

Anne Pässilä

REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RESEARCH-BASED THEATRE

Processing innovation at the crossroads of theatre,
reflection and practice-based innovation activities

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to be presented with due
permission for public examination and criticism in Theatre Vanha
Juko, Lahti, Finland on the 1st of December, 2012, at noon.

Acta Universitatis
Lappeenrantaensis 492

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ISBN 978-952-265-321-5
ISBN 978-952-265-322-2 (PDF)
ISSN 1456-4491

Lappeenrannan teknillinen yliopisto
Yliopistopaino 2012

THE AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RESEARCH ARTICLES:

Article 1: The author designed the Work Story method of inquiry, collected and analysed the data, dramatised the data into theatrical performances, and wrote most of the empirical section of the paper. The author carried out the performative part of the study in cooperation with two applied theatre artists. The author and co-author formulated the research question together. The author wrote the theoretical section on theatre and aesthetics, while the co-author wrote the theoretical section on learning in organisational settings. The author and co-author wrote the conclusions together.

Article 2: The author formulated the research question and collected the data for the study. The author and co-authors wrote the empirical and theoretical sections of the paper together. The author's primary contribution was in the theoretical section on organising reflection via theatre-based learning. The author and co-authors wrote the conclusions together.

Article 3: The author formulated the research question and collected and analysed the data for the study. The author and co-authors wrote the empirical and theoretical sections of the paper together. The author's primary contribution was in the theoretical and practical sections on the link between Theatrical Images, story-telling, and dialogue. The author and co-authors wrote the conclusions together.

Article 4: The author designed the RBT model as a reflexive method of inquiry, collected and analysed the data, dramatised the data into theatrical performances, and wrote most of the empirical section of the paper. The author and co-author formulated the research question together. The author wrote the theoretical section on theatre and reflection. The author and co-author wrote the conclusions together.

Article 5: The author collected and analysed the data alone. The author and co-author formulated the research question and wrote the theoretical section together. The discussion and conclusion were written primarily by the author.

Article 6: The author and an applied theatre artist jointly collected and analysed the data and dramatised the data into theatrical performances. The author formulated the research question alone; she also wrote the theoretical section on Forum Theatre alone. The author and co-authors wrote the theoretical section on innovation together.

CONTENTS

THE AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RESEARCH ARTICLES:	2
CONTENTS	4
ABSTRACT	6
TIIVISTELMÄ	8
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	10
LIST OF FIGURES	12
LIST OF TABLES	12
1 INTRODUCTION	15
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THIS STUDY	15
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY	18
2 RESEARCH DESIGN	21
2.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT AND QUESTIONS	21
2.2 THE ACTION RESEARCH APPROACH UTILISED IN THIS STUDY	22
2.2.1 Participatory Action Research	24
2.2.2 Research-based theatre as a participatory method of action research	25
2.2.2.1 <i>The four already-existing categories of RBT</i>	26
2.2.2.2 <i>Ethnodrama and ethnotheatre as new categories of RBT</i>	26
2.2.2.3 <i>RBT as applied in this study</i>	26
2.2.3 Areas of action research interest	28
2.3 RESEARCH PROCESS AND DATA	30
2.3.1 Building a reflexive model of RBT	30
2.3.1.1 <i>First stage: Building the model – Planning actions</i>	32
2.3.1.2 <i>Second stage: Collective testing – Action</i>	35
2.3.1.3 <i>Third stage: Extending the model – Observation</i>	35
2.3.1.4 <i>Fourth stage: Analysis of the model – Reflection</i>	38
2.3.1.5 <i>Fifth stage: Validation of the model – The revised plan and the final model</i>	39
2.3.2 Research data	42
2.3.3 Sub-studies	46
2.4 KEY CONCEPTS APPEARING IN THIS STUDY	47
3 A NOVEL APPROACH TO INNOVATION: A PRACTICE-BASED ORGANISATIONAL INNOVATION PROCESS	52
3.1 MODES OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN PBI	53
3.2 APPLIED DRAMA AND THEATRE	56
3.2.1 ADT as an artistic investigation	59
3.2.2 Aesthetic distance and participation	60
3.3 REFLECTION	61
3.3.1 Dewey-based reflection	62
3.3.2 The reflective practitioner: reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action	63
3.3.3 Different types of reflection.....	64
3.3.4 Critical reflection	66

4	TESTING THE REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RBT	68
4.1	THE PRACTICE-BASED TESTING CONTEXT	68
4.2	BASIS OF THE TESTING	70
4.2.1	Aesthetic distancing	70
4.2.2	The dramaturgical gaze and the roles of researcher: validity and reliability.....	72
4.3	CYCLES OF TESTING	75
4.4	ANALYSIS – A PATH FOR TESTING.....	76
5	FINDINGS	79
5.1	THE SEVEN STAGES OF THE REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RBT	79
5.2	THE TUNNEL OF REFLECTION AND REFLEXIVITY	83
5.3	RESULTS OF THE SUB-STUDIES	85
5.4	LINKS BETWEEN THEATRE, REFLECTION, AND INNOVATION IN THE CONTEXT OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION.....	91
5.5	PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS: A CHECKLIST FOR PRACTITIONERS APPLYING THE REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RBT	95
6	CONCLUSIONS – A REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RESEARCH-BASED THEATRE	98
7	REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	102
7.1	REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY	102
7.2	AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	103
	REFERENCES	105

ABSTRACT

Anne Pässilä

Reflexive model of research-based theatre – processing innovation at the crossroads of theatre, reflection and practice-based innovation activities

Lappeenranta 2012

115 p.

Acta Universitatis Lappeenrantaensis 492

Diss. Lappeenranta University of Technology

ISBN 978-952-265-321-5, ISBN 978-952-265-322-2 (PDF), ISSN 1456-4491

Contemporary organisations have to embrace the notion of doing ‘more with less’. This challenges knowledge production within companies and public organisations, forcing them to reorganise their structures and rethink what knowledge production actually means in the context of innovation and how knowledge is actually produced among various professional groups within the organisation in their everyday actions. Innovations are vital for organisational survival, and ‘ordinary’ employees and customers are central but too-often ignored producers of knowledge for contemporary organisations. Broader levels of participation and reflexive practices are needed.

This dissertation discusses the missing links between innovation research conducted in the context of industrial management, arts, and culture; applied drama and theatre practices (specifically post-Boalian approaches); and learning – especially organising reflection – in organisational settings.

This dissertation (1) explores and extends the role of research-based theatre to organising reflection and reflexive practices in the context of practice-based innovation, (2) develops a reflexive model of RBT for investigating and developing practice-based organisational process innovations in order to contribute to the development of a tool for innovation management and analysis, and (3) operationalises this model within private- and public-sector organisations.

The proposed novel reflexive model of research-based theatre for investigating and developing practice-based organisational process innovations extends existing methods and offers a different way of organising reflection and reflexive practices in the context of general innovation management. The model was developed through five participatory action research processes conducted in four different organisations.

The results provide learning steps – a reflection path – for understanding complex organisational life, people, and relations amid renewal and change actions. The proposed model provides a new approach to organising and cultivating reflexivity in practice-based innovation activities via research-based theatre. The results can be utilised as a guideline when processing practice-based innovation within private or public organisations. The model helps innovation managers to construct, together with their employees, temporary

communities where they can learn together through reflecting on their own and each others' experiences and to break down assumptions related to their own perspectives.

The results include recommendations for practical development steps applicable in various organisations with regard to (i) application of research-based theatre and (ii) related general innovation management. The dissertation thus contributes to the development of novel learning approaches in knowledge production.

Keywords: practice-based innovation, research-based theatre, learning, reflection, mode 2b knowledge production

UDC 792:658.589:001.895

TIIVISTELMÄ

Innovaatiot ovat tärkeitä yritysten ja julkisen sektorin organisaatioiden säilymisen kannalta. ”Enemmän vähemmällä”-tehokkuus haastaa organisaatiot tunnistamaan omia ruohonjuuritason toimintatapojaan ja rakenteitaan. Keskeistä on tunnistaa mitä toimintaan liittyvä tieto oikeastaan tarkoittaa innovaatiokontekstissa, eli kuinka käytänteisiin kietoutuva tieto rakentuu eri ammattiryhmien välillä jokapäiväistä työtä tehtäessä. Tiedon tunnistaminen edellyttää kokemusten avaamista.

Nykypäivän organisaatioissa ”tavalliset” työntekijät ja asiakkaat ovat keskeisissä rooleissa käytänteisiin kietoutuvan tiedon rakentamisessa, vaikka valitettavan usein heille on tarjolla vain statistin rooli. Niinpä organisaatiot tarvitsevat laaja-alaisempia ja refleksiivisempiä käytäntöjä työntekijöiden ja asiakkaiden osallisuuden lisäämiseen.

Tässä väitöskirjassa pohditaan tuotantotalouden innovaatiotutkimuksen, taiteen ja kulttuurin tutkimuksen, soveltavan draaman ja teatterin käytänteiden (post-Boalilaisten lähestymistapojen) ja oppimisen välisiä suhteita organisatorisissa tapahtumissa. Erityinen huomio kohdentuu siihen miten organisaatioon luodaan rakenteita, toimintatapoja ja tilaa, jotka mahdollistavat kollektiivisen reflektion organisoitumisen (*organising reflection*), eli reflektion muodostumisen.

Tämä väitöskirja (1) tutkii ja laajentaa tutkimusperustaisen teatterin roolia liittämällä sitä reflektion organisoitumiseen ja refleksiivisten käytänteiden luomiseen käytäntölähtöiseen innovaatiotoimintaan, (2) kehittää tutkimusperustaisen teatterin refleksiivisen mallin, jonka avulla organisaation jäsenet voivat yhdessä tarkastella ja kehittää omia käytäntölähtöisiä organisatorisia prosessi-innovaatioita, ja (3) todentaa mallia yksityisissä ja julkisen sektorin organisaatioissa.

Tutkimusperustaisen teatterin refleksiivinen malli tarjoaa organisaatioille erilaisen tavan lähestyä tiedon rakentamista. Tämän tyyppinen tiedon rakentaminen soveltuu käytäntölähtöisen innovaatiotoiminnan ohjaamiseen ja johtamiseen. Malli on kehitetty neljässä organisaatioissa toteutuneissa yhteensä viidessä toimintatutkimusprosessissa. Mallin avulla organisaation jäsenet luovat omat oppimisaskelensa – reflektion polkunsä – jonka avulla he voivat tulkita ja ymmärtää uudistamiseen liittyviä oman organisaationsa kompleksisia tapahtumia, tunteita, ihmisten välistä toimintaa ja siihen kätkeytyviä valtasuhteita.

Malli selkeyttää sitä miten tutkimusperustaisen teatterin avulla luodaan reflektiota synnyttäviä ja rikastuttavia rakenteita, tapoja, kohtaamisen paikkoja käytäntölähtöisen innovaatiotoiminnan tueksi ja edistämiseksi. Malli helpottaa innovaatiojohtajaa luomaan yhdessä työntekijöidensä kanssa väliaikaisia oppimisyhteisöjä, joissa oppijat yhdessä reflektivat omia ja toisten kokemuksia sekä haastavat omia uskomuksiaan.

Väitöskirjassa luodaan tutkimusperustaisen teatterin suomalainen sovellus innovaatiojohtamisen tueksi ja tähän liittyen suositukset organisaatioiden kehittämistyöhön. Näin tämä väitöskirjatyö edistää uudenlaista lähestymistapaa oppimiseen ja tiedon rakentamiseen.

Avainsanat: käytäntölähtöinen innovaatio, tutkimusperustainen teatteri, oppiminen, reflektio, moodi 2 b tyyppinen tiedon rakentaminen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dewey's words aptly describe my feelings about the process of writing this dissertation:

"Suppose you are walking where there is no regular path. As long as everything goes smoothly, you do not have to think about your walking; you already formed habit takes care of it. Suddenly you find a ditch in your way. You think you will jump it (supposition, plan): but to make sure, you survey it with your eyes (observation), and you find that it is pretty wide and that the bank on the other side is slippery (facts, data). You then wonder if the ditch may not be narrower somewhere else (idea), and you look up and down the stream (observation) to see how matters stand (test of idea by observation). You do not find any good place and so are thrown back upon forming a new plan. As you are casting about, you discover a log (fact again). You ask yourself whether you could not haul that to the ditch and get it across the ditch to use as a bridge (idea gain). You judge that idea is worth trying, and so you get the log and manage to put it in place and walk across (test and confirmation by overt action)." Dewey (1933)

Embarking on this journey of exploration has been simultaneously wonderful and terrible: there truly was no ready-made thoroughfare stretching out before me, and I have been picking my way through pathless terrain. I have received invaluable assistance, support, and encouragement from so many people during this research expedition. A collective thanks to all of you; it would take a separate volume to thank each of you individually.

At this point, I would like to thank my dissertation supervisors, Professor Vesa Harmaakorpi and Professor Helinä Melkas; they have urged me to leap from rock to rock and encouraged me to make my own observations. My journey would never have gotten off to a proper start without the constant support of my friends and inspirations Tuija Oikarinen and Laura Melanen, wonderful women who made the task of forging ahead less daunting. My journey was so much richer because of you! I would also like to thank the wise colleagues with whom I was privileged to collaborate: Satu Parjanen, Anne Kallio, Professor Tuomo Uotila, Pekka Korhonen, Professor Allan Owens, and Professor Isabelle Mahy. I have been able to navigate surprising twists in large part thanks to the guidance of Professor Russ Vince and Professor Ariane Berthoin Antal, for which they have my heartfelt appreciation.

My warmest thanks to my pre-examiners Professor Giovanni Schiuma, from Università degli Studi della Basilicata, and Professor Elena Antonacopoulou, from the University of Liverpool Management School. Your comments spurred me on during the final leg of my journey. I am also grateful to Professor Arja Ropo from the University of Tampere School of Management for agreeing to be my opponent.

A special thanks goes to the courageous and open-minded leaders who dared to step onto the pathless routes of research-based theatre with me: thank you, Aarno Yrjö-Koskinen, Jouni Lieskallio, Markku Mikkonen, Eeva Halme, Jorma Valjus, and Kari Koskinen. Finnish working life needs leaders like you. An equally big thanks goes to all of the skilful employees as well as the gifted practitioners of applied drama and theatre and other artists whose talents and willingness to explore made it possible to investigate organisational phenomena using theatrical methods. I'd like to offer a particular thanks to the wonder-woman of ap-

plied theatre, Pirre Toikkanen. I sincerely appreciate the financial support I received from the Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation and the Päijät-Häme Regional Fund of the Finnish Cultural Foundation. Also, I would like to acknowledge the support from the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation. And my friend Jussi-Pekka Kekki, thank you for holding my hand at the end of my journey and helping me step across those final technological barriers.

My grandmother Helvi has always been an example to me that everything is possible as long as you keep cheerfully moving forward and don't let those slippery ditch-banks dissuade you. I was instilled with an uncompromising courage in my childhood home, thanks to my mother Aira and my father Väinö. Also my group of friends-slash-cheerleaders has kept my spirits up, especially at those moments where the fear of getting lost threatened to discourage me: thank you Jonsku, Tsugu, Aditi, Jussi-Pekka, Hikka, Matti, Justiina, Virpi, Minna, Lasse, Lealiisa, Anu, One, Jani, Aki, Kati and Paul and all the partners in Susinno Ltd.

My biggest thanks go to Pasi, Onni, and Ilona and my faithful research assistant Fiide. Thanks to you, my feet have stayed firmly on the ground during this journey. I have been able to fearlessly wander into unexplored territory knowing that in your company I am always safe. This section of the path has been cleared now, and a new leg of the journey can begin!

Lahti, November 2012

Anne Pässilä

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The research context of this study	21
Figure 2. The action research spiral (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000 p. 283)	23
Figure 3: The research design	27
Figure 4. The research journey	32
Figure 5. The combination of different angles used in this study	53
Figure 6. The relationships between ADT, PAR, and RBT	57
Figure 7. The dynamics of organising reflection, critical reflection, and reflexivity	65
Figure 8. The distinction between reflection and reflexivity	67
Figure 9. The levels of reflection involved in the case studies	70
Figure 10. Theatrical Images	71
Figure 11. The various roles of the researcher	74
Figure 12. Testing as it took place throughout the action research	75
Figure 14. The RBT model	84
Figure 15. Epistemological mixing	95
Figure 16. Reflecting on the 'as is' and 'as if' of everyday actions	99

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. The contributions of RBT to AR	29
Table 2. Research process of this study	42
Table 3. Fieldwork in the five RBT processes	44
Table 4. Harmaakorpi and Melkas's (2012) extended model of 2a and 2b knowledge production and innovation policy (as summarised from the original table).	54
Table 5. Different categories of ADT traditions	58
Table 6. Perspectives of reflection (Developed from Vince & Reynolds, 2009)	64
Table 7. Elements of the reflexive model of RBT	80
Table 8. Resonance between the sub-studies and research questions.	85
Table 9. Theoretical frameworks and main findings of the sub-studies	89
Table 10. The crossroads of practice-based innovation (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012) and theatre-based organisation of reflection (Vince & Reynolds, 2009).	93

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THIS STUDY

Knowledge production challenges companies and public organisations to reorganise their structures and rethink what knowledge production actually means in the context of innovation and how knowledge is produced between various professional groups within the organisation in their everyday action. Innovations are vital for organisational survival, and 'ordinary' employees and customers are central but too-often ignored producers of knowledge for contemporary organisations. Broader levels of participation and reflexive practices are needed to process responsible innovation (Hasu et al., 2012). Within the framework of the literature on industrial and innovation management, the links between reflection, organisational learning, and the development of innovative practices are lacking (see however Baldwin, 2008, a study from the social humanities and social sciences). The 'Tayloristic' way of seeing people as mechanical resources or objects of knowledge production and related learning should be ancient history. The role of all organisational actors – not only R&D unit employees or managers – needs to be shifted from object to subject in innovation activities. (Van de Ven et al., 1999/2008; Van de Ven, 2007) Great innovation potential lies in organisational processes and in the logic of how these processes are facilitated to enable knowledge production and to encourage innovation actors to take the lead role as critical reflectors on their own work (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012; Gripenberg et al., 2012; Sveiby et al., 2012).

One research gap that exists within the innovation literature is the fact that innovation has been understood as a technical project that can be solved by scientists, R&D experts, and innovation management; the dominant assumption is that innovations generate valuable things – that 'innovation is good', so to say (Gripenberg et al., 2012). But innovation seems to be a more complex phenomena than previously understood; current innovation studies suggest focusing holistically on how an organisation is run, and how organisational actors identify practice, learning, participation, and innovation as part of their day-to-day work and practices (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012; Hasu et al., 2012; Antonacopoulou, 2006a; 2006b). The capacity to seek and see new points of view can be facilitated through organisational process innovations. This means that the concept of innovation needs to be rethought: products, services, and/or technologies are not the only things that can be renewed; organisational processes can be as well. But then the question of the social and interpretative dimensions of innovation arises (Lester & Piore, 2004; Stark, 2009; Buur & Matthews, 2008; Verganti, 2009; Van de Ven et al., 2000). The most typical approaches to organisational process innovations involve developing innovation capability and sensibility, breaking up silos, facilitating participation and mutual encounters, and preventing bottlenecks between organisational actors (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012), all of which allow people to jointly explore and interpret their practices and the assumptions behind their actions. These types of processes – between professionals within the organisation and between professionals and their customers – is aligned with the idea of learning as change and learning from change. Reflexivity in relation to innovation – the existence of spaces for 'reflection in change' and 'reflection on change' – is, thus, fundamental (Hasu et al., 2012).

In this study, innovation activities are defined as learning steps aiming at the creation of innovation wherein all organisational actors are understood as critical innovators. The practice-based innovation context of this study focuses on increasing innovation in organisational processes by having employees, managers, and customers reflect on practices and, in doing so, create processes together. In this way, people's relationships, reflections, and actions – which bring novelty to the organising of practice – are inherent to innovation. Organisational process innovation is understood as a relational and social process – a way of doing one's work – where this relational process provides value to those involved, both to the organisational actors and the customers.

Broader levels of participation in the context of innovation and work are needed in the form of micro-level learning processes (Hasu et al., 2012). Studies by Berthoin Antal (2009, forthcoming; see also Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Schiuma, 2011)¹ provide steps for connecting the arts, change (in the context of organisational learning and development), and innovation. The study discusses whether the arts can play a role in organisational innovativeness through creativity and enriching encounters, and if so, under what conditions art creates space for change. From the perspective of the artistic investigation utilised in this study, theatre is viewed as a craft for renewing and changing organisations. But studies in the field of arts in organisations (Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Darsø, 2004; Meisiek, 2002; Meisiek & Barry, 2007; Taylor, 2008; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Nissley, 2010; Clark & Mangham, 2004a; 2004b) does not discuss how to organise or cultivate collective reflection or reflexive practices within organisational settings and innovation. There is a lack of understanding about the processes of reflection and reflexive practices, and the link between them and artistic investigation, innovation processes, and knowledge production. The present study will discuss these missing links between artistic investigations (as a concept from research-based theatre), organisational innovation processes, everyday work practices, participation, and the theory of reflection – in short, 'organising reflection'.

The methodology used in this study is participatory action research, which includes theatrical explorations from the field of applied drama and theatre (ADT) as a way of conducting qualitative research (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). According to Rossiter et al. (2008 p. 131; see also Denzin, 1997; Turner, 1982) theatre (or as Denzin, 1997 defines it, 'performative ethnography') "has unique potential to interpret, translate and disseminate research findings", and theatrical methodologies provide interpretative, critical, and analytical investigation tools for research.

Beck et al. (2011) define research-based theatre (RBT) as a concept consisting of various research and performance continuums with a variety of purposes, practices, and audiences. Two of the approaches used in RBT are ethnodrama and ethnotheatre. According to Saldaña (2005 pp. 1-2), *ethnodrama*, as one application of theatrical methodology, is a written research script that consists of "dramatized, significant selections of narratives collected through interviews, participative observations, field notes, journal entries, and/or print and media artifacts such as diaries, television broadcasts, newspaper articles, and court

¹ Berthoin Antal (2009) uses the concept *artistic intervention*, Barry and Meisiek (2010) use the concept *workarts*, while Schiuma (2011) uses *arts-based initiatives*.

proceedings”, while *ethnotheatre* is performance that includes “the traditional craft and artistic techniques of theatre production to mount for an audience a live performance event of the research participants’ experiences and/or the researcher’s interpretations of data”.

A study by Mienczakowski and Morgan (2006 p. 178) in the field of emancipatory research notes that new forms of participatory theatre based on the idea of critical ethnography – namely, critical ethnodramas – “seek to translate action research into reflexive, reflective performances”. Critical ethnodrama operates at the level of both education (where collective learning and changing are woven together) and ‘voicing’, in which the research scripts are utilised as a form of voicing.

Based on work of Denzin (1997), Mienczakowski (2006), and Saldaña (2003), Rossiter et al. (2008 p. 138) define one of the four categories of RBT as ethnodrama, which entails the creation of ‘real-life’ vignettes that emerge from data, theatrical performances that feature a variety of characters that engage the audience through monologue and dialogue, and scenes containing elements of dramatic tension, and aims to communicate research findings in a way that remains ardently faithful to the primary research subjects and the veracity of the data.

Despite its epistemological potential in knowledge production, organisational learning, and change, RBT has rarely been touched on in European discussions on research on the arts and organisations, even though it has received attention as a method for conducting research in North America, Australia, and New Zealand (see e.g. Beck et al. 2011; Saldaña, 2003, 2008, 2009; White & Belliveau, 2010, 2011; Nisker, 2008; Mienczakowski, 1995; Mienczakowski & Morgan, 2006; Beck et al., 2011)². In this study, a Finnish application of RBT will be designed, and it will focus on using theatre for the purposes of data analysis and knowledge transfer (see also the Appendix, video documentation³ on RBT/ethnotheatre that illustrates several separate vignettes taken from the data and adapted into performative form). Theatre, then, operates at two levels in this study: firstly at the level of research methodology, and secondly at the level of knowledge production (including learning from experiences through reflection) within organisations. Reflection will be organised through participatory theatre using a post-Boalian approach. This study proposes the use of RBT in Finnish contexts to enable broader participation and as a critical approach for processing innovation.

As a whole, this study will build links between innovation research conducted in the context of industrial management, arts and culture research, applied drama and theatre practices (specifically post-Boalian approaches), and learning (especially collective reflection) in organisational settings. The post-Boalian approach used in this study is derived from the original theatre practices conceived by Augusto Boal (1979/2008) as an epistemology for

² See e.g. the *Canadian Journal of Practice-based Research in Theatre*
<http://cjprt.uwinnipeg.ca/index.php/cjprt/index>

³ The edited material (14 hours) is from one of the theatre sessions involved in this study; it was videotaped using six cameras. The video was co-edited by the author and by media artist Aki Lintumäki, who had the main technical role in the editing. DVD is available at the LUT Lahti School of Innovation website, (<http://www.lut.fi/en/lahti/Pages/Default.aspx>).

creating a space for people to make sense of complex micro- and macro-level processes related to their lives, communities, and society. It also honours Boal's philosophy of theatre, which embraces communal openness, transparency, democracy, sustainability, responsibility, participation, and solidarity. The post-Boalian approach views the links between theatre, social change, learning, and development as an epistemology for gaining knowledge about a complex and fragmented world, rather than as a Marxist ontology between the oppressed and the oppressors. The post-Boalian approach is an example of how theatre has stepped out from the institutional practices of the traditional arts world and, in the context of this study, into organisations and workplaces. This study proposes that innovation also requires openness, transparency, democracy, sustainability, responsibility, participation, and solidarity, all of which can be created through reflective thinking.

The present study explores ways of organising reflection and reflexive practices through post-Boalian theatre practices. From this perspective, this study investigates a concrete process of reflection for practice-based innovation in order to harness new forms of knowledge production in organisational learning. Organisational actors need various types of participative and reflexive learning activities and opportunities in order to gain more understanding of existing change processes and to be able to change through them. This study will extend previous RBT applications into the fields of reflection and novel reflexive practices and, contrary to earlier studies, it will provide a novel way of processing innovation in working environments. This study points to the research gap between innovation strategy and the micro-level organisational innovation activities in which employees and managers create practices for processing innovation and try to reflect on what is taking place during this creation.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The objectives of this dissertation are as follows: by means of action research, to (1) explore and extend the role of RBT to organising reflection and reflexive practices in the context of practice-based innovation, (2) develop a reflexive model of RBT for investigating and developing practice-based organisational process innovations in order to contribute to the development of tools for innovation management and analysis, and (3) operationalise this model within private- and public-sector organisations. As a corollary to these objectives, this dissertation aims to produce recommendations for practical development work in different types of organisations with regard to (1) the application of research-based theatre and (2) related general innovation management.

The process of organising reflection and reflexive practices is deeply connected to learning from experiences (Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1983; Vince, 2002; Reynolds & Vince, 2004b; Cunliffe, 2001, 2002; Cunliffe & Esterby-Smith, 2004; Reynolds, 2011; Hasu et al., 2012). The reflexive model of RBT cannot be developed independently of micro-level organisational processes because of the amount of knowledge embedded in everyday practices (how people actually act in various situations) and embodied in everyday interactions (how people relate to each other and how they encounter each other and their customers) (see Eisner, 2008).

Practice-based innovation is “...triggered by problem-setting in a practical context and conducted in non-linear processes utilizing scientific and practical knowledge production and creation in cross-disciplinary innovation networks” (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012 p. 438). Melkas and Harmaakorpi (2012) highlight the social nature of knowledge production; learning related to new, emerging knowledge takes place within groups of people having a common and situated (specific to those involved in it) interest. Groups of people may have different points of view; they localise the same context in different ways by generating different questions.

Polyphony is inherent to this type of learning. Instead of aiming at finding the one right answer, a ‘quick fix’ or ‘ready-made’ solution, polyphony aims to make visible various scenarios related to the situated and practical context in question, and see learners as active constructors of innovation and organisational process (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012; Antonacopoulou & Chiva, 2007).

Practice-based innovation should be managed – or, to be precise, facilitated – differently than technical projects and material resources (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012; Ellström, 2010; Darsø & Høyrup Pedersen, 2012; Darsø, 2008) because the practice of processing innovation in organisations is based on individuals and their capability to interact and jointly create knowledge despite obstacles (Jensen et al., 2007; Lundval, 1992; Uhlin, 2000). Some scholars (Amin & Cohendet, 2004; Buur & Matthews, 2008; Verganti, 2008) suggest that all people in an organisation need to be valued as creators of innovation, because people and their actions create innovation (Ellström, 2010).⁴

Innovation strategies have also recently drawn attention to the relationship between innovation and learning: according to Lundvall (2003; 2007; Lundvall et al., 2002), science and codified knowledge are becoming increasingly important for more and more companies in a variety of industries – including so-called low-technology industries. This fact does not imply that experience-based learning and tacit knowledge have become less important for innovation. Despite these stresses on contextual and practice-based approaches to innovation and learning (see the interpretative dimension of innovation in Lester & Piore, 2004, and the interactive and practice-based approach to innovation in Newell, 2006; Akrich et al., 2002a), there is a lack of concrete innovation practices within micro-level processes at organisations.

At the micro-level, a critical boundary forms as a gap between top-level managerial innovation strategy planning and operational employee-level innovation practices; despite the formal innovation structures of organisations, both employees and managers struggle with the unplanned and emergent processes inherent to the social dimension of innovation and learning. This gap exists between the macro-level discourse consisting of innovation visions, future scenarios, and aims and goals, and operational, micro-level practices that ask how to implement innovation strategy in daily activities, and why the implementation is necessary (see Jensen et al., 2007; Lundval, 1992; Uhlin, 2000 on innovation policies and

⁴ Research and practice in adult education have emphasised the importance of critical reflection (see Mezirow et al., 1990; Mezirow, 1991; Freire, 1970/2000, 1998), but in innovation studies critical reflection is a novel approach.

regional innovation studies related to learning). This gap is the lack of 1) practices for constructing collective learning processes (see Elleström, 2010; Nilsen & Ellström, 2012; Darsø & Høyrup, 2012; Oikarinen, 2008) that allow for reflection and reflexivity to emerge, and 2) reflection on experience-based knowledge, which is often local and tacit, embodied in people, and embedded in practices (Nilsen & Ellström, 2012; Darsø, 2004). This is particularly important when organisational actors are dealing with problematic situations: confronting diversity and unknown problems, or encountering on-going challenges and multi-voiced interactions in their everyday work. The interpretative approach suggested by Lester and Piore (2004) is required when people face unstructured problems within organisations. Examples of such unstructured problems are breaking up silos between groups of professionals within a work community and preventing bottlenecks. These are common problems in contemporary organisations that lack reflexive, sensitive practices for dealing with them (Vince, 2002; Cunliffe, 2002; Cunliffe & Jun, 2005).

2 RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT AND QUESTIONS

Figure 1 presents the context of this dissertation, which is formed at the crossroads of practice-based innovation activities, micro-level processes in organisational settings, post-Boalian participatory theatre practices, and reflection. The figure uses a flower as a metaphor for the nature of the RBT process: a period of development and collective growth.

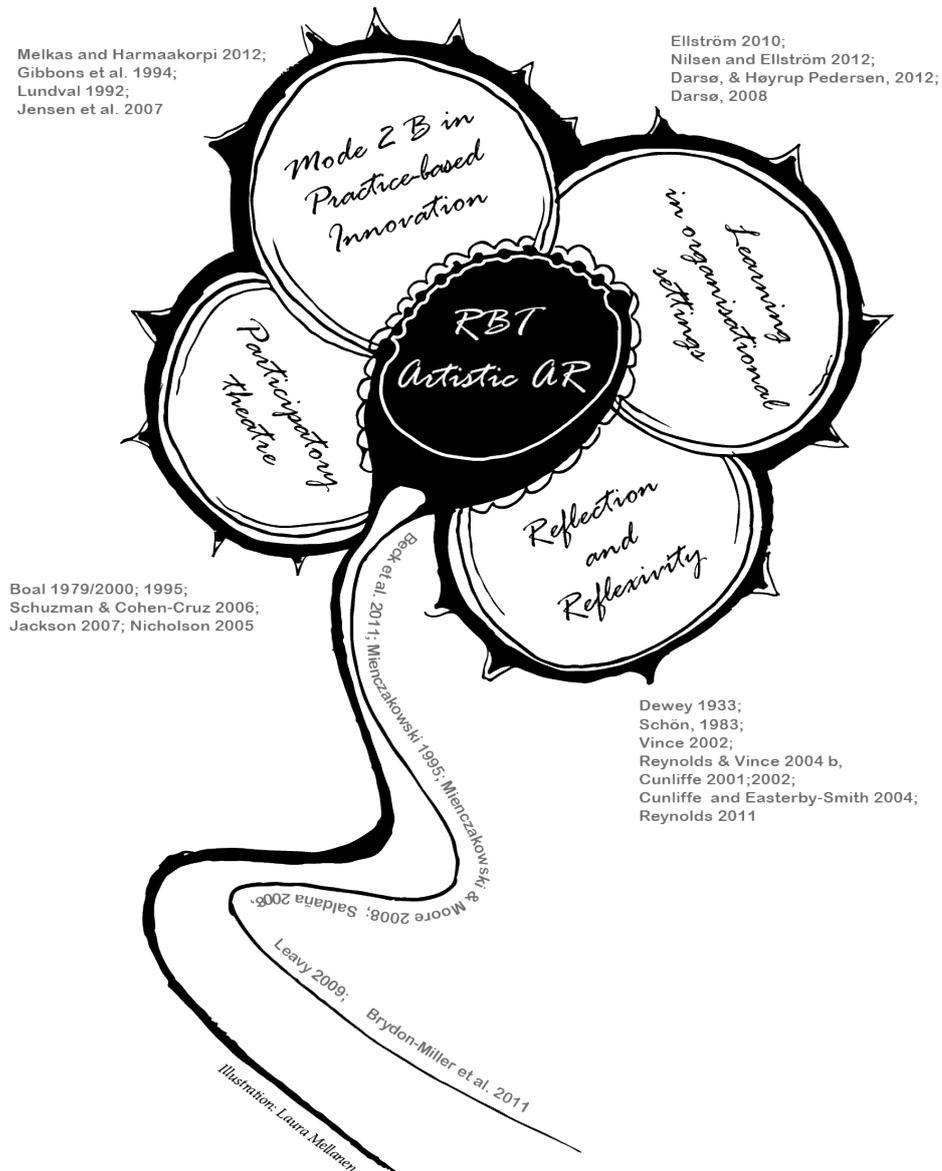


Figure 1. The research context of this study

The primary objective of this study is:

- to explore and extend the role of RBT to organising reflection and reflexive practices in the context of practice-based innovation.

The secondary objectives are:

- to build a model for organising reflection and reflexive practices with the help of participatory, post-Boalian theatre practices,
- to collectively test the model in various private- and public-sector organisations, extending it in an iterative process that links action and theory and involves organisational actors, artists, and researchers, and
- to produce a checklist for practitioners using RBT in organisational settings.

The main research question of this study is: *How can RBT be organised and collective reflection cultivated in practice-based innovation activities?*

This main question is divided into the following secondary questions:

- *What kinds of reflection and reflexive processes emerge via RBT in organisational settings?*
- *What is distinctive about the use of RBT in organisations?*
- *How are theatre, reflection, and innovation linked in the context of knowledge production?*

The reflexive model of RBT will be designed utilising post-Boalian participatory theatre. RBT will operate at two levels in this study: firstly, at the level of research methods in participatory action research, and secondly, at the level of knowledge production (which includes learning from lived experiences through reflection) within organisations. The model will be designed to help participants jointly construct temporary communities where they learn together through reflecting on their own and others' experiences and break down assumptions related to their own perspectives. The model will be designed to support a shift in emphasis, from encouraging the individual's ability or opportunity to reflect to understanding how reflection and reflexive practices can be organised to support learning and on-going change. In this context, change is related to the social situations involved in micro-level workplace learning, where organisational members try to make sense of what is happening around them, who they are, how they are related to each other, and the complex situations of which they are a part. For example, aesthetic participation will be achieved with the help of aesthetic distancing, and it will allow the members of the work community, including managers and employees cooperating together as learners and interpreters, to explore what actually happens at the grass-roots level when people try to renew their work practices by applying the philosophy of practice-based innovation and by reflecting on their customers' experiences. This kind of aesthetic and participatory process will include awareness of the emotional and political dynamics within a community of innovators.

2.2 THE ACTION RESEARCH APPROACH UTILISED IN THIS STUDY

Action research is a qualitative, praxis-related research orientation (Mattson & Kemmis, 2007), an orientation focused on facilitating change. Reason and Bradbury (2006 p. 1) define it thusly:

“... action research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.”

The soul of action research is the idea that action is linked to research through a spiral of reflective cycles: planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning, re-acting, re-observing, re-reflecting, and so on (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). This also poses a challenge for action research: practice is multi-layered, complex, and must encompass various co-existing aims. This being the case, action research methods change according to the interests, aims, and wishes of the people involved; for example, various organisational interests and research interests can exist simultaneously. One key to action research processes is awareness of these various interests (Mattson & Kemmis, 2007). Action research aims at improving practices and questioning goals, everyday actions, self-understanding, and critical reflection. People are profoundly affected by the implicit understandings within organisations and communities, and these understandings pose challenges for critical learning processes (Alvesson, 2002; Heron & Reason, 2006; Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2009). The following figure illustrates the action research process in a form known as the ‘action research spiral’ (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000 p. 283).

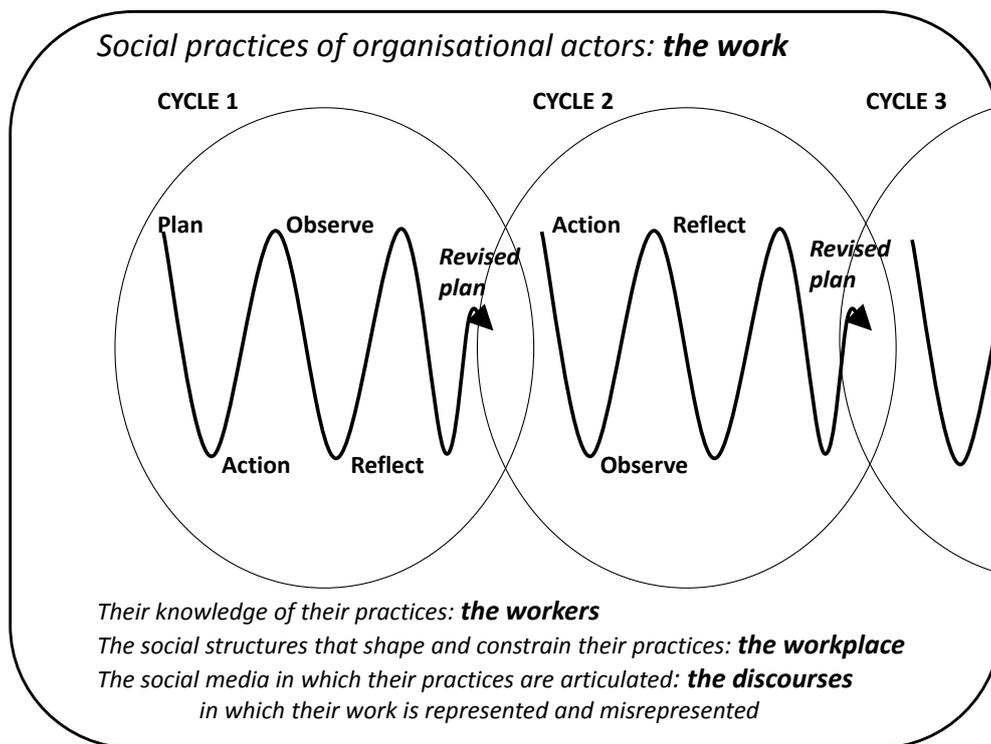


Figure 2. The action research spiral (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000 p. 283)

2.2.1 Participatory Action Research

When exploring messy, real-world organisational actions and the dynamics between people, participatory action research (PAR) is one way of interpreting and creating shared understandings of on-going action. PAR is a branch of action research that aims to improve organisational practices and facilitate the problem-solving processes of organisational actors. In this study, PAR will be applied to two industrial and two public health-care organisations' social practices in order to reflect on on-going change and to create a work community-based analysis of the social problems that crop up when people are faced with change. An orientation toward action and toward expressions of employees' and customers' needs and opinions are within the scope of this study, but the actual change actions and evaluations thereof are not covered here.

PAR is a reflective inquiry process for the systematic development of knowledge (Reason & Bradbury, 2006). Authors in the field of educational action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Kemmis, 2006) highlight that action research is a social, practical, and collaborative learning process including discourses during which people create meanings and interpret their world together. Education ought to be understood in its broadest sense; practitioners ought to aim at understanding their own practice and how to improve it. According to Carr and Kemmis (1986), changing existing situations requires broader reflection on the context in question and the world.

Brydon-Miller et al. (2011 p. 387) describe PAR as follows:

"It is built upon the notion that knowledge generation is a collaborative process in which each participant's diverse experiences and skills are critical to the outcome of the work. PAR combines theory and practice in cycles of action and reflection that are aimed toward solving concrete community problems while deepening understanding of the broader social, economic, and political forces that shape these issues."

The tradition of action research views knowledge generation as taking place through reflection on action, while actions aim to create change. Reason and Bradbury (2006 p. 1) define action research as follows:

"...a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment."

These proponents of action research understand it as a practice for the systematic development of knowledge. Action research as a whole is based on forms differing from traditional academic research; it echoes the ideas presented by Gibbons et al. (1994) on different types of knowledge production. One primary purpose of action research is to produce practical knowledge useful to those involved, as Gibbons et al. (1994) suggest when they extended the idea from discipline- and science-based knowledge production (which they termed 'mode 1 knowledge production') to a new form of context-driven, problem-oriented, and interdisciplinary knowledge production (which they named 'mode 2 knowledge production'). So both action research and mode 2 knowledge production are about working towards practical and emancipatory outcomes within a transdisciplinary

context (Reason & Bradbury, 2006; Gibbons et al., 1994) in which the knowledge production “is carried out in non-hierarchical, heterogeneously organised forms which are essentially transient....and not being institutionalised primarily within university structures” (Gibbons et al., 1994 preface).

In this study, RBT is linked to participatory action research that uses the arts as a way of both generating and recording the research process (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011; Eisner, 2008).

2.2.2 Research-based theatre as a participatory method of action research

Formal ties between theatre and research, particularly in terms of the analysis and interpretation of research results, have developed only relatively recently, over the past three decades (Rossiter et al., 2008; Gray & Sinding, 2002). The term ‘research-based theatre’ (RBT) refers to theatrical explorations as a way of conducting and representing scholarly research (Beck et al., 2011). This research approach has focused on using theatre for the purposes of data analysis and knowledge transfer (Rossiter et al., 2008) and deepening participants’ understanding about complex organisational life, people, and relations amid renewal and change actions (Mieniczakowski, 1998; Mieniczakowski et al., 1996).

RBT is a discussion forum for people involved in research and is closely related to Reason and Bradbury’s (2006, p. xxii) definition of action research:

- *responds to practical and often pressing issues in the lives of people in organisations or communities*
- *engages with people in collaborative relationships, opening new ‘communicative spaces’ in which dialogue and development can flourish*
- *draws on many ways of knowing, both in the evidence that is generated and diverse forms of presentation as we speak to wider audiences*
- *is strongly value oriented, seeking to address issues of significance concerning the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the wider ecology in which we participate*
- *is a living, emergent process which cannot be pre-determined but changes and develops as those engaged deepen their understanding of the issues to be addressed and develop their capacity as co-inquirers, both individually and collectively*

According to Brydon-Miller et al. (2011 p. 390), arts-based methods are useful for generating and recording research processes as well as for collecting, analysing, and reporting data. For example, Augusto Boal’s (1992, 1995, 1996) ideas of education as participation and his education and development work in the theatre can be jointly viewed as a form of participatory action research (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011).

A study by Beck et al. (2011) described research-based theatrical performance. The authors delineated a spectrum of RBT based on two defining continuums: research and performance. In their framework, the term RBT means activity that involves work from both continuums. However, neither tradition considers the priority or ethics of either academic research or theatrical elements (performances or participatory activities) to be based on artistic or aesthetic purposes or the idea that art makes you better (Beck et al., 2011; White

& Belliveau, 2010). White and Belliveau (2010; see also Saldaña, 2003) stress research ethics and reliability, noting that the principles of qualitative and mixed methods point the RBT researcher towards research design and implementation rather than artistic ends.

2.2.2.1 The four already-existing categories of RBT

Based on the work Denzin (1997), Mienczakowski (2001), and Saldaña (2003), Rossiter et al. (2008 pp. 132-139) defined four categories of RBT in the health sciences:

- 1) non-theatrical performances, which includes performances that employ a minimum of traditional theatrical conventions,
- 2) theatrical RBT performances, which includes performances informed by the research process but do not strictly follow data and give primacy to artistic form,
- 3) interactive or non-interactive ethnodramas, which includes vignettes (stories, quotations, point of views) from data, and
- 4) fictional theatre performances, which includes works that are performed for the purposes of domain and are based on education rather than research.

According to Rossiter et al. (2008, p. 138), interactive or non-interactive ethnodrama:

“...entails the creation of ‘real-life’ vignettes that emerge directly from data such as interviews, focus groups or ethnographic notes. Unlike non-theatrical performances, ethnodramas are theatrical; performances feature a variety of characters that engage the audience and each other through monologue and dialogue, and scenes contain elements of dramatic tension....ethnodramas aim to communicate research findings and to remain ardently faithful to the primary research subjects and the veracity of the data.”

2.2.2.2 Ethnodrama and ethnotheatre as new categories of RBT

According to Saldaña (2003, 2009), ethnodrama and ethnotheatre have a legitimate place in research. Mienczakowski et al. (1996) defined Boal's Forum Theatre work as emancipatory theatre research closely linked to ethnodrama, specifically critical ethnodrama. In a research context, theatre is not promoted as entertainment, nor are the merits and status of the actors involved given headline attention (Mienczakowski et al., 1996). The key concepts of RBT, as a form of inquiry and performative interview, are change, consciousness, and critical reflection (see Denzin, 2001, 2003). These concepts are also common to Boal's (1995) theory of participation, the PAR aim of changing practices, and Mienczakowski and Morgan's (2006) ideas of critical ethnodramas as vehicles for learning.

2.2.2.3 RBT as applied in this study

The following figure illustrates the research design approach utilised in this study.

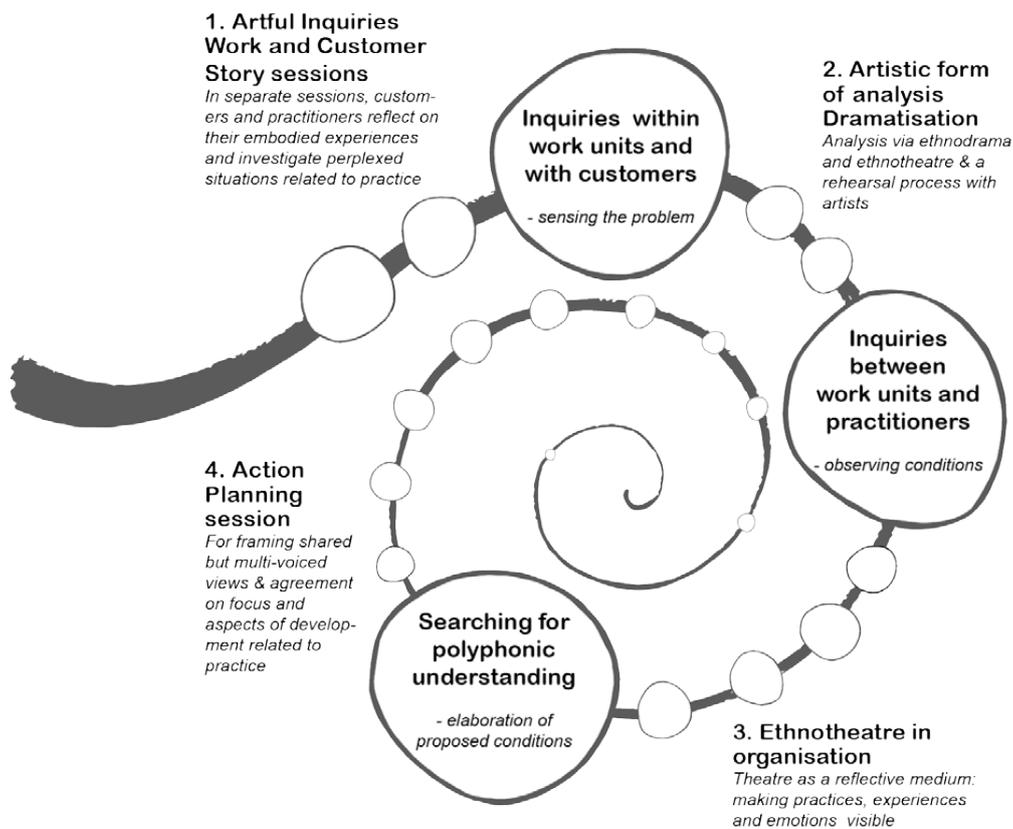


Figure 3: The research design

In this study, the first phase of the fieldwork (1. Story-telling in the form of Work Story or Customer Story) relies on story-telling as a method of inquiry (Finley, 2008; Leavy, 2009). This inquiry method involves images, namely theatrical images. Theatrical images can be viewed as one approach to the use of participatory visual methods within qualitative organisational research (Vince & Warren, forthcoming). The theatrical images generate stories that represent the experiences of the practitioners and customers; they stimulate feelings about experiences at work that could then form the basis of (collective) reflection, acting as a mode of ethnographic story-telling (Saldaña, 2008, 1998). The story-telling sessions include Work Story and Customer Story sessions as forms of data collection; these sessions also act as reflexive practice for participants. As a form of inquiry, the story-telling sessions aim at producing and gathering meaningful and contextual knowledge (which are often embodied in people and embedded in the way people do their work).

Before the second phase of fieldwork (2. Dramatisation), the images, stories, and conversations are carefully arranged and scripted according to the methods presented by Saldaña (2008, 2009). In each case, at least two researchers and an applied theatre instructor code and analyse the stories and conversations gathered during the Work and Customer Story sessions using an approach adapted from interactive ethnodrama (Saldaña, 2008).

After this, the dramatised data is staged for an audience (3. Organisational Theatre session). The audiences are made up of members of the organisation, some of whom have already participated in the first phase of the fieldwork (1. Story-telling). During the Organisational Theatre (OT) sessions, the points of views of employees, managers, and in some cases also customers are played back to the members of the organisation in order to break up silos between various groups of professionals and between them and their customers. The theatrical scenes act as a medium for interpretation and critical reflection. In the third phase of fieldwork, theatre is used as a medium through which to reflect, producing dramatic representations of emotions and the relationships that are integral to practice (see Beck et al., 2011, Mieniczakowski, 2001; Mieniczakowski, 1995; Mieniczakowski et al., 1996; Mieniczakowski & Morgan, 2006).

Once the OT sessions are held, interpretative conversations, idea generation, and researcher-facilitator field notes (participants work together in small groups, and each group has a researcher in the role of group facilitator) are carefully arranged, and development needs and themes are listed. This list then provides the topics for the next session, the so-called Action Planning session. The Action Planning session is also planned together with the key team.

The final phase of the fieldwork (4. Action Planning sessions) generates links between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action and indicates the needs to focused on in reflexive practice. At this phase, the participants negotiate which aspects require development. The fundamental questions revolve around what needs to be developed and how, when development work should be done, who ought to be involved, and how the change would affect those involved. At this phase, the participants from the organisation concretise development needs and, with the help of the key team, the organisation starts to change its practice (Heron & Reason, 2006).

2.2.3 Areas of action research interest

Kemmis (2006) defines three basic interests of action research, namely empirical-analytical (or positivist), hermeneutic (or interpretative), and critical. These varying interests in terms of knowledge aim at different results. The following table has been compiled on the basis of prior literature in the field; it illustrates the various interests of action research (based on Kemmis, 2006) and identifies the contributions of RBT to AR.

Table 1. The contributions of RBT to AR

	Empirical-analytical, positivist approach to AR	Hermeneutic-interpretative approach to AR	Critical approach to AR
Interest	Instrumental, technical, and material aspirations for change	Practical aspirations for change	Emancipatory aspirations for change
Position	Distant relationship between researcher and participants, researcher has the role of objective expert	Close relationship between researcher and participants, researcher has the role of partner	Integral relationships between researcher and participants, participants have the role of co-researchers
Outcome	Increase specific solutions for problem-solving and getting things done effectively	Multi-voiced decision-making process, improvements in practice, increased self-understanding	Critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, increase in democratic encounters
Contributions of RBT to AR	Identifies existing problems, defines development needs, facilitates action planning	Establishes multi-voiced sense-making processes, deepens understanding of existing situations and the problems inherent to them	Organises reflection, tests existing 'truths' and questions assumptions, facilitates reflexive engagement

The aims of empirical–analytical research are instrumental, technical, and material, and its goals lie in the effectiveness of various practices and functional improvements. Most of these types of action research aim at increasing particular outcomes and are a form of problem-solving. Success is attained when the defined goal of the on-going project has been reached. Action research of this kind does not question the goals themselves, nor the situation in which the goals are constructed. Hermeneutic or interpretative action research also involves technical aspirations for change, as it has practical interests in the context of decision-making. This branch of action research is influenced by organisation theorists Donald Schön’s and Chris Argyris’s (1978) work on action science, industrial action research⁵, and Weick’s (1995) work in the field of sense-making theory and practice.

⁵ The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (<http://www.tavinstitute.org/>) is an example of a consultant-driven approach. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2000), industrial action research has recently differentiated from action science; it has focused on reflection and a broader approach to organisational and social change.

When action research aims to improve practices and questions goals, everyday actions, and assumptions, it also involves critical reflection within organisations or other communities. (Kemmis, 2006 p. 95). The most pure form of action research, at least according to Kemmis (2006 p. 95), is an emancipatory approach in which critical actions aim to emancipate “people from the determination by habit, custom, illusion and coercion which sometimes frame and constrain social and educational practice, and which sometimes produce effects contrary to those expected or desired by participants and other parties interested in or affected by particular social or educational practices”. In this form of action research, reflection is a key to revealing social practices and structures between people. Kemmis positions his work and study in the critical domain of action research and points out the relevancy of emancipatory interests. From this perspective, action research is not only an instrument for problem-solving; it also helps people to encounter each other at a humanistic level, as individuals within a community (Park, 2006).

2.3 RESEARCH PROCESS AND DATA

2.3.1 Building a reflexive model of RBT

This study consists of an introductory section and a section containing six sub-studies that discuss various aspects of organising reflection via theatre as an activity in practice-based innovation. At the end of the Introduction, the results and conclusions from the research articles are summarised. The results and conclusions of this dissertation are based on the findings of the six sub-studies, and in addition, the reflection and reflexive model is based on the meta-analysis of the five RBT processes conducted during the sub-studies.

The practice-based orientation of PAR was a natural choice for the present study, for the design, collective testing, and operationalisation of the novel reflexive model of RBT that was developed. It is commonly used in situations where knowledge generation is a collaborative process in which each participant’s experiences and skills are critical to the outcome – in this case, designing a model that aims at solving practical, concrete, micro-level problems (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011 p. 387).

Previous studies in RBT have been conducted in the fields of social, health, and educational sciences (Nisker, 2008; Nisker et al., 2006; Gray and Sinding, 2002; Mitchel et al., 2006); this study is an example of a novel application in the context of industrial management and technological science. In this study, RBT as a research method used in PAR will be based on the following aspects from previous studies:

- it will make use of ADT in the forms of ethnodrama and ethnotheatre during reflection (Mienczakowski, 1998; Mienczakowski et al., 1996)
- it will focus on an emancipatory research interest (Mienczakowski & Morgan, 2006; Mienczakowski, 1995) in order to create shared ownership of research projects between various actors: the members of the organisation, their customers, artists, and researchers (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000)
- it will formalise the research processes used by researchers within a university setting (Beck et al., 2011)

- performances will be created for specific purposes for organisational members only; the performances – open-ended theatrical scenes – will explore issues from the data, with some performances being based on original transcripts of data (Beck et al., 2011; Saldaña, 2003)
- the design of the four stages of research will be based on the practical and theoretical works of Mieniczakowski (2001, 1995), Mieniczakowski and Moore (2008), and Saldaña (2005, 2008, 2009)
- novel arts-based research methods (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011; Leavy, 2009; Finley, 2008) will be designed in the spirit of ethnodrama and ethnotheatre (Mieniczakowski, 1995; Mieniczakowski et al., 1996; Mieniczakowski & Morgan, 2006), and, for example, the Work Story and Customer Story methods will be designed and tested
- RBT interventions will be considered applied drama and theatre, not traditional performance art, because the performances are not intended for general audiences but for people participating in the research (Beck et al., 2011), meaning, for example, that problems and experiences will be raised and discussed through theatrical inquiry
- qualitative research ethics and practices will act as the guiding principles of the researchers' and artists' work (White and Belliveau, 2010, 2011; Saldaña, 2008).

The participatory worldview chosen at the beginning (2008-2010) of the research process had implications throughout the study. The author used the metaphor of craft and craftsman when describing PAR; it brings together action and reflection, theory and practice, and in their practical solutions the people involved made verbal and embodied suggestions during the research (Reason & Bradbury, 2006). PAR is like a craftsman – a quilt-maker or carpenter – creating an artefact: there are conventions and practices to be followed, but there are always surprises and obstacles requiring reaction and resolution within the framework of a specific time, space, and set of relations.

The research process included five stages. The first – namely, building the model – involved background work on theory and practice that was conducted at a forest-industry company, called Factory 1 in this study. The second stage, collective generating and testing, was conducted at a public health-care organisation, which is called Care Unit in this study. The third stage of this study involved testing of the model and was conducted at a large public health-care corporation, referred to as Public Corporation in this study. The fourth stage involved reflection and was also conducted at Public Corporation. The fifth stage of the research process was testing of the revised plan; it was conducted at a wood-processing company (involved in the same business domain as the company focused on in stage 1), called Factory 2.

The metaphor of a 'garden of Jatuli' illustrates the process taken during this research. A garden of Jatuli is an ancient ritual place in Finland where people used to go to seek solutions to their problems. The garden is a circular labyrinth in a field or forest. It is a path for problem-shifting: a person steps into the garden with a question in mind and walks, the question still in mind, to the centre of the garden, where an answer to the question emerges. Finally, the person walks out of the garden with the solution. The garden of Jatuli also resonates with a praxis-related research process in which the objective is to have a dialogue between theory and praxis, rather than a monologue of either. This research

process is like walking through a garden of Jatuli; the question or research problem presented at the beginning of the path transforms along the way. As the researcher is walking, she does not know what is coming, but at the end of the journey – retrospectively, so to say – she is able to pattern the journey.

The journey of this research was like walking in a place no established path existed and the complexity of action research was continuously present. The researcher – as a quilt-maker or carpenter – faced fragmented situations, from which she gradually compiled an image of the whole. The three fragments of the present study were 1) design and development of the RBT method, 2) the organisational development process (in this case, development meant reflection on on-going change and planning change actions), and 3) orchestrating participative action research processes. The following figure illustrates the journey taken during this action research.

