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Power relationships and authentic organisational learning : daring to break the silence on meaningful dialogue in policing organisations

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Power relationships and authentic organisational learning: Daring to break the silence on meaningful dialogue in policing organisations

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The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

The 21st century presents great opportunities and threats for business: national and global markets are demanding high performance, innovation, creativity, and flexibility. Public sector organisations are continually asked to do more with less, with equal if not greater efficiency and creativity demands as the private sector. Organisational learning is a concept touted as an important and necessary strategy for organisations to keep pace with the rapid changing global environment that now plays host to opportunities as well as great economic and social volatility. However the reality for many is that they become proficient at the kind of organisational learning that reinforces the status quo (Morgan, 2006).

This thesis aims to make an original contribution to the organisational learning literature by exploring power relationships and the degree to which individual and/or groups have the capacity or power to question the *existing order of things*. More particularly, it examines *how and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'*. In doing so, this research explores a conceptual model of power relationships drawing on a traditional organisational leadership framework originating with Burns (1978) – '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – as well as incorporating a critical perspective, drawing on the work of Freire (1970) with the notion of a '*revolutionary*' power relationship. These three power relationships are explored as they operate to varying degrees across the *four dimensions* of power drawn individually from Dahl through to Lukes and Foucault. Notions such as '*meaningful dialogue*' and '*liberated learning space*' are introduced as a means to explain the capacity or 'power to' question the *existing order of things*: including the traditional dominant attitudes, beliefs, values and norms in organisations.

Despite the perceived importance of organisational learning as a strategy for organisations in the 21st century, and the significant growth in the literature since the early 1990s, the notion of *power* continues to be all but silent in the organisational learning literature. Positioned in the recent *emancipatory* perspective of organisational

learning, underpinned by Critical Theory, this thesis contributes to breaking this silence by exploring beyond the possible vested interests that we, as managers, may have to maintain the *existing order of things* in organisations. The *emancipatory* perspective encourages me to distinguish between organisational learning that is more '*compliant*' to the learning agenda of managers – whether *exploiting* existing learning or *exploring* new learning both for corporate benefit – and more '*authentic organisational learning*' driven by employees.

This original contribution has particular significance for policing organisations. The ability of individuals to question the *existing order of things* in such organisations is of interest due to a perceived inability to bring about meaningful cultural reform. This research argues that reform failures may be due to a managerial learning agenda being deployed, which may result in compliance rather than more '*authentic*' learning. Hence, this thesis examines the conceptual model primarily in respect to two case studies of policing organisations: one Australian and the other in another part of the Oceania region.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

 (i)   incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education.

 (ii)   contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

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Finally, and importantly, thanks to my third round of supervisors Dr Paul Jackson and Professor Alan Brown: Alan provided timely advice and guidance, and was primarily responsible as Head of School for linking me with Paul. I give special thanks to my mentor Dr Paul Jackson who I will be eternally indebted to and grateful for taking me on as his student and guiding me through the proposal phase to the very end of thesis submission. My relationship with Paul is a classic '*revolutionary power relationship*' of the Freire variety – where "…the teacher and the student as both Subjects…". I thoroughly valued our mentoring sessions over a coffee to discuss the impacts of power relationships in organisations, his continual challenges to my thinking, and his timely encouragement throughout. Thank you very much Paul! This thesis is as much a tribute to you – I would not have completed it without you.

Most importantly I acknowledge and convey a special thanks to my family. Firstly, to my mum and dad: providing my working class roots. Secondly, special thanks to my partner in life Jan-Marie, and my two daughters Jayna-Lee and Asha. While I have applied my best endeavours to ensure they did not miss out too much, I must acknowledge the incremental sacrifices they have endured over many years. Thank you Jan-Marie for your ongoing support in my endeavours, not just here but in life. Both Jayna-Lee and Asha have made me so proud of them in developing into young women, and I hope I have to the smallest degree inspired my girls towards their own learning journey in life.

Dedicated to Jan-Marie

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Note: Appendix L and Appendix M contain confidential information that will disclose the identify of the organisations involved in this research, and as such have been withheld from publication.

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Note: Table 18 and Table 19 contain confidential information that will disclose the identify of the organisations involved in this research, and as such have been withheld from publication.

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PROLOGUE[1]

Silencing Charlie

Charlie, a police officer, considered himself a model employee. Desirous to please his superiors, Charlie's mission was to challenge status quo thinking that stymied progress in his changing "cutting edge" organisation. Senior managers, also destined for change, loved his innovative ways. However, Charlie sensed uneasiness if he challenged the existing order of things – the traditional *attitudes*, *beliefs*, *values*, and *norms* – the type that perpetuated managers' privileged position. Seated in a "buy in" session, Charlie listened as an executive manager peddled the latest wares in career advancement. Historically, seniority had been "legitimately" challenged by the controllers of the game. Merit became the game of choice. Since, evolution of change pursued. This time, the agenda: performance reports. Top level sign off was evident in the well articulated presentation. Charlie could see "buy in" was non-negotiable. Only fine tuning was permitted now. An isolated question of substance raised by Harry, a union official, was quickly dismissed. The executive manager acknowledged his response was to "run the corporate line"; espousing "organisational need" as the reason for change. Charlie continued to watch, and listen, as officers around him soaked up the technicalities of the salesman's wares. Torsos poised eagerly in chairs, eyes glued intently on the authoritative figure, hands scratching pens against paper. Asking only technical questions: "Had they become part of the machine?" thought Charlie. "Were they so interested in climbing the corporate ladder that they have become blinded to performance reports as a control device designed by authoritarians to ensure compliance to the machine?" Now for Charlie to move ahead, a glowing report was a must. To receive such a favourable referee meant his thinking – or at least his voice – needed to conform: to the attitudes; beliefs; values; and norms, championed by managers. Charlie himself, a vocal officer on contentious issues – often standing up for fairness, equality and justice – could feel the shackles gripping tighter around his throat as the presenter detailed the new corporate plan. Charlie was facing a dilemma: the prospects of surrendering his independent voice to comply with the corporate line for the sake of advancement. With a young family, Charlie could feel his spirit draining from his soul. Charlie's voice was about to be silenced.

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[1] This story was inspired by a real documented event in an Australian policing organisation in April 2010.

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Now is the time, to make real the promises of democracy…. So even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in [this nation's] dream. I have a dream, that one thing; this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men [sic] are created equal.

Dr Martin Luther King Jr

1.1   Background to the research

Organisational learning is one of a number of concepts in management and organisational studies that as strategy for organisations, offers a means to keep pace with the dynamic global environment of the 21st century. In an age more reliant on information and knowledge than ever before, the old paradigms or metaphors of the past become the myths that hold us back (Hames, 1994). Unprecedented economic uncertainty combined with a turbulent and international market environment require flexibility in a new management, organisational form and industrial relations strategy (Streeck, 1987). Such changing economic environments call for new business models redistributing power in organisations towards organisational democracy (Butcher & Clarke, 2002). Some say the time is ripe for a move away from hierarchy and towards heterarchy and responsible autonomy in organisations (Fairtlough, 2007). New paradigms are required in a management approach that supports creativity, intelligence and a capacity to learn and question (Clarke & Clegg, 1998). In some circles, organisational learning has been seen as offering the best chance for sustaining a competitive advantage particularly for knowledge intensive industries (Stata, 1989) (see also Grundy, 1994; de Geus, 1997; Lei & Slocum, 2002).

With this promise and expectation, there has been significant growth in the organisational learning literature since the early 1990s (Crossan & Guatto, 1996). This growth has continued beyond the turn of the new millennia (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004). What's more, it is predicted that the research flow will persist into the foreseeable future (Argote, 2011). The interest can be explained in terms of the advance of globalisation, the speed of technological change, and growing corporate competition (Easterby-Smith,

Snell, & Gherardi, 1998). Hence some have gone as far to suggest the notion of organisational learning as a new management paradigm has shifted from being an academic interest to be a sizzling boardroom issue (Burnes, Cooper, & West, 2003).

However, while there is significant growth and interest in the literature, there is still a debate concerning whether organisational learning has the capacity to deliver. This debate has emerged because it is now recognised that the effectiveness of organisational learning may be based on how learning is understood and "managed" in organisations (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999). Despite our best endeavours to implement organisational learning or to become a "learning organisation" (Senge, 1990), it may be that what we do as managers and employees generally in organisations may have more impact on organisational learning than we realise. As we try to control and steer the organisation to the desired direction, it might be that we manage out certain more 'meaningful dialogue' between organisational actors. There is also the question as to the genuineness of organisational learning or whether it is just another metaphorical tool in the manager's arsenal to control not only what employees do in organisations, but how they think (Coopey, 1995; Easterby-Smith et al., 1998; Coopey, 2004). There is the possibility of us overlooking our vested interest in maintaining the *dominant management ideology* in organisations: that is the status quo (Diefenbach, 2009a). Hence this thesis argues that a more enlightened understanding to "managing" organisational learning may be necessary so that organisational learning is more likely to be facilitated than obstructed.

The pursuit of genuineness in organisational learning led me to explore a number of different perspectives and debates (Dodgson, 1993; Easterby-Smith, 1997; Romme & Dillen, 1997; Easterby-Smith et al., 1998; Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999; Easterby-Smith, Crossan, & Nicolini, 2000; Karataş-Özkan & Murphy, 2010). While different perspectives have made important contributions to our understanding of the organisational learning process, many omit or inadequately address *power*: particularly the unequal power relationships that may arise in organisations. This thesis argues that if organisations are to capitalise on and utilise the creativity and awareness of employees that may enable the organisation to meet contemporary economic and social

challenges, then there is a need to better understand the implications that *power relationships* have for organisation learning.

Such an appreciation may help us to better understand why organisations have trouble reforming. Many organisations have become proficient at traditional single-loop learning, which enables the organisation to keep on course but also maintains the status quo (Morgan, 2006). In contrast, Morgan (2006) argues that organisations need to develop the skills and systems to review and challenge its basic operating norms and paradigms so it can move with the changing community sentiments and global markets. That is challenging the *institutionalization* process in organisations that has developed over history to become accepted as common sense of everyday reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Or what could be described as the *existing order of things* (Foucault, 1970, 1981)[2]. A better understanding of the power relationships in organisations and their associated impact on the organisational learning process may assist the exploration of why individuals and/or groups may or may not question the *existing order of things* in organisations: that is identifying the extent to which such questioning is encouraged or permitted.

The task of exploring and exposing power relationships is central to more recent authors who consider organisational learning as a potential '*emancipatory*' process. The '*emancipatory*' perspective has its roots in the Frankfurt School and other associated promoters of Critical Theory (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). While there are various versions to Critical Theory, "[a]t least some…are motivated by an interest in relating theory to politics and an interest in the emancipation of those who are oppressed and dominated" (Kellner, 1989, p.1). The basic concern of "CT", as some refer to it, "…is to analyze social conditions, to criticize the unjustified use of power, and to change established social traditions and institutions so that human beings are freed from dependency, subordination, and suppression", and "…is oriented towards the development of a more humane, rational, and just society" (Scherrer, 2009, p.30). In essence Critical Theory advocates emancipation: that is the liberation of people through examining the traditions, assumptions, ideologies and power relations that distort or

prevent people from being more fully human (Freire, 1970; Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). Therefore, the *emancipatory* perspective to organisational learning may be seen as the focus on freeing individuals and groups from the repressive nature of organisations which may restrict the development of human consciousness (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). Power relationships then become a central focus as to how they forge human consciousness, or our way of seeing the world.

Situated in the '*emancipatory*' perspective, this thesis makes the distinction between traditional organisational learning which may be more '*compliant*', and that which may be seen as more '*authentic*'. More '*authentic organisational learning*' opens the potential for the freeing of people's minds to think more deeply and differently, and to give more breadth and depth to a range of alternatives (Armstrong, 2003), not just what is desirable for corporate benefit whether exploiting existing knowledge or exploring new learning (March, 1991). It takes a bottom-up employee approach to organisational leaning, rather than top-down. The breadth of learning flourishes through opening up multiple-voices, perspectives, or paradigms, not just that of management. The depth of learning draws from strong conflict on cornerstone issues in organisations, as opposed to polite conversations on the superficial and day-to-day business. This learning is underpinned by points of difference, rather than shared mental-models.

> '*Authentic organisational learning*' opens the potential for the freeing of people's minds to think more deeply and differently, and to give more breadth and depth to a range of alternatives, taking a bottom-up employee approach to organisational leaning, rather than top-down.

From the '*emancipatory*' notion of freeing people's minds to think more deeply and differently, it is not too difficult to image unintended beneficial consequences for corporations that may flow from more '*authentic organisational learning*'. Hence, this thesis argues that if organisations are to capitalise on and utilise the creativity and awareness of employees that may enable the organisation to meet contemporary economic and social challenges, then perhaps more '*authentic*' organisational learning

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[2] See also Lukes (1974, 2005). Some referred to the 'natural order of things' (Haugaard, 2012).

may be needed as the reform strategy. Not only might it be economically wise and paralleled with corporate social responsibility, which should bring its own benefits, but independent of that it is the right thing to do. However, from this perspective, as a reform strategy it cannot be bequeathed or bestowed upon the inferiors by the superiors, but must be part of a struggle by all employees to liberate themselves and each other (Freire, 1970). This thesis aims to contribute to that struggle.

1.2   Research question

Positioned in the '*emancipatory*' perspective, this research explores the degree to which individuals and/or groups have the capacity or 'power to' question the *existing order of things*: including the traditional dominant attitudes, beliefs, values and norms in organisations. In broad terms, this thesis aims to critically examine:

> *How and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'?*

In doing so, this research makes an original contribution to knowledge by articulating a heuristic conceptual model of power relationships so as to inform an *emancipatory* approach to organisational learning. The model draws on a traditional organisational leadership framework originating with Burns (1978): '*transactional*' and '*transformational*'. The model also incorporates a critical perspective, drawing on the work of Freire (1970) with the notion of a '*revolutionary*' power relationship. The research explores these three power relationships operating to varying degrees across the *four dimensions* of power as developed collectively by Dahl (1957; 1961), Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1970), Lukes (1974, 2005), and Foucault (1977, 1982). This approach has not been taken in the power literature, let alone applied to organisational learning. The conceptual research model was developed after exploring the organisational learning and power literature addressed in Chapter 2.

1.3   Significance of this research

1.3.1   For organisation learning literature

By focusing on *power relationships*, this research makes a contribution to the organisational learning literature. Despite the voluminous work on organisational learning, in the late 1990s Easterby-Smith et al. (1998) reported that the theme of *power* was underrepresented in the organisational learning literature. Despite isolated pockets of interest, some years later power was viewed as one important area that remained under-discussed (Vince, Sutcliffe, & Olivera, 2002). Other authors have reported that power had not featured strongly (Blackler & McDonald, 2000), was still virtually (Ferdinand, 2004) or largely (Lawrence, Mauws, Dyck, & Kleysen, 2005) ignored in the organisational learning literature. This was clearly evident in a recent review (Bapuji & Crossan, 2004) as well as a more recent look at the past, present and future in organisational learning research (Argote, 2011). A similar state of play is also reported on the discourse of knowledge management (Gordon & Grant, 2005; Clegg, 2009b), a "further evolution" of the concept of organisational learning which seeks to better manage and exploit knowledge as a productive and generative resource within business and government organisations. Not surprising: as power is not the focus of mainstream management literature (Hardy & Clegg, 1996), and muted at best in organisational studies generally (Clegg, Courpasson, & Phillips, 2006).

Within the organisational learning literature that addresses power, there is acknowledgement that power relationships may facilitate or inhibit organisational learning (Vince, 2001; Contu & Willmott, 2003; Huzzard, 2004; Ford, 2006). Some have addressed in terms of situated learning theory and the "community of practice": in which the idea of power relationships shaping, constraining or enable learning is discarded or dimly regarded (Contu & Willmott, 2003; Huzzard, 2004). Some address in terms of sense-making or sense-giving or sense-takers (Blackler & McDonald, 2000; Huzzard, 2004).

Of the organisational learning literature that does address power, Ferdinand (2004) suggests it may lack critical reflection. Many fail to ask: "Whose interests are served?" Blacker and McDonald's (2000) work is an example, focusing on teams and

approaching power as an ongoing product of collective activity and as the medium for it. However, there are few researchers who are asking that hard question. For example, Snell and Man-Kuen Chak (1998) suggest that learning in organisations only benefits the 'ruling court', and will continue to do so unless democratic arrangements are in place. Lave and Wenger (1991, p.42) acknowledge that "[i]n particular, unequal relations of power must be included more systematically in our analysis". Huzzard (2004, p.357) asks the question, "…do unequal relationships of power enhance learning or is learning enhanced when such inequalities are broken down and more equal relations prevail in a community of learners?" Coopey (1994, 1995, 2004) draws attention to the metaphors of organisational learning as ideological controls used by managers. And further suggests "…the bulk of the fruits of learning that are forthcoming will continue to be harvested by the already privileged" (Coopey, 1998, p.371).

Not only is power unrepresented, and if addressed may lack critical reflection, Fenwick (2003) suggests that from a critical perspective organisational learning is far from emancipatory. Reynolds (1998, p.183) provides a possible reason for this observation, saying that "[t]he professional and academic knowledge communities of management and management education have been largely out of bounds to critical, let alone emancipatory, thinking". Managers would not appreciate having their privileged position subjected to public critical analysis, or patronised or alienated by the moral high ground taken by critical theorists using terminology such as resistance and struggle (Reynolds, 1998). This is particularly concerning given the view that many organisations are trapped in the type of learning that maintains the status quo, and that the type of learning from questioning the basic operating systems in organisations necessary for them to evolve, proves elusive (Morgan, 2006).

Some see political activity as a necessary element and an inherent and intrinsic process of organisational learning: a position conversely taken or assumed in the bulk of organisational learning literature (Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000; Ferdinand, 2004; Huzzard, 2004). Coopey (1998, p.365 & 372) draws attention to a 'democratic deficit' in the British business culture: calling for "…a new form of politics to give much

greater expression to the experience of 'rank-and-file' members in organizations" through "…questioning and sceptical approach to the discourses and practices that tend to position and define us". In his single case study, Vince (2001, p.1328) found anxiety as the key to an organisational dynamic, characterised by a fear of conflict, a pressure to perform, and avoidance of interaction: "[f]or whatever reasons, they often ignore, avoid or abandon *meaningful* processes of reflection and inquiry" (emphasis added).   The notion of *meaningful* reflection and inquiry as a political activity will become relevant in this thesis.

Some have called for further specific research. For example, Snell and Man-Kuen Chak (1998) call for rigorous research to demonstrate how liberation and democracy can be spread through the organisation. Ferdinand (2004) suggests there is a desperate need for research into the actual political activity of organisational actors who seek to control their learning. Huzzard (2004, p.359) concludes by acknowledging that his work does not address "…how learning processes in organizations are embedded in more *macro* power relations" (emphasis added): an avenue for further research. This research aims to contribute, in varying degree, to addressing these concerns.

1.3.2   For reform in policing organisations

The opening paragraph to this chapter highlights the significance of learning for organisations.   Some see organisational learning as a strategy for sustainable development: the vision of which is "…the efficient adaptive unit – always in the right place at the right time to take advantage of environmental change" (Pedler, Burgoyne, & Boydell, 1997, p.3). While this research to better understand *how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'* may have significance for most organisations today, it has particularly significant for policing organisations. For example, policing organisations are significant sites to uncover power relationships. Adlam (2002, p.17) says "[t]he governance of police organisations by police leaders appears to reflect the appropriation and exploitation of a wide range of these tactics and technologies of power. Sometimes this is done knowingly, sometimes cynically and sometimes it occurs unawarely". Adlam (2002, p.17) goes onto to say, "[t]he police organisation impresses as a melting pot or 'tossed salad' of Foucauldian

spirals, symbols, networks and dynamics of power".   Yet typical functionalist approaches to police reform in Australia do not explicitly address power, a point highlighted by Gordon (2006) in his genealogical case study of reform in the New South Wales Police.

Also the notion of organisational learning may be particularly linked to the police reform agenda nationally and internationally: an issue that appears to have been overlooked in the police literature. For example, organisational learning may be linked to the issue of reform agenda on 'police culture'. While it is acknowledged that policing organisations in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand, Netherlands and Sweden have been engaged in reform in recent years (Bayley, 2005), the notion of a 'police culture' or a 'police occupational culture' has been blamed as an obstacle for police reform. Chan (1996, p.110) says, "[c]onspiracy theory aside, the most powerful and currently popular explanation for the recalcitrance of police organizations against change is to postulate the existence of a 'police culture'". 'Police culture' being a label used in the police literature to lump together the values, beliefs, attitudes, norms, informal rules and practices among police officers, particularly the negative ones   (Chan, 1996).   Savage (2003) claims that British policing organisations are the most effective in resisting reform and modernisation, than other areas of the public sector. He says that the reform-resistance culture of policing has almost been institutionalised, thereby protecting the traditional ways of functioning and structures (Savage, 2003).

Even more recently in an international forum of 27 police leaders and academics held in Sydney Australia, it was identified that public trust or confidence and therefore police legitimacy (the authority to police) was strongly dependent on the inner stories of individuals and policing organisations, and that such stories needed adjustment for improvement in culture ("Pearls in Policing," 2010). Articulated examples of the current negative inner stories in policing organisations were: "leave it to us"; "we know best"; "we always have to be the leaders"; "we are the good guys – it's us versus them"; "you need to trust and respects us, but we don't have to trust and respect you" ("Pearls in Policing," 2010, p.2).

Yet, according to Chan (1999, p.254) "[t]he challenge for reformers is that cultural change in police organizations is extremely difficult". Vickers (2000, p.519) suggests that "[o]rganisationally based loyalty may operate to silence police officers – loyalty to their colleagues may be unconscious". The difficulty can be seen with Chan and Dixon's (2007, p.463) suggestion that 10 years after the Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service, "…much of the deeper structural and cultural change that the Commission's reports deemed necessary has not happened". The reason, it is suggested, is that "…the [Royal] Commission's truth became incompatible with the ambitions of the police leadership and the priorities of government", where by "…police reform slipped off the political agenda in favour of simplistic law-and-order rhetoric" (Chan & Dixon, 2007, p.463). A further contributing factor may be seen in the ethnographic case study of the New South Wales Police by Gordon, Clegg, and Kornberger (2009), who reveal that despite the reform agenda, traditional historical power relationships continued to reinforce compliance and silence, where the new reform practices of the Employee Management System (EMS) and the Operations Control and Review (OCR) simply became the vehicles for the old practices of discipline, punishment and domination.

Difficulties for police reform may be viewed in terms of the dominant approach to learning in policing organisations, and the way reform is implemented. That is whether a top-down and/or externally imposed approach is suitable for police reform. Some suggest that there is a "hidden curriculum" to the traditional approach to police training, akin to the outdated "machine" metaphor sending police down an intellectual cul-de-sac, producing unintended consequences that "…reinforces traditional cultural prejudices and inhibits major change programmes…" (White, 2006, p.386). A typical approach to reform strategies aimed at changing the mindset of officers is to order officers to attend a course over a few days and telling them to simply think differently, as well as producing a large rule book to supplement the training (Brodeur, 2005; see also White, 2006). Managers apportion blame to those officers engaging in "bad" behaviour, rather than reflecting on the system that is reproducing exactly the officers we ask for (White, 2006). Similarly, "[r]eforms such as the establishment of a new powerful anti-corruption agency are unlikely to overturn the deep cynicism and hostility

among police officers against top-down and externally imposed accountability" (Chan, 1999, p.266). The imposition of external and top-down reform agendas, described by some as the modernist approach to police reform (Waters, 2007), may explain why reforms fail, as street officers and mid-level managers may go through the motions and give token efforts to satisfy superiors, rather than being true believers (Skogan, 2008). This thesis argues that with deep (and possibly repressed) cynicism and hostility, more '*authentic organisational learning*' may not occur.

The degree to which '*authentic organisational learning*' does or does not happen may have further implications for internal police reform. For example, Vickers (2000) suggests that there is an organisational ideology in policing organisations that focuses on training rather than education and learning. Vickers (2000) further suggests that critical thinking and reflection, beyond the black and white thinking, is necessary for police leaders and practitioners. However, Adlam (1999) raises concerns that the testing of culture within policing organisations against the criteria for a learned profession, would reveal the police to be severely wanting. Adlam (1999) further points to the implication of police officers being in an organisation in which they do not need to take responsibility for themselves, breeding a dependency on the organisation looking after them and resolving their problems. "Thus, there is neither the psychological need nor the psychological demand to become reflective practitioners" (Adlam, 1999, p.59). That is, a practitioner who has moved from the technical rationality of simple problem solving to a reflective, deeper and broader learning process which better able to respond to uncertainty and instability (Schon, 1983). It is suggested that systematic reflection process would lead to questioning of the core elements of the police culture (Adlam, 1999). However, "[t]he practices of police training collude in the suppression of a genuinely critical examination of police, their role and the conduct of police leadership because those practices are unable to 'live with' the discomforts and dislocations attending any examination of the 'nondebatable'" (Adlam, 2002, p.19).

1.3.3   For basic human rights

Relevant to this thesis is the degree to which individuals and groups feel freedom to question the *existing order of things* in organisations, and thereby possibly facilitate

what is described here as '*authentic organisational learning*'. In Australia, we would like to view ourselves as advocates of fundamental human rights. It can be argued that organisational learning from an *emancipatory* perspective is intertwined with human rights. The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights aims in part, to give:

> …recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world…Whereas…the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy *freedom of speech and belief* and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people…(emphasis added) ("UDHR," 2011).

In particular, Article 19 provides:

> Everyone has the *right to freedom of opinion and expression*; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to *seek, receive and impart information and ideas* through any media and regardless of frontiers (emphasis added) ("UDHR," 2011).

Therefore understanding the impact of power relationships on '*authentic organisational learning*' has broader societal implications in terms of whether individuals feel freedom to express their opinions and impart their ideas.

The importance of feeling free to express opinions as a human rights issue can be seen with two historical psychological experiments conducted separately by Stanley Milgram and Solomon Asch. Asch (1955), in concluding his study on conforming to group pressures, observed that consensus disguised in the dominance of conformity, polluted the social process while simultaneously individuals surrendered their functioning as thinking and feeling beings. He was concerned with the strength of conformity in society being so strong, that intelligent people were willing to call black white, raising "…questions about our ways of education and about the values that guide our conduct" (Asch, 1955, p.34).

Milgram's (1963) interest was understanding the psychological mechanism of obedience, which might explain how millions of innocent people were slaughtered in gas chambers between 1933 and 1945, through very large numbers of people obeying

orders underpinned by the inhumane policies emanating from the mind of one person. In concluding his controversial experiment, Milgram (1963, p.376 & 378) observed that in punishing the victim it was clear that many of the participants were "…often acting against their own values", and there is a tension between the disposition not to harm others and "…the tendency to obey those whom we perceive to be legitimate authorities".

This thesis does not suggest that the modern policing organisation is akin to the holocaust of the 1930s and 1940s. But Milgram's work does highlight the importance of people feeling free to question the attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms in organisations. Particularly amongst policing organisations, which are charged with the powers to maintain social order on behalf of the government of the day, there is always the danger that these powers can be abused (Edwards, 1999; Neocleous, 2000; Innes, 2003). While it is arguably important that police officers follow orders in an urgent strictly operational context when there is no time for in-depth discussions, it is equally important that officers are developed as independent thinkers capable of questioning the *existing order of things* as well as the unethical behaviour such that they do not allow simple order compliance and rule conformity to give way to their own sense of right and wrong.

1.3.4   For the researcher

This research has significance also for me, the researcher. Not only was the conceptual model developed after reviewing the literature, but also the reflections of my undocumented experiences and observations in organisations, particularly a policing organisation. I am a police officer with an Australian policing organisation, commencing more than 25 years ago. During that period of time, I have seen significant change in the conduct of the way things are done in the organisation, but there are some fundamental attitudes, beliefs, values and norms that have not changed. For example, on joining the organisation at the young age of 20 years, I recall the first day in the classroom at the training academy with 80 of my fellow "recruits". The "Senior" walked in the room and through his statue, demeanour, and a deep South African accent, he immediately commanded respect. There was an immediate hush in

the room, as the "Senior" commenced to berate one of our number for not wearing a jacket as detailed in the instructions sent in the mail. An officer standing next to me, who has since risen to senior management levels within the organisation, whispered "what am I doing here". This was the start of a four-month indoctrination process, whereby as a recruit I learned very quickly that to survive in this outfit I needed to "stick together" with my fellow recruits, look after each other, stay silent unless spoken to and invited to speak, and not question superior officers – no matter what. Issues of morality or ethics were unknown concepts. The law overrode all, the police were the keepers of law and order, and your superiors were "God". Superiors could do no wrong: instilling fear in subordinates.

In almost 30 years I have seen significant change in the organisation. However, those changes have been the result of initiated change programs, either via so called "radical" change such at the Alpha Reform[3] program or incremental change through individual management initiated projects, both designed to meet some preconceived ends. The focus has been on improving techniques and processes. In the case of the Alpha Reform program, the primary focus was on cultural change involving changing management identified attitudes, beliefs, values and norms. Such values and beliefs are recognised as influencing thinking and action in organisations (Davenport & Prusak, 2000). However, not all attitudes, beliefs, values and norms are up for questioning, and there remains an *existing order of things* that endures and is unexamined. That is that managers ultimately have the right to manage, and employees are obliged to obey. In a recent example in 2012, as the officer-in-charge of a detectives' office I was engaged in a discussion with my line manager over his desire to change rosters back to 8-hour shifts rather than the 10-hour shifts initiated by staff. After pointing out to my manager that there was no evidence to support <u>his claim</u> that the change was necessary to counteract occupational safety and health concerns and declining performance results, I was directed to implement the change as it was his preferred option. After challenging his general top-down "*my way or the highway*" attitude to the situation where there was no point negotiating a satisfactory outcome, it was made 100 percent clear to me that I needed to "very careful". The inference was that by questioning his thinking I was

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[3] Pseudonym.

questioning his authority to be obeyed, and on doing so I was verging on being "insubordinate".

1.4   Methodology

In addition to my undocumented experiences and observations functioning in a policing organisation, in Chapter 3 I adopt what I have termed a *critical pragmatist* worldview to explore a suitable research design that focuses on addressing the research question: *how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit more 'authentic organisational learning'*.   Adopting a *pragmatist* paradigm encouraged me to explore a myriad of mixed methodology, rather than being fixated on the mono-method argument that "one method is better…".

The chosen research design adopts a three phase approach: an *exploratory investigation* phase; a *confirmatory investigation* phase; and an *emancipatory* phase. This thesis will only deal with the first two phases, leaving the final phase for post-doctorial research. The central focus of this research is the *confirmatory investigation* phase consisting of two case studies of policing organisations: one major and one minor.

1.5   Critical Theory: An underpinning paradigm

This thesis is not about Critical Theory. However with the thesis positioned in the *emancipatory* perspective of organisational learning, Critical Theory has been used as a guiding philosophy. The *critical pragmatist* perspective underpinning the methodology derives from Critical Theory to which I owe much for my learning journey. After years of studying in the field of management and leadership, and being employed in a policing organisation, the conservative and functionalist viewpoints did not seem to adequately explain the 'dark-side'. I became fascinated with the work of Critical Theorists such as Paulo Freire (1970), Henry Giroux (1981), Jurgen Habermas (1984), and Karl Marx (2011) to mention only a few. In addition, Michel Foucault (1970), not as a Critical Theorist but now a distant relative of the Critical Theory camp in the

"family resemblance" idea (Haugaard, 2002, 2010).[4] While fascinated, it was also the start of the *struggle* for me to reconcile such pieces of work with years of being indoctrinated in mainstream, functional education and organisational life in a capitalist society. Along this journey, feelings of isolation, alienation, and hopelessness were not uncommon. However, a degree of comfort and optimism to continue was provided with the thought that Critical Theory had some roots in adult education. I owe much to Brookfield (2005) and Diefenbach (2009a) who provided many 'eureka' moments in knowing that I was not alone, and that it is "okay" to question the *dominant ideology*: "Knowing that challenging dominant ideology risks bringing punishment down on our heads is depressing and frightening" (Brookfield, 2005, p.8). Even for critical management academics! (Alvesson, Bridgman, & Willmott, 2009).

1.6   Key limitations to research

With a Critical Theory underpinning philosophy I am encouraged to be sceptical and suspicious, hence understand the limitations of this research. While this thesis aims to make an original contribution to knowledge, it does not assert to be the last word on *how and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit* organisational learning let alone *more 'authentic organisational learning'*. An acknowledgement of the limitations helps us to recognise that while the contribution may aim to be original, it may also only be small.

First, this thesis examines the research question in respect to policing organisations, which may not transpose to other types of organisations – public, private, or not-for-

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[4] Foucault (1980, p.53) acknowledges that he quotes Marx in his work, suggesting that "[i]t is impossible at this present time to write a history without using a whole range of concepts directly or indirectly linked to Marx's thought and situating oneself within a horizon of thought which has been defined and described by Marx. One might even wonder what difference there could ultimately be between being a historian and being a Marxist" (see also Brookfield, 2005). However it is argued that as Foucault's work developed, "…it dissociated itself progressively from the Marxist agenda" (Downing, 2008, p.5). However, it must be acknowledged that the family resemblance is limited to the extent that his work helps us to uncover and explain the hidden elements of power which influence the thinking and knowing of individuals in a society. Rather than the Critical Theorist idea that there is a privileged dominator who benefits from this thinking or "knowledge" to exploit the dominated, Foucault see power relationships as a force field or network of influences in the way we think (Downing, 2008).

profit/non-government. Second, and similarly, the findings may not translate to other Australian policing organisations, nor other international jurisdictions influenced by different cultural, social, legal, political, and economic arrangements. Thirdly, the research was limited to two organisational case studies, whereas a more comprehensive and interesting study might have look at all eight Australian policing jurisdictions. Alternatively, an examination could have been made with cases from other Western culture jurisdictions, and further compared and contrasted with Eastern culture jurisdictions. However these limitations, primarily due to limited resources, do not preclude post-doctorial research examining these opportunities.

There is also the degree of complexity and theoretical diversity in both the organisational learning and power literature. In the organisational learning literature it has been suggested there is a lack of convergence between frameworks (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999). Other suggest there is a "mystification of organisational learning", plagued by the absence of a clear agreed upon definition, conceptual divergence, and producing a researchable construct (Friedman, Lipshitz, & Popper, 2005). While an overarching unified theory and framework is lacking (Tsang, 1997), some suggest it is not desirable (Easterby-Smith et al., 1998), while others believe it is probably impossible (Lipshitz, Popper, & Friedman, 2002). In addition to a similar diversity issue in the power literature, power is considered ubiquitous making it hard to understand and often obscured in the taken-for-granted aspects of social life (Haugaard & Clegg, 2009): therefore pinning it down is easier said than done (Clegg et al., 2006).

There is limitation in terms of the methodology and data collection. With using Critical Theory as a guiding philosophy, readers from a *positivist* perspective may be disappointed in the inability to judge the definitive "cause and effect" contribution of this research (Clegg, 1989a) or "prove" its ascription (Morriss, 2002). Similarly with inability to observe power (Morriss, 2002), this research relies heavily on the self-reporting of organisational actors, which may not be accurate and are open to embellishment or being false.

Finally, on the issue of methodology is the influence of the researcher. Exploring deeper, more subtle aspects of power, raises the notions of *false consciousness* of organisational actors or their willingness, albeit perhaps unwittingly, to act against their '*real interest*' (Lukes, 2005). Determining the '*real interests*' of people is intrinsically controversial as it requires a judgement of moral, political and philosophical values (Lukes, 2005). Therefore, the reader must bear in mind that I cannot be said to be an independent objective observer, as the interpretations are influenced by my own learning journey. Further, from Foucault's work, we must understand that the analysis of data at the commencement of my journey will be somewhat different to the final product. That final product will also be subject to the influences of my thinking at the time of writing, which may further change sometime into the future.

1.7   Outline of thesis

In drawing this chapter to a close, I provide an outline of what lies ahead in this thesis. In Chapter 2, I explore what is "known" in the field of organisational learning and power. Firstly I review the literature relating to organisational learning and then separately in respect to power, which culminate towards the end of the chapter into a conceptual model which serves as an heuristic device for my research. In the organisational learning literature review I explore various underpinning perspectives, before I make a case for a division between traditional '*compliant*' and more '*authentic*' organisational learning. I then examine the key organisational learning processes. After addressing the organisational literature I later turns to the power literature whereupon after giving a general overview, I build a case for the so-called four dimensions to analyse power, which I will use to explore a model of three power relationships in organisations and their impact on the organisational learning process. After discussing possible implication from the presented conceptual model, I finish Chapter 2 by suggesting five propositions which will form the basis for the rest of my research.

Proceeding to Chapter 3, as I have outlined above, I discuss the philosophical foundations before moving onto discuss the research method, design, data collection, data analysis and interpretation as well as the ethical guidelines governing this research.

In this chapter, I focus on how this research will be conducted in order to answer the research question: that is it will become my "road map" on how to proceed.

In addition to addressing the literature review in Chapter 2, culminating in a conceptual model for this research and the five propositions, and Chapter 3 addressing the methodology on how the research will be conducted, the next three chapters speak to the data analysis. Chapter 4 centres on the *exploratory investigation* phase and the data analysis from three focus groups. The *exploratory investigation* phrase aims to improve my understanding of the concepts, to further refine the model, to improve on the research design if necessary, and ultimately to establish the face validity of the constructs and explore the five propositions emanating from the model presented in Chapter 2. This will allow me to possibly refine the model and proceed to the *confirmatory investigation* phase with a better understanding of the dynamics captured in the conceptual model.

Both Chapter 5 and 6 address the *confirmatory investigation* phase, focusing on two separate case studies on policing organisations: one major, one minor. Here I report on the respective data analysis from the two organisational case studies. The data analysis involved enacting legislation, annual reports and other public documents in both organisations, along with 20 interviews of embedded case in the first case study and 11 interviews in the second. Both case studies aim to find evidence to support or refute the five propositions postulated from the model presented in Chapter 2 and further refined in Chapter 4.

The final chapter, Chapter 7, provides me with a number of opportunities for critical reflection. These include reflecting on the data analysis from both organisational case studies and drawing conclusions from this research as well as in respect to five propositions prescribed to the conceptual model detailed in Chapter 2. And ultimately how this thesis makes a contribution to better understanding how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit more '*authentic*' organisation learning in policing organisations. Further, it is an opportunity to reflect and provide in-depth discussion on

the implications from this research for organisational learning and power theory as well as policing policy and practice: including reform, training and education, for practitioners, managers and organisations generally. The thesis then concludes with reflections on the research limitations, finishing with suggestions for further research.

1.8   Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, this research aims to make a significant contribution to the organisational learning literature positioned in the '*emancipatory*' perspective. As such it particularly draws into question the power relationships which may facilitate certain types of learning while inhibiting others: power being under-discussed and researched in the organisational learning literature. Also from this perspective, it encourages a focus on more '*authentic*' organisational learning in contrast to that which is more '*compliant*'. Rather than simply exploiting existing or exploring new technical learning for direct corporate benefit, more '*authentic*' organisational learning might encourage people's minds to think more deeply and differently and to gives more breadth and depth to alternatives. With this distinction, this thesis seeks to better understand *how and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'*.

In the next chapter, I explore the literature to better appreciate what is involved in the organisational learning process. It is through that appreciation, linked with my own experiences and observations in a policing organisation that the term '*meaningful dialogue*' is introduced as the social equivalent of *critical reflection* that specifically focuses on questioning the *existing order of things* including power relationships. The psychological freedom that individuals and/or groups experience to engage in such questioning is introduced as a '*liberated learning space*'. It also explores the power literature before conceptualising a triadic model of power relationships consisting of two from a traditional leadership framework of Burns (1978) and introducing the third from the work of Freire (1970).

Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.

Paulo Freire

2.1   Introduction

The introductory quotation is an extract from Brazilian critical education theorist, Paulo Freire (1970) who was expressing an equalitarian view in contrast to the "banking" concept of education whereby those who consider themselves knowledgeable see knowledge as a gift they bestow upon those they deem to know nothing. Instead, through reviewing the work of others we are engaging with the world in a *continuous* and *hopeful* inquiry (and at times *restless* and *impatient* at our lack of understanding), to emerge with greater knowledge and learning that we had previously. It is through respect and the pursuit of knowledge and learning that we seek to better understand the valuable insight of those who preceded us, so that we are better placed to make a humble contribution to our collective understanding.

As indicated in Chapter 1, this thesis is concerned with better understanding *why and how power relationships facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'*, particularly for policing organisations. From the field of adult education, "learning" at an individual or group level may be conceived as "…the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow, 1998, p.190). While organisations do not learn in actual fact (Stacey, 2003), the metaphor "*organisational learning*" is the term used to describe the process by which people as a interdependent collective within the bounds of an organisation, reinforce or change their thinking incrementally. Hence it is the people who learn, not the organisation. Stacey (2003, p.331) says "[l]earning is the activity of interdependent people and can only be understood in terms of self-organising communicative interaction and power relating in which identities are potentially transformed". However, despite the interest in the 1990s, early in this millennium Easterby-Smith, Antonacopoulou, Simm, and Lyles (2004, p.378) suggested "…organizational learning still remains largely a 'black box',

and that in itself is a powerful message to all organizational learning researchers; namely, that almost irrespective of how much we already know, there is still so much more to learn".

In this review, I explore the literature on organisational learning commencing with both the '*technical*' and the '*social*' perspectives before looking at the recent '*emancipatory*' standpoint. The '*emancipatory*' perspective encourages me to make a division between traditional '*compliant*' organisational learning and that which is more '*authentic*'. Making this distinction led me to explore two key organisational learning processes, '*reflection*' and '*dialogue*', making the distinction between the individual and social processes. I find that the *critical* theorist notion of '*critical reflection*' is evident in the literature but a social equivalent is absent. In the absence of a social equivalent of critical reflection I coin the notion of '*meaningful dialogue*'. From here I explore the notion of a '*learning space*', which led me to introduce the term '*liberated learning space*' to describe the psychological freedom individuals and/or groups feel to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' at a social level.

Later in this chapter I turn to exploring the analysis of power, highlighting various authors whose work contributes to the so called *four dimensions* of power. The '*first-dimension*' is pluralist, presupposing a negotiated order of society where parties participate in observable conflict with others over issues in the decision-making process: the equivalent of an "arm wrestle" in a level playing field. The '*second-dimension*' draws attention to inequalities in the decision-making process, whereby some issues are kept off the agenda confining it to 'safe' issues. The '*third-dimension*' builds onto the *second-dimension*, drawing attention to the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of groups that prevent a potential issue from ever becoming issue in the first place. The '*fourth-dimension*', being similar to the *third-dimension*, draws attention to the historical social construction of humans beyond the grasp of the organisation, describing the power which formulates the broader systems in society which everyone is subject to, and individuals themselves become the bearer of and discipline themselves.

Adopting the four dimensions for power analysis for this research, I then move to exploring a model of power relationships in organisations. My thesis investigates two traditional power relationships in organisations: '*transactional*' and '*transformational*'. These are often espoused as a leadership model in the business and management literature, referring to key leadership attributes. They are also associated with reinforcing or changing organisational culture respectively. In this thesis I argue that both are underpinned by a *unitary* ideology: the belief in a single, centralised, supreme governing body. The driving force behind the *unitary* frame of reference is the pursuit of common objectives. As such there is perceived need for individuals to subordinate their own interests and in its place an obligation to obey managers who have a perceived right to manage for the greater good of the organisation. In contrast to these two traditional power relationships, in the model I draw on the work of Freire (1970) to describe '*revolutionary power relationships*' which are simultaneously built on a '*pluralist*' but particularly a '*radical*' frame of reference. I conclude this chapter articulating the possible implications that these three types of power relationships may have for individuals and/or groups to feel free to engage '*meaningful dialogue*', and thereby the possible implications for '*authentic organisational learning*'.

2.2   Exploring organisational learning

I start this charter with a review of the organisational learning literature, drawing attention to the work under three different perspectives: '*technical*', '*social*', and '*emancipatory*'.

2.2.1   As a technical process

The formal and rational transfer of learning

A traditional approach to organisational learning can be viewed as a '*technical*' process (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999). From this perspective organisational learning is pictured as a *rational* and *objective* process (Easterby-Smith et al., 1998). Drawing from the field of management science (Easterby-Smith, 1997), this view assumes that organisational learning is about "…the *effective* processing, interpretation of, and response to, *information* both inside and outside the organization", which "…is

generally explicit and in the public domain" (Emphasis added) (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999, p.3). This perspective is particularly appealing to managers as it highlights the importance of learning to improve performance or to maintain or achieve a competitive advantage in a rapidly changing environment. It draws attention to the *formal* nature of organisational learning, assuming that managers can and should control the learning process to best achieve the organisational goals and meet the demands of that environment. This perspective also draws from the field of psychology (Easterby-Smith, 1997), and is concerned with the *cognitive* process within the *individual*, and the *transfer* of learning from the individual level to the organisational level and vice versa (refer to Crossan, Lane, White, & Djurfeldt, 1995 for examples). It also focuses on the ability of the organisation to change the potential behaviour of individuals to meet the changing needs of the organisation. From this perspective organisations are seen as systems, and organisational learning as a management tool for regulating, modifying and aligning behaviour (Elkjaer, 1999). As such the notion of leadership is also evident in this perspective.

Knowledge, information and memory

Easterby-Smith and Araujo (1999) offers Huber's (1991) work as an example of the '*technical*' perspective (see also Jackson, 2012). Huber (1991) articulated four constructs or processes of organisational learning, being '*knowledge acquisition*', '*information distribution*', '*information interpretation*', and '*organisational memory*'. Here it is the mechanical and rational processing of information or knowledge that receives central attention. According to Huber (1991, p.89) "*[a]n entity learns if, through its processing of information, the range of potential behaviours is changed*", and "*…an organization learns if any of its units acquires knowledge that it recognizes as potentially useful to the organisation*" (emphasis in original). Further he argues that "*…more organizational learning occurs when more of the organization's components obtain this knowledge and recognize it as potentially useful*"; "*…when more and more varied interpretations are developed…*"; and "*…when more organizational units develop uniform comprehension of the various interpretations*" (emphasis in original) (Huber, 1991, p.90).

The flows of exploration and exploitation of learning

Another example of the '*technical*' view is March (1991) who draws attention to the delicate tradeoffs between '*exploration*' of new possibilities and '*exploitation*' of existing certainties in organisational learning. Here choices need to made between gaining new information on alternatives which may improve future returns, and using existing information to improve the current returns (March, 1991). March (1991) describes a mutual learning process, suggesting that knowledge is stored by organisations in the procedures, norm, rules and forms, which accumulates over time through learning from individuals, and individuals are in turn socialised in the organisational beliefs or code.   March's (1991) work was applied by Crossan, Lane, and White (1999) in their 4I organisational learning process framework (Intuiting, Interpreting, Integrating, Institutionalizing), consisting of feed-forward ('*exploration*') and feedback ('*exploitation*') learning loops where learning is seen to "*flow*" between three levels – the individual, the group, and the organisation. The notion of learning "*flow*" was continued by Bontis, Crossan, and Hulland (2002) as well as Vera and Crossan (2004). Zietsma, Winn, Branzei, and Vertinsky (2002) extended the Crossan et al. (1999) model to include attending and experimenting. They also highlight official endorsement and joint sense-making are required in the integration of learning from the individual level to the organisational level through the institutionalisation processes.

Single-loop and double-loop individual learning

However, Argyris and Schon (1974) are also major contributors in the '*technical*' view (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999), concerned with the *cognitive* process within the *individual*, which may lead to a change in their potential behaviour.   Their original work related to individual learning that occurs in the human mind, and makes the distinction between an individual's '*espoused theory*' and their '*theories-in-use*' – that is between what people say they do and what they actually do. What people actually do ('*theories-in-use*') specifies an individual's governing variables (or values), and the priority of those variables. They go on to explain how these governing variables are maintained or changed through feedback loops similar to those used by a thermostat to control the temperature of a room. Argyris and Schon (1974) say that just like a thermostat controls the temperature at a predetermined setting, an individual may learn to adopt new techniques or strategies to accomplish their governing variables or '*settings*' ('*single-loop*' learning). Alternatively, the actual thermostat setting may be

changed by the householder, which is akin to changing the individuals governing variables or 'settings' ('*double-loop*' learning) (Argyris & Schon, 1974).

Single-loop and double-loop organisational learning

Argyris and Schon's (1978) later work made the bridge for application to organisational learning. For them, organisational learning involves detecting and correcting errors, and again used the analogy of a thermostat. Here the '*settings*' are the underlying norms, policies, and objectives within the organisation. '*Single-loop*' learning occurs when information feeds the error-detection-and-correction process, within the present norms, policies, and objectives of the organisation (Argyris & Schon, 1978). '*Double-loop*' learning takes place "…when error is detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of an organization's underlying norms, policies, and objectives" (Argyris & Schon, 1978, p.3). That is '*single-loop*' deals with problem solving while '*double-loop*' learning deals with why these problems existed in the first place (Argyris, 1990). The notion of '*single-loop*' and '*double-loop*' learning is also popular with managers and theorists, which is attributed to the concept being easily mapped to organisational change (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999). '*Double-loop*' is considered important as it is associated with more radical change (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999), and is necessary for organisations to evolve (Morgan, 2006).

Institutionalization: Single-loop learning in organisations

However, most organisations get stuck in single-loop learning systems and become proficient at this form of traditional learning that only serves to reinforce the status quo (Morgan, 2006) (see also Argyris, 1976). Organisations stick with what has worked in the past and cannot see that the world has changed (see Leonard-Barton, 1992 on "core rigidities"). This may be seen as '*institutionalization*', where patterns, routines, roles, language and knowledge develop through history to become accepted as common sense of everyday reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). An example of '*institutionalization*' was played out in Darabont's (1994) film "The Shawshank Redemption" in which a long-term prison in-mate became institutionalised to the harsh prison way of life and was unable to cope with reality in mainstream society when he was eventually released. Similarly people in organisations accept their current reality as *the* reality, and are pressured towards '*single-loop*' learning by an environment that encourages a 'top

down' approach to management and focus on clearly defined targets as a means of control, thereby developing an institutionalised approach to learning (Morgan, 2006).

The undiscussable, and its undiscussability is undiscussable

Argyris (1992) explains single loop learning and focuses on the control of the current operating system. Argyris (1992) says that individuals are socialised with a Model I theory-in-use, which creates an learning environment which reinforces a Model I theory-in-use. The Model I theory-in-use consists of four governing values, which are: to strive for unilateral control; maximise winning and minimise losing; minimise the expression of negative feelings; and being rational (Argyris, 1992). Argyris (1990) describes how these governing values leads to '*organisational defence routines*'. '*Organisational defence routines*' are described as "…actions or policies that prevent individuals or segments of organisations from experiencing embarrassment or threat" (Argyris, 1990, p.25). Consequently, organisations are unlikely to detect and correct errors, as individuals or segments of the organisation covered up the errors to save face, the cover up is then undiscussable, and its undiscussability is undiscussable (Argyris, 1980, 1990).

Top-down re-education: Coercive persuasion

According to Argyris (1990) the solution to this problem is to *re-educate* individuals in Model II theories-in-use, which consist of three governing values: valid information; informed choice; and responsibility to monitor and evaluate the implementation of that choice. Argyris (1990) says that this process must commence at the top and worked down the organisation in the same fashion as a cultural change program. However, Morgan (2006) argues that challenging basic operating systems and paradigms, such as "the machine", is difficult to achieve and more so for bureaucracies. Schein (1999a, 1999b) explains the problematic nature of changing operating systems using a top-down approach, describing such top-down cultural change programs in terms of '*coercive persuasion*', where people are forced to learn through a process of cognitive redefinition not dissimilar to that experienced by prisoners of war. That is employees are forced to conform to learn what managers want them to learn, as they see no alternative and face potential loss of job or career advancement (Schein, 1999b), or a poor performance review. Hence, even '*double-loop learning*' can involve coercion by managers.

Assumptions and difficulties

Therefore, while the traditional '*technical*' view of organisational learning has made an important contribution to our understanding of organisational learning, there are a number of assumptions and difficulties which are overlooked. For example, it focuses on the *formal* aspect of organisational learning and in doing so it assumes that we as managers can, should and need to control the learning agenda to ensure that organisational learning is effective in keeping pace with the changing environment and meeting organisational goals. This is highlighted in Senge's (1990) work on the five disciplines of the '*learning organisation*', and the role of leaders to build such an organisation[5]. This is also more recently suggested by Yeo (2007). However, it neglects that learning stored as knowledge, which some refer to at the 'stocks' of learning (Bontis et al., 2002), is often carried in the heads of people (de Geus, 1997; Kim, 1998) who can walk out at anytime (Handy in Penfound & Bradley, 1997).

It also assumes that we as individual managers are competent and capable of steering the learning agenda in organisations, which Morgan (2006) argues is problematic. Further it assumes that as managers we will use information in the best interest of the organisation, and not selectively to further our own vested interests (Hardy & Clegg, 1996; Diefenbach, 2009a). For example, Coopey (1994, 1995) argues that senior managers have preferential access to knowledge and understanding, and are in a position to use language to safeguard their prerogatives whilst ensuring obedience of other members.

It also overlooks the need for diversity in organisational learning and by restricting organisational learning to that already known by managers or "experts" it limits the scope of organisational learning and flexibility. In effect replicating what is known by the manager, thereby producing managerial clones. That is it replicates the view of reality held by managers not diversity. In organisations people may face cognitive redefinition and are forced to learn, as they see no alternative (Schein, 1999a, 1999b) or they want to be seen as good employees, desirous and competent for promotion

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[5] See also Senge et al. (1999).

(Aktouf, 1996). With the ambition to climb the corporate ladder, some managers who are tempted to play safe, conform and mirror the behaviour of senior managers (Coopey, 1998).

As such the '*technical*' view overlooks that people tend to learn what managers want them to learn. For example, Kleiner (2003, p.666) argues "…the core group in any organization is the focal point of organisational learning throughout the organization, because people act to fulfil the perceived needs and priorities of some key group of people". However, managers may not see the importance of other things being learnt, or are capable of being learnt such as values like tolerance or respect. Hence, focusing on the perceived needs and priorities of the core group may ultimately reduce an organisation's capacity if such other learning opportunities are ignored.

It neglects the fact that certain questions cannot still be asked by employees, particularly those that threaten the position of managers, thus tending to perpetuate the status quo in organisations (refer to Armstrong, 2003). This is particularly highlighted with Argyris's (1990) '*organisational defence routines*'. It also neglects to acknowledge that managers are the product of a larger social system that reinforces their position and authority to control the learning agenda (refer to Voronov & Yorks, 2005 for a discussion on this issue). And finally, it overlooks the importance of the '*social*' aspect of organisational learning, which highlights the informal nature of learning in organisations and draws attention to the fact that people can learn without management involvement (Gherardi, Nicolini, & Odella, 1998; Elkjaer, 1999).

2.2.2   As a social process

Informal social interactions

In addition to the '*technical*' perspective which focuses primarily on the management agenda of organisational learning, the literature also suggests that organisational learning may be seen as a '*social*' process. This perspective "…focuses on the way people make sense of their experiences at work", and accordingly see learning as

"…something that emerges from social interactions, normally in the natural work setting" (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999, p.4).   The importance of this perspective is that it shifts the focus from the *formal* process to the *informal* process of organisational learning, and how people make sense of the world through the social interaction between individuals and groups. It highlights that we do not just learn instrumental practices, but also values and various worldviews. It particularly draws attention to the way employees can and do learn without the involvement and guidance of managers, highlighting that organisational learning need not be the sole province of managers.

Lave and Wenger: Community of practice

For example, Lave and Wenger (1991) draw attention to the notion of learning as a '*situated activity*' ('*situated learning theory*'). This shifts the focus from the individual as a learner (that is learning as a cognitive process) to viewing learning as participation in a social world where meaning is produced and reproduced (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They use the term '*legitimate peripheral participation*' to describe the relationship between newcomers (apprentices) and old-timers (masters), and "…the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.29). Their work highlights how apprentices can learn from each other without the involvement of the masters. Lave and Wenger (1991, p.98) say that it is the community of practice that provides the potential '*curriculum*' for learning, defining it as "…a set of relations among persons…[where]…[t]he social structure of this practice, its power relations, and its conditions for legitimacy define possibilities for learning (i.e., for legitimate peripheral participation)".

Brown and Duguid: Community-of-communities

Brown and Duguid (1991) also see organisational learning as a '*social*' process, drawing attention to the significant learning that occurs in the informal communities-of-practice in which people work. They support the idea that learning is socially constructed, "…putting knowledge back into the contexts in which it has meaning…" (Brown & Duguid, 1991, p.47). Brown and Duguid (1991) suggest the need for the organisation to be reconceived as a community-of-communities, giving recognition to the many non-canonical communities within it. This concept gives recognition to the informal learning that occurs between individuals who rely on each other's stories which are not written in any corporate manual (Brown & Duguid, 1991).

Gherardi, Nicolini, and Odella (1998) also support the idea that learning can be seen as a social activity. They argue that "[i]f one applies a social perspective to learning, attention shifts from the processing of information and the modifying of cognitive structure to the processes of participation and interaction that provide and sustain the proper context for learning" (Gherardi et al., 1998, p.276). Gherardi et al. (1998) build onto Lave and Wenger's (1991) community of practice and the idea of a '*learning curriculum*', introducing the notion of '*situated curriculum*'. They describe the '*situated curriculum*' as the "…pattern of learning opportunities available to newcomers in their encounter with a specific community inside a specific organization" (Gherardi et al., 1998, p.280). Accordingly, they say that '*situated curriculum*' has a tacit nature and is one way that cultural and material knowledge is institutionalised within a community of practice (Gherardi et al., 1998).

Issues and problems

Organisational learning as a social process focuses on the *informal* aspect and the *social* context or '*learning environment*' (Rifkin & Fulop, 1997) of organisational learning, highlighting that useful organisational learning can be employee-driven and not reliant on managers to control the learning agenda. However, it does not address several issues and problems. In particular, it does not address the issue of unequal power relationships, and its impact on organisational learning. Organisational learning as a social process assumes that communities are equal, and that "…[p]articipation is always based on situated negotiation and renegotiation of meaning…" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.51). Consequently it rests on the assumption that participants have equal power when negotiating meaning. So, the opportunity may exist within a community of practice to openly question and learn within the narrow framework of an occupational need such as flute makers (Cook & Yanow, 1993). However, it is acknowledged that unequal relations in a broader organisational context needs to be given more systematic analysis (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In addition, a social approach to organisational learning does not address the issue of managers being in control of the formal learning agenda, and overlooks the extent to

which managers influence the interpretive process which defines the meaning for others. This research argues that a social approach misses the possibility that learning controlled by managers may result in a more compliant form of learning. Reference again can be made to Schein's (1999a, 1999b) work on '*coercive persuasion*', where people are forced to learn through a process of cognitive redefinition. That is the management of meaning is a form of control. Consequently it may not be to the organisation's advantage to facilitate more compliant learning rather than focus on developing a more authentic form of learning that expresses the diversity of organisational life.

It also assumes learning occurs across communities or sub-cultures. Therefore it overlooks that sub-cultures and/or occupational communities are not necessary aligned with one another or the organisation, and may act and hence learn in "dysfunctional" ways. Schein (1996, p.11) highlights that there are three major "occupational communities" or sub-cultures in organisations "…that do not really understand each other very well and that often work at cross-purposes". He suggests that organisational learning will continue to fail until cultures (or sub-cultures) recognise the different language and assumptions of other cultures, and treat them as valid and normal (Schein, 1996). This particularly highlights the breakdown in learning between managers and practitioners.[6]

However, one of the most important criticisms that has emerged concerns the assumption that employees have control over the learning process, and are free to explore any issue. Employees generally don't have a choice as managers pursue efficiency. Managers want to control the learning agenda because they want to ensure employees learn what the managers perceive as important to the organisation. There is the issue of accountability, in amongst a host of competing economic and political pressures. For managers "time is money". As such this may ultimately be a control and

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[6] Note Adlam (2002, p.17) suggests that there are different realities within policing organisations, particularly the "…substantial gap between the language of 'management' that is characteristic of the more senior ranks and the discourse of the rank and file 'front-line' service deliverer".

trust issue: do managers actually trust employees to discuss "relevant" issues; do they actually trust employees to be smart enough to come up with good ideas?

Hence, the '*social*' approach along with the traditional or '*technical*' approach overlooks the notion that organisational learning may be compliant because employees may not feel free to question organisational practises, or perhaps some but not others, thus tending to perpetuate the status quo in organisations. As a consequence some voices may be silenced in organisations whilst others may be heard based on their privileged positions (refer to Armstrong, 2003). Therefore a different perspective on organisational learning is needed: one that enables people's mind to be free; perhaps more '*emancipatory*'.

2.2.3   As a potential emancipatory process

Freeing from repressive social and ideological conditions

More recently, organisational learning has been considered as a potential '*emancipatory*' process (For example, see Armstrong, 2003; Bokeno, 2003a; Bokeno, 2003b; Durant & Cashman, 2003; Fenwick, 2003). Emancipation is suggested to be needed to adequately prepare people for "…the turbulent new century" (Dehier, Welsh, & Lewis, 2001, p.494). Alvesson and Willmott (1992, p.432) describe emancipation as:

> …the process through which individuals and groups become freed from repressive social and ideological conditions, in particular those that place socially unnecessary restrictions upon the development and articulation of human consciousness.

The raising of human consciousness suggests the potential for a higher order form of learning – such as *double-loop* and even *triple-loop* learning (Romme & van Witteloostuijn, 1999) – which is required for continuous self organisation (Morgan, 2006). However, Morgan (2006) notes that the idea of learning and self organisation may conflict with the realities of power and control associated with hierarchical organisations. For example, Fenwick (2003, p.630) says that current organisational

learning theory is "…essentially conservative, oriented to sustaining the prevailing power relationships by focusing on managers' and organization's interests rather than workers' interests, with vague or instrumental purposes and simplistic understandings of learning".   Armstrong (2003, p.29) suggests that the majority of people within organisations experience little that is emancipatory about the organisational learning process, and that organisational learning currently is a "…vehicle that perpetuates colonization…" of people's minds and energy.   Armstrong (2003, p.15) says that "…we devote our energies to further the goals of employers who have duped us (and who may be similarly duped) into striving for those goals, into identifying organisational goals as our goals".   This is supported by Argyris's (1992) account on how individuals are socialised into Model I theories-in-use in organisations, and by Schein's (1999a, 1999b) account of '*coercive persuasion*'.

Freeing the mind to think differently, to question more deeply, and to give more breadth and depth to alternatives

This research proposes that organisational learning as an *emancipatory* process is important for organisations because it opens the potential for freeing people's minds to think differently, to question more deeply the underpinning assumptions, and to give more breadth and depth to alternatives.   In essence, it supports an evolving process of change akin to Argyris and Schon's (1974) '*double-loop*' learning.   Its importance to organisations can be seen with a quote from Armstrong (2003, p.28) who says:

> Until we create a community whose foundation is built on a pedagogy of emancipation, organizational learning will continue as it is now: that is, as a vehicle that perpetuates colonization, the easy bondage, where no real questions need be asked because there are no genuine alternatives from which to choose.

This reinforces Morgan's (2006) concern that many organisations are stuck in the status quo or '*single-loop*' learning.   To borrow the terms of Argyris and Schon (1974), emancipation might be the '*espoused theory*' within organisations, but it is may not be part of their '*theories-in-use*'.

An employee-driven approach: The struggle to free themselves

The contribution of organisational learning as an *emancipatory* process is its employee-driven approach rather than a top-down management-centred approach[7]. From this perspective, employees are encouraged to engage in a '*struggle*' to free themselves (Freire, 1970), and thereby freeing the organisation from the status quo (Morgan, 2006). For example, Armstrong (2003, p.28) suggests that emancipation is a difficult '*struggle*', as it "…involves the breaking of the accepted, but colonizing, patterns of our lives". This is what Argyris (1990) was advocating, however he adopted a top-down approach of re-educating people in Model II theories-in-use. In contrast, the notion of '*emancipation*' is "…not a gift bestowed upon employees…" but "…involves an active process (or struggle) for individual and collective self-determination" (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992, p.433). This means that organisational learning from an '*emancipatory*' perspective cannot be a top-down strategy implemented by managers, irrespective of their best of intentions, but employees and managers must engage in a struggle together to free themselves.

Struggle implies resistance

While the notion of '*struggle*' implies resistance, a concept that managers are generally averse to, its importance and benefits for organisations cannot be understated. For example, a struggle implies that people care, hence an organisation without struggle may suggest people have withdrawn and/or are disengaged. For those that do care, they may <u>not</u> speak out. Armstrong (2003, p.21) says that when people threaten the status quo in organisations, "…their voices are silenced…" and "…forced underground", and such alternative voices are disciplined and kept in check by the dominant culture thereby constraining them to "…a defined, predictable pattern of activity, of learning and living". This is supported by research conducted by Janis (1982a) who looked at the intra-group dynamics in decision-making, and identified that a failure to engage in critical thinking by groups with high cohesiveness and striving for agreement and concurrence, leads to the potential for '*groupthink*' (Janis, 1982a). '*Groupthink*' is described as "…a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action" (Janis, 1982b,

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[7] For example, the '*learning organisation*' as advocated by Senge (1990).

p.9). Diversity rather than homogeneity in decision-making has been shown to be an advantage (see Surowiecki, 2004; also Sunstein, 2006).

In comparison to the scepticism of traditional organisational learning, an *emancipatory* perspective might offer something new to the debate. As mentioned in Chapter 1, and again alluded to above, the *emancipatory* perspective encourages me to make a distinction between '*compliant*' and more '*authentic*' organisational learning.

2.3   Exploring organisational learning: Compliant or authentic

The distinction between '*compliant*' and more '*authentic*' organisational learning is at the heart of the question posed by Easterby-Smith et al. (1998, p.269): "…are companies using the rhetoric of the learning organisation [and similarly organisational learning] to obtain *compliance* and commitment from employees, or does the idea represent a *genuine* attempt to establish *mutual partnership* in collective action learning?" (emphasis added). Similarly Coopey (1995, p.211) questions the genuineness of the traditional rhetoric, suggesting that "…those managements who realize its ideological potential will be able to make use of the prescribed language and practices to maintain their hegemony".

'*Authentic organisational learning*' is a bottom-up employee driven, locally situated and participative approach to learning, which emphasise the need for multiple and diverse realties of learning, focusing on the emancipation of all organisational actors. As such conflict is inevitable and even desirable; where consensus is a potential outcome of learning but not necessarily and not predefined or the target of management.

However, '*authentic organisational learning*' can be seen as a response to Huzzard and Östergren's (2002) argued re-conceptualisation of organisational learning. For them, such a new way "…is locally situated and participative…[where]…conflict is inevitable and even desirable; consensus, rather than being a prerequisite of learning, is a potential outcome of learning" (Huzzard & Östergren, 2002, p.S48) . '*Authentic organisational learning*' can be seen as a bottom-up intervention which

respects diversity, where "…consensus is not an *ex ante* prerequisite of learning and is not predefined or targeted by top management" (Huzzard & Östergren, 2002, p.S58). However, similar to critical or emancipatory action research, '*authentic organisational learning*' is not likely to be well received by managers within organisations, "…as an approach aimed at emancipation and empowerment, is a challenge to the existing social order and hierarchy" (Boog, Keune, & Tromp, 2003, p.424).

In contrast '*compliant organisational learning*' can be seen as traditional organisational learning, described as a "…top-down unitaristic blueprint" which emphasises shared vision and meaning, and consensus (Huzzard & Östergren, 2002, p.S58). Huzzard and Östergren (2002, p.S49) describes the type of organisation, which this thesis would suggest may facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*', where:

> The hierarchy is instrumental in coordinating organizational activities that, in turn, *are guided by a strong unitary ideology and rules that govern the behaviour of internal stakeholders*. The shared ideology has the effect of narrowing down the range of sensible decisions and thereby coordinates action in an instrumental fashion. In such contexts, an organisation cultivates a single perspective and a single idea of how both it and its environment functions" (emphasis added).

'*Compliant organisational learning*' may be seen as "forced learning", where there may be change in behaviour but not in cognitive understanding (Crossan et al., 1995). The cost of such traditional organisational learning is highlighted by Oswick, Anthony, Keenoy, Mangham, and Grant (2000, p.900) who say "…the convergent pursuit of an uncontested outcome (i.e. the 'right answer' or the solution) is at a price; some voices are silenced and, as a consequence, certain perspectives are marginalized while others are privileged". Vince (2001, p.1333) implicitly alludes to '*compliant organisational learning*', describing where "[a]n establishment seeks to contain learning so that it can be assimilated into existing organisational power relations, so that learning can be

> **'Compliant organisational learning'** is a top-down unitaristic blueprint towards learning, which emphasises shared vision and meaning, and consensus, focusing on a single corporate learning agenda. That is one corporate voice. Emphasis is on corporate direction for corporate benefit, whether exploiting existing learning or exploring new learning.

'exploited' as much as 'explored'". As such it implies the juxtaposition between organisation and learning, where "…learning is desirable, as long as it is learning that can in some way be 'managed', limited or controlled" (Vince, 2001, p.1333) .

In making the distinction between '*compliant*' organisational learning and that which is more '*authentic*' I should mention two points. Firstly, they are not pure dichotomy extremes with no interjacent positioning. Organisations are filled with multiple interactions between individuals and/or groups and the scope and degree of organisational learning is the outcome from the totality of those interactions. Hence, these terms represent part of a heuristic model only and are extremes on a continuum: blending in such a way that it would be impossible to say exactly where one finishes and the other begins. Therefore they cannot be seen as precise measures.

The second point, and perhaps similarly, relates to the use of the term '*authentic*'. When I use the term 'authentic' I am not meaning in an absolute sense. As even when there may be more '*authentic*' organisational learning, organisations (and managers) are still constrained by the system in which they find themselves (Haugaard, 2012). I also do not mean '*authentic*' in the sense of being a single or final "truth", or how things should or ought to be (Foucault, 1994c). However, I use the term to make the simple distinction from more '*compliant*' organisational learning. With concerns that organisational learning is being used as a disingenuous top-down management strategy to gain compliance, then a distinction must be made for a more genuine form of collective learning where everything is for the taking. In this sense I'm suggesting '*authentic organisational learning*' is the net result of multiple trajectories from multiple realities. Each trajectory of individual reality is derived from the social process of individual voicing their '*authentic*' learning derived from their own experience which they feel free to explore and voice (or not). In this way it may be seen more as an authentic 'care of the self' (Foucault, 1990): That is emancipation must come from the self and not imposed by others. The top-down granting or gifting approach to emancipation by others, no matter how well intentioned, is still more '*compliant*' learning: the net result more '*compliant organisational learning*'.

With the distinction made between '*compliant*' and '*authentic*' organisational learning, I explored the process that might lead to more '*authentic*' organisational learning.

2.4 Authentic organisational learning

2.4.1 Exploring meaningful dialogue

The literature reveals notions of '*reflection*' and '*dialogue*' as two fundamental processes of organisational learning. From these processes, I examined how they or their variations might facilitate the potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*'. Previous research shows that '*critical reflection*' differs from '*reflection*', and may be more conducive to an *emancipatory* perspective.

'Reflection': The individual side to organisational learning

'*Reflection*' is considered central to the organisational learning process (Bokeno, 2003a; 2003b) (See also Vince, 2002b; Hoyrup, 2004), and is primarily a process of learning that occurs within the mind of the individual (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985a).[8] The idea that '*reflection*' is the learning process at the individual level of analysis is highlighted in earlier writers such as Kolb (1976).[9] Kolb's (1976) work on the experiential learning model

> '*Reflection*' is primarily a learning process that occurs within the mind of the individual, as they recapture their experience – thinking, evaluating and mulling it over.

highlights that an individual's observation and reflection is based on their concrete experience that helps them to formulate theories, which they can test against new experiences. Later, Boud et al. (1985a, p.19) described '*reflection*' as:

> …an important human activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it…. In our view, reflection in the context of learning is a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations. It may take place in isolation or in association with others.

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[8] It is acknowledged that a group of individuals may collectively reflect on an event such as in a debriefing situation (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985b). However, an individual can reflect on his/her experiences without reference to any other person.

[9] Refer also to Schon (1983, 1987).

According to Boud et al.(1985b), it is only the individual learner who can reflect on their own experience. Our experiences condition our perceptions of events which shaped our responses to the world about us, and exactly how we are affected by our experiences is unknowable to others (Boud et al., 1985a).

'Critical reflection': An emancipatory perspective

From the *emancipatory* perspective, some organisational learning authors such as Bokeno (2003b; 2003a) and Fenwick (2003) highlight the need for '*critical reflection*', particularly to expose institutionalized constraints on learning (Bokeno, 2003a) and Model I norms that exist in organisations (Bokeno, 2003b). It is suggested that '*double-loop*' learning is accomplished through '*critical reflection*' on Model I norms or theories-in-use (Bokeno, 2003b). Vince (2001, p.1347) suggests that "*[c]ritical reflection* on what has become established provides a way out of self-limiting organisational dynamics" (emphasis added), and that changes in the 'establishment' "…involves inquiry into the power relations that characterize an organization as well as the identification of conscious and unconscious dynamics that guide the *internalization of the organization in the minds of its members*" (emphasis added). According to Vince (2001, p.1348) a "…'critical' approach to organisational learning is concerned with encouraging doubt about established habits, processes, assumptions and attachments", and that the "…focus of the approach is on the social rather than the individual, and therefore it pays particular attention to an analysis of power relations…".

'*Critical reflections*' is differentiated from other forms of '*reflection*' which can be instrumental and '*technical*' in focus, "…concerned with practical questions about what course of action can best lead to the achievement of goals or solutions of specific problems" (Reynolds, 1997; see also Reynolds, 1998). With its foundations in Critical Theory emanating from the Frankfurt School, '*critical reflection*'[10] is concerned with emancipation through questioning the subtle or invisible taken-for-granted assumptions

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[10] '*Critical reflection*' has its foundation in Critical Theory (Reynolds, 1998), more particularly in adult education (van Woerkom, 2004), and notable authors include Habermas (1987a), Giroux (1981), Kemmis (1985), and Hindmarch (1993).

which are usually not asked, analysing power relationships that are invariably asymmetrical, and a collective focus on the social, political and cultural processes with the view to changing them (Reynolds, 1997). Reynolds (1998)[11] highlights that '*critical reflection*' distinguishes itself from other versions of '*reflection*' in four ways, namely that it concerns itself with the questioning of assumptions; focuses on the social aspects rather than the individual; particular attention being given to the analysis of power relationships; and is concerned with emancipation. More specifically, Reynolds (1998, p.192) characterised '*critical reflection*' as:

> …questioning taken-for-granteds, both about practice and its social and institutional context…identifying and questioning both purposes, and conflicts of power and interest…relating the experience of work to wider social, political and cultural processes with the prospect of changing them.

Reynolds (1998, p.189) says that social domains such as management "…accumulate taken-for-granteds, beliefs and values reflecting the view of the majority or those in power so pervasively that they have become unquestioned 'common sense'". So, '*critical reflection*' involves questioning, and sometimes making moral evaluations rather than exercising technical or practical judgements (Reynolds, 1998). Individuals engaging in '*critical reflection*' may ask who is able to speak and who is silenced,

> **'Critical reflection'** is 'reflection' concerned with emancipation through questioning the subtle or invisible taken-for-granted assumptions which are usually not asked, analysing power relationships that are invariably asymmetrical, and a collective focus on the social, political and cultural processes with the view to changing them.

who is asking the questions and who is giving the answers, and perhaps more interesting where does this discussion take place (Reynolds, 1997).

