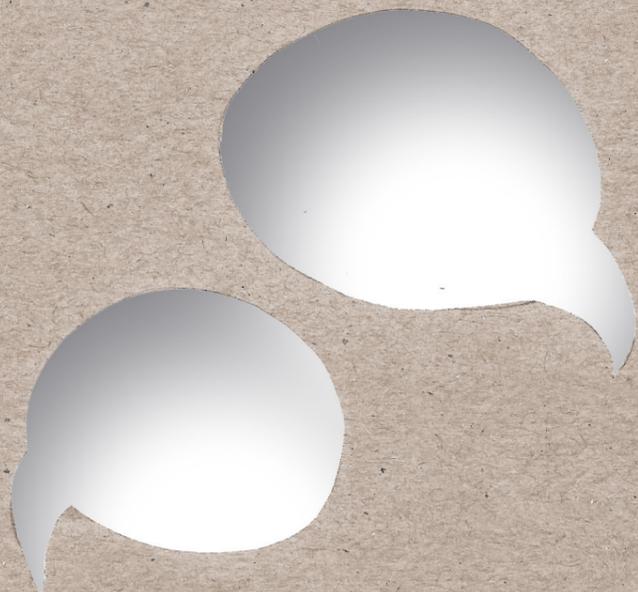




Språkitecture
Playing in a New Language

VICTORIA MCCREA



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Playing in a New Language

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Språkitecture: Playing in a New Language
Victoria McCrea
Spring 2019

Chalmers School of Architecture : Architecture and Urban Design

Examiner: Joaquim Tarrasó
Supervisors: Kengo Skorick, Emilio Brandao
Direction : Urban Challenges



*How do we express ourselves through
the mask of another language?*

About the Author:

This thesis stemmed from my enduring interest in language, pedagogy and role playing.

My interest in language learning was fostered at a young age, as I grew up attending French immersion school, speaking English at home to my Swedish mother. When I studied architecture at the University of Manitoba, I became completely enthralled in my research regarding pedagogical theory in the Canadian arctic. I was fascinated to study how different cultures might pass on information and educate their youth - that action may speak louder than words - and I began to reflect on my own experiences in the educational systems.

I moved to Sweden in 2015 and studied at the *Svenska för invandrare* language schools in Gothenburg. Though the teachers were wonderful, I found my Swedish proficiency grew the most when I was applying my knowledge in every day life, especially when working at both Swedish speaking and international preschools between internships. I found that children were the perfect audience to test my language skills with. There was room to make mistakes, and they would correct my grammatical or pronunciation errors.

This thesis was inspired by my own struggle to grasp a new language, wrestle with homesickness and build a new identity. I want to thank all the wonderful people who have supported me, corrected my Swedish and shared their own stories along the way.



Education

BACHELORS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Arctic Adaptations Studio (2010-2011)

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Healthcare Architecture Studio (2017)

Nordic Architecture (2017)

Housing Studio (2018)

Gender and Norm Critic (2018)

Design for Social Inclusion (2018)

Work

Number Ten Architects (2014-2015)

Ett Ark Arkitektur (2015-2016)

Krook och Tjäder (2017)

HTFC Planning and Design (2018)

Reading Instructions:

Theory of Communication : Introduces the background of language pedagogy and the communication theories presented in this thesis.

Thesis & Delimitations : Delineates the scope of the thesis and the questions that will be addressed.

Typology & Program : Presents the two programs (the Language school and the Preschool) and evaluates how they will share space, resources and philosophies.

Context : Describes the project site at the urban scale and explores the building through a model-focused methodology.

Design Response : Illustrates the design process and methods and walks the reader through the resulting building design.

Discussion : Evaluates the results of the *Design Response* and re-addresses the thesis question.

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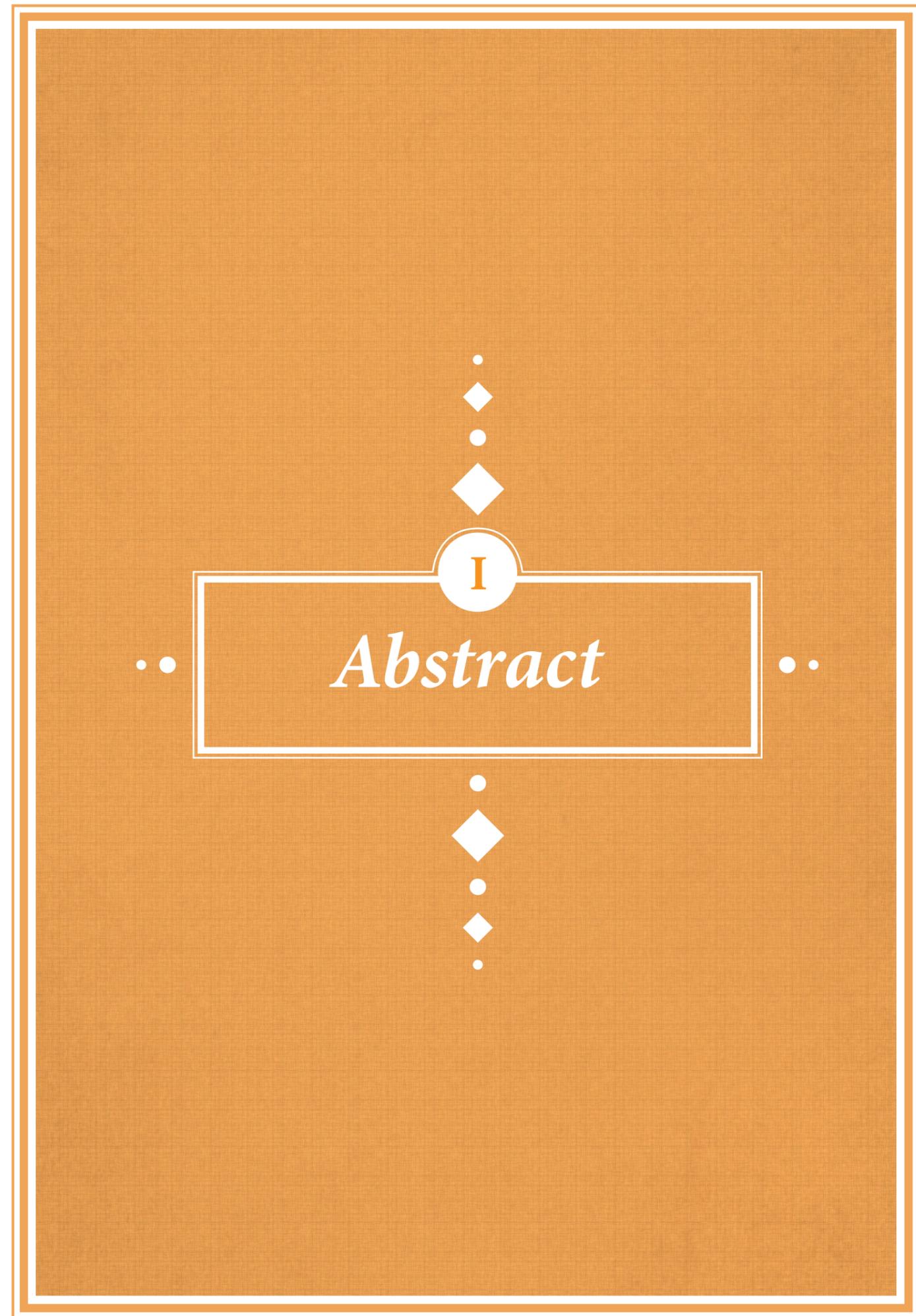
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*“Har människor
rötter eller fötter?
Jag tror att vi har båda
och det gör ont.”*

*(Do people have roots or feet?
I think we have both,
and it's painful)*

*- interview with Esther,
an SFI Teacher*



Abstract

As immigrants to Sweden continue to be settled in urban peripheries, they risk both geographical and cultural segregation. This thesis proposes to create an inter-generational space to reduce the isolation and the struggle to connect that faces many newcomers as they learn a new language and culture.

Absorption of a new culture is best made through a well-rounded submersion into the new environment. Yet for immigrant adults, the current language school environment is often stiff, formal and disconnected from everyday life. Standard classrooms isolate students from their community and family and provide little local context for the adult learner. Children on the other hand, are offered environments in which language acquisition is seamlessly integrated into everyday play. Distracted by the fantasy of game and play, children are free to find new ways to express themselves without fear of making mistakes.

This thesis explores an environment where a Preschool and adult Language school are housed

in the same building to capitalize on the resources each program can offer the other. A playful setting where communication is more fluid would allow instructors to use multiple situations in which adults could apply their knowledge of the new language and culture. At the same time, the presence of adult immigrants, and in some cases relatives, would build self-confidence in children and encourage a rewarding interaction of the generations.

To assist newcomers in learning a new language within the context of the surrounding society and culture, this thesis proposes extending the classroom into the bustling suburban square of Goteborg's Kortedala.

This thesis plays with the performative aspects of adopting a new culture and the character shift that occurs when expressing oneself through a different language. By testing theories of proxemics and framing, the project studies the spatial aspects of communication and how distance and framing might affect the degree to which one feels comfortable connecting with others.



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II
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*Theory of
Communication*
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*“Since culture is learned,
it seems clear that one should
be able to teach it.
Yet in the past there has been
little success in this regard,
with the important exception
of language,
one of the dominant threads
in all cultures.”*

- Edward T. Hall

Background

Language and the Experience of Culture

To truly absorb a culture, one must learn the language. But this is a process that takes time, requires room for making mistakes. This thesis will explore the way one connects to the world around them with only limited language. What does it feel to move through a space wearing the new costume of an adopted culture?

Language Pedagogy

The way language is taught is constantly evolving. Traditionally, bilingualism has been taught through a monolingual lens (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). The two languages are compartmentalized and the second language is taught through self-reference. In the context of new immigrants attempting to learn a second language, this practice risks re-enforcing the hierarchy of the dominant culture and creates an environment that belittles the learner's identity. (García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017).

New trends in language pedagogy, however, are supporting the inherent bilingualism (or even multilingualism of the student) through the concept of *Translanguaging*.

Translanguaging is a pedagogical method that allows the student space to reference their native tongue. Supporting both languages simultaneously increases understanding and creates a nurturing environment that values the knowledge the students already possess. In early childhood

development, translanguage-learning appears to facilitate the creation of neural pathways that grow two simultaneous systems of communication. (Kovelman, Baker, & Petitto, 2008).

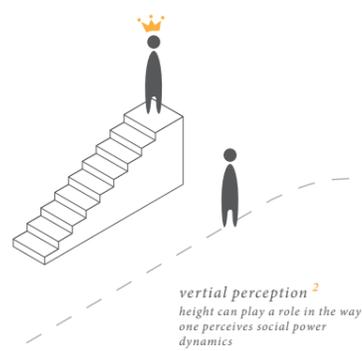
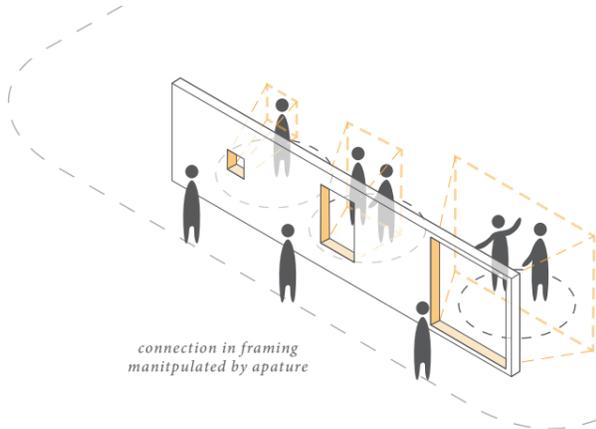
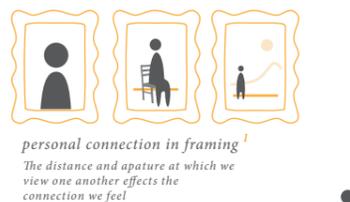
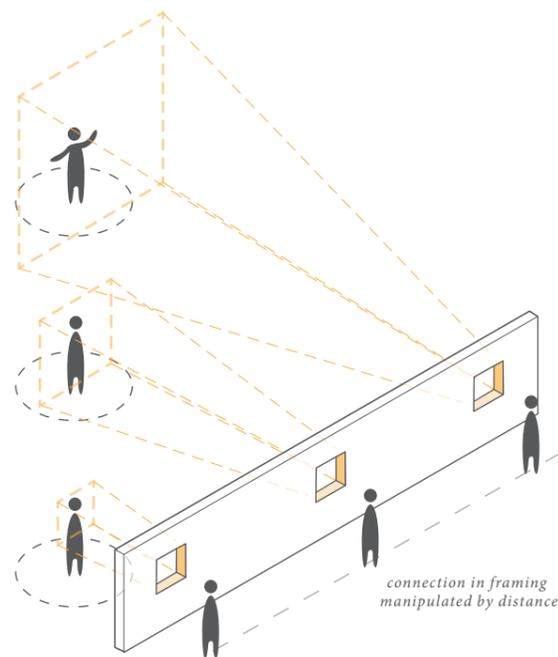
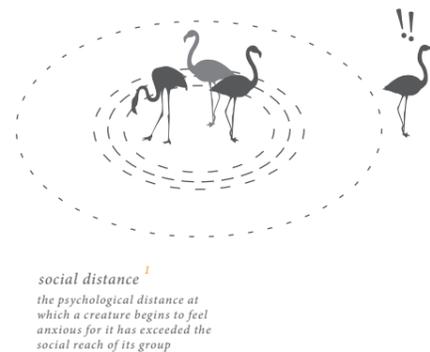
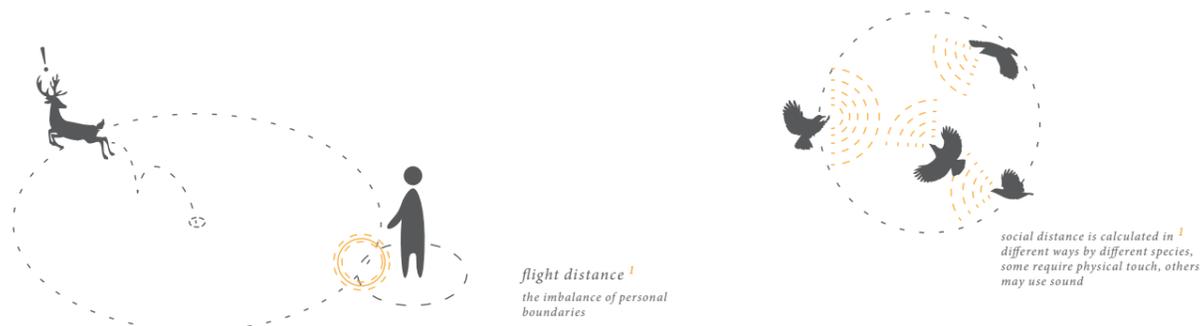
To support translanguage-learning, a teacher need not be fluent in the student's native tongue, but instead, the teacher must employ a flexible approach and provide tools for the students to customize their learning.

Relevance to the Design Profession

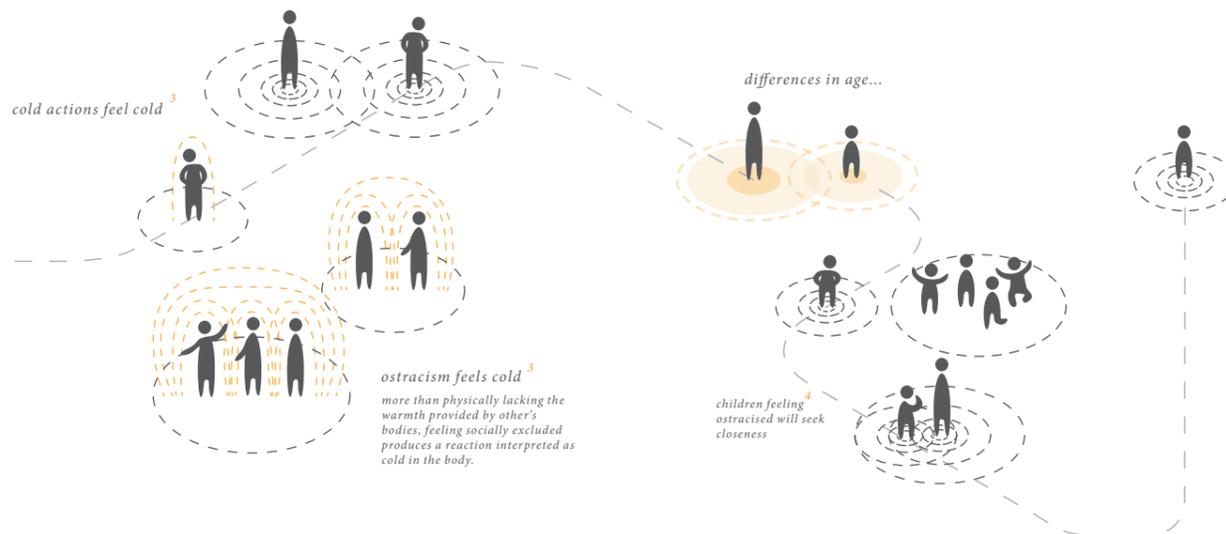
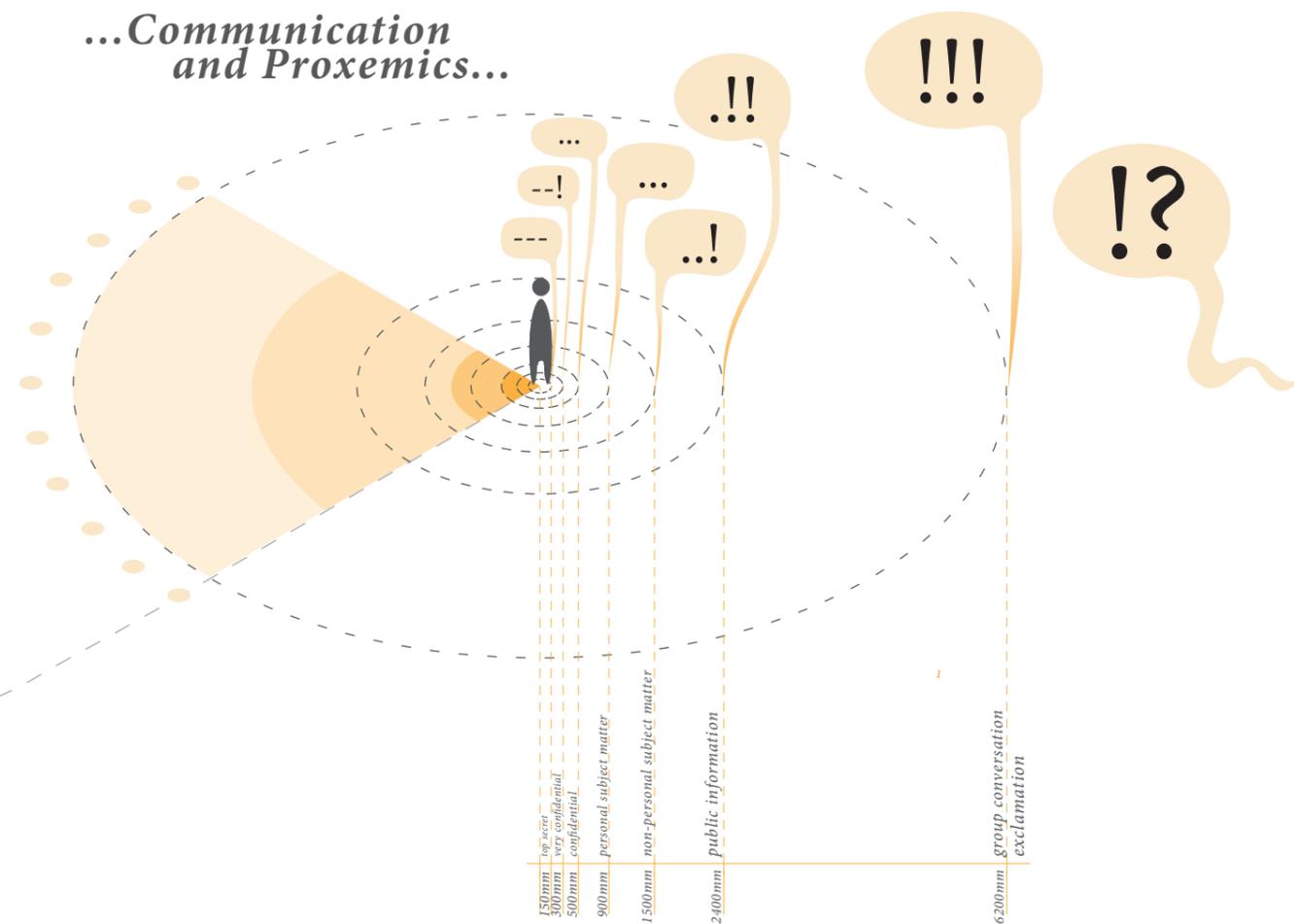
This project will explore the potential in designing flexible shared spaces that can adapt to a variety of programs. “Multipurpose designs” risk becoming ambiguous spaces that do not meet the specific needs of the user. But if designed with care, these shared spaces have the potential to strengthen one another by offering new resources to each of the components.

