some children dream of becoming rich and famous, getting a regular job, or technological innovations, others are very conscious and are concerned with what is happening in the world in terms of war, climate change and global crisis. They point out that the world in which they are growing up is becoming more challenging to live in. They are not perplexed, however, and they find solutions and inventions that deal with pollution and garbage problems as well as medicine that can cure life-threatening diseases. At the end of one workshop, a girl came over and told us that in the future there would be no plastic bags, and that we had to remember to write that down. The children show that they have a desire to do something for the world they live in. Maybe these are thoughts they have already made in the past, or maybe these are thoughts that they made after having reflected on the future during the workshop?

3.0 Stories told and written through the project

In his doctoral dissertation, Harald Nilsen describes how an assignment given without a clear recipient can lead to a lack of motivation for the writing project: “8th grader Heidi sits at school writing a fictive interview, and during a brief guidance from me she replies; No one will read it, anyway.” (2000, p. 18). Through this utterance, Heidi conveys that the teacher is not a relevant or authentic reader, and thus the interview in her eyes has no reader. This experience became important to Nilsen and his work with pupil texts. His story also became thought-provoking for me as a teacher. Why does the pupil write - and how do we motivate the pupil to write? How do we motivate the pupil to write better texts, and what defines a good text?

Malcolm Ross describes the creative process through a model in which he shows which elements are important and need be stimulated and developed for creative activity. The essence of developing aesthetic competence is impulses, and the framework around all creative activities is a playful atmosphere, thus forming an exploratory act. Impulses are at the centre; it is the driving force of every expressive action. Impressions are received through the senses, and one must wonder and explore sensory impressions and experiences. Sensory experiences provide impulses and inspiration for imagination. Imagination is our ability to form inner images (Ross 1978, pp. 80-81).

What impulses may start the creative writing process? Items, pictures or a sentence may be starters for writing projects, as shown in the previous section. It is motivating to tell a story when one has an audience listening. Jørgensen shows an interest in all the children's stories in these workshops, which may contribute to motivating the children to create new stories. Having a real recipient for the writing project, not just the teacher as a "no-reader", can be a motivating factor. One of the goals of the workshops in the IWBE project is that some of the texts collected through the workshops will be used to create a performance, which all participants in the workshops will be invited to see. By describing the results of the project, the play that is to be based on the children's stories, the instructor tries to create an interest in the following writing project. The outcome from the workshops will be used for something outside their local classroom, something of great importance for the next part of the project. “Location based learning aims to connect theory and knowledge acquisition of the traditional classroom with the real world outside” (Murphy 2015, p. 157). Using the extended classroom does not necessary mean walking out of the classroom to teach in a different location, but to

see teaching and learning in a larger perspective; as going from communicating while interacting *in* the world, to communicating *with* the world. The connection between children and professional actors is interdependent, as they both had to perform separately to make this joint project work. "Breaking the fourth wall" is used to explain the situation where the actors addresses the audience from stage (Bell 2008, p. 203). The same concept may be used about the way the local instructor and the children break out of the classroom and interact with a group of international actors in the world beyond.

Defining what makes a text or story good or not is not easy. We expect the narrative to have a plan, structure, dynamic development or *plot* (Claudi 2010, pp. 130-131), what we call narrative grammar. If the story has a clear motive or point, it often enhances our experience of quality. But here we base our adult view on what makes a good text good, not the child's view; which may indeed be different.

A number of the texts created during the IWBE workshops lack several of the characteristics of a narrative, which is quite common for pupil narratives. In order to describe and see the qualities of the pupils' texts, it would therefore be appropriate to use a wider description of the narrative than provided in section 1.2. Skjelbred uses the terms *referential narratives* and *actual narratives* to bring out differences between the stories the pupils write. A referential narrative is characterized by the fact that it "describes everyday events in a chronological order (...) They are without any highlight or development beyond time" [my translation] (Skjelbred 2014, p. 51). Another genre pupils often choose for their writing project is *descriptive* and *reflective texts*. While stories extend over a certain period of time, and are often told in the past, descriptions and reflections will concentrate on one point on the timeline, most often the present (Skjelbred 2014, p. 75).

3.1 Stories from the Norwegian children

Here, a selection of the text material from the Norwegian IWBE workshops, both texts and drawings, will be presented and briefly analysed. Picking out just a few of the texts has been a difficult process, as the material contains numerous exciting and fun texts.

3.1.1 Text Material

The Gift from the Future

The first section of text material to be addressed comprises of three texts written for the task *The Gift from the Future*. Here the children had to reflect on how an object they received could fit into the future, and find a connection between themselves, the object and the future.



Illustration 19: This will be a text about a mini-plane.

Text 1

2068

In 50 years, we can compress ourselves so one can jump into a toy airplane and be small while everyone else is bigger. There are very few mini-aircraft that you can jump into and become small; you can only buy them in China. In the future, all toy airplanes will become things you can get into and fly off in. The invention is certainly to gain more space. But the strangest thing is when you get off the plane you are small. But you get big again when you wait for a day, and so it is with the mini-aircraft invention. (Boy, 11)

The boy conveys an idea about the object he has been assigned, and gives it qualities that he thinks can fit into a vision of the future. The text is descriptive, it lacks dynamic development or plot, and the tense varies between future and present forms. The description of a mini-aircraft where people are being shrunk to board is typically science fiction, where

technological innovations are often the subject. The way the boy describes the invention makes it appear as something that is commonplace in the future.



Illustration 20: Here is the last bit of plastic existing.

Text 2

2068

This is Nesna in 50 years.

Now there are flying cars, flying shops and plastic magnets. There is a piece of plastic that will now go on display at a museum in Nesna.

In 50 years, the world has become a better place.

I have invented plastic magnets.

But that's 20 years ago.

Now I'm a grandmother. I'm married. I have 10 grandchildren. I have made a difference. I have saved the world and am a celebrity. I work with inventions.

I think plastic and pollution is a bad thing. That is the story of Nesna in 50 years, and about my family. Who would have thought that? Not my parents. The end. (Girl, 11)

Text 2 is also a text without plot; it is episodic, with distinct descriptions of the future, but which lack a continuous development of action. The text may be seen as a reflective text where the grandmother looks back on her life (Skjelbred 2015, p. 82). The piece of plastic that was the starting point for the text has gained an important place; it is now in a museum, inferring that plastic no longer exists in the future. This may be seen in connection with the first-person narrator having invented the plastic magnet. Finally, the first-person narrator offers an evaluative component (Senje and Skjong 2005, p. 55), where she tells about the important things she has experienced in her life: she has created an important invention and saved the world, and she has family, children and grandchildren; something her parents would not expect, according to the girl of eleven.

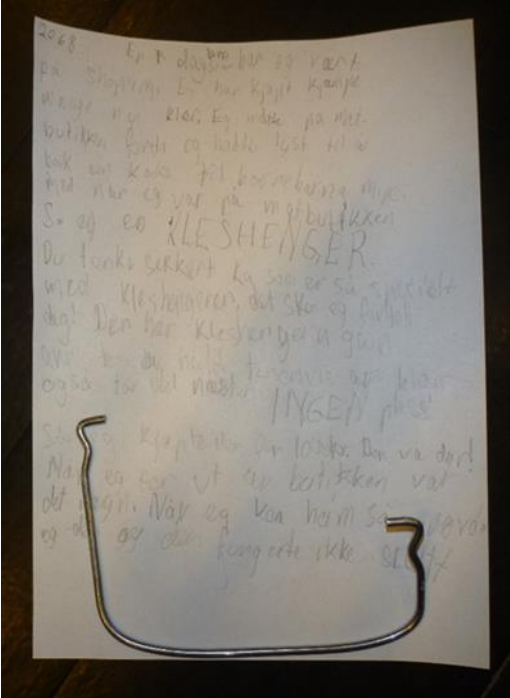


Illustration 21: A hanger with room for thousands of clothes.

Text 3

2068

One day in 50 years , I have been shopping. I have bought lots of new clothes. I had to go to the food store because I wanted to bake a cake for my grandchildren. While I was in the food store I saw a HANGER FOR CLOTHES.

You probably think what is special about this clothes hanger? I will tell you that! This hanger can hold thousands of clothes and it takes hardly ANY room at all.

So I bought one for 1,000 NOK. It was expensive.

When I came out of the store it was raining. When I came home, I tried the hanger and it did not work... THE END. (Girl, 11)

This text describes a shopping trip in the future where the first-person narrator buys something she sees as a bargain. The text is written in the past, it is a first-person narrative and everyday content. Furthermore it is a referring story, but it has a break bringing in the amazing clothes hanger. The highlight is reached when the narrator comes home and is to try the new investment, realizing it is not working.

The first-person narrator speaks directly to the reader: "You probably think what is special about this clothes hanger? I will tell you that!". Such a meta commentary acts as a pointer to highlight the plan for the text (Senje and Skogn 2005, p. 81). To describe this shopping trip, the narrator also provides additional information: "When I came out of the store it was raining", a theme that is not discussed further in the text, and which thus has no real connection with and relevance to the rest of the story; unless the rain ruined the clothes hanger, but this would be pure speculation.

The text starts out in the style of a fairy tale, "A Day in Fifty Years...", which is a common starting point in pupil texts (Skjelbred 2014, p. 42). Ending a text can be complicated for many pupils, and here the writer has retrieved the non-textual signal "end" to mark a termination, which is also a fairly common solution in pupil texts (Senje and Skjong 2005, p. 58).

