

Navigating the Void: Dimensions, Space, and Language in “The Window of the Spaceship ‘In-Between’ ”

Yi Ran

Department of Mathematical Sciences, Ritsumeikan University

[Course Name]

[Instructor Name]

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The concept of communication is often taken for granted in our daily lives. We assume that if we speak the same language, we understand each other. However, Toshiki Okada’s play, *The Window of the Spaceship ‘In-Between’*, challenges this assumption effectively. Through the reading of the script, the viewing of the performance, and the workshop with the actor Leon Koh Yonekawa, I have come to realize that language is not just a tool for information transfer, but a complex spatial phenomenon. This essay reflects on these experiences, focusing on the interplay between theatrical space and mathematical dimensions.

First, the script presents a fascinating dynamic between the human crew, the robot Yoshinogari, and the alien Sazareishi. Upon reading the text, I was struck by the character of Yoshinogari. Although he is a robot, he expresses a desire for “yarigai” (a sense of purpose). The human crew dismisses his feelings because he is an algorithm itself. This interaction highlights a cruelty often found in human communication: we tend to ignore the “voice” of those we consider different. This connects deeply with Toshiki Okada’s article, “It’s tough to handle the language” (2024). Okada argues that native speakers often fall into a habit of “lazy” listening. In contrast, as noted in the article regarding the “New Form of Intercultural Theatre” (2023), non-native speakers bring a certain strength to the language, forcing the audience to listen more carefully.

The workshop with Mr. Leon Koh Yonekawa provided a deeper understanding of these concepts through physical interaction. During the Q&A session in class, I asked Mr. Yonekawa a question which had been puzzling me regarding the actors’ movements. I observed that their positioning on stage seemed random, so I asked: “If an actor cannot ‘read the air’ (*kuuki wo yomenai*), wouldn’t the positioning become chaotic and ruin the performance?”

His answer was profound and completely changed my perspective. He said that there is no need to “read the air.” He explained that wherever an individual stands, that specific spot becomes a valid performance space. It is not about fitting into a pre-existing harmony or following invisible social rules. Rather, the act of standing itself defines the space. This randomness is not chaos, but a vital part of the performance loop where each actor asserts their

own spatial reality.

This idea of defined space was further explored during a conversation I had with Mr. Yonekawa on our way home. We discussed the mathematical concept of “spaces of different dimensions.” As a mathematics student, I proposed that the stage is not just a simple 3-dimensional Euclidean box. In mathematics, we deal with spaces of varying dimensions (\mathbb{R}^n), where properties change depending on the dimensional framework.

I suggested that while the actors exist in physical 3D space, the “In-Between” narrative creates a higher-dimensional space—a topological structure where distance is measured not in meters, but in understanding and language. Mr. Yonekawa found this mathematical analogy interesting. We discussed how an actor moving on stage is not just translating coordinates in x, y, z axis, but is effectively moving between different dimensional layers. Just as a lower-dimensional object cannot fully comprehend a higher-dimensional one, the characters in the play (humans, robot, alien) struggle to connect because they are essentially operating in different dimensions of existence.

In conclusion, *The Window of the Spaceship ‘In-Between’* is a philosophical inquiry into how we connect with “the other.” Through the workshop Q&A, I learned that performance space is defined by presence, not by social atmosphere or “reading the air.” Furthermore, my discussion with Mr. Yonekawa confirmed that theatre and mathematics share a common goal: describing the complex structures of our world. Whether through the abstract dimensions of mathematics or the physical dimensions of the stage, we are all trying to find our coordinates in the vast spaceship of existence.

References

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