

# **Using a spatial storytelling tool to map EAP positionality in English universities**

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# Outline

- The study
- The Spatial Storytelling tool
- What Spatial Storytelling has revealed
- Reflections on using the tool



# The study

How does the position of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in English universities shape EAP practice and the identity and agency of practitioners?

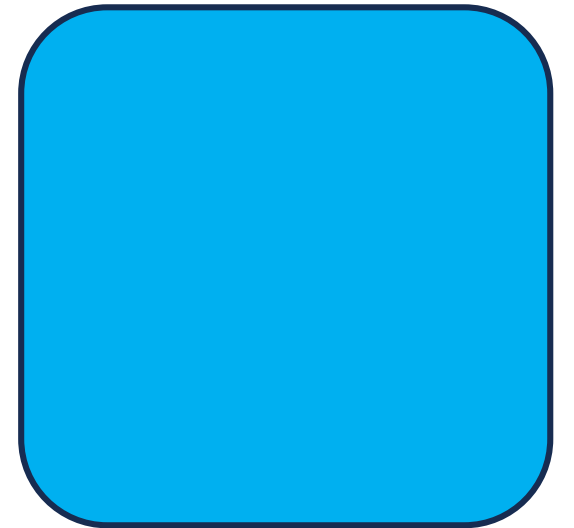
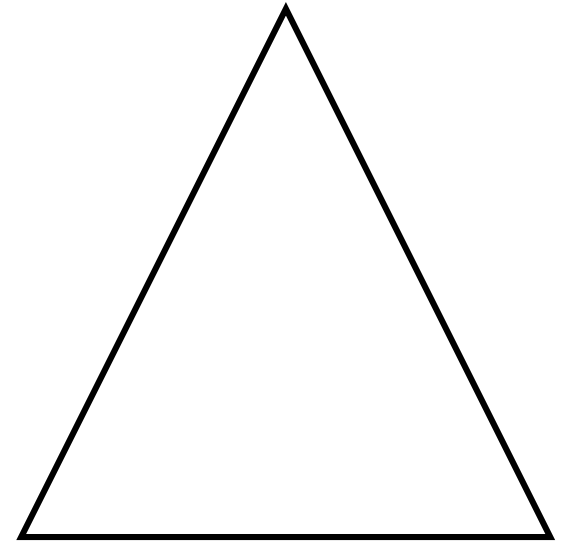
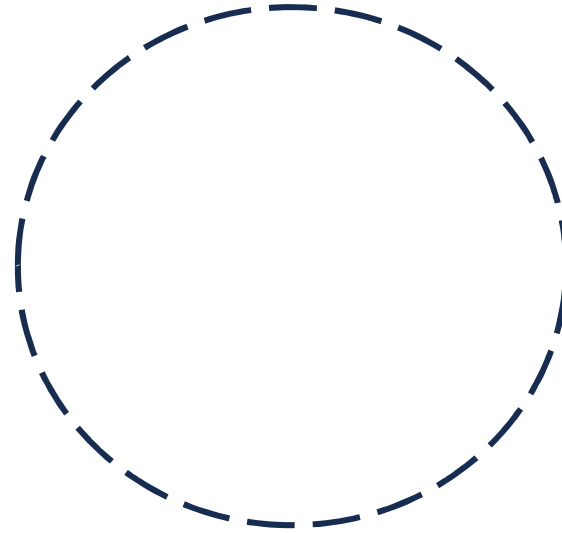
Two case studies

Participants – EAP practitioners, managers and academic colleagues



# The Spatial Storytelling tool

- What is Spatial Storytelling?
- Inspiration
- What it involves



# Let's have a try...

1. Take a piece of paper and draw a shape which best represents the university for you.
2. Think about the position or positions of English for Academic Purposes in the university and add EAP to the map.
3. Think about your own position in the university and add that to the map.
4. Think of links that you have or that the EAP has – internal links within the university, and external national and international links. Now draw these on the map.