Diary from 2069.

The following four texts are samples of diary texts written by pupils from different schools.

Text 4

Diary

Today I got up. I made breakfast, brushed my teeth and showered.

I was to go to work. But when I arrived, the boss said: You are fired!!!

I started to cry. I worked as a kindergarten teacher. I went home, thought, then!!!! I am to be a cleaning lady!!! Hmmm, even though I am a man. I applied and went to a job interview....

I GOT THE JOB

I was going to take a look

But then!! I heard a shot I

hid behind a car

But it was children playing. I became sour, but ok, ok...

Then all went well... (Boy, 12)

Text 4 is a referring story describing a future where the world has not changed much. The boy has grown up and he has a quite regular job. However, the narrative has a form of plot, with several complications and highlights. The first complication is when the first-person narrator gets fired from his job as a kindergarten teacher. His counter action lies in seeking a new job and the excitement of the job interview, followed by the narrative's first highlight when getting the job. Then follows the complication of the shots and the protagonist must hide. The writer uses exclamation marks and a mix of upper case and lower case letters to indicate the intensity of the text. The story ends in harmony, where the protagonist gets a new job and the sounds of shots were caused by children at play. In the spirit of the writer: "everything went well".

The text is written by a boy, and he uses gendered terms for the two occupational categories he has chosen; originally *barnehagetante* (kindergarten aunt, an expression used in Norway) and cleaning lady. These two gender specific terms were both in daily use a generation ago, but have today been replaced by more gender-neutral terms. Behind this slightly archaic and gender specific usage is perhaps a humoristic strike. Either in spite of or because of this approach, the boy manages to create an action-packed text with a number of qualities.

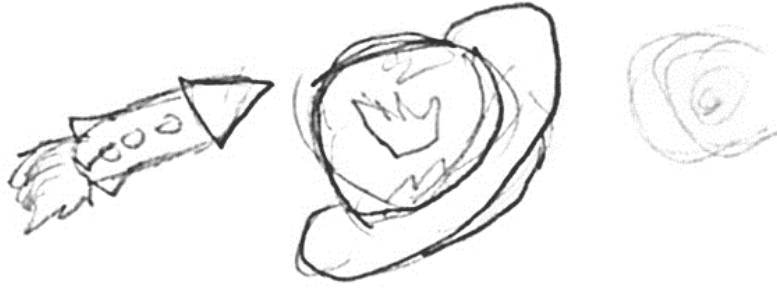


Illustration 22: Illustration for text 5

Text 5:

Diary 2069

Today we found a new planet with life, and now we will find out what kind of creatures they are.

Day 2)

I was in my laboratory, when we suddenly found something out. I got contact with these creatures, but we do not know if it is safe.

I have been a scientist for a long time, but we have never seen anything like this.

We are in England, trying to figure it out. (Girl, 11)

The girl responsible for text 5 has in her schema form noted that she wants to become a researcher, and in the diary text she tells about two days in her work as a researcher. Despite a simple and concise language, the writer demonstrates competence in the use of literary instruments and narrative grammar. She begins with a simple orientation the first day; they have found life on another planet. The opening goes straight into the action, giving the narrative an approach of *in media res*. This works well in the diary genre, where one expects the first-person narrator to know what has already happened, and may thus emphasize the especial events of that one specific day. However, this approach is also an opening that “may serve as a dramatic impact” [my translation] (Claudi 2010, p. 76). The following day, which is also the last in the narrative, the narrator presents a complication: the researchers have been in contact with the creatures, but she emphasizes that this is something completely unknown and perhaps not completely harmless. The end is open, she presents a mystery building suspense, but we are left not knowing what happens next.

The last sentence "We are in England trying to figure this out" is the result of an adult walking around among the pupils trying to help them expand their texts, and here the suggestion was that the writer could include a description of the research station. The sentence fits poorly into the context, but had the purpose of the writing project been to write a new draft, this information could have been merged into the text in a different and more natural way.

The in media res opening is a literary tool that often is used as an opener for short stories and novels. Skjelbred quotes Bjørg Vik, who characterizes the novel as "a text that gives an aftertaste" (Skjelbred 2014, p. 62). This pupil's text has a surprising event, and the reader is after reading the text left wondering what happened. Why did the text end so abruptly? Did the first-person narrator get in contact with the alien creatures, or did they come to earth and take it over? We do not know, it is the "aftertaste".

Text 6

Today something very special happened. I planted a strawberry, but it grew into something very special.

It grew into a money tree.

I did not know what to do with all the money. I had already bought all I wished for. (Girl, 11)

The author of text 6 writes on her form that her future plan is to become rich. She uses relatively simple tools to create tension in the text, starting by saying that "something very special happened today", giving the reader expectations of what this very special might be. Tension is further built up by the first-person narrator telling about the normal activity of planting strawberries⁶, which develops into something completely unexpected. This is fantastic literature, where in the mundane, something supernatural suddenly emerges; which due to its impossibility attracts attention (Slettan 2018, p. 10). The text has an open ending, where the first-person narrator adds an evaluative component: what should she do with all

⁶ This pupil comes from a farming area where strawberries are one of the crops.

the money, when she has everything she wants? There is a lot of humour in this reflection, and a question anyone may ask themselves.

Text 7

9.61.2069

Dear Diary. On my way to work at the kindergarten, something a little scary happened. A message was given that a meteor would hit earth in 2 months. Now it was first come, first served, which was to get a space on a rocket heading for another planet called Earth2. The rocket had a top speed of 60 light years per hour. But it was difficult to get aboard, but luckily we got on the rocket Starbound62! (Girl, 11)

Text 7 is in essence a story with a plot, where the narrator starts by offering a context: the first-person narrator is on her way to work, when something happens. She describes the conflict as getting to know that a meteor will strike Earth in two months, and her concern with finding any available space on a rocket that can take them to Earth2. The narrative is resolved and ends in harmony; not just for the first-person narrator, but as she uses the plural form "we", also for an undefined group of people. The narrator describes how they got a seat on the rocket Starbound62, inferring to the reader that they got away from Earth before the meteor strikes.

It appears that the diary form is a sensible genre to use when writing a text in limited time. A diary is specifically a "bed-to-bed text", which runs from morning to evening. The first-person narrative goes without saying, and the texts may be referential or reflective. Introduction and ending is simple, where "Dear Diary" is a nice opening, and the ending is the end of the day. The texts are mostly written in the present, with some situations referred to in the past. Most of the above texts have a dynamic development, having a narrative grammar, and when we look at the action we understand that these texts take longer than a single day. We may therefore conclude that the pupils did not really master the writing assignment of describing one day in 2069, but on the other hand, they succeeded in creating a narrative with a plot.

Drawing a story

The tasks given to the pupils were presented as a form, where they were to write their name, what they wanted to become as grown-ups, and draw a portrait of themselves in fifty years from now. These elements form the framework of the pupils' work. When the first group was to fill out the form, they were not instructed that they were just going to draw a portrait of themselves, and we received drawings from the pupils which are so much more than "just" a drawing. Many of the pupils chose to do a drawing that illustrated their career choices. Images are iconic characters, and the term draws attention to the close relationship between the image's expression side and its content side. "In a drawing, everything is inter-connected. (...) Each image constitutes a whole, a continuous representation" [my translation] (Hopperstad 2005, p. 25). The relationship between image and text in a picture book or a cartoon is termed iconotext (Mjør, Birkeland Risa 2006, p. 116). The three selected drawings representing this group show some of the pupils' knowledge of the iconotext, even though they do not know the term.



Illustration 23: I want to be a superhero who rescues children from war! (Girl, 9)

Illustration 23 shows a drawing done by a girl of almost nine years. The juxtaposition of the elements draws the readers initial attention to the drawing and the girl on the left who looks smilingly directly at the viewer; to her right are two crying children in front of a burning building. "In pictures that require our attention, one or more of the participants represented will look directly at us, as a kind of pictorial 'hello you'," [my translation] Hopperstad (2005, p. 49). Also, in terms of relative size, the illustrator indicates that the girl on the left is the most significant character (Hopperstad 2005, p. 54), and to further emphasize the importance and perspective, the illustrator has drawn a line between the word "me" and the girl. The drawing line is simple but powerful. Although the characters in the drawing are static, the drawing itself is dynamic. The girl with the smile is the enactor showing strength through the smile, while the other two are targets for the action; they seek the girl's help and their eyes are on her, not on the viewer. Reading the text below we will be further enlightened. The girl will become a superhero, saving children from war zones. The burning house represent a warsone. This is a narrative representation, it is narrative and tells something about a course of events (Hopperstad 2005, p. 44). This is in contrast to the conceptual representation we find in the next drawings we will look at.