Relevance to Sustainability

Being able to communicate is a crucial component when attempting to bridge cultures and create richly diverse, integrated societies. Incorporating a variety of age groups into this experience has the potential to create long lasting bonds between folk. This project seeks to dissolve the apprehension of the stranger and instead celebrate the joy of encountering new cultures.



...Communication and Proxemics...



1: Hall, E. M. (1966) The Hidden Dimension. New York, NY: Anchor Books.
2: Schubert, T.W., (2005) Your Highness: Vertical Positions as Perceptual Symbols of Power. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 89(1), pp. 1-21

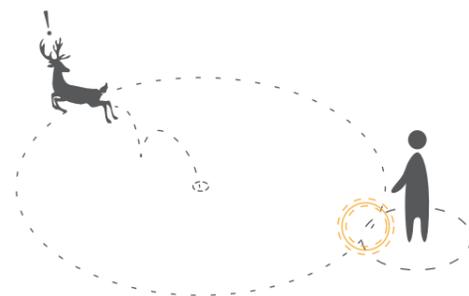
3: Zhong C.B., Leonardelli G.L., (2007) Cold and Lonely: Does Social Exclusion Literally Feel Cold? Association for Psychological Science 9(1) pp. 838-842
4: Marinovic, V., Wahl S., Träuble, B., (2016) "Next to you"—Young children sit closer to a person following vicarious ostracism. Journal of Experimental Child Psychology 156 pp. 179-185



*social distance,
delineated by sound*



*social distance,
the psychological distance at
which a creature begins to feel
anxious for it has exceeded the
social reach of its group*



*flight distance,
an imbalance of personal
boundaries*



*critical distance,
the narrow zone between
flight or attack*

Social Distances

Different cultures communicate differently, varying in more ways than simply language (Hall, 1966). The way we feel connected, display a willingness to connect and delineate personal space, varies from person to person and from culture to culture. Anthropologist Edward Hall coined the term proxemics in 1966 to refer to the environmental and communicative aspects of our personal space. His book, "The Hidden Dimension" illustrates these differences in inter-personal connections through anecdotes of animal behavior.

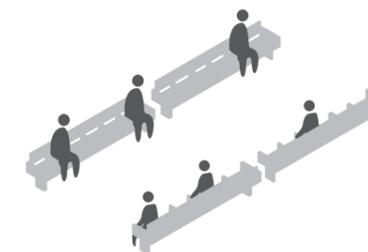
The connection we feel to our group or to foreign groups may be determined through a variety of factors. Tactile factors such as touch, smell or warmth are more primal ways of communicating. Psychological factors such as facial expressions, speech inflection, body movement and positioning may be more nuanced. Both, however, may be perceived differently from culture to culture. The boundaries may be difficult to discern, especially across different groups. We constantly run the risk of misunderstanding them as we attempt to bridge cultures.

A central theme to this thesis is that understanding the way we move through space and connect with our neighbours and environments is an integral role in designing a welcoming and effective learning atmosphere.

Sociopetal and Sociofugal Spaces

The design of a space has the power to strongly influence the type of interactions of its occupants. Psychiatrist Humphry Osmond coined the terms *sociopetal* and *sociofugal* spaces to describe the types of environments accessible in his hospital (Hall, 1966). Sociofugal spaces are arranged in ways that isolate people and inhibit interaction, such as a waiting room or train station benches. Sociopetal spaces, on the other hand, encourage interaction with others, such as cafés or service desks. Osmond noted that neither sociopetal or sociofugal spaces are inherently better than the other, but that they each have their place and purpose to serve. He believed that patients' levels of comfort or loneliness were influenced by the type of arrangements of fixed or non-fixed seating.

In an attempt to improve communication and social interaction in his ward, Osmond and his coworker, psychologist Robert Sommer, also observed the way staff and patients communicated across tables. Sommer's observations revealed that people were twice as likely to communicate when sitting diagonally at the short-end corner of the table, than if they were sitting across from one another. In this position, one has a concentrated amount of interaction to one side of them, but eye contact is not required as frequently. Each of the conversationalists may retreat into the distraction of their meal or the space in front of them, and maintain a desired level of exposure.



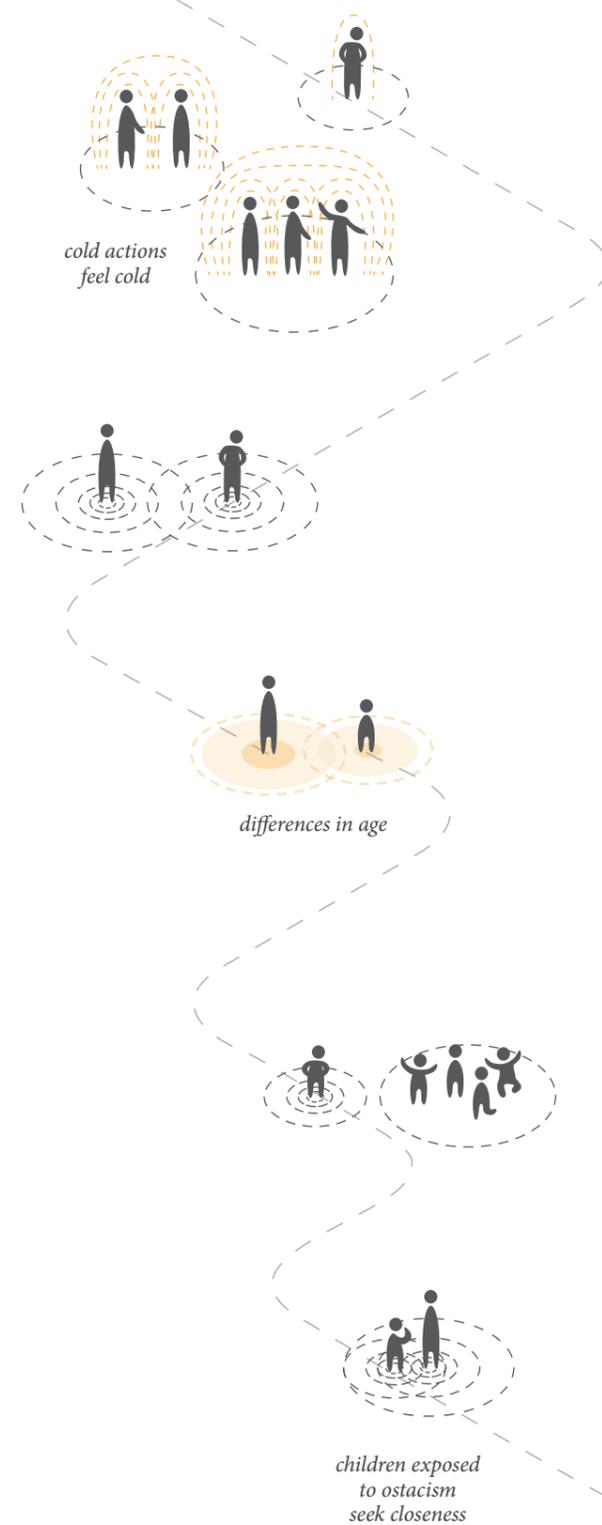
*sociofugal spaces,
the train station*



*sociopetal spaces,
the cafe*



interaction across a table



The effects of ostracism on personal space

Ostracism, to feel ignored or socially excluded, has a powerful affect on our ability and willingness to connect with people around us (Marinovic, Wahl & Träuble, 2017). It threatens our feeling of control, of belonging and our self esteem. Interestingly, while adults tend to withdraw from society and create protective barriers of distance and seclusion when experiencing ostracism, children faced with social exclusion are more prone to seek closeness, looking to the protection of adult figures, even strangers to comfort their fear of abandonment (Marinovic, Wahl & Träuble, 2017).

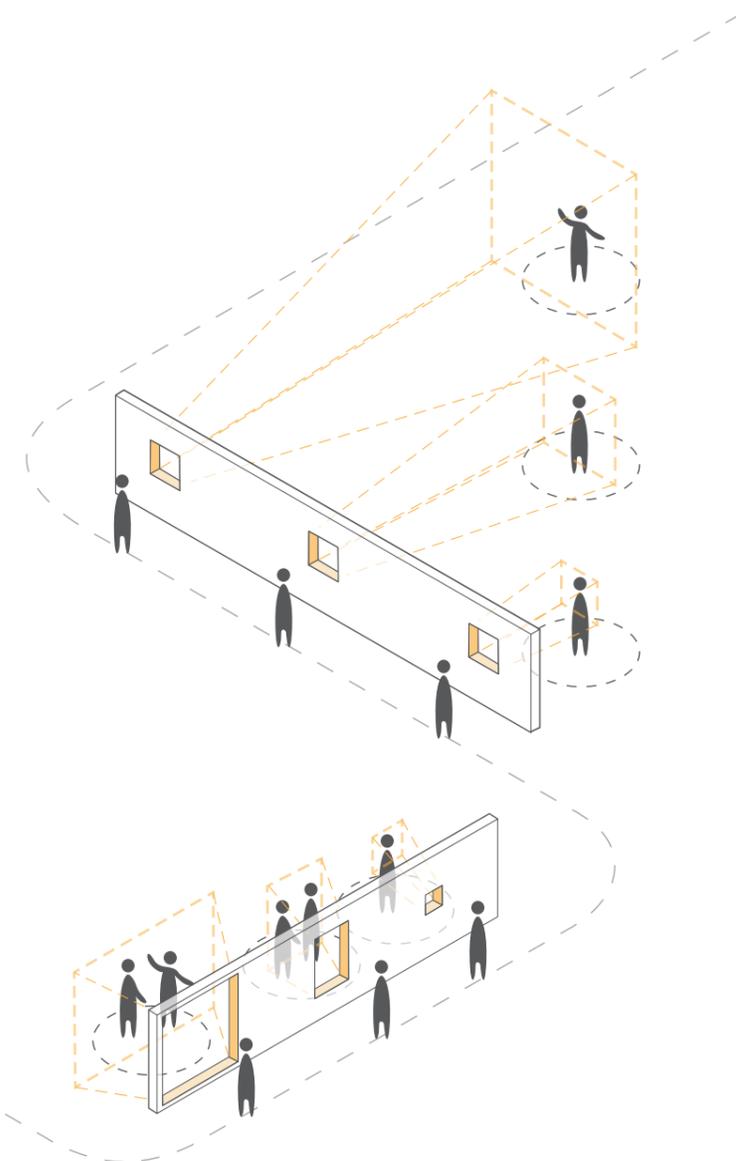
Ostracism also has the curious effect of producing the physical sensation of cold in the body (Zhong & Leonardelli, 2008). Just as the expressions “to give one the cold shoulder” and “cast an icy stare” suggest, people who feel excluded from social environments seek physical warmth to sooth the pain of ostracism.

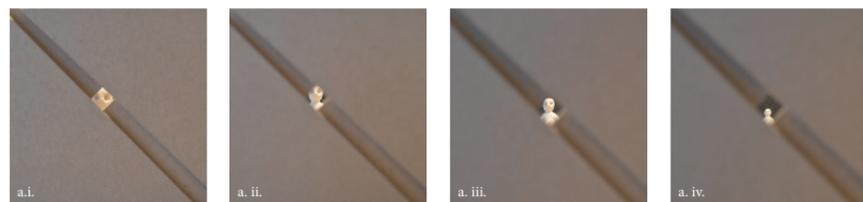
Connection in framing

In his book, *The Painter's Eye*, Maurice Grosser describes what an artist considers when framing subjects in a painting (referenced in Hall, 1966). In portraiture, how closely the subject sits to the canvas, or how exposed or hidden behind the canvas edge the character may be, effects the message the artist conveys. Maurice defines a portrait as holding the subject from a distance of 1.2 to 2.4 meters (Hall, 1966). It is at this distance that the viewer feels that they could potentially hold a conversation and communicate with the subject.

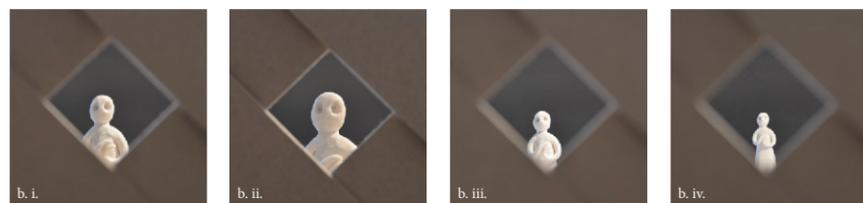
Setting the subject further back in the portrait, to a point where the viewer is able to see the entirety of the subject's body and features, creates a different type of connection. Here we stand close enough to observe characteristics, but slightly too far from the subject to ask any questions. It enforces the autonomy of the subject as we understand the unit as a whole (Grosser, 1956). Further back still, and the viewer has only the body position in relation to its landscape to reference. At a far distance, the viewer does not consider their own effect on the subject, as they are no longer close enough to communicate with.

Applying these theories to three-dimensional space may provide an interesting set of tools to customize interaction in this project's program.

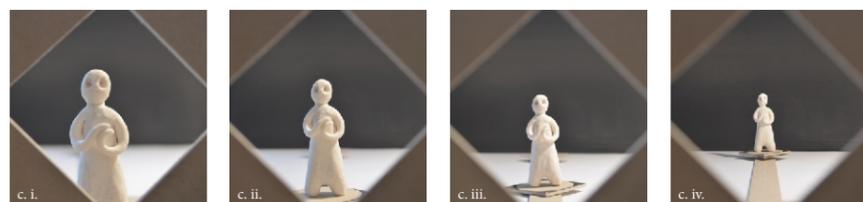




... cannot see enough of a person to assess their character...
... they seem to spy on you...
... they have more power...



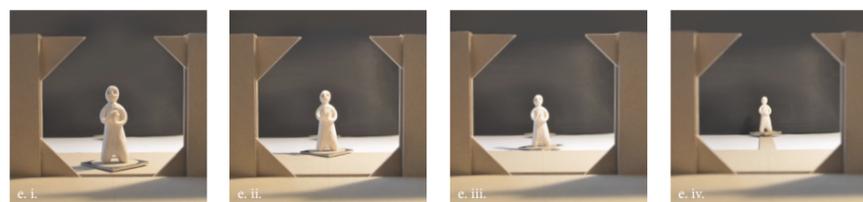
... seeing their full face and the body language of their torso, they seem approachable... a safe boundary keeps aspects of them hidden from notice...



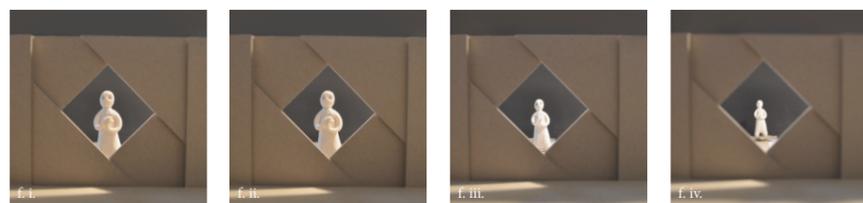
... this aperture is versatile, the subject can hide themselves by approaching it, or reveal their entire body by distancing...



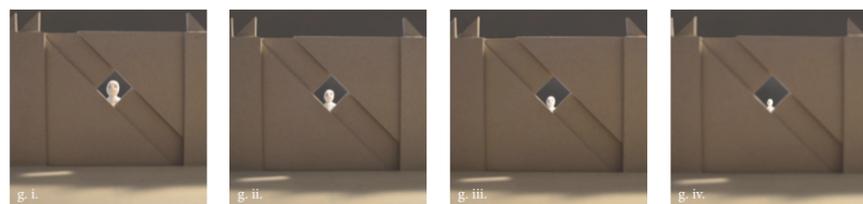
... there is no obstruction between the subjects... this may create an honest environment, but certain characters may feel too exposed...



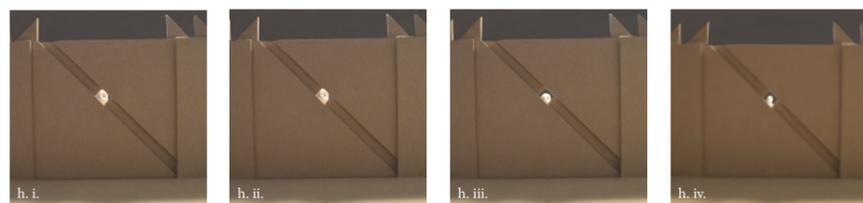
... stepping back, one gets a sense of the environment... the aperture is a portal to another space... one could trespass directly into the other territory...



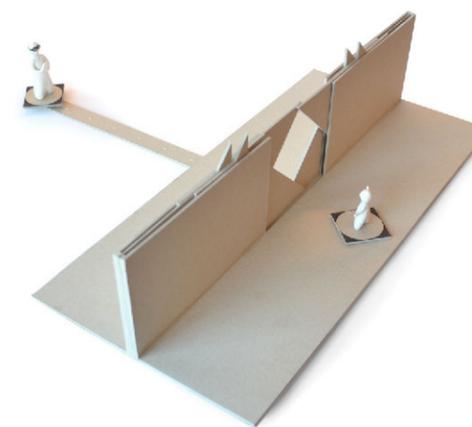
... an honest portrait on the wall... the subject has full freedom to choose how much they display... both participants feel safe...



... a strange voice on the wall... this aperture shows very little, a disembodied head in space...
... untrustworthy...