# Doreen Massey

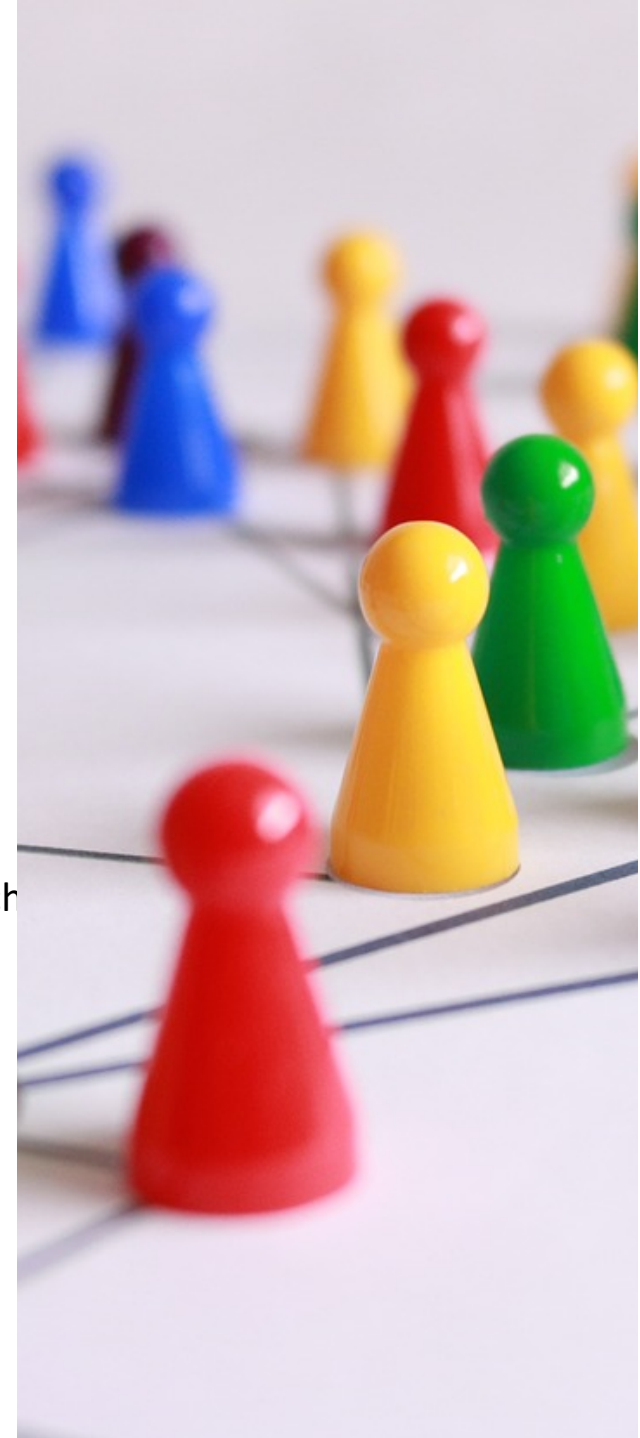
(3 January 1944 – 11 March 2016)

- Professor of Geography at the Open University.
- Work focused on feminist geography, space, place and power