With links to adult education, Mezirow (1998, p.186) says '*critical reflection*' on such taken-for-granted assumptions has a "…major potential for affecting a change in one's established frame of reference". The expectation habits making up our frame of reference heavily influence "[w]hat we perceive and fail to perceive and what we think

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[11] See also Reynolds (1999) for more details on the principles of '*critical reflection*'.

and fail to think…" (Mezirow, 1990, p.1).   Critical reflection is "…central to understanding how *adults learn to think for themselves* rather than act on the concepts, values, and feelings of others" (emphasis added) (Mezirow, 1998, p.185). Taking an *emancipatory* perspective to adult learning, Mezirow (1998, p.191) argues it is necessary to understand the central role played by '*critical reflection*': "[i]f *learning to think for oneself*…is essential in the world of work, in functioning as a citizen in a democracy, and in *making responsible moral decisions in fast changing societies…*" (emphasis added). '*Critical reflection*' being "…the function of thought and language that frees the learner from frames of reference, paradigms, or cultural canon (frames of reference held in common) that limit or distort communication and understanding" (Mezirow, 1998, p.191).   The cultural canons must be open to challenge through '*critical reflection*', "…so that a learner may avoid the tunnel vision of a particular canon" (Mezirow, 1998, p.197). Vince (2002b, p.74) suggests that "[t]he absence of a 'critical' form of reflection has, over time, led to entrenched organizational dynamics and established power relations that are now seen as 'normal' aspects of organizing". This is evident in Dehier et al.'s (2001, p.495) description of the command and control canon "…grounded in Weberian bureaucracy and Tayorlism evolved into a set of taken-for-granted assumptions underlying management orthodoxy".

'Dialogue': The social side to organisational learning

In addition to '*reflection*', as previously stated I explored the notion of '*dialogue*'. While '*reflection*', and hence '*critical reflection*', is the part of the organisational learning process that occurs in the human mind, '*dialogue*' is the social aspect of the process which occurs between individuals and/or between groups. '*Dialogue*' is often seen as bridging the gap between individual and organisational learning (Oswick et al., 2000), and is identified by many writers as necessary for learning (For example, Isaacs, 1993; Schein, 1993; Schein, 1995; Boreham & Morgan, 2004; Yeo, 2007). Some see '*dialogue*' as the key organisational learning process operating at the group level, linking the individual level to the organisational level (Crossan et al., 1999). Others argue that dialogue is "…critical to double-loop learning as it enables inconsistencies [between espoused theory and theory-in-use] to surface and be addressed" (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008, p.440).

'*Dialogue*' may be described as "…a discipline of collective thinking and inquiry, a process for transforming the quality of conversation and, in particular, the thinking that lies beneath it" (Isaacs, 1993, p.2). It is defined as "…a sustained collective inquiry into the processes, assumptions, and certainties that compose everyday experience" (Isaacs, 1993, p.2). Dialogue is considered central to organisational learning "…because it holds promise as a means for promoting collective thinking and communication" (Isaacs, 1993, p.5). More recently Isaacs (1999, p.9) describes dialogue as "…a shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together. It is not something you do *to* another person. It is something you do *with* people" (emphasis in original). Dialogue "…allows the evolution of shared meaning for the group" and it is through dialogue that "…the group can evolve new and deeper shared understandings. This shared meaning can cause those who have participated to more or less spontaneously make mutual adjustments to their actions" (Crossan et al., 1999, p.528 & 529). For some, dialogical exchange is connected with the development of new knowledge in organisations (Tsoukas, 2009).

> **'*Dialogue*'** is the social or group process that links individual learning to organisation learning. It involves the collective communicating, thinking and inquiry into the assumptions and certainties which compose everyday experiences and that can potentially transform the underlying thinking.

Although the concept of '*dialogue*' has been addressed in the learning literature by Isaacs (1993; 1999) as well as Schein (1993, 1995), it does not address why '*dialogue*' does not occur across organisational cultures as highlighted by Schein (1996). This research argues that the notion of '*dialogue*' does not address the idea of meaning and the subtle differences of meaning that can inhibit learning across organisational cultures (Schein, 1996). As such the literature seldom makes a distinction between the types of dialogue, and is often a term used interchangeably with conversation (Baker, Jensen, & Kolb, 2005). A recent exception is Mazutis and Slawinski's (2008, p.438) notion of *authentic dialogue*, which they describe as "…self-aware, balanced, and congruent and transparent dialogue which facilitates learning at and between multiple levels of the organization". They say

> …we introduced the concept of *authentic dialogue* as the type of dialogue that encourages the detection and correction of errors, encourages participants to be reflective and self-aware, to be open, honesty and balance in their accounts, to

continually monitor their expressions so that they are congruent with their values and beliefs and to communicate those values transparently (emphasis added) (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008, p.442).

However, it may be those very values and beliefs, although congruent and communicated transparently, that support and perpetuate the way things are in organisations, or the *existing order of things*. That is those values and beliefs reinforce the existing dominant values, beliefs, attitudes and norms within organisations resulting in single-loop learning rather than double-loop learning. What is needed is the type of dialogue that supports Mazutis and Slawinski's (2008) notion of authentic dialogue, consisting of open, honest and transparent exchanges, *but also have critical and liberating components*.

'Meaningful dialogue': An emancipatory perspective

In this research I introduce and adopt the notion of '*meaningful dialogue*', which encapsulates the notion of *authentic dialogue* whilst being a more '*critical*' and liberating form of dialogue. Freire (1970) suggests that a "[c]ritical and liberating dialogue…must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation", hence making the link to the idea of organisational learning as an *emancipatory* process. The concept of '*meaningful dialogue*', however, has not been addressed in the organisational learning literature. The term is used in society and by various writers in the context of understanding fundamental differences in attitudes, beliefs, values, norms, and assumptions, whether between diverse countries (Sullivan, 1996), between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (Wane, 2003; Kim, 2005), between various parties within organizations (Marsh & Macalpine, 1999; Williamson, Bright, & Parkin, 2001), or between various stakeholders (Bronn & Bronn, 2003).

'*Meaningful dialogue*' is the social aspect of the organisational learning process that is closely aligned with the notion of '*critical reflection*'. That is '*critical reflection*' is the foundation for '*meaningful dialogue*'. As such '*meaningful dialogue*' can be defined as dialogue, that is collective thinking, inquiry and reflection, that involves the questioning the dominant fundamental attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms in organisations. It is

these underlying attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that form our established frame of reference (Mezirow, 1998) or the *dominant ideology* in organisations. *Ideology* being defined as the "…set of principles upon which the political, social, and economic order of society is based" (Enteman, 1993, p.8). From the field of adult education, Brookfield (2005, p.41) described the Critical Theory view of *ideology* as "…the broadly accepted set of values, beliefs, myths, explanations, and justifications that appears self-evidently true, empirically accurate, personally relevant, and morally desirable to a majority of the populace". However, with the aim of encouraging "…*critical* back into *critical thinking*…[as an]…inherently political process" (emphasis in original), Brookfield (2005, p.vii & 41) encourages a focus on the notion of *dominant ideology* which he says functions "…to maintain an unjust social and political order…by convincing people that existing social arrangements are naturally ordained and obviously work for the good of all". As with '*critical reflection*', '*meaningful dialogue*' is congruent with a search for a new *ideology* for societies where "…the search involved the historically philosophical task of questioning unexamined assumptions…[where it is]…necessary to challenge not only surface theories but also the foundations on which those theories depend" (Enteman, 1993, p.xi). That is to question the *existing order of things* in society (Foucault, 1970): the social, political and economic order or *ideology* of society (Enteman, 1993). In essence, '*meaningful dialogue*' involves questioning the *existing order of things*.

> **'*Meaningful dialogue*'** is a particular '*dialogue'* aligned with the notion of '*critical reflection'*, and involves questioning the *existing order of things*: the dominant ideology or fundamental attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms in organisations and society.

As such '*meaningful dialogue*' fits other forms of collective inquiry. For example '*meaningful dialogue*' is similar to "emancipatory discourse" (Raelin, 2008). It is also a consistent with the notion of "…a free and open form of politics…" or "free political activity" (Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000, p.869), and could potentially be seen as a "new form of politics" in organisational life to address the "democratic deficit", giving "…much greater expression to the experience of 'rank-and-file' members…" (Coopey, 1998, p.365). '*Meaning dialogue*" might also be seen as being 'plurivocal' in nature, that is 'real dialogue' which is described as "…the dynamic and interactive process

through which dominant univocal accounts of 'organizational reality' can be undermined" (Oswick et al., 2000, p.900). '*Meaningful dialogue*' also fits with Vince's (2002b, p.74) notion of 'organizing reflection' which "…involves questioning established assumptions, bringing power relations into view, contributing to a shift from individual to collective reflection, and helping to create more democratic modes of managing and organizing".

With the notion of '*critical reflection*' from the literature and the reciprocal social aspect of '*meaningful dialogue*' introduced here, these two processes might bring us closer to understanding how more '*authentic organisational learning*' might be facilitated.

2.4.2 Exploring liberated learning space

But under what circumstances will '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*' take place? Clearly a space has to be created within which participants are able to question the *existing order of things*. By understanding the notion of '*learning space*' we may be better placed to understand the context for more '*authentic organisational learning*'.

Learning space: Physical or psychological

Many authors suggest that a '*learning space*' is necessary for organisational learning. For example, Phillips (1994) speaks of '*space*' and its connection to freedom, and freedom not just as separation but as coming together for common goals. According to Phillips (1994), '*space*' is where dialogue happens. Rifkin and Fulop (1997, p.137) suggest that a '*learning space*' is "…a space opened by a release of control by management and by a relaxation of privileging forces". For them, individuals have "…freedom to think and explore and to engage in uninhibited questioning of such things as managerial control" (Rifkin & Fulop, 1997, p.137). Coopey (1998, p.380) uses the term '*learning space*' (as does Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000), drawing attention to and citing Fulop and Rifkin as saying that a '*learning space*' is:

> …'likely to come in those episodes or moments when participants are able to accept that no view is a priori authoritative or true…there is a suspension of

truth or knowledge claims…managers have no claim to a privileged vantage point' and 'ideas such as "wrong-doing" are contested'….

In contrast to the connection with freedom, Sense (2005) applies the term '*learning space*' to a series of workshops conducted with managers, and interestingly, he reports that the "…participants seemed to yield to the perceived authority of the researcher within the workshops…" (Sense, 2005, p.187). This raises the issue of whether a '*learning space*' actually exists, like viewing a '*learning space*' as another name for a workshop (Sense, 2005), or the relational set up of chairs in a classroom (Vince, 2011), or whether it is a perception of the participants. That is, whether a '*learning space*' exists anywhere and at anytime where a participant feels free to raise issues, as oppose to the place and times the organisers or facilitators designate a workshop as a learning space. Some suggest that a 'space' does indeed exist in organisations (Armson, 2009).

'*Liberated learning space*': Psychological free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'

For the purpose of this research, the notion of '*learning space*' is viewed here as a perception, that operates at two levels. At the individual level, a person has a '*learning space*' if that person feels free to engage in '*reflection*'. At a social or group level, a person has a '*learning space*' if that person feels free to engage in '*dialogue*'. In this research I adopt the view that

> '*Learning space*' is an individual's perception about their freedom to think and speak. At a basic level a person has a '*learning space*' if he/she feels free to engage in '*reflection*' at the individual level, or '*dialogue*' at a social or group level.

it does not matter that a facilitator intends for a workshop to be a '*learning space*' if the person does not feel or perceive it to be a '*learning space*'.

With introducing the notion of '*meaningful dialogue*', in this research I also introduce the notion of a '*liberated learning space*' to define the context in which '*meaningful dialogue*' may occur. For the purpose of this research, a '*liberated learning space*' is viewed also as a

> '*Liberated learning space*' is a particular '*learning space*' where a person feels free to engage in '*critical reflection*' at the individual level, or '*meaningful dialogue*' at a social or group level.

perception that operates at two levels. At the individual level a person has a '*liberated learning space*' if the person feels free to engage in '*critical reflection*'. At a social or group level a person has a '*liberated learning space*' if that person feels free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. In this research I also adopt the view that it does not matter that a facilitator intends for a '*liberated learning space*' to exist, if the person does not feel or perceive that a '*liberated learning space*' exists. If the person does not feel that

> '*Managed learning space*' is a particular '*learning space*' opposite to a '*liberated learning space*' where a person does not feel free to engage in '*critical reflection*' at the individual level, or '*meaningful dialogue*' at a social or group level, whether self-managed or managed by others; however may feel free to engage in '*technical*' or '*consensual*' dialogue.

a '*liberated learning space*' exists, that is they do not feel free to engage in '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*', then the '*learning space*' is restricted or is a '*managed learning space*'. I adopt the notion of a '*managed learning space*' to denote that the space is somehow controlled, and despite its name it does not need management involvement. Such a learning space can in fact be self-managed, and in turn is restricted.

'*Consensual*' and '*technical*' dialogue

In this '*managed learning space*' people may feel free to engage in only '*technical dialogue*' and/or '*consensual dialogue*'. These terms have been adapted from Reynolds (1997; 1998) typologies of

> '*Technical dialogue*' (or '*instrumental dialogue*') involves collective thinking and inquiry that involves practical questioning towards the best course of action to the achievement of goals or the most effective and efficient solutions of specific problems.

'*reflection*'. In essence, '*technical dialogue*' (or '*instrumental dialogue*') is the collective thinking and inquiry that involves practical questioning towards the best course of action to achieving goals or the most effective and efficient solutions of specific problems. '*Consensual dialogue*' involves a <u>selective approach</u> to the collective thinking and inquiry, that reinforces the values chosen by management to epitomize the organisation's 'culture', aimed at developing a shared commitment to common purpose, through creating or generating a shared and common understanding or meaning.

The distinctive traces between these three forms of dialogue – '*technical*', '*consensual*' and '*meaningful*' – can be found in Habermas' (1984, 1987b) work on theory of communicative action: the ideal speech act. For example, more '*technical dialogue*' is aligned to '*action oriented to success*' which can be called '*instrumental*' or '*strategic*'. '*Instrumental*' is oriented towards following rules, and evaluated by the efficiency in dealing with the physical world (Roderick, 1986). '*Strategic*', also

'*Consensual dialogue*' is '*dialogue*' which involves a selective approach to the collective thinking and inquiry that reinforces the values chosen by management to epitomize the organisation's 'culture', aimed at developing a shared commitment to common purpose, through creating or generating a shared and common understanding or meaning.

oriented towards following rules, but is evaluated by the efficiency in influencing the decisions of potential opponents (Roderick, 1986). In contrast, more '*meaningful dialogue*' is aligned to '*action oriented to understanding*' or '*communicative action*': that is when social intercourse is not based on calculated success of individual actors but on mutual achievement of understanding (Roderick, 1986). Such situations are made meaningful through the theoretical possibility of ultimate agreement (Outhwaite, 1998). In negotiating and reaching an understanding through uncurtailed communication, "…no participant has a monopoly on correct interpretation" (Habermas, 1984, p.100). In contrast, '*consensual dialogue*' can be seen in '*consensual speech actions*', with the pursuit of understanding where communication can be disrupted:

> …if one party's right to perform the speech acts he performs is called into question, on the grounds, for example, that his role or status does not entitle him to do so, or that his acts contravene accepted norms or conventions, fall outside established relational patterns, are inconsistent with recognized values (McCarthy, 1984, p.289).

Thereby a '*managed learning space*' must exist if an individual engages in '*consensual dialogue*' due to their view that it is not their place to question beyond what is acceptable. It must be remembered that a '*managed learning space*' can be self-managed or restricted, suggesting that a '*liberated learning space*' requires psychological safety in order for more '*meaningful dialogue*' to occur.

Liberated learning space and psychological safety

Given the questioning of the *dominant ideology*, a '*liberated learning space*' would require a degree of psychological safety at the individual as well as the group levels (Edmondson, 1999; Wong, Tjosvold, & Jiafang, 2010). To engage in '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*' with others, may be considered potentially anti-foundational and anti- the system (Fulop & Rifin, 1997). "It is contended that the [learning space] emerges only when people in the organisation communicate in certain reflective and 'authentic' ways about information, experiences and feelings, with one of the key feelings being fear" (Fulop & Rifin, 1997, p.46). However, Vince and Saleem (2004, p.137) suggest that "…there remains an unwritten rule in many organizations that it is inappropriate to bring emotions to work". However, emotions such as fear of making mistakes can play a role in organisational learning, generating caution and blame (Vince & Saleem, 2004). In exploring the relationship between emotions and learning with managers, Vince and Saleem (2004) suggest that fear of making a mistake or getting things wrong makes individuals behave cautiously and act with self-protection, and blaming others or 'elsewhere' when they do. This in turn undermines the manager's ability to reflect through being too anxious and therefore too busy, which undermines the communications processes between levels (Vince & Saleem, 2004). It is suggested that "[w]hen we interact with others in groups we co-create emotional and political dynamics that shape and are shaped by the group's mutual activity" (Vince, 2011, p.335).

'Liberated learning space' and normalising pressure

Similarly, organisational pressure would impacts on the prevalence of a '*liberated learning space*'. Coopey and Burgoyne (2000) draw attention to the 'normalising pressures' in the broader society, which act to shape the values, beliefs, norms and structures within organisations, and to which all employees are susceptible including those at the apex such as CEOs and top executives. Such normalising pressures can be seen in the private sector to emanate from capital and financial markets which further focus on short term profits as a measure of company performance and their accountability to shareholders (Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000). Similarly in the public sector the normalising pressures emanate from the government's accountability to the broader community as a major collective stakeholder for sound fiscal management in

the delivery of services. Coopey and Burgoyne (2000, p.877) says the pressures from internal and external sources act to deny people their learning space, explaining that:

> …[the pressure] can inhibit the will and capacity of employees to communicate freely their representations of key experiences and associated emotions. As a result, people's accounts are censored and sanitised, a process that, potentially, acts to stunt the growth of all their identities, and to preclude opportunities to learn about colleagues, themselves and the organisation.

'Liberated learning space' and trust

It is argued here that the *'liberated learning space'* requires "…a sense of confidence that [others in the group] will not embarrass, reject, or punish someone for speaking out", which "…stems from mutual respect and trust amongst [group] members…in which people are comfortable being themselves" (Edmondson, 1999, p.354). This could make the difference between speaking up being viewed as natural or as a last resort (Edmondson, 1999).

Therefore, the role of trust cannot be underestimated for a person to have a *'liberated learning space'*. Trust is considered "…fundamentally a psychological state" involving "…a state of perceived vulnerability or risk that is derived from the individuals' uncertainty regarding the motives, intentions, and prospective actions of others *on whom they depend*" (emphasis added) (Kramer, 1999, p.571). Similarly it can be defined as "…one's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favourable, *or at least not detrimental to one's interests*" and "…acts as a guideline influencing one's interpretation of social behaviors within a relationship" (emphasis added) (Robinson, 1996).

Coopey (1998, p.366) talks about a lack of trust as a crucial deficit in organisations, and suggests "…the ideology and practices that constitute management tend to undermine the foundation on which trust is built…". Coopey and Burgoyne's (2000, p.873) draw attention to Fulop and Rifkin's work on a *'learning space'* "… within which trusting relationships can flourish such that people lose the fear of revealing themselves to others and are more prepared to move from entrenched positions".

In summary, this thesis argues that '*liberated learning spaces*', where people feel free to question the *dominant ideology* or *existing order of things*, are necessary for more '*authentic organisational learning*'. It would appear that '*liberated learning spaces*' are depended on a number of factors such as psychological safety, normalising pressure, and trust. This thesis argues that central to these factors is power, particularly asymmetrical relationships. This thesis argues that the '*liberated learning space*' happens when people feel free to deal with 'uncomfortable knowledge' such as threats to the existing structures and power relationships (Vince, 2002a). If people feel free to question the *dominant ideology*, then one could image that they would be feel free to question anything, which must lead to a deeper and boarder learning across a range of alternatives, and not just sticking with what is already "known". Whether it does remains to be seen, but ethically an *emancipatory* approach must be in everyone's interest. It is at this point in this chapter that I move from the organisational learning literature to the power literature.

2.5   Exploring power

In organisational settings, the key factor which distorts communicative interaction and which might suppress a critical form of dialogue, are the asymmetrical relationships in power between managers and staff. However, as detailed in Chapter 1, while there is acknowledgement that power relationships may facilitate or inhibit organisational learning (Vince, 2001; Contu & Willmott, 2003; Huzzard, 2004; Ford, 2006), power is largely under discussed or addressed adequately (Blackler & McDonald, 2000; Vince et al., 2002; Ferdinand, 2004; Lawrence et al., 2005).

Hence, to understand the scope for '*authentic organisational learning*', such as in policing organisations (the subject of study in this thesis), it is necessary to consider *power* in our everyday lives. Clegg, Courpasson, and Phillips (2006, p.1) argue, "…power is the most central concept in the analysis of organization(s) and organizing". Haugaard and Clegg (2009, p.1) describe the ubiquity nature of power and "…absolutely central to any understanding of society", yet "…arguably one of the most

difficult concepts to make sense of within the social sciences". Haugaard and Malesevic (2008, p.3) say "[p]ower is fascinating, enchanting, enabling, horrifying and human. More than anything else there is no social and political life without power". For Giddens (1984, p.283):

> The study of power cannot be regarded as a second-order consideration in the social sciences. Power cannot be tacked on, as it were, after the more basic concepts of social science have been formulated. There is no more elemental concept than that of power…. Power is one of several primary concepts of social science, all clustered around the relations of action and structure. Power is the means of getting things done and, as such, directly implied in human action".

"Fifty shades of power"

However, exploring the notion of power is a complex undertaking. Some say that since the 1980s, the debates on power have broadened and have developed in greater complexity (Gohler, 2009). The complexity is due to the lacks of unity (Haugaard, 2002) and the vast diversity between the thoughts and ideas of writers. For example, a collection of works highlight this point (Clegg, 1989a; Hardy, 1995; Scott, 2001; Haugaard, 2002; Clegg et al., 2006; Clegg & Haugaard, 2009), but they also assist researchers to navigate their way through the complexity. Clegg et al. (2006, p.6) suggest that as a result of this diversity and complexity in the literature on power, the '…ramifications for the study of organizations have remained largely unexplored". What's more, power has been considered an "essentially contested" concept (Lukes, 1974; Astley & Sachdeva, 1984), and judging from more recent literature is likely to remain *eternally* so (Haugaard & Clegg, 2009). Introducing a collection of writers, Haugaard and Clegg (2009, p.22) make the point that there is "…no single correct interpretation of power…", and each of their respective concepts are:

> …conceptual tools, each of which enables the author in question to make sense of certain aspects of social life, presumably those aspects that most interest them and which they think most important, most powerful. If their usage brings clarity to the perspective the 'conceptual tool' is being used well; if the contrary, then their usage is poorly developed (Haugaard & Clegg, 2009, p.4).

Amongst the diversity, there are a number of identified debates or ways of looking at power. For example, between '*power to*' and '*power over*' (Morriss, 2002; Clegg et al., 2006; Gohler, 2009; Morriss, 2009); or '*consensual power*' and '*conflictual power*'

(Haugaard, 2002); or *causal* power and *social* power (Scott, 2001); or '*agency*' versus '*structure*' (Giddens, 1984; Layder, 1985; Clegg, 1989a; Dowding, 2008); or '*modernists*' and '*postmodernists*' (Haugaard, 2002); or '*mainstream*' and '*second stream*' (Scott, 2001), or '*functionalist*' (mainstream management) and '*critical*' perspectives (Hardy, 1995; Hardy & Clegg, 1996) and further a '*pragmatic*' perspective (Gordon, 2006; Gordon, 2009; Haugaard, 2009).

Functionalist, critical theorist, and pragmatist perspectives

While some of these debates will surface in the midst of this literature review, a few are worthy to mention upfront as they are no doubt relevant in this research to understand *how and why power relationships impact on 'authentic organisational learning'*. From the diverse literature Hardy (1995) makes the distinction, as does Gordon (2009), between mainstream management authors who have a *functionalist* approach to power, and those who view power from a *critical* perspective. *Functionalist* writers focused on *authority* as legitimate power evident as normal, natural and inevitable in the hierarchical formal structural design of the organisation (Hardy, 1995). From this perspective "…authority is legitimate and power is illegitimate" (Gordon, 2009, p.256). In contrast, the *critical* perspective views power as *domination* and action to challenge such domination constitutes *resistance* (Hardy, 1995). However, the *functionalist* literature views resistance as being without just cause and therefore anyone who dare challenges such natural power would be viewed irrational, irresponsible, and blatantly subversive (Hardy, 1995; see also Hardy & Clegg, 1996). That is, power in hands of managers pursuing organisational goals is *functional* and therefore 'good', while *dysfunctional* in the hands of those challenging organisational goals and promoting their self-interest and therefore 'bad' (Hardy, 1995) (for example, see Mayes & Allen, 1977). In more recent literature, there is the *pragmatist* perspective "…concerned with studying 'how' power actually *is* in a social system" (emphasis added), rather than the rational ideals of the *functionalist* or the democratic ideals of the *critical* theorist on how power should be in the system and who should have what amount (Gordon, 2009, p.265). Gordon (2009) suggests Machiavelli, Nietzsche and Foucault write from the *pragmatist* perspective.

Reasons for studying power: Practical, moral and evaluative

The distinction between the *functionalist*, the *critical* theorist, and the *pragmatic* perspective, has some relationship to reasons for studying power. Morriss (2002) suggests three contexts for understanding the need for the concept of power: *practical*, *moral* and *evaluative*. The *practical* context is to help us to know our own power and that of others. Machiavelli's (2010) work *The Prince* is an example of this context, developed as a guide for a prince during the 16th century to provide insight into the nature of power. As such, Machiavelli is considered a founding voice of the *pragmatic* perspective (Gordon, 2009). Functionalists are also concerned with the *practical* context. In contrast, the *moral* context is the assigning of responsibility or blame to individuals or groups, while the *evaluative* context is not about the blaming of people but evaluating the social system. That is judging a particular society say for example in terms of freedom, justice and equality (Hayward & Lukes, 2008). *Critical* theorists are particularly interested in the *moral* and *evaluative* contexts.

'Power to' and 'power over'

Closely related to the perspectives and context for studying power, is the distinction between '*power to*' (do something or bring something about) and *power over*' (someone else or some issue) (Morriss, 2002; Clegg et al., 2006; Gohler, 2009; Morriss, 2009). Morriss (2002) relates this to distinction between '*effect*' and '*affect*' of power, the former meaning an ability to make something occur, and the latter meaning the impact on others. Similarly, Gordon and Grant (2005) contrast '*power-as-strategy*' (which relates to '*power to*') with '*power-as-entity*' (relating to '*power over*'). In this sense, '*power to*' may be seen as more positive, favourably, empowering and creative, focusing on power as an enabler or facilitative, while the '*power over*' perhaps more negative, constraining and antagonistic (Clegg et al., 2006) and only conceivable in social relationships (Morriss, 2009). Haugaard (2002) prefers the terms '*consensual*' and '*conflictual*' power respectively, thus links to some degree with the '*functionalist*' and '*critical*' theorist perspectives. The former being productive; the latter being repressive (Morriss, 2009). However, Morriss (2002) argues that even '*power over*' can be phrased as '*power to*'. For example, this research is concerned with the *power to* engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' in organisations, and the *power to* facilitate or inhibit that occurring. However, the '*power to*' do something can result in having '*power over*' someone. For example, a judge holds office and is granted power through legislation,

having the *power to* incarcerate thereby restricting a person's freedom, hence the judge has *power over* the otherwise 'free' citizen. In this sense, '*power to*' precedes '*power over*' (Benton, 1981; Haugaard, 2012), and defines the prerequisites for power relationships (Morriss, 2009). In addition, Hayward (2000, p.24) suggests "…to study and understand "power over", one must attend to the social distribution of "power to"". The social distribution of '*power to*', and thus the '*power over*' others, is the contentious issue in the *pluralist / elitist* debate on power. It is also implicit in the way key authors have addressed the *four dimensions* of power, which might be useful here in the analysis of power relationships.

2.6   The four dimensional view of power

In the diverse literature key authors have addressed power from different perspectives, which when combined have created the '*four dimensions*' (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998) or '*four faces*' of power (Digeser, 1992). In this thesis I will now focus on each of these dimensions as a model of analysis for power relationships, before moving to a model of power relationship for this research.

2.6.1   First-dimension of power

Dahl's 'pluralist' community perspective

A frequent starting point amongst the diversity is at the *agency* level of analysis, and focusing from a *functionalist* perspective. Scott (2001, p.6) described the *mainstream* tradition of power which "…has been principally concerned with the episodically exercised power that one agent has *over* another" (emphasis added). Within this stream is Weber's (1962, p.117) definition of power as the "…opportunity existing within a social relationship which permits one *to* carry out one's own will even against resistance and regardless of the basis on which this opportunity rests" (emphasis added).[12] Similarly, Dahl (1957, p.202 & 203) provided a definition of power whereby "A has power *over* B to the extent that he [sic] can get B *to* do something that B would not otherwise do" (emphasis added), and where the actors in the relationship may be

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[12] As Morriss (2002) suggested, this is actually '*power over*' described in terms of '*power to*'.

"…individuals, groups, roles, offices, governments, nation-states, or other human aggregates". Dahl (1957, p.203) said "[t]he base of an actor's power consists of all the resources – opportunities, acts, objects, etc. – that he can exploit in order to affect the behaviour of another".

Lukes (1974, p.15) described Dahl's approach as the '*one-dimensional*' view of power, which "…focuses on *behaviour* in the making of *decisions* on *issues* over which there is an observable *conflict* of … *interests*, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation" (emphasis in original). Here the assumption is that in society there are various policy preferences regarding a particular issue, and that individuals will engage in open conflict to debate the issues highlighting the 'fors' and 'againsts', weighing up the 'pros' and 'cons', looking at the 'upside' and 'downside' of the various arguments. The assumption is that those with the best arguments on the issue will be able to convince others to vote with them on these policy issues. The assumption is that those with a view or an opinion on an express policy preference will participate in this political process. The *one-dimensional* view of power might explain relationships in a '*pluralist*' community involving a negotiated order in society, where various interest groups "…bargain and compete for a share in the balance of power…" (Morgan, 2006).[13] The negotiated nature of power suggests that no one individual or group has absolute power to dominate another continuously (Johnson & Gill, 1993).

Burns' transforming / transactional framework of power: Leadership

Dahl's *pluralist* notion of a capacity to get others to do something other than what they intended, is evident in Burns' (1978) work on political leadership. Burns' transforming/transactional framework as a leadership model is frequently cited in mainstream management literature, but is conspicuously absent from the power literature, but is implicit in the work of Giddens (1984) and Clegg (1989a), and is made reference to in Gordon's work (2006). Burns (1978) argued that '*leadership*' is a special type of power, and that all leaders are actual or potential power holders. However, he argued that power must be seen not as things, property or possession, or

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[13] Wrong (1968, p.674) referred this as *intercursive* power which "…exists where the power of each party in a relationship is countervailed by that of the other, with procedures for bargaining or joint decision making governing their relations when matters affecting the goals and interests of both are involved".

but as a *relationship* among people (Burns, 1978). Similarly, Clegg (1989b, p.99) suggested that there is a "…pervasive tendency to think of power as something, rather than a property of relations". Briefly, Burns (1978, p.4) described a '*transactional*' relation between leaders and followers, in which the "…leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another…" such as jobs for votes, and it is these *transactions* that "…comprise the bulk of the relationships among leaders and followers". This exchange and mutual adjustment between two parties in a power relationship was acknowledged by Crozier (1973). In contrast, '*transforming*' leadership is seen as more potent, whereupon the leader "…recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower…", and "…looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower" (Burns, 1978, p.4). Burns (1978, p.13) described the power process as one:

> …in which power holders (P), possessing certain motives and goals, have the capacity to secure changes in the behaviour of a respondent (R), human or animal, and in the environment, by utilising resources in their power base, including factors of skill, relative to the targets of their power-wielding and necessary to secure such changes.

French and Raven's power bases: In the perceptions of those subject to power

Burns' idea of political leaders involved in power relationships with followers and utilising resources in their *power base*, links with the work of French and Raven (1968). Some have called on managers to utilise power positively to survive and prosper, calling on them to "acquire" and skilfully "utilise" power bases (Benfari, Wilkinson, & Orth, 1986). French and Raven (1968) described five *bases of power* that they considered to be especially common and important – reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert – although acknowledging that there may be more (see also Raven, 1992). They "…defined power in terms of influence, and influence in terms of psychological change…which includes changes in behavior, opinions, attitudes, goals, needs, values, and all other aspects of a person's psychological field", and suggest the source of power or influence on a person "P" is in the relationship between "P" and a social agent "O", "…where O can be either another person, a role, a norm, a group, or part of a group" (French & Raven, 1968, p.260).

What is of particular importance here as reflected in their five bases, is that power is based in the life space of "P" particularly involving "P's" *perception* or perspective. For example, *expert* power is based on "P's" perception of the extent of "O's" expertise or special knowledge in an area; *reference* power is based on "P's" identification with "O"; *reward* power is based on "P's" perception that "O" can mediate rewards for "P"; conversely *coercive* power is based on "P's" perception that "O" can mediate punishment for "P"; and *legitimate* power is based on "P's" perception that "O" has a legitimate right to prescribe "P's" behaviour (French & Raven, 1968). The bases of power being bases on the perception of "P" also seems to add weight to or be congruent with the idea presented earlier in this thesis that a '*learning space*' is in the perception of the participant, not a physical place. If power is one of the key determinants of the learning space, then French and Raven's bases of power being in the perception of "P" adds weight to Rifkin and Fulop's (1997) notion of a '*learning space*' – that is one's freedom to think, explore and engage in uninhibited questioning – is also in the perception of "P".

In summary, the *first-dimension* of power focuses attention at the agency or individual level. It presupposes a *plural*, negotiated order of society where parties participate in observable conflict with others over issues in the decision-making process, much like an "arm wrestle". It assumes a level playing field. As such, in power relationships, political leaders endeavour to attract the support of "followers" as part of the negotiated process, and in turn draw on and utilise resources in their power base. The key to this dimension, as Lukes (1974) summed up, is that there is observable conflict over interests, where policy preferences are expressed and assumed through political participation.

2.6.2   Second-dimension of power

In understanding the impacts of power relationships on '*authentic organisational learning*', the '*one-dimensional*' view will only take the analysis so far. While the *pluralist* perspective accepts the legitimacy of the *decision-making* process by community leaders each utilising resources in their respective power base, it neglects or takes for granted the structural inequalities that place certain individuals in privileged

positions to make those decisions or to decide not to act (*non-decisions*). It is at this point that we can see emerging the *critical* perspective on power (Gordon, 2009). For example, in a recent documentary on poverty in the United States, Gibney, Beck, and Bolt (2012) take a *critical* perspective in revealing how the wealthiest top one percent of the United States resided in select locations such as 740 Park Avenue, Manhattan, New York, and how their wealth had grown exponentially since the 1980s while the remaining 99 percent of the country had only a modest increase. The remarkable growth was explained in terms of the wealthiest one percent effectively controlling the rules of the system. For example, they showed how two US billionaire brothers used their wealth to fund political campaigns, effectively influenced political decision-making such that more equitable tax reform was kept off the agenda thereby enabling them to maintain their privileged tax position.

Mill's power elite: Structural inequalities encroaching decision-making

Gibney et al.'s (2012) work is similar to the work of Hunter (1953) and Mills (2000), drawing attention to the notion of a '*ruling elite*'. Hunter (1953) studied leadership and power relations in "Regional City"[14] and firstly drew attention to the inequalities in the living and working standards between the policy or decision-makers in the community and the other community members, and secondly, showed that the Council only represented the narrow interests rather than representing the whole community. The bulk of the community, "the silent group", did not have a voice in policy determinations (Hunter, 1953). It was evident that economic and social rankings were a key in the decision-making platform. Similarly, Mills (2000) in his work *The Power Elite*, first published in 1956, suggested that major national power within American society resides within the economic, the political, and the military domains, and that it is the people (men) who occupy pivotal positions at the pinnacle of major hierarchies and organisations within those domains, who are the power elite within "contemporary" society. He suggested that there was interconnectedness within the "higher circles" within these domains, and a gradation of power within the respective institutions under those domains. That is not to say that the powerful are acting in unison or in a conscious conspiracy, but the members of the top social stratum know and see one another, take the views of one another into consideration, and appreciate that their separate interests can be realised if they work collaboratively. In Mills' work, he

articulates how the power elite hold key positions within local society and are able to decide on important community issues, and are able to move easily between roles in the top level from one institution to another.

In response, Dahl (1958) called for more rigorous testing to establish the existence of such a group, however in subsequent work, Dahl (1961; see also Haugaard, 2002) acknowledged unequal distribution of power but still maintained his *pluralist* perspective that there was no single ruling elite. While Dahl may be right, the ruling elite argument alerts us to the way in which dominant groups may control the decision-making agenda: that is, what decisions are made and what fail to get made or even reach the agenda. In suggesting that such decision-making can have major consequences for ordinary men and women, Mills (2000, p.4) said "Whether they do or do not make such decisions is less important than the fact that they do occupy such pivotal positions: their *failure* to act, their *failure* to make decisions, is itself an act that is often of greater consequence than the decisions they do make" (emphasis added).

Bachrach and Baratz's second face of power: Agenda control – confining to 'safe' issues preventing others from being raised

The failure to act or decide by key decision-makers draws attention to a so called *second* face or dimension of power, which may further assist in the analysis of power relationships bearing on '*authentic organisational learning*'. Lukes (1974, p.57) points out the '*one-dimensional*' view of power is "…blind to the ways in which its political agenda is controlled", which is better captured by the *second-dimension*. The '*two-dimensional*' view of power includes the *first-* (where there is concrete decisions and observable conflict), but includes '*nondecision-making*'[15], or the suppression or prevention of decision-making on potential issues on which there is observable conflict (Lukes, 1974). Here Lukes (1974) draws attention to the work of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who argue that there is a *second face* of power where the scope of the decision making process is confined to relatively '*safe*' issues. They describe how power is exercised when "…A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public

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[14] A pseudonym for a city of half a million people, assumed in the United States of America

consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A" (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962, p.948). In a footnote they make the distinction between the two faces saying that in the first case "…A openly participates; in the other he participates only in the sense that he works to sustain those values and rules of procedure that help him keep certain issues out of the public domain" (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962, p.948). Bachrach and Baratz (1970, p.18) describes this *second* face of power as "…the practice of limiting the scope of actual decision-making to "safe" issues by manipulating the dominant community values, myths, and political institutions and procedures". They say:

> Political systems and sub-systems develop a "*mobilization of bias*", a set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals, and institutional procedures ("*rules of the game*") that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups at the expense of others. Those who benefit are placed in a preferred position to defend and promote their vested interests. More often than not, the "*status quo defenders*" are a minority or elite group within the population in question (emphasis added) (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970, p.43).

An example of this *second-dimension* of power may be managers in organisations who, unlike power relationships in a '*pluralist*' community negotiating political interests, rely more on their legitimate power to restrict dialogue to themes which reinforce managerial prerogative and other dominant managerial attitudes, beliefs, values and norms. By doing so managers are able to control the learning agenda, where "…B is prevented, for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A's set of preferences" (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962, p.948). Bachrach and Baratz (1970, p.44) suggest that *nondecision-making* is the main method to sustain a particular *mobilisation of bias*, which "…is a decision that results in suppression or thwarting of a latent or manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision maker".

The most direct, extreme and perhaps unlikely, but not something impossible, in organisations is the use of force to prevent "…demands for change in the established order from entering the political process" (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970, p.44). However,

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[15] Note: Bradshaw (1976) prefers the term '*decision to neglect*', as oppose to *nondecision-making*.

still direct is the use of power through the threat of sanctions including intimidation, potential deprivation of potential reward or something of value, or the reminders of illegitimate sanctions such as being dismissed from employment if the dominant values are called into question (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). Less direct biases in the political system where issues may be denied legitimacy because they are in violation of established norms, practices or rules; or the "…reshaping or strengthening the mobilization of bias in order to block challengers to the prevailing allocation of values"; or "…where B, confronted by A who has greater power resources, decides not to make a demand upon A for fear that the latter will invoke sanctions against him" (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970, p.46). Bachrach and Baratz (1962, p.949) said, "…to the extent that the person or group – consciously or unconsciously – creates or reinforcers barriers to the public airing of policy conflicts, that person or group has power".

In summary, the *second-dimension* of power also focuses attention at the agency or individual level. However, it disputes the pluralist idea of a negotiated order of society where parties participate in observable conflict with others over issues in the decision-making process. Instead it draws attention to '*nondecision-making*' and agenda control: that is the way in which those in privileged positions may control the agenda and thereby suppress issues. They may keep issues off the agenda confining it to only *safe* issues.

2.6.3 Third-dimension of power

Lukes: The socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups and practices of institutions.

In contrast to the *agency* level of decision-making and nondecision-making (*first-* and *second-dimensions* of power), power relationships can be analysed from deeper, broader and more subtle social structured and cultural aspects of groups or institutions. Lukes (1974, p.23) describes this '*third-dimension*' of power as the supreme *exercise* of power, explaining that A may exercise power over B "…by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants… that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts or desires…". According to Lukes (1974, p.22) this '*third-dimension*' is

sustained by "…the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions, which may indeed be manifested by individuals' inaction". With the '*three-dimensional*' view of power, Lukes (1974) is not only referring to the individualistic approach of the first two dimensions focused on decision-making and nondecision-making, but also draws attention to the cultural and social forces and institutional practises. These may *prevent conflict from arising in the first place on potential issues* that may not be questioned, and therefore potential conflict remains but may never be actualised. Unlike the previous two conception of power where there is overt or covert conflict, the third more 'radical' conception of power suggests that "…power *could* be exerted even if *B* consciously wants to do what *A* desires" (emphasis in original) (Digeser, 1992, p.979). Here Lukes (1974) is referring to *latent* conflict which may <u>not</u> be observable, such as where *B* consensually goes along *against* his/her '*real interest*'. Lukes (1974) pointed out that the *pluralist* assumes individual interests are captured in policy preferences on issues, and do not account that such interests might be unarticulated or unobservable due to a lack of conflict, or the possibility that people may not know or are mistaken of their '*real interest*' – that is *false consciousness* (see also Marcuse, 1964; Marx & Engels, 1974). Lukes (1974) said that the wants of people may be the product of the system that goes against their '*real interest*' which they would prefer or want if they were able to make an autonomous choice.

At the time Lukes' (1974) work was described as "controversial" particularly in respect to the notion of *real interest* and *false consciousness*, and as such his work was subject to criticism (Bradshaw, 1976; Benton, 1981), attracting a subsequent response from Lukes (1976). In a second edition, Lukes (2005) reproduces the first as an entire chapter, and seeks to clarify and defend the *third-dimension* of power. This new edition attracted further attention (Dowding, 2006; Hayward, 2006; Hindess, 2006; Morriss, 2006; Shapiro, 2006) to which Lukes (2006) further acknowledged and responded. However, Lukes' (1974, 2005) work is recognised as making a significant contribution to the American power debate (Hindess, 2006), providing important insight for the study of power (Hayward, 2006), being enormously influential (Dowding, 2006), and a widely read piece of work (Morriss, 2006). For it is this *third-dimension* that exposes the power exercised as a "…false or manipulated consensus by definitional fiat", which:

…prevents people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they *accept their role in the existing order of things*, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial (emphasis added) (Lukes, 1974, p.24).

It is at this point that Scott (2001) marks the commencement of the *second-stream* of power, diverging from the tightly define *mainstream* focused episodic power of one agent *over* another. Instead, focusing on strategies and techniques of power, the *second-stream* sees power as "…diffused throughout society…", and being "…the collective property of whole systems of co-operating actors, of the fields of social relations within which particular actors are located" (Scott, 2001, p.9). Scott (2001, p.9) included Gramsci (1971, 1994) as a key figure in the development of this stream, whose work on the concept of *hegemony* drew attention to "…a mechanism of power through which a dominant class can secure the *consent* of subaltern classes without the need for any direct use of coercion or repression" (emphasis in original). Recently, Haugaard (2009) scopes the power literature to make explicit the ideas and themes that have "…strong resonance with the Gramscian concept of hegemony", which includes Lukes (1974, 2005) as well as Foucault, Clegg (1989a), and Hayward (2000). It is these later three authors that tend to take a more *pragmatic* perspective on power.

Hayward's de-facing power: Network of social boundaries that limits fields of possible action for everyone

Hayward (2000, p.26) distinguishes her work from what she calls "power-with-a-face", that is the so-called *three dimensions* of power including Lukes' "…hegemonic control over the beliefs and preferences of the powerless" by the powerful. Instead *de-facing* power is proposed "…by reconceptualizing it as the network of social boundaries that limits, *for all*, fields of possible action", rather than as instruments possessed or used by some actors (emphasis added) (Hayward, 2000, p.27). It is these social boundaries, or power's *mechanisms*, that define what is possible and facilitate and constrain the social actions for *all* social actors, albeit not necessarily equally (Hayward, 2000). Here the focus is <u>not</u> on the "powerful" that may be subject to criticism and held responsible as suggested by Lukes, but on the political *mechanisms* which consists of relevant *practices*, and the *institutions* that govern and sustain such practices. By de-facing

power, Hayward (2000, p.38) suggests it "…expands the field of what researchers might study to include any significant restriction on the social capacity to act upon boundaries defining relevant practices and institutions". Hayward (2000, p.38) explains the terms *practices* and the *institutions*:

> By *practice*, I mean a complex of social boundaries to action that, together, define an end or set of ends; standards, such as standards of ability, character, or achievement; and a community, group, or other collectivity of individuals who pursue these ends and who accept, adhered to, and/or are measured against these standards.

> By *institution*, I mean a system of laws, procedures, norms, routines, and other boundaries that determine and distribute rights, duties, sanctions, and rewards, including material rewards, public recognition, and status.

A key difference between Lukes (1974, 2005) and Hayward (2000) is the issue of *responsibility*, what Morriss (2002) suggests is the *moral* context for needing the concept of power. This raises the argument of *structure* versus *agency*. That is, how much of the powerless' plight can be predicated to agency and how much to the collective actions that structure behaviour (Dowding, 2008). Taking a structuralist position in reconceptualising power as the network of social boundaries consisting of the practices and institution that constrain and enable, Hayward (2000) takes a more *evaluative* approach (Morriss, 2002) to judging the social system or structure rather than laying blame at any one particular agent. In contrast, on the issue of responsibility Lukes (2005, p.68) says "…the powerful will include those who both contribute to and are in a position to reduce or remedy others' powerlessness. Where this is not feasible, we encounter structural limits to power". Despite taking a structuralist approach, Haywood (2006, p.156) maintains that even though "…no identifiable agent or agents can be held *morally* responsible for creating a given relation of domination, those actors whose actions helped produce that relationship are obligated to attempt to understand and to change it" (emphasis added). Lukes (in Hayward & Lukes, 2008, p.12) acknowledges that "[h]uman agents, whether individuals or collectivities, have power or are powerful within structural limits, which enable and constrain their power". Further that power can be attributed to agency when it is within their power to do otherwise, however "…[i]f they are so structurally constrained or determined that they are unable

to act otherwise than they do, then they are powerless to do so, and so they are powerless, not powerful" (Lukes in Hayward & Lukes, 2008, p.12).

In summary, the *third-dimension* of power in beyond the agency level of decision-making (*first-dimension*) and nondecision-making or agenda control (*second-dimension*), and moves into the area of thought control. It is the *third-dimension*, according to Lukes, which secures compliance through controlling the thoughts and desires of people. It is sustained by "…the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions…" (Lukes, 1974, p.22). The dispute between Hayward and Lukes (2008) on the issue of responsibility – where Hayward (2000, p.38) is incline to expand the field to the political *mechanisms* that includes the institution that may restrict the social capacity of *everyone* to act – points to a deeper, broader, and more subtle *fourth-dimension* which exposes power in the historical development of the system.

2.6.4   Fourth-dimension of power

Foucault's making of human beings as subjects: The historically social construction of humans

The historical and systemic nature of power which *everyone* is subjected to, albeit to varying degrees, raises the possibility of a still deeper, broader, and more subtle '*fourth-dimension*' (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998) or '*fourth face*' of power (Digeser, 1992). Some say that the *fourth-dimension* takes the *third-dimension* of power one step further (Digeser, 1992), while in Lukes' (2005) later work he questions the suggested ultra-radical view of power, arguing that the *fourth-dimension* of power is part and parcel of the *third-dimension*. Both have been linked to the notion of hegemony (Mumby & Stohl, 1991; Hardy & Clegg, 1996; Lukes, 2005). However, the distinction of the *third-dimension* of power has been seen "…as a property of dominant persons, groups (and especially) institutions…" (Knights & Willmott, 1989, p.541). Advocates of the distinction between the two, suggest that in this '*fourth-dimension*', in which "…power is embedded in the very fabric of the *system*; it constrains how we see, what we see, and how we think, in ways that limit our capacity for resistance" (emphasis in

original) (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998, p.460). Unlike the '*third-dimension*' of power where A may *exercise* power over B "…by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants… that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts or desires…" (Lukes, 1974, p.23), with the '*fourth-dimension*' "…both A and B are part of a system that prevails over both of them…" (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998, p.461). While the power relations embedded in the system may operate to advantage certain actors, both actors can neither escape nor control such relationships (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998) (see also Hardy & Clegg, 1996). The inescapability of this *fourth-dimension* of power is argued on the basis that it is always present in the practices and interactions between people who are the 'vehicles' of power, perpetuated through the participation in discourse and norms, which "…marginally forge the character of individuals" (Digeser, 1992, p.984). Mumby and Stohl (1991, p.316) say:

> To the extent that discourse structures the identities of social actors, we can say that power is not merely interdictive or restrictive, but actually plays a productive role in the construction of social reality. In this sense, power is viewed as institutionalized and hence constitutive of normal, routine, organisational practices.

The foundations of this '*fourth-dimension*' emanate from the work of authors such as Foucault (1977, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1990, 1994a). It is suggested that Foucault did not integrate his voluminous work into a "…single and systematic theoretical statement, making it difficult to summarise his general ideas in a clear and consistent form" (Scott, 2001, p.93). Remarkably Morriss (2002) goes as far as to suggest that Foucault does not address power. However it is clear that for Foucault, it is "knowledge" that cannot be dissociated from power (Downing, 2008). Within the three phases of Foucault's work – the 'archaeology'[16], the 'genealogy'[17], and the 'care of the self'[18] – power is only explicitly addressed in the genealogy phase but is more implicit in the other two

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[16] The "archaeology" phase consists of "The Order of Things" (1970) among others (see Haugaard, 2002; Gordon, 2006).

[17] The "genealogy" phase consists of "Discipline and Punish" (1977); "Power/Knowledge" (1980); and "The Will to Knowledge" (The History of Sexuality Volume 1) (1981) (see Haugaard, 2002; Gordon, 2006).

[18] The "care of self" phase consists of "The Use of Pleasure" (The History of Sexuality Volume 2) (1985) and "The Care of the Self" (The History of Sexuality Volume 3) (1990) (see Haugaard, 2002; Gordon, 2006).

(Haugaard, 2002). For example, attention is drawn to the 'care of self' phase, being the latter two of his three volumes on the history of sexuality, only a small part of his intended writing on the subject (Downing, 2008). There Foucault (1985, 1990) leads us through classical ancient Greek and Roman philosophical texts to reveal the historical and broad spectrum of influences on the life of a subject in the form of "knowledge" that may vary from one culture and one era to another. It is these text or "knowledge" that provides people with guiding principles on sexuality, such as the best seasons of the year or diet for copulation. However, Foucault himself acknowledges that his work has not been aimed at analysing power per se, but to "…create a history of the different modes by which human beings are made subjects" (Foucault, 1982, p.208). That is "[s]ubjects are understood as social constructions, whose formation can be historically described" (Digeser, 1992, p.980).

Consequently, with the implicit nature of much of his work, a detailed analysis of the intricacies of the entire Foucault collection is not possible here. Here only brief commentary on aspects of his work as it relates to power is provided, particularly drawing attention to the implications that the co-called *fourth-dimension* has for Critical Theory and the three dimensional view of power.

As a general statement, Foucault's work does demonstrate power relationships that evolved over several centuries from the historical development of society and the state, and are imposed on <u>all</u> individuals who therein internalise the power and discipline themselves toward what is acceptable or considered 'normal'. More particularly, it is his first volume in the history of sexuality – "The Will to Knowledge" – in the second chapter that Foucault (1981, p.92) explicitly speaks of power, beyond the top-down state domination and subservience of its citizens as might be explained by the more radical *second-* and *third- dimensions* of power. Instead he speaks of power "…as the *multiplicity of force relations* immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own… " (emphasis added). Here Foucault (1981, p.93) describes the omnipresence of power: "[p]ower is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere". In doing so he proposes that power comes from below, and where there is power there is resistance not exterior but "inside"

power.   He argues "[t]hese points of resistance are present in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a *plurality of resistances*, each of them a special case…" (emphasis added) (Foucault, 1981, p.95).

The idea of *multiplicity of force relations* with *plurality of resistance*, casts doubt on the Critical Theorist notion of a broader single '*dominant ideology*' in society created and perpetuated by a dominant group (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 1980). That is, with a network of relations with multiple forces and resistance point, it becomes very difficult to pinpoint the oppressor against which to take revolutionary action towards social change. However, Foucault does not cast aside the Critical Theorist notion of dominant ideology, nor does he debunk Lukes' notion of the *third-dimension* of power. Instead Foucault is simply telling us that there must be something more than the mere focus on ideology and the notion of domination of one person or group over another, including whether by sovereignty or state apparatuses. For example:

> …it is quite possible that the major mechanisms of power have been accompanied by ideological productions…but basically I do not believe that what has taken place can be said to be ideological. It is both much more and much less than ideology. (Foucault, 1980, p.102)

For him, in addition to the right of sovereignty, power can also be exercised by the apparatuses of knowledge and polymorphous mechanisms of disciplines which have their own discourse:

> It is the production of effective instruments for the formation and accumulation of knowledge…. All this means that power, when it is exercised through these subtle mechanisms, cannot but evolve, organise and put into circulation a knowledge, or rather apparatuses of knowledge, which are not ideological constructs". (Foucault, 1980, p.102)

In fact Foucault makes it clear that he is not claiming that the State apparatus is not important but it must be recognised that power isn't confined to the State apparatus, recognising that "…nothing in society will be changed if the mechanisms of power that function outside, below and alongside the State apparatuses, on a much more minute and everyday level, are not also changed" (Foucault, 1980, p.60). As such Foucault (1980) was more interested in the multiple forms of domination exercised within society

by the subjects in mutual relations. He therefore suggested locating power in the extremities.

Reinforcing this point, Foucault (1982, p.222 & 224) suggests that the fundamental anchorage point of such power relationships "…even if they are embodied and crystallized in an institution…", is found outside institutions and "…rooted in the system of social networks…". For example, Foucault (1994a) points to the historical emergence of population and the *governmentalization* of the state, which saw the emergence of governmental apparatuses in the management of the common good and where the family becomes a privileged instrument in governing the population. As such, Foucault (1994a) suggests that discipline was never so important than with the management of a population. Disciplinary power was the focus of earlier work, in which Foucault (1977) draws attention to the historical development of disciplinary partitioning (or "dividing practices" - Foucault, 1982), involving the binary division and branding between the 'normal' and 'abnormal' in society and the segregation of the 'abnormal', along with a mechanism designed to ensure the possibility of constant visibility of the 'abnormal' and which they cannot verify that they are in fact so under the constant gaze or surveillance. The important aspect of power here is not in the device or the person operating the device, but the automatic and permanent functioning of power in the "…arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up" (Foucault, 1977, p.202). That is the person gets "…caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers" (Foucault, 1977, p.201).[19] Later, Foucault (1982, p.212) uses the terms *government of individualization*, and says:

> This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects.

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[19] Some have described this as the "inner panopticon", where individuals keep themselves in check through self-imposed surveillance of perceived norms against which they hold themselves accountable (Jackson, Gharavi, & Klobas, 2006).

This *fourth-dimension* of power is said to be both totalising and individualising (Foucault, 1982). Totalising in that "…disciplinary power brings all aspects of life under its "gaze" and prods the thoughts, beliefs, actions, morals, and desires of individuals toward a norm of what is acceptable" (Digeser, 1992, p.993). It is individualising "…by falling outside the norm, by not living up to its standards", whereupon for "…[t]hose who fall outside the range of acceptability, there is immense social pressure to conform, standardize, and normalize" (Digeser, 1992, p.993). Accordingly, Foucault (1982, p.210) encourages us to "…refer to much more remote processes if we want to understand how we are trapped in our own history".

It is the historical trappings as a technique of power that interests Foucault. For him power and knowledge are intertwined: power produces knowledge which produces power (Foucault, 1980). Foucault (1994b) acknowledges Nietzsche's genealogical work suggesting that knowledge is invented. As such knowledge may be used in the interests of the powerful. However, we can also be subjugated by our own "knowledge". This is highlighted in the later two of the three volumes on the history of sexuality (the 'care of self' phase), where he examines sexual austerity as varying principles of self-discipline rather than as universal law. In introducing his second volume – "The use of pleasure" – Foucault (1985, p.13) alerts us to the change in his writing direction to focus on historical texts on "sexuality" which "…served as functional devices that would enable individuals to question their own conduct, to watch over and give shape to it, and to shape themselves as ethical subjects…". That is these text were "…written for the purpose of offering rules, opinions, and advice on how to behave as one should: …intended to constitute the eventual framework of everyday conduct" (Foucault, 1985, p.12). In the third volume – "The care of the self" – Foucault (1990, p.68) addresses the importance of self-examination in the cultivation of the self (learning): "[t]he task of testing oneself, examining oneself, monitoring oneself in a series of clearly defined exercises, make the question of truth – the truth concerning what one is, what one does, and what one is capable of – central to the formation of the ethical subject". This notion of "truth" emerges from Foucault's work, which is explicably linked to "knowledge" and power. Foucault (1994c, p.132) tells us that "[t]ruth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it – a "regime" of truth".

Later, I will return to Foucault and the notion of "truth", and the implications for Critical Theory terms used in this thesis. However, for now, I will highlight other writers who implicitly deal with the *fourth-dimension* of power.

Other writers implicitly on the fourth-dimension of power

Similarly to Foucault's work, the *fourth-dimension* of power can be seen with other authors, though not specifically writing on power. For example, Berger and Luckmann (1966) highlight that individuals are subjected to *institutionalization*, where their consciousness is socially determined by the patterns, routines, roles, language and knowledge that have developed over history and *legitimated* to become accepted as common sense and taken-for-granted reality of everyday life. The institutional order is such that what are human phenomena, such as rank and hierarchical structures, become *objectified*: a process preceding the *reification* of social reality where such human products are apprehended as things (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The socially determined programming is *internalised* as reality initially through primary socialization in early childhood by significant others who are in charge of socialising the child into society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The social programming continues as secondary socialization throughout life, internalising the role-specific knowledge which is "…directly or indirectly rooted in the division of labour" and modern education (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p.158). For example, the role of being a police officer in society is internalised through a regime of intensive academy training of discipline, an ongoing paramilitary existence where discipline is reinforced, as well as social definitions of 'police officer' by significant and non-significant others. According to Berger and Luckmann (1966, p.169) "…the reality of everyday life is ongoingly reaffirmed in the individual's interaction with others" which maintains the consciousness. Both socialization processes take place within the context of specific social structures (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Likewise, Rose (1999) discusses some of the historical event that have contributed to the shaping of the private self, that is the governing of the soul. Rose (1999, p.1) says:

> Social conventions, community scrutiny, legal norms, familial obligations and religious injunctions have exercised an intense power over the human soul in the past times and other culture…. Thoughts, feelings and actions may appear as the

very fabric and constitution of the intimate self, but they are socially organized and managed in minute particulars.

In summarising, the *fourth-dimension* is similar to the *third-dimension* in that both are concerned with thought control. While Lukes (2005) suggests they are one and the same, which may be the case in considering the broader society, his focus on responsibility as being necessary for his *third-dimension* opens the necessity for distinguishing a *fourth-dimension* in respect to organisations. That is drawing the distinction between inside and outside the boundaries of the organisation. Inside the organisation, responsibility for hegemonic control over the beliefs and preferences or the shaping of perceptions, cognitions and preferences (*third-dimension*) may be assigned principally to the chief executive officer and their predecessors, along with their managerial underlings. However, there are also historical and systematic developed aspects of power outside the organisation, beyond the grasp of individual managers, which we are *all* subject to (*fourth-dimension*). Without even stepping inside the organisation, we may become the enforcers of our own subjection, where we discipline ourselves to conform to what we become to see as acceptable norms.

With each of the four dimensions developed separately, there is scope for an integrated approach. In this chapter, I now move to integrated models between structure and agency as background for the analysis of power, before specifically addressing power relationships.

2.6.5   Integrated models between structure and agency

While authors have contributed to aspects of the four dimensions, others separately have suggested alternative approaches to an integrated model between *structure* and *agency*. Integrated models bring to light the way *structure* may impose power on *agency*, but also how *agency* may impact on *structure*. That is that people may choose to act in a way contra to the persistent persuasiveness of structural power, through more informed consciousness and resistance. Some have described *structure* as '*primary power*' and *agency* as '*secondary power*', where the former constrains and opens possibilities for

the later to be exercised, while the later expresses and reproduces the former (Voronov & Coleman, 2003; Voronov & Yorks, 2005).

Giddens' theory of structuration: Duality of structure

This overarching duality of *primary* and *secondary* power and the interaction between them, is evident in Giddens' (1984) *duality of structure* which he suggests is fundamental and a crucial notion in his *theory of structuration*. With the *duality of structure*, 'structures' are socially produced and reproduced through the rules and resources (as the medium of power and structured properties of social systems), which are "…drawn upon and reproduced by knowledgeable agents [that is humans] in the course of interaction" (Giddens, 1984, p.15). That is "…the rules and resources drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action *are at the same time the means of system reproduction*…" (emphasis added) (Giddens, 1984, p.19). Giddens (1984, p.25 & 26) suggests "[s]tructure is not external to individuals…", and "…has no existence independent of the knowledge that agents have about what they do in their day-to-day activity". However, "…institutionalized features of social systems have structural properties in the sense that relationships are stabilized across time and space" (Giddens, 1984, p.xxxi). He says:

> The human social activities, like some self-reproducing items in nature, are recursive. That is to say, they are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves *as* actors. In and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible. (Giddens, 1984, p.2).

According to Giddens (1984, p.258) "[p]ower…is generated in and through the reproduction of structures of domination" which are constituted by allocated and authority resources. Allocated resources "…stem from control of material products or of aspects of the material world", and authority resources "…derive from the co-ordination of the activity of human agents" (Giddens, 1984, p.xxxi).

Clegg's circuit of power: Episodic, dispositional, and facilitative

Another integrated model between structure and agency is Clegg's (1989a; 2009a) work. Rather than focusing on the dimensions of power, Clegg (2009a) prefers the idea of circuits of power. In earlier work Clegg (1989a) described in elaborate detail the three main circuits of power as a framework for analysis: *episodic*, *dispositional*, and

facilitative. Episodic power, being the most visible, functions at *agency* level of social relations between individuals and/or groups, not too dissimilar to the *first-dimension* of power (Clegg, 1989a; Clegg, 2009a). As such Clegg (1989a) suggests that episodic power implicitly assumes resistance. The preferred outcomes are achieved from agencies' power being realised through standing conditions such as means and resources control. The outcomes from this level of power can further *reproduce* or *transform* the existing architectonics of power relationships, which are the *rules fixing existing relations of meaning and memberships* in organisational fields (that is *dispositional* power). Thus the episodic power influences the dispositional power at the *social integration* level, which in turn fixes or refixes (Clegg, 1989a) or institutionalise or deinstitutionalise (Clegg, 2009a) social relations at the agency level. That is, episodic power is not only about securing outcomes but can reinforce or transform the 'rules of the game', which define the identity of agencies and their actions (Clegg, 1989a). As well as fixing and refixing the social relations at the agency level, dispositional power at the *social integration* level facilitates or restricts *innovations in discipline and regulation* (that is *facilitative* power) at the *system integration* level. This facilitative power at the *system integration* level further empowers or disempowers social relations at the agency level. Clegg (1989a, p.224) says, "Social and system integration can thus be conceptualized as the pathways through which fields of force are fixed and stabilized on 'obligatory passage points' in the circuits of power". It is also agencies that control or contest the obligatory passage points at the *social integration* level.

2.6.6 Adopting the four dimensional perspectives for power analysis

In his later work, Clegg (2009a, p.55) calls for the abandonment of the "…structuralist metaphors of dimensions where the most radical dimension provides the foundations, the footings, through dominant ideology", suggesting that the three-dimensional view of power has <u>not</u> been widely used in organisational theory. He says, "Using the three-dimensional power perspective only takes one so far in the analysis of power, however. Its focus remains fixed on a negative conception of power as a means of making people do things they would not otherwise do" (Clegg, 2009a, p.54). Instead Clegg (2009a) suggests the metaphors of "flows". Clegg's (1989a; 2009a) "circuits of power" model

certainly does provide a comprehensive account of power that draws together the *four dimensions* as well as merges the notion of '*power over*' and '*power to*'.

But, I am not convinced that abandoning the dimensional metaphor is neither necessary nor desirable. Clegg's notion of circuits of power and "flow" is more politically neutral, which may be less appropriate for this research more heavily influenced by Critical Theory. For Critical Theorist there is an ethical and moral positioning, beyond understanding and explaining power.

Instead, following Clegg's (1989a; 2009a) influence, I would encourage the inclusion of the *fourth-dimension* of power. As Haugaard and Clegg (2009, p.23) advised, power is a conceptual tool just like a screwdriver: "A screwdriver can double as a chisel but it is not as fit for the purpose as a specifically designed and appropriate tool. So it is with power". In fact there would appear to be more to lose than gain in abandoning the dimensional approach. It is clear that Clegg (2009a) prefers to take a Foucauldian-influenced view of power, focused on the idea of multiple flows of power and resistance. It would also appear that *episodic* power includes both the *first-* and *second-dimensions* (see also Haugaard, 2008), whether agents are involved in decision-making or nondecision-making. It would appear that the scope for the *second-dimension* in episodic power is determined by the social relations, defined by obligatory passage points through which *dispositional* power and *facilitate* power flow at the *social* and *system integration* level respectively. Using the dimensional model, it could therefore be argued that the scope for the *second-dimension* is determined by the *third-dimension* being operated and controlled <u>inside</u> the organisations and the *fourth-dimension* of power emanating and operating from <u>outside</u> the organisation "…embedded in the very fabric of the *system…*" (Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998, p.460).

That is, the distinction between the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* could be useful in the analysis of power in organisation, in sync with the organisational boundaries and responsibilities. In line with Lukes (2005), the *third-dimension* refers to "…the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions…"

within the boundaries of the organisation which are within the grasp (and therefore responsibility) of managers and other organisational actors. This is in line with the notion of organisational culture, and the perceived ability of leaders to change the culture (Bass & Avolio, 1993). That is managers as a group inside the organisation can be held responsible for the *third-dimension* of power. Conversely, the *fourth-dimension* refers to the power in the broader system, in which organisational actors may have limited scope to influence change and therefore cannot be held directly responsible. It is the *fourth-dimension* that can still be subject to *evaluation* (Morriss, 2002), and which can impact on the *third-dimension* of power.

Rather than abandoning the dimension metaphor (Clegg, 2009a) or defacing power (Hayward, 2000), it may be necessary to ensure a model includes the Foucauldian influenced *fourth-dimension* of power (Gordon & Grant, 2005). For me the *second-* and *third-dimensions* were useful in conceptualising power, perhaps for no other reason than for the reminder that organisations are not "vanilla", highlighting how the learning agenda is or at least can be controlled, primarily by management, whether as individuals or as a group or as a practice. This is an obligatory passage point that must not be overlooked. Otherwise it is far too easy to adopt a Foucauldian *fourth-dimension*, and 'blame the system' (Lukes in Hayward & Lukes, 2008) and not take any action to bring about change. For this reason, I will maintain the general scope of the dimensional view, but include the *fourth-* rather than using just the three dimensions as Lukes (2005) suggests.

For the purpose of this research the *fourth-dimension* will be taken as the power <u>outside</u> of the control of managers and the organisation itself, emanating from the systems (Clegg, 1989a), or sources (Mann, 1986) of the broader society. It is the intense power developed over time that has governed the human soul (Rose, 1999), that has become accepted as common sense and taken-for-granted reality of everyday life (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). It is against this, what society sees as "normal" and under the watchful eyes of others, that individuals discipline themselves to conform and become their bearer of their own power situation (Foucault, 1977). In contrast, in respect to organisations, the *third-dimension* will be taken as "…the socially structured and

culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions" (Lukes, 1974, p.22) that take place <u>inside</u> the organisation. It is here that individual or collective agents can be assigned responsibility for creating, perpetuating, or sustaining such cultural and social forces and institutional practises. In adopting the four dimensional view of power, I have included Table 1 as an easy reference to assist the reader throughout this thesis.

Table 1:   Four dimensions of power

First	Negotiated political order – no single party dominates (pluralist)
Second	Agenda control – confine to safe issues
Third	Group social structures and culturally patterned behaviour, and institutional practices (<u>Inside</u> organisation and within management responsibility)
Fourth	Broader societal 'structures' - similar to 3rd D (<u>Outside</u> organisation and beyond management's direct control) (Includes self-discipline and formation of self)

In including the *fourth-dimension* within the framework for power analysis, I am mindful of the implications that Foucault's work has for the Critical Theorist terms used in this thesis, particularly in respect to "truth". Words such as "*authentic*" and "*liberated*" are not too dissimilar to the notion of a single "truth" which is implicated in the value judgement of the researcher. As pointed out above, Foucault (1994c, p.132) tells us that "truth" is explicably linked to "… a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it…". That is, words such as "authentic" are enmeshed in the power of "truths", and who decides what is authentic. As such Foucault (1985, p.9) says "[t]here is always something ludicrous in philosophical discourse when it tries, from the outside, to dictate to others, to tell them where their truth is and how to find it, or when it works up a case against them in the language of naïve positivity." However,

"truth" is not the domain of Critical Theorists. Hence they do not make claim to a final "truth" (Steinberg, 2012). They are "…motivated by an interest in relating theory to politics and an interest in the emancipation of those who are oppressed and dominated…", and as such are "….informed by a critique of domination and a theory of liberation" (Kellner, 1989, p.1). As such versions of "truth" are always contestable. As pointed out above, in respect to organisational learning I do not mean '*authentic*' in the sense of being a single or final "truth", or how things should or ought to be. Instead, for me, '*authentic organisational learning*' is seen as the net result of multiple trajectories from multiple realities. Foucault (1985, p.9), while discounting claims to truth, appears sympathetic to the emancipation of the self through exposure to different knowledge: "But it is entitled to explore what might be changed, in its own thought, through the practice [sic] of a knowledge that is foreign to it". However, not as a grand narrative that instils yet another "truth" onto others.

2.7   Exploring organisational power relationships

Having adopted the four dimensions for power analysis, I now move to exploring the organisational power relationships which will be used in this study. In doing so, I must acknowledge the global power relationships that have historically developed outside the organisation (Astley & Sachdeva, 1984; Hindess, 2006) that limits everyone.

2.7.1   Impact from global power relationships

Reconceptualising power as a network of social boundaries that limits everyone as suggested by Hayward (2000), is apparent in Mann's work. Mann's (1986, 1993, 2011, 2012, 2013) analysis is particularly useful in providing an overview, highlighting four sources of social power: *ideological, economic, military, and political relationships*.

Mann's comprehensive study highlights the depth of power relationships that extent beyond the boundaries of individual organisations, but also beyond the bounds of any single country. It could be argued then that despite global pluralism, economic power in the shape of capitalism is a common dominant concern of individual nation-states

(Mann, 1993, 2011). This is an important point in understanding the background behind management ideology. In discussing the economic governance within a capitalist society, Scott (2001, p.48) makes clear the obligations on managers to keep enterprises in a profitable state, influenced heavily by corporate shareholders: "What is important is to recognise that the powers of command in a capitalist economy form an interlocking structure of top positions and that the exercise of command within individual enterprises cannot be separated from this". This obligation on managers sets up a powerful *unitary* ideology in society – operating as a *fourth-dimension* of power – which is the foundation for traditional power relationships in organisations.

Before specifically addressing the traditional power relationships in organisations – '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – it is prudent for me to firstly draw attention to the historically development of the *unitary* ideology as the foundation of such relationships operating in the *fourth-dimension* and reinforced in the *third-dimension*.

2.7.2   Unitary ideology as foundation of traditional power relationships

Unitary frame of reference in society and organisations: Fourth- and third-dimension of power

In conceptualising a model of power relationships and the impact on '*authentic organisational learning*', this thesis suggests that a '*unitary*' frame of reference or ideology operates in the *fourth-dimension* of power in society to form the foundations of traditional power relationships in organisations. For a Critical Theorist the notion of '*unitary*' is described as an ideology; for Foucauldian influenced researcher it is seen as a "knowledge"; and as perhaps a more neutral alternative as a "frame of reference". I used the terms interchangeably. From a Marxist critical theorist perspective, the *unitary* ideology could be seen as part of the broader '*dominant ideology*' in society that "…creates an acceptance of capitalism in the working class" (Abercrombie et al., 1980, p.1), which perpetuates their subordination such that everyone should be working towards this common goal. The '*dominant ideology*' suggests that "[t]he ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas…": that is the ruling class which are the 'ruling material force' as well as the 'ruling intellectual force', control both the means

of material as well as mental production (Marx & Engels, 1974, p.64). Under the 'unitary' frame of reference, which firmly fits within the *functionalist* perspective (Gordon, 2009), society (or the organisation) and the individual are viewed as having the same interests, and emphasis is placed on the pursuit and achievement of a common good or common objectives. Morgan (2006, p.194) explains:

> The unitary view pictures society as an integrated whole where the interests of individual and society are synonymous. This unitary view emphasizes the sovereignty of the state and the importance of individuals subordinating themselves in the service of society as a means of realizing and satisfying their true interests and the common good.

'Unitary' frame of reference is the ideology that views the interests of the individual and society as synonymous, and therefore managers have the right to manage and employees the obligation to obey.

To achieve these common objectives in organisations, individuals subordinate their own interests, respecting the manager's right to manage, and their duty to obey (Morgan, 2006). From this point of view the emphasis is on the uniting of all participants through common objectives and values, and as such it "…is said to be the need for a unified structure of authority, leadership, and loyalty, with full managerial prerogative legitimized by all members of the organisation" (Fox, 1974, p.249). "Concepts such as authority, leadership, and control tend to be preferred means of describing the managerial prerogative of guiding the organisation toward the achievement of common interests" (Morgan, 2006, p.196). Fox (1974, p.250) says "[t]he greater the tendency to see the true nature of industrial enterprise as unitary, and to see any challenge to managerial rule as of doubtful legitimacy, the greater the disposition to view the enforcement of prerogative by coercive power as desirable and justified". Conflict is seen as pathological (Johnson & Gill, 1993), resulting from "…individual members' deficiencies and failure to conform to given norms and values" (Oliga, 1996, p.58). As such it is seen as a "…rare and transient phenomenon…" which is caused by troublemakers and is eradicated with the appropriate action by managers (Morgan, 2006, p.195), such as performance management strategies. For example, Parsons (2002, p.78) describes this view in respect to power:

Power then is generalized capacity to secure the performance of binding obligations by units in a system of collective organization where the obligations are legitimized with reference to their bearing on collective goals and where in case of recalcitrance there is a presumption of enforcement by negative situational sanctions – whatever the actual agency of that enforcement.