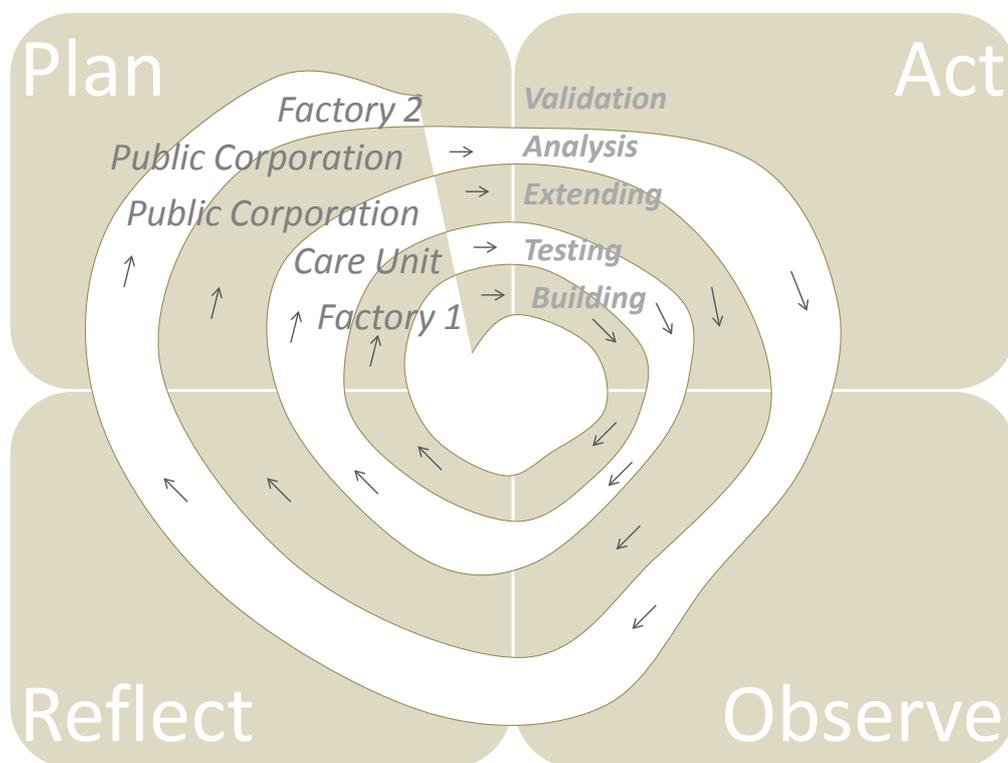


Figure 4. The research journey

2.3.1.1 First stage: Building the model – Planning actions

During the first stage of the present study, the author familiarised herself with previous studies in the fields of organisational studies, innovation studies, and applied drama and theatre. Learning through and from experiences was relevant for each of these different domains. Also relevant at this stage was the author’s co-operation with experienced senior researchers who had backgrounds in business, economics, and industrial management. A multidisciplinary research approach combining applied drama and theatre in the context of

organisational learning and practice-based innovation was co-created at that time. Then the author started her participatory observation (participating in meetings and various learning sessions in the role of facilitator in order to get familiar with the organisational culture of Factory 1) and at the same time began designing various types of theatrical inquiry methods that would be suitable for different organisations (Sub-study 1 describes what took place at Factory 1 in greater detail).

At this stage of the study, practice and theory were relatively clearly divided into distinct domains: the quilt-maker or carpenter practicing their craft (practice) and trying to understand it (theory). As a practitioner, a quilt-maker or carpenter possesses embodied knowledge about materials, structures, tools, design, and production, and in the same way, the author applied the embodied knowledge she had gained as an ADT practitioner and educator to the practices used in the present study. These previously gained skills helped the author to create her own identity and design practice as an action researcher. Still, theory seemed like a separate zone where the action researcher occasionally visited. But after several visits, theory became a friend or a colleague; it helped the researcher to understand and make sense of the action research currently underway. For example, in each encounter, the action researcher emotionally and cognitively sensed the atmosphere – the social, emotional, and political tensions – although at some points it was impossible to articulate this. Mienczakowski et al. (1996) note that researchers implicitly read others' feelings, discussions, and reactions. A researcher–facilitator cannot be afraid of resistance, as it is inherent to any change process (Boal 1995, 1996; Meisiek, 2004). These were the author's guidelines too; to not be afraid of emotional responses – either others' or her own.

In order to create a research project where lived experiences could be shared in a trusting, communicative space (Reason & Bradbury, 2006) within the organisational setting of Factory 1, the author designed a story-telling method based on ethnodrama and ethnotheatre (Mienczakowski, 1998; Mienczakowski et al., 1996).⁶ Factory 1 represented a recent shift within the domain of the Finnish forest industry: a company that used to be a partially state-owned object of national pride had evolved into a multinational company owned by diverse shareholders and engaged in a struggle for survival with other multinational forest industry companies. The vast majority of employees at Factory 1 were men, and the author characterised the workplace atmosphere as relatively masculine, with employees who were experienced practitioners, yet 'ordinary personnel'. At this point, the author had to design a novel theatrical method that would take the needs of the employees of Factory 1 into account. The process of designing Theatrical Images began.

Designing the Theatrical Images and Work Story methods (and, during the subsequent process, the Customer Story method) involved practical choices, one of which was related to the riddle of how to facilitate expression of the participants' embodied experiences. As a part of this study, then, the author created and produced over 500 Theatrical Images with a graphic designer, photographer, and three actors in order to create a process for sharing both experiences and embodied knowledge. The Theatrical Images were used as a method

⁶ Articles 3 and 4 describe this in greater detail.

of reflective inquiry during the research process. Each Theatrical Image⁷ or sequence of images was constructed on the basis of the five elements of drama – act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose (Burke, 1969) – as well as of other influences and resources, including Boal’s (1995) Image Theatre practices, mask theatre (based on the Brechtian effect of alienation), and the statues technique for improvisational theatre (Johnstone, 1996). This same kind of design-oriented work was involved throughout the research process. The sub-studies describe the practices involved in the Work Story and Customer Story in greater detail (see Sub-studies 3 and 4).

During this stage, the author, with the help of her co-researchers, co-developed a new three-phase inquiry method for organising reflection. The focus was on identifying and developing the functions, methods, arenas, and roles within the organisation that enabled the interpretation, assimilation, and distribution of various new ideas within it. This method of inquiry included three phases: 1) collecting Work Stories, 2) analysing the stories, and 3) presenting a session of applied theatre. Three functional levels were also involved: mutual collaboration between the management and the researchers, the work of the theatre group, and the participatory development work within the organisation. Lave and Wenger’s (1991) situated learning theory of organisational learning as legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice offers one viewpoint. However, the theory and practice of peripheral participation focuses primarily on “joint efforts, social cohesion and mutual identity” (Elkjaer & Huysman, 2008 p. 172; Wenger, 1998) and therefore lacks the generative and renewing levels. The generative and reflective levels that were needed in this study were achieved when members of the work community started to critically reflect on their collective actions and interactions and to process the related tensions (Cunliffe & Jun, 2005; Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004; Cunliffe, 2002, 2003; Reynolds, 2011).

During this first sketch of the reflexive model of RBT, the experiences and views of the participants were collected through story-telling sessions, after which the stories were analysed and scripted into theatrical scenes, which, in the end, were acted out to stimulate conversation in a session where the tellers of the stories were present. Relying on the idioms of theatre and narratives, it was possible to deal with delicate and difficult questions within the organisation by distancing the participants from feeling threatened or accused.

The method-building process at Factory 1 lasted eighteen months. One of the practical objectives of this particular RBT process was to create new collaborative practices first between the sales organisation and a mill/production unit, and then also between them and a mill located in another city.

Apart from the staff sessions, another element crucial to project progress was the collaboration with the project group consisting of the company’s key team. There were five members of the key team who were actively involved in determining the focus of the sessions and following up on the chosen targets of action.

⁷ The author and Russ Vince are working on a study that discusses the relationship between aesthetic distancing and critical reflection; that study deals with Theatrical Images in greater detail.

2.3.1.2 Second stage: Collective testing – Action

During this stage, collective testing took place in a public health-care organisation, Care Unit. Relying on the work of Mienczakowski and Morgan (2006), the three phases of the model were crystallised as 1) plotting realities: narrative data collection and interventions among customers and service producers, 2) analysis: dramatisation of narratives, and 3) searching for multi-voiced understanding: presenting narratives in organisational theatre interventions. In addition, a fourth stage was established: 4) shared idea generation for action planning to enable development of process innovations. During this fourth phase, organisational actors defined needs and planned necessary changes.

The commitment of the respective management teams from both the health-care organisation and the research organisation was essential – the first impetus for co-operation thus took place at the strategic level, between the directors of the research unit and the municipality. After this, a key team (which included employees and a manager from the organisation, researchers, and an artist) started to work together, co-operating as a reflective team throughout the process. Because of the participatory dimension of the research methodology, it was important that the employees and researchers discussed, designed, and made decisions together.

A novel application of inquiry was also implemented, namely the Customer Story method, and the reflexive practice of collective voicing was tested (More detailed descriptions are presented in Sub-studies 3 and 4). The Customer Story method responded to practical and sensitive issues embedded in the communities of practice and in the lives of organisational members as observed and experienced through the perspective of their customers.

As the research participants at least temporarily disturbed conventional practice (Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004) through their stories and collective discussions with the help of Theatrical Images, they actually stepped out of their comfort zones and talked about the perplexity of the existing social structures. Reason and Bradbury (2006) understand this as a part of action research, when the people involved in the research engage each other in collaborative relationships. The complexity of these types of situations encouraged the author to focus on creating ‘safe-enough’ research settings for those involved. The author then linked the theory of aesthetic distancing (Boal, 1992, 1995, 1979/2000; Brecht, 1964) to the theory of organising reflection (Vince, 2002) and started to systematically utilise these in practice and reflective inquiries.

2.3.1.3 Third stage: Extending the model – Observation

The third stage involved extending the model; it was linked to the literature on reflection and reflexivity, with a particular emphasis on moving beyond the individual reflective practitioner to consider reflection as an organising process, one that supports learning and innovation at the group and organisational levels. The core of this stage was building a bridge between ADT and PBI and exploring the dynamics of practice-based innovation in organisations. During this stage, understanding of critical reflection as an organisational practice that can create spaces for generative learning emerged. In this process, an idea from Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004 p. 36) about the embodied nature of reflection

proved essential: “It is therefore difficult to separate individual actions, social interaction, and context because we are always acting within circumstances and in relation to others”.

The model was extended through the understanding that the dynamics that support innovation also involve an understanding of the dynamics that get in the way of innovation. Innovation is unlikely to occur without committed, mutual effort and a strong desire to transform existing knowledge. This resonates with new ideas in the field of innovation studies that propose a more critical perspective on innovation at both the overall policy level and the organisational micro-level (Sveiby et al., 2012; Hasu, 2012; Parker, 2002, see also Berthoin Antal, forthcoming, on the field of organisation studies and the arts). At this point, the author understood that ‘the way we do things here’ – assumptions within organisations and also within multidisciplinary RBT teams – blocked co-operation. The assumption of ‘a way we do things here’ was an issue that could not be ‘solved’, ‘controlled’, or ‘deleted’ because of its nature; it was embodied in people and their interaction, as well as in the community’s practice.

During a meeting of the key team, one of the partner organisation’s managers highlighted that “we must work more efficiently with fewer resources”. On a general level, this notion of doing ‘more with less’ represents the discourse around public health and social services in Finland. Behind this policy-level statement lurk the messy everyday politics of organisational life: the complex feelings and emotions generated through interaction with practitioners and customers; established habits and attachments to routine ways of working that are resistant to change; individual and collective blame, apathy, and cynicism, and the silos created by them; the tensions within hierarchies; and the contradictory role assigned to managers and leaders, which asks them to be both the champions of change and the guardians of the status quo (Vince & Reynolds, 2009; see also Sub-study 2 of the present study).

At this stage of the research, the difference between knowledge that is experienced from within a role (of worker, manager, leader) and knowledge that is generated through collective, critical reflection on roles became relevant.

The organisation that was the focus of this stage of the study was a public health-care corporation – referred to as Public Corporation in this study – that was in the midst of intra-organisational change; it was re-organising emergency duty services. Instead of waiting to see how structural change might affect practice, the employees and managers started to discuss beforehand how they could act in the changed situation and how they could prevent the negative effects of the change. Through RBT – and aesthetic distancing played a special role here – employees, researchers, and artists created a communicative space for reflection where assumptions of ‘the way we do things here’ were called into question. The result of this process was that members of the organisation were able to engage in proactive planning that helped them to deal with the emotions, reactions, and practice related to the change. One manager from the organisation stressed the outcome of this reflection: “We were able to share very sensitive issues without excusing or blaming each other”. This resonates with Elkjaer and Huysman’s (2008 p. 175) notions of tensions as triggers for organisational learning – and therefore for reflection, too.

However, the process was fragmented, and not all professional groups found reflection useful or took part. These choices made by organisational actors were not in the author’s

hands, and were also a response to the changes that the PAR process triggers. Resistance is one reaction to possible change; through it, the assumption of 'the way we do things here' emerged in this case. For example, one professional who did not take part (he was given the pseudonym of Doctor Smith for the purposes of the study) expressed that "reflection is rational if it results in productivity and affects quality of work", but he did not see that the reflexive model of RBT would make any difference in terms of either efficiency or quality. It was his free choice to not take part. At this point, the author and Doctor Smith had an interesting discussion about care situations; Doctor Smith argued that his expertise lies in medical treatment rather than care, and discussions of patients' needs or employees' feelings are irrelevant. According to him, a doctor's job is to offer the best possible medical treatment to the patient and there is not much to reflect on beyond medical issues; he'd prefer to "leave the feelings out".

However, according to Cunliffe (2001, 2003, 2004; see also Cunliffe & Jun, 2005), reflexive practices are rational, but with 'rational' as the opposite of irrational rather than the opposite of emotional; emotional responses are rational actions when practitioners reflect on the complexity of events, roles, and status quos. Those involved in the research process and the inquiries discussed the various emotional responses that emerged during them. For example, they shared their experiences about the types of situations in which anger produces resistance that blocks actions and when it acts as a driving force; whether the need for joy produces resistance; whether, when people yearn for things to be settled in the sense of 'those were the good old days', time has polished their memory, or whether the work genuinely used to be more joyful. Discussions about upcoming organisational change made them reflect on how 'the need for the past' might be acting as a block. The participants themselves articulated a difference between looking back to consider how something had been done or could have been done differently and creating distance from which to connect with something from the past that is still being felt now – and in doing so, they actually socially constructed new scenarios for the future.

One question often asked of PAR researchers is: How is participation organised? Does everyone have equal rights? Do the employees have the freedom to not participate? Is the researcher aware of the power she is using? The answer is that all relationships involve power, and in work organisations in particular, power is continuously present. One of the skills of a PAR researcher is the personal reflexive practice whereby she makes her own actions transparent to herself and to others. This type of reflexive practice was engaged in during meetings of the key team and in informal discussions with the artists. The researcher and artists included reflection as part of their normal work; each rehearsal began and ended with reflection.

The following episode from the field data illustrates a perplexed PAR situation in the context of organising reflection.

At the beginning of a reflective session for a professional group from one unit, the employees' resistance was very concrete. The employees presented themselves anonymously: "I'm from ...unit, and I really don't know where it is nowadays; I'm an experienced worker but don't know what I'll be in the future." One of the employees saw art-based reflection as a waste of time: "We don't need your theatre here because our work life is already a circus." Another employee continued: "Managers don't hear or listen to us.

Before the previous recession, everything was in good hands, but not anymore. People don't know their own units and jobs anymore, they don't know who they're supposed to work with in the future or who's a leader. We don't know what needs to be done!" At this point, the atmosphere was almost aggressive, and the female participant asked everyone to calm down. They also asked where the managers' hidden cameras were, and most of them laughed. The women's reaction and joke freed up the situation a little. "This must be some kind of trick the managers are playing, a conspiracy against us," continued one of them. As a facilitator, I tried to maintain a low profile and so I said to them: "OK, I sense some tension and confusion here. Should we talk about it?" It was necessary to point out that the facilitator, researcher and art-based reflection are not conspirators of any kind. I continued: "I've talked to your managers, of course; otherwise none of us would be here. But I wouldn't define myself as your enemy. During my conversations with your managers, I had the impression that the managers are willing to hear your points of view." One of the participants said, "Really? I doubt it," and other participants asked: "Why aren't they here, then?" I responded, "Yes, that's a good question. I felt that they really meant what they said, but I can't guarantee anything. I can only speak for myself."

Critical reflection is always a messy and paradoxical event; critical and reflective questioning has to be collectively shared in public, and even questioning mobilises power relations (Vince, 2002; Vince & Saleem, 2004). Aesthetic distancing is based on the assumption that everyone's voice is important when a community is making sense of and trying to learn from a change that is currently underway. And in the first stage (the story-telling sessions), the emerging power relations and tensions were reflected from each professional group's own perspective. Later on, in the theatre session, the goal was to articulate the emotions and any problems and tensions that emerged during the change process from various viewpoints: from those of different units, as well as those of executives and managers. At that stage, collective reflection was also focused on generating the questions that emerge from perplexed situations rather than instant problem-solving.

Apparently the motives for organising reflection in organisations are related to the empowerment of both employee and managers. But paradoxical tensions existed: managers wanted to achieve a measurable outcome from the empowerment process and talked about employee-oriented idea generation and problem-solving rather than dialogue or reflection, while employees wanted more personal managerial involvement (they highlighted that 'faceless management' causes experiences of oppression) in problem-solving. Conversations with managers revealed that they understood reflection and the related empowerment as a tool for gaining profit and efficiency for future use – as a form of productive reflection. The managers' PAR expectations were focused on the technical interest of empowerment rather than an emancipatory interest.

2.3.1.4 Fourth stage: Analysis of the model – Reflection

In the middle of the process (during 2010), the practice and theory of reflection became strongly interwoven with each other and with art practice. In the midst of action within and observation of the model, the author produced a novel action by executing the same model a second time within the same organisation (see Sub-study 5, which describes this stage in greater detail).

The scope was broader than previous RBT processes at this same organisation (the previous process focused on intra-organisational questions, such as how to organise practice before an upcoming organisational change process). At this stage, the broader scope involved employees, managers, and health-care customers and stakeholders, and it focused on both intra- and inter-organisational questions of how to organise health-care services in a responsible manner. This second round was smoother because the managers, researchers, and artists had already shared experiences from the previous process. This made it easier for everyone involved to trust the emergent process, which cannot, according to Reason and Bradbury (2006), be pre-determined, but changes and develops as those engaged in it gain more understanding of the nature of the action research process and the issues addressed. The managers, researchers, and artists developed their capacity as co-inquirers during the previous process, and the starting point for this second process was sharply focused. Shared trust made it possible for the actors to confront organisational perplexity and to stimulate employee-driven learning and social innovation processes between groups of professionals from different units. A relevant question for health and social service management was finding out whether it would be possible to break down the barriers and reduce the distances between different professional groups – between practitioners from Primary Health Care Services (Primary) and those from Special Care Services (Special). This is a common problem in health and social services: nowadays organisations are more like networks; there are a lot of opportunities for knowledge production, but the main obstacles are the silos between different intra-domains (as was the case here as well, between practitioners from the primary and special care units).

Because of the nature of this puzzle and the scale of the organisation (employees and managers from five municipalities, plus a partner organisation of the same size also operating in other areas of the five municipalities), it was impossible to conduct the fourth phase of the model (shared idea generation for action planning) at this stage. Therefore the artists (professional ADT actors, the ADT instructor, and a cinematographer) and members of the organisation produced a piece of ethnotheatre via video. The piece showed a perplexed situation from the perspective of the customer and was intended as a trigger for reflection organised by the organisational members themselves.

2.3.1.5 Fifth stage: Validation of the model – The revised plan and the final model

According to Dewey (1933/1988), solutions and problems are linked to each other, and if you know how to solve a problem, then it has become a task to be carried out rather than a problem to be solved. This type of approach was still 'new' to the organisations involved in the study: traditional organisational learning programmes and knowledge production have focused on formal, codified, and explicit 'know-what' or 'know-why' types of knowledge. Informal, embodied, and tacit 'know-how' and 'know-who' types of knowing were a challenge for managers and members of the key team (Jensen et al., 2007). However, it was essential at the fuzzy-front end of the practice-based organisational innovation process to be able to form issues that could not be 'solved' or unified in a logical, linear, and analytic fashion at the begin of problem-solving – even though it was neither easy nor the way people were used to doing things (Lester & Pioire, 2004; Stark, 2009; Verganti, 2009; Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012). Innovation management and questioning taken-for-granted assumptions and values required resonance with critical management (Alvesson, 1995;

Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992; Parker, 1995). In order to be able to shift from reflection to practical reflexivity, the members of the research team who were involved in PAR attempted to *unsettle conventional practices* (Cunliffe, 2001, 2009; Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004 p. 31)⁸, and this was accomplished at least temporarily via aesthetic distancing and participation.

During the final stages of the research process (2011–2012), theory was harnessed to action and yoked to praxis in order to transform it and make a model out of it. The validation of the model took place in a Finnish wood-processing company (Factory 2). The research process was implemented in 2011, and it involved a total of 56 employees, operational managers, and executive board members from Factory 2 as well as freelance artists and a multidisciplinary team of researchers. The validation focused on organising a critical reflection process through RBT, with the aim of increasing employee involvement in an on-going organisational change at Factory 2.

Factory 2 was a traditional, family-owned forest-industry company from southern Finland struggling, like all Finnish forest-industry companies, with the same problems as Factory 1. The owners and employees of Factory 2 emphasise an ‘our company’ attitude when describing their commitment to the company and excellence and their motivation. However, this idyllic description was changing because of industry-wide structural changes as well as an organisational change currently underway at Factory 2. Factory 2 had made it through a previous recession without downsizing, but during the autumn of 2010, the board of directors reformed the organisation, and employees were dismissed after layoffs. At the beginning of 2011, the board of directors launched a new strategy for the company: three independent units were reorganised into one unit, and new core values – integrity, courage, creativity, and profitability – were launched for the employees.

The change process was carried out ‘in adherence to rules and order’. Still, both employees and managers were confused amid the change; the managers had assumed that they had sufficiently explained why and what kind of change was needed, but the employees sought practical solutions rather than abstract strategic ideas. The ‘our company’ attitude seemed to be both lost and longed for as the company underwent this major change process. The employees agreed with the managers that reforms had to be adopted, but how? At this point, the model was validated in this organisation; during and after each step, the author evaluated it, relying on feedback, video documentation, and discussions with managers. Through reflexive practice, participants not only examined experiences related to practices but challenged the arguments on which practices were based, identifying tensions, contradictions (uncertainties, discrepancies, dissatisfactions) in order to ensure experience was not taken for granted (Gherardi & Poggio, 2007; Hasu et al., 2012).

⁸ A study by Nilsen and Ellström (2012) echoes Cunliffe’s suggestion; they note that organisations and work communities should challenge established patterns of thought and action in their everyday work and practices. The learning involved in innovation and the innovation-creation practices thus requires critical reflection.

Next, an evaluation was provided in the form of an ethnodrama. The ethnodrama was dramatised from interviews and discussions with managers from the organisations involved as well as feedback questionnaires from the employees who were involved:

Let us visualise an employee at your company, Frank or Frances Taylor. He/she is a positive craftsman, experienced and dedicated to his/her work. F. Taylor may be a company manager or an employee who took part in this RBT process. Let F. Taylor tell to you through his/her experiences what the reflexive model of RBT is all about.

F. Taylor: It was like acting out kind of a parody between production and sales, or between doctor and patient, or between manager and employee, or between manager and landlord-owner, where different practices, power relationships and emotions were made visible and discussible. Alongside naturalistic story-telling and performance, a touch of carnival was included.

The core of the model is lived experience, which was investigated through the question: "Why do you do things the way you do?" This question was asked via the scenes that were acted out. The scenes presented the many ways in which the different communities within the company encounter each other, how they communicate and deal with things, and through the characters it was possible to see the whole spectrum of the community, the various tensions, relationships, and misunderstandings.

Testing the model in the framework of real working life was, thus, shock treatment in a positive sense. But since in the worst-case scenario we could have denied the tensions that emerged, at each step we had to 'fight' to step further into reflection. But it was also clear that we could have chosen to deny and run away without losing face.

The different stages of the reflexive model of RBT made the various work communities ask themselves: "Is this really how we do it?", after which they looked at their own functions in a constructive way. Sensing the images of their own organisations was startling. Its power lay in approaching the matter simultaneously through different senses and experiences. It left a trace in our memories, in very much the same way as it is always possible to remember the experience left by a watching a good film or book or enjoying good food, whereas a bad film is forgotten the instant the TV is switched off, and with bad books you never manage to finish, and eating bad food is just a bad habit.

The impact is seen after a longer period and the accomplishments were partially immaterial. "Things do happen, but they happen slowly. We have achieved something, but it is more immaterial, intangible things, and a new attitude has been seen to surface in people and their actions when they encounter each other. During the process, confrontations and accusations transform into common problems to be solved. Metaphorically, it can be considered moving from in-the-box thinking to seeing the outside world, but taking this step requires some special incentive; it cannot be forced because some system of control, rule, or command orders it.

Reflexive practices between the various professional groups: the stone-faced production workers and the head-in-the-clouds salespeople start to view and encounter each other differently. The formerly distant employees of the various units grow closer and get to know each other. Building reflection is, however, a dynamic and active process that is continuously

underway in organisations. The reflexive model of RBT requires constant work – we are in the midst of on-going fight or deny-and-flight situations.

Table 2 illustrates how the study was conducted. The study was conducted during 2008-2012.

Table 2. Research process of this study

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Building the model	Testing the model	Extending the model	Analysing the model	Validating the model
Juggling practice and theory	Constructing the theory	Balancing theory and practice	Developing the practice in line with the theory	Reflection of practice through theory
Background work and practice begins with the first organisation	Background work and practice begins with the second organisation	Background work and practice begins with the third organisation	Background work and practice begins the second time with the third organisation	Background work and practice begins with the fourth organisation
The first PAR process: Plan > Action > Observe > Reflect > Evaluate	The second PAR process: Plan > Action > Observe > Reflect > Evaluate	The third PAR process: Plan > Action > Observe > Reflect > Evaluate	The fourth PAR process: Plan > Action > Observe > Reflect > Evaluate	The fifth PAR process: Plan > Action > Observe > Reflect > Evaluate

2.3.2 Research data

The amount of research data was substantial; it included written stories, drawings, images, photographs, videotapes, meeting memos, semi-structured feedback questionnaires, open feedback, the researchers' field notes, and the researchers' analysis. A total of 327 members of the organisations and their customers were involved in the interventions, as were 5 key teams, 13 artists, 1 video documentarian, and (temporarily, for example during theatre sessions) 11 researcher-facilitators, as well as the author.

Small and large organisations from both the private and public sectors were involved, each of them struggling with different situated and contextual problems as well as general problems related to contemporary organisations and society, such as the globalisation that is driving organisations to reorganise their structures and practices and boost organisational capabilities and human skills. Competition and contemporary 'trends' are forcing organisations to be more efficient, to produce sustainable but economically viable solutions, and to increase both innovation itself and the speed of processing innovations. The

employees and managers at the organisations involved were engaged in a struggle for survival; the general assumption was that they needed to produce more with less effort and fewer resources. This frustrated the organisational actors; they felt that they possessed neither the time nor the space to do their work as well as they wanted. From this perspective, these organisations were appropriate and willing targets for developing collective reflection and reflexive practices in order to learn and gain knowledge about this on-going perplexed situation. Those organisations and members of organisations involved in the PAR process were eager to reflect on what innovations actually meant to them and in their everyday work practices, roles, duties, and identities.

According to educational philosopher John Dewey (1933/1998 pp. 137-140), perplexed situations are so complex that codified and explicit knowing does not suffice to provide solutions, so when people start facing the difficulty of the situation, they begin to reflect. The nature of perplexity demands that organisational actors themselves join in the research process; discovery becomes a joint learning process, and the organisational actors themselves, as opposed to the researchers or artists, carry out the change action. To receive deeper understanding, learners need to reflect on experiences and develop critical thinking skills. Dewey (1933/1998) stressed that reflection is an intentional attempt to understand from experiences in a specific situation.

The organisations involved were different by nature. Two of them operated in industrial fields: Factory 1 was a packaging and container unit of a multinational forest-industry company, while Factory 2 was a family-owned wood-processing company. The Finnish forest industry has faced fundamental challenges since the early 2000s, such as market pressures in the domain, globalisation, the decreased use of paper due to digitalisation, and problems importing raw materials. These issues stimulated a structural change in the domain that affected strategy and operations, and both Factory 1 and Factory 2 had to find new ways of surviving in this situation.

Two of the organisations involved in this study were public health-care organisations. Finland's publicly funded health-care system, which is codified in law and relies on general taxation as a source of funding, has also faced difficulties. The main concerns are related to increasing health costs because of increased life expectancy, an aging population, and advanced treatments. At the regional level, public health-care organisations are trying to find the right balance when organising health services for citizens. These factors influenced the Care Unit and Public Corporation involved in this study.

The Care Unit was a small dental health-care unit run by the Department of Social Services and Health in a southern Finnish municipality. One of the Unit's three sectors was dental care for children and adolescents aged 0–17 years. This customer group, which was the scope of this study, receive treatment at public clinics located in local schools. The municipality is responsible for providing dental care services. The Public Corporation was a regional centre for health and social services that began operations in early 2007. The organisation has approximately 700 employees, who, aside from management and administration, operate in five different service areas: promotion of health and well-being, social services, home and living services, health-care services, and activity and rehabilitation services. As part of a national reorganisation of social and health services in Finland, the regional centre went through a major change process over a two-year period, 2007-2009.

The Public Corporation echoes the new voice of public management: service provision is arranged via public business management, but municipal politics continue to serve as the highest authority. Both organisations were in the middle of organising their practices: the Care Unit wanted to gain a deeper understanding of their customer group, and the Public Corporation was interested in exploring how their practices function at the grass-roots level from the perspective of employees and the specific customer group involved.

Table 3 illustrates the data collection of the present study in greater detail.

Table 3. Fieldwork in the five RBT processes

RBT processes	Factory 1	Care Unit	Public Corporation (1st process)	Public Corporation (2nd process)	Factory 2
Field	Multinational forest industry; packaging and container units	Public health-care unit	Regional centre for health and social services	Regional centre for health and social services	Family-owned wood-processing company
Issue	Customer was not satisfied with the company's product	Teenage customers' no-shows for dental health care	Emergency duty re-organisation	Co-operation between practitioners in primary health-care services and special care services for mentally disabled people	Adapting to a major structural change in the organisation
Professionals involved	Operators Sales managers Sales assistants Designers from R&D	Dentists Nurses Assistants Customers	Assistant nurses Nurses Doctors Collaborators	Assistant nurses Nurses Doctors Collaborators Customers	Employees and managers from sales, operations, and R&D Executive group Managers from four customer companies

Partici- pants	70	36	25	140	56
Key team	VP of sales & marketing 2 plant managers 2 researchers 2 operational managers 2 design managers 1 product manager VP of HR 2 ADT artists	1 manager 2 dentists 2 nurses 1 assistant 3 researchers ADT artists and graphic designer 4 students	2 managers 2 nurses 2 researchers 1 artist	4 managers 4 nurses 1 collaborator 2 researchers ADT artists and graphic designer	4 managers 4 researchers (1 had the role of ADT instructor as well)
RBT Inquiries	6 Work Story sessions: author in the role of ADT facilitator and 1-2 researchers 1 Theatre session (2 ADT artists and author in the role of ADT facilitator) 3 Action Planning sessions: author in the role of ADT facilitator and 2-4 researchers	1 Work Story session: ADT artist and 3 researchers 6 Customer Story sessions: ADT artist and author in the role of ADT facilitator 2 Theatre sessions: ADT artist, 4 students, the author in the role of facilitator, and 4 researchers in the role of group facilitators 2 Action Planning sessions + 4 Action sessions: the author in the role of ADT facilitator and	2 Work Story sessions: author in the role of ADT facilitator and 2 researchers 1 Theatre session: 4 ADT artists, the author in the role of ADT facilitator, and 4 researchers in the role of group facilitators 1 Action Planning session: the author in the role of ADT facilitator and ADT artist and 4 researchers in the role of group facilitators	2 Work Story sessions: author in the role of ADT facilitator and 2 researchers 3 Customer Story sessions: 5 ADT artists, and the author in the role of ADT facilitator 1 Theatre session: 5 ADT artists, the author in the role of ADT facilitator, and 5 researchers in the role of group facilitators 1 RBT video scripted and produced by the ADT artist, 2 researchers, and 2 nurses for	7 Work Story sessions: author in the role of ADT facilitator and 2-3 researchers 7 interviews with customers and managers 1 Theatre session: 5 ADT artists, the author in the role of ADT facilitator, and 5 researchers in the role of group facilitators 1 Drama session: ADT artist and researcher 1 Action Planning session: ADT artist, graphic

		4 researchers		organisational learning – the organisation organised Action Planning sessions themselves	designer, and 4 researchers
Empirical data	4 hours of videotape narratives feedback questionnaires 2 researchers' field notes	5 hours of videotape narratives, drawings feedback questionnaires 2 researchers' field notes	4 hours of videotape narratives feedback questionnaires 2 researchers' and artists' field notes	20 hours of videotape an edited 1-hour video narratives participants notes feedback questionnaires 5 researchers' and artists' field notes	18 hours of videotape narratives feedback questionnaires 5 researchers' field notes
Time frame	2008-2010	2009-2010	2009-2010	2009-2010	2010-2011

2.3.3 Sub-studies

This dissertation is made up of six sub-studies:

Sub-study 1: Pässilä, A. & Oikarinen, T. (accepted) 'Research-based theatre as a facilitator for organisational learning.' Accepted for P. Meusbürger, A. Berthoin Antal, M. Ries (eds.), *Learning Organizations: The Importance of Place for Organizational Learning*. Dordrecht, Springer Verlag.

Sub-study 2: Pässilä, A., Oikarinen, T. and Vince, R. (2012) 'The role of reflection, reflection on roles: practice-based innovation through theatre-based learning.' H. Melkas and V. Harmaakorpi (eds.), *Practice-based Innovation: Insights, Applications and Policy Implications*. Springer.

Sub-study 3: Pässilä, A., Oikarinen T. and Kallio, A. (accepted) 'Creating dialogue by storytelling.' Accepted by the *Journal of Workplace Learning*.

Sub-study 4: Pässilä, A., Oikarinen T. and Harmaakorpi V. 'Collective voicing as a reflexive practice.' Submitted (2011) to *Management Learning*.

Sub-study 5: Pässilä, A. and Melkas, H. 'Recognising distances, organising reflection: The contribution of research-based theatre.' Submitted (2012) to *Organisational Aesthetics*.

Sub-study 6: Pässilä, A., Oikarinen, T., Parjanen, S. and Harmaakorpi, V. 'Forum theatre in facilitating social service innovation – interpretative dimension of user-driven innovation.' accepted (2012) to *Baltic Journal of Management*.

The first sub-study, 'Research-based theatre as a facilitator for organisational learning', represents the organisational learning process within a forest-industry organisation conducted through theatre-based activities. This sub-study draws a picture of intra-organisational overlaps. The second sub-study, 'The role of reflection, reflection on roles: practice-based innovation through theatre-based learning', explores the reflective learning element of RBT in greater detail. This sub-study draws a picture of the reflection zone and describes the connection between reflection, theatre, and innovation.

The third sub-study, 'Creating dialogue by storytelling', illustrates how dialogue was created through dramaturgical storytelling and how it encouraged various groups of professionals towards a model for organisational dialogue that influences problem-shifting in a positive way. The fourth sub-study, 'Collective voicing as a reflexive practice', explores how reflexive practices are formed in RBT. This sub-study focuses on the co-construction of reflexive practice and the overlaps between public health-care professionals and their customers' needs and expectations. The sub-study presents a path for collective voicing as a learning process.

The fifth sub-study, 'Recognising distances, organising reflection: The contribution of research-based theatre' focuses on distances and reflection – an action through which communities of practice consisting of different professional groups can become aware of distances and bridge them. This sub-study showed how different types of distance coexist and interrelate. The sixth sub-study, 'Forum theatre in facilitating social service innovation – interpretative dimension of user-driven innovation', introduces post-Boalian theatre practice as a method for promoting interpretative user-driven innovation processes; how service providers could learn from their customers' experiences, and bridge distances between their and their customers' perspectives. An innovation process from the fuzzy front-end of the Finnish public health-care sector served as the case study. The method called *Forum Theatre* is used in sense-breaking and sense-making in order to pave the way for the development of instances of social service innovation.

2.4 KEY CONCEPTS APPEARING IN THIS STUDY

The next section provides brief definitions of the key concepts used in this study. The definitions and related references the concepts are explained in greater detail later in the study.

Practice-based innovation (PBI)

Innovation that is triggered by problem-setting in practical contexts and carried out in non-linear processes that utilise scientific and practical knowledge production and creation in cross-disciplinary innovation networks.

Practice-based innovation activities

Various types of facilitation methods, collaborative social processes, and approaches used during the practice-based innovation process.

Innovation activities

Steps that aim at leading to the implementation of innovations.

Organisational process innovation

The implementation of a new organisational process in the context of work practices that aims at increasing value for organisational actors and customers; for example, service providers gaining access to their customers' experiences and renewing their work practices based on them. The main logics for producing knowledge in order to facilitate organisational process innovations are linked to social knowledge production in which various types of tensions and obstacles are faced from an interpretative perspective, and generation takes place through multi-voiced discussions between organisational actors and between these actors and their customers and stakeholders. Organisational process innovation is grounded in the assumption that we, as people, are continuously constructing meanings of our worlds and our selves rather than the assumption that there is a reality from which we can separate ourselves.⁹ The epistemology of practice-based innovation understands organisational process innovation as a result of a specific type of knowledge production, mode 2b knowledge production.

Reflection

Reflection is an inquiry into experience, in which the learner reflects retrospectively on what has happen in a perplexed situation or what is happening in an on-going perplexed situation. John Dewey's 1933 study is one cornerstone of reflection theory. Schön (1983) later developed it further, creating the concept of *reflective practitioner* for the context of management and organisations.

Reflective and reflexive practice

The concept of reflective practice was introduced in Schön's (1983) theory of learning in and from action. This study by Schön and later studies by other authors were based on John Dewey's writings on learning, interaction, problem-solving, and reflection. Reflexive practice is an extension of reflective practice; it involves critical thinking. Reflexive practices take the dynamics of interaction between reflection and action into consideration in order to change practice.

⁹ Lester and Piore (2004) refer to ontological differentiation between the analytical and interpretative views of managing innovation, wherein the analytical approach is an objectivist or positivist ontology based on a realist view of the world, and interpretation is a relativist or participative ontology based on a constructivist – especially social constructionist – or participatory view of the world. While interesting, this distinction is beyond the scope of the present study, but it does offers intriguing avenues for potential future research in innovation studies.

Organising reflection

An approach that emphasises reflection as a collective rather than an individual practice, this concept is based on studies by Vince (2002) and Reynolds and Vince (2004b). The approach can be crystallised in the question: how can reflection be organised so that it is an integral aspect of everyday processes of organising, and becomes a more common and accepted part of organisational knowledge and practice? Organising reflection presents a praxis for organisations to process reflection.

Applied drama and theatre (ADT)

ADT is an umbrella concept for various theatre practices that operate outside the bounds of the traditional world of the arts and arts institutions, for example, in development projects, social welfare and health-care institutions, business organisations, and adult education.

Post-Boalian theatre practice

Theatre director Augusto Boal created a new genre of theatre focused on development and change, namely the Theatre of the Oppressed. Post-Boalian theatre practices are various types of theatre techniques that are applied to developmental learning processes. The use of post-Boalian theatre practices focuses on the multi-voiced interpretation of existing situations; interpretation takes place between the theoretical frameworks of 'as is' and 'as if'.

Participatory theatre

A form of a theatre in which the audience plays an active role and participates in the construction of theatre. Participatory theatre is based on the idea of participatory pedagogy in which participants jointly construct a learning space and explore meaningful questions. Augusto Boal's inventions of Forum Theatre and Image Theatre are examples of participatory theatre.

Aesthetic distancing

A concept based on Bertolt Brecht's idea of the alienation effect, which breaks down the illusion of cathartic theatre. The idea of aesthetic distancing puts familiar, taken-for-granted issues in a new light, making the unfamiliar familiar and vice versa; everyday affairs and relationships are explored through metaphors or roles. This allows for reflection and reflexive thinking; participants sensuously explore different type of distance related to the issues at hand.

Aesthetic participation

Embodied and cognitive engagement in a process wherein participants use their senses, bodies, and experiences to reflect on their experiences and those of others. A distinct aspect of aesthetic participation is the notion that participants are simultaneously engaged in and distanced from whatever they are exploring.

Polyphony

A descriptive concept that illustrates the nature of aesthetic distancing and of the dialogue created through aesthetic participation. Polyphony means that various perspectives, voices, and points of view can exist simultaneously.

DUI mode

The doing-using-interacting, or DUI, mode is related to knowledge production that emphasises temporary and heterogeneous settings of practitioners collaborating on a problem defined in a specific and localised context. There are similarities between DUI and PBI; both value learning from experiences and learning by doing as well as heterogeneous interactions between practice and theory in order to gain knowledge. The distinction between DUI and PBI lies at the levels of interest and purpose; in addition to macro-level economic interests – achieving growth in business domains – PBI is interested in achieving responsible micro-level growth that takes people’s holistic well-being in organisational settings into account. A PBI framework was chosen for this study, because it extends DUI to the grass-roots-level functions of organisational situations and encounters. PBI also considers the social, emotional, and political processes of everyday work situations in which meanings are constructed. PBI is focused on developing novel approaches, methods, and tools for thinking and acting in a creative and reflective manner in complex situations where organisational members, stakeholders, customers, communities, and/or citizens are in the midst of action; critical innovation policy and discussion about holistic innovation management are also welcome within the framework of PBI.

Mode 2b knowledge¹⁰

Mode 2b knowledge production and knowledge are related to the DUI mode; they embrace the heterogeneous development of organisations, the effectiveness of which becomes visible more slowly. Such development may be conducted with the help of applied community-based theatre methods and reflection.

Research-based theatre (RBT) and ethnodrama and ethnotheatre

RBT is qualitative, arts-based research method that includes theatrical explorations as a way of conducting and representing scholarly research. One branch of RBT is ethnodrama and ethnotheatre, in which various types of theatrical practices facilitate data collection, analysis, reporting, and validation.

¹⁰ The literature in practice-based studies makes a distinction between the concepts of knowing and knowledge. Practice-based epistemology links learning and knowing to participation; for example, Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning is legitimate peripheral participation in practice; Brown and Duguid (1991) underline that both learning and the process of knowing are participation; according to Gherrardi (1999, 2006, Gherrardi et al., 1998), one cannot separate the knower from the social situation of knowing; Elkjaer (2003 p. 39; 2004) highlights that learning is social process wherein “both issues of knowing and issues of being and becoming” are present. In this study, the concept of knowledge is used in such a way that both knowing as coming to know something and knowledge as knowing something are woven together in knowledge production within a course of action.

Reflexive model of RBT

The reflexive model of RBT is one result of this study. It is a model for organising reflection and reflexive practices with the help of participatory, post-Boalian theatre practices.

Action research and participatory action research

Action research is a qualitative, praxis-related research orientation focused on facilitating change in the midst of action. Participatory action research is one branch of action research, and it has a history in the fields of social practice.¹¹

¹¹ The first generation of action research was conceived by social psychologist Kurt Lewin; the second generation was conceptualised by British action researchers in an organisational development context. A little later, the Australian tradition was conceived as an argument against British practical research interests; the Australian tradition emphasised emancipatory and critical interests. Simultaneously, a third generation developed in Europe that was similar to the Australian tradition. The fourth generation emerged at the crossroads of critical, emancipatory, and participatory action research that operated within broader social movements; both Paulo Freire's work and the Scandinavian folk-school movement are examples of it (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000).

3 A NOVEL APPROACH TO INNOVATION: A PRACTICE-BASED ORGANISATIONAL INNOVATION PROCESS

“I shall reconsider human knowledge by starting from the fact that we can know more than we can tell. This fact seems obvious enough; but it is not easy to say exactly what it means. Take an example. We know a person’s face, and can recognize it among a thousand, indeed among a million. Yet we usually cannot tell how we recognize a face we know. So most of this knowledge cannot be put into words. “

Polanyi, 1967 (p. 4)

Polanyi’s (1967) definition of tacit knowing – “We can know more than we can tell” – points out a novel approach to innovation, towards practice-based organisational innovation processes. The tacit dimension of knowledge (or “knowing”, in Polanyi’s words) invites people to share, create, imagine, reflect, and learn together. This quote from Polanyi broadly illustrates the perspective of how complex knowledge production is in practical and social contexts when organisational actors are in the midst of processing innovation. Previous research has rarely paid attention to the combination of different modes of knowledge production, applied drama and arts, and reflection in the context of processing innovation, for instance within the process of organisational innovation.¹²

PBI was, therefore, chosen as the practical and theoretical framework for this study because of its attention to social, emotional, and political processes in the everyday work situations in which meanings are constructed. PBI is focused on developing novel approaches, methods, and tools for thinking and acting in a creative and reflective manner in complex situations where organisational members, stakeholders, customers, communities, or citizens are in the midst of action (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012). The following figure demonstrates the combination of various fragmented angles applied in this study.

¹² Schön’s (1983) theory of learning, reflection, and change is one of the cornerstones of organisational research, much like his and Chris Argyris’s significant influence on organisational learning.

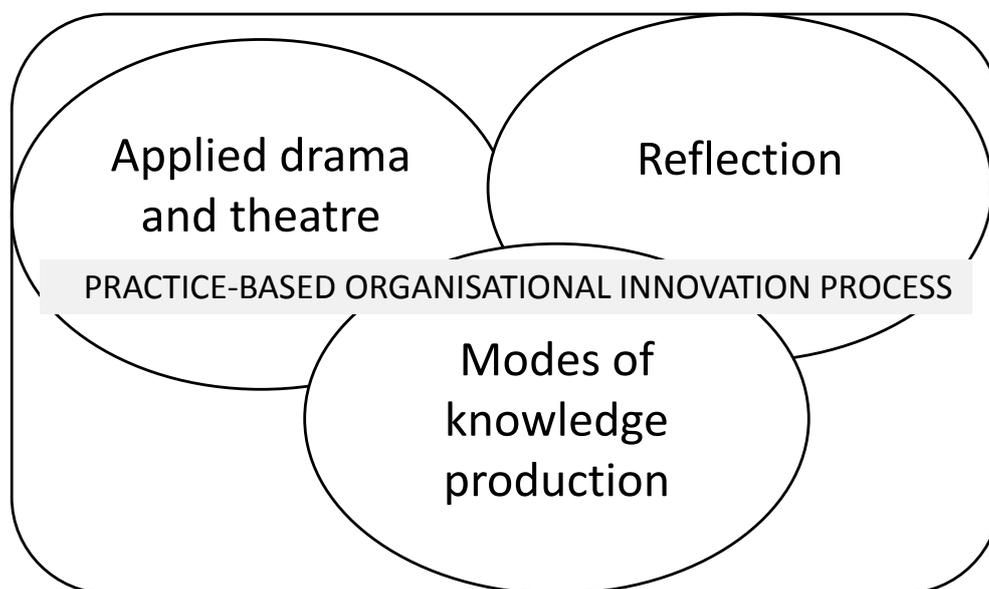


Figure 5. The combination of different angles used in this study

3.1 *MODES OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN PBI*

Practice-based innovation studies (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012) have recognised the distinction noted by Gibbons et al. (1994; Nowotony et al., 2001) between two different types of knowledge production.¹³ Gibbons et al. (1994) provided the idea of a knowledge production system that is highly interactive and ‘socially distributed’ (Hessels & van Lente, 2008). Gibbons et al. (1994) tried to make sense of what was happening during on-going change in the world of science, science policy, and the knowledge economy, and by doing so, they provided insight that is still relevant, despite criticism (see Hessels & van Lente, 2010; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). Jensen et al. (2007) based their study on the distinction made by Gibbons et al. (1994), while Harmaakorpi and Melkas (2012) joined the discussion by suggesting new sub-categories for mode 2 knowledge production. According to them (2012 pp. 445-446), it is necessary and fruitful to extend mode 2 into two sub-categories to understand the prerequisites of practice-based innovation, and to support them in practice. The following table illustrates Harmaakorpi and Melkas’s (2012 p. 447-448) proposal for new sub-categories of Mode 2 knowledge production. This table is adapted from the original; only those elements pertinent to this study are presented.

¹³ Gibbons et al. (1994) distinguished between mode 1 and mode 2 knowledge production. Mode 1 knowledge production is set within a mono- or multidisciplinary framework, while mode 2 attempts to increase an orientation towards the production of relevant knowledge. Mode 2 operates in an applied context and trans-disciplinary framework. At a later point, the authors of these mode 2 definitions (Nowotony et al., 2001) explained their ideas in greater detail in response to criticisms of their definitions (see, for example, Hessels & van Lente, 2008, 2009, 2010).

Table 4. Harmaakorpi and Melkas's (2012) extended model of 2a and 2b knowledge production and innovation policy (as summarised from the original table).

	Innovation policy types		
Point of view	Science-based innovation (STI, Mode 1)	Practice-based innovation (DUI, mode 2a)	Practice-based innovation (DUI, mode 2b)
Most typical innovation types	Radical technological innovations and related concepts	Radical concept innovations – technological system innovations	Organisational innovations – social innovations – service innovations
Most typical fuels of innovation	Proximity	Distance	'Near distance'
Most typical logics	Agglomeration – clusters – economies of scale	Related variety – innovation platforms	Developing innovation capability – breaking silos and preventing bottlenecks
Most typical capital	Intellectual capital – financial capital	Social capital – institutional capital	Social capital – structural capital
Most typical innovation processes	Analytical	Interpretative	Interpretative
Most typical innovation methods	Scientific methods	Methods of intellectual cross-fertilisation (including virtual)	Problem-based learning (e.g. culture-based methods)
Most typical origins of innovations	Science and related expertise	Networks – serendipity –customers	'Ordinary' staff – customers

Innovation policy is differentiated into 1) science, technology, and innovation knowledge production (the STI mode), which is based on the production and use of codified scientific and technical knowledge and 2) 'doing-using-interacting' knowledge production (the DUI mode), which is based on informal processes of learning and embodied, experience-based know-how (based on Jensen et al., 2007; Lundval, 2007; Gibbons et al., 1994). Harmaakorpi and Melkas (2012) extend the variety of modes by suggesting that the DUI mode has two new dimensions, which they named sub-categories 2a and 2b.

Harmaakorpi and Melkas (2012 pp. 445-446) divided knowledge production into these two sub-categories to understand the prerequisites of practice-based innovation activities and to support them in practice:

- Sub-category 2a refers to intellectual cross-fertilisation, for example in innovation sessions, in which scientific and practical expertise are combined with the help of various ideation and creative methods
- Sub-category 2b refers to heterogeneous development of organisations, the effectiveness of which becomes visible more slowly. Such development may be conducted with the help of applied, community-based theatre methods and learning by doing, in which
 - the most typical type of knowledge creation process is tacit, and
 - the most typical knowledge base is symbolic.

According to Harmaakorpi and Melkas (2012), the most central factors of innovation activities to be explored in greater detail are innovation types, modes of knowledge production, innovation models, and proximities and distances. They define these factors as the corner pieces of the puzzle, with the other pieces being economic logics, innovation capital, innovation processes, innovation methods, the origins of innovation, fields of expertise, types and conversion of knowledge, knowledge bases, innovation environments, knowledge transfer mechanisms, and institutions (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012 pp. 440-441).

Different types of innovation policy need to be taken into consideration when processing innovation in order to identify which policies and activities are suitable for each organisation. In practice-based innovation activities, mode 2 is likely to be the mainstream, but the tools to support it are not yet very well developed (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012). For example, in the context of learning, the STI mode could be described using the metaphor of a waterfall: learning and knowledge creation takes place at development and research institutions and is then shared with and converted over to social and business institutions. In this scenario, those learners at the micro-level who are processing innovation are more like knowledgeable users than producers.

However, to bring novelty to collective learning, both networks and employee participation¹⁴ and competence building are more important than ever (Lundvall, 2007; Nielsen & Lundvall, 1999; Lundvall, 2002). The learning perspectives related to knowledge production in STI and to the different angles of DUI modes fundamentally differ from each other, even though both are needed. Whereas the STI mode is grounded in formal and codified learning processes and production of 'know-what' and 'know-why', the DUI mode is based on tacit and embodied learning processes and will produce 'know-how' and 'know-who' types of knowledge (Jensen et al., 2007).

Mode 2b also challenges how learning is understood in the context of practice-based innovation. A social and situated learning approach (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Elkjaer, 2003)

¹⁴ From this perspective, learning takes place on the job, in the midst of action, and employees are subjects rather than objects of knowledge production.

and shifting from pragmatist-style thinking to more socially constructed thinking are fundamental to mode 2b learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) highlighted the role of participation in the community of practice during learning. Mode 2b also values informal encounters between various professional groups and between them and their customers. According to Harmaakorpi and Melkas (2012), mode 2b operates in the fields of organisational, social, and service innovation; for example, employees generate ideas and discussions on how to co-operate in renewing practices and solving problems related to the culture of their organisation. In other words, the members of a work community explore real-life work situations – and their perplexity – and try to find solutions to problems as well as create new answers and approaches. This type of knowledge is highly situated and embodied (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012).

Therefore, the value of pragmatist knowledge production that involves reflexivity, trans-disciplinarity, and, as Gibbons et al. (1994 p. 3) suggest, a “more temporary and heterogeneous set of practitioners collaborating on a problem defined in a specific and localized context” in knowledge production is high, as is the changing role of knowledge in social relations. The most typical innovation processes in sub-category 2b are interpretative; Lester and Piore (2004) divided innovation processes into analytical and interpretative processes. The interpretative dimension of innovation refers to a fragmented, on-going, open-ended, and multi-voiced dialogue-based process that emphasises interaction and communication. Incompleteness and distance must be faced, and participants have to be willing to stand multiple viewpoints and a lack of universal truths – as there may be no single ‘answer’, but rather multiple suggestions and proposals (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012).

Lester and Piore (2004) showed in their study that the innovation process needs to be valued as an open-ended social process. According to them, the ability to create space for social commitment, shared language, and trust are fundamental to innovation, and once that space has been created, knowing can be generated together by the members of various professional groups within the organisation and between external actors and customers.

3.2 APPLIED DRAMA AND THEATRE

Applied drama and theatre (ADT) is an umbrella concept for various theatre practices that take place outside of the bounds of the traditional world of the arts and arts institutions, for example, in development projects, child and youth work, social welfare and health-care institutions, and adult education (Nicholson, 2005; Jackson, 2008; Needlands, 2007, 2004; Needlands & Goode, 2000). ADT spans pedagogy, education, therapy, and community work. It is a way of framing how members of a community can explore and reflect on meaningful questions and problems – meaningful to those doing the reflecting and to their community – with the help of theatrical methods.

One novel genre of ADT has arisen in the field of organisational management, in which ADT practitioners work within private and public organisations with employees, managers, stakeholders, and customers. This genre is still developing, and its forms, styles, purposes, and values are still taking shape (Berthoin Antal, 2009; Schiuma, 2011; Darsø, 2004).

However, within the scope of scholarly research – meaning PAR in the present study – RBT is distinguished from ADT. ADT has an explorative, action-learning dimension; it is not a research methodology in the same sense as RBT. The following figure (6), which is based on the earlier ADT studies mentioned in this study and the author’s experiences as an ADT practitioner,¹⁵ illustrates the relationships between ADT and PAR and how the participatory tradition of ADT is linked to research and theatre.

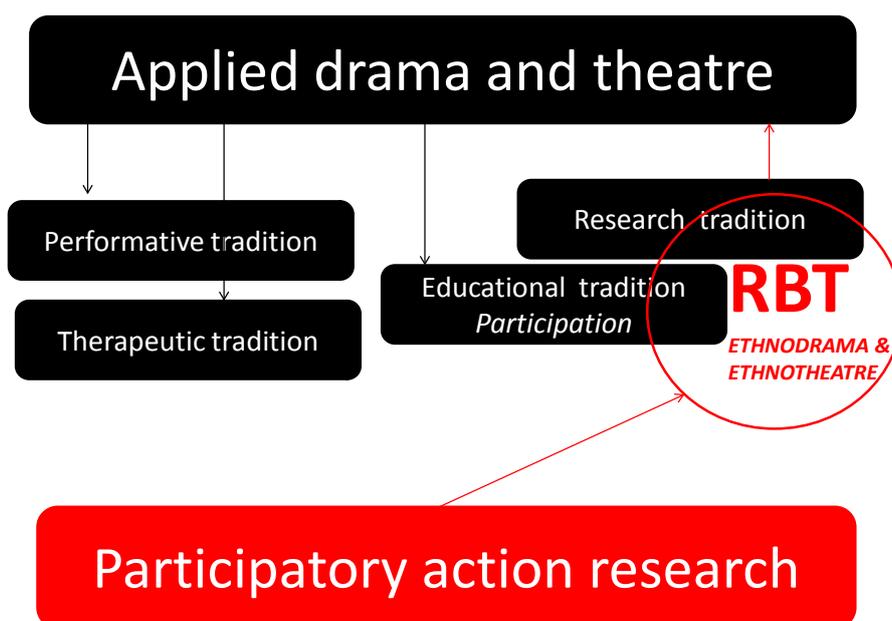


Figure 6. The relationships between ADT, PAR, and RBT

Nicholson (2005), Jackson (2007), Taylor (2003), and Neelands (2007, 2004) have defined the complex roots of applied theatre and drama. One common definition is the idea of learning as a reflective, sensitive process in which participants explore their own experiences and views of reality in a dramaturgical and fictional frame, and by doing so construct new meanings (Jackson, 2007) through drama actions and discussions. The core idea of the educational tradition is to create a space for dialogue and for reflective thinking (see Asikainen, 2003; Eriksson, 2011; Errington, 1992; all of which are studies linking critical reflection and drama education).

The following table (5) categorises four different traditions under the umbrella of ADT. The categorisation was created by ADT practitioners (Pässilä, Korhonen, & Owens, 2012)¹⁶ and it based on the previous ADT research mentioned in this study.

¹⁵ The author of the present study has had experience in pedagogy, education, and ADT since 1990.

¹⁶ Pekka Korhonen has had an important role in developing Finnish drama and theatre pedagogy, a field he has been working in since 1970. Allan Owens has taught and coached process drama to practitioners of applied

Table 5. Different categories of ADT traditions

Genres	Performative tradition	Therapeutic tradition	Educational tradition	Research tradition
Domain	Performance art	Health care	Development work	Science
Context	To make theatre art – at art institutions or outside of them	To heal – at health-care institutions or corporations	To bring about change – in various communities	To conduct Action Research – at a university
Roles	Artist and audience	Therapist and patient	Facilitator and change agents	Researcher and co-researchers or participants
Aim	Passive reception as audience, distanced catharsis	Healing, self-understanding	Improvements in efficacy and welfare	Knowledge production for the academy and for the AR participants

There are four traditions of ADT: performative, therapeutic, educational, and research. In the performative tradition, the practitioner takes on the role of performer, while the actor and audience see a play and receive an aesthetic experience. In the therapeutic tradition, the practitioner is in the role of the therapist, the audience is in the role of the patient, and the aim is to heal the patient. In the educational tradition, the practitioner is in the role of change facilitator, and the audience takes part in change and is engaged in the change process as an active subject. In the research-based tradition, the practitioner is in the role of researcher and ADT practitioner, while the audience members are in the role of organisation members and co-researchers who are actively creating and producing knowledge in order to better understand the organisational settings around them. This study is focused on the research-based tradition and utilises participatory theatre as a valuable form of inquiry and reflection for practical needs of action research.