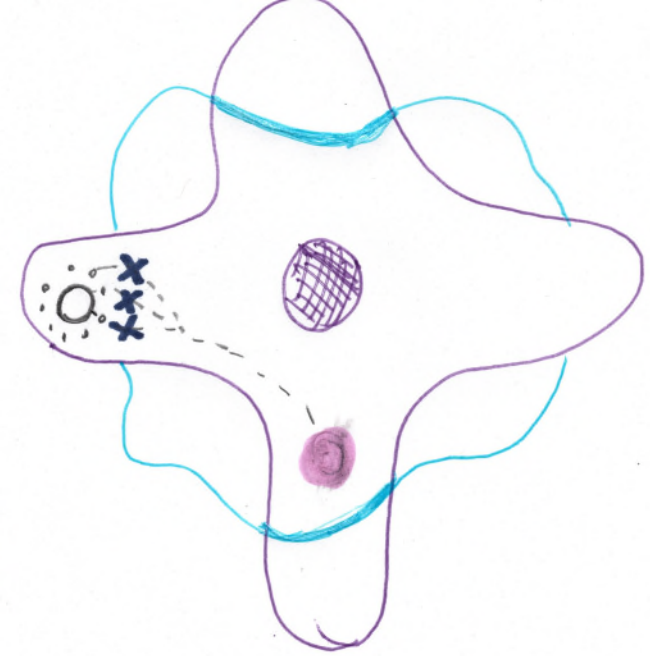
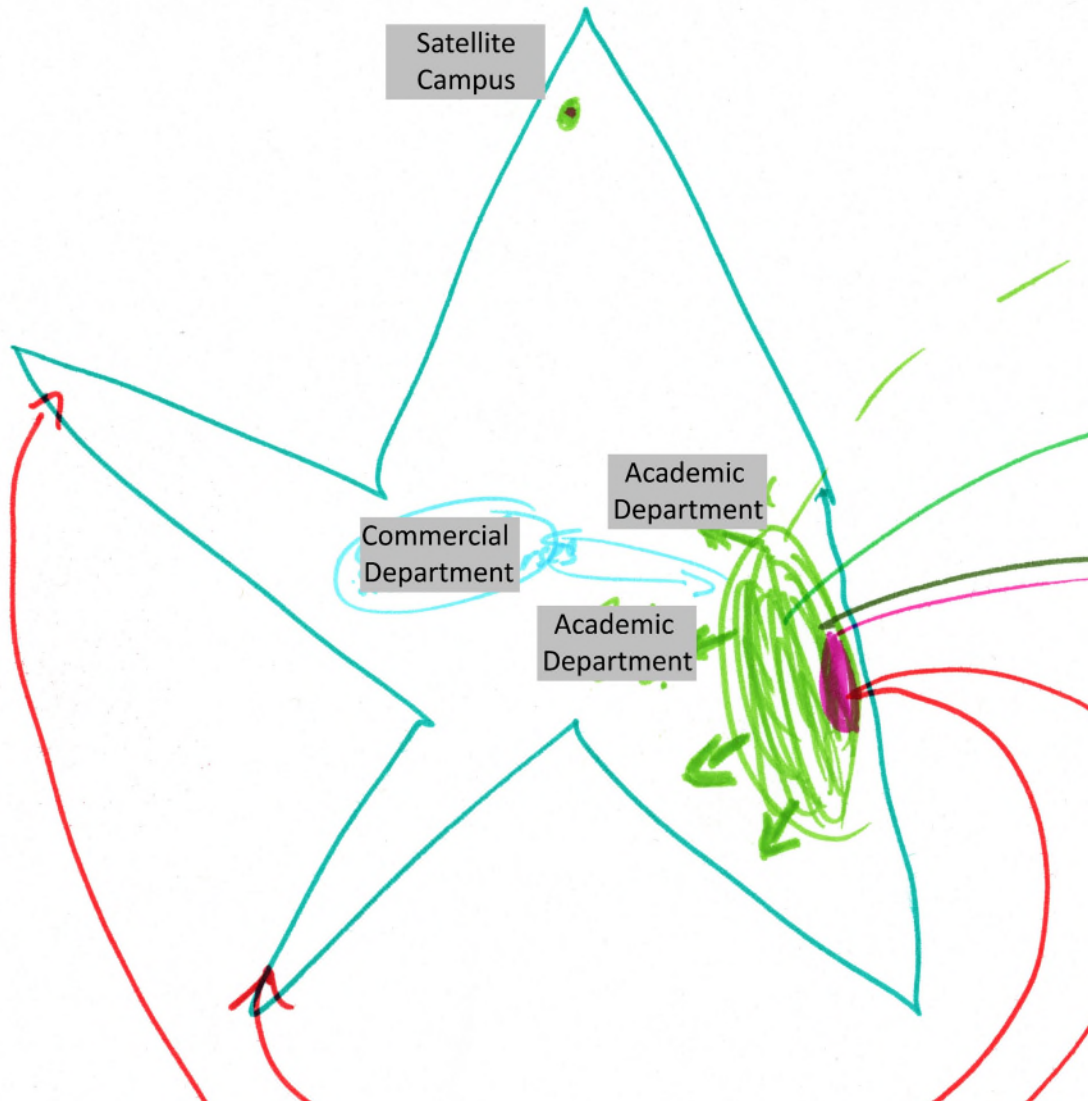