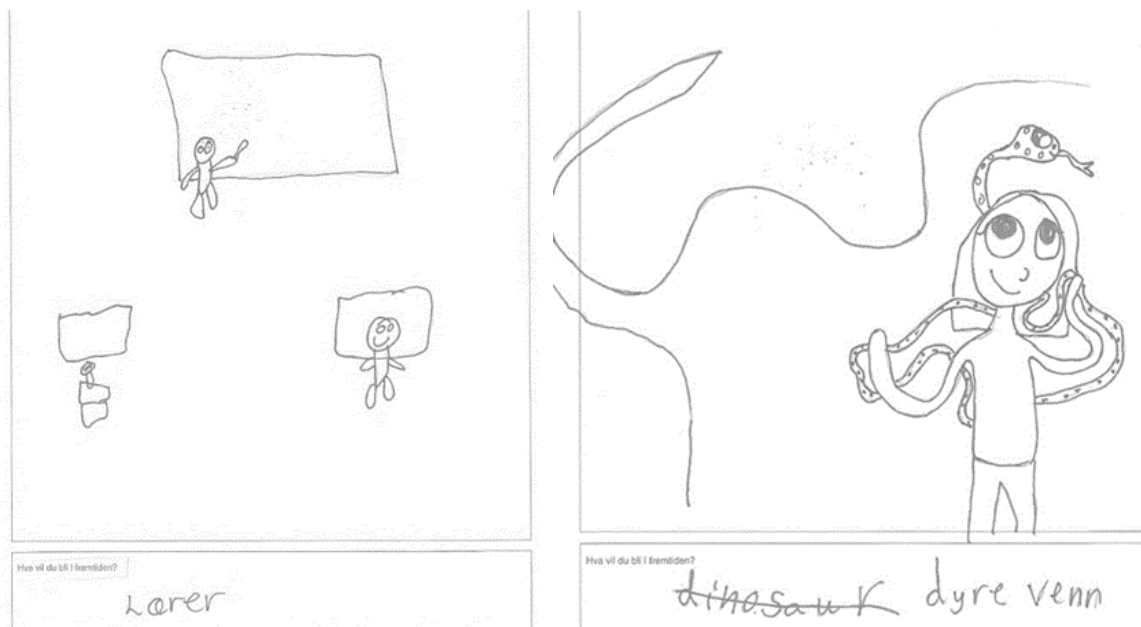


Illustration 24: The nine year old boy wants to be a teacher when he grows up.

Illustration 25: The nine year old girl wants to be an animal lover when she grows up.

Illustrations 24 and 25 show two illustrators who have created an opinion about what something is, what is called conceptual representation (Hopperstad 2005, p. 44). Illustration 24 is made by a boy who wants to become a teacher when he grows up, and he has drawn a person standing at a blackboard explaining or writing something, and in front of him sit two children at their desks smiling. This is how the boy envisions the practice of the teacher's profession: he explains things at the blackboard.

In illustration 25 we see a girl who wants to become an animal friend, and has drawn herself with a snake coiled around her. The girl looks up at the snake, and they both show joy and friendship.

The drawings are descriptive, and combined with the simple text serve as iconotexts; though lacking the dynamic structure of the girl becoming a super hero.

Co-writing

Based on illustrations supplied, three or four of the children created texts together. The narratives were written down either by themselves or by an adult. Two of the results of these collaboration writing tasks are presented below.

Text 8

Sometime in the future there lived a shadow man in Mo I Rana. He went out in the dark, and there he found a liquorice stick. And then he went home and ate it. Then he met the angel Angelica and the skeleton mango. Then there grew some flowers he did not like, so he covered them in darkness. Then Lucy the hedgehog crossed a road and Lula the owl said that now you must water the grass. The shadow man went to a concert. Afterwards a baby came to visit, and when morning came, a rainbow appeared and then they sat in the sofa all day looking at the rainbow and had a good time and slept.

In the future all are friends, shadow men and angels and skeletons. (Told by four ten-year olds)

Text 8 begins with the phrase "Sometime in the future ...", similar to the "Once upon a time" start of the traditional fairy tale. The narrative is a referring story, where it gives a description of an ordinary day in the shadow man's life. However, the story lacks a plot, it has a "and then, and then" structure (Skjelbred 2014, p. 51). The shadow man does not like flowers, so he covered them in darkness, which may be seen as a magic move. The text has many characters: the shadow man, the skeleton, the angel and a baby, as well as a couple of animals. None of the characters have any particular tasks, and they are only present on this one day, or really the night, since they sit on the couch all day and sleep. The text ends in harmony, the shadow man and the baby sitting and enjoying themselves on the couch, as "(in) the future are all friends, shadow men and angels and skeletons". This is how the authors manage to link the text to the given task in the ending.

Text 9

In fifty years Mistia went for a trip in to a labyrinth, where she found a wounded eagle. It was wounded by a troll. Mistia got angry with the troll. "Why did you do that?" she said to the troll. The troll answered, "I hate birds! I cannot fly, that is unfair!"

Misita said, "We have to save the bird" "I don't care!" the troll answered. And turned and left.

Mistia saw a mystical thing. "What is that?", she asked, "some kind of drum". She struck the drum and then there came a magic glittering beam from it, and the bird got well and spread his wings and flew away. The troll came back and said "sorry for being mean and grumpy".

Then they became friends and lived happily ever after. (Told by three ten-year olds)

In terms of genre, text 9 is fairy tale: it is a story with a plot. The text has an orientation where the protagonist Mistia went into a maze. Another complication arises as Mistia finds the wounded eagle, which she must help. The antagonist is the troll who simply does not like that birds can fly. The helper is the magic drum, which just pops out of the blue, and that is how the eagle heals. The troll goes through a development, as Mistia beats the drum, and the glitter comes out, the troll returns as kind. Everyone becomes friends, and the story ends in

harmony in the traditional fairy tale ending form "they lived happily ever after." Apart from the introduction "In fifty years ...", there is nothing that ties this story to the future.

During these tasks, we made an important experience: in the first workshop each group of children got twelve pictures, which turned out to be too many. This was amended in the next workshop by reducing the number of pictures to five per group, which is reflected in text 9.

The past tense is used in both these texts, it is the most common tempus form in narratives. "Often this type of tempus is called narrating or narrative tempus, which shows that it is indeed most common to tell about something that has happened" [my translation] (Senje and Skjogn 2005, p. 39). More or less subconsciously, the narrators of these texts have moved even further into the future, to be able to tell about the past. The fairy tale genre is a genre most children are well acquainted with, and which they consequently choose when telling a story themselves. But even though they know the genre, this is an implicit knowledge where they recognize a folk-tale, but may not be able to describe so many of the genre traits (Senje and Skjong 2005, p. 114). Consequently, writing new texts the features may appear a little random.

What do we see looking out of our window in fifty years' time?

Mo i Rana is a town located by a fjord and surrounded by mountains. The mountains and fjord will most likely be the same in fifty years from now, but what else would the children see through their window in fifty years? This is the task the children were given, and my question is *at what point does a story become a story?* While working on this task we got to see how the children are influenced by each other's ideas; how they get ideas about things they "see" that are related to what the others "see". In this manner the children are able to see an interconnected world outside their window. It is like a flow of thoughts from the children, that resembles what in literature is called *a stream of consciousness*, a method of narration that describes happenings in the flow of thoughts in the minds of the characters as used by e.g. Virginia Woolf in *The Mark on the Wall* (Woolf 1921). The state of flow characterizes a creative or aesthetic learning process. It is the mental state in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity according to Csíkszentmihályi (1996).

Text 10

Looking out of my window in fifty years' time, I see: a flying ox, a flying house, a flying horse, a flying toilet, two human biking, a man drinking water, a dinosaur flying, a rocket, a sofa on wheels, a man flying, the world upside down and Norway in the air, and a tunnel to Candy-land. (Told by a group of nine-year olds)



Illustration 26 and 27: Drawings for text 10: A flying house, a rocket and a flying man.

When Kristin was to explain this activity, she used “flying cars for all” as an example of things that might exist in fifty years' time. Thus “flying” became a key concept for the children, and Mo i Rana was filled with flying animals and objects. May it be a natural consequence of Mo i Rana being filled by flying objects that the narrator looking out the window in the future is probably also flying, and that he sees Earth up-side down and Norway hanging in the air?

Text 11

Looking out of my window in fifty years' time, I see: a flying dog, a hare with a long tail who eats a wing, a robot who sends animals to Mars, a flying car and a man playing PlayStation, The Man from the Sea [a statue in the fjord with no arms] with hands and lots of birds' nests, a two-headed dog, a competition between two tanks, a fish with a boat motor instead of a heart, a house with wheels, a park with candy, two human in a self-going boat, a fish castle, it is raining candy, self-programming weather, superhero out flying, super-hero-police, superhero-hospital, a robot doing my homework, a rom-station, a cheese museum made of cheese, a wild museum where everything is alive. (Told by a group of nine-year olds)



Illustration 28 and 29: Drawings for text 11, a flying dog and a hare with a long tail who eat a wing.

May the above text be called a narrative? Both text 10 and 11 are fragmentary, which the task invites by each child telling what it sees "outside the window". But if one listens to what the children tell, one sees the connection between the different parts of the text. The children listen to each other, and they want to tell something different from what the previous one said; where the new element to the story is also based on earlier statements on numerous levels. For example, when a child sees a super human and the next a hospital for super humans. Then one child sees a flying dog, and the next a hare eating a wing. Might it be the dog's wing? Another child sees a dog with two heads. Then a robot shows up that sends animals to Mars, thus maybe animals start to become extinct and Mars is a safer place for them? There is also a fish with a motor instead of a heart, as well as a fish castle. Is a fish castle a place where you can see ordinary fish when the fish in the sea have developed engines in place of hearts? A child talks about a wild museum, where in addition to housing wild things is wild in itself; the perception of the last child in this group. The story does not follow the definition of a narrative, but there is a red thread in it. The narrative is about the future of the wild animals of Mo i Rana. This has much in common with a science-fiction text where all the animals are degenerated and destroyed, or maybe they are further developed. A future where animals are sent to Mars or may only be seen in a castle or a museum. The narrative is fun, but also scary; watch out for the future, it may be horrible. Collaboration or collaborative writing is when more people work together to write a common text (Eritsland 2008, p. 10). Here the

children create an oral narrative together, where the children listen to each other and respond. They create a universe of animals and objects that belong together - whether flying objects or strange animals, the narrative can be seen as a joint project.