... the eerie feeling of being watched... mysterious...
being spied on... an imbalance of power...



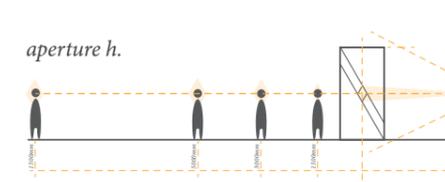
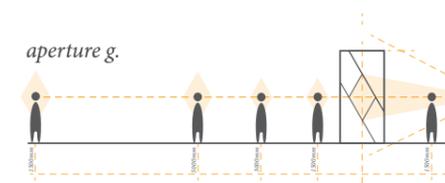
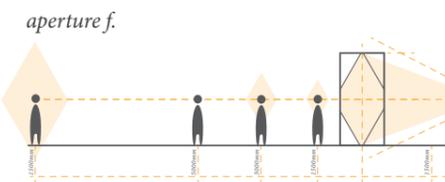
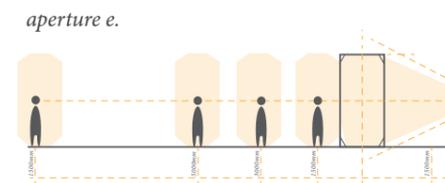
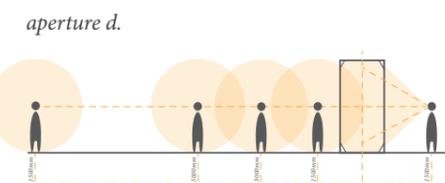
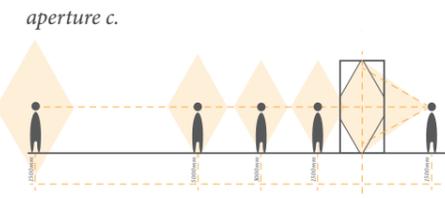
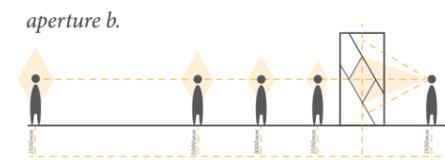
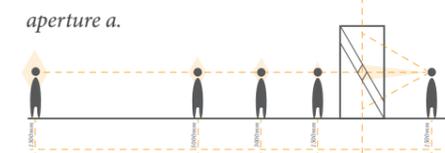
study model: moveable aperture, 1:50

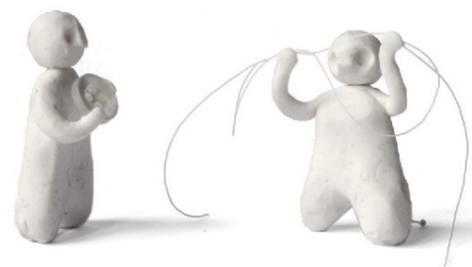
Aperture Studies

A model was created to test Grosser and Hall's theories of proxemics in framing. Four triangular pieces formed a moveable aperture that could frame a figure at varying distances. The scale figure was set at 1m, 3m, 5m and 10m, and the aperture was opened to four different sizes.

When the figure stands close to a small aperture (see image a.i. [left]), they seem to spy on the viewer. There is something mysterious and possibly distrustful about their perception. When the aperture is opened (image c.i.) the closeness allows the viewer to take in an honest perception of the figure, and one feels close enough to hold a conversation. Without any barrier visible (image d.i.) there is nothing that separates the figure from the viewer's environment. This could be beneficial for activity, but might leave the viewer feeling over exposed.

The study was repeated with the camera (the viewer) set further back to include the environment (ceiling and floors) into the image. The result decreased the viewers perceived affect on the subject.

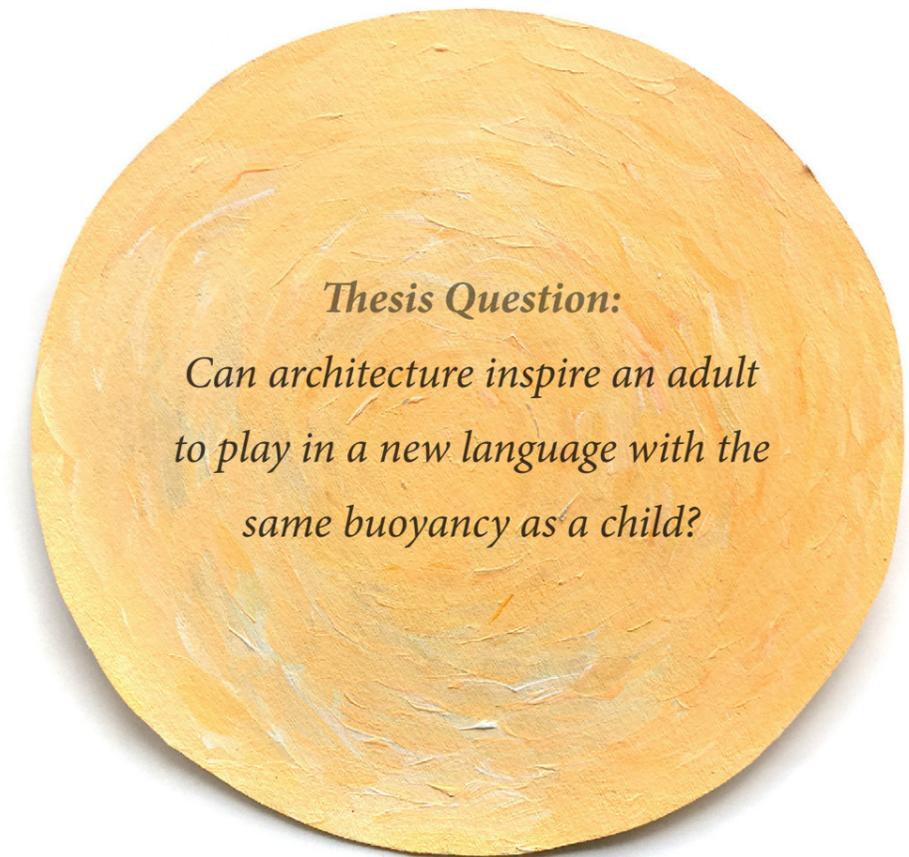
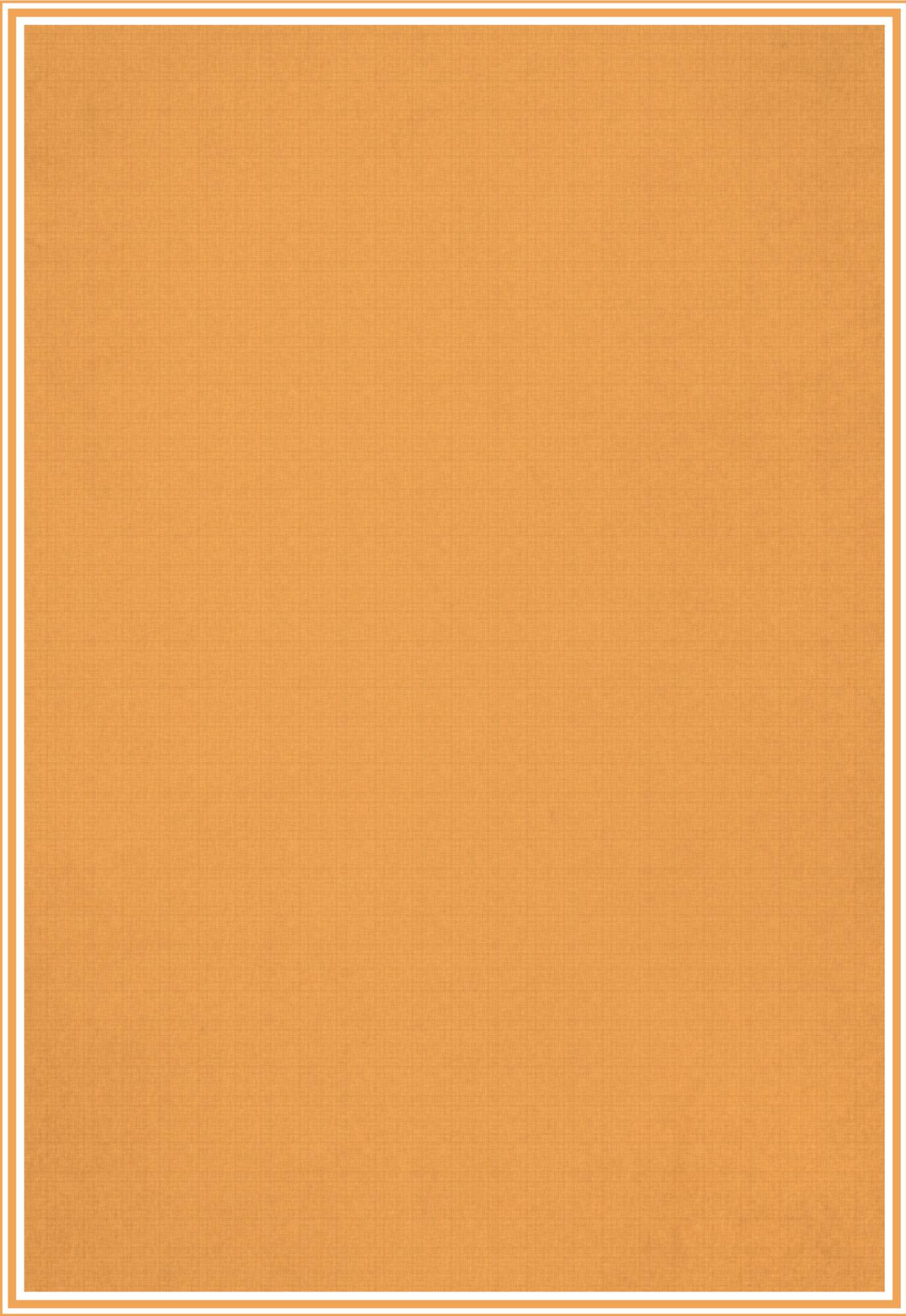




III

*Thesis &
Delimitations*





Thesis Question:

*Can architecture inspire an adult
to play in a new language with the
same buoyancy as a child?*

Delimitations

This thesis will regard a common pedagogical approach to language learning in Gothenburg, Sweden and compare it to the *Reggio Emilia* structure that is being adopted by many modern preschools. Learning environments will be explored and tested through model studies. Interviews with both SFI (Swedish for Immigrant Language school) and preschool teachers will provide practical framework for the research, while inspiration from the work of anthropologist Edward T. Hall will add a dimension of theatrics, role play and proxemics to the project.

The project will focus on children from age 0-5, new immigrants to Sweden (with an emphasis on adult students) and teachers to both types of schools. The site will be located in one of Gothenburg's North-East suburbs, specifically in an urban square or community space.

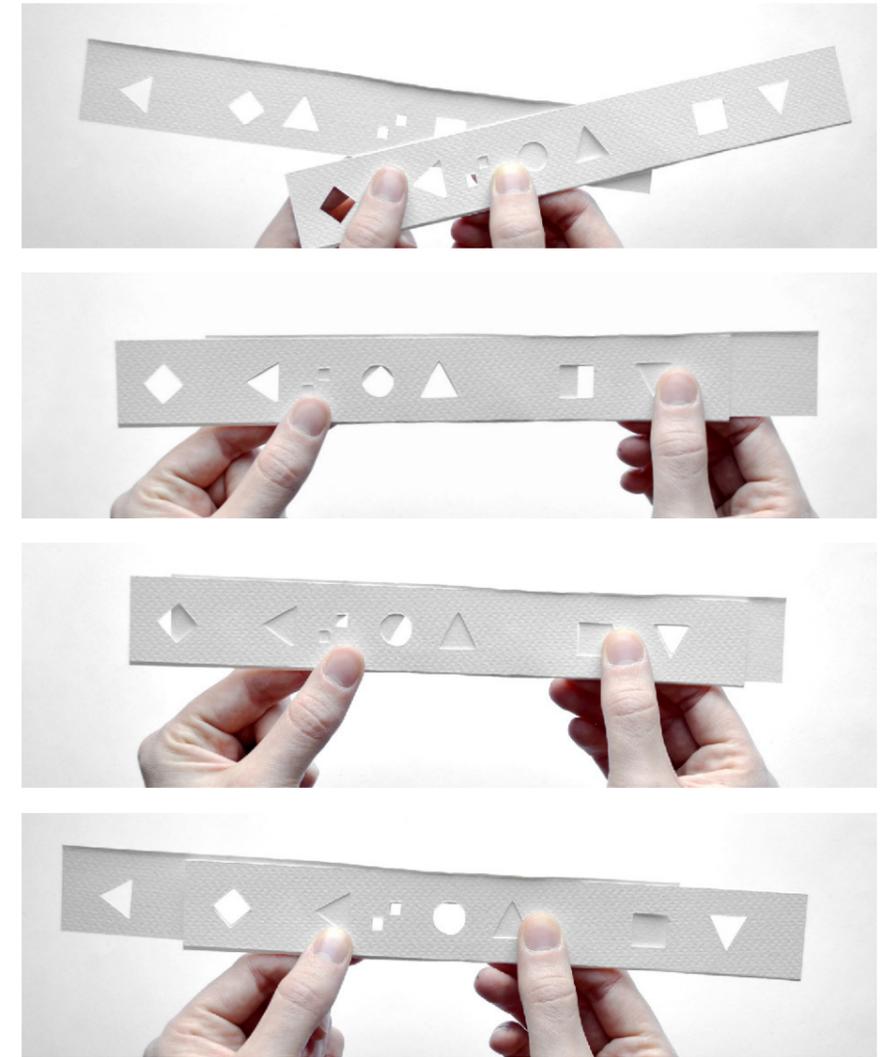




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*Typology &
Program*
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*“The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.
A hundred
always a hundred...”*

*- from the poem
“No way. The hundred is there.”
by Loris Malaguzzi.
Translated by Lella Gandini*

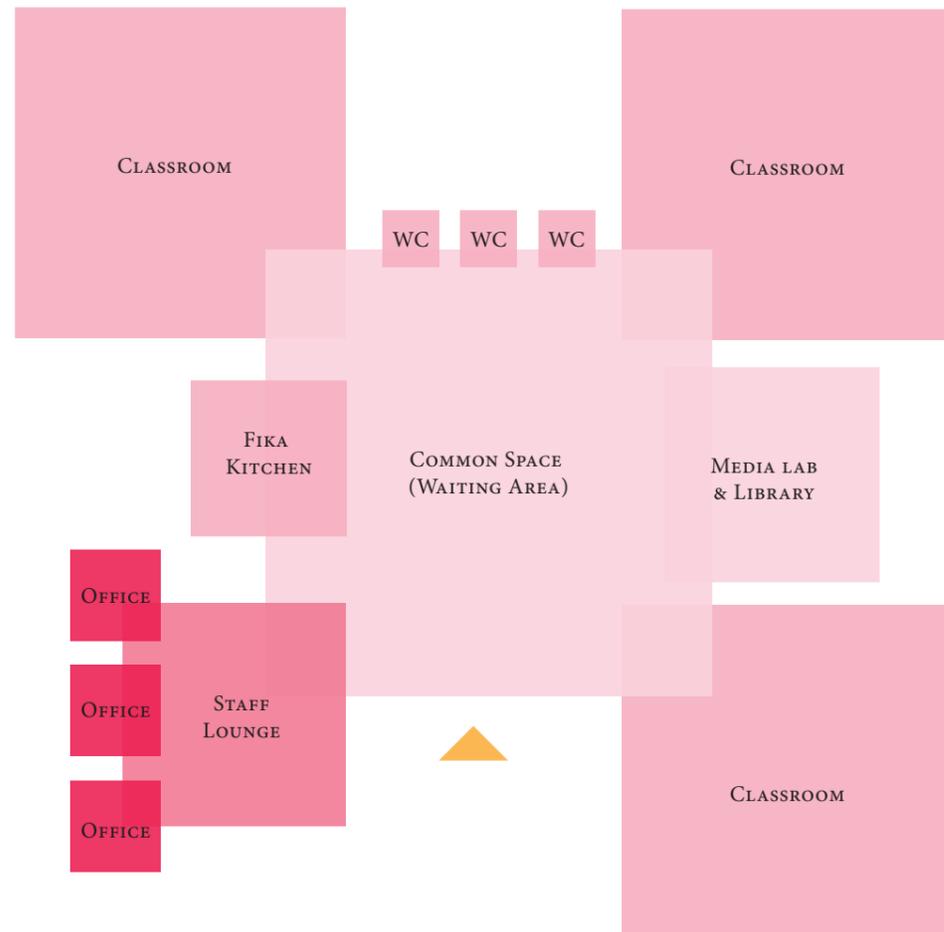


Concept Model: Aligning the Two Programs. In certain positions, it appears as if the two programs might fit very well together... Turning the model over, however, one realizes they have aligned a circle to a square.

Typology and Program

The Preschool and the Language School share many similar functions, but certain particularities of their programs may be difficult to combine. The simple issue regarding the different

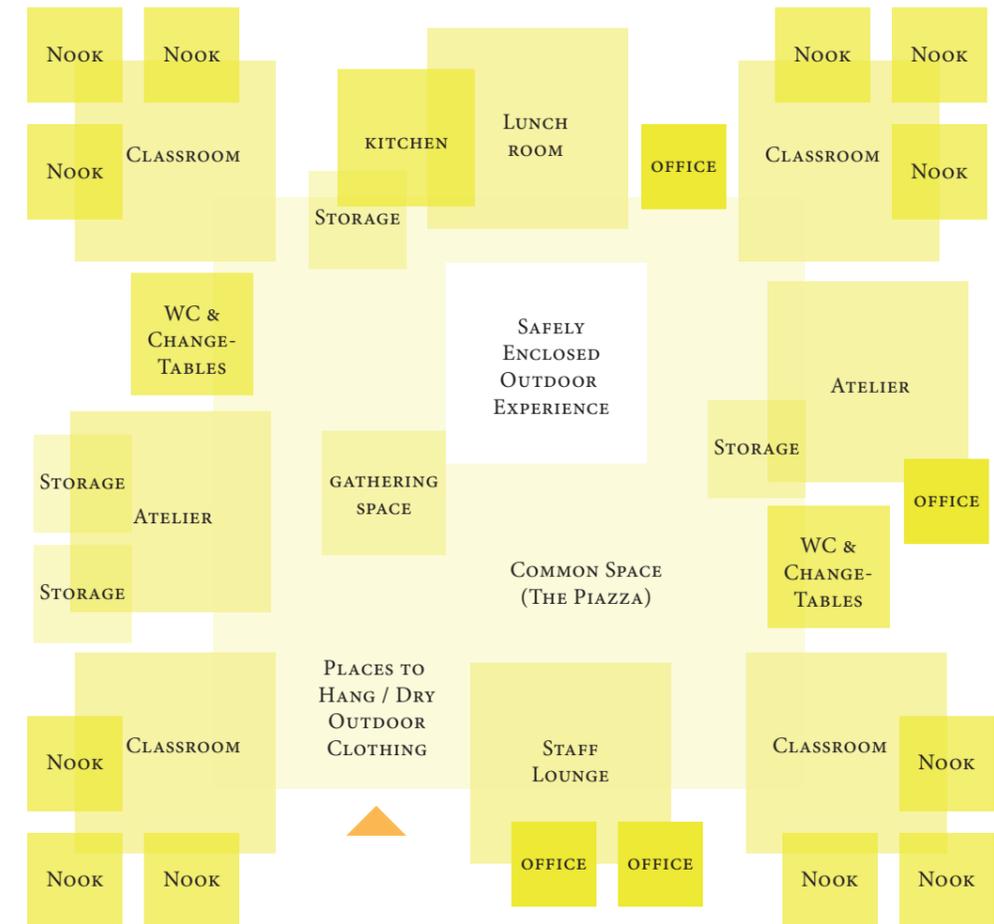
scales of the students presents an exciting challenge. However, concerns regarding the safety of the children in such an open program may be difficult to design for.