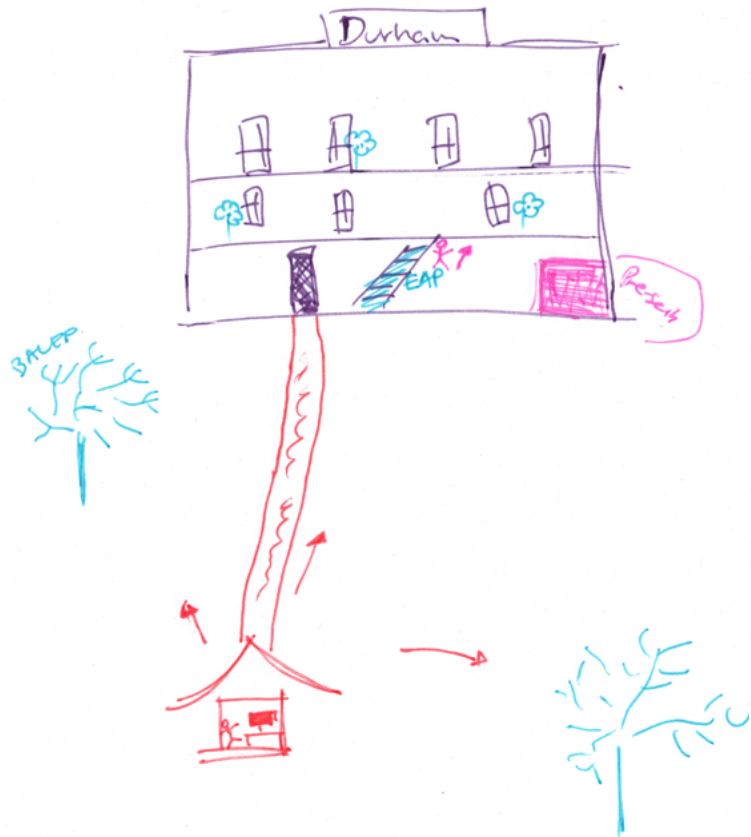
# Doreen Massey's concepts