3.1.2 About the texts and point of development

Initially, the question "what is a good story" was raised, using narratology to find some answers. However, the good story is not only about narrative grammar and dynamic development, it is also about having something to convey. This is precisely what the involved children have, as well as imagination and the joy of storytelling. The teacher's task and responsibility working with writing is to inspire the pupils to write and to guide and encourage them. The teacher should also be able to analyse and see the points of development in the pupils' texts; the parts of the text that have a special potential for development. The potential for development may be on different levels, but they are always there (Senje and Skjong 2005, p. 13). The texts presented here all have qualities and points for development, but with the limited time at our disposal there was not time to work on further development of the texts. At the same time, the aim of the workshops was not to develop children's writing skills as such, but to inspire them to use their imagination and to gather ideas to be used in the work of putting together a performance. But if only one or just a few of the children also found new joy in writing, we gained more. The theatre instructor and the teacher possess different skills, and through such cooperation they may complement each other. Kristin states:

I have a lot of respect for the teachers and the knowledge they have. (...) I am an extra resource in their everyday life, giving time to create nice things; which may be done by more adults present. We can all do with extra expertise in our everyday lives. (interview, January 2019).

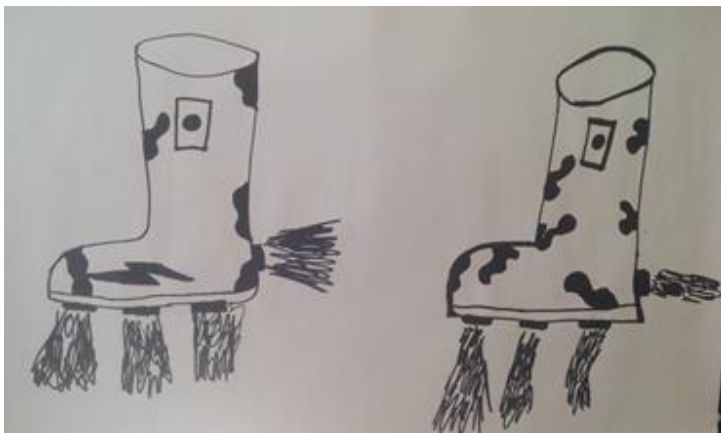
3.2 What do European children think about the future?

"A main goal has simply been to get to know what goes on in the minds of children from seven different countries when they think of the future", Kristin explains (Interview, January 2019). In the narrative that is formed in IWBE, the various stories, thoughts and ideas for the future of children in the different countries will end in a common narrative, which will be unfold from the stage; a climax to which tension is attached. What will children from different countries

tell? How will it be possible to build a common narrative, based on the different contributions? To seek answers to these questions it will be natural to start by reading children's texts from several of the participating countries in IWBE, attempting to form a picture of what children in Europe think about the future.

The theme for all the workshops has been the same, but different instructors have had different approaches to it and the children have been given different tasks. This is reflected in the material I have received from other partners, which includes stories, wishes and drawings. As I do not know the context in which the texts were created in, it would be wrong to undertake a close read of the texts as with the Norwegian children's texts. The purpose of the review is to uncover the essence and themes of children's future visions in more countries than just Norway, and to see whether there is a similarity or relationship between the texts.

3.2.1 Texts and drawings from children in IWBE



Illustrations 30 and 31: Spanish and Norwegian flying-shoes.

The tasks the children have been given in the different countries have been different, and the texts are structured in different ways. Nevertheless, we find many common features, both in texts and drawings. A good example of this is the drawings above. The Spanish flying-shoes in illustration 30 have a lot in common with the ones the Norwegian boy has drawn in illustration 31.

Flying objects is a common idea about the future. Several children imagine flying people in fifty years' time. From Spain I also received a drawing of a flying-helmet, which looks a bit like a helicopter. The Norwegian girl who wrote text 2 says that "Now there are flying cars, flying shops and plastic magnets". In text 10, the Norwegian children see not only flying people, but also flying animals, flying houses, flying toilets, and flying cars. Here follows a German story about the hero Link who lives in a future where cars can fly.

Text 12: Link der Held

Es war einmal nach fünfzig Jahren eine Welt, die komplett anders war.

Die Autos konnten fliegen, die Häuser waren riesengroß und jeder hatte Superkräfte.

Jeder Tag war sonnig.

Aber eines Tages hat es geregnet und eine Kreatur ist gekommen. Jeder aus der Zukunft Stadt kämpfte gegen die Kreatur, aber die Menschen aus der Zukunftstadt haben die Kreatur nicht besiegen können. Da kam Link der Held und hat mit seinem Excaliburs die Kreatur besiegt. Jeder aus der Zukunft Stadt hat sich gefreut. Ende (Boy, 9, Germany)

This is a complete narrative with a plot and a typical children's text ending in *The End*. The text covers the two areas of both science fiction and fantasy literature. Despite flying cars and super powers, when the terrible monster arrives in the world, humans fall short and the hero Link must save the day with the help of Excalibur, the sword of Merlin which according to legend has magical powers.

Several writers have kept to the fantasy genre, and with the fairy tale format of *Once upon a time*, the Austrian instructor has made a new introduction to suit the future project: "Once upon a time in the land of tomorrow". This is a format that creates an expectation of the adventurous, which the pupil texts are characterized by. The reader is taken into a fantastic world where the most incredible things can happen.

Text 13:

Once upon a time in the land of tomorrow.

It was snowing sugar and next to our house was an ocean out of raspberry juice.

I jumped into it and was diving with my snorkel a week long.

I discovered a lot of different animals. They were looking like long ago.

Some were gliding, others swimming and some were spitting out their milk teeth.

One I really liked a lot. It was a green jelly baby living in an orange peel.

We were playing together all time long till my air was running out and I had to go up. (Girl, Austria)

There is something almost dreamy about this text, with the snow of sugar, the diving in the juice, and the special animals the author encounters on his swim. The text has a very logical ending where the diving has to end due to the lack of air.

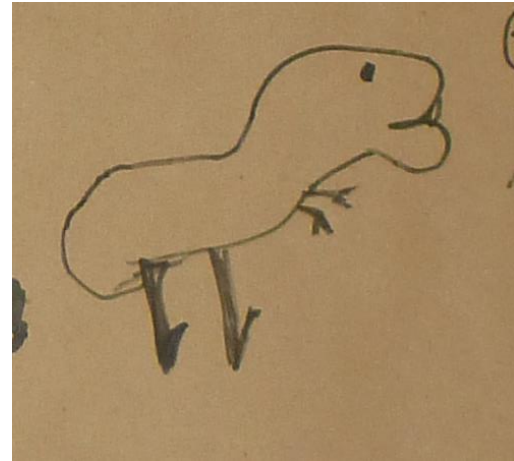
Dreamy, or maybe lyrical are terms that also could be used to describe the next text. The German girl is telling that the world will become a magical place in fifty years. She envisions a world where animals can talk and friendship becomes more important, a world where everything becomes much better than it is today.

Text 14: Wie ich mir die Welt in fünfzig Jahren vorstelle

In fünfzig Jahren ist die Welt magisch. Tiere werden sprechen können. Und Menschen werden fliegen können. Viele Wünsche werden in Erfüllung gehen. Die Welt wird viel lustiger als sie jetzt schon ist. Abenteuer erlebt man vor der Haustür. Unmögliches wird passieren. Die Natur stellt sich von alleine wieder auf. Es werden Unterwasserwelten entdeckt, die noch nicht entdeckt worden. Langsam mit der Zeit entstehen Fabelwesen von selbst. Einen Streit kennt man nicht mehr. Von Wut ist keine Rede. Es ertönen ganz geheimnisvolle Geräusche. Es regnet, aber die Menschen werden nicht nass. Briefe werden schweben können. Freundschaft spielt eine wichtige Rolle. Wenn man Ärger hat, versöhnt man sich sofort wieder. Im Sommer wird es nicht zu warm, aber es lohnt sich noch in den Teich zu springen. Im Winter wird es nicht zu kalt, aber Schnee wird es trotzdem geben. Ein Fall löst sich von selbst. Man kann die Welt ganz schnell umkreisen. Wenn man will. Aber ein(e) Held(in) bleibt man für immer und ewig. (Girl, 9, Germany)

In text 11 Norwegian children “see” from their window in fifty years’ time a dog flying and a rabbit with a long tail eating a wing, and a dog with two heads and a fish with a boat engine

for a heart, among other things. In other workshops, Norwegian children saw other prehistoric and mythical animals, such as the unicorn and the velociraptor in the drawings under.



Illustrations 32 and 33: From my window I see... a unicorn and a velociraptor. (Ten year-olds, Norway)

Children across Europe are concerned about animals, also ordinary animals, and they will become veterinarians or care for animals as they grow up. Illustrations 34 and 35 are written and drawn by children from Denmark and Norway, and show they both have the same future dream: they want to help animals.