In general, it is characteristic of ADT that it provides an imagination-focused framework – via aesthetic distancing and participation – for exploring and understanding how different people experience aspects of the subject or phenomenon being studied. However, this imagination-focused framework is too often ‘over-understood’, as if it would guarantee only good, desired outcomes. It is essential to understand to what, how, why, and with whom this framework is applied in order to gain knowledge of how ADT works (Gallagher, 2000); Berthoin Antal (forthcoming) discusses the need for critical perspectives in her study.

drama and theatre off and on for the past 20 years in Finland. His impact on Finnish drama and theatre pedagogy is also significant. Korhonen and Owens have frequently worked together over the past 20 years.

In each case, the applied drama activity is a customised intervention with the expectation that change in understanding, attitudes, and perhaps action will occur in the participants. One key aim is enabling participants to engage corporally in the created fictional world via roles, stories, and play, and to encounter other ways of knowing the world and considering the construction of everyday realities, thereby allowing for the possibility of reconstruction (Gallagher, 2000). In ADT, participants do not simply discuss the issues addressed via conceptual inquiry, but explore them concretely through a process of 'doing': watching and sharing thoughts and interpretations. The situation is often metaphorical and analogous, making simultaneous use of ironic playfulness and roles. In the eyes of outsiders, the aesthetics of drama activity often appear to be clumsy, incomplete, imperfect, and sketch-like rather than finely drawn, because the action is based on improvisation and the story is made up of fragments in which the situation has been considered from different views. These multiple perspectives are harnessed in the spirit of dissensus rather than consensus, where the clash of opposing views is central to the meanings being generated (Pässilä, Korhonen, & Owens, 2012).

3.2.1 ADT as an artistic investigation

Previous studies of the arts in organisations (Darsø, 2004; Berthoin Antal, 2009; Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Schiuma, 2011) have focused on learning, change, development, and innovation processes. For example, the arts have been used to attempt to sharpen skills needed in the organisation (creativity, diversity, imagination, and improvisation) or have aimed at practical outcomes, for example generating greater numbers of ideas, awareness or impacts on strategy, or at organising communication and interaction training. These arts applications have been viewed as encounters between different domains, as the artist or art practitioner enters into the workplace to work with organisational actors and/or art is brought into the world of the organisation.

As an art form appearing in organisations and in business life in general, ADT has received attention; managers and businesspeople have invited scholars and practitioners from the arts to the same table to discuss how to benefit from co-operation. Or, vice versa, scholars and practitioners from the arts have invaded organisational life (Schiuma, 2011; Nissley, 2010). According to Berthoin Antal (2009 p. 6), "policymakers are showing an interest in how to support competitiveness, quality of working life, and corporate social responsibility, and they are discovering that cultural resources can contribute significantly. So they would like to know whether artistic interventions can deliver on the promise to stimulate innovation and organizational learning." This might lead to a situation where people from within the organisation and ADT practitioners tend to forget the essential natures of these two different domains. Oft-heard statements about 'the power of theatre' ought to be co-operatively defined in each case by questioning what, whom, and how ADT empowered rather than arguing at a general level (Meisiek and Hatch, 2008).

Berthoin Antal (2009) underlines that practitioners – whether their background is in the arts, business, or research – ought to critically seek to understand the complex processes entailed in bringing artistic ways of knowing and doing to organisational contexts. Examples of previous studies that attempt to create a critical approach are those by Meisiek (2002), Meisiek and Barry (2007), and Nissley et al. (2004) on organisational theatre based on Boal's

philosophy of the theatre and on organisational development. Also Clark and Mangham's (2004b) study on Boalian Forum Theatre critically pointed out how existing power tensions are maintained rather than changed via theatre interventions. Nissley et al. (2004) also raised the issue of power and politics in their study. Clark's (2008) study explores the use of theatre in organisations as a resource and a technology. Clark's instrumental definition demonstrates a typology dependent on its participatory and adaptive dimensions. The typology divides theatre in organisational settings into four different categories, namely corporate theatre, radical theatre, organisational theatre, and situational theatre.

3.2.2 Aesthetic distance and participation

The present study will link reflection with aesthetic distance in order to demonstrate one way in which critically reflective knowledge can be put into practice within organisations in the service of learning and change. One of the key challenges in organising reflection is to move away from seeing reflection as looking back at how something was done or could have been done differently and to move towards creating distance from which to connect with what is still being felt. Organisational actors are connected to a wide range of past emotions in the present – even if people are not conscious of them (Pässilä and Vince, 2012; see also Vince and Saleem, 2004).

The combination of aesthetic distancing and reflection has rarely been discussed in earlier studies. Aesthetic distancing was a notion invented by playwright Bertolt Brecht (1964) in the context of drama and theatre. Ontologically, Brecht (1964) highlighted the critical reflection achieved by the artistic experience. Fiction and truth were different domains and needed not be mixed. He maintained distance between the role and the actor as well as between the play and the world. Instead of creating an illusion (the idea behind Aristotelian drama or tragedy), Brecht created epic drama that shattered the illusion of the stage. Brecht (1964) used different types of alienating effects – aesthetic distancing – to provoke reflective thinking in the audience.

The concept of aesthetic participation is derived from the participatory theatre of Augusto Boal (1979/2000, 1992, 1995), of which the combining of cognitive rationality and embodied knowing is a fundamental aspect. Aesthetic participation is a concept created for this dissertation in order to understand the nature of participative process conducted via aesthetic distancing. Aesthetic participation refers to post-Boalian theatre practices. Boal (1979/2000, 1992, 1995) extended Brecht's (1965) and Freire's (1970/2000) ideas and created a new form of theatre: a participatory theatre he named the Theatre of the Oppressed. This is a tradition that applies theatre to the needs of people and communities.

Boal, Brecht, and Freire understood people as bodily creators who use their senses when making sense of the world, actions, and relations. The dualistic idea of traditional performing theatre – with those who are performing on a stage and those who are receiving sitting passively in the audience – is challenged during aesthetic participation via aesthetic distancing (Boal, 1995; Brecht, 1964; Barry, 2008). Participants in ADT actually construct content for play and playful exploration (Heikkinen, 2002); for example, in traditional performance theatre, distance exists between actors and audience and between text and interpretation, but during aesthetic participation, the participants own the play, and it is played as a game with rules and structures (Boal, 1992). During this exploration, the players

are reflexive practitioners who have the power to create the play, by suggesting and making changes to events on-stage or events in images (Boal, 1979/2000). The players are encouraged to become co-constructors and co-actors, which Boal (1979/2000, 1995, 1992) termed 'spect-actors'. Using the Greek terms 'protagonist' and 'antagonist', Boal sought to show a person (the protagonist) facing obstacles and resistance (the antagonists) and offer a stage for dialogue.

3.3 REFLECTION

"Reflection is the practice of periodically stepping back to ponder the meaning to self and others in one's immediate environment about what has recently transpired. It illuminates what has been experienced by both self and others, providing a basis for future action. It thus constitutes the ability to uncover and make explicit to oneself and to one's colleagues what one has planned, observed, or achieved in practice. In particular, it privileges the process of inquiry leading to an understanding of experiences that may have been overlooked. Experiences can be composed of actions, beliefs, and feelings."

Raelin, 2001 (p. 11)

The theory of reflection emphasises lived experiences and how to gain knowledge of them. Reflection is focused on making sense of perplexity instead of trying to control it (Vince, 2002; Reynolds & Vince, 2004; Reynolds, 2011; Keevers & Treleaven, 2011). Recent innovation studies (Sveiby et al., 2012¹⁷; Hasu et al., 2012) suggest that reflection is a key process of innovation (Hasu et al., 2012 use the concept *reflexive brake*), especially when reflection is understood as a collective way of learning and gaining knowledge.

The learning – and reflection – involved in innovations is a complex, non-linear, and interactive process (Van de Ven et al., 1999; Akrich et al., 2002a; Newell et al., 2006; Mork et al., 2010; Hasu et al., 2012). The research literature has not paid sufficient attention to the fact that whenever they zoom in on reflection through the lens of practice-based innovation, the participants involved in the innovation actions are active subjects, intellectual and emotional persons, rather than innovation resources or objects of innovation actions (Melkas & Harmaakorpi, 2012).¹⁸ The micro-level perspective, in which

¹⁷ The aim of Sveiby et al. (2012 p. 3) is "...to challenge contemporary innovation research by problematizing its underlying assumptions and promoting a more nuanced way of considering the consequences of innovation..." In saying so, they point out the need for critical innovation policy at the macro-level and for critical innovation activities in micro-level processes.

¹⁸ Nilsen and Ellström (2012) suggest that practice-based innovations can be fostered through creative learning that is broadly similar to concepts such as 'double-loop learning' (Argyris & Schön, 1978), 'expansive learning' (Engeström, 1988), and 'transformative learning' (Mezirow, 1991). Nilsen and Ellström (2011) propose that creative learning involves experimentation and testing of alternative ways of acting in different situations, and reflection is fundamental to this.

various professional groups reflect on organisational relations, practices, and tensions, includes exploration of experiences. Reflection offers a way to start making sense of this complexity: participation therein is primarily focused on reaching harmony, but it calls attention to tensions, conflicts, and emotions (Vince & Saleem, 2004; Reynolds & Vince, 2004a).

But one question remains open: how can workplace spaces and places for reflection between organisational actors be organised within organisations being driven to act faster and faster when processing innovation?

Processing innovation is, then, always a question of change as well, and change includes tensions between existing and new, emerging ways of organising practises and relations. In order to be able to create new approaches, organisational members need to understand how and why they are actually involved with each other and, in doing so, start to reflect on the current habits and related assumptions. The theory and practice of organising reflection is based on the interest of facilitating critical reflection (Vince, 2002; Reynolds & Vince, 2004b; Reynolds, 2011, 1998, 1999; Baldwin 2008); the challenge is that it is said to be almost impossible to implement (Fook, 2010; Rigg & Trehan, 2008; Gould & Baldwin, 2004).

According to Vince (2002), reflection, especially critical reflection, is a process of breaking assumptions that simultaneously raises various types of resistance among learners. For example, the blocks between various professional groups and power tensions become 'visible'. In this context, visible means that people piece together what happens around and between them and articulate their experiences. This is difficult to do via traditional reflection practices. Therefore, new perspectives and practical learning activities – especially in the field of processing innovation – are needed in organisations.

3.3.1 Dewey-based reflection

Dewey conceptualised various modes of how people think: belief, imagination, consciousness, and reflection. Rodgers (2002 p. 845) identified, based on Dewey's writings, four criteria for characterising the concept of reflection and the purposes it served. According to Rodgers, these four criteria were:

- Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience to the next with a deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. It is the thread that makes continuity of learning possible, and ensures the progress of the individual and, ultimately, society. It is a means to essentially moral ends.
- Reflection is a systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking, with its roots in scientific inquiry.
- Reflection needs to happen in a community, in interaction with others.
- Reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others.

According to Dewey (1933/1998 p. 140), the complexities of situation and problem are woven together, and if we knew just what the difficulty was and where it lay, reflection would be much easier than it is. Dewey is against ready-made problem-solving; he reminds

us that reflective thinking requires moving beyond perplexity and reflective dialogue during problem-solving. When discussing problem-solving (p. 138), he draws on the image of a perplexed situation:

“Suppose you are walking where there is no regular path. As long as everything goes smoothly, you do not have to think about your walking; your already-formed habit takes care of it. Suddenly you find a ditch in your way. You think you will jump it (supposition, plan): but to make sure, you survey it with your eyes (observation), and you find that it is pretty wide and that the bank on the other side is slippery (facts, data). You then wonder if the ditch may not be narrower somewhere else (idea), and you look up and down the stream (observation) to see how matters stand (test of idea by observation). You do not find any good place and so are thrown back upon forming a new plan. As you are casting about, you discover a log (fact again). You ask yourself whether you could not haul that to the ditch and get it across the ditch to use as a bridge (idea gain). You judge that idea is worth trying, and so you get the log and manage to put it in place and walk across (test and confirmation by overt action).”

According to Rodgers (2002 p. 863), Dewey’s reflection includes precise steps: observation and detailed description of an experience, analysis of the experience that includes generation of explanations and development of theories, and experimentation, testing the theory. Reflection requires cognitive and emotional discipline on behalf of the individual. Rodgers (2002 p. 863) summarises that reflection “...which involves interactions between the self, others, and one’s environments, in turn serves as the next experience from which learning can continue, a phenomenon that Dewey called continuity.”

3.3.2 The reflective practitioner: reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action

Later on, Schön (1983) developed Dewey’s theory and practice of reflection into the concept of ‘reflective practitioner’, a well-known conceptual model in management learning and management education. Schön used the concepts of ‘reflection-on-action’ and ‘reflection-in-action’. He emphasised that the key skill of practitioners is being able to ‘think about what they are doing while they are doing it’. Schön (1983 p. 68) illustrates the nature of reflection-in-action when the practitioner is in the midst of action that challenges his assumptions thusly:

“The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation.”

Reflection is one of the key building blocks of learning (Vince & Reynolds, 2009) and allows organisations to call to the surface the assumptions that inform day-to-day action (and inaction). Schön (1983 p. 138) describes the reflective situation as follows:

“When a practitioner makes sense of a situation he perceives to be unique, he sees it as something already present in his repertoire. To see this site as that one is not to subsume the first under a familiar category or rule. It is, rather, to see the unfamiliar, unique situation as

both similar to and different from the familiar one, without at first being able to say similar or different with respect to what. The familiar situation functions as a precedent, or a metaphor, or... an exemplar for the unfamiliar one."

3.3.3 Different types of reflection

The concept of reflection has been elaborated as an activity undertaken by the individual (reflective practitioner) within an organisation. Recently, there has been a shift in perspective that emphasises the critical and organisational dimensions of reflection in both educational and organisational contexts. Four perspectives have helped to take our understanding of reflection as an organisational process beyond that of the notion of the 'reflective practitioner': critical reflection, public reflection, productive reflection, and organising reflection (see Table 6 below) (Vince & Reynolds, 2009).

Table 6. Perspectives of reflection (Developed from Vince & Reynolds, 2009)

	Critical reflection	Public reflection	Productive reflection	Organising reflection
Characteristics	To identify and question taken-for-granted beliefs and values	To become collectively aware of and transform one's own behaviour	To develop work and learning activities that change work practices and personal engagement	To take account of emotional and political processes in the workplace
Focus	To question and challenge existing structures and practices	To improve policy and practice	To improve productivity and quality of working life	To generate collective knowledge
Aim	To unsettle established ways of working	To create alternative interpretations	To improve competence linked to productivity and work satisfaction	To organise structures that allow reflection
Key element	Emancipatory	Transformation-al	Agency building	Organising process
	Reynolds, 1998; Alvesson, 1995; Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992; Parker, 1995, 2002; Cunliffe, 2009	Raelin, 2001; Vince, 2004; Cunliffe, 2009; Reynolds & Vince, 2004a	Boud et al., 2006	Vince, 2002; Reynolds & Vince, 2004b; Nicolini et al., 2004

According to Vince and Reynolds (2009), productive reflection emphasises the dual goals of productivity and quality of working life. The aim of productive reflection – balancing the

needs and ambitions of customers, investors, and personnel through learning, competence development, creativity, and innovation – is aligned to the aims of industrial management. “Reflection is far from being an isolating act of solely personal benefit, it is a key to learning to improve production and to making life at work more satisfying” (Boud et al., 2006 p. 2). In productive reflection, the focus is on the work itself: enhancing productivity and underpinning improvements in personal engagement and meaning in work (Vince & Reynolds, 2009).

Public reflection can bring the consequences of one’s behaviour to one’s attention in ways that might transform behaviour, and make visible and discussable the gap between what people say they will do and what they actually do in organisations in order to make change possible (Vince and Reynolds, 2009). Public reflection is an approach that explicitly links the impact of organisational politics on the individual – for example, the tendency towards caution and blame (Vince and Saleem, 2004) – to the impact individuals can (collectively) make on organisational politics (Raelin, 2001; Reynolds & Vince, 2004a). It is a process that “can help us review and alter any misconstrued meanings arising out of uncritical half-truths found in unconventional wisdom or in power relationships” (Raelin, 2001, pp. 12-13).

Vince (2002) proposes a shift from individually oriented reflection to collective reflection: becoming collectively aware of and transforming one’s own behaviour. This approach has been conceptualised as organising reflection (see also Reynolds & Vince, 2004b). Organising reflection also invites critical reflection (Reynolds, 1998; 2011), which includes examination of the social and political assumptions rooted within an organisation (Cunliffe, 2009; 2004). So organising reflection includes critical reflection, while critical reflection triggers reflexivity (Cunliffe, 2009). The following figure (7) illustrates the dynamics between organising reflection, critical reflection, and reflexivity.

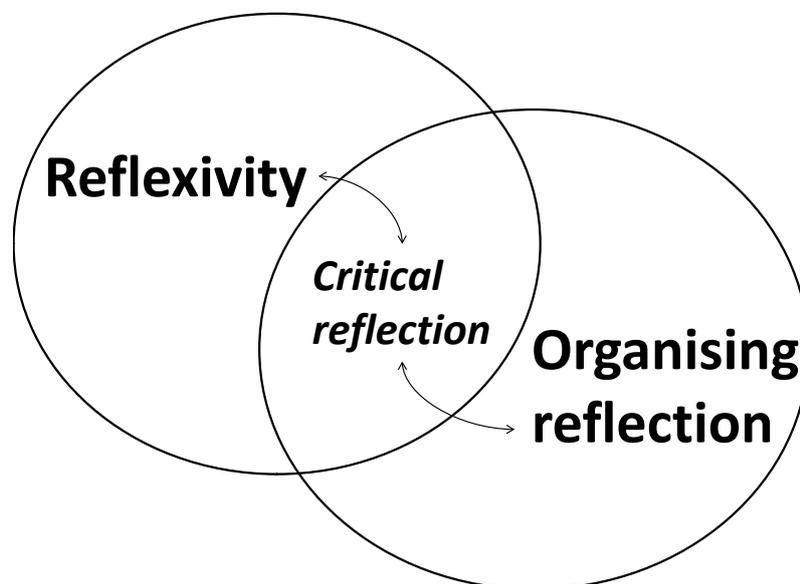


Figure 7. The dynamics of organising reflection, critical reflection, and reflexivity

Even though reflection is widely recognised, it is forgotten in organisations and in the everyday work and practices that take place within them. When reflecting on a perplexed situation in an organisational setting, the focus is on discovering and letting a sense of dissonance emerge in order to understand and challenge the assumptions behind it. Reflection requires dialogue, which enables organisational actors to deal with difficulties and resistance (Vince, 2002; Reynolds & Vince, 2004b). One fundamental aspect of organising reflection is taking account of emotional and political processes in the situational frame of the work, workers, workplaces, and discourse in which their work is represented and misrepresented (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000 p. 283).

3.3.4 Critical reflection

If practical reflexivity is to be included in the learning process, critical reflection must be part of it. Vince and Reynolds (2009) summarise the characteristics of critical reflection that distinguish it from other approaches to reflection:

- The task of critical reflection is to identify and question taken-for-granted beliefs and values, particularly those that have become unquestioned or 'majority' positions.
- Critical reflection pays particular attention to the analysis of power relations and relations between power and knowledge. Regardless of the particular perspective a critical approach is based on, it will emphasise the value of questioning and challenging existing structures and practices.
- Critical reflection implies a shift of focus from an individual perspective on knowledge (skill or competence) towards a collective, situated process that assists inquiry into actual and current projects and their organisational consequences.
- Critical reflection identifies social and collective dynamics within and constructed by our own practice. Reflection on socially constructed, collective experience is important in order to highlight the political, emotional, and ethical components of organising, as well as its conceptual or technical aspects.

The following figure (8) illustrates the distinction between the ontological backgrounds of how reflection and reflexivity are understood and explained (Vince, 2002; Cunliffe, 2009).

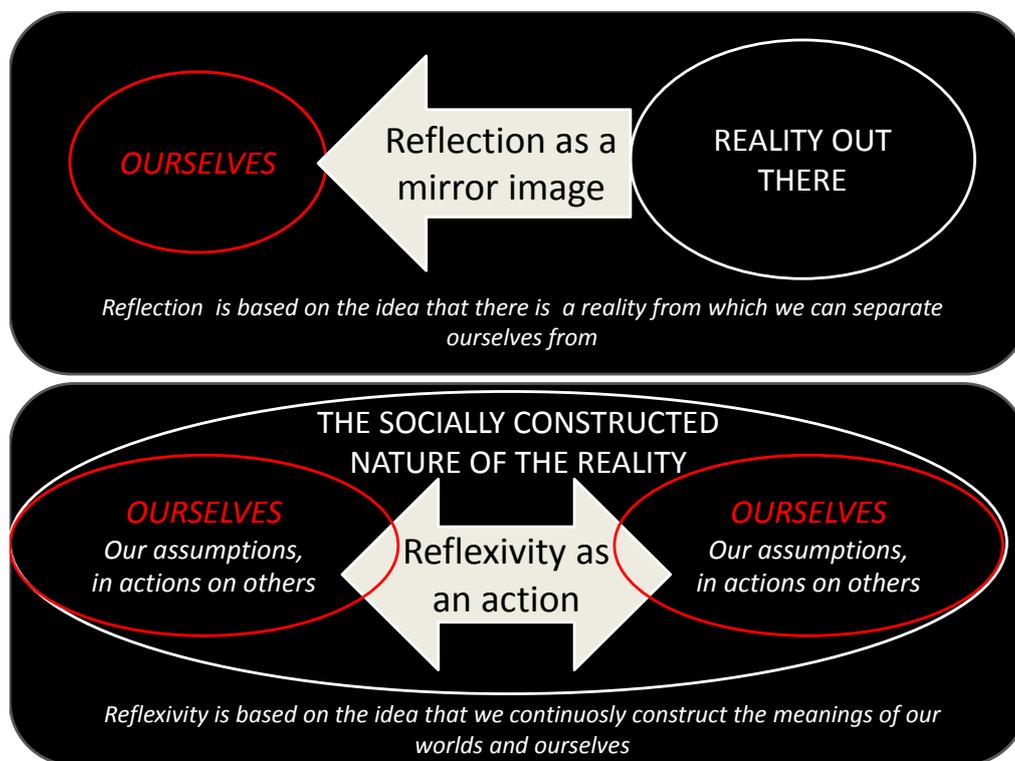


Figure 8. The distinction between reflection and reflexivity

The first image portrays reflection as a retrospective mirroring that does not automatically involve critical thinking as part of this process. For instance, implementing Schön's (1983) reflection-on-action or reflection-in-action into the social structures of work does not necessarily include a critical approach. The second picture describes reflexivity as an ongoing relational and dialogical event involving critical reflection and the questioning of basic assumptions (Cunliffe, 2001, 2009; Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004).

4 TESTING THE REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RBT

During this study, the author applied – in other words, tested – RBT in Finnish private and public organisational contexts. The members of four organisations were involved in this process, offering unique perspectives and purposes in specific, practice-based situations. The authentic organisational situations required tailored processes and extensive involvement.

Testing was guided by the theory and practice of reflection and reflexive practices (relying on such concepts as Dewey's 1933 reflective thinking, Schön's 1983 reflective practitioner, Vince's 2002 organising reflection, and Cunliffe's 2002 reflexive dialogical practice), and drew on story-telling sessions, dramatisation, organisational theatre sessions, and action planning sessions as methodological elements.

4.1 THE PRACTICE-BASED TESTING CONTEXT

Despite innovation theories and formal discussions about the importance of innovation as a fuel for welfare and growth, another reality seems to exist on the practical level. At the grass-roots level of the organisations where the model was tested, the executives, operational managers, and employees were not fully familiar with the learning orientation related to knowledge production at the fuzzy front-end of innovation processing. The basic assumption was that analytical decision-making interactions around structural problems were sufficient when it came to processing innovation. A simplified innovation process (including conception, implication, and marketing) was taken for granted as an isolated element of innovation creation activities. The managers and employees from the case organisations sought instrumental and mechanical solutions for how to 'produce' or 'implement' innovations in order to benefit from them. These assumptions entailed the idea that innovations are 'out there', that they could be captured and converted to business profit in the form of controlled R& D projects. Employees had a merely instrumental role, despite the fact that organisational actors, or at least some of them, acknowledged the need for a different type of role. The social structures of the organisations were thus stuck in an attitude of 'this is the way we have always done this', even though they recognised they did not have a path out of this situation.

Testing of the model was conducted through five processes that took place in the period 2008–2011 in southern Finland. These RBT processes provide insights into the RBT design process and the complexity of functions and roles in RBT. Testing took place in the work of four organisations. At the beginning, participants had only a fuzzy image of the problem, and an important aspect of this type of process was deepening understanding of the complexity of problems and possibilities throughout the organisation.

Two of the companies operate in the forest-industry sector, and the other two case organisations were in the public health-care sector. All of the case organisations were (at least formally) familiar with the new innovation discourse and highlighted the value of openness and the importance of and need for innovation in their official speeches and strategies. The practical need that needed to be addressed by the action research was a change in existing practices and the ways in which people saw their roles during the renewal

of practices in their work community. The steps to changing practice were designed using the stages of RBT, and the participants themselves defined the development needs. In other words, the organisations' members – managers, employees, and customers – innovated practices. Before the organisation's members were able to innovate a practice, however, they needed to understand it. They explored together how the practice was organised in their organisation, how they carried out their professional actions, and how they themselves shaped practice and innovation processes.

In each organisation, the action took place between various professional groups; in two of the processes, customers were involved as well. The five sub-studies describe the stages in which planning actions (model building), acting and observing the process and resulting action (collective testing with key teams and within organisations), and reflecting on processes and re-planning (creation of the extended model) took place. At the end of the research process, acting and observing processes and novel action (analysis of the model) and reflecting on processes (validation of the model) took place within the context of two organisations.

Testing the reflexive model of RBT involved 38 interventions: Work Story sessions, Customer Story sessions, Organisational Theatre sessions, and Action Planning sessions. The interventions were novel forms of inquiries (also in terms of the elements of the model) that captured the practical and perplexed situation with the help of aesthetic distancing. The essential working question for participants was, what was actually taking place – especially at the hidden and tacit level of micro-processes – in their work and at their workplace when the employees and managers were in the midst of change and in the process of renewing or maintaining their way of being.

During the testing, the participants in the model exhibited visible emotional responses to the on-going change; they faced the dynamics involved in the fuzzy front-end of the practice-based innovation process.

Both the fuzzy front-end nature of practice-based innovation and the nature of PAR required that those involved actually be active participants who reflected on what was happening; they reflected on what change means to them and what effects they had experienced (both negative and positive experiences were shared). Through these reflections, they defined avenues for change and made action plans based on them. The following figure illustrates the three different levels of reflection that took place during the PAR process used in this study.

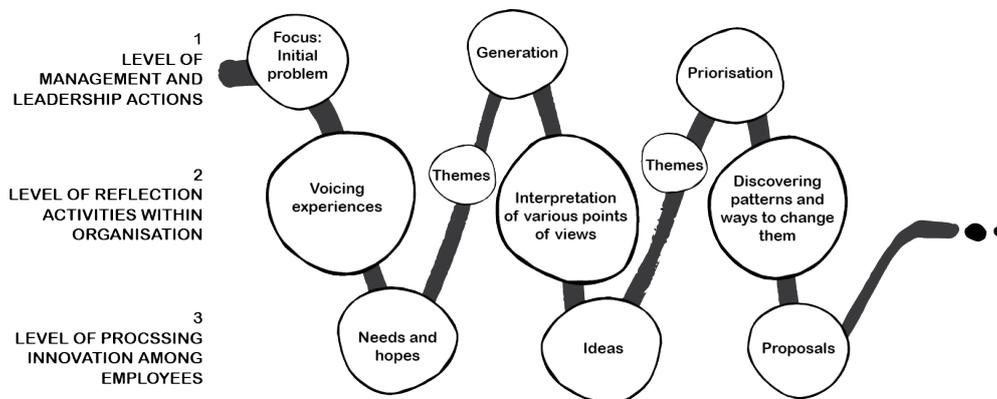


Figure 9. The levels of reflection involved in the case studies

The evaluations at the three different levels – 1) management and leadership actions, 2) dialogue actions within the organisation, and 3) processing innovation among employees – were divergent, multi-voiced, and polyphonic rather than focused on finding consensus or unified harmony.

From the grass-roots perspective, the participants shared their experiences about practices, roles, relations, actions, events, tensions, and emotions; they then discussed and defined the issues that needed to be maintained as well as what needed developing and how. By doing this, they started to change their way of organising. From the perspective of practice-based innovation, the organisations’ members took steps to reshape their social practices and produced mode 2b knowledge for organisational process innovation. The action plans focused on defining significant development needs at the personal, professional, contextual (what is essential to whom and why), institutional, and structural levels.¹⁹ From the action research perspective, the outcome of this testing was that through the reflexive model of RBT, the members of the organisation gained knowledge about the disorganisation of organisations, contextually specific practice, the underlying dynamics of human interactions (for example, emotions and power issues), and the paradoxes that are integral to organisational life. They became more aware that knowledge production is a participatory process involving the social, emotional, and political dynamics of the organisational life of which they always are a part.

4.2 BASIS OF THE TESTING

4.2.1 Aesthetic distancing

One essential pillar of the model was the ‘aesthetic space’ (originally conceived by Boal 1979/2000) provided through post-Boalian ADT practices. The aesthetic space was formed through, by, and between people encountering each other. These encounters differed from

¹⁹ Further steps are beyond the scope of this study but offer interesting avenues for further research.

routine daily meetings because their intent was to collectively learn from the synergies resulting from the utilisation of sensing (the senses) and imagination in reflection, and then further in knowledge production as well. The driving force behind the creation of the aesthetic space was the aesthetic distancing whereby people, through the use of a theatrical frame and varying roles, become visible in various ways and find different voices. From a post-Boalian perspective, this voicing involved democratic ethics; voicing was not a top-down educational programme, nor did it involve conformism (Boje et al., 2003). This voicing was, on the other hand, a polyphonic, collaborative process wherein participants shared and respected different points of view; it was not theatrical training focusing on how to behave, present, be creative, or gain interaction skills. Instead, this post-Boalian theatre was a reflexive practice, offering radical space for aesthetic participation. This resonates with Reynolds's (1998, 1999, 2011) definitions of generating critical reflection. The aesthetic distancing that took place during the process of aesthetic participation revealed relational processes of organising that can 'unsettle conventional practice', and through this attempt, became associated with reflexive practice (Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004).

One practical example of reflexive practice was use of Theatrical Images in the context of collective voicing (this is described in greater detail in Sub-study 4). Through Theatrical Images, participants explored practical situations and the social structures related to these situations. The following figure illustrates Theatrical Images.

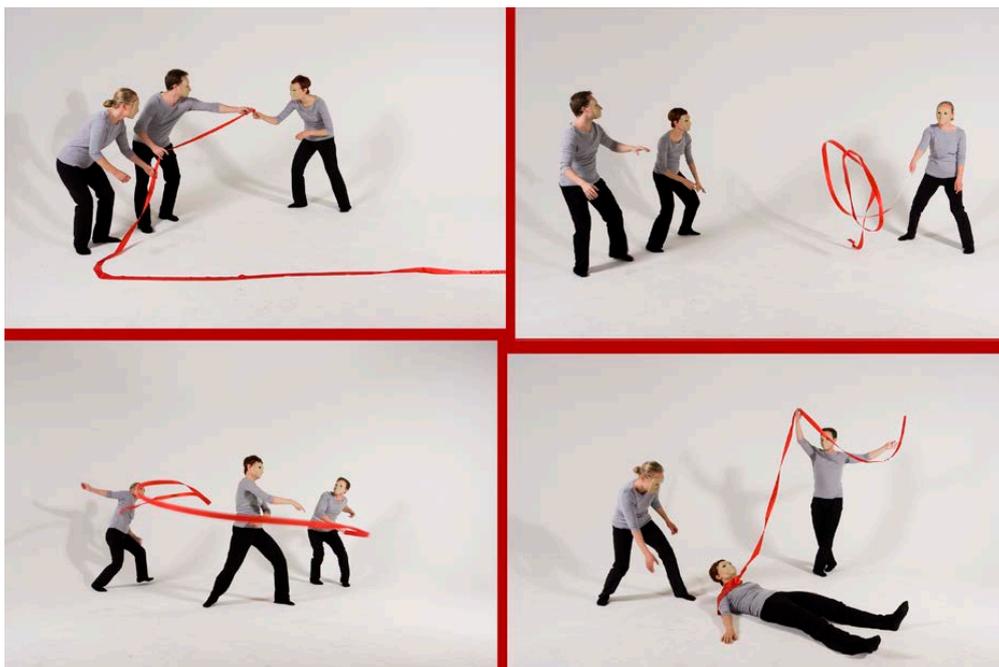


Figure 10. Theatrical Images

Theatrical Images were used as a tool to represent experiences, attitudes, feelings, behaviour, ideas, and relationships; in a way, the images captured the participants' lived experiences of practical situations. Each individual understood the Theatrical Images in their

own way, associating the images with their own experiences; each interpretation of an image was valued; there was not a single right convention for interpreting the images.

The images served the creation of a dialogue that elicited tacit knowledge and enabled reflection. With the help of the images, people were able to focus on the themes entwined in practical situations: Who said what and did what? What if they did something differently? This provided both individuals and various groups of professionals the opportunity to create temporary distance between their experiences within the organisation and the emotions and relations generated through these experiences. The individuals projected their interpretations onto the images as a way of articulating the contradictions that were often integral to their experience within the organisation. Aesthetic distancing was a process that encouraged an important contradiction: remaining connected to the emotions generated within organisations, and, at the same time, being able to sufficiently distance one's self from their effects. Aesthetic distance encouraged reflection on the emotions at work and, as a consequence, invited reinterpretation of practice (see Sub-study 2). The first push for change came from the experiences of the employees themselves; they created an expansive interpretation from their own and others' experiences. Self-defined needs and possibilities were the cornerstones of the change.

4.2.2 The dramaturgical gaze and the roles of researcher: validity and reliability

Bradbury and Reason (2006 pp. 333–349) address questions of quality and validity in action research by drawing attention to important and complex choices that must be made by the action researcher: "Participatory action research is emergent and evolutionary: you cannot just go to a village or an organization or professional group and 'do it', but rather the work evolves (or does not) through mutual engagement and influence" (ibid p. 345). Questions about how the action researcher works have emerged and developed over time, and questions of how this influences the work he or she carries out are essential. According to Golafshani (2003), validity and reliability in qualitative research are defining characteristics of research that is credible, while the credibility of qualitative research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher. With this notion serving as a guiding precept, the credibility of the research process and the researcher's actions were articulated and evaluated throughout the study.

Bradbury and Reason (2006, pp. 346-349) provide a list of categories of quality to consider:

- 1) quality in participation and relationships
- 2) quality of useful, pragmatic outcomes
- 3) quality of knowing: conceptual–theoretical integrity, extended ways of knowing, methodological appropriateness
- 4) quality of work and purpose: engaging in significant work, and
- 5) quality of consequences.

Within this study, the author and the artists were temporary visitors, participatory outsiders, and interpreters for the organisations rather than objective analysts or experts. Questions of quality and validity demanded reflection on the five issues mentioned above among all those involved.

A stance that recognises the person of the researcher within the research process is a natural method of choice for studying disorganisation, power, paradox, and affect (Patton, 2002). This present study added another, embodied level through 'dramatic gaze'. Dramatic gaze was a way of including embodiment in the research process; it allowed the researcher and co-researchers to explore perplexed situations and learn from them together.

As a mode of interpretation linked to both embodied and more explicit knowledge, dramatic gaze was woven into the expectations and dynamics involved in the research process. It was crucial that the author be aware of the researcher's position and actions and understand that "the researcher is the instrument" (Patton, 2002 p. 14). Self-awareness was gained through reflective meetings between the author, the researchers from research institutions, the artists, and the members of the organisations as well as between the author and the artists. These reflective meetings also offered a stage for validity: during discussions, the research was constantly evaluated, various interests were articulated, and practical steps were taken based on these evaluations.

The reflective meetings were critical observational steps for conducting triangulation of this study. As is common in qualitative research, triangulation was used to test the reliability and validity of the study (Golafshani, 2003). In each meeting, representatives from the key team (which consisted employees and managers, researchers, and artists) raised issues about the methods used, the ethics and values related to participation, the nature of the data and the analysis, and the diversity of research interests and outcomes. These discussions and negotiations influenced the research process, making it emergent and evolutionary. The power dynamics related to knowledge production at each level limited as well as enabled the research: for example, it was challenging to let go of the dichotomy between 'them' and 'us', with 'them' as lived experiences of structures and higher-status workers as experts and 'us' as lived experiences of lower-status actors who felt powerless. This division into 'them' and 'us' was a consistent practice; each professional unit found itself in a powerless relationship with regard to someone else. Paradoxically, awareness building was embedded in the practice that the reflection itself was part of.

Three approaches were followed to ensure the reliability and validity of the study, although reliability and validity are not viewed as distinct in qualitative research in general or this present study in particular. The three approaches describe the different roles of the researcher as well as different positions (based broadly on Mattson & Kemmis, 2007): 1) an actor in a participatory action research process took on the role of researcher, 2) an actor in an organisational development project took on the role of facilitator, and 3) an actor in method development took on the role of constructor. These approaches cross-fertilised each other and generated different types of questions, which were then discussed during the reflective meetings:

- 1) The role of researcher involves several research-related questions: Where, when, and how do we collect data and analyse it? How do we get feedback from the organisation, and how do we give feedback to them? Is feedback a monologue or dialogue?
- 2) The role of facilitator consists of the questions related to the development project and the interactions in it: How do we organise story-telling inquires? What stimulates story-telling? How do we share experiences with each other?

How do we interpret stories? How are stories devised and dramatised with the ADT artist? How is context converted, for example into development topics? Who prioritises contexts, and how?

- 3) The role of constructor is made up of the questions about learning and knowledge production and the related practical actions: How do we use narratives? What forms of ADT would be most suitable in each case? How and what do we learn from the narratives? How do we script the stories? How do we devise theatre scenes from the stories? How do we dramatised scripts for performance?

The following figure (Fig.11) illustrates the three approaches the researcher took to the participatory research.

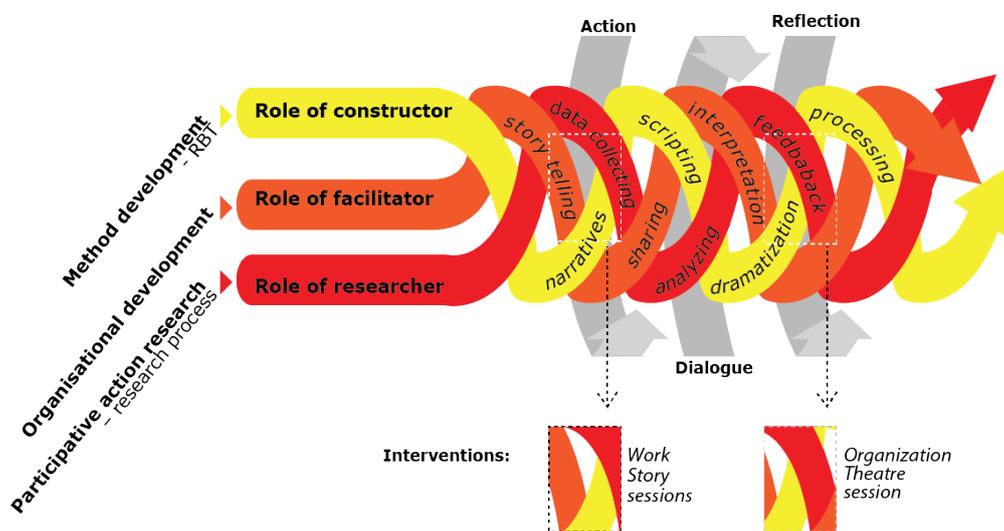


Figure 11. The various roles of the researcher

During the research process, the author, as researcher and ADT practitioner, was engaged in a dialogue between theory and praxis, action and reflection. It was a cumulative process: all three approaches – the participatory action research process, the purposes and praxis of organisational development, and the methods for reflecting change and development – were woven together. The various phases of RBT functioned as a reflexive practice contributing to identification of ‘not-yet-existing’ possibilities and problem-solving within the work community.

The researcher had three roles during this study: constructor, facilitator, and scholar/researcher. In the role of constructor, the author designed participatory, narrative, and theatrical methods for each work community. In the role of constructor, the author used her expertise as an ADT practitioner to design a reflexive model of RBT that included reflective inquiries, namely Work Story and Organisation Theatre sessions. When designing these inquiries, the author applied her knowing and knowledge of ADT. However, during these participative sessions, participants reflected on their personal and professional understanding, which was simultaneously a form of data gathering, and in this case the author was in the role of researcher collecting and analysing data as well as gathering,

receiving, and giving feedback related to development ideas, challenges, and possibilities. During the reflective inquiries (the Work Story and Organisation Theatre sessions), the author also acted as a facilitator, inviting and inspiring members of the work community and their customers (in dedicated Customer Story sessions) to articulate their lived experiences via story-telling and to, through interpretation, share and examine their own experiences and those of others related to practice and relationships around practice. After the sessions, the author stepped once more into the role of constructor and gathered all the narratives, and, respecting the original narrators' voices, scripted stories and dramatised theatrical scenes and participatory exercises out of them. At this point, the author also processed her co-operation with the ADT artists, customers, managers, employees, and the multidisciplinary research team. Another important task for the author was processing the series of change-related actions within the various groups of professionals.

4.3 CYCLES OF TESTING

The following figure (12) illustrates how testing took place in the action research. In each organisation, testing involved four cycles: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

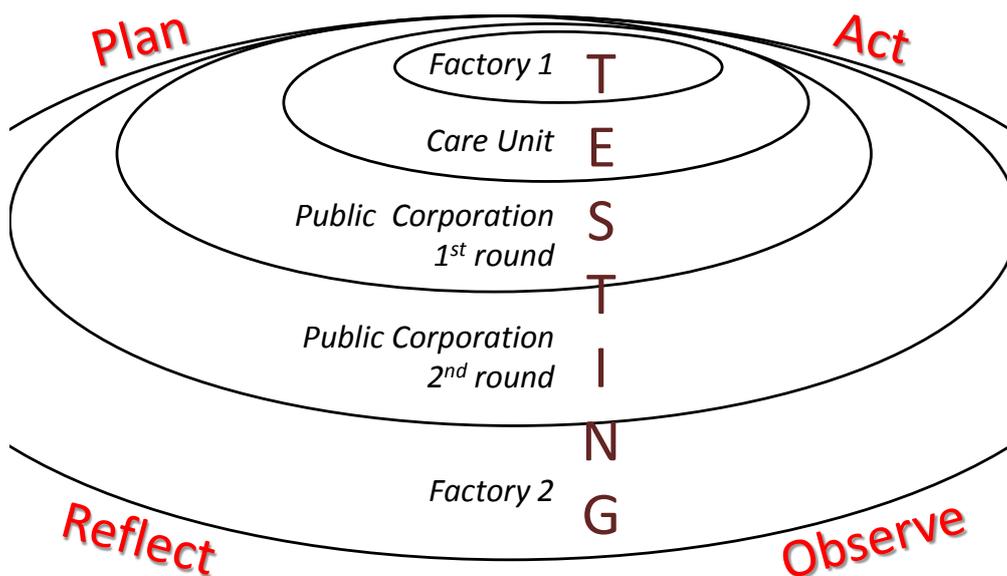


Figure 12. Testing as it took place throughout the action research

Each organisation played a role in generating the outcome: the reflexive model of RBT. Within Factory 1, the technical interest of PAR focused on model building; within the Care Unit, on collective testing (the customers also played a significant role); within round 1 in the Public Corporation, on extending the model; within round 2 in the Public Corporation, on analysing the model; and within Factory 2, on validation of the model. Each process was unique and open-ended; the researchers were only one part of the knowledge production where managers and employees were co-researchers. This was followed by participatory

action and an arts-based research orientation (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011; Finley, 2008; Leavy, 2009).

In each phase of the research process, the author of this study was involved as an action researcher, as an orchestrator for the group facilitators (researchers in the role of facilitators) and artists, and as a member of key team. The author's aim was to keep the role of action researcher as transparent as possible through discussions with the key team members and by reflecting on her own researcher voice during the research process (Denzin, 2001, 2003). The author evaluated the credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness of the research with the key team and, in the cases when a user-driven innovation approach was involved, with the customers of the organisation; issues were evaluated in their natural settings – in the problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (see for example Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

A question framed by Lincoln and Guba (1985 p. 290) guided the author's evaluation and testing: "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?" It led to the formulation of a question that acted as the basis of discussions: Did the RBT process allow various voices and interests – including those that were rarely heard – to emerge? Meetings of the key team served as a forum for discussion and dialogue and functioned as a validation and reliability process. In each organisation, a heterogeneous key team was nominated from within the organisation. The key team included managers, leaders, and employees, as well as at least one artist and 3–6 researchers. The participants jointly constructed a multi-voiced understanding of goals, collaboratively designed and evaluated the reflexive model of RBT. Even the interests and goals were different; diversity was understood as a possibility rather than a problem. This diversity took time: negotiations at the beginning of each process lasted 3–6 months, because it was fundamental to reach a 'shared-enough' understanding of the nature, goals, and values of the RBT process.

Not all of the negotiations ended up in PAR collaboration, because a participatory research orientation was not suitable for all organisations. In one organisation for instance, a manager wanted a controlled context of inquiry: "...these questions are too difficult to ask because the employees don't know the right answers to them..." And in another organisation, the manager questioned the participatory process in general; the author met with the manager to negotiate whether his organisation would be interested in the PAR orientation. After some minutes, the manager raised his hand and pointed out the window to the yard behind their factory, where a man was smoking his cigarette. The manager said: "Do you mean that...that I should ask them...as if they had any ideas. I don't think so..." After the meeting, both the manager and the researchers agreed that a participatory action research orientation would not have been best for this organisation.

4.4 ANALYSIS – A PATH FOR TESTING

Dewey's steps of reflection (1933/1998) are observation and detailed description of an experience; analysis of the experience that includes generation of explanations and development of theories; and experimentation, testing theory. This same kind of process took place to some degree in each RBT instance.

One important process for testing was dramatisation, and it was carried out using the methods of ethnodrama and ethnotheatre (Mieczakowski & Moore, 2008; Saldaña, 2009). Dramatisation attempted at articulating the tacit knowledge embodied in various professionals and embedded in practices. It began from the analysis of narrative and visual data; after this thematic analysis, the data was scripted into performances – the script of the ethnodrama that included quotations from the data – which were then rehearsed as theatrical scenes (= open-ended performances that allowed participants to participate) and designed into participatory activities. The following figure demonstrates the diversity of testing; it simultaneously included identification of practical problems in the situated workplaces, analysis of situated problems, and co-construction of the model. During the testing, co-construction was made explicit through self-evaluation.

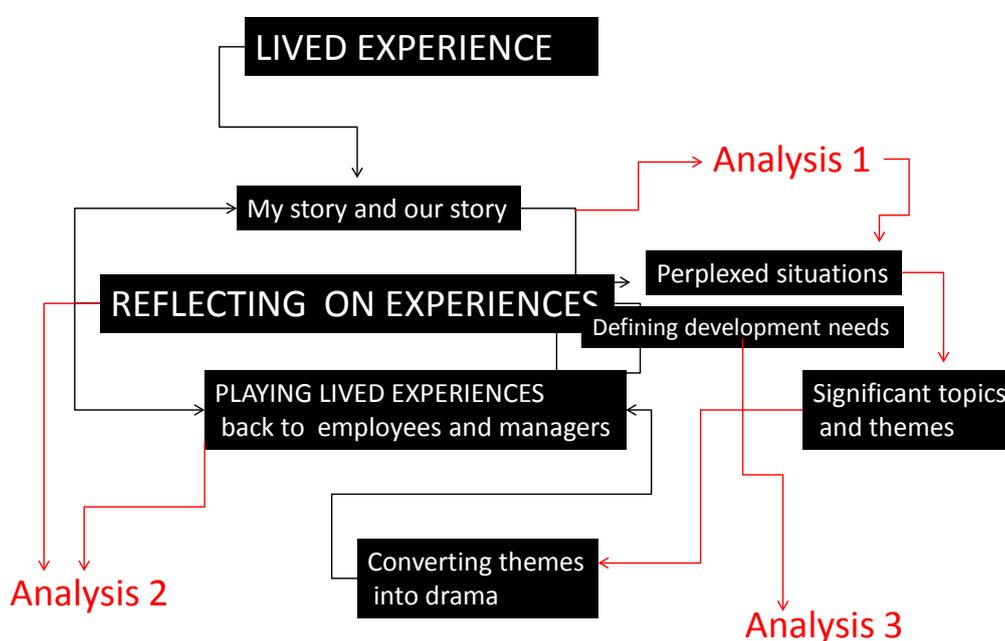


Figure 13. The testing paths followed during the study

- Analysis I included dramatisation of narratives taken from the story-telling sessions. Narrative and visual data was dramatised into theatrical scenes, open-ended performances that included participatory activities for participants. The first step of the analysis involved the researchers' thematic analysis. In each case, at least two researchers analysed the stories that were told and discussions that took place during the story-telling sessions. The analysis then progressed in such a way that the researchers categorised these stories and discussions by defining the contents of the narratives. The contents were grouped into themes. For example, the themes from the Factory 1 case study were organised around different units; for the Care Unit, they were organised around their customers' needs, hopes, and fears; for the Public Corporation during round 1, they were organised through the lenses of nurses, doctors, and assistants; for the Public Corporation during round 2, they were organised from the perspective of a customer service process; for Factory 2, they were organised around the production process. The thematic analysis then served as

a starting point for dramatisation. Before passing on the analysis for use in theatre, however, the organisation's key team had an evaluatory discussion about these themes. This had two effects: the key team validated the analysis, and they also started to reflect on the innovation potential of their own organisation. After this, the researcher (the author of this study) and the applied theatre artists used original stories, discussions (which were videotaped), and thematic analyses when scripting the plot for the theatrical scenes.

- Analysis II included content analysis of the data from the Organisational Theatre sessions. Data was collected through video, participatory observation, and narrative questionnaires. During the Organisational Theatre sessions, the researchers took on the role of group facilitators, observing discussions and making field notes. After each Organisational Theatre session, the researchers analysed their notes and produced a list of development needs for the key team. Based on these development needs, the researchers and in some cases the artists designed a participatory Action Planning session for the organisation in question. This process was slightly different at the Public Corporation during round 2; in this case, the Action Planning sessions were organised by the key members of the organisation, and the researcher and artists produced a video (based on one theatrical scene from the Organisational Theatre sessions) that facilitated conversations and action planning within the organisation.
- Analysis III included data from the Action Planning sessions. The data was in the form of mind-maps, conceptual models and categorisations, priority lists, photographs, and the researchers' field notes. Action planning took place collaboratively; the idea was to plan *with* rather than *for* people. In this way, the members of the organisation jointly negotiated what was meaningful and worthy of development, as well as how to organise development actions. Action planning was, then, a step for renewing and innovating one's own practices, processes, capabilities, and services.

Organisational processes were practice-based co-creations²⁰ for model building; all actors were involved in testing. This testing differed, however, from laboratory- or classroom-style testing; testing took place in everyday, problematic organisational settings. Throughout testing, the organisational actors and, in some cases, also the customers were engaged in developing, constructing, and testing the model; this took place through formal feedback questionnaires, participatory discussions, meetings, and informal discussions with managers and members of the organisation's key team.

²⁰ In the context of industrial management, co-creation can be understood as 'test beds'.

5 FINDINGS

This study explored and extended the role of RBT in organising reflection and reflexive practices in the context of practice-based innovation in Finland. The implications of this study take the form of a reflective learning model of RBT that can be collaboratively constructed by organisational actors, innovation scholars, and ADT artists, and whereby people can organise and create micro-level learning processes related to practice-based innovation actions by themselves.

During this study, a model of for organising reflection and reflexive practices was built by tapping participatory post-Boalian theatre practices, and this model was collectively tested in four organisations. The co-creation of the model was carried out in an iterative process cycling between action and theory. A checklist for practitioners – for innovation managers, facilitators, and ADT artists using RBT in organisational settings – is also provided as one practical finding of this study.

In this section, the findings of the study are explained. First, the findings from the sub-studies are explained, as the sub-studies illustrate how the model was tested and extended to the organisations.

The research questions addressed by this study were:

- *How can RBT be organised and collective reflection cultivated in practice-based innovation activities?*
 - *What kinds of reflection and reflexive processes emerge via RBT in organisational settings?*
 - *What is distinctive about the use of RBT in organisations?*
 - *How are theatre, reflection, and innovation linked in the context of knowledge production?*

5.1 THE SEVEN STAGES OF THE REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RBT

Table 7 illustrates the elements and functions of the reflexive model of RBT developed during the study. These elements are integral to organising RBT and cultivating collective reflection in practice-based innovation activities. The model consists of seven stages, seven functions, and five emerging types of reflection that demonstrate what kinds of reflection and reflexive processes emerge via RBT in organisational settings. The reflection types are 1) personal reflection and reflexivity, 2) professional reflection and reflexivity, 3) context, 4) institutional reflection and reflexivity, and 5) structural reflexivity. During the process, the participants faced various obstacles because they were – at least temporarily, during the aesthetic participation – ‘unsettling the conventional practices’ related to their organisation and their own assumptions.

In each of the seven stages, the participants needed to exert intentional effort at reflection; even deciding to do so was a complex learning process. Too often, learning and innovation are viewed through a prism of ‘good and beautiful’, as if people only learned good things or produced good innovations in beautiful processes wherein everyone lives happily ever after.

The ‘fight or flight’ metaphor illustrates this paradox; learning and processing innovation are neither good nor bad, neither ugly nor beautiful, but rather perplexed, polyphonic, and sometimes even messy processes that require the questioning of one’s taken-for-granted assumptions.

The seventh stage of the model was beyond the scope of this study, as not all of the research processes lasted until that phase was completed. As a matter of fact, those processes are still on-going within the organisations. The following table shows the results of a meta-analysis of the five different PAR processes carried out in the case study organisations. The analysis exemplifies the elements of the reflexive model of RBT.

Table 7. Elements of the reflexive model of RBT

Stages:	Functions:	Emerging reflection:
Stage 1 Negotiation and multi-voiced commitment	Constructing content	<i>Context level reflection</i> focusing on the beliefs and assumptions that define content
Stage 2 Voicing lived experiences	Articulation of perplexity and complexity	<i>Personal level reflection</i> and <i>professional level reflexivity</i> focusing on taken-for-granted assumptions
Stage 3 Dramatising multi-voiced experiences	Transforming content into an aesthetic form	<i>Institutional level reflection</i> and <i>professional level reflexivity</i> related to competences, professional interests and assumptions in the domain
Stage 4 Theatrical explorations	Sharing different points of view	<i>Personal, professional and institutional level reflexivity</i> related to the politics and dynamics of participation, emerging resistance, anxiety and feelings of uncertainty
Stage 5 Polyphonic interpretations	Making sense of content	<i>Institutional level reflexivity</i> related to managerial or organisational actors’ reflexive practices, <i>structural level reflexivity</i>
Stage 6 Practice-based planning	Transforming content into practice	<i>Personal and institutional level reflexivity</i> related to interrelationships between the different levels of reflection (personal, collective, organisational, domain-level and societal)

Stage7 Practice-based action for renewal	Actualisation	<i>Context level reflection</i> related to continuous breaking of assumptions that aims to redefining content
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The reflexive model of RBT consists of the following seven stages:

1. Negotiation of and multi-voiced commitment to a general focus on participation and RBT exploration:

- Managers (and, in some cases, also other actors who are members of the organisation’s key team) and RBT practitioners construct content for learning and development.
- Different aspects negotiated and discussed include, for instance, the principle of polyphony, goals, and needs. During this phase, the RBT practitioner emphasises the importance of different voices and emancipation. The organisational actors emphasise practical solutions, and technical interests are highlighted. At this phase, there are multiple interests rather than one.
- The function of the stage is to construct content.



2. Voicing lived experiences:

- Organisational actors, various groups of professionals articulate and reflect on the perplexity and complexity they face in their work and work community. This articulation is stimulated via story-telling and visual methods. During this phase, groups of professionals discuss their professional and personal identities, learning needs, and power tensions. They also analyse what issues are important to them and categorise these issues. The researchers take on the role of facilitators, and all discussions are documented via video or participatory observation.
- The function of stage is to articulate perplexity and complexity.



3. Dramatising multi-voiced experiences into theatrical scenes:

- RBT practitioners, researchers, and ADT artist(s) transform the content of discussions from the previous stages into aesthetic form. During this phase, ethnodramatic analysis is used to dramatis the content into and devise²¹ theatrical performances.
- Researchers also confirm the validity of the themes in discussions with the organisational actors. The main focus of this validation is to ensure that the voices of the original narrators are respected during the dramatisation.

²¹ *Devise* and *devising* are expressions ADT artists use when constructing a play or theatrical scene from lived data; in our case studies, the data was collected during artistic interventions, namely Work Story sessions. Reflective inquiry was carried out through story-telling and with the help of Theatrical Images.



- The challenge here is to maintain the various voices and the tones and themes of the original stories. The idea is to describe the perplexity and complexity of lived experiences rather than dramatise an educational, 'how to behave' play.
- RBT practitioners (ADT artists and researchers) design a participatory theatre session.
- The function of the stage is to transform content into aesthetic form.

4. Theatrical explorations:

- Theatrical explorations are carried out in the context of participatory theatre. Perplexed situations are played back to organisational members and they begin to interpret and reflect on what is happening onstage. The ADT artists and researchers are in the role of facilitators.
- Participants share different points of view related to the events onstage. They discuss dialogue or lack of thereof, the diversity and difficulty of communication, and the structures that block reflective actions.
- During this stage, the organisational actors share and reflect on perceptions of learning and what is meaningful to each professional group.
- The function of this stage is to share different points of view.



5. Polyphonic interpretations:

- Organisational actors and researchers try to make sense of content. They discuss what should be done and what they are able/empowered to do and how to organise the process of becoming. The purpose of polyphonic interpretation is to allow or at least be aware of the potential of emerging knowledge – even if it is an uncontrolled and messy process of reflection.
- The function of this stage is to make sense of embodied and embedded content.



6. Practice-based planning:

- Organisational actors and researchers transform content into practice. For example, content needs to be made tangible in some way. When learning, the aim is to stimulate co-operative actions between different professional groups; people ought to crystallise where, how, why, and between whom.
- The function of this stage is to transform tacit and symbolic content into practice.



7. Practice-based actions for change:

- During this phase, organisational actors try to do things differently. They implement learning actions in practice and reflect on what is happening.
- The function of this stage is the actualisation of plans.