- Space and place
  - Space is a
    - Product of interrelations
    - Sphere of multiplicity
    - Always under construction (Massey, 2005, p. 9)
  - Place is “constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus” (Massey, 1994, p. 154)
- Activity space
  - the “spatial network of links and activities, or spatial connections and locations, within which a particular agent operates” (Massey, 1995, p. 54).
- Throwntogetherness
  - "the question of our living together in the sense of juxtaposition" (Massey, 2005, p. 187)
- Power-geometry
  - Each place has a “geography of power within it” (Massey, 1993, p. 55)



The maps...

# The maps...



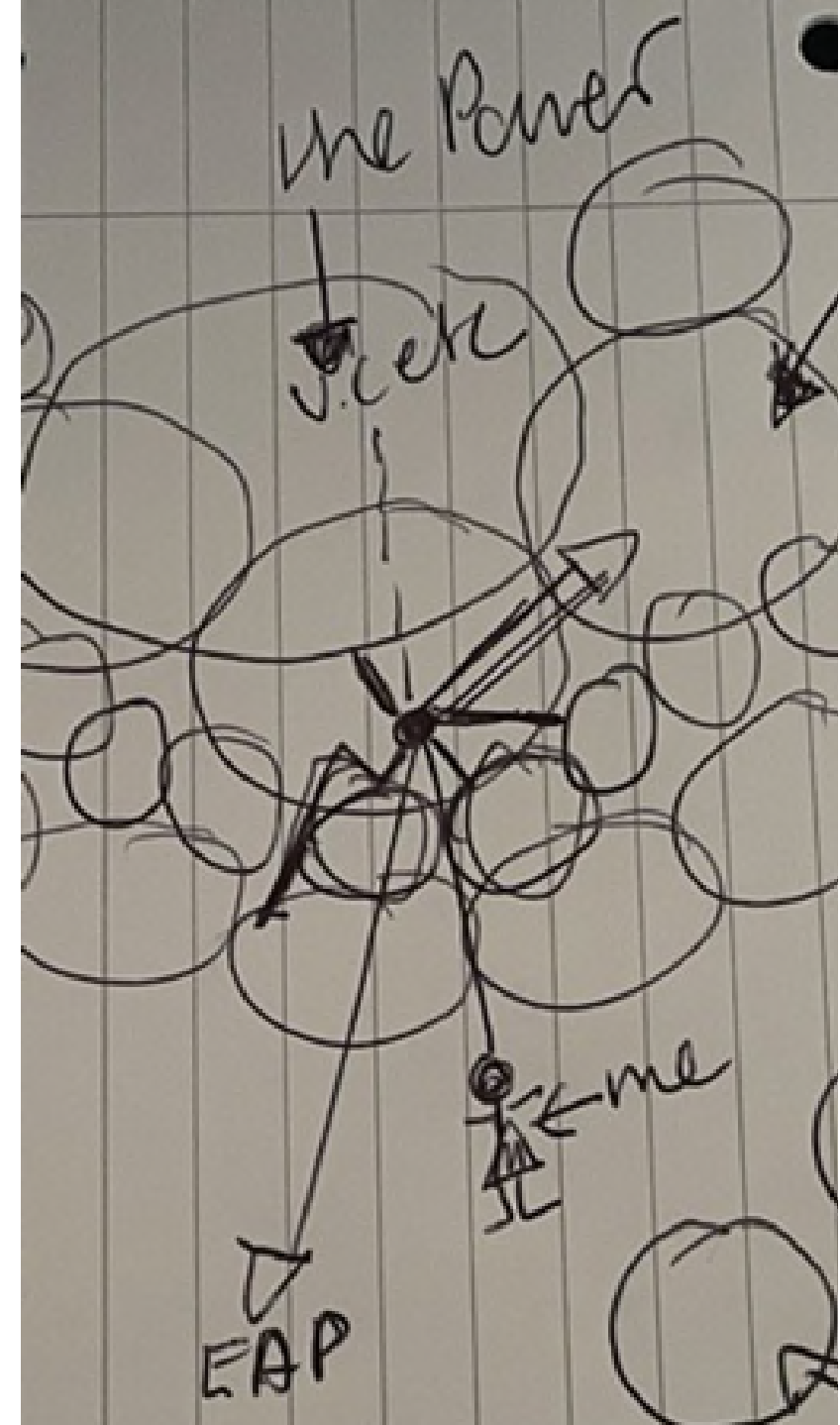
# Links and connections



# Power relations

“The big bubble is, I've called it the power, which I mean, like the VC and the kind of, the people who hold the reigns of power [...] and then the next band, I've put [...] professional services like the international office, academic office [...] because geographically, they are close to the power, they're all together in [location], so I think in my head, they're all very closely interrelated, interlinked.”