Taylor's unitary ideology as part of the 'hidden history' of organisations: Fourth-dimension of power

To understand traditional power relationships, it is important to understand the *unitary* ideology as part of the 'hidden history' of organisations and thereby operating as the *fourth-dimension* of power. Clegg (2009b, p.310 & 311) outlines the "hidden history" that lay behind the constitution of organisations, whereby "…managers originally constituted as the delegated 'servants' of 'masters'…", but later emerged as "…a specialist in authority – overseeing the employee – a specialist in obedience". Hardy and Clegg (1996, p.622) highlight that "[m]odern organizations were…designed to function as if they were a unitary organism". In fact, the '*unitary*' frame of reference is the reality for many organisations, particularly those that have a long history of paternalistic management and a culture based on the respect for management's right to manage (Morgan, 2006).

The foundation of the *unitary* ideology was evident in Taylor's new *Principles of Scientific Management* idea in 1911, whom Clegg (2009b, p.312) attributes as producing the first modern technology of power, aimed at the "…political economy of the body", where "…people did exactly what they are supposed to do". Taylor advocated that for the sake of maximising national efficiency, the responsibility for work practices should be removed from the hand of workmen [sic], and that managers were best placed to scientifically define rigid standardised laws and rules that govern those practises. Clegg (2009a, p.41) says:

> In this system, one should always do just as one was told; one should never be where one does not belong to, and what one should do and where one should be were not to be left to chance but should be determined, authoritatively, by the sciences of productive efficiency and management establishing new rules for workplace design and conduct.

For example, in examining the efficiency of bricklaying, Taylor (2010, p.65) suggested there was a duty conferred on management to manage:

> It is only through *enforced* standardization of methods, *enforced* adoption of the best implements and working conditions, and *enforced* cooperation that this faster work can be assured. And the *duty of enforcing* the adoption of standards and of enforcing this cooperation *rests with the management alone*. (emphasis added)

Conversely, there was an obligation to obey and the consequences were simple:

> All of those who, after proper teaching, either will not or cannot work in accordance with the new methods and at the higher speed must be discharged by the management (Taylor, 2010, p.65).

This thesis argues these early 20th century writings of Taylor are now well entrenched as the *unitary* ideology, which is part of Clegg's (2009b) suggested 'hidden history' of organisations. As such, the *unitary* ideology remains so taken-for-granted, that it is the foundation of the traditional power relationships – 'transactional' and 'transformational' – operating at the *fourth-dimension*.

2.7.3   Transactional and transformational power relationships

Unitary ideology as foundation of <u>both</u> 'transactional' and 'transformational' power relationships in organisations

> **'Transactional power relationships'**, built on the *unitary* frame of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups, that <u>reinforce existing dominant</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations in order to maintain the status quo.

In conceptualising a model of power relationships and the impact on 'authentic organisational learning', this thesis suggests that a *unitary* ideology underpins two traditional power relationships in organisations – 'transactional' and 'transformational' – which reinforce and maintain a *unitary* frame of reference in organisations through the four dimensions of power. For the purpose of this research, 'transactional power relationships' are described as the relationships between

individuals and/or between groups, that <u>reinforce existing dominant</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations. In this sense, it is the '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-dimension* of power that reinforces the *existing order of things* in society including the *unitary* ideology.

In contrast, '*transformational power relationships*' are described as the relationships between individuals and/or between groups that <u>challenge existing</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organizations (Bass, Waldman, Avolio, & Bebb, 1987; Bass, 1997), taking a <u>management-centred approach</u> to instilling new predetermined dominant attitudes, values and beliefs within organizations (for

> '*Transformational power relationships*', built on the *unitary* frame of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups that <u>challenge existing</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations, taking a <u>management-centred approach</u> in order to instil new predetermined dominant attitudes, values and beliefs within organisations.

example, see Kotter, 1995). Being management-centred, the *unitary* ideology is not challenged and continues to operate in the *fourth-dimension* of power.

The notion of '*transactional power relationships*' and '*transformational power relationships*' are taken from Burns' (1978) work on political leadership, which is frequently cited as a leadership framework in mainstream management literature and receiving some attention in the organisational learning literature (for example Vera & Crossan, 2004; Zagorsek, Dimovski, & Skerlavaj, 2009). While power was a prominent feature of Burn's (1978) original work, it was considerably lacking in Bass's (1985) development of the *transactional/transformational* leadership framework, which focused on key attributes or prescribed behaviours of the leader in managing their "*subordinates*" in small groups and complex organisations.

For example, the key factors of transactional leadership are '*congruent reward*' defined as "clarifies what is expected from followers and what they will received if they meet expected levels of performance"; and '*active management-by-exception*' defined as

"focuses on monitoring task execution for any problems that might arise and correcting those problems to maintain current performance levels" (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999, pp.444 - 445).

On the other hand, the key factors of transformational leadership are '*charisma/inspirational*' which "provides followers with a clear sense of purpose that is energizing, is a role model for ethical conduct and builds identification with the leader and his or her articulated vision"; '*intellectual stimulation*' which "gets followers to question the tried and true ways of solving problems, and encourages them to question the methods they used to improve upon them"; and '*individualized consideration*' which is "understanding the needs of each follower and worked continuously to get them to develop to their full potential" (Avolio et al., 1999, p.444).

Such a focus on the key attributes or traits of these "great leaders" (Fulop, Linstead, & Dunford, 2004), has lead to a romance of leadership (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). As such, there is particular interest in the special or extraordinary endowments of the leader who are seen as being able to control the leadership process (Meindl, 1993), and where leadership has "…assumed a heroic, larger-than-life quality…" (Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987, p.91).

Implicit within Burns' (1978) original model of '*transactional*' and '*transforming*' was the idea that power relationships in a political environment in the broader community are based on *pluralist* frame of reference, that is a balance of power. However, underplayed or taken-for-granted in Bass's (1985) *transactional/transformational* framework is an explicit acknowledgement that the notion of formal leadership within organisations is superimposed on a management framework underpinned by employment relationships and contracts, which relies on formal authority or legitimate power. In organisations, the *unitary* frame of reference and legitimate authority are accepted as normal every time a contract of employment is signed or an acceptance of promotion to a more senior management position. The employment relationship and contract are never jointly constructed by both parties from the ground up, but it is

deemed as already constructed which employees either willingly accept or have forced upon them (Fox, 1974).

An important implication of the employment contract is the "…subordination to the existing basic pattern of work organization as determined by the employer" (Fox, 1974, p.294). An example of the taken-for-granted subordination of employees is seen in the preface to Bass's (1985, p.xiii) book where he says, "[i]f [*managers*] are to be transactional leaders, they will need to provide the *subordinates* with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what they can hope to receive in exchange for fulfilling these expectations". In contrast, "*[m]anagers* who aspire to become transformational leaders must pay attention to each of their *subordinates*, sharing their concerns and development needs, and treating them as individuals" (Bass, 1985, p.xiv). Similarly by Bass, Waldman, Avolio, and Bebb's (1987) repeated reference to "superiors" and "subordinates" in respect to the *transactional/transformational* framework.

If not already apparent, the '*unitary*' frame of reference of management ideology is implicitly, if not explicitly, evident within the *transactional/transformational* model of power relationships. For example, Bass, Avolio, Jung, and Berson (2003, p.208) say that historically with transactional leadership "…followers agreed with, accepted, or complied with the leader in exchange for praise, rewards, and resources or the avoidance of disciplinary action". Following on in describing *active management-by-exception,* they say "…the leader specifies the standards for compliance, as well as what constitutes ineffective performance, and may punish followers for being out of compliance with those standards" (Bass et al., 2003, p.208). Similarly, Bass (1997, p.130 & 133) says the transformational leadership involves "…the moving of followers beyond their self-interest for the good of the group, organisation, or society …", and such leaders "…motivate followers to work for transcendental goals that go beyond immediate self-interests" . More expansively, Bass (1990, p.2) said earlier:

> Superior leadership performance…occurs when the leaders broaden and evaluate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self interest for the good of the group.

Hence, for those interested in performance, transformational leadership has some appeal. However, it is acknowledged that "[t]ransformational leadership may be autocratic and directive or democratic and participative", and that "how participative or directive the transformational leaders will be – how much they will depend on authority – would also depend on the issues involved" (Bass, 1997, p.136 & 137). Similarly in Bass' (1985, p.18) earlier work, he states "[t]ransformational political leaders may also use their authority and power to radically reshape *through coercive means* the social and physical environment, thus destroying the old way of life and making way for a new one" (emphasis added). The autocratic and directive style can only be achieved with legitimate power or authority, hence the argument that '*transformational power relationships*' in organizations are underpinned by *unitary* frame of reference. Certainly it has been shown that police leaders demonstrating high levels of transformational leadership behaviours can expect compliance by subordinates in situations requiring urgent action when using harsh bases of power, where as softer bases of power may be less efficient (Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, & Agassi, 2001).

Both *transactional* and *transformational* leaders in an organisational context can operate in the *second-dimension* of power in the way they are said to reinforce or challenge culture, but in their positions as managers continually reinforced the '*unitary*' frame of reference. The '*unitary*' frame of reference is also evident in descriptions of how the transactional/transformational leaders deal with the culture, particularly how culture is created, maintained and changed (Bryman, 1996), hence how we learn the values and norms in organisations. While '*transactional*' leaders have been described as working within the existing organizational culture (Bass, 1985), "…following existing rules, procedures, and norms…" (Bass & Avolio, 1993, p.112), '*transformational*' leaders are noted for their ability to change the organizational culture (Bass, 1985, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993), aimed at replacing existing core values with new ones (Stace & Dunphy, 2001). Bass and Avolio (1993, p.113 & 114) describe the realignment of culture towards the new vision, whereby transformational leaders:

> …need to be attentive to the conservativeness reflected in beliefs, values, assumptions, rites, and ceremonies embedded in the culture that can hinder efforts to change the organisation. They need to modify key aspects of culture,

when it is possible to do so, to fit with new directions desired by the leader and membership of the organisation.

Schein (1992, p.26) says that culture is referred to the pattern of shared, taken-for-granted basic assumptions, which "…will manifest itself at the levels of observable artefacts and shared espoused values, norms, and rules of behaviour" (see also Stace & Dunphy, 2001). 'Values' is considered a higher-order concept that controls our attitudes and beliefs (Vaughan & Hogg, 2002). 'Norms' are "…definite principles or rules which people are expected to observe" (Giddens, 1989, p.31). These basic assumptions are similar to Argyris' (1992) 'theories-in-use', and are seldom debated or confronted, hence are difficult to change (Schein, 1992; Morgan, 2006). However, as Burns (1978, p.200) points out in respect to the reform leader, a subset of transforming leadership, they "…typically accept the political and social structures within which they act, [and] their reform efforts are inevitably compromised, and usually inhibited, by the tenacious inertia of existing institutions". That is there is an acceptance of the *existing order of things* that structures society and in particular organisations, and that the existing institutional ways inhibit any reform strategy.

'Transactional' and 'transformational' power relationships and managerialism ideology

The historically development of the *unitary* ideology since at least the early 20th century is marked as an episteme where the rights of managers to manage on behalf of owners/shareholder has come to be accepted as the natural order of things in society as well as organisations. In Foucault's (1970) work "*The order of things*" he draws attention to the notion of '*episteme*', which have been described as the "…specificities on which order may be predicted" and which "…cause certain forms and structures of knowledge to emerge in a given cultural period and at a given moment" in history (Downing, 2008, p.39). In terms of the episteme of the current period, Enteman (1993) suggests an emergence of a new ideology created by managers for managers, termed *managerialism* which describes the relationship between managers and organisations.

The 'unitary' ideology can be seen as part of a broader ideology of *managerialism*. Enteman's (1993) description of the new *managerialism* ideology implicitly highlights the reinforcement of 'transactional power relationships' in society. He suggested that influence is exercised through organisations in a managerialist society which is "…nothing more than the summation of the decisions and *transactions* which have been made by the managements of the organizations" (emphasis added) (Enteman, 1993, p.159). He points out that while it is tempting to view managerialism as a hidden and complex conspiracy between managers to run the country, it is managers who are *transacting* with other managers on behalf of their organisation, in an effort "…to make the best possible arrangements for themselves (first) and their organizations (second)" (Enteman, 1993, p.160). Enteman (1993, p.165) deliberately uses the notion of *transactions* to describe the numerous interactions managers have on behalf of the organisation, making the link to Burn's idea of 'transactional leadership', or what has been termed here as 'transactional power relationships'. Enteman (1993, p.163 & 165) argues that under managerialism "[i]t is the job of management…to manage the numerous constituencies which have an impact on the organization…to give direction to the organization" and "…engage in a transactional process…". Hence the 'transactional' process can be explained in economic terms: "As humans need material subsistence they develop economic relationships, cooperating in production and exchange with others" (Mann, 1986, p.14).

The scope of 'transactional power relationships' operating within the *fourth-dimension* of power underpinned by the *unitary* frame of reference can be seen in Diefenbach's (2009a) work. Like Enteman's (1993) argument that *managerialism* has emerged as an ideology created by managers for managers, Diefenbach (2009a) also provides a comprehensive argument surrounding the dominance of managers and the ideology of management that have reached hegemonic status to become the norm and normality in organisations and the broader society reality. He argues that underpinning the dominance of managers is a "…comprehensive system of mutually reinforcing interests, power and ideology" (Diefenbach, 2009a, p.219). In describing the dominance of managers, Diefenbach (2009a, p.3) points out that the past century has witnessed the creation and development of "… 'the managers' *as a new ruling social group, if not to say dominating class*" (emphasis in original).

Despite '*transformational power relationships*' being known for challenging culture – traditional attitudes, beliefs, values and norms – even they are not exempt from the *managerialism* ideology. In application to policing, Dupont (2003) alludes to the new face of police governance in Australia, in which it could be seen that since the start of the managerialist reform agenda beginning in the early 1980s the government of the day and the Commissioner's of Police are in a '*transformational power relationship*'. The Commissioner's once operational independence and autonomy, and having lifelong tenure, have folded to treasury-allocated funding to government set priorities, performance indicators, and short-term contracts of three to five years to minimise resistance from police hierarchy (Dupont, 2003). In Dupont's (2003) analysis, is the suggestion of a *unitary* frame of reference in that if the Commissioner wishes to pursue a career in policing then he/she best obey the Minister / Government of the day. Hence, this thesis suggests that both '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships in organisations are not there to liberate individuals, but act and not act to protect their own interest and thereby cement the status quo.

In summary, traditional power relationships – both '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – are founded on the *unitary* ideology: as such, managers have the right to manage towards achieving common objectives in organisations, and individuals must subordinate their own interests, respecting the manager's right to manage and their duty to obey. The *unitary* ideology is part of broader *managerialism*, created by managers to serve the interests of managers primarily and thereby maintain the *existing order of things*. It is this ideology that operates in the *fourth-dimension* of power in society that permeates to the *third-dimension* of power operating inside organisations. While '*transactional power relationships*' <u>reinforce</u> the existing dominant attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organizations, and '*transformational power relationships*' <u>challenge</u> them, neither undermines the *unitary* frame of reference but instead accepts it as necessary and evitable as the *existing order of things*. While '*transformational power relationships*' may be appealing for those concerned with performance, they are not interested in the emancipation of people, but instead interested only in the implementation of a new vision.

2.7.4   Revolutionary power relationships

Pluralist and critical frames of reference of 'revolutionary' power relationships in organisations

> *'Pluralist'* frame of reference views society as having a negotiated order where power is shared and no one individual or group has absolute power to dominate another continuously.

In contrast to traditional power relationships – whether '*transactional*' or '*transformational*' – I draw on the work of Freire (1970) to describe '*revolutionary power relationships*'. It should be mentioned that both Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) speak of revolutionary leadership as a subset of transforming or transformational leadership. However, unlike Bass's (1985) work which suggests a '*unitary*' frame of reference being the underpinning philosophy, this thesis argues based on an analysis of work by Freire (1970) and Burn (1978), that the foundations of '*revolutionary power relationships*' are simultaneous built on a '*pluralist*' but particularly a '*radical*' frame of reference. As previously stated, the '*pluralist*' vision involves a negotiated order in society, where various interest groups "…bargain and compete for a share in the balance of power" (Morgan, 2006, p.194). The negotiated nature of power suggests that no one individual or group has absolute power to dominate another continuously (Johnson & Gill, 1993). It places importance on the diversity of individual and group interests (Morgan, 2006). From this frame of reference, organisations are seen as having a "…plurality of power holders drawing their power from a plurality of sources" (Morgan, 2006, p.196). The '*pluralist*' frame of reference is the implicit intent suggested in the notion of '*communities of practice*' mentioned earlier. The '*pluralist*' vision is also highlighted in Ford's (2006) notion of '*reciprocal-relational power*' which involves a sharing of power where there are unclear boundaries between superiors and subordinates. In these relationships, sometimes one is up and sometimes one is down, and each is simultaneously acted upon and enacting on the other in a process of resisting and responding (Ford, 2006). Ford (2006) suggests that this relationship is driven by the learning and sharing of knowledge.

However, a '*pluralist*' frame of reference in organisations accepts the broad social structure and arrangements, assuming a fairly level playing field in society and that struggles can be enacted in the *first-dimension*. It assumes there is a balance of power between conflicting parties, thus highlighting the need for compromise and negotiation (Johnson & Gill, 1993). In recognising this problem, the '*revolutionary*' power relationships are particularly underpinned by a '*critical*' or '*radical*' frame of reference, which is better able to expose the full extent and exercise of power in organisations and society that may impact on '*authentic organisational learning*'.

> '*Radical*' frame of reference views society as encompassing different class interests, and therefore advocates social change through exposing oppression and asymmetrical power.

Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed and the struggle to liberate

The '*revolutionary*' power relationships, underpinned by a '*critical*' or '*radical*' frame of reference, can be seen with the work of Freire (1970). Freire's (1970) '*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*' addresses the dehumanised state of 'men'[20] in terms of oppression, and suggests that "An act is oppressive only when it prevents men from being more fully human" (Freire, 1970, p.42). He says that "Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression" (Freire, 1970, p.40). Freire (1970) goes on to point out that it is only the oppressed who can free both the oppressed and the oppressor who also become dehumanised as they dehumanise and violate the rights of others. However, "As long as the oppressed remain unaware of the causes of their condition, they fatalistically "accept" their exploitation" (Freire, 1970, p.51). Freire (1970) says that a *revolutionary* leadership (here I use the term '*revolutionary power relationship*') must practice co-intentional education between the teacher and the students as both Subjects (rather than students as objects), co-intent on reality, firstly in unveiling the reality of oppression, and secondly, continue the pedagogy after the transformation to ensure permanent liberation. In other words, in organisations employees question their reality and being able to learn in a more empowered setting. According to Freire (1970) to become fully human the oppressed must engage in a struggle to liberate themselves, but it cannot be forged *for* the oppressed by the leadership or implanted into the oppressed through

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[20] More gender neutral language adopted in the later edition, and includes men and women (Freire, 1996).

liberating propaganda, however must be *with* the oppressed through *reflection* and *dialogue* to be authentic and a valid transformation.

> **'Revolutionary power relationships'**, built on *radical* and *pluralist* frames of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups that challenge existing attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations in order to bring about social change.

Based on the work of Freire (1970) I describe '*revolutionary power relationships*' as the relationships which engage in a struggle to liberate themselves by firstly unveiling and exposing existing attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within the organisation and society that may be oppressive (*radical*), and secondly forging together an ongoing pedagogy to liberate themselves (*plural*). This relates back to the idea of organisational members learning through challenging and questioning the status quo, that is the norms and assumptions in organisations (Morgan, 2006). This approach might therefore encourage members to learn how to learn (Morgan, 2006), for example how to function and get things done beyond hierarchy (Fairtlough, 2007), or imagine an alternative order or at least tame the excesses of hierarchy (Child, 2009), hence may lead to more authentic learning.[21] Irrespective of the position in the formal structure in organisations, these relationships are not what might be described as 'one up - one down' relationships (Ford, 2006) or A over B relationships (Dahl, 1957). Instead the '*revolutionary power relationships*' recognise and enables individuals to be interdependent, relying on each other for their respective evolving understanding and learning.

Functional importance and tasks of 'revolutionary power relationships'

In later work, Freire (2007) implicitly points to the importance of '*revolutionary power relationships*'. He advocates social change, and points to the ethical responsibility of

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[21] The notion of "learning how to learn" relates to the idea of '*triple-loop learning*'. Triple-loop learning moves from choosing to change the setting or values (double-loop learning) to becoming aware how they and those before them have facilitated and hindered learning, and inventing new ways to learn and coming up with new structures of thought and strategies for learning (Snell & Man-Kuen Chak, 1998; Romme & van Witteloostuijn, 1999), generating an awareness of how to learn from one moment to the next (Torbert, 1994). Also see Tosey, Visser, and Saunders (2011) on the different origins and conceptualisation of 'triple-loop' learning.

progressive educators to unveil and reveal injustices and oppressive situations, and to generate political dreams which enable people to truly imagine for the future. For Freire (2007, p.4) a key is to awake the political consciousness of educators and provide the context for questioning the neoliberal discourse and doctrine that "…seeks to limit education to technological practice." In its application to this thesis, it would appear that Freire is suggesting that more '*revolutionary power relationships*' will lead to more '*authentic organisational learning*' by facilitating a context where people question the *existing order of things* and not simply confining their thinking to more '*technical*' matters.

'*Revolutionary power relationships*', as progressive educators taking ethical responsibility for unveiling injustices and oppression and pursuing political dreams, might undertake a number of learning tasks towards emancipation. For example, in outlining the power of Critical Theory to adult education and learning, Brookfield (2005) articulates seven interrelated learning tasks embedded within Critical Theory: that is challenging ideology, contesting hegemony, unmasking power, overcoming alienation, learning liberation, reclaiming reason, and practicing democracy.

Such learning tasks have implications for policing organisation. However, the purpose here is not to prescribe what these tasks might look like in a policing organisation, as that is part of the struggle for emancipation by individuals themselves and as a collective. The purpose is to reinforce the essence of Freire (1970) idea for '*revolutionary power relationship*' whereby organisational actors practice co-intentional education between the teacher and the student as both Subjects unveil power and ensure permanent liberation. In '*revolutionary power relationship*' rather than focusing on the technical activities operated within the organisation, the underpinning beliefs, values, myths and practices become the focus. Both *challenging ideology* and *contesting hegemony* are linked to the learning task of *unmaking power*, which involves understanding the full operations of power: the negative regressive and repressive kind as well as the positive productive and strategic kind. This is a central argument for the Critical Theorist to extend beyond the three dimensional view of power, to include the Foucauldian influence *fourth-dimension* of power. That is people understanding that

they are themselves the bearer of power, which extends beyond the power of a sovereign or dominant group. In policing organisation, there is a range of dominant discourses, language, social habit and practices that could be challenged and exposed by independent thinking. Where *ideology* is seen as a system of dominant ideas intentionally designed to reinforce the power of the ruling class, *hegemony* is viewed more broadly as embedded in a system of practice amongst us all and is "…the process by which people learn to live and love the dominant system of beliefs and practices – is not imposed on them so much as it is learned by them" (Brookfield, 2005, p.96). Hegemony, rather than ideology, is highlighted in Foucault's work where we become imprisoned by our own history and thinking: through internalising the power and disciplining ourselves toward what is acceptable or considered 'normal'.

The learning tasks of *overcoming alienation*, *learning liberation*, *reclaiming reason*, and *practicing democracy* are related to notion freedom which is central to Critical Theory. Within policing such tasks are not licences to do as you please, which some may think, but as adult learning tasks they relate to the way we think and communicate. For example, *practising democracy* may include dealing with differences and diversity in the organisation and society, living with unresolved conflict, and be more inclusive in decision-making; *reclaiming reason* may include thinking beyond the technical requirements of the law, or based on the simple logic of supporting capitalism; *learning liberation* may include thinking and understanding the dominant ideology argument and the goal of emancipation; and *overcoming alienation* may include thinking of how to overcome the "…distancing of people from the world of feelings and sensuality so that they feel dominated by lifeless objects" (Brookfield, 2005, p.106).

In taking on these tasks, this thesis argues that '*revolutionary power relationships*' are particularly sensitive to and relevant in challenging, primary and secondary power that are perpetuated in societies and organisations, that prevent people from being more empowered and therefore able to authentically learn. While *traditional* power relationships may be blind to the operation of power perhaps beyond the '*first-dimension*' of power, '*revolutionary*' power relationships particularly focus on all three dimensions of power described by Lukes (1974) as well as the '*fourth-dimension*'.

However, it must be stated that the aim of these relationships is not to challenge individuals per se, such as usurping or undermining the 'leadership' or formal authority in organisations, as this would itself be oppressive (refer Freire, 1970). Nor is it the purpose of '*revolutionary power relationships*' "…to preach or impose [their] ideals on those who do not wish to take up what [they] think [they] have to offer" (Voronov & Coleman, 2003, p.177). However, the aim is to raise consciousness, and struggle together towards the emancipation of <u>all</u> organisational actors. Foucault (1982, p.216) says:

> The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries.

2.8   Research conceptual model

Having now explored the organisational learning and power literature, I now turn to the development of a conceptual model for this research (Garratt & Jackson, 2012). Thus far, from the organisational learning literature and position from the *emancipatory* perspective, this thesis has pointed to a possible distinction between '*compliant*' and more '*authentic*' organisational learning. These two types of organisational learning are captured in Figure 1. In addition, this thesis has looked at the key organisational learning processes – '*reflection*' and '*dialogue*' – making the distinction between dialogue that is '*technical*', '*consensual*', and '*meaningful*'. Further, making the distinction between a '*learning space*' which is '*liberated*' compared with one more '*managed*'. These two learning spaces are also captured in Figure 1. Then, from the power literature, this thesis has pointed to two traditional power relationships – '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – both underpinned by the *unitary* frame of reference, as well as a '*revolutionary*' power relationship underpinned by *critical* and *pluralist* frames of reference. This thesis has suggested that these three power relationships can be analysed through four dimensions of power. Through critically reflecting on the literature and my personal learning journey of more than 25 years in an Australian policing organisation, I have captured my thinking in a conceptual model (see Figure 1) in how they may either facilitate a '*liberated*' learning space or a

'*managed*' learning space, and in turn facilitate the potential for '*authentic*' and '*compliant*' organisational learning respectively.
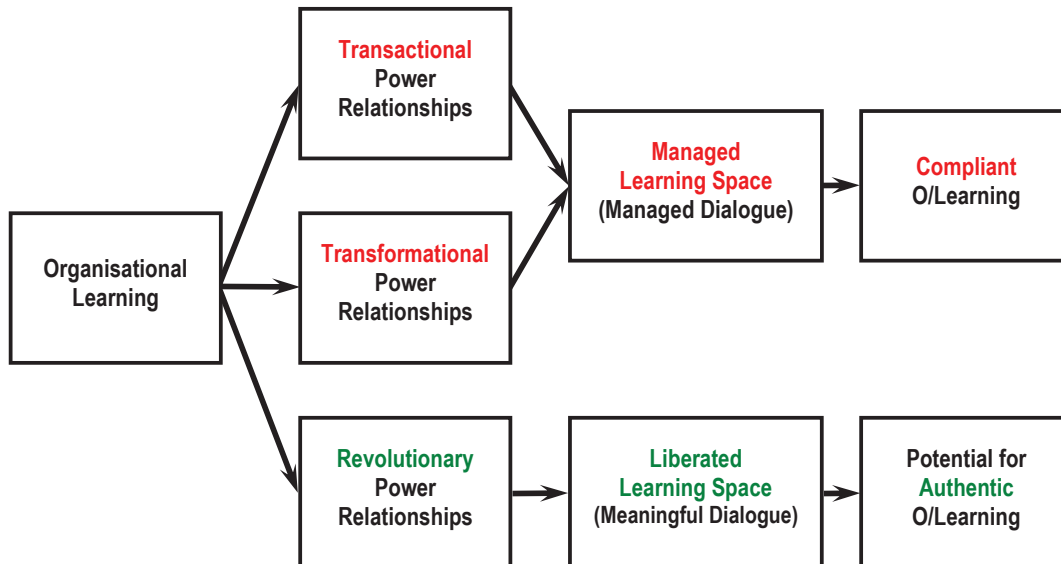
Figure 1:   Research conceptual model: Power relationships and authentic organisational learning

2.9   Possible implications for authentic organisational learning

To arrive at this point, in exploring the literature on power relationships and the organisational learning process and context, I critically reflected on possible implications that these three power relationships may have for '*authentic organisational learning*'.   The model suggests that organisational learning is mediated by power relationships. In particularly, that both '*transactional*' as well as '*transformational*' power relationships facilitate a '*managed learning space*' and it is these spaces that ultimately lead to '*compliant organisational learning*'.   Further, that it is '*revolutionary power relationships*' which facilitate a '*liberated learning space*' and it is these spaces that facilitate the potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*'.   This can be further elaborated upon.

2.9.1　From transactional and transformational power relationships

As such, this research seeks to explore and confirm whether both '*transactional power relationships*' and '*transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*' (see Figure 1). My early reflections suggest that both may facilitate such a restricted space, where the dialogue is '*managed dialogue*', either as a '*technical*' process or as a '*consensual*' process (refer to Reynolds, 1997; 1998, 1999). In this '*managed learning space*' people feel free to engage only in '*technical dialogue*' and '*consensual dialogue*'. Both forms of '*managed dialogue*' are driven towards outcomes (Oswick et al., 2000, p.899) determined by management.

'*Transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships make important contributions in organisations. For '*transactional power relationships*', '*consensual dialogue*' reinforces existing dominant attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations as prescribed by managers. In contrast for '*transformational power relationships*' '*consensual dialogue*' challenges existing attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations but within the predetermined boundaries set by managers. Hence '*transactional power relationships*' assist the organisation to primarily focus on problem-solving and achieving goals, while '*transformational power relationships*' enable the organisation to change direction and pull together for a common purpose.

However, the *unitary* ideology operates in '*transactional*' power relationships operating in the *fourth-dimension* in the broader society, and further permeates through the *third-dimension* in the organisation. The *unitary* ideology defines the manager's right (and employee's respect of that right) to control the learning agenda. Given that both '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships in organisations are underpinned by a '*unitary*' frame of reference, there may be an implicit obligation on managers to manage the learning space, and an equal obligation on employees to restrict their learning to conform to manager's learning agenda.

In managing the learning agenda, managers whether in '*transactional*' or '*transformational*' power relationships act to keep issues off the agenda (*second-*

dimension), and confine to *safe* issues such as '*technical dialogue*' and '*consensual dialogue*'. '*Critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*' have no relevance and are seen as disruptive to the status quo and outside the bounds of what is acceptable in organisations. Questioning the *existing order of things* is not permitted. Instead, '*transactional power relationships*' reinforce the *unitary* ideology through the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* of power. '*Transformational power relationships*' challenge some institutionalised attitudes, beliefs, values and norms, but continue to reinforce the *unitary* ideology. That's because managers have a vested interest in maintaining the *existing order of things*: the ideology of management (Diefenbach, 2009a). Consequently, some institutionalised attitudes, values, beliefs, norms and practices within organizations are left unchallenged and continue to be reinforced (*third-dimension* of power).

Hence, this research also seeks to explore and confirm whether '*managed learning spaces*' facilitate more '*compliant organisational learning*' (see Figure 1). Employees and even managers may be unaware of any alternative and may accept the current order of learning within organisations. Without a critical perspective we may be unable to appreciate that implicitly within these power relationships, is the idea that managers are very much in control of the learning agenda in organisations, and consequently organisational learning is not being fully realised. Instead, the organisational learning may be more like '*compliant learning*', where employees learn what their managers want them to learn or what they perceive their managers want them to learn. Consequently, some voices may continue to be silenced, thereby organisational learning may not reach its potential. It may account for organisations getting stuck in '*single-loop*' learning.

2.9.2   From revolutionary power relationships

In addition, this thesis aims to explore and confirm whether '*revolutionary power relationships*' may facilitate '*liberated learning spaces*', where people feel free to engage in '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*'. That is questioning the *existing order of things*: the underlying fundamental, traditional and dominant attitudes, values, beliefs and norms within organisations.

Unlike the traditional power relationships, '*revolutionary power relationships*' are simultaneously built on a '*pluralist*' and particularly a '*radical*' or '*critical*' frame of reference (operating only in the *first-dimension* of power). From a truly '*pluralist*' frame of reference, a diverse range of interests are recognised not just that of senior management and such interests need to be negotiated between parties on more equal terms where neither may dominate.

However, it is the '*critical*' or '*radical*' frame of reference that looks beyond the formal organisational rhetoric, aspiring, desirous and driving to bring about social change towards a more equal society and seek to eliminate inequalities. Social change is achieved through learning, not necessarily in the formal sense of education, but through joint and reciprocal partners in the learning process, where there is genuine interest in the views of others. '*Revolutionary power relationships*' emphasise the importance for people to reach their potential, and as such see that the interests of management and the employee are sometimes at odds. Consequently, conflict in thinking is seen as inevitable and is not taken personally, recognising that a struggle is needed for social change: a struggle that involves delving deep into the structural inequalities in organisations and society, to examine and expose the practices that perpetuate those inequalities. Therefore, asymmetrical power relationships are constantly in sight. Being sensitive to the operations of power and advocating social change, '*revolutionary power relationships*' operate only in the *first-dimension*. In the spirit of critical adult education, their tasks are to challenge ideology, contest hegemony, unmask power, overcome alienation, learn liberation, reclaim reason, and practice democracy (Brookfield, 2005). Therefore the assumption is that in '*revolutionary power relationships*' people feel free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. In which case, there is a '*liberated learning space*'. The assumption is that it is '*meaningful dialogue*' that opens the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*', which has the capacity to bring about emancipating change.

And finally, this thesis endeavours to explore and confirm whether '*liberated learning spaces*' may facilitate the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'. The word

"potential" should be noted. Just because individuals have a '*liberated learning space*' it does not necessary follow that '*authentic organisational learning*' will occur. Authentic learning may occur at an individual or group level, but not at an organisational level. This thesis suggests that for '*authentic organisational learning*' to occur, a critical mass needs to be reached within the organisation. It is suggested that "…islands or pools of learning can be created within an organization….and may ultimately reach a critical mass to form joined-up, learning continents", and as such "[t]hese islands need a lot of effort if learning is to be developed and sustained" (Grundy, 1994, p.20).

For those interested in performance, this may be something they would like to think about. Organisational learning needs to be considered more fully. Without '*authentic organisational learning*', organisational actors may not capitalise on the human potential within organisations, and restrict organisational learning. When human potential is not utilised or realised, individuals may feel under-valued and alienated. However, it may be that '*revolutionary power relationships*' can only be found in organisations not underpinned by unitarism, but with multiple, diverse and divergent norm systems and ideologies such as in the democratic governance of a white-collar trade union (Huzzard & Östergren, 2002). A major problem with the '*traditional*' notion of organisational learning is that learning only occurs within the bounds of what and how managers want people to learn, thereby reinforcing conformity and compliance within organisations. The problem with this approach is that individuals and groups do not engage in authentic learning and their potential is not realised. In the words of Oswick et al. (2000, p.899) it is "…'real dialogue' which produces 'real organizational learning' (i.e. deeper polyphonic understanding)". However, equally it may be the case that more '*authentic organisational learning*' may be counterproductive, and result in more discontent employees.

The notion of '*revolutionary power relationships*' built on *pluralist* and *critical* frames of reference encouraging a '*liberated learning space*', appears to have some support in the literature. In essence, these relationships aim to provoke what Coopey and

Burgoyne (2000, p.881) described as *political activity* (*first-dimension* of power) which they examined its role:

> …as a means of creating 'psychic space' in which people are able to speak out and engage with others in ways that enhance their self-knowledge and their capability to bring that knowledge to bear on the work context and the relationships that flourished there" (emphasis added).

Political in the sense of not subscribing to the camouflage of the dominant '*unitary*' frame of reference in organisations, but driving a partnership arrangement to bring about social change in a way that does not totally destabilised the organisation (at least not all at once). Coopey and Burgoyne (2000, p.872) advocate that "…free and open political activity is able to provide the psychic security…in which people are able to speak without fear". However, they were concerned about the entrenched power structures, suggesting that "[u]nless political action enables these structures to be challenged, higher-level learning will be inhibited" (Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000, p.881). Similarly, the notion of '*revolutionary power relationships*' operating in the *first-dimension* is in line with Coopey's (1998, p.374) idea of 'radical theatre', saying "[c]reating theatre between people who participate voluntarily and on equal terms provides a 'learning space' where trusting relationships can flourish". Coopey (1998, p.375) suggests the interaction between participants grow and slowly open up to shape the potential for deep learning:

> In effect, the series of episodes of mutual self-disclosure serve as a vehicle for learning and for building up trust. The deeper the trust as each participant obtains freer and freer access to the motives and reasons of the others, the deeper the learning.

2.10   Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the organisational learning literature, drawing particular attention to three perspectives: '*technical*', '*social*', and '*emancipatory*'. While the technical and social perspectives have contributed to our understanding, looking at organisational learning from an '*emancipatory*' perspective encourages a closer examination of the power relationships perpetuating in organisations: power being all but ignored in the organisational learning literature.

Adopting an '*emancipatory*' perspective has encouraged me to separate the idea that there could be a potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*' beyond that which is more traditional and '*compliant*'. The literature raises the possibility that more '*compliant organisation learning*' may emanate primarily from a heavy focus on the '*technical*' side of the business aimed at problem solving and achieving organisational goals. In terms of the learning process, individual and/or groups are focused on more '*technical*' *reflection* and *dialogue* in the organisation. This is conducive to the '*technical*' perspective of organisational learning, whether aimed at *exploiting* what is already learnt or *exploring* new learning.

In contrast, from an *emancipatory* perspective, the questioning and inquiring moves beyond the technical aspect of the business, to a deeper questioning of the *existing order of things*. This involves examining the fundamental, traditional, and dominant attitudes, beliefs, values and norms in the organisation, a process described here as engaging in more '*meaningful dialogue*' at the social level, built on '*critical reflection*' at the individual level. However, generally the organisational learning literature does not make such a distinction on the notion of '*dialogue*', albeit that such a distinction has been made in respect to '*reflection*'. In addition, while the organisational learning literature speaks of a '*learning space*', in taking an *emancipatory* perspective I introduced the notion of a '*liberated learning space*' and '*meaningful dialogue*': the '*liberated learning space*' being the psychological freedom individuals and groups feel to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*' in organisations. That is the freedom they feel to question the *dominant ideology* and the *existing order of things* in organisations.

In this chapter I have drawn from the political and mainstream business management literature to present a triadic model of power relationships, consisting of two traditional power relationships – '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – and one from the so-called radical perspective: '*revolutionary*'. The two traditional power relationships are explicitly absent from the power literature, however do feature in mainstream business management literature not as power relationships but as a leadership model. As a leadership model, little attention is given to them in the organisational learning literature, but not at all as a model of power relationships. The radical arm of the triadic

model appears to be absent from both mainstream business management and power literature, although Freire's (1970) work does feature in adult education literature.

I have explored possible implications for these power relationships through a four dimensional power analysis model. In the organisational learning literature that *does* address power, this four dimensional model appears to be absent. By adopting the four dimensional model to analyse power, not only is the negotiated conflict (*first-*) addressed, but also agenda control (*second-*) as well as thought control both inside the organisation (*third-*) and outside in broader society and by the individual themselves (*fourth-*).

In this chapter, I have explored a model that might provide insight in *how and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit organisational learning, particularly that which is more 'authentic'*. Research is therefore needed to explore aspects of this model further, and confirm or refute observations, encapsulated in five propositions which will be the focus of this thesis:

- ❖ **1A** '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

- ❖ **1B** '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

- ❖ **2** '*Managed learning spaces*' facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*'

- ❖ **3** '*Revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'

- ❖ **4** '*Liberated learning spaces*' facilitate the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'

In the next chapter, I will explore the research methodology literature to devise a research design to confirm or refute these propositions, and ultimately address the research question – *how and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'*.

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I believe that, as progressive educators, we have the ethical responsibility to reveal situations of oppression. I believe it is our duty to create the means to understanding political and historical realities so as to bring about the possibility of change. I feel it is our role to develop work methods that allow the oppressed to, little by little, reveal their own reality.

Paulo Freire

3.1   Introduction

In Chapter 1, I set the task in this research to better understand *how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'*, particularly focusing on policing organisations.   In Chapter 2 I explored the literature on both organisational learning and power before presenting a conceptual model.   The conceptual model suggests organisational learning being mediated by a triadic arrangement of power relationships to ultimately facilitate distinctively different organisational learning: one '*compliant*' and the other more '*authentic*'.   Chapter 2 concluded with a series of five propositions that are the focus of this thesis, as follows:

- ❖ **1A**   '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

- ❖ **1B**   '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

- ❖ **2**   '*Managed learning spaces*' facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*'

- ❖ **3**   '*Revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'

- ❖ **4**   '*Liberated learning spaces*' facilitate the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'

In this chapter, Chapter 3, I move to explore the literature on research methodology in order to devise a research design to confirm or refute the propositions and possible implications.   This chapter commences with an exploration of the philosophical foundations that underpin the methodological choices.   In particular, I look at the *objective* and *subjective* approaches to social science, which drive the general

quantitative and qualitative alternatives. In addition the *critical* perspective is added to the mix and examined. This perspective is particularly relevant to this thesis, positioned in the *emancipatory* perspective of organisational learning and focused on power relationships. It takes an ethical and political stance encouraging the deeper questioning of power, which will be useful in the analysis of the data, unveiling the hidden aspects of power in the day-to-day taken-for-granted aspects of social life. Following the philosophical foundations discussion in this section, is a discussion on the methodological choices. Addressing the mono-method argument that one method is better than the other, I explore the pragmatism and multiple worldviews as foundations for mixed method research. From these perspectives, 'mixed *method*' and 'mixed *model*' studies open possibilities for a range of mixed methodology research designs.

This chapter then focuses specifically on the study of power relationships and organisational learning, highlighting the need to rely on relevant counterfactuals in the examination of power, before leading to a proposed research design. The design starts with an *exploratory investigation* phase to supplement my own observations and experiences, albeit undocumented, that were used along with the literature review to develop the model for this research. The proposed design also included a *confirmatory investigation* phase, using an organisational case study strategy focusing particularly on policing organisations as the subjects of interest. This chapter now commences with considering the philosophical foundations and methodological choices.

3.2   Philosophical foundations to methodological choices

Researchers are faced with various research methodology which have their own set of implicit philosophical assumptions and principles – both *ontological* and *epistemological* – that guide how "best" to conduct social research and explains why they differ (Neuman, 2011).

3.2.1 Ontological and epistemological assumptions in research

Ontology is the branch of philosophy which studies the concept of being or existence, what does it mean to be or what exists (Jacquette, 2002). Two basic ontological positions are *realist* and *nominalist*. A *realist* sees the world as existing "out there", independent of humans or their interpretation of it; while a *nominalist* views that "…our experience with what we call "the real world" is always occurring through a lens or scheme of interpretations and inner subjectivity" (Neuman, 2011, p.92). From the *realist* perspective the 'reality' subject of investigation is external to the individual, imposing itself on one's consciousness; whereas from the *nominalist* perspective the 'reality' is the product of individual consciousness or mind, or their intersubjective experience (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Hassard, 1991; see also Jackson & Carter, 1991). The *nominalist* does not accept the existence of 'real' structure in the world, but structures are artificial creations and labelled; whereas for the *realist*, the real world consists of "…hard, tangible and relatively immutable structures" irrespective of the labels that we may give them (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.4). That is, the *realist* ontology is associated with an *objective* approach to social science, while the *nominalist* is associated with the *subjective* approach (see Figure 2).

Subjective approach	Objective approach
Nominalism	Ontology	Realism
Anti-positivism	Epistemology	Positivism
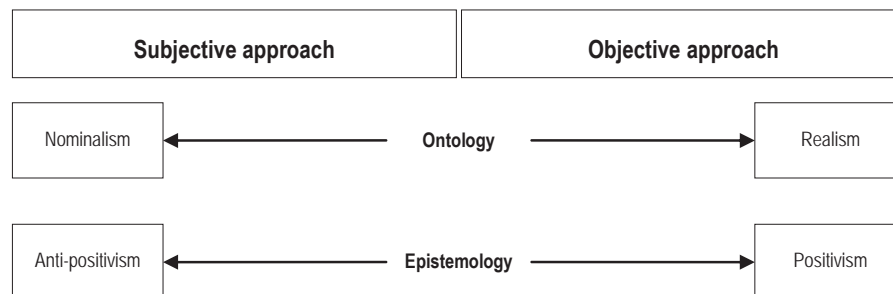
Figure 2: **The subjective-objective dimension to social science**

(Source: Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.3)

Rooted in our ontological assumptions are our *epistemological* assumptions. Epistemology being the branch of philosophy which studies the nature of knowledge or knowing: that is how do we know what we know and what is the most valid way to arrive at the *truth* (Neuman, 2011)? The *positivist* epistemology, based on the

traditional approaches dominating the natural sciences, seeks "…to explain and predict what happens in the social world by searching for regularities between its constituent elements" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.5). They would argue the existence of an external and objective reality, independent of any individual (Goles & Hirschheim, 2000) (see Figure 2). *Positivist social science* may be described as an "…organized method for combining *deductive* logic with the precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity" (emphasis added) (Neuman, 2011, p.95). From this perspective, the social world is treated the same as the natural world, hence knowledge is seen as objective, attainable through examining empirical evidence and testing hypotheses to these fundamental laws (Hirschheim & Klein, 1989; Goles & Hirschheim, 2000). That is knowledge is gained through a scientifically grounded study, and the task is to find the objective reality and discovery the objective *truth* (Wicks & Freeman, 1998). In contrast, the *anti-positivist* epistemology is set against the search for laws and predictability, but sees the social world as relativistic and needs to be understood from the point of view of participants directly involved in the activity being studied (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). This subjectivist position (see Figure 2) argues that reality is unclear and evasive which individuals interpret uniquely (Goles & Hirschheim, 2000). As such *interpretive social science* may be described as "…the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (Neuman, 2011, p.101). It rejects the appropriateness of studying the social world with natural science methods, as reality is too complex and relative to the individual and therefore knowledge cannot be "known" by any single perspective (Hirschheim & Klein, 1989; Wicks & Freeman, 1998; Goles & Hirschheim, 2000).

3.2.2   Sociologies of regulation and radical change[22]

Using Burrell and Morgan's (1979) model, it is evident that the traditional *objective-subjective* approaches to social science are positioned in the *sociology of regulation* dimension in their approach to the nature of society (see Figure 3) (see also Morgan,

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[22] In describing an alternative to the Burrell and Morgan model, Deetz (1996) use the "consensus-dissensus" to describe the dimension that addresses the relation of research to existing social orders.

1980; Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Goles & Hirschheim, 2000). The '*sociology of regulation*' is "…essentially concerned with the need for regulation in human affairs; the basic questions which it asks tend to focus upon the need to understand why society is maintained as an entity" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.17). In contrast, *critical social science* is positioned in the *sociology of radical change* dimension in their approach to the nature of society (see Figure 3), and may be described as a "…critical process of inquiry that goes beyond surface illusions to uncover the real structures in the material world in order to help people change conditions and build a better world for themselves" (Neuman, 2011, p.108). The basic concern of the '*sociology of radical change*' "…is to find explanations for the radical change, deep-seated structural conflict, modes of domination, and structural contradiction which its theorists see as characterising modern society" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.17). Burrell and Morgan (1979, p.17) go onto explain that the *sociology of radical change* "…is essentially concerned with man's [sic] emancipation from the structures which limit and stunt his potential for development", and with "…what is possible rather than with what is; with alternatives rather than acceptance of the *status quo*" (emphasis in original).

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                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │  Sociology of Radical Change │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
                                      │
              Radical Humanist        │        Radical Structuralist
                                      │
   ┌────────────┐                     │                     ┌───────────┐
   │ Subjective │─────────────────────┼─────────────────────│ Objective │
   └────────────┘                     │                     └───────────┘
                                      │
              Interpretative          │          Functionalist
                                      │
                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │    Sociology of Regulation   │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
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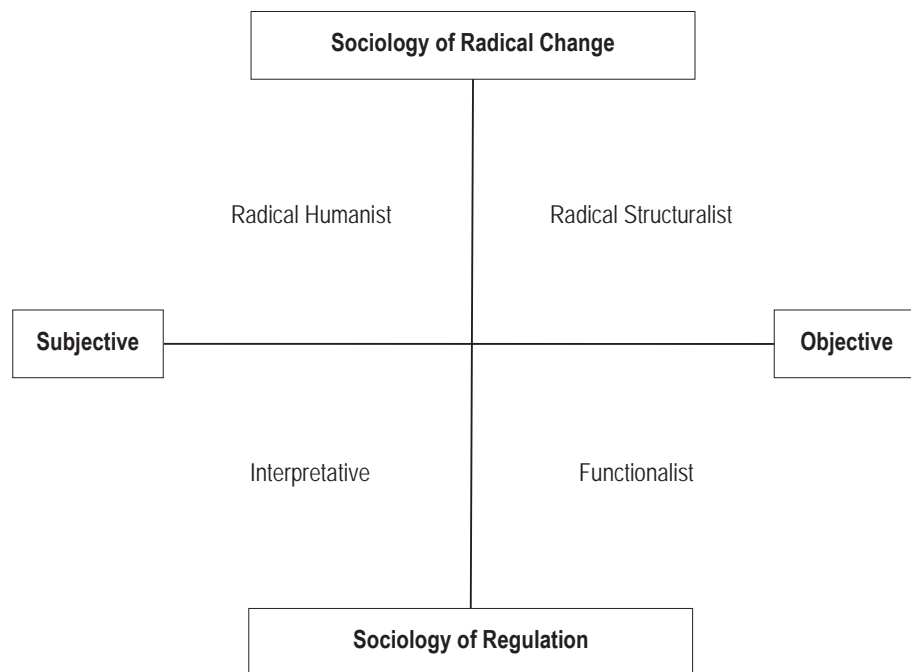
Figure 3:   Sociology paradigms: Nature of social science with nature of society

(Source: Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.29)

According to Burrell and Morgan's (1979) model, the notion of *sociology of radical change* falls across both the subjective and objective ontological and epistemological assumptions, either as the *radical humanist* and *radical structuralist* (see Figure 3). Both emphasise radical change, emancipation, modes of domination, deprivation, and potentiality. The *radical humanist* takes a *subjectivist* approach to social science – tending to be *nominalist* and *anti-positivist* – placing emphasis on human consciousness, with the view that "…the consciousness of man is dominated by the ideological superstructures with which he interacts, and that these drive a cognitive wedge between himself and his true consciousness" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.32). In contrast, the *radical structuralist* takes an *objectivist* approach to social science – tending to be *realist* and *positivist* – concentrating their critique on structural and power relationships and drawing attention to structural conflict (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Both the *radical humanist* and *radical structuralist* may be concerned with a range of social injustice issues. Both are radical, the former concerned with changing the *social constructed* realities, the later changing the *structural* realities (Gioia & Pitre, 1990).

In contrast, traditional research methods have not concerned themselves with issues such as social injustices (Mertens, 2003). In fact it has been suggested that traditional researchers cling to the guard rail of neutrality (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Whereas critical researchers are not embarrassed to be labelled political in their attempt to confront social injustices and often declare their devotion to the struggle towards a better world (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Kincheloe and McLaren (2000, p.292) say "…critical researchers enter into an investigation with their assumptions on the table, so no one is confused concerning the epistemological and *political baggage* they bring with them to the research site" (emphasis added). The critical researchers often see their research as a "…first step toward forms of political action that can redress the injustices found in the field site…" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p.291; see also Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2012).

Given that this thesis is positioned with the *emancipatory* perspective of organisational learning, and it focuses on exploring power relationships, the assumptions of *critical social science* will be relevant to this research. In contrasting *critical social science*, in

Appendix B (see Table 14) I have provided a summary analysis of the work of Neuman (2006, 2011) comparing with *positivist social science* and *interpretive social science* in answering ten questions through the respective paradigms to reveal the underpinning assumptions of each.

3.2.3   The researcher's ontology and epistemology assumptions

Before proceeding further in this chapter, it is prudent to make some clear comment on my ontological and epistemological assumptions. In doing so, I declare that I have been reluctant to prescribe to any one particular worldview, resistant to being "boxed" into any particular approach. Foucault (1982) would describe this as a "dividing practice", which becomes a form of power through categorising the individual, attaching an identity and imposing a law of truth, against which the individual discipline him/herself. As such I see that it would only restrict me as a researcher and prevent me from looking at what is possible. A stance perhaps described as a '*a-paradigmatic*' one (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), and which is encouraged by the Burrell and Morgan model supporting multiple paradigm research (Hassard, 1991) but not as a new restrictive dogma (Willmott, 1993). However, I do so on the basis that it is "healthy medicine" for the researcher to clearly disclose their epistemological preferences so as to know who is on the other side of the table and where the researcher is coming from (Huberman & Miles, 1994). Contrary to what the positivists would have us believe, research is ideologically driven and there is no value-free or bias-free research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Janesick, 1994).

It would be tempting for someone looking at the model presented in this thesis, in association with the presented propositions (in Chapter 2), to assume this research is embedded in the *realist* ontology and *positivist* or *post-positivist* epistemology. However, I must make clear that this thesis is underpinned by the *sociology of radical change* in particular Critical Theory. The model serves only as a heuristic device (Wright, 1979) to make explicit the social construction of my reality, emanating from exploring my own thinking as it developed through the literature review, critically reflecting on my observations and experiences in a policing organisation, and entering into with others what I have called '*meaningful dialogue*'. It does not make claim to a

final truth (Steinberg, 2012).   With Critical Theory being very much about social change, the model's usefulness to others is dependent on how much it helps them to better understand and make sense of their own reality, and their envisaging how things might be different in their individual and collective pursuit towards their own emancipation. Much like a Wittgensteinian ladder, its usefulness is over and may be discarded once one has climbed past it.

In exploring my *political baggage*, I do see this research as a possible first step towards emancipatory change for officers and staff in policing organisations.   Critical researchers have an ethical responsibility to awaken political consciousness to social injustices and oppressive state of affairs, and to generate political dreams which enable people to truly imagine for the future (Freire, 2007). That is to develop "…nonviolent revolutionary ethical consciousness…" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2012, p.112). Hence my role as a critical researcher is "…not to describe the world as it is, but also to demonstrate what needs to be changed" (Shields, 2012, p.3). As such I am influenced by the *radical structuralist* perspective in that power relationships in policing organisations have a long history such that some of the traditional cultural and institutional practices have become reified. I adopt a *radical humanist* perspective in that I see the importance of "…transcending the limitations of existing social arrangements" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.32). That is the need to ask 'who benefits' from the current arrangements (Neuman, 2000), and could they be different as part of the struggle for a better world (Freire, 1996; Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011; Steinberg, 2012).   Plummer (2011) uses the term '*critical humanist*' in the sense of an approach to research that focuses on human experience including the structure and daily lived nature of such experience, whilst recognising the role that research takes – both political and social. My overall aim is to take a "dissensus" position "…shifting analytic attempt to see what could not be seen before…" (Deetz, 1996, p.197). Therefore I see research as a possible first step towards unveiling a reality of oppression (Freire, 1970, 1996) so that a new journey of *co-intentional* education may commence toward liberation. In doing so, I will use whatever research methodology will assist in the unveiling process.

Exploring further my ontological and epistemological assumptions, with my political baggage to one side, at this point in time I hold the view that there are some natural occurring objects in the world existing outside of oneself (*realist*). However, I am also of the view that we as humans can interpret these natural occurring objects and assign names and meaning. For example, the objective-subjective labels are socially contrived (Deetz, 1996). Similarly, aspects of social life can also be interpreted rather than exist as a single reality. Hence I see there can be multiple realities in society of both natural occurring objects and social life, and what is 'real' is relative to the individual (*nominalist*). However, such multiple realities can be become unified, justified, legitimated, reified, socialised and internalised (*social constructionist*) (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). So reified that some social phenomenon can be studied in terms of probable "cause and effect" (*post-positivism*) or as culture that takes on structural form (*structuralism*). Or it can be seen for its instability (*post-structuralism*) or constant state of flux as we try to understand our own individual reality rather than single truth for all (*postmodernism*).

Therefore I do not prescribe to any particular single paradigm to the exclusion of others. This is consistent with the idea that multidisciplinary research informs Critical Theory (Kellner, 1989). However, if pressed I would suggest I have adopted the endeavours of a '*critical bricoleur*' (McLaren, 2001) or what I might describe as a *critical pragmatist*. The *bricoleur* is "Jack of all trades…" or a "handyman/women" type person who uses whatever tool at hand to complete the task (Levi-Strauss quoted by Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.4). Similarly, the *pragmatist* advocates that "what works" in answering the research question is of primary importance, rather than the paradigms underpinning the research or the method used (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Both the *bricoleur* and *pragmatist* support multiple methods and mixing methods to address the task, rather than the mono-method argument of the past.

3.2.4 The methodological choices of the critical pragmatist

Mono-method argument: "One method is better…"

The historical 'war' between those advocating a quantitative approach and those advocating a qualitative approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), has been the centre of arguments on how to best research the problem. For example, Martin (1993) points to the *simple* mono-method argument that one method is viewed as better than the other, and the *complex* mono-method argument that one method is better than another to address a particular theoretical issue. An example of the later argument is the view that a '*qualitative*' approach is particularly useful when little information exists on the specific research question; the variables are largely unknown; the theory base is inadequate or incomplete to guide the study; and will help the researcher understand the phenomenon by focusing on the context (Creswell, 1994). In addition, the '*qualitative*' approach has typically been associated with the descriptive case study research design, "…characterized by a natural environment in which no manipulation of any variable occurs and involving *exploratory investigations*" (emphasis added) (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p.30). Conversely, the '*quantitative*' approach is said to be suitable where there is a substantial body of literature; the variables are known; and the theory has been developed to the point of being able to be tested and verified (Creswell, 1994). The '*quantitative*' approach has typically associated with the laboratory experiment research design, "…characterized by a controlled research environment in which a manipulation of a variable occurs and involving *confirmatory investigation* of an a priori hypothesis…" (emphasis added) (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p.30).

However, Martin (1993) argues that we should refrain from mono-method arguments but work actively to breaking up mono-method monopolies.[23] In respect to the Burrell and Morgan model, there has been a recognition by some that there are transition zones

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[23] Interestingly in contrast to *objective-subjective* dimensions supporting a quantitative and qualitative research respectively, Deetz (1996, p.196) use the dimensions "local/emergent – elite/a priori" where the latter is "…heavily theory driven with careful attention to definitions prior to the research process"; while former "…work with an open language system and produce a form of knowledge with less lofty claims". However, straying from what would appear to be a *complex* mono-method argument, Deetz (1996) suggests that in these dimensions linguistic/social constructionism is acknowledged in all research positions, and both can claim objectivity.

between paradigm, where it is impossible to establish with certainty where one ends and another begins (Gioia & Pitre, 1990), a point that is illustrated by Goles & Hirschheim (2000) (see Figure 4). Certainly, it is now recognised that there is paradigm "interbreeding" or "blurring of genres", where two once irreconcilable theorists are now looking at the various paradigms to better inform their own arguments (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). Martin (1993, p.35) suggests that "…both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used for both *exploratory* and *confirmatory* research" (emphasis added). This is the position adopted by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) who advocate a *pragmatist* perspective to research methodology.
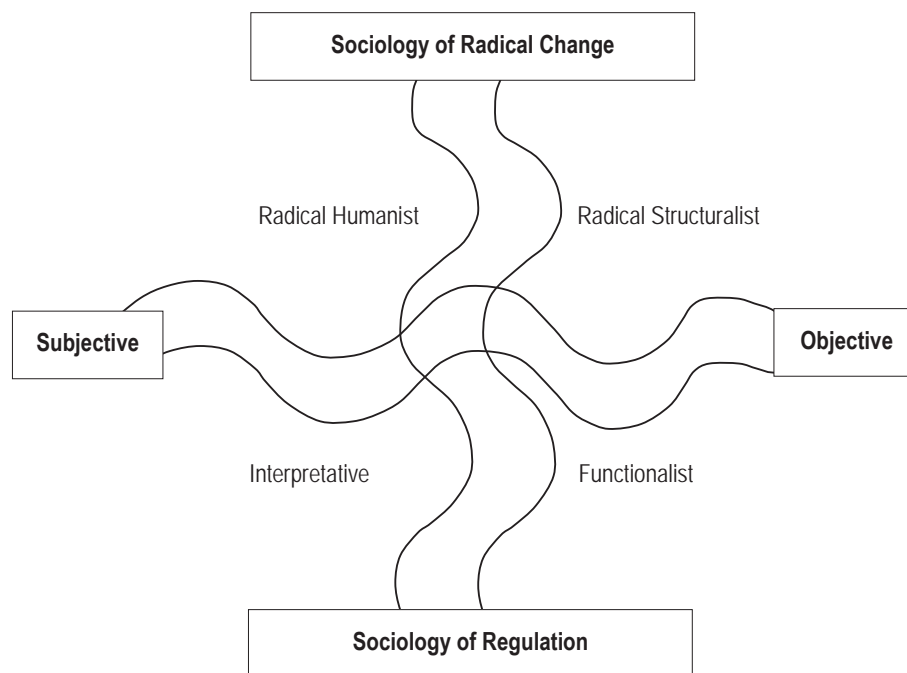
Figure 4:   Sociology paradigms: Blurring transition zones

(Source: Goles & Hirschheim, 2000, p.259)

Critical pragmatism as a foundation for mixed method research

The '*pragmatist*'[24] approach "…rejects the either-or of the incompatibility thesis and embraces both points of view", which allows for both quantitative and qualitative methods, and both objective and subjective points of view (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Consequently, it can be seen that the pragmatist researcher "…will emphasize

the importance of conducting research that best addresses the research problem", will employ multiple methods of data collection, both quantitative and qualitative, to best answer the research question, and "…will focus on the practical implications of the research…" (Creswell, 2007, p.23). An alternative stance to the pragmatism perspective as a single paradigm for the research project, may be to adopt multiple paradigms or worldviews (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Adopting multiple worldviews opens the opportunity to include the *transformative-emancipation* paradigm (Mertens, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Mertens, 2007) as an alternative worldview to pragmatism for the use of mixed methods. The aims of transformative and emancipation having their roots in critical social sciences (see Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Mertens, 2003). However, to make my political baggage perfectly clear in this research, I use the term '*critical pragmatist*'.

'*Mixed method* studies'

The adoption of the '*critical pragmatist*' worldview raises a number of possibilities for this research. For example, it raises the possibility for mixing at the *method* only level in a mixed method research project (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.5) suggest that with mixed method research as a *method*, "…it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies". It involves the collection and analysis of two types of data (qualitative and quantitative) in the research (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). This is consistent with Tashakkori and Teddlie's (1998, p.17) definition of '*mixed method*' studies, which they describe as "…those that combine the qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology of a single study or multiphased study". Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) described the *mixed-method* design as including a quantitative phase and a qualitative phase in an overall research study.

'*Mixed model* studies'

However, the adoption of the '*critical pragmatist*' worldview also provides the flexibility for mixed research which mixes beyond the *method* level. That is it raises the possibility for mixing the *methodology* level in a mixed method research project

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[24] For further details on the general characteristics of pragmatism, refer to Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004).

(Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.5) suggest that with mixed method research as a *methodology* "…it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches _in many phases_ in the research process" (emphasis added). That is it involves the integration of two approaches to research (quantitative and qualitative) (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). This appears to capture Tashakkori and Teddlie's (1998) notion of '*mixed model studies*'. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p.19) "[t]hese are studies that are products of the *pragmatist* paradigm and that combine the qualitative and quantitative approaches _within different phases_ [or stages] of the research process" (emphasis added). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) described the *mixed-model* design as "…mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches within or across the stages of the research process".

The stages within or across which the mixing may occur in *mixed model* designs, includes the *purpose of the research* stage, the *data collection* stage, and the *analysis* stage. For example, Patton (1990) describes the idea of '*methodological mixes*' (which Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) later call '*mixed forms*') involving the mixing of the *design* (experimental design or naturalistic inquiry), with the *data* collection technique (quantitative or qualitative), with the *analysis* process (statistical analysis or content analysis). Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) expands, reworks and relabels the three dimensions of Paton's work, to describe a research approach that they call '*mixed model studies*'. Their dimensions are the *type of investigation* (exploratory investigations versus confirmatory investigations); the *data collection and operation* (qualitative versus quantitative); and the *analysis and inference* (qualitative versus statistical) (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) point that historically *confirmatory investigations* have consisted of primarily quantitative data collection, a deductive conceptual framework, and statistical data analysis. However, in *mixed model confirmatory studies*, the data collection and the data analysis can be either qualitative or quantitative (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Similarly, in *mixed model exploratory studies*, the data collection and the data analysis can be either qualitative or quantitative (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Mixed methodology research designs

Consequently, as can be seen in Figure 5, Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) have produced a classification consisting of eight simple types of studies, which include the traditional pure quantitative and qualitative models, as well as six simple mixed model studies (Mixed Type I to Mixed Type VI). They later refer to these as *monostrand mixed model designs* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). In addition to these six *monostrand mixed model designs*, Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) have highlighted two more complex combinations, being a '*parallel mixed model design*' (Mixed Type VII) and a '*sequential mixed model design*' (Mixed Type VIII). These they later refer to as *multistand mixed model studies* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Also depicted in Figure 5 are six similar mixed-model designs described by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), which they call *across-stage mixed-model designs* "…because the mixing takes place across the stages of the research process" (See Figure 5). In addition, they highlight the *within-stage mixed-model design*, an example of which is "…the use of a questionnaire that includes a summated rating scale (quantitative data collection) and one or more open-ended questions (qualitative data collection)" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.20).
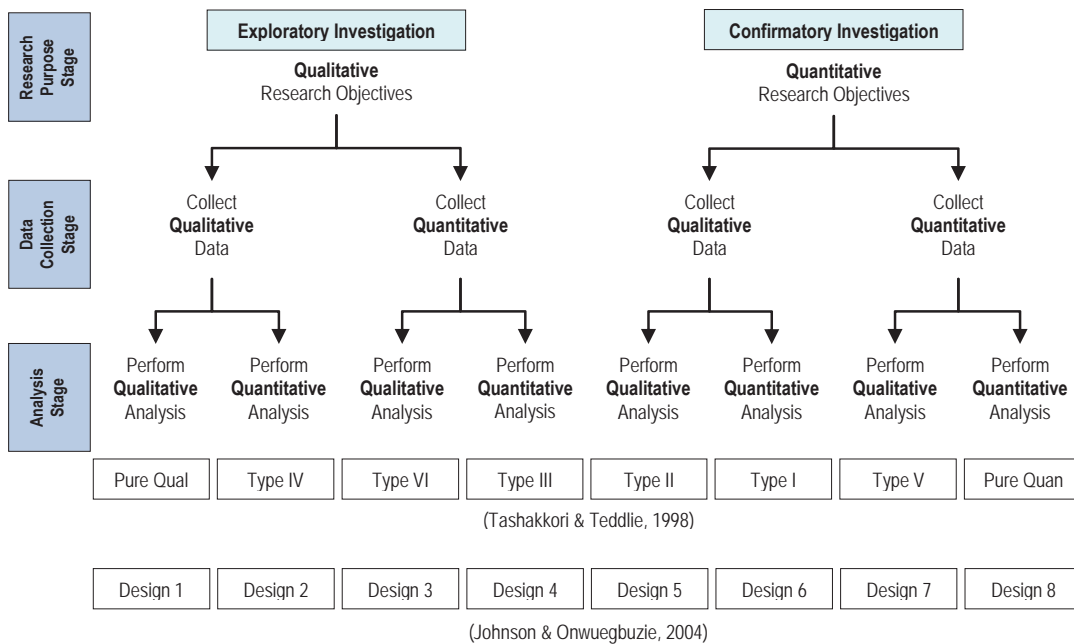
Figure 5:   **Monomethod designs with mixed model designs**

Mixed methodology research designs: Strengths and weaknesses

While the use of mixed methodology (including *mixed method* studies and *mixed model* studies) provides opportunity for flexibility, mention should be made of the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. One of the main justifications for using multiple methods is '*methodological triangulation*' (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p.41) explain that "[t]he original term triangulation refers to a surveying/nautical process in which two points (and their angles) are used to determine the unknown distance to a third point". In essence, the strategy of triangulation with multiple methods is to "…attack a research problem with an arsenal of methods that have nonoverlapping weaknesses in addition to their complementary strengths" (Brewer & Hunter, 2006, p.4). This has been referred to as the *fundamental principle of mixed method research* (Johnson & Turner, 2003). "The goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.14).

In terms of weaknesses of mixed research, Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest they include the difficulty of both qualitative and quantitative research being carried out by a single researcher; requiring the researcher to learn multiple methods as well as understanding how the methods may be mixed; being more time consuming and expensive; purists being concerned about only working in one paradigm; as well as the early development of the approach in which many issues need to be worked out. Despite these weaknesses, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) describe four situations when a mixed methods research is the preferred design to address the research problem. These have been captured in Table 15 in Appendix B.

3.3 Research method

3.3.1 Studying power relationships and organisational learning

Having taken a *critical pragmatist* approach which supports mixed research designs, I now look closer at research method issues relevant to the study of power and organisational learning. This is important given that power is recognised as a difficult

notion to pin down (Clegg et al., 2006), particularly given its diversity and complexity. It will also give me some clues for a research design on how this research could be conducted.

Quantitative versus qualitative approach to research power relationships

In devoting a five chapter part to his book on *how to study power*, Morriss (2002, p.124) makes the point that researchers will be disappointed in their pursuit to determine who has power, as no single method will guarantee a satisfactory answer: "Those who have proposed one, perfect way of going about studying power have been deluded…". In fact, Morriss (2002) pleas for methodological tolerance, rather than rejecting evidence because it doesn't accord to some notion of 'hardness'.

Despite this plea for tolerance, comment should be made in respect to taking a purely *quantitative* approach to the study of power relationships. In particular, power relationships are not generally open to precise measurement, and are not conducive to the traditional *quantitative* research methodologies (Crozier, 1973; Hardy, 1995). However, some may argue greater success can be had measuring power operating in the *first-dimension*. For example, in the application of Burns' (1978) framework of political leaders as power holders, Bass (1985) and later Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999) identified key attributes to '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' leaders. Also in the *first-dimension*, Dahl's (1961) work involving the counting of votes: the simplest method of assigning a numerical measure to power yet with its own complexities (Morriss, 2002). Despite this approach, there is acknowledgement of the difficulties in identifying causal relations in the analysis of power with any degree of rigor (Dahl, 2002).

While vote counting or assigning attributes may, to some degree, address power relationships operating in the *first-dimension*, it does not do so entirely. Further, this approach is neither conducive nor appropriate to identify the other dimensions of power. For example, in Dahl's counting of votes on the "more important" issues, it does not address how some issues don't make it to the agenda on decidable issues (*second-dimension*) (Morriss, 2002). Similarly, with the *third-dimension* of power, how do you

study what does not happen (Gaventa, 1980)? Thus a *quantitative* approach seems less appropriate to penetrate the deeper dimensions of power. However, Morris (2002) reminds us there is no single best way to study power.

Studying the taken-for-granted aspects of power through an interest-oriented approach and relevant counterfactual statements

While we cannot hope to *prove* the attributes of power across all dimensions, we also cannot directly observe power (Morriss, 2002). Power, Lukes (2005, p.64) says, is "…most effective when least accessible to observation, to actors and observers alike…". Instead, with the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions*, we gain a better appreciation that power engulf our everyday lives: it is not necessarily positioned in the obvious but can be "…invisible to the taken-for-granted natural attitude of social practice" (Haugaard & Malesevic, 2008, p.1).   As such the foundation of power analysis requires the "…suspension of the natural attitude of everyday life", to the point of finding "…the most taken for granted aspects of social life surprising" (Haugaard & Malesevic, 2008, p.1).

In the study of power, rather than an *issue* or *preference* approach taken by the pluralists like Dahl, both Morris (2002) and Lukes (2005) argue firstly, for taking an *interest-*oriented approach, and secondly, relying on *counterfactual* statements and drawing inferences to indirectly "observe" power. In respect to the first, Lukes (2005) used terms such as '*real interests*' and *false consciousness* in defending the study of the *third-dimension* of power, suggesting that an individual's *real interest* cannot be dispensed with in addressing this dimension. An *interest*-oriented approach is necessary to reveal how people willingly accept the *existing order of things* even when the acceptance is against their own interests: that is their wants may be the product of a bias system. Lukes (2005) recognises that people do not have a single interest, but their interests are multiple and conflicting. Clegg et al. (2006) say that for someone to judge other people's actions and thinking against some privileged idea of what their interests really should be, is to view themselves as an oracle and to regard another individual as a nothing or nobody, a cultural dope, a thing not free to choose. However, Lukes (2005) acknowledges that determining the interests of people as to what is central as oppose to

that which is superficial, is intrinsically controversial: sides are taken on moral, political and philosophical grounds, and as such cannot avoid a judgement of values.

This judgement links with the reliance on *counterfactual* statements to study power: that is statements about what has <u>not</u> actually happened but might have happened if the circumstances were different. Specifically Morris (2002, p.124) says "What we can observe – the evidence we can gain – are facts; we cannot observe, nor gain evidence directly about, 'counterfacts'. What we have to do is gain evidence of facts – make observations – and from this *impute* to counterfacts" (emphasis in original). In accepting that counterfactuals cannot be tested directly, Morriss (2002, p.145) says "…our evidence is used in *indirect* ways to establish the truth of, or reasonableness of asserting, counterfactuals…" (emphasis added). And further, that "[t]he most convincing way of establishing the truth of a counterfactual is to make the antecedent true, and then see whether the consequent is also true" (Morriss, 2002, p.125). Similarly Lukes (in Hayward & Lukes, 2008, p.6) says that the *third-dimension* of power, hidden from direct observation, "…has to be inferred via the postulation of relevant counterfactuals, to the effect that but for the exercise of the power in question those subject to it would have thought and acted otherwise, in accordance with their 'real' interests".

The idea of examining the *facts*, and making inferences based on *counterfacts* in the study of power, is not too dissimilar to the metaphor of a police investigation and a criminal trial. The focus of a police investigation is to look at an incident involving a transgression of the law from a range of different angles in an effort to, one, uncover whether a crime has been committed, and two, who committed it. A subsequent trial involves an objective (or at least as possible) review and interpretation of the evidence in the case, drawing inferences from the available evidence, and determining whether the burden of proof has been satisfied in respect to all the elements of the alleged offence. In many cases, there is no direct evidence. Instead, cases must rely on indirect evidence derived from a series of interferences drawn from other facts or evidence. In making such inferences, the police officer or court applies the "reasonable man [sic] test": that is "what would a reasonable man do under the circumstances?" Where there

is no or little direct evidence, the officer and the court evaluate the available corroborating evidence that may combine like thread to form a rope to establish the case. The case is then decided not on absolute truth or conclusively proven, but on proof beyond a reasonable doubt. This is perhaps the best that can be achieved in examining the four dimensions of power.

Foucault's (Fourth-dimension) implications for an interest-orientated study of power

However, Foucault's work has implications for the idea of taking an interest-oriented approach to study power. Firstly, Clegg et al. (2006) say using an interest based view of power in terms of Foucault's work is analytically underdeveloped. They say:

> The notion of real interests that are not realized is entirely alien to his analysis. To argue that identity and interest are related within the framework of a dimensional view, and that the identity shaping mechanisms are a fourth-dimension, can only mean that this fourth-dimension somehow shapes the identity of the other dimensions. (Clegg et al., 2006, p.218).

If we are to accept a *fourth-dimension* of power based on the Foucault's ideas, which I am suggesting we do, the observations of Clegg et al. are valid. It could be argued that the *first-*, *second-*, and *third-* dimensions of power operate within the context of the *fourth-dimension*: that is the relationships operating within these dimension fall within the *multiplicity of force relations* and the *plurality of resistance* to which Foucault referred. The identities of such dimensions can be history described (for example see Clegg, 1989a), which have formed disciplines with their own discourse. In that way, the other three dimensions of power can be seen perhaps as subsets within the *fourth-dimension* of power: that is they make up the *multiplicity of force relations* with *plurality of resistance* operating within a society. However, I don't believe Foucault was simply referring to just three aspects (or four for that matter) in the "multiplicity". As previously stated, for Foucault (1980, p.93) power is entwined with "knowledge" and the notion of "truth": "[w]e are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth". If Foucault hypothesis is right, then it is easy to see that the capacity of others to have *power over* others through the other three dimensions is only possible due the "truth" that becomes assigned to that situation providing the "*power to*". That is not only a "truth" in what

the "rules of the game" will be (Clegg, 1989a), but also what the "game" is. The outcome from the operation of multiple "truths" becomes the natural *order of things*.