What is distinctive about the use of RBT in organisations is that participants need to prepare to struggle with two possibilities at each stage: to face and fight, in other words, to start to reflect; or to deny and fly, in other words, to avoid issues and maintain the existing situation. Obstacles are part of reflexive practices, because they spark the emotional and political dynamics at each of the seven stages. The author underlines that the model is not a tool to be mechanically implemented a single time from 'top management down to blue-collar employees', but rather a framework for how to start to organise reflection together and allow reflexive practices to be part of everyday working process. Accordingly, the model contributes to previous research conducted in the field of arts and organisations by arguing that post-Boalian practices in and of themselves do not bring anything to organisations or change anything within them if the organisational actors are not able or willing to take advantage of them.

In the model, reflection and reflexive practices are linked to contextual and situated learning: perplexed situations explored through aesthetic distancing challenged employees to create and produce knowledge. The reflexive model of RBT offers a path to mode 2b knowledge production. The model has potential when organisational actors confront new problems in their everyday work. But without reflexive practices, the emerging, sensitive knowledge sets up hurdles to learning, and the focus of learners remains on maintaining existing situations rather than changing them.

The reflexive model of RBT functions like a needle in the hands of a quilt-maker or an axe in those of a carpenter; the needle or axe is a metaphor for post-Boalian practice as a tool for organisational use, and the quilt-maker or carpenter is the person using the needle or the axe. The needle is handy when tacking pieces together, and the axe can be a clever tool for chopping wood but rather harmful if the carpenter chops someone else. We cannot blame the needle or the axe, but we can question the carpenter's action. We do not assume that the axe will fix a broken chair alone, nor do we expect the needle to sew a quilt by itself, and it is the same when applying post-Boalian practice: organisational actors have to take on the roles of quilt-maker or carpenter, as do practitioners of the arts and research. All actors – especially ADT practitioners and PAR researchers – need to acknowledge what can be done with the needle or axe: how and where to use it and, more importantly, where not.

5.2 THE TUNNEL OF REFLECTION AND REFLEXIVITY

During reflection, the participants recalled their experiences, and reflexivity occurred temporarily when participants generated generative questions to ask themselves in the context of imitation and imagination. These generative questions led them to – at least temporarily – question basic assumptions; to gain a critical perspective that allowed reflexivity to emerge. One distinctive element of the use of RBT in organisations is that the critical perspective requires that participants experience the working atmosphere as safe and supportive enough for them to trust that aesthetic distancing will protect them from fights regarding the status quo and give them the opportunity to voice their experiences. This also poses a challenge: if organisational relationships and structures are too oppressive, this type of approach maintains existing power dynamics. However, power is always present in organisations, and the reflexive model of RBT allow power dynamics to be expressed, articulated and discussed.

The following figure illustrates the RBT model, which is an on-going process of reflection, action, and reflexivity during RBT knowledge production, as the outcome of a learning process.

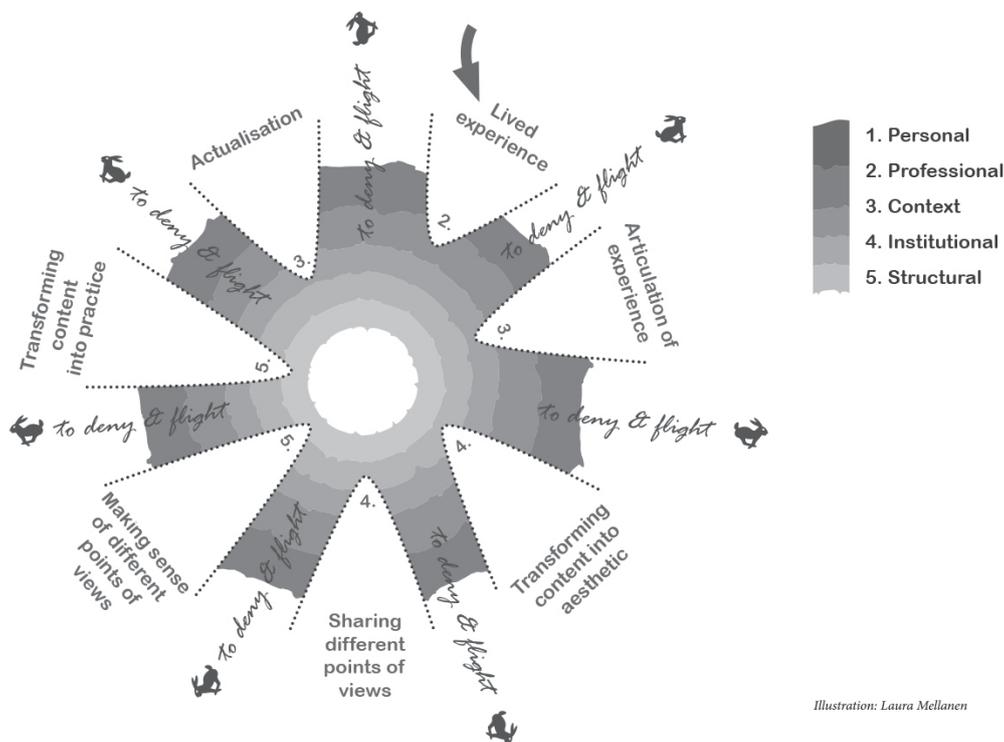


Figure 14. The RBT model

The five levels of reflection and reflexivity included in the reflexive model of RBT are:

- 1) personal reflection and reflexivity,
- 2) professional reflection and reflexivity,
- 3) contextual reflection and reflexivity
- 4) institutional reflection and reflexivity, and
- 5) structural reflection and reflexivity.

The most obvious level of functioning was intrapersonal: the contextual, and the personal and professional levels of reflection. The participants felt that they had ownership on this level. However, the institutional and structural levels of reflexivity were difficult to reach: it was the experience of the organisational actors and ADT practitioners that they did not have sufficient access or power to deal with this level. For example, the author of this study felt that, at the stage of theatrical explorations, she was intruding when asking about power positions. The author was touching on something that was considered best left alone or hidden. The metaphor of the ostrich with its head in the sand is an apt illustration of this phenomenon: some topics and issues within organisations make people want to hide their heads, and everyone pretends, 'OK, it doesn't exist'. This game of hide-and-seek between

what is revealed in public and what remains hidden is an integral trigger for reflexive practices. For example, managers create a social structure based on the perspective of hiding if they prohibit employees from expressing experiences that the managers presume are negative. By classifying experiences from their own perspectives and values, managers create oppressive practices: lived experiences need to be faced without dividing them into those that are useful for the organisation, and those that are not. This is a mistake, because one's experiences and their sharing need to be value-free: reflection is a process for gaining deeper understanding and producing knowledge from experiences. Experiences are valuable as they are. The problem the author faced in the organisations was that there is an on-going battle as to whose worldview is the right one, even if richness could be found in polyphony.

The function of reflection was easier to grasp than that of reflexivity, probably because the organisational actors understood reflection in terms of a practical mirror image (see Cunliffe, 2002) and used reflection as a technical tool in order to categorise and explain organisational life, and – in the worst-case scenarios – to excuse what they do and why, tapping their own perspectives and prohibiting the potentiality of widening these perspectives. Reflection is, thus, seen as a systematic thought process that simplifies experiences. The institutional and structural level of reflexivity was difficult to define and achieve. This illustrates the tensions between the imperatives of organisational success/survival and the well-being of the members of the organisation (Pässilä and Vince, 2012).

5.3 RESULTS OF THE SUB-STUDIES

In this section, the results of the six research articles are summarised. In addition to the findings from the five sub-studies, a meta-level analysis and conceptualisation of all six PAR processes (the sixth PAR process was a validation of the reflexive model of RBT) is described in greater detail.

This study linked RBT, reflection, and knowledge production with practice-based innovation. The various RBT processes that were carried out within the organisations studied during the period 2008–2011 were an attempt to construct reflexive practices: how could the researcher and collaborators organise and conduct reflection in order to understand the lived experiences of the members of the organisations involved in the research and concretise them as development needs. The following table illustrates how the research question and sub-questions resonate with the sub-studies.

Table 8. Resonance between the sub-studies and research questions.

How can RBT be organised and reflection and reflexivity cultivated in practice-based innovation activities?	All sub-studies, especially sub-studies 1, 3
What kind of reflection and reflexive processes emerges via RBT in organisational settings?	Sub-studies 1, 2, 4
What is distinctive about the use of RBT in organisations?	Sub-studies 3, 4, 6
How are theatre, reflection, and innovation linked?	Sub-studies 2, 5

A brief summary of each sub-study is offered below, after which Table 9 delineates the theoretical framework and main findings of the sub-studies in the form of articles.

How can RBT be organised and reflection and reflexivity cultivated in practice-based innovation activities? (Sub-studies 1 and 3): Sub-study 1 emphasises that learning is a vital element of change, and that organisational events are seen as a continuous, possibly evolving, cumulative and emergent process. In order to organise reflection and enable employees to become knowledge creators and sense-makers of organisational events, it is important to create a polyphonic learning space by combining various techniques from applied theatre. From this perspective, learning is a collective and interpretative action process in which the members of the organisation construct meanings together, and the change itself is a pattern of endless modifications in day-to-day work and social practices. The first sub-study considers whether the existing situation in complex organisations leaves the holistic perspectives that take people into consideration hidden behind technical rationalities. The sub-study suggests that hidden learning potential exists: the process of joy and enthusiasm. The contribution of the first sub-study is to stress the social infrastructure of an organisation by believing that 1) narratives encourage engagement (employees with different perspectives doing things together), and that 2) it is possible to gain knowledge through interpreting personal experiences. The polyphonic space divides reality into two levels: usual, familiar reality, and theatrical reality as it appears on stage. The approach underlines that learning through theatre is a social, cultural, and collective construction; knowledge creation takes place between people in a suitable context. The first sub-study claims that it is crucial for an organisation to hear different voices and that learning, as an element of change, is multi-layered, highly complex, and conflicted, and organisational events are understood differently during the various phases of the process and in different roles within the organisation.

Sub-study 3 has a practical tone. It develops, for organisational use, practice and theory derived from Augusto Boal's dialogue-based technique (Image Theatre). The third sub-study examines how the members of an organisation create dialogue together. This is done in a dramaturgical, story-telling framework, where the dialogue emerges from story-telling facilitated by symbolic representations in the form of still images. Sub-study 3 presents a model of dramaturgical story-telling, Work Story, for organisational dialogue. Work Story is an example of how to create reflexivity within organisations. The practical implications are that the use of the model facilitated the sharing of experiences among members of the same occupational groups and their construction of common interests by investigating unstructured and uncertain social situations at work.

Both Sub-studies 1 and 3 emphasise the value of people and their interaction in innovation activities. The main message is that people – especially employees, because they are sometimes ignored – ought to be valued and respected as innovators in their own work or in products and services related to their own work and practice.

What kinds of reflection and reflexive processes emerge via RBT in organisational settings? (Sub-studies 1, 2, and 4): The most typical field of expertise of practice-based innovation is related to an overall ability to build possible worlds (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012). Lester and Piore (2004) divided innovation process into analytical and interpretative processes. This interpretative approach is possible to record through dialogue. Dialogue includes

voicing and listening wherein the innovation actors must be willing to stand multiple viewpoints, suggestions, and proposals. Reflection is essential to dialogue. For example, 'listening to the voice of customers or employees', as an example of a user- and employee-driven approach, is highlighted in innovation strategies, but the operational level (of organisations and work communities) lacks the practices needed to organise it. Sub-studies 1, 2, and 4 address the need for dialogue and reflection by offering examples of how to organise reflection via various theatrical and narrative methods.

Sub-studies 1, 2, and 4 point out the importance of various voices. The first sub-study explores voicing from the perspective of organisational learning. The case study describes in detail how learning processes were triggered by arts-based techniques and how the ideals and ideas of all members of the organisation were shared through story-telling and theatre techniques at the organisational level. By discussing the relationship between learning, reflection, and practice-based innovation, Sub-study 2 is also linked to learning. The article demonstrates how learning based on applied drama and theatre can offer an effective strategy for the creation of reflective spaces that reveal the dynamics of innovation, both in terms of what promotes and what prevents innovative behaviour and practice. Viewing roles and relations 'acted out' in theatre helps reduce the unconscious acting out of entrenched emotional and political dynamics in practice. The struggle to create innovation in the midst of action can be seen in the reflexive tension between the radical possibility of such interventions and the political purpose they may serve for established power relations. In the context of practice-based innovation, a 'critical' perspective is the starting point for understanding the shift from individual to collective reflection. Assumption-breaking is one key aspect of practice-based innovation. Sub-study 2 suggests that a 'Reflection Zone' (R-zone) is created in a context of artful framing and that assumption-breaking occurs between imitation of (as is) and imagination in (as if) everyday action.

Sub-study 4 focuses on the co-construction of reflexive practice in a public health-care organisation. It describes how theatre facilitates 'collective voicing' and dental health-care professionals' reflections on their own practices in perplexed situations from their customers' points of view. Sub-study 4 also demonstrates the value of ADT methods and presents a path for collective voicing as a learning process enabling reflexive practice in organisations. This sub-study gives a detailed description of how the authors applied Augusto Boal's technique of Image Theatre to constructing a dialogue for organisational learning, workplace learning in particular. The author's application of dramaturgical story-telling as a model for organisational dialogue is presented.

What is distinctive about the use of RBT in organisations? (Sub-studies 3, 4, and 6): Diversity is one of the driving forces of practice-based innovation. It is, therefore, necessary to articulate, hear, and discuss various experiences in order to interpret the current situation and imagine possible choices in the situations as experienced. Sub-study 6 discusses new forms of social service innovation through concepts such as user-driven innovation and interpretative innovation. The innovation potential triggered in practical contexts seems to be widely understood, but practical measures to exploit the potential still appear to be to a large extent lacking. This sub-study introduces Forum Theatre and role of the Joker as interpretative approaches to innovation processes. The Joker's job is to introduce people with different backgrounds to each other and, therefore, create space for overlaps between different actors and encourage interaction. An innovation process at the fuzzy front-end of

the Finnish public health-care sector has been used as a case example. Sub-studies 3 and 4 contribute to the discussion by illustrating two reflexive practices for organisational use. These sub-studies emphasise that organisations need to pay attention to reflective learning processes and value multi-voiced interactions that promote innovation and organisational actors' awareness of their actions, behaviour, and assumptions in order to bring renewal to the organisation.

How are theatre, reflection, and innovation linked? (Sub-studies 2 and 5): Sub-study 5 addresses the challenges that arise when RBT is applied to bridging cross-disciplinary settings. The fifth sub-study focuses on distances and reflection – an action by which communities of practice consisting of different professional groups can become aware of distances and bridge them. The link between different types of distances and the process of organising reflection is investigated. Here, reflection is understood as taking place through distancing, by means of RBT: a participatory method for bringing overlap to the experiences of various professionals and those of customers. The sub-study, which describes an investigation of Finnish care services, is based on data from a process to enhance collaboration between special care services for mentally disabled people and primary health-care services. The results showed that aesthetic distancing offers practitioners a sensory way to explore the perspective of their own professional group and get closer to perspectives of other professional groups and customers. Sub-study 5 also showed how different types of distance coexist and interrelate. Sub-study 2 contributes to this discussion by addressing reflection. It suggests that theatricality (in the form of roles and relations acted out in theatre) enables participants to raise their awareness of the emotional and political dynamics related to innovation actions. Reflection is seen as a key ability in contextualised problem-solving (for example, breaking silos and barriers between various groups of professionals) and the knowledge generation overlapping among different groups of professionals.

A summary of the framework, pertinent key references, and main findings of each sub-study is provided in Table 9.

Table 9. Theoretical frameworks and main findings of the sub-studies

Article	Theoretical framework	Findings in an innovation context
1	<p><i>Polyphony in organisational learning and practice-based innovation</i></p> <p>Weick, 1995, 1979; Schein, 1999; Czarniawska, 2001, 2008; Oswick et al., 2000; Lester & Piore, 2004; Palmer & Dunford, 2008; Boal, 1995; Schreyögg & Höpfl, 2004; Nissley, Taylor, & Houden, 2004; Taylor, 2003; Barry & Hansen, 2008; Abma, 2000</p>	<p>An interpretative action approach to learning that engages employees, managers, researchers, and artists allows participants to seek and create polyphonic understanding together. A polyphonic space inside an organisation ought to be built on a dialogue in which the role of the management changes from the setting of goals to the shaping of directions. This type of polyphonic space emerges temporarily between participants with the help of aesthetic distance, and enriches the participants' way of being and relating.</p> <p><i>Innovation context: An interpretative action approach to learning is an example of the knowledge transfer mechanisms conducted in DUI, mode 2b organisational learning.</i></p>
2	<p><i>Learning, reflection, and practice-based innovation</i></p> <p>Vince & Reynolds, 2009; Vince, 2002; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006; Ellström, 2010; Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2005; Brown & Duguid, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Gherrardi, 2006</p>	<p>One key issue for practice-based innovation is how organisations generate innovation in the midst of action. Reflection is seen as an important organisational process that can create spaces for generative learning. Theatre-based learning can offer an effective strategy for the creation of reflective spaces that reveal the dynamics of innovation, both in terms of what promotes and what prevents innovative behaviour and practice.</p> <p><i>The struggle to create innovation in the midst of action can be seen in the reflexive tension between the radical possibility of such interventions and the political purpose they may serve for established power relations. There will always be a tension in organisations between the dynamics that support innovation and the dynamics that undermine it.</i></p>

3	<p><i>Reflective learning, story-telling, and dialogue</i></p> <p>Boal, 1995; Cunliffe, 2002a, 2002b; Gabriel, 2000; Gabriel & Connel, 2010; Abma, 2007; Gherardi, 2006; Elkjaer, 2003; Meisiek, 2002; Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Clark & Mangham, 2004; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Barry & Meisiek, 2011; Schiuma, 2011; Jensen et al., 2007; Lundval, 1992; Uhlin, 2000; Lester & Piore, 2004; Ellström, 2010; Nilsen & Ellström, 2012; Darsø & Høystrup, 2012; Vince, 2002; Cunliffe, 2009, 2008; Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004</p>	<p>Augusto Boal's dialogue technique (Image Theatre) can be adapted for organisational use. This application ought to take place through a dramaturgical, story-telling framework where the dialogue emerges from story-telling facilitated by symbolic representations of still images. A model for organisational dialogue is presented. The model illustrates the dramaturgical story-telling as used in Work Story that influences problem-shifting in a positive way. As a dialogue practice, Work Story makes it possible for members from the same occupational groups to share experiences with each other and construct common interests by investigating unstructured and uncertain social situations at work.</p> <p><i>Innovation context: A model for organisational dialogue is aligned with organisational innovations and social innovations. Through this model, employees are able to participate in processing innovation; they are the originators of innovations.</i></p>
4	<p><i>ADT as a reflexive practice</i></p> <p>Cunliffe & Jun, 2005; see also Oswick et al., 2000; Dewey, 1933/1998; Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004; Cunliffe, 2002, 2003; Reynolds, 2011; Vince, 2011; Freire, 1970; Boal, 1979/2000</p>	<p>The methods of applied drama and theatre (ADT) facilitated 'collective voicing' and dental health-care professionals' reflections on their own practices in perplexed situations from their customers' points of view. The value of ADT methods is demonstrated. A path for collective voicing as a learning process enabling reflexive practice in organisations is presented.</p> <p><i>Innovation context: Collective voicing is an example of how organisations can develop organisational innovation capabilities through reflexive practices.</i></p>
5	<p><i>RBT, reflection, distances, and proximity</i></p> <p>Taylor & Hansen, 2005; Brecht, 1964; Boal, 1995, 1979/2008; Dewey, 1958; Beck et al., 2011; Knobens & Oerlemans, 2006; Gertler, 1995; Boschma, 2005; Harmaakorpi et al., 2006; Parjanen et al., 2011;</p>	<p>The study focuses on distances and reflection, an action through which different professional groups can become aware of distances. We investigate the link between distances and the process of organising reflection. Reflection is understood here as taking place through distancing, by means of research-based theatre (RBT) – a specific artistic orientation of action research which in this study is a participatory method for bridging the experiences of various professionals and customers. Aesthetic distancing offers practitioners a way to step back from the perspective</p>

	<p>Nooteboom, 2012; Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Vince, 2002; Dewey, 1933; Freire, 1970</p>	<p>of their own professional group and grow closer to the perspectives of other professional groups and customers.</p> <p><i>Innovation context: Through an aesthetic form, a knowledge-gaining process was created: in the RBT process, various groups of professionals reflected together how they tend to interact with each other, and different types of distances were recognised. This enables various groups of professionals to collaborate in a social innovation processes.</i></p>
<p>6</p>	<p><i>Interpretative dimensions of innovation</i></p> <p>Lester & Piore, 2004; Kline & Rosenberg, 1986; Lundvall, 1988; Dosi, 1988; Harmaakorpi, 2006; Schienstock & Hämäläinen, 2001; Knobens & Oerlemans, 2006; Gertler 1995; Boschma 2005; Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005; Burt, 2008; Stark, 2009; Boje et al., 2003; Meisiek & Barry, 2007; Boal, 1992, 1995, 1996</p>	<p>The theoretical implication of this study links the interpretative dimension of innovation (Lester & Piore, 2004) as a sense of dissonance (Stark, 2009) and the Joker’s function (Boal, 1979/2000). Interpretation, in the context of sense-making and sense-breaking (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005), is a system of searching, selecting, organising, and connecting. This study shows one example of service providers, building on prior knowledge and reflecting on subjective user experiences, jointly interpreting the social reality of service production in order to understand and develop it. It includes changes at the socio-cultural level of process at which the service providers’ focus depends on their understanding of real-world patterns, interactions during service processes, distances – which emerged as tensions and silos – between service providers and users, and designing services based on user perspectives.</p> <p><i>Innovation context: One of the most typical aims of practice-based innovation is the overall ability to build possible worlds. This study illustrates how service providers as innovation actors try to understand how they are acting and how practices are formed, and how professionals and customers interact with one another and the world.</i></p>

5.4 LINKS BETWEEN THEATRE, REFLECTION, AND INNOVATION IN THE CONTEXT OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

This study concretises how mode 2b learning and knowledge production took place through reflection on everyday work situations with the help of RBT. Temporarily ‘safe enough’ playgrounds (as a form of aesthetic space; Heikkinen, 2002 used the concept of ‘serious playfulness’) were created to help participants step out of their comfort zones. The zones were created with the collaboration of all participants for reflective and reflexive learning

activity to take place within the framework of practice-based innovation. Experiential, embodied, and tacit knowledge was explored and tapped through metaphors, while the perplexed situation was played with and explored via images, stories, performances, and role-play. Aesthetic distancing and participation facilitated knowledge production, deepened understanding of power relations, and offered space for reflection and reflexivity. Theatrical methods that utilise aesthetic distancing acted as initiatives for expressing embodied experiences, as well as knowledge production that was focused on understanding tacit and situated knowledge.

However, in this study, aesthetic distancing offered the potential and space for multiple worldviews (polyphony) to emerge and be interpreted and reflected simultaneously rather than 'mirroring reality', or explaining one and only one reflection of reality. Participants co-produced knowledge by reflecting polyphonic viewpoints; they did not need to read images, stories, or performances literally, but as something resonating with how they or their customers have emotionally, socially, and/or politically experienced the social structures of their work, workplace, and the related relations.

Aesthetic distancing allowed people to explore invisible and sensitive phenomena, or 'taboos'. Taboos are blocks that organisational actors avoid addressing; discussions make social and political dynamics visible and sometimes even possible to talk about. In the organisations involved in this study, taboos related to informal practices, to the key 'what really happens here' events in micro-level processes. One of the taboos related to innovation was that renewing is considered 'good' even though experiences of change were perplexed rather than well-balanced. This resonates with the innovation research of Sveiby et al. (2012).

The reflexive model of RBT revealed practical, emotional, and political perplexity to the reflectors themselves, but only if they were willing to allow it to do so. Employees did not, for instance, raise difficult or sensitive issues as topics in formal conversation; they did not start reflecting on the power tensions between them during weekly meetings or share their fears or dreams in project meetings because it was considered to be a waste of time. Similarly, emotions were not understood to be part of knowledge production, despite the fact that emotions – change causes emotional responses and power tensions – are symptoms of the resistance that emerges when things change, as they do when innovation is being processed.

The following table 10 combines three elements: practice-based innovation, mode 2 knowledge production, and reflection via RBT. It summarises the findings of five years of exploration; theory is combined with practice, and practice with theory.

Table 10. The crossroads of practice-based innovation (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012) and theatre-based organisation of reflection (Vince & Reynolds, 2009).

	Practice-based innovation (DUI, mode 2b) and RBT		
Point of view	Practice-based view of organising reflection via theatre	Hermeneutical–interpretative view of organising reflection via theatre	Critical view of organising reflection via theatre
Key element of RBT reflection	Agency building	Transformational	Emancipatory
Most typical innovation types	Organisational innovations – social innovations – service innovations are generated by improving competence linked to productivity and work satisfaction	Organisational innovations – social innovations – service innovations are generated by creating alternative interpretations	Organisational innovations – social innovations – service innovations are generated by unsettling established ways of working
Most typical fuels of innovation	‘Near distance’ in problem-solving and identifying development needs	‘Near distance’ in multi-voiced sense-making and shared understanding of hidden potential	‘Near distance’ in allowing reflexivity to emerge
Most typical logic	Developing innovation capability – breaking up ‘silos’ and preventing bottlenecks via technical orientation to improve processes, practices and roles.	Developing innovation capability – breaking up ‘silos’ and preventing bottlenecks via symbolic actions and descriptions to deepen understanding related to one’s own role in renewing processes, practices, and roles.	Developing innovation capability – breaking up ‘silos’ and preventing bottlenecks via critical reflection to collectively break down assumptions and change existing situations through raised awareness.
Most typical capital	Social capital – structural capital is gained by developing one’s own work and learning activities that change work practices and personal and	Social capital – structural capital is gained by becoming collectively aware of diversity and transforming one’s	Social capital – structural capital is gained by identifying and questioning taken-for-granted beliefs and values as well as by taking account of

	professional engagement	own behaviour	emotional and political processes in the workplace
Most typical innovation processes	Combination of interpretative and analytical dimensions of innovation processes	Interpretative dimension of innovation process is emphasised	Aesthetic distancing of interpretative dimension enables practitioners to break assumptions related to practice and the innovation process
Theatrical methods are focused on	Problem-based orientation; what kind of outcome organisational actors produce during story-telling and theatre sessions as well as how organisational actors deepen interaction with one another	Interpretative orientation; theatricality is understood as symbols of meanings related to the work community and practitioners are understood as interpreters exploring imagination, creativity, divergence, and differences during story-telling sessions and theatre sessions	Reflexive orientation; breaking down existing assumptions and utilising epistemological mixing of hermeneutical–interpretative and practice-based views of reflection
Most typical origins of innovations	‘Ordinary’ staff and customers who define problems and gain deeper understanding of the perplexity of the problem	‘Ordinary’ staff and customers who interpret the existing situation	‘Ordinary’ staff and customers who explore the dynamics between various groups of professionals and between them and customers

From the innovation management perspective, it is vital to acknowledge that instead of giving answers to people or advising them how to be innovative, learning should raise questions and dialogue about what is meaningful for people in their work and how they understand the relation between their work, innovation, and their role in renewing practices. Knowledge production at the crossroads of PBI and RBT recognises what inspires or blocks various professional groups within an organisation; how they construct relationships with each other; what kind of structure supports them; what kind of structure is oppressive; and how to reflect organisational discourse and identity building.

The primary finding of this study is that the reflexive model of RBT is aligned with mode 2b knowledge production as a specific knowledge transformation ‘mechanism’. In this transformation, the organisational actors – innovation managers and employees from different professional groups as a community of practice-based innovators – and artists

share their understanding of values, ethics, roles, and interests when applying theatre in organisational use. The first step is creating a multi-voiced space for theatre and inviting diversity into this type of knowledge production and learning. For example, during storytelling and Organisational Theatre sessions, diverse views compete; this is a competition of interests and values, but in the best possible situation, managers, employees, customers, artists, and researchers both define and evaluate the purpose of the interventions together.

Epistemological mixing (presented in Figure 15) leads both the organisational as well as research and theatre practitioners to a space that is safe enough to step 'out of their comfort zones' and towards heterogeneous knowledge production.

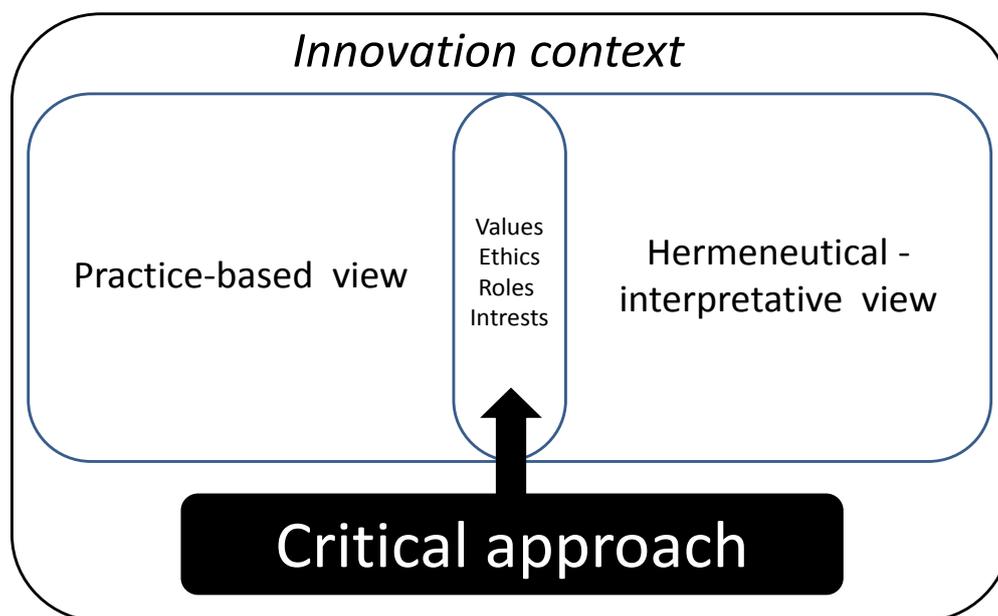


Figure 15. Epistemological mixing

Epistemological mixing – reflecting on practice as a path to co-producing knowledge – offers a stage for understanding the purpose and outcome of theatre in organisational contexts. The three views of reflection – the practice-based and hermeneutical–interpretative views and the critical approach – are based on experiences related to the organisations in this study and summarise organisational actors', theatre practitioners', and researchers' assumptions about theatre as a learning activity.

5.5 PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS: A CHECKLIST FOR PRACTITIONERS APPLYING THE REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RBT

As a practical implication for those interested in artistic investigation – especially innovation managers and ADT practitioners – a conceptualisation (see Figure 14) and checklist are provided. This checklist is a tool for making values and ethics visible and negotiable. Three different views – the practice-based view, the hermeneutical–interpretative view, and the critical approach – include questions and definitions. These three views and questions

related to them can be used as a framework for negotiating how and why an organisation would apply RBT to knowledge production.

First of all, when the reflexive model of RBT is used as a platform, it is not a question of a Christmas party play where employees and managers entertain each other. The use of the reflexive model of RBT demands professional and experienced PAR researchers and facilitator–artists. The professional skills of a facilitator–researcher and facilitator–artist include competence in, for instance, organising interaction and knowledge processing and sensing one’s own and others’ intuitions and emotions, as well as experience with group dynamics so she/he understands how to provide and create safe spaces for reflection in organisational settings where many power tensions and hidden agendas exist.

It is also important that the facilitator–researcher and facilitator–artist recognise their own weaknesses and strengths and apply reflexive practices to their own work through self-evaluation and collective feedback. It is one of the skills of an innovation manager to be able to facilitate people’s reflective interactions rather than to control the outcome of the reflection. The focus is primarily on seeing and seeking as many perspectives as possible, finding the blind spots in one’s own practices and basic assumptions, and then, after this polyphony, being able to trust one’s own intuition – one’s own tacit and embodied knowledge – and to let it become part of analytical problem-solving.

During aesthetic participation in which the reflexive model of RBT is applied, participants explore their own experiences and experimental knowledge by imagining and imitating everyday organisational practices. Aesthetic participation can be created and achieved if participants are willing and if organisational structures, rules, norms, habits, attitudes, and assumptions give them right to do so. For example, problems and experiences are raised through theatrical inquiry; therefore the themes and issues are situated and contextual, dealing with the problems and experiences of those participating. This is essential when applying the reflexive model of RBT; it is primarily a participatory and action-based research process that applies theatre as a method of inquiry to gain knowledge about complex events, situations, tensions, and relationships within organisations.

The following checklist provides some material for preliminary discussion and negotiation when innovation managers, ADT artists, and researchers are searching for shared interests, defining purposes and hoped-for outcomes, and articulating the values and ethics involved in applying a reflexive model of RBT. The checklist is divided into three categories and includes the questions to be discussed at each juncture.

1. The hermeneutical–interpretative view emphasises:

- What do various group of professionals and customers do during story-telling sessions, theatre sessions, and action planning sessions – what types of aesthetic distancing would be suitable in this context?
- How do the PAR researcher, ADT artist, and innovation manager define their division of labour?
- Who are the key team members; what they do during the process?
- How and where do the organisational actors interact with one another?
- How many employees are participating, and which ones?

2. The practice-based view highlights:

- Post-Boalian theatrical practices as symbols of reality that need to be interpreted by organisational actors: what should and needs to be interpreted? What should not be interpreted? How are hidden issues addressed?
- Is the work community allowed to apply and explore imagination, creativity, divergence, and differences during story-telling and theatre sessions? If so, how it is applied? And by whom? Who takes responsibility for it? Who can join in? What should the outcome of it be? Who defines the need for the outcome?
- Are all organisational actors involved in exploring imagination, creativity, divergence, and differences during the story-telling sessions and theatre sessions? If not, why not?

3. The critical approach involves:

- The questioning of existing assumptions: what is to be questioned, how is it to be questioned, and why? What taboos exist?
- The epistemological mixing of the hermeneutical–interpretative and practice-based views: How do you understand these views? What is the desired outcome? Describe the ideal reflection process: what takes place during it? What are you, as innovation manager, ADT artist, PAR researcher, or customer, doing during it?
- Addressing the issue of how we shift from the assumption that ‘this is the way we do things here’ to an explorative mode where one questions basic assumptions of the way things are done: What blocks and what enables critical perspectives within your organisation? Describe a practical situation in which things are being processed, and then one in which they are not. What is happening in those situations?
- Transparency, which can be achieved by adding the critical approach and reflexive practices into the mix of values and ethics from the organisational actors and the practitioners; how can this be achieved?

6 CONCLUSIONS – A REFLEXIVE MODEL OF RESEARCH-BASED THEATRE

The section deals with the application of the model.

This study results in a novel reflexive model of RBT that is built into a practice-based innovation context and mode 2b knowledge production. The model has theoretical implications for creating a reflexive process for organisational use to generate fruitful overlaps between various professional groups and between them and their customers. It connects the theory and practice of organising reflection via aesthetic participation. This model summarises how organisations can develop their mode 2b knowledge production by utilising symbolic knowledge bases. The reflective model of RBT is one example of innovation activities for PBI.

Based on feedback from and discussions with the organisational members who were involved in its use, the reflexive model of RBT offers an opportunity to open up a novel learning horizon for participants and gives collective permission to open up discussions about difficult issues related to tensions and power positions among organisational members and between them and their customers as well as between organisational members and organisational structures. This resonates with the theory of Deweyan (1933/1998) reflection, Vince's (2002) theory of organising reflection, and Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith's (2004) idea of reflexivity 'unsettling conventional practice', all of which underline the importance of creating new learner roles and identities within the organisation whereby the old roles and identities can be extended and challenged.

In this study, various situationally novel (new to the people participating in the learning processes) roles were created in the midst of action. These novel roles are vital to reflection and emerging reflexivity. However, each role is paradoxical, containing at least two poles and dimensions, and there exists a need to fight for space for 'the spokesperson' from 'the dictator', for 'the organiser' from 'the manipulator', for 'the multi-voiced negotiator' from 'the decision-maker', for 'the listener' from 'the lecturer', and for 'the inspirer' from 'the commander'. It is an on-going fight between new and old roles, between professionals, status quos, and roles and structures that prevent reflexivity. The participants have the opportunity to deal with perplexity and, in doing so, to start to reflect, or they can conversely ignore reflection. Either way, they may maintain or reconstruct the existing dynamics of the organisation. Through emerging reflexivity, the learners understand themselves as creators with multiple roles and functions within the organisation.

In everyday discussions, innovation refers to positive things, to something better and/or something we have a passion for: ideas, creativity, courage, novelty, victory, efficiency, and profit. Innovation is a hero story. However, renewing an existing situation – whether it is a product, a practice, a process, a service, an idea, an attitude, or a perspective – into something else is a messy change process where neither employees nor managers feel like winners or heroes.

In order to be able to familiarise themselves with innovation (Harmaakorpi & Melkas, 2012; Hasu et al., 2012; Van de Ven et al., 1999/2008) and how it is linked to their work, people ought to organise reflection around lived experiences, both their own and those of others.

In an RBT context, reflection invites learners to play – to play seriously (Heikkinen, 2002; Boal, 1995) – and a distinct aspect of this playfulness is embodiment. During this interaction, people ‘let their bodies be involved’ in their discussions. So, in a sense, they have a cognitive assumption regarding work and continuous change, and a given change is viewed as a case to be solved, a decision-making project with the assumption that there is an objective reality out there to be controlled. However, when the participants start to explore their experiences via images (through Work Story and Organisational Theatre sessions), they start to share their embodied experiences. Behind the reflexive model of RBT lies the idea of learning from experience to create organisational process innovation, and reflection therefore stands at the centre. This implies an approach to learning and knowledge production that integrates interpretations of imagination-tapping, perplexed situations; in other words, the perplexity and diversity of organisational life are explored by the organisational members themselves. Two worlds are present during the learning process: reflection of social reality (through ‘as is’ imitation) and imagining possible (‘as if’) realities. The following figure illustrates the reflection that emerges through three overlapping levels of knowing: lived experiences at the workplace, theatricalising practice with ‘as is’ imitation, and also doing so with ‘as if’ imagination. These overlaps allow people to create and share embodied experiences and articulate them during sensory processes.



Illustration: Laura Mellanen

Figure 16. Reflecting on the ‘as is’ and ‘as if’ of everyday actions

When reflecting on experiences between the 'as is' and 'as if' modes via images, the people involved shifted from a rational – a cognitive or 'head'-oriented – approach towards holistic meaning-making that also took emotions and embodied experiences into account. For example, this quotation from a Work Story session at Factory 2 illustrates the path of how people reflect their embodied experiences:

Lisa: I have this image of pulling on a rope. I could be this person passing by. These are people focusing on different goals. This illustrates the situation in our organisation. We are not one company! Look at this image where there is a person with a gun in his hand, shooting and bringing trouble into the process.

Paula: Yes, this one is resisting. But it is important to learn how to act in a new organisational setting. Motivation is at zero degrees. The fallout from the previous situation is destructive.

Alec: That ballet dancer represents managers who have brilliant visions but have forgotten the operational level. How we are supposed to implement all these beautiful and marvellous visions?

So continuous change causes emotional responses, and these emotional responses are rational and ought to be taken seriously. The following quotations from Factory 2 illustrate emotional responses: "...look, he has this feeling ... feeling... I am not enough.... See how he carries that (in the image he is talking about there is a character lifting a square object)... it...it's heavy...he does what he can. But you see what he does isn't enough...." and "that person can't do anything, that one doesn't know what to do. Just like in the present situation. This one over here is passing the problem on and those others are just doing. It's difficult, this situation is difficult. It is hard, painful..."

Through 'as is' and 'as if' modes in aesthetic space, people are able to confront the complexity of events, roles, and status quos and combine both cognitive and embodied knowledge; this combination enables people to connect past feelings with present feelings in a reflective process that links individual and collective reflection. The participants themselves articulated the difference between looking back to consider how something was done or could have been done differently, and creating distance from which to connect with something from the past that is still being felt now – by doing so, they created new scenarios for the future, for example making sculptures of their own bodies during theatre sessions. Emotions emerged in situations where people thought and shared their thoughts about what might be happening (they swung between 'as is' and 'as if'). They also discussed these different emotional responses, for example, in what kind of situations does anger produce resistance that blocks actions, and when does it act as a driving force? Or: does the need for joy produce resistance: in the midst of change, people yearn for things to be settled, attitudes such as 'those were the good old days'/'time has polished memory'/'work used to be a pleasure' and the need for past experienced feelings might act as a block.

The dynamics of politics, power, and emotions are part of the change process when organisational actors process innovation – when they are trying to survive the turbulence of change actions. Change takes place through, by, and between people; therefore PBI and mode 2b knowledge require interactions, interpretations, and reflections that can be

organised for example through reflexive RBT practices. In the ideal scenario, the reflexive model of RBT is a collective and critical process of learning and knowledge production, part of the broader participation of the work community, but in the worst-case scenario, it is a manipulative and oppressive management tool that only serves to maintain existing power tensions and status quos.

The RBT processes dealt with and explored issues that were meaningful to the participants. The meaningful issues were situational and contextual; the participants themselves defined them. It is important that the ethics of RBT include a multi-voiced perspective and, as ADT authors (see, for example, Prendergast & Saxton, 2009; Conrad, 2006; Boal, 1995) note, people be empowered enough to have the position as well as the possibility to critically explore their past, present, and possible futures. Aesthetic distancing helps participants to gaze critically at themselves and organisational perplexity. The theatricalisation also echoes the discovery of diversity, complexity, and polyphony of social reality. Simultaneously, exploration of dramatic actions also activates awareness of power tensions and, therefore, hinders emerging reflexivity. This is a paradox: learning itself produces resistance. Despite this dual dimension of RBT, it proposes alternative actions and demystifies and familiarises events that might otherwise appear to be inevitable or include too much diversity. Theatricalisation – even if it might be a messy, difficult and complex learning process – uncovers contradictions, tests variations, and tries out events from several points of view.

The focus on the mode 2b in RBT is towards a holistic, human-oriented rather than a technology-centred learning model of organisation. It accepts learning as joint knowledge creation that involves both political and emotional processes and accepts conflicts as part of reflection. The reflexive model of RBT highlights that reflection, like change itself, is a dynamic, non-linear, and continuous process rather than a process of moving from an unwanted chaotic situation to a desired stable situation. Maintaining a critical reflective perspective is a challenge; it requires a totally new learning strategy wherein reflexive practices are considered part of organisational learning and innovation. RBT is a practical example of how to create a shared space for reflection. In this space, narrative and theatrical methods can facilitate co-construction and deconstruction.

7 REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This dissertation discusses a reflexive model of RBT as a participatory learning application in organisational settings, one linked to knowledge production in the context of practice-based innovation. The research question addressed is how RBT should be organised and reflection and reflexivity cultivated in practice-based innovation activities in organisational settings. The contributions and practical implications for organisational actors, especially for innovation managers and leaders, is a holistic learning model (introduced earlier in this dissertation; see Figure 14 in the Findings section) that can be organised to support learning and on-going change.

7.1 REFLECTIONS ON THE STUDY

The limitations of this study could be pointed out from a positivist research stance because RBT does not claim to be generalisable. However, the accordance of practice and theory is constructed differently in qualitative and quantitative research; the limitations of this study are related to the role of the PAR researcher and the differences between the organisations involved. One limitation of this study is, therefore, related to the nature of action-oriented research as an investigation of an individual unit. This study focused on local and situational aspects of understanding lived experiences, diversity, and polyphonic perspectives which, according to Oswick et al. (2000 p. 887) “enables a deeper, richer and less constrained understating of organizational learning to be developed”. During this, the author and organisational members – managers and key team members – had a participatory role in the research process. The four organisations involved in the PAR were all different from each other. So the nature of this qualitative study is practice-based, local and situated, and based on this experience and perspective, the reflexive model of RBT was co-created.

This co-creation is an example of a Finnish application of RBT and is linked to the North American tradition of using RBT to conduct qualitative research, which is a fairly young research tradition. The nature of this study was action research seasoned with arts-based methods. The often-asked question, ‘How does this study differ from consultancy?’, is, for the action researcher – which is how the author defines her own research identity – related to links between practice and theory. This lurking question continues to perpetuate the assumption that the distance between the researcher and the researched guarantees an objective quality. The differentiation between consultancy and action research lies in two aspects: firstly, the action research and RBT conducted in this study needed to contribute to change, or at least deeper understanding of on-going change. Through RBT, this change took place through aesthetic participation, and the practical value was created for those who were involved in research process. Secondly, action research and RBT need to contribute to theory as well. This study extends knowledge about organising reflection thorough RBT.

Even though there is some earlier evidence of using RBT as a research method and technique of artistic investigation in an organisational (learning and change) context, more studies in different kinds of environments should be conducted in order to achieve a deeper ability to generalise the results. This study brought arts into the organisation in two ways: as

an action research methodology and as a technique of artistic inquiry related to reflection; the research was technically and practically oriented, even though some emancipatory research interests were hoped for. This study was positioned at the crossroads of three interests: those of the organisational actors, as managers and employees had a technical and problem-solving orientation to the action research; those of the researchers who had practical research interests; and those of the artists and some of the researchers, the author included, who had emancipatory research interests. When evaluating this study from the viewpoints of these three research interests – technical, practical, and emancipatory – only the technical and practical interests were achieved. The emancipatory research interest was much more challenging to accomplish, and a longitudinal research process would have been more appropriate to achieving that interest.

Obviously, an RBT research orientation of this nature is not a main orientation in innovation research conducted within the framework of industrial management. This fact simultaneously created challenges and opportunities for this study; the author's background allowed her to take on a unique role when taking part in discussions in the field of industrial management studies or within an organisation being run according to ideas grounded in the principles of industrial management. Because of the cognitive and cultural distances between the author's background and industrial management, many interesting generative themes arose, such as questions related to the role of people in industrial management, or to current assumptions of endless growth. However, the author, as a temporary outsider with a different background than most other scholars, may have managed to contribute to this field of research by offering ideas from critical and humanistic management by, for example, asking and questioning taken-for-granted assumptions related to overlaps between innovation research within the framework of industrial management, arts and culture research, applied drama and theatre practices, and learning in organisational settings.

7.2 AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Well-being in working life, employee well-being, and broad-based organisational participation in organisational learning and development for the purpose of constructing sustainable innovation activities for Finnish business and public organisations are future research avenues that the author is eager to explore. This type of research introduces RBT as a methodology for organising critical reflection and evaluating process. In particular, the link between critical reflection and aesthetic distance ought to be explored in greater detail, in order to demonstrate one way in which critically reflective knowledge can be put into practice within organisations in the service of learning and change.

In general there is a need for European-level research that would explore and evaluate phenomena related to subjects like 'artistic interventions' and the logic of 'arts-based initiatives' in the context of learning in practice-based innovation. Therefore, a research agenda for the coming years that enriches innovation, organisational, and ADT studies ought to challenge organisational actors from the private and public sectors, scholars from various backgrounds, and applied artists to engage in longitudinal, reflective dialogue and participatory, critical, practice-based research design at the international level. The research strategy should include both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Above all, the

research agenda should include participatory evaluation, which would invite organisational actors to participate as full members of the research team. Therefore, future prospective research frameworks ought to be constructed utilising multidisciplinary and participatory research approaches. In terms of future research, this study calls for longitudinal studies on what happens after RBT and how organisations can continue to operate in a manner that nurtures a holistic and critical learning approach. The reflexive model of RBT could then be further tested in order to gain a deeper understanding of applied theatre in the context of learning and innovation.

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Canadian Journal of Practice-based Researcher in Theatre

<http://cjprt.uwinnipeg.ca/index.php/cjprt/index> 24.7.2012

Sub-study 1:

Pässilä, A. & Oikarinen, T. (accepted)

'Research-based theatre as a facilitator for organisational learning.'

Accepted for P. Meusbürger, A. Berthoin Antal, M. Ries (eds.), *Learning Organizations: The Importance of Place for Organizational Learning*.

Dordrecht, Springer Verlag.

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RESEARCH-BASED THEATRE AS A FACILITATOR FOR ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

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This article develops theatre-based approach to stimulate dialogue within an organization. With the help of art-based actions - particularly applied theatre - we explore creation of a communicative space for conversation and interpretation. We assume the polyphonic learning space will make people aware, shake things up and thus facilitate change and learning in organizations. This study asks i) can polyphonic learning space be constructed by combining applied theatre techniques to it and ii) what kind of a knowledge creation process might emerge through it.

We propose an approach called Research-based Theatre (RBT) as a practical orientation and a methodical approach to bringing together alternative world-views distributed throughout the organization. Through case study we describe an interpretative action approach to learning in one factory of a multinational forest industrial company in Finland. Through this case we describe how employees, managers, researchers and artists seek and create polyphonic understanding together in a process built on Research-based Theatre and action based learning.

According to our results, the core of learning was the aesthetic space created by storytelling and theatricality which set up a template allowing the observation of familiar taken-for-granted reality from an unfamiliar angle. Theatre offers an aesthetic learning space for both expressing and challenging one's own worldviews as well as interpreting the worldviews, attitudes and behaviour of others. We noticed that knowledge creation through art-based processes has a tacit and embodied dimension, through play and imagination serious yet playful atmosphere was created which allowed the emergence of polyphony.

Our results suggest that the polyphonic space emerges temporarily between participants with the help of aesthetic distance, and enriches the participants' way of being and relating. The Research-based Theatre underlines that learning through theatre is a social, cultural and collective construction; knowledge creation takes place between people. We see a huge learning potential and an object of further research in the aesthetic space as a forum for contextual and situated understanding as well as a form to share tacit and self-transcending knowledge.

Keywords: Research-based Theatre, organizational learning, polyphony, aesthetic learning space

1 TOWARDS POLYPHONY AND JOY

Once upon a time a humanist, economists, artists, an industrial manager, sales managers and researchers sat around a table and searched for common ground. The writers were members of this group when the following question cropped up; is the present organization management so tied to the traditional orientation of control and command that the humanistic dimension of the organization as a community of individuals is forgotten? Where is the process of joy and enthusiasm? The managers thought that it is possibly hidden in effectiveness and analytical problem solving. All of those present wondered if the existing situation of complex organization is leaving the holistic perspective of people hidden behind technical rationality? What if there is a hidden learning potential?

So, at this phase of search, the humanist, economists, artists, industrial manager and sales managers pointed out the social dimension of knowledge creation of all employees. The research and development process then started with the experimental attitude: the aim of organizational development was to stimulate dialogue within an organization through art-based learning practices and the aim of the research was to describe a learning process which is based on art-based methods and action based learning. With the help of art-based actions, particularly applied theatre, we wanted to find out how employees are able to become sense-makers of organisational events. Different voices, human experiences and worldviews of an organization were treasured. That is why this study asks i) can polyphonic learning space be constructed by combining applied theatre techniques to it and ii) what kind of a knowledge creation process might emerge through it. Here, learning is a vivid element of change and organizational events are seen as a continuous, possibly evolving, cumulative and emergent process (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995, 2005; Weick & Quinn, 1999). From this perspective learning is a collective and interpretative action process in which the members of an organization construct meanings together, and the change itself is a pattern of endless modifications in day-to-day work and social practices. (Abma, 2000).

We follow the path of loosely organized actions, concrete incidents and the power of narratives, the path that Weick (1979, 1995), Schein (1999) and Czarniawska (2001, 2008) have pioneered. We, however, move further along the path of dialogue and suggest that if an organization is able to make sense of events related to a problem and become empowered through art-based action (Abma, 2000; Barry & Hansen, 2008; Boal, 1995), the members are then able to create new relationships that tie them together in a fresh way. Our contribution to the discussion is to stress the social infrastructure of an organization by believing that 1) narratives encourage engagement (employees with different perspectives doing things together) and that 2) it is possible to gain knowledge through interpreting personal experiences.

Through case study we describe an interpretative action approach to learning where employees, managers, researchers and artists seek and create polyphonic understanding together (Oswick, Anthony, Keenoy, Mangham, & Grant, 2000 explains the polyphonic organizational learning from which the concept polyphonic space is derived). Polyphonic space inside an organization is built on a dialogue in which the role of the management changes from the setting of goals to the shaping of directions (Lester & Piore, 2004; Oswick et al., 2000; Palmer & Dunford, 2008). In construction of the polyphonic space, our research

and development is based on the ideas of theatre philosopher and practitioner August Boal, who has applied theatre-based techniques into various purposes (Boal, 1995; Nissley, Taylor, & Houden, 2004; Schreyögg & Höpfl, 2004; Taylor, 2003).

We describe the theoretical and methodological framework of the study in the first three chapters of the article. In chapters two and three we also discuss learning and theatre in an organization. Chapter four focuses on research orientation and the application of theatre in an organization. The rest of the article is devoted to the case description and the conclusions. In the conclusions, we suggest that polyphonic space emerges temporarily between participants with the help of aesthetic distance, and enriches the participants' way of being and relating.

2 FACILITATING LEARNING WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION

Boal (1995) claims that theatre is a way to form knowledge and the artists of our case study easily agreed with him. On a practical level Boalian theatre is a learning dialogue where conceptual thinking and awareness is based on everyday experiences. This type of learning dialogue is very sensitive and vulnerable and should be facilitated with the full respect of each individual. Mezirow (2000) and Kolb (1984) remind us that individuals construct their own worldviews by grasping experiences and reflecting upon and conceptualizing them in a social context. In ideal learning situation, learners get the picture of their own meaning making and schemas and thus are able to generate deeper understanding from their own organization and work. Through meaning making new ideas may occur and learners may identify problems and interpret them with others in the social processes (Abma, 2003; Argyris & Schön, 1978; Boonstra & de Caluwé, 2007; Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Even these human related issues are well known in organization by various authors (Abma, 2003; Brown & Duguid, 1991; March, 1991; Marshak & Grant, 2008; Van de Ven, Rogers, Bechara, & Sun, 2008), the mainstream of the traditional management is concerned with controlling and checking business activities. The managers of our case study point out that learning is too often impeded by the demands of unanimity, operational effectiveness, analytical problem-solving and technical rationality. Thus organizational diversity is seen as a threat not as a possibility.

At this point Weick (1979, 1995) might remind us that valuing an organization as a collection of multiple, socially constructed, loosely coupled realities with competing interests and conceptions would contribute to learning possibilities. Leaning on "Weickian tradition" we claim that if an organization wants to provide dialogical learning, it has to create a safe environment and procedures for nurturing diverse worldviews among its employees. For this reason we argue that events in an organization and the narrative reflection (Czarniawska, 2008) of them, offer possibilities for learning. Stories, narratives and myths are practical tools for framing new, shared meanings, changing mindsets (Ford & Ford, 1995; Marshak & Grant, 2008) and creating self-understanding in an organization (Abma, 2003; Reissner, 2008). Narratives may be used in various contexts in an organization. Bruner (1996) called attention to narratives as an expression of the individuals' ways of constructing meanings while Hänninen (1999) pointed out the inner narratives and socialization process. On the other hand Gergen (1994; Gergen, Gergen, & Barrett, 2004) describes a more collective and community view of narratives. Lämsä and Sintonen (2006)

are arguing for structuring the interactions in an organization and Oswick et al. (2000) focus on interrelationships and Rhodes (1996) has an interest in the narrative approach to change.

At this point the group - economists, humanists, artists, industrial managers, sales managers and researchers - are arguing again. They have various interests and they are all pointing in different directions. However, as the storm settled, they decided to follow the human related path, which is formed through the conception that narratives are constructed images of experience and thus, narratives connote real life but are not actually images of reality. The group believes in Jarnagin and Slocum's (2007, p. 294) argumentation that narratives more or less channel a logical, intuitive and emotional understanding when employees interpret internal socio-cultural actions in the work community as well as in Oswick's et al. (2000) application of narratives into dialogical scripting, which refers to a creative process of fictionalising a real event. Therefore - the group supposes - narratives enable the learners to disengage themselves from the context-specific elements of the event and focus on the underlying 'intertextual aspects'. Scripting is a form of an aesthetic distance and it is a way to interpret one's own organization with the help of narratives: a group selects a key critical incident and uses it as a springboard for producing a fictionalised narrative (i.e. script) through collective interaction. According to Abma (2003) and Reissner (2008) a storyteller as a learner has an active role; s/he is able to examine the problem and the possibilities and produce different points of view on the subject at hand through the script. At the end of this chapter Bruner (1986, 1990) wants us to remember that learning through narratives is a sensitive system of searching, selecting, organizing and interpretation, whereby the learners, building on knowledge through subjective experiences, interpret the social reality together (Gergen, 1994). Therefore, the dialogue takes place in the act of giving and receiving meanings (Hänninen, 1999).

3 THEATRE IN AN ORGANIZATION

During the last fifteen years, theatre has gained increasing attention as an intervention technique as a resource or technology in organizational change, development and learning (Boje & Rosile, 2003; Clark, 2008; Darsø, 2004; Josendal & Skarholt, 2006; Meisiek, 2002; Nissley et al., 2004; Schreyögg & Höpfl, 2004). The practical application of various theatre techniques to an organizational context has increased (Meisiek, 2004; Meisiek & Barry, 2007). Barry (2008) thinks that increasing interest is related to a new paradigm of artful turn in organization studies. With our study we take part in the discussion of application (Mienczakowski, 1995; Mienczakowski, Smith, & Sinclair, 1996; Mienczakowski & Morgan, 2001) that focuses on interpreting existing situations from different point of views. From this tradition, contribution is a way to see organizational events differently with the help of art and especially the help of the distancing effect of art. From the perspective of art education, it is like a serious play; people interpret their own actions themselves in a context of play (Heikkinen, 2002). Based on previous research in a field of applied theatre we propose an approach called Research-based Theatre (RBT) as a practical orientation and a methodical approach to bringing together alternative world-views distributed throughout the organization.

From the RBT tradition, we understood art-based action in a frame of postmodernism rather than of modernism, and that is why the theatre philosophy and practices in the context of

organizational learning are based on open dramaturgy, which inherits narration from the epic drama of Brecht (1964). Brecht is a creator of the distancing effect, *Verfremdungseffekt*, which has an interesting learning potential in the context of organizational learning. Theatre offers techniques for both expressing and challenging one's own worldviews as well as interpreting the worldviews, attitudes and behaviour of others, and, in this sense, theatre operates in a field of experiential and transformative learning (Boal, 1992, 1995, 1996). In generating richer understanding within an organization, the communication between different groups' views is the key, and that is why it is important to bridge gaps and facilitate discourse between different work units; to plot the reality together, so to speak.

Boal's (1992, 1995, 1996) theatre practices are considered post-modern theatre, in which the new role of theatre is seen to be increasing awareness and a way of plotting reality (Tausing & Schechner, 1994). Open dramaturgy is like a puzzle, unlike conventional modern theatre or Aristotelian dramaturgy, in which episodes are constructed through a hero's actions in a linear and causative plot. We approach organization with the same idea of puzzle; we see organization as a fragmented and open-ended community. Thus, the narratives in organization are fractured and unfinished, even a multi-narration as performance researcher Schechner (1988) might say and from the perspective of narrative organizational studies an ante narrative (Boje, 2001).