(A-M1)

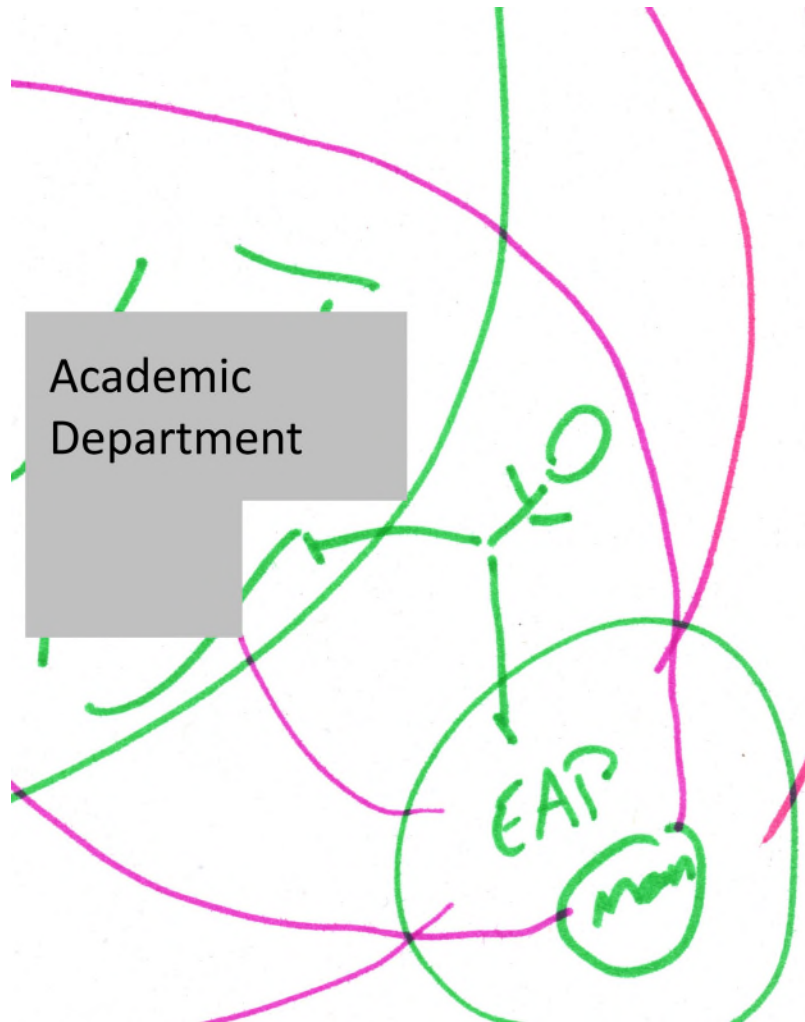


# Position and identity

“I think it's changing. I get the impression it's changing [...] I think it's different in different Schools [...] I think it varies from School to School, and I would even guess that it varies from lecturer to lecturer.”  
(B-EP3)



# Position and identity



“That's me, sort of leaping across rather than straddling. Yeah, like a balancing act, so I'm sort of in the [Academic Department], lecturing with the [course] ... this year I'm here, but a year ago I was there.”

(B-EP1)