Swedish for Immigrants

Language classes are offered to any new immigrant to Sweden. Programs are available to suit a variety of educational backgrounds and language proficiency, and can be studied full or part time.

Many schools occupy repropoed buildings in the industrial zones or outskirts of a town. Occasionally the schools share spaces with other adult education buildings. They are often designed as traditional classrooms, with desks and chalkboards. Media libraries support the education, and the spaces are connected with common areas for waiting or enjoying a fika break.



Preschools (The Reggio Emilia Model)

There are a number of pedagogical approaches to select from when designing and structuring a preschool. This thesis will analyze the Reggio Emilia model, chosen for its respect for the autonomy of the child and the child's relationship to the built environment.

The Reggio Emilia model emerged in northern Italy after the Second World War in an attempt to raise children to reject fascism. It is centred around the belief that the child should be free to explore the world at their own pace and make their own

decisions. The schools are designed to the height and size of the children who occupy it. All toys and supplies are placed low and accessible. Furniture is proportionally small. Reggio Emilia schools are typically designed around a central plaza and courtyard to allow children to safely move between the spaces and choose whether they want to play indoors or outdoors. Classrooms are flexible spaces that are divided into smaller nooks which can be adapted to suit the children's current interests.

How often do you rearrange the classroom? Do you feel that it is easy to change it to suit the lessons?

Esther:

I used to have my own room where I could put things on the wall and curate the atmosphere of my room. I created cultural corners, I wanted everyone to feel at home and see their culture reflected. Now I have to share a room, so I don't have the same control. I do like to place name tags on the desks each day to customize which cultures sit with which, to either support translanguaging or practice immersion.

Mark:

I focus their attention to the board, where I can quickly change images and text, and currate the flow of the lesson. Then, before anyone gets too fidgety, I have everyone stand up by their desks and stretch. Following physical instructions is a great way to learn!

Was the room designed for a certain way of teaching and do you feel that it still is in line with your teaching style?

Esther:

This shared room is too blank. I don't feel as spontaneous as I used to because I don't have all the tools at hand. I spend a lot of time cleaning away our supplies.

Mark:

I would love if we had more room to move around and apply actions to our words. Learning is like a ladder, you have to learn each step before you can reach the next rung. Verbs is one of them.

How do you imagine your teaching style will develop? Do you see any changes to the curriculum on the horizon? How would these changes change the classroom environment?

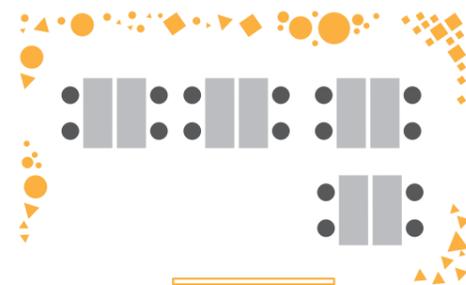
Esther:

The changes depend on the students. Sometimes we have enthusiastic students who come with their own ideas of what they want to learn, but often we have shy students who would rather not go on study visits to the city. I hope to employ more practical ways of teaching, holding second-hand markets or cafés in the school, but I wish that we could go to where the Swedes are, to have a more authentic experience.

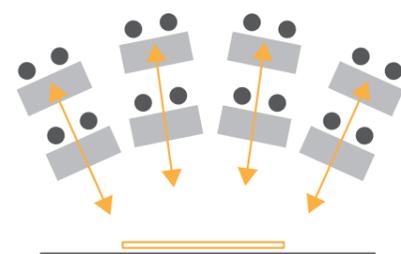
Mark:

We are part of the Folkhögskola, which historically was created to improve literacy in farmers, and therefore ensure all members of society could participate in democracy. Now we mostly teach immigrants. Each group has a desire to be included.

2019.02.11 : Interviews at Folkhögskolan i Angered



Esther's classroom



Mark's classroom



Supporting translanguaging through seating arrangement

Interviews with SFI Language Teachers

Casual, on-site interviews were conducted with two enthusiastic SFI teachers with two rather different ways of using their classrooms environments. The interviews [shown left] have been translated from a blend of Swedish and English.

How often do you rearrange the classroom? Do you feel that it is easy to change it to suit the lessons?

Linnea:

Our preschool moved from an old villa to a newly designed facility in Utby. Before the move, we often talked about rearranging the classrooms, but with three different teachers, in an old space with fixed furniture, the changes were never realized.

The new space was designed with the Reggio Emilia concept of low furniture on wheels that the children can operate. It is quite easy to create new spaces within the room, or re-purpose furniture when the children's interests evolve. All of the materials are now low enough that the children can access them whenever they want, without having to wait for a teacher to hand them out, and they can display their work on the tables and walls.

The new space is also easier to redesign because it is so simple. The old villa had so many nooks, doors and high windows, the space felt quite fixed. The windows are low in the new school, so the children can create sunny reading spaces around them.

Was the room designed for a certain way of teaching and do you feel that it still is in line with your teaching style?

Linnea:

The new space encourages a way of thinking that both the teachers and the students have had to learn to adapt to. Now that the children have power to affect their surroundings, we teach them how to make thoughtful decisions in a democratic manner. They are learning that their ideas are important, and that we can work together to create a space that suits their interests.

How do you imagine your teaching style will develop? Do you see any changes to the curriculum on the horizon? How would these changes change the classroom environment?

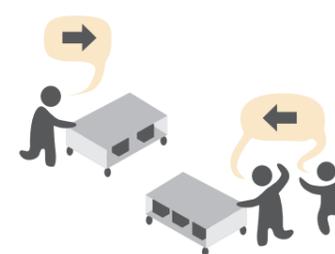
Linnea:

We (the teachers) are developing new problem solving techniques that include the children in the changes we make to the classroom. We once had a problem with children dumping the entire bucket of toy animals onto the floor every time they played. But by carefully observing what was happening, we realized it was only because they had trouble finding the animals they were looking for. We found several small boxes to use instead, and involved the children in creating categories for the different types of animals. It was a learning process for all of us, and the classroom is much more organized as a result.

2019.05.13 : Interview in Mölndal



Inaccessible scales



Movable furniture

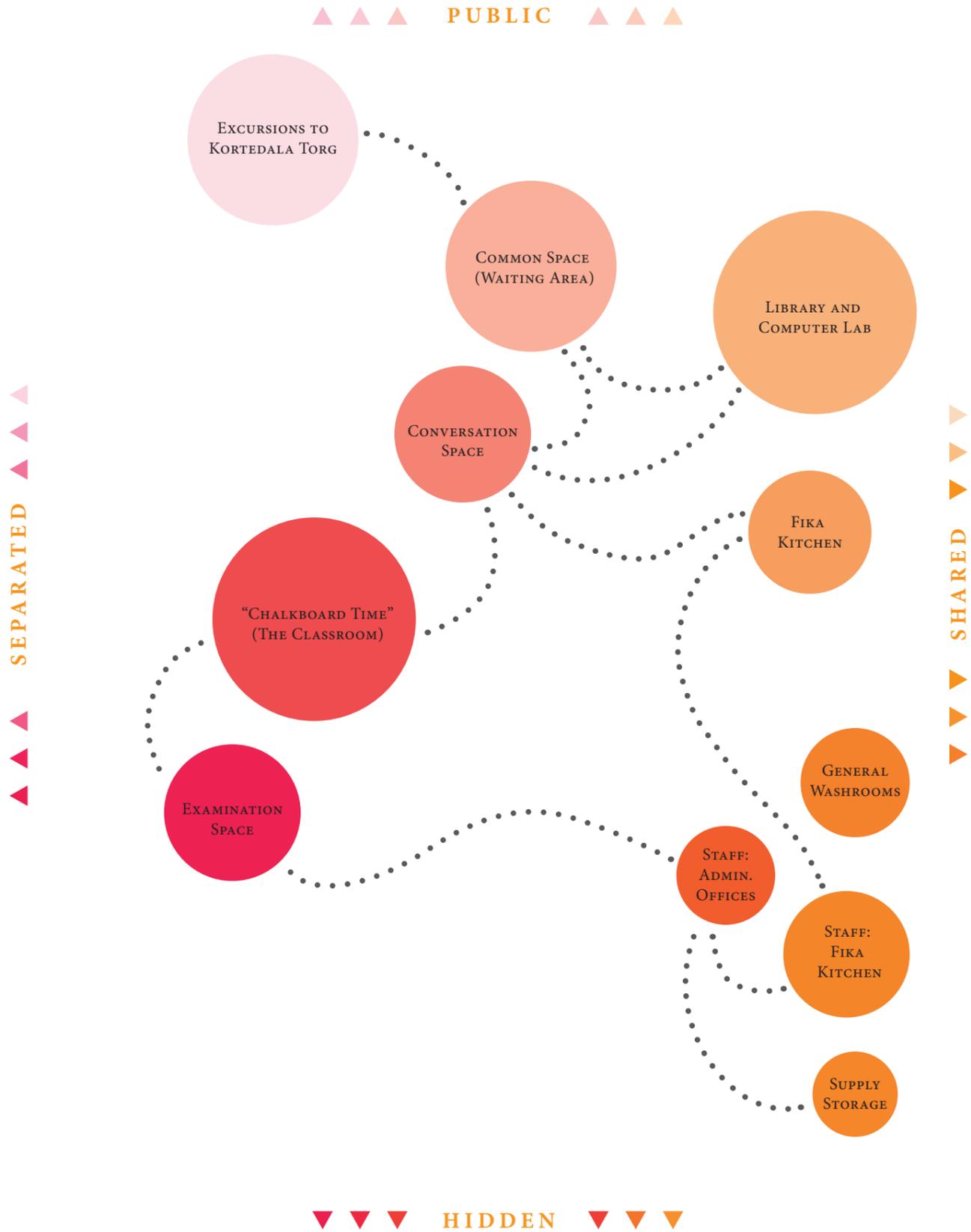


Problem solving together

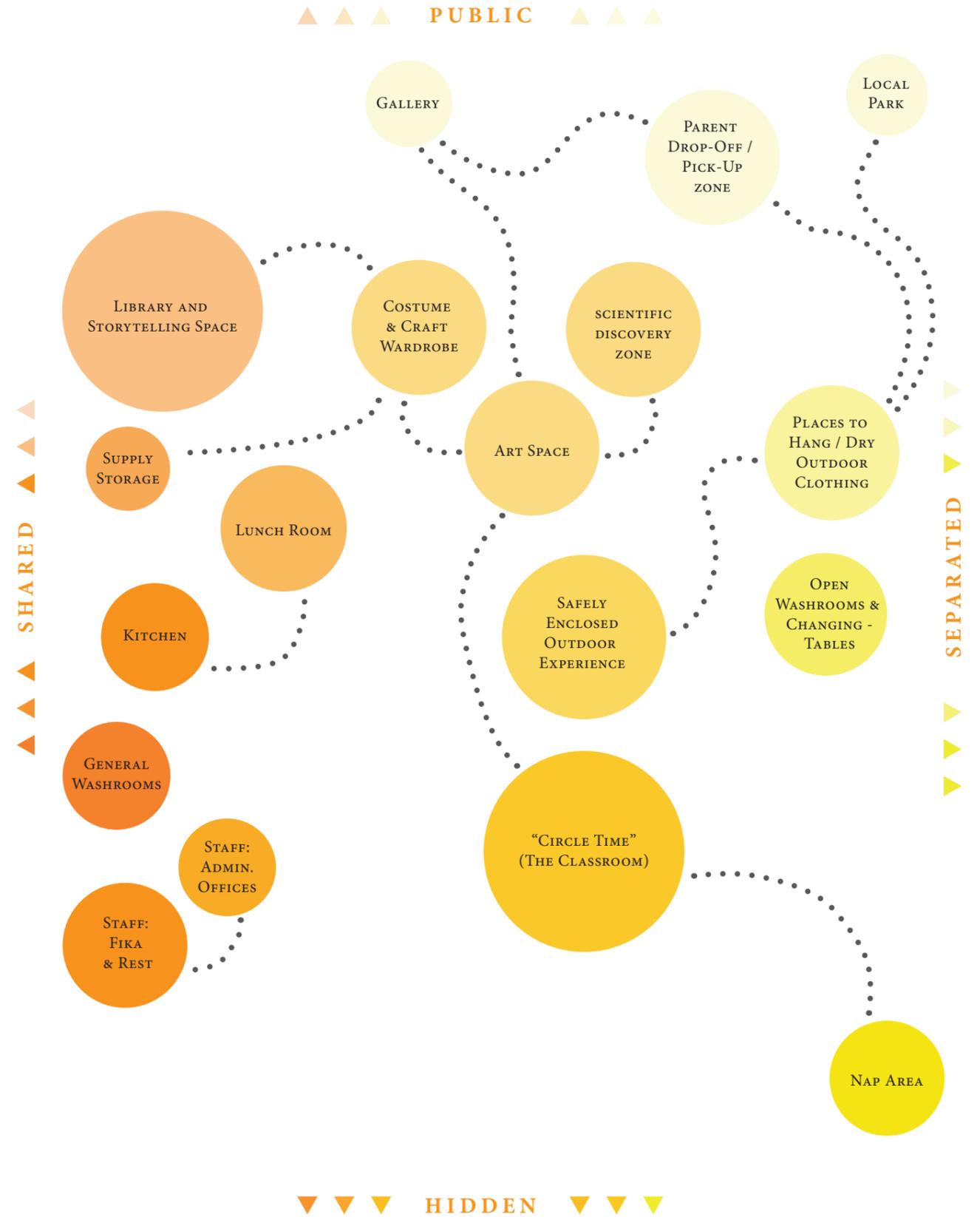
Interviews with Preschool Teachers

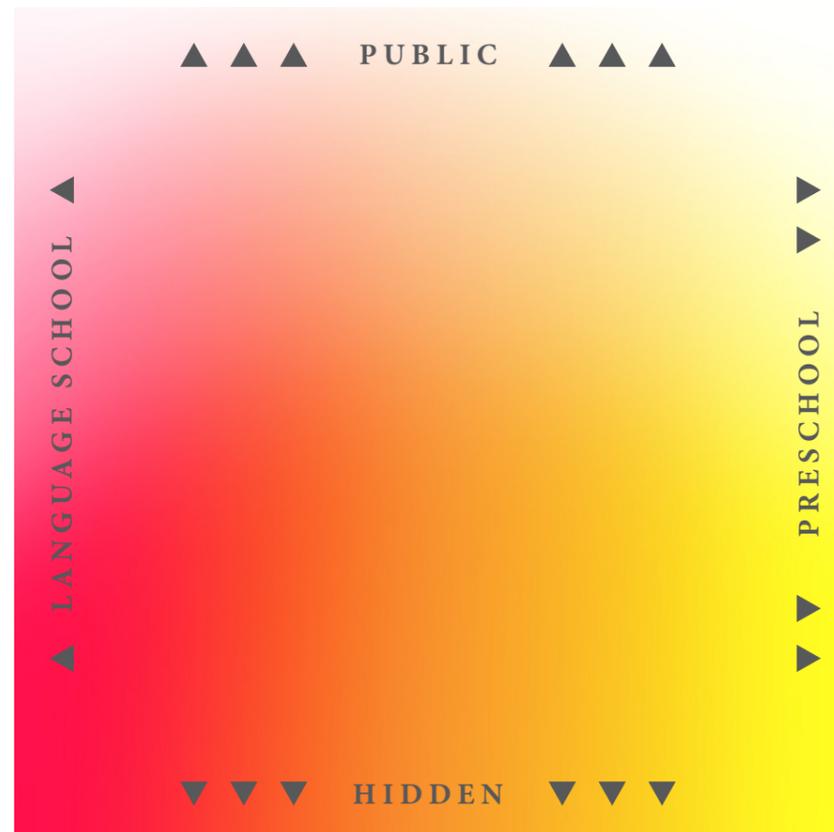
Linnea [right] worked in a Preschool that moved from an old villa in Utby to a new facility designed with the Reggio Emilia guidelines. The students remained in the same group during the move, so she was able to observe the changes that the new design had on their daily life.

THE LANGUAGE SCHOOL



THE PRESCHOOL



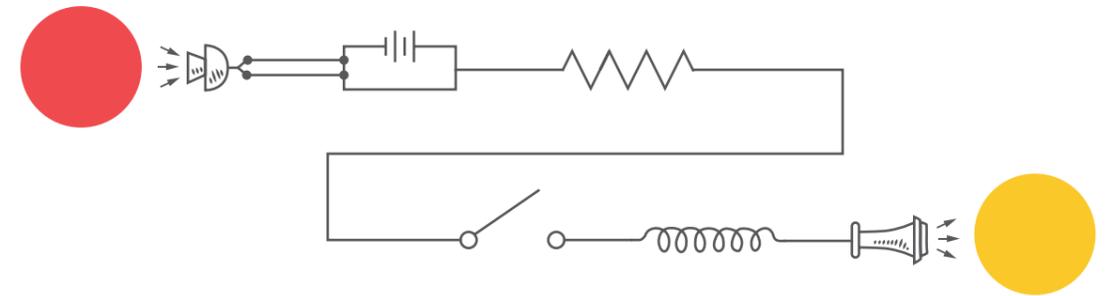


The Program Colour Code : from public to hidden, specialized to shared.



Program Analysis and Colour Coding

The components of the preschool and the language school were arranged against a gradient of public to hidden, specialized to shared, in order to determine which aspects might be consolidated and which might require secure separation. The resulting diagrams were not symmetrical; the preschool requires far more separation and protection. Many of the staff facilities can be shared.



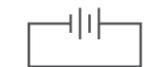
Communication chains

Though the colour coding diagram could offer information about the arrangement and sequence of the spaces, it lacked an analysis of the *feeling* and particularities of the spaces. It did not speak to the *messages* that each of the programs might communicate to one another.

The diagram on the following page drew inspiration from the analogies made by Edward Hall in his book *the Silent Language* that break down the components of a message as if they were part of a telephone circuit. The diagram focusses on what is being communicated and how the message is carried.

The diagram gave a new emphasis to the importance of wall space for hanging and displaying art, public space for students to meet members of the community, and a theatre for storytelling and performing.

 The *mouthpiece* represents the voice of the acting party, in this case the children, the language students or the greater society.