Hence, adopting a Foucauldian *fourth-dimension* as part of the analysis framework has implications for the research approach.[25] For example, as alluded to above, Foucault (1980, p.96 & 98) suggests an acceptance that the analysis "…should not concern itself with the regulated and legitimate forms of power in their central location…" but instead he advocates being "…concerned with power at its extremities": "...the myriad of bodies which are constituted as peripheral *subjects* as a result of the effects of power" as "…individuals are the vehicles of power". Further he says "[p]ower must by [sic] analysed as something which circulates…. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands…. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation" (Foucault, 1980, p.98). Consequently, Foucault (1980, p.100) advocates for an *ascending* analysis of power: "…to investigate historically, and beginning from the lowest level, how mechanisms of power have been able to function". As pointed out in Chapter 2, of particular interest to Foucault, and which he views as a major mechanism of power, is "…the production of effective instruments for the formulation and accumulation of *knowledge* – methods of observation, techniques of registration, procedures for investigation and research, apparatuses of control" (emphasis added) (Foucault, 1980, p.102).

However the particular interest of this research is not to describe the historical development of a particular knowledge formation within a particular policing organisation in order to identify the multiple power mechanisms in play. Rather than a history of knowledge to uncover the power mechanisms, this research has a narrower focus commencing with a conceptual model drawn from the literature as I critically reflected on my own personal experiences, in order that I might better understand how power relationships facilitate or inhibit 'meaningful dialogue'. In addition my research is guided by a Critical Theory philosophy, which encourages an examination of the dominant ideology and dominant group: a particular focus in the *second-* and *third-dimensions* of power.

However, there will be aspects of power that cannot be explained by a Critical Theorist approach alone: something that Foucault (1980) found in his analysis in the History of Sexuality. For example, this research suggests that the *unitary* frame of reference is the foundation of the traditional power relationships: '*transactional*' and '*transformational*'. Based on Lukes' insistence that there is/are responsible agent(s) who can be held responsible for the *third-dimension,* the *unitary* frame of reference appears to fall outside the scope of this dimension. Instead the *unitary* frame of reference is evident in the broader society outside the reach of individual organisational managers, and is part of the *multiplicity of force relations* in the broader society to which Foucault refers. However, the scope of these force relations in the broader society is beyond the scope of this research. For this reason, my research will address the *fourth-dimension* of power, but only to the extent of the *unitary* frame of reference as it relates to policing organisations. All other mechanisms of power that might be classified as the Foucauldian *fourth-dimension* are not addressed. This does not preclude this research from taking an *interest*-oriented approach using a relevant *counterfactual* statement: bearing in mind I cannot *prove* power across all dimensions (Morriss, 2002).

3.3.2   Organisational case study strategy to study power relationships

An exemplar interest-oriented ethnographic case study of power

In terms of an exemplar for an *interest*-oriented approach to the study of power, Morriss (2002) points to Gaventa's (1980) study of power and powerlessness in an Appalachian valley. Other researchers of power also recognise Gaventa's case study in exposing the three dimensions, particularly the *third-dimension* (Clegg, 1989a; Hayward, 2000; Lukes, 2005; Clegg et al., 2006). Gaventa (1980) takes a historical look at the post-colonization inequalities in Central Appalachia within the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia in the United States. His study examines the interests of the predominant working class 'mountaineers' associated with images of poverty, compared with the corporate land and coal owners in a rich coal field capable of feeding a 200-year national energy demand (Gaventa, 1980). Morriss (2002, p.151)

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[25] For more particulars, see Foucault (1980, p.96 to 103).

describes Gaventa's "…commendably eclectic methodology…", involving the study of contemporary documents and records, immersing himself in the regional history, interviewing as many people possible, and observing decision-making. Also he took on the role of investigative journalist to uncover secrets of land-ownership, and even acted as a community activist setting up social experiments (Morriss, 2002).

In discussing the methodology for his study, more particularly the notion of *relevant counterfactuals*, Gaventa (1980, p.27) suggests going outside of the decision-making arenas of the *first-* and *second-dimensions* of power, to carry out "…extensive, time-consuming research in the community in question". That is an ethnographic study. In such studies the ethnographer overtly or covertly participates in the daily lives of others over an extended period of time, watching, listening, questioning and/or collecting whatever data available to illuminate the subject of research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Tedlock, 2000). Gaventa (1980) suggests firstly looking at the historical developments of the situation giving rise to an apparent 'consensus', which may indicate whether it is by choice or shaped by power relations. Exploring the historical developments tends to lend itself to a case study approach, which is evident in Gaventa's work, and which will be explored further below for this research. It also opens the potential to explore power in the *third-* (*inside* the organisation) and *fourth-dimension* (*outside* the organisation). Secondly, communication, socialization and acculturation processes can be studied, to determine differences between ideologies of the power-holders and actions, inactions or beliefs of the powerless (Gaventa, 1980). This is also relevant to the current research on organisational learning in which the communication process is a central feature. Thirdly, Gaventa (1980, p.27) says, is the possibility "…in a given or changing situation to posit or participate in ideas or actions which speculate about or attempt to develop challenges". This is, in the case of the current research, to imagine or conceive things as being different, and to generate discussion ('*meaningful dialogue*'). Implicit is the notion of change, which seems to fit with an '*emancipatory*' perspective to organisational learning.

Power to engage in 'meaningful dialogue' as a counterfactual statement

In the current research, I am looking at the degree to which people feel free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. To facilitate this research, I started with a baseline assumption

(or antecedent "truth") that every human being has the capacity or *power to* question the *existing order of things* in organisations, which encapsulates the dominant ideology: the traditional attitudes, beliefs, values and norms. This is not too unreasonable baseline assumption given the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights espoused in Chapter 1, the principles of which encapsulate the rights of all human beings to enjoy freedom of speech, opinion and expression without interference as the highest aspiration. If we apply the notion of human rights to this research, we might expect that everyone in organisations has the right to feel free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. That is the right to experience a '*liberated learning space*'. In the event that individuals and/or groups do not experience a '*liberated learning space*', that is the *power to* engage in '*meaningful dialogue*', then we may look at the distribution of *power to* in the first instance, or subsequently the *power over* whether by others or self imposed: remembering that '*power to*' precedes '*power over*' (Benton, 1981; Hayward, 2000). The antecedent "truth" of the social learning process, in this case '*meaningful dialogue*', is consistent with Morriss' (2002, p.145) assertion that power cannot be studied in isolation, but the "…assessment of raw observations depends on crucial points on a theory of the social process". In this case, the social process is organisational learning – more specifically '*meaningful dialogue*'. The baseline assumption that every human being has the *power to* engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' can be linked to the notion of *real interest*. That is people have a *real interest* in their right to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'.

While supporting the study of power drawing inferences from relevant counterfactual, Lukes (2005, p.49) acknowledges the extraordinary difficulties sometimes to justify the relevant counterfactual, and asks "[c]an we always assume that the victims of injustice and inequality would, but for the exercise of power, strive for justice and equality?". However, hierarchical systems which may be a situation of potential conflict, the task becomes the study of *quiescence* (Gaventa, 1980). The examination of how people react to hierarchical systems and intellectual subordination may adduce evidence, which support relevant counterfactuals of the three dimensions of power, but which can never be proven conclusively (Lukes, 2005). By examining a rigid hierarchical structured organisation enforced by chain of command and the subordination of intellect from the lower ranks, this research focuses on understanding why subordinated employees do not

engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' in an effort to bring about change in a restrictive social structure. Surely, that would be a means for an organisation to truly learn?

An organisational case study research strategy

Gaventa's (1980) study of power and powerlessness in an Appalachian valley suggests that a case study approach may be suitable for this research. A case study approach was also taken by Gordon et al. (2009) in their ethnographic study on discourse and power in the New South Wales Police (see also Gordon, 2006).   The case study is considered a research strategy used for studying organisational phenomena (Yin, 2003b; Hartley, 2004) and is the method of choice in circumstances where the context is not readily distinguishable from the phenomenon being studied (Yin, 2003a). More particularly a case study has an advantage when 'how' and 'why' questions are asked; and/or the researcher has little control over events; and/or a contemporary phenomenon is the focus within a real life context (Burns, 2000; Yin, 2003b) (see also Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998). It is acknowledged that case studies allow for exploring the characteristics of real-life events such as power struggles in organisation (Remenyi et al., 1998). According to Hartley (2004, p.325) "[c]ase studies are useful where it is important to understand how the organizational and environmental context is having an impact on or influencing social processes". Further, "[c]ase studies can be useful in illuminating behaviour which may only be fully understandable in the context of the wider forces operating within or on the organization, whether these are contemporary or historical" (Hartley, 2004, p.325). This may be useful in examining the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* of power, where historical and contemporary themes may be connected. Mackenzie Davey and Liefooghe (2004, p.181) say "[s]ocial and power relations influence thought and knowledge so it is impossible to achieve understanding without examining the context in which any action takes place". The present research involves asking a 'how' and 'why' question; I don't have control over the learning processes or events in organisations; and the focus is on organisational learning and power relationships in the real life context of the organisation.   The organisational context, both contemporary and historically, will be important in respect to understanding how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit '*authentic organisational learning*'. Therefore this research involves a case study approach at the organisational level.

3.3.3 Policing organisation as a case study of power relationships

While there may be broad similarities between organisations in Western cultures, there may be vast differences between organisational types. Due to the limitation of my resources, this research might be best served by restricting itself to organisations that provide the best opportunities to learn, and focus on those cases of intrinsic interest (Stake, 2000). Silverman (2000, p.103) says that with the intrinsic case studies "…no attempt is made to generalize beyond the single case or even to build theories". While the research question for this thesis relates to organisational learning in organisations generally, my specific interest for this research is policing organisations, more particularly Australian policing organisations.

Policing organisations make interesting case studies. Governments across the globe are "reinventing" themselves for social and economic development in the decades leading up to the 21st century brought on by globalisation driven by technology (Osborne & Gaebler, 1994; Rondinelli & Cheema, 2003). Particularly since the 1990s policing organisations like other government agencies in Australia and elsewhere, have moved towards modern management principles under the banner of new public management (Butterfield, Edwards, & Woodall, 2004, 2005; Diefenbach, 2009a, 2009b). Such organisations have grown to view themselves as offering a service to the wider community who are their customers or clients; engage in corporate planning to devise agreed upon key performance indicators; be accountable to their stakeholders (being the government of the day, other government agencies and the community) for the outcomes to be achieved; and mobilise resources to ensure the key performance indicators are met. Structurally, like many other large organisations, policing organisations have their operational employees who are geographically spread, as well as other specialist administrative (non-operational) sections or departments such as human resources, finance, and corporate services. However, unlike many other organisations, policing organisations in Australia have been built on a paramilitary history and culture, which may offer an excellent opportunity to analyse the impacts of multi-dimensional power relationships highlighted in this thesis.

Despite the richness of such organisations to address the research question for this thesis, the extent to which this research can be generalised to other organisations will, however, be limited to one's ability to see similarities and differences in comparison to other organisations. Perhaps more particularly however, this research may be of relevance to other policing organisations particularly those in Australia, with all things being equal, but only to the extent that others may see similarities and differences. For example, Gordon's (2006) historical/ethnographic case study of power, knowledge and domination in the New South Wales Police, pre and post the Wood Royal Commission, would be an interesting comparison (see also Gordon et al., 2009). This could be grounds for further research beyond this thesis. However, its ability to generalise to other organisations is not a claim of this thesis (McNeill & Chapman, 2005).

3.4   Research design

Having adopted a *critical pragmatist* approach towards an organisational case study of power relationship and organisational learning, in this section I focus more acutely on the research design. Yin (2003b, p.20) defines the research design as "…*a logical plan for getting from here to there*, where *here* may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and *there* is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions" (emphasis in original). The design must be elastic, with decisions being made at the beginning, during and in the end (Janesick, 1994). As such it must be remembered that there is no perfect research design, and a number of trade-offs need to be made due to resourcing, time available, and limitations on the human ability to grasp complex issues (Patton, 1990). This follows a pragmatist approach to the research design, which focuses on "what works" in answering the <u>research question</u> as being of primary importance (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

3.4.1   Organisational case study design

Organisational case study: Ability to generalise beyond the case

In selecting the organisational case study as the strategy to research power relationships and organisational learning, there are a number of corollary issues that need to be considered. For example, the number of cases, and similarly the number of individual

cases within each case, required to satisfactorily answer the research question. This raises the issue of *external validity* of the research design, that is the extent to which the research can be generalised beyond the immediate study to the wider universe (Remenyi et al., 1998; Yin, 2003b). As previously stated, while there may be broad similarities between organisations in Western cultures, there may be vast differences between organisational types. Consequently, many researchers and writers feel the need to face and defend the charges of having too small a sample of cases, and not being representative (Siggelkow, 2007). Representativeness of a sample allows the researcher to make such broader inferences (Silverman, 2000).

However, representativeness is not a claim of the case study (McNeill & Chapman, 2005). Yin (2003b) says that the notions of samples and universes are not the correct way of dealing with case studies. Further, Yin (2003b, p.38) points out that some "…fall into the trap of trying to select a "representative" case or set of cases…", and suggests that "…no set of cases, no matter how large, is likely to deal satisfactorily with the complaint" of the ability to generalise from one case to another. Yin (2003b, p.33) advises to avoid the notion of sampling all together to eliminate confusion, and further suggests to aim for *analytic generalisation*, as opposed to *statistical generalisation* where "…the investigator is striving to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory". That is case studies are "…generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (Yin, 2003b, p.33) (See also Burns, 2000). In Stake's (2000, p.448) words, "[t]he purpose of a case report is not to represent the world, but to represent the case". Stake (2000) further suggests that the opportunity to learn should be of primary importance in the selection of case studies. Siggelkow (2007, p.23) suggests that the conceptual argument is likely to have greater interest for the reader of the research than the particular case "…because it is this argument that can shape their future thinking and allow them to see the world in a slightly different light". Siggelkow (2007, p.22) also suggests that "[o]ne needs to convince the reader that the conceptual argument is plausible and use the case as additional (but not sole) justification for one's argument". Therefore case selections for this research were not concerned with sampling or being representative to generalise to other cases, but uses analytical generalisation to generate and argue general propositions about the impact of power relationships on organisational learning.

Organisational case study: Single versus multiple

If this research on organisational learning and power relationships was to focus of policing organisations in Australia, particular consideration needs to be given as to whether the research question can be adequately or best answered by a single case study, or if a multiple case study design is needed. As such consideration was given to the five rationales for a single-case design articulated by Yin (2003b)[26]. An argument might be mounted for three specific reasons in respect to a policing organisation in the study of power relationships and organisational learning: the *critical* case; the *extreme* or *unique* case; or conversely the *representative* or *typical* case. Due to space I will not elaborate on these arguments here beyond those detailed above in the section "The policing organisations as a case study of power relationships".

However, suffice to say that despite the possibility of a single case study design, the multiple case study design is considered more robust and less vulnerable. For example, Remenyi, Williams, Money, and Swartz (1998) suggest that business researcher should regard the single case study design as high risk in most circumstances. Similarly, Yin (2003b, p.53) suggests that "…[s]ingle-case designs are vulnerable if only because you will have put "all your eggs in one basket"". However, the rationale for a multiple case study design is not related to sample size as previously mentioned, but to follow replication logic. Rather than falling in the trap of trying to select a *representative* set of cases as warned against by Yin (2003b), a preferred way of looking at the case study is to consider it in the similar way as an experiment. A single case study is like a single experiment, where as multiple case studies may be considered like multiple experiments (Yin, 2003b) (see also Remenyi et al., 1998; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).   Yin (2003b) makes the point that scientists don't select 'representative' experiments. Further, he suggests that "[e]very case should have a specific purpose within the overall scope of the inquiry" (Yin, 2003b, p.47), such as the need for 'replication' of the experiment or testing two different hypothesises, but not for the reason of following a 'sampling' logic akin to having multiple respondents to a survey (Yin, 2003b). The 'replication' logic for multiple-case studies involves the careful selection of cases that

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[26] Note that Yin (2003b) acknowledges there may be more than five rationales for a single case study design.

"…either (a) predicts similar results (a *literal replication*) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a *theoretical replication*)" (Yin, 2003b, p.47).

Despite this warning, a significant inhibitor for multiple case study research is the resources available to the researcher. As previously mentioned, it is noted that multiple case studies are considered more robust, provide more compelling evidence (Remenyi et al., 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), and offers greater analytical power (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). However, multiple case studies "…can require extensive resources and time beyond the means of a single student or independent research investigator" (Yin, 2003b, p.47). Creswell (2007, p.76) says "[t]he study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis; the more cases an individual studies, the less the depth in any single case". A possible solution to this dilemma might be to consider a '*two-case*' case study design. Yin (2003b) suggest that even if the researcher can manage a '*two-case*' case study, it will be better than a single case study design. If a '*two-case*' case study design is selected, then further consideration will need to be given to 'polar types' – a particular important approach in theoretical sampling (or *theoretical replication*), where extreme cases enable easier observation of contrasting patterns (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). However, Yin (2003b, p.53) says that even with direct replication (or *literal replication*), a '*two-case*' case study design increases the powerfulness of the analytical conclusion as compared with a single case study research method, hence the external validity "…will have immeasurably expanded…".

3.4.2   Case design: Exploratory versus confirmatory

In addition to the consideration for an organisational case study design, I gave consideration to whether a *theory building* rather than a *theory testing* approach might be a more suitable first step. The building of theory "…consists of either constructing new theories or adapting older theories to explain known but previously unexplained empirical generalizations" (Brewer & Hunter, 2006, p.21). To *build theory* requires what Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2000) describe as a '*research before theory*' strategy, or what Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) describe as an '*exploratory investigation*'. '*Exploratory investigations*' are those without *a priori* hypothesis, in which case a '*qualitative*' approach is traditionally suitable (Tashakkori & Teddlie,

1998). In contrast, *testing theory* requires a '*theory before research*' strategy (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000) or a '*confirmatory investigation*' (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). '*Confirmatory investigations*' are those with *a priori* hypothesis, in which case a '*quantitative*' approach is traditionally suitable (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

There are advantages for conducting an '*exploratory investigation*' as a first step in answering the research question. For example, Marshall and Rossman (2006, p.34) say that the purpose of the *exploratory* study is "[t]o investigate little understood phenomena"; "[t]o identify or discover important categories of meaning"; or "[t]o generate hypothesis for further research". Emory and Cooper (1991, p.144 & 145) say that "…the area of investigation may be so new or so vague that a researcher needs to perform an exploration just to learn something about the problems", and develop clearer concepts and improve on the research design. Yin (2003b, p.28) says "[f]or case studies, theory development as part of the design phase is essential, whether the ensuing case study's purpose is to develop or test theory". Emory and Cooper (1991) recommend using such an approach when the direction of the research project is unclear. In such cases, they would support the researcher conducting an '*exploratory investigation*' as the first stage, aimed at orientating the researcher and the study, develop and formulate hypotheses, and developing the specific design (Emory & Cooper, 1991).

However, consideration was also given as to whether I could proceed direct to a '*confirmatory investigation*'. This is particularly relevant given my limited resources, and the extent to which the conceptual framework has been developed from the outset. In developing the conceptual framework prior to the data collection stage, I have drawn upon my experiences and informal observations from over 25 years as a police officer and reflected on those experiences and observations in conjunction with the literature review. Consequently, it could be argued that the development of the conceptual framework, and the associated model, was at a stage that would suggest that this research engage in a *theory testing* design. It could hardly be argued that this research has begun with little else than a research question, requiring the theory to emerge and

develop from the data collection (Neuman, 2000). However, as this research at that stage had relied on my informal and undocumented observations, there was a need for further data gathering to improve on my understanding of the issues and variables, to further refine the conceptual model, and to improve on the research design. Accordingly, I considered that an *exploratory investigation* was a necessary first phase for this research (see Figure 6). As Figure 6 shows, in conjunction with an *exploratory investigation* phase, a *confirmatory investigation* phase and an *emancipatory* phase were also proposed. The details of each phase are represented in Figure 7.[27] I now turn to detailing the rationale as well as provide particulars for each phase.
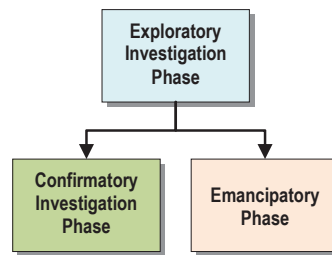
Figure 6: Broad outline of research design phases

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[27] Note: The dotted lines denote that phase / stage that will be pursued depending on the availability of the researcher's resources, and their necessity in answering the research question. This may be a limitation to this research design.
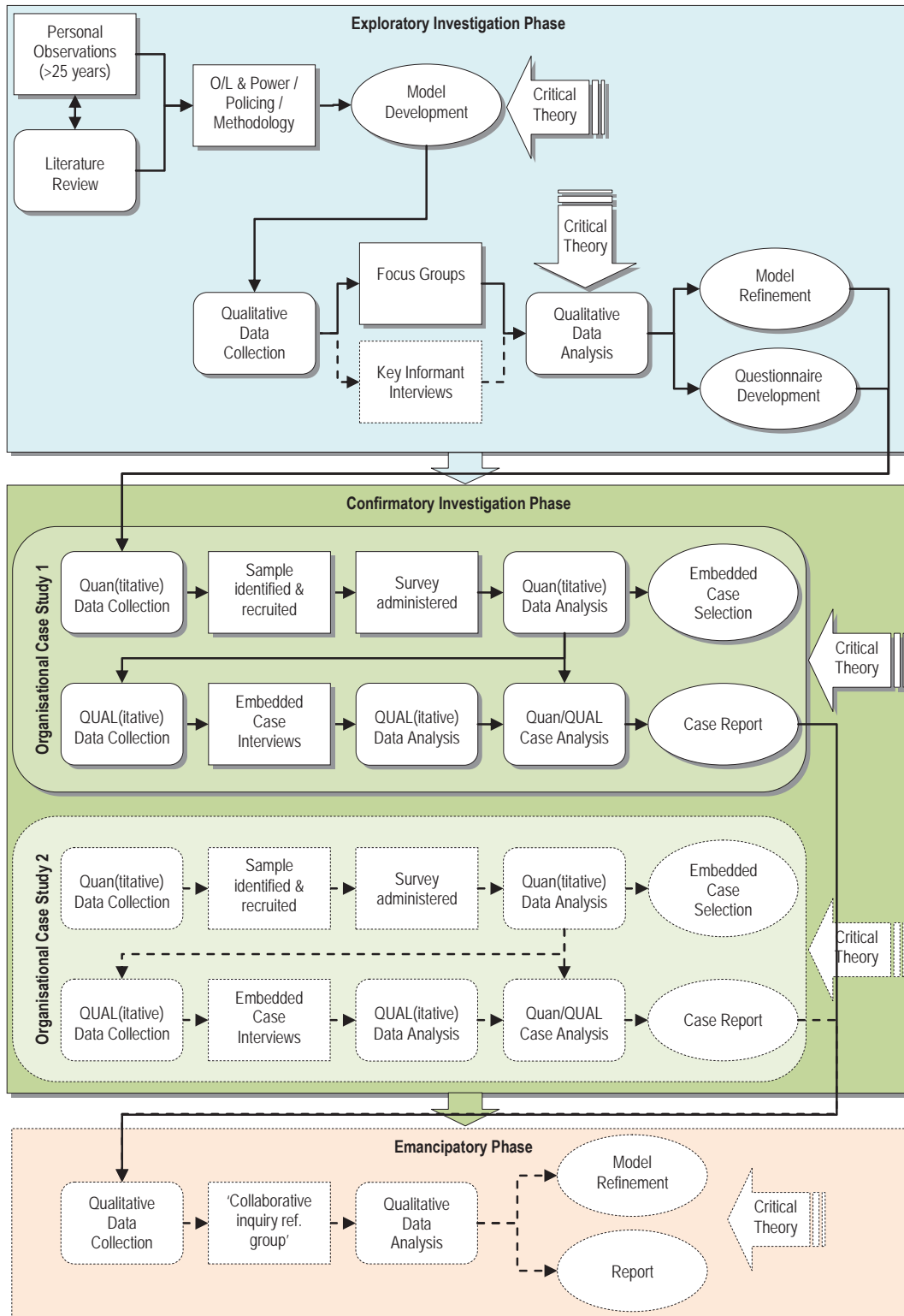
Figure 7:   Proposed research design

This research commenced many years ago. For more than 25 years I have performed the unofficial role of "ethnographer" in an Australian policing organisation, participating in the daily lives of others – observing, listening, and questioning (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Once the province of anthropologists, early ethnography was used to explore cultural patterns deeply rooted in human consciousness, where more recently the focus has shifted to understanding the means by which culture is constructed and negotiated principally through group interactions (Chambers, 2000). With an emphasis on *being-there*, the study of culture of small-scale homogeneous societies could be undertaken through systematically observing behaviours "…in the cultural settings in which they naturally occurred" (Chambers, 2000, p.855). Such observations are carried out over an extended period of time, living the everyday life of the inhabitants in that society (Tedlock, 2000). Since the 1960s, *critical ethnography* has emerged, focusing on the historical and cultural standpoint from multiple perspectives, often engaging in a political struggle working "…the divide between the powerful and the powerless" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2008, p.288). Its hope is not pure observation, but to "…dismantle uncontested expressions of power via acts of critique and resistance" (Hickey, 2012, p.179). Whilst undisciplined in my approach, with undocumented observations and experiences existing only as memories, on a daily bases I have endeavoured to analyse and make sense of the power relationships in the organisation and their impact on myself and others. This sense-making (Weick, 2001; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005) became clearer for me once I commenced this research formally, engaging more intensely with the literature particularly as I ventured beyond mainstream management and leadership into the work of Critical Theorists. It was from this sense-making and engaging with the literature that I conceptualised the model for this research.

Moving to the more formal research, I decided to utilise a *monostrand (monomethod) QUAL design* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) for the *exploratory investigation* phase. That is a *pure qualitative design* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) refer to this as their *Design 1 mixed-model design* (See Figure 5). I considered this design to be the most effective in providing me with a better understanding of the conceptual framework from the perspectives of other individuals within a policing organisation, whilst enabling me to better utilise the limited resources

for the *confirmatory investigation*. As previously mentioned a '*qualitative*' approach is particularly useful when little information exists on the specific research question; the variables are largely unknown; the theory base is inadequate or incomplete to guide the study; and will help the researcher understand the phenomenon by focusing on the context (Creswell, 1994) (see also Edmonson & McManus, 2007). This design will provide the opportunity for multiple perspectives rather than relying solely on my informal and undocumented observations. It was anticipated that the analysis of data from this phase would either buttress or rebut my thinking. In the event that my thinking was totally debunked in this phase, further consideration would then be given to the research design and the degree of further qualitative data collection needed to explore a modified conceptual framework. This may involve key informant interviews (see Figure 7).

3.4.4   Confirmatory investigation phase

In the event that the *exploratory investigation* phase provide only minor refinements to the conceptual model, then I would proceed straight to *theory testing* by undertaking a *confirmatory investigation* to further address the research question (see Figure 7). In contrast to theory building, the testing of theories, "…consists of logically deducing predictions from existing theories and stating these predictions as new hypotheses for research" (Brewer & Hunter, 2006, pp.21-22). As Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p.139) point out "[h]istorically, in confirmatory studies, the data primarily have been quantitative, the conceptual framework has been deductive, and the data analysis has been statistical". However, adopting a '*mixed model*' approach, particularly a '*mixed confirmatory design*' "…the data can be qualitative or quantitative and can be analysed in either form as well" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p.139) (see also Hunter & Brewer, 2003). As previously mentioned, the rationale relates to the fundamental principle of mixed method research (Johnson & Turner, 2003), where the goal is to draw on the strengths and minimize the weaknesses in the research design (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

An embedded case study design

In considering a case study approach, I considered that a purely organisational level of analysis may not be suitable in answering the research question. Consequently, I

considered a corollary issue in how an '*embedded case study design*' might be used to answer the research question. The thesis for this research suggests that a '*liberated learning space*' may be necessary for more '*authentic*' organisational learning. Such a space involves individuals, either separately or collectively, feeling free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*', that is questioning the *existing order of things* such as power relationships. Therefore, how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit a '*liberated learning space*', and therefore '*authentic organisational learning*', will require the research to take an individual level of analysis. Yin (2003b) suggests that an individual person or a group of people may be an individual holistic "case" in its own right, or be considered as a subunit of a broader organisational case study. This second approach, where there are multiple units of analysis, is referred to an '*embedded case study design*' (Yin, 2003b) or a '*case within the case*' design (Stake, 2000). The fact that cases at an individual level in this research will require an analysis of the overarching organisational context, rather than be context free, suggests that '*embedded case study design*' would be required in this research. However, a pitfall to remain aware of with the '*embedded case study design*' is to focus on the subunit level of analysis, and failure to return to the organisational level of analysis (Yin, 2003b). In police organisations, there may be differences between business units which are operational (working at the "frontline") as opposed to non-operational (administrative functions); which consist of general practitioner as oppose to specialist practitioner; which are in country as oppose to metropolitan locations; between practitioners and managers; and between various levels. There may also be differences between police officers (sworn) and police staff (unsworn); between male and females; between younger and older generations of employees; and between people with or without tertiary levels of education. In determining the selection of embedded cases, I gave consideration to theoretical sampling using 'polar types', where extreme cases enable easier observation of contrasting patterns (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007) (See Figure 8).
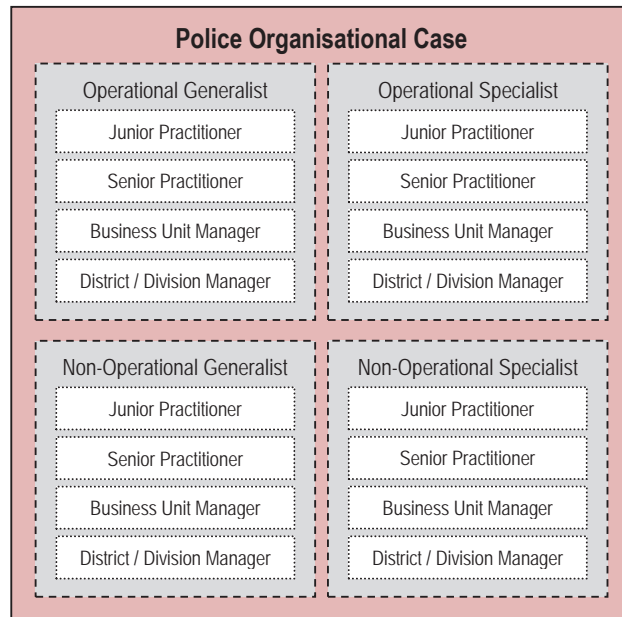
Figure 8: **Model for an embedded single-case study design**

However, there are limitations to using a predetermined 2 x 2 matrix for 'polar types' of groups and individuals within policing organisations. For example, there is a particular risk that I may miss other more significant 'polar type' embedded cases within the organisation. Consequently, my attention may be focused on less significant embedded cases, and neglect other more significant embedded cases which would obviously not be subject to analysis. There is also the issue of limited resources that cannot be wasted with embedded cases that do not best represent the overall case study.

Quantitative or qualitative data collection and analysis with a case study design

Simultaneously, I considered the strengths of using quantitative or qualitative data collection and analysis with a case study design. Individually the qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis pose the dilemma of trading off between the *depth* and *breadth* of the coverage (Hunter & Brewer, 2003). A particular strength of using *quantitative* data collection and analysis is that it provides me with the capability to research the *breadth* of the organisational case study. That is it reduces answers to numbers which can be analysed statistically, and may allow inferences drawn from a sample to generalise to the broader population (Hunter & Brewer, 2003).

In this research, it means generalising to the organisation as a whole case. In contrast, using *qualitative* data and analysis provides me the opportunity to study individual cases (embedded cases) in *depth*.

Consequently, in designing the *confirmatory investigation* phase I considered utilising the respective strengths to capture both the *breadth* and *depth* within the case studies. This may be seen in Figure 7 where each organisational case study in the *confirmatory investigation* phase consists of a quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by a qualitative data collection and analysis. This design could be described as a *multistand mixed model study*, more particularly a '*sequential mixed model design (Mixed Type VIII)*' (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). In these designs mixing of each approach occurs in at least one phase (or in this case in at least one sub-phase) of the investigation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) say that Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson's (2003) '*sequential explanatory designs*' fall within this category. Creswell et al. (2003, p.227) say "[t]he purpose of the sequential explanatory design is typically to use qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a primarily quantitative study". Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) later termed this as the '*explanatory design: follow-up explanations model (QUAN emphasis)*' (see Table 15). As indicated the emphasis of this design is on the quantitative data.

'*Explanatory design: participant selection model (QUAL emphasis)*'

While a sequential qualitative and a quantitative approach would be useful to give both depth and breadth to the organisational case studies, a significant issue needed to be addressed in respect to the quantitative approach. Apart from the obvious in terms of resources required to use two difference research approaches in both the data collection and analysis, the issue relates to the amount of weight given to a possible quantitative approach. On reviewing the literature there was not a survey instrument available that might be used in respect to power relationships. As mentioned above, Avolio et al. (1999) have tested the MLQ (Form 5X) as a research instrument to differentiate between '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' leadership characteristics. However, if it could be adapted to the power relationships model presented here, it would require the

integration of the '*unitary*' ideology into the instrument as well as developing a scale for '*revolutionary power relationships*'. This would a significant investment of resources, and at best would only address the *first-dimension* of power, failing to capture the other dimensions as previously discussed. However, a significantly less emphasis on the quantitative method could be used to assist with subject selection.

This raises an interesting variation to this design highlighted by Creswell et al. (2003, p.227) emphasising the qualitative data, where the quantitative results from analysing individual traits of interest are "…used to guide purposeful sampling of participants for a primarily qualitative study". Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) later refer this as the '*explanatory design: participant selection model (QUAL emphasis)*' (see Table 15 in Appendix B). This design is particularly appealing to me as it provides a possible solution to limitations of using a predetermined 2 x 2 matrix for 'polar types' of groups and individuals within policing organisations as previously mentioned. That is to use a quantitative approach to cover the *breadth* of the organisation, and to select the embedded cases on which to follow up with a qualitative approach to address the *depth* of those embedded cases. That is to provide depth of explanation in the organisational case study.

3.4.5   Emancipatory phase

My original research plan included an *emancipatory* phase. Premised on the work of Freire (1970) who involves the people he studied as partners in the research (Kincheloe et al., 2012), the idea was to run this phase concurrently with the *exploratory investigation* phase and the *confirmatory investigation* phase, known as a '*concurrent transformative design*' (Creswell et al., 2003). This type of action agenda for reform has connection with action research, in particular with '*critical action research*' (Boog, 2003), or alternatively termed '*critical-emancipatory action research*' (Hughes, 2001). Following an approach from the action research literature, the participants in the *emancipatory* phase of a '*concurrent transformative design*' could become a '*collaborative inquiry reference group*' (Hughes & Williams, 2001), joining me in a learning journey throughout the research project. As such this was consistent with an *emancipatory* perspective of organisational learning and the notion of more '*authentic*'

organisational learning. It was a means of feeding back results into the organisation, as well as an opportunity for participants to question and challenge their own thinking as well as the findings through rival explanations.

By including an *emancipatory* phase, this research in some way would contribute to the duty to which Freire (2007) refers to in the opening quotation to this chapter. However, due to the longevity of this research it became evident that a concurrent approach was ambiguous and unpractical for me in this research in keeping participants engaged for a protracted period of time. An alternative approach was to run the *emancipatory* phase sequentially with the *confirmatory investigation* phase, known as a '*sequential transformative design*' – a variation to the '*sequential explanatory design*' (Creswell et al., 2003).   However, as I was conducting the analysis from the *confirmatory investigation* phase, it became evident that resources were quickly running out, both in terms of financial and time but also in terms of space to present the additional data analysis. Consequently, I decided to abort the *emancipatory* phase for this thesis, but consoled myself that this was an avenue I could pursue in post-doctoral research.[28]

3.5   Data collection methods

Having chosen a research design, I now look at the methods of data collection for both the *exploratory* and *confirmatory* investigation phases.

3.5.1   Exploratory investigation phase

I chose to conduct an *exploratory investigation* phase due to the conceptual model (refer Figure 1 in Chapter 2) being developed through my informal and undocumented 'ethnographic' observations in a policing organisation for more than 25 years. Having selected a *monostrand (monomethod) QUAL design* for this phase, I considered a suitable qualitative data collection strategy. Before expending significant time to arduous task of collecting and analysing qualitative data, a pilot study is a good strategy (Janesick, 1994).

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[28] Enlightenment, empowerment and emancipation must all be completed to achieve the practical intent of critical social science (Fay, 1987).

Exploratory investigation using focus groups

One such strategy is the focus group which may work better than interviews to collect research information in a short timeframe (Berg, 2004). According to Morgan (1997, p.2), "[t]he hallmark of focus groups is their explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group". Focus groups are dynamic when they are administered correctly, and it is the group energy that distinguishes the focus group interview from the traditional one-on-one, face-to-face interviews (Berg, 2004). Berg (2004, p.126) details the significant advantages of using focus groups as a data collection strategy (see Table 2).

Table 2:   Advantages of focus group as data collection strategy

1	It is highly flexible.
2	It permits observation of interactions.
3	It allows researchers to access substantive content of verbally expressed views, opinions, experiences, and attitudes.
4	It can produce speedy results.
5	It can sample from large populations at a fairly low cost.
6	It can be used to assess transient populations.
7	It places participants on a more even footing with each other and the investigator.

Source: Berg (2004, p.126)

In comparing the strength and weaknesses of the focus groups with the *individual interview* and the *participant observation*, Morgan (1997) concludes that the strengths of the focus group offers a compromise between the strengths and weaknesses of the other two, but does not match the strength of either in their respective specialist domain. For example, the researcher has a variety of interaction with participant observer and only one-to-one interactions with individual interviews, whereas there is group and individual interactions with focus groups. However, participants may feel more comfortable disclosing sensitive issues in a one-to-one interview than the other two. (see Table 16 in Appendix B for more comparison between the three data collection methods).

Focus groups as natural experiments for 'revolutionary power relationships'

A major strength of the focus group is the ability to observed interactions. The interaction of participants is relevant to this research particularly in respect to the notion

that '*revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'. Morriss (2002) talks of two indirect ways to study power if direct experiment is not possible: *natural experiment* and *thought experiment*. With the discussion focusing on power relationships, these focus groups could be seen as embryonic '*revolutionary power relationships*', particular if attention is given to the design of the focus group sessions, placing participants on an equal footing with each other and the researcher. Therefore focus groups can be a method for a *natural experiment* through creating a situation matching such a relationship, and observing how people behave. That is, do they engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' with others? This could not be achieved with one-to-one interviews. Particular attention was given to eliminate any scope for unequal power relationships, including the arrangement of chairs equally around the table, inclusion of the researcher as another member of the group, wearing of casual plain clothes by the researcher instead of uniform and rank, ensuring participants refer to the researcher on first name basis, and encouraging participants to walk around the room for tea or coffee or to leave the room for a comfort break as they wished.

Use of stories for thought experiments on power relationships

In addition, the focus group can be a *thought experiment*, by drawing to the surface previously unquestioned and taken-for-granted assumptions about power relationships in the organisation and how they would react. This could be achieved by presenting different scenarios to the focus groups, each representing the respective power relationship and associated learning space in the model, and open up for discussion. The scenarios could be prepared in the form of a story or vignette on which focus group participants were asked to respond. This is similar to the *projective technique* which Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Lowe (2002, p.102) describe as a useful device in exploratory management research, of which the rationale is that:

> …individuals will reveal hidden levels of their consciousness by reacting to different types of stimuli, such as drawings. These stimuli are intended to be very ambiguous in the hope that the respondents will 'project' their own meaning and significance onto the drawings.

Planning and preparation for focus group interviews

In planning and preparing for focus group interviews, there needs to be a trade-off in terms of the degree of structure (Morgan, 1997). A semi-structured approach was

adopted. While less structure is useful in an *exploratory investigation*, a degree of structure was needed to focus the groups' attention on aspects of the model within the allocated timeframe, to use vignettes as a projective technique for a thought experiment, but not to strictly following a series of questions that may restrict overall group discussions and exploring issues as they see fit. Consequently, at the beginning of focus group sessions, participants were each given a protocol document containing broad instructions so they had clear expectations on how the focus group session was to proceed, and five tasks for the groups to focus their attention (see Appendix H). Each vignette has a series of questions about their evaluation of the story, their organisation and their experiences. The questions were designed to facilitate discussions and participants as individuals or as a group were not required to answer any specific question. The participants were given 30 minutes for discussions as required by each task.

Focus group vignettes

The first task was to critically reflect on a story founded on a *unitary* frame of reference couched in terms of the board organisation context (see Table 17 in Appendix B). In order to generate discussion, the key themes in this story were the notions of "achieving common objectives"; "individuals subordinate their own interests"; and "manager has the right to manage and obligation on employees to obey". The second, third and fourth tasks were focused on stories A to C on which the groups were to critically reflect upon. These stories reflected each of the three identified power relationships in the model, along with possible implications as detailed in Chapter 2. Story A represented '*transactional power relationships*', with the key themes of "reinforcing (supporting) traditions, policies and procedures"; "communicating expectation on performance"; "exchange for performance"; and "reviewing and monitoring expectations, and taking corrective action" (see Table 17 in Appendix B). Story B represented "*transformational power relationships*", with key themes of "organisational change"; "challenging traditions"; "new corporate vision / direction"; "communicating vision" (see Table 17 in Appendix B). Story C represented "*revolutionary power relationships*" in a managerial context in line with both Story A and Story B. Key themes were "encouraging everyone to reach their potential"; "eliminating constraints in thinking"; "encouraging diversity"; "preventing inequalities"; "focus on learning through encouraging questioning things taken-for granted"; and "encourage conflict on

issues" (see Table 17 in Appendix B). The fifth task presented the model to the group, who were asked to evaluate in light of their observations and experiences in the organisation.

Maintaining confidentiality for focus group participants

A concern about focus groups is the ability of the researcher to maintain confidentiality between participants. Morgan (1997) raises the additional ethical issue of focus groups, than traditional interviews: the invasion of privacy where participants are asked to disclose to other participants as well as the researcher. Berg (2004, p.140) says that "[i]f group members feel apprehensive or inhibited by fear of somehow being exposed, they will not fully disclose their feelings and perceptions". Where a participant doesn't feel comfortable disclosing to other, it also wastes the time of the researcher (Morgan, 1997). A possible strategy to minimise this risk in social scientific research is to have all participants of focus groups sign a confidentiality agreement, although there enforceability is more of honour than in law (Berg, 2004). Ultimately, however, participants are free to drop-out of focus groups, and could withdraw from being involved or decline to respond or disclose. In this research, participants were required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to participation in focus group discussions (See Appendix G).

Focus group selections – Number, size and makeup

Other considerations were given to the selection of focus groups in terms of number, size and their makeup. (Morgan, 1997). Briefly, in terms of number, Morgan (1997) suggests three to five is the rule of thumb, while Krueger and Casey (2000) suggest the rule of thumb is three to four with any one type of participant. However, enough to provide a trustworthy answer was the key (Morgan, 1997), and decisions are driven ultimately by the purpose of the study and resources available (Krueger & Casey, 2000). In terms of size, Krueger and Casey (2000) suggest that five to ten people is typical, while Morgan (1997) suggests that six to ten is the rule of thumb. Key here is the level of interaction and the degree of control needed over the group (Morgan, 1997). In terms of makeup, decisions need to be made on the degree of homogeneity of group participants, and the degree to which group participants are strangers (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Again the purpose of the study was key (Krueger & Casey, 2000), but Morgan (1997) suggests that having stranger participants is the rule of thumb, although it is

acknowledged that acquaintanceship is unavoidable in organisations. However, a degree of caution is needed with close-knit work groups and issues of power which can inhibit interaction (Krueger & Casey, 2000). This is a particular issue for this research, given that I am a member of an Australian policing organisation, holding a management position at the rank of Senior Sergeant.

I considered all the advice of Morgan (1997) as well as Krueger and Casey (2000). I considered my purpose in that I was looking at the groups as a pilot study to evaluate the face validity of the developed model, rather than looking for saturation in the development of new themes. Consequently, due to resource limitations, I chose to focus on police officers only, and aimed to conduct four focus groups of about five to six people at the ranks of First Class Constable, Senior Constable, Senior Sergeant and Superintendent. However, a significant issue firstly was gaining volunteers, and secondly, bringing them together on a specified time, day and place. As a result, only three focus groups could be mustered. There were insufficient volunteers for the First Class Constable group. Each of the other groups consisted of four to five participants, which I deemed as suitable for my purpose.

3.5.2 Confirmatory investigation phase

Organisational case studies: Selection of cases

In terms of selecting possible suitable organisations to be case studies, I considered and compared the sizes of seven state jurisdictional policing organisations in Australian. With Yin's (2003b) advice a '*two-case*' case study was adopted. However, due to resources, the selection was based on undertaking a major case as well as a minor case, rather than two major organisational case studies. The selection of the major case was based purely on accessibility and resources. Firstly, to gain access to an organisation requires applications and negotiations, signing of contracts to protect information, and a far degree of trust on behalf of the organisation to expose their internal practices and behaviours. Secondly, policing in Australia is primarily based of state jurisdictions, and although some states are closer than others, there is a sizeable distance that must be travelled, as well as accommodation costs, to access an organisation for any degree of

time to undertake the research. The major organisational case study was therefore selected based on my ability to gain extensive access, and was the most cost effective within my available resources. It was fortunate, however, that this organisation had gone through a significant cultural change program in the 1990s, at a time when some other Australian jurisdictions had gone through or were going through Royal Commissions or inquiries into corruption and misconduct. In addition, early in the new millennium this organisation was subject to a Royal Commission inquiry into corruption. Given the change agenda, the organisation was suitable to explore *'transformational power relationships'*, and given the cultural change focus of the program as well as the Royal Commission, the organisation was suitable to explore the notion of individuals feeling free to question the traditional attitudes, beliefs, values and norms.

However, the selection of the minor organisational case study was through opportunity rather than design. Following the notion of *theoretical replication*, two extreme cases would be ideal, one large and one small for example, which might enable easier observation of contrasting patterns (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). It was unfortunate, that the selected major case was a middle-sized policing organisation, though perhaps fortunate in the sense of being "middle of the road". In selecting an organisation for a minor case study it made no sense to pursue a larger policing organisation given the resources available, although some organisations which faced Royal Commissions or inquiries into corruption would have made interesting research albeit that openness may have been problematic. Consequently endeavours were made to gain access to a smaller policing organisation, which had not been subject to a Royal Commission or inquiry into corruption, but without success.

It was some time into the research project and through unrelated circumstances that I travelled to a country in Oceania with a similar culture and historical background, permitting the cost effectiveness to conduct research outside Australia that would otherwise have been outside the scope of my available resources. Endeavours to gain access to the organisation in rushed circumstances were also successful, a tribute to the organisation having sound research policies and procedures in place, and efficient

employees handling applications. This organisation was suitable given that it too had gone through a Commission of Inquiry into the inappropriate behaviour of officers (Kyle, 2006) [29], and change was being pursued, although not as a total organisational cultural change program adopted by the organisation selected for the major case study. However, unlike the first organisation with state jurisdiction, this was a national policing organisation. Despite a significantly smaller geographical jurisdiction, this organisation had a workforce approximately 1.5 times the first. However, being a minor organisation case study it is likely that justice has not been done in representing the case to the extent of the first.

To protect the identity and reputation of the policing organisations and the participants involved in this research, the major organisational case study will be referred to as the "Terra Australis Police" (TPol) (see Table 18 in Appendix L); and the minor one as the "Oceania Police" (OPol) (refer Table 19 in Appendix M).

Embedded case selection for major organisational case study

As detailed above I had chosen the '*explanatory design: participant selection model (QUAL emphasis)*' (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), using quantitative data for the embedded case selection for major organisational case study. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent out to a stratified sample of 1,000 employees, from the ranks of First Class Constable to Superintendent for police officers, and Level 3 to Level 7 for police staff. From the 1,000 employees, 151 (15.1 percent) agreed to participate in the survey, but 146 (14.6 percent) actually participated. The survey consisted of four stories developed for the focus groups, reflecting the '*unitary*' frame of reference as well as each of the three power relationships: '*transactional*', '*transformational*', and '*revolutionary*'. In a series of questions, the respondents were asked to rate the resemblance of the stories to their experiences in the organisation, and the degree to which they felt free to engage in '*technical dialogue*' and more '*meaningful dialogue*'. An 11 point scale was used, ranging from 0 (not at all) to 10 (absolutely). Provisions were made for respondents to provide open ended qualitative responses as well. Demographic data was also collected.

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[29] Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

In order to identify and select the most extreme cases for interview, the analysis involved a series of exercises to rank participants on the basis of their responses to the stories reflecting the three power relationships. That is to separate 'polar type' cases in their rating of the stories. Consideration was also given to select 'polar types' based on demographic information (see Figure 8 above). The selections were also influenced by the respondents' availability for interview during the scheduled period for data collection. Of the 146 respondents to the survey, 87 agreed to participate in an interview, of which 17 were selected for interview. In addition a further three officers outside of the sample, were invited for interview. One was referred to me during an interview with another selected participant, and two were of the rank of Assistant Commissioner to extend the research into the senior levels of the organisation.

While the stories and the survey questions could not be declared as providing a valid and reliable instrument to pinpoint the three power relationships, they were adequate enough to give me a starting point in case selection that might have otherwise been undertaken by complete random or snowball sampling. However, the quantitative approach did consume significant resources both in the development of the survey and the data analysis in an effort to bring some objectivity to the case selection process. The degree to which this was achieved is difficult to gauge as the final case selection still required a degree of subjectivity, as well as being subject to the availability of respondents during the data collection timeframe. It was also evident that during interview, participants disclosed significantly more depth than their responses in the survey instrument, which allowed for further exploration of the issues. In addition, the stories were more focused on power relationships between organisational actors operating in the *first-dimension*, while the *second-*, *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* were more implicit than explicit.

Embedded case selection for minor organisational case study

For this reason the case selection for the second organisational embedded case selection took a different path. Due to circumstances unrelated to this research, I travelled to the capital city of a country in Oceania: hence took the opportunity to undertake a second organisational case study. On gaining approval to access the policing organisation, I was provided with a list of 451 police officers assigned to duties in the capital city

which included the national police headquarters. The case selection process was primarily governed by timeframes available to me to arrange and conduct the interviews. There was six business days in which to organise the interviews, from the time of access approval and the provision of the list of officers. The interviews needed to be conducted in a three day period during which I was available in the country.

The list of 451 officers was divided into separate Excel spreadsheet for the ranks of Constable, Senior Sergeant and Superintendent, and further into males and females. Each of the six separate spreadsheets was ordered in response to a random number returned automatically by the Excel program. From each ordered spreadsheet, up to 9 officers were shortlisted. From the shortlist, slight modifications were made to cater for different operational status workplaces. The officers on the modified shortlist were sent an invitation to participate in an interview, and were advised of the strict timeframe for the interviews to take place. A total of 11 officers agreed to be interviewed. It was unfortunate that no male officers at the rank of constable affirmatively responded to the invitation, and only one female constable who had recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Consequently, the profile of cases was significantly overrepresented in management ranks compared to the more junior ranks (see Table 3 and Table 4). This may influence the type of responses received from case participants. There was an almost even balance between male and female officers interviewed, although female officers were overrepresented in comparison to the breakdown of officers in the capital city (see Table 3 and Table 4).

Table 3: **Breakdown by rank and gender of 451 officers located in capital city**

	Constable	Senior Sergeant	Superintendent
Male	292	55	20
Female	78	4	2

Table 4: **Distribution of selected embedded cases for minor organisational case study**

	Constable	Senior Sergeant	Superintendent
Male	0	3	3
Female	1	3	1

Embedded case data collection - Interviews

A total of 31 semi-structured interviews were conducted, 20 in the major organisational case study and 11 in the minor. Each case participant was asked a series of questions from a developed protocol to guide the interview (see Appendix J and Appendix K), and I used a range of probing questions and was free to ask questions to explore issues raised by the participant. Each interview took approximately 90 minutes to complete (approximately 2790 minutes in total - 1800 minutes and 990 minutes respectively). Standardising questions, or at least the main questions, and recording both the questions and answers assists a qualitative researcher to evaluate the reliability of the data collected (Kirk & Miller, 1986).

Both in the email and telephone communications with participants as well as on entering the field, considerable attention was given to building rapport in order to establish trust. This was important to ensure that participants felt free to disclose and talk about all aspects of their organisational life such that nothing was off limits (Janesick, 1994). All interviews were conducted face-to-face, with the exception of one country participant who was interviewed by telephone.

This chapter now moves to data analysis and interpretation.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

3.6.1 Critical hermeneutics interpretation

A place to start this section is to iterate the adoption of *critical social science* ontological and epistemological assumptions in this research (see Table 14 in Appendix B). These assumptions have played an important role in not only the model development, but also the data analysis process (Agger, 1998) (see Figure 7). While traditional researchers claim neutrality in organisational analysis (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000), critical research challenges the assumptions often taken for granted in other approaches in order to expose power relationships (Mackenzie Davey & Liefooghe, 2004).

Although taking a *critical bricoleur* (McLaren, 2001) or *critical pragmatist* perspective, the data analysis in this research chiefly involved qualitative data. The quantitative data in the *confirmatory investigation* phase was used only for embedded case selection, as detailed above. This data was not used in the analysis for the broader organisational case study; hence this section deals purely with the analysis of the main qualitative data in both organisational case studies.

In dealing with purely qualitative data, a *critical hermeneutic* stance was taken in the overall approach to the data analysis and interpretation. This is an important choice given the interest of critical researchers in the 'language games' that perpetuates power relationships, that prevent the uprise of transformative action, and that persistently "…shape a dulled, misled, and/or false public consciousness" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2012, p.105). A hermeneutic interpretation involves not only understanding the meaning of observations and text, but also being aware of my own consciousness and the values implicitly within my consciousness (Steinberg, 2012). From this perspective there can be no pristine interpretation in any research, but with an understanding of the blinders and boundaries the interpretation moves us to a new level of understanding (Steinberg, 2012). With *critical hermeneutic* interpretation, the researcher moves further understanding the historical and social context and dynamics that shape the text, engaging in a back and forward examination of the parts in respect to the whole, and the whole to the parts (Steinberg, 2012). That is from the embedded case to the organisational case, and even further to society, and vice versa. The Critical Theorist engaging in critical hermeneutics lay no claim to a final truth and are suspicious of any interpretative model that makes such a claim (Steinberg, 2012). Hence, the verification of findings can never be settled and must be ongoing as continual new understandings are made.

3.6.2 Qualitative data analytical process

Leaving to one side the *critical hermeneutics interpretation*, I move now to the mechanics of the analytical process itself. Qualitative data requires constant

comparative analysis throughout the entire length of the research project (Janesick, 1994), commencing with its collection (Ezzy, 2002; Neuman, 2011) or even before (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The objective of qualitative data analysis is to produce a coherent, intelligible and valid account (Dey, 1993). In broad terms, the process involves breaking down the data into smaller bits so as to classify it, the classification of the data, and making connections between those classifications to provide a new account or description based on a reconceptualisation of the data (Dey, 1993). Boulton and Hammersley (2006) say there is no specific set of rules or simple recipe that will always be appropriate in data analysis to guarantee good results, particularly with unstructured qualitative data.

However, Miles and Huberman (1994) do provide a comprehensive guide to qualitative data analysis, focusing on three activities – data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification – which are entwined before, during and after data collection. They describe *data reduction* as "…the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data…"; *data display* as "…an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action"; and *conclusion drawing and verification* is where the analyst begins "…to decide what things mean – is noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions", and such meanings have to be "…*tested* for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their "confirmability" – that is, their *validity*" (emphasis in original) (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.10 & 11).

3.6.3   Data reduction in data analysis

Early ethnographic data reduction

Data reduction into a manageable model is seen as the end goal of qualitative data analysis (Janesick, 1994). A form of data reduction was implicitly occurring in early days as I worked inductively to produce the model for this research, reflecting on the literature in conjunction with my observations and experiences. Being a participant observer in a policing organisation for many years, I had unintentionally commenced an informal form of data analysis from the day I decided on this research. Even further, the

informal analysis commenced as far back as I can remember in my continual efforts to make sense of organisational life in policing. This informal analytical process uses the "soft computer" (Miles & Huberman, 1994) – the researcher's mind – in my own continual reflections and in dialogue with others both inside and outside the organisation. In this sense, the formal research did not commenced as a blank canvas, but with a background of undocumented analysis of informal ethnography for many years. Hence the model conceptualised for this research developed by inductive analysis normally associated with qualitative research where themes and patterns emerge from the data (Janesick, 1994), and earlier versions can be seen as the start of an emerging data display.

Miles and Huberman (1994) provide nine methods for early analysis. One of particular method I adopted was "memoing", which I called "Reflective Data Commentaries". Working in a policing organisation while conducting this research, provided me with a stage for observing and reflecting as I reviewed the literature. Throughout the project, my thinking was fuelled by uncomfortable feelings of "doubt" (Locke, Golden-Biddle, & Feldman, 2008), questioning my interpretation and understanding.[30] Primarily conceptual in intent (Miles & Huberman, 1994), memoing enabled me to captured my thinking and reflections as part of questioning myself about my observations and experiences on current and historical events in the organisation, ultimately leading to the development of the conceptual model.

Data reduction through iteration

As the project progressed from these early days, the analysis continued during and after the data collection until the end of the project. Hence, data analysis is a iterative process better understood as a spiral than a straight line, much like climbing a mountain with each level providing a new or fresh view or clarity (Dey, 1993). Figure 9 provides a broad-brush outline of the general analysis process I took with the formal data analysis (particularly as it relates to the *confirmatory investigation* phase), highlighting the spiral nature of data reduction. The analysis involved reading and re-reading transcripts, repeatedly listening to audio-recordings, grouping or clustering the data for

interpretation and to identify relationships, and questioning, checking and verifying transcripts to ensure validity for findings (Janesick, 1994).
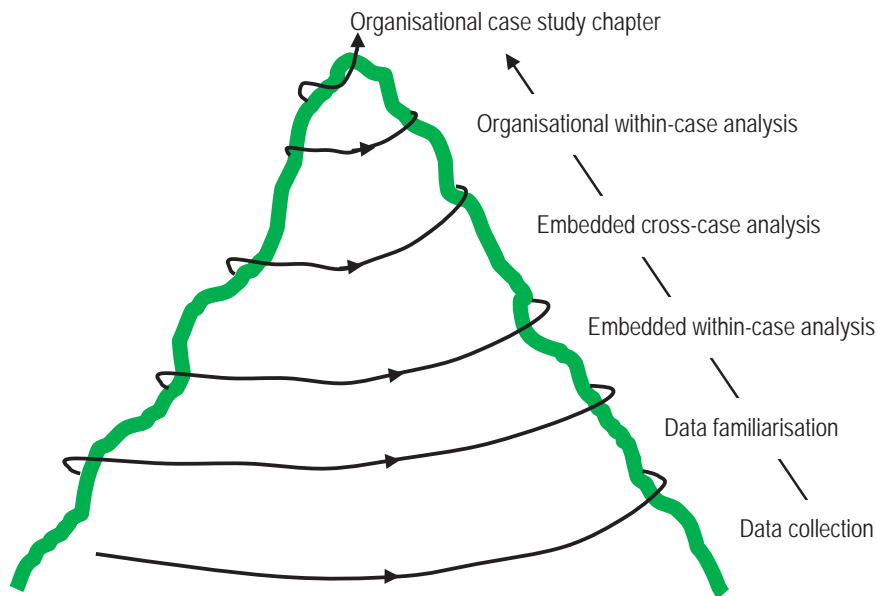
Figure 9: **Qualitative data analysis process**

Data preparation

Before commencing the formal data reduction process, the data needed to be prepared. Both the focus group interviews and the embedded case interviews were electronically recorded using a digital-audio-recorder, which were subsequently transcribed. Both the audio-recordings and transcriptions were entered into NVivo 9, which offers a set of tools designed to assist researchers with conducting and managing the qualitative data analysis process (Bazeley, 2007). The initial phase of the data analysis involved listening to the recordings while checking the accuracy of the transcripts. This gave me the opportunity to re-familiarise myself with the data, and go through field-notes collected during the interviews. In addition I added "timestamps" to the transcripts which provided cross-referencing to the audio-recording for easy retrieval of the

[30] Locke et al. (2008) encourage researchers towards three strategic principles for engaging and using doubt in their research: turning toward not knowing; nurturing hunches; and disrupting the order.

original relevant words spoken by the participant. This enabled me to repeatedly refer back to the recording to check and double-check meaning, intention, and context of what was being said, particularly against any conclusion or inference that I was drawing. I also added a case and line reference number to each line of the transcripts, enabling me to cross-reference the write-up of organisational case study reports to the relevant line in the transcript (for example, see Figure 10 and Figure 11).

Senior Sergeant 1 – 2.307

Focus group & speaker number

Focus group session reference number

Line reference number
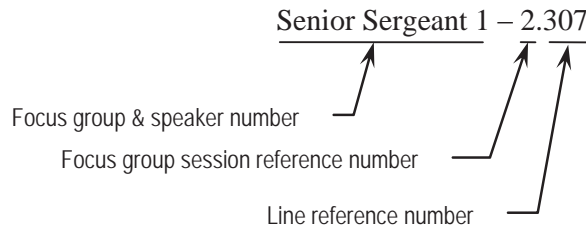
Figure 10: Referencing for exploratory investigation phase - Chapter 4

Senior Sergeant – Case 99.307

Employee's level/rank

Case reference number

Line reference number
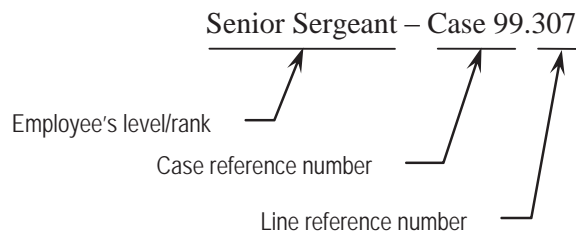
Figure 11: Referencing for confirmatory investigation phase - Chapters 5 and 6

Data reduction in exploratory phase

In analysing the data for the *exploratory investigation* phase, I took a more *inductive* approach despite already having a conceptual model in place. In this sense, the focus groups acted as a pilot study to assist me to identify any "constructs" or relationship between the constructs that I may have omitted from the model. I read and re-read the transcripts whilst playing the audio-recordings, making annotations along the way. However with a model in place, complex coding was not adopted. Instead chunks from the transcripts were arranged and assigned initially to 'free nodes' (coding) reflecting general themes, and then to 'tree nodes' reflecting the "constructs" of the model. For example, constructs included the traditional power relationships – '*transactional*' and

'*transformational*' – along with the *unitary* ideology. Both the nodes and the transcripts were re-examined for patterns and differences in respect to the model constructs and their relationships. Data was then extracted and compiled in a single draft report, where it underwent a series of iterations to examine further and reduce the data. From this analysis and combined with the literature, I compiled a table of the characteristics for each of the constructs: the three power relationships – '*transactional*', '*transformational*' and '*revolutionary*' – and the two organisational learning modes – '*compliant*' and '*authentic*' (see Table 7 to Table 13 in Chapter 4). The learning spaces were simply defined as the presence or absence of a feeling of freedom to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. These tables were then used in the data analysis in the *confirmatory investigation* phase.

Data reduction in confirmatory phase

The *confirmatory investigation* phase took on a slightly different analysis. In comparison to the very 'loose' inductive approach in the informal analysis leading up to this research with the development of the model, the formal part of the research took on a 'tighter' approach, particularly in this phase. Firstly, the analysis was more deductive, having five propositions developed in line with the conceptual model as well as an articulation of the characteristics of the constructs. Secondly, a two organisational case study design, each with multiple embedded cases, provided me with the opportunity to conduct both '*within-case analysis*' and '*cross-case analysis*' (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

During this phase I commenced with a *within-case analysis* at the *organisational level*. This involved analysing public available current and historical corporate documents, including legislation establishing the organisation. Applying a *critical hermeneutics* interpretation, I was able to gain a better understanding of the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* of power that may be at play before I commenced the *within-case analyses* at the *individual level*.

The *within-case analyses* at the *individual level* involved careful and repetitive inspections of audio-recordings and transcripts. The initial reviews and iterations

involved firstly reacquainting myself with the data and better understanding the meanings espoused by participants, and secondly annotating data selections which might attribute or otherwise with each portion of the model. Understanding meaning, intention, and context was important in these early iterations, as was questioning and searching for contradictions in what the participant was saying. Secondary reviews involved more *cross-embedded case analysis* linking and cross referencing similarities and differences between each other or to the model, with me adding my interpretation to supporting and refuting evidence to verify the findings.

A third cycle of reviews commenced the *within-case analysis* at the *organisational level*. It involved decision-making to finally condense the data and interpretation into a manageable and presentable format for the individual organisational case study chapters. It was during this cycle of iterations that data was moved into a draft report, where my interpretations were added, and where the data from embedded cases continued to be contrasted and compared against each other and as it "fit" or otherwise with the conceptual model. Some data was also quantified using tally sheets. Also during this cycle, inferences were starting to appear more prominently, and notes on interim findings and conclusions were prepared for future reference and on-going analysis. In this cycle, I needed to decide what was important to display and what can be omitted while still presenting the "best" of the data to ensure the findings were balanced and not biased. Every effort was made to include the irregular or exceptional case.

The fourth and final series of reviews commenced the *cross-case analysis* at the *organisational level*. This series of iterations involved further decision-making in respect to the conclusions being drawn from the organisational case studies. Focus was to include the prominent and unusual aspects of the cases. From these decisions further data and interpretation reduction was made to the final draft for each organisational case study report, as the concluding chapter was being firmed up. This leads me to the verification of the analysis.

3.6.4 Verification of data analysis

Verification is an important part of the data analysis process. Qualitative data requires a degree of interpretation and creativity which can account for different researcher producing different analysis for the same data (Boulton & Hammersley, 2006). Hence qualitative data collection and analysis is often considered more subjective than quantitative data (Sullivan, 2001; Neuman, 2011). However, Kirk and Millar (1986) argue that qualitative social science research can still be evaluated in terms of its objectivity by way of the reliability and validity of it observations. In loose terms *reliability* is "…the extent to which a *measurement procedure* yields the same answer however and whenever it is carried out", while *validity* is seen as "…the extent to which it gives the *correct* answer" (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p.19). While not subscribing to a mechanical application of a pre-determined criteria as is the case in quantitative data analysis, Klein and Myers (1999, p.68) say "…it does not follow that there are no standards at all by which interpretive research can be judged". The criteria of validity depends on the audience and the purpose of the research, for example finding "truth" compared with liberation and emancipation (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). And each social science community has their own means of judging interpretation (Denzin, 2009). For example, Critical Theorists see claims to truth are themselves always discursively located and entwined in relations of power (Kincheloe et al., 2012).

Returning now to *critical hermeneutic* stance taken with the data analysis and interpretation, I turn attention to Klein and Myers (1999) who, with their critical hermeneutics and Critical Theory background, provide seven interdependent guiding principles for evaluating interpretative data and research. In this research I used these as the guiding principles in the qualitative data collection and analysis process, as I have outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Seven guiding principles for evaluating interpretive field data and research

	The principle of:	
1	**Hermeneutic circle**	The fundamental principle guiding all other principles. Understanding is through iterating back and forth between the interdependent meaning of the individual parts and the whole. The whole might be the historical context or the organisational case study, and the parts being the embedded cases.
2	**Contextualization**	Social and historical background requires explicit critical reflection, so audience can appreciate the emergence of the current situation.
3	**Interaction between the researchers and the subjects**	Recognises that "facts" are not collected like rocks. But are the social construction in the interaction between the researcher and the participant, which requires critical reflection. Researcher must be self-conscious and question his/her assumptions.
4	**Abstraction and generalization**	Recognises that theory has a crucial role in interpretive process. Theoretical abstractions and generalizations must be carefully related to the field as researcher experienced and/or collected, is important so audience can follow how the theoretical insights was arrived at. Hence validity of inferences is drawn from *representativeness*, not in a statistical sense, but based on the *plausibility* and *cogency* of logical reasoning.
5	**Dialogical reasoning**	Recognises that prior knowledge, prejudices and pre-judging play a role in our understanding, hence researcher must be sensitive to and confront his/her preconceptions based on contradictory findings. Fundamental philosophical assumptions, and their strength and weaknesses must be made clear and transparent so audience and researcher understand any preconceptions.
6	**Multiple interpretations**	Recognises there are multiple interpretations requiring the researcher to examine the social context that have influenced actions under study, and document the multiple viewpoints and their reason for having them.
7	**Suspicion**	Recognises that not all is necessarily what it seems. Researcher must be sensitive to biases, distortions, and 'false consciousnesses" of all research participants including the researcher him/herself.

(Source: Adapted from Klein & Myers, 1999, p.71 to 78)

Principles of suspicion and scepticism

While Klein and Myers (1999) stress the interdependence and importance of each principles, as a police officer along with adopting Critical Theory as a guiding philosophy in this research, I particularly found the principle of *suspicion* to be particularly relevant not just to the research project as a whole but underpinning the other principles as well. Kincheloe et al. (2011, 2012) say a healthy and creative *scepticism* is a key to critical analysis where claims to neutrality and natural are questioned. Brewer and Hunter (2006) suggest that scientist are sceptics, hence social research must engage in healthy *scepticism* in continually questioning the validity of their work (*principle of dialogical reasoning*). Hence, I adopted the underpinning principles of *scepticism* and *suspicion* in this research before, during and after data

collection, in order to assess *credibility* of the "witness" and *weight* of their evidence, and the search for *corroborating* evidence to support or refute claims both the participants and my own (principles of *hermeneutic circle,* and *interaction between the researchers and the subjects*). *Credibility* is a must for qualitative research, which must be established using "…the views of people who conduct, participate in, or read and review a study" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p.125).

I followed the principles of *scepticism* and *suspicion* in the years developing the conceptual model (principles of *hermeneutic circle* and *contextualization*). The formal part of this research was conducted over a period of 10 years; versions of the model were developed over a 6-year period. One of the benefits being immersed and working in the field for an extended period of time whilst conducting the research, just like an ethnographer, is that each day I was confronted with a new social interaction situation where upon I would be questioning and challenging the apparent or face validity of the model (principles of *dialogical reasoning*; *abstraction and generalization;* and *interaction between the researchers and the subjects*). Kirk and Miller (1986, p.30) suggests "Face-to-face, routine contact with people continues throughout the period of fieldwork, and unless the fieldworker is unusually craven or complacent, his or her emerging hypothesis are continually tested in stronger and stronger ways in the pragmatic routine of everyday life". Similarly, Creswell and Miller (2000) say that prolonged engagement in the field increases validity through being able to check out interview data with previous observations.

Part of the principles of *scepticism* and *suspicion* is also not taking informants' view at face value (Klein & Myers, 1999). This is particularly important with me being a police officer of rank, and the need to ensure participants were not simple saying what they perceived I wanted to hear. Simultaneously with the participant articulating an answer to a question, I was implicitly analysing what was said, comparing it with what others have said as well as with my own experiences (principles of *interaction between the researchers and the subjects* and *multiple interpretations*). With a semi-structured protocol, I also had the opportunity to pursue a corollary line from this form of in-field analysis to explore what is not said – the "rigor in the absence" – "… a task ignored by

monological, objectivist modes of research" (Kincheloe, 2005, p.345). There was the opportunity to put evidence from other participants, in order to 'try it on' as well as test my own thinking (principles of *dialogical reasoning* and *abstraction and generalization*).

Similarly, and in line with *critical social sciences*, challenging and questioning was an important part of the analysis during data collection. While the *positivist* assume research findings to be value free – not subject to power or ideology – and the *interpretative* researcher assumes that subjects know and understand firsthand what is happening, critical theories would suggest the possibility that both assumption are mistaken (Cherryholmes, 1988). Cherryholmes (1988, p.112) suggests the "[c]ritical research assumes that beliefs of any (all?) individual(s) [researcher(s) or subject(s)] may be in error. We may always be doing something other than what we think we are" (*principle of dialogical reasoning*). As such "construct validity" is always open and can never be settled (Cherryholmes, 1988). Instead the Critical Theorist researcher assumes that "…the meaning of human experience can never be fully disclosed – neither to the researcher nor even to the human that experienced it" (Steinberg, 2012, p.195). Hence, Cherryholmes (1988, p.112) says "[i]nterpretations and arguments of researchers *and* subjects may be questioned. Subjects may interrogate research interpretations, and researchers may interrogate subjective understandings" (emphasis in original).

To encourage participants to be open to challenging and questioning during the data collection process, each participant was addressed with the following words in the protocol introducing the research:

> I may challenge what you say, but that is purely to gain a better understanding. So don't be put off by that. Likewise, please feel free to challenge anything I say. I will not be offended if you disagree with anything I say or about anything in the organisation.

The potential for auditing

Apart from the underpinning principles of *scepticism* and *suspicion*, there is also the potential for auditing as a mean of ensuring accuracy of data analysis. With the analysis of qualitative data, just like an unscrupulous scientist or police officer, there is the risk of the researcher fabricating or falsifying evidence to support their own line of thinking (Dey, 1993). Such fabricating or falsifying evidence might be reduce through the possibility of external and internal replication along with the fear of been caught out (Dey, 1993). Hence, there is a need for transparency with the possibility of 'auditing' as a recognised method which could assist to verify findings and conclusions, by the careful retention of easily retrievable records of the entire research project (Huberman & Miles, 1994). In the digital age, this process is made easier with digital-audio-recorders and storage-devices. As such this research project has available for audit, all research material including original interviews, transcripts, memos, reflective journals, emails, iterations of data set analyses, as well as repeated drafts of research reports / chapters. In addition, detailing the analytical process forms part of the audit trail on how this research was carried out, is important for external assessing of the *credibility* of this research (Boulton & Hammersley, 2006).

The search for corroboration

However, just as damaging as fabricating or falsifying evidence is the simple discounting or misinterpreting evidence through only hearing and seeing what they want to, or paying more attention to supportive evidence and less to contradictory evidence (Dey, 1993). There is at least a two-fold risk for me as the researcher here. Firstly, being indoctrinated into mainstream policing and management ideologies, there is the risk of me accepting the *existing order of things* as natural and taken-for-granted. In this sense, I may be unwittingly influenced by the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* of power that have engulfed my life. Secondly, and conversely, is with entering the investigation with the *political baggage* of Critical Theory (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). As such researchers are advised to take special care to design and conduct rigorous, trustworthy and authentic research (Shields, 2012, p.3). Thus as part of the analysis, neglecting, discounting, or misinterpreting evidence may be reduced by the continual search for corroborating evidence (Dey, 1993) (*principle of dialogical reasoning*). Corroborating evidence not only in support, but also purposively looking for negative examples which refute or disprove an initial hypothetical construct or

model (Janesick, 1994). Hence the *principle of suspicion* includes the search for rival explanations, inferences and interpretations. Siggelkow (2007, p.23) argues that "…the persuasiveness of the arguments is greatly strengthened if serious attention is given to alternative explanations – and why these alternatives are unlikely to hold".[31]

Checking interpretations and conclusions

Another means of verification is checking back with participants (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) (principles of *multiple interpretations* and *interaction between the researchers and the subjects*). This can be conducted concurrently with data collection checking the interpretation with the participant (Ezzy, 2002) or after the analysis is complete evaluating the degree to which participants agree with or support the conclusions drawn (Sullivan, 2001). In both the focus group interviews and the long one-on-one interviews, I regularly summarised back to the participant(s) my understanding of their point, to ensure that my interpretation was correct. This was also an opportunity to check the reliability of their interpretation of the world through critical reflection. With a Critical Theory foundation, I was on the lookout for signs of the so called *false consciousness*, where individuals are so accepting of the dominant ideology that they suggest their feeling free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' when in fact it was further more '*technical dialogue*'. In which case, participants were asked for examples on which I could assess the validity and reliability of their response (*principle of suspicion*). This also provided me with the opportunity to check out rival explanations (Huberman & Miles, 1994). Rival propositions were put to case participants, as well as providing them with an opportunity to disagree (principles of *multiple interpretations* and *interaction between the researchers and the subjects*).