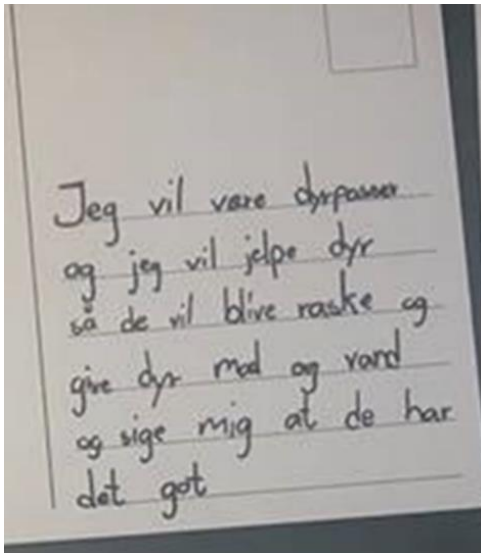


Illustration 34: I want to be an animal keeper and want to help animals to get well and give animals food and water and tell me that they are happy. (Danish child's wish)

Illustration 35: What do you want to become in the future? An animal friend that saves animals. (Girl, 10, Norway)

European children are also preoccupied with the environment. In text 2 the Norwegian girl confirms that “plastics and pollution are a bad thing”. The German boy who wrote the following text surely agrees.

Text 14: David der Müllmann

Ich bin Müllmann David aus dem Jahr 2050. Wenn ich Müll sehe, fliegt er in unseren Wagen.

Wenn ich jemanden sehe, der seinen Müll auf den Boden wirft, kriegt Bombe. Ich Italiener.

Ich bin der Beste der Welt. Wenn ihr nein sagt, kriegt ihr Bombe. Bye Bye Baby. (Boy, 9,

Germany)

David the garbage truck driver tells his story of how he drives around in a garbage truck that attracts garbage and throws bombs at those who throw garbage on the wrong places. This must surely be seen as a resilient solution to the waste problem. Other children have other good suggestions on how to combat this problem.

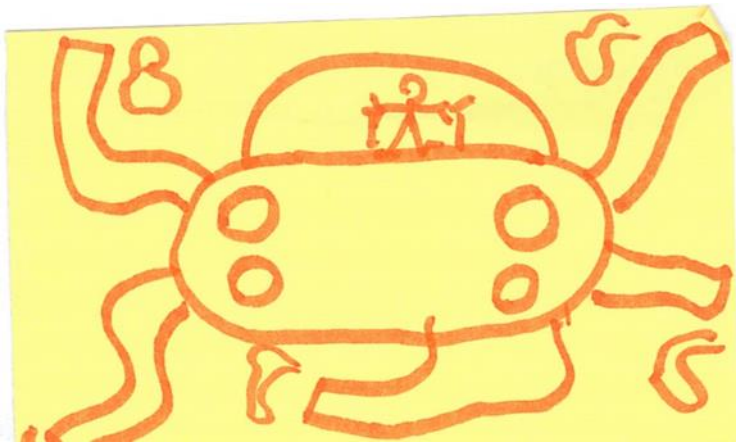


Illustration 36: A submarine with 5-10 flexible pipes that it can use to suck up plastic. (Norwegian child)

Illustration 36 shows a drawing of a submarine that sucks up plastic from the sea. The invention is designed by a Norwegian pupil who lives on an island where the main industry is fishing. He knows that plastic in the sea is a growing problem. In text 14, the German girl told about how nature itself fixes things: "Die Natur stellt sich von alleine wieder auf."

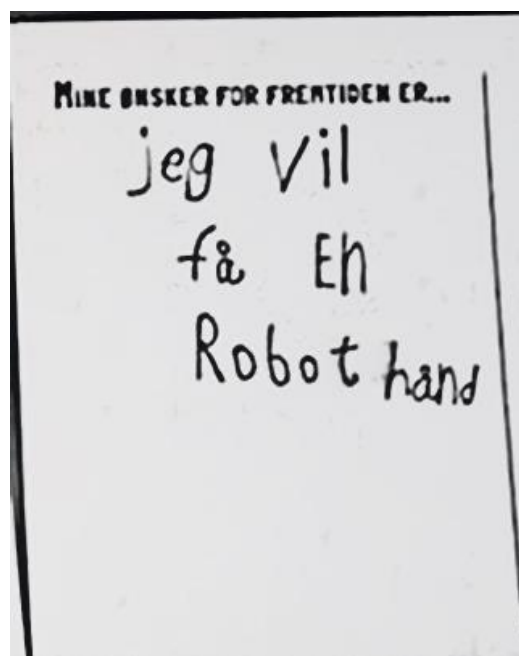
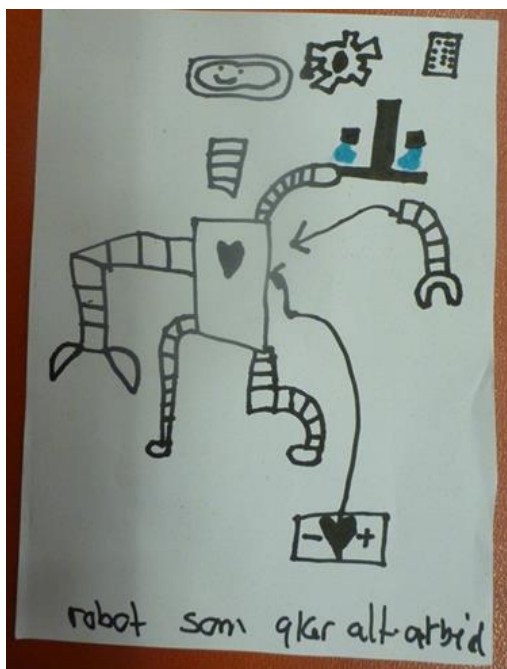


Illustration 37: A robot can do all the work. (A group of ten year-olds, Norway.)

Illustration 38: My wish: "I will get a robot hand". (Danish child)

Of other important inventions European children envision, we have the robots to do the work for us. Norwegian children told about robots that could do everything from homework to housework, while the Danish child wants a robot hand. A robot can certainly help with many things, and in the following text written by a girl from Austria, we meet robots that clear snow.

Text 15:

Once upon a time in the land of tomorrow.
It's snowing all time. Very little snowflakes.
I see robots shovelling snow. No human beings.
They are all sitting inside in front of their computers.
Only a little boy is playing in the snow. (Girl, Austria)

The future described here is something many people envision and perhaps fear, where technological innovations carry out our most tedious work tasks, while all humans sit alone in front of computers. The text is unfinished, yet it leaves the reader with some important questions. A single boy playing in the snow; maybe he is our last hope that humanity is not completely obliterated?

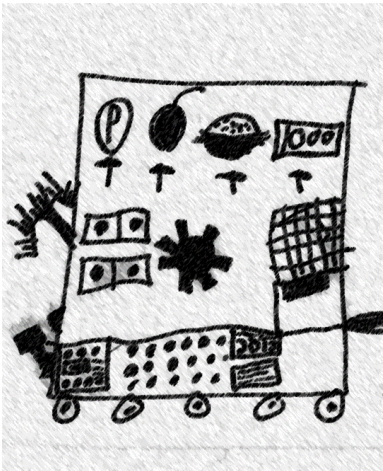


Illustration 39 and 40: A Spanish and a Norwegian invention: Machines that creates new things.

There are drawings across national borders that have a close resemblance and relationship, as illustrated by the Spanish and the Norwegian machine that is able to create different things in illustration 39 and 40. The Spanish invention is able to create balls, cars, and pistols, while the Norwegian one is able to create money, hamburgers, and bombs. The preference for war toys is found among many children, exemplified in one of the Danish children's wishes, where the writer wishes for endless war in the future and a sword in hand.

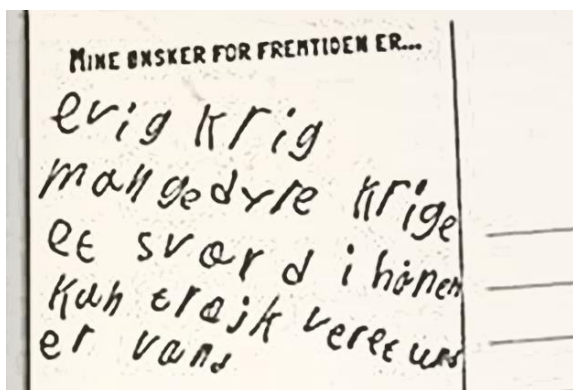


Illustration 41: Danish child's wish for the future: Endless war, many expensive wars, a sword in hand, and being able to breathe under water.

Several children have said that in fifty years the Third World War has started, or that the Earth is deserted. Do they want to shock, or is this a result of our living in a world where war and destruction are becoming common even for ten year olds? Or is this due to war games are common play – games that children have played at all times, which today are carried out digitally via a computer?

Children dream not only of inventions or fantastic things, they are also realistic and think that they will grow up into a world that has not changed much from today; a world where they may become doctors, teachers or football players. Illustrations 42 and 43 show how two boys from Spain and Norway both dream about becoming a football player. The Norwegian boy also wants to become a chef, while the Spanish boy's fine heart does not only beat for football, he also dreams of getting a girlfriend. Partners and children is something many of the children mention when thinking of their future, as in text 2 where the Norwegian girl not only writes

about flying cars and environmental issues, but also of a future family life: “Now I am a grandma. I am married. I have ten grandchildren.”