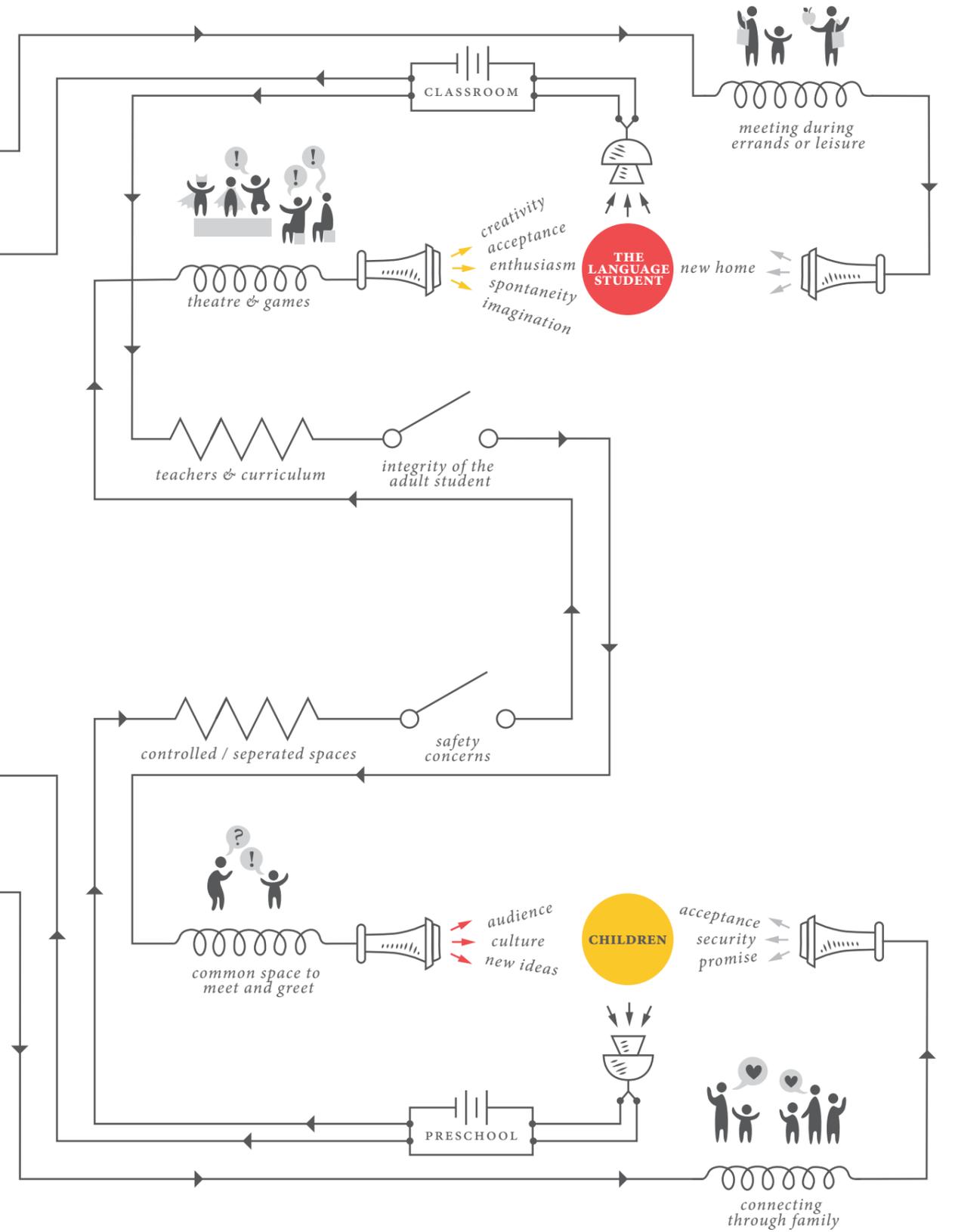
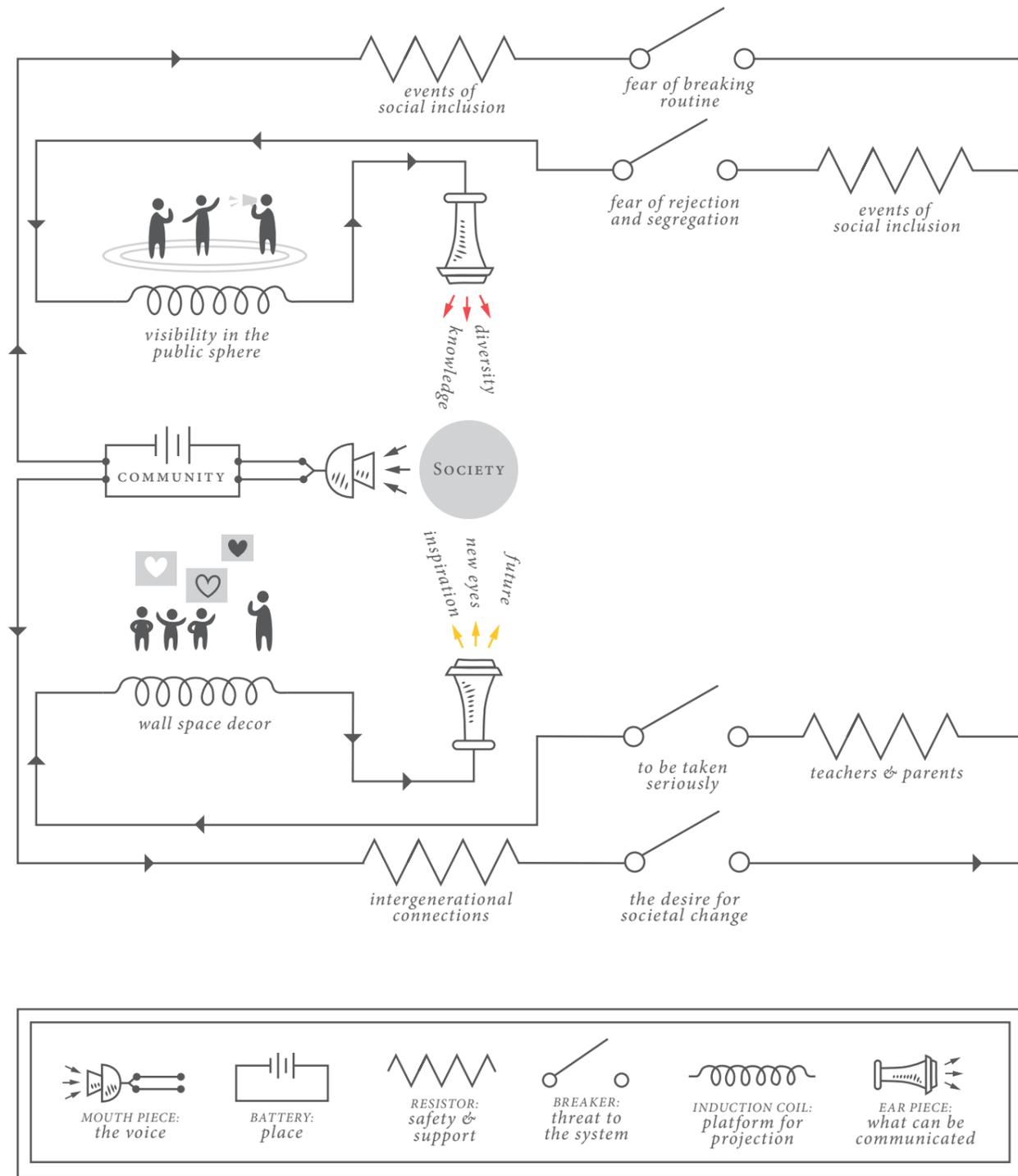
 The *battery* is the place where the actors reside, it is space where the message is generated.

 The *breaker* refers to a force that may threaten the relaying of the message. Threats like poor security or lack of social acceptance may prevent a message from carrying.

 The *resistor* is a safety measure that could be put in place to ensure that the breaker does not trip and break the chain.

 The *induction coil* is the platform on which the message is projected. It may refer to gallery or performance space.

 The *speaker* is message itself, the lessons that may be learned if all the components of the chain are successful.

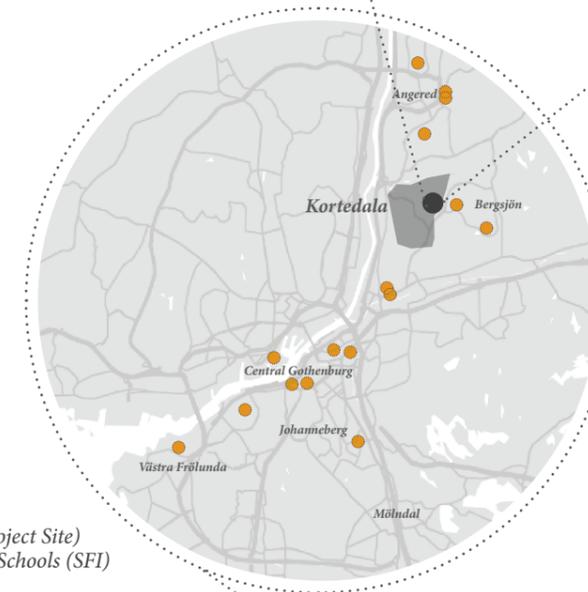




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*“The limits of my language are
the limits of my world.”*

- Ludwig Wittgenstein



- Kortedala Torg (Project Site)
- Swedish Language Schools (SFI)

Context

Language in Gothenburg

SFI Schools can be found throughout Gothenburg, mostly commonly in the “Förort” suburbs. It is in these regions that the most diverse demographics are found.





Kortedala Torg: The library and the bingo hall



Kortedala Torg 4: The project site

Kortedala Torg

The proposed project site is the central square of the Gothenburg outskirt neighbourhood Kortedala. Built in the 1960's as part of the "Million Homes" projects in Sweden, the square maintains much of its original modern charm. The library and bingo hall are lit with neon signs, the surrounding buildings are built with playful, geometric forms. Compared to the squares of other North-Eastern neighbourhoods in Gothenburg, Kortedala Torg succeeds in creating the feeling of a city centre, with all of the storefronts facing inwards and implying strong connections between the buildings. It is a walkable distance from the main tram stop and close to the residential buildings behind it.

The square holds many amenities that service the local residents. Most notably the grocery store. But while doctor's offices and government agencies occupy the upper floors of the buildings, there are several vacant store fronts on the street level.





INSPIRATION: The Work of Shaun Tan

"The Arrival"®, by author and illustrator Shaun Tan is a breathtaking piece of wordless literature. Through drawings, Tan manages to convey the sense of confusion and despair one feels when struggling to communicate in a very strange new world.

FIGURE 1 [LEFT]: Adapted from "The Arrival", (p.21-22) by S. Tan, 2006, Melbourne: Arthur A. Levine Books, Scholastic Inc. Copyright 2006, Scholastics Inc.



Reading Kortedala Torg

How does one read a site without language?

Kortedala Torg is a space shared by many cultures and languages. Indeed, the signs in the shop windows change language from store front to store front. Meandering about the square, one observes a wide array of communicative tools used by the local business owners to illustrate the program or products of their establishment. They select their audience when they design their advertisement. How does one project ideas that cross language barriers? How does one read without language?

This thesis seeks to comfort the homesick wanderer. The photo collection on this and the following page documents the communicative tools on the site and hopes to illustrate the overwhelming effect their intensity might have on the uncertain new-comer.



A blend of languages and symbols.



... Highlighting what we read...



... Blocking out what is legible...



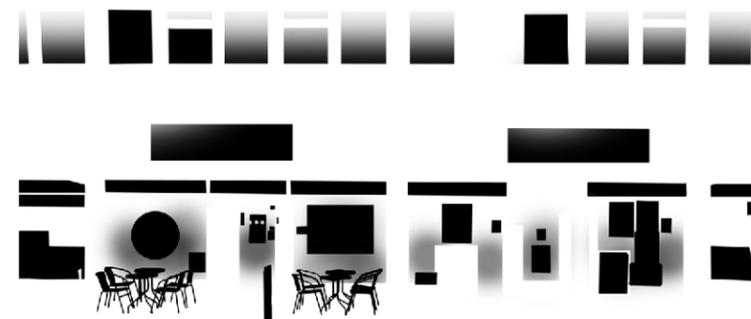
... Abstracting the information...



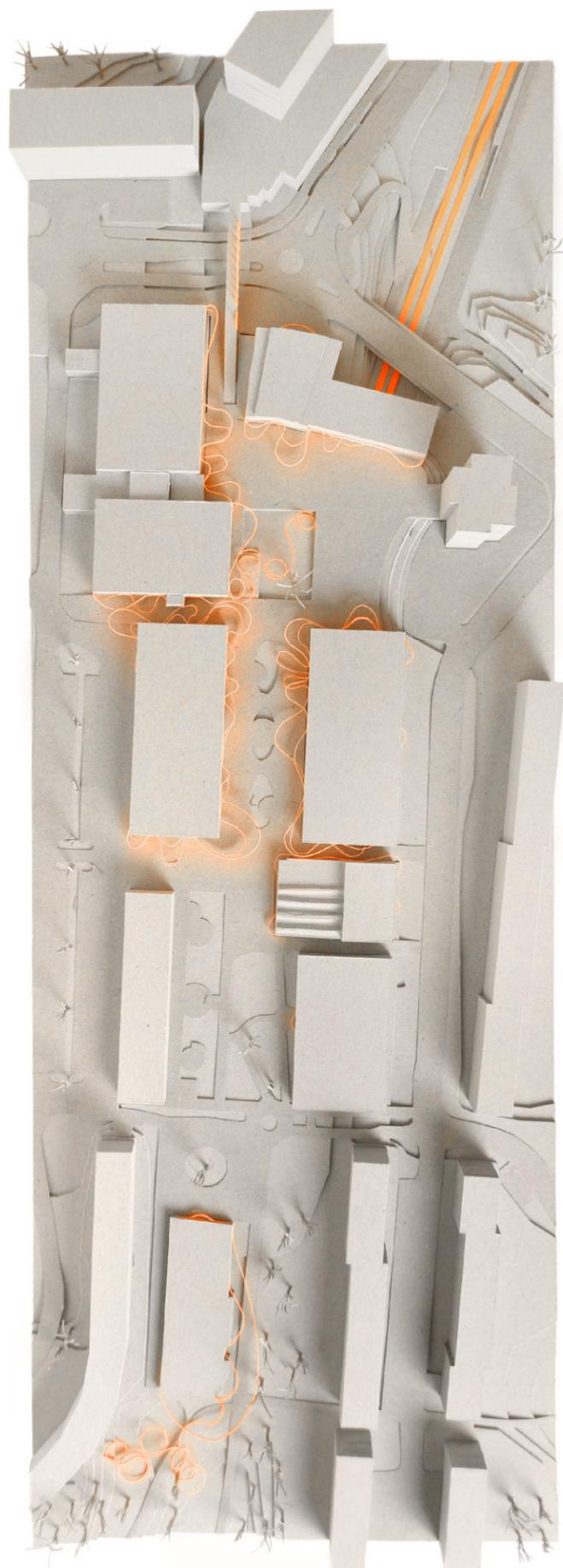
... an intensity of expression and information...



... reducing the ability to understand the environment...



... studying the form and power of the isolated communication tools...



PROJECT SITE

site model, scale 1:200m

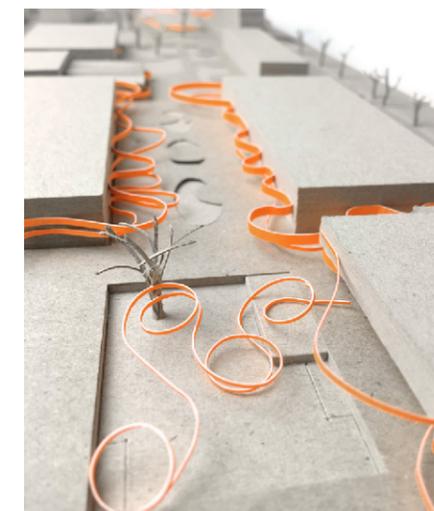


site model, scale 1:200m. illustrating the communicative tools of the area

Reading the Site: the Projection of the Programming

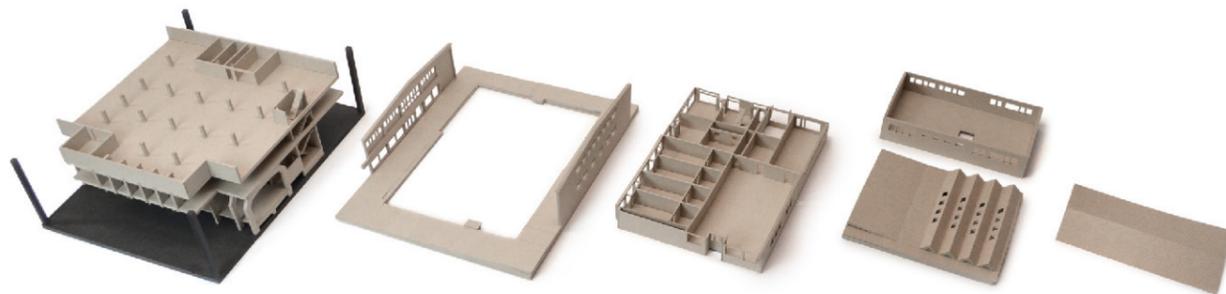
The results from the photo survey on the previous pages were translated into three-dimensions on a site model. The two ribbons that follow the façades of the buildings illustrate the projection and the intensity of the communicative tools of Kortedala Torg. The top ribbon illustrates the graphic design elements, such as signage and imagery. The bottom ribbon illustrates the human elements, such as people and furniture, visible outside or through windows, that might give the observer some idea about the programming of the spaces. The distance the ribbon projects from the building indicates how far away one can read the information from.

The model suggests that Kortedala Torg is in fact rich in opportunity to apply language-learning in everyday life. The language school could make use of the programs available create authentic learning environments.





The existing building, scale 1:100



The components: tools to play with.



*South façade / section through to tram tunnel :
a dead alley with secret egress*

Model as Method

This thesis focuses on model crafting as a tool to explore the physical environment and test philosophies in three dimensional space. A model is arguably the most widely accessible and useful tool in an architect's toolbox, as people of any age or origin can read and appreciate the three-dimensional language.

A detailed, manipulable model was created as a base to start playing with the different components. Though the building was initially chosen for its well-connected location and quirky shape, drawings from the city revealed a hidden labyrinth of underground spaces. Beneath the main floor is an automotive hobby shop that extends past the limits of the building, below that is a tram tunnel whose emergency exit shares the building's structure. Exploring these strange spaces in the model sparks imagination and might inspire the future program to move vertically through the structure.