Similarly during both phases, I evaluated the degree to which participant's accounts were supporting, or otherwise, the model (*principle of abstraction and generalization*). In an inductive analysis, this process is usually conducted after data has been analysed and themes identified. However, in this case I entered the focus group interviews (*exploratory investigation* phase) with the model developed, and the embedded case

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[31] This is particular important given the political nature of critical research where conservative factions, who have a financial interest to maintain the status quo, deploy funding to evidence-based projects to counter and silence the critical stance (Cannella & Lincoln, 2012).

interviews (*confirmatory investigation* phase) with both the model and characteristics developed against which to assess the data. In the focus group interviews, the final task was to present the model in a simplified form, and gain their feedback so that I could evaluate their support or otherwise with the model construction. Similarly in the embedded case interviews I was continually evaluating the degree to which participants supported the model, and towards the latter part of the interview further and more deeply explored the level of support or otherwise.

Ideally, this evaluation process would continue after the analysis is completed and presenting conclusion to participants. This was to be achieved through the *emancipatory* phase running concurrently or sequentially with the *confirmatory investigation* phase. Critical Theorists see collaboration as an important theme in the validation process to avoid further exploitation (Creswell & Miller, 2000). For the reasons outlined above, the *emancipatory* phase was not conducted in this project as planned, but will be pursued as part of post-doctoral research.

Another technique for evaluating the quality of inference in qualitative research is the presentation of *thick description*, where other researchers may make comparisons to their own work (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This leads me to the display and presentation of the data analysis.

3.6.5   Display and presentation of data analysis

As the data collection of this research commenced with a conceptual model, data display became simplified. In the *exploratory investigation phase*, the data collected in response to the stories was analysed in terms of the evidence to support or refute the presence of the seven individual model constructs, and then the five connections between the constructs of the model as shown in Chapter 2 (See Figure 1). The results from the data analysis of the focus group interviews are presented in Chapter 4. In the *confirmatory investigation phase*, the data from the interviews was analysed in terms of evidence to support or refute the five propositions generated from the model referred to

in Chapter 2 (see Figure 1). The results from the data analysis from the major organisational case study are presented in Chapter 5, and the minor in Chapter 6.

The end result of the analysis is the presentation of the data in narrative form through direct quotations from participant interviews, whilst the researcher provides some interpretative commentary to frame the key findings of the study (Janesick, 1994). Hence, a balance between the case participants' description, as selected by the researcher, and researcher own interpretation (Patton, 1990). It is against this balance of description and interpretation by which the reader may judge the evidence.

3.7   Ethical Guidelines

This research received ethic approval prior to commencement, and updates were provided on its progress. On approval this research was conducted in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Edith Cowan University - Human Research Ethics Committee to safe guard the rights of all participants / informants. Central to these guidelines was considerations for voluntary participation, informed consent, privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, and the right to discontinue (Burns, 2000; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000). As previously mentioned, a Confidentiality Agreement was utilised in the *exploratory investigation* phase in an endeavour to safeguard the reputation of participants in the focus group interviews (see Appendix G). An Information Letter was provided to all focus group participants (see Appendix C), who were required to sign an Informed Consent form prior to any participation (see Appendix F). Similarly, the embedded case participants in *confirmatory investigation* phase were provided with a separate Information Letter (see Appendix D and Appendix E), and were also required to sign an Informed Consent form prior to participation (see Appendix F).

Appendices L and M containing the pseudonyms for the organisational case studies have been restricted from public access to protect the identity and reputation of the organisations and the individuals participating in this research.

3.8   Conclusion

With the research question outlined in Chapter 1 – to better understand *how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'* – and the five propositions stemming from the model developed in Chapter 2, in this chapter I adopt a *critical pragmatist* worldview and set out to explore a research design to address the research question.   In doing so, I explored a myriad of mixed methodology possibilities. In the research design, I chose to use an *exploratory investigation* phase to supplement my own informal, undocumented experiences and observations from over 25 years in policing in conjunction with the literature review. This phase used three focus groups: Senior Constables; Senior Sergeants; and Superintendents. This was a means of including multiple perspectives, beyond my own views, in exploring the development of the model.   Focus groups were considered a suitable means of collecting large volumes of data than one-to-one interviews.   I then proceeded to a *confirmatory investigation* phase, undertaking case studies of two policing organisations. From these two organisational case studies, a total of 31 embedded cases were selected – 20 in the major organisational case study and 11 in the minor – and each participated in a semi-structured interview of approximately 90 minutes. The proposed research design included an *emancipatory* phase, which is consistent with the social change agenda espoused by Critical Theory. However, due my dwindling resources, this phase was not executed as part of this project, but will be considered for further post-doctoral research.

With the research plan developed and articulated, in the next chapter I will turn to presenting the data analysis conducted during the *exploratory investigatory* phase.

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4.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, I explored the methodological choices and detailed the proposed research design to address the issue of *how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit 'authentic organisational learning'.* As the literature exploration drew to a close in Chapter 2, a conceptual model was presented as a result of reflections on more than 25 years of informal and undocumented observations and experiences within a policing organisation and an extensive review of the literature pertaining to organisational learning and power relationships (see Figure 1 in Chapter 2).

This chapter is the first of three chapters presenting the data analysis from this research. It focuses on the *exploratory investigation* phase (see Figure 7 in Chapter 3). The purpose of the *exploratory investigation* phrase was to improve my understanding of the concepts, to further refine the model, to improve on the research design if necessary, and ultimately to establish the face validity of the constructs and the model. After briefly describing the participants and the stories used to generate focus group discussions, this chapter presents the data analysis that speaks to the face validity of each model construct and the relationship between the constructs.

4.1.1 Focus Group Participants

The *exploratory investigation* phase involved data collection and analysis from three focus group interviews, drawing on the observations and experiences of 13 police officers employed by the same Australian policing organisation. A breakdown of the three focus groups, in terms of gender and rank, is presented in Table 6.

Table 6:   Focus Group Participants

Group	Male	Female	Total
Senior management (Superintendents)	3	1	4
Junior management (Senior Sergeants)	2	3	5
Senior practitioners (Senior Constables)	3	1	4

4.1.2   Focus group tasks

As detailed in Chapter 3, the focus groups were given five tasks. The first four involved vignettes upon which participants were asked to critical reflect and discuss in light of their experiences and observations in their organisation (refer Appendix H). While the vignettes were designed to provoke discussion in respect to the various sections of the model, the groups were free to explore various points as they arose. Hence, some tasks included discussion points which were more relevant to other sections of the model. Consequently, that evidence is presented accordingly.

This chapter has two sections. The first section will explore the *individual* model constructs (see Section 4.2 below), while the second section will explore the *relationships* between them (see Section 4.3 below). I will commence by exploring the *individual* model constructs.

4.2   Exploring the model constructs

This first section presents the focus group data analysis in exploring the model construct face validity. In doing so, I seek to better understand the constructs and the criteria by which we can identify their presence. First are the power relationships: '*transactional*', '*transformational*' and '*revolutionary*'. Second are the learning spaces: '*liberated*' and '*managed*'. And lastly the organisational learning: '*compliant*' and '*authentic*'.

I entered the *exploratory investigation* phase with baseline characteristics of each model construct based on the literature review. After conducting the data analysis I presented in a table following, the characteristics of each model construct. These characteristics are not to be interpreted as a "truth" of each construct, but will be used as a guide or aid in the data analysis process for the *confirmatory investigation* phase.

4.2.1 Transactional power relationships

The Broad Organisational Context (Task 1) (see Appendix H) was designed to provoke responses that may illuminate the *fourth-* and *third-dimensions* of power. This task centred on the *unitary* ideology: the right of managers to manage and the obligation of employees to obey. This thesis suggests that the *unitary* ideology is the foundation of the two traditional power relationships: '*transactional*' and '*transformational*'. As such the continual reinforcement of this ideology, falls under the umbrella of the broader '*transactional power relationship*'.

> **'*Unitary*'** frame of reference is the ideology that views the interests of the individual and society as synonymous, and therefore managers have the right to manage and employees the obligation to obey.

There was no shortage of responses highlighting the *unitary* ideology, and establishing the face validity of the notion of '*transactional power relationships*'. For example, opening responses from all three focus groups vectored straight to notions of "rank", "hierarchy" and "quasi paramilitary", and their reinforcement of those traditional attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms:

> **'*Transactional power relationships*'**, built on the *unitary* frame of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups, that <u>reinforce existing dominant</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations in order to maintain the status quo.

> I think reading that paragraph is pretty close to how we operate as a quasi para-military organisation I suppose. Just as the way we've started.
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 1.005)

> …it's a tradition really, and the policies and the procedures and the legislation and the [oversight body] is what actually makes us actually work under a lot of those.
>
> (Superintendent 2 – 1.008)

> …from a broad or organisational perspective it's pretty much on the money…it's exactly the way it is…I don't think you can get away from it, or should get away from that…
>
> (Senior Sergeant 5 – 1.035)

In addition to the broader operations of power, there was also the evidence of agenda control (*second-dimension*), which was reflected in discussions on the chain of command, thereby reinforcing the *third-dimension*:

> I've got a new superintendent who told us in no uncertain terms that he would be always referred to by his rank…"you will comply with the chain of command…You will".
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant 1 – 1.049)</div>

After analysing the focus group data supported by the literature, I captured the characteristics of '*transactional power relationships*' in Table 7.

Table 7:   Transactional power relationship characteristics

Transactional power relationships
- Founded on *unitary* frame of reference   - Top-down relationships (unequal power distribution)   - Manager's right to manage (management prerogative)   - Employee's obligation to obey (individuals must subordinate own interests)   - Relies on positional power   - Legitimate, reward and coercive power dominate   - Emphasis on achieving common goals (usually espoused in corporate plans)   - Conflict is rare and temporary (unusual)   - Conflict caused by troublemakers or deviants   - Conflict needs to be eradicated by management   - Focuses on maintaining the status quo   - Reinforces existing attitudes, beliefs, values and norms   - Monitors and corrects performance   - Rules, policies and procedures are important for control

4.2.2 Transformational power relationships

The focus groups provided evidence of '*transformational power relationships*', challenging traditions operating as the *third-dimension* of power. However, the *unitary* frame of reference remained untouched (*second-dimension*). Particular reference was made to the current Commissioner, along with the Deputy Commissioner, challenging traditions in the organisation and championing the new organisational philosophy focused on performance.

> **'*Transformational power relationships*'**, built on the *unitary* frame of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups that <u>challenge existing</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations, taking a <u>management-centred approach</u> in order to instil new predetermined dominant attitudes, values and beliefs within organisations.

Evidence was provided of the Commissioner encouraging constables to e-mail direct, thereby bypassing everyone else – that is breaking the chain of command.[32] From the senior sergeant group:

> …I think that whole paragraph summarises I guess, if you look at our top management like the Commissioner and [the Deputy Commissioner], my view is that this is exactly what they want….I don't think they care about traditions at all. I really don't.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.007 & 011)

From the senior constables:

> …on the surface [the Commissioner] seems to be making a lot of positive changes. And also he's going to tick a lot of people off in the process.
>
> (Senior Constable 3 – 1.142)

Accordingly, the data supported the face validity for the construct '*transformational power relationships*'. As such I captured the characteristics in Table 8 based on the data analysis from the focus groups and supported by the literature.

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[32] Superintendent 1 – 1.352

Table 8:   Transformational power relationship characteristics

Transformational power relationships

- Founded on a *unitary* frame of reference
- Top-down relationships (unequal power distribution)
- Manager's right to manage (management prerogative)
- Employee's obligation to obey (individuals must subordinate own interests)
- Relies on positional power
- Legitimate, reward and coercive power dominate
- Emphasis on achieving common goals (usually espoused in corporate plan)
- Conflict is rare and temporary (unusual)
- Conflict caused by troublemakers or deviants
- Conflict needs to be eradicated by management
- Change focused (challenging the status quo)
- Challenging the status quo: existing attitudes, beliefs, values and norms
- Creates and communicates predetermined "vision"
- Inspires towards new direction: based on employee "buy in" to the new "vision"

4.2.3   Revolutionary power relationships

'Revolutionary power relationships', built on *radical* and *pluralist* frames of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups that challenge existing attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations in order to bring about social change.

Story C was not couched in a truly pluralist power relationship, as the mere mention of word "manager" in a policing context immediately implies an asymmetrical power relationship. However, the words "my manager" were used to place this story in a similar context as Story A ('*transactional*') and Story B ('*transformational*'). In this context, the initial responses from the focus groups were that the story was "unrealistic"[33] and "utopia"[34]. However, there was acknowledgement that such a manager does exist, albeit rare[35], or at least is possible[36]. There were difficulties

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[33] Senior Constable 1 – 2.401 & 407; Senior Sergeant 1 – 2.342

[34] Superintendent 2 – 2.493; Superintendent 1 – 2.634; Superintendent 4 – 2.636; Senior Sergeant 1 – 2.230; Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.231

[35] Senior Constable 1 – 2.415; Senior Constable 2 – 2.418

reconciling the story with the demands of the manager's duties in terms of time[37]. Some described the manager scenario as the "perfect manager"[38] or "optimum manager"[39]. However, three of the five senior sergeants stated that they had experienced a manager as outlined in Story C,[40] who was described as "open", "genuine" and later as having "sincerity"[41].

From the senior constables:

> …there's a few out there [who are authentic and genuine].
>
> (Senior Constable 1 – 2.300)

While another confirmed:

> Definitely …There's just not enough of them…
>
> (Senior Constable 3 – 2.304)

However, each of the focus groups described in some way the vulnerable position such a manager faced, and the self-confidence needed. There was a recount of backlash received by a superintendent after speaking out, who was subsequently considered a "fruit loop" by his peers.[42] From the superintendent group:

> …someone who does this has to be really comfortable in their own position and secure and confident, because [you're] really…opening yourself up. You're really…, you're not baring your ass so to speak, but you really are opening yourself up for a lot of criticism and so you have to have a manager who's mature and confident and comfortable in this kind of thing.
>
> (Superintendent 3 – 2.485 & 487)

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[36] Superintendent 1 – 2.496

[37] Superintendent 1 – 2.500

[38] Superintendent 1 – 2.500

[39] Superintendent 4 – 2.492

[40] Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.349; Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.384; Senior Sergeant 5 – 2.388;

[41] Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.384 & 391

[42] Senior Sergeant 5 – 2.397 & 402

In addition to the responses, the design of the focus groups themselves illustrated the functioning of the philosophy that underpins '*revolutionary power relationships*'. Apart from the senior constables, as the facilitator I did not have legitimate power over the participants from an organisational perspective. With all focus groups I endeavoured to reduce any perception of '*power over*' participants. For example, I was seated with the rest of the participants in a circular pattern and took a low key role focusing more on listening, thinking, taking notes, and periodically provoking discussion. The active discussion was maintained by the participants themselves. In addition, the focus groups were given some limited instruction to assist them to focus the discussion process, which included the invitation "Please treat the facilitator as one of your colleagues in the focus group, not as a group leader, and direct your discussions to others in your group. The facilitator will tend to listen to the discussion" (See Appendix H).

Despite what started out as a search for the "holy grail", with my observations of the focus group as part of the methodology along with the comments from the groups, I was satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that a '*revolutionary power relationship*' could exist in an organisational context, and that the construct had face validity. As such I was able to articulate the characteristics of '*revolutionary power relationships*' in Table 9, based mainly on the literature along with what could be gleaned from the focus group data analysis particularly the way the focus groups were conducted by the participants.

Table 9:   Revolutionary power relationship characteristics

Revolutionary power relationships
• Founded on *pluralist* and *critical* frame of reference • Maintain collegial relationships – neither party dominate • Treat people like equals – joint and reciprocal partners • Emphasis diversity of interests • Genuinely interest in the views of others • Encouraging and truly supportive • Important for people to reach their potential, rather than corporate goals • Critical of traditions which constrains the way people think • Seek to eliminate inequalities • Inspires and advocates towards social change

- Struggle is needed for social change so conflict is inevitable
- Manager and employee interests are (sometimes) at odds
- Relationship can be adversarial if one is dominated
- Conflict is permanent and has potential benefits
- Conflict is not taken personally
- Democratic power dominates – human rights and egalitarian values

4.2.4   Managed learning space

In contrast to a '*liberated learning space*' (below), the notion of *fear* or concern appeared to be at the core of a '*managed learning space*'. It was immaterial that the *fear* was rational and well grounded or not. Both will impact on a person feeling free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. The prevalence of *fear* was such that it may be a product of the *unitary* ideology as part of the *third-dimension* of power being reinforced in the organisation.

> **'*Managed learning space*'** is a particular '*learning space*' opposite to a '*liberated learning space*' where a person does not feel free to engage in '*critical reflection*' at the individual level, or '*meaningful dialogue*' at a social or group level, whether self-managed or managed by others; however may feel free to engage in '*technical*' or '*consensual*' dialogue.

The threat of disciplinary action or loss of employment ("whacked and sacked"[43]) was a foundation of the *fear*. There were also the pernicious sanctions: being made "scapegoats"[44] or "…hanging someone out to dry…and making an example of them"[45]. Closely related was a '*managed learning space*' noticeable in the *fear* that the senior officers may take it personally, feel embarrassed or threatened and engage in retribution or retaliation which impact on people personally or their section[46]. Similarly there was the *fear* of being shouted down[47] or subjected to persistent interrogation, and

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[43] Superintendent 1 – 1.044

[44] Senior Sergeant 5 – 2.319

[45] Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.318 & 320

[46] Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.303 & 309; Senior Sergeant 4 – 1.308; Senior Sergeant 5 – 1.447

[47] Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.207 & 214

embarrassed or made to look less favourable in the eyes of their peers[48]. There was also the fear of being ostracised which was seen as worse than losing your job.[49] Another major *fear* or concern was being overlooked for promotion. It was explained:

> …especially at senior ranks…you're always careful of what you do and how you do [it] because you may all of a sudden go from "You're going places" to "Oh not for a while you're not.
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 1.572)

Being swiftly removed from their position and transferred to another perhaps less favourable position was also a highlighted *fear* or concern. One senior constable explains:

> …you never know who you're talking to…suddenly you find yourself somewhere else.
>
> (Senior Constable 3 – 1.115)

The focus groups provided support for the face validity of a '*managed learning space*', characterised in Table 10.

Table 10:   Managed learning space characteristics

Managed learning space
- Either self-managed or by another / others   - Feeling psychologically unsafe   - <u>Not</u> feeling free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' (as described below)   - <u>May</u> feel free to engage in '*technical*' dialogue   - best course of action to the achievement of goals   - most effective and efficient solutions of specific problems   - <u>May</u> feel free to engage in '*consensual*' dialogue   - selective approach to questioning   - reinforces the values chosen by management to epitomize the organisation's 'culture'   - aimed at developing a shared commitment to common purpose   - creating or generating a shared and common understanding or meaning

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[48] Superintendent 3 – 1.144 & 402; Superintendent 2 – 1.303 & 311

[49] Senior Constable 3 – 2.092

4.2.5 Liberated Learning Space

The focus groups revealed more examples of '*managed learning spaces*' than a '*liberated learning space*'. This might be expected in an organisation founded on the *unitary* ideology in traditional power relationships. To describe freedom, the focus groups used adjectives such as a "free for all"[50] and a "bitch session"[51] from the senior sergeants; and "chew the fat"[52] from the superintendents. For example:

> '*Liberated learning space*' is a particular '*learning space*' where a person feels free to engage in '*critical reflection*' at the individual level or '*meaningful dialogue*' at a social or group level.

> …we never have the chance for a free for all…. there's got to be some way, because we're so structured in our meetings…[that] those things that people want to get out, there's never the opportunity to get it out.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.255)

However from the senior constables group there were words used such as "voice"[53] and "being heard"[54], and the contrast notion from the senior sergeants of being a "lone voice"[55] in recognition of not feeling free.

However the focus groups themselves were examples of people having a '*liberated learning space*' in an organisational context. Participants engaged in a total of 8.5 hours of '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*' involving the collective questioning and inquiry into the values, believes, attitudes and norms within the organisation with the view to help the researcher

> '*Meaningful dialogue*' is a particular '*dialogue*' aligned with the notion of '*critical reflection*', and involves questioning the *existing order of things*: the dominant ideology or fundamental attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms in organisations and society.

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[50] Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.255; Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.258 & 260

[51] Senior Sergeant 5 – 2.275

[52] Superintendent 2 – 1.583

[53] Senior Constable 1 – 1.023

[54] Senior Constable 1 – 2.435 & 614

[55] Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.140; Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.141

to uncover the power relationships and their impact on organisational learning. The participants were invited and volunteered to be a part of the discussions, and were advised that they could withdraw at any time. The participants were given stories and guiding questions, but were free to direct the conversation as they saw fit. As part of a focus group each participant could ultimately choose if and when to speak or be silent.

While the participants disclosed little of a '*liberated learning space*', the functioning of the focus groups themselves engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' on power relationships revealed attributes consistent with the literature. Hence the characteristics arose mainly from the literature (see Table 11).

Table 11:   Liberated learning space characteristics

Liberated learning space
- Requires a degree of psychological safety   - Feels free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' involving questioning the: - existing order of things in organisation and/or society   - organisational dominant ideology including management thinking and practise   - organisational assumptions that are taken-for-granted   - organisational traditions (that is the fundamental dominant values, beliefs, attitudes and norms)   - organisational inequalities, moral issues, equal rights, or social injustices   - organisational power relationships that are invariably asymmetrical.

4.2.6   Compliant Organisational Learning

'*Compliant organisational learning*' was spoken in terms of alliance or positioning:

- "alignment";[56]
- "bring yourself into line";[57]
- "go with the hierarchical…decisions";[58]

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[56] Superintendent 4 – 1.035 & 039

[57] Senior Sergeant 5 – 2.128

[58] Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.301

- "we're all on board";[59]
- "fit the corporate profile";[60]
- "toe the corporate line";[61] and
- "toeing the party line".[62]

Others used the word in terms of compliance:

- "comply";[63]
- "do what they're told"; "doing exactly as they're told without question";[64]
- "…if [they] say [you] should do something you do it…";[65] and
- "…they say do and you actually have to do".[66]

It was evident that '*compliant organisational learning*', the thinking behind which may spread from the top of the organisation, is detailed in corporate documents:

> …we follow the organisational line which links into the business plans, the strategic plans, the traffic policing strategies…
>
> (Superintendent 2 – 2.022)

Based on the analysis of the focus group data and supported by the literature, I captured the characteristics of '*compliant organisational learning*' in Table 12. I was satisfied with face validity of '*compliant organisational learning*'.

> **'*Compliant organisational learning*'** is a top-down unitaristic blueprint towards learning, which emphasises shared vision and meaning, and consensus, focusing on a single corporate learning agenda. That is one corporate voice. Emphasis is on corporate direction for corporate benefit, whether exploiting existing learning or exploring new learning.

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[59] Superintendent 1 – 2.090

[60] Superintendent 2 – 1.111

[61] Superintendent 2 – 1.105

[62] Senior Constable 3 – 1.142

[63] Senior Constable 1 – 2.127;

[64] Senior Constable 3 – 2.128 & 1.142; Senior Constable 1 – 1.318

[65] Senior Constable 2 – 1.315

[66] Senior Constable 1 – 1.318

Table 12:   Compliant organisational learning characteristics

Compliant organisational learning
- top-down intervention (single corporate learning agenda)   - emphasises shared vision and meaning, and consensus   - one corporate voice (restricting learning to corporate agenda)   - exploitation of existing knowledge for corporate benefit   - exploration of new learning for corporate benefit (includes moving organisation forward – continuous improvement)   - employees learn what their manager wants them to learn (what managers find acceptable)   - satisfying the wishes and demands of their manager or senior managers to fulfil the corporate objectives;   - following the 'corporate line' (includes that outlined in corporate documents)   - following order, procedures, policies, rules & regulations

4.2.7   Authentic Organisational Learning

'*Authentic organisational learning*' is a bottom-up employee driven, locally situated and participative approach to learning, which emphasise the need for multiple and diverse realties of learning, focusing on the emancipation of all organisational actors.   As such conflict is inevitable and even desirable; where consensus is a potential outcome of learning but not necessarily and not predefined or the target of management.

The focus groups offered no example of '*authentic organisational learning*'. A possible reason is discussed below in exploring a '*liberated learning space*' with '*authentic organisational learning*'. However there was an appreciation of what it could be and perhaps what it is not.

For example, from the senior constables it could be described as:

…constant growth, constant learning.

(Senior Constable 3 – 2.642)

From the senior sergeants:

> …people don't reflect on things, and that's how you learn. And if we don't actually acknowledge that that's important, then as an organisation we're never going to get out of that [situation].
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.497)</div>

From talking about the implementation of their code of conduct, it was implied what '*authentic organisational learning*' is not:

> It's all this stuff it's being forced upon you. So is that learning?
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.608)</div>

In response:

> …there was no belief in it, because there were a lot of people that didn't demonstrate it that were being rewarded and were being very successful. And people learn by what they see, and what they see get rewarded.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.616)</div>

Despite little evidence coming from the focus groups, drawing mainly from the literature I compiled the characteristics of more '*authentic organisational learning*' in Table 13.

Table 13:   Authentic organisational learning characteristics

Authentic organisational learning
- bottom-up emergent (employee driven)   - a joint and reciprocal learning process (multiple and diverse realities)   - genuine learning for all organisational actors   - concerned with emancipation of individual's thinking   - challenges people to think independently   - frees thinking in areas that would otherwise be considered out of bounds   - not necessary for corporate benefit   - not predefined or targeted by top management   - consensus is possible but not necessary a prerequisite for learning   - continual contested learning   - deeper and boarder thinking to a range of different perspectives or alternatives   - social change is possible

4.3 Exploring relationships between model constructs

After briefly presenting the evidence of *individual* model constructs, this second section now explores the *relationships* between the various model constructs.

4.3.1 Transactional and transformational power relationships

The focus groups revealed a dynamic or tension between '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships. That is, both relationships do not sit in isolation from each other but are continually acting upon the other: '*transactional*' reinforcing; '*transformational*' challenging. This was not previously considered, yet so obvious given both are underpinned by *unitary* ideology. For example the '*transformational*' power relationships operating at the lower dimensions either as individuals or as a coalition, interact within the context of '*transactional power relationships*' operating at the broader levels of power. Despite the Commissioner, along with the Deputy Commissioner, being seen as engaging in '*transformational*' power relationships within the organisation, they are still subject to the *unitary* frame of reference as the *fourth-dimension* of power being reinforced within '*transactional*' power relationships in the organisation. Their actions (or inactions) reinforce the *unitary* frame of reference within the broader dimensions within '*transactional*' power relationships.

This was clearly evident in reconciling observations by superintendents raising the notion of accountability and public interest and pressure.[67] It was suggested that accountability starts with government, and the Commissioner needing to meet key performance indicators and justify expenditure,[68] and the government being accountable to the public or community.[69] The media is also recognised as playing a role in the accountability process.[70] Relationships between all managers and all employees generally, individually and collectively, operate within the broader system of society which has been historically determined: the *fourth-dimension* of power.

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[67] Superintendents 2 – 1.307; Superintendent 4 – 2.225 & 227

[68] Superintendents 2 – 2.230 & 283; Superintendent 4 – 2.227 & 229; Superintendent 3 – 2.256

[69] Superintendents 3 – 2.258; Superintendent 4 – 2.259

[70] Superintendent 4 – 2.227; Superintendent 2 – 2.261

The dynamic between the two traditional power relationships was also evident in analysing from the *third-dimension* of power perspective. For example, while it was suggested that the hierarchy was being broken down by certain individuals in the organisation[71], one officer said:

> I tend not to agree with that entirely, 'cause I think that the structure has the last say, so to speak… I think even if you go in as a manager with good intention to involve your staff, it always comes back to that structure and that hierarchical structure…well it's culture is what it is, isn't it? And that culture is always there… [Despite individuals having some influence] I think we're really dominated by the culture and the structures that are in place.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 4 – 1.022, 024 & 030; supported by Senior Sergeant 5 – 1.023).

The dynamic between the two was also apparent looking at the *second-dimension* of power. Despite the commissioner being considered non-traditional ('*transformational*'), the senior sergeants referred to individuals operating within the *second-dimension* to reinforce the *third-dimension* ('*transactional*') thereby protecting their privileged position:

> There [are] particular people still within the organisation maintaining a particular culture in the way that we do things.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.024)

> …because it supports their existence.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.025; supported by Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.026)

> …what we're saying is, or what I think we're saying is that there are certain groups … that have almost locked down and been self-perpetuating and that still exist within this organisation…
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.039)

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[71] Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.007 & 011

4.3.2 Transactional power relationships: Managed learning space

It was evident the tradition of addressing senior officers by rank, operated within '*transactional*' power relationships to reinforce the *third-dimension* of power. This enabled individuals to exercise the *second-dimension* of power to control the learning space. For example, '*transactional*' power relationships commenced in the Academy with the notion of "respecting the rank" irrespective of personal attributes or competencies, and continued throughout the career:

> …when I joined the job [12 years ago], when we went through [the academy]…our [squad] sergeant said "… you will not question. It's absolutely insane for you to question your sergeant who has all this experience".
>
> (Senior Constable 3 – 2.021)

Similarly talking about the indoctrination process:

> So I don't kind of know at what point I was indoctrinated into that way, but I would never have even thought to question it, because that is what indoctrination and culture is. You become part of it without actually being consciously aware that you're being part of it.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.145)

Managers reinforce the tradition "respecting the rank" (*third-dimension*), facilitating agenda control (*second-dimension*):

> …they are basing their current competencies on the rank. So if I'm a superintendent by name, I'm therefore a superintendent by nature. And you call me a superintendent, which gives you and me the recognition that I am a superintendent.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 1 – 1.124)

In this context, another identified the impact on the learning space:

> …if you're going through that hierarchical, addressing them as 'Superintendent', they're always on that platform and it doesn't allow for that free discussion as much. Or I don't feel it's probably as invited from a superintendent…
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.057; agreement from Senior Sergeant 2 – 1.062)

Another senior sergeant provided a practical example of not speaking up at a meeting where senior managers reinforced the tradition of officers staying in the organisation for life:

> You know what? I sat there and thought a few things in my head, and didn't say anything.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.173)

In explaining the reason for not questioning, which included not feeling as strong about the issue as some others, it was said:

> …I'd feel uncomfortable in that environment. …I would have been…the lone person to come forward with that argument. In saying that, possibly, if I had said it, some other people may have spoken up.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 4 – 2.175)

From the superintendents, it was evident that there is not only a *right to manage* but also an *obligation to manage* being reinforced under a '*transactional*' power relationship: thereby facilitating a '*managed learning space*' that extends to restrict even '*technical dialogue*' at higher levels. Despite acknowledging that the person above generally has a greater insight into the corporate direction[72], deferring to the manager can be was seen as "handballing" the problem[73] and is something that the superintendents were conscious not to do at their level[74]. The *obligation to manage* was linked to being seen as capable of doing one's job:

> "Bring me solutions, not questions" would be the response from their manager. "You're in charge of the district…And if you can't do it I'll find someone who can".
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 1.562 & 564)

Supporting the comment, another said:

> Yeah, I've got to say. I mean that's realistic down to the inspectors and probably down to the [officers-in-charge] of subdistricts as well.
>
> (Superintendent 2 – 1.565)

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[72] Superintendent 2 – 1.648

[73] Superintendent 1 – 1.664

[74] Superintendent 4 – 1.665

In highlighting how the learning space is managed, the previous Superintendent went onto say:

> …If you do that once, oh it's okay. Twice, three times, they're going to say "This person is not the right person for the job. He or she can't handle the role we expect them to do". So people will shy away from doing that, to receive some negative exposure because they want to be promoted, or they want to go to a better job, or they want to do that. So that's a bit of personal preservation I suppose…
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 1.574)

4.3.3 Transformational power relationships: Managed learning space

On the surface there was an indication that officers did feel more free to question in '*transformational power relationships*'. For example, it was said:

> …I think over the last five, ten years maybe…I think people are more comfortable now to question why we do this…as opposed to prior to that.
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 1.143 & 145)

This period marks three successive commissioner reigns since a major organisational change program in the mid 1990s, each commissioner challenging organisational traditions in some way. Such that:

> …questioning [is] now an attribute…[whereas] …a questioning employee ten years ago…, they were a threat or they were seen as…rocking the boat.
>
> (Superintendent 4 – 1.147 & 149)

One superintendent said:

> And that's been from the Commissioner,…his ability to, or predilection for questioning tradition has filtered through so people are much more happy now to say well why are we doing that.
>
> (Superintendent 3 – 1.219)

However, despite this apparent freedom, there was evidence supporting the model that '*transformational power relationships*' operating at the *second-dimension* facilitating a '*managed learning space*'. For example, in abolishing traditions of saluting and

wearing head dress, there was no dialogue, '*meaningful*' or otherwise. The organisational change agents simply abolished their enforcement:

> …I mean we would never question [it], if you weren't wearing your hat on the street, like you were hung, drawn and quartered. …it would be like suicide. You wouldn't, you'd be hauled up before your boss….
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 1 – 1.145)</div>

> Now no one wears them. [The] Commissioner doesn't care. Not a big thing for him. …it's not an issue.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 1 – 1.145)</div>

Similarly with saluting:

> "Don't worry about saluting anymore, it's gone"…but once again that's got to come from the top. [The Commissioner] said "Don't worry about saluting".
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 1 – 1.214)</div>

The senior constables surfaced a hardline and less subtle example of a '*transformational*' power relationship at a unit level, operating in the *second-dimension*. A '*managed learning space*' was created through the fear of being transferred. Only '*consensual dialogue*' was permitted. In the discussion, it was suggested that if officers questioned traditions outside the direction set by senior management:

> …You'd be classed as a troublemaker.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 2 – 2.132)</div>

In the example, the officer had:

> …been [at a section] for a period of time and it needed an overhaul… [and the senior sergeant] was…sent there to deal with it… And what he was to do was, "okay, let's come in and get rid of anyone who opposes our new plans". And that was it.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 3 – 1.142)</div>

It was suggested that the managers were given authority to:

> …"sort it out, do whatever you want, as long as you tidy it up, as long as you fix it, get rid of all the troublemakers." Because you're considered to be a troublemaker if you actually say, "you can't do that, you can't".
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 3 – 1.160)</div>

In another example, the superintendents discussed the changing performance culture as a result of the Commissioner's accountability to the government. The governance was described as "huge"[75], increasing "exponentially" over the last few years[76]. The impact on the learning space was evident:

> I just feel that sometimes when I listen to people talk…they feel as though they're under siege…people feel as though they're under siege.
>
> (Superintendent 2 – 2.161 & 163; supported by Superintendent 3 – 2.162)

It was suggested that there was a "genuine fear"[77]. People needed to defend themselves because they have been "bashed around"[78] or:

> …smacked…so many times in the past… they feel they got to get on the front foot and just come up with bullshit really.
>
> (Superintendent 3 – 2.166)

> …There was a fear of [losing their position] and that's why people are so defensive …, there is a fear that if they're not seen to be doing the right thing, or they're so defensive that they don't probably think the next step ahead….they're scared….There is a genuine fear.
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 2.173, 175 & 177)

Suggesting how even '*technical dialogue*' is restricted in the '*managed learning space*', it was described how people:

> …come up with…half assed answers to the questions rather than actually trying to solve the problem. They're too busy trying to cover their ass.
>
> (Superintendent 3 – 2.175)

It was suggested that people will have a siege mentality:

> …as long as there was that power differential and ability for people to get themselves smacked or find themselves in a less favourable position, i.e. getting

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[75] Superintendent 1 – 2.454

[76] Superintendent 3 – 2.455

[77] Superintendent 1 – 2.177

[78] Superintendent 3 – 2.180

transferred or not promoted or whatever it is you're looking for… Or simply people thinking I'm a dummy.

<div align="right">(Superintendent 3 – 2.362 & 364)</div>

In addition to supporting the observations of the superintendents, a senior constable spoke of a senior officer explaining performance figures to an assistant commissioner. It was apparent that managers' behaviour impacted on the learning space of junior officers:

> …poor old [officer-in-charge] copped a flogging. …what [the officer-in-charge] was saying, wasn't what the assistant commissioner wanted to hear.

<div align="right">(Senior Constable 4 – 1.368 & 399)</div>

4.3.4   Managed learning space: Compliant organisational learning

The apparent outcomes from the '*managed learning space*' had the hallmarks of the submissive, obedient and, in some cases, helpless nature of '*compliant organisational learning*'. With a '*managed learning space*' facilitating only '*consensual*' or '*technical*' dialogue, there were indications that employees felt an obligation to restrict their learning to conform to manager's learning agenda. For instance, the '*managed learning space*' was seen with the fear of "political suicide"[79] or "career suicide"[80] which encouraged people to follow the corporate line: that is '*compliant organisational learning*'. While the senior sergeants used the terms like "sycophant"[81]; "strategic brown noser"[82]; or "Yes people"[83]: to describe people who comply or flatter to get ahead.

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[79] Superintendent 2 – 1.024 & 1.114

[80] Superintendent 1 – 1.115

[81] Senior Sergeant 1 – 1.347

[82] Senior Sergeant 2 – 1.361

[83] Senior Sergeant 4 – 1.338; Senior Sergeant 1 – 1.353

From the senior constables the '*managed learning space*', signalled through the fear of being transferred or ostracised, ensured '*compliant organisational learning*'.[84]   There was also perception that inspectors are:

> …trying to toe the company line, not trying to rock the boat too much…So they guarantee they keep the inspector [rank]…
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 2 – 2.328 & 330)</div>

From the superintendents it was explained:

> People [who] are prone to want to go further in the organisation don't want to *rock the boat* too much…knowing that, okay, we got to *toe the corporate line*, be good corporate citizens…[but] if you're going to go out on a tangent and hurt the organisation, the expectation is well perhaps you're not wanted in the higher echelons… because you don't fit the corporate profile…
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 2 – 1.103, 105 & 111)</div>

Another said:

> But our organisation in that respect is no different than [a major corporation] or…[a government agency], if you're a senior manager, [in a] senior management role, and you go outside the party, the company expectations or rules…, tell you what, guess what you won't come Monday… You [not] only won't get promoted, you won't be there Monday.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 1 – 1.117, 119 & 121)</div>

It was explained:

> And it's just not in terms of going outside and discussing those ideas with the external people, it's even if you raise that and you question the status quo…["internally" - adds Superintendent 4 – 123]… there's some people who get very uncomfortable ["Yes" – adds Superintendent 1] about you questioning, even if you're just say - doing that in a small forum, they get very uncomfortable about that…["Yeah, they do" – adds Superintendent 2 – 125]…Very uncomfortable… ["It's true" – adds Superintendent 1 – 128].
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 3 – 1.122, 124 & 126)</div>

In exploring the example of people feeling "under siege" ('*managed learning space*'), '*compliant organisational learning*' was also evident:

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[84] Refer to case described by Senior Constable 3 – 2.128. Quote: "…do what they're told, whenever they're told, however they're told and never questioned anything then they get to stay".

> …when they give an explanation [and] it's not accepted and then you give another explanation and it's not accepted...you start making it up at the end of the day just so you can stop, and you go "Yeah, look I understand. I understand, we'll try and work on that"…

<div align="right">(Superintendent 2 – 2.303 & 311)</div>

The superintendent describes the thinking process:

> …"well I've tried to give you an explanation but you don't want to hear that explanation."

<div align="right">(Superintendent 2 – 2.322)</div>

And from the assistant commissioner perspective:

> "…don't give me an excuse" in other words…

<div align="right">(Superintendent 2 – 2.324)</div>

In describing the outcome it was suggested:

> The people that are giving the answers…go into their shell. The [officers-in-charge] basically have all gone into their shell and are frightened…[or] apprehensive…

<div align="right">(Superintendent 2 – 2.338)</div>

Another explained the outcome from such a '*managed learning space*', which resembles almost a sense of helplessness:

> …solutions and ways of learning and developing the problem are either ignored or hidden because people are scared… So what happens is that … they'll just go through the motions and just sort of avoid getting in trouble.

<div align="right">(Superintendent 3 – 2.343)</div>

Another officer followed on:

> And I think all those fresh ideas and new ways of doing [things] are stifled…I'll use the word frightened, they were shit scared… they … bunker down and they'll … addressed only what I have to address, and [say] "Thank God that's over"…

<div align="right">(Superintendent 1 – 2.348)</div>

Similarly there were examples of '*compliant organisational learning*' being perpetuated through a '*managed learning space*' where people can develop a sense of helplessness.

That is people become indifferent. For example, after a description of an officer not speaking out, one officer said:

> And I think…that is a form…of learned helplessness, where you …go "why bother?"…And they go, "well I know I'm not going to win this one. They're not worrying about it so I won't and I'll just do my little bit".
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.117)

The officer went on to say:

> And that, I think, restricts greatly progression and learning…And I think…if people get to that point where…they do give up, then I don't think that's healthy, and I certainly don't think that promotes a learning environment at all.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.117)

4.3.5   Revolutionary power relationships: Liberated learning space

Difficulties were experienced finding '*revolutionary power relationships*', with the view that situations depicted in Story C were "few and far between"[85] in reality. Hence it was difficult to explore this power relationship and a '*liberated learning space*'. However there was the comment:

> …as an employee, I know which type I prefer to work with. And that is one that is cutting those barriers down, bringing it more to a level where it is informal. I think because it allows more free flow of ideas.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 1.057)

The notion of "cutting down barriers" may be connected to '*revolutionary power relationships*' which seek to expose oppression as with the notion of an "informal level" reflecting a more collegial or pluralist approach where no one person is up and the other down. The notion of "free flow of ideas" may be loosely connected to a '*liberated learning space*' where people feel free to engage in critical reflection and '*meaningful dialogue*'.

With the limited number of examples coming from the groups, the participants were directed towards specific statements in the Story. The senior constables were asked for

theirs thought in relation to the statement, "I also feel comfortable questioning traditions within the organisation, particularly those that are oppressive". It was stated:

> If [Story C] was the manager you're talking to I'd feel quite comfortable talking to the manager about those sorts of things.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 1 – 2.373)</div>

The senior constable went on to say:

> Yes. The one's that described, yeah. You'd speak - if a manager was like that, come across like that and you actually felt he genuinely had your best interests at heart, then you wouldn't hesitate to be able to converse with him and broaden his knowledge as well as yourself.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 1 – 2.382)</div>

The senior constables were then directed towards the statement, "I feel comfortable with openly disagreeing with my manager at the appropriate time, as we see this as an opportunity for us to learn together and to move forward in our thinking". The initial response by one senior constable was:

> Oh absolutely.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 3 – 2.399)</div>

Another senior constable agreed in respect to this particular manager but didn't think it was happening within their organisation.[86] Another senior constable agreed:

> Yeah, like this manager would but in reality it wouldn't happen.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable 2 – 2.409)</div>

Likewise, in directing the superintendents to this statement it was stated:

> Well if I had utopia it would be okay.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 2 – 2.627)</div>

> Absolutely.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 1 – 2.628)</div>

> …in that story you have to, that's how you do things.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent 3 – 2.638)</div>

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[85] Senior Constable 3 – 2.286; Senior Constable 1 – 2.288, 2.415 & 417; Senior Constable 2 – 2.418

[86] Senior Constable 1 – 2.401

In addition, every effort was made to maintain '*revolutionary power relationships*' in the focus groups, with the view to facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'. As previously stated, the three focus groups with limited structure, freely engaged in '*meaningful dialogue*' with their colleagues for a total of 8.5 hours about the power relationships in their organisations. During the debriefing at the end of each focus group, participants were asked which Story the focus group best reflected. There was overwhelming, if not unanimous, agreement and comments that the focus group process best reflected Story C: '*revolutionary power relationships*'. Inadvertently making the link to a '*liberated learning space*', Superintendent 4 (supported by superintendent 3) stated that people are very busy and that they do not take the time out of our work to sit down and reflect on and discuss these issues, and that it was good to hear other people's comments and join in on the discussion. Towards the end of the actual focus group discussion of the senior sergeants, the officers were laughing at the fact that they were finding the focus group discussion very therapeutic:

> Can we book in to do this once a month?
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.475)

> It's very cathartic isn't it?
>
> (Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.476)

In the superintendent focus group a situation arose where one superintendent challenge the view of another. The initial hesitation was evidence of a '*managed learning space*' brought about by traditional power relationships through the fear of being adversely acted upon by those with higher power capacity. Colleague encouragement sparked a '*liberated learning space*', whereupon the officer continued to make their point:

> …I got to be careful what I say.
>
> (Superintendent 2 – 2.305)

> No, no, no, no, no…Just say what you like.
>
> (Superintendent 1 – 2.306 & 308)

> Well as long as it's confidential, you know, that's the main thing.
>
> (Superintendent 2 – 2.309)

4.3.6   Liberated learning space: Authentic organisational learning

Finding face validity evidence to support this aspect of the model was problematic. While there may be isolated cases of more '*authentic*' learning for an individual, it is difficult to evidence the effect at the organisational level, in the midst of organisational learning that is predominantly '*compliant*'. Isolated cases of a '*liberated learning space*' would have no or little effect on the organisation as a whole. That is unless the number of people engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' reached critical mass. Hence the reason the model describes the <u>potential</u> for '*authentic organisational learning*'.

Despite this difficulty, a useful insight came from one senior sergeant, speaking of questioning and discussion and reflection as a necessary part of the learning process. The officer was responding to another officer's '*managed learning space*' where managers were passing unfavourable comments about junior officers. The officer made the link between the freedom to question and a deeper level of learning where alternative thinking was possible:

> …this is about all your learning stuff, you've got to question the way that you know the world to be or that you believe things to be in order to move on and to learn and change your view.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.221)

> So if you even get one of those people thinking "actually, I rate really what [another officer] says generally, that's really interesting that [that officer] had that point of view. Have I really got things right? Are we really doing the wrong thing by just bagging these people?" And if it just makes them for one second challenge their own view, that is how we move on. So I think we need to still do that.
>
> (Senior Sergeant 3 – 2.221)

Another officer was questioning the '*managed learning space*' where people are dissuaded from raising anything controversial:

> Why? …Why do we do that? Why don't we just throw caution to the wind?
>
> (Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.249)

The officer goes on to suggest the possibility for more '*authentic*' organisational learning:

> …But surely if one of us will then do something different, then someone might catch on and go "yeah, I'll give it a fly, I'm not going to die from it. Let's give things a fly." So how then do we encourage that kind of "why not?" Why can't we just try things?
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant 2 – 2.251)</div>

4.4   Conclusion

Apart from the last segment of the model, that is the relationship between a '*liberated learning space*' and the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*', there was sufficient evidence coming from each of the three focus groups to substantiate the face validity of the model.

However, a modification to the model was needed. There was a dynamic between the '*transactional power relationships*' and the '*transformational power relationships*' in that each is continually interacting against the other. In organisations, both these traditional power relationships are underpinned by a *unitary* frame of reference which is a tradition that is reinforced, and as such operates within '*transactional power relationships*'. While '*transformational power relationships*' challenges the values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms, the *unitary* frame of reference, operating through the *third* and *fourth* dimensions of power, is still reinforced. The absence of challenge to the *unitary* ideology acted to reinforce the *existing order of things*, which again was reinforced in the way change was implemented: Top-down. These dynamics are illustrated in the modified model by inverse arrows between '*transactional power relationships*' and '*transformational power relationships*' showing the perpetual reinforcement of the *unitary* ideology between the two (see Figure 12).
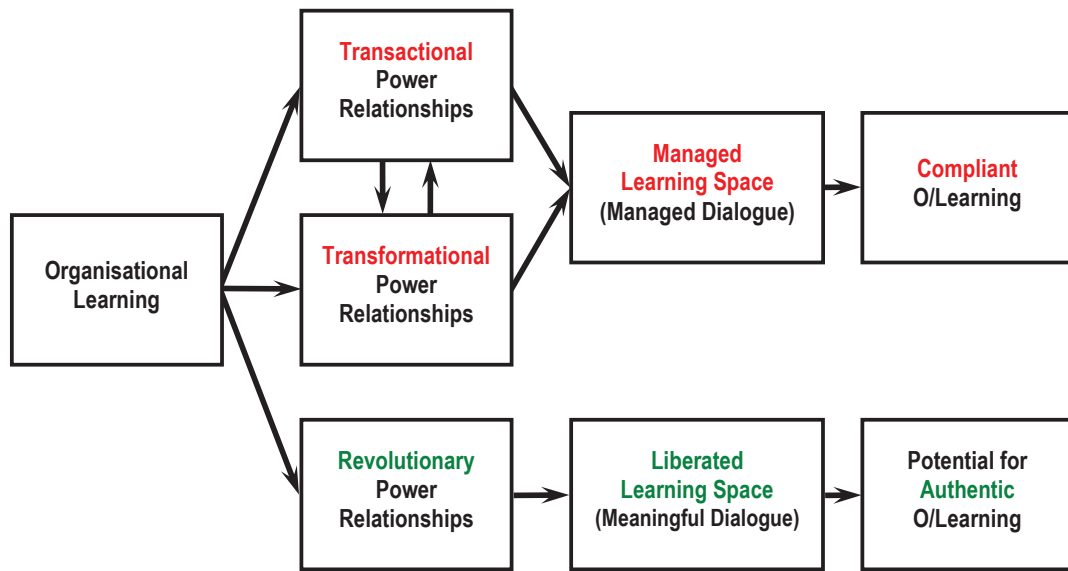
Figure 12: Modified conceptual model: Power relationships and authentic organisational learning

With the overall face validity of the model supported in the main, I was more confident to proceed to the *confirmatory investigation* phase. This *confirmatory investigation* phase commenced with a major case study of an Australian policing organisation, to find evidence to support or refute five propositions denoting the relationships between the various constructs of the model. The next chapter presents the data analysis of this major case study.

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5.1   Introduction

In the last chapter I presented the analysis from the *exploratory investigation* phase, which led to two key outcomes. First there was an addition made to the model presented in Chapter 2, namely the recognition of the continual interaction between '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships. Second, was establishing face validity for the majority of the model, with the exception of the relationship between a '*liberated learning space*' and '*authentic organisational learning*' of which there was a lack of available evidence to strongly confirm. Despite this shortfall, with the overall validation of the model combined with my own experiences and observations in a policing organisation, I was more confident with the level of understanding in order to proceed to the *confirmatory investigation* phase.

This chapter reports on the data analysis from the first of two organisational case studies. The data was gathered from enacting legislation, annual reports, historical corporate and other public documents, as well as interviews with 20 embedded cases. Forming part of the *confirmatory investigation* phase, this major case study aims to find evidence to support or refute the five propositions postulated from the model presented in Chapter 2 and further refined in Chapter 4:

- ❖ **1A**   '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

- ❖ **1B**   '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

- ❖ **2**   '*Managed learning spaces*' facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*'

- ❖ **3**   '*Revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'

- ❖ **4**   '*Liberated learning spaces*' facilitate the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'

5.2   Organisational background

Before addressing each of the propositions in turn, I will provide a brief overview of the organisational background.

Historical roots and current structure

The historical roots of the Terra Australis Police date back to the Banks Colony[87] in the early 1800's, and is modelled on the establishment of a paramilitary police force in Ireland by the Chief Secretary Sir Robert Peel in the early 1800s and the subsequent establishment of police in London lead by two Commissioners – one a soldier, the other a lawyer (Conole, 2002)[88].

In 2012, the Terra Australis Police (TPol) is one of eight policing organisations in Australia.   TPol is a middle-sized Australian policing organisations, employing approximately 7,500 people: approximately 1,800 police staff and 5,700 police officers[89] (*Terra Australis Police: Annual report*, 2012). Its annual budget expenditure in 2012 was approximately $1.2billion (*Terra Australis Police: Annual report*, 2012).

The organisation is structured with a "Commissioner" as the chief executive officer, reporting politically to the Minister of Police. Under the Commissioner there is the "Deputy Commissioner" who oversees the policing functions of the organisation, and the "Executive Director" who oversees the corporate and administrative functions. These three executive management positions form the "Commissioner's Executive Team" (CET).   The senior management also consists of eight "Assistant Commissioners" and one "Commander" who head specific portfolios, the majority of whom report to the Deputy Commissioner; as well as four "Directors" who head

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[87] Pseudonym. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[88] The work of historian Conole (2002) provides a useful backdrop for this organisational case study, which would otherwise have been beyond the scope of this thesis. Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[89] Police officers are "sworn" in or appointed to that office under section 10 of the Police Act (1887), and their powers are conferred on them by various legislation.

portfolios such as finance, human resources, assets, and strategy and performance, reporting to the Executive Director.

The Terra Australis policing jurisdiction is broken into seven "Metropolitan" and seven "Regional" districts[90], each headed by a "Superintendent" and a group of four or five "Inspectors". A similar divisional management structure exists for other specialists policing functions. Reporting to an Inspector is a number of positions titled "Officer-in-Charge" (OIC), who are in charge of a police station or specialist business unit, and hold the rank of "Senior Sergeant" or "Sergeant".

Apha reform and the first change agenda Commissioner

In the two decades prior to 2012, the Terra Australis Police experienced two major episodes driving continuous change under the command of three separate leaders. The first, in 1994 when the Terra Australis Police Force (as it was known) commenced a culture change program known as the "Alpha" reform ("Alpha Briefing," 1994)[91]. "Alpha" was described as "…complete and continuous change" ("Alpha Briefing," 1994). In the year leading up to the launch, a new Commissioner was appointed from the ranks of another Australian policing jurisdiction. On the appointment of the new Commissioner, senior executive positions, which had been vacant for some time, were filled and the incumbents formed the dominant coalition (Kotter, 1995) along with the Commissioner to implement the change. As part of the implementation, all Commissioned Officer positions were vacated and officers from the rank of Sergeant and above could apply for the positions under a new promotion system. Some Commissioned Officers were selected for positions, while others received a redundancy package, and more junior officers were promoted to Commissioned Officer positions some at a rank higher than the next rank above their current one. Non-Commissioned Officer vacant positions were filled in a further phased approach after a six month moratorium on promotions.

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[90] *Terra Australis Police: Annual report (2012)*

[91] Pseudonym. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

Alpha was said to be "…aimed at reforming the whole organisation in an integrated strategic manner", and involved "…holistic transformation…to bring about profound, radical and lasting change" ("The Alpha Program," no date, p.1 & 2). Profound because it involved changing the "…organisational culture and individual's attitude and behaviour" ("The Alpha Program," no date, p.1). The Commissioner described the old culture of the organisation as centrally driven, very hierarchical, with too many rules and regulations, and a perception that staff were required to strictly comply with them ("Future directions," 1996)[92]. The organisation became known as the "Terra Australis Police Service", dropping the notion of being a "*force*". The new vision and the corporate values were extensively communicated to inspire towards the new direction (*Managing change*, 1996)[93], which was succinctly captured in a strategic document, titled "Purpose and Direction" (1995)[94]. The desired new culture, in part, was about being customer focused with community leadership and localised service delivery, devolved decision making and problem solving, and working in partnership with the community (Purpose and direction, 1995). The "Blue Book" as it was often referred to by the Commissioner and others, was the first "glossy" strategic document that was widely and regularly referred and communicated to the rank and file "sworn" and "unsworn" (now referred to as police officers and police staff). Alpha had all the hallmark of a successful transformation (Kotter, 1995). It was regularly stated that if you wanted and were eligible for promotion, you needed to know and speak the content of the "Blue Book". A senior manager suggested:

> …[Alpha] was a huge change.…The biggest thing, I think the main thing that [Alpha] was, was just completely changing the culture, or trying to change the culture of the agency.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent – Case 7.052 & 056)[95]</div>

One manager said:

> …before… [Alpha reform] came on no one ever got anything like that, it was just come to work do your work and go home; the next day come to work, do your work, go home.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 77.162)</div>

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[92] Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[93] Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details..

[94] Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[95] Supported by Senior Sergeant – Case 77.018.

Second change agenda Commissioner

In 1999, the second change agenda Commissioner was appointed from the ranks of an international jurisdiction. This Commissioner continued with the Alpha reform agenda, and reviewed the Alpha change program and initiated the subsequent Terra Australis Police Reform Program (Hennery, 2004b)[96]. However, despite the implementation of Alpha, it did not prevent the second episode – the "Hennery Royal Commission"[97] – driving change. Commencing in late 2001, the Hennery Royal Commission accepted that there has been corrupt and criminal conduct by officers since 1985, and was concerned with identifying the prevailing culture in the organisation. The inquiry found the organisation did not fare favourably on a number of fronts compared with police organisations in other states, and suggested "[t]he difficulty does not seem to arise as much in the implementation of structural and procedural changes, as in the delivery of reforms in the more challenging areas of culture, management and technology" (Hennery, 2004a, p.5)[98].

Royal Commission, third change agenda Commissioner, and the "Back-to-Basics" principle[99]

After the Royal Commission findings and recommendations were handed down in January 2004 (Hennery, 2004a), the third change agenda Commissioner was appointed. This Commissioner was charged with considering and implementing recommendations, and introduced the "Back-to-Basics" principle: "The Back-to-Basics guiding principle has become the bedrock of our corporate thinking and is now firmly embedded within our organisation" ("Back-to-Basics," 2010). The focus of Back-to-Basics is said to involved in part "[c]ultural change, through improved leadership, accountability, performance management and adhering to corruption-resistance principles" and "[c]ontinuing to transition the culture of the Terra Australis Police into one that is performance-based, as opposed to the old 'rank and file' hierarchy of the past" ("Back-to-Basics," 2010).

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[96] Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[97] Pseudonym. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[98] Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[99] Pseudonym. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

After this overview of the organisational background, I turn now to examining the evidence that refutes or supports each of the five propositions for the model.

5.3 Evidence addressing five propositions

5.3.1 Transactional power relationships: Managed learning space

The first section of the model proposes that individuals and groups in '*transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*': restricting interactions to '*technical*' dialogue aimed at problem solving or achieving organisational goals, or '*consensual*' dialogue aimed at reinforcing management desired values, beliefs and attitudes within the organisation. The model assumes '*transactional power relationships*' operate within the *fourth-*, *third-*, and *second-dimensions* to maintain the status quo by reinforcing the dominant traditional values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms (the *existing order of things*). In doing so questioning the *existing order of things* or *dominant ideology*, is not encouraged nor supported. If anything '*meaningful dialogue*' is to be eradicated.

Proposition 1A: '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'.

The characterisations of '*transactional power relationships*' as well as '*managed learning space*' are detailed in Table 7 and Table 10 in Chapter 4.

Transactional employment contracts historically developed in society and enshrined in legislation to instil the unitary ideology: The fourth-dimension

'*Transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-* and *third-dimensions*, accounted for the bulk of power relationships in this organisational case study. At the heart of these relationships operating at the *fourth-dimension* was the *unitary* ideology, evident in the management structure and the employment contract. Transactional employment contracts instilled the ideology that managers have the right to manage and employee's obligation to obey, that authority is the foundation of a chain of command, and that those of higher rank are to be respected and obeyed. As such, *authority* and its *legitimacy* played a major part in this case. The *unitary* ideology emanated through the

historical paramilitary origins of the organisation, beyond the grasp of present day managers. Along with the paramilitary police force model having historical British roots governing police establishments in Australia, the *unitary* frame of reference was enshrined in legislation. For example, the chain of command was revealed in an extract from the Code of Rules published in the Government Gazette in 1853:

> The sergeants will devote their whole time to the service and see that *all orders given by the Superintendent or senior authority are strictly enforced*.

> The constables *will obey their superiors* and likewise devote their entire time to the service (emphasis added). (Conole, 2002, p.21)[100]

This early day *unitary* doctrine as the foundation of '*transactional power relationships*' in the *fourth-dimension* was reinforced in the present day Police Act (1887)[101] and Police Force Regulations (1973)[102]. For example section 10 of the Police Act (1887) prescribes the terms of engagement under which police officers are employed: that is officers promise to "…well and truly serve our Sovereign Lady the Queen…until…legally discharged…", and further to keep and preserve Her Majesty's peace and to discharge all the duties of the position according to the law. The *unitary* ideology of the employment contract was further reinforced by section 9 which enshrined the Commissioner's "right to manage", prescribing the framing of rules, orders and regulations governing the police force generally and police officers individually, including their places of residence, their classification or rank, and the location in which they serve. Section 23 prescribed the Commissioner's right to punish individual officers for transgressions, and section 8 the right to dismiss an officer if the Commissioner loses confidence in the officer's suitability based on his/her "…integrity, honesty, competence, performance or conduct…" (Section 33L). Conversely, police officers' "obligations to obey" was clearly prescribed in the Police Regulations[103], in particular:

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[100] Details of publication withheld. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[101] Pseudonym. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[102] Pseudonym. See Table 18 in Appendix L for details.

[103] The Police Regulations being made by the Governor pursuant to section 138A of the Police Force Act (1887).

- regulation 401 stipulated the officer's functions, duties and responsibilities are to be carried out *as directed*;

- regulation 402 made clear that officers were to *promptly obey* lawful instructions by supervisors, and *comply* with enactments, regulations, rules, orders and administrative instructions;

- regulation 602 forbid an officer *from being insubordinate in any way*; and

- regulation 603 reinforced that officers *shall not disobey* a lawful order or fail to carry out a lawful order without good and sufficient cause.

Respect for elders and authority: Fourth-dimension

Some cases revealed the *unitary* ideology enshrined in legislation is reinforced in broader society and individuals discipline themselves to respect elders and obey police in their societal role:

> I think to a certain extent that's how society is isn't it? You need to give that person that is older than you the respect that they deserve if they've been around for a lot longer than you….And it's something that I think has been around forever and it should be, that's how I think is an orderly society…we can't have anarchy.
>
> (First Class Constable – Case 92.144 & 146)

Cultural acceptance of the unitary ideology: The third-dimension

It was evident the *fourth-dimension* devolved to the *third-dimension* whereby managers and the employees accepted and reinforced the dominant *unitary* ideology. Almost all embedded cases (n=18) accepted the organisational culture as paramilitary and/or hierarchical, which had been handed down through the generations of senior officers holding elite positions. Through recruit training, police officers accepted that senior ranked officers must be afforded a fair degree of respect and courtesy. By and large, new recruits are not employed without undertaking an intensive induction and training program over several months, hence begins the process of shaping perceptions, cognitions and preferences so that they accept the existing order of things (*third-dimension*).[104] Recruits are left in no doubt of the division between "Commissioned

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[104] At the time of writing this thesis that period was six months.

Officers" and the general rank and file, and that the "recruit" is at the bottom of the "totem pole" irrespective of their life skills and knowledge. Historically, officers had been schooled in culturally patterned behaviour such as standing fast when a Commissioned Officer walks into a room and referring to them as "Sir", "Ma'am" or "Mr…" or "Ms…", and the institutional practices such as following the chain of command. For police staff (unsworn) members, who do not receive this induction process, the reinforcement was difficult and learnt from watching the police officers:

> …[officers] obey them or do whatever they've been told to do…Because what they've been trained, since they're a cadet.
>
> (Level 4 – Case 41.044 & 050)

For the police officers the impacts on their feeling free to question was evident in their reflections of the historical paramilitary and/or hierarchical traditions:

> Basically…you can't really step out of that…it's fairly firm structure within the organisation…you find that [you] really need to…do what you're told by people that of a higher rank than yourself.
>
> (Constable – Case 17.018)

> …if you're given instruction from a senior member, you are not encouraged to challenge it or there is fear of challenging it, I suppose is more correct. You feel obliged to do it…whether you believe it's right or wrong…you just do it because you have been instructed to.
>
> (Senior Constable – Case 44.039)

Even more senior officers acknowledged the cultural aspects that perpetuate the existing order of things:

> Authority is what runs our organisation. Authority is what creates the situations whereby smartarse inspectors like me don't argue with the decisions of a Deputy Commissioner.
>
> (Inspector – Case 87.050)

> "I told you to do it", "I'm the boss", "you're not", "do as you're told".
>
> (Superintendent – Case 151.034)

Facilitating 'technical dialogue' and inhibiting 'meaningful dialogue': First- and second-dimensions

Apart from social and personal discussions, the participants repeatedly acknowledged that '*technical dialogue*' whether strategic or operational was a daily occurrence. Conversely more '*meaningful dialogue*' was rare. The idea of questioning the *existing order of things* was foreign, requiring considerable probing. When probed many participants described further instances of '*technical dialogue*'. In some cases the closest to '*meaningful dialogue*' was questioning a management policy to address a personal grievance. One senior officer summarised the feeling of freedom between engaging in '*technical*' and perhaps more '*meaningful*' dialogue, inferring that the later involves a degree of risk:

> …there is nothing really sensitive about technical issues.
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.090)

Generally, participants felt freer engaging in '*technical dialogue*', and a number expressed their willingness to question issues for continuous improvement and negotiate outcomes. However there were instances where participants did not feel free to engage even in '*technical dialogue*'.

Manager behaviour to control the agenda and reinforce authority: Second-dimension

While the rank stratification was evident as the *fourth-* and *third-dimensions*, managers engaged in behaviours to reinforce their authority and control the learning agenda. For example, a senior police staff member was deterred from speaking further on an issue when a non-police manager reinforced the privilege of rank. Rank, for police officers, is traditionally reinforced by the use of stripes and badges on uniform shoulder epaulettes, which signify a particular rank in the hierarchical structure (the "pips"):

> I have experienced the tap on the shoulder… "Look at [this]…I've got the pips and that makes me more important and it doesn't matter what you say, because I've got the pips".
>
> (Level 7 – Case 126.036 & 038)

Agenda control was also evident whereby officers were prevented from speaking on 'technical' matters outside the chain of command:

> [He said] "Oh, so you're going behind my back or over my head", I said, "I'm sorry". [He said,] "Well you obviously got an agenda".
>
> (Senior Constable – Case 8.068)

Further, Commissioned Officers used pressure and fear to control the agenda, again on 'technical' issues:

> …I got pressure on me as in you've done wrong…There was distinct pressure from the Inspector…there was no talk, there was no point challenging…
>
> (Senior Constable – Case 139.090, 098 & 112)

Complying with instructions creates a fear: Reinforcing disciplinary power

With the focus on control and the need to follow the rules and procedures along with the accountability, one participant described the fear of not knowing, effectively silencing 'technical dialogue':

> You are afraid to be wrong I think.…you are afraid I think because there is so much you have got to learn, you are afraid to admit that you don't know something. Should I know that? Did I forget it?
>
> (Constable – Case 12.131 & 135)

> …you don't feel comfortable talking about it, because sometimes the job will go wrong and the Senior [Constable] will just sit there and not talk to you about it…
>
> (Constable – Case 12.135)

> …people are frightened to make mistakes in police. Because there is this big stick approach to things…
>
> (Level 7 – Case 126.034)

Employees are politically strategic: Who controls systems of reward and punishment? – Second- and third-dimensions

There was strong recognition that senior officers above them control the reward and punishment system; hence when it came to engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' participants were strategic in deciding to speak or remain silent on issues.

> …to raise it [would be] very detrimental to your own job security, so there's a little bit of self preservation involved….conscious of the fact that [your] contracts are coming up for renewal and gee, "I *better not rock the boat* too much because I might not be able to get my contact renewed". (emphasis added)
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.130 & 144)

Similarly for others not subject to contract:

> …*rocking the boat* can be detrimental to yourself. (emphasis added)
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 77.136 & 138)

> …if you *rock the boat* too much, you won't get promoted, you will get transferred out somewhere where you don't want to go…. Challenge too much you would be possibly seen as a *troublemaker*…. (emphasis added)
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.160, 164 & 166)

On questioning an issue involving conflicting values:

> He didn't like it…he was going to the commissioned officer in charge of the district at the time, and was saying all sorts of things about me. That I was not pulling my weight and trying to get me out of the district and so he was trying to put me up as a *problem child* (emphasis added).[105]
>
> (Superintendent – Case 7.034)

In being strategic, there was a need to be careful:

> I need to be careful here…. You have to be careful to be very selective about who you say things to and the context obviously….you certainly can't be indiscriminate in comment, criticism, challenging things, you won't last very long….
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.074, 108 & 122)

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[105] Managers frequently use the label "*problem child*" to discredit junior officers who have a diverse view, denoting that they are hard to manage.

Questioning dominant ideology perceived negatively: Third- and second-dimension

'*Transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-dimension*, were so prevalent that engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' was perceived negatively, beyond '*rocking the boat*'. While managers may reinforce the negative vocabulary thereby keeping such questioning off the agenda (*second-dimension*), individuals discipline themselves in accepting the *existing order of things*. Collegial individuals reinforced the existing power relationships without direct management intervention (*third-dimension*). For example:

> [These issues] are taboo so to speak…it's the culture. There's really not a culture to allow us to challenge these sorts of things. We're heavily governed by policy, procedure and the like where you just don't challenge it, you do it… and that's the way it [has] been for me…
>
> (Senior Constable – Case 44.413 & 429)

Surprisingly, such questioning was perceived as:

- "whinges" or "whinging, bitching and moaning"[106];
- having a "sook or whinge"[107];
- "gripes"[108];
- "complaining"[109]; or
- "sledging"[110].

Employees reinforcing the status quo: First-dimension

Similarly, colleagues of the same rank also functioned in the *first-dimension* to reinforce the status quo. One participant explained that the masses decided what was "legitimate"[111]. This has implications for people raising issues, in which the masses may deem engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' as illegitimate, perhaps resulting in

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[106] Superintendent - Case 7.084; Detective Senior Constable - Case 46.114 & 126; Level 4 - Case 41.218

[107] Senior Sergeant – Case 77.158

[108] Senior Constable - Case 8. ; Constable - Case 17.078 & 172

[109] Constable - Case 17.078 & 080; Level 4 - Case 41.218

[110] Detective Senior Sergeant - Case 83.170

[111] Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.138

individuals being labelled a "whinger".   While the officer suggested that being labelled doesn't affect people from raising issues[112], another officer suggested:

> …there is quiet a victimisation going on…[which entailed]… [a]voidance by some people, exclusion, ridicule in some cases, where that person actually doesn't get ridiculed to their face, but it goes on behind their back.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable – Case 8.051 & 054)</div>

'Meaningful dialogue' behind closed doors: First-dimension

The negative perception generated in '*transactional power relationships*' reinforcing the *existing order of things*, appeared to facilitate covert '*meaningful dialogue*':

> …there is plenty of sledging goes on behind backs and *behind closed doors* undoubtedly. Not something that I profess to engage in…that's not something that I tend to do although I know that my colleagues and peers do that all the time. (emphasis added)
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Senior Sergeant - Case 83.170)</div>

Organisationally outflanked: Pointless

The prevalence and the power imbalance of '*transactional power relationships*' in some cases led participants to not raise issues or not pursue them. In a sense there was "…outflanking of subordinate classes such that they consider resistance pointless" (Mann, 1986, p.8). They become '*organisationally outflanked*': lacking the collective organisation to do anything else but consent to their own subordination (Clegg, 1989a). There was a sense of vulnerability in some cases, and hopelessness in others. As indicated above, some saw it as a strategic retreat however others saw it as pointless. For example, on dialogue involving '*technical*' issues on policy and '*technical*' matters:

> …they bashed me to the boundary and I was like, okay, no worries.
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Senior Sergeant - Case 83.164)</div>

> I've made the conscious decision on occasions, not to comment because I've determined that it's a waste of time….
>
> <div align="right">(Inspector – Case 87.042)</div>

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[112] Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.140

A sense of hopelessness was evident in some response on their feeling feel to question the existing order of things:

> Do you know what my answer is? Why would I want to sometimes?...It's a little bit of a preservation thing as well….

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 77.136 & 138)</div>

Conclusion

In was clear that '*transactional power relationships*' operated across all four dimensions to suppress the freedom to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'. A major influence is the implicit reinforcement of society's dominant ideology within the terms of engagement. Nowhere does it suggest that part of the officer's duty is to continually question and challenge the *existing order of things*, whether in society or the organisation. Therefore it is not the officer's role to question and challenge the dominant traditional values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms, but simply to carry out his/her duty. In addition, while participants felt free to engage in '*technical dialogue*', it was surprising the instances of others reporting that they did not. A key inhibitor was the *unitary* ideology embedded in the rank stratification, and the cognition that managers control the reward and punishment systems.

5.3.2   Transformational power relationships: Managed learning space

The model proposes that individuals and groups in '*transformational power relationships*' also facilitate a '*managed learning space*'. Therefore, these power relationships claim to challenge existing traditional attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms, but take a management-centred approach to instilling new predetermined dominant attitudes, values and beliefs within organizations. As well as restricting interactions to '*technical*' dialogue, the model assumes '*transformational power relationships*' in organisations operate within the *third-* and *second-dimensions* to facilitate '*consensual*' dialogue in order to challenge the status quo and steer the organisation in a new direction, instilling a new culture or common purpose. Like the '*transactional power relationships*', '*meaningful dialogue*' involving questioning the *existing order of things* or *dominant ideology*, is not encouraged nor supported. If anything it is seen as resistance or an obstacle to the new direction, and as such it needs to be eradicated

(Kotter, 1995; 2010). Hence, while employees may 'buy in' to the vision, particularly as it is a requirement of their employment, it is only the agenda of the managers.

Proposition 1B: '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'.

The characterisations of '*transformational power relationships*' as well as '*managed learning space*' are detailed in Table 8 and Table 10 in Chapter 4.

Despite almost all cases (n=18) accepting the organisational culture as paramilitary and/or hierarchical, the majority saw more widespread change in the organisation (n=13), with further cases seeing more isolated change in the organisation (n=4). However, one participant suggested that the organisation was changing but in the way it was changing it was staying the same, while a senior officer suggested the organisation was regressing.[113]

Questioning is still culturally taboo: Third-dimension

Despite nearly two decades of change since 1994 (highlighted in the Organisational background above), it was evident that the drivers of a '*managed learning space*' were largely identical to those reported above in respect to '*transactional power relationships*'. This was summarised by a senior officer:

> Can I start at the top? That doesn't happen at the top. I will tell you right here and now. And if anybody from the Commissioner down believes it is [happening] they are delusional. We do not challenge each other's thinking in this organisation, it is *culturally taboo*. And that is being lead stronger than it has ever been lead…. (emphasis added)
>
> (Superintendent – Case 151.050)

And further:

> This is the culture, we don't question each other. We are *too shit frightened* to question each other and how dare anyone ever question the Deputy or the Commissioner. If anybody believes that that has changed, in fact that is one of the areas that we have regressed because I believe we are more likely today to keep quiet than we have ever been. (emphasis added)
>
> (Superintendent – Case 151.050)

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[113] One case found it difficult to assess due to the limited time in the organisation.

Satisfying the demands of managers for sake of promotion: Second- and third-dimensions

The superintendent's generalisation can be supported by specific examples. In 2004 shortly after the third change agenda Commissioner came to office, a newly promoted District Superintendent gave a speech to his mid-level managers which demonstrated that irrespective of the change program managers were still very much in control of the agenda. It must be remembered that since the introduction of Alpha in 1994, promotion selections made by the executive are based on individuals reflecting the new order. By communicating to align to a common purpose, it reinforces the *unitary* frame of reference and highlights how the learning space is managed to facilitate '*consensual dialogue*'. Paraphrasing, the new superintendent's words went something like this:

> If the Commissioner wants bacon and eggs for breakfast, I will give him bacon and eggs. I may suggest porridge, but if he wants bacon and eggs then that's what I'll give him.