Illustration 42 and 43: Spanish and Norwegian boys dream about becoming football players.

3.3 European children writing the future

I Will Be Everything is about writing the future, and as I said in some of our planning meetings, we are asking children to write the future before someone else writes it for them (Alex Byrne 2020).

During the workshops conducted through this project, the pupils have produced a large amount of texts and drawings about the future. The genre is mainly science-fiction, and in some cases fantasy. The distinction between science-fiction and fantasy lies in the likelihood of the narrative elements. While science-fiction refers to a yet unexplored future of scientific or technological possibilities, fantasy stories contain something supernatural or magical (Slettan 2018, p. 10). Pupils write about technological innovations and medical breakthroughs, or travels into space, but also about supernatural events such as a strawberry plant growing up and becoming a money tree. In addition, some describe an everyday life that could just as well have been today. Most texts are short, and many lack a plot and have oral features. Several of the narrators have based their work on the traditional fairy tale's opening and

ending form, which is adapted to a vision of the future by "sometime in the future ..." or "a day in fifty years ...". When children are using the fairy tale opening form, it does not have to be because they are planning to write a fairy tale, but as it provides a time and a place, it is a good opener. The same applies to the closing form, as it is an easy way to end a text (Skjelbred 2014, p. 42).

The texts the children write cover many of the same issues, regardless of where the children come from. This is an impression that director Jørgensen also is left with; "we wondered whether children in different countries would tell very different things. Now I've held workshops in Spain, Austria, Poland, and Norway, and it's not very different" (interview January 2019).

A nice ending to this "European Tour" may surely be this Danish child's beautiful wish:

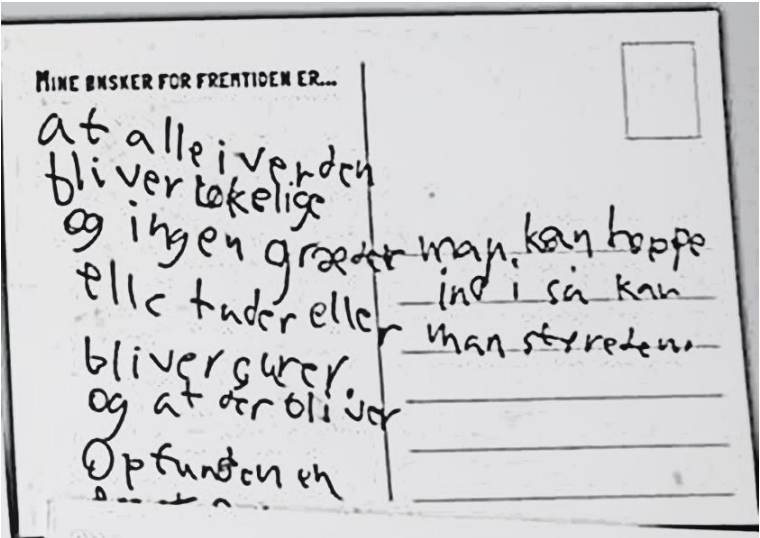


Illustration 44: My wishes for the future are that everybody in the world will be happy, and that no one cries or are sad, and there will be invented a [...] one can jump into so one may control it. (Danish child)

4.0 From text to stage

The material will then be transformed into an immersive theatre show and exhibition touring to each partner's home venue and beyond in Denmark, Germany, Norway, Poland, Austria, and Spain. (IWBE project description).

In part 3 we took a look at texts and drawings produced by children both in Norway and in other participating countries, and were able to conclude they have a lot in common. However, though children in different countries may think alike, they also represent a number of different ideas. Thus actors and director were faced with a challenging task when deciding on which direction to take in their work developing a performance. Kristin Jørgensen comments:

I am very curious about what is interesting for an adult director. Will he [director Alex Byrne] prefer science fiction, is that what impresses him? He is the one to make some final decisions together with the actors. What are they fascinated by; the mundane or the violent? I am very curious about this, and have given it a lot of thought... (interview January 2019).

Another valid question is whether the actors and director may successfully communicate the voices of the European children.

4.1 Hilde recounts how the play was developed

There was a lot of material to choose from and choosing is difficult – this is the job of the artist – to choose what to put with what and how and in what order. That's how you succeed and fail, it's the job. I like stories with violence and I like stories with romance (so do you), it's the stuff of life and it makes and shapes us. I also like stories that surprise, that break rules and where characters are altered/changed. (Byrne 2020).

Together with director Alex Byrne of the award winning theatre group NIE, actors from six of the participating countries have worked out the performance IWBE. Hilde Stensland is the Norwegian actor participating, and here she tells us the story about the process from text to stage (interview February 2020):

It started with all of you. All of you who have done workshops with children in seven different countries; you who have inspired the children to write down the stories of their dreams, of how they envisage their future, how they imagine their town and what the future holds.

Actors and director met in Nürnberg, Germany, for two weeks in July 2019; all actors bringing material from their own countries. There was a lot – several thousand stories. Each day for two weeks we read stories for several hours, and marked with stars the ones we liked the best. We worked in pairs or alone trying out stories for presentation; several hundred stories were tried out. Then we found something we could use; perhaps just a cool character from a story. In this way we broke down the texts and reassembled them. If we chose to use a whole story, we tried to keep as closely to the original as we could in order to keep the language of the child. Thus we have scarcely changed their grammar. This I think was such a nice detail preserving their own language.

We sought to retrieve what the children want to say, what they think about the future, what they dream about. There are a number of recurring things in the different countries, and we can see some patterns. One common denominator is the futuristic elements, which is recurring for the children regardless of their country; flying cars and people – all that can fly. Sweets and muffins rain from the skies, and they write about robots, especially the English children do. In the English texts we find robots and apocalypse – the robots and technology take over the world. Pollution is also a recurring topic. We can also see some differences; in Norway we are preoccupied by activism, environment and such; the children engage in something but themselves, whereas in Spain and Poland the boys want to become professional football players to earn a lot of money because they want to take care of their family. The girls want to become doctors or vets in order to take care of animals and their family.

In August we met in Denmark and continued our work for two new weeks. Leaving Germany, we had selected between fifty and sixty stories, which now had to be reduced to ten or twelve. The stories we present on stage exist in numerous versions.

As an example, I may have presented one of the stories in one way, but then Unai [López de Armentia from Spain] and I have presented the same story in another way, thus becoming a shadow play with a difference. Also, we may have brought in a song used in one show and seen that we could include it in our story now, but in a different way. This way all these stories have

been presented on the floor several times, with different actors and new ideas. Finally we had performed the same stories again and again, and if one is to renew oneself over and over again, it becomes a little “oh my gosh, are we to invent the wheel again? – but so we did”. We figured it out in the end, then entered the room, cooperated on the stories, made some adjustments, and achieved what we wanted. Naturally we have selected stories from all the countries represented in the project, and have assembled the stories according a form of thematic and following a red thread.



Illustration 45: The ensemble: left to right Dagmara Żabska (Poland), Helga Rosenfeldt-Olsen (Denmark), Unai López de Armentia (Spain), Nora Winkler (Austria), Michael Schramm (Germany) and sitting in front Hilde Stensland (Norway). Photo: Lars Wahl.

Stensland describes how the theatrical expressions create an interaction. The actors work together with the children’s stories, read for each other and try out the stories on the floor; listen to each other and respond, and try out the texts again. This way of working can be compared with collaborative writing when more people work together to create a common text, the pair or group converse about the text creation, they respond to each other and complete the writing as a joint assignment (Eritsland 2008, p. 10), and has been mentioned earlier in this report. The greatest difference between a drama and a story is that the drama

can be realized in a theatrical manner, where props, sounds, the stage space, as well as the actors' movements are all meaningful. When developing theatrical texts, working together through interaction will be a good and natural process. The trying out of a script becomes more natural when the words are spoken aloud, not just written in a document.

Hermeneutics is about interpretation, it is about making something that is unclear understandable (Gilje 2019, p. 11). Stensland tells how they broke down the texts to rebuild them in order to capture what the children want to convey. In the hermeneutics the individual parts can only be understood if they are linked to the whole (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2013, p. 193). When we are to understand something new, such as a story or a theatre play, we use the understanding we already have to interpret what is happening. As the process moves forward, the new information will slip into our understanding. In this way, an interpretation is always a meeting between you and what you perceive. While the hermeneutic spiral is preferably used for the interpretation of texts, it may also be used to describe how the theatre play is created, how the smaller parts are linked together to a whole. In both cases it is the whole that creates meaning and understanding.

4.2 I Will Be Everything – on stage

The performance begins already outside the theater, with the audience having to put on laboratory coats. "As excited experimental rats - or are we scientists?" asks Fredly in her review in *Periscope* (2020). Two of the actors come out to meet the audience, and already here we get a hint of the language of the performance, as actors Dagmara Żabska and Hilde Stensland, each speak their own language, Polish and Norwegian. The audience is asked to raise their hands, while the actors check to see if we are clean enough to be let in. We are brought into the laboratory; to a stage which is a square white box, with openings in the middle of the sides and space for the audience in all four corners. This is how the audience gets close to the actors, who use all four openings in their performance. The actors are dressed in white oilskin trousers; presenting themselves as garbage women and garbage men, they take us on a journey to the future. They collect garbage and garbage can become stories, and this is the narrative they draw us into.



Illustration 46: A white box in the black box.