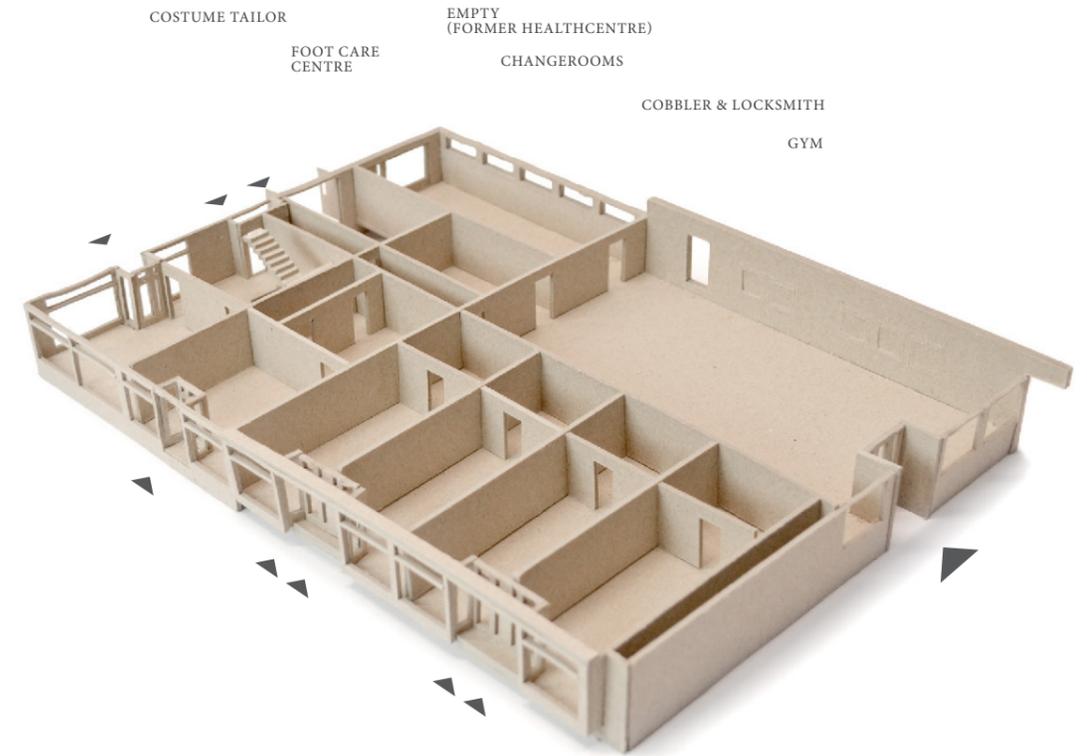
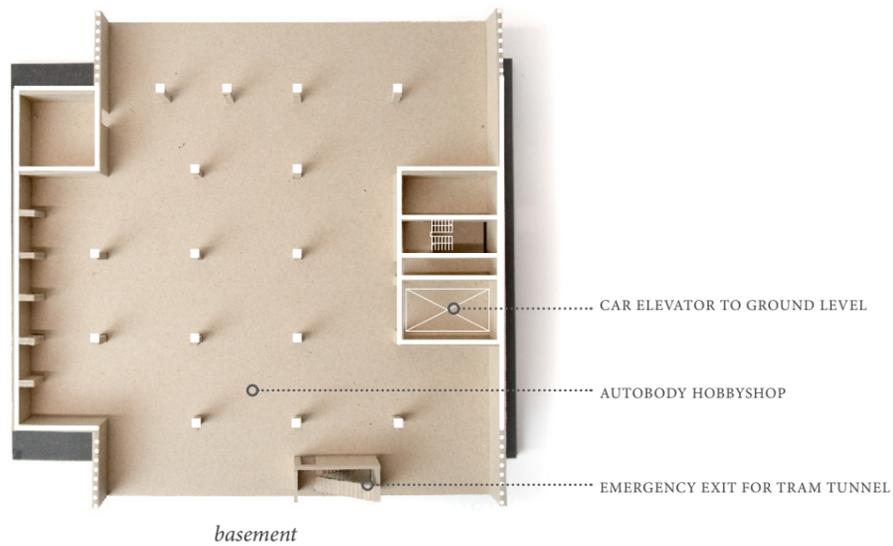
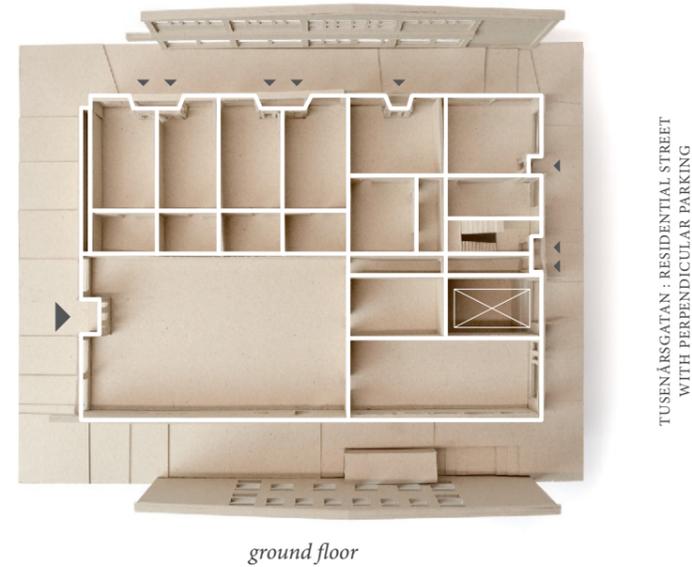
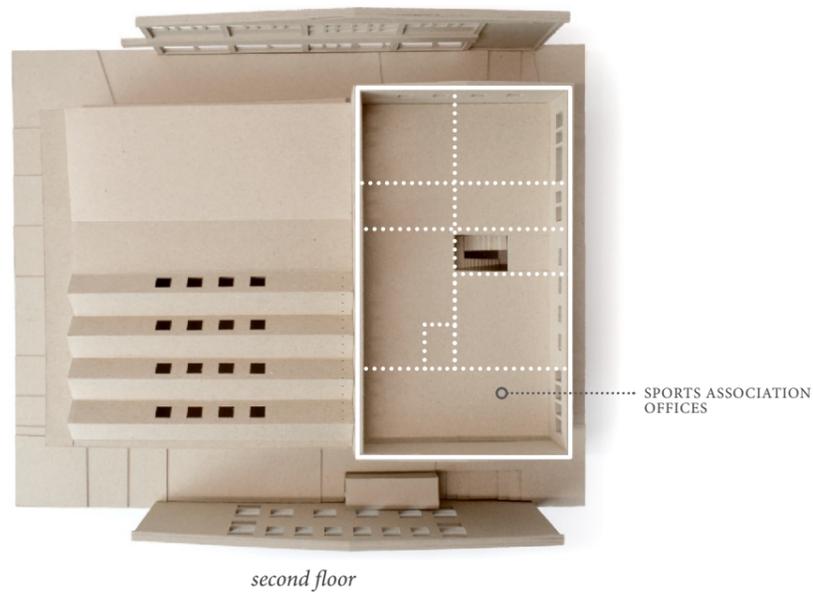
*West façade / toward Kortedala Torg :
the character-roof*



*North façade / toward the large shop building :
a series of storefronts*



*East façade / toward Tusenårsgatan :
an assortment of portals*

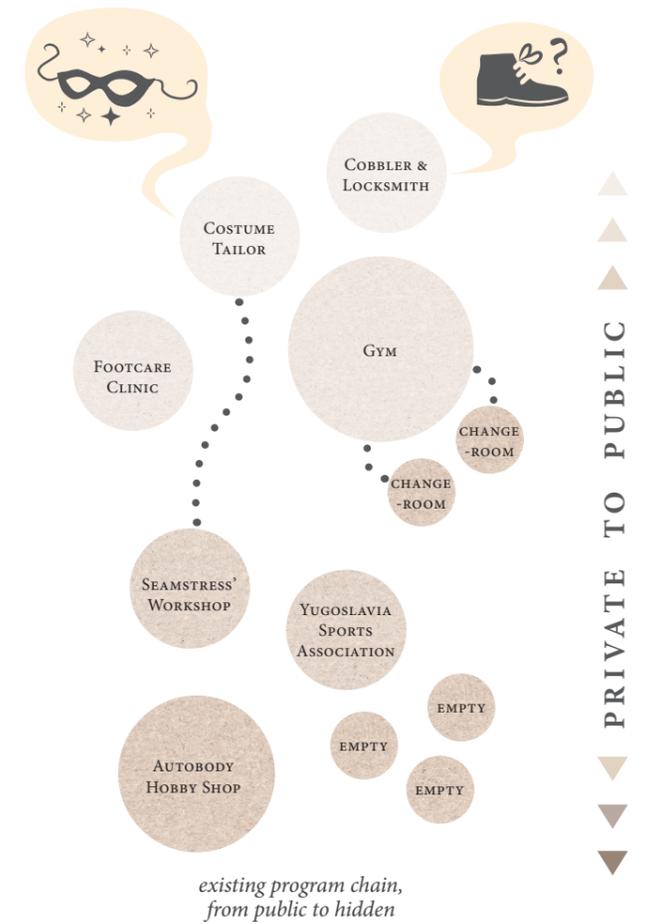


Exploring the structure

Crafting a detailed model allows the viewer to explore the rooms and programs that are publicly inaccessible. The building has been renovated and reproposed several times since its original design in 1956, but the themes of the programs are relatively similar to their original intent.

Drawing from the existing resources in the building

There are several different programs that presently exist in the building. This project chooses to use the resources of the ones that are the most publicly available. The cobbler and the tailor both offer services that any student or community member can access, and their programs create dialogue that act as useful practice. The idea that the costume tailor might feed valuable resources into the craft shop of the preschool is also very exciting.





VI

*Design
Response*

“What must I do, to tame you?” asked the little prince.

“You must be very patient,” replied the fox. “First you will sit down at a little distance from me - like that - in the grass. I shall look at you out of the corner of my eye, and you will say nothing. Words are the source of misunderstandings. But you will sit a little closer to me, every day . . .”

- “The Little Prince”
by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
(de Saint-Exupéry, 1946, p. 67)

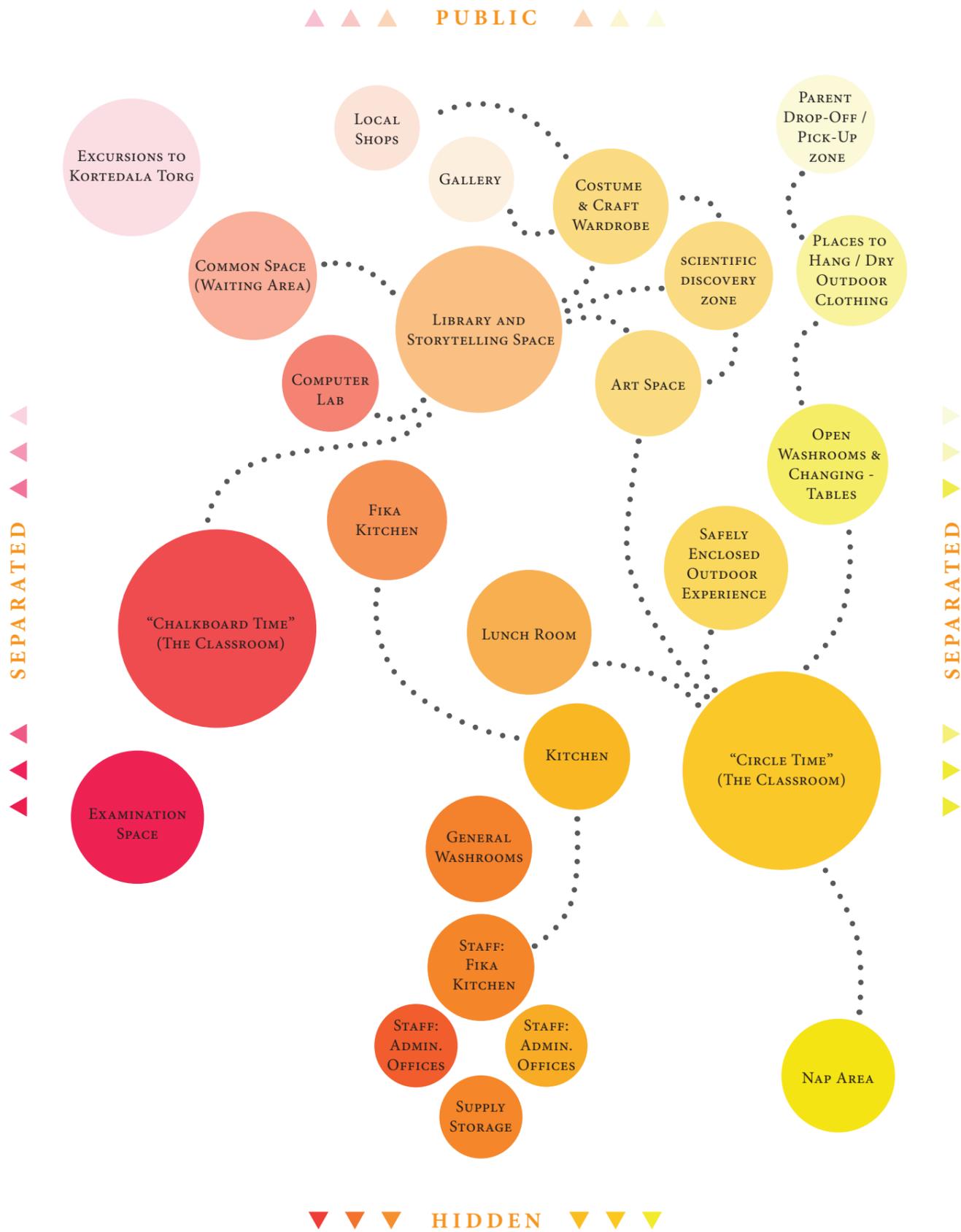


Design Response

While both the preschool and the language school have the potential to offer valuable resources to one another, they are not entirely compatible programs. A careless design might threaten the integrity of the adult student, or the safety of the child.

This thesis focuses on two theories of distancing and framing to design a space that allows both programs to communicate in a carefully controlled manner.

By testing theories of proxemics and aperture design, the project studies the spatial aspects of communication and how distance and framing might affect the degree to which one feels comfortable connecting with others.



program distribution on three floors

Amalgamating and Distributing the Programs

The programs analyzed in chapter IV are merged in the graphic to the left and then distributed around the building [above] in response to the particularities of the site. The more public parts of the program are located on the main floor, with the library in the southwest corner, the language classrooms to the north along the alley, and the preschool entrance to the east - near the parking lot and costume tailor. The preschool classrooms, which require the most protection, occupy the top floor, while the staff of both programs share space in the basement.

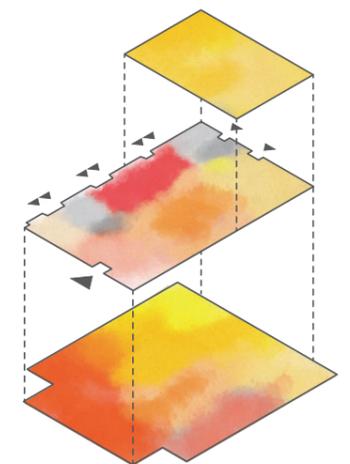
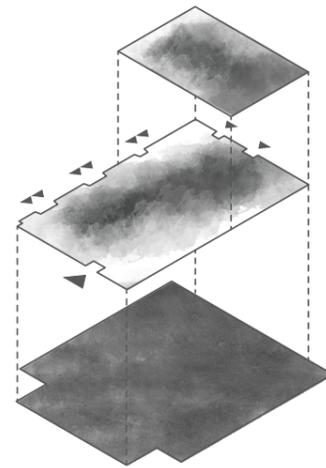
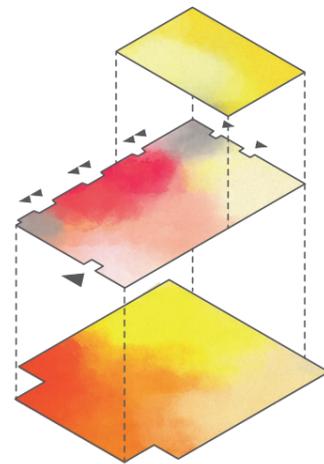


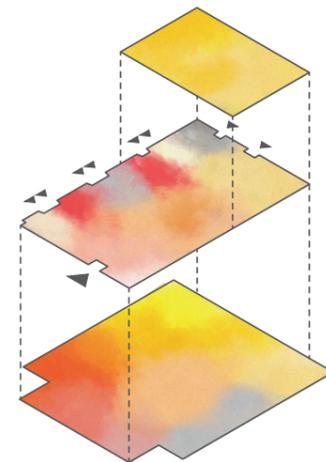
Illustration of the resulting program distribution across three floors



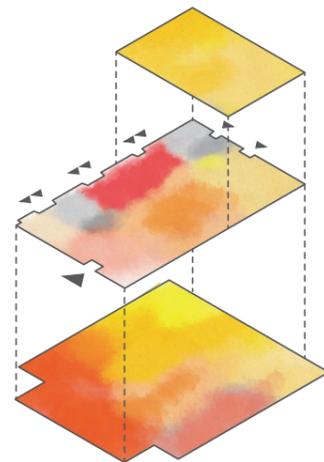
public and hidden spaces in the existing building



program arrangement 1



program arrangement 2



program arrangement 3

Program Evolution

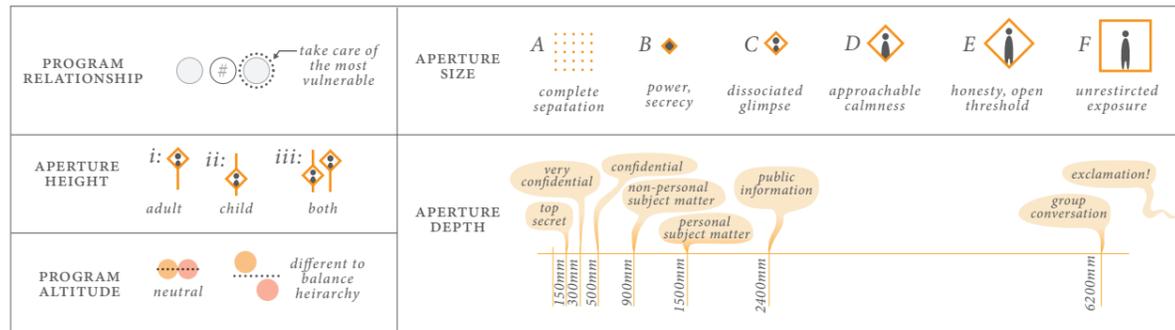
The building was first analyzed for which areas might be more publicly accessible and which are more hidden. The colour code of the program was applied in response to this, and shifted as the spaces were further explored.



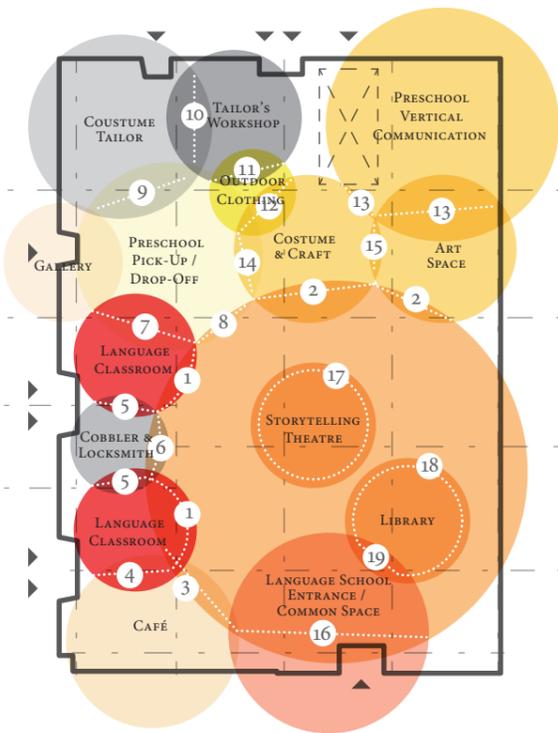
Playing at 1:25m

As this thesis plays with questions of intimacy and interpersonal connections, the model needed to be quite large. Large enough that the viewer can pick up on the details and expressions of the characters, large enough to imagine the spaces and their relationships to one another.