In the context of diversity, theatre is not interested in finding one solution or truth. Instead, in theatrical interactions, the participants explore many different meanings hiding somewhere in the processes of finding solutions and possibilities. (Boje, Luhman, & Cunliffe, 2003) By leaning on Clark and Mangham's previous studies (2004) we define RBT as a way of telling polyphonic stories inside an organization and, furthermore, in our definition, theatre is a performative narration formed by gesture, text and interpretation.

The roots of applied theatre lie within the community-based orientation of theatre; thus, the meaning of theatre is more like storytelling rather than a performing art (Nissley et al., 2004), and its pedagogical core is situated in critical learning (Asikainen, 2003). Plotting the reality is based on the philosophy of theatre that emphasises significant incompleteness and insufficiency (Heikkinen, 2002; Oddey, 1994) and in the context of plotting it is more puzzling than explanatory. With the help of theatre techniques it is possible to build bridges between analogies and social reality. The meta-language of the theatre enforces the generation of dialogue (Asikainen, 2003; Heikkinen, 2002), which is formed on one of Boal's ideas of "making thought visible" (Boal, 1995, p. 137). We have applied it to "making representations and power relationships visible" as well as Burke's (1969) idea of a dramatic analysis of reality in which we are interested in "different realities" (Rhodes, 1996) among communities within an organization. The function of applied theatre is like a transformative agent or mirror. The audience has an active role as a storyteller and sensemaker, deeply involved in the situation in which communication is formed through the interpretation of different situations that are presented or constructed during drama (Boal, 1995). In this sense, theatre is a communicative space for conversation and interpretation, which sets things in motion, makes people aware, unblocks gridlocked situations, shakes things up or 'unfreezes' (Ford & Ford, 1995; Heikkinen, 2002; Marshak & Grant, 2008; Oswick et al., 2000).

Theatre as an aesthetic learning space

In RBT, the interactions are based on Boal's Image Theatre approach where the human body is used as a tool to represent experiences in life: attitudes, feelings, behaviour, ideas and patterns of power relationships. The practical and research learning interest is in dialogue which takes place in an encounter between members of organization and actors in a context of performance. The learning may emerge - if circumstances are favorable - in a social space between fiction and fact, between encounters of individuals. The actors and members of organization's demonstrations are symbolic images of something that has happened or could happen in real life. At the same time, when people interpret body images, they reconstruct and reflect their own view on the issue. A technique of Boal's called Frozen Images is applied in our study both as a data collection technique and as a narrative technique for reflection. The participants (individually or in groups) create and reflect an image of an impression of a situation. Frozen images offer an opportunity to handle problems in fragmented time. In a frozen image, time and reality are conceptual; linear time is modified and checked as episodes from past and from future (Neelands, 1990, p. 4).

Boal explains aesthetic space through the concept of metaxis. Symbolic actions in a role-play scene assist the participants in observing the existing situation ("as is") and a non-existing possibility ("as if") in order to investigate habits, beliefs, language, feelings and social relationships. The aesthetic space, formed through imitation in drama, is a specific place of representation (*mimesis*) in situated time and reality. It is a human property that allows people to observe themselves in action with the help of aesthetic distance. The self-knowledge thus acquired empowers the person "to be the subject (the one who observes) of another subject (the one who acts)" (Boal, 1995, pp. 13–20).

Aesthetic space stimulates knowledge creation in a specific manner, and through that, transformational learning processes emerge in reflections and the interpretation between the experiencing of lived and fictional life situations. Likewise, the pedagogical core of applied theatre is situated in reflective and critical learning, but the actual now-and-here moment of subjective understanding is situated in between, in the metaxis, of interpretations of imitations constructed in the aesthetic space (Boal, 1995). We see a huge learning potential and interesting research object in the aesthetic space as a forum for contextual and situated understanding as well as a form to share tacit and self-transcending knowledge. As a learning space where sense is made, theatre sets up a template allowing the observation of familiar taken-for-granted reality from an unfamiliar angle, an angle that uses familiar elements and signs of daily work life in a fictional context. The character of reality as a social construction may become apparent; the familiar taken-for-granted reality is likely to become contingent, making it evident that it could be different. This duplication process is not straightforward; it does not produce unequivocal, predictable results, so therefore it is unnecessary to guide the process as a linear project (Schreyögg & Höpfl, 2004).

4 RESEARCH ORIENTATION - ACTING ON WITHIN ORGANIZATION

The relationship between studying organization and acting on within organization and with the members of it was integral. The research problem has two levels; 1) problems that were

more conceptual and related to research and 2) problems that were more practical and related to organization's development work. The research questions are as follows:

- In what way applied theatre could be a device for research
 - Theatre as an acquisition process of knowledge: How can personal and unformulated knowledge be shared with others? What kind of a co-construction and creation process of new knowledge does RBT represent?
- How organization could construct a polyphonic space for organizational learning
 - How learning process should be triggered by art-based techniques? How ideals and ideas of all members of organization could be shared at the organizational level?

These research questions pointed us to the field of qualitative research. It involves a participative investigation of intensive case with the subjectivist research perspective. The importance of participatory and democratic elements was outlined both in the research as well as in the development process. The next picture illustrates the combination of our research and development work in organization.

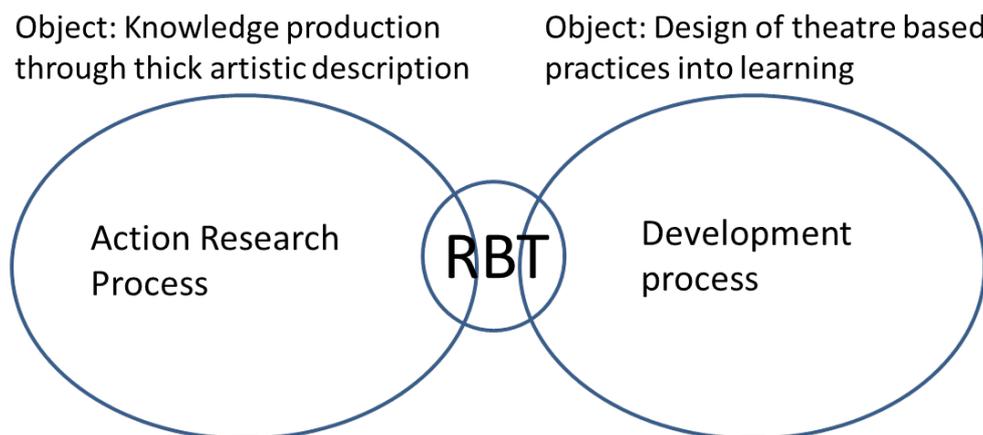


Figure. 1 The combination of research and development processes. Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

Research problem formulation guides us to a more phenomenological-constructivist view of knowledge where the main idea, both theoretically and practically, was that the learning process in an organization is a social and cultural event and that all the members of the organization (with various competences, backgrounds, needs and skills as well as experiences and feelings) should be seen and heard; everyone's ideals and experiences are valued. With that in mind we started our action research process. So, instead of an analytical problem-solving or linear decision making approach we decided to follow a more interpretative approach and study together with the case company how to create a polyphonic space which would enrich learning and knowledge generation among all the members of company. Central to the research was also how theatre is related to embodied tacit knowledge – the actual process of doing something and the art of doing itself in a specific context, not just talking about it.

Research orientation emphasises social interaction between people and the changing practices of social process (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). For that reason we created forums in which people were able to join each other as co-participants in developing the practices related to their daily work life (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). The aim was to create a process in which people are collectively trying to understand how they are in relation to and interacting with one another and the world, and this included meaning-making dialogue. According to Barry (2008) the artistic approach emphasises problem finding and the narrative approach revolves around artful reframing of problems. To his definition artistic actions in research means an iterative and emergent perspective to a problem, and this was what we aimed at, too.

Research positions - mapping the making of organization

In practice, when working on our case study, we have encountered a multi layered action research process in which various aims exist. We found that it is crucial to be aware of one's own position, power and purpose when acting within an organization. One critical phase of action research was evident: the organization had a practical orientation to the process and they wanted to improve effectiveness through social practices with functional terms. Managers and employees were after concrete outcomes and benefits. However, researchers had more humanistic aspirations towards change; to see how the social dimension of the learning process is shaped and shifted by the ways the members of the organization see and understand themselves (Barry, 2008; Kemmis, 2001;). In addition to this, the artists were also interested in actions and events related to the artistic process and play that increase possibilities for emancipation and/or empowerment. Various existing interests caused some communicational confusion and we realized that there is lack of common ground and common language. RBT seemed to reveal the power relationships among different communities inside the organization. Power issues are very hard to deal with and it was difficult to see and interpret existing situations from different points of view. Researchers and artists were involved in various social processes (roles, rules, needs, interests, feelings, emotions and power between different groups) during interactions.

Even though there was an agreement that the learning process allows also an interpretative orientation to organizational landscape, the needs for actions were quite often framed only from a rational and instrumental perspective. Artists, especially, could not understand the worldview of functional rationality; they were amazed at how members of the organization claimed that only rationality drives practices. They argued that all practices done by humans have social elements too. Likewise, participatory action research emphasizes the dynamics of social factors related to knowledge creation and learning and action researcher Kemmis (2001) also claims that social elements (power, trust, engagement, collaboration and communication) operate more or less through interpretation.

5 CASE

Background of the case

Through this case our intention is to describe a knowledge creation process that is based on art-based methods and action based learning. The case company of this study is one factory of a multinational forest industrial company in Finland. This company operates in a challenging field; the competition for market shares is fierce, the whole tradition of this industry in Finland as well as the rest of Europe is changing; during our study, several downsizings have been conducted in Finland. In order to survive, the individual factories are forced to renew themselves and be innovative. The need for change is in the air. The situation within the case company culminated in a shower of accusations between production, sales and product development unit: "Who is to blame?" This type of tension could hardly be solved in an analytical way or through top down management. So, the starting point of our case company was focused on the need of connections between people inside organization.

However, the first challenge was to bridge different views and interests – various interests of art, artist, art education, research, researchers, development work, the daily operations of the factory, employees, managers, innovation activities, and learning - into a joint, meaningful point of interest. Connecting people was far from harmonious, in part the process was chaotic and we survived it by discussing with one another as well as listening to "others odd" voices; an engineering manager and an applied theatre artist worked hard together to build a common ground. At the very beginning we had both virtual and face-to-face conversations and meetings between theatre workers and the researchers, the researchers and the managers of the case company, the researchers and the employees of the case company, as well as the employees and the managers. It took many discussions to create a shared, multivoiced vision about what we were supposed to aim towards, and, to be honest, this vision changed during the journey. One basic element of the research vision we agreed upon was namely that we all were interested in the employees' sense-making, and the employees felt that it was important for them to voice their views. From that point onwards we understood theatre as an active, participatory place for sense-making (sense-making as a learning action) as well as sense-breaking (sense-breaking as an out learning action and as a critical reflection) in an organization.

During the spring of 2008, about 70 workers of the case company participated in the learning process which lasted for 18 months altogether, but in this study we focus on the first intensive 3-month period. Interventions in the organization were, in keeping with action research practice, recorded on videotape. We realised that it was difficult to describe the richness of the interactions during the research process adequately, so we captured events and feelings through a 12-minute research movie in addition to our traditional research report.

Participatory action research based case

So, with the help of theatre, we tried to bring up organizations social interactions and practices - how people act and react, think and talk and feel - under the spotlight in a

sensitive way. The main goal was to understand the social infrastructure of organization because we noticed that the technological infrastructure was the main role in the case company: the production process/manufacture was outlined and human processes were not so important. The picture below illustrates our approach to knowledge creation: how we linked interpretative process and art based activities into a development process of the case study (See Fig. 2).

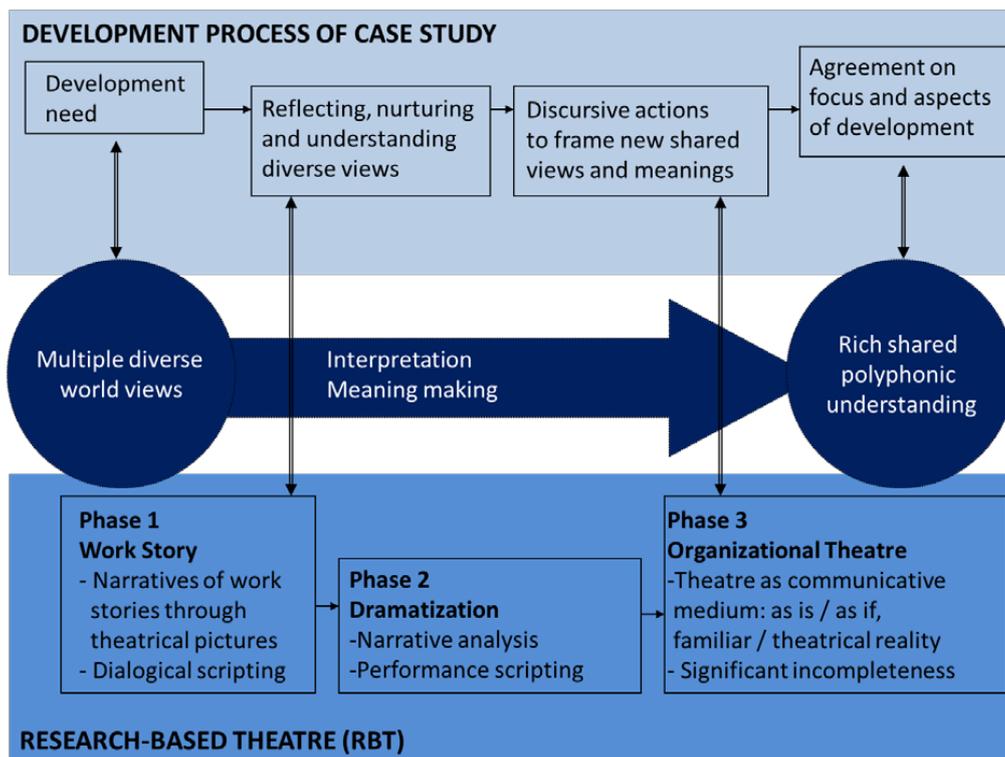


Figure 2. Development process of the case study. Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

We suppose that theoretically, research based theatre is a way to form knowledge. At a practical level it is a learning event and a dialogue where conceptual thinking and awareness is constructed and based on everyday experiences.

Plotting realities with the help of theatrical pictures (phase 1)

The interactions began with five separate Work Story workshops in which the participants (9 – 28 people in each) represented the same department. We wanted to hear what the employees from various units – production, after-treatment, sales, design – had to say about the present situation in the organization. Firstly, the participants memorised individual experiences and then they were divided into smaller groups (4 – 7 people in each) in which they collectively constructed a story related to significant moments in their daily work with the help of seven theatrical pictures (see the Fig. 2). The theatrical pictures were produced beforehand Work Story interventions and are an application of a specific

technique of Boal - the frozen image technique from Image Theatre - where we combined with elements of mask theatre and Johnston's (1996) technique of low and high status. Participants traced significant meanings in the lived and experienced social life of the organization through theatrical pictures. They interpreted pictures as images of reality: "Imagine that these pictures are a description of what happens in your company". After that, the employees organised the pictures and plotted their story by telling what is done, when and where it is done, who does it, how does s/he do it and why. Through storytelling members of the same work unit shared their ideals and ideas of the organization and their work.



Figure 3. Theatrical pictures. Source: design by Pässilä

The main idea of this phase was dialogical scripting. We asked the employees to tell the story step by step, so that the last picture (or the end of the story) was "Client is dissatisfied".

Phases of research based theatre

In phase 1 we (see Fig. 2) collected stories about details of the organization's life; people told us how they act in a specific situation, how they see each other, what kind of tensions are related to encounters, what they say to each other and what they think of each other and how they feel. The objective of this phase was to form a space for interaction and

discourse inside the different work units. The following table illustrates the learning focus and the potential mode of knowledge creation in this phase.

Phase	Technique	Learning focus
1 Work Story	Storytelling interventions at five different work units through theatrical pictures during January 2008	To reflect one's own experience To construct a shared meaning of the experiences Experiential knowing

Table 1. Work Story phase. Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

After the stories (in phase 2 see Fig. 2) researchers and artists scripted stories and translated them into performance – into theatrical scenes. We had fourteen stories illustrating the employees' experiences, revealing concrete events, feelings, fears, hopes and tensions. Analysis began by reading the stories through the dramaturgical lenses and with an evocative attitude. We traced what employees were doing and why they were doing it and categorised the stories into themes which pointed towards the same direction: the relationships between the groups inside the organization and the power struggles concealed in these relationships. The next table illustrates the learning focus in the dramatisation phase.

Phase	Technique	Learning focus
2 Dramatisation of narratives	Researchers and artists analyze employees' stories and devise stories into a script; dramatizing the script for performance (seven role-play scenes) and rehearsing the scenes during January, February and March 2008	To make groups' world views visible To make power relationships visible from different perspectives Design of reflective questioning: how to define and share relevancy of knowledge

Table 2. Dramatisation phase. Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

Role-play scenes were the triggers for the action based learning in the next phase of the intervention, namely Organizational Theatre (see the Fig. 2) that focused on making visible barriers and blocks in communication and on uncovering the problem by the use of play-acting and an action based learning assignment. During the theatre session the members of

the organization watched theatrical scenes and then they interpreted what they saw; events were situated in the context of day-to-day work. Events were shown through three main characters on stage: a customer, a salesman and an operator from the production line. After each role-play scene, the participants reflected upon what had happened in the scene in groups. Next, each group summarized their conversation and the spectrum of the meanings, shared it with the other groups and commented upon each other's views.

The employees and managers worked together in small groups, each of which had one participant from the five different work units. During this phase the group members outlined the problems and potentials inherent in the events on stage. They analyzed themselves by dialoguing about their own practices, behaviors and relationships. During the session employees and managers shared, repeated, amplified and interpreted the social practices of everyday work and reinterpreted as well as re-sequenced them. The following table illustrates the learning focus in this phase.

Phase	Technique	Learning focus
3 Organizational theatre	Participative theatrical intervention of applied theatre and reflective questioning	<p>To discuss about different world views, uncover problems, question and make assumptions transparent, confront taken-for-granted, trace potential between different work units</p> <p>To redefine and reconstruct narratives</p> <p>To increase employees' creation of knowledge about their worldviews on the basis of their own sensemaking</p>

Table 3. Organizational Theatre phase. Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

As a result employees suggested practical actions that concentrate on how to change the existing situation. They shared ideals and ideas about what kinds of social engagements needed to be done, what skills they would need to reach their target, how they would encourage each other, how they would learn from each other and from the customers and what kind of a plan they required to do it. Employees themselves engaged in problem sifting and planned their own development targets. The next dialogue illustrates the aesthetic distance.

Salesman: You see, these two men at stage one from production and one from the sales department don't understand each other.

Operator: This person from production, he does not know that the information has changed. Nobody told to him.

Salesman: So he is working with the wrong data.

Operator: But is it his fault?

Salesman: He is making a mistake because of someone else.

Operator: Of course in the end it is always the production unit's fault.

This type of dialogue is very sensitive and vulnerable; it is facilitated with the help of aesthetic distance. Even as members of the organization were discussing what was happening on the stage they also interpreted their own behavior, communication and attitudes through distancing themselves from it. We doubt that without openness and a trustful atmosphere it becomes difficult to do things together or construct an image of one's own organization. At least in an ideal situation, members of the organization get a picture of their own meaning making and schemas and then they are able to generate deeper understanding from their own organizational actions and how they themselves are related to it. We claim, based on this case, that knowledge creation space is formed between the employees and employees and managers and the actions on stage. Play and imagination created an atmosphere that was serious yet playful and it allowed the emergence of polyphony.

6 THE ORGANIZATION AS A STORYTELLER

In the end, the humanist, artists, industrial manager, sales managers and researchers sat around the table one last time. We formed a metaphor; organization as a storyteller which illustrates learning as an ongoing process, and it stresses the collective self understanding of what kinds of plots, scenes, tensions and roles are presented within the organization. We claim that experience and new emerging knowledge is bond to our body, thus we dare to argue that knowledge creation through art-based processes has a tacit and embodied dimension. When we reflect organizational events on the stage as a spectator we think by acting. So our thinking is related to physical movements, gestures and encounters between another emerged in the act. Whenever we have to describe thinking by acting it is a translation process. Then we translate contextual action into conceptual text, therefore, we change communication from one language (embodied) into another (written words). This is probably a more general issue: how to express ones own individual embodied experiences - or how to describe the experiences of the organization's members into a conceptual level. On the theatre stage you may act but in a research stage you have only text and sometimes the text does not capture the whole spirit. Or perhaps by gesture you may catch another view, a novel view. However, now it is time for the conclusion.

So far in this article we have described how applied theatre maybe a device for research and how organization may construct a polyphonic space for organizational learning through application of theatre techniques and action based learning. Through our case we described how learning processes are triggered by art-based techniques and how ideals and ideas of all members of the organization were shared through storytelling and by theatre techniques

at the organizational level. The following table illustrates the learning orientations of the interventions and the creation of knowledge.

Learning in Work Story intervention	Learning in Organizational Theatre intervention
Expression of one’s own worldview Sharing first with closest colleagues, whose conceptions probably are in accord Reflecting and interpreting experienced reality Critical self-reflection Collaborative discourse Negotiation and collective meaning-making	Exposure to others’ worldviews Dialogue with opposing viewpoints Imagining possible worlds and ways to reach them Prioritizing what should be done Reflecting what we have done vs. how and why “the others” are doing it Social reinterpretation
Knowledge creation Knowledge related to emotion, body, and action	Knowledge creation Knowledge related to logic of social events, mind, and collective memory

Table 4. Learning orientations of the interventions and the creation of knowledge Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

We found collective knowledge creation as a matter of metaxis born in the space of storytelling, which happened simultaneously at two different worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image during interaction. During interaction members of the organization participate to share their personal and unformulated experiences in order to accumulate different pieces of information and to structure those into a meaningful pattern that can be put to practical use. We cherish the idea that everyone is involved in knowledge creation. Exposing this is possible if the organization, at the social level as well as the level of structure, is willing to acknowledge these tensions and is ready to learn from them. Employees and the managers empower themselves by sharing identities through roles and by dialoguing their voices through interpreting the script.

The polyphonic space divides reality into two levels: the usual, familiar reality and the theatrical reality as it appears on stage. The approach underlines that learning through theatre is a social, cultural and collective construction, knowledge creation takes place between people in a suitable context. The next picture illustrates the modelling of polyphonic space.

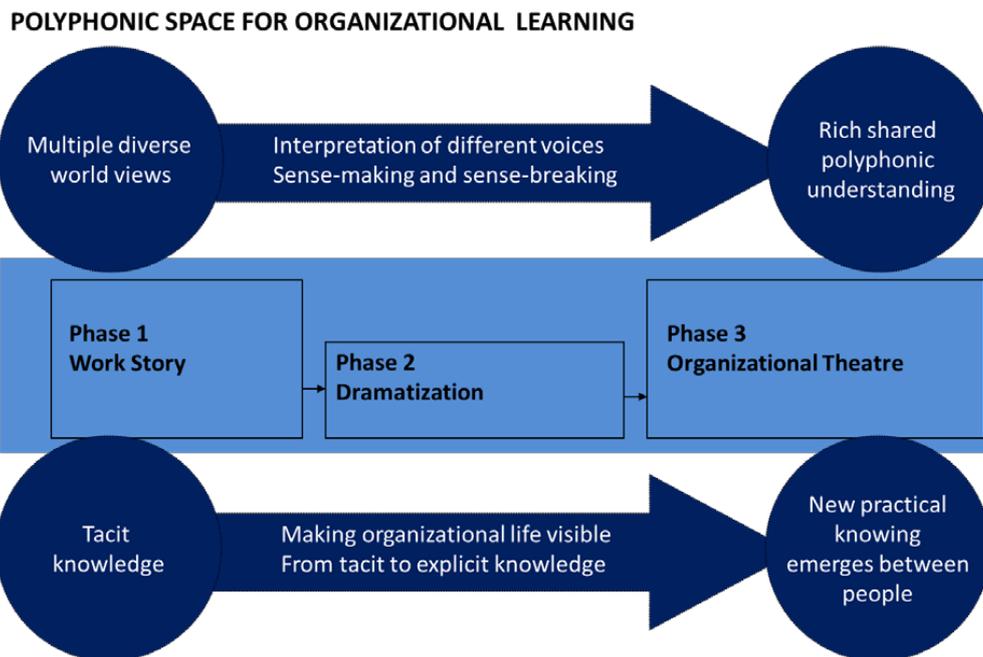


Figure 4. The model of a polyphonic space. Source: design by Pässilä and Oikarinen

Thus we suggest that learning, in a context of theatre and action based learning, is understood as the sensitive contributions of learners, and, during the interpretations of lifelike narratives, different knowledge is generated between them.

A co-construction and creation process of new knowledge in research based theatre

In polyphonic space the learners articulate their own world-views, conceptions and experiences. They then pay full attention and listen to other, possibly opposing points of view and construct a shared polyphonic understanding together. The polyphonic space is constructed from an interrogative and evocative reading of the narratives constructed by the employees and managers themselves. Through the polyphonic space, learners try to trace significant meanings. The perceptions of the organization members, the way in which different communities share their interpretations of reality through theatrical signs and role-play scenes, shorten the distance between them. The dynamic of the learning process is often 'conflicted and chaotic' because of the nature of diversity. One participant verbalized the dynamic of the social constructed space by these words: "Even though we tried to be open to different points of view, we tried to see things from another's perspective... the conversation drifted to our own perspective...we take a defensive position..." However, we suggest, based on idea of critical reflection, that an awareness of different positions is the cornerstone of socio-cultural renewal.

We claim that it is crucial for an organization to hear different voices and that learning as an element of change is multi-layered, highly complex and conflicted, and organizational events are understood differently at the various phases of the process and in different roles

within the organization. So, it is time for the last line around the table: there is not a single specific change related to renewal but several different interpretations about change, and organizations need to cherish diversity, not control it.

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Sub-study 2:

Pässilä, A., Oikarinen, T. and Vince, R. (2012)

'The role of reflection, reflection on roles: practice-based innovation through theatre-based learning.'

H. Melkas and V. Harmaakorpi (eds.), Practice-based Innovation: Insights, Applications and Policy Implications. Springer.

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Chapter 10

The Role of Reflection, Reflection on Roles: Practice-Based Innovation Through Theatre-Based Learning

Anne Pässilä, Tuija Oikarinen, and Russ Vince

Abstract A key issue for practice-based innovation is: how can organisations generate innovation in the midst of action? In order to answer this question, this chapter discusses the relationship between learning, reflection, and practice-based innovation. Reflection is seen as an important organisational process that can create spaces for generative learning. The authors demonstrate how theatre-based learning can offer an effective strategy for the creation of reflective spaces that reveal the dynamics of innovation, both in terms of what promotes and what prevents innovative behaviour and practice. Through research and intervention in three organisations, the authors show that viewing roles and relations ‘acted out’ in theatre helps to reduce the unconscious acting out of entrenched emotional and political dynamics in practice. The struggle to create innovation in the midst of action can be seen in the reflexive tension between the radical possibility of such interventions and the political purpose they may serve for established power relations. There will always be a tension in organisations between dynamics that support innovation and dynamics that undermine it.

10.1 Introduction

A key issue for practice-based innovation is represented in the question: how can organisations generate innovation in the midst of action? Our aim in this chapter is to address this question from the perspective of learning – both individuals’ learning in the organisation and organisational learning. In order to do this we utilise the literature on reflection and reflexivity, with a particular emphasis on

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H. Melkas and V. Harmaakorpi (eds.),
Practice-Based Innovation: Insights, Applications and Policy Implications,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-642-21723-4_10, © Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2012

moving beyond the individual reflective practitioner to consider reflection as an organising process; one that supports learning and innovation at the group and organisational level. We are making a contribution to an understanding of the dynamics of practice-based innovation in organisations, and we assert the importance of critical reflection as an organisational practice that can create spaces for generative learning. We argue that such spaces are necessary to encourage innovative knowledge and innovative work as a continuous aspect of everyday practice in organisations.

Understanding the dynamics that support innovation involves an understanding of the dynamics that get in the way of innovation. Innovation is unlikely to occur without committed, mutual endeavour; and without a strong desire to transform existing knowledge. However, existing knowledge may be seen as essential to the effective functioning of an organisation, as a key value, or as an integral part of 'the way we do things here'. Attempts to transform existing knowledge are not easy because they get caught up in (for example): the messy everyday politics of organisational life; the complex feelings and emotions that are generated through interaction with others; established habits and attachments to routine ways of working that are resistant to change; individual and collective blame, apathy, cynicism and the silos that such behaviour creates; the tensions within hierarchies; and the contradictory role that managers and leaders have, which asks us to be both the champions of change and the guardians of the status quo. (Vince and Reynolds 2009)

Theatre-based learning offers an effective strategy for the creation of reflective spaces that can reveal the dynamics of innovation, both in terms of what promotes and what prevents innovative behaviour and practice. This approach encourages reflection on the difference between knowledge that is experienced from within a role (as a worker, manager, leader) and knowledge that is generated from collective, critical reflection on roles. In other words, seeing roles and relations 'acted out' in theatre helps to reduce the unconscious acting out of entrenched emotional and political dynamics in practice. This approach helps to create a space in the mind that underpins engagement with collective spaces of learning and innovation. Of course, theatre-based intervention is also conducted within the political realities of organisational life, and as a consequence may well serve to reinforce resistance to the transformation of knowledge. The struggle to create innovation in the midst of action can be seen in the reflexive tension between the radical possibility of such interventions and the political purpose they may serve for established power relations (Coopey 2007).

10.2 Reflection, the Organisation of Reflection and Reflexivity

Imagine that the following dialogue happens in an organisation where a manager, an employee, a researcher and an artist are at the beginning of a theatre-based learning process of reflection and learning.

Manager Smith: We are interested in organising reflection, of course. We need to improve our practices.

Artist Brown: Great! Understanding is such an important element of personal and professional growth.

Manager Smith: Yes but we don't want to spend too much time or employee resources on it.

Employee Davies: Yes, yes I hope that reflection generates change, and we'll get ready and usable solutions from it.

Researcher Jones: The nature of reflection is participatory interaction and you have to create time and space for conversations.

Manager Smith: Yes, yes but we have the problem of how to deal with reclaims. Could you make employees understand how important it is to co-operate together?

Artist Brown: Make them understand?

Employee Davies: As you can see managers assume that we leave our brains at home when we come to work.

Manager Smith: Sorry I didn't mean that, I was just pointing out that we have new challenges in our business which can't be solved in old ways. So the Executive Group of our company has pointed out a new direction, and I have to implement it.

Researcher Jones: What if you reflect on this new situation together? The idea of reflection is that reflectors formulate their own questions and through questioning share problems and emotions related to issues.

Manager Smith: Emotions?

Artist Brown: Emotions!

Employee Davies: Emotions... I don't know about it. We are doing things in a rational way.

Manager Smith: Exactly, I am sure that emotions are most important but I think that our employees have possibilities to share their emotions if they want to. Some employees want to express their emotions somewhere other than in workplace.

Employee Davies: Like in the pub. (laughs)

Artist Brown: But organisations as a community are full of emotion.

Manager Smith: We do business here. I have a financial responsibility!

Employee Davies: And the rest of us have a practical and operational responsibility.

Researcher Jones: Yes, but organising is a potential learning process consisting of various elements. Emotions are one element in reflection and everyday work practices. Organising reflection involves shared interpretation. It involves making sense of things together, solving problems together.

Manager Smith: But do we need a shared interpretation? Isn't there a big risk if you can't facilitate the right solution?

Employee Davies: Yes indeed, we want concrete action rather than speculations.

Artist Brown: But the uncertainty and incompleteness is the driving force in finding the multiple solutions and possibilities.

Researcher Jones: There is always a chance that things will go wrong.

Artist Brown: Reflection is rather an empowering process to make sense of a situation in different ways, not a tool for a problem solving.

Manager Smith: Why on earth should we take that risk then?

Researcher Jones: Because you need a different kind of approach to discover your ways of working that are not productive; and practices that are taken-for-granted as well as the assumptions behind them.

Employee Davies: It must be confusing!

Artist Brown: Sharing experiences and feelings might be that too. But it is also a good way for you to learn about what is really happening in your organisation.

In this dialogue Manager Smith takes a rational and managerial approach to reflection. Manager Smith wants to benefit quickly and effectively from reflection.

From Manager Smith's point of view, gaining knowledge through reflection is like any other production factor, a commodity that can be possessed, stored, accumulated, converted, or exchanged (Van de Ven and Johnson 2006). Employee Davies points out the need to change actions (Ellström 2010) and he sees the practical impacts of reflection. However, he thinks that confusion is the result of bad practice. Artist Brown has an interpretative and artful approach (Mienczakowski 1995; Meisiek and Hatch 2008). Artist Brown is inspired by the notion that reflection as part of learning is not only about possessing knowledge, but also about knowing as action. Researcher Jones's approach is informed by practice-based innovation (Harmaakorpi and Melkas 2005) in situated learning (Brown and Duguid 2001; Lave and Wenger 1991). Researcher Jones considers the organisation of reflection (Vince 2002) an integral part of knowledge, learning, and innovation, and that these develop simultaneously within a course of action (Gherardi 2006).

One problem that organisations face is that 'quick fix', ready-made 'solutions' tend to deny tensions inherent in the complexity of organisations and in turn, deny access to the emotions and politics that both promote and limit learning in organisations (Dehler 1998). These characters: Manager Smith, Employee Davies, Artist Brown and Researcher Jones made a commitment to discover and work on the dynamics that support and block innovation in the organisation. This raises an important question – what is it that prevents members of this organisation sharing their ideas, communicating and cooperating in the midst of action?

In order to make sense of dynamics that get in the way of innovation, organisational members may have to articulate their past experiences and their desired future action. Within an organisation, various work groups can reflect on their way of doing things, and try to make hidden assumptions visible. It may be important to reflect on what seems to work and what doesn't; being aware of associated feelings; of judgments made and on what basis; and of the ideas, values and assumptions which influence the interpretations made of the experience (Vince 1998). However, the messy everyday politics of organisational life complicates knowledge sharing. The possibilities of learning in and from experience require reflection-based experiential learning process linked to everyday practices. In this study, we explain how a reflection-based learning process was constructed through applied theatre with employees, managers, customers, theatre artists, and researchers within three organisations. In this context theatre is understood as a way to articulate experiences, and as a learning process both of drawing on and developing new ideas.

10.2.1 Practice-Based Innovation

From an organisation's point of view, practice-based innovation refers to employees' and managers' reflection on and renewal of their own operations. This may involve the development of new working methods, routines, products or services (Harmaakorpi and Mutanen 2008; Harmaakorpi and Melkas 2005).

Renewal is based on learning in and through work processes within the operations concerned (Ellström 2010). It focuses on workplace learning as a fundamental mechanism behind practice-based innovation and highlights work processes as well as wide participation in learning. The driving force behind these practices is the interplay between the explicit and implicit dimensions of work (Ellström 2010). It is this tension that creates the potential for practice-based innovation.

A key challenge for practice-based innovation is how to capture knowledge embedded in ongoing practices (Lundvall 1992; Jensen et al. 2007). Three critical social dynamics of creating and sharing practice-based knowledge for innovation have been proposed: boundaries, embeddedness of practice and collective sense-making (Dougherty 2004). To change taken-for-granted knowledge in organisations, interaction between diverse views and experiences is needed. Knowledge embedded in practice during an innovation process does not exist without social action. Innovations emerge through the interactions between the practices of heterogeneous groups in the social contexts in which they are located (Newell et al. 2002). Practice-based innovation in the midst of action is dependent on two fundamental social, inter- and intrapersonal processes – analysis and interpretation. Theatre-based learning is especially suited to social dimension of interpretative innovation process (where learning takes place among and through other people according to Gherardi et al. 1998) and to foster organisational and process innovations. Because of its reflective nature it allows learners to negotiate the meaning of actions and situations in a midst of innovation process. Through it, people gain common knowing what promotes and what prevents innovative behaviour and practice.

An important issue for organisations (from the perspective of practice-based innovation) is to find out what an interactive and interpretative approach to innovation actually means and involves in a specific context. This raises the question: what prevents and enhances interaction and interpretation in organisations' own socio-cultural systems? Knowing in the midst of innovation can be a blind spot for managers as well as employees, and organisations may need to “look at the world simultaneously through both analytical and interpretative lenses and flip back and forth between them as conditions required” (Lester and Piore 2004: 74).

10.2.2 Reflection on Practice-Based Innovation

Now we could imagine again; Researcher Jones argues that learning through attempts at innovation is more a process of reflection than a project related to technical problem solving in a company's everyday working life. Researcher Jones leads us into an ongoing and open-ended reflective process (Schön 1983; Vince and Reynolds 2009), the thrust of which is to discover new meanings (Lester and Piore 2004: 97). Manager Smith agrees with this, but seeks clarity and also struggles with letting go of control, as well as with accepting ambiguity and confusion. In effect, learning challenges, it undermines and it destabilises, it creates anxiety as well as the potential for change. It creates resistance to change and the desire for change at

the same time. Manager Smith reminds us that reflection is a symptom of something deeper. Manager Smith, Employee Davies and the rest of the members of the organisation have to collectively reflect (Reynolds and Vince 2004b) on what is happening in their own organisational life. They have to ask – what is the nature of their own organisation and their own innovation process, how are relationships formed, what are the familiar or taken-for-granted assumptions and what other assumptions are present?

Within an organisation, experience is embedded in practice, and members share it implicitly, and that kind of implicit or tacit knowing cannot be transferred without reflection on practice (Vince 2002; Dougherty 2004). The point here is that what people already ‘know’ can get in the way of innovation unless they also seek to call into question the value of existing knowledge to changing circumstances. Reflection on underlying assumptions invites analysis of our own organisational world and therefore our own actions, practice, and experience. Reflection is one of the key building blocks of learning (Vince and Reynolds 2009) and it allows organisations to surface the assumptions that inform day to day action (and inaction). The concept of reflection has been elaborated as an activity undertaken by the individual (reflective practitioner) in the organisation. Recently, there has been a shift in perspective which emphasises the critical and organisational dimensions of reflection in both educational and organisational contexts. Four perspectives have helped to improve our understanding of reflection as an organisational process, beyond the notion of the ‘reflective practitioner’. These are: critical reflection; public reflection; productive reflection; and organising reflection (see Table 10.1 below).

In the context of practice-based innovation, a ‘critical’ perspective is the starting point for understanding the shift from individual to collective reflection. Critical reflection involves a dynamic and dialectical movement between ‘doing’ and ‘reflecting on doing’ (Freire 1998: 43). In the next section of the chapter we describe how theatre-based learning can help us to interrogate this movement between action and reflection, as well as offering a way to think about current practices within organisations in order to transform them.

10.2.3 Organising Reflection via Theatre-Based Learning

Theatre instructor Augusto Boal applied Freire’s (1974) educational ideas to communities with the help of theatre. His approach is centred upon making experiences, attitudes, feelings, and relationships visible by observing institutionalised habits and practices in a new way (Boal 1992, 1995, 1996). Theatre-based learning offers one way of organising reflection: “to raise questions about purpose and intent and about the assumptions and taken-for-grantedness on which organisational policies and practices are based” (Reynolds and Vince 2004b: 4). Learners can explore everyday matters and, through performance as well as narratives, learn from themselves (Heikkinen 2002: 129–133). We understand Boalian theatre as a way to articulate experience. In this context, narratives or performances are a way of

Table 10.1 Perspectives of reflection (developed from Vince and Reynolds 2009)

	Critical reflection	Public reflection	Productive reflection	Organising reflection
Characteristics	To identify and question taken-for-granted beliefs and values	To become collectively aware of and transform own behaviour	To develop work and learning activities that change work practices and personal engagement	To take account of emotional and political processes in the workplace
Focus	To question and challenge existing structures and practices	To improve policy and practice	To improve productivity and quality of working life	To generate collective knowledge
Aim	To unsettle established ways of working	To create alternative interpretations	To improve competence linked to productivity and work satisfaction	To organise structure which allows reflection
Key-element	Emancipatory Reynolds 1998; Alvesson 1995; Alvesson and Willmott 1992; Parker 1995, 2002; Cunliffe 2009	Transformational Raelin 2001; Vince 2004; Cunliffe 2009; Reynolds and Vince 2004a	Agency building Boud et al. 2006	Organising process Vince 2002; Reynolds and Vince 2004b; Nicolini et al. 2004

framing everyday experience and digging into it. Entering the imaginative world while playing a role, as well as reflecting on the real from the point of view of drama, offers the possibility of learning (Heikkinen 2002: 139–141). Narrative and theatrical approaches revolve around the artful reframing of intransigent problems. It allows the learners to observe, analyse, define, and find out from their own experiences. In artful framing, the members of an organisation as learners express and address their own questions, perceptions, and interpretations by doing and by acting (Meisiek and Hatch 2008: 415), which leads them to problem shifting (Barry 2008: 36).

Freire (1970) has designed a specific generative approach which includes generative themes and generative questioning (open ended questions) to underpin learning. Generative questioning in particular, when used in Boalian (1992; 1995; 1996) applied theatre practices, provides a learning space for reflection. It allows learners to investigate their assumptions and for people to gradually delve deeper into their own assumptions with the help of aesthetic distance. Theatricality allows people to locate themselves within and to see the world around them as a reality in a process of ongoing transformation. (Freire 1970: 12)

Now you could imagine an interactive theatre performance where one theatrical scene is centred on one theme and one codified situation illustrates how power relations are woven into an organisation. Employee Davies and Manager Smith are in the middle of a process of dialogue with Artist Brown and her theatre company. Researcher Jones explains that the development of generative themes takes place in a codified situation on stage. Members of the organisation are encouraged into critical thinking by acting, as well as reflecting by acting. Employee Davies and Manager Smith can stop the performance and suggest changes to the events on stage. They ask ‘why?’, construct various scenarios together; and reveal multiple meanings. The guiding principle is that they all generate the theme through praxis and interaction with the help of a codified situation.

One vivid aspect of reflection in this theatre-based approach is ‘assumption breaking’: when organisational events are presented with a help of codified existential situation, in which members of organisations are liable to share and interpret it critically with others. Boal’s (1996: 49) metaphor ‘theatre is telescopic’ emphasises the possibility of assumption breaking through clarity of focus and attention. The ‘telescope’ helps observation, it brings close that which can seem to be hidden far away. It helps organisational members to contextualise an event and specific places in order to apply them to the learning process (Boal 1995). Describing the situation helps people to make sense of the parts in relation to the whole, as well as any important relationships and collective dynamics (Freire 1970). It is important to remember that what is seen on the stage and through the stage is always an interpretation that is embedded in the performance and realised through it (Clark 2008: 403). Theatre itself does not engender social change but it can allow members of organisations to confront hidden conflicts, behavioural patterns or critical routines (Schreyögg, quoted in Clark 2008: 405) in order to support attempts at change.

Assumption-breaking is one key aspect of practice-based innovation. We suggest that a ‘Reflection Zone’ (R-zone) is created in a context of artful framing, and assumption breaking occurs between imitation (as is) and imagination (as if) of everyday action. (See Fig. 10.1.)

Reflection is understood as an investigation and evaluation process in which learners can search for new perspectives from their own experiences through their

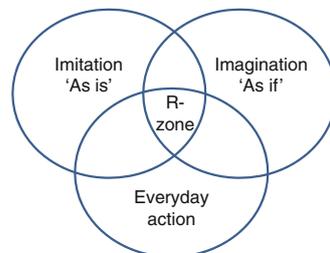


Fig. 10.1 The ‘reflection zone’ of imagination and reality

attempts at challenging existing assumptions. Reflection broadens one's ability to see and understand one's own actions, as well as reactions. It is about learning in, with and through theatrical and imagined being (Heikkinen 2002: 104; Errington 1992: 50). Critical reflection as an element of theatre-based learning encourages organisational members to be able to sense hidden ideas and ideals and to generate knowledge together. In the context of innovation, different work units and professional groups within an organisation can create mutual awareness, show how they feel, what they are afraid of and what their beliefs are. Assumption breaking as a part of a reflective practice includes a commitment to ask questions that in turn may be neither comfortable nor welcome (Reynolds and Vince 2004b: 4). In this way, members of organisations are able to create collective knowledge as a base for innovations in practice. We illustrate this process with an example from research.

10.3 Reflection and Actionable Knowledge: Case Studies

The aim of the study we are presenting is to elaborate how organisations can generate innovation in the midst of action in a context of practiced-based innovation; to create a reflective process in which the people seek to understand how they are in relation to and interact with others in a specific organisational context. Our research orientation emphasises social interaction between people, as well as changing practices. We create forums in which people are able to work as co-participants and develop practices related to their everyday working life during research. Methodologically, the study follows a specific artistic orientation of action research, namely, research-based theatre (Pässilä and Oikarinen forthcoming; Mienczakowski 1995; Mienczakowski et al. 1996; Mienczakowski and Morgan 2001). In our case, theatre is applied to participatory action research and we modified it for the micro-level practice-based innovation activities of organisations (Carr and Kemmis 1986; Kemmis and McTaggart 1988; Kemmis and Wilkinson 1998; Kemmis and McTaggart 2000; Kemmis 2001; Matsson and Kemmis 2007). The method of research-based theatre in organising forums for reflection proceeds through four phases as illustrated in Fig. 10.2.

Firstly each community's or work group's own views and practices are articulated and reflected. The articulation is facilitated by storytelling methods and theatrical pictures. Then the stories are analysed and devised as performative theatre scenes. The scenes are played back to the narrators as a theatrical performance in an organisational theatre session. It is a participatory session where all participants work in mixed groups. The focus is to construct common understanding by using a practical problem as a boundary object. Later, there will be one or more action planning sessions focusing on agreement on development needs. Several techniques are used: image theatre, forum theatre and the interpretation of codified event, interpretation with the help of the distancing character,



Fig. 10.2 Organising reflection through theatre-based learning

interpretations of stories, collective scripting, visual arts and creating a joint collage, and flagging the turning points in a codified event.

10.3.1 The Research Design and Research Process

The empirical data in this chapter comes from action research projects in three different organisations. All of the organisations are located in the Päijät-Häme region in Finland and they all operate in fields which have faced major structural changes during this decade. All the projects began with a development need identified in the organisation. However, in the course of planning together with the managers and employees of the organisations and researchers the aim of development was widened to issues of innovation and learning. The organisations involved in the research were one unit of a multinational company from the field of industrial engineering ('the Factory'), a public sector health care unit ('the Care Unit'), and a public health centre from a public sector enterprise ('the Public Corporation'). In each organisation there were multiple participating work groups, and in the case of the Care Unit, customers were also involved. Table 10.2 (below) illustrates the research process in each organisation.

Table 10.2 Case organisations

Cases	Case Factory	Case Care Unit	Case Public Corp.
<i>Field</i>	Multinational forest industry	Public sector health care unit	Public health centre
<i>Boundary object</i>	Customer reclamations	Teenagers' no-show to dental care	Emergency duty re-organisation
<i>Participating work units</i>	Operators Sales managers Sales assistants Designers	Dentists Nurses Assistants Customers	Nurses Doctors Collaborators
<i>Participants</i>	70 persons	36 persons	25 persons
<i>Sessions</i>	Storytelling (6 sessions) Theatre session Action planning session	Storytelling (7 sessions) Theatre session Action planning session	Storytelling (2 sessions) Theatre session Action planning session
<i>Steering group</i>	Managers	All occupations represented	Managers
<i>Empirical data</i>	4 hr videotape + researchers' notes	5 hr videotape + researchers' notes	3 hr videotape + researchers' notes
<i>Time frame</i>	2008–2010	2009–2010	2009–2010

10.3.2 Data Collection and Interactions

The data collection was focused on reflective practices in theatre-based learning interactions in the three case organisations. In every organisation, we proceeded through four phases (see Fig. 10.2): (1) work story sessions in various work units, as well as customer story sessions or interviews; (2) dramatisation and analysis of the stories; (3) an organisational theatre session between various work units; and (4) action planning session between various work units. All interactions were, in keeping with action research practices, recorded or videotaped. The researchers took part in every phase and made research notes of them. The artist took part in some work story sessions and in the dramatisation and organisational theatre session.

The storytelling sessions were organised into occupational groups so that each group could first reflect their own views and practices with like-minded others. The theme of the work stories (i.e. boundary object) in each organisation was such that it was of interest to the whole organisation and to each work unit involved, but one on which they had differing views. For example, in the factory, sales assistants, sales managers, operators, and designers had different problems so they also needed different solutions but they needed to find ways to articulate their view points to each other. They would then be able to discuss and generate ideas from different perspectives and different needs, and synchronise their solutions.

After the storytelling phase, the researcher and the theatre director analysed the experiences, tensions, and relationships between various work units and professional groups. Common themes were surfaced using drama analysis, and in the later stages these themes were transformed into codified events. We categorised the

Table 10.3 Levels of assumption

Level of systems	Level of practices	Level of interactions	Level of emotions
Assumption about organisational structure	Assumption about everyday working life and operations	Assumption about relationships between professional groups, customers and stakeholders	Assumption about feelings between different professional groups and about own individual feelings
“Managers should organise...”	“We do not have enough information/ There is so much information”	“We do not know anything about our customers ”	“There is always such a hurry, I feel guilty when I ...”
Power relations			
Power is hidden; nobody seemed to have the feeling that I or we have the power to change circumstances.			

events of stories into four levels. These levels are like different layers around assumptions. We discovered events which reflected the organisation through established organisational practices, as well as common interactions and emotions. These levels were related to power relations in the organisation. From these levels, actors and the researcher created codified events that could be performed on stage. Table 10.3 illustrates the different levels of assumption.

Through their analysis of the themes, the researcher and the artist started to script theatrical scenes (see Fig. 10.2, phase 2 – Dramatisation). The manuscript was initially a rough draft of the themes, to which the actors began creating scenes (codified events) with the help of theatre techniques. At this stage the researcher, actors and the theatre director moved functionally within the stories. This could be called a performative analysis of the material. In this context, the narrative form (text: original stories and themes) was turned into acting (characters, gestures, and images). Generative themes were codified into performative action. As the dramatisation emerged, the researcher generated reflective questions from the performative action. The rehearsals of the theatre performance began when a codified event had been formed from all the themes and when the language of the performance (reflecting the language of the organisation) had been discovered. In the ‘Case Factory’ two actors and one researcher worked together for six months. They had 20 rehearsals and meetings. In the ‘Care Unit’, two researchers and an actor worked with four students, and it took four months. They had 15 rehearsals. In the ‘Public Corporation’ five actors and a researcher worked for two months and they had 10 rehearsals and meetings.

In the organisational theatre session (see Fig. 10.2, phase 3) employees and managers worked in mixed teams and interpreted theatrical scenes. The discussion was guided by the researchers and the artist working as facilitators. A theatrical scene illustrated the situations that various work units had told in their storytelling sessions. In the theatre session, members of mixed work groups explained to each other why the characters in the scene were acting in such a way. “That man does not

understand the instructions; the other man is explaining things from his own perspective, which is not relevant for the other man.” “Maybe he does not even understand what the other man is talking about?” This was how participants interpreted their own actions. Simultaneously, through interpretation they started to suggest how to do things differently. “This man could say to that other man that he doesn’t understand his language or his point of view, and maybe then they might find out how they should communicate?” (The data is from the Case Factory.) They were able to see their own part in the organisations they had created (“That is how we act and react”) and through reflection they were able to express their feelings, joys, and sorrows. Some issues were more pleasant than others. Hidden assumptions emerged gradually in the artfully framed events when the participants articulated what happened on stage and why. It was a sensitive and physical event in which the participants organised the beliefs behind their own actions through the images and events on stage. The results gained from the theatre session were made into a plan of action for distribution and construction of information between different work units in the action planning sessions (see Fig. 10.2, phase 4). The aim of these sessions was not reflective and they are out of the scope of this chapter.

10.4 An Example from the Case ‘Care Unit’

In this example we describe how the assumption breaking process emerged and how it enabled members of the organisation to generate ideas. Because of the rich nature of our data from three organisations we selected only one analysed interaction from the Care Unit organisation for deeper observation. This example illustrates how people negotiate the meaning of actions and situation.

During an organisational theatre session in ‘Care Unit’, members of the organisation performed, examined and deconstructed a codified event which could have happened or had happened in their organisation. The event was about a teenage-customer at the dentist. The problem of the organisation was that many teenagers did not show up for their appointments. With the help of the main facilitator guiding the discussion, the participants started to recognise and define problems behind the event, especially when they jumped onto the stage and took on a role. Making changes in this context means that you have to act. The stage becomes a simulation of working life where it is possible to try different types of action and to make sense of them. For example Tiina, who is a nurse, took a role of a doctor and started to make changes in the events of the scene. Tiina’s performance allowed her colleagues to examine and interpret their own assumptions and to form new ideas through generative questioning.

In a role, Tiina explained to her teenage patient Netta what will happen during an operation. During their conversation Tiina bent towards Netta and comforted her by touching Netta’s shoulder. Tiina said to Netta:

“Dear Netta, there is no problem, this is going to be an easy operation, you don’t have to worry at all.”

The rest of the employees and managers cheered Tiina:
 “Good Tiina, very good.”
 They examined what happen in the codified event:
 “Fear, I sense fear, Netta dreads the dentist.”
 They helped Tiina by advising:
 “Comfort Netta because she is afraid of you.”
 Someone from audience asks:
 “Why is she so afraid, it is such an easy operation?”
 The audience tried to make sense of what was behind her fear:
 “Say to her that she has taken good care of her teeth. You could also explain the operation you will do.”
 Then someone pointed out that
 “It is a unique situation to Netta even if it is routine to us” and “we should not deny her experience, if she feels that it is a scary operation. Then it is to her. We have to respect her feeling.”
 It was at this stage that the employees and managers were able to transform their understanding of the problem:
 “Sometimes doctors use power, they oppress their patient.”
 And then someone added:
 “And they oppressed nurses too.”
 Now they were dangerously near a difficult issue about themselves as oppressors. So in this stage it was not surprising that they changed the conversation to a more comfortable level:
 “Tiina, maybe you could say to Netta that she can listen to her favourite band through her own iPod. Maybe it would help her to feel more comfortable and relaxed.”
 At this phase Tiina just acts and reacts, and the rest of the members of the organisation observe. Then another employee, Henrik, comes to stage, and events on stage continue further.

Employees and managers posed questions to each other with the help of the codified event: What actually happened in that scene? What was that story about? What other changes could characters have made? And what would they have done in a similar situation in a real life? During the reflective conversation, employees and managers pointed out that it was a unique situation to Netta but routine to themselves and behind this event is expertise (nurses or doctors) that creates power over their patient. They critically reflected their own behaviour: “We quite often think that we know better and what is best for our patient.” They also realised that acting in their professional role may mean that they ignore the fact that their patient is a person. Such realisations take them to the heart of the ‘R-zone’, identifying and questioning their own taken-for-granted beliefs and values. Critical reflection helped them to challenge both the structure and current practice of health care, and through this to challenge assumptions about their professional identity and power relations. They reflected that they do not encounter Netta as a person, just as a set of teeth to take care of. They noticed that seeing the patient more personally would be beneficial for the operation. Because of the sensitive nature of this issue they started to invent solutions for the problem and to suggest new ideas:

“There could be posters and magazines for young patients.”; “And positive feedback. We could give some positive feedback for all patients.”; “We could have a feedback system for customers.”; “Employees also need a feedback system.”; “We could send her a friendly text message.”

Of course in this type of a reflective conversation there is also resistance:

“We never get that kind of a technology. It is such an investment for our organisation.”;
“We have such busy schedules already now, I don’t need more tasks to do.”; “Netta doesn’t need our comfort, she should take care her own teeth, but you know teenagers, they just ignore us and drink Coca Cola.”

In this example, members of the organisation surfaced problems and possibilities, as well as generated new ideas through a codified event. Between ‘as is’ and ‘as if’ in the R-zone, the participants distanced themselves from an event in order to make sense of it. It provided a conscious and thoughtful connection between ideas and experiences, past experience and future action. This type of reflection is an incremental way to surface one’s own preliminary or intuitive assumptions, and the consequent emphasis on problem shifting can become an established way to reflect. This approach encourages reflection on the difference between knowledge that is experienced from within an individual role (as a worker, manager or leader) and knowledge that is generated from collective, critical reflection on roles. We see this as a significant shift of perception in relation to the successful implementation of collective and critical reflection within organisations.

10.5 Summary and Conclusion

Theatre-based learning offers an effective strategy for the creation of reflective spaces that can reveal the dynamics of practice-based innovation, both in terms of what promotes and what prevents innovative behaviour and practice. Reflection of one’s own and the others’ assumptions takes place between the imitation and the imagination (Heikkinen 2002) of real life situations.

In this study, the codified events created critical reflection (the R-zone) where learners study their own action, practice, feeling, and experience. Employees and managers interpreted situated practices by sharing their ideas about how different work units in the company interact with one another. By using theatre and narratives, it was possible to surface delicate and difficult questions within the organisation. Distancing the participants from actual events helped them to move beyond feeling threatened or accused. In organisational theatre, the actors performed codified events back to the original storytellers, who then interpreted the situations and reflected on actions through their performance. Reflection emerged through seeing, hearing and feeling actual behaviour: “Oh, do we really behave like that?” or “We do not act like that!” Such reflection assisted members of a work unit to challenge themselves as to whether their perceived behaviour and practice really was how they did things. Interpretation of performance, with the aid of aesthetic distance, helped those involved to handle issues related to emotions and power relations. Interpretations showed that different managerial skills and different ways of working together were necessary (which resonates with the research findings of Lester and Piore 2004).

The results point towards the need for managers to look at the potential of bottom-up perspectives on innovation. The most important insights arose when people learned to pose new questions to themselves and to each other across work units. The following phrases from the 'Case Factory' illustrate how operators and salespersons tried to find out common learning practices in everyday working life: "You could come to me, because I am stuck with the machine, you could come and ask me what the relevant issues are for me. Come and see how I do it." From a perspective on power this was an invitation to reorganise relationships between work units. Reflection on roles helped to create a space in the mind that could underpin engagement with collective spaces of learning and innovation.

Of course, theatre-based intervention is also conducted within the political realities of organisational life, and as a consequence may well serve to reinforce resistance to the transformation of knowledge. When new practices were implemented into working life practice only one female salesperson changed immediately her pattern, and spent half a day with the operator. Clearly, it is easier to discuss difficult issues, thoughts, intentions, and feelings around the codified events than it is to carry this forward and to implement changes in practice. Common knowledge was built gradually through participants' conscious and unconscious acts, and new ideas were generated through assumption breaking. Previous knowledge (existing cultural assumptions) blocked participants' ability to generate radical suggestions. The potential for innovation here may be in the silences produced; in that which participants did not dare to observe or refused to see. The importance of cultivating a tolerance for ambiguity was also pointed out in each of our cases. After their reflections and theatre-based learning actions, all the organisations involved started to convert some ideas into new services, practices or products.

We have argued that reflection underpins the potential of practice-based innovation because, in the midst of action, people are unable to separate knowledge and knowing from practice. In practice-based innovation, knowledge and knowing arise from (internal and external) interaction in the situated context. Through the role of reflection and through reflection on roles it is possible to share and to address a wide range of tensions, relationships, and misunderstandings. However, it is very difficult to create reflection in the midst of action. Theatre-based reflection helps in two ways. Firstly, it allows participants to model behaviour that can help them to comprehend and implement reflection-in-action. Secondly, it generates spaces for innovation.