The audience is immediately invited into the narrative as the garbage truck, which is also a time machine, will not start. Everyone has to go out on the floor, thus entering into the fiction where we stomp in rhythm to contribute energy for the time machine. This is a good move, as among the audience are children who participated in the workshops, and although their written contributions are not necessarily included in the performance, they have participated in and recognize the process and outcome. By inviting them in to the performance, a new ownership is created for the project and the performances. The *breaking of the fourth wall* (Bell 2008, p. 203) is precisely what Anne (13) liked best with the performance, as she explains "I think it was fun that we could join in. So when the rabbits came down from the ceiling we were to help clean up and things like that, it was fun. It was a little different from other performances".

Then one story rolls out after another, using various theatrical tools, live music, video projections, storytelling, shadow theater, and animation. "The juxtaposition of all the different storytelling techniques in *I Will Be Everything* creates a dynamic overall impression, and keeps the excitement going, since we never know what the next scene will offer," [my translation] Fredly writes in her review (Fredly 2020).

After meeting David the garbage truck driver, who gives people a bomb if they throw garbage in the wrong places (see text 15), we meet the last rabbit in the world. Michael Schramm sits alone with the guitar and gives voice to the rabbit who is so lonely and teased by the other animals. He looks at the other animals who reject him, and says in broken Norwegian; "Why are you so cruel to me?". Eventually he finds a solution; he creates a machine that makes new rabbits, but then there are too many rabbits on Earth, and they have to be sent to the carrot planet. To show how many rabbits there are, the actors let it rain stuffed rabbits on stage, to the children's delight. Some rabbits end up near the audience, and as more keep falling, several children run forward and pick up one or more rabbits, trusting they are allowed to move onto the stage. In one of the shows, just about all the children ran out on the floor in the rabbit rain, and not a single rabbit was left on the floor. Sending the rabbits to the carrot planet, and the children on invitation helped put the rabbits in the rocket; albeit a little heavy heartedly. There was an incident where one child pocketed a number of rabbits, whereby one of the actors had to point at the pockets in order for the last rabbits to be loaded into the rocket.

Unai López de Armentia is computer game addict Eneko who ends up in a life crisis when the web breaks down. He asks the audience for help, but then he gets an idea and builds a flying skateboard; ending in an off-stage crash. A garbage bin is wheeled into the room, from where a person emerges. The story unfolding in front of us, is about the war against the robots. Nora Winkler pulls out one and one sign with individual sentences, spending plenty of time turning around the room so everyone can read the signs. The only thing that is heard is a little murmur from the children who read out half-aloud as they stretch to see the next sign, and are fascinated by the silent story about the girl who lives in a garbage can and is so scared of robots.

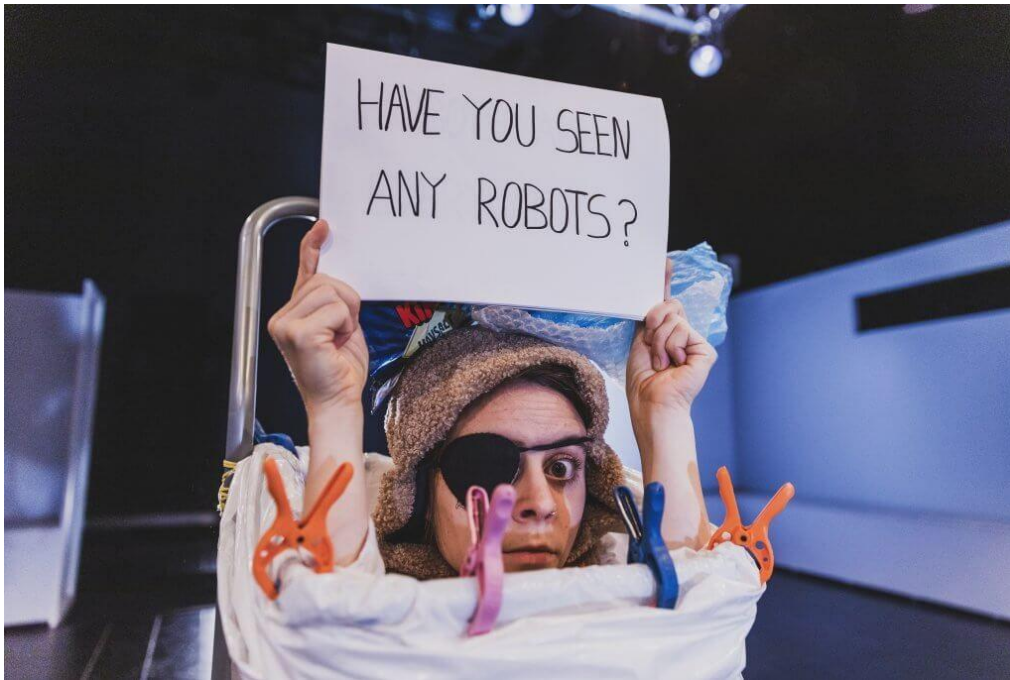


Illustration 47: The girl who lives in the garbage bin; in the Norwegian performance the texts were in Norwegian. Photo: Lars Wahl.

Dagmara Żabska plays the distraught mother who misses her son and who suddenly discovers him on a flying train. The scene is illustrated by a choppy animation projected on a canvas that runs across the entire stage floor. This way the audience can see the boy on the train wherever they sit. When the mother finally reaches her son, she discovers that he is made of metal; a robot the boy made to fool his mother. Nora Winkler sings about the magical future the German girl envisioned in text 14. The text is used in its entirety, while Michael Schramm and his guitar sets the music. The lyrics tell about the magic of things, and the song brings out the tenderness of the lyrics.

The room is dark, Hilde Stensland is a scientist communicating with other scientists in Madrid and London telling about the latest discovery; a new life form is found in outer space. The story ends in silence (see text 5). Shadow theatre is used to tell about the children with flying-shoes, and about the failed attacks on Earth by the extra-terrestrials. They press the wrong button and a bomb filled with super fertilizer is sent to Earth. Forests grow up everywhere, extinct animals are brought to life, and everyone lives in peace and harmony. The white walls throughout the room are used as canvases, where the audience turns to see the figures and

are able to touch them. This is a creative way to show flying cars and children flying with flying-shoes, as well as dinosaurs coming to life.



Illustration 48: The figures used to create the shadow theatre.

In the last story, we meet Helga Rosenfeldt-Olsen's as Julia, who decides to start an environmental organization because the beach is littered with garbage. The only one who comes to help her is Marco, played by Unai López de Armentia, but he is a boy, and that does initially not please Julia. Finally, all children are asked to help clean the beach, they are not difficult to ask. The children immerse themselves in the performance in such a way that when the garbage get thrown across the floor, they show a clearly negative reaction. Their faces are full of disbelief and protests are heard. In one of the shows, the children cannot help but get involved, as suddenly there was a gang from the audience out on the floor cleaning up after her. The actors coped with the situation, the children were led in place, the garbage was thrown out and the story rolled on.

The actors from the different countries use their own language in the dialogue, with Hilde the Norwegian actor as a guide who translates, explains, and responds to input so the audience understands what is going on. At times it is a cacophony of different languages, and without Hilde's narrative role, much might have gone over the heads of many. But not for everyone;

Carl (11) tells that "the actors got much of the story across through body language, even though we didn't understand the language they spoke." When the boy Eneko was sitting with an invisible game console in front of him, I heard a quiet whisper from one of the boys sitting next to me "he is gaming". Berit (11) comments that "it was cool that there were different languages", when asked what she thought of the show. The use of many languages can be seen as a picture of the international project and our international community; as also the understanding of action through common understanding across the borders. During the performance, the Polish actor realized that in the audience there were several children who had Polish as their mother tongue. They responded to what she said, they understood her, and after the performance she sent them a greeting. In the rabbit scene, the actor speaks broken Norwegian "why are you so cruel?". Both Polish children and other children who may not be fully fluent in Norwegian may experience an identity with the play.

Initially, there will always be some children who will not participate, who will try to be a little rowdy and jokers. "What year is it?", the actor asked, "1995" came a reply from a bench, but others were shouting "2020" louder, so the joker got nowhere. "Shall we sing a song?", an actors asked, "No" sounded the answer from a boy sitting next to me. But despite attempts to be funny, it did not take long for them to be fully involved. The cocky kid next to me had full focus on the action on stage for the rest of the show; only commenting on what was going on by whisper to his friend beside him. When the actors spoke their own language, the boys interpreted or explained to each other, and when the actors asked us to join the dance at the end, the boy next to me was quick to join the action with the other boys.

Familiar topics such as "climate crisis, robot issues and groundbreaking DNA technology" are fronted in the play, writes Fredly (2020). Through the story of Eneko, the theme of data addiction is highlighted. Everything is boring for Eneko when the net breaks down. This serve as an eyeopener not only for children, but also for the adults, as we rely on the internet and data both at work and leisure. It is used to gather information, in writing and communication, for example in the project IWBE. We might all have an identity crisis if the internet breaks down and we can no longer do our job as we normally do.

"The actors in between the scenes frantically running around and shouting in each other's mouths can leave an adult audience breathless," writes Fredly in her review in Periskop, and

she continues that this can be seen as a "recognition of children's wild and loud voices that are often not allowed in school or kindergarten" [my translation] (Fredly 2020). Some children may agree with the adult point of view, while not all. "When it was a bit noisy when they were to travel in time, I got a little bit of the mood, the excitement," Anne (13) comments, and Carl (11) describes it like "I personally, I like noise. I think it was noise in a non-messy way, if you understand what I mean". Some children may agree with the adult point of view, while others will agree with Anne and Carl, sometimes loud noises fit into the entirety.