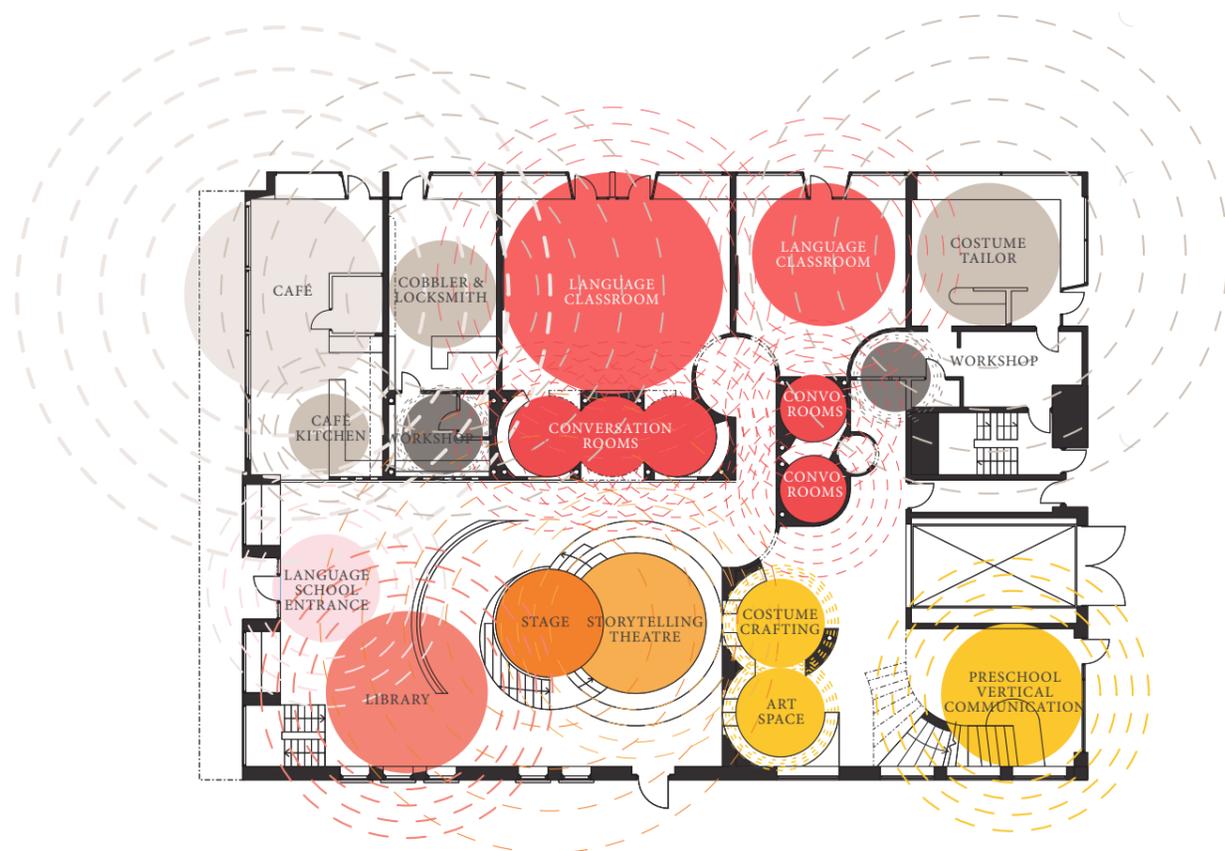
matrix legend



The Aperture Matrix

Once the plan of the spaces was roughed out, the next steps were to design the walls or openings that would divide them. The relationships were analyzed with four factors: the height of the character the aperture would tailor to; the height of the programs in relation to one another (this might mitigate social power imbalances and affect the message that could be carried); the size of the aperture and how much of the program and characters are revealed, and finally, the distance that should be maintained between the components based on the information the programs feel comfortable sharing to their audiences.

PROGRAM RELATIONSHIP	DESIRED EFFECT	APERTURE SIZE	APERTURE DEPTH	APERTURE HEIGHT	PROGRAM ALTITUDE
1	inviting encouraging yet protects the calmness of the classroom	C	1500mm	i:	
2	celebrates the origin of the theatre costumes yet maintains childrens safety	D	500mm	ii:	
3	blurs line between public and school, serves many people and programs	E	2400mm	iii:	
4	blocks noise, relation by proximty, visual not required	A	n/a	n/a	
5	blocks noise, relation by proximty, visual not required	A	n/a	n/a	
6	protects calmness of the cobbler's workshop, while inviting public to interact	A	n/a	n/a	
7	Solid separation, blocks noise, maintains integrity of the adult student	A	n/a	n/a	
8	open and inviting, yet children cannot cross unsupervised	E	6200mm	ii:	
9	the shimmer of the fabric shines through, the sound doesnt disturb the tailor	B	300mm	ii:	
10	customers glimpse into the workroom, which is well lit and comfortable	E	500mm	ii:	
11	the scraps from the tailors workroom spill into the childrens wardrobes	B	300mm	ii:	
12	the wardrobe spills into the costume room, blurring the line between indoor & outdoor play	D	6200mm	ii:	
13	the open space of the preschool gives way to the craft station, art spills out	E	2400mm	iii:	
14	parents are drawn into these spaces, children share their crafts and ideas	F	2400mm	iii:	
15	teachers can limit the spaces for the lessons, the ideas an materials can be shared between	E	1500mm	iii:	
16	open connections, yet visitors do not feel they are interrupting the story by opening the door	D	2400mm	iii:	
17	sound permiates, the stage amplifies the stories to the audience across the building	F	6200mm	iii:	
18	sheltered for concentrated work, but the stories of the space fill the air, listen from any seat	E	6200mm	i:	
19	open connections, visitors calmly pass the threshold into the learning environment	F	6200mm	i:	

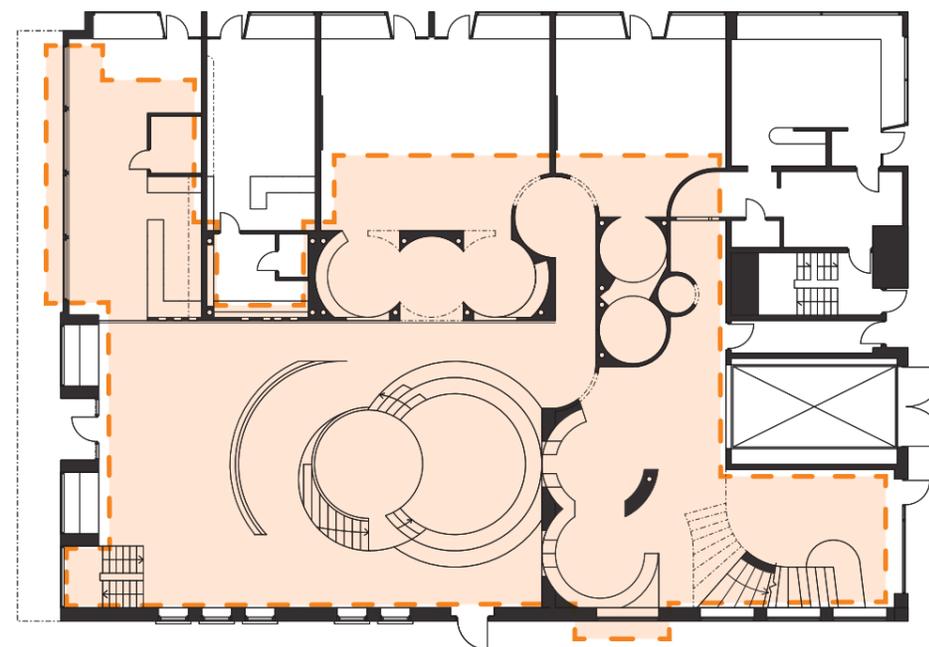


Distancing the Programs

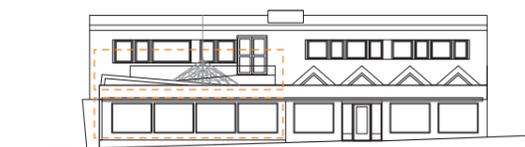
The distances determined in the matrix were calculated radiating out from the size of the program. They are maintained through the design of the renovation, either in form of the walls or as fixed furniture that divide the spaces.

In the conversation rooms, for example, the first quarter of the radius become a bench allowing a secondary audience member to linger at the edge of the conversation.

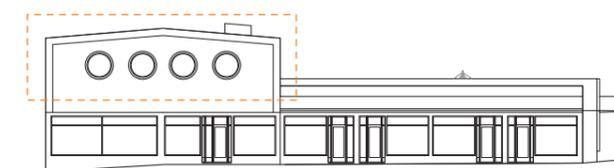
In the preschool's crafting space, the distance parameter becomes shelving that both divides the room and separates the children from the audience in the storytelling circle.



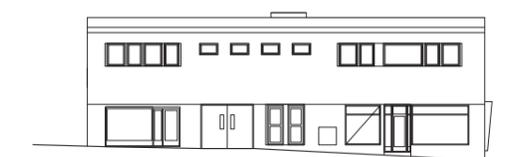
The extent of the renovation



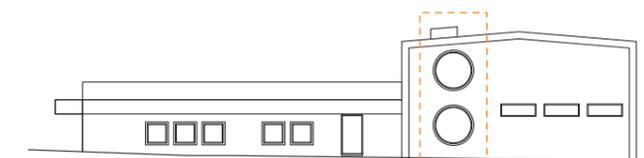
West façade / toward Kortedala Torg



North façade



East façade / toward Tusenårsgatan



South façade

The Remodelling

The external renovation to the building was kept to a minimum. The preschool on the top floor received windows suitable to the height of small children. Following the information found on old drawings, a line of large windows was returned to the façade of the café. Despite the open terrace space that has been added for the preschoolers, the roof maintains its characteristic shape.

In response to the programs' distance and aperture requirements, it is the core of the building that has received the most drastic changes.

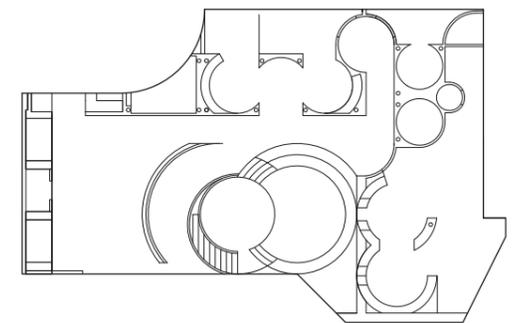


Photo by Mathias Söderman



Segment Model

The remodelled core of the building was illustrated in a three-story model at 1:25m. Following the concept of *Model as Method* (p. 52) the apertures from the communication experiments, the colour disks and plasticine characters were reconfigured into the form of the large structure. No longer bound by their round program dimensions, the colours spilled across the plan and swirled around the spaces, like tiny foot prints across the floor. The colours contrasted brightly against the homogenous cardboard material and helped illustrate the nature of the programming in the rooms that were only fragments.

*the modeled segment*



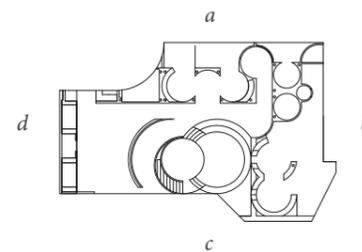
elevation a



elevation c



elevation b



elevation d

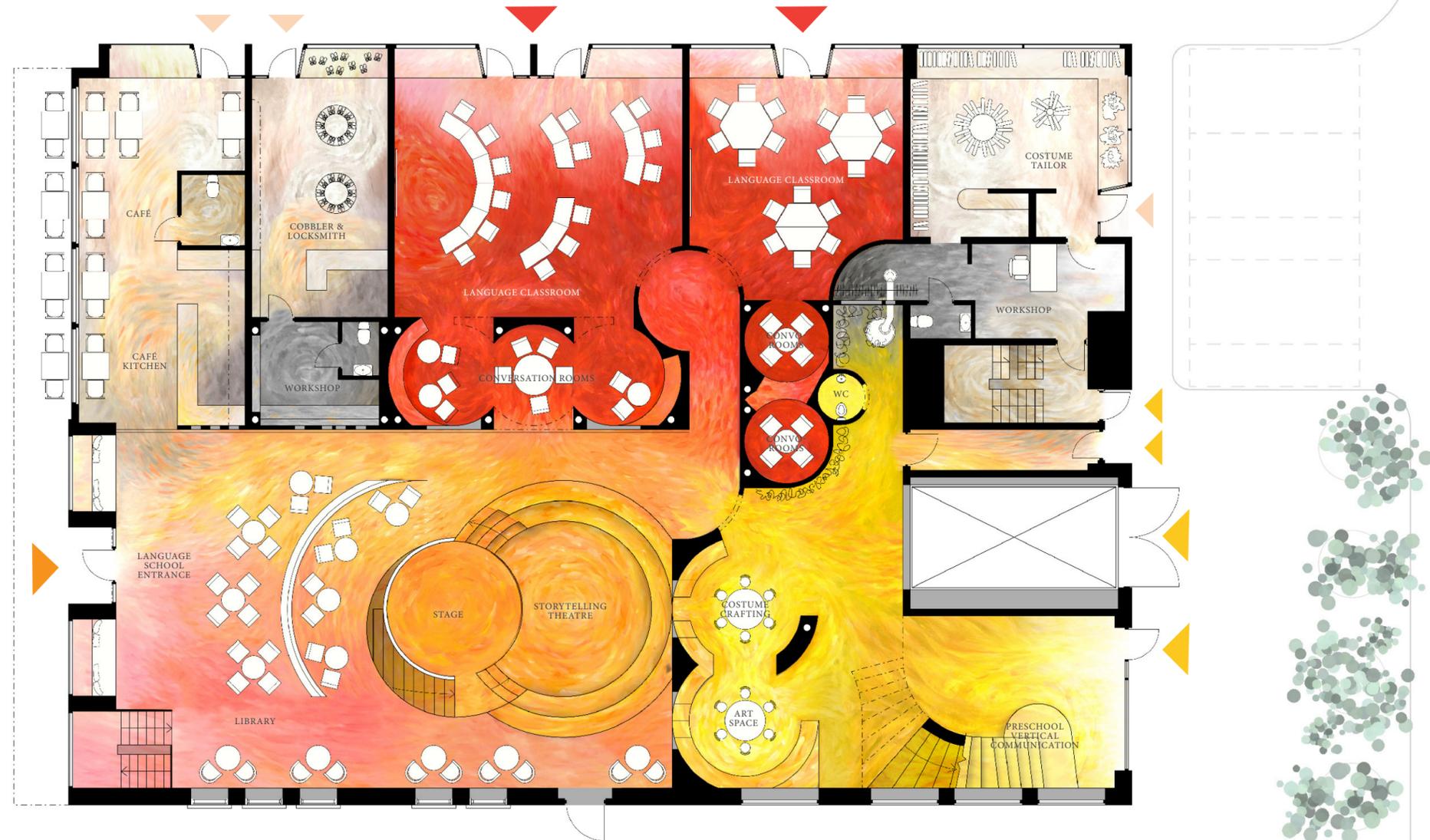
The Main Floor

The public amenities: the cafe, the cobbler and the costume tailor, sit in the north corners of the building, anchoring the program in the community

The language school classrooms, shown in red, open along the narrow street to the north. The preschool, illustrated in yellow, opens to the south east corner, with easy access to parking.

Nearly all of the programming is connected to the storytelling theatre, which takes the large open space under the corrugated roof. *The theatre is described in greater detail on page 90.*

Tucked into the corners around the round program bubbles, small light-tubes draw natural light from the roof down to the basement.



The Basement

The basement is largely dominated by the preschool, which requires the greatest protection from the public. Here, the preschool space is designed for a smooth lunch-to-nap flow. Children race down the steps in the south corner, wash their hands for lunch, and assemble in the lunchroom for their meal. When they have finished eating, the children can wait for their friends around the two floor-windows that shine down to the tramline below, and watch the lights pass underneath.

The napping pods in the north corner of the basement allow children to choose their own resting space. When they wake, they can either gather for games and crafts in the wake-up-zone, or burn their new-found energy in the rumpus room below the theatre space.

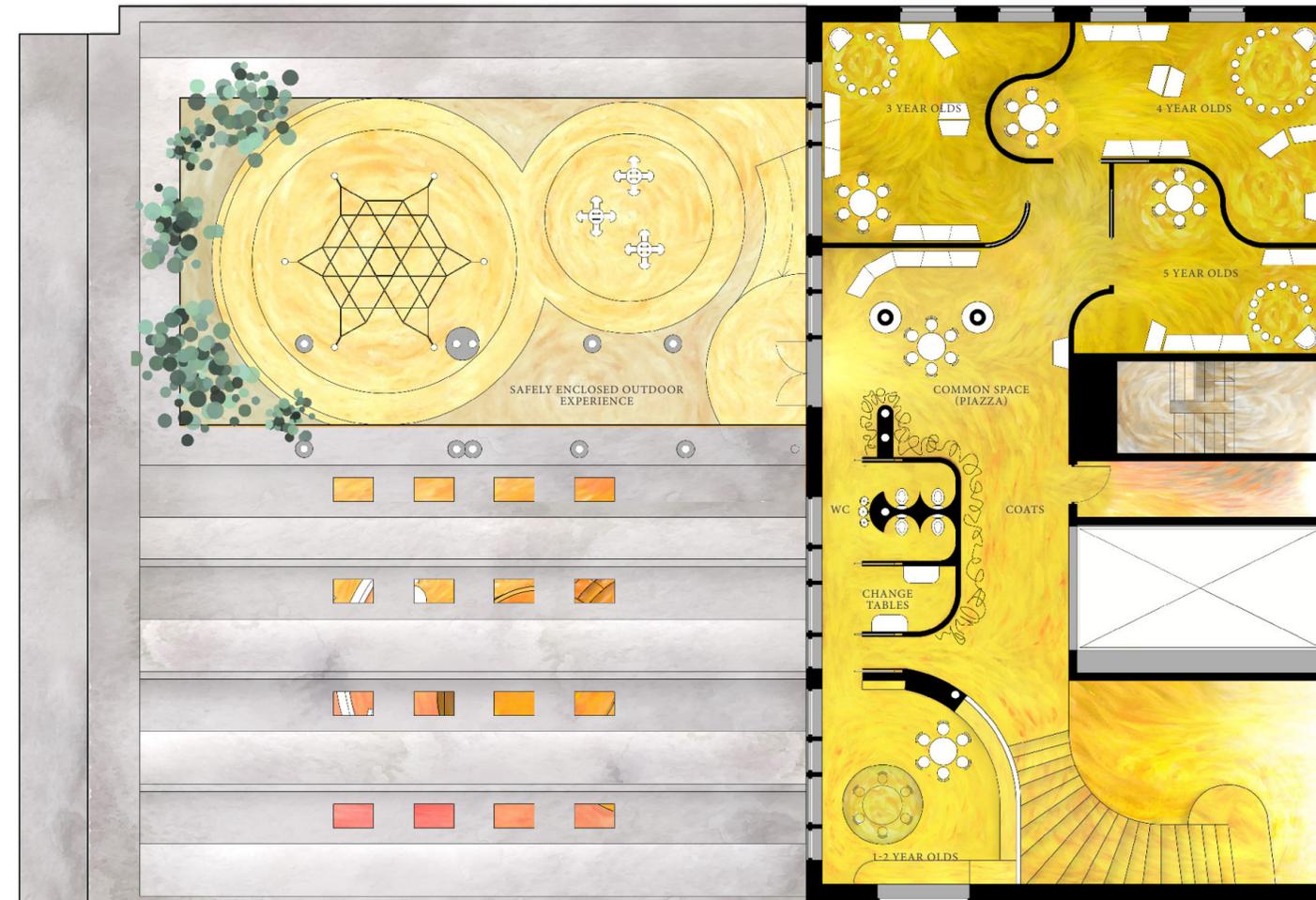
The staff from both the preschool and the language school share resting and workrooms along the west edge of the basement. The language students have access to the media space to the south.