# The value of a multi-modal approach

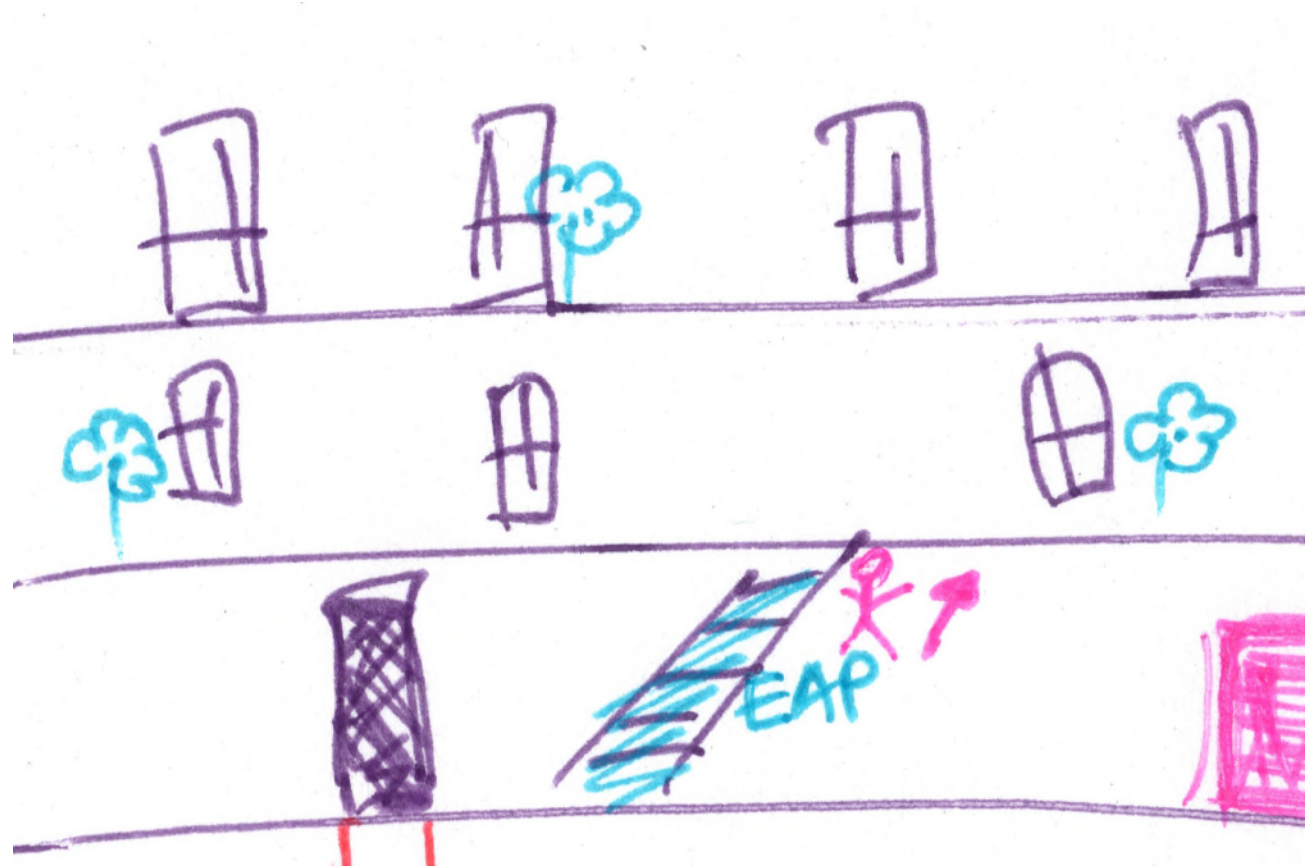
- Fun and social.
- A moment in time "it won't be the same 'here' when it is no longer now" (Massey, 2005, p. 139).
- Participants are empowered and have agency.
- Makes things visible – thoughts, perceptions, things which are unconscious or hidden.
- Thoughts are externalised, and participants can step back and reflect.
- It reveals how people and groups are positioned in relations to one another: distance, connections, gaps, weak links and power.

“I think it was a good thing to do, because I think it visualizes in some sort of way the number of people, areas, departments, projects, etc, that you are involved in, and it's quite good to see it on a piece of paper like that, and I suppose you realize your impact or your connections a little bit more, it seems a bit more concrete”.

(B-M2)

# Value to practitioners?

- Enables us to externalise thoughts, step back and reflect
- Creates a record of perceptions of positionality
- Gives everyone a voice
- Possible to focus on places or groups of different
- Activates the sociological imagination



# References

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# Thank you!

Any questions or comments?