Resistance is part of critical consciousness, because reflective learning is difficult even in an atmosphere of openness and trust. Quite often, social norms, roles and hierarchy create blocks to new ways of seeing what is happening in the organisation as well as new ideas that may help to transform it. Organising reflection offers one way to balance learning between analytical and interpretative approaches in a midst of practice-based innovation. Both these approaches are needed to support innovation in organisations, but the interpretative and interactive dimensions are particularly important because they shed light on the emotional and political dynamics that both support and suppress innovation in organisations.

For all the potential effectiveness of this approach it is also important to acknowledge its limitations. Members of an organisation reflected on and reconstructed

assumptions within aesthetic settings, not within the workplace itself. Taking everyday dramas and placing them on a stage affords opportunities to examine practice, but it does not necessarily change practice. On a stage it is possible to talk, observe or challenge; in the everyday conflicts of organisational life it is not. The core of critical reflection in the context of practice-based innovation involves the questions: 'why do we do things the way we do?' and 'what is important to us, and why is it important?' Such questions are asked in relation to the actions that occur within a scene and to the diverse points of view that emerge. Such questions encourage the examination of underlying emotional and political issues in the organisation – if there is a political will for such an examination to be made. Organisational members may start with a desire to make change happen but they may also come to feel that change is going to undermine the ways in which 'things have always been done'. This is especially true for organisational members in positions of power who are often (understandably) reluctant to have their assumptions and ways of working challenged and their authority 'undermined'. The struggle to create innovation in the midst of action can be seen in the reflexive tension between the radical possibility of such interventions and the political purpose they may serve for established power relations (Coopey 2007). There will always be a tension in organisations between dynamics that support innovation and dynamics that undermine it.

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Sub-study 3:

Pässilä, A., Oikarinen T. and Kallio, A. (accepted)
'Creating dialogue by storytelling.'

Accepted by the Journal of Workplace Learning.
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CREATING DIALOGUE BY STORYTELLING

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The objective of this paper is to develop practice and theory from Augusto Boal's dialogue technique (Image Theatre) for organisational use. The paper examines how the members in an organisation create dialogue together. This is done in a dramaturgical storytelling framework where the dialogue emerges from storytelling facilitated by symbolic representations of still images.

Design/methodology/approach: The study follows the lines of participatory action and art-based research. The data is collected from 13 dramaturgical Work Story storytelling sessions in four different organisations. The research design belongs to the tradition of research-based theatre, which implies artful inquiry, scripting and performance in research.

Findings: The paper presents a model for organisational dialogue. The model illustrates the dramaturgical storytelling of Work Story which influences problem shifting in a positive way.

Research limitations: The limitations of this study are related to the scope of the research. The Scandinavian cultural context facilitates an open, bottom up process. More case studies in different kinds of environments should be conducted. In the future it might be advantageous to conduct more longitudinal studies on how organisations can nurture continuous dialogue.

Practical implications: Work Story as a dialogue practice facilitated members from the same occupational groups to share experiences with each other and construct common interests by investigating unstructured and uncertain social situations at work.

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Originality/value: The paper combines research field that explore art-based initiatives within organizations, workplace learning and innovation research.

Keywords: Dialogue, dramaturgical storytelling, learning, art-based initiatives, innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

Dialogue, which means encounters between persons, exchanging experiences, ideas and opinions (Boal, 1995), is the key when creating a reflexive learning culture (Cunliffe, [a], 2002; [b], 2002) for practice-based innovation (Harmaakorpi and Melkas, [a], 2011). Storytelling and stories can portray situations from the perspective of the teller (Gabriel, 2000; Gabriel and Connel, 2010; Abma, 2007) and offer a landscape for dialogue and learning (Abma, 2003; Cunliffe, [a], 2002). This article develops practice and theory from Augusto Boal's (1995) dialogue technique (Image Theatre) for organisational use and especially for workplace learning (Gherardi, 2006; Elkjaer, 2003; Cunliffe, [b], 2002). The study is linked to a research field that explores art-based initiatives within organizations (e.g. Meisiek 2002, see also Clark and Mangham, 2004; Taylor and Ladkin, 2009; Barry and Meisiek 2011; Schiuma, 2011).

Authors in innovation research (see the innovation policy perspective, Jensen et al., 2007; Lundvall, 1992; Uhlin, 2000 and the interpretative perspective, Lester and Piore, 2004 and the learning perspective, Elleström, 2010; Nilsen and Ellström, 2012; Darsø and Høystrup, 2012; Pässilä, Oikarinen and Vince, 2012; Oikarinen, 2008) suggest that organisations need to pay attention to learning processes and cherish multi-voiced interactions that assist innovation. Traditional learning programmes are focused on formal and codified "know-what" or "know-why" types of knowledge and informal 'know-how' and 'know-who' types of knowing as well as generative and innovative learning, are challenging in workplaces.

The ability to collectively reflect experiences related to practices and construct shared understanding of their modification needs is important for learning (Vince, 2002). This ability to make sense of present and past habits and behaviour also creates a culture of practice-based innovation (Harmaakorpi and Melkas, 2012; Pässilä, Oikarinen and Vince, 2012; Pässilä and Oikarinen, forthcoming). Instead of giving answers to people or advising them on how to be innovative, learning should raise questions and dialogue about what is meaningful for people in their work: what inspires or blocks them, how they construct relationships between each other and how they develop their work together.

Practice-based innovation is a collaborative form of creating knowledge in which the aim is to combine knowledge interests from theory and practice alike, as well as knowledge from different disciplines (Harmaakorpi and Mutanen, 2008; Harmaakorpi and Melkas, 2012). Recent innovation discourse on practice-based innovation highlights the need for an interactive, interpretative and shared learning mode. People and groups in organizations create knowledge by participating in and contributing to negotiations of the meanings of actions and situations. Melkas and Harmaakorpi (2012, p. 2) highlight that one cannot just 'pour knowledge into' the innovating partners, they must be interactive in the collective learning processes that lead to successful innovations. Learning processes require interaction, dialogue and a questioning of prevailing assumptions and reflexivity (Cunliffe, 2009; 2008; Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith, 2004), are noted to be filled with challenges and tensions (Vince, 2011) and are hardly approachable with traditional methods (Abma, 2000; 2003; Cunliffe, [a], 2002; [b], 2002).

Therefore, this study has turned to art-based initiatives to facilitating dialogue. Barry and Meisiek (2010) have termed a field of art-based initiatives in organisations 'the workarts'. The term 'workarts' reverses the term 'artwork' to emphasize the work that art does in

workplaces, attempting to challenge and improve the work done there. The authors of this paper have developed, together with employees and managers, a specific dramaturgical storytelling technique, Work Story, composed in organisational settings. On a practical level, it means that people from the same professional group gather together and begin to reflect and share their own experiences with the help of images, namely Theatrical Images (TI).

This article addresses the questions: How do the members of organisations construct dialogue together in a dramaturgical storytelling framework? How does dialogue emerge from storytelling facilitated by symbolic representations of still images?

Methodologically this study follows the lines of participatory action and art-based research (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011; Boal, 1979/2008; Finley, 2008; Leavy, 2009). The analysis of 13 dramaturgical Work Story storytelling sessions in four different organisations suggests that a transformational, in-between situation, between a realistic “as is” mode and an imaginative “as if” mode, characterises dialogue during storytelling and leads participants to problem shifting rather than problem solving. The study concludes by outlining a suggested model for organisational dialogue. The model illustrates the dramaturgical storytelling of Work Story, which can be used to facilitate dialogue within the workplace. The proposition is that dramaturgical storytelling influences problem shifting in a positive way; it transforms the engagement of employees and enables the discovery of alternative, or as yet non-existent, ideas and proposals.

The paper is structured as follows. First, we provide a brief overview of the key concepts. Second, we present practical examples and explore the ways in which the examples resonate with the concepts. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of the use of dramaturgically framed storytelling.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

“Organisations are not simple structures but complex interweavings of people and their emotions, meanings, interpretations, actions, assumptions, bodies and ways of talking...”(Cunliffe, 2009:104). Therefore it is important to make sense of what’s going on between people. A dialogue provides opportunities for learning (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Gherardi, 2006; Elkjaer, 2003) and innovating (Jensen et al., 2007; Ellström, 2010; Nilsen and Ellström, 2011; Darsø and Høystrup, 2011; Pässilä, Oikarinen and Vince, 2012).

2.1 Practice-based innovation and learning

It is the process of seeing the world around us differently that allows organisations to see themselves from a novel perspective and be able to innovate. So, the premises for innovation are (i) the existence of different worldviews and approaches and (ii) the process of dialoguing, reflection and sense-making in workplace learning (Ellström, 2010; Nilsen and Ellström, 2012). The challenge is how to cultivate these in organisations that strive for effectiveness, competitiveness and orderliness, and are trapped within their own worldview.

The innovation potential of organisations is based on individuals and their capability to interact and create knowledge (Jensen et al. 2007; Lundval, 1992; Uhlin, 2000). All the

people in an organisation ought to be cherished as creators of innovation (Amin and Cohendet, 2004; Axtell et al., 2000; Harmaakorpi and Melkas, 2012). The way employees understand their work exposes how they make sense of it and its meaning for the organisation. The ways in which people actually work usually differ fundamentally from the ways organisations describe work in manuals, training programs, organisational charts and job descriptions (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Cook and Brown, 1999; Gherardi, 2006). In order to utilize the innovation potential embedded in everyday work practices, organisations need dialogue.

In the context of renewing work practices, organisation members confront 'messy' unstructured situations. An unstructured situation is contextual and there are multiple ways to interpret it. A situation like this demands interaction; joint inquiry that allows interpretations and collective sense-making of these interpretations (Elkjaer, 2004). Instead of trying to identify whose "truth" is the right one, organisational actors could interpret together how reality is created in their everyday encounters and work situations and question which assumptions are taken-for-granted (Ellström, 2010; Pässilä, Oikarinen and Vince 2012).

The focus of learning should concentrate on creating forums for interaction; collective interpretation, discussion, reflection and sense-making for alternative worldviews. Nilsen and Ellström (2011) emphasise that organisations and individuals ought to challenge established patterns of thought and action. However, one can hardly approach alternative worldviews with traditional, formal learning methods (Abma, 2000, 2003; Vince, 2011). Therefore, the authors of this paper are interested in applied drama and theatre, and storytelling as a learning method that could offer the possibility to challenge established patterns of thought and action.

2.2 Applied drama and theatre, and storytelling in the workplace context

Applied drama and theatre (ADT) is an umbrella concept for various theatre practices that operate out of the traditional art world and art institutions, for example in development projects, social and health care institutions and adult education. Nicholson (2006), Jackson (2007) and Needlands (2004) have defined the complex roots of ADT. One common definition is the idea that participants in ADT explore their own experiences and views of reality in a dramaturgical frame and, by doing so, they construct new meanings (Jackson, 2007). One characteristic of ADT is that it provides a imaginative framework for exploring and understanding how different people experience reality. The Brazilian artist Augusto Boal's (1979/2008; 1992; 1995; 1996) participatory theatre practice, namely the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), in a field of change and development, is one of the significant branches of ADT that examines social reality. Boal (1995) created theatrical techniques whereby participants form a path to interact, to learn collectively and to build trustful relationships in order to explore and change the oppressive structures of everyday life. Storytelling is a strategy to make sense of these socially constructed structures. Also, when the participants are sharing their stories and collectively creating meanings they are co creating a dialogue.

Boal's (1979/2008) theatre techniques represent the door to sense-making.² Over 40 years Boal's theatre has addressed personal, political and community level problems as well as questions about identity, race, gender, human rights, political processes in communities in Latin America, Africa and Europe (Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman, 2006; Prendergast and Saxton, 2009). In Image Theatre (Boal, 1979/2008, still image technique), the human body is used as a tool for representing life experiences, attitudes, feelings, behaviour, ideas, the patterns of power relationships, and social relations. The participants' demonstrations are symbolic images of something that has happened, or could happen, in real life. At the same time, when people tell stories and interpret body images, they reconstruct and reflect their own views on the issue. According to Boal (1996), the focus of drama is always a dialogue where people seek to find out something unknown through action. However Barry (2008) reminds us that dialogue, in the context of workarts, is more like problem shifting as a sense-making action than problem solving as a change action. Cohen-Cruz (2006) emphasises that the relationship between theatricality and lived experiences of reality is very fruitful for dialogue. Storytellers habitual way of seeing and believing are challenged, enabling them to make new distinctions and to shift contexts. But he reminds us that not all storytelling is liberating, there is always a risk that the stories reproduce dominant ideology and voicing them just victimises the storytellers. Boal (1995, pp. 16-20) has defined action in an aesthetic context and shown through praxis that theatrical framing both generates the existing situation ("as is") and creates a future vision or scenario ("as if"), as well as reorganising the relationship between the existing and imaginary situations.

In addition, ADT offers a stage for reflection in an organisational learning context (Pässilä, Oikarinen and Vince, 2012). Stories are esteemed for framing shared meanings (Gabriel, 2000; Gabriel and Connell, 2010; Abma, 2003) and creating reflexive self-understanding (Cunliffe [b], 2002) in organisations. ADT as an artist-led intervention is one way to gain knowing in workplace context (Barry, 2008; Barry and Hansen, 2008; Clark and Mangham, 2004; Mangham, 2005; Nissley et al., 2004). Artist-led interventions allow organisation members to make sense of complexity in the business environment and offer an essence of that complexity. The arts offer also a new lens to tackling problems or shifting perceptions. But there are limitations; when the arts are used well in a workplace they can open up thinking but that they can also be used to mask corporate rhetoric and work practices, and then the arts are just fake-entertainment. (Nissley, 2010)

This article develops the practice and theory of dramaturgical storytelling practice in order to cocreate dialogue between organisation members. The focus is on an artist-led intervention; a dramaturgical storytelling, namely Work Story (WS). The study explores how the members of organisations construct dialogue together in a dramaturgical framing and how dialogue emerges from storytelling, facilitated by symbolic expressions and representations.

² For example, Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman (2006) present a collection of essays and case studies on the work of Boal; also Prendergast and Saxton (2009) introduce TO studies; also see the website of the International Theatre of the Oppressed Organization, www.theatreoftheoppressed.org

3. PRACTICAL CASE EXAMPLE: CREATING DIALOGUE BY STORYTELLING

3.1 Research design and method

Together with employees and managers the authors developed a dramaturgical storytelling technique, Work Story. On a practical level it means that people from the same professional group gather together and begin to reflect and share their experiences with the help of TI (images used in this study are Theatrical Images, applied from Boal's Image Theatre) and a professional applied theatre instructor. Images were used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words, and to pay attention to things in novel ways (Weber, 2008 pp. 44-45).

Methodologically this study follows the lines of participatory action and art-based research (Brydon-Miller et al. 2011; Finley, 2008; Leavy, 2009). The research design belongs to the research-based theatre tradition, RBT (Beck et al 2011, Mienczakowski, 1995; Mienczakowski et al., 1996; Mienczakowski and Morgan, 2001; Saldaña 2008), which implies artful inquiry, scripting and performance (Saldaña 2008) in research. As a research method, RBT is an inquiry process in which various actors (employees and managers of an organisation, researchers and artists) gain collective and personal knowledge by sharing their experiences. Storytelling with the help of images is one approach that uses participatory visual methods within qualitative research (Vince and Warren, forthcoming; Weber, 2008). Such methods are particularly useful in research projects that seek to evoke and articulate embodied knowledge.

3.2 Case study organisations

This study documents the dialogue constructing in four organisations in Finland 2008–2010. The first case company operates in the forest industry sector and the other three case organisations in the public health care sector. All of them have faced structural changes during the first decade of the 21st century. All four case organisations were familiar with the new innovation discourse and highlighted the value of openness and the importance of innovation in their official speeches and strategies. However, there was another reality on the practical level: on a micro-level, the managers and employees were not fully familiar with how to organise learning related to practice-based innovation.

Practical workplace situations were the triggers for co-operation between organisational actors, researchers and an artist (= applied theatre instructor) within the organizations. The interpretation of problems launched co-operation as to what should be examined together. However, it took two to four months and multiple meetings, e-mails and phone calls by the researchers, the artist, the directors, managers and key persons of each organization for the focus of each storytelling session to become clear. The focuses reached were; 1) customers are dissatisfied with a product and complain, 2) teenage patients of dental care do not show up for their appointments, 3) the emergency duty of one health care centre is being re-organized and 4) health care professionals are facing problems in taking care of mentally disabled patients.

Altogether we organized 13 interventions with 151 participants from the case organisations (2–6 interventions per organisation). Each intervention was facilitated by an artist and a researcher, and 2–3 researchers collected data via participatory observation. As documentation, there are 36 hours of videotapes and a 250 page fieldwork diary.

The aim of the documentation was to collect data on how dialogue emerged through stories. Researchers and applied theatre instructor analysed the stories and conversations of all the Work Story sessions by using an analytical approach of interactive ethnodrama (Saldaña 2008). As a result of the analysis six stages of dialogue were traced. Interactive ethnodrama was a way to reveal the meanings of lived experiences. Interactive here means that participants also took part in the analysis during storytelling sessions. They reflected which kinds of expressions, beliefs, attitudes and experiences were articulated in the stories and Theatrical Images.

Table 1 illustrates the research setting.

Table 1: The research setting

Cases	Case 1 Factory	Case 2 Care Unit	Case 3 Public corp.	Case 4 Public corp.
Field	Multinational forest industry	Public sector health care unit	Public health centre	Public health care unit
Practical unstructured situation	Customers are dissatisfied with a product and complain	Teenagers' no-show for dental care	The emergency duty of re-organization	Problems in taking care of mentally disabled patients
Focus of Work Stories	<i>How did we come to the situation in which the customer is not happy?</i>	<i>What happens before, during and after a dental care operation?</i>	<i>What will happen during reorganizing our unit's practices?</i>	<i>How to share experiences between different work units and professionals?</i>
Findings from dialogues	Employees generated ideas on how to cooperate	Employees and managers negotiated how to organise a customer-friendly practice	Employees and managers generated ideas on how to organise their practice	Employees and managers generated ideas on how to solve problems related to the culture of their own organisation

Work Story sessions	6 storytelling sessions for employees from different work units	1 storytelling session for employees	2 storytelling sessions for employees from different work units	4 storytelling sessions for employees from different work units
Participating employees	Operators Sales managers Sales assistants Designers	Dentists Nurses Assistants	Nurses Doctors Collaborators	Nurses Doctors Assistants Managers
Amount of participants	70 employees 4 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor	36 employees 3 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor	25 employees 3 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor	20 employees 3 researchers + 1 applied theatre instructor
Documentation	4 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 14 Work Stories	5 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 5 Work Stories	3 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 4 Work Stories	24 hr videotape + researchers' notes + 6 Work Stories
Time frame	Spring 2008	Spring 2009	Autumn 2009	Spring 2010

3.3 A description of dramaturgical storytelling; Work Story - its goals, the setting and what was done

The goals of the Work Story sessions were:

- to share experiences on uncertain situations that the employees had faced at work
- to explore these situations from “as is” and several “as if” perspectives
- to look for alternative scenario solutions for unstructured situations
- to explore what should be renewed, how it should be done and what the employees themselves think they should know and learn

We extended Saldañas's (2008) ethnodrama to participants themselves being ethnographic storytellers. The following principles were applied to the storytelling technique: the story was about lived experiences; the plot was the vehicle for the structure of the story and event (= an unstructured situation); the events included sequential arrangements of actions; the storyline was the progression of the event and the story was placed at the storyteller's organisation; and the characters resonated the storyteller's organisation.

The facilitation method – the use of TI in storytelling – was based on of Boal’s Image Theatre technique.³ Figure 1. illustrates examples of the TI.

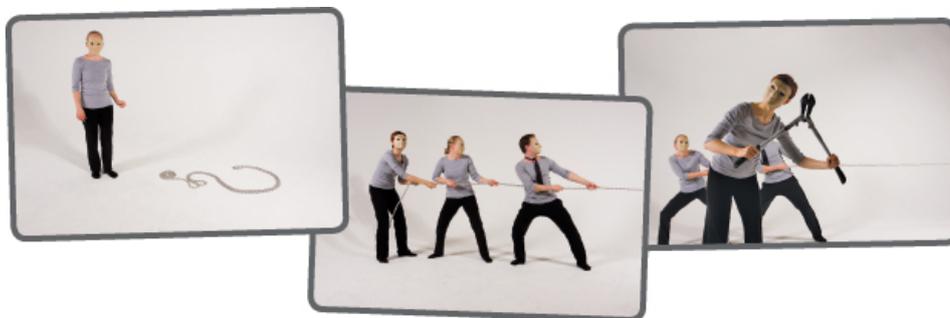


Figure 1 Theatrical Images

Images were used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words, and to pay attention to things in new ways (see the methodological studies from Weber, 2008 pp. 44-45; Vince and Warren, 2011). In other words, people made sense of the complexity with the help of TI.

The structure of the storytelling is illustrated in Table 2. Each Work Story session lasted about 3 hours. Participants were colleagues from the same work unit or profession i.e. doctors, nurses, salespersons, designers, operators. The number of participants per session varied between 2–28 persons. If there were more than six participants, they were divided further into smaller groups of 3–7 persons.

Employees discussed what was important to them, what the other units should know about their work, what they should know about the other units, and what alternative practices they could use in their work. They scripted an ambiguous work situation by interpreting the action in one event. Plotting started by charting what is wrong in a specific event: what is happening in the event, what the relationship is like in the event, how relationships are created, who the main character is and how he or she sits in relation to others in the event.

Table 2: The six steps of dialogue

Step 1 Generation of themes	Orientation to Theatrical Images via reflecting on still images illustrated by artist and researcher
Step 2 Inquiry and reminiscence	Individual story; recalling one’s experiences in writing

³ Anne Pässilä created and produced over 500 TI with a graphic designer, photographer and three actors. Each image, or sequence of images, has been constructed on the basis of five elements of drama: act, scene, agent, agency, purpose (Burke, 1969), as well as from other influences and resources – including Boal’s (1995) theatre practices of Image Theatre, mask theatre (based on the Brechtian alienation effect; Brecht 1964) and the statues technique of improvisation theatre (Johnstone 1996).

	4 pictures and one “free” story (partial) sharing with others
Step 3 Narration and sharing	Collective story; a mixture of the group members’ experiences, composed into a story in homogeneous, small groups organizing 3–8 pictures into a description of events which lead to problems
Step 4 Sharing and exploring	Oral presentations and collective analysis of group stories pointing out the turning points of the stories identifying alternative chains of events
Step 5 Exploring and reflecting	Reflective discussion and reflective questioning outlining the wider context, the ‘big picture’; how the acts of the participants and changes in practices impact on others and vice versa
Step 6 Exploring, generating and analysing	Working out what needs to be done differently making social structures visible mapping alternative practices
Outcomes	practical ideas for what needs to be done, how to renew one’s work, and how to deepen co-operation with colleagues shared awareness about how one’s actions create and transmit social situations

The dramaturgical storytelling techniques of the Work Story were first created with the case company, the ‘Factory’. Next we will illustrate how the Work Story session proceeded there. In Chapter 4 we complement the discussion with the findings from the other cases.

3.4 Creating dialogue with the help of storytelling – what was learned

The focus of the storytelling was very operational at first: to reflect a situation where customers are dissatisfied and complain. The organisational actors’ interest was to develop the current practices and thus decrease amount of complaints from customers. They had tried to solve the problem by analysing the causes for complaints, by recruiting personnel for quality control and by improving their data system. Despite this, the amount of complaints kept piling up, there were accusations between sales, design and production . The management of the Factory realized that the problem was very complicated and multifaceted. To get to the bottom of the problem the management wanted to give all the

employees concerned an opportunity to participate in reflecting on the problem. So, we were asked to study and facilitate the construction of collective dialogue.

We organized separate Work Story sessions for each occupational group. The first step in the session was to create a sufficiently safe and distancing work approach for storytelling. The applied theatre instructor and the researcher, who acted as facilitators, warmed up the group, introduced the theatrical images and instructed how to compose stories with them. Then the participants discussed the focus of the storytelling. During the second step, the participants articulated their individual experiences and views. Each chose one TI from a collection of images and explained the event and experience it described in his/her everyday work. Through TI participants were able to articulate experiences embodied in people and embedded in practices.

For example, an operator described an image: "Here the foreman and an operator are wondering how on earth they can accomplish what the sales manager has promised to a customer. The sales manager is not in the picture as he is downhill skiing with another customer". (In the quotation the storyteller uses the expression "picture" when pointing to TI.) The participants then wrote about their feelings, fears, hopes and experiences through symbols and gestures depicted in the TI. After that they had an opportunity to share their stories with others as much they wanted. They often started with phrases like "in this picture, this character is from sales...."; "the atmosphere in this picture is..."; or "she is a designer and should tell her manager that ...". Sharing personal experiences, followed by joint contemplation (open questioning), led the participants forward to joint storytelling.

After this, the participants compiled a collective story in small groups so that up to 3-8 TI were organized into a description of a situation ending with the customer being dissatisfied. Next, there is an illustration of how four sales assistants narrated and shared their experiences during collective storytelling with each other.

Table 3. Example of dialogue

<p><i>Joanna: The character in this picture is someone from the marketing department.</i></p> <p><i>Lisa: Yes, she has just received feedback from a customer.</i></p> <p><i>Joanna: Not positive feedback.</i></p> <p><i>(Laughter)</i></p> <p><i>Eva: No! Definitely not!</i></p> <p><i>Lisa: This is just so typical!</i></p> <p><i>Elisabeth: This depicts her feelings just after the phone call. You can see how she is.</i></p> <p><i>Joanna: Lying face down.</i></p> <p><i>Lisa: Again she is being treated like rubbish.</i></p> <p><i>Elisabeth: Everyone is pointing at her.</i></p>
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Eva: Look, she has such a heavy burden.

Lisa: Like she was the guilty one.

Joanna: Why do they always blame us?

Elisabeth: Even when we are just middlemen.

Joanna: ...and trying our best.

Eva: But look, there she is at home and lying face down; can't get to sleep.

Lisa: She thinks that nobody cares or values her work.

Joanna: Even though she has done her work excellently

Elisabeth: But how has she done wrong then?

Eva: Here she asks, 'Why does this happen?'

In general, issues of power are difficult to discuss but through TI it seemed to be a little bit easier. Participants interpreted an image, pointed to it and talked "as if" it were a real situation. For example: Lisa and her colleagues (see above example) tried to make sense of what was happening in their work community. 'Like rubbish' describes their position; they feel that they do not have any power. Eva's question, 'Why does this happen', shifted the storytelling to the next level. The participants started to discuss what was 'behind' their practice and actions; what kinds of beliefs, hopes and fears. The atmosphere between them was serious and playful at the same time. In a very fragmented way they communicated what the problematic issues were.

The fourth step of the Work Story were oral presentations of the group stories. All the participants gathered together and each group shared their stories. Together the participants discussed situations of TI in the story and defined turning points where the characters' actions could change the situation and the story would have an alternative ending. "If this character here acts differently the situation will change..." The collective creation of new endings and reflection on the turning points became a vivid moment; in the "as if" mode the participants were even able to discuss very difficult and sensitive issues. The "as if" mode protected them (in the image, the focus was on the character, he or she, rather than the narrator who was protected by his/her role as storyteller) when reflecting upon their own actions, making visible the inhibitors and possibilities for reform both at the level of the story and their own relationships. Figure 2 illustrates TI after storytelling.



Figure 2. Example of a TI after storytelling

At step five, all the participants started exploring and reflecting on what they had done during storytelling and on how the stories actually resonated with reality. Participants considered that resistance emerges through blame; “the cause of complexity is always in the other unit”. But gradually, because of the “as if” imagination, participants started to reflect upon their own actions. By plotting a story – based on one’s experiences at work – and scripting it, participants became aware how they actually form, shape and maintain social reality around themselves. This encouraged them to look for alternative scenarios for a situation and to be aware that they need to create several possibilities and problem solving scenarios rather than only have one correct solution.

At step six, stories were cooperatively analysed by using analytical approach of interactive ethnodrama (Saldaña 2008). Employees, the applied theatre instructor and the researcher together examined narrated and scripted situations based on real life and imaginative experiences. All the stories from one session were gathered together into different storylines. Interactive ethnodrama was conducted through the following questions:

- What is this story about?
- What happens in it?
- When and where does it happen?
- Why does it happen?
- Who is the main character? Who else is involved?
- How does the character act and react?
- How do the other characters feel?

One analysis of a situation started when the applied theatre instructor asked employees to define the key events in storyline (storyline consisted of 3-8 TI) and then the participants started discussing.

After listing the key events there was a discussion of their nature in general: what is meaningful in the event, what inspires or blocks the characters in that event, how they construct relationships between each other, how they encounter each other and which barriers they have faced and will face. During this conversation the applied theatre instructor asked what power they have, or need, to change the event. Participants were silent for a while. Then one of them by pointing out on TI started to reflect on how reality is created in their everyday encounters and work situations. "This event over here, it's about how we do things. See; that lad is a newcomer, he doesn't know the rules yet. The old chap here is laughing at him and his suggestions. It's odd, because the newcomer has a point. I don't know whether we really act like that in real life. I suppose, yes. We old chaps should pay attention to what that lad is saying. But I wonder why we don't. We have our own standpoint and cling to it." This comment led them to question which assumptions are taken for granted. Someone else pointed to the storyline and argued: "He is acting like that because he is afraid to lose face or status." A third person joined the conversation: "Yes, this could really happen somewhere ... (all employees laugh a lot at this comment)... but not in our unit." At that point we all understood that he was actually saying that it was happening in their organisation too. The participants clarified, at least partly, what the problematic issues in unstructured situations were and explored their reasons and symptoms.

This way, the analysis proceeded and at the end of each session participants had generated themes from the key events of the stories. In general, the themes were related to specific work practice, roles in work, rules, power tensions between people, emerging emotions, lack of information, lack of feedback, lack of cooperation between work units.

After each storytelling session two researchers listed the themes and all the ideas (that need to be changed according to employees) from the stories and conversations. These lists were then transcribed into Word documents, or drawn into maps and introduced to the managers and key members of the organisations, who categorised the themes and listed the necessary changes. Their reactions were complex; at the same time they were excited about the ideas but also expressed their fear whether it was possible to put these change ideas into practice.

4. DISCUSSION

This article discusses how it is possible to create dialogue by storytelling and to find a model for organisational dialogue. Boal's Image Theatre (1995;1979/2008) provided an opportunity for studying and designing storytelling as a way to facilitate dialogue in a workplace learning context. In a dramaturgical storytelling framework, namely the Work Story, the dialogue emerges from symbolic representations of Theatrical Images.

The Work Story is a practical example of enabling reflexivity (Cunliffe, 2009; 2008; Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith, 2004). The result of dramaturgical storytelling is that employees and managers were able to create new insights of practice by defining and reflecting problems and possibilities. It can be understood as an alternative way to facilitate learning process

that assists innovation. The problem-setting and possibility-setting cherish multi-voiced interactions. The Work Story – as a reflexive approach to constructing dialogue – echoes to the previous studies of art-based initiatives in the workplaces by underlining storytelling as a potential way to gain ‘know-how’ and ‘know-why’ types of knowing in work places.

Dialogue is in a major role in knowing gaining process like this. Participants of the Work Story sessions were able to see for themselves how social reality is structured through their own sense-making and actions. To employees and managers understanding reality, for instance, consisted of a need for regularity, structure, predictability and an assumption that “one has to have everything in control”. But when a situation like that is portrayed in the Work Story session, they started to laugh. Similar collective self-awareness occurred at each session. On the one hand, employees and managers understood that the need for regularity and predictable structure is derived from each corporation’s formal job description in the official manuals, but they also understood that things never work like that. On the other hand they themselves construct barriers and bottlenecks by presuming knowledge production to be a controllable and structured linear process instead of highlighting existing or emerging ‘know-how’ and ‘know-who’ types of knowing. They pointed out that, ‘know-what’ and ‘know-why’ types of learning create images of a controllable and structured linear learning process. However, when people are involved it, the image of a controllable situation collapses.

Simultaneously with plotting a story from their experiences and talking about it, participants formed that helped them face the complexity of situations and the interactions within it. The new, emerging knowing is embedded into social situations with colleagues when participants, in their stories and conversations, make visible what happens in unstructured situations and generate ideas how to resolve these situations. Participants became enthusiastic to find more “as if” possibilities when they distanced themselves (with the help of TI) from lived experiences and reflected on events with a dramaturgical gaze. The following model for organisational dialogue suggests how members of an organisation are able to construct dialogue in the context of the dramaturgical storytelling of the Work Story.

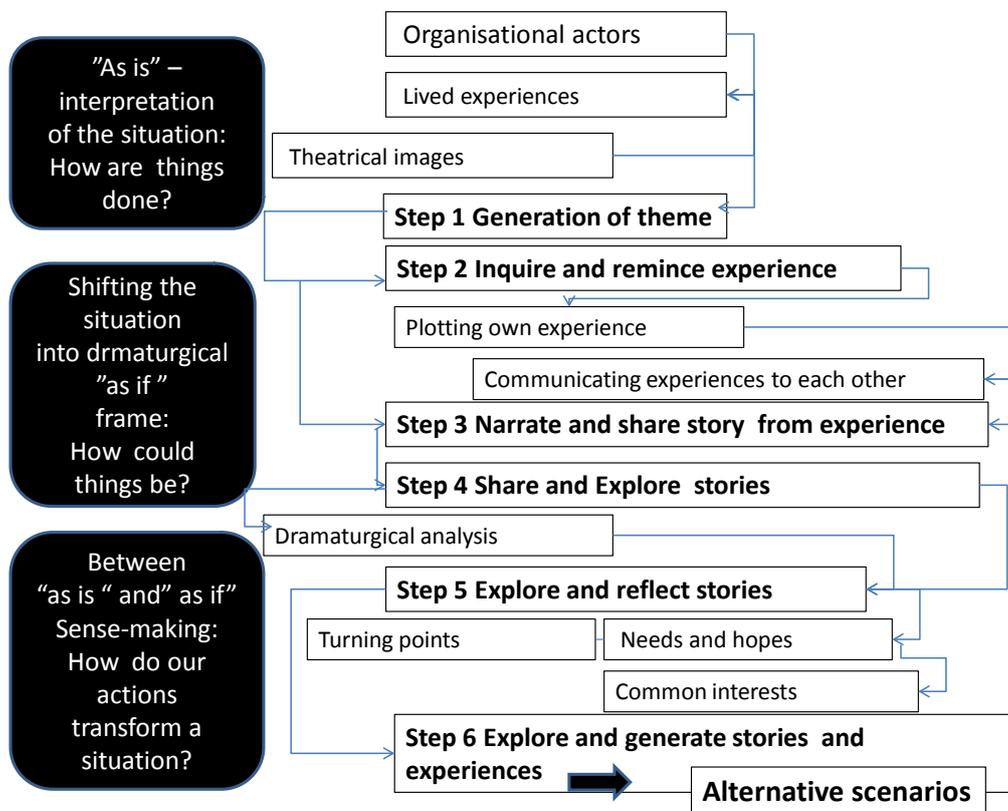


Figure 3: The model for organisational dialogue

The participants moved slowly but steadily towards the point where different points of view, needs and wishes could emerge and found hidden possibilities, as well as finding out ideas how complex problems may be faced. The situational and contextual ‘ahaa’ moment occurred while they were creating dialogue: the employees’ findings were radical and novel to themselves in their own work. In other words, they shifted the problem and made situational boundaries visible in their organisation. This led them to idea generation: they started to innovate how to reorganise practices (they discussed what should be changed and reflected what other units should know about their practice and vice versa). In spite of this, they faced the paradox of ‘not knowing what they do not know’. This is a moment of reflexivity; through stories, symbols and metaphors the participants bring to light their perceived difficulties and start to process the problem.

Simultaneously, they also created a shared learning mode for practice-based innovation by making dialogue acceptable with each other without being afraid of “making a fool of him/herself”. Each professional group constructed stories on how they experienced everyday relationships with each other and how to be innovative. In a workplace learning context innovation is not a “thing out there”, something you can control, it is a question of how people, all organisational actors, encounter each other in everyday organisational practice, how they shape that practice with their actions and conversations and, above all, how reflexive they are.

However, reflexivity carries assumptions about power that is enacted in organisational actors' everyday relationships with each other. In a session held in a health care corporation, for instance, employees brought up unspoken tensions and oppressive power relations. The context here was the following: The employees were informed by managers about forthcoming changes; emergency services were to be merged into one unit and the new arrangements meant that both employees and managers had to reorganize their daily work practices. At first, employees expressed their emotions and tensions through metaphors; 'having a part in a play', 'playing a game', 'being in a battlefield or competition with someone' or 'playing Tug of War'. During this metaphorical dialogue the atmosphere was extremely sensitive; employees shared with each other what was meaningful for them in their work. After the metaphorical dialogue TI acted as a broker for employees to indicate what specific action and emotion inspires or blocks them. When articulating how they construct relationships between each other they described power tensions and resistance with the help of TI.

A legitimate question that may be raised is whether the Work Story can be used as an inquiry method for organisational actors who have no interest in opening the Pandora's box of of knowledge such as "know-how" and "know-who" . Undoubtedly there are organisational actors who are keener on traditional learning programmes than art-based initiatives. However, Work Story approach requires that all participants are in a position in which they have the power to change existing practices. If the organisational actors lack that power, the Boalian philosophy will be "tamed", and storytelling just keeps on maintaining power tensions. It is more realistic to term the intention as "finding hidden possibilities", rather than empowerment in the context of work communities. The implications of the study for the practice of workplace learning is that the dramaturgical storytelling of Work Story supported a shift in emphasis – by encouraging the individual's ability or opportunity to make sense of reality.

5. CONCLUSION

In this study we discussed organisational actors' dialogue co-construction in a frame of storytelling. As a result, a model is suggested for organisational dialogue inside an organisation through the dramaturgical storytelling of Work Story. Such an interaction can assist to construct the engagement of organisational actors in developing their own work, if allowed and resourced by management. By the model for organisational dialogue suggested in this study, organisational actors can make sense of the unstructured and uncertain situations that are part of everyday work.

The limitations of this study are related to the scope of the research. The Scandinavian low-hierarchy work culture facilitates an open, bottom up process. Even though there is some earlier evidence of using Boal's technique in a work community context, there is a need to practice the methodology in other research contexts to understand the benefits of it in terms of practical implications and change support. As for future research, this study calls for longitudinal studies on what happens after the Work Story sessions and how organisations can continue in a manner that nurtures creating a learning culture for practice-based innovation. The dramaturgical storytelling of the Work Story technique could also be examined in the light of the theories of participatory innovation.

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Sub-study 4:

Pässilä, A., Oikarinen T. and Harmaakorpi V.
'Collective voicing as a reflexive practice.'

Submitted (2011) to Management Learning.
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'COLLECTIVE VOICING' AS A REFLEXIVE PRACTICE

ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the co-construction of a reflexive practice in a public health care organisation. We study how the reflexive methods of applied drama and theatre (ADT) facilitate 'collective voicing', specifically in the context of dental health-care professionals' reflections on their own practices in perplexed situations from their customers' points of view. This study makes use of the research-based theatre (RBT) approach, illustrating how various voices – even those of young customers – are expressed, heard, and discussed in order to interpret the status quo of perplexed situations and relationships and imagine possible choices for disentangling the perplexity. Our study demonstrates the value of the post-Boalian ADT practices and presents a path for collective voicing as a learning process enabling reflexive practice in organisations.

KEYWORDS

Reflection, reflexivity, perplexity, post-Boalian practices, research-based theatre

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of public organisations highlight the customer's perspective; "listening to the customer" seems to be the mantra of new public management. However, what actually happens at the grass-roots level from the perspective of a customer frequently ends up a blind spot and an unknown for service providers, both managers and employees alike. The customer perspective seems to be a cliché that does not take advantage of any real process of mutual discovery or interaction between professionals and customers (Hennala 2011; Langan 2000). Listening to the voices of customers is one of the keys to dissecting the power tensions between health-care professionals, as provider-experts, and patients, as consumers and objects of treatment in public organisations. Reducing this tension requires a shift from a monologue held by the professionals into multi-voiced dialogue between professionals and their customers. Key terms in this shift are *reflection* and *reflexivity*: moving from an authoritative monologue towards more critical, responsible, and ethical actions (Cunliffe and Jun 2005; see also Oswick et al. 2000).

The shift is made possible through learning from experience: through reflection and with the help of reflexive practices. As ways of refining our interpretation of collective voicing, reflection and reflexivity are distinct from each another: unlike reflection, which is about listening and responding to the customers' hopes and wishes, reflexivity is a collective exploration of lived experiences that involves joint discovery.

In this study, we strove to co-construct reflexive practice by following Dewey's (1933/1998; 1916) notion that the foundation for learning lies in perplexed situations: when a situation containing a perplexity arises, the person who finds himself facing it begins to reflect. According to Dewey (1933/1998 p.140), "There is a troubled, perplexed, trying situation, where the difficulty is, as it were, spread throughout the entire situation, infecting it as a whole." In other words, reflection on perplexity and perplexed situations are aspects of problems and their solutions. The challenge is that managers often attempt to repair tailor perplexed customer-relation situations as if they were rationally controllable processes and try to discover efficient solutions through a "neutral" analytical process rather than by "unsettling conventional practices" (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004).

Applied drama and theatre (ADT), which has its roots in Dewey's philosophy of learning and art education, offers a potential form for constructing reflexive practices for organisations. We connect Dewey's work with that of theatre director Augusto Boal (1979/2000) through the concepts of reflection and reflexive practices. Boal's life work focused on development and social change; his theatre, as a form of emancipatory theatre, was one way of organising reflexive practices for oppressed people in Latin America, Africa, and, later in his career, Europe. Boal's work was practical example of how critical pedagogy (Freire's 1970 was devoted to critical reflection) and applied drama and theatre are combined. Boalian practices offer a path to discovering a revolutionist ontology of the truth. Boal was a Marxist-oriented activist-artist and did not work with organisations (Mutnick 2006). In this study, Boalian practices are applied as an epistemology for gaining knowledge about social reality in the context of public or private organisations, and we created the concept of *post-Boalian theatre* for such organisational use, as distinct from the revolutionist ontology of Boalian theatre.

The core of the post-Boalian reflexive practice of ADT is setting up a scene anchored in sensing an everyday situation that allows the observation of familiar, taken-for-granted reality from an unfamiliar angle, an angle that uses the familiar elements and signs of daily life in a new combination and a new context of meaning¹. The post-Boalian reflexive practice of ADT as an activity of critical pedagogy resonates with Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith's (2004) practical reflexive approach of unsettling conventional practices through theatrical investigation. This led us to the research question of our study: How can ADT methods be used to facilitate, first, joint reflection and, later, reflexive practice among managers and employees of public health-care organisations, specifically in terms of their teenage customers' experiences, and help them create understanding from perplexity?

The research question has systematically led us to adopt a specific artistic orientation to our action research, namely, research-based theatre, or RBT (Beck et al. 2011; Mienczakowski 2001; 1995; 2003; 2008; 1998; Mienczakowski et al. 1996; Mienczakowski and Morgan 2001; Saldaña 2009). RBT is a research strategy that involves using theatre as a way of conducting and representing scholarly research (Beck et al. 2011; Leavy 2009).² After collecting their data, RBT researchers integrate it and theatricalise it into a script, which is then rehearsed and performed by the researchers themselves or actors (White and Belliveau 2011; Beck et al. 2011). In this article, we present a RBT process that took place in a dental health-care unit operated as part of Finland's public health and social services system. The customers, employees, and managers of this unit participated in the process together with the researchers, an applied theatre instructor (ATI), a graphic designer, and four students studying youth outreach from an educational institution focused on social and health services.

The reflexive practice was co-constructed by exploring perplexed situations via post-Boalian ADT practices. The process was a cycle with three stages: expressing, listening to, and interpreting the various voices involved – with the voices of the teenage customers being the ultimate focus of interest. Reflection was related to these various voices, to the resonance of the dental-care professionals' voices and the customers' voices as expressed, performed, and interpreted in reality and in imaginative roles, reflexivity was related to the attempt to unsettle conventional practice. Reflexivity paved professionals to question how they interacted with their customers and how they could act differently.

Next we will describe the key theoretical concepts. After that, we explain RBT methodology and present our empirical case. At the end, we discuss the collective voicing of perplexed situations.

PERPLEXED SITUATIONS, REFLECTION, AND REFLEXIVITY

When making organisational decisions, professionals can dehumanise themselves, their customers, and practices, acting as if encounters between professionals and customers

¹ This resonates with the epistemology of Boalian theatre (see Mutnick 2006)

² RBT has been used as an educational process in the health sciences (Nisker 2008; Collattonio et al. 2008; see RBT-based studies in the health care field by Colantonio et al. 2008, Wager 2009, Grey et al. 2000, Grassau et al. 2006).

were objects to control, measure and dominate and any emerging feeling of perplexity something to be avoided. This may lead the parties involved to consider perplexity to be the result of an individual's mistake, rather than an element of problem-solving. For example, accusations like: "Who has broken the rules and disturbed the process?", "Who has allowed chaos to emerge and didn't control the situation?", or "Could you please leave emotions out of this?" are common among both managers as well as employees.

Instead of trying to avoid perplexed situations, Dewey (1933/1998 pp.137-140) stresses that we need to understand them as triggers for learning. When a person starts to deal with a difficulty by facing the situation, she or he begins to reflect. Dewey (1933/1998; 1916 p. 151) defines reflection as an intentional attempt to understand something from our experiences of a specific situation: the process of reflection includes 1) gaining a sense of the problem, 2) the observation of conditions, 3) the formation and rational elaboration of a suggested conclusion, and 4) active experimental testing. Vince and Reynolds (2009) condense this description, defining reflection as a process where learning from experiences is linked to understanding of past action and to improvement in future action. To Dewey, knowledge and action are inseparable processes (Elkjaer and Simposon 2011 p. 64), and the perplexity of a situation can be transformed into understanding through reflection on the experiences related to the situation. This leads to reflection on emotions of uncertainty, tensions in relationships, and assumptions.

Dewey's ideas about reflection have been developed further into managerial practice by Schön (1983). According to him reflection is 'on-the-spot surfacing, criticising, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understanding of experienced phenomena; often it takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation' (p. 241-242). Reynolds and Vince (2004) go further, explaining reflection as a collective rather than primarily individual learning process and takes account of social and political processes. They emphasises critical reflection which attempts to include an awareness the ways in which relations of power are part of peoples' 'intuitive understanding of experienced phenomena' (Cunliffe 2009c). Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004) underline that critical reflection does not actually arise from reflection-on-action or reflection-in-action, but from practical reflexivity (Cunliffe 2002; Vince 2002; Reynolds 2011; Trehan and Rigg 2007).

The attempt to raise the political context within which reflection is done is a way of 'unsettling' (Cunliffe 2009c; Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004) the situation in order to introduce the potential for learning/ change. Reflexivity is "an 'unsettling', i.e., an insecurity regarding the basic assumptions, discourse and practices used in describing reality" (Pollner 1991 - quoted in Cunliffe 2009c)

Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004 p. 2) define the differentiations between reflection and reflexivity as learning processes as follows:

"Whereas reflection encompasses learning by reflecting on experience, a reflexive approach embraces learning in experience. Reflection is generally characterised as a cognitive activity; practical reflexivity as a dialogic and relational activity. Reflection involves giving order to situations; practical reflexivity means unsettling conventional practices."

Cunliffe and Jun (2005 p. 226) contrast the notions of reflection and reflexivity; according to them, the concepts "are often used synonymously but carry different ontological and

epistemological assumptions and consequently generate different intellectual and social practice". In their paradigm, reflection is based on a realist view of the world, while reflexivity is grounded in constructionist and deconstructionist view of the world. This distinction is illustrated in the following figure.

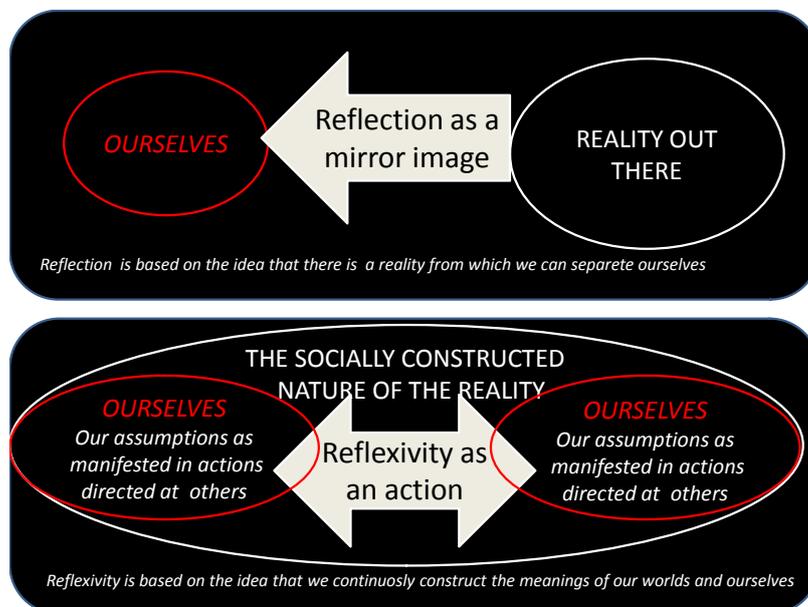


Figure 1. The distinction between reflection and reflexivity

Despite their different epistemological roots, both reflection and reflexivity provide opportunities for critical thinking. Reflection does not, however, necessarily require the questioning of one's taken-for-granted assumptions (Cunliffe 2009[b]; Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004).

In this study, which is based on the previous work of Vince (2002), Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004) and Cunliffe (2009c), we consider reflection as being related to that which employees and managers already know, and reflexivity as being related to employees' and managers' self-activity with the intent of gaining emerging, novel knowing, knowledge as it is reconstructed or maintained within perplexed situations. The concept of "knowing" is put into sharper relief, as to "know" something is to be at the intersection of what is "already known" and what is becoming, what is emergent in one's knowledge (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004; Keevers and Treleaven 2011). We use the concept of reflexivity in constructionist terms: exposing the situated, tentative, and provisional nature of research and knowledge.

In contrast to reflection, then, reflexivity involves questioning hidden assumptions and power structures (Cunliffe 2002; 2003; Reynolds 2011). This is why it is a useful tool in cases where traditional learning methods are unlikely to support managers' – and, in the case of this study, employees' – attempts at exploring assumptions and power dynamics (Vince 2011). At least in their formal strategies, public health-care organisations include reflection

as a part of their professional and organisational identity³, whereas practical reflexivity, as a practice which seeks to reveal the assumptions behind organisational situations and events by destabilising taken-for-granted “truths”, is for the most part lacking within organisations and managerial routines (Nicolini et al. 2004; Cunliffe 2009[a]).

Reflection as a conversation with the situation and reflexivity as engagement with the power relations that structure the perplexed situations within an ADT framework are grounded differently. Whereas reflection involves learning by reflecting retrospectively on experience, practical reflexivity in ADT involves learning during experience by addressing how one’s assumptions and actions reform or maintain situations. Practical reflexivity is, therefore, focused on organisational transformation rather than socialising people into an organisation (Cunliffe and Jun 2005; Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004; Elkjaer and Simpson 2011; see also Freire 1970). The question of how to construct reflexive practices for perplexed situations directed us to Augusto Boal’s ideas of critical pedagogy and ADT. During ADT, the participators’ experiences of a perplexed situation are repeated and investigated within a theatrical frame.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND ADT

ADT is an umbrella concept for various theatre practices that operate outside of the traditional art world and arts institutions, for example, in development projects, social and health-care institutions, and adult education (Prendergast and Saxton 2009; Taylor 2003). Lately, ADT has received increasing attention as an approach to organisational change (e.g. Meisiek 2002; Clark and Mangham 2004); in addition, the number of practical applications of ADT has increased (Barry and Meisiek 2010; Berthoin Antal 2009; forthcoming).

One common element among ADT’s complex roots is the idea of reflection as a process whereby learners investigate their own experiences and views of reality in a dramaturgical frame (Jackson 2007; Nicholson 2006; Needlands 2007). The following figure illustrates different ADT traditions (Prendergast and Saxton 2009) and the ways in which theatre and action research are linked in this study.

³ See Finland’s national strategy for social and health policy
http://www.stm.fi/en/ministry/strategies_and_programmes/strategy

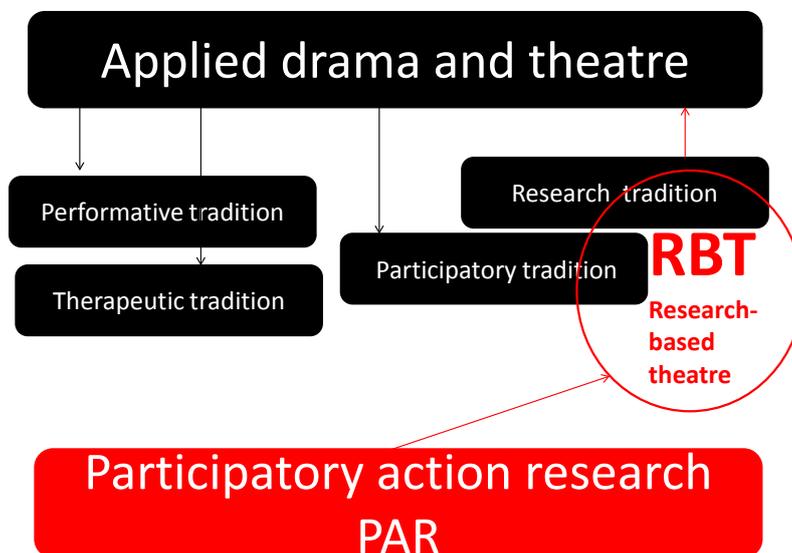


Figure 2. The relationships between ADT, PAR⁴, and RBT

Boal's philosophy of a participatory approach to theatre was inspired by the work of Paulo Freire (1970) and Bertolt Brecht (1964), carnival and the circus, the Brazilian avant-garde theatre of the mid-twentieth century, and the influences of political theorists such as Hegel and aesthetic theorists such as Aristotle. Boal aimed at developing critical thinking (Schuzman and Cohen-Cruz 2006, pp. 1–9); Eriksson (2011) and Errington (1992) also emphasise that drama is a practical form of critical pedagogy, a way of learning critical thinking and higher awareness. It thus offers a potential stage for organisational actors to tune in to their customers' experiences and, from that point of view, learn through reflection.

A unique characteristic of reflection within an ADT framework is that insights emerge through the participants' acting with their bodies (Linds 2006) and engaging on a sensory level with perplexed situations. ADT brings together individuals, their knowledge of social practice, and framed situations. Using simultaneous multiple existences – “as it was” (past action and situation), “as it is” (present action and situation), and “as if” (alternative future actions and situation) – organisational actors take a critical gaze at the perplexed situation. Their multiple actions construct practical reflexivity; they themselves unsettle the assumptions. In this study, post-Boalian ADT practices are methods for voicing the lived experience of situations as well as a method of inquiry for exploring hidden assumptions, emotions, and tensions within an organisation. Emerging reflexivity takes place in a fiction of “doing”, “making”, and “voicing”. Participants create images of their reality and start to

⁴ When exploring messy, real-world organisational actions and the dynamics between people, participatory action research (PAR) is one way of interpreting and creating shared understandings of on-going action. PAR is a branch of action research that aims to improve organisational practices and facilitate the problem-solving processes of organisational actors, it is a reflective inquiry process for the systematic development of knowledge (Reason & Bradbury 2002).

play with these images, and body, intuition, co-creativity and imagination are central to this process (Boal 1979/2000).

Even if it can be an at-times messy and complex learning process, the practices involved in post-Boalian ADT facilitate the creation of multiple insights through patterns of theatrical inquiry and performance, the reflecting and uncovering of contradictions, the testing of variations, and the trying out of events from several points of view (Boal 1995; Saldaña 2003). The reflexive practices involved in post-Boalian ADT are formed through the senses by “work[ing] together to dramatize collective stories activating the whole body through nonverbal and verbal expression” (Linds 2006 p. 115). As an example of nonverbal expression is a technique of a *still image* (Boal 1992; 1995 p. 77) which illustrates a still moment of an actual action on participants own experience; one that is still going on at time, or that could happen again. An applied theatre instructor (ATI) helps participants to ‘make’ *still images*⁵ by using their bodies: to sense and express their experiences. Still image can be realistic, allegorical or surrealist. After this, the ATI help participants to explore narrated and performed situations.⁶ ATI and participants’ starts to reflect on what is going on in the situation of *still image*: what is happening, what has happened, what will happen, what kind of a power relationship and emotions it involves, how it echoes the participant’s own experiences, and what should change in order for the situation to change. Whether the mode is narrative (linguistic) or performative (dance, still images, acting), for participants the emergence of novel knowing is situated in “imaginative doing and making” when they were in the midst of dramatic activity (Boal 1992; Linds 2006). Boal describes this state as one of “...belonging completely and simultaneously to two different, autonomous worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image. The participant shares and belongs to these two autonomous worlds; their reality and the image of their reality, which she herself has created” (Boal 1995 p. 45). This is the idea of post-Boalian: to offer a stage – aesthetic space - within an organisation for interplay between the actual lived experience and wish-fulfilling fantasy, the tangible and intangible (Linds 2006 p.114; Gabriel and Connel 2010 p. 507; Gabriel 2000). In an ideal situation, theatrically framed perplexed situations - ethnotheatrical vignettes - allow reflexivity to emerge and the participants to gain knowing together, but in the worst possible scenarios, reflection only causes confusion and meaningless conversations within the organisation by maintaining existing and oppressive relations (Clark and Mangham 2004a; 2004b).

Next we will discuss, through our empirical case, how reflexive practice was created within a theatrical framework.

⁵ For example, in this study, the health-care customers created post-Boalian still images of encountering a doctor and gave voice to their lived experiences. These images were photographed to serve as data for the later analysis.

⁶ The reflexive practices involved in post-Boalian theatre are based on storytelling. Stories have been identified as an effective means of sense-making and knowledge sharing; stories communicate experiences, ideas, and emotions (Gabriel and Connel 2010; Abma 2000, 2003)

A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF RBT

Research design and method

The research design applied in this study was based on the RBT tradition (Beck et al. 2011; Mienczakowski 2001; 1995; 2003; 2008; 1998; Mienczakowski et al. 1996; Mienczakowski and Morgan 2001; Wager et al. 2009; Saldaña 2008), which implies the application of artful inquiry, scripting, and performance in research (Saldaña 2008; 2009; Finley 2011). As a research method, RBT is an inquiry process in which various actors (in this case, the employees and managers of an organisation, the researchers, and the artists) gain collective and personal knowledge by sharing experiences through linguistic and non-linguistic arts-based methods (Davies and Ellis 2008; Finley 2008; Leavy 2009). Utilization of visual methods of inquiry (Vince and Warren 2011) and theatre-based methods of inquiry (see Beck et al. 2011) has been noted as particularly useful in research projects that seek to evoke and articulate embodied and tacit knowledge (Weber 2008), and so we used such methods (for example, theatrical images and drawings). The artistic process was used as a way of sensing and examining the experiences of the people involved in the study (Finley 2008; 2011; Denzin 2003; see also a Fook 2010 study on critical reflection as a research method).