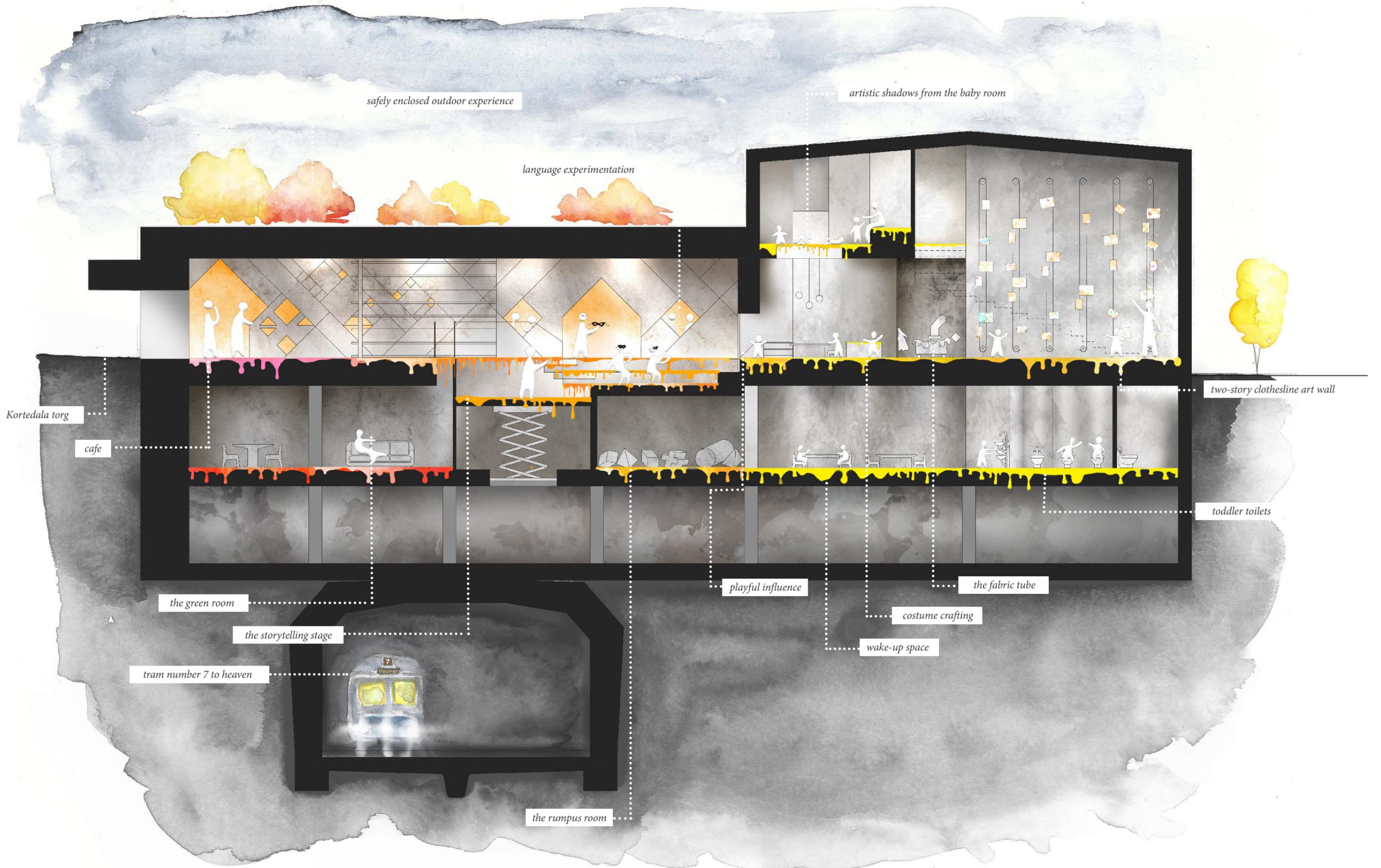


The Second Floor

The second floor is entirely devoted to the preschool. The designs of the classrooms are abstract, which helps the children and teachers arrange and rearrange the spaces to suit their daily needs. There is a classroom for each of the age groups with a focus on a shared, open space in the middle where the groups can interact.

A rooftop terrace has been added to the structure. Recessed from the edge of the building, it can scarcely be seen from the square below. Here the children can play outdoors whenever they like, safely elevated among the rooftops of their community.





safely enclosed outdoor experience

artistic shadows from the baby room

language experimentation

Kortedala torg

cafe

two-story clothesline art wall

toddler toilets

the green room

playful influence

the fabric tube

the storytelling stage

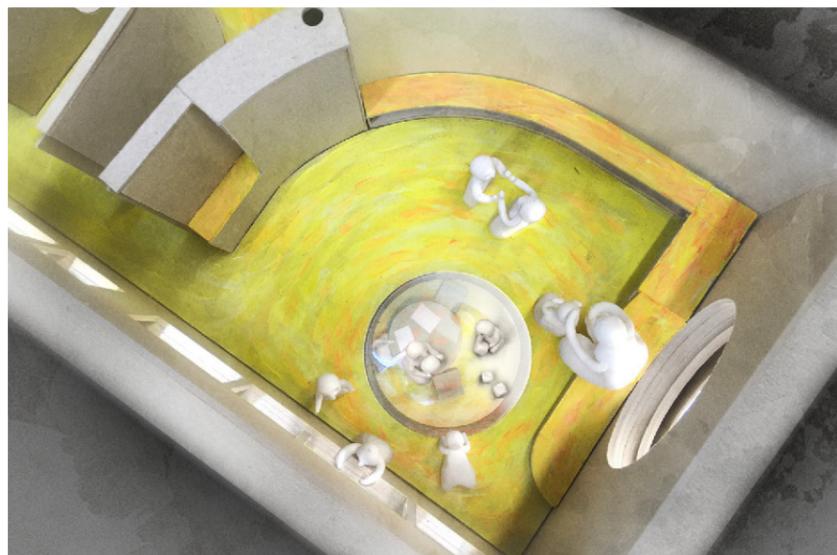
costume crafting

tram number 7 to heaven

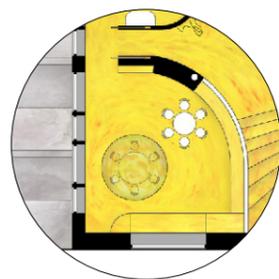
wake-up space

the rumpus room





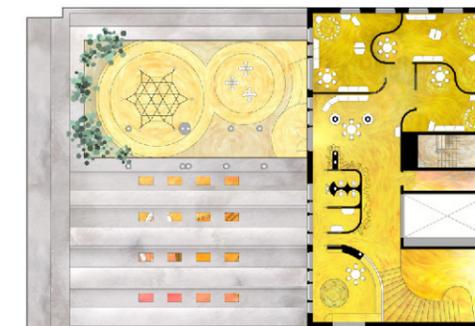
a translucent floor in the baby room casts shadows on the art table below



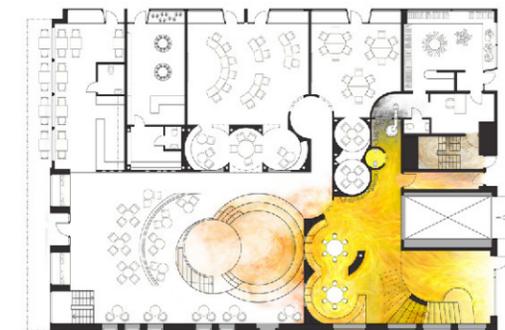
The design of the toilets works to allow the children privacy despite the lack of doors.



The two-story clothesline art wall. A never-ending rotation of interests.



the second story



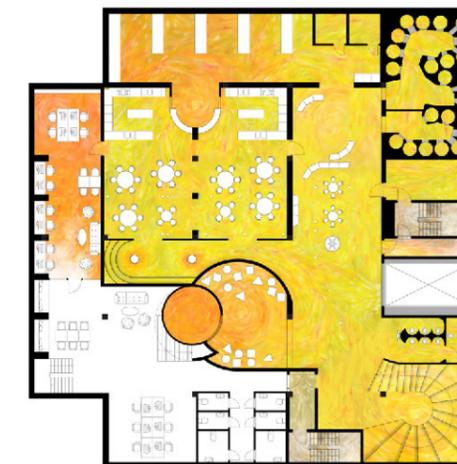
the first story

The Preschool

The first floor of the preschool houses the arts and craft spaces. It is the philosophy of the Reggio Emilia school design that the spaces should reflect the curiosities of the children. The art the children generate here is celebrated on the walls of the space and can be seen by the parents coming to pick them up, and the public passing by. The ideas and conversations of the day follow the children home.

The costume tailor in the north corner generates scrap fabrics that can be used by the children's crafting. Costume racks line the walls, and at the west side is a portal that opens up to the storytelling theatre.

The floor of the baby room is translucent to create a shadow play that may influence the art space below as the baby crawl around with their brightly coloured toys.



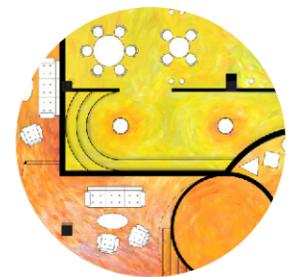
the basement



The Fabric Tube : circulating scraps from the seamstress' workshop into the craftspace of the preschool



The Tram Tunnel Tubes: Children watch the lights of the trams pass underneath as the wait for their friends to finish lunch and get ready for a nap.





The conversation space, separating the language classroom from the story telling theatre. The bravery of the language students is celebrated here.

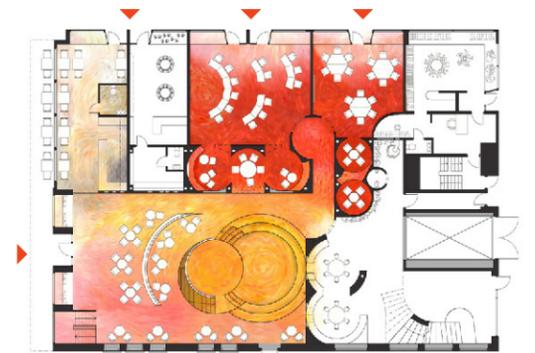


The entrance to the language school through the storytelling theatre.

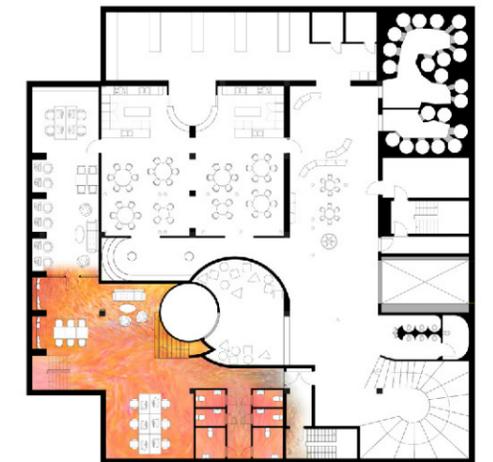
The Language School

The integrity of the adult student is maintained as they do not see the preschool when they first arrive. Instead they see books, cafe seating and many of their peers waiting for class or working on homework

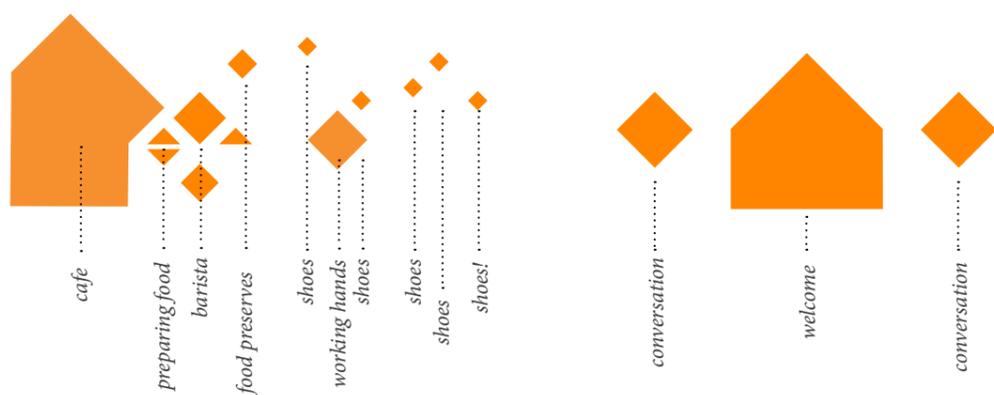
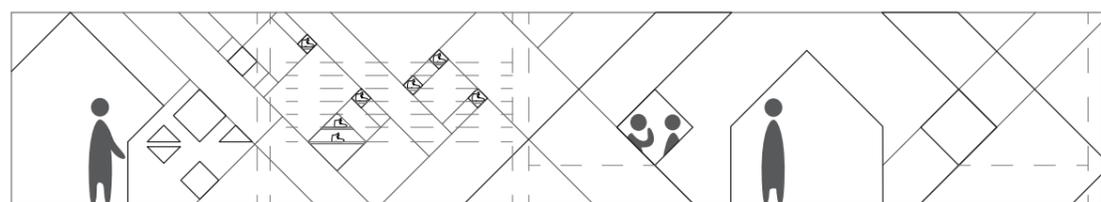
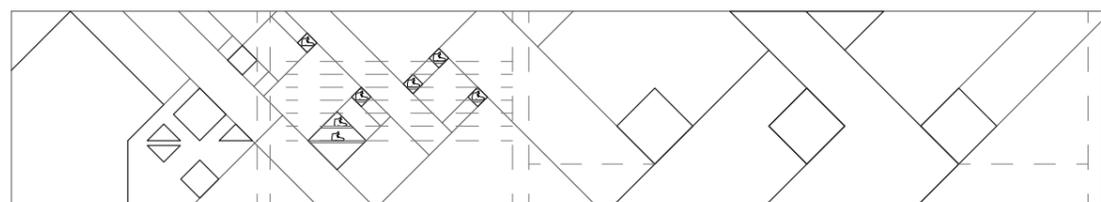
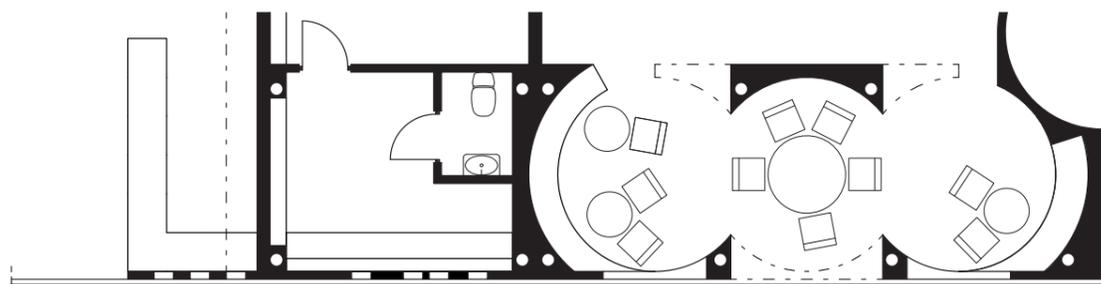
The language classroom looks like just an ordinary room, except for the back, which opens up into more intimate conversation rooms, the storytelling theatre is seen through them. The conversation rooms allow for different break-out spaces that teachers can use to shake up their classroom's routine.



the first story



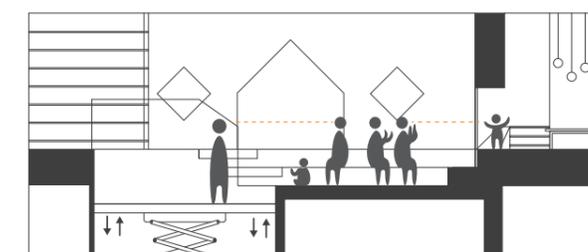
the basement



The Storytelling Theatre. The characters here are experimenting through the mask of another language

The Storytelling Theatre

The storytelling theatre is was connects all the programming in the building. It is designed to be used for both scholastic or public events. Apertures to the various programs shine into it. The playfulness of the children's crafting add flavour to the lessons and stories told here.



Mitigating social power imbalances in the theatre seating

The theatre is designed to mitigate the height differences of the various story tellers and audiences. It sits the adults down to the eye-level of the children, and the instructor to the eye-level of the language student.

The platform can also be raised or lowered to be loaded with equipment from the basement

The apertures along the walls of the space express the programs behind them. They illustrate the opportunities to apply knowledge learning in everyday life, such as a trip to the cobbler, or ordering fika from the cafe



... layering in the library..
... daring to try something new.

Discussion

... Can architecture inspire an adult to play in a new language with the same buoyancy as a child?...

... can it inspire weightless curiosity and mitigate embarrassment? In this project, architectural design tools were used to bring two potentially incompatible programs as close together as possible without risking the integrity or the safety of the participants. The design attempts to create an abundance of in-between spaces that allow individuals to choose the degree to which they interact with their peers and neighbours.

The key to successfully supporting translanguaging in a classroom is to create space for the students to step in and out of languages comfortably. The resulting language school design works with flexible, layered spaces that empower both students and teachers with the ability to customize their experiences.

The apertures that shine into the storytelling circle seek to describe the curious programming of the space - not with written language, but through the architecture itself. A central theme in the creation of this thesis was the question of cross language communication, and a great variety of

communication tools were explored. Distinctive colours and repetitive shapes maintained links between concepts as they shifted scales. Other symbolic languages (such as the electrical diagram of the *communication chain*) were also experimented with. Possibly the most visceral mode of communication was through the plasticine characters. They were designed to be gender and culturally ambiguous, allowing any viewer to sympathize with their situation.

The initial concept to merge the two programs stemmed from personal questions of how more language students could learn from young teachers, just as I had. In the end the two programs have very limited interaction. However, I feel that the moments they do share are deeply important. When interacting with children, adults benefit from a playful setting where communication is more fluid and abstract methods are more accessible. Simultaneously, a program that aims to encourage self-confidence in children can produce a ripple-effect on society for generations. The children see the struggle of the language student and sympathize with them. They hear the power of their own voice and see their ability to influence the world around them. Perhaps the children of this preschool will carry this confidence and sympathy with them as they grow, and will remember to be brave when it comes time for them to step into a new language.



photo by Mathias Söderman

VII

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Images

FIGURE 1: Adapted from “The Arrival”, (p.21-22) by S. Tan, 2006, Melbourne: Arthur A. Levine Books, Scholastic Inc. Copyright 2006, Scholastics Inc.

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