In interviewing one senior officer, this anecdote was couched in slightly different form:

> …if the Commissioner said today that we are going to eat oranges for lunch, basically we would eat oranges for lunch?
>
> (Researcher)

The response:

> …if you wanted to get on and wanted to throw your hat in the ring for the next [Assistant Commissioner] job, then you might be walking the corridors holding an orange in your mouth.
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.184)

Satisfying the wishes of managers for favourable treatment: Second- and third-dimensions

Similarly, a senior sergeant had a vision for change at a small business unit, and challenged the traditional ways of doing business at the unit level in a way described as

"very stand over tactic type behaviour"[114]. Consequently, seeking favourable treatment, the officer remained silent on '*technical*' issues and agreed with the new cultural direction at the unit ('*consensual dialogue*'):

> …I think I was very limited, I did not say anything. I felt I was very limited in how I could have handled that or how outspoken I could be there because …[what] I needed to have happen…wouldn't have happened if I'd been as outspoken as some of the other people"
>
> <div align="right">(First Class Constable – Case 92.180)</div>

Describing her need for a favourable transfer due to an injury:

> …I felt that if I didn't play along with the boss at the time and just go along yeah yeah agree agree agree whatever, he wouldn't have helped me as much to get to another position.
>
> <div align="right">(First Class Constable – Case 92.182)</div>

The officer explains:

> The fact that if you did raise an issue you were going to be *labelled as a troublemaker* and you were not going to be given the same sort of, not privileges, opportunities perhaps as other people that would go along with what was happening. (emphasis added)
>
> <div align="right">(First Class Constable – Case 92.202)</div>

> … certainly after being at [Unit] that affected me a lot I would certainly think twice about speaking my mind now in situations.
>
> <div align="right">(First Class Constable – Case 92.134)</div>

Manager behaviour promotes legendary stories to control the agenda and reinforce authority: Second- and third-dimensions

Whether factual or not, "legendary" stories emerged about the behaviour of the first change agenda Commissioner responsible for the implementation of the Alpha culture change program. The behaviour was designed to control the agenda and confine to '*consensual dialogue*', but in addition the images these stories created and their retelling formed the foundations for the *third-dimension* thereby reinforcing the *unitary* ideology:

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[114] First Class Constable – Case 92.188

People, whatever it was, under [Commissioner] actually challenged him from time to time. You got your head belted, but you challenged him because it was all new to them.

Likewise:

…there's some legendary stories going around about how [the Commissioner] dealt with his senior officer group, particularly the ones who disagreed with him and there was a few premature retirements…

The officer further described a story told by recently retired superintendents who took up the invitation to speak, which was suggested to generate fear and scepticism within the organisation today:

They voiced their opinion and [the superintendents]…said [the Commissioner] just was screaming at them across the table. It was like, wow, and yet they thought, "but you said that if I disagreed I could speak to you about it"…

Another example was provided where senior manager questioned the third change agenda Commissioner indirectly over a '*technical*' matter:

…it came down and it was pretty harsh of "Who is this person, and bring her back into line"…. I was pretty nervous to be honest….when it came down from above…it wasn't a threat, but it felt like a threat…I did feel pretty threatened at that time….It's the ranks that does it.

The impact:

…people would joke "Oh that's it. You've now done your career. You're not going any further".

Whether factual or not, the impact was derived from the "story" conveyed to the manager that reinforced the *unitary* ideology:

> I know [my director] was pulled upstairs and he was asked to pull me into line because…I don't have any rank and who are you to question me as the most senior officer. So I know that did happen but it didn't happen to me.
>
> <div align="right">(Level 7 – Case 126.140)</div>

"Whingers, wankers or sooks": Second- and third-dimensions

Similarly a senior officer, promoted under the reign of the third change agenda Commissioner, spoke with junior managers to set the scene for the new direction, align behaviour, and to control the learning agenda, thereby confining the learning space to safe issues:

> I can distinctly remember…the first time that this particular Superintendant walked in, one of the first words out of his… mouth were, "I don't like *whingers, wankers or sooks*. So if you think that you're any one of those things then you best go and find yourself somewhere else to work" (emphasis added).
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 27.046)</div>

The words "…whingers, wankers or sooks…" are recognised as having cultural significance in Australian society, expressing undesirable characteristics of individuals and contempt for particular attitudes and behaviours (Stollznow, 2004). This is highlighted with the officer's description of the impact on the learning space:

> …it still sticks with me now, because it's singularly one of the most stupid things I've ever heard a Superintendent say in my life. It just stifled all constructive conversation that was ever likely to come out of that group…
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 27.046)</div>

He explains that people will be in fear to speak out:

> … because all of the OIC's were absolutely shit scared that they were going to be branded a whinger, a wanker or a sook if they opened their mouth and said anything.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 27.046)</div>

Even restricting '*technical dialogue*':

> He was never ever going to have to deal with any problems, 'cause everybody was too scared to open their mouth, but he was never going to bloody learn anything either….
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 27.046)

The unitary ideology: The hidden subtle fourth-dimension of 'transactional power relationships'

The third change agenda Commissioner was recognised as one person with whom many participants felt they could open up to and would be listened to[115], and collegial in his approach certainly with senior executive members[116]. One senior officer observed:

> [Commissioner's first name] to some extent models that in having a more collegial approach and being more relaxed and not requiring "Sir" and "Commissioner" when you're in a meeting situation.
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.072)

And further:

> He encourages consultation, so I suppose the decision making style now is probably a bit more consultative than it was in the past, but there is probably still some room for improvement there.
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.072)

However, major policy changes were communicated in a top-down fashion from senior executive in email "Broadcasts". Such changes were designed to breakdown the paramilitary traditions, but had the effect of reinforcing the *unitary* ideology. The abolition of the "standing fast" tradition was a quoted example, a tradition whereby officers were required to immediately stand to attention for Commissioned Officers entering the room. There was a division between people that supported the tradition, seeing it as necessary for discipline, and the non-supporters who saw it as unnecessary. While not expecting to be consulted, a senior officer said there was no prior discussion:

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[115] First Class Constable – Case 92.114;

[116] Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.056;

> …I think that was just a decision made by him and I certainly, there was no discussion at our level. We were just told, that's what's happening…
>
> (Superintendent – Case 7.070)

In terms of the impact:

> Well it's raised some eye brows put it that way.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 7.072)

A similar interesting observation was made in respect to certain practices abolished as part of the change agenda, but others were put in place thereby reinforcing the *unitary* ideology:

> This Commissioner has I guess, purported to make an effort to get rid of the rank traditions that there have been in the past in police…. [He] has attempted to get rid of some of those things [such as standing fast for commissioned officers], yet you and I both have an ID, and on our ID there is a colour. And that colour signifies what rank we are.
>
> (Level 7 – Case 126.020)

The manager goes on to implicitly highlight how both power relationships are working to reinforce the *unitary* frame, which leads to a '*managed learning space*'. The '*learning space*' is managed in that it is reinforced that the voice of people at the lower ranks are not important:

> So on one hand there is a suggestion that we're trying to get rid of that and that we're all employees…but on the other hand we're so visibly determined as what rank, that even our passes determine who are, as if, because we're red and not blue, we're not as important. So I find that bizarre.
>
> (Level 7 – Case 126.020)

In terms of '*leaning space*', there were implications of the "red tag" for '*technical dialogue*' let alone '*meaningful dialogue*':

> … you would talk to the equivalent red tag. Whereas if you are a blue tag, then you would talk to the blue tag.
>
> (Level 7 – Case 126.028)

This was supported by another manager:

> To tell you brutally, since we changed the ID card, like the separation between police officers and police staff, and police staff have been coloured level one to three is white. Four to six is red. Seven and up is blue. And if people see the white colour ID, they will treat them like "you don't know nothing, you're just lower. I don't want to talk to you, I want to talk to your boss.
>
> (Level 4 – Case 41.024)

Conclusion

Despite nearly two decades of change since 1994, it was evident that the drivers of a '*managed learning space*' were largely identical to those reported above in respect to '*transactional power relationships*'. It was evident that '*transformational*' and '*transactional*' power relationships oscillate between each other, challenging some attitudes, beliefs, values and norms while reinforcing others such as the *unitary* ideology. There were examples of '*technical*' and '*consensual*' dialogue occurring in the *first-dimension*; however of greater interest were the instances of the *second-* and *third-dimensions* that inhibited '*technical dialogue*' let alone '*meaningful dialogue*'.

5.3.3   Managed learning space: Compliant organisational learning

The model suggests that where individuals have a '*managed learning space*', that is they do not feel free to question the *existing order of things*, then the organisational learning will tend to be more '*compliant*' than '*authentic*'. '*Compliant organisational learning*' is beneficial in that it assures alignment to the corporate vision, whether maintaining the current path or setting a new direction. As such it includes the *exploitation* of existing knowledge and the *exploration* of new knowledge for corporate benefit, and can be seen where employees are restricted in their learning to the corporate agenda.

Proposition 2:   **'*Managed learning spaces*' facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*'.**

The characterisations of '*managed learning space*' as well as '*compliant organisational learning*' are detailed in Table 10 and Table 12 in Chapter 4.

All participants confirmed that the majority of their dialogue was of a '*technical*' nature. To test this part of the model, the expression "following the corporate line" was used to provoke the generation of or elicit responses contiguous with the notion of '*compliant organisational learning*'. They were specifically asked:

> When your discussions are about the day-to-day business of a technical nature such as problem solving and achieving goals, would you say that learning in your organisation is generally about following the corporate line?
>
> <div align="right">(Question 9)</div>

Almost half the cases provided unequivocal evidence that supported the proposition (n=9). Most related to the single corporate agenda and not straying from it, and exploiting existing learning through following orders, procedures, policies, rules and regulations. Further cases provided support for the proposition, but also drew attention to the scope to explore new learning for continuous improvement often with permission (n=6). The remaining cases explicitly did not support the proposition, however implicit support was found within their reflections (n=5).

No scope for learning outside the corporate "box"

A senior practitioner described his learning as conforming or fitting the corporate "box", suggesting there was no scope for learning outside the "box":

> I think my learning has…developed in a way that's supposed to be directed at bettering the Agency if that makes sense. I don't know how much the Agency supports learning outside the scope of what might fit into the organisational box so to speak….the way that we go about thinking is very lineal I suppose and we don't think outside the box…
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Constable – Case 44.469 & 473)</div>

A junior practitioner, after reflecting on her guardedness on what she discussed with others, talked about the "fit" to corporate learning agenda:

> Definitely…definitely following the corporate line…. Well everything has to be…according to those guidelines. Yeah, so learning then from within the agency, so there is no outside [learning]… it has to be corporate.
>
> <div align="right">(Constable – Case 12.416 to 420)</div>

Exploiting existing learning: Following order, procedures, policies, rules &
regulations

Similarly, another junior practitioner echoed the corporate "box" "fit", fearing being
labelled a "whinger", talked of following instructions delivered top-down in order to
achieve corporate outcomes:

> …I think everything from paperwork at the most basic level…everything comes
> from… District Office and above and then also from a Station level, but they
> definitely implement things that everybody has to follow as a whole… to
> achieve what the organisation as a whole needs to achieve, needs to be uniform I
> suppose and that's why we need to follow those guidelines and legislations and
> procedures that they have put in place.
>
> <div align="right">(Constable – Case 17.240 to 242)</div>

A senior manager spoke about '*technical dialogue*' on processes between her business
area and another business unit:

> Yeah. Definitely.   Especially in [business area 1].…That's why actually
> [business area 2] and [business area 1] go so well in hand [together], because it
> is process orientated. So any discussions around that are toeing the corporate
> line.
>
> <div align="right">(Level 7 – Case 126.210)</div>

A detective business unit manager suggested that on balance, officers' learning was
probably about following the corporate line and as a result the overall impact on
learning was "negligible". The officer acknowledged there was no discussion, debate,
or dialogue on policy issues opened to all organisational actors, whereby draft policies
could be exposed for their possible weakness and perhaps even rejected. He noted
instead that officers would be inclined to follow the corporate line despite disagreeing
with policy:

> …coppers are always renowned for…being philosophically opposed to [policy]
> just because…it's policy and it's come down from a high. It doesn't mean that
> they don't follow it, but it just might mean that they don't agree with it.
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Senior Sergeant – Case 83.282)</div>

Similarly, an administration manager gave the example of engaging in '*technical
dialogue*' in the form of ringing around to areas to establish the correct procedure to

follow. While acknowledging that she doesn't always follow the corporate line as she likes to take shortcuts, generally she does [follow the corporate line] until such time that someone tells her the rules have changed:

> Well I like the short cut….Some people will follow, some people won't. Because [the procedures are] too hard, taking too long….there are procedures and you have to strictly follow them to the signature block, letterhead, everything. You have to follow that.
>
> (Level 4 – Case 41.242)

A senior manager suggested that a heavy focus on '*technical dialogue*' on processes was connected to following the corporate line, drawing attention to the notion of carrying out the wishes of government spread across the public-sector. Despite encouraging others internally to question the *existing order of things*, he admitted that when he engaged in '*technical dialogue*' his learning is about following the corporate line:

> Yes, yes I do. Yes I do toe the company line, toe the corporate line…the curtness is the policy and we must follow the policy and you can't step outside of it….Tick the box, process driven, process thinking… "Show me where it says that"….
>
> (Superintendent – Case 151.244, 246, 254, & 256)

Alignment: One voice – the corporate learning agenda

Connected with following government policy was the perceived need for a single corporate voice. Despite being at ease with any form of dialogue with anyone internally including the current Commissioner, a corporate manager reported being guarded when dealing with external parties including government ministers and the Attorney General:

> …I certainly wouldn't be perhaps as open in my views on social injustices or whether or not our agencies were placed to deliver certain government policy or not.
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 152.084)

Implicit within the comments on the perceived disloyalty to the Commissioner by engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' with senior government officials, was the notion that there was to be only one corporate voice – the Commissioner's:

I think people follow the corporate line full stop….Yes, yes. People will follow the corporate line…. at the end of the day you would toe the corporate line.

<div align="right">(Assistant Commissioner - Case 152.104 & 106)</div>

Despite his espoused freedom to question, repeatedly calling "a spade a spade", a station manager supported the "end of the day" notion that people will "toe the corporate line" in order to facilitate "sameness" in standards or outcomes:

I think it is. That's all that it's about and I think it's a great thing…I think the public expects a standard of service…There's no room for shortcuts and there's no room for doing the job incorrectly….

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 109.114)</div>

Implied here is that there is only one way to achieve the necessary standards. Managerial drive for consistency and reliability appears to come at the cost of potential innovation and staff liberation.

Exploring new learning: Compliant organisational learning for continuous improvement

In addition to the above cases, there were a number of case participants whose reflections also supported the proposition, not just to engaging in '*technical dialogue*' to exploit existing learning but specifically reflected that there was scope to explore new learning – that is the notion of continuous improvement. For example, a business unit manager detailed her engagement in '*technical dialogue*' to achieve the organisational outcomes expected by her manager in terms of meeting prescribed key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs set the agenda for what it is that employees are expected to achieve (*second-dimension*), hence what is done and talked about; and becomes reinforce as part of a performance culture (*third-dimension*):

We have KPIs and things that are expected of us, so certainly we try to follow the corporate line. [But] if we see something that we can do better and it's not the corporate line then *we can certainly make that suggestion*. I don't feel that we can't go outside the box. *With consultation* we do that…

<div align="right">(Level 4 – Case 6.157)</div>

A senior manager provided a similar response linking the notion of a '*transactional power relationships*' in the sense of getting "paid" to do, with following the corporate line:

> …at my level, it most definitely is about following the corporate line because you wouldn't last too long if I said, "our [Back-to-Basics] sucks and I'm going to do something completely different". That's just not the way we do [things], you wouldn't last five seconds in that sort of environment. So in terms of that, I mean I'd definitely follow the corporate line, that's what I get paid to do.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 7.108)

A station manager also drew attention to the exploitation of current learning that is contained in procedure manuals and rule books, but suggested that there was scope for finding a better way:

> Well I mean look, you're governed, you're governed…This is the way you will do things. Having said that, I'm quite happy if I find a way of doing things…So, although you are governed by those police manuals and you will do it this way, ….I think the rigidity's gone out of it…. If there's a better way to do things, then let's hear it.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 27.136)

Similarly, a senior officer supported the proposition but acknowledged there was scope for improving the way things are done:

> Yeah probably in policing, I think the corporate line is pretty strong in policing. So it's good when people do challenge it and suggest something different or ask, "Why are we doing it that way?"
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 153.256)

What is the corporate line anyway? We just follow blindly

Five cases explicitly did not support the proposition, however implicit support was found within their reflections. The first, a senior practitioner suggested there was no time for dialogue at all; hence there was confusion about the corporate line. However, the officer's learning space was so '*managed*' that it even inhibited '*technical dialogue*'; consequently he simply followed senior officers' orders and instructions. He also explained the liberation façade, eventually there was compliance:

…there is…very little time to actually do that, with what I'm required to do…I mean the only times that…I discuss procedural stuff is when someone comes and asks a question "How do I do this?" … You really don't get time to do it.

(Senior Constable – Case 8.214 & 216).

Nobody knows what the corporate line is. It's lost…[b]y the time it gets down to people like us, it's lost.

(Senior Constable – Case 8.220 & 222)

The second case, also a senior practitioner, still complied with what the manager wanted in carrying out his investigations with the general values of honesty and integrity, to maintain a high reputation for the organisation and in accordance to his training:

I am not sure if there is learning really….I personally would always follow say the corporate goals….But do I really know [them], if I had a discussion with someone? No not really…. I don't see that it has really been communicated to me what the corporate goals are….[T]here would have been an email sent out saying "here's the new policy". That's it. Now the reality is who read[s] it?...We don't read them because you haven't got time to read them. But is it actually presented to you? No.

(Senior Constable – Case 139.332 & 346)

The third case, yet another senior practitioner, also explicitly disagreed with the proposition. However, implicitly this officer provides evidence that her '*technical dialogue*' through her problem solving was in accordance with the guidelines and training to assist the organisation achieve its corporate outcomes:

My day to day problem solving has got nothing to do with the corporate line….I don't go into technical discussions or problem solving discussions with the corporate line in the back of my mind….My main issue is solving my problem and how to solve that best, but not with the corporate guidelines in mind.

(Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.284)

… of course you always conduct your warrants according to guidelines. You gather your evidence according to what you have been taught and you take your statements according to how you have been taught. But you do that as a matter of course, you don't do it thinking of the corporate line.

(Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.288)

> Am I adhering to what I am supposed to, because from my point of view, I rarely, I never cut corners and I don't go outside the guidelines. I do it just as a matter of course and I do it the same way for every single thing.
>
> (Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.288)

A fourth case, senior detective manager, explicitly disagreed with the proposition suggesting that following the corporate line was a guarantee *against* improvement. However, the officer's earlier reflections suggested that senior management set the agenda and the way things are to be done with limited input from assistant commissioners on decisions[117] ('*managed learning space*'), and that the superintendents and inspectors were expected to make it happen[118] ('*compliant organisational learning*'). This reflection was also reinforced in the officer's notion of "mapping" his desired direction within the bounds of corporate direction, implicitly connecting '*consensual dialogue*' and '*technical dialogue*' as part of a '*managed learning space*' to '*compliant organisational learning*'.

> No. I think at my level the goal must be is to measure where you want to take that particular area of business and that particular work area, map that against the corporate line, and try and fill the gap so that you can better the business. So toeing the corporate line as a concept will, in its strictest form, guarantee that we don't improve.
>
> (Detective Inspector – Case 87.078)

The last case, a project manager, did not explicitly agree nor disagree with the proposition, speaking extensively about his freedom to engage in '*technical dialogue*' and the idea of business improvement. However, the connection was implicitly made in his reflections about the corporate documents which people study for promotion (as a basis for '*consensual dialogue*' in a '*managed learning space*') and getting everyone "punching" in the same direction ('*compliant organisational learning*').

> They belt out all the strategic and annual business plans and they've got all the informing strategies and all the glossies, and I think anyone that's looking for promotion at some point reads all of them….as strange as it sounds it actually does I think to some degree align everyone into that same focus. Through the

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[117] Refer to Case 87.018 & 024

[118] Refer to Case 87.012

promotional system everyone is very keen to make sure that they know what their business is about and they read these documents.

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 77.160 & 162)</div>

I think it's a plus. In actual fact to some degree it stops you or prevents you from doing things that are not goal orientated so you're not going off on the wrong path which if you had no instructions sometimes you can do a lot of effort for no good….[I]f I know that and if I know my staff know that then we're all punching in the same direction which is a good thing.

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 77.166)</div>

However, the connection between a '*managed learning space*' and '*compliant organisational learning*' manifested itself more evidently with the officer's reflection on his approach to not being concerned about issues that do not impact on him. Thus his unwillingness to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' in respect to issues such as questioning the dominant ideology ('*managed learning space*'), were connected with doing whatever his manager wants him to do:

I certainly don't have a problem asking why but I'm not really concerned about those things that don't really impact on me personally as in whatever I do….*I'm pretty compliant as an individual* and that gets back to your personality. If you want me to go and do something, I'll go and do it. How do you want me to do it, when do you want me to do it, when do you want me to finish, what am I supposed to achieve, what's my objective? I'll go and do it. (Emphasis added)

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 77.084 & 086)</div>

In concluding this section, it was evident from all the case participants that the majority of their day to day dialogue in the organisation was of a '*technical*' nature. Almost half of participants provided unequivocal evidence that supported the proposition, with a further quarter supported the proposition but suggested scope for continuous improvement. The remaining quarter explicitly did not support the proposition, however implicit support was found within their reflections.

5.3.4   Revolutionary power relationships: Liberated learning space

The model suggests that individual and groups in '*revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*', where people feel free to engage in '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*'. Operating only in the *first-dimension*, these relationships practice democratic education, challenging the dominant attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms within organizations. Built simultaneously on a '*pluralist*' and particularly a '*radical*' or '*critical*' frame of reference, their tasks are to challenge ideology, contest hegemony, unmask power, overcome alienation, learn liberation, reclaim reason, and practice democracy (Brookfield, 2005).

Proposition 3:   *'Revolutionary power relationships' facilitate a 'liberated learning space'.*

The characterisations of *revolutionary power relationships*' as well as '*liberated learning space*' are detailed in Table 9 and Table 11 in Chapter 4.

Pluralist/equal power relationships facilitate freedom to engage in dialogue

'*Revolutionary power relationships*' were rare. However, participants reported feeling more free to engage in dialogue generally when relationships were more equal and collegial. This extended to rank barriers being broken down by familiarity and/or informal social settings.

One senior practitioner spoke of feeling free to engage in '*technical*' dialogue with his peers, and felt he <u>could have</u> entered into more '*meaningful dialogue*' with an inspector in a country position who treated him like an equal. He compared his experience external to the organisation:

> Everyone has an equal say and there's a huge opportunity for improvement and brainstorming….there's a lot of robust discussion without any fear of any repercussions…. I believe that promotes a great opportunity to get your mind across….
>
> (Senior Constable – Case 44.139 & 169)

Similarly from a junior practitioner compared her non-operational specialist and operational experiences:

> …I am more comfortable in feeling [free] as I am equal here, more equal than if you were at the station. You are a constable there, but here in a smaller area you are accepted for what knowledge you have and what you have to offer….
>
> (Constable – Case 12.217)

However, when it came to engaging in more '*meaningful dialogue*' an equal power relationship was not enough. It appeared that equal power relationships can reinforce the status quo. While the senior officer felt free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' on a range of issues with peers, including the Commissioner, the officer suggested power relationships were "pretty well set" and things taken-for-granted had not been canvassed. Similarly, the officer rarely engaged in deeper "philosophical"[119] discussion such as the role of policing in a 21st century democratic society:

> I just don't think that many of my peers are in that space.
>
> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 152.054)

Advocating social change: Challenging colleagues to free their mind

Closer signs of a '*revolutionary power relationship*' with colleagues appeared in an officer sharing her external acquired learning, and the needs for social change in the perception and attitudes of others towards Aboriginal people. Her approach was to encourage a reciprocal arrangement rather than force her view, and respecting others' points of view.[120] However the officer fell short of total freedom, not wanting to cause "trouble":

> …I am not one to force things [nor] do I want to force and they have their views and I have my views….[I]f you're going to start creating trouble you're not going to get anywhere, you are just going to cause yourself trouble. So you have got to go,…it's decorum, softly, softly anywhere you go. So only because I feel that if you want to get something across, you can't ram it down whoever's throat.   It's got to an awareness…a gradual awareness and then acceptance…that's how I operate anyway.
>
> Constable – Case 12.199 & 209)

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[119] The term "philosophical" was used by the senior officer, and was interpreted not just in an academic sense but in the context of questioning deeper attitudes, beliefs, values and norms through critical and rational argument beyond the day to day issues.

[120] Case 12's approach to not force her views onto other and the reciprocal arrangements to dialogue appeared to mirror Freire's (1970) notion of 'revolutionary leadership'.

Advocating social change: Challenging in a social setting breaks down rank barriers

Similarly, another Constable was more inclined to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' with colleagues of equal rank, and with her sergeant in a country station where there was a greater reliance to help each other in their social and personal life.[121]   The officer's freedom extended to more senior Commissioned Officers in a country posting in an informal social setting over a few drinks, which generated a more collegial relationship for that period. '*Meaningful dialogue*' occurred between the officer, a Superintendent and two Inspectors at a social barbeque, on issues such as rank structure and women being disadvantaged in the organisation. A '*revolutionary power relationship*' emerged with the female Inspector initiating "playful banter" with a serious social change message on gender inequality. Despite describing her relative freedom to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' in this collegial environment (or at least more equal than the formal setting), the Constable said:

> I still was a little bit guarded… I think you still have to be careful that you don't overstep the mark…but I have probably felt 95% free…on those particular occasions. At other times I will always think about what I say before I say it…
>
> (Constable – Case 17.132)

A rare strong revolutionary power relationship: One officer's radical frame of reference

Thus far it was evident that an equal power relationship based on a *pluralist* frame of reference tended to facilitate feeling free to engage in dialogue generally. However the strongest evidence of a '*revolutionary power relationship*' underpinned by a *radical* frame of reference, came to light after a senior manager refer to her feeling feel to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' with a Superintendent:

> I worked on the…project with Superintendent…and was very lucky in doing so because we, at length, used to speak about these type of things…we would talk at length … about issues in terms of things like power relationships and ethics, and management style, and I was really lucky to … talk to him about these sorts of things…. And he's interested in this side of things as well. So we would talk about that, and things like corruption…. I quite enjoyed that….I would openly speak to [him] about any of these issues.
>
> (Level 7 - Case 126.076 & 166)

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[121] More equal power relationships in country postings were reported in other cases.

The reciprocal partnership in the learning process was evident in the senior manager's comments which reflected an acceptance of different points of view and not the need for consensus:

> …we don't always agree but you can have a discussion about it, an open discussion about it…you don't have to agree.
>
> <div align="right">(Level 7 - Case 126.198)</div>

When interviewed, the *radical* frame of reference underpinning the '*revolutionary power relationship*' was clearly evident in the Superintendent's advocating social change, encouraging people to challenge the conventions in the organisations. This placed him at odds with senior management:

> …to question some of the policies that [a Deputy Commissioner] was very carefully guarding, was an act of treason…it's tantamount to taking on a system.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent - Case 151.200)</div>

Challenging current management thinking and ideology was perceived as going against senior management, resulting in personal sacrifices. For example, he recounted a senior executive member telling him:

> …don't bother applying for Assistant Commissioner. It's in [the Commissioner's] best interest that the [Superintendent] remains just where he is and goes no further in this organisation, because you can't have people that question authority in this organisation.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent – Case 151.196)</div>

Despite this repercussion, the Superintendent was not deterred and continued to feel free to challenge and question the "conventions of the day":

> …it's in my nature…and it's happened over the years a number of times…I have been approached and told that my style doesn't fit and that sort of stuff and I just say, "Well get used to it because it's not changing" …it's just anti cultural and so people will tell you with a whisper "don't do this" and "don't do that" or "your style is too close to the boys" or whatever, some crap, but I just ignore that anyway.
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent - Case 151.168)</div>

The 'revolutionary power relationships' were evident in the Superintendent's endeavour to build and maintain equal and collegial relationships in an effort to bring about social change. Conflict was seen as necessary for social change, and the need to be critical of traditions which constrain the way people think (the *third-dimension* of power):

> …I encourage our people to ask the hard questions….I take a lead role in trying to break down the conventions and that in itself is actually breaking one of the conventions of…our own organisation. So again, nobody above me would agree [with] what I am saying because they say "Oh, that's not the way it is. We all encourage that". Well bullshit they do and we do. So I make a concerted effort to do that far and wide….That's why I'm a heathen in this outfit.
>
> (Superintendent - Case 151.142 & 144)

In respect to employees under his control, it appeared from his reflections that the Superintendent did not take conflict personally, appearing to be encouraging and supportive, and genuinely interested in the views of others, and seeing himself as a joint and reciprocal partner in the learning process in an effort to bring about social change. In critically reflecting on the culture and management practises that stymie debate, the Superintendent said:

> So I mean I am going right to the heart of what this issue is all about and I mean…I actually practice the antithesis of that. I want us to question. I even want people to feel free from level one, it doesn't matter how low can you go in terms of rankings, level one, level one question me, openly in front of everybody, even criticise, I mean seriously criticise because it is only then that we are all going to learn. Not only me, all of us because if the level one can question a Superintendent, then a level one can question a Senior Sergeant or an Inspector or a bloody Senior Constable or a level five.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 151.266)

However, the Superintendent spoke of the difficulties in engaging with others in questioning the conventions of the organisation, alluding to scepticism created by the *third-dimension* of power operating within the traditional power relationships:

> …the reality is that if you practice this [questioning of the organisation's conventions], you are looked at with one disbelief and two in the sense that "yeah he says it, but does he really believe it", you know, "I will believe it when pigs fly". So actually trying to adjust people's trust and get people to free up is

actually easier said than done. So sometimes I am little bit careful how I approach that depending on the group….I am really cognisant of the cultural issues and I approach it very carefully.…you don't trust bosses and that's hard and fast, that's engrained in people's attitudes and belief system and culture, absolutely engrained in them.

<div align="right">(Superintendent - Case 151.150 & 152)</div>

'Revolutionary power relationship': Two "almost but not quite" cases

Two further cases had a similar outlook to that of the Superintendent particularly in terms of accepting the interests of management and employee are sometimes at odds and not placing their own promotion above their need to feel free to speak out even though it may be detrimental to their career advancement. They certainly cited feeling free to speak out on issues they disagreed with. However, both tended to accept the *dominant ideology* as necessary in the organisation, and neither was concerned with social change as a driver nor the need for mutual and reciprocal learning. In the first case, the station officer-in-charge said:

> …I've certainly been accused of being negative in the past… I don't think I'm a negative person, but I'm not frightened. Let's clarify that, I'm not frightened now to stand up and say what I think, because really I'm not chasing hard for a promotion, I'm satisfied with my own lot, I'm happy with the job that I do and I certainly get a lot of satisfaction out of doing the job that I do at the present rank that I'm at. So if the worst that was going to happen to me was that I was going to be branded as being negative and I would stay being a Senior Sergeant Station OIC for the next 10 years, then I could probably live with that. So really I have nothing to lose, but I've got to a point in my life now where I think it's important that if you've got something to say, then you should stand up and say it…

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 27.052)</div>

The second station officer-in-charge also stated that he felt free to engage in dialogue with senior management on moral issues, and while he hoped for further promotion one day, he did not let that stand in his way in questioning:

> …I call a spade a spade, so I think that it probably comes down to that fact that I don't necessarily cop it on the chin or swallow the bullshit when it's said to me. I tend to question things and want to understand it and clarify it before I act upon it, so I think it's probably got more to do with that. So I challenged it…So yeah I entered into dialogue and you challenge that and I make no beg your pardons….

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 109.078)</div>

Conclusion

For this section of the model, this case study revealed that '*revolutionary power relationships*' should be considered in two phases as Freire's (1970) work suggests, firstly in unveiling the reality of oppression, and secondly, continue the pedagogy after the transformation to ensure permanent liberation. The first suggests a *critical* frame of reference to challenge the *dominant ideology*, while the second suggests a *pluralist* frame of reference to ensure democracy and permanent liberation. The democratic phase was clearly evident with the number of cases reporting feeling freer to talk, discuss, converse, engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise, with more equal and collegial power relationships. Familiarity with more senior officer appears to break down the formal barriers generated in the traditional power relationships, as did social and informal settings generate a more democratic setting. However, this case study only revealed evidence of one strong '*revolutionary power relationship*' underpinned by a *critical* or *radical* frame of reference, focused on challenging the *dominant ideology*. In the embedded case it was evident that the Superintendent delved deeper into the structural inequalities in organisations and society, and keen to examine and expose the practices that perpetuate inequalities. However, due to a perception that speaking out would or could be detrimental to career advancement, it is evident that individuals in these relationships must be willing to place their freedom to challenge the *dominant ideology* above their own promotion.

5.3.5   Liberated learning space: Authentic organisational learning

The model suggests that when individuals experience a '*liberated learning space*' there is scope for more '*authentic organisational learning*'. The assumption is that when individuals do not fear the managerial consequences of questioning the *existing order of things* such as the manager's right to manage and the obligation on employees to obey, they will engage in the type of learning that challenges them to think more broadly and deeply, more independently, and to think differently and open their minds to a range of alternatives. While this learning may occur at an individual level, there is no guarantee that it will spread at an organisational level, particularly given the societal constraints. The most that can be tested in this study is the <u>potential</u> for '*authentic organisational learning*'.

Proposition 4: *'Liberated learning spaces'* **facilitate the potential for** *'authentic organisational learning'.*

The characterisations of '*liberated learning space*' as well as '*authentic organisational learning*' are detailed in Table 11 and Table 13 in Chapter 4.

Freedom to question leads to greater scope for learning and improving

The more participants felt free and had opportunity to talk, discuss, converse, or engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise, the greater the scope for learning generally. The freedom to question generally, immediately took the learning process out of the hands of managers and allowed individuals to drive and explore their own learning experience. Learning was no longer seen as needing some corporate benefit. However, testing this proposition was significantly hindered by the lack of instances in which case participants could clearly articulate situations when they have actually engaged in questioning the *existing order of things*. The limited evidence of deeper levels of questioning even at senior levels, in itself provides an insight into what learning happens and what doesn't in a modern policing organisation.

Similarly case participants may say that they felt free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*', however the learning space was so tightly '*managed*' that the case participant's thinking was trapped in the *existing order of things*. From their response it was evident that they could not see any difference between what has been termed here as '*meaningful dialogue*' and '*technical*' or other forms of dialogue. The nature of the traditional power relationships operating in the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* is so subtle and taken-for-granted in organisations and society, that the idea of questioning the *existing order of things* was too foreign for many case participants. For example, a manager of a metropolitan police station provided examples of his experiences engaging in more '*technical dialogue*' with others, making the linkage to the notion of organisational learning as continuous improvement:

> …if you don't question things and you don't seek ways of improving things, then what are you going to learn going forward? If you're just going to take what they did in 1950 as rote and that's just the way we do things around here, then (a) you're not going to learn anything, but (b) you're not going to keep pace with outside society that's constantly bloody changing anyway. I mean what was done back in 1950, is now largely bloody irrelevant in the world that we live

in now, so you've got to keep questioning things. You've gotta keep seeking ways to improve things.

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 27.140)</div>

Similarly, a corporate project manager reflected on his experience in district policing running a detectives' business unit, and pointed to the freedom to engage in more '*technical dialogue*' in District Status Review meetings where managers report on their business unit's performance, aimed toward business improvement and problem solving:

> …it was clearly a very good opportunity to talk about things that you were doing at your area that could help other people….we clearly got to say exactly what you [sic] felt about the good and the bad and other people would in the forum be able to respond like "do this" or "do that"….[I]t's a bit like "I have a problem here" and someone would pipe up and go "I've done this" and you've gone "that's a good idea, I'll take that on board".

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 77.170 & 172)</div>

Freedom to question leads to diverse thinking and receiving others points of view

However, there was some degree of specific support for this proposition. For example, a detective manager reflected on the issue of having the freedom to question and suggested learning from diverse thinking and differing points of view that either challenge or reinforce his thinking:

> "…it's good for learning and experience because you are engaging in it and you are talking about it and you are seeking other people's point of views, so yeah it is good….It's a positive….And you are either getting your views reinforced or you are being told, "No you are on the wrong page champ".

<div align="right">(Detective Senior Sergeant – Case 83.304 to 308)</div>

A more senior divisional detective manager similarly reported that feeling free to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*', although he couched it in terms of "conversation", provided opportunity for learning of differing and alternative points of view:

It gave another perspective and that's one of the best parts about conversation is that to give another perspective to the argument or whatever the business may be.

<div style="text-align: right">(Detective Inspector – Case 87.082)</div>

Freedom to question leads to broader, deeper, and more independent thinking

A slightly stronger connection was provided by a senior practitioner, linking feeling free to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*' with an example of human rights in a democracy where people are suppose to be able to think freely and express themselves, with the type of learning that challenges people to think more broadly and deeply, more independently, and to think differently and open their minds to a range of alternatives ('*authentic organisational learning*').

It probably comes down to a shift in awareness….A heightened awareness. If you call it learning, well it is. It's a shift in your thought processes…. A lot of people have thought "I've never thought about that before".

<div style="text-align: right">(Senior Constable – Case 8.244 to 252)</div>

Similarly a more junior practitioner with a degree of life experiences, supported the proposition with examples of about her feeling free to engage in dialogue, questioning the traditional values, beliefs and attitudes surrounding race relationships and human rights ('*meaningful dialogue*') based on her studies in Aboriginal culture:

I think that being able to verbalise and discuss it, gives you different perceptions. It might change my thinking; it might change somebody else's thinking. Most people… I think when I do talk about things, that people do think about it. I think [my previous manager] thought about it. She would say to me sometimes, "I haven't thought about that"… "it's coming from another angle…".

<div style="text-align: right">(Constable – Case 12.432)</div>

Another junior practitioner from the regional area, who spoke about her experiences in engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' on gender inequalities in the organisation, supported the proposition to a degree highlighting the subtle nature in which her thinking is "broadened":

I think…even just that basic little being able to talk about it, definitely helps.

(Constable – Case 17.258)

Freedom to question existing order of things and reciprocal learning process

However, the strongest link came from two case participants. The first was the superintendent who started from a point of wanting everyone feeling free to seriously question and even criticise him as well as the conventions of the organisation for the sake of learning. Rather than focusing on the impact on his individual learning, his commentary linked such freedom to the potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*'. The superintendent appears to intuitively point to the need to feel free to question his authority and the system to enable the collective to learn:

> If you want to change culture, make sure the first thing you change is that culture that stymies debate, change that first….I think it's disrespectful philosophically to any organisation that professes to be a learning organisation to stymie that debate or stymie those people who…otherwise would question or who would like to question our belief system… it is only then that we are all going to learn.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 151.266)

The second case also provided a strong link between the potential for deeper, broader and diverse thinking and points of view ('*authentic organisational learning*'), and her feeling of freedom to engage in dialogue with the superintendent: a kind of dialogue that involved questioning and challenging the *existing order of things* such as the right of senior management to dictate their own acceptable behaviour ('*meaningful dialogue*'). She felt at ease disagreeing with the Superintendent, highlighting the "stretch" to see a different perspective:

> But part of that used to be excitement for me because your opinion then stretches, the things that I all ready accept and so you start to question what you know and how you've come to know it, and to see if you…change your perceptions…. [I]f you have a different opinion to me, then you might actually open my eyes to a different point of view.
>
> (Level 7 - Case 126.198 & 202)

The notion of deeper and broader thinking and opening the mind to a range of alternatives was obvious in the manager's reflection:

> So in an environment where you can openly discuss things, then it's amazing how things, like you might say something and that might make me remember something else, and then I might say that and you might then think of something else that you, and before you know it you've thought of something that you've never thought of before.

> (Level 7 – Case 126.216)

The case participant also suggested that her thinking was expanded in situations where she was exposed to diverse points of view through her feeling free to question others:

> Because you've thought about it in a different way…[a]nd when you start thinking about things in a different way, then when you're presented with a problem, you don't just think along the same lines. You can think about it from different aspects, from different people's point of view.

> (Level 7 – Case 126.216)

Freedom to question government policy, learning but toeing the corporate line

Another senior officer at the corporate level, questioned whether deeper levels of '*meaningful dialogue*' would ever actually occur in organisations at all, drawing on years of experience working with government agencies. However, the corporate level manager suggested hypothetically that deeper understanding would be derived from people engaged in examining the fundamental core values and drivers behind policy making in government agencies.

> Well I don't think it would happen, but if it did happen, I think it would raise people's awareness of the core values and the core drivers behind the policy making. So you wouldn't be examining the policy without examining the foundations upon which the policy is based. So I think that you would have a better understanding of the rationale for the issues that you were dealing with.

> (Assistant Commissioner – Case 152.102)

Despite the hypothetical situation of people feeling free to and in fact engaging in deeper '*meaningful dialogue*', the senior officer suggested that people would still be compliant:

> People will follow the corporate line. I don't think, even if you had those discussions and you sat and discussed at the very basic level, the values involved with certain policy, you would still, you could then quite, you might end up with

better policy if it is prior to the policy development, you could end up with a modified, what's perceived as a bad policy or a sub optimum policy. But at the end of the day you would toe the corporate line.

(Assistant Commissioner – Case 152.106)

However, he reaffirmed his view that a deeper level of learning and understanding would result from feeling free to and engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*':

Now whether you would learn from that is a different issue. I think you would and that if you examine any policy with a value set of spectacles on, you are going to get a deeper [or] you ought to get a deeper understanding of the shortcomings in the policy. If you just follow the policy without reflecting on it with some of your big picture glasses on, then you are never going to modify the policy. Well you might modify it, but you are not going to be modifying it in a meaningful way or with a good basis.

(Assistant Commissioner – Case 152.108)

Freedom to question ideology and the contradictions

Despite the general connection suggested by case participants between people feeling free to engage in dialogue and learning generally, mention should be made of a case participant who explicitly refuted the proposition that the freedom to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' facilitates the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'. The officer's initial response was:

I don't think it affects my learning. It might affect my lifestyle but it doesn't affect my learning. No, I don't think it affects my learning.

(Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.294)

However, support for the proposition in respect to a '*liberated learning space*' facilitating the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*' was implicit within the officer's elaboration of her experience in having freer conversations generally:

…if your conversation is open and free going, you talk about a lot of things and you learn a lot of things and you might hear a lot of war stories…"

(Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.312)

The officer's response also highlighted the notion of organisational actors seeing themselves as joint and reciprocal partners in the learning process, a key attribute of the potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*':

> "…if you're friends or mates with your boss and you go and ask a question, you will get a lengthy answer…. So I think that would have an impact on your learning if you didn't have an amenable relationship with your bosses, absolutely.
>
> (Detective Senior Constable – Case 46.312)

Conclusion

In concluding this section, it is evident from the reflections of the case participants that generally the more that they felt the freedom and the opportunity to talk, discuss, converse, engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise, the greater the scope for learning generally. At a minimum, it was evident that the freedom to engage in more '*technical dialogue*' such as problem solving led to learning as continuous improvement. In the few instances where case participants were able to articulate to some degree feeling free to question the *existing order of things*, there was a suggestion that their learning was deeper, broader, more independent, and enabled people to think differently and open their minds to other alternatives. Or simply learning from others: "I never thought of that"[122]. Despite this evidence, the strength of '*transactional power relationships*' operating within the *third* and *fourth dimensions* of power cannot be underestimated. Being a case study situated in the realities of organisational and societal life, these broader and subtle dimensions of power could not be isolated for the case participants. It was evident that some case participants would still feel some constraint, which was summed up succinctly by the corporate level manager who suggested that "[p]eople will follow the corporate line"[123].

5.4 Organisational case analysis: Proposition conclusions

Proposition 1A and 1B

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this organisational case study. Firstly, '*transactional*' and even '*transformational*' power relationships inhibit '*meaningful dialogue*' but they can also inhibit more '*technical dialogue*' ('*managed learning space*'). Both are underpinned by a *unitary* ideology placing managers very much in

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[122] Level 7 – Case 126.258 & 216; Assistance Commissioner – Case 152.078

[123] Assistant Commissioner – Case 152.106

control of the learning agenda. The legislation emanating outside the organisation beyond the control of individual managers, framed the employment contract based on the *unitary* ideology thereby setting up the *fourth-dimension* of power against which employees discipline themselves to be seen as a good employee. In some cases family and societal values support this dimension. There was no shortage of case examples where the *unitary* ideology was reinforced as the *third-dimension* whereby individuals accepted the *existing order of things* or could see no alternative, and managers operating in this space reinforced manager's privileged position (*second-dimension*). A surprise, but in hindsight should have been foreseen, was non-manager individuals operating to reinforce the status quo (*first-dimension*).

Even with '*transformational*' power relationships to challenge and change direction, the *unitary* ideology was left unchallenged and in fact was reinforced. It was evident that '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships oscillate between each other, challenging attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms, while reinforcing others (*third-dimension*). Managers behaved similarly in controlling the learning agenda to issues they deemed important in the change process which could not be further questioned (*second-dimension*).

Proposition 2

Significant evidence was presented by participants to support the proposition that '*managed learning spaces*' facilitated '*compliant organisational learning*'. All case participants acknowledged that '*technical*' dialogue was dominant in the organisation, and the majority agreed with the suggestion that the "corporate line" is followed to achieve corporate outcomes whether exploiting existing learning (n=9) or with scope to explore new learning through continuous improvement (n=6). Others explicitly did not support the proposition, but support was implicit in their elaboration (n=5).

Proposition 3

'*Revolutionary power relationships*' are rare. Equal and collegial (*plural*) power relationships facilitated a feeling free to talk, discuss, converse, engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise. Familiarity and social settings also assisted in breaking down rank barriers. However, only one case participant was truly

in a '*revolutionary power relationship*' with others underpinned by a *critical* or *radical* frame of reference desirous of social change. In that case it was clear that a '*liberated learning space*' was facilitated by both parties.

Proposition 4

Generally participants reported that the more they felt free to talk, discuss, converse, engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise, learning of depth and breadth was a probable outcome. However, the proposition testing was significantly hinder by the few case disclosures of true '*meaningful dialogue*'. Participants may say that they felt free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*', but disclosed further instances of '*technical dialogue*'.

General

A fresh observation was noted during this case study. Not only were the power relationships impacting on organisational learning, but '*compliant organisational learning*' heavily focused on '*technical dialogue*' was perpetuating the dominant attitudes, beliefs, values and norms that are the foundations of '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships. In this sense it is the organisational learning that is fuelling the *third-dimension* of power for these traditional power relationships, enabling managers more easily to execute the *second-dimension* through agenda control. This observation may give rise to a need for more '*authentic organisational learning*' if there is a desire to change power structures in policing organisations to be more democratic.

In the next Chapter, I report on the data analysis from the second of two organisational case studies. Also forming part of the *confirmatory investigation* phase, this subsequent minor case study in another policing jurisdiction continues in the pursuit to uncover evidence to sustain or refute the five propositions from the model.

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6.1   Introduction

In the last Chapter, I reported on the data analysis from the first of two case studies of policing organisations.   The evidence supported the idea that '*transactional*' power relationships operated across all four dimensions to inhibit more '*meaningful dialogue*', and may also inhibit '*technical dialogue*'.   In addition, even '*transformational*' power relationships reinforced the *unitary* ideology (*third-dimensions*) by controlling the learning agenda (*second-dimension*), and thereby further inhibiting '*meaningful dialogue*'.   In turn, there was ample evidence to support the proposition that a '*managed learning space*' facilitated more '*compliant organisational learning*'.   In contrast, '*revolutionary power relationships*' were rare.   Limited disclosures of '*meaningful dialogue*' hindered testing the proposition that '*liberated learning spaces*' facilitated more '*authentic organisation learning*'.

In this Chapter, I present the data analysis from the second of the two organisational case studies in the *confirmatory investigation* phase.   The data was gathered from enacting legislation, annual reports and other public documents, along with interviews with 11 embedded cases.   Following the replication logic (Yin, 2003b), this minor case study seeks to unearth further evidence to again either sustain or rebut the five propositions from the model presented in Chapter 2 and further refined in Chapter 4.   As a reminder, the propositions are presented as follows:

❖ **1A**   '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

❖ **1B**   '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*';

❖ **2**   '*Managed learning spaces*' facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*'

❖ **3**   '*Revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'

❖ **4**   '*Liberated learning spaces*' facilitate the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'

With the word restriction on this thesis proportioned to this minor case study, I have endeavoured to reduce the reporting in this Chapter by focusing on any major differences or new issues in comparison to the first organisational case study. Again due to space restrictions and the reduced size in comparison to the first case, I have saved the drawing of conclusions until the very end of this Chapter.

6.2 Organisational background

As presented in Chapter 5, I will provide a brief overview of the organisational background before presenting evidence that addresses each of the propositions in turn.

Structure and historical roots

Early Oceania policing around the mid 1800s was modelled on the Royal Irish Constabulary and characterised as "militaristic", followed by legislation to establish a "militia" style armed constabulary with officers appointed by the Governor (Cameron, 1986)[124] [125]. It is suggested that in the late 1800s the police in Oceania was being more influenced by the Peel model (Cameron, 1986), but evidenced with the introduction of the Police Act 1962, dropping the word "Force".[126] Today, the Oceania Police (OPol) is a national policing organisation, employing nearly 12,000 people in 2012, of which nearly 9,000 are constabulary employees (police officers) (*Oceania Police: Annual report* 2012). In 2011 – 2012, its annual operating expenditure budget was nearly $1.5billion (*Oceania Police: Annual report* 2012). In terms of structure, the "Commissioner" performs both the function of Chief Constable and Chief Executive officer, reporting politically[127] to the Minister of Police. The structure of senior

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[124] Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

[125] See also the Constabulary Ordinance 1849 and The Armed Constabulary Act 1872

[126] Previous legislation being "Police Force Act 1889"; "Police Force Act 1918" and "Police Force Act 1951"

[127] That is there is no organisational line management relationship, but the Commissioner is obliged to report to Government.

management is similar to that of the first case study. All 16 police executive managers (senior management) are males[128].

The Oceania policing jurisdiction is de-centralised consisting of 12 districts, each headed by a "District Commander" at the rank of "Superintendent". All 12 district commanders are males[129]. Each district has a centralised police station, from which suburban and subsidiary stations are managed. There are over 400 community-based police stations, ranging from two-person stations. Each district has specialist functions to various degrees, such as "Specialist Crimes Squad" and "Search and Rescue". There is also a range of policing services coordinated centrally at a national level.

Commission of Inquiry into Police Behaviour

On reviewing annual reports for the past decade[130], there has been no single organisational wide change program as seen in the first case study, but more incremental change. However, a more recent recognised catalyst for culture change was the Commission of Inquiry into Police Behaviour investigation commencing in 2004, into allegations of sexual assault by officers dating back to the late 1970s (Bridgman, 2008)[131]. While stopping short of suggesting systemic cover up of unacceptable behaviour, Commissioner Kyle (2006, p.1)[132] highlighted particularly concerns about officers turning a blind eye to certain inappropriate sexual activity, as well as a wall of silence by officers to protect their colleagues who had complaints made against them.

Code of Conduct and the new Policing Act 2008

Monitoring some 60 recommendations by the Commission (Kyle, 2006), it was clear to the Office of the Attorney General that it was not just the systems and procedures that needed to change within police, but the attitudes and behaviours (Sharpe, 2010, p.11)[133].

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[128] At the time of writing this thesis (2012).

[129] At the time of writing this thesis (2012).

[130] *Oceania Police Annual Report* (2001) to *Oceania Police Annual Report* (2012)

[131] Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

[132] Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

[133] Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

A major procedural change was the introduction of the recommended Code of Conduct implemented in early 2008. This was followed by the new Policing Act 2008 in the later part of the year, adding weight to the enforceability of the Code in new employment relationships.[134]

It was evident from the embedded case interviews that the Code of Conduct was a significant change for the organisation, and through a contemporary training program focusing on ethics and integrity, had generated significant organisational discussion about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours.[135] However, recognising that true cultural change takes many years, the State Service Commission questioned the degree of cultural change after just three years, and suggested that "…while compliance may technically have been achieved, culture change had not" (State Service Commission Report cited by Bridgman, 2011, p.3)[136]. As noted by the Office of Attorney General, "…a compliance approach, without the necessary cultural change, will not ensure that the Commission's recommendations are fully implemented" (Sharpe, 2010, p.18). These observations highlight the particular importance of this thesis to policing reform.

6.3 Evidence addressing five propositions

6.3.1 Transactional power relationships: Managed learning space

The model proposes that '*transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'. Operating in the *fourth-*, *third-*, and *second-dimensions*, such relationships restrict to '*technical*' and '*consensual*' dialogue, thereby reinforcing the *existing order of things*.

Proposition 1A: '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'.

The characterisations of '*transactional power relationships*' as well as '*managed learning space*' are detailed in Table 7 and Table 10 in Chapter 4.

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[134] Refer Section 20 of the Policing Act

[135] Refer interview of Superintendent – Case 209.086.

[136] Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

Transactional employment contracts historically developed in society and enshrined in legislation to instil the unitary ideology: The fourth-dimension

Like the first organisational case study, '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-* and *third-dimensions*, accounted for the bulk of relationships however overall the evidence tended to be more subtle than the first. Despite the subtlety of the evidence, transactional employment contracts still reinforced the ideology that managers have the right to manage and employee's obligation to obey. This organisation too appeared to be built on a historical paramilitary police force model, with connection with New South Wales[137]. The *unitary* ideology emanated through that historical paramilitary origins, which was protected by legislation.[138] As such *authority* and its *legitimacy* still played a large part in this case.

In the recent modernised version of this legislation, the Policing Act 2008, employment contracts were in the hands of the Commissioner[139]. Under that Act, the *unitary* ideology was reinforced under the "command and control" section 30, which detailed the hierarchical top-down nature of relationships in the organisation applicable to <u>all</u> police <u>employees</u>, not just police officers, specifically drawing attention to the rules, policies and procedures to maintain control:

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[137] Refer to New South Wales Laws Repealed ordinance 1846

[138] The Constabulary Ordinance 1849 was the earliest legislation reviewed. In addition to detailing monetary penalties and imprisonment for "…securing obedience…" under section 7, section 5 of that Act prescribes the powers, privileges, duties and responsibilities of sworn constables, who "…*shall obey all lawful directions* touching the execution of their office which they may from time to time receive from such Commissioner, Inspector, or other officer" (emphasis added). Similarly, the *unitary* ideology was found in the subsequent historical legislation provisions. In particular worthy of mention was the introduction of provisions for the dismissal of officers for "insubordination" evident in the Police Force Act 1918 (sections 8 to 10), which included the dismissal of the Commissioner by the Governor. However, there was no evidence of these provisions under the Police Act (1962) and subsequent legislation. The Oath of Office appeared in The Police Force Act (1889) which required officers to swear they would "…well and truly serve our Sovereign Lady the Queen…for the period of three years…, and until… legally discharged…". This remained largely unchanged up to the time of writing this thesis.

[139] Refer section 18 of Policing Act 2008

> Every Police employee *must obey* and be guided by (a) general instructions; and (b) the Commissioner's circulars; and (c) any applicable local orders… (emphasis added)

> Every Police employee *must obey* the lawful commands of a supervisor… (emphasis added)

Cultural acceptance of unitary ideology as natural: The third-dimension

The *fourth-dimension* in broader society extended to the *third-dimension* within the organisation, whereby managers and employees accepted and reinforced the dominant *unitary* ideology. Almost all cases (n=9) acknowledged the organisational culture as paramilitary and/or hierarchical, however there were suggestions these paradigms were less important than in Australian jurisdictions and/or were not as strong as they were once. The *unitary* ideology was embedded early in the careers of officers:

> Especially…back when I started…if you were told to do something you just did it….
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 205.100)

> When I first joined you were told for the first six months you sit in the car, you shut up and ears…and eyes open, you look and learn….
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 204.036)

Facilitating 'technical dialogue' and inhibiting 'meaningful dialogue': First- and second-dimensions

Like the first case study, all participants acknowledged that the majority of their dialogue was of a '*technical*' nature whether strategic or operational, and generally they felt free to engage in discussing such issues. However, it was evident that more '*meaningful dialogue*' was far less common. When it came to questioning the *existing order of things*, many participants suggested they felt free to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*' but again gave examples of more '*technical dialogue*' as part of their formal, "legitimate" role or position in the organisation relating to their area of expertise, sometimes operating at a strategic level. For example, encouraging the

acceptance of a workgroup[140]; questioning the collection of data for the benefit of other agencies[141]; questioning involved in ethical decision-making[142]; and the need to work collaboratively with other organisations[143]. All officers explained that they were following the function of their role in the organisation. However, questioning issues that may be seen as outside their "legitimate" role were lacking. This may not be unusual bearing in mind this cohort was a group of very senior officers and that is the role that they are paid to do (*'transactional power relationship'*). One officer summed up:

> …there is still, at the end of the day…that element of "if it doesn't affect you directly then you shouldn't be challenging it".
>
> (Superintendent – Case 208.094)

Unitary ideology indoctrination: The second- and third-dimensions

A less senior officer explained the "indoctrination" process commencing at college training as a recruit, where by the upper echelons will not be questioned and to do so would be inappropriate.[144] In not questioning the dominant beliefs and attitudes particularly of senior management, the officer explained:

> …it's been drummed in to me that [it's] not my place…it's made very clear… you have to do the marching… polish your shoes and obey commands. And…it happens from…thereon in….[Y]ou've got people who are senior officers who pretty much assume that that's the relationship that you won't challenge anything.
>
> (Senior Sergeant - Case 211.088 & 090)

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[140] Senior Sergeant – Case 201.056 onwards.

[141] Superintendent – Case 202.042 onwards.

[142] Senior Sergeant – Case 203.102 onwards.

[143] Senior Sergeant – Case 204.134 onwards.

[144] Senior Sergeant - Case 211.088 & 090; Also supported by Senior Sergeant – Case 205.100

Manager responsible for outcomes demands obedience: The third-dimension

There was an acceptance that managers are responsible for the contractual outcomes of the organisation, hence their decisions are <u>not</u> to be questioned[145]. This further supports the *unitary* ideology, and reinforces the obligation on employees to do as they are told, generally without question.

> My boss tells me we have to do it, well we're doing it…. End of the day and it does happen, and that still happens….It's only an organisation like ours that a boss can say "Well I'm your boss and I'm telling you to…". …you do it because he just told me to.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 205.180 & 182)</div>

Perceived legitimacy and credibility to speak on issues: The fourth-, third- and second-dimensions

With the strength of '*transactional power relationships*', individuals felt they needed organisational legitimacy and/or credibility amongst their managers and/or their colleagues in order to question the status quo. This has important implications for both '*technical*' and more so '*meaningful dialogue*'. The *unitary* ideology has organisational legitimacy to the point of being widely accepted (*third-dimension*), and it would be rare for individuals to have the perceived credibility to question it. Not only do managers and colleagues keep such issues off the agenda (*second-dimension*), individuals discipline themselves and self-censor (*fourth-dimension*)[146]. For example, a project officer describes his experience in challenging decisions or views in respect to youth:

> I don't think it would go anywhere. I wouldn't have had the legitimate interest in it. And I think it is big in police, you need to be seen to be skilled or experienced, or have a reputation in an area to really be able to go in to bat for it. And then people will listen.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 201.072)</div>

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[145] Two senior officers explicitly spoke of the '*transactional power relationships*' between the Commissioner on behalf of the organisation and government. See Superintendent – Case 202.088; and Superintendent – Case 208.116.

[146] See Senior Sergeant – Case 204.178 to 190.

Conversely:

> [If it wasn't]… my role, I wouldn't be listened to in the least…. I wouldn't have credibility. Even if it was a moral issue, I would probably be…still seen as an outsider.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 201.072)

Employees are politically strategic: Who controls systems of reward and punishment? – Second- and third-dimensions

With the risk to promotion prospects and other opportunities, officers were cautious about engaging even in '*technical dialogue*'. For example, despite a general feeling free to engage in '*technical dialogue*':

> …there is that aspect of if I was to [go for promotion] how much can I say without offending….I guess in my discussions I'm reasonably aware of who I could potentially piss off, who might be a future boss for me or who could be on a panel if I was to [go for promotion].
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 204.060)

Being too vocal on even '*technical*' issues could result in "character assassination" or "stymied career aspirations":

> …it's probably a person who potentially…may well be on a panel for a job I want to apply for…. I've got three pips on my shoulder, you're a senior sergeant, it's my decision to make….I would think that this person may see it as undermining their decision making….
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 204.078)

Exposed to a range of issues on which the officer had potential to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' including sexist behaviour, another officer remained silent:

> I didn't [feel free to discuss] and I should have [raised it]…I should have but I didn't, because I just wanted to play the game and be quiet and be a good girl and just muck through.
>
> (Sergeant – Case 210.170)

Organisationally outflanked: Apathy, pointless or not worth the grief

As with the first organisational case study, there was a sense that individuals felt "organisationally outflanked" (Mann, 1986; Clegg, 1989a) by the scope and dominance of '*transactional power relationships*', whereby resistance in the form of questioning was pointless. While one senior officer suggested apathy amongst the street officers preferring to be Indians[147], others suggested questioning was not worth the personal sacrifice, and simpler to get on and perform their role:

> …there's times when I've thought about challenging something but sometimes you think it's just not worth the grief…you're probably not going to change things…. just the stress for me personally…to get too worked up about it.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 203.204 & 206)

Stories of manager prerogative to control the agenda and reinforce authority:
Second- and third-dimensions

Stories, whether factual or not, reinforce the authority of managers as controllers of the agenda. There was a story of a historical case of a prosecutor being removed by a District Commander after questioning senior management on issues. Despite acknowledging the difficulty to measure the consequence of such stories, and that some might still engage despite possible repercussions, this story was in this officer's consciousness:

> At the time it definitely had an effect on the people that were aware of what had happened… definitely well back early in my career it wasn't unusual to hear discussions about that with regards to particular people.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 203.178)

Culture of silence: Employees reinforce the dominant values in the organisation –
The third- and first-dimensions of power

Colleagues may also function in the *first-dimension* to reinforce the status quo. A senior officer[148] spoke of the "comradely" between officers up and down the hierarchy suggesting generally there was a harmonious relationship through the ranks. Other

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[147] Superintendent – Case 209.176 & 182

[148] Refer Superintendent – Case 209.124

officers spoke of the historical unwritten "culture of silence" which prevented traditional attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms from being discussed:

> You didn't fit up your mate…[or]…didn't want to be the nark or be the whistle blower…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 204.170 & 172)

> …no way that you bloody narked on them…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 205.196)

6.3.2   Transformational power relationships: Managed learning space

The model proposes that '*transformational power relationships*' also facilitate a '*managed learning space*'. Operating within the *third-* and *second-dimensions*, these relationships facilitate '*consensual*' dialogue in order to challenge the status quo and steer the organisation in a new direction, instilling a new culture or common purpose. However, being also underpinned by a *unitary* ideology, questioning the *existing order of things* is not encouraged nor supported, and must be eradicated.

Proposition 1B: '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'.

The characterisations of '*transformational power relationships*' as well as '*managed learning space*' are detailed in Table 8 and Table 10 in Chapter 4.

Challenging the status quo and communication the vision towards a new direction

While almost all embedded cases accepted the organisational culture as paramilitary and/or hierarchical, all embedded cases (n=11) saw the organisation as changing. A frequently cited driver for change was the findings from the Commission of Inquiry released three years earlier. The focus of change was to "not turn a blind eye", and to encourage managers and supervisors to address poor performance. One officer suggested that the dialogue happening in the public arena was "…encouraging us to learn and change and progress in the right direction…"[149]:

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[149] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 211.184

> …the Commission of Inquiry has made us talk as an organisation…and challenge our values and our traditions…and…issues that are quite fundamental. So even though it's been forced on us, those conversations have started to take place which is what's important for change….
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 211.184)</div>

It was evident that both the Commission of Inquiry and the released Code of Conduct, along with the Commissioner, provided "legitimacy" for officers to challenge.[150] In other words, there was '*consensual dialogue*' that was happening inside the organisation. Participants felt more comfortable than previously was the case, particularly in respect to continuous improvement on '*technical*' matters. While there were differing views as to whether the new vision was being communicated or communicated effectively from the top[151], a senior officer suggested people felt safer to engage in dialogue:

> …today the organisation has a lot more people contributing because they feel that they are able to, and it is safe to do so.
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Superintendent – Case 207.170)</div>

Another officer suggested, however:

> …it depends on where you sit in the organisation, because the higher up the more right…you [have] to challenge…
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent – Case 208.092)</div>

Code of Conduct reinforcing the unitary ideology: The hidden subtle fourth-dimension of 'transactional power relationships'

In the cohort, almost all managers and senior managers, there was a clear understanding of their responsibility to manage perceived "poor performance".[152] The Commissioner, in introducing the Code of Conduct, stated it "…marks a transition from the semi-military style of managing behavioural issues in Police to a more mainstream employment practice" (*Oceania Police Code of Conduct*, 2007, p.i). A senior officer

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[150] For example, see Senior Sergeant – Case 201.202

[151] For example, see Detective Superintendent – Case 207.186 & 188; and Senior Sergeant – Case 211.198

explained the new streamline approach to dealing with poor performance, clearly in the hands of managers:

> Now we're stating "this is our Code of Conduct, these are our values, these are demonstrations of what is poor behaviour or poor performance" and so people are more able to know what it is that's expected of them and *we're able to deal with them* in a much more constructive way. (emphasis added)
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent – Case 202.012)</div>

However, despite the changes, the historical *unitary* ideology was clearly reinforced in the Code of Conduct. For example, while there was no "insubordination" provisions under the Police Act (1962) and subsequent Policing Act (2008), "insubordination" and "disobedience" were among the "…specific examples of unsatisfactory behaviour that may be considered serious misconduct…[beyond misconduct]… and which could justify dismissal without notice…" (*Oceania Police Code of Conduct*, 2007, p.10). "Disobedience" is not defined, but "insubordination" includes "…publicly criticising Police" (*Oceania Police Code of Conduct*, 2007, p.10). Therefore, what amounts to "insubordination" is in the minds of managers.

'Meaningful dialogue' or a performance issue?: The second-dimension

This has important implications for an officer's '*liberated learning space*', as those in senior management positions who accept the *existing order of things* as natural, may view questioning as "insubordination". If not "insubordination", they may deem it as "illegitimate behaviour" or "poor performance" that must be managed. For example, in describing the benefits of better engaged employees who were "…more productive and happier…", a senior manager implicitly described in negative terms officers who engage in this type of questioning as "the cynic" who needed to be *managed* as a poor performer:

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[152] For example, refer Detective Superintendent – Case 207.132

> ...the cynic in the organisation is now challenged. Somebody with negative attitude, critical, undermining and something like that, whereas I notice people in the organisation will now challenge that sort of negativity. Because they want a range of, what one described as *desirable behaviours*. ...managers will actually now address that type of negative or poor performance, poor attitude. (emphasis added)
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Superintendent – Case 207.132)</div>

The officer explains that managers used to condone "...unsatisfactory behaviours, and poor work performance..." but now had matured to accepting it as their duty and responsibility to address.[153] The risk to '*meaningful dialogue*' can be seen in the example provided by another officer describing a junior yet mature officer being "performance managed":

> It's the first person I've ever had that...has questioned the chain of command and the hierarchy that we have...
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 205.150)</div>

Even colleagues were seen as an extension of the manager's reach, hence act to keep issues off the agenda (*second-dimension*):

> Colleagues...would probably in this day and age not so readily buy into [the cynic]. Would in fact challenge that sort of thought, or else bring it to the attention of a supervisor.
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Superintendent – Case 207.146)</div>

Like the first case study, it was interesting that negative connotations were used to describe people who do question anything outside of '*consensual dialogue*'. Terms used included:

- "troublemaker";[154]
- "known for rocking the boat";[155]
- "pain in the arse";[156] and
- "shit stirrer".[157]

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[153] Refer Detective Superintendent – Case 207.132

[154] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 206.048; Senior Sergeant – Case 211.090; Senior Sergeant – Case 201.173

[155] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 203.158

[156] Refer Senior sergeant – Case 206.134

[157] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 206.076

Negative connotation of 'meaningful dialogue': The third- and second-dimensions

In this vein, there was evidence like there was in the first organisational case study that more '*meaningful dialogue*' may be viewed negatively, and may be mistaken for behaviour verging on being "mutinous" that needed to be managed.[158] Even speaking about his own freedom to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*', the officer says:

> I'd say [I can] within limits….if you were constantly *complaining* about the organisation I'm sure you'd get a good slapping down….I can debate issues as opposed to complain about issues….
>
> (Superintendent – Case 208.068, 070 & 072)

The officer described the organisation as more collaborative as a result of the changes, with supervisor being more tolerant to querying, as opposed to questioning, and "…with that ultimate stick at the end of the day".[159] Hence, while there is more flexibility in allowing dialogue particularly on '*technical*' issues on how best to achieve an outcome, there is an underlying belief on '*meaningful dialogue*':

> I think if you put your head up too far, it'll get knocked off.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 208.114)

Employees are politically strategic: Who controls systems of reward and punishment? – Second- and third-dimensions

Recognising the negative view of questioning particularly the *existing order of things*, some are strategic in playing it safe. Officers were still cognisant that managers controlled the systems of reward and punishment; hence they were strategic in whether to speak on issues or remain silent. Even here with '*transformational power relationships*', the production of a '*managed learning space*' was similar to '*transactional power relationships*' (reported above), as well as that found in the first organisational case study. In an example of reporting back group discussions to a larger forum centred on a national manager's vision for change, a police employee did not accurately report the discussions for fear of being seen as a "troublemaker" by senior managers. Despite the change in the organisation, it was still one in which "…you can get punished" for stepping outside what is acceptable to the senior manager

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[158] Refer Superintendent – Case 208.126 & 066

[159] Refer to Superintendent – Case 208.104 & 110

('*consensual dialogue*').[160] The officer goes on to paraphrase the observations of an external consultant that managers in the organisation have long memories and speaking out could be detrimental in the future:

> …we're disadvantaged because this is an organisation where we stay a long time. And people have long memories. And if we say things and embarrass people or say things that make us a person on the fringe or a *troublemaker* or someone that's just going to raise issues that are unpopular with them, *they'll get you later on*. (emphasis added)
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 201.186)

The unitary ideology behind a 'common direction': The third- and second-dimensions

Even when immersed in '*transformational power relationships*' the underlying *unitary* ideology was well in place (*third-dimension*). As a change agent in rolling out a new training program throughout the organisation, another officer recognised that she felt free to question within the realm of her legitimate role but not beyond that to question the *existing order of things* ('*consensual dialogue*'). This has implications for the organisation as only what is "legitimate" in accordance with the strategic plan get measured and all other issues are neglected (*second-dimension*), hence setting an implicit barrier to what is the subject of dialogue and what is not ('*consensual dialogue*'). The officer explained:

> …if we focus it all on one thing, then other things are going to be neglected…there's nowhere for that to go…. It doesn't because that's not one of the strategic goals or…isn't what's in vogue at the moment, it's not given the time…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 211.204)

The officer, perhaps intuitively, suggested that since things aren't being measured because they fall outside the strategic plan, and therefore undiscussed, people in the organisation don't discover that things might be wrong or could be different:

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[160] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 201.186

…then it's only measured on what they set, then the other things that aren't being measured or aren't being looked at, we don't know that they're wrong,…it's not measureable that they are wrong or that they could be improved so, if you're only choosing to measure certain things you're only going to find out certain things.

(Senior Sergeant – Case 211.204)

6.3.3   Managed learning space: Compliant organisational learning

The model proposes that restricting to '*technical*' or '*consensual*' dialogue ('*managed learning space*') tends to lead to more '*compliant*' than '*authentic*' organisational learning. '*Compliant organisational learning*' can be seen where employees restrict their learning to the corporate agenda (alignment to the corporate vision), and includes *exploitation* of existing or *exploration* of new learning within those boundaries.

Proposition 2:   **'*Managed learning spaces*' facilitate '*compliant organisational learning*'.**

The characterisations of '*managed learning space*' as well as '*compliant organisational learning*' are detailed in Table 10 and Table 12 in Chapter 4.

Like the first organisational case study, all participants confirmed that the majority of their dialogue was of a '*technical*' nature. Again this section of the model was tested by provoking responses contiguous with the notion of '*compliant organisational learning*', by using the expression "following the corporate line". They were specifically asked:

When your discussions are about the day-to-day business of a technical nature such as problem solving and achieving goals, would you say that learning in your organisation is generally about following the corporate line?

(Question 9)

One Voice: Aligning to the "big picture" and exploiting existing learning

There was support for the proposition from cases (n=4) speaking of alignment to the corporate direction, including exploiting existing learning through following established policies and practices. For example, a frontline supervisor accepted the *existing order of things* without question and engaged predominantly if not solely in '*technical*

dialogue'. Not being a "big picture thinker"[161], the supervisor applied practical common sense from her existing learning to decision-making, taking corporate policy into account:

> …it will be along the corporate lines, because that's how I work, and…I'm a police officer and I do things by the book. You know, "This is how we do things, this is what we will do".
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 205.212)</div>

A national coordinator in an operational field similarly agreed that he follows the "big picture" in his daily '*technical*' decision-making:

> I think that certainly at the level that I deal with on a day-to-day basis there is an awareness of the whole big picture and where certainly the organisation is trying to hit and always trying to strive for. So I think that a lot of decisions that are made are based on that….I think by and large we are driven by, people are cognisant of strategic policy.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 204.267 & 271)</div>

Acknowledging her apathy when it came to engaging in '*meaningful dialogue*' and confining her dialogue to '*technical*' matters, an officer from non-operational support area pointed to the need for alignment to the corporate direction for uniformity:

> I think it's actually quite good because it keeps you focused and…hopefully I'd imagine it creates a uniformity that we're all on the same page.…I think that *we're all thinking the same* and *we're not encouraged to think as individuals… We're not probably paid to think. Not paid enough to think in those…terms*. (emphasis added)
>
> <div align="right">(Sergeant – Case 210.285 & 287)</div>

For a senior officer, the corporate direction is well known and the '*technical dialogue*' revolves around how to best achieve the contracted outcomes for government and the community:

> I think we all know why we're here. The discussions are more around "is this the best way of doing it", or … "what should the district's focus be within those parameters?" I think everybody's clear about that… this is what we've contracted to government to do and thereby to the [community]…
>
> <div align="right">(Superintendent – Case 202.100)</div>

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[161] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 205.212

Alignment but flexibility to explore new 'technical' learning

Further cases (n=5) also supported the proposition, but highlighted some flexibility to explore new '*technical*' learning towards innovative ideas. For example:

> I think people are conscious of the organisational goals and the vision however there is opportunity at the local level, or the team level, to actually implement initiatives for themselves…. So there is that flexibility.
>
> (Detective Superintendent – Case 207.204)

Similarly, a degree of flexibility in determining priorities within the corporate agenda was evident from a national tactical manager:

> …every year there is a business plan and a mission; often it's over a period of time. And you have to align your activities to that. So it is pretty much really follow the corporate line…. [W]e are controlled, you do have a little bit of flexibility, but at the end of the day you've got to be aligned with whatever the national plan is.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 208.132 & 134)

An operational manager also agreed with the proposition, pointing to the need to follow the "rules", but suggested there was room for innovation:

> …technically it's about following guidelines and protocols…there's very clear protocols and guidelines that need to be followed….but…there's an avenue for innovation, technically, operationally. We can be innovative, slightly restricted though by the nature of the guidelines, regulations, policies and everything…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.144)

Freedom beyond the corporate line

There were two cases who explicitly disagreed with the proposition. However, on analysis it was evident from their responses that the officers were restricted within '*technical dialogue*'. The first, a national coordinator, talked of the general freedom to engage in robust '*technical dialogue*' with stakeholders, and it was evident that the overall corporate direction was in the background and the officer will comply:

> I've got a certain amount of freedom there I think to have robust discussions especially with our stakeholders…. But at the same time you've got to have in the back of your mind that what's the best interest of the police…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 203.198)

The second case, a training officer, felt more fortunate than other areas, whereby she was able to independently explore best practice in a '*technical*' field of training and make it fit into the corporate line so it could be sold to senior managers as part of the corporate line:

> I think we're probably quite lucky in that…we look at what are best practices and then we make it fit in with the corporate line…. [We] try and sell it in a way that makes it look that it is the corporate line… our corporate direction is so broad it's very easy to do that.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 211.172)</div>

6.3.4   Revolutionary power relationships: Liberated learning space

The model proposes that '*revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*', where people feel free to engage in '*critical reflection*' and '*meaningful dialogue*'.   Operating only in the *first-dimension*, these relationships practice democratic education, challenging the dominant attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms within organizations. Built simultaneously on a '*pluralist*' and particularly a '*radical*' or '*critical*' frame of reference, their tasks are to challenge ideology, contest hegemony, unmask power, overcome alienation, learn liberation, reclaim reason, and practice democracy (Brookfield, 2005).