Fredly in her review of the play points out that it is not uncommon to collect children's stories as a starting point for a play, and carries on to say that *I Will Be Everything* has included an extra layer to this. "The stories are retold by professional actors, while the fumbling and unpredictable elements of the children's stories retained to provide a genuine childish approval." [My translation] (Fredly 2020). Not even grammatical errors were corrected in order to retain the children's voice; a fine detail, according to Stensland (interview, February 2020). This says a lot about the respect for how the adult actors and director have treated the children's lyrics.

Director Alex Byrne writes "I am so sorry to all children who wrote stories that did not make it into the show. We did read them all and all of them somehow fed into this process" (Byrne 2020). But how did the children experience it? When asked what feedback they have received from the children, Hilde Stensland said "it has been tremendous, the children have been delighted, and I believe that in all countries we have had children who have been involved in the process and have recognized their own stories; it has been absolutely amazing" (Interview February 2020). This did indeed happen in Norway, when a child came to Kristin Jørgensen after the performance to tell her that her story had been told from the stage. Both Anne, Berit and Carl could report things they recognized from the workshops, such as the robots that took over the world, the flying humans and cars, the return of the dinosaurs and the garbage problem that was the red thread through the performance.

"You guys are great," a boy called out during the applause. He had been completely silent throughout the performance, but now he just had to say what he thought.

Dentro y fuera del Beñat Etxepare

Paraíso pone en marcha la vigésimo sexta edición de su programa escénico para llegar a unos 20.000 estudiantes vitorianos

✦ Carlos González

VITORIA – Los distintos caminos que recorre de manera simultánea Paraíso, Premio Nacional de las Artes Escénicas para la Infancia y la Juventud, parecen en ocasiones inabarcables. Tras poner en marcha este pasado fin de semana en Abetxuko la programación correspondiente al centro al Centro de Innovación Artística para la Pequeña Infancia KunArte –en la que la compañía cuenta, entre otros, con la colaboración de DIARIO DE NOTICIAS DE ALAVA–, el lunes levantó el telón del veterano proyecto que desarrolla con el Beñat Etxepare como foco de atención, aunque en la labor que se lleva a cabo con los centros escolares de la capital alavesa, son unas cuantas las actividades e iniciativas que se realizan fuera de las tablas del centro cívico Iparralde.

Como en los últimos tiempos, unos 20.000 estudiantes de la capital alavesa –Paraíso desarrolla otro programa paralelo en el resto del territorio– pasarán hasta junio de 2020 por la vigésimo sexta edición de una propuesta que busca, ante todo, “alimentar la creatividad” puesto que “la cultura es el alimento más eficaz para impulsar una dieta creativa y una vida sana”, según explicó ayer Pilar López, responsable de la compañía de Abetxuko, en la presentación oficial de la campaña.

Una decena de espectáculos van a cimentar una programación que, eso sí, siempre busca generar distintas líneas de desarrollo antes y después de las representaciones en sí mismas: una iniciativa que no sólo llega al alumnado, sino que también implica al profesorado; un cartel que se compone además de talleres didácticos,



Una escena de 'Dena izango naiz', que esta semana se está viendo en el centro cívico Iparralde. Foto: Cedida

cursos de arte y educación y otras iniciativas. En este sentido, López remarca ayer la necesidad de mantener en el futuro la esencia de esta apuesta, algo para lo que es necesario realizar

un cambio generacional en distintos ámbitos. “Por ejemplo, hay un profesorado que nos conoce desde hace muchos años, con el que colaboramos de manera habitual, pero está entrando

gente nueva en los centros y tenemos que engancharnos a ellos y ellas”, una labor en la que se está contando con la colaboración de Teklak, Estudio de Comunicación y Audiencias.

Con todo, en lo que se refiere a las representaciones en sí, el Beñat Etxepare está acogiendo esta semana sus primeras citas con el público de la mano del montaje *Dena izango naiz*, que el sábado 2 de noviembre se abrirá también al público en general con sesiones a las 12.30 y a las 19.00 horas. Como ya publicó este periódico la semana pasada, la obra es el resultado de una colaboración internacional en la que están implicadas siete compañías europeas, incluyendo la sala Baratz, una propuesta en la que se han implicado estudiantes de otros tantos países a los que se les pidió imaginar cómo serán las cosas dentro de 50 años. Cabe recordar que en el caso de Vitoria, en los talleres previos tomaron parte alumnos de Samaniego, Lakuabizkarra, Ramón Bajo, Ángel Ganivet, Odón de Apratz, Antonio López de Guereñu y Aranbizkarra.

De todas formas, ahí no quedará la cosa. Por las tablas de Iparralde también pasarán la formación italiana Factory Compagnia Transadriática, que traerá un espectáculo de danza basado en las andanzas de Peter Pan, inspirado en el libro *Las aventuras de Peter y Wendy* del autor James Matthew Barrie. No faltarán tampoco *Kibubu*, Premio Feten 2014, de Marle de Jongh, *El tesoro de la Barracuda* de A la sombra Teatro, *Clásicos cómicos* de Teatro Corsario y *Un salto de gigante* de la Pal. Paraíso, por su parte, aportará tres espectáculos a la programación: *Lunaticus Circus: Bihotz bihotzez* y el estreno de *Único, el príncipe destronado*, que cuenta con la firma de Itaki Rikarte. A eso habrá que sumar *Ehuna*, una propuesta de Dantzaz en la que el grupo de Abetxuko también colabora de manera activa. ●

Illustration 49: Review from Spain, by Carlos Gonzales. Photo: Cedida.

5.0 Conclusive comments

The IWBE narrative starts out with workshops in the different countries, followed by a selection process among the various texts; followed by the composition and juxtaposition of the texts to create an adventurous performance for the children who participated in the first workshops. The performance marks the end of a journey for Kristin Jørgensen and me. The play is now a stand-alone performance, where actors now can perform to new children in all participating countries. As this report is written, Corona is all over us and the actors are working on a virtual version.

The project has come to the end of the road; what now remains is accounting and writing reports. Has the project been successful? In order to answer that, one must first find out how to measure the success of a project like this. Is the project successful because the goals of the project description for Creative Europe were achieved? Or is it the reviewer's words about the play that determine whether the project is successful?

If it is the latter one should go by, Hedda Fredly's "Review" *I Will Be Everything* ": Deeply Slapstick Poetry" in *Periskop* would be a good read and an indication of success. "I Will Be Everything at Nordland Theater lifts children's own stories with exemplary recognition of the absurd and childlike" [my translation] (Fredly 2020), she writes; which is exactly what those who have worked on the project wanted to achieve.

In evaluating a completed project, one must also look at the implementation and the ways and process towards the goal. The intermediate goals of this project are the results of the workshops in the first stages of the project. The creative processes that the pupils took part in were important for achieving these goals. Based on the pupils' pleasure in participating in the workshops and the resulting texts and drawings, this part of the project should be considered successful.

The plan to reach such a large number of children over one year may have been somewhat ambitious. It has been hectic, but we have managed the implementation, and numerous more children were able to view the performances. An important goal for the project was to "build relationships with schools that currently do not engage with theater" (from the IWBE project description). Consequently all schools in the immediate vicinity of Nordland Teater were offered the opportunity to participate in the project. For various reasons, some were unable

to attend the workshops; one of which was offered, and accepted, a separate workshop at a later time. The positive feedback from both pupils and teachers shows that the goals have been achieved.

In a large international project like this with many partners, communication and collaboration can be a challenge. In today's digital world we envision that everything can be done over the Internet, but it proved not entirely straightforward. We have many different communication platforms online, and in order to start a collaboration an assessment must be made to find out which works best for the participants. Large collections of material have been made available to be shared with the other partners. There are demands on both options for backup and protection of personal privacy. If for any reason a joint account stops working, someone must have the responsibility to step in and address the problem immediately. With the computer nerd Eneko in mind, one might just imagine how things can go if one chooses data solutions that do not work optimally. In this project, they choose to use also physical meetings that have taken place on a regular basis, which turned out to be a sensible choice. In physical meetings, participants can work more intensively together without interruptions. Digital resources are used as a support rather than the main form of cooperation.

My research is based on the question "What may happen in the meeting between theatre and school pupils?". This report in its entirety describes what happened during this meeting, where 2,000 pupils from all over Europe participated in the workshops, they made stories about the future, and they got to see the play. This project has been a process where the pupils have been active participants in the early stages, and though the majority of the children did not find their own stories in the stage performance, they were able to recognize work carried out in their workshops. The children had the experience of being involved from the initial workshops to the performance; through the director's presence during the workshops, and through the actors' way of inviting the children on stage. During their first meeting with the instructor in their own schools they probably did not fully understand what they were taking part in; they just had a great time. When invited to the performance and listening to the different languages on stage, they realize how children all around Europe have so much in common; and they might better comprehend that this performance was a part of an international project they too had been participating in.

For me as an observer, the experience of the children's enjoyment of what they got to see on stage, their focus, how they paid attention to everything that was going on, how quick they were to involve themselves when invited on stage by the actors, and the joy of dancing most of the children showed in the final scene – this is indeed proof that the project has been a success.

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