In this study, theatre is an investigational tool involving data collection, analysis, and reporting. RBT proceeds through four phases:

- (1) The process begins with separate inquiries for customers (the Customer Story), employees, and managers (for both of these latter groups, the Work Story). The aim is to give voice to – i.e. express, investigate, and reflect on – the participants' experiences. This inquiry is facilitated through storytelling methods and *theatrical images*. (see figure 3)⁷



Figure 3. Theatrical images

The storytelling sessions can be described as a collective scripting of perplexed situations. The researcher is embodied in the research process as a researcher and as

⁷ The first author of this article has created and produced over 500 Theatrical Images with a graphic designer, a photographer and three actors. Each image or sequence of images was constructed on the basis of five elements of drama – act, scene, agent, agency and purpose (Burke 1969) – and Boal's (1995) theatre practices of Image Theatre, mask theatre (based on Brecht's (1964) alienation effect), and the statues technique of improvisational theatre (Johnstone 1996).

an ADT practitioner; this status allows the researcher–ADT practitioner to gain a rich description of key events, perplexed situations, and problems.

- (2) The stories of the customers, employees, and managers are then analysed by the researchers and the ATI, who devise performative theatre scenes from them (Saldaña 2009). The idea is to make various voices heard and present the perplexity of the situations. The “voices”, i.e. the themes in the script, are validated by the customers and members of the organisation; we played stories back to the customers and members of organisation to ensure that their authentic voice was still present in the scripted scenes.
- (3) In an ADT session, the multiple voices of the perplexed situation are aired as theatrical scenes. This is a participatory session in which professionals reflect on the perplexed situation and take part in acting out scenes. This offers interplay between reflections on the “known” and reflexivity as emerging knowing that challenges the known.
- (4) The process later continues through multiple sessions striving for agreement on development actions.

Personal reflection

Evaluative discussions were organized throughout the research process and embedded into each inquiry. In those discussions, I attempted to raise the question of power in order to avoid my maintaining of existing tensions as an RBT research practitioner. I also paid attention to sensing what the others were feeling and sensing, even though this was different from what I was feeling and sensing. In order to maintain my own appreciative but critical gaze during the research, I collected anonymous feedback, videotaped my interactions (whenever acceptable to fellow participants), and reflected afterwards on my own actions as evident in the videotape (gesture, tone voice, eye contact, words).

Setting the stage for collective voicing in a Finnish public dental health-care unit

This study elaborates an RBT process wherein teenage customers, dentists, nurses, dental hygienists, assistants, and managers from a dental health-care unit, as well as researchers, an ATI, and a graphic designer organise and construct a reflexive approach together. The research process started with the need to reflect on the experiences of the teenage customers (aged 13–17) and learn from them in order to change the perplexed situations affecting the health care professionals and their customers.

There were a total of 100 teenage customers participate in workshops and 150 wrote narratives without participating workshops, 36 employees and managers, 5 researchers, the ATI, and 4 students involved in the research process, which lasted over a year during 2008–2009. The RBT process included many functional stages, which Table 1 describes in detail. All interactions were documented via participatory observation, meeting memos, and photographs, and some were videotaped. The data consists of two researchers’ field notes,

five hours of videotapes, photographs, customer stories told via theatrical images, employee stories, teenager drawings, and feedback survey responses.

Table 1. The research setting

Those involved:	When it took place:	What took place:
Meetings with RBT team employees and managers from the case organisation, 5 researchers, ATI, the graphic designer	22 Sep 2008-9 Oct 2008	-The RBT team negotiated the aim of the research and decided how to organise it. - A researcher and the ATI designed theatre-based inquiries
- Customers (8 classes from 2 schools: 150 pupils) wrote stories - Six storytelling sessions (2 schools: 100 pupils) - Storytelling session with 36 dental health-care professionals	10 Oct 2008-9 Jan 2009	-Researchers analysed the students' texts -A researcher and the ATI organised Customer Story sessions and analysed themes -Researchers and the ATI organised a Work Story session
Analysis and dramatization of collected data	1 Nov 2008-13 Jan 2009	-A researcher and the ATI sorted the data into themes, plotted and dramatized the themes into theatrical scenes: dramatized imaginary perplexed situations based on data were created
Applied theatre rehearsal process	1 Nov 2008-23 Jan 2009	-Four youth outreach students from a school of social services and the ATI-scripted and rehearsed scenes - Discussion between a researcher, the ATI and the graphic designer about the aesthetic possibilities; symbols, visualisation, lighting, sound and costumes
Validation of the dramatization with the customers (1 class: 30 pupils) Reflective meeting with a researcher, the ATI and the graphic designer	9 Jan 2009-23 Jan 2009	-Triangulated data is returned to the customers for additional comment - The ATI and the four students who formed the theatre group modified the applied theatre script - Planning of the participative elements for interactive collaboration between the professionals, a researcher and performing students for the applied theatre session
Applied theatre session with 36 dental health care professionals, 5 researchers, the	23 Jan 2009	-The plotted and dramatized imaginary perplexed situations were performed for the professionals who participated (by taking

ATI, the graphic designer, a lighting and sound expert and 4 performing students		different roles or using distancing, for example 'hot seating') and interpreted the situation by reflecting on, from the perspective of their own practices, oppressive roles, patterns based on assumptions that are taken for granted, power tensions, emotions and professional visions and meaningful elements in their work.
Evaluation meeting with the ATI, four students and a researcher Reflective meeting with researchers and the ATI Reflective meeting with a researcher, the ATI and the graphic designer	24 Jan – 2 Mar 2009	-Feedback discussion; what was learned through this process -Researchers turned their field notes into Word documents and discussed emerging themes -Roundup from the theatre session from the perspective of how to facilitate reflection and reflexivity and the list of the development ideas the professionals created during the session -Discussion about aesthetic complexity during the research process
Meeting with the RBT team	3 Mar 2009	-Feedback discussion -Professionals from the case organisations categorized ideas created in applied theatre as: (1) a platform for a teenage-oriented dental health-care service process, (2) holistic interaction and encounters with teenage customers, (3) novel types of communication with teenage customers e.g. through social media, and (4) assessing the value of practices with teenage customers -The RBT team negotiated how to take the next steps, and started to organise an action planning session
Action planning session with 36 professionals Feedback survey	27 Mar 2009	-The professionals generated ideas based around four themes defined earlier by the RBT team
Roundup from the idea generation of the action planning session	28 Mar – 2 Apr 2009	-Researchers turned their field notes into Word documents and discussed what emerged during action planning -Roundup from the action planning session focusing on how to facilitate the process whereby plans are implemented as actions
Meeting with the RBT team	3 Apr 2009	-Feedback discussion -Professionals from the case organisation prioritised the development ideas created during the action planning session, decided on

		the timetable and defined the actions for the next stage
36 professionals involved in the actions	3 Apr 2009– 23 Nov 2009	Four different development processes started: two facilitated by ATI and the graphic designer, one facilitated by the researchers, and one by the case organisation themselves
36 professionals involved in reflection, facilitated by the ATI and the graphic designer	2 Dec 2009 – work continued	Reflection session; observation on what has happened, what was learned, and evaluation of where we are now & next steps

Giving voice to the customers' experiences

Boal (1995) uses the term *voicing thoughts* to describe acting out embodied experiences theatrically. We followed this method when organizing participants' reflection on the perplexed situation.

The first phase of data gathering and analysis focused on 150 teenagers' written experiences of dental health care. All the texts were analysed by three researchers and, after that, a researcher and the ATI used the analysis as a map to design ADT-based inquiries with the customers.

The second phase of data collection focused on three inquiry sessions conducted at two schools, for a total of six sessions. The following figure illustrates the nature of the visual data; some of the inquiries were facilitated with the help of comic strip drawings.

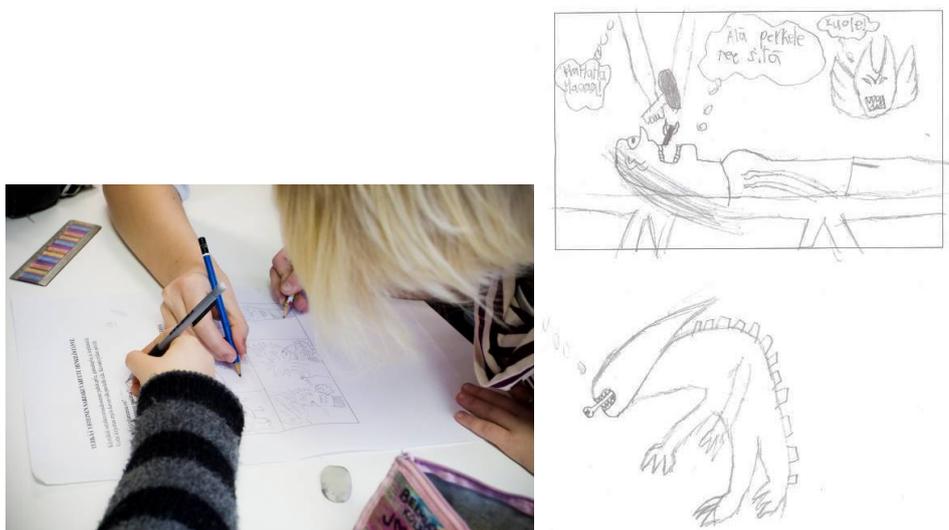


Figure 4. The nature of the visual data

After each inquiry, a researcher and the ATI analysed the data through ethnodramatic framing (Saldaña 2009), resulting in ethnotheatrical vignettes.

In one inquiry, an imaginary character, Netta, who represented a teenage customer, and two “dentists in white jackets” who represented dental health-care professionals, were created together with the customers. After the creation of the imaginary character Netta (later on, Netta was also a character in a theatre scene), she was used as a stimulus for practical reflexivity.

Different types of encounters – including emotions, power relations, and tensions – between Netta and the two dentists were explored together with customers (see Figure 4 for an example of exploration from one inquiry) via post-Boalian theatre practices.



Figure 5. ADT inquiry with teenage customers

A typical setting analysed and dramatized from the data was as follows: the worlds of Netta and the dentist do not meet on a personal or emotional level. The dentists take care of Netta’s teeth skilfully, but that does not automatically guarantee a good experience for Netta. The dentists’ assumption of neutral medical treatment, “*we are taking care of problems related to teeth*”, creates powerless feelings “*they can’t even see me*” in customers and “*whatever*” resistance. The dentists in turn interpret the customers’ emotions as antagonism, ingratitude, and indifference. Both customers and professionals live in their own, respective worlds, and the other world disturbs the peace of their own. Through this inquiry, one of the key elements of the perplexed situation emerged: how professionals interact with their customers. This element was named *encountering*.

Giving voice to the professionals’ experiences

One inquiry, the Work Story, was organised for the dental health-care professionals. During it, professionals reflected on their experiences with teenager customers. The professionals reflected on their own role and relation to customers, concluding that inner conflicts and being in a rush created perplexed situations in which there was not always time to engage with the teenage customer in a respectful way.



Figure 6. A Work Story session: employees sense and reflect on their experiences with the help of theatrical images

The professionals' reflection and emerging reflexivity was indicated in various ways in the stories. In one storyline, the professionals reflected on a customer's experience that *"It feels like we're always in somebody's way"*. The customer's experience of a missing caring dimension in the treatment affected the quality thereof. In the emerging reflexivity, the professionals were on the defense; they reflected that their customer seemed to be expressing that *"I couldn't care less"*. This became an excuse for not unsettling their conventional practice and explaining that their customers actually *"don't pay attention to our advice"*, and therefore the professionals *"just take care of the teeth, not the person"*, and that they *"are health-care workers, not social workers"*.

At this point, the professionals realised that one common emotion being experienced by the customers was fear, and fear, in turn, transforms into different kinds of reactions. The lack of caring made the customer feel worse. One of the key findings was thus revealed by the professionals' adopting an attitude of reflexivity: their own response is also based on emotions, rather than neutrality, and involves more than medical procedures. This helped the professionals to investigate social and political relations within the perplexed situation.

Collective voicing: interpreting images of reality together

The following pictures illustrate one situation as presented via post-Boalian theatre practice.



Figure 7. A perplexed situation as presented on stage

In this situation, dentists (“two dentists in white jackets”) are talking to each other; they are gossiping about their boss and complaining about their work. The customer (*Netta*) has a question for them, but they do not have time to listen, and then, after they put all kinds of instruments into *Netta*’s mouth, they start asking her questions. *Netta* is afraid of pain, but the dentists laugh at her and say, “*This is a minor procedure that even little kids don’t need painkillers for.*” The existing relationship between professionals and customer was thus illustrated.

The dental care professionals reflected that being able to tolerate strong emotions and engage with power dynamics would improve their encounters with customers. During one of ethnotheatrical vignettes, the health-care professionals were enabled to critically reflect on encounters between the customer and the professionals and between the professionals themselves. Simultaneously, when they were involved in imaginary action with an imaginary customer; they were sensing, creating, and interpreting different viewpoints of a perplexed situation that resonated with their own lived experiences with teenage customers. Professionals transformed the power relations on the stage. They shifted from their “neutral” professional identity to a professional who asked her- or himself, “Who am I? How do I relate to others? How do I encounter other people? How do I sense customers’ feelings? How do I respond to my own emerging feelings and those of colleagues and customers? How do my actions, emotions, and language reform or maintain this perplexed situation?” By generating questions and discussion about the role of *Netta*, they were questioning their own practice outside of the role, advising themselves and seeing the complexity of the perplexed situation through the imaginary roles of “two dentists in white jackets”. Through sensing the ethnotheatrical vignettes, professionals became reflexive practitioners.

DISCUSSION

RBT was conducted through the use of post-Boalian ADT practices; inquiries were organised that produced data that was analysed into an integrated script, which was then rehearsed and performed. The idea of this RBT study was to explore the relationships between the actions of health-care professionals and customers by capturing the customers’ experiences. The use of post-Boalian ADT practices focused on sensing, sharing, repeating, amplifying, and interpreting perplexity in work processes and social practices.

Reflection started with the sense that something is wrong in the situation that was being performed; professionals reflected on what was wrong, what the nature of the obstacles was, and what resistance needed to be overcome⁸. The professionals broke the assumption of their authority by questioning what they had considered “*neutral and rational actions*” when encountering customers. Reflecting from the customers’ viewpoint revealed to them that “*Netta felt that she was invisible to the dentists and that they probably wouldn’t notice her absence*”. The treatment situation was routine and familiar, even boring, for the dentist, while for Netta it was unique and new. Emerging reflexivity took place when sensing emotions guided them to understanding their own actions and power in the treatment situation. Reflexivity shifted their professional perspective from medical treatment to a more holistic caregiving situation, where emotions and power relations were included as a part of organisational dynamics. Through this acting on stage, practical reflexivity took place at the intersection of experience in fiction, the reflection of experience in fiction, and the lived experience of reality.

Reflexivity makes invisible, “unwanted”, “painful”, and “surprising” issues visible, and so therefore it was important for me as a researcher and ADT practitioner to recognise the political and social dynamics within the organisations. In striving for its aim of unsettling conventional practices, emerging reflexivity is not value-free or neutral, but tightly woven into the existing organizational power relations, into which I was also woven. Therefore, it was important to create a sufficiently safe, trusting, and transparent working engagement.

Professionals asking critical questions about what they are doing with their customers and why they are doing it opens the door to questioning existing assumptions about these topics. The following generative questions (see Table 2) are examples for unsettling conventional practices. The questions are summarized from data of this study.

Table 2. Generative questions for unsettling conventional practices

Questions for knowing what	Questions for knowing how	Questions for knowing practices
What is it like to be a customer?	How do I receive a young person?	What are “good practices” when encountering teenagers?
What is it like to be a teenager?	How do I interpret a customer’s reactions?	What facilitates this process?
What is non-encountering?	How do I act?	Where have I been treated well? What do I remember about it?
What does non-encountering affect?	How do I control my own attitudes?	What can I utilise from my good experiences of
What is a good encounter?	How are power relations seen?	
What emotions emerge during good encounters?	How is treating a young	

⁸ This resonates with the Dewey’s notions of inquiry; see Elkjaer and Simposon 2011, p. 66-67.

	<p>person different from interacting with other customers?</p> <p>How will encountering a young person and getting to know him or her proceed?</p>	<p>treating an adolescent?</p> <p>How do I know whether a practice is good or not?</p> <p>What are the biggest challenges in our practices?</p>
<p>What kind of encounter would teenager-driven dental care be?</p>	<p>How does a good encounter manifest itself in my work?</p>	<p>What is encountering in words and actions and as a practice?</p>

These questions guided the professionals to understand themselves and the situation as subject to change. This resonates with the idea of reflexivity as collective and ongoing construction (Cunliffe 2009[b]; Cunliffe and Easerby-Smith 2004; Keevers and Treleaven 2011; Reynolds 2011) rather than reflection as a retrospective mirroring of a reality (Schön 1983) from which we can separate ourselves.

In summary, the practical reflexivity gained via post-Boalian ADT practices allowed professionals to become more aware of the power dynamics and emotions related to their practices. They became more aware of different voices – their own, and those of their colleagues and customers. So the connection between reflection and reflexivity is moving from reflection as a conversation with the situation, to critical reflection as engagement with the power relations that structure the situation, to reflexivity as exposing and unsettling the situation.

Post-Boalian ADT links practical reflexivity and sensing in non-linguistic ways; it facilitated the professionals themselves discovering situations and problems. The interplay between actual lived experiences and imagined multiple interpretations of the perplexed situation and the actions and emotions related to it sheds light on taken-for-granted aspects of practice. We propose that collective voicing is one path to revealing what is hidden, tacit, and embodied in organisational dynamics. As an example of practical reflexivity, collective voicing thus makes a contribution to promoting managerial comprehension of listening to the voice of customers (see Figure 7).

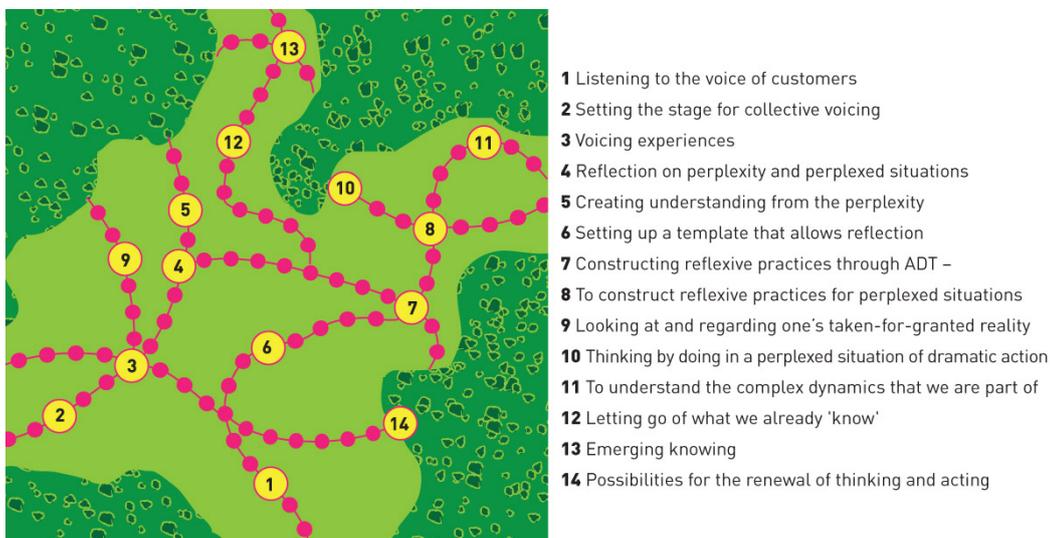


Figure 8. Collective voicing of a perplexed situation as a path to reflexivity

In public health care, collective voicing is a way of looking at and regarding one's taken-for-granted reality; it could be an approach that invites managers and employees – if they consider themselves reflexive practitioners – to question their own assumptions. If the organisational actors, as reflexive practitioners, are able to ask critical questions and inquire about what they are doing with their customers and why, then they are more able to question the assumptions behind their actions and allow reflexivity to be a professional competence among others, while at the same time increasing their awareness of resistance and encouraging them to deal with their customers' anxiety. All of these help organisational actors become more able to “unsettle conventional practice”. In order to understand the complex dynamics of which they are a part, organisational actors ought to use perplexed situations and emerging tensions creatively. They should focus on letting go of what they already “know” about their customers.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we have described a collective voicing process as an example of reflexive practice in a public health-care organisation. We posed the question of how the methods used in post-Boalian ADT practices can facilitate professionals' reflecting on and learning through and with their customers' experiences. We grasped the temporary potential that perplexed situations offer for reflexivity and constructed a process for articulating, hearing, and interpreting the various voices of experiences in such situations.

The results of our study support the idea that construction of reflexive practices via perplexed situations offers possibilities for the renewal of thinking and acting. However, collective voicing in the context of a perplexed situation is a dialogue with dissonance. We note that constructing reflexive practices is not something done easily or readily, but that it is worth spending the time and effort on.

We turned to post-Boalian ADT, presented a path for collective voicing, and noticed that among its essential elements are customers being invited to “voice their thoughts” and professionals being willing to reflect on different voices and voicing as a starting point for transactions (Boal 1995; Dewey 1933/1998). Reflexivity emerged and raised a discussion about the power relationships between the professionals themselves, as well as between them and their teenage customers; and led them to investigate and develop the encounters and generate customer-oriented health care services.

However, collective voicing does not guarantee change – in actual practice, any changes must be collectively organized and made by practitioners in their everyday work and encounters with their customers. We also understand the importance of the structures that allow collective voicing to be organized. The challenge of creating a customer-oriented structure will be a future research avenue in our next action research process.

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Sub-study 5:

Pässilä, A. and Melkas, H.

‘Recognising distances, organising reflection: The contribution of research-based theatre.’

Submitted (2012) to Organisational Aesthetics.
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RECOGNISING DISTANCES, ORGANISING REFLECTION: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH-BASED THEATRE

ABSTRACT

Studies that focus on utilisation of distances – such as cognitive, social or aesthetic – in development activities are increasing. In this study, we focus on distances and reflection – an action with which different professional groups can become aware of distances. We investigate the link between distances and the process of organising reflection. Reflection is here understood as taking place through distancing, by means of research-based theatre (RBT) – a specific artistic orientation of action research which is in this study a participatory method to overlap experiences of various professionals and customers. RBT applies narrative and dramaturgical intervention techniques. Through this aesthetic form we created in this study a knowledge gaining process: in the RBT process various groups of professionals reflected together how they tend to interact with each other. A study of Finnish public care services is based on data from a social innovation process to enhance collaboration between special care services for mentally disabled people and primary health care services. The results showed that aesthetic distancing offers practitioners a way to step back from the perspective of their own professional group and get closer to perspectives of other professional groups and customers. They thus recognised distances and partly also were able to cross them.

Keywords: aesthetic distance, reflection, care services, arts-based methods

INTRODUCTION: AESTHETIC DISTANCE AND EXPERIENCE

Aesthetics comes from Greek *aisthētikos*, from *aisthēta* ‘perceptible things’, from *aisthēsthai* ‘perceive’¹, and it is concerned with knowledge that is created from our sensory experiences (Taylor and Hansen, 2005). The concept of aesthetic distance has its roots in philosophy of Brechtian epic theatre (Brecht, 1964) and pragmatism of Boalian theatre (1995) and Dewey’s (1958: 2) identification of art as experience; “... the actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience”.

Dewey, Brecht and Boal broke the illusion of glorified art and brought it to a real life level connecting mind and body. Brecht broke the illusion of theatre with what he called *Verfremdungseffekt*, in other words ‘alienation effect’. Alienation effect means “to watch from a distance, without involving oneself, as one who observes, thinks and draws his or her own conclusions” (Boal, 1979/2008: xix).

Via aesthetic distancing Brecht made theatre more transparent and required aesthetic awareness of how theatre is made, how actors assume a role, and what theatre is for (Mutnick, 2006). The reflexive effort in a context of aesthetic distance is the core of the action – that is when an actor and an audience step outside fiction to comment on what takes place on stage and what the relationship is between fiction shown on stage and facts lived in one’s own life. (Schechner, 2002: 28).

When reflecting via aesthetic distance we are exploring past, now and possible future by using aesthetic forms; by storytelling, imagining, using our body. Aesthetic distancing helps us give some kind of a form (image, gesture, sound, word) to what we have experienced and to what we are trying to find out from our experience; we are simultaneously aesthetically experiencing and reflecting experiences. Through this we propose alternative actions and sometimes we are surprised ourselves, too; “where did it come from?”. An understanding of the ‘surprise’ that can be triggered from practice enables ‘a more sophisticated understanding of reflection-in-action’ (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009: 4). Aesthetic experience is based on the perspective that all experience is perception, and this resonates with what Taylor and Hansen’s (2005) idea that aesthetic experience and sensual perception goes beyond rational and analytic apprehension.

In this study, we investigate the link between different types of distances – not only aesthetic but also others – and organising reflection through post-Boalian theatre practices. This is a research-based theatre (RBT) study of Finnish public health care. The term ‘research-based theatre’ refers to theatrical explorations as a way of conducting and representing scholarly qualitative research (Beck et al., 2011). Through RBT, we explore collaboration between special care services (Special) for mentally disabled people and primary health care services (Primary). We show how different types of distances coexist and contribute to answering the question of how employees recognise and make distances visible and how they can cross those with the use of aesthetic forms.

¹ According to Oxford Dictionary.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Other types of distance

In addition to aesthetic distance, other types of distance (and proximity) (Knoben & Oerlemans, 2006) are interesting. The (innovation) research literature usually emphasizes advantages of proximity; it is seen as an important precondition for knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer (Gertler, 1995). The different dimensions of proximity reduce uncertainty, solve problems of coordination and facilitate interactive learning and innovation. Proximity may however also have negative impacts due to lack of openness and flexibility (Boschma, 2005). Elements of distance may be seen as a fuel for facilitate innovation – when skilfully applied. In this study we discuss – in addition to aesthetic distance – eight other types of distance (cf. Harmaakorpi et al., 2006; Parjanen et al., 2011) as well as crossing various distances via applied theatre and drama based reflection. Innovation refers here to social innovation (cf. BEPA, 2010).

Cognitive construction on the basis of interaction with other people entails crossing *cognitive distance*: different people develop different cognitive structures along different life paths in different environments, and to collaborate one must cross that distance. Cognitive distance arises between different people, organisations, and scientific disciplines as well as between theory and practice. (Nooteboom, 2012.) Cognitive distance results in both a problem and an opportunity. The problem is that to the extent that cognitive distance is greater, people understand each other more or less imperfectly, have different normative views and inclinations, and have less empathy, less ability to imagine themselves in the position of the other, which all limit ability to collaborate. The positive side of cognitive distance is that it provides an opportunity for learning and innovation. Hence, cognitive distance can be too small to generate novelty or too large to utilise its opportunities. (Nooteboom, 2012.)

In addition to cognitive distance, Table 1 shows other types of distance (and proximity): communicative, organisational, functional, cultural, social, geographical (cf. Harmaakorpi et al., 2006) and temporal (Parjanen et al., 2011). In practice, identifying and drawing the lines between the different types may be artificial, but useful both in theoretical and practical sense. *Communicative distance* has to do with the ability to communicate and exchange ideas as an important part of creative and innovation processes. People often discuss problems in a language (or manner) that they mistakenly assume everybody in the group to understand. They use, for example, various concepts that are not understood by everybody or the concepts may have different meanings in different areas of expertise. (Nahapiet & Ghosal, 1998)

Knowledge creation depends also on a capacity to coordinate the exchange of complementary pieces of knowledge within the organisation and between organisations. *Organisational distance* refers to the difficulty in coordinating transactions and exchanging information within and between organisations. There are maybe no ties between independent actors, or there is no possibility for interactive learning. New knowledge creation often requires going out of the established channels. (Boschma, 2005.)

Functional distance refers to actors' different areas of expertise. Members in different functional communities do not necessarily understand each other because they do not interpret knowledge in the same contexts. Functionally close actors act in areas of expertise close to each other, for example in the same industry. Similarities in knowledge and experiences facilitate the acquisition and development of new knowledge. If actors are functionally far from each other, there is more to learn, but the distance also means that it is more difficult to learn. (Cf. Knobens & Oerlemans, 2006.)

Relations between people are socially embedded, when they involve trust based on friendship, kinship and experience. Social proximity may facilitate the exchange of tacit knowledge, in particular, because of trust-based relations. Lack of trust can prevent people from asking questions or volunteering in giving information. On the other hand, too little *social distance* in a relationship may weaken the innovative capacity of organisations due to an overload of trust. Members of social networks may be locked into established ways of doing things at the expense of their own innovative and learning capacity. (Boschma, 2005.)

Every organisation and even its subunits have a culture of their own, which influences the ways in which their members think, feel, sense and act. *Cultural distance* refers to differences in these cultural habits, rules and values. The creation of knowledge is a complex process involving the understanding of different organisational cultures and subcultures (Bechky, 2003). When organisational cultures are similar, organisations are expected to interact more easily and with better results, because common interpretations and routines allow them to interpret and give meaning to actions without making all these interpretations explicit (Knobens & Oerlemans, 2006).

Geographic distance refers to the spatial or physical distance between actors (Boschma, 2005). Short distances facilitate face-to-face interactions. Especially the transfer of tacit forms of knowledge is easier when the distance is small. (Boschma, 2005; Knobens & Oerlemans, 2006.) There is also *temporal distance* (Parjanen et al., 2011) – referring to differences in the ability to imagine potential futures and make use of future-oriented information and knowledge. This temporal distance manifests itself in the ways in which actors perceive the future – in a reactive or proactive manner.

Table 1. Different types of distances, their sources and innovation potential (adapted on the basis of Harmaakorpi et al., 2006; Parjanen et al., 2011; cf. also Boal, 1995; Brecht, 1964).

Distance	Source	(Innovation) potential
1. Geographic	Physical distance between actors	Geographic proximity does not automatically lead to innovations, but it may, for instance, facilitate social proximity.
2. Cognitive	Differences in ways of thinking and knowledge bases	A certain degree of cognitive distance enables creation of new innovations.
3. Communicative	Differences in concepts and professional languages	When making a new idea understandable, concepts from other fields or sciences, for instance, may be utilized.

4. Organisational	Differences in ways of coordinating the knowledge possessed by organisations and individuals	An organisation should have both strong and weak links in its network.
5. Functional	Differences in expertise in different industries or clusters	It is useful to obtain novel information also from outside of one's own field of operations. In such cases, the information often needs to be adapted to the field of operations in question.
6. Cultural	Differences in (organisational) cultures, values etc.	The challenge is to get people working in different organisational cultures to collaborate.
7. Social	Social relationships and the amount of trust included in them	Innovations require interaction among different kinds of actors. Trust helps in creation of radical ideas.
8. Temporal	Differences in ability to imagine possible, potential futures	The challenge is to acquire and assimilate future-oriented knowledge so that it could be exploited in a proactive manner.
9. Aesthetic	To sense lived experiences; aesthetic distancing works as another way of knowing; to 'perceive things' which are embodied in people and embedded in practice. In this study, this distance is instrumental – with its help, other distances are made visible and known.	Use of artist-led intervention as an example of arts-based methods to explore sensory experiences proposes alternative actions, and demystifies and familiarises events that might otherwise appear to be inevitable or include too much diversity. Through play, performance stops, reflects, uncovers contradictions, tests variations and tries out events from several points of view.

In this study, aesthetic distance is instrumental – with its help, employees are enabled to recognize distances; other distances are made visible and known, as the organization is large and complex, and organizational reforms have caused new distances.

Stark (2009) suggested that through the overlap of different viewpoints and frameworks of various professional groups and customer groups, new knowledge emerges at least when people are able to sense and cross various distances. Stark juxtaposed knowledge creation to searching and the perplexing situations in which people search for what is valuable. This resonates with Dewey's (1933) reflective inquiry. We find it promising to explore what kind of a search it will be when we combine the aesthetic form of theatre to this combination.

Applied arts as an aesthetic form

Taylor and Hansen (2005) crystallised artistic aesthetic organisational research in terms of content (instrumental – aesthetic) and method (intellectual – artistic). Their categorisation of existing organisational aesthetics research is: (i) intellectual analysis of instrumental

issues, (ii) artistic form used to look at instrumental issues, (iii) intellectual analysis of aesthetic issues, and (iv) artistic form used to look at aesthetic issues. According to them (p. 1227), “Aesthetics offers a new look into organizations, and a look at alternative ways of expressing and making meanings that deeply influence organizational interactions, behaviours, and understanding.” In this study, the above-mentioned fourth category is the most relevant.

The burning issue in research of arts-based methods is the wide variety of perspectives and applications of arts in organisational settings. Previous studies (Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Darsø, 2004; Meisiek, 2002; Meisiek & Barry, 2007; Taylor, 2008; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Berthoin Antal, 2009; Schiuma, 2011) have pointed out that we ought to think more clearly about particular purposes and organisational contributions that arts-based processes can make. Taylor and Hansen (2005: 1217, 1227) find the most promise at the work that uses artistic forms to look at aesthetic issues; artistic forms are used to present the direct sensory day-to-day experiences in organisations. Barry and Meisiek (2010) use the concept of ‘workarts’ in a context of arts-based initiatives in organisations. They frame arts-based methods in the light of sensemaking theory and the role of mindfulness in it. In their study, three distinctive workart movements are identified; art collection, artist-led intervention and artistic experimentation.

In this study, we will focus on artist-led intervention as an example of one form of arts-based methods, and frame it with the help of Taylor and Ladkin’s (2009) typology of arts-based processes in organisational development and change (see Figure 3). Although Taylor and Ladkin’s focus was on managerial and leadership development at the individual level, we found their identification (typology) to explore different phases of applied theatre intervention at the organisational level. The typology consists of two key dimensions: the horizontal axis indicates whether a particular technique focuses on the art process or the art product. We have extended the typology by adding the element of collective reflection (Pässilä, Oikarinen & Vince, 2012; Vince, 2002) into it. In this context, researchers, artists and organisational members explore and present sensory experiences via post-Boalian artistic forms.

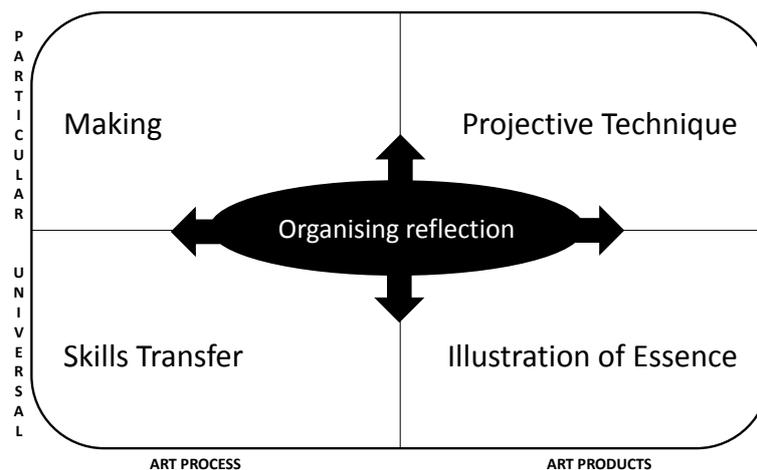


Figure 3. An extended typology of arts-based processes (based on Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, and Pässilä, Oikarinen & Vince, 2012).

Art as a process and art as a product – the vertical axis depicts the continuum between focus on the particular, or universal nature of art. (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009: 55-61) Taylor and Ladkin identified four different processes that do not operate within conventional organisational or change approaches: skills transfer, projective technique, illustration of essence and making (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009: 56). We extended the list of approaches by adding critical reflection which invites various professional groups within an organisation to make sense of and to cross distances (Table 2). Organising reflection (Vince, 2002; Figure 3) is one approach to critical reflection and attempts to include an awareness of the ways in which relations of power are part of people’s ‘intuitive understanding of experienced phenomena’. Our intuition is shaped consciously and unconsciously by the discourses, dispositions, expectations and connivances in the situation that surrounds us. The attempt to raise the political context within which reflection is done is a way of ‘unsettling’ the situation in order to introduce the potential for learning/ change. (Cunliffe, 2009; Pässilä et al., forthcoming.)

Table 2. Five types of arts-based processes (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Pässilä, Oikarinen & Vince, 2012).

Arts-based processes	Arts-based methods can facilitate...
skills transfer	skills that can be useful in everyday work
projective technique	participants to reveal inner thoughts and feelings, to express tacit and embodied knowing
illustration of essence	participants to recognise qualities, situations, emotional responses, or ways of being
making	a deeper experience of personal presence and a healing process
critical reflection	various professional groups to be aware of social structures of an organisation as well as tensions and anxiety involved in patterns of activities overlaps between various groups of professionals within an organisation

Critical reflection (Dewey, 1933) is needed in changing and transforming processes within organisations (cf. also Schön, 1983; Ibbotson & Darsø, 2008; Hasu et al., 2012). We suggest that reflection of distances provides access to discovering potential of organisational folds which Stark (2009) understands as fundamental for innovation. The main aim of studies of ‘organizing reflection’ (Vince, 2002) has been to support a shift in emphasis – from encouraging the individual’s ability or opportunity to reflect to understanding how individual and collective reflection can be organized in support of organizational learning and change. This perspective on the organization of reflection involves awareness of emotional and political dynamics within organizations that can inhibit and enhance reflection and therefore both underpin and undermine learning and change. (Pässilä & Vince, 2012)

Generative questioning

A new element for organising reflection is to organise it through participatory theatre based on a post-Boalian approach. The post-Boalian approach used in this study is derived from the original theatre practices conceived by Augusto Boal (1979/2008; 1992; 1995; 1996) as an epistemology for creating a space for people to make sense of complex micro- and macro-level processes related to their lives, communities, and the society. It also honours Boal's philosophy of theatre, which embraces communal openness, transparency, democracy, sustainability, responsibility, participation, and solidarity. The post-Boalian approach views the links between theatre, social change, learning, and development as an epistemology for gaining knowledge about a complex and fragmented world, rather than as a Marxist ontology between the oppressed and the oppressors. The post-Boalian approach is an example of how theatre has stepped out from the traditional art world's institutional practices and, in the context of this study, into a public health care organisation.

Boal was impressed by Paulo Freire's (1970) critical thinking and pedagogy, so he applied Freire's educational ideas to communities with the help of theatre. Freire's generative questioning in particular, when used in Boalian (1992; 1995; 1996) applied theatre practices, provides a learning stage for sensuous investigation. To Boal, theatre is a stage of change and development, centred upon making experiences, attitudes, feelings and relationships sensible by observing institutionalized habits and practices. An audience member, a spect-actor, as Boal would say, is in the middle of a process of dialogue with the performers and the other spect-actors. Spect-actors are investigators, sense-makers, interpreters and actors, too. One vivid element of Boalian theatre is sensuous participation. For example, during a forum theatre the spect-actor can stop the performance, suggest changes to the events on stage and step into a role and be part of the happenings represented through stage. The audience and the actors both construct various scenarios through acting, reflecting and engaging in a dialogue. In that kind of an interaction, an emerging knowing is created in the interpretations, and it is embodied in participants' senses and interactions.

So, if we understand theatre as a process for reframing and redefining, we need critical thinking. Freire (1970: 113) emphasises that the investigation of generative themes awakens a critical consciousness. The methodology of investigation is dialogical, and it should allow different communities - or in an organisational setting, different groups of professionals - to pose questions and, hence, allow generative themes relating to these communities to be found. Boal combined Freire's search for a generative theme with a participatory theatre process. In the framework of imaginative situation, the participants examine fundamental questions related to their respective community and the society at large. Studying the generative theme refers to studying people's ways of thinking and sensing about reality, constructed in a social, cultural and historical framework, as well as conscious actions pertaining to it (Freire, 1970: 117).

Boal devised the investigation of a generative theme into a codified situation on stage and into thinking by acting, as well as reflecting by acting. When people are presented with a codified existential situation (Boal's still image or forum theatre, which refers to a so-called reality and praxis), they are liable to share and interpret it with others. Freire talked about describing the situation, which helps people make sense of the parts of which the whole consists, as well as the relationships thereof. This involves careful attention to the emotional dynamics of reflection. Individual and collective emotions in organizations contribute to the

structures that eventually constrain emotional responses or define the contextually specific nature of emotional work. (Pässilä & Vince, 2012)

Freire (1970: 12) encouraged people to find themselves (emotionally as well as institutionally) and see – to sense - the world around them as a reality in a process of ongoing transformation. In a way, an application that blends generative questioning, post-Boalian theatre practices and learning enables diversity to emerge. It brings close that which is far away and makes bigger that which is small. (Boal, 1996: 49). Here we recognise one central process related to innovation and reflection; a process of generating possibilities for overlapping (Stark, 2009) structural folds.

Generative questioning (Freire, 1970), in particular when used in post-Boalian applied theatre practices, provides a sensuous learning stage for investigation. Theatre provides an imaginative framework – via aesthetic distancing - for exploring and understanding how different people experience aspects of the subject or phenomenon being studied. Therefore Boal (1979/2008; 1995) suggest that theatre is a method of knowledge building. Post-Boalian approach to reflection (Pässilä, Oikarinen & Vince, 2012) enables us sense what has happened and what is happening in our own cultural behaviour, practices, values and assumptions (cf. Drew, 2008; Kerr & Darsø, 2008; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Organising reflection via theatre includes senses into reflection process; reflection involves sensual perception concerned with the appreciation of beauty.

Figure 2 illustrates our idea of aesthetic dimension of cohesive groups, and how it provides the requisite familiarity and diversity for access and action. We link the idea of collective reflection (Vince, 2002) preceded by using the aesthetic form (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Taylor & Hansen, 2005) and knowledge generation (Vedres & Stark, 2010) in the context of a public health care organisation.

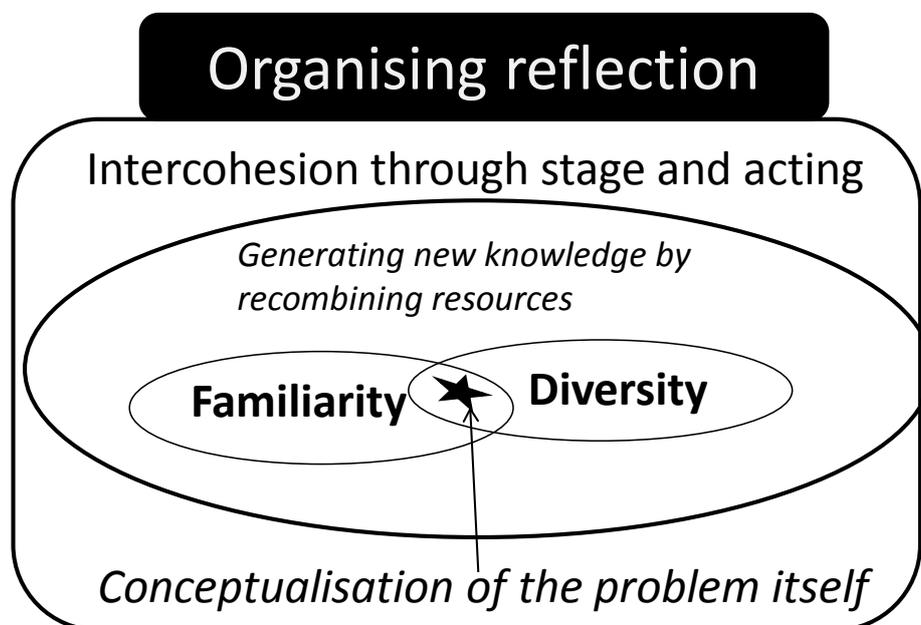


Figure 2. Aesthetic dimension of cohesive groups.

Through aesthetic form we create in this study a knowledge gaining process: in this RBT process various groups of professionals relate and reflected together how they tend to interact with each other. Theatre creates a stage where the world is not already 'given', and dramatic action should substitute for real action (Boal, 1979/2008: 134) – it allows discovery of diversity. Acting interrogates the character's actions, proposes alternative actions, and demystifies and familiarises events that might otherwise appear to be inevitable or include too much diversity. Through play, performance stops, reflects, uncovers contradictions, tests variations and tries out events from several points of view. (Schechner, 2002: 182)

RESEARCH SETTING AND DESIGN

Background and context

Social innovation

The action research process that is described here took place in the public sector. Public sector innovations are primarily considered to be social innovations, even if there would be other elements, too (Hasu & Saari, 2009). Social innovation has been linked to factors emphasizing novel ways to do things, novel ways to see old and new challenges and more generally the ability to see behind and out of the usual (Koski, 2008). This definition resonates with Stark's (2009) study of the perplexing situations in which people search for what's valuable; the dissonance of diverse principles can lead to discovery. In this study, the focus is on the means, the process of social innovation – as the ends in this type of an initiative become visible slowly and in many different ways; they will be focused on in future studies.

Here we identify a promising link to aesthetics in organisation; work communities and their networks – and people's experiences of what is valuable - are a core resource at the grass-roots level in social innovations. Taylor and Hansen (2005: 1224) point out that "The use of artistic forms to look aesthetic issues offers a medium that can capture and communicate the felt experiences, the affect, and something of the tacit knowledge of the day-to-day, moment-to-moment reality of organization. Not just the cleaned-up, instrumental concerns of 'the business', but the messy, unordered side as well." We suggest in this study that arts-based methods as an example of aesthetic forms within organisation allow to search and to go beyond simple innovation 'recipes' and examine the configurations, contingencies and complexities that social innovation in the public sector requires.

The target organization

The action research process focused on a Regional Centre for Health and Social Services (hereafter: The Centre) in Finland. A relevant question for health and social service management was finding out whether it would be possible to break down the barriers and reduce, in particular, distances between different professional groups – between practitioners from Primary Health Care Services (Primary) and those from Special Care Services (Special). This is a common problem in health and social services: nowadays organisations are more like networks; there are a lot of opportunities for knowledge

production, but the main obstacles are the 'silos' between different intra-domains (as it was in this case as well, between practitioners from Primary and Special).

The Centre has approximately 700 employees operating in five different areas: promotion of health and well-being, social services, home and living services, healthcare services, and activity and rehabilitation services. The Centre went through a major change process over a two-year period, between 2007 and 2009. These changes were connected to a national reorganisation of health and social services in Finland. During the change process, the different organisations (and their units) of five municipalities were merged into one whole. The Centre could be characterised as an organisational network, in which numerous different professionals negotiate and seek for common practices and ways to work. The major change process also resulted in new distances within the large network in addition to older distances between professional groups, for instance. The manager of The Centre wanted to discover whether it would be possible to reduce distances, those between different professional groups and other distances, and thus contacted the researchers.

Method

The method used in this study is participatory action research, which includes theatrical explorations from the field of applied drama and theatre (ADT) as a way of conducting qualitative research (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). A research-based theatre (RBT) study of Finnish public health care is presented. The term 'research-based theatre' refers to theatrical explorations as a way of conducting and representing scholarly research (Beck et al., 2011). This research approach has focused on using theatre for the purposes of data analysis and knowledge transfer (Rossiter et al., 2008) and deepening participants' understanding about complex organisational life, people, and relations amid renewal and change actions (Mieniczakowski, 1998; Mieniczakowski et al., 1996). According to Rossiter et al. (2008: 131; see also Denzin, 1997; Turner, 1982), research-based theatre (or, as Denzin, 1997, defines it, 'performative ethnography') "has unique potential to interpret, translate and disseminate research findings", and theatrical methodologies provide interpretative, critical, and analytical investigation tools for research.

The research-based theatre (RBT) focus of this study is to explore collaboration between practitioners from special care services (Special) for mentally disabled people and primary health care services (Primary). The metaphor of overlapping (Stark, 2009; Vedres & Stark, 2010) is used when discussing how to cross distances between different professional groups and their customers. The study aims to show how different types of distances coexist within the social innovation process. The study contributes to answering the question of how employees recognise and make different distances visible and how they can cross those with the help of different aesthetic forms. An additional aspect of the research concentrated on contextual and operational practices in relation to people with mental disabilities. A working assumption at the start of the RBT process therefore was that both these units could learn from each other.

Previous studies on RBT have been conducted in the fields of social, health, and educational sciences (Nisker, 2008; Nisker et al., 2006; Gray & Sinding, 2002; Mitchel et al., 2006). In this study, RBT as a research method used in participatory action research is based on the following aspects from previous studies:

- it makes use of ADT in the forms of ethnodrama and ethnotheatre during reflection (Mienczakowski, 1998; Mienczakowski et al., 1996)
- it focuses on an emancipatory research interest (Mienczakowski & Morgan, 2001; Mienczakowski, 1995) in order to create shared ownership of research projects between various actors: the members of the organisation, their customers, artists, and researchers (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2009)
- it formalises the research processes used by researchers within a university setting (Beck et al., 2011)
- performances are created for specific purposes for organisational members only; the performances – open-ended theatrical scenes – explore issues from the data, with some performances being based on original transcripts of data (Beck et al., 2011; Saldaña, 2003)
- the research design is based on the practical and theoretical works of Mienczakowski (2001; 1995), Mienczakowski and Moore (2008), and Saldaña (2005; 2008; 2009)
- RBT inquiries are considered as applied drama and theatre, not traditional performance art, because the performances are not intended for general audiences but for people participating in the research (Beck et al., 2011)
- qualitative research ethics and practices act as the guiding principles of the researchers' and artists' work (White & Belliveau, 2010; 2011; Saldaña, 2008).

Research Design

The fieldwork

During the last few years, I (the first author) have worked as a researcher-facilitator of applied drama and theatre in the public organisation – The Centre. According to my practical knowledge as an applied drama and theatre facilitator, effective and efficiency-oriented organisations – the on-going trend that public organisations are facing to produce more and better services with less money and human resources – are in need of reflection zones in which the members of the organisation can explore and present their experiences (cf. also Kerr & Darsø, 2008; Hasu et al., 2012). In the following, we will describe the phases of the research in greater detail.

During this study, (i) practitioners from Special and Primary services reflected via the artistic forms of storytelling, post-Boalian practices and ethnotheatre upon how they have experienced their work with mentally disabled customers and different practitioners, and (ii) mentally disabled customers shared their views via the artistic forms of storytelling and post-Boalian practices concerning how they have experienced health care practices.

At the beginning of the process, prior to the first phase of the fieldwork, we organised a team of practitioners with members from both Primary and Special services and the researchers and artists (thirteen people in total). The team decided that the specific context of the inquiry should be as follows: what happens before, during and after a doctor's appointment in primary health care when a patient is mentally disabled? The team was interested to find out what happens between professionals from different work units, and what happens between professionals and customers. Figure 4 illustrates the research setting at The Centre.

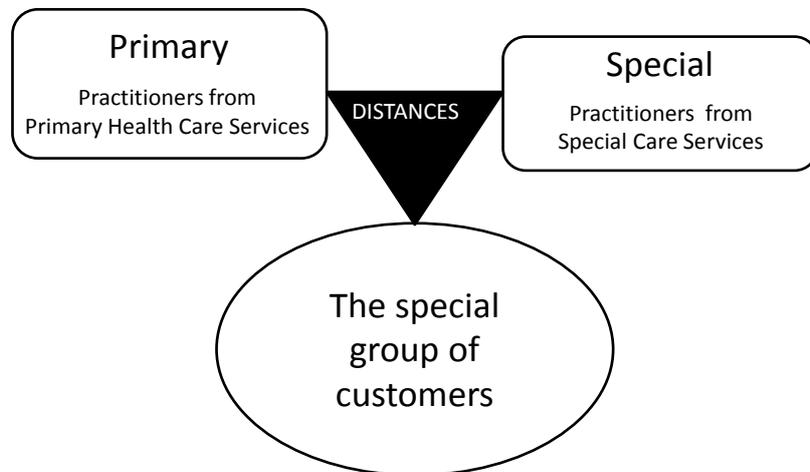


Figure 4. The research setting at The Centre.

Phase 1: Artful inquiry in the form of Work Story and Customer Story

In this study, this first phase of the fieldwork relied on story-telling as a method of inquiry (Finley, 2008; Leavy, 2009). This inquiry method involves images, namely theatrical images. Theatrical images can be seen as one approach to the use of participatory visual methods within qualitative organisational research (Vince & Warren, 2011). In this study, the theatrical images generated stories that represented the experiences of the practitioners; they stimulated feelings about experiences at work that could then form the basis of (collective) reflection, acting as a mode of ethnographic story-telling (Saldaña, 2008; 1998). The story-telling sessions include Work Story sessions as a form of data collection; they also act as reflexive practice for participants. As a form of inquiry, the story-telling sessions aim at producing and gathering meaningful and contextual knowledge (which are often embodied in people and embedded in the way people do their work).

Figure 5 illustrates the nature of the data collected via theatrical images.



The doctor is this one. I wonder if this doctor could be more playful.

They both are frustrated. This situation has already taken 10 minutes: "I cannot get the sample, the patient does not let me touch her." The doctor is very busy and getting nervous as the appointment prolongs itself and the next patients are queuing to get in. A nurse comes in, she is trying to calm down this patient. The doctor is thinking that well, this will soon be over. The doctor is thinking: "Which is more harmful to the patient – the illness or the care?" The patient's mother insists that every sample must be taken from her child. The mother says: "It's our right."

Figure 5. Example of the data collected with the help of theatrical images.

Phase 2: Dramatisation

The second phase of the fieldwork was dramatisation, where practitioners and customers' narratives were analysed and turned into theatrical scenes. During this second phase, images, stories, and conversations were carefully arranged and scripted based on the methods presented by Saldaña (2008; 2009). In each case, at least two researchers and an applied theatre instructor coded and analysed the stories and conversations gathered during the Work Story and Customer Story sessions using an approach from interactive ethnodrama (Saldaña, 2008).

Phase 3: Ethnotheatre session

After this, the dramatised data were staged for an audience in the ethnotheatre session. The audience was made up of members of the organisation, The Centre; some of whom had already participated in the first phase of the fieldwork. During the ethnotheatre session, the points of views of employees, managers, and also customers were played back to the members of The Centre in order to break apart 'silos' between various groups of professionals, and between them and their customers. The theatrical scenes acted as a medium for critical reflection. In the third phase of the fieldwork, theatre was used as a medium through which to reflect, producing dramatic representations of emotions and the relationships that are integral to practice (see Beck et al., 2011; Mienczakowski, 2001; Mienczakowski, 1995; Mienczakowski, Smith & Sinclair, 1996; Mienczakowski & Morgan, 2001).

Once the ethnotheatre session had been held, interpretative conversations, idea generation, and researcher-facilitators' field notes (participants worked together in small groups, and each group had a researcher acting as a group facilitator) were carefully arranged, with a focus on development needs and themes. After this phase, members of the organisation negotiated concerning the aspects requiring development or change. The fundamental questions at this phase revolved around what needed to be developed and how, when development work should be done, who ought to be involved, and how the change would affect those involved.

In this article, we focus on the third phase; the ethnotheatre session. During the theatre session, practitioners from Primary and Special Services articulated their embodied professional knowing and expressed meanings and assumptions related to their practice.

Data collection

Table 3 illustrates the recorded participatory data collection in September 2009 – April 2010.

Table 3. The interactive data collection (September 2009 – April 2010).

Regional Centre for Health and Social Services 'The Centre'
Theme: Co-operation between practitioners in primary health-care services and special care services for mentally disabled people
Professionals: assistant nurses, nurses, doctors; collaborators, customers
Participants: 140
"Key team" members: 4 managers, 4 nurses, 1 collaborator, 2 researchers, 2 artists (the ADT instructor and a graphic designer)
RBT inquiries: 2 Work Story sessions: the first author in the role of ADT facilitator and 2 researchers 3 Customer Story sessions: 5 ADT artists and the first author in the role of ADT facilitator 1 Theatre session: 5 ADT artists and the first author in the role of ADT facilitator, other researchers as group facilitators 1 RBT video scripted and produced by the ADT artist, 2 researchers and 2 nurses for organisational learning – the organisation organised subsequent Action Planning sessions by itself
Empirical data: 20 hours of videotape, an edited 1-hour video, narratives, theatre session participants' notes (librettos), feedback questionnaires, 5 researchers' and artists' field notes
Time frame: 2009-2010

Table 4 shows the themes and contents of the eight scenes of the theatre session. It needs to be emphasised that this type of research, for instance, dramatisation, requires training and experience in theatre and art education in addition to research experience (cf. Pässilä,

forthcoming). In the theatre session, the scenes were played by professional applied drama and theatre actors. Table 4 comprises our ethnodrama analysis which we formulated into vignettes of ethnotheatre.

Table 4. The eight scenes (vignettes from the data) of the ethnotheatre session.

Scene and its theme	Contents
<p>Scene 1: Collapsing of dreams</p> <p><i>A male and a female actor in a contact improvisation entangled in a red thread; the scene ends as the woman winds up the thread into her lap and holds it as a baby.</i></p>	<p>What goes on in the head of a mother of a mentally disabled child? The scene is about understanding the mother's feelings, her reactions and reactions of the care worker, as well as the encountering of the care worker (a doctor/nurse) and the mother at the emotional level.</p>
<p>Scene 2: Visiting a child health centre</p> <p><i>The role character of the nurse is embodied by means of clownery, without speech. The nurse is facing a new situation and an odd experience. The mother role character enters the stage carrying her baby. The child is embodied with birch logs; the body, head, hands and feet are logs that have been fixed with screws. The nurse is afraid of the child; the mother gives instructions on how to work with the child.</i></p>	<p>What could you learn as a care worker from the mother? The scene is about the mother's first visit to the child health centre since the child was born, and it is the first time when the care worker (a nurse) encounters a mentally disabled child as a customer with her mother.</p>
<p>Scene 3: Customers' horror experiences and care workers' routine in a care situation</p> <p><i>Two doctor characters discuss in medical terms without noticing the mentally disabled customer character who embodies her/his fear by physical story-telling.</i></p>	<p>The scene is about the customer's and the care worker's different worlds in the same situation (experiences from the situation and actions in it).</p>
<p>Scene 4: Drafting provocative news headlines on customers' experiences</p> <p><i>An actor is in the role of a provocative Finnish media person ('Hannu Karpo') interviewing a mentally disabled customer. The customer tells that...</i></p>	<p>The scene is about use of power from the viewpoint of the customer, addressed in the Brechtian way.</p>
<p>Scene 5: A journey from a care home to the doctor's appointment</p> <p><i>A female and a male actor on stage; the woman supports the man's moves, the man hits the woman, the woman eludes. They continue the joint movement.</i></p>	<p>The special care service worker gets ready with her mentally disabled customer for a doctor's appointment already the night before. The scene is about the special care worker's work that is not visible during the doctor's appointment itself.</p>
<p>Scene 6: Care workers' hidden thoughts</p>	<p>The scene is about cultural and cognitive</p>

<p><i>The facilitator presents a dispute between a primary health care doctor and a special care service nurse. The actors act, and the facilitator stops the situation. Then she interviews the audience asking what the role character senses, thinks, feels and says.</i></p>	<p>distances; care workers' prejudice against each other and about visualising it.</p>
<p>Scene 7: Social maps; the network of professionals around the customer.</p> <p><i>The actors portray the customer's network. They come to stage one by turns and tell about their own relation to the customer by holding a thread. At the end of the scene, a net of the thread is delineated on stage.</i></p>	<p>The scene is about bringing up care workers' roles, distances and tasks from the viewpoint of the customer.</p>
<p>Scene 8: A dream of encountering; wishes concerning one's job</p> <p><i>The facilitator-researcher engages the participants: tell your three wishes (rub the wish lamp). The participants tell their wishes after a while and the actors come to stage by turns to improvise the wishes in a clownery-like way.</i></p>	<p>The scene is about care workers' dreams concerning their work and ways of doing it – with the attitude: "if everything were possible, how would you do your work?".</p>

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS: REFLECTION AS A SPACE FOR STRUCTURING DISTANCES

The data were analysed according to the principles of qualitative content analysis (deductive and inductive). Contents of the data were categorised and classified according to the elements of the arts-based process and types of distance. We analysed (1) the video materials which resulted from documenting the theatre session with 6 cameras and (2) participants' reflective notes written during the session from which we coded elements of distance. The notes were collected with the help of narrative questionnaires – librettos – that were then transcribed into Word documents.