Proposition 3:   '*Revolutionary power relationships*' facilitate a '*liberated learning space*'.

The characterisations of *revolutionary power relationships*' as well as '*liberated learning space*' are detailed in Table 9 and Table 11 in Chapter 4.

Pluralist/equal power relationships facilitate freedom to engage in dialogue

Like the first organisational case study, '*revolutionary power relationships*' were rare. However, in the absence of power asymmetries in the *first-dimension*, participants reported feeling more free to engage in dialogue generally. For example, describing his feeling more free to initiate more '*meaningful dialogue*' with his colleagues in a training course, said "[w]e were equals there"[162]. Another example, the officer spoke of his

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[162] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 201.148; See also Senior Sergeant – Case 203.130 & 132

previous "unsworn" manager who was employed from outside the organisation and described as an "educator". Paraphrasing his manager's observations, suggested her thinking was outside traditional management practices:

> "I came here and I saw these awful things," she says. "They're quite unacceptable…disgraceful."
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 201.220)

The "outsider" encouraged and was supportive of diverse points of views. Even though she was his "supervisor" in title, they engaged more as colleagues in more '*meaningful dialogue*' about conventions in the organisation. The officer contrasted her with other police managers who would be "…offended and confronted by questions…" and see such discussions with the officer as a waste of time:

> …she's not offended by it….[she] would think that her time was very well spent. She's a former educator…. she welcomes those conversations. She might not agree, and she'll state that she doesn't agree, and she'll challenge back. But she's happy to have them…And she's approachable with those, she's very approachable.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 201. 246 & 216)

Familiarity also played a role in relationships being more equal, and possibly breaking down rank barriers. A senior national manager described a so called "Packaged for Export" issue where another senior colleague was appointed to a well sought after position rather than being dealt with in term of his performance. Despite acknowledging that dialogue on such issues would probably not occur with other senior officers, as he or others would be seen "…as a whinger or making waves…"[163], the officer felt free to discuss the issue with the Commissioner based on his personal relationship:

> …I was able to raise that with [the Commissioner], but that was more based on personal relations…having worked very closely with him and have those conversations quite regularly with him….
>
> (Superintendent – Case 209.108)

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[163] Refer Superintendent – Case 209.110 also 119

Rare strong 'revolutionary power relationships': Radical frame of reference

While a *pluralist* frame of reference tended to facilitate feeling free to engage in dialogue generally, there was one case that provided the strongest evidence of a more '*liberated learning space*' being facilitated by a '*revolutionary power relationship*' underpinned by a *radical* frame of reference. So strong, the evidence flowed for the entire interview. Despite the abundance of evidence, self-reporting needs to be treated with caution unless corroborated by one or several other sources. In this case, in 2010 I worked with this officer over a four week period, where the officer demonstrated not only pluralistic values in working with others, but held adversarial views in standing up for principles and what is "right", even if it went against the dominant views. From my observations the officer had a central desire and willingness to engage in a struggle to bring about high level social change. These observations were also corroborated by feedback from colleagues of both mine and the officer. It is from these collective experiences that this embedded case was a necessary candidate for this study.

The *radical* frame of reference was evident in challenging the traditional police maxim "respect the rank not the person":

> [I'm] constantly challenging above me…I have challenged at an Executive level. I don't care about rank, and what I mean by that is, I'm not going to respect you just because you are of a rank, I respect the person.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.022)

The *radical* frame of reference was clearly evident in the officer advocating social change towards encouraging others to question the *existing order of things* and challenge current thinking including the officer's own:

> I'm never going to challenge just for the hell of it…. [However] I'm not a person that just accepts how things are just because that's the way we do things. I'm forever challenging the way we do things…not because I want to…[b]ut because I think it's the right thing to do. And I think someone needs to do it.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.032 & 106)

> …I say to my staff "…you need to feel free to challenge me on it if you don't agree…. If you're just "yes" people, I don't want to manage "yes" people. Don't agree with me just because I'm saying it…" I encourage my staff to question.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.032 & 106)

However, advocating change often put the officer at odds with senior management over issues that she believed were not right and needed to be addressed:

> I know my reputation is one that people know that I'll fight for what I believe in and some people think that's trouble and they don't want it because [they] can't get me to be quiet or sweep things under the carpet about things that aren't right.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.086)

Talking about the conflict with senior management:

> It's inevitable if you're not going to just accept everything that you're told, everything you're told to do, or the decisions that are made. It's inevitable.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.114)

Speaking about the preference for collegial relationship to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*':

> You don't want to have an adversarial relationship. You don't want that, but the problem is sometimes you have to resign yourself to it…unless you want to just bite your tongue and do what you're told and agree with things that you don't agree with.

However, despite the personal sacrifices the officer continued to advocate social justice and challenge traditional thinking on issues, with the philosophy:

> I believe in… "rather die on your feet than live on your knees"…always be true to yourself, stand up for what you believe…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.070)

> Do I still think they think I'm a shit stirrer? Yes… because I'll take an issue and shake it… And I won't hide anything.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.076 to 080)

> I'm not [afraid of the consequences] because I've reached a decision a little while ago that I am going to remain true to myself…I am going to still talk about issues and if it would mean that I would have to lose my career over it, then so be it….
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.084)

Despite her apparent courage to bring about change and expose fundamental flaws in the system, the officer described the higher echelons as the "police machine" which was "daunting" in their ability to mobilise resources to target her:

> I think that's when you step out of line and you do something they don't like…when you're under the magnifying glass of the "police machine", so what I mean by that is people in authority and at a high level…have you in their sights and start going for you, …it doesn't matter if you're right, it's pretty hard to sustain it. Because the pressure they can put on you from all sides is quite unbelievable, quite unbelievable.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 206.068)

Mild cases of 'revolutionary power relationships': Pluralists

There were two mild cases of '*revolutionary power relationships*' underpinned more by a *pluralist* rather than a *critical* frame of reference. Both favoured more equal / collegial relationships to bring about slow incremental change, and couched their discussions in the interest of the organisation rather advocating social change. The more senior officer reported greater freedom to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*', having served longer in the organisation, being exposed to the senior executive level, and having a close working relationship with the Commissioner:

> I mean one of the reasons is that I've been around for a very long time. I've worked in the executive environment so it's not like it's scary. And I think those sorts of things need to be taken up. Now you don't have to be confrontational about it, but I certainly don't have an issue with raising those sorts of issues.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 202.048)

6.3.5   Liberated learning space: Authentic organisational learning

The model proposes that when individuals experience a '*liberated learning space*' there is scope or potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*'.

Proposition 4:   '*Liberated learning spaces*' facilitate the potential for '*authentic organisational learning*'.

The characterisations of '*liberated learning space*' as well as '*authentic organisational learning*' are detailed in Table 11 and Table 13 in Chapter 4.

Freedom to question leads to greater scope for learning and innovation: Or does it?

Like the first organisational case study, it was evident that the more participants felt free and had opportunity to talk, discuss, converse, or engage in dialogue whether *'meaningful dialogue'* or otherwise, the greater the scope for learning generally. However, again, the testing of this proposition was significantly hindered by the lack of instances in which case participants could clearly articulate situations when they have actually engaged in questioning the *existing order of things*. While many expressed a feeling free to so question, predominately it was to engage in more *'technical dialogue'*. This reinforces that traditional power relationships operating in the *third-* and *fourth-* dimensions are so subtle and taken-for-granted in organisations and society, that the idea of questioning the *existing order of things* was too foreign for many in the organisation. For example, a senior operations manager's suggestion that he engages in such questioning but in fact gave the example of "cluster groups" being brought together to share innovative ideas in work practises (*'technical dialogue'*):

> I think everyone learns from what occurs in other areas…, so that there is actually a sharing of ideas and learnings. And then those cluster groups will all meet once annually to again share ideas, best practice, and they were across a range of things.
>
> <div align="right">(Detective Superintendent – Case 207.210)</div>

Freedom to question leads to broader, deeper and diverse thinking, and receiving others points of view

However, there was some evidence for the proposition specifically relating to expanding the depth and breadth of learning, although many still related to more *'technical dialogue'* than *'meaningful dialogue'*. For example a national coordinator spoke of selling argument to senior officers and external agencies, on why things should change:

> It doesn't obstruct learning or your thinking…I think that's quite healthy that you would actually do that.
>
> <div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 203.216)</div>

The officer went on to point to receiving others points of view:

> I think it's good and it's interesting because if you don't raise an issue or if you don't challenge something you never know the other side, the counters of the argument, or the position you're in may raise something that you haven't actually thought of.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 203.224)

A further officer suggested that as a result of people feeling comfortable to express their opinions, spoke of the broadening of views through a continual defining and re-defining process:

> …what I think where we may be as an organisation may not in fact be the case at all. So…the fact that I think we're here but in fact we're much more advanced or we've got a long way to go to get to the point where I thought we were… [and] I don't think that just with the conversation we have today necessarily finishes today.
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 204.281 & 285)

However, one less senior officer suggested she thinks differently and had to adapt to "fit" in the organisation. While struggling to come to terms with feeling like she does not "fit", there was recognition of the benefit to the organisation of being different:

> I was different anyway, but, it made me realise that it's a little bit like banging your head against a wall. …[but] it's good to have different people like that retained in the Police, because it gives the perspective and the thinking that they don't have. …I'm just different.
>
> (Sergeant – Case 210.363, 367 & 369)

Speaking about his learning when feeling free to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*' with a previous national manager compared with the dialogue of a '*technical*' nature with his current manager:

> There's almost no comparison there, 'cause I think that I learn by questioning and talking to somebody, from hearing them challenge my questions, even my thinking. I learn a tremendous amount, I'll never forget it…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 201.234)

Freedom to question the existing order of things in a joint and reciprocal learning process towards social change

It was interesting that the strongest supportive evidence for this proposition came from female officers; each in their own way and to varying degrees struggled with the *existing order of things* and questioned the dominant traditional attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms. The first was a senior officer, who described the collegial relationship working with the Commissioner, and spoke about the mutual broader and diverse learning on the social change issue of getting more women in senior executive positions:

> I think the learnings are about that people do have different views. I think the learnings are around sometimes thinking differently about the same thing will point you into another direction. That the learnings are that we can be much more inclusive or have a broader range of thought, if you like.
>
> (Superintendent – Case 202.102)

The second officer, engaged in a change initiative and training, suggested that without more '*meaningful dialogue*' there would be no learning and no change:

> … having those conversations is really important….Because otherwise you won't be thinking. If you're not challenging, if you're not thinking, then there'll be no learning to be done. We'll just be like little ants doing whatever we're told to do… unless those discussions are happening, then we won't change as an organisation…
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 211.184)

The third officer provided very strong evidence supporting the proposition. The officer highlighted her experiences taking on the "police machine" towards more bottom-up change in the organisation. Her initial response was one of disillusionment, learning that her actions had consequences including the stress of "going against the grain".[164] However, talking about a questioning environment she tries to create with her staff, modelling her ideal organisation where people did feel free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*':

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[164] Refer Senior Sergeant – Case 206.148)

> If that was in the organisation, it would be fantastic. If we could… openly give our perspective,…I'm not challenging…[but] I can give a perspective because… I think differently…[and] there are different ways of looking at it, but it's that robust, defensible process…. that would be my nirvana of having everyone…be honest with you, that's what I try and create.

<div align="right">(Senior Sergeant – Case 206.152)</div>

6.4   Organisational case analysis: Proposition conclusions

With the analysis completed, a number of conclusions can be made in respect to the propositions. The conclusions for this organisational case study largely mirrored the first, although the evidence in some areas was more subtle.

Proposition 1A and 1B

Again there was an abundance of evidence to support the propositions that '*transactional*' and even '*transformational*' power relationships inhibit '*meaningful dialogue*' ('*managed learning space*'). In some cases even more '*technical dialogue*' is inhibited. With both power relationships underpinned by a *unitary* ideology that managers have the right to manage and employees are obliged to obey, the explicit or implicit and more subtle "Do as you're told" was evident from many participants to various degrees (n=9), and particularly in an operational setting it was accepted as normal and taken-for-granted.[165] The historical origins supported by legislation reinforced the *unitary* ideology thereby setting up the *fourth-dimension* of power against which employees gauged and disciplined themselves as a good employee. Irrespective of the reform agenda, the *unitary* ideology is further reinforced as the *third-dimension*, initially indoctrinated into the organisation through training, and then throughout their career (*second-dimension*). Even in '*transformational power relationships*', the idea of questioning the *existing order of things* had negative connotations, necessitating performance management (*second-dimension*). Employees themselves, wishing to not be disadvantaged, are politically strategic in remaining silent (*second-dimension*). Some, feeling 'organisationally outflanked' and seeing no alternative, accepted the *existing order of things* thereby reinforcing the manager's privileged position (*second-*

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[165] For example refer to Superintendent – Case 202.084 and Senior Sergeant – Case 205.151

dimension). Colleagues also functioned in the *first-dimension* to reinforce the status quo, thereby reinforcing a culture of silence (*third-dimension*).

Proposition 2

Once more, significant evidence was found supporting the proposition that '*managed learning spaces*' facilitated '*compliant organisational learning*'. Like the first organisational case study, all participants confirmed that the majority of their dialogue was of a '*technical*' nature. In turn, some cases spoke of alignment to the corporate direction, including exploiting existing learning through following established policies and practices (n=4). Further cases supported the proposition, but highlighted some flexibility to explore new '*technical*' learning towards innovative ideas (n=5). Two cases explicitly disagreed with the proposition, however their responses were to support or fit the "corporate line".

Proposition 3

Less asymmetric and more collegial (*plural*) power relationships including the 'outsider', facilitated a feeling free to talk, discuss, converse, engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise. Familiarity also assisted in breaking down rank barriers. Yet again '*revolutionary power relationships*' were rare. Like the first case, in this study there was only one embedded case truly in a '*revolutionary power relationship*' underpinned by a *critical* or *radical* frame of reference desirous of social change. This case reported personal sacrifices for questioning management thinking: describing the "daunting" mobilisation of resources by "police machine" against her. In terms of the idea of feeling free to question the *existing order of things* ('*liberated learning space*'), the officer suggested it was more the need to be courageous than feeling free. While exercising caution with self-reports, the researcher's previous observations in another environment, added credibility to the strong self-reported statements exhibited.

Proposition 4

Generally, like the first case study, deeper and broader learning was more likely when participants felt free to engage in dialogue whether '*meaningful dialogue*' or otherwise. Albeit that perhaps deeper learning was less evident compared to the first case study.

Once again the researcher found the testing of this proposition was significantly hampered by the few cases disclosing instances of questioning the *existing order of things*. Despite this shortfall, of the cases that suggested more '*meaningful dialogue*' there was clear potential for more '*authentic organisational learning*'.

General

As a general observation, despite being a larger organisation, consisting of nearly 12,000 employees compared with just over 7,500 in the first case study, it appeared to be a more tolerant of dissenting opinions in '*technical dialogue*' albeit with an acceptance of a strong *unitary* ideology in the operational environment. However, this observation may be the result of case selections.

The selection of cases first appeared as a limitation to accurately representing the case, but ultimately it may be its strength. Being a minor case study, a limited number of embedded cases were interviewed. However, the selection produced an over-representation of embedded cases in mid-level and senior management positions: the Superintendents (n=4) represented the top five percent of police officers; and the Senior Sergeants (n=6) are within the top 10 percent. More than half had national coordination or corporate responsibilities attached to National Police Headquarters (n=6). Consequently, responses may <u>not</u> be indicative of more practitioner levels representing the remaining 90 percent of constabulary employees. This is significant given the emancipatory stance of Critical Theory of uncovering the reality of the "oppressed": that is the less privileged "oppressed".

However, their voice to the significance of these finding can be inferred from the Oceania Police 2011 Workplace Survey results on engagement in the organisation[166]. Of the responses from nearly 80 percent of all employees, only 21.3% said they were engaged[167], compared with 63.2% who were ambivalent[168] and 15.5% disengaged[169].

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[166] (*Oceania Police workplace survey*, 2011)

[167] Noting an increase from 17.8% in 2010

[168] Noting a decrease from 64.4% in 2010

The highest engaged were Commissioned Officers (Inspectors and above), and the lowest engaged were Constables. This must have a significant impact on organisational learning, suggesting it is more '*compliant*' than '*authentic*'.

Further, there was a perception that managers and senior leaders were not listening to staff. Only 28% of employees felt "the organisation" was "interested in the views and opinions of its staff". This suggests managers don't even encourage '*technical dialogue*'. It is hardly surprising then that their voice can be found in a comment to State Services Commission (cited by Bridgman, 2011, p.4)[170]:

> The Commissioner and all his Inspector mates in bullshit castle at Headquarters should get back on the street and get a reality check….

Having now presented the analysis from the two organisational case studies for the *confirmatory investigation* phase, I draw together the conclusions and discuss the implications for this thesis in the next and final chapter.

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[169] Noting a decrease from 17.8% in 2010

[170] Commission of Inquiry into Police Behaviour (2010, p.26). Details of publication withheld. See Table 19 in Appendix M for details.

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*Our society is run by insane people for insane objectives… I'm
liable to be put away as insane for expressing that. That what's
insane about it.*

John Lennon

7.1   Introduction

John Lennon, song writer and political activist, was speaking out against the United
States government in a time when troops were being sent to fight in Vietnam. In the
documentary "The US vs John Lennon" (Leaf & Schienfeld, 2006), it was evident that
Lennon and other radical activists were challenging the system and the key individuals
who controlled it.   They were advocating "peace".   Others, who saw the war as
necessary, saw the activists questioning and challenging the system as a threat to
"democracy".   The Director of the FBI – J. Edgar Hoover, supported by President
Richard Nixon, called on his Federal Agents to be ready to meet the challenge to
maintain order and stability. However, journalist Geraldo Rivera says the unequivocal
evidence now suggests that Hoover "…used the FBI as an instrument almost as a
political police force.   Anyone who was off message became susceptible to an FBI
probe". FBI Federal Agent John C Ryan admitted "Looking back…that was horrible
what we did…we were being used by the government to stop dissent, just plain and
simple".   FBI Federal Agent M. Wesley Swearingen spoke of Hoover's desire for
agents to "neutralise" these organisations, saying "…it wasn't a question of whether it
was right or wrong, legal, ethical, immoral, or whatever, as long as it was effective".

This introduction to this final chapter echoes the significance of a better understanding
of *how and why power relationships facilitate or inhibit authentic organisational
learning*, the subject of this thesis. This final chapter provides me with a number of
opportunities. Firstly it is an opportunity to critically reflect on the *emancipatory* nature
of the literature in Chapter 2 and the data analysis in both organisational case studies,
and draw conclusions from this research which may be useful to help emancipate police
managers and practitioners together as well as better inform further research. In doing
so it is an opportunity to focus on the model presented in Chapter 2 and which was
refined in Chapter 4.   It is an opportunity to critically reflect on a number of

implications: for organisational learning theory and the theory of power; for policing organisations, policing reform, and the training and education of police officers; and for police practitioners and managers. As important, it is an opportunity for critical reflection on the implication for me in a policing organisation. Lastly, it is an opportunity to reflect on the limitations of the research and suggest possible avenues for further research, before making some concluding remarks.

7.2 Research conclusions

I start with conclusions from the research, firstly addressing each of the five propositions before I make final comment on the research problem, and then finishing with comment on the methodology.

7.2.1 Research propositions

The five propositions for this research were examined in the *confirmatory investigation* phase outlined in the two organisational case studies in Chapter 5 and 6. Before specially addressing each, I firstly make a general observation in respect to power relationships.

Power relationships do not operate in isolation to one another

Firstly, the case studies highlighted that the three power relationships do not operate in complete isolation to each other, but are overlapping to varying degrees, and vary from situations, or from one moment to the next. In the organisations, it was evident that there was no such thing as a pure '*revolutionary power relationship*' operating in isolation, as the very existence and nature of an employment contract immediately creates a '*transactional power relationship*'. Hence, people operating in a purely '*revolutionary power relationship*' are not likely to last long in the organisation as they will be deemed by managers to be negative and a disruptive influence, or as not aligning to the new "shared" direction or resisting the change efforts. While those few people who were not fearful of operating in '*revolutionary power relationships*' and would be willing to push the boundaries, there was an implicit acknowledgement that they are still in an employment contract, which can be terminated. As such, unless the *existing order*

of things changes, '*revolutionary power relationships*' are always "subordinate" to, and overpowered by, the traditional power relationships in organisations.

Both traditional power relationships ('transactional' and 'transformational') are built on unitary ideology operating as the fourth-dimension of power

A close association was sensed between '*revolutionary*' and '*transformational*' power relationships as both advocate change. However, an even closer alignment was evident between '*transformational*' and '*transactional*' power relationships. Despite one challenging and the other reinforcing the status quo, the framing of both within a *unitary* ideology made it sometimes difficult to differentiate in the analysis as to the greater influence between the two. In some cases there was a clear distinction, but in others the two operated as one. For example when the Commissioner in the major case study rid some of the traditions of rank such as the saluting to Commissioned Officers and "standing fast" when these senior officers entered the room. By itself, a '*transformational power relationship*', but this was followed by the introduction of new identification cards which were colour coded to signify and reinforce the tradition of rank in the organisation ('*transactional power relationship*').

With these general observations, I turn to each of the propositions. With the common *unitary* ideological foundation, and with space a premium in this thesis, I have chosen to deal with both the traditional power relationships – '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – together in one section drawing out their similarities and differences.

Proposition 1A: '*Transactional power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'.

Proposition 1B: '*Transformational power relationships*' facilitate a '*managed learning space*'.

The evidence strongly suggests that '*transactional*' and even '*transformational*' power relationships facilitate a '*managed learning space*'. The strength and prevalence of evidence gives the impression that there is no escaping the *unitary* ideology (*fourth-*

dimension): it seems as though managers will always have the right to manage and employees the obligation to obey. Whether reinforcing or challenging, the questioning of the *dominant ideology* or the *existing order of things* is out of bounds: '*managed learning space*'. Both may facilitate '*technical*' and '*consensual*' dialogue, but inhibit '*meaningful dialogue*'. In some cases even '*technical*' dialogue was inhibited.

Transactional employment contract historically developed in society and enshrined in legislation to instil the unitary ideology: The fourth-dimension

It was found that the *unitary* ideology is at the heart of '*transactional power relationships*' operating at the *fourth-dimension* outside the grasp of managers. The *unitary* ideology is enshrined in legislation that historically established the respective organisations and the transactional employment contract. Policing organisations serve a function as part of the broader society in an exchange process, which Burns (1978) would describe as a power relationship that is '*transactional*' (see also Enteman, 1993) (see Figure 13).[171]

Cultural acceptance of unitary ideology as natural: The fourth- and third-dimensions

Employees recognised that managers above them control the systems of reward and punishment. These '*transactional power relationships*' could be seen as operating in the *fourth-dimension* of power, where the broader and more subtle aspects of power in society were accepted in the historically defined roles of the "police officer" and "manager", and individuals disciplined themselves to act and speak according to those implicitly defined roles. These roles are further established internally in the *social structures*, such as the division between "Commissioned Officers" and all others as well as the division between the various ranks generally; the *culturally patterned behaviour* such as the old standing fast for senior officers walking into a room and referring them as Sir", Ma'am or "Mr…" or "Ms…"; and the *institutional practices* such as following

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[171] Broadly speaking to protect life and property of the people it serves on behalf of the government, who in these two jurisdictions are "democratically" elected by the people. Police officers are employed by the organisation to perform roles and are paid a wage for their skills and knowledge, and the managers manage the internal organisational exchange process on behalf of the elected government. In exchange for protecting life and property, there is an acceptance of police as a legitimate group to act on the behalf of the people.

the chain of command. Hence, in both organisations, the *unitary* ideology operating in the *fourth-dimension* of '*transactional power relationships*' had become culturally accepted and reinforced as natural in paramilitary and/or hierarchical norms – *third-dimension* – the minor case perhaps less so.
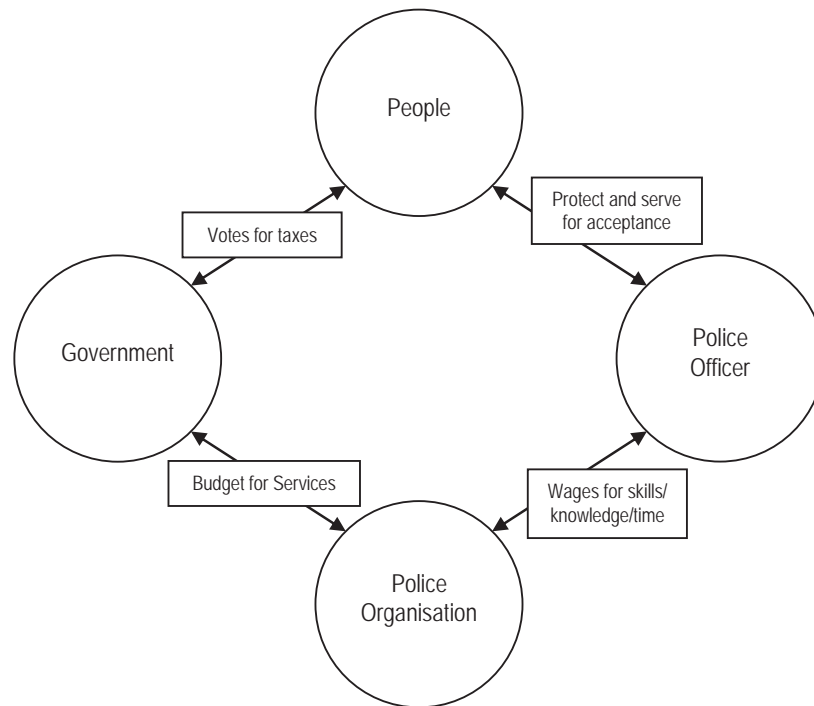
Figure 13: Exchanges in 'transactional power relationships'

'Transactional power relationships' facilitating 'technical dialogue' and inhibited 'meaningful dialogue': First- and second-dimensions

The prevalence of '*transactional power relationships*' meant the *existing order of things* was accepted as natural and not questioned. All embedded case participants acknowledged that the majority of their day-to-day dialogue in the organisation was based on problem solving and achieving goals. However, when it came to questioning the *existing order of things* such instances were rare. This was particularly highlighted by the degree of probing questions I used to help participants tap into their memory of instances involving deeper questioning. While some described these as "asking the hard questions", others seemed not to appreciate such deeper levels, and instead tended to describe further instances of '*technical dialogue*'. Where there was deeper questioning, instances involved the questioning of organisational culture or "conventions". None of

the participants described the deeper questioning of the *dominant ideology* in organisations generally, such as managers right to manage. Even at senior levels it was acknowledged that "philosophical" discussions (more '*meaningful dialogue*') were rare.

'Transactional power relationships' inhibiting 'meaningful dialogue' (interpreting negatively): Third- and second-dimensions

Despite participants being asked about instances of questioning the *existing order of things*, it was interesting that some described such questioning in negative and "unproductive" language. Participants used terms such as "sledging", 'whinging", "bitching", "moaning", "complaining", "bellyaching" or having a "sook", "gripe", or "grizzle". There was a sense from some participants that they felt that '*meaningful dialogue*' served no "productive" purpose, being pointless or useless. It was as though '*meaningful dialogue*' had no relevance and outside the bounds of what is acceptable in the organisations. Some suggested that such questioning was perceived as "rocking the boat". Negativity towards '*meaningful dialogue*' was interpreted as part of the arsenal of '*transactional*' power relationships operating to control the agenda (*second-dimension*), and now forms part of the culture of the two organisations (*third-dimension*) so as to protect the *existing order of things*.

'Transformational power relationships' facilitating 'consensual dialogue' and inhibited 'meaningful dialogue': First- and second-dimensions

Even with '*transformational power relationships*' more '*meaningful dialogue*' was seen in negative terms and kept off the agenda, making way for only '*consensual dialogue*'. To this end, the Commissioner, senior managers, and areas responsible for corporate strategy, operate in unison in the *second-dimension*. In the Terra Australis case, the aim of the reform agenda was to challenge some specific identified traditional attitudes, beliefs, values and norms in the organisations that had become the foundations of '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-dimension*. The purpose was to instil a new set of attitudes, beliefs and values, which would act as a new '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-dimension*. While this was occurring, the '*transactional power relationships*' continue to function in the day-to-day business facilitating '*technical dialogue*'. There was no indication that '*transformational power relationships*' interacted with the '*transactional power relationships*' to the point of facilitating '*meaningful dialogue*'. Hence, both

'*transformational*' and '*transactional*' power relationships facilitated a '*managed learning space*'. The art of controlling the agenda was none clearer than the message delivered by the Terra Australis superintendent promoted under the reign of the third change agenda Commissioner: "…I don't like *whingers, wankers or sooks*…"[172]

In that organisation, the strategic document known as "the blue book" set the new corporate direction. It also set the framework for '*consensual dialogue*'. Questioning the traditional attitudes, belief, values and norms in the organisation was accepted and celebrated, but only to the extent of the "blue book" framework. With the instalment of a new promotion system, all Commissioned Officer positions were declared vacant and existing officers could apply for positions or elect redundancy. Anecdotes from employees at the time suggested that a clear alignment to the new direction was necessary for a key position. For some it meant promotion: for a few, a rapid rise.[173] The notion of alignment to corporate strategic document for promotion was born. One participant specifically spoke of this alignment process in the current day:

> They belt out all the strategic and annual business plans and they've got all the informing strategies and all the glossies, and I think anyone that's looking for promotion at some point reads all of them….
>
> (Senior Sergeant – Case 77.160 & 162)

Similarly, in the Oceania Police there was "legitimacy" for officers to challenge, derived from the Commission of Inquiry, the released Code of Conduct, along with the Commissioner. However the Code of Conduct, within which reinforced of the *unitary* ideology, was also the yardstick against which to measure performance, and officers were well schooled on their responsibility to manage perceived "poor performance". As mentioned above, many referred to '*meaningful dialogue*' in negative terms: hence no doubt needing to be "managed".

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[172] Senior Sergeant – Case 27.046

[173] The current Commissioner took an unusual step in promotion, rising from Senior Sergeant to Superintendent.

'Transactional' and 'transformational' power relationships and the political strategies of employees: Who controls the systems of reward and punishment? (Second- and third-dimensions)

As mentioned, there was recognition that in traditional power relationships – *'transactional and 'transformational'* – it is the managers who control the reward and punishment systems. Consequently, the participants in their pragmatic self interest were strategic in when to speak and when to remain silent. The trick was to understand what the manager was thinking through what the manager says, and for participants to align what they say and their behaviour to the manager's thinking. If the participant's thinking was to stray from centre, then the trick was not to stray too far. The game is learnt and played, but the rules are seldom questioned.

Focus group participants suggested that this was the strategy of the "sycophant" or the "strategic brown noser" or "yes people". However, case study participants revealed the strategy was not just confined to the obedient or obsequious, ingratiating individual who insincerely flatters the more powerful to gain personal advantage. As subtle as it sounds, it was not so much gaining a personal advantage as not being disadvantaged. Core disadvantages included being overlooked for promotion or a valuable training opportunity, or not receiving a favourable transfer or receiving a transfer that the participant did not want. Police officers in particular are vulnerable to stay in an unsatisfactory situation, as the organisation has almost a monopoly over the employment of high level policing skills and knowledge within their jurisdiction, a career which is not easily transferable to another organisation. Similarly the use of minimum and maximum tenure along with management initiated transfers, make officers hesitant. Participants used phrases such as "detrimental to your own job security"; not having your "contract renewed"; being "packaged for export", or simply being seen by managers as a "problem child" or a "whinger, wanker or sook".

'Transactional' and 'transformational' power relationships' reinforcing unitary ideology: Second- and third-dimensions

Rank played a big role in the organisations, and the hierarchical structure is continually reinforced. Hence managers, whether *'transactional'* or *'transformational'*, used

symbols and stories to reinforce authority and rank, and keep issues off the agenda (*second-dimension*). For police officers, stripes and badges on epaulettes on the shoulders of uniforms reinforced rank and the hierarchy structure. In the major case colour-coded identification cards included the unsworn police staff (non-police officer) into the stratification. For example, with the new cards a public sector manager gave the tap on his shoulder: pointing to this imaginary epaulette to reinforce the senior manager's superior "rank" over others. Another example was the drawing of the figure "8" to the Level 7 participant, to signify superior rank and to reinforce authority.

The recounting of stories also worked to keep issues off the agenda (*second-dimension*), and reinforce the *unitary* ideology (*third-dimension*). It was the participants themselves, not the actual manager involved, who were recounting the stories as recipients, observers, or re-tellers that was of interest. It was difficult to gauge the degree of influence these stories had on the overall organisation. However the frequency in which the stories were recounted must work to the advantage of all managers.

Stories even circulated about '*transformational power relationships*'. In Terra Australis Police, while a few did challenge the Commissioner's change agenda in early days, it was the stories that followed that created the '*managed learning space*' for others (*third-dimension*). Comments included: "You got your head belted…"; "…that was the end of them"; "…they were just sidelined…and then they were offered the redundancy…"; and "…you certainly got the message that you weren't going to be allowed to question…". In this sense, individual managers may keep an arm's distance, and employees perpetuate the *third-dimension* of power in the retelling.

Collegial individuals and groups can reinforce the status quo without management intervention (first- and third-dimensions)

Similarly, collegial individuals and groups can reinforce the status quo without management intervention: participants engaged in dialogue but are shut down by the responses from others. These appeared to be an indirect extension of '*transactional power relationships*' reinforcing the status quo, operating in the *first-dimension*. In the

major case, one participant described it more in terms of the masses prescribing what is deemed as "legitimate", which was the theme along with credibility in the minor case. It was more '*technical dialogue*' than '*meaningful dialogue*' that was being shut down; hence it was still a '*managed learning space*'. It could be argued that managers had no involvement in these interactions; therefore it may be taking power too far. However, the fact that '*meaningful dialogue*' was often described in negative terms supports a culturally patterned behaviour on which managers can take action in the form of raising issues for discussion, however choose not to in order to prevent grievances from being raised. In this sense these power relationships may be operating at the *third-dimension*, whereby individuals accept the *existing order of things* as they see no alternative. Further, if managers are to be held responsible for the operation of the *third-dimension* of power as Lukes (2005) suggests, it may be more evident from the negative connotations that participants attached to '*meaningful dialogue*', that the '*transactional power relationships*' were operating in the *fourth-dimension*. As such participants would discipline themselves that this form of dialogue was seen as unproductive.

A distinction can be drawn between these instances and what can be seen as colleagues in more '*revolutionary power relationships*'. Despite both being equal in ranking, '*revolutionary power relationships*' are continually advocating for social change, as well as espousing values such as democracy, freedom, justice and fairness. Colleagues as an extension of '*transactional power relationships*' explicitly or implicitly support and reinforce the status quo, and have the power of the *dominant ideology* in the organisation to support their position.

Employees are "outflanked" by the depth and breadth of traditional power relationships

Among those affected by traditional power relationships – both '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – there was a sense of resignation that to resist was pointless. Some, even more senior officers, explicitly used phases such as: "…you just don't even bother"; "why bother?"; "…there's been times when I haven't bothered…"; and "why would I want to sometimes?". Case participants suggested the need for "preservation" or "self-preservation" was the reason, not necessarily for personal advancement but because there was a feeling that to do otherwise was pointless in changing the dominant

view or a decision made from up high. Mann (1986, p.7) and others (Clegg, 1989a; Hardy & Clegg, 1996; Clegg et al., 2006) referred to the notion of being "*organisationally outflanked*" to explain why the masses do not revolt but instead comply simply "…because they lack collective organization to do otherwise…". To use the phrase of one senior officer in questioning those in high places, "…it's tantamount to taking on [the] system".[174]

Proposition 2: *'Managed learning spaces'* facilitate *'compliant organisational learning'.*

Organisational learning was more 'compliant' than 'authentic'

A distinction between '*compliant*' and more '*authentic*' organisational learning was evident. Case participants connected their learning with the good of the agency, speaking of the need for organisational fit. They spoke of following guidelines, procedures, and policy to ensure consistency (exploitation), with many using a similar phrase as "that's the way things are done around here". In addition, some mentioned scope for continuous improvement in those processes and procedures, and many acknowledged that they were free to try something new (exploration). However, in both exploitation and exploration the process was predominantly top-down. And more often than not new processes or procedures were handed down with little explanation or rationale for the change. In cases indicating that the learning might be a bottom-up process, it was still seen as needing to align to the corporate plan.

The case participants provided significant evidence to suggest that '*managed learning space*' facilitated '*compliant organisational learning*'. That is the learning was primarily about following the 'corporate line' or the corporate agenda. All case participants agreed the majority of their day-to-day dialogue in the organisation was of a '*technical*' nature and the majority of case participants provided explicit evidence in their reflections that '*compliant organisational learning*' was a likely outcome. Many were congruent with the proposition outright (major case n=9; minor case n=4). Some

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[174] Superintendent – Case 151.200

of whom even suggested that their learning space was so restricted that they question whether there was any learning as all. Added to this were others who were congruent but suggested there was some flexibility to explore new learning for continuous improvement or innovation (major case n=6; minor case n=5). It was evident that this enabled members of the organisation to provide a rapid response in addressing the corporate outcomes, but was broad enough to allow for looking at how to improve processes and procedures. The remainder (major case n=5; minor case n=2) explicitly disagreed with the proposition but provided implicit evidence of support.

Proposition 3: *'Revolutionary power relationships'* **facilitate a** *'liberated learning space'.*

Pluralist/equal power relationships facilitate freedom to engage in dialogue

In both organisations, in the absence of power asymmetries in the *first-dimension*, participants reported feeling more free to engage in dialogue generally. In addition to the collegial nature of relationships, familiarity and social settings appears to break down the formal barriers generated in traditional power relationships. Rank was then less prominent or has less potency. It was apparent that managers had made a conscious effort to breakdown rank barriers and there was a degree of trust on behalf of the participant. However, pluralism by itself by and large did not seem to encourage individuals to engage in *'meaningful dialogue'*, and can reinforce the status quo. Instead *'meaningful dialogue'* was better facilitated when the *critical* frame of reference was evident.

'Revolutionary power relationships' have two phases

Hence it became apparent that *'revolutionary power relationships'* need to be considered in two domains or phases. This is in line with Freire's (1970) work. The first phase is in unveiling the reality of oppression. The second is to continue the pedagogy after the transformation to ensure permanent liberation. The first involves a *critical* frame of reference to initially challenge the *dominant ideology*, while the second involves a *pluralist* frame of reference to ensure ongoing democracy and permanent liberation.

'Revolutionary power relationships' are rare and generally more likely to operate "behind closed doors"

The case studies revealed a limited number of '*revolutionary power relationships*' underpinned by a *critical* frame of reference: one strong case in each the major and minor organisational case studies. This is not surprising given the converse significant number of traditional power relationships operating within the *second-* and *third-dimensions*, which are further reinforced by the *fourth-dimension* in the broader society. It was evident that people operating in '*revolutionary power relationships*' are perceived as negative and resistant, and are considered "troublemakers". Hence individuals are cautious about what they say, when, where, and to whom. It is understandable then that these relationships may also operate "behind closed doors" as some participants suggested, and were more likely to exist between colleagues of equal status or rank, and rarely involved managers and "subordinates".

People operating in 'revolutionary power relationships' give up promotion stakes for sake of their freedom to speak out

While some are strategic in their approach to playing the game so as to not be disadvantaged, it was evident that participants demonstrating greatest '*revolutionary*' potency in their examples of their relationships with others had made a conscious choice to sacrifice personal career advancement. Their reflections made it clear that their desire to have a voice had come at a cost: a cost that they were willing to pay for freedom to speak out. In the major case, the one senior officer was told that there were no prospects of further advancement due to his willingness to speak out on issues, while the other two who were less '*revolutionary*' potent in their examples were accepting that there may be no further advancement for them. In this sense, these individuals had accepted that they had paid or may pay the price for "rocking the boat" to bring about change in some form, which may go against the desire of more senior managers. It was evident that these individuals espoused a degree of courage in their willingness to go "against the grain" as prescribed by managers as well as accepted by their colleagues. It was clear that using one's voice to question the rules of the game was akin to not playing by the rules of the game, and attracted severe sanctions (Gaventa, 1980).

Proposition 4: *'Liberated learning spaces'* **facilitate the potential for** *'authentic organisational learning'.*

Generally the more case participants felt the freedom and opportunity to talk, discuss, converse, engage in dialogue whether *'meaningful dialogue'* or otherwise, the greater the scope for learning. However, support or otherwise for this proposition was hindered by the rarity in which case participants were able to articulate instances of engaging in *'meaningful dialogue'*, and their associated freedom to do so. At a minimum, it was evident that the freedom to engage in more *'technical dialogue'* such as problem solving connected to learning as continuous improvement.

Despite this shortfall, and in contrast to *'compliant organisational learning'*, some participants were able to describe a form of learning that goes beyond exploiting existing learning or exploring new learning through continuous improvement in processes, procedures and policies. They were able to consider diverse points of view or a different perspective through feeling free to question generally. Some described it in terms of a shift in thought process or "…heightened awareness…", enabling people to change their thinking or to think in a way that they never thought before, or having their thoughts challenged. It appeared as a deeper and broader form of learning which opens up the possibility to a different perspective and see other alternatives. However, this form of learning appeared to be so foreign in their organisation so as to describe it as ideal in a perfect world but unlikely to happen.

In the few instances where case participants were able to articulate to some degree the feeling free to question and challenge the underlying fundamental and dominant values, beliefs, attitudes and norms in the organisation (*'liberated learning space'*), there was evidence that it tended to facilitate learning which was deeper and boarder, and enable people to think differently and open their minds to a range of alternatives (*'authentic organisational learning'*). For example, on the ethical question of what would be viewed as reasonable by the public on how much a senior officer should be allowed to expend on a bottle of wine with a meal whilst travelling: "…so is it a bottle of wine for $20.00 because…that seems reasonable, or is it a bottle of wine for $40.00. So where is

that line?" (Level 7 – Case – 126.076).   Then there is the slippage on what is the acceptable norm: so if $40 becomes acceptable, what about a $60 bottle then?

However, while authentic learning may occur at an individual or group level, it does not necessarily mean it will occur at an organisational level. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, it is suggested that isolated islands of learning can be formed within the organisation but need to reach a critical mass and sustained as joined-up continents of leaning (Grundy, 1994). This suggests that for '*authentic organisational learning*' to permeate, a critical mass needs to be reached within the organisation; hence a *potential* for this type of learning is the best that can be expected.

7.2.2   Research problem

In determining *how and why power relationships may facilitate or inhibit authentic organisational learning*, the final conclusions from this research are captured in the final conceptual model (see Figure 14). Propositions supported by a degree of evidence are shown in thicker lines than those with less. Propositions shown in dotted lines could not be substantiated significantly, requiring more evidence, and remain hypothetical.
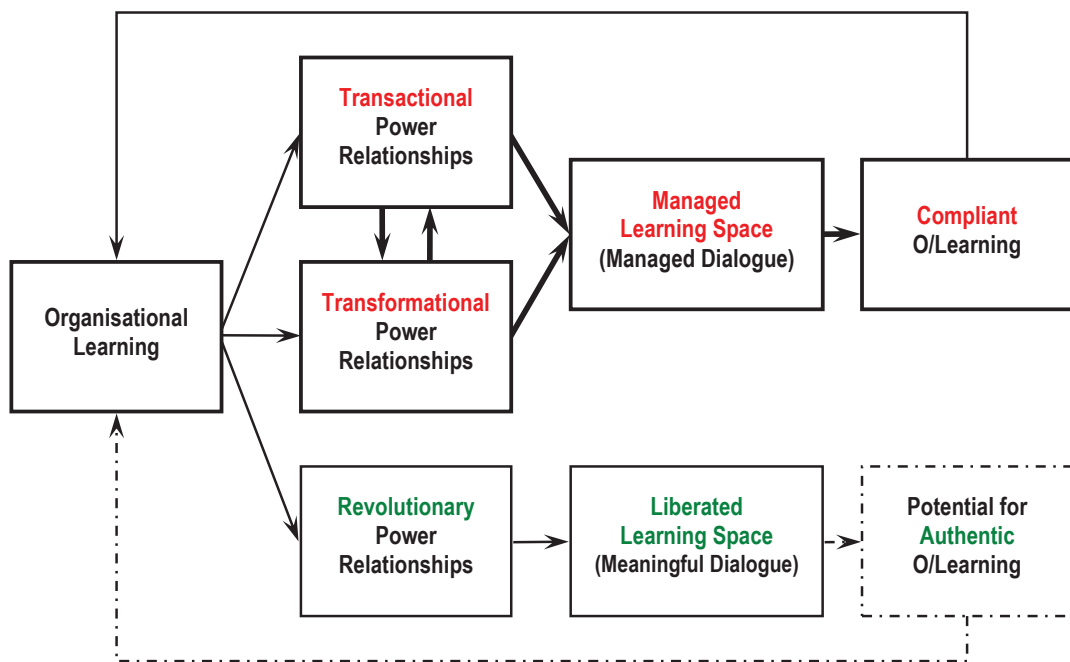
Figure 14: Final conceptual model: Power relationships and authentic organisational learning

Prevalence of 'compliant organisational learning' attributed to 'technical dialogue'

More '*compliant organisational learning*', whether exploiting existing learning or exploring new learning for corporate benefit, was far more prevalent than a deeper learning in the organisations studied. This prevalence was mainly attributed to the heavy focus on '*technical dialogue*': its purpose was to deliver corporate outcomes. In a sense, '*technical dialogue*' has formed part of their *practical consciousness*: that is what people tacitly know to enable them to 'go on' in social life, without being able to express such knowledge directly and discursively (Giddens, 1984; Haugaard, 2003).

'Technical dialogue' congruent with 'transactional power relationships'

The heavy focus on '*technical dialogue*' was congruent with '*transactional power relationships*'. Hence a large component of the '*managed learning space*' is the freedom to engage in '*technical dialogue*'. This is logical given that employees are subject to employment contracts as part of the exchange process in '*transactional power relationships*'. Individuals are paid to solve problems and achieve goals on behalf of the organisation. This exchange process operates daily in the *fourth-dimension*, with the notion of employment being historically developed, legitimated and legislated, and become so common place and natural that individuals discipline themselves to be good employees: "*...I'd definitely follow the corporate line, that's what I get paid to do*".

'Transformational power relationships' facilitate 'consensual dialogue'

The research also supported the idea that both '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships facilitate more '*consensual dialogue*': '*transformational*' to a larger degree than '*transactional*'. '*Consensual dialogue*' involves the questioning of values chosen by management to epitomize the organisation's 'culture', aimed at developing a shared commitment to common purpose, through creating or generating a shared and common understanding or meaning. This form of dialogue is related to the *third-dimension* of power: '*transactional*' reinforcing the culture, while '*transformational*' are challenging it to instil a new culture or a new '*transactional power relationship*' operating in the *third-dimension*. On this point, it was interesting that the '*consensual dialogue*' on the notion of continuous improvement, which was once the province of '*transformational power relationships*', was being reinforced as part of the new culture ('*transactional power relationships*') in the Terra Australis Police. '*Consensual*

dialogue' was particularly evident in the stories relayed by officers in the Terra Australis case study arising in the era of the Alpha program. The stories suggest that when officers questioned the chosen new culture for the organisation, there were adverse consequences thereby sending a firm message to others (*second-dimension*).

'Transformational' and 'transactional' power relationships oscillate to facilitate a 'managed learning space'

As highlighted above there was a close alignment between '*transformational*' and '*transactional*' power relationships, both being founded on *unitary* frame of reference. Hence, it is concluded that there is a dynamic between the two (see Figure 14). This is consistent with the observations in the literature review that Bass's leadership framework – transactional / transformational – was superimposed on a management structure in organisations, and consistent with Bass's own research which suggests that both can occur concurrently and are not considered as opposite ends of the same continuum (Avolio et al., 1999). This was clearly evident with the cultural change program (Alpha) in the Terra Australis Police. There were historical '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions*, some of which were being challenged by the new Commissioner and his dominant collation as '*transformational power relationships*'. However there were many aspects of '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-* and *fourth-dimension* of power that continued unimpeded and unquestioned. For example, while certain ranks were abolished to produce a flatter structure, the notion of rank remained along with the associated practices of standing fast when Commissioned Officers entered the room, saluting, and addressing them as "Sir", "Ma'am", "Mr…" or "Ms…".

More 'authentic' learning is possible at individual level, but the proposition was not supported at organisational level

Isolated authentic learning is possible at an individual level. Individual participants did identify the possibility for deeper, broader, and more independent learning that would enable them to think differently and open their minds to a range of alternatives. Of the very few embedded cases that articulated more '*meaningful dialogue*' there were indications that the individuals and those around them may experience a deeper and broader learning than they would through more '*compliant organisational learning*'. However, so scarce was this learning that it would not be possible to suggest that it

could extend from the individual level to the broader organisation level. Therefore in the final conceptual model, '*authentic organisational learning*' is shown in a dotted line (see Figure 14).

The overwhelming sense from participant observations was that organisational learning was a top-down controlled process. This thesis argues that '*authentic organisational learning*' can only occur when the number of individuals and/or groups involved in the learning process is sufficient to reach a critical mass, at which point it might be seen more like a social movement (Scott, 2001; Clegg et al., 2006). Otherwise the best that can be hoped for is a "potential" for '*authentic organisational learning*'.

'Compliant organisational learning' reinforces power relationships

It became apparent that the volume of '*compliant organisational learning*' was also reinforcing compliance in the organisations. In this sense '*compliant organisational learning*' was in fact part of the dominant attitudes, beliefs, values and norms that are the foundations of '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships. Such learning operates in the *third-dimension* where it is accepted as part of the *existing order of things*. This was capture succinctly by one focus group participant: "…*you go outside the party[line]…tell you what…you won't be there Monday*". Therefore the conceptual model was amended with the linkage from '*compliant organisational learning*' as the dominant organisational learning to the power relationships (See Figure 14). Likewise, showing the converse, an additional linkage was made from the '*authentic organisational learning*' with a dotted line showing a potential cycle mediated again by power relationships but not substantiated.

7.2.3   Research methodology

As part of the conclusions, I should make some comments in respect to the chosen methodology for this research project.

Critical pragmatism as underpinning philosophy

I found adopting the '*pragmatist*' approach as the underpinning philosophy gave me "permission" to be simultaneously guided by any other paradigms or research methods necessary for "what works" in answering the research question (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). More particularly, I adopted what I called a '*critical pragmatist*' approach, drawing on Critical Theory as the guiding framework for this research: underpinning the data analysis and to be the guide for an initially proposed *emancipatory* phase. In doing so, it allows the flexibility for '*mixed method*', in mixing qualitative and quantitative in the method, or the more complex '*mixed model*' design within or across the research stages.

Exploratory investigation using focus groups

Adopting a '*mixed model*' design, the project commenced with an *exploratory investigation* phase. This was appropriate to explore the model further, beyond my undocumented ethnographic account. It provided me with a degree of confidence to proceed to a more resource intensive *confirmatory investigation* phase. Cost effectiveness for the *exploratory investigation* phase was provided by focus groups, enabling high volume of concentrated data. The focus groups also provided a small scale experiment to test the association between '*revolutionary power relationships*' and the notion of a '*liberated learning space*'.

Power to engage in 'meaningful dialogue' as a counterfactual statement

In the study of power, *counterfactual* statements are claimed to be useful along with taking a *interest*-oriented approach (Morriss, 2002; Lukes, 2005). The *counterfactual* statement based on the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, made it possible to unveil the power relationships operating across the various dimensions of power: by suggesting that it is in the real interest of all individuals in organisations, and therefore their right, to feel free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*'.

However, in a number of cases the notion of questioning the *existing order of things* was so foreign that significant probing was required. A possible solution to this problem may be to use vignettes as a *projective technique* to reveal hidden aspect of

their consciousness (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002), similar to the approach adopted in the *exploratory investigation* phase. It may also alleviate the confusion with more '*technical dialogue*' involving problem solving or achieving goals, and open the scope for real radical examples to be explored. However, a danger may be that the vignettes interfere with candid self-reporting.

'Explanatory design: participant selection model (QUAL emphasis)'

As mentioned in Chapter 3, significant resources were exhausted in pursuing an '*explanatory design: participant selection model (QUAL emphasis)*' in respect to the major organisational case study in order to identify '*polar types*' in the selection of embedded cases. The success of this approach is questionable: participants disclosed significantly more depth in the interviews than their responses in the survey. In hindsight, two paths would be recommended in taking this approach again in respect to case selection for power relationships in organisations. The first path would be to make a significantly greater investment in the development of a comprehensive survey instrument, endeavouring to address the *second-*, *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* of power. Rather than rating vignettes, the development of a more comprehensive survey instrument may have been more effective in the selection process: factoring in the broader dimensions of power along with testing for validity and reliability of the instrument. The second path would be to abort the idea of a more objective approach to embedded case selection. Given the significant further resource investment required in taking the first path, and given the ubiquity of power, aborting the idea of a more objective approach to embedded case selection would be recommended for future research. Instead, resources could be better utilised on engaging further embedded cases, or conducting another organisational case study, or undertaking an *emancipatory* phase.

7.3   Research implications

Having addressed the conclusions from this research, I now turn to the implications. In this section I will address the possible significance of this research for theory, practice, social issues and action (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

7.3.1   For organisational learning theory

This thesis offers a new way of looking at organisational learning. In the introduction it was highlighted that organisational learning is believed to offer hope for organisations to be able to keep pace with the rapidly changing global environment of the 21st century, prompting significant growth in the literature since the 1990s. However, not all are believers that organisational learning can live up to the promise. In particular there are concerns whether managers are using the organisational learning rhetoric as a means of gaining commitment and compliance from employees (Coopey, 1995; Easterby-Smith et al., 1998), or whether there is a genuine interest in the collective freeing of our minds to think differently (Armstrong, 2003), which may have some organisational benefits as well.

Researchers should distinguish between two forms of organisational learning: 'compliant' and 'authentic'

Taking an *emancipatory* perspective, this research supports Huzzard and Östergren's (2002) argued re-conceptualisation of organisational learning, and suggests that it may be time to differentiate between organisation learning that may be considered '*compliant*' (a "top-down unitaristic blueprint") and that which is more '*authentic*' (a bottom-up intervention). Writers from a management or functionalist perspective would tend to focus on the former; while from radical humanist perspective would focus on the later. However, from a pragmatic or multi-paradigm perspective, an understanding of both types of organisational learning may be useful, and serve different purposes in organisations. From the case studies there was a degree of recognition amongst some embedded cases that '*compliant organisational learning*' ensured conformity and alignment to a set of organisational desired goals, keeping people working in the same direction. While '*compliant organisational learning*' may involve the exploitation of existing learning and the exploration of new learning (March, 1991), more '*authentic organisational learning*' is underpinned by an *emancipatory* perspective allowing organisational actors to free their thinking in areas that would otherwise be considered out of bounds. However, it must be stated that '*authentic organisational learning*' still provides no *guarantee* of any positive long-term effects, and may remain an organisational learning "black box" (Crossan & Berdrow, 2003). However, the distinction may give us a better appreciation of

organisational learning as a whole, and one more step closer to better understanding how and why it occurs or not.

Theorists should consider more 'meaningful dialogue' that involves questioning the existing order of things, rather than focusing on 'technical dialogue'

This research also suggests that if it is to be accepted that more '*authentic organisational learning*' is possible, then a distinction needs to be made between more '*meaningful dialogue*' and other forms of dialogue. The notion of '*meaningful dialogue*' is a key contribution of this research. The current organisational learning literature makes the distinction between '*reflection*' and a more radical version being '*critical reflection*', but not so with '*dialogue*'. An implication of this approach is that there may be a limitation to interpreting the current literature, theories, and research advocating '*dialogue*' as a key process in organisational learning. While dialogue may still be considered central, this research suggests that consideration must be given to whether the dialogue being addressed is a critical, more '*meaningful dialogue*' that involves the questioning of the *dominant ideology* and the *existing order of things*, or that which is more '*technical*' in nature such as problem solving or achieving results, or some combination of both, or some other form. For example, as previously mentioned Crossan, Lane, and White (1999) highlight dialogue as part of their "4Is" model (Intuiting, Interpreting, Integrating, and Institutionalizing) through feed-forward and feedback learning loops between individuals, groups and the organisation. However, the full scope of their notion of dialogue does not seem to have been addressed. On the surface it would appear to be more a '*technical*' or '*consensual*' form, aimed at reaching a shared understanding and meaning. There is no mention of a more critical form of dialogue that could be described in Brookfield's (2005) language of challenging ideology, contesting hegemony, unmasking power, overcoming alienation, learning liberation, reclaiming reason, and practicing democracy. This is further supported by the work of Bontis, Crossan, and Hulland (2002) who associate these learning flows with the need to effectively manage and minimise any misalignment and maximise business performance.[175]

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[175] Further, this distinction may have been provided new insights in Crossan and Berdrow's (2003) case study looking at organisational learning and the application of the 4Is model to examine strategic renewal.

Organisational learning models should include a critical paradigm that focuses on power and includes a radical perspective to power

This research has focused on power relationships, with power being an under researched area within the organisational learning literature. An implication of this research for organisation learning theory is that it highlights the need to factor in a critical paradigm into models. Remembering that power has not been the focus of mainstream management literature preferring to focus on leadership (Hardy & Clegg, 1996), the focus on leadership in current models gives central attention to only the so called "legitimate" aspects of power. The model presented in this research, which adds to the radical notion of '*revolutionary power relationships*', may have implications for organisational learning theories that focus on the traditional power relationships such as the transactional / transformational model of leadership. For example, following on the example of Crossan et al.'s (1999) 4I model, this research may extend Vera and Crossan's (2004) work using the only the transactional / transformational leadership framework at a strategic level that reinforces / challenges institutionalized learning. Similarly, this research may encourage the extension of Lawrence, Mauws, Dyck, and Kleysen's (2005) work on the "politics" of organisational learning, who suggested a way to integrate power into the 4Is model. They proposed one best form of power (influence, force, domination, and discipline) for each of the four learning processes. From an analysis of their work, it appeared to be a great example of traditional power relationships facilitating a '*managed learning space*' towards innovative ideas for corporate benefit, rather than questioning the *existing order of things*. As a result, at best, these power relationships only address one half of the picture.

Organisational learning models need to integrate the dimensions of power

Related to the last point is to encourage using a model in organisational learning that expands beyond the individual characteristics of leaderships to the broader aspects of power. The model presented in this research suggests that the three power relationships – '*transactional*', '*transformational*', and '*revolutionary*' – function to various degrees across the *four dimensions* of power. By focusing purely on leadership, the assumption is that their power is only operating in the *first-dimension*. That is, it is assumed that leaders are functioning as pluralists, where the lead is a negotiated outcome where no

person has power over another continuously and must rely on their individual bases of power.

However, by focusing on power relationships it includes the broader and more subtle aspect of power beyond leadership. This way attention is drawn to the way in which learning is kept off the agenda (*second-dimension*); the cultural pattern and institutional practices that keeps people from wanting to learn outside the boundaries of what has been deemed acceptable by others (*third-dimension*); and the way the broader history of society frames individuals as subjects to the point that individuals and groups discipline themselves (*fourth-dimension*).

Such a framework is useful in analysing power in organisations as it assists in understanding that '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships are founded on a *unitary* frame of reference, and how they function beyond the immediate hands and voice of the "leader". It also assists in understanding how '*revolutionary power relationships*' can only function in the *first-dimension* of power as they seek social change towards equality in society free of injustices. Their aim is a *pluralist* outcome where no person has power over another continuously, but they also take a *critical* or *radical* stance in highlighting the power relationships that facilitate and perpetuate the inequalities and injustices.

7.3.2   For power relationships and leadership theory

The model developed through this research also has implication for theories on power relationships and leadership.

Rather than leadership, mainstream management research needs to focus on models that include a radical perspective, to expose the full extent of power in organisations

As previous mentioned, power has not been the focus of mainstream management literature preferring to focus on leadership (Hardy & Clegg, 1996). This research calls into question the conventional approaches to leadership studies particularly as it relates

to organisations. In doing so, it supports the notion of a romanticised approach to leadership studies where '*transformational*' is referenced with being "charismatic" (Meindl, 1993) and seen as more "potent" (Burns, 1978). In this research, the evidence is that even '*transformational power relationships*' inhibit a '*liberated learning space*', thereby leading to more '*compliant organisational learning*'.

A major contribution of this research is a new way of conceptualising power in organisations, making a connection between mainstream management and the more radical perspectives of power. The mainstream perspective has made the distinction between authority as a form of "legitimate" power and other power seen as "illegitimate", informal and dysfunctional (Hardy, 1995). From this perspective, the model in this research has accommodated a popular leadership framework – *transactional* and *transformational*. As pointed out, in developing this framework for political analysis in society, Burns (1978) saw '*leadership*' as a special type of power and that all leaders are actual or potential power holders; while in applying it to organisations Bass (1985) superimposed the framework onto the "legitimate" management structure. Hence, this thesis has argued that these two traditional power relationships are underpinned by *unitary* frame of reference, where managers are assumed to have the right to manage and employees have the obligation to obey. The *unitary* ideology has developed through history to the point of functioning as '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-dimension* of power. By using this framework as power relationships rather than leadership, the focus can shift from the characteristics of the individual, to focus on the relationships between individuals and/or groups.

To this mainstream framework, as a duo of power relationships not as leadership, this research has introduced the notion of '*revolutionary power relationships*' drawing from the work of Freire (1970), thereby adding a more *radical* perspective. The positioning of the *radical* in contrast with the traditional power relationships is captured in quadrants formed by contrasting *unitary* with *radical / plural* on one axis against reinforcing and challenging on the other (see Figure 15). It can be seen that both '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships are positioned in the *unitary*

side, the former reinforcing and the later challenging. In contrast, '*revolutionary power relationships*' are positioned in the quadrants that are *radical / plural*, and can both challenge and reinforce. This is in line with the two tasks of '*revolutionary power relationships*' as suggested by Freire (1970), firstly in unveiling the reality of oppression (Phase 1 – challenge), and secondly, continue the pedagogy after the transformation to ensure permanent liberation (Phase 2 – reinforcing democratic values) (see Figure 15). In this sense the "legitimate" and the 'illegitimate", the "formal" and "informal", the "functional" and the so-called "dysfunctional", form part of the same model of power relationships which can operate between individuals and/or groups. The model in this research has explicitly joined the dots between a leadership model and the broader and more subtle aspects of power, that otherwise may have been only implicitly made.

Unitary

Transactional	Transformational

Reinforce ———————————————————————— Challenge

Revolutionary Phase 2 (pluralist / democratic)	Revolutionary Phase 1 (radical)

Plural / Radical
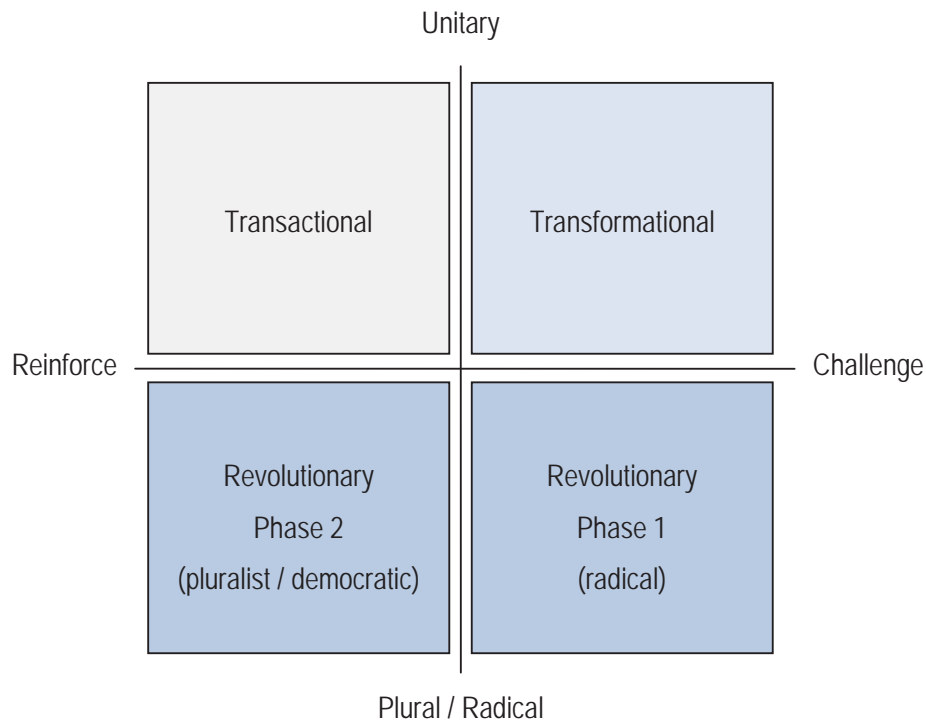
Figure 15: Positioning of three power relationships

Power in organisations can be analysed through four dimensions

A further implication of this research is that it suggests that these three power relationships can be analysed using Lukes' *three-dimensions* of power, and then further adding the Foucauldian influenced *fourth-dimension*. Firstly, it contributes with the acknowledgement that the three dimensional view of power hasn't been widely used in the study of power in organisations (Clegg, 2009a). Secondly, the approach of this study with a four dimensional model of power analysis contributes to better understanding the use of an interest based view of power in terms of Foucault's work, which Clegg et al. (2006) suggest is analytically underdeveloped. In particular, the idea that "…this fourth-dimension somehow shapes the identity of the other dimensions" (Clegg et al., 2006, p.218). This research, which has limited the analysis of the *fourth-dimension* of power to the *unitary* frame of reference , highlights how the "knowledge" or "truth" in the broader society has instilled the belief within both managers and employees that managers have a right to manage and employees an obligation to obey. It is then the managers who are responsible for the day-to-day business to reinforce this *fourth-dimension* of power in what Lukes (1974, p.22) refers to as the '*third-dimension*': "…the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions…". It is then the fourth- and the third-dimensions that reinforce the dominant position of managers, who then placed to confine the learning agenda to safe issues thereby preventing any challenge to their vested interest (*second-dimension*). It was also interesting how colleagues functioned in the *first-dimension* to further reinforce the status quo.

Hence, while Lukes (2005) suggests that the so-called *fourth-dimension* is not an ultra-radical aspect of power but one in the same as his *third-dimension*, this research tends to support that in the application to organisations there is a sound argument for all four dimensions. This is based on Lukes' insistence that there is/are responsible agent(s) who can be held responsible and accountable for the *third-dimension*. In contemporary organisation those agents might be managers. Whereas the Foucauldian *fourth-dimension* cannot be attributed to any particular agent, but is an outcome of the entire system of society, which everyone is subjected to, and the way in which individual agents are formed as subjects. The model supported by this research then is that the three power relationships, the two traditional and the one radical, can operate to various

degrees across the four dimensions of power (see Figure 16). However it again must be acknowledged that this research addressed only the *fourth-dimension* to the extent of the *unitary* frame of reference. All other mechanisms of power that might be classified as the Foucauldian *fourth-dimension* were not addressed.

	Transactional	Transformation	Revolutionary
First	Political conversations and interactions between individuals and/or groups that reinforce status quo	Political conversations and interactions that challenge the status quo, in line with new direction of management	Political conversations and interactions that expose oppression and power, moving toward collective permanent liberation
Second	Agenda control to safe issues - reinforcing the status quo, and preventing any challenge	Agenda control allowing only "legitimate" challenge to the status quo in line with new direction of management	
Third	Group social structures and culturally patterned behaviour, and institutional practices that reinforces the status quo	Group social structures and culturally patterned behaviour, and institutional practices that challenges the status quo	
Fourth	Broader societal 'structures' (as 3rd D) beyond management control, which reinforces dominant ideology		

Figure 16: Three power relationships operating in four dimensions of power

Each of the three power relationships may function within the *first-dimension* of power, however only '*transactional power relationships*' operates across all four dimensions of power and thereby reinforces the *existing order of things*. In addition to operating in the *first-dimension*, '*transformational power relationships*' operate in the *second* and *third-dimensions* of power which work to challenge management selected attitudes, beliefs values and norms.

Considering the scope and positioning, the two organisational case studies tended to reflect that a more accurate diagram of these three power relationships across the four dimensions of power might be better reflected in Figure 17. Here it can be seen that

'*transactional power relationships*' operating across the four dimensions of power far exceeds the other two. In contrast the permanent liberation phase of '*revolutionary power relationships*' was all but nonexistent in the case study organisations (Phase 2 represented as "R2" in Figure 17).
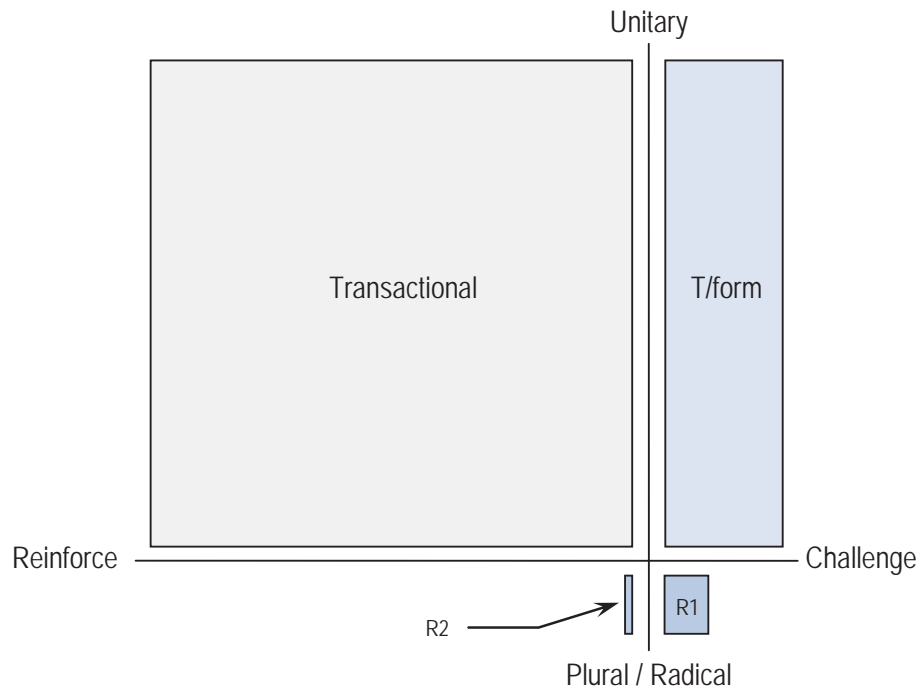
Figure 17: Positioning and scope of three power relationships in organisations

This research took a different and perhaps somewhat more simplistic path to Clegg's (1989a; 2009a) work. However, the model researched and presented here appears to be congruent with Clegg's (1989a; 2009a) idea of the circuits of power. It is acknowledged that Clegg (2009a) prefers "…an imagery of flows…" rather the using the dimension metaphor. However, Clegg acknowledges that his notion of *episodic* power is familiar to the *first-dimension* of power, and the episodic outcomes can *reproduce* or *transform* the existing architectonics of power relationships, such as the rules fixing existing relations of meaning and memberships in organisational fields. This appears consistent with the thesis of this research that the '*transactional*' (reproducing); and the '*transformational*' and '*revolutionary*' power relationships (transform) operating in the *first-dimension* of power (episodic power). The rules fixing existing relations of meaning and memberships in organisational fields functioning at

the *social* integration *level* may be seen as akin to the *second-* and *third- dimensions* of power. It is these that facilitate or restrict innovations in discipline and regulation at the *system* integration level, which may be akin to the *fourth-dimension* of power. According to Clegg's circuits of power model, it is the *social* integration level (*second-* and *third- dimensions*) and the *system* integration level (*fourth-dimension*) that impact on social relations in *episodic* power level. Perhaps a notable difference is that Clegg's notion of circuits of power and "flow" tends to be more politically neutral and have a Foucauldian influence, while the model presented in this research is more heavily influenced by Critical Theory. By that I mean my research has been more focused on the *dominant ideology*, more particularly the *unitary* frame of reference, perpetuated by the dominant group: managers. Whereas Clegg's focus was influenced by the notion of multiple flows of power and resistance points, and not the idea of a particular individual or group dominating others. The model developed in this research therefore may offer a Critical Theory based alternative to Clegg's circuits of power model.

7.3.3   For policing organisations

Policing organisations need to re-think power relationships if employees are to be free to grow

This research reveals possible implications for organisations. However, much depends on government and society perspectives on what is require of their policing organisations moving through the 21st century. '*Compliant organisational learning*' appears to have served policing organisations well in the developing history of policing, and this research revealed its prominence in the organisations studied. After all the prime purpose of '*compliant organisational learning*' is alignment and producing corporate outcomes: that is following the corporate line to ensure some corporate benefit.

However, this research suggests that these traditional power relationships may only take the policing organisation so far. The problem is that the compliant mindset is now well entrenched in the officers themselves such that they can see no alternative and continue to discipline themselves to confine their thinking within the bounds of what is deemed

acceptable usually by managers ('*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-* and *fourth-dimensions*). They risk becoming myopic, accepting the existing reality as the *only* reality (Morgan, 2006). This research suggests that more '*revolutionary power relationships*' may be needed for employees to experience a '*liberated learning space*' where they feel able and comfortable to question the traditional taken-for-granted *dominant ideology* that appear and perpetuate in policing organisations. While this research could not establish a firm link to more "*authentic organisational learning*", such unconstrained thinking may still be necessary if policing organisations are to flourish.

Police organisations need to question the paramilitary ideology (fourth- and third-dimensions of power) if they are to innovate for the future

In many policing organisations the paramilitary ideology is well enshrined, designed to bring about control, discipline, predictability and order. The question is whether it is really necessary or in fact suitable in 21st century policing, which is characterised by globalisation and the breakdown of international boundaries, and the ever increasing speed of technology. It has been recognised that the traditions of rank and hierarchical chain of command of the quasi-military management model may not fit with the demands of modern policing (Bayley & Shearing, 1996). Some organisations have flattened structures by removing superfluous ranks, and many if not all are discussing the value of collegial, participative management, involving the decentralisation of decision-making to local commands who determine the scope of police operations in their own patch (Bayley & Shearing, 1996). This was a central feature of the Alpha Program in the Terra Australis Police in the mid 1990s. However, there continues to be a recognition of the need for policing organisations to move from an authoritarian organisations to more democratic and participatory governance (Marks, 2000). Even post the 9/11 events in 2001, there is still a call for policing organisations to move beyond modernity, characterised by order, stability and consensus, to postmodernity associated with the post-industrial era, characterised by disorder, fragmentation, and diversity (Waters, 2007).