First we analysed the video materials for three months and edited them with a media artist into one piece of documentation. This documentation shows what happened during the session. After this, the librettos were transcribed and thematically categorised. This categorisation was used when we discussed the results with the key team; on the basis of it, development targets were set – what should be done otherwise and how. A video was produced together with The Centre to help them in their further reflection processes.

After this, the first author analysed the scenes; what happened (deeds) and what was said (texts), cross-analysing them with the interpretations of scenes expressed in the librettos. The first author had also dramatised the scenes, but she did not analyse those as such but compared them with the interpretations of the session participants. These cross-analysed eight scenes were then thematised with the help of the categorisation of Taylor and Ladkin, with organising reflection included. She thus determined what was done during the scenes

and noticed that the most common were the issues belonging in ‘projective technique’ and ‘illustration of essence’ categories.

Figure 5 summarises how the different elements of the arts-based process emerged during the theatre session (see also Table 4 on the eight scenes).

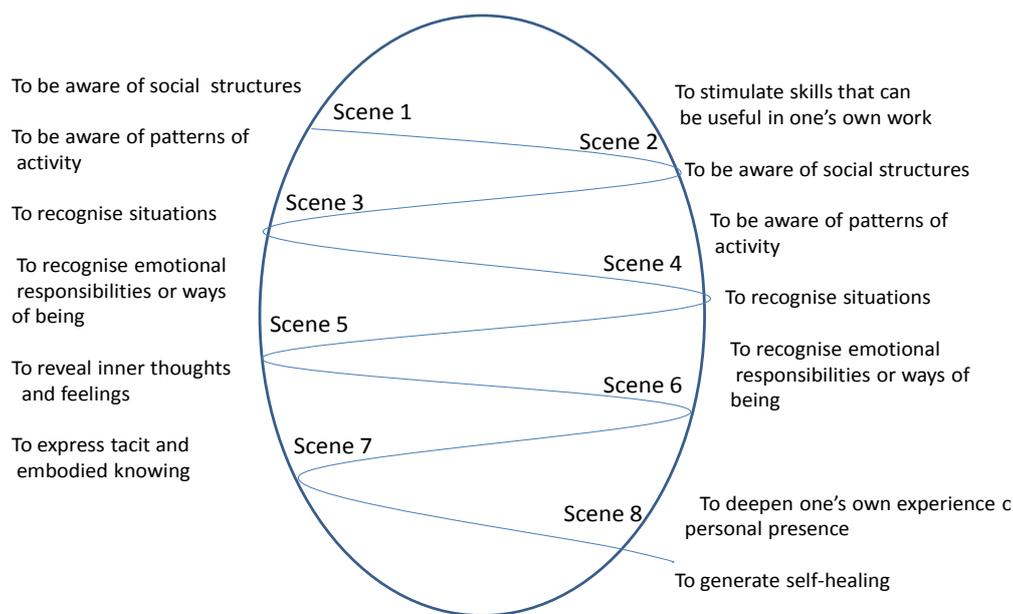


Figure 5. Different elements of the arts-based process during the theatre session.

Through this stage of analysis, we gained an image of what kind of a process the theatre session was. At this point, a lesson learnt was that even though all the five elements that arts-based processes can facilitate (cf. Table 2; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009) work in different ways, during the theatre session these elements were all woven to each other (thus were not separate processes, as claimed). At this stage, we also had a feedback session with the key team, and analysed the data also from the perspective of the development work within The Centre.

We also analysed the elements of distance from the participants' reflective questionnaires. Figure 7 illustrates what distances became embodied through the different arts-based approaches.

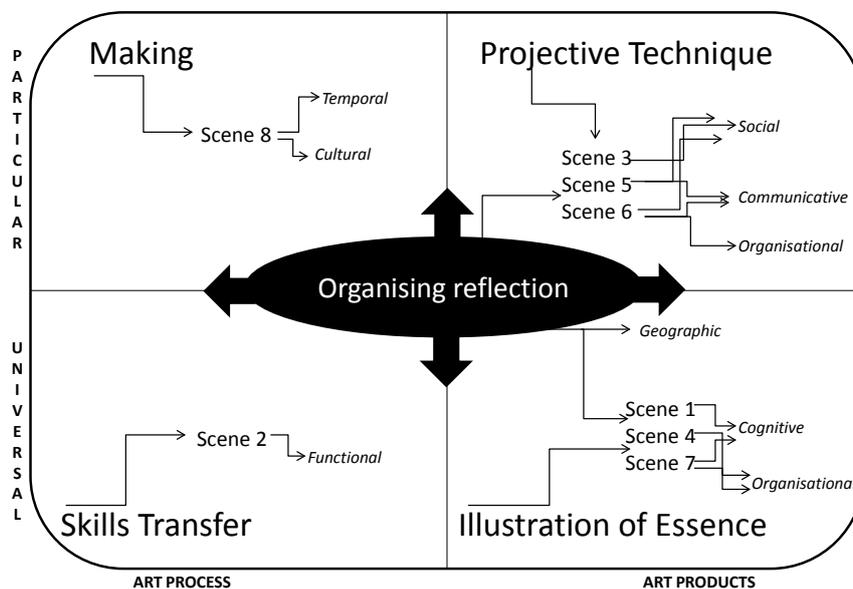


Figure 6. Distances that became embodied through the different arts-based approaches.

Through this stage of analysis, we understood which arts-based approaches resonated to reflection of distances. A lesson learnt was that the approaches of projective technique, critical reflection technique and illustration of essence provided more bridges to awareness of distances. These approaches were also in the main role of the theatre session in general. This is natural because of the nature of the Boalian theatre which is, at least partly, into pragmatism and Dewey's reflective inquiry (1933) as well as Freire's (1970) collective awareness. If we interpret these theoretical authors from the perspective of organisation, the outcome of theatre is related both to the particular and the universal. Even though the remaining two approaches, making and skills transfer, were minor, they had an important functional role during the process.

In the next stage of the analysis, we started to organise codes from the data into categories, found 30 categories, and compared these categories with each other. With this in mind, we took the next analytical step and compared the categories with the types of distance, and found four generative themes related to distances; my life, my work, our organisation and our policy. Each of these themes illustrated contextual and local perplexed situations within The Centre. The theme of My Life summarised what kind of an oppressive experience a mentally disabled person and her/his family face within the services of The Centre. The theme of My Work summarised a complex web of relationships in a concrete way: what kind of a process is a customer's and a practitioner's joint journey from a care home of Special care services to a doctor's appointment at the health care unit of Primary services? The theme of Our Policy summarised ongoing power struggle within The Centre, and the theme of Our Organisation summarised structures for access and action. Figure 7 illustrates the themes that were identified from the data.

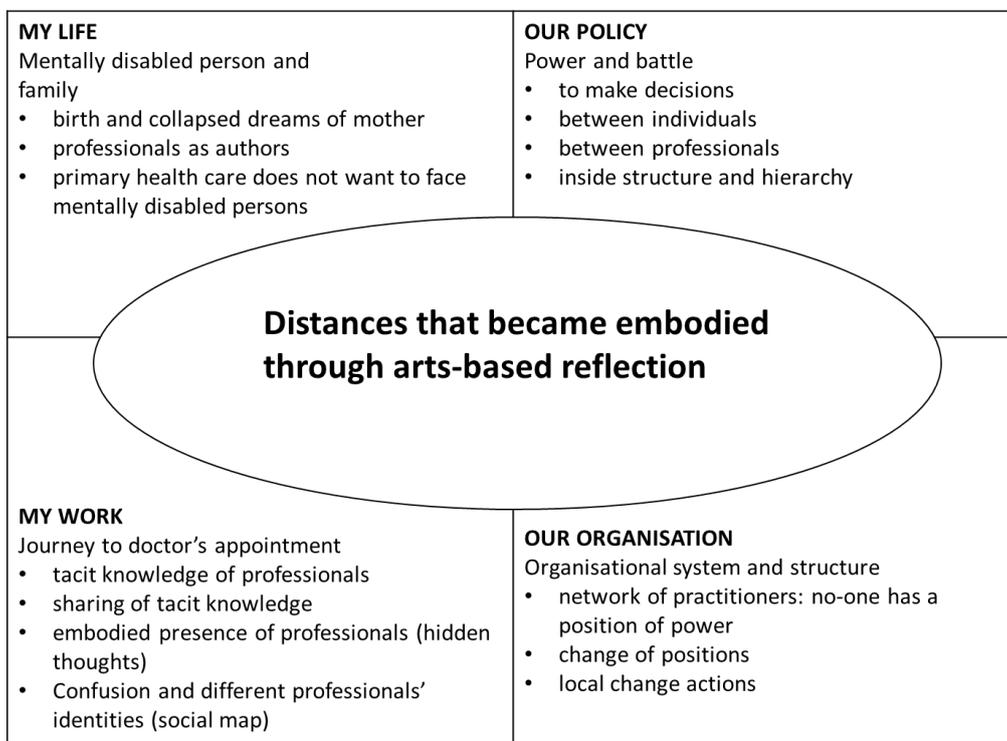


Figure 7. Distances that became embodied through the arts-based reflection.

Throughout the first reading of the data we noticed that interpretations (done by the practitioners as spectators interpreting what took place on stage, and how to change situations) generated novel recombinations. From the Deweyian perspective (Dewey, 1933), meaningful and burning questions can be articulated into new problems only in a process of transformation and co-operation across different groups of professionals. Also Vedres and Stark (2010: 9) pointed out that “Generating novel recombination is itself a kind of production requiring coordination and cooperation across different communities”. So, practitioners from The Centre were already on the way to generating novel recombinations when they articulated distances related to each theme. The data showed that there are several overlapping cohesive ties of closure, familiarity in conceptualisation of the problem, so to say, between different groups of professionals within The Centre. For example, this emerged through the generative themes of My Life and My Work. Practitioners critically reflected their own practice from the perspective of their customers. Workers from both Primary and Special services recognised and identified – with the help of experience-based knowledge of customers – turning points in their own actions (both problems and opportunities). The customers’ experience-based knowledge and its opening are part of customer-centred resources, and workers from both services had a ‘close distance’ to this. The workers became aware of the fact that by acting across borders of units (by breaking existing silos) they could solve problems better and create completely new ways of action – and thus create something new. However, this would require an entirely new organisational culture with cohesive groups; for instance, forming new groups around developing and renewing things. And when the workers defined this, they simultaneously made their own

organisation's structural fold visible. This structural fold precisely contains the innovation potential.

However, simultaneously, there were several obstacles for overlaps. For example, there were complex distances, which require a systematic approach and skills concerning how to face tensions of familiarity and diversity in the generative themes of Our Policy and Our Organisation. Finally, we created Table 5 from the data to show the process of practitioners reflecting distances in the arts-based process, and what kind of possibilities for structural folds and overlaps exist within the organisation when different professionals open themselves to views and experiences of others.²

Table 5. Types of distance identified; their appearance, examples and impacts.

Type of distance	Definition/ source	In which scene does it come up? With what has it been articulated? Type of aesthetic distancing in the arts-based process	Examples of generative questions and viewpoints in the research data	Impacts Connections (taken to the thematic level) to innovation potential and structural folds
Geographic	Physical distance between actors	Scene 7 through aesthetic distancing by critical reflection technique	Can decisions be made in a process-like way – without meeting and seeing the customer's unique life situation?	Physical distance between different actors (service providers) and physical distance between different actors, on the one hand, and the customer, on the other.
Cognitive	Differences in ways of thinking and knowledge bases	Scenes 1 and 7 through aesthetic distancing by illustration of essence and critical	Who is responsible for the whole? What is a problem, from whose point of view? Why are mentally disabled people not	Overlaps to the customer's world, the nature of the service system and questions related to the

² For other examples of using RBT in innovation activities see, e.g., Pässilä, Oikarinen & Vince, 2012; Pässilä & Oikarinen, forthcoming; for practical limitations of doing this kind of work, see Pässilä, forthcoming.

		reflection technique	listened to more when making decisions concerning where they live?	child's care.
Communicative	Differences in concepts and professional languages	Scenes 5 and 6 through aesthetic distancing by projective and critical reflection techniques	How does the care worker cope at work? Words do not help – how does the care worker act in such situations? The care worker knows which feelings of the customer lead to which behaviour – how does she/he know it?	Overlaps to the practical work process and issues that come up in it.
Organizational	Differences in ways of coordinating the knowledge possessed by organisations and individuals	Scenes 4 , 6 and 7 through aesthetic distancing by illustration of essence and critical reflection techniques	Why is the customer not taken seriously/ listened to? Do near relatives take care of mentally disabled people? Where is the collaboration between management and employees? Demand and supply do not meet – why? How big a difference can one person make?	Overlaps to the oppressive service process experienced by the customer and injustice found in the system. Overlapping complex elements of organising services for customers.
Functional	Differences in expertise in different industries or clusters	Scene 2 through aesthetic distancing by skills transfer	How to learn to listen to what the customer tries to say? The care worker dares to show her/his uncertainty: admitting incompetence and inexperience. Which problems do parents have with their mentally disabled child?	Overlaps to shared expertise in a care situation, professional identity and definition of the aim of the service.
Cultural	Differences in (organisational) cultures, values etc.	Scene 8 through aesthetic distancing by making	The organisational level listens to the customer; the customer gets to choose the care worker; the right customer to the right place.	Overlapping dreams related to the organisational structures and service

			<p>Time for the customer, lots of time.</p> <p>The care worker's voice; I am listened to; my work is important; I am important; rock'n roll i.e., the spirit of happening.</p>	practices.
Social	Social relationships and the amount of trust included in them	Scenes 3, 5 and 6 through aesthetic distancing by projective and critical reflection techniques	<p>The doctor does not even dare to touch; does not appreciate the nurse; the doctor could ask for help; academics do not know all.</p> <p>The care worker thinks she/he knows all; little education; uncertain.</p> <p>Underestimating easily – a similar work, after all.</p>	Overlapping different attitudes and preconceptions that the practitioners had of each other.
Temporal	Differences in ability to imagine possible, potential futures	Scene 8 through aesthetic distancing by making	<p>Away from choosing the least bad option from only bad options.</p> <p>A joint understanding about what is important.</p> <p>People truly encounter each other – time, heart, presence, love and caring of all employees.</p>	Overlapping dreams related to the professional identity and capabilities.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, we explored aesthetic distancing of an artist-led intervention by linking it to the concepts of other distances and structural folds. During the theatre session, the participants – the practitioners from more than one cohesive group (doctors, nurses and assistants from Primary Health Care and Special Care Services) were actors at the structural fold, they were all insiders, participating in dense ties that provide familiarity. The main developmental outcome of our research process was that the members of the organisation questioned (Freire, 1970) recognisable patterns of distance; and the various paths of “the ways to do it”. The practitioners from different professional groups were familiar enough to conceptualise the problem in a fresh and novel way. Figure 9 conceptualises the overlap between Primary and Special care services.

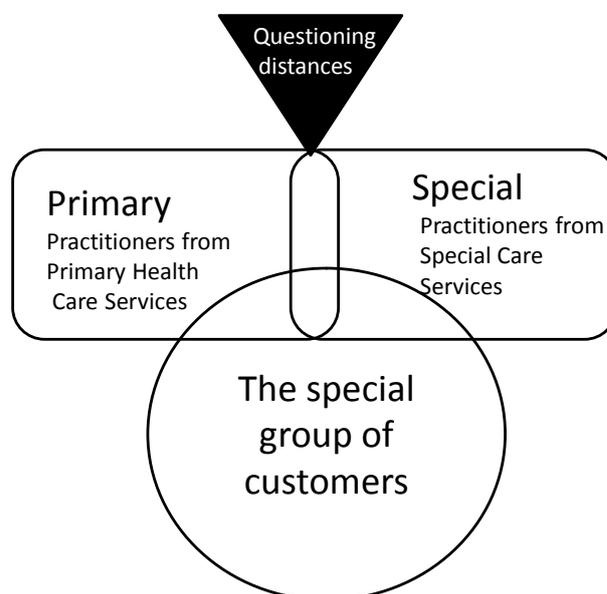


Figure 8. The overlap between Primary and Special Services.

Understanding of the potential of distances and structural folds emerged when the professionals from Special Care Services and Primary Health Care Services confronted each other via the theatrical framing (Freire, 1970; Boal, 1979/2008; 1995; 1996) and decided to interpret the structure of perplexed situation and patterns of activities in it. At least in our case, people were collectively discovering different types of distances within their organisational structure and professional behaviour. We found out that the social dimension of the artist-led intervention and the Boalian theatre practices shifted the organisation members' attention from processing, possessing or containing of information to the process of participation and interaction that provide the context for learning and innovation as well.

For example, care workers from Special Care Services stepped back from their own professional perspective, gained distance from their own perspective and experiences, and

got closer – recognised and crossed distances – to the perspectives and experiences of nurses and doctors from Primary Health Care Services. The aesthetic processes – aesthetic distancing works as another way of knowing; to ‘perceive things’ which are embodied in people and embedded in practice. Aesthetic distancing gives pleasure for us when we are perceiving emotions and relations related to experiences; theatrical images embed people, situations, events, and alike. It gives the same kind of pleasure as play or games give. Children know that; jumping, running, laughing, yelling in the midst of game is a pleasing moment of beauty. This same kind of playfulness is around when people are reflecting via theatrical images. Aesthetic distancing gives us a playful but critical gaze to perceive ourselves.

Also the members of Primary Health Care Services created distance for reflection, for making knowledge, feelings and experiences explicit, in order to get closer and appreciate the work of the members of Special Care Services – in order to gain distance again; make change happen. This is simultaneously a creative and disruptive process, and it is full of innovation potential: overlaps of communities of practice formed structural folds (Stark, 2009) within the huge organisational network of the Regional Centre for Health and Social Services. There is a resonance with Vedres and Stark’s (2010) study; we, too, found out that because the practitioners were members of more than one cohesive group, they together have a ‘close distance’ to diverse resources. According to Vedres and Stark (2010), innovation involves a combination of close familiarity and diversity; therefore, there is a need to seek for structural features that promote these processes. Our solution for promoting such processes is a combination of artist-led intervention and reflection to advance social processes which are needed in social innovation.

With the help of aesthetic distance, meanings are made in an organisation for ‘what we are about to do’, ‘where we are about to go in a ‘quaking’ terrain’. This ‘quaking’ is handled in a sensual way; by anticipating, interpreting, listening, feeling, watching. Problem-solving is very different from that taking place in a meeting room in the office. There are typically domains in an organisation that do not even talk to each other, yet there is an enormous potential in how, for instance, a special care worker acts with her/his customers. How can we learn from each other? Innovation potential easily peters out due to assumptions based on misunderstandings concerning other professional groups’ work. The link to innovation also needs to be novel; the direction should not go towards a managed, controlled project, but continuous change and uncertainty need to be tolerated.

We found that, in particular, three distances shaped the structure of social relationships and patterns of action within The Centre:

- Cultural distance – “How things are usually done around here”; this context represents local and situated taken-for-granted issues and assumptions. Simultaneously, practitioners are maintaining and changing existing patterns.
- Cognitive and organisational distance – “How things ought to be done in the field of this domain/profession”; this context represents what is understood as a normative and good practice or professional identity, and it is based on what is valued to be “worthwhile” within different groups of professionals.

- Aesthetic distance in the sense of “How practitioners encounter each other and their customers”; this context includes emotions and tensions between practitioners, and between practitioners and their customers.

With the help of RBT, employees of different professional groups collectively reflected their organisation’s internal operations by sensing tensions. Employees had the right in the theatrical framework to at least question present doing; with that, the employees produce a common language and understanding concerning another persons’ views – in addition to one’s own perspective, the other person’s perspective starts to open, after which a novel organisational picture of the whole may be seen. Different professional groups temporarily sensed each other’s views and foundations of those, but without commonly agreed work for change, operations are easily continued as they have always been done. It requires time together and space to define aims in a sufficiently multi-voiced manner. In addition to this, resources are needed to build up an action plan, and skills are needed to implement it.

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Sub-study 6:

Pässilä, A., Oikarinen, T., Parjanen, S. and Harmaakorpi, V.
'Forum theatre in facilitating social service innovation – interpretative
dimension of user-driven innovation.'

Accepted (2012) to Baltic Journal of Management.
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FORUM THEATRE IN FACILITATING SOCIAL SERVICE INNOVATION - INTERPRETATIVE DIMENSION OF USER- DRIVEN INNOVATION

ABSTRACT

The discussion of innovation has recently taken new forms. The potential of innovation triggered in a practical context seems to be widely understood, but practical measures to exploit the potential still seem to be missing to a great extent. The present article introduces research-based theatre as both an artistic intervention technique (aiming to develop public health care services) and as a qualitative research method for interpretative user-driven innovation processes. Methodology of this study presents an application of qualitative research namely research-based theatre (RBT) tested originally in health care studies in Northern America. An innovation process in the Finnish public health-care sector in its fuzzy front-end is used as a case example. This study explores how service providers could learn from their customers' experiences, and bridge distances between their and their customers' perspectives. The research question is the following: *how user's experiences can be transformed through Forum Theatre into a utilizable format in the front end of social service innovation in public health care organisations?* This study is an example of Finnish application of RBT which explores the role of Forum Theatre as a sensemaking process in a fuzzy front-end of innovation.

Keywords: User-driven innovation, interpretative innovation, research-based theatre, artistic intervention of Forum Theatre, sensemaking, social service innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

Innovations are widely seen to be the driving force of economic growth in the information era. The concept of innovation, however, has been understood in numerous ways during the last century. In the early stages of industrialisation, innovations were mostly seen as great leaps of knowledge achieved by talented individuals or research groups. From this idea comes the name of the concept of a 'linear model' of innovation. Each level in the linear model produces outputs that are transferred to the next level as inputs. The flow of knowledge is unidirectional, that is, later outputs do not provide inputs for earlier stages (Kline and Rosenberg, 1986).

In today's world, linear innovation processes are, in reality, rendered less attention. The traditional approach is seen as too research based and technocratic. Many scholars have criticised the linear model due to its incompatibility with the present techno-economic paradigm (cf. Kline and Rosenberg, 1986; Lundvall, 1988; Dosi, 1988; Harmaakorpi, 2006). Schienstock and Hämäläinen (2001: 50) have listed the main reasons for the criticism as follows:

- innovation processes are seen as exceptional events
- knowledge creation is understood as a process of reasoning and inference as isolated from the rest of human activities
- problems of uncertainty are not dealt with
- research focuses only on R&D as the main function in innovation processes
- collaborative elements are seen as irrelevant.

This present study is an application of Lester and Piore's (2004) interpretative innovation process. A user-driven innovation process in the public sector is used as an illustrative example. A social service innovation for public health-care services was used as a case study of practical innovation activities as learning steps which intends to creation and implementation of innovation. Interpretative innovation is a concept formulate by Lester and Piore (2004), it illustrates an alternative innovation strategy. Interpretative innovation embraces and exploits ambiguity to sustain creative output. It is a process where organisational actors (managers, employees, customers, stakeholders) are acting as interpreters and reflecting, nurturing and creating diverse views rather than problem solvers. Through ambiguity new meanings – newness and new value for users and products, process and practices are created. Innovation activities are repeatedly assumed to belong to R&D unit but in a context of interpretative dimension of innovation all organisational actors are understood as innovators. (Lester and Piore, 2004.)

The study focuses on the front-end of the innovation process when employees and managers of a public health care organisation are attempting to renew their services through their customers' lived experiences. The research question is thus: *how user's experiences can be transformed through Forum Theatre into utilizable format in the front end of social service innovation in public health care organisations?* From this perspective employees and managers are seen as a "co-users" (service providers are in dialectical relationship with customers/ service users perspectives) when designing and implementing novel ways to provide their services.

Research-based theatre, RBT, (considered as an form of qualitative research methodology; see Beck et al., 2011) is used as an technique to renew service processes (see studies about artistic interventions by Berthoin Antal, 2009; forthcoming) as well as a qualitative research method (see studies about research-based theatre and it's specific forms of ethnodrama and ethnotheatre by Leavy, 2009; Saldaña, 2003, 2008; Mieczakowski, 1995; Mieczakowski and Morgan, 2001). One particular technique of artistic intervention, Forum Theatre, is utilised in this study and is applied in sense-breaking and sensemaking inside the innovating "user-groups". The aim is to break the prevailing ways of acting among the providers and thereafter conduct a sensemaking process in order to pave the way for the development of instances of social service innovation. When referring to social service innovation we mean an innovation which combines 'newness', product quality and a decrease in service delivery costs. This newness is created through social interaction, capability building and implementation of an improved process. It includes changes in socio-cultural level of process where service providers focus to depend their understanding of real-world patterns, interactions during service process, tensions and silos between service providers and users and designing their services based on users perspectives. This type of a social service innovation needs an interpretative dimension of innovation. The focus of this study is to prepare favourable conditions for social innovation, rather than dealing with the innovations themselves.

2. FACILITATING INTERPRETATIVE INNOVATION

Lester and Piore (2004) question if there is a missing dimension in innovation research - they break new ground in the field of interpretation, based on cultural and communicational studies. According to Lester and Piore (ibid., see also Stark, 2009; Godin, 2005), innovation is often studied only as a decision making and problem solving process with its roots in engineering – from this perspective, innovation is defined as an analytical linear project with a well-defined beginning and end, aimed to solve existing problems. What if the issue does not yet exist but is more a result of incompleteness (Heikkinen, 2002) illustrates the logic of drama and learning through the aesthetics of incompleteness) and co-construction (Weick, 1995)? Innovation processes must also be affected with issues that cannot be 'solved' or unified in a logical, linear and analytical fashion.

Lester and Piore (2004) compare analytical and interpretative approaches (see Table 1) - according to them, the interpretative view is not widely understood in the field of innovation, although it would provide potential for new insights.

Table 1. Comparing analysis and interpretation (Lester and Piore 2004, pp. 97-98)

ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus is on a project with a well-defined beginning and end • The thrust is to solve pre-defined problems • Managers set goals • Managers convene meetings and negotiate to resolve different viewpoints and eliminate ambiguity • Communication is the precise exchange of chunks of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus is on a process that is ongoing and open-ended • The thrust is to discover new meanings • Managers set directions • Managers invite conversations and translate to encourage different viewpoints and explore ambiguity • Communication is fluid, context-dependent, undetermined

The goal of interpretative innovation is to discover new definitions. This process of sense making is understood to be a fragmented, ongoing, open-ended (and multi-voiced) process of dialogue which emphasizes interaction and communication. (Lester and Piore 2004, 6-8; pp. 97-98) Lester and Piore give the metaphor of a cocktail party host as a manager of the interpretative innovation process. Once the party (innovation process) is underway, her job is to keep the conversation flowing. She may break up groups that do not seem to be working or are headed for an unpleasant argument, and steer guests to other groups (ibid. pp. 56-57). One of the vital tenets of the party has to be toleration of incompleteness and distance, as well as to withstand multiple viewpoints and a lack of universal truths – there may be no single ‘answer,’ but rather multiple suggestions and proposals. One of the practical innovation actions of an organisation is to understanding the incompleteness and distance included in the creation and implementation of novel ideas.

To understand interpretative innovation we have to look closer at two concepts: proximity and distance (Parjanen et al., 2010; Harmaakorpi et al., 2011) The proximity and distance concepts are used in many different ways in literature dealing with topics such as innovation studies, organisational science and regional science (Knoben & Oerlemans, 2006). Usually the literature emphasizes the advantages of proximity but ignores the potential of distance for the formation of new ideas and innovation. Proximity is seen as an important pre-condition for knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer (Gertler, 1995). The different dimensions of proximity reduce uncertainty, solve the problem of coordination and facilitate interactive learning and innovation. The capacity of an organisation to innovate may require social proximity. Social proximity can facilitate especially the exchange of tacit knowledge because of the necessity for trust- knowledge, is far less tangible and is deeply embedded in an organisation’s operating practices. Experience, stored as tacit knowledge, often reaches the consciousness in the form of insights, intuitions, and flashes of inspiration. However, we ought to be critical about the links between personal and organisational innovativeness and creativity (see Berthoin Antal, 2009; forthcoming studies about artistic interventions). Proximity also has a negative impact due to the problem of ‘lock-in,’ meaning a lack of openness and flexibility (Boschma, 2005). If things are always done the same way, it may not be possible to rethink in new ways. Innovation often requires dissimilar, complementary bodies of knowledge. Scholars researching innovation are unanimous about the innovation potential in combining different fields of knowledge (cf. e.g. Johansson, 2004; Dosi, 1988;

Pekkarinen and Harmaakorpi, 2006). Through the interaction of diverse people and groups, there is the potential to overcome the factors constraining the development of new knowledge (Mitchell and Nicholas, 2006).

Diversity tends to increase the potential for innovation. However, people tend to be attracted to groups made up of members similar to themselves, and relatively few people are capable of creating bonds between different groups. Homogenous groups often reach solutions more quickly, and with less friction along the way, but they do little to enhance expertise and creative thinking. The group commences with a similar mind-set and eventually concludes with the same one. (Amabile, 1998) Behaviour and opinions are usually more homogenous within than between groups, so people connected across groups are more familiar with alternative ways of thinking and behaving (Burt, 2004). Success in generating new ideas and innovation is seen as depending upon the flexibility of the organisation, and the ability to interact with outside organisations and third actors (Gellynck et al., 2007.) Interaction may require different ways of bridging distance, because diversity and distance also mean different interests, perspectives, concepts and potentially language (Stark, 2009). In this study we are searching for an interpretative approach through interaction related to users' experiences.

Burt describes change agents as information brokerage in the structural hole (1992). The term structural hole is related to Granovetter's (1973) studies on strong and weak links. Strong links are characterised by proximity and weak links by distance. The structural holes existing in weak links are rich in ideas. The information brokerage could occur by (i) making people on both sides of a structural hole aware of the interests and difficulties of the other group, (ii) transferring best practices, (iii) drawing analogies between groups ostensibly irrelevant to one another, and (iv) making syntheses of knowledge interests (Burt, 2004).

Stark (2009) criticises Burt's (1992) definition and suggest a concept of 'entrepreneurship' which differs from brokerage. Entrepreneurship tends to keep multiple evaluative principles in play and exploit the resulting dissonance, and fosters a generative friction. New ideas emerge from surprising combinations. In Stark's (2009) view, the most innovative ideas do not exist as information 'out there' in the environment of the group; ideas must be generated. Stark's (2009, p. 17) quotation describes his perspective: "When the problem is production of new *knowledge* rather than simple access of information, the bridging ties of brokerage are insufficient". According to Stark, the Shumpeterian recombinant type of knowledge generation requires a more intimate familiarity than can be produced by weak ties (Stark, 2009, p. 17). He also refers to Lester and Piore's (2004) study and emphasises their idea of two different modes of innovation: analytical and interpretative as well as the challenge to integrate knowledge across heterogeneous domains. In Stark's definition brokerage function involves bringing together incompatible traditions and interactions of ambiguity view points. The information brokerage – function and role extends to 'cocktail party hostes' as Lester and Piore (2004) suggest in their study. The host' job is to introduce people with different backgrounds to each other and, therefore, create space for overlaps between different actors and encourage interaction. The concept of innovation then needs to be rethought; in addition to renewing better products, services or technologies, social processes can also be renewed. Now it becomes a question of social and interpretative dimension of innovation; organisational members are part of the knowledge production related to renewing process as well as their interpretations of existing situations and

assumptions. Most typical logics of this type of innovation is to develop innovation awareness for breaking 'silos', facilitating participation, encountering each other and preventing bottlenecks between organisational actors. When creating innovations, people are exploring and interpreting together their own practices and assumptions - between various professionals within organisation and between professionals and customers – they are making, as well as breaking, the sense of their actions, social processes and relations in them.

3. FORUM THEATRE IN SENSEMAKING AND SENSE-BREAKING

We have adopted Weick's (1995) idea of sensemaking to a practical micro-level and assimilated it to Stark's (2009) and Lester and Piore's (2004) ideas about the value of play, dissonance, ambiguity and uncertainty as a potential for sensemaking in the context of designing user-driven service processes. Our definition of sensemaking is articulated in Weick's (1995, p.15) words: "*Sensemaking is what it says it is, namely, making something sensible. Sensemaking is to be understood literally, not metaphorically*". Weick et al. (2005) highlight that turning circumstances into a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard into action. However, the practical challenge is action; 'springboard forums' of integration, therefore in this present study we explore the possibilities of Forum Theatre, as a springboard for sensemaking but we also want to extend the idea of 'making something sensible' by adding a flavour of sense-breaking to it. Sense-breaking is the process which allied theoretical ideas of interpretative innovation, sensemaking and the surprising combination of knowledge creation to the practices of Forum Theatre which is a forum for provocation, disagreement, conversation and dialogue. The focus of the present paper is on the fuzzy front-end of the innovation process, where the Joker's function is understood as an essential, in sense-breaking and sensemaking and creating overlaps between the service providers and users.

Boal created a new role for theatre in which performance art is to be seen as a way of plotting and raising awareness, interpreting and making sense of reality. (Tausing and Schechner, 1994; Boje, et al. 2003) Forum Theatre offers methods for both expressing one's own and interpreting others' worldviews, attitudes and behaviour. (Boal, 1995)¹ It is characteristic for Forum Theatre - as well as other forms of participatory theatre - to provide an imaginative framework for exploring and understanding how different people experience aspects of the subject or phenomenon being studied (Gallagher, 2001). It is also fundamental to understand that Forum Theatre has been used in ways that Boal himself might not understand or accept (Nissley et al., 2004; Nissley, 2010; Meisiek and Barry, 2007). In this study we use expression 'Forum Theatre role-play scene' when referring to our application to honour Boal's original philosophy of Forum Theatre and to differ our organisational application from that.

¹ Theatre director Augusto Boal's (1979/2000) focused on development and change as a practical example of how critical pedagogy and theatre are combined. The core of Boal's critical pedagogy is setting up a template that allows the observation of familiar, taken-for-granted reality from an unfamiliar angle, an angle that uses the familiar elements and signs of daily life in a new combination and a new context of meaning (Mutnick, 2006).

Forum Theatre is a form of theatre in which audiences have the power to suggest and make changes to onstage events, members of the audience are encouraged to join the action onstage, becoming co-constructors and co-actors, who Boal terms 'spect-actor'. In Forum Theatre the facilitator of the action is the 'Joker'. The Joker takes responsibility for the logistics of the process and functions as a neutral link between the actors and the audience, encouraging them to step into the role of a 'spect-actor'. (Boal, 1992; 1995)²

Boal (1995, pp. 14-20) explains theatre through the concept of metaxis. The actual moment of subjective understanding is situated in between, metaxis, interpretations of imitations constructed in aesthetic space. In Boal's words (1995, p.43) *metaxis* is: "The stage of belonging completely and simultaneously to two different, autonomous worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image. The participant shares and belongs to these two autonomous and worlds: their reality and the image of their reality, which she herself has created." Boal suggests that aesthetic space stimulates a specific way to knowledge and discovery, cognition and recognition and thus it is a form of knowledge based on learning by experience, where transformational learning happens in reflections and interpretation between the experience of the lived life and fictional situations of life. According to Boje et al. (2003) Boal's view is dialectic: looking at how theatre can be used to empower participants. Symbolic actions in a context of metaxis assist participants in observing the existing situation ("as is") and the non-exciting possibility ("as if") to investigate habits, beliefs, language and social relationships. (Boal, 1995, pp. 13-20)

4. CASE STUDY OF RESEARCH-BASED THEATRE IN THE FUZZY FRONT-END OF SOCIAL SERVICE INNOVATION

Background of the case

In Finland, everyone is entitled to free health care. In the case of young people, that also includes free dental care. However, approximately 10 % of those entitled to free dental health care do not make use of that opportunity. When young people's teeth are not regularly examined and taken care of, their dental health can deteriorate and become more difficult and expensive to treat in the future. Those who fail to keep appointments, 'no shows', also contribute to the loss of dental care capacity. The aim of the research project was to understand why young people aged 13–15 years do not take advantage of their free dental care services and what could be done to increase their likelihood of visiting the dentist.

Innovation activities, in a context of a user oriented approach, raise the customer to the centre of development. Whereby the users actually develop the product or service him or herself together with employees; in our case, we understood the user as a co-creator and an actor rather than an object of development. Thus, service providers and service users are

² Boal's theatre philosophy and practices (1992, 1995, 1996) have three main branches: the educational, social and therapeutic branches. His theatre practices are concerned as epic theatre, which is a continuum of what Brecht (1964) have created.

seen as constructors of social service innovation. However, co-construction is a challenge; there are different kinds of distances between providers and users, as in our case between young customers and the dental health care professionals. These distances were used as potential for idea generation and development.

Research setting

We approach distances as a need for an organisation to develop their operations (practices and behaviours) around customers' preconceptions. The challenge is how service providers could learn from the customers and by doing so bridge the distances. The research question is the following: *how user's experiences can be transformed through Forum Theatre into a utilizable format in the front end of social service innovation in public health care organisations?*

Overlaps are made of analogy and interpretation: we are exploring how the language and structure of Forum Theatre – play between *metaxis* —forms overlaps between professionals and young customers. In these overlaps, innovation is related to knowledge creation, which takes place in interactions where we are interested in the role of the 'Joker' as a facilitator to promote a multi-voiced discussion. In our case, Forum Theatre is used as an inquiry – as a research method - to explore how to renew service processes. Our study is broadly linked to studies of artistic interventions and critics of its contribution to organisational learning, development and change (Berthoin Antal, 2009; forthcoming; Shiima, 2011; Pässilä and Oikarinen, forthcoming).

Qualitative research methodology

Research design belongs to qualitative research methodology used in health care studies research-based theatre tradition – RBT - (Saldana, 2008; Beck et al., 2011; Mienczakowski and Morgan, 2001; Saldaña, 2003; White and Belliveau, 2010; 2011). It is a methodology which combines action research and arts-based research (Brydon-Miller et al 2011) which is, according to Leavy (2009), a set of methodological tools to address questions in holistic and engaging ways in which theory and practice are intertwined.

RBT is an umbrella concept and it's specific forms of ethnodrama and ethno theatre is used for inquiry, data collection, analysis and interpretation (Saldaña, 2003; 2008; Mienczakowski, 1995; Mienczakowski, Smith & Sinclair, 1996; Mienczakowski and Morgan 2001). The steps of RBT are framed through four phases described in the following table.

Table 2. The steps of RBT

1) Inquiries, data collection and interventions among customers and service producers, <i>Data collection and inquiries for Forum Theatre</i>	2) Analysis; dramatization of collected and analysed data, ³ <i>Analysing, dramatizing and rehearsing of Forum Theatre</i>
3) Searching multi-voiced understanding, <i>Representing users perspective via Forum Theatre role-play scene,</i>	4) Shared idea generation for action planning to enable a social service innovation to take place, <i>Interpreting characters actions in Forum Theatre scene and sense-breaking and sensemaking dental health care service process,</i>

Through reflection of experiences (written, told, drawn and performed), researchers, artist, customers and members of an organisation make a description of the events, actions and emotions happening in the organisation during and after dental health service, while also trying to illuminate why those things happen. During the Forum Theatre role-play scene (used as FT further on), participators studied the service process and interpretation was carried out through the questions: what is happening in that scene, where it is happening, why it is happening, who are the main characters, how are they acting, what should be done differently, how are the characters feeling, what are the characters hidden thoughts and so on.

Research process

The research process included 1) work of development team, 2) theatre work with students, 3) data collection through written accounts from two schools and a qualitative inquiry as a form of six artistic interventions with customers and one artistic intervention with employees of the dental health care services, 4) analysis of collected data, devising data into a form of performance and rehearsing performances, 5) designing a participatory of the theatre session, 6) theatre session as a representation of analysed data and 7) action planning. FT was one scene in a four hour theatre session. It was used as a unit of analysis because each phase mentioned above was included in it. The next figure (Fig 1) illustrates the stages of research process.

³ The method for analysis developed here is based on Burke's (1962), Brecht's (1964) and Boal's (1992; 1995; 1996) idea of drama as an interrogative reading of meanings in real-life situations. According to Saldaña (2003 p. 225) "Participant voices from two or more data sources can be interwoven to (a) offer triangulation, (b) highlight disconfirming evidence through juxtaposition, (c) exhibit collective story creation through multiple perspectives, and/or (d) condense "real-time" data for purposes of dramatic economy."

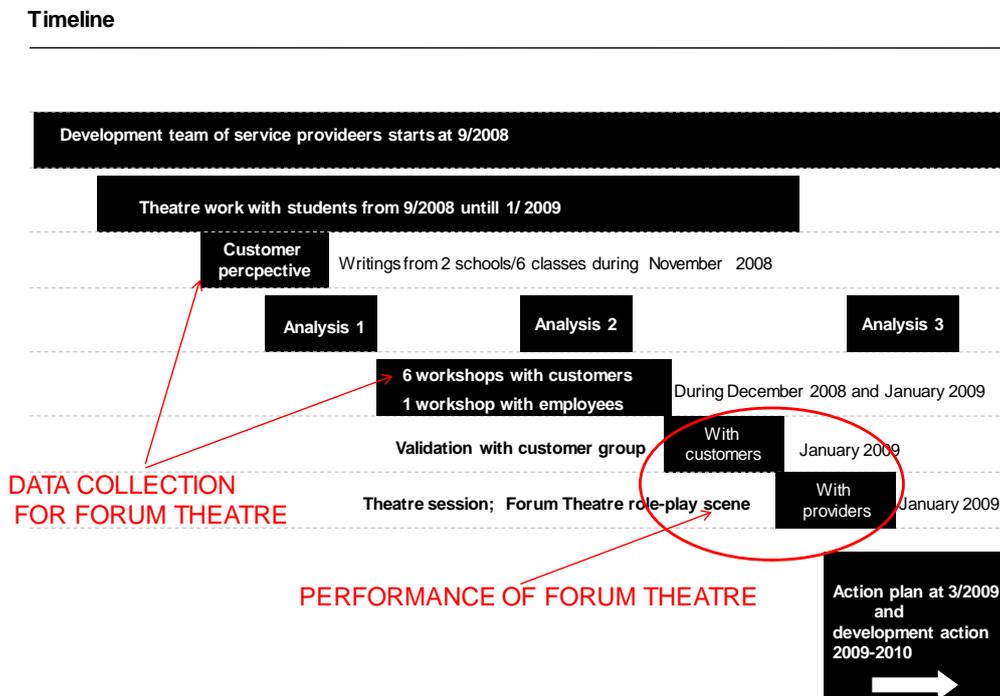


Figure 1. The research process

Next we will briefly explain stages of the research process.

Building the development team

The first impulse for co-operation happened at the strategic level, between the directors of the research unit and the municipality. After this, a development team started to work together: five researchers, two artists and six employees/service providers co-operated as a reflective team during the whole process. In this article we describe the research during the first eight months, the first meeting of development team was in autumn 2008 and the latest meeting was in spring 2009 - however the process of social service innovation is still ongoing and extending to 2012.

Data collection

We collected stories about the details of the service process e.g. users recount stories of how they act in a service situation, draw pictures to describe how they see each other, and use drama to articulate what kind of clashes emerge between service providers and their customers. Visual symbols were utilised to interpret what kind of emotions and tensions were embedded in service practices.

Firstly, we collected accounts from 100 pupils from six classes in three different schools. Afterwards, we had six 'research workshops' with pupils - who presented a specific customer group; young teenage customers of dental health care services - and one

'research workshop' with dental professionals – who represented the service providers of the dental health care services.

Analysing

The analysis was conducted via the ethnodrama approach, the script of FT consisted of analysed and dramatised selections from inquires of customers and service providers (Saldaña, 2003). Firstly, three researchers read writings from six classes and categorised narratives into three themes. The themes described what took place before, during and after the dental health care treatment. Secondly, these themes were investigated in more detail.

Through the use of performative, narrative and visual data (by collecting customers' experiences through participatory methods (see Vince and Warren, 2011)) we - the researcher, the artist and teenagers from one school class - created a dramatised FT character called Netta which illustrated how customers felt during "treatment". The script writing process was a way of analysing the data with the aim of transforming the results into drama while respecting the original experiences of the young customers and aiming to communicate research findings in an evocative manner.

Theatre work with students

As we started to collect the teenagers' experiences, we simultaneously started to work with four youth leader students aged 17-20 from the social and health care vocational education. Part of their drama education studies included taking part in this research process. These students formed a theatre group which was instructed by a professional applied theatre artist (who also acted as a Joker during FT). Their group worked as a validation of transferring data to the performance: Service providers' ideas were first run past the students, who were much closer to the teenage customer's perspective, both socially and cognitively, than "the adults".

Designing of the participatory exercises of the theatre session

On a general level, the focus was to make sense of different worldviews and power positions between customers and service providers. It was also important to uncover problems that customers were highlighting and question and make the service providers' own assumptions and attitudes transparent.

Forum Theatre role-play scene

The Theatre Session lasted in total four hours and the FT lasted 20 minutes. During the FT, Netta was invited to the operation room by two dentists (one was called Peltonen) and oppressive actions during the interaction were explored. During the scene, service providers, as audience members, substituted role-characters and made sense of Peltonen's various forms of actions and explored new behaviours.

5. EXPERIENCES OF TRANSFORMING USER'S EXPERIENCES THROUGH FORUM THEATRE

Qualitative data was gathered through videotape (4 hours) and participatory observation by five researchers. Afterwards, two researchers and an artist categorised the structure of the FT and the Joker's actions during it. These categorisations were then compared and the actions were described in the next tables (see table 3).

The analysis showed that FT included three fundamental elements:

- 1) Introducing the story with the help of the actions of the Joker. For example, the Joker asked "What happened in this story?" and "What did you see when you look at the image on the stage?" The participants identified the characters, their relationship and the tension between them. The following quotation illustrates the nature of the participants' interpretations: *The doctor discusses a procedure with the patient; her colleague is worried about the timetable.*
- 2) Realisation. When the Joker organised a playful interaction in which the rules of the game of power and oppression are made explicit - for example, Netta, the imaginative user, and the Joker provoked service providers to make sense of the options of change. A quotation from the data illustrates sensemaking: *It's a scary scene in which the service providers are not listening to or seeing their customer/ The nurse is thinking 'the next patient is already waiting.'* After that the service providers started to break the existing assumption of sensemaking and rehearsed optional scenarios and ways of looking at the situation in the scene. The following quotation describes the baby steps service providers took in reflecting themselves: *When your own attitude is negative you are tempted to dispirit the positive person (Misery loves company)*
- 3) Reflection. When the Joker facilitated spectators to reflect on suggestions of change – for example the Joker provoked service providers to change - at least temporarily during the FT - their mind settings from their own position and identity to that of the customers' perspective. In other words they made sense of the service situation with the user-driven orientation. The following quotations illustrate the service providers' reflections: *Tasks are often distributed so that the same person always takes care of the same things, and that's boring. /I suffer from the fact that the work-rate is determined by external factors. It is impossible to work at your own pace./ I don't feel our community functions this way/ Why doesn't anybody else in the team take responsibility? Why don't they understand?*

The table 3 shows in more detail the analysis of actions of the Joker, and through the Joker's original impressions we try to give a picture of the sensemaking and sense-breaking actions. By this analysis we describe and define the moments of bridging which allowed service providers to understand the existing distances between them and their customers and led service providers to sense their service productions from a new perspective.

Table 3. Analysis

The structure generated by the actions of the Joker	Original impressions of the Joker	Metaxis as a bridge between service providers and their customers lived experiences
General overview of the situation, examination and analysis of the events/actions	"What do you feel happened in this scene? What do you think it means?"	Representation of the customer Imaginative observation of events scripted through the narratives of the customer
Prerequisites of the work	"We have here the theatre, so we can do fiction and sort of make it provocative and we don't have to make it look just as it is in real life."	Instructions for observation
Interaction with the imaginative customer	"Well what about Netta, as we have the character Netta in the scene. How do you feel, would you go the next time if you were called?"	Emphatic understanding from the perspective of the customer
Explicating the options of change	"Have you got any ideas, about what might have changed this visit for the better from Netta's point of view?"	Knowledge gathering through idea generation
Structuring the work	"What if we go right back to the beginning of the story? What is so good in our theatre is that we can wind the scenes backward and forward and they move in front of us and we can go to the beginning."	The power relations, the observer has the power to change events at the Forum Theatre role-play scene
Seeing the situation anew and rehearsing optional ways of looking at the situation on the scene	"You can now replace Peltonen here, so apparently you are sitting by the computer and you can play the scene according your own suggestion. After that you can play the scene	Aesthetic stimulation, participatory observation and demonstrations in the Forum Theatre role-play scene

	the way you would like Peltonen to act, and you can watch the reactions of your co-players for a while.”	
Reflecting the suggestions of change	<p>“How do you feel, would it have made any difference in the treatment if it had started like this?”</p> <p>”Could we start collecting a general list... actions which could make the customer feel better, if we can feel that the customer is afraid?”</p> <p>”Have we now solved all the problems here?”</p>	Reflection of the relations versus/between the Forum Theatre role-play scene and the real life

Service providers were collectively making sense of how they are acting and how service practices are socially formed, and how employees and customers are interacting with one another during the different phases of the service process. In a way, tacit and embodied experiences of customers, as service users, were transformed into an explicit form of knowledge - or at least collectively shared form of knowing - for health care professional as service providers. Relevant new knowing to service providers during the FT was that it needs two to tango: their actions, behaviour, feelings and even assumptions constructed a fundamental element of service. The actions on stage and the Joker’s questions led them to realise that they are also users in social service innovation: that encouraged them to critically reflect their own practice and perspective. The quotation of a service provider illustrates that developing services with the user-driven orientation service providers ought to sustain ongoing reflection and generation of practices; *“The customer is the star. All too often we have this routine attitude. Like we know what we are doing in the medical treatment but we don’t pay enough attention to the customer - even though it is a unique, first time experience for Netta. Instead of doing our ‘medical tricks’ we should encounter her as a living and experiencing person.”*

When creating social service innovation for the public health care service it is important for service providers to understand that they are actually doing the development together with customers. This could be considered as an important prerequisite for the process. The quotation of a service provider illustrates the emerging perspective of innovation during the FT: *Oh, I didn’t realise how such small bodily things could affect a teenager’s feelings on how an operation is going – that emotional sense of the situation is so important.* From this perspective service providers included a holistic caring approach to service: dental health care is one part of the growth and welfare of their customers. They created an idea of proactive and preventative caring: and further generated an idea to encourage teenagers to take care of their teeth themselves and practice to provide positive dental health care. This idea forced service providers to critically reflect on the whole process of service which paved the way to the development of instances of social innovation during the next phases of the research process. They created a new caring process for teenage customers, they

renewed their invitation system, paid attention to their interaction skills and created caring routines on how to communicate and encounter their young teenage customers as well as developing a user-oriented feedback and evaluation system.

FT brought the social interactions and practices (how service providers and users act and react, think and talk and feel) under the spotlight in a sensitive way. In the context of the interpretative dimension of user-driven innovation it is fundamental to make sense of the social and political infrastructure of the service process as well as break the assumption that a technological infrastructure is enough in a service innovation process. Based on this case, it is more than possible to transform user's experiences into an utilisable format for service providers. After transformation, service providers are able to develop service production without isolating innovation process from the human activities. With the help of the Joker, service providers talked about problems of uncertainty and this led them to developing their service. By doing so they familiarized their own actions allied to the innovation process, they no longer saw it as an exceptional event and understood their own actions as a main function in the social service innovation.

We suggest that the role of the Joker is to host interpretation. Assuming that, interpretation, in the context of *metaxis*, is understood as a process of sensemaking and sense-breaking. The interpretative view is not widely understood in the field of innovation yet, although it would provide potential for new insights. One implication of FT is to enrich the innovation awareness of public organisations on a more general level; the public sector needs new social service innovations on how to re-organize service production and services as they are suffering from hierarchies and different types of professional silos and distances. Social and cognitive distances blocks organisational members and causes blaming rather than idea generating. For example, in our case service providers and customers shared their experiences among similar minded because the social distance between health care professionals as medical experts and their teenage customers was huge. In this sense, user orientation – the spanning distances and interacting service providers and customers with different backgrounds and needs – is seen as an innovation potential for public sector needs. But this methodological approach can be generalised for the private sector also whenever the issue is to span the distances and create overlaps between diverse interpretations.

User oriented innovation sees the customer as a living, feeling and memorizing subject and actor. To sustain a competitive edge, more focus must be given to meeting users' needs – and not simply those explicitly stated in opinion or market research – but rather those latent and future needs that can be identified through artistic intervention, and by the users themselves. Figure 3 combines the *metaxis* element of FT and the function of the Joker in it.

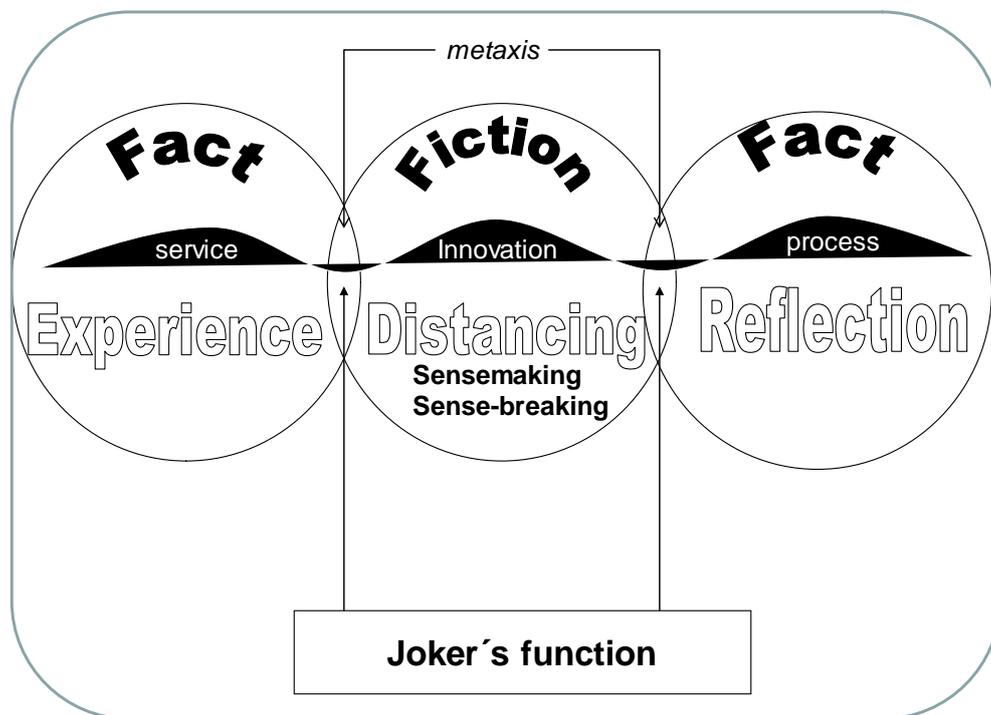


Figure 2. Forum Theatre and the function of the Joker's actions

By social service innovation we mean an innovation which combines 'newness', quality of goods for users as well as a decrease in cost of delivering the services. In other words, newness is created through social interaction, capability building and implementation of an improved process. In this kind of a process, problems are defined in co-operation and formulation is a dialectical negotiation. The logic of social dimension of the public health care service process was revealed through acts, scenes, and vignettes presented during the FT and it helped the service providers to make sense of their own actions.

The theoretical implication of this study links interpretative dimension of innovation (Lester and Piore, 2004) as a sense of dissonance (Stark, 2009) and the Joker's function (Boal, 1979/2000). Interpretation in the context of sensemaking and sense-breaking (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005) is a system of searching, selecting, organising, interpreting and connecting whereby the service providers, building on prior knowledge and through reflecting on subjective user's experiences, interpret the social reality of service production together in order to understand and develop it. It includes changes in the socio-cultural level of process where service providers' focus depends on their understanding of real-world patterns, interactions during service process, distances -which emerged as tensions and silos - between service providers and users and designing their services based on user perspectives. The FT described one episode during treatment from the perspective of a teenage customer. The role of the Joker is parallel to the role of a cocktail party host following the metaphor given by Lester and Piore (2004), a cocktail party host who steers conversation and thus helps the participants to co-construct understanding and overlaps between different world views. Characteristics for the Joker as host is to be able to confront

power tensions and despite so brokerage different suggestions and provocative scenarios articulated and made visible through FT. The Joker as a party host is a mixture from the idea of the change agent, information broker and entrepreneur who 'moon walks' between proximity and distances and through aesthetic steps allows overlaps to be constructed.

We defined the main function of the Joker in FT conducted in social service processes: to span distances, to encourage dialectical dialogue, to echo ambiguity and different voices, to create space for incompleteness and trust between participants. The Joker's expertise in a context of facilitating social service innovation is a result of overlapping - skills and knowing from at least two different domains; 1) applied drama and theatre and 2) public health care. Before FT, the Joker is involved in collecting data, analysing data, dramatising data in the performances, preparing and realizing research workshop and meetings. It is fundamental to understand that 'joking' is a form of artistic intervention expertise gained through education, training and rehearsing. In other words, only those who are competent, professional applied drama and theatre practitioners who have gained knowing in organisational and workplace contexts are capable of taking on the role of the Joker in facilitating organisational innovation processes.

FT and the Joker's function were presented as an artistic intervention to facilitate the front end of social service innovation. The aim was to develop a social service innovation for the public healthcare sector by an interpretative dimension of the user-driven innovation process. The present paper includes only the front-end of the innovation process, where the Joker's function was essential in sense-breaking and sensemaking and creating overlaps between the service providers and users. The social service innovation is supposed to benefit the public health care system to a great extent by reducing costs and by giving added value for the customers. When implemented more widely in the whole public sector, the developed innovation will have a large social impact, fulfilling the definition of a social service innovation. As a result of the intervention action planning started within the organization. The change activities were: 1) design and implementation of a novel service process for teenage customers, 2) training and reflection on their presence and social skills to encounter teenage customers with the help of a theatre artist, and 3) service providers and their customers created a new communication system for teenage customers with the help of a designer.

However, the limitation of this study is related to the nature of the handcraft: the nature of situational and contextual process. Therefore, a research agenda for the coming years that enriches intersections of RBT, artistic interventions and innovation studies ought to challenge organisational actors, innovation scholars and artists into international longitude reflective dialogue and participatory research design. The future research ought to take a multi-stakeholder perspective; to seek understanding in what the artists, employees and managers of health service production, customers and innovation researchers expect and experience. The research strategy should include both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Above all, the research agenda should include participatory evaluation which would invite various actors – service providers and customers as users of social service innovations - as full members of the research team. Therefore, further upcoming prospective research framework ought to be constructed through the multidisciplinary and participatory approaches.

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