7.3.4   For policing reform

The scarcity of 'meaningful dialogue' limits the police reform agenda

This research suggests possible implications for policing reform. Australia has seen its fair share of royal commissions into the activities of policing organisations. In Chapter 1, I suggested that organisational learning may be particularly linked to the police reform agenda nationally and internationally: an issue that appears to be overlooked in the police literature. The example was provided that organisational learning may be linked to the issue of reform agenda on 'police culture' – the attitudes, values, beliefs and norms that guide behaviour (Payne, 1991; Chan, 1996) – which is renowned as difficult to change and resistant to reform strategies (Chan, 1996; Chan, 1999; Savage, 2003). Some suggest that "…there still is a police culture whose defining elements are alive and well" (Loftus, 2010, p.3). I have introduced the idea of '*meaningful dialogue*' as the social process in organisational learning which involved the collective thinking, inquiry, reflection, and questioning of the *existing order of things* which included the questioning of the underlying fundamental attitudes, values, beliefs and norms. Such questioning may play a key role in forging ethics as practice in organisations rather than relying on codes of conducts (Clegg, Kornberger, & Rhodes, 2007), either as written booklets or handed down verbally like the 'ten commandments' by external agencies or by senior management.

Despite the need for reform in policing and to question the deep-seated attitudes, values, beliefs and norms, it would appear from this research that '*meaningful dialogue*' may be rare in policing organisations, or at least it was in the two organisation case studies subject of this research. It was clear that the majority of dialogue was of a '*technical*' nature involving problem solving and achieving goals. This is not surprising given that frontline policing involves responding to crisis situations.

Despite '*transformational power relationships*' being considered more potent (Burns, 1978), this research tends to show that these relationships <u>do not</u> facilitate a '*liberated learning space*', not dissimilar to '*transactional power relationships*'. As a result individuals learn to play the game, and know when it is time to speak and when it is

time to remain silent. In many cases the '*managed learning space*' extended beyond '*meaningful dialogue*' such that participants did not even feel free to engage in '*technical dialogue*'. As one senior officer stated in this research: "[w]e are too shit frightened to question each other…. we are more likely today to keep quiet than we have ever been"[176].

This observation was made after more than 15 years of reform since the introduction of the Alpha reform program in Terra Australis. If this is the case, which this research suggests it is, then this has potential significant repercussions for police reform which both the Hennery Royal Commission in Terra Australis and the Commission of Inquiry in Oceania were aiming to address.

Reformers should be concerned that the questioning of the traditional attitudes, beliefs, values and norms; power relationships; and moral issues, equal rights, or social injustices in the organisation, were associated with the notion of "rocking the boat" and carry other negative connotations. It was evident that in many cases, officers and police staff still feel the need to be compliant and do not feel free to speak out for fear of the consequences. Moreover, "…compliance can lead to ethically questionable outcomes because there are no guarantees of the ethicality of rules because they are rules" (Clegg et al., 2007, p.113). It would appear that the "culture of silence" is still alive and well, but perhaps more subtle. The question has to be asked whether anything has been learnt.

'*Revolutionary power relationships*' may be necessary to facilitate ongoing questioning of dominant attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms

Reformers may be better placed to conceptualise culture change in terms of power relationships and organisational learning.   Culture may be seen in terms of '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *third-* and even the *fourth-dimension* of power. Such power relationships are suggested here as facilitating a '*managed learning space*'. In such relationships, individuals and groups are not

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[176] Superintendent – Case 151.050

encouraged to question the *dominate ideology* or the *existing order of things*. Similarly, internal reformers adopting a management agenda to the learning process may be seen as '*transformational power relationships*' also underpinned by *unitary* frame of reference, and likewise facilitate only '*consensual*' and further '*technical*' dialogues. This research suggest that more '*revolutionary power relationships*' may be necessary to bring about internal reform.

The effectiveness of more '*revolutionary power relationships*' in bringing about social change is recognised. Some have argued that "…internal resistance or challenge is one of the most effective and direct mechanisms for bringing about change in policing agencies…" (Marks, 2000, p.558). Further, "…effective police transformation may require a more radical challenge of established police culture. Such a challenge, it is argued, may be generated by 'dissident' police groupings which defy existing police practice and frameworks" (Marks, 2000, p.557). However, external reformers cannot instil '*revolutionary power relationships*' on others on the inside. Such relationships must be generated by the police practitioners and managers themselves. Real reform in policing must come from within, not imposed from outside or from above, but from each and every officer for him or herself.

7.3.5   For police training and education

The lack of 'meaningful dialogue' intensifies the focus on training for purpose and skills, rather than education and learning to explore new ways of thinking

Vickers (2000) made the observation that there was an organisational ideology in policing organisations that focuses on training rather than education and learning. If that situation is still prevalent today, the lack of '*meaningful dialogue*' in the two policing organisational case studies compounds that situation. Part of the '*managed learning space*' is to focus organisational energies on the training of officers for front-line policing; hence participants in this research reported mainly engaging in '*technical dialogue*'. When the job role changes toward community-oriented policing and problem-solving policing, the focus is still on task-oriented training (Bradford & Pynes, 1999). Even '*transformational*' power relationships still function to '*manage*' the

learning space with predefined reform agendas, for example a change management program focusing on customer service training (Burn, 2010). However, a 'hidden curriculum' in police training has been suggested, in which there are unintended consequences of "…reinforcing traditional cultural prejudices and inhibits major change programmes…" (White, 2006, p.386). Although it has been suggested that situation may be changing internationally (Cordner & Shain, 2011), it is acknowledged that in the United Kingdom "[p]art of the reason for the lack of reform is the resistance from police officers to academic study in what is regarded as a practice-focused vocation" (Paterson, 2011, p.288). The failure to question the 'technical' and scientific paradigm of training in 'means' rather than learning centred around values 'ends', has raised concerns that "…the police service is proceeding down an intellectual cul-de-sac" (White, 2006, p.389). This focus on a top-down approach to training rather than education and learning, can be seen as akin to Freire's (1996, p.53) notion of the "banking concept of education", where "…knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing".

Educated officers may feel under-valued and alienated if their learning is not utilised

Another implication from this research in terms of education is the ability of policing organisations to harness the knowledge and learning of officers who have undertaken or do undertake external education. When officers do undertake education and learning programs external to the organisation, this research must raise concerns about how much of that learning is able to penetrate and permeate the organisation as '*authentic organisational learning*' in which others can share the benefits of new insights. With traditional power relationships facilitating a '*managed learning space*', significant learning must be underutilised. It is suggested here that without '*authentic organisational learning*', organisational actors do not capitalise on the human potential within organisations, consequently individuals particularly those engage in tertiary education may feel under-valued and alienated. For example, there is evidence to suggest that employee perception of the organisational learning culture among highly educated males, impacts on career satisfaction, their organizational commitment, and ultimately employee turnover intention (Joo & Park, 2009; Joo, 2010).

7.3.6   For policing practitioners

Police practitioners need to be aware that the right to speak out for social change comes at a personal sacrifice

The research surfaces implications for police practitioners. It was apparent from the disclosures by the embedded case participants that very limited '*meaningful dialogue*' occurs in the organisations under study.   Instead, most participants engaged in '*technical dialogue*' in order to achieve the outcomes for the organisation.   In some cases the traditional power relationships were so strong that the '*managed learning space*' extended to inhibit even '*technical dialogue*'. On most occasions when people did feel free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*', it is usually occurred between colleagues of an equal rank / level and more often than not it took place in a social occasion or "behind closed doors".

The model indicates that police practitioners need to be aware of the '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-dimension* that creates that '*managed learning space*'.   It is here that the *existing order of things* becomes embedded in society and in policing organisations through history, to the point that each practitioner takes on board that power and discipline themselves to maintain the *existing order of things*.   The literature would also show that historically there is economic, political, military, and ideology power at work on a global basis and between nation-states (Mann, 1986, 1993; Scott, 2001; Mann, 2011, 2012, 2013), and economic power in a capitalist society means the employment contract plays an important role in the '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-dimension*.   Some agents may make a conscious or subconscious calculation based on the proverb "the one who pays the piper calls the tune".   Consequently, individual agents become subservient to those above, and discipline themselves as they wish to be seen as good employees worthy of promotion (Aktouf, 1996).   Some may strive for promotion to break out of the subservient relationship, but the '*transactional power relationships*' operating in the *fourth-dimension* ensures the *existing order of things* is maintained. The *existing order of things* is further maintain through managers functioning '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships through controlling the agenda (*second-dimension*) and controlling the thinking and desires within the organisation (*third-*

dimension), facilitating a '*managed learning space*' such that issues, that may be important to police practitioners, are not raised.

It was evident from the embedded cases that when participants truly felt free to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' they were in '*revolutionary power relationships*'. An implication from this is that such individuals would be seen as troublesome employees who were "rocking the boat" or "not on board", and consequently considered not worthy of promotion. However, those participants who were more fully immersed in '*revolutionary power relationships*' acknowledged this as a fact and were not perturbed, but saw it as necessary for the greater good. While each of these participants had reached at least the equivalent rank of senior sergeant, this could have major implications for these officers and staff members, and police practitioner generally, who wish to generate '*revolutionary power relationships*'. There is an opportunity cost that involves a personal sacrifice.

Bottom-up organisational change will be difficult in policing organisations

Generating sufficient and quality '*revolutionary power relationships*' to ultimately facilitate '*authentic organisational learning*' will not be an easy undertaking in policing organisations. This research tends to indicate the extensiveness of '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' power relationships operating in policing organisations to restrict the learning agenda. Mann (1986) and others (Clegg, 1989a; Hardy & Clegg, 1996; Clegg et al., 2006) describe the situation where the masses comply as they are "organisationally outflanked" by the overwhelming power exercised by others such as those occupying management and supervisory positions. The masses may remain powerless and "outflanked" when they do not have the knowledge and are ignorant of the workings of power, and ignorant of others with who they can form an alliance (Hardy & Clegg, 1996). They may be "outflanked" when they consider resistance pointless (Mann, 1986) or the perceived costs outweigh the benefits or chances of success (Hardy & Clegg, 1996). It explains why the dominated may tend to comply and consent to their own subordination, rather than revolt (Clegg, 1989a).

The difficulty highlighted in this research suggests that police practitioners may need to be willing to commit great personal effort contributing to research and developing well articulated arguments, whether through doctoral, masters, honours or otherwise independent study, to challenge the existing dominant values, beliefs, attitudes and norms that maintain and perpetuate existing power relationships in policing organisations, such as the *unitary* frame of reference. There will also need to be police practitioner who are willing to listen, ponder, question, and to ultimately continually engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' with their colleagues, including managers at all levels, and not to blindly accepting the arguments, but in an effort to making a positive contribution to '*authentic organisational learning*'. There will need to be police practitioner with an emancipatory philosophy well embedded in their mind, to ensure that '*meaningful dialogue*' is not akin to simply "knocking" alternative points of view as being fanciful or unrealistic, and to ensure that the person espousing those views are not simply dismissed as a "fruitcake" or "anti-organisational". However, it will mean police practitioners respecting alternative points of views, and a willingness to engage in critical reflection and questioning and exploring more deeply the underpinning values, beliefs, attitudes and norms in operation in their organisation. It will only be then that Lauer's (1995) vision of a 'practitioner-centred police organisation' will be realised.

7.3.7   For policing managers

Police managers need to be aware that they are equally oppressed

This research similarly has implications for police managers as for police practitioners. Freire (1970) suggests both the "oppressed" and the "oppressor" are dehumanised, and must join together in the struggle to free themselves. It is without doubt that many, if not all, managers will not take kindly to being referred to as the "oppressor". However, unequivocally there is an unequal power relationship between the manager and the managed. By and large the inequality is set up by a system of selection to identify one person to be given greater formal authority over a group of others. Difference in status or rank between the manager and the managed is not necessarily a signal that the manager has greater knowledge, skills or capability than the managed, nor that the manager has greater expertise in managing than the managed. Nor is it that their

thinking is necessarily more superior, nor that their particular attitudes, values and beliefs are to be held in a higher regards than others (albeit that a selection process may have deemed that so). There are many talented people who do not participate in vertical career advancement, but who are still developing their knowledge and capabilities. Yet many managers to varying degrees accept without question the *unitary* frame of reference in that they have a right to manage and those over whom they command have an obligation to obey.

This research indicates that the *unitary* frame of reference translates to managers have the right to be heard by those below them, and all other employees have an obligation to be silent to those above them. Even police managers themselves reported either not feeling free to engage, or by their accounts do not engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' with those above, to question the *dominant ideology* and the *existing order of things* in the organisation.

Police managers can do much in the liberating approach toward more 'authentic organisational learning'

This research suggests that leaders and managers may take two paths. One is to foster only '*transactional*' and/or '*transformational*' power relationships in order to protect their privileged position. The research suggests that people will tend to confine their dialogue to issues of a '*technical*' nature, or to '*consensual dialogue*' ('*managed learning space*'). Managers taking only this path may invest their time and energy in educating themselves in mainstream management theories and literature, which take a functional perspective focusing on how to extract the best performance for the organisation in the most effective and efficient way. The value of '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' should not be underestimated. When it comes to "leading" a reform strategy, managers taking this path will be well able to align behaviour to the corporate line. However, adopting only this path will only take the manager so far. The idea of strong leadership by managers predominantly means '*transactional*' and/or '*transformational*' power relationships, which this research suggests a '*managed learning space*' for employees and ultimately more '*compliant organisational learning*'.

The alternative path is to broaden their understanding of power relationships beyond mainstream management theories that focus instead on leadership as legitimated authority and management prerogative. In doing so, they might explore new ways to facilitate the emergence of an internal '*social movement*', themselves acting as '*organisational activists*' towards engineering new polyarchy structures for the future (Clegg et al., 2006): where the enduring goal is *emancipation* for all organisational actors. One suggestion is 'heterarchy' involving multiple rule and balance of power, or even 'responsible autonomy' placing decision-making in the hands of a group who are accountable for outcomes (Fairtlough, 2007). However, it must be remembered that *emancipation* cannot be a gift bestowed on practitioners by managers (Freire, 1970; Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). The joint discovery and implementation must be part of the liberating exercise or struggle. For example, managers may encourage the legitimacy of Freire style '*revolutionary power relationships*' through *emancipatory* or *critical* action research (Boog, 2003; Boog et al., 2003).

Police managers need to be aware of the subtleties of power relationships, and should join police practitioners in social change in the organisation

In interpreting this research, managers should not read this thesis as advocating '*revolutionary power relationships*' in the operational field where there may be life and death decisions to be made. To predict their response: "*We can't have officers questioning decisions and orders*". However, equally the paradigm of "manoeuvring the troops to take the hill" does not need to function in the safe zones of the organisation such as the offices, corridors, and classrooms. Hence, it is unsure why some Commissioned Officers (senior managers) insist on being referred to as "Sir" Ma'am or "Mr…" or "Ms…" in these environments, while others adopt a nonchalant and blasé acceptance of the salutation. While such practises may have been beneficial in the history of policing, their relevance in 21st century policing needs to be questioned. Without wishing to pursue this issue further, this research suggests that appropriateness of questioning in an operational environment needs to be the subject of '*meaningful dialogue*' between police practitioners and managers.

Police managers need to act with honesty

This research should provide a word of caution for managers. Policing organisations do not need "Machiavellian revolutionists". Managers functioning in traditional power relationships may see the benefits in facilitating more '*authentic organisational learning*' and may be tempered to force and manipulate power relationships to meet their own Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). However, employees will see them for what they are – '*transformational power relationships*': the likely result may be silence.

7.3.8 For the researcher's learning

This research has implication for me in my on-going learning journey. This particular section of my life-long learning journey spanning some 10 years has been a rocky one, as one might expect embarking on a research project heavily immersed in Critical Theory. However, it has been an *emancipatory* one, raising my consciousness and freeing my mind (but no doubt not totally) from the repressive nature of organisational life (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992).

Previous to commencing this project, I was completing a Master of Business Administration degree, had recently been promoted to the rank of Senior Sergeant at the age of 37, and very soon was being encouraged to apply to the rank of Inspector on the basis of "*you are exactly what we need in the Commissioned Officer ranks*". This was a life-long dream since joining the police at the age of 20. My organisation was about to face a Royal Commission into corruption, which would mean further change. I understood many business concepts relevant in policing organisations, and had focused much of my post-graduate studies in organisational change. The aim of my research started out as a venture in the area of strategic human resource development, particularly focusing on the learning organisation philosophy. It was to focus on leadership and culture, but I knew power was to play a major part in a policing organisation. My PhD supervisors were two key people in the new wave of policing, with a keen interest in police reform. For a highly motivated officer, I was well placed for further advancement.

Things were about to change. In the course of my learning and understanding the theories, I found myself questioning others in respect some attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within policing. Not because I wanted to put anyone to the test or to be disrespectful, but for no other reason than it was against my personal values. As an example, I recall a senior officer telling me about a new concept known as "District Status Review" (DSR) meetings, and he seem to gain pleasure out of the DSR being an opportunity to "embarrass" the officers-in-charge of his sub-districts if they were not performing. A fatal mistake was to challenge the senior officer's view ever so politely that I didn't think it was very conducive to learning. While nothing was said at the time, it was evident from the look on his face that it was a comment that was not appreciated. In an incident with another senior officer I politely raised my concern that an "adversarial" environment was evident in his area of command and that it may be counterproductive in creating a learning environment. This was another fatal mistake on my part. Shortly after these incidents (and no doubt other similar minor interactions) I come under intense scrutiny to the point that I postponed my studies to set about to re-establish my credibility as a valued employee.

Engaging in critical theory changed my organisational outlook: It unveils the hidden aspects of power and sets a path to desire more authentic social change

While I was familiar with the "rules of engagement" as an employee in a policing organisation, these minor incidents set me on a learning trajectory that would not otherwise have been explored. After engaging in Critical Theory for a considerable time, I became conscious of the limitations of functionalist theories or management rhetoric. An implication for me after having undertaken this research, is dealing with the question of whether I have out grown the organisation or whether the organisation has out grown me. If the above examples and those uncovered in this research are anything to go on, life could be difficult for an officer questioning the *existing order of things*. With this new insight into how power relationships may impact upon organisational learning, it will be difficult to <u>not</u> engage in such questioning. It would be difficult for me to remain silent. However, unless like minded people can be found and fostered, it is likely that such questioning will not be well received by the believers of the *dominant ideology* in positions of authority. As mentioned in Chapter 1, feelings of isolation, alienation, and hopelessness were not uncommon along this journey immersed in Critical Theory; however it also offered a degree of hope and optimism.

Through the course of this research I had identified colleagues disillusioned by the *existing order of things* and looking for social change, who have inspired me for action.

For me, an implication of this research is that organisational life will never be the same again. Simply meeting corporate objectives on behalf of others in order to advance the corporate ladder can no longer be the single focus. Moving up the corporate or social ladder has the unintended consequence of reinforcing relations of domination and validating hierarchy systems (Haugaard, 2002). As a manager within a policing organisation my challenge will be to find a healthy balance between fulfilling my corporate responsibilities while still engaging in the liberating intent espoused by Critical Theorists. One option for me would be to continue on in the organisation in the same way as I was prior to undertaking this thesis, which would no doubt be expected by and/or please senior managers. However, there are two issues here. First, there is the risk of cognitive dissonance: the internal conflict or tension between two ways of thinking that do not fit or work well together. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, this research would suggest that I run the risk of simply perpetuating the role of the traditional power relationships in facilitating a '*managed learning space*', and thereby further compounding more '*compliant organisational learning*'.

An alternative path may be to follow the influential work of Freire (1996) in the field of adult education, and to continually looking for ways and opportunities to generate '*revolutionary power relationships*' in the organisation, which may facilitate a '*liberated learning space*' for others. For example, the development of a "network" or "association" among policing practitioners as a form of collective action, and engaging in "critical" or "emancipatory" action learning (Boog, 2003) projects within the organisation. An extension of this could be to engage in an emancipatory mentoring role to assist others in questioning the dominant attitudes, beliefs, values, and norm that maintain the *exiting order of things*. This approach could be combined with other emancipatory research and continuous writing in the field, not just in academic journals but also police practice journals, aimed at raising consciousness of power relationships that impact on learning in policing organisations. As previously mentioned organisational learning appears to be overlooked in policing literature.

7.4 Limitations

Having addressed the implications, there are a number of limitations in this research that need to be mentioned.

No precise measure of power

First, the investigation of power is not a precise science, and there is no standard measure of power in the literature. While a quantitative survey instrument has been devised based on the characteristics of leaders (Avolio et al., 1999), it does not address the more comprehensive and subtle multi-dimensions of power. Instead, the literature acknowledges that power is an essentially contested concept (Lukes, 2005) and is difficult to pin down (Clegg et al., 2006), hence there is no single guaranteed way of measuring power (Morriss, 2002). It is questionable whether a suitable quantitative survey instrument could be devised to capture the subtleties in the operation of all four dimensions across the three power relationships. Once one dimension of power is isolated, there is no guarantee that the subject is influenced by another form of power.

Researcher's influence on interpretation process

Secondly, with a more qualitative approach with interviews, the data analysis requires a degree of interpretation by me based on my interpretations of the literature as well as what happens in the organisations. In some ways I have an advantage of more than 25 years in a policing organisation to assist in this interpretative process. While this opens the possibility for a very rich data source, it can also be a limitation in that my interpretations may be influenced by my own history, personal makeup, and biases. In saying that, as detailed in Chapter 3, I made every effort to remain cognisant of my biases and prejudice, and confront and challenge my thinking. However, I understand that I may never be fully aware of my own "*false-consciousness*", hence be still subject to a *fourth-dimension* of power.

Ability to generalise to other policing organisations

A further limitation is the ability for this research to generalise to other organisations, or even policing organisations in Australia. However, it should be reminded that the

ability to generalise to other organisations through having a representative set of cases is not the purpose of the case study, but more akin to an experiment following a 'replication' logic to predict similar or contrasting results (Yin, 2003b). Single case design are vulnerable (Yin, 2003b), whereas multiple case studies are considered more robust, provide more compelling evidence (Remenyi et al., 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), and offers greater analytical power (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). This research was still limited to two organisational case studies, with the second one being supplementary to the major case. In the second organisational case study, I had no "insider knowledge" about the organisation; however I did carry into the organisation my biases of what it means to be an employee of a policing organisation. However, the observations from these two organisational case studies could be compared and contrasted against the findings of a single case study, for example of the New South Wales Police undertaken by Gordon (2006) (see also Gordon et al., 2009).

Missing emancipation phase

A final limitation is a missing *emancipatory* phase. The original research design included a phase where the observations and interpretation from the *confirmatory investigation* phase would feedback into one or several focus groups as a '*collaborative inquiry reference group(s)*' to identify possible explanations whether congruent or rival. This process was to provide the opportunity to address *internal validity* in the analysis of the case studies. This is particular important in presenting evidence from case studies which the analysis has been undertaking from a Critical Theory perspective.

In addition, as pointed out in Chapter 3, collaboration is an important theme in the validation process for Critical Theorists, as it avoids further exploitation (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This is particularly important given this thesis is position in the *emancipatory* perspective of organisation learning. However, I took a degree of comfort knowing that this was an avenue I could pursue in post-doctoral research.

7.5 Further research

While this research may contribute to a better understanding of how and why power relationships impact on '*authentic organisational learning*', there are still further questions to be answered.

Extending MLQ (Form 5X) to include dimensions for '*revolutionary power relationships*'

Firstly, from a *positivist* perspective Avolio, Bass, & Jung (1999) have tested the MLQ (Form 5X) as a research tool to draw the distinction between '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' leadership characteristics. In the application to power relationships operating in the *first-*, and perhaps even the *second-dimensions* of power, this research suggests consideration needs to be given to '*revolutionary power relationships*'. An interesting piece of further research is whether the MLQ (Form 5X) could be extended to include the radical aspect to the traditional power relationships. The extension would need to address the *unitary* ideology as part of the transactional / transformational framework. While it is questionable whether the extended MLQ (Form 5X) could address the full consideration across the four dimensions of power, it could be used to improve the research design for case selection in a quan/QUAL study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Extending to other police organisations or organisations generally

Whether a quantitative approach is used to enhance the selection of embedded cases or not, further research is necessary in applying the model to other policing organisations in Australia, as well as internationally. Developing a broader number of organisational cases will allow for comparing and contrasting between cases, which may give a better understanding of power relationships in policing organisations to ascertain whether there are common themes such as those built around the paramilitary ideology and the *unitary* frame of reference that underpins the traditional power relationships, or whether there are cross-cultural differences that require further exploration. In essence, is the model of power relationships (including the two traditional – '*transactional*' and '*transformational*' – and the radical – '*revolutionary*' – operating across the four dimensions of power) applicable across a range of policing organisations? Similarly, can the model be applied to other organisations, including other paramilitary

organisations such as fire-fighters and customs and immigration services (Gordon et al., 2009)? Are there policing organisations or organisations generally that foster more '*revolutionary power relationships*' underpinned by a *critical / pluralist* frame of reference? If so, how do these power relationships survive? Obviously there would be many concerns from management in respect to '*revolutionary power relationships*', and therefore research that addresses these concerns would be useful in understanding the impacts of '*revolutionary power relationships*' on issues such as alignment and performance.

Co-existence of 'authentic' and 'compliant' organisational learning in one organisation

Another avenue of further research is to better understand the tension between '*compliant*' and '*authentic*' organisational learning. Despite a limitation to the evidence found in this research, what was found indicates that when people feel free to engage in more '*meaningful dialogue*' there is the potential for more '*authentic*' organisational learning to be facilitated. Given that managers are concerned with alignment to a common purpose and therefore more likely to be advocating more '*compliant*' organisational learning, it would be interesting to better understand whether '*authentic*' and '*compliant*' organisational learning can co-exist in the one organisation.[177] If it is possible, it would be useful to have better understanding of the degree that more '*authentic*' organisational learning would be tolerated by managers before it was considered dysfunctional. On this point, to what degree of control would managers be happy to relinquish to the general employees and conversely how much control would still be in the hands of senior managers of the organisation?

Longitudinal research on police officer cohort from the pre-recruit phase to 5 years service

A final suggestion for further research is a longitudinal study to track the impacts of power relationships over time. The recruit police officer do not come to a policing organisation as a blank canvas, but has years of exposure to power relationships from birth. In order to gain a better appreciation of power relationships that develop over

time and their impact on organisational learning, longitudinal research following a cohort of police officers as embedded cases in one policing organisation, from the pre-recruit phase to 5 years service, could be useful in better understanding the impact on their freedom to speak. It is not known whether the police recruit comes to the organisation with a '*liberated learning space*' perhaps generated from tertiary level education or life experiences, and the stage or stages at which the various power relationships have greatest impact. It is assumed that police academy training may have a significant impact as a period of receiving intense '*technical*' knowledge, and the research could track the embedded cases through this process. However, it is equally important to track the embedded cases post recruit training to identify the degree of influence power relationships have on their freedom to speak post-recruit training. This research could have linkages with concerns about attrition rates in policing organisations, and there may be a sense of frustration brought about by traditional power relationships shutting down more '*meaningful dialogue*', and officer feeling frustrated that their voices are not heard. It was apparent in the present research that officers in particular, were more likely to engage in '*revolutionary power relationships*' with others when they had made a conscious decision to abandon, or at least were not concerned about, career advancement.

7.6   Concluding Comments

In drawing this chapter and ultimately this thesis to a close, it is hope that it may be the start of a new beginning. As previously mentioned organisational learning is one of a number of concepts in management and organisational studies that is believed to offer hope for organisations to be able to keep pace with the rapidly changing global environment of the 21st century. However, the model presented here differentiates '*authentic organisational learning*' as an *emancipatory* process, from the rhetoric of traditional organisational learning which may be used by managers to gain compliance and commitment from employees. As such, it opens the potential for freeing people's minds to think more deeply and differently, and to give more breadth and depth to alternatives. This is important if the imagination of employees is to be unleashed to see

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[177] For example, it may be that '*compliant*' organisational learning may be accepted as necessary and essential in an operational environment, but '*authentic*' organisational learning is better for organisational strategic development, not driven by managers for corporate benefits but by employees generally.

new possibilities for the future. Not only does this have long term benefits for organisations, but it is also the ethical thing to do. The model suggests that to capitalise on more '*authentic organisational learning*' people need to feel free to think and speak, not just superficially, but to engage in '*meaningful dialogue*' that questions the dominant values, belief, attitudes and norms in organisations. Managers and employees need to pay attention to the power relationships that prevent such a '*liberated learning space*'. In the leadership literature, attention is paid to the transactional / transformational framework, with transformational leadership usually seen as more potent in its ability to change organisational culture. However, it is overlooked or taken for granted that these traditional power relationships in organisations are founded on a *unitary* ideology.

The model presented here is significant because it draws attention to how traditional power relationships, either as '*transactional*' or '*transformational*' operating within the *first-* , *second-*, *third-* and *fourth-dimensions* of power, restrict or manage the learning space of employees. The model also stresses the potential importance of '*revolutionary power relationships*' which have a foundation in Critical Theory, to encourage resistance and struggle both of which historically are not accepted by managers in organisations who seek to eradicate it and shut it down. However, managers and employees need to see the value in these power relationships to facilitate a '*liberated learning space*', and free the minds of all organisational actors to ask the questions that are not normally asked such as those that challenge the *dominant ideology* and the *existing order of things*. Engaging in this form of questioning may better invite imaginative and creative participation, rather than silencing some voices while privileging others.

As the introduction opening this chapter highlights, individuals or groups who rigidly adhere to a set of doctrines or a *dominant ideology* and who are intolerant of other views, feed by their dedication, zeal and passion, can lead to unethical outcomes and reinforce the status quo. The overall message for police practitioners, managers and reformers is to encourage all employees to engage in a liberating struggle together to

free their minds from the power relationships that prevent them from becoming more fully human. With that this thesis ends with a message from Paulo Freire:

> *Sectarianism, fed by fanaticism, is always castrating. Radicalization, nourished by a critical spirit, is always creative.*
>
> *Sectarianism mythicises, and thereby alienates; radicalization criticizes and thereby liberates.*
>
> *The radical, committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a "circle of certainty" within which reality is also imprisoned.*
>
> *On the contrary, the more radical the person is, the more fully he or she enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he or she can better transform it.*
>
> *This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them.*

Paulo Freire

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In order to for the reader to navigate their way through this thesis, the researcher provides the following glossary of terms:

'*Authentic organisational learning*' is a bottom-up employee driven, locally situated and participative approach to learning, which emphasise the need for multiple and diverse realties of learning, focusing on the emancipation of all organisational actors. As such conflict is inevitable and even desirable; where consensus is a potential outcome of learning but not necessarily and not predefined or the target of management.

<div align="right">(Huzzard & Östergren, 2002)</div>

'*Compliant organisational learning*' is a top-down unitaristic blueprint towards learning, which emphasises shared vision and meaning, and consensus, focusing on a single corporate learning agenda. That is one corporate voice. Emphasis is on corporate direction for corporate benefit, whether exploiting existing learning or exploring new learning.

<div align="right">(Huzzard & Östergren, 2002)</div>

'*Consensual dialogue*' is '*dialogue*' which involves a selective approach to the collective thinking and inquiry that reinforces the values chosen by management to epitomize the organisation's 'culture', aimed at developing a shared commitment to common purpose, through creating or generating a shared and common understanding or meaning.

<div align="right">(Reynolds, 1997; 1998)</div>

'*Critical reflection*' is '*reflection*' concerned with emancipation through questioning the subtle or invisible taken-for-granted assumptions which are usually not asked, analysing power relationships that are invariably asymmetrical, and a collective focus on the social, political and cultural processes with the view to changing them.

(Reynolds, 1997)

'Dialogue' is the social or group process that links individual learning to organisation learning. It involves the collective communicating, thinking and inquiry into the assumptions and certainties which compose everyday experiences and that can potentially transform the underlying thinking.

(Isaacs, 1993; 1999)

'Learning space' is an individual's perception about their freedom to think and speak. At a basic level a person has a *'learning space'* if he/she feels free to engage in *'reflection'* at the individual level, or *'dialogue'* at a social or group level.

'Liberated learning space' is a particular *'learning space'* where a person feels free to engage in *'critical reflection'* at the individual level or *'meaningful dialogue'* at a social or group level.

'Managed learning space' is a particular *'learning space'* opposite to a *'liberated learning space'* where a person <u>does not</u> feel free to engage in *'critical reflection'* at the individual level, or *'meaningful dialogue'* at a social or group level, whether self-managed or managed by others; however may feel free to engage in *'technical'* or *'consensual'* dialogue.

'Meaningful dialogue' is a particular *'dialogue'* aligned with the notion of *'critical reflection'*, and involves questioning the existing order of things: the dominant ideology or fundamental attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms in organisations and society.

'*Pluralist*' frame of reference views society as having a negotiated order where power is shared and no one individual or group has absolute power to dominate another continuously.

(Morgan, 2006)

'*Radical*' frame of reference views society as encompassing different class interests, and therefore advocates social change through exposing oppression and asymmetrical power.

(Morgan, 2006)

'*Reflection*' is primarily a learning process that occurs within the mind of the individual, as they recapture their experience – thinking, evaluating and mulling it over.

(Boud et al., 1985a)

'*Revolutionary power relationships*', built on *radical* and *pluralist* frames of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups that challenge existing attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations in order to bring about social change.

(Freire, 1970; Burns, 1978)

'*Technical dialogue*' (or '*instrumental dialogue*') involves collective thinking and inquiry that involves practical questioning towards the best course of action to the achievement of goals or the most effective and efficient solutions of specific problems.

(Reynolds, 1997; 1998)

'*Transactional power relationships*', built on the *unitary* frame of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups, that reinforce existing dominant attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations in order to maintain the status quo.

(Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bass, 1997)

'*Transformational power relationships*', built on the *unitary* frame of reference, are relationships between individuals and/or between groups that <u>challenge existing</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organisations, taking a <u>management-centred approach</u> in order to instil new predetermined dominant attitudes, values and beliefs within organizations.

(Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bass, 1997)

'*Unitary*' frame of reference is the ideology that views the interests of the individual and society as synonymous, and therefore managers have the right to manage and employees the obligation to obey.

(Morgan, 2006)

Table 14: Three social science research worldviews compared

	Questions	Positivist Social Science	Interpretative Social Science	Critical Social Science
1	What is the ultimate purpose of constructing social scientific research?	To discover and document causal laws of human behaviour	To develop understanding of social life; discover how people construct subjective meaning in context of natural and/or social setting	To change the social world; to critique social relations and transform them; to empowering people, particularly the less powerful; to reveal hidden truths; to encourage grassroots action;
2	What is the fundamental nature of social reality?	Reality is real; it exists out there (essentialist orientation); assumes people experience the world the same; stable pre-existing patterns or order can be discovered	Social world (life) is perceived; constructed through interaction; people create reality – taken-for-granted (constructionist orientation); experiences differ and given equal value	Social reality has many layers; accepts there is an observable reality and social constructed reality; as well as a deeper unobservable level of structural and causal mechanisms (in historical context) that generate surface level (realist orientation)
3	What is the basic nature of human beings?	Assumes humans to be self-interested, pleasure-seeking, rational mammals; shaped by external forces	Human engage in a continuous process of creating and sustaining meaning through social interaction; patterns are evolving; continually making sense of their worlds	Humans exist in a continuous relational process – creating society and being created by society; can be misled and have unrealised potential trapped by illusion; reification (detachment from what we created – treating as alien)
4	What is the view on human agency (free will, volition, and rationality)?	*Deterministic* (what determining cause produces effect); down plays free choice; free will is largely illusion	Assumes voluntarism; voluntary individuals making free choice (human agency); focus on thinking not just action	Bounded autonomy (blending determinism and voluntarism); free will, choices, and decision-making not unlimited, but within restricted boundaries or options; can be moved
5	What is the relationship between science and common sense?	Science is the "best" way to find truth (common sense is inferior, less valid)	Ordinary people use common sense to guide them every day; it contains meaning of everyday social interactions (common sense is vital to understand people)	False consciousness (people often have mistaken or false ideas about their true interests); hides power; task is to demystify and unveil surface appearances to reveal hidden structures (not clearly observable).
6	What constitutes an explanation or theory of social reality?	Nomothetic (law) explanation; universally valid; deductive reasoning	Idiographic ("thick" description); describes and interpret how people live their lives, and how meaning is generated and sustained; reader may feel reality of another; inductive reasoning	Abduction reasoning to create explanatory critique; 'tries on' potential rule and asks what might follow from this; rarely produces definitive truth; advances deeper understanding by eliminating some alternatives; explanatory critique may differ from prevailing beliefs; reveals a pathway for emancipatory action and change
7	How does one determine whether an explanation is true or false?	No logical contradiction; consistent with observed facts; replication needed; observations can be repeated; deduces and tests hypotheses with replicated observations to confirm causal law	True if it makes sense to the people being studied; if it allows others to enter the reality of people being studied (postulate of adequacy)	Explanation are verified through *praxis* (explanations are valued when it helps people understand the world, to take action to change it); tests theory by accurately describing conditions generated by underlying structures, then applying knowledge to change social relations; testing is dynamic
8	What does good evidence or factual information look like?	Objective; assumes empirical facts exist and observable; assumes subjective understanding of empirical world is shared (intersubjectivity); assumes there are incontestable neutral facts on which all rational people agree	Subjective; evidence must be understood in the context in which it occur, or the meaning assigned by social actors; facts are fluid and embedded in meaning system; not impartial, objective, and neutral; often brackets taken-for-granted assumptions	Bridges objective-subjective gap; facts of material condition exist independent of subjective perceptions; theories based on beliefs and assumption about world, and on set of moral-political values; to interpret facts, need to understand history, adopt set of values, and know where to look for underlying structures
9	What is the relevance or use of social scientific knowledge?	An instrumental orientation is used; to enable the exercise of control of environment; improving efficiency and effectiveness	A practical orientation is used; to learn about how the world works; acquire an in-depth understanding of people; appreciate the diversity of experiences;	A dialectical orientation is used; to learn about how the world works; link subjective understanding with ways to analyse objective conditions to reveal unseen forces and unrecognised injustices; knowledge can free people from the hackles of the past thinking
10	Where do socio-political values enter into science?	Value-free science; objective; independent of social and cultural forces	Values are integral part of social life; researcher should reflect on their own values as part of study; values should be made explicit; relativism (no values better than another)	All science must begin with a value position; Activist orientation; social research is a moral-political activity; researcher commits to a value position; advocates that knowledge is power, and is used to control people's lives

(Source: Neuman, 2006, p.81 to 105; and Neuman, 2011, p.95 to 115)

Table 15:   Mixed method design: Reason for preferences

	Reason When Mixed Method Preferred	Design	Particular Mixed Method Design
A	**"A need exists for <u>both</u> quantitative and qualitative approaches"** **Explanation:** "When only one approach to research (quantitative or qualitative) is inadequate by itself to address the research problem…"	**Triangulation Design**	a) Triangulation Design b) Triangulation Design: Convergence Model c) Triangulation Design: Data Transformation Model (Transforming QUAL data into QUAN) d) Triangulation Design: Validating Quantitative Data Model e) Triangulation Design: Multilevel Model
B	**"A need exists to <u>enhance</u> the study with a <u>second source</u> of data"** **Explanation:** "When a quantitative design (eg experimental or correlational study) can be enhanced by qualitative data, or when a qualitative design (eg grounded theory or case study) can be enhanced by quantitative data…"	**Embedded Design**	a) Embedded Design b) Embedded Design: Embedded Experimental Model c) Embedded Design: Embedded Correlational Model
C	**"A need exists to <u>explain</u> the quantitative results"** **Explanation:** "A problem exists when the quantitative results are inadequate to provide explanations of outcomes, and the problem can best be understood by using qualitative data to enrich and explain the quantitative results in the words of participants".	**Explanatory Design**	a) Explanatory Design b) Explanatory Design: Follow-up Explanations Model (QUAN emphasis) c) Explanatory Design: Participant Selection Model (QUAL emphasis)
D	**"A need exists to first <u>explore</u> qualitatively"** **Explanation:** "A problem exists when qualitative research can provide an adequate exploration of a problem, but such an exploration is not enough – quantitative research is needed to further understand the problem".	**Exploratory Design**	a) Exploratory Design b) Exploratory Design: Instrumental Development Model (QUAN emphasis) c) Exploratory Design: Taxonomy Development Model (QUAL emphasis)

(Source: Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p.32 to 35 and 62 to 79)

Table 16:   Comparison between individual interviews, focus groups, and participant observations

Individual Interviews	Focus Group	Participant Observation (Naturalistic Observation)
	➢ Ability to produce concentrated amount of data on the topic of interest. Target interest of researcher. Gives access to data that may not be observable.	➢ Produces large amount of data. May include data that is of no interest to researcher. Restricted to what is observable.
➢ Data collection limited to verbal accounts of individuals, of their external observations.	➢ Data collection limited to verbal behaviour of groups.	➢ Data collection on a larger range of behaviours of individuals and groups.
➢ No group interaction, only dyadic interaction with researcher.	➢ Consist only of interaction in discussion groups.	➢ A greater variety of interactions with the study participants.
➢ The researcher creates and manages process. Discussion more controlled.	➢ The researcher creates and manages process. Discussion more controlled than participant observations (researcher defines discussion topic), but less controlled than individual interview (participants define the nature of group discussions).	➢ The research topic may be discussed openly. Discussion less controlled.
➢ Researcher's interest may also influence participant's responses.	➢ Researcher's interest may influence group interaction, thereby raising uncertainty about the accuracy of what the participants are saying.	➢ Researcher's interest may also influence interactions.
➢ Each informant has greater time to share information. More in-depth understand of an individual's opinions and experiences.	➢ Provides less depth and details of any particular participant's opinion or experience. However, can generate more discussion on topics which are habit-ridden or not thought out.	➢ Attitude formation, decision-making, habit-ridden, or private behaviours may be inherently unobservable or may not provide meaningful observations.
➢ Participants may feel more comfortable to express views otherwise maintained as private. (However, requires more exploration).	➢ Some participants may withhold things that they would express in private. (However, requires more exploration).	
➢ Requires post hoc analysis of separate statements of each interview.	➢ Provides direct evidence of similarities and differences of opinions and experiences. (ie direct evidence of level of consensus or diversity).	
➢ Perhaps less extreme views expressed to interviewer. Perhaps more sensitive views likely to be expressed to interviewer.	➢ Possibility of more extreme views to be publically expressed. Group conformity may be an issue.	
➢ Interviewer has greater control of interview (closer communication between participant and interviewer).	➢ Requires greater attention to the role of the moderator (ie level of involvement).	
➢ Greater burden on informants to explain themselves.	➢ Researcher may need to choose between greater control and less free-flowing discussion, or allow group to take control and be less focused on subject of interest.	
➢ Low logistic considerations may make it more efficient to produce data.	➢ May be more efficient at producing data and concentrated set of interactions in very short time frame, but consideration of the logistics to gather greater numbers may make it less efficient.	➢ Gaining access to setting may be an issue, as is the length of time in the field that may be required to collect substantial data on the topic of interest.

Source: Morgan (1997)

Table 17:   Focus group vignettes

Broader Organisational Context
You are employed in a policing organisation. Your organisation has a long history, and has been built on many traditions and assumptions on the way things are done. One such tradition in your organisation is that _senior officers give the orders, make the rules, and make the overriding decisions_. It is widely accepted that _achieving common objectives_ in your organisation is significantly important, and that _individuals must subordinate their own interests_ in order for the organisation to achieve those common objectives. It is widely accepted in your organisation that the _manager has the right to manage and employees must do what the manager tells them_.

Story A
Senior management support many of the traditions. My manager is very good at ensuring things run smoothly, and _meeting expectations_ of senior management. In doing so, he/she makes sure that _policies and procedures of the organisation are complied with._ My manager tells me what is _expected from me in terms of performance_, and _what I will receive_ if I meet those expected performance levels as well as if I don't. He/She frequently _reviews the performance_ of my workgroup, and is looking for any change _or variation in performance_. My manager is _actively monitoring tasks_ undertaken by me and within my group. In doing so, my manager is looking for any problems that might arise, and to _correct those problems_ in order to _maintain or to increase performance_. He/She often provides technical advice on the law and on processes and procedures, or ways to improve performance.

I feel comfortable and safe questioning others (including my manager) about technical issues, such as how best to achieve a goal, or solve a problem or a case, or ways to improve performance. I don't feel comfortable questioning the traditions in my organisation. If I disagree with my manager I tend to go along with what my manager says or wants, as disagreement may be seen as resisting the routines for sustainable performance. |

Story B
My organisation is _changing away from some traditions_, and the senior management in my organisation have _challenged many of the traditions_. My manager communicates with me in a way that inspires me and my workgroup towards the _new corporate vision or common direction_ designed to improve the outcomes for the organisation. My manager is very good at ensuring everyone has a clear understanding of the corporate vision of the organisation. My manager _coaches me towards higher levels of achievement in line with the new direction_. In doing so, he/she talks about where the organisation is heading, and what is trying to be achieved at higher levels. My manager encourages me to _question the tried and true ways_, and encourages me to question methods in use in order to improve upon them.

I feel comfortable and safe questioning others (including my manager) about the technical issues, as well as the obstacles to achieving the new direction for the organisation or policing. However, I don't feel comfortable questioning my manager about any tradition that is outside the boundaries of the new direction set by senior management. If I disagree with my manager I tend to go along with what my manager says or wants, as disagreement may be seen as resisting the new direction set by senior management. |

Story C
My manager is very good at ensuring everyone _reaches their potential_, and is known to be on the lookout for anything that _constrains or restricts the way people think and behave_. I am aware that my manager has _beliefs in diversity and preventing inequalities_. As such my manager _encourages and respects diverse points of view_, and _treats everyone like an equal_. My manager has the view that _people must be able to question and discuss everything for people to learn_ and for the organisation to move forward. My manager also has the view that not _all questioning is in the best interest of the organisation in the short-term_, but may be _needed to break traditions that often restrict the way people think_. He/She _does not take disagreement personally_, but _encourages people to think critically about things that are taken-for-granted_.

I feel comfortable and safe questioning others (including my manager) about the technical issues, as well as where the organisation or policing is heading. I also feel comfortable questioning any traditions within my organisation, particularly those that are oppressive. I feel comfortable with openly disagreeing with my manager at the appropriate time, as we see it as an opportunity for us to learn together and to move forward in our thinking. |

Focus Group Participant Information Letter

	Research Title:	Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
	Chief Investigator:	Lindsay Garratt
	Supervisor:	Dr Paul Jackson

Dear colleague,

Thank you for accepting our invitation to participate in this university research project. Your time and effort in contributing to this project is very much appreciated.

The information provided is for your reference (previously provided in the initial invitation to you).

The project aims to explore the extent to which organisations create an environment that encourages learning, and to identify the factors that affect the type of learning that occurs in organisations. This will assist practitioners and managers to better understand the impacts on learning in organisations, thereby it will enable them to make more informed choices and take action for the future.

Your group has been invited to form a focus group. Participants in the focus groups will join with me as the Chief Investigator, to explore this issue through discussion of experiences and observations. It is expected that the focus group session will take 2-3 hours. The focus group session will be audio recorded and later transcribed to assist in analysing the data for the research.

All recordings and transcripts are strictly confidential, and will not be released to any third person without your written authority. All information collected about you will be confidential to the researchers, and you will not be identifiable in any publications or reports. Employees or management of the Terra Australis Police will not receive any information that will enable you to be identified and this information is solely for the purposes of this research. Further, all participants in the focus groups will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement before participating. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If you participate, this will demonstrate that you have understood the content of this invitation, and that you give your consent to participate and to have your responses included in the broad analysis of data of the particular case study reported in reports and publications.

As previously mentioned, I need to disclose that I am a police officer with the [organisation withheld] at the rank of Detective Senior Sergeant. However, please be assured that your participation or not, will not subject you to being advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

Thank you once again for participating in this research, and I look forward to working with you in this session. Please feel free to ask questions or contact me via email address lgarratt@student.ecu.edu.au or phone xxxx xxx xxx, at any time if you have any further questions relating to this project. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Dr Paul Jackson via email at p.jackson@ecu.edu.au or phone (08) 6304 2340.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Garratt
PhD student

Contact Details:

Lindsay Garratt
PhD student
School of Management
Faculty of Business and Law
Edith Cowan University
Joondalup WA 6027
Australia
Telephone (08) 6304 5916 or xxxx xxx xxx
lgarratt@student.ecu.edu.au

Note: This research project has been approved by the ECU Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer at ECU on (08) 6304 2170 or email at research.ethics@ecu.edu.au *.*

In addition, this research has been approved by the Research Application Review Committee (RARC) of the Terra Australis Police. If you would like to discuss this research with a representative of the RARC, please contact [name withheld] or [name withheld] at the Terra Australis Police Academy on (xx) xxxx xxxx.

Case Study Participant Information Letter

	Research Title:	Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
	Chief Investigator:	Lindsay Garratt
	Supervisor:	Dr Paul Jackson

Dear colleague,

Thank you again for accepting our invitation to contribute in this university research project, and your willingness to partake in a one-to-one interview. Your time and effort in contributing to this project is very much appreciated. The information provided here is for your reference.

The project aims to explore the extent to which organisations create an environment that encourages learning, and to identify the factors that affect the type of learning that occurs in organisations. This will assist practitioners and managers to better understand the impacts on learning in organisations, thereby it will enable them to make more informed choices and take action for the future.

To date three focus groups (Superintendents, Senior Sergeants, and Senior Constables) have assisted me with an exploration phase, followed by an invitation to approximately 1,000 employees in your organisation to participate in a survey. A small group, including yourself, have been selected from that survey and are now being invited to join me as the Chief Investigator, in a one-to-one interview to discuss in depth your personal experiences in your organisation. It is expected that the one-on-one discussion will take about 90 minutes. The discussion will be audio recorded and later transcribed to assist in analysing the data for the research.

All recordings and transcripts are strictly confidential, and will not be released to any third person without your written authority. All information collected about you will be confidential to the researchers, and you will not be identifiable in any publications or reports. Employees or management of the Terra Australis Police will <u>not</u> receive any information that will enable you to be identified and this information is solely for the purposes of this research. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If you participate, this will demonstrate that you have understood the content of this invitation, and that you give your consent to participate and to have your responses included in the broad analysis of data of the particular case study reported in reports and publications.

As previously mentioned, I need to disclose that I am a police officer with the [organisation withheld] at the rank of Detective Senior Sergeant. However, please be assured that your participation or not, will not subject you to being advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

Thank you once again for participating in this research, and I look forward to working with you in this session. Please feel free to ask questions or contact me via email address lgarratt@student.ecu.edu.au or phone 9xxx xxxx, at any time if you have any further questions relating to this project. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Dr Paul Jackson via email at p.jackson@ecu.edu.au or phone (08) 6304 2340.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Garratt
PhD student

Contact Details:

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In addition, this research has been approved by the Research Application Review Committee (RARC) of the Terra Australis Police. If you would like to discuss this research with a representative of the RARC, please contact [name withheld] or [name withheld] at the Terra Australis Police Academy on (xx) xxxx xxxx.

Case Study Participant Information Letter

ECU EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY	Research Title:	Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
	Chief Investigator:	Lindsay Garratt
	Supervisor:	Dr Paul Jackson

Dear colleague,

We would like to invite you to participate in a university research project. The project aims to explore the extent to which organisations create an environment that encourages learning, and to identify the factors that affect the type of learning that occurs in organisations. This will assist practitioners and managers to better understand the impacts on learning in organisations, thereby enabling them to make more informed choices and take action for the future.

You have been randomly selected from a sample provided by the Organisational and Employee Development project officer, [name withheld] (Ph: xx xxx xxxx).

To date, 20 interviews have been conducted in another policing jurisdiction including officers at the rank of Constable, Senior Constable, Senior Sergeant, Superintendent, and Assistant Commissioner.

As an officer in the Oceania Police, you are invited to join me as the Chief Investigator, in a one-on-one interview to discuss in depth your personal experiences in your organisation. You will be one of only six interviews conducted in the Oceania Police (2 x Constables; 2 x Senior Sergeants; and 2 x Superintendents). It is expected that the one-on-one discussion will take about 90 minutes. The discussion will be audio recorded and later transcribed to assist in analysing the data for the research.

All recordings and transcripts are strictly confidential, and will not be released to any third person without your written authority. All information collected about you will be confidential to the researchers, and you will not be identifiable in any publications or reports. Employees or management of the Oceania Police will <u>not</u> receive any information that will enable you to be identified and this information is solely for the purposes of this research. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If you participate, this will demonstrate that you have understood the content of this invitation, and that you give your consent to participate and to have your responses included in the broad analysis of data of the particular case study reported in reports and publications.

I need to disclose that I am a police officer with the [organisation withheld] at the rank of Detective Senior Sergeant. However, please be assured that I have no affiliation with the Oceania Police and your participation or not, will not subject you to being advantaged or disadvantaged in any way.

Thank you for considering this invitation, and I look forward to meeting with you. Please feel free to ask questions or contact me via email address lgarratt@our.ecu.edu.au or phone 61 xx xxxx xxxx, at any time if you have any further questions relating to this project. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Dr Paul Jackson via email at p.jackson@ecu.edu.au or phone 61 08 6304 2340.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Garratt
PhD student

Contact Details:

Lindsay Garratt
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lgarratt@our.ecu.edu.au (Student email account) or [email address withheld] (Work email)

Note: This research project has been approved by the ECU Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer at ECU on +61 8 6304 2170 or email at research.ethics@ecu.edu.au .

In addition, this research has been approved by the [organisation withheld] Police Research and Evaluation Steering Committee. If you would like to discuss this research with a representative of the Committee, please contact [name withheld] (Evaluation Manager – Organisational Assurance Group – Phone – xx xxx xxxx Ext xxxxx) or [name withheld] (Co-ordinator Research and Evaluation Steering Committee - Evaluation Services Team – xx xxx xxxx Ext: xxxxx).

Research Title: Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning

Chief Investigator: Lindsay Garratt

I ...., as a participant of
<div align="center">(Full Name)</div>

the above research project, agree with the following:

☑	I have received and have read a ['*Focus Group Participant Information Letter*' / '*Case Study Participant Information Letter*'], which explains the purpose of the research study.
☑	I have read and understand the information provided.
☑	I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions, and I have had my questions answered to my satisfaction.
☑	I am aware that if I have any additional questions, I may contact the researcher or his supervisors, or the nominated independent contact persons, and have those questions answered.
☑	I understand that my participation in this research will involve all the procedures that have been listed as outlined in the ['*Focus Group Participant Information Letter*' / '*Case Study Participant Information Letter*'].
☑	I understand that the information that I provide, will be kept confidential, and that my identity will not be disclosed without my consent.
☑	I understand that the information that I have provided will only be used for the purpose of this research project, and I understand how the information will be used.
☑	I understand that I am free to withdraw from further participation at any time, without explanation or penalty, and am free to withdraw my consent at any stage.
☑	I understand that my participation will involve the electronic recording of my audio responses, and I have been made aware of what will happen with the recordings during and after this research project as outlined in the ['*Focus Group Participant Information Letter*' / '*Case Study Participant Information Letter*'].
☑	I freely agree to participate in the project.

....
Signature of Participant   Signature of Witness

Date: ..../......../.............   Date: ..../......../.............

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EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

Research Title: Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
Chief Investigator: Lindsay Garratt

Confidentiality Agreement
(Focus Group)

I .... (full name)
understand that there is the potential risk to participants and/or my organisation,
caused by participants disclosing to a third party, information supplied by others
during the course of this focus group interview which is part of the research
project conducted by the chief investigator.

In participating in this focus group, I have a responsibility to ensure that I do not
communicate or in any manner disclose publically information discussed during
the course of this focus group interview.

I hereby agree that I will not communicate or in any manner disclose publically
information discussed during the course of this focus group interview.   I agree
not to talk about material relating to this study or interview with anyone outside
of my fellow focus group members and the chief investigator.

Participant's Signature .... Date ....

Chief Investigator's Signature .... Date ....

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EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

Research Title: Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning

Chief Investigator: Lindsay Garratt

Focus Group – Exploration Investigation Phase

Please read all instructions before commencing.

Instructions:

1.   There are five tasks for the focus group to work through. (Maximum 30 minutes per task).

2.   Each task is to be addressed in sequence.

3.   The first four tasks ask the focus group to critically reflect on a story (which are a maximum of 2 paragraphs each) and collectively discuss the questions that follow.

4.   The last task provides a diagram of a model, and asks for the focus group to critically reflect on the model and collectively discuss the questions that follow. It is asked that members of the focus group do not look at the model until the group is at that stage.

5.   The facilitator will read aloud the individual task and story to the focus group. Please follow with the facilitator as he reads.

6.   Each task has from 4 to 9 questions.

7.   It is <u>not</u> imperative that the focus group address each question, <u>nor</u> address the questions in order. However, the group should use the questions as a guide to focus their discussion.

8.   Please treat the facilitator as one of your colleagues in the focus group, <u>not</u> as a group leader, and direct your discussions to others in your group.

9.   The facilitator will tend to listen to the discussion.

10.   The facilitator may encourage the group towards specific questions, or ask probing questions, or encourage the group to move on (due to time restrictions).

11.   Are there any questions?

Task 1: The first task of the focus group is to critically reflect on the broader organisational context which will be used as a foundation for the stories that follow. Please read the following paragraph, and collectively discuss the questions below.

Broader Organisational Context

You are employed in a policing organisation. Your organisation has a long history, and has been built on many traditions and assumptions on the way things are done. One such tradition in your organisation is that senior officers give the orders, make the rules, and make the overriding decisions. It is widely accepted that achieving common objectives in your organisation is significantly important, and that individuals must subordinate their own interests in order for the organisation to achieve those common objectives. It is widely accepted in your organisation that the manager has the right to manage and employees must do what the manager tells them.

Your Organisation

Q1.   To what degree does this situation reflect your organisation?

Q2.   Is there anything that you would change or add to this broad organisational context to better reflect your organisation?

Q3.   To what degree do people feel comfortable to question others about traditions in your organisation?

Task 2: The next task of your focus group is to critically reflect on <u>Story A in light of the broader organisational context</u>. Please read the following paragraphs, and collectively discuss the questions below.

Story A

Senior management support many of the traditions. My manager is very good at ensuring things run smoothly, and meeting expectations of senior management. In doing so, he/she makes sure that policies and procedures of the organisation are complied with. My manager tells me what is expected from me in terms of performance, and what I will receive if I meet those expected performance levels as well as if I don't. He/She frequently reviews the performance of my workgroup, and is looking for any change or variation in performance. My manager is actively monitoring tasks undertaken by me and within my group. In doing so, my manager is looking for any problems that might arise, and to correct those problems in order to maintain or to increase performance. He/She often provides technical advice on the law and on processes and procedures, or ways to improve performance.

I feel comfortable and safe questioning others (including my manager) about technical issues, such as how best to achieve a goal, or solve a problem or a case, or ways to improve performance. I <u>don't</u> feel comfortable questioning the traditions in my organisation. If I disagree with my manager I tend to go along with what my manager says or wants, as disagreement may be seen as resisting the routines for sustainable performance.

Story Evaluation

Q4. Is this situation realistic?

Q5. How do you feel about this situation?

Your Organisation

Q6. To what degree does this situation reflect your organisation?

Q7. In what situation do you think this story is likely to occur?

Q8. Where in your organisation do you think this story is likely to occur?

Q9. Do you think there is a connection between the situation outlined in the Broader Organisational Context and
Story A?

Your Experiences

Q10. Have you experienced or heard others talking about a situation like this?

Task 3: The next task of your focus group is to critically reflect on <u>Story B in light of the broader organisational context</u>. Please read the following paragraphs, and collectively discuss the questions below.

Story B

My organisation is changing away from some traditions, and the senior management in my organisation have challenged many of the traditions. My manager communicates with me in a way that inspires me and my workgroup towards the new corporate vision or common direction designed to improve the outcomes for the organisation. My manager is very good at ensuring everyone has a clear understanding of the corporate vision of the organisation. My manager coaches me towards higher levels of achievement in line with the new direction. In doing so, he/she talks about where the organisation is heading, and what is trying to be achieved at higher levels. My manager encourages me to question the tried and true ways, and encourages me to question methods in use in order to improve upon them.

I feel comfortable and safe questioning others (including my manager) about the technical issues, as well as the obstacles to achieving the new direction for the organisation or policing. However, I <u>don't</u> feel comfortable questioning my manager about any tradition that is outside the boundaries of the new direction set by senior management. If I disagree with my manager I tend to go along with what my manager says or wants, as disagreement may be seen as resisting the new direction set by senior management.

Evaluation

Q11. Is this situation realistic?

Q12. How do you feel about this situation?

Q13. To what degree is this story different from Story A?

Your Organisation

Q14. To what degree does this situation reflect your organisation?

Q15. In what situation do you think this story is likely to occur?

Q16. Where in your organisation do you think this story is likely to occur?

Q17. Do you think there is a connection between the situation outlined in the Broader Organisational Context and Story B?

Your Experiences

Q18. Have you experienced or heard others talking about a situation like this?

Task 4: The next task of your focus group is to critically reflect on <u>Story C in light of the broader organisational context</u>. Please read the following paragraphs, and collectively discuss the questions below.

Story C

My manager is very good at ensuring everyone reaches their potential, and is known to be on the lookout for anything that constrains or restricts the way people think and behave. I am aware that my manager has beliefs in diversity and preventing inequalities. As such my manager encourages and respects diverse points of view, and treats everyone like an equal. My manager has the view that people must be able to question and discuss everything for people to learn and for the organisation to move forward. My manager also has the view that not all questioning is in the best interest of the organisation in the short-term, but may be needed to break traditions that often restrict the way people think. He/She does not take disagreement personally, but encourages people to think critically about things that are taken-for-granted.

I feel comfortable and safe questioning others (including my manager) about the technical issues, as well as where the organisation or policing is heading. I also feel comfortable questioning any traditions within my organisation, particularly those that are oppressive. I feel comfortable with openly disagreeing with my manager at the appropriate time, as we see it as an opportunity for us to learn together and to move forward in our thinking.

Evaluation

Q19. Is this situation realistic?

Q20. How do you feel about this situation?

Q21. To what degree is this story different from Story A?

Q22. To what degree is this story different from Story B?

Your Organisation

Q23. To what degree does this situation reflect your organisation?

Q24. In what situation do you think this story is likely to occur?

Q25. Where in your organisation do you think this story is likely to occur?

Q26. Do you think there is a connection between the situation outlined in the Broader Organisational Context and Story C?

Your Experiences

Q27. Have you experienced or heard others talking about a situation like this?

Task 5: The final task of your focus group in to critically reflect on the proposed model for this research. Please review the below model and discuss in light of your experiences and observations in your organisation.

Power Relationships	Freedom to Question	Outcome

"A" Power Relationships' refer to the relationships between individuals and/or between groups, that <u>reinforce existing</u> dominant attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organizations.

"B" Power Relationships' refer to the relationships between individuals and/or between groups that <u>challenge or question existing</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within, taking a management-centred approach to instilling new predetermined dominant attitudes, values and beliefs within organizations.

A person feels the freedom to engage in questioning others, but is confined to technical matters or matters permitted by management.

Learning that is restricted to what managers want people to learn. (Management Driven)

"C" Power Relationships' refer to the relationships between individuals and/or between groups that <u>challenge or question existing</u> attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms within organizations.

A person feels the freedom to engage in questioning others about <u>all</u> matters, particularly about inequalities.

Learning that is open to questioning more deeply and more broadly, and encourages a diverse way of thinking. (Employee Driven)

Evaluation

Q28. To what degree is this model realistic?

Q29. How do you feel about this model?

Q30. Is there anything that you would change or add to this model to better reflect your experiences and observations?

Q31. To what degree do you think the stories are reflective of the model?

Collaborative Inquiry Reference Group

I am interested in receiving an invitation to be a part of a 'collaborative inquiry reference group' to review and analyse the results of this research.

Name: ……………………………………………………………………..

[Page intentionally left blank]

EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

Research Title: Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
Chief Investigator: Lindsay Garratt

Welcome and Introduction

- Welcome everyone and thank you for volunteering to assist me in my research.

- I would like the focus group today be as informal as possible.

- So please feel free to get up and stretch your legs, make a cup of tea/coffee if you wish, and go to the toilet.

- (Give directions for the toilet).

- We will have a break about half way.

- Before we start the discussion, there are some administrative things that I need to do.

- While I do that, please relax and make yourself comfortable.

- Please feel free to ask any questions as we go.

Information Letter

- An information letter was attached to the Outlook Calendar Appointment for this Focus Group.

- This information was also provided in an attachment with the initial invitation.

- Also I have provided you with a hard copy for you to take away.

Project Aim

- The project aims to explore the extent to which organisations create an environment that encourages learning, and to identify the factors that affect the type of learning that occurs in organisations.

- Our particular focus is policing organisations, and two such Australian organisations have been selected as case studies for this research, one of which is the Terra Australis Police.

Purpose of the Participants Involvement

- I have been with the [organisation withheld] for nearly 25 years, and my research thus far is based on some of my observations and experiences.

- Your role today is to assist me to explore this issue through discussion about your observations and experiences.

- Please don't assume that have the same knowledge or understanding as yourself. So please speak up.

- I encourage you to be open and honest with your discussion, and to be critical in your discussion.

- I may challenge what you say, but that is purely to gain a better understanding.

- Likewise, please feel free to challenge anything I say. I will not be offended if you disagree with anything I say or about anything in the organisation, or anything that is presented today.

- And I would encourage yourselves to dig deep in your thinking.

- There are three focus groups being conducted at different levels in the organisation.

- The work we do today will assist me in preparing an organisational survey as well as conducting 16 case studies with individuals.

Risks

- Every effort has been made to minimise any risks with this research.

- Part of my role is to ensure your confidentiality is maintained and your general wellbeing.

Signing Confidentiality Agreement

- To ensure confidentiality, I would ask everyone to read the Confidentiality Agreement.

- If you agree with it, would you mind please signing it.

- (Pause while people read and sign Confidentiality Agreement (and collect)).

Ground Rules

- Key principle - Respect others

- Respect others points of view (It is important that another's person's experiences may be different to your own)

- Allow every person an opportunity to be heard

- Only one person speaks at a time and no side conversations between neighbours so everyone can hear and participate freely.

- If you disagree, I encourage you to speak up after the person has made their point.

Vignettes

- In front of you, there is a booklet of Vignettes (case studies or stories) with questions. We will be working through this booklet together during the discussion.

- Feel free to mark or write anywhere as you see fit.

Notes

- Also in front of you there is a small booklet for notes.

- Please jot down anything that comes to mind while you are waiting to speak so you don't forget.
- Also, if you don't get an opportunity to speak, or don't want to raise anything with the group, please feel free to jot it down.
- I will collect the Vignettes and the Notes afterwards and may use material in my analysis.
- I have included a space for your name, so I can contact you if I need to clarify a point.
- I will also be making some notes of any points for me to follow up on.
- But please don't be put off by that.

Signing Consent Form

- There is a Consent Form for you to read, and sign if you agree to participate.
- Before I ask you to sign the Consent Form, does anyone have any questions?
- Could everyone please read the Consent Form and please sign if you are happy to participate.
- Please feel free to ask any questions.
- **(Pause while people read and sign Consent Form (and collect)).**

Audio Recording

- As indicated in the Information Letter and the Consent Form, this focus group will be audio recorded to assist me in the analysis process.
- I will turn the recorder on, but please ignore it.
- Turn the digital recorder on.

Stories and Questions

- We will start. I will read the instructions first.

[INSERT THE FINAL STORIES AND QUESTIONS]

- Start with the questions

Conclusion

- That concludes the Focus Group today.
- **Turn the digital recorder off.**

Demographics Form

- To assist me writing up my analysis, would you please complete the demographic form.

Check Out

- A debriefing is to be conducted at the conclusion of the focus group interview. That is, check out to ensure that everyone feels comfortable prior to departure.

- How do you feel about the focus group today?

- Are there any concerns about today?

- If you have any concerns or complaints about today, please don't hesitate to ring me to discuss.

- Otherwise, please feel free to contact any of the people detailed in the Information Letter.

Invitation to 'collaborative inquiry reference group'

- From here we will be conducting an organisational survey as well as conducting 16 individual case studies.

- I will be presenting the results of the survey and the case studies to the 'collaborative inquiry reference group'.

- This group will assist me to critically analyse the results.

- The group may meet once or twice in the next six months or so.

- If you would like to be a part of that group, please fill in your name on the final page of the Vignette booklet.

Reinforce Confidentiality Agreement

- To reinforce the issue of confidentiality, please remember the confidentiality agreement that you signed today.

Thank you

- Thank you everyone for coming today.

- I really appreciate your time and effort to assist me, and your honest responses.

EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

Research Title: Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
Chief Investigator: Lindsay Garratt

Welcome and Introduction

- Thank you for volunteering to participate in this interview and assisting me in my research.

- I would like our discussion today be as informal as possible, but obviously I have some protocols that I need to follow as a researcher.

- Please relax and make yourself comfortable.

- Please feel free to ask any questions as we go.

Information Letter

- An information letter has been sent to you.

- I have also a hard copy for you to take away with you today.

Project Aim

- The project aims to explore the extent to which organisations create an environment that encourages learning, and to identify the factors that affect the type of learning that occurs in organisations.

- Our particular focus is policing organisations, and we hope to conduct two organizational case studies for this research, one of which is the Terra Australis Police.

Your Involvement

- I have selected people from the survey you completed in May this year (2009) to participate further in this research.

- Each of the people selected will be invited to discuss details about their observations and experiences in their organisation.

- The content from our discussion today about your experiences will form the basis of one of the case study within your organisation.

- There will be approximately 16 case studies of individual experiences.

- In our discussion, I will be asking you a series of questions about you, your organisation, and your experiences.

- I encourage you to be open and honest with your discussion with me, and to be critical in your discussion.

- Please do not feel that you need to give political correct or official responses. I am interested in your experiences, and I encourage you to dig deep in your thinking.

- I have been in the [organisation withheld] for 25 years, but please don't assume that I have the same knowledge or understanding as you. So please speak up. I am interested in what you have to say about your experiences.

- I may challenge what you say, but that is purely to gain a better understanding. So don't be put off by that.

- Likewise, please feel free to challenge anything I say. I will not be offended if you disagree with anything I say or about anything in the organisation.

- I will be writing notes and reading questions from time to time, but that is to help me to guide the discussion. So, please ignore.

Risks

- Every effort has been made to minimise any risks with this research.

- Part of my role is to ensure your confidentiality is maintained and your general wellbeing.

Signing Consent Form

- There is a Consent Form for you to read, and sign if you agree to participate.

- Before I ask you to sign the Consent Form, do you have any questions?

- Could everyone please read the Consent Form and please sign if you are happy to participate.

- (Pause while participant reads and signs Consent Form)

Audio Recording

- As indicated in the Information Letter and the Consent Form, this interview will be audio recorded to assist me in the analysis process.

- I will turn the recorder on, but please ignore it.

- Turn the digital recorder on.

Questions

- We will start.

- This is case number……… on the …….(Date)……..

ICE BREAKING AND CONTEXT

Q1.   Tell me a little about yourself, and your background in your organisation.

Q2.   Tell me a little about the type of organisation in which you are employed.

   2.1.   What are some of the traditional values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms that you see in your organisation?

2.2. Do you see the organisation as changing or staying the same?

    2.2.1. In what way?

Q3. It has been said that there are hierarchical and paramilitary traditions in your organisations. Would you agree with that? (If not, how would you characterise your organisation?)

Q4. What does that mean to you?

LEARNING SPACE

Q5. I am going to ask you about the types of dialogue or discussions that take place in your organisation. By that I mean: two-way communications between two or more people whereby you and others engage in inquiring, questioning and challenging each other's thinking about issues. Tell me a little about the types of dialogue in which you participate in your organisation?

Q6. Typically, is the majority of your dialogue about the day-to-day business of a technical nature such as problem solving or achieving goals?

6.1. Do you feel free to discuss matters of a technical nature?

6.2. Have you experienced a situation(s) when you did not feel free to engage in dialogue of a technical nature?

    6.2.1. Is there anything about the traditions in your organisation that made you feel that way?

    6.2.2. Is there anything about the other people that made you feel that way?

        6.2.2.1. Did the other people support the traditions in your organisation?

    6.2.3. Is there anything about the corporate direction that made you feel that way?

    6.2.4. Is there anything about senior management that made you feel that way?

    6.2.5. Is there anything about the Commissioner that made you feel that way?

    6.2.6. Is there anything about government that made you feel that way?

    6.2.7. Is there anything about the views held in society that made you feel that way?

    6.2.8. What else made you feel that way?

Q7. Do you engage in dialogue other than of a technical nature?

Q8. Do you engage in a dialogue with others (whereby you inquire, question and challenge each other) about issues that are against the existing order of things, such as the following:

Hand participant card

- traditions (that is the dominant values, beliefs, attitudes and norms) in your organisation;
- taken-for-granted things in your organisation;
- moral issues, equal rights, or social injustices in your organisation;
- power relationships in your organisation;
- issues whereby your thinking goes against the dominate thinking in your organisation, including that of senior management?

8.1. Generally, do you feel free to say what you think in your organisation?

    8.1.1. Is there a limited to what you say?

8.2. Have you experienced a situation(s) when you felt free to engage in this type of dialogue?
(Or felt more free than other situations)

    8.2.1. Tell me about that situation.

    8.2.2. Who were the people there (no names)?

    8.2.3. What sorts of things were said?

8.3. Have you experienced a situation(s) when you did not feel free to engage in this type of dialogue?
(Or felt less free than other situations)

    8.3.1. Tell me about that situation.

    8.3.2. Who were the people there (no names)?

    8.3.3. What sorts of things were said?

POWER RELATIONSHIPS

Q9. Thinking about a situation(s) when you did not feel free to engage in this type of dialogue, what is it that made you feel that way?

9.1. Is there anything about the traditions in your organisation that made you feel that way?

9.2. Is there anything about the other people that made you feel that way?

    9.2.1. Did the other people support the traditions in your organisation?

9.3. Is there anything about the corporate direction that made you feel that way?

9.4. Is there anything about senior management that made you feel that way?

9.5. Is there anything about the Commissioner that made you feel that way?

9.6. Is there anything about government that made you feel that way?

9.7. Is there anything about the views held in society that made you feel that way?

9.8. What else made you feel that way?

Q10. Thinking about a situation(s) when you did feel free to engage in this type of dialogue, did you feel completely free or were you still a little guarded in what you said?

10.1. What is it that made you feel that way?

10.2. Is there anything about the traditions in your organisation that made you feel that way?

10.3. Is there anything about the other people that made you feel that way?

10.3.1. Did the other people support the traditions in your organisation?

10.4. Is there anything about the corporate direction that made you feel that way?

10.5. Is there anything about senior management that made you feel that way?

10.6. Is there anything about the Commissioner that made you feel that way?

10.7. Is there anything about government that made you feel that way?

10.8. Is there anything about the views held in the society that made you feel that way?

10.9. In there anything else that made you feel that way?

ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Q11. When your discussions are about the day-to-day business of a technical nature such as problem solving and achieving goals, would you say that learning in your organisation is generally about following the corporate line?

11.1. In terms of learning, what was the outcome?

11.2. Does it affect your learning?

Q12. Thinking about a situation(s) when you did feel free to engage in discussions about issues that are against the existing order of things (such as outlined above), how did it impact on yours and others learning?

12.1. What was the outcome?

12.2. Did it influence your thinking?

12.3. Did the conversation affirm or change your view?

12.4. Did you feel free talking to others about this conversation?

Q13. Is there anything else that you would like to say about how dialogue happens or does not happen in your organisation, or the impacts on organisational learning?

Conclusion

- That concludes the interview today.
- **Turn the digital recorder off.**

Check Out

- A debriefing is to be conducted at the conclusion of the interview. That is, check out to ensure that participant feels comfortable prior to departure.
- How do you feel about the interview today?
- Are there any concerns about today?
- If you have any concerns or complaints about today, please don't hesitate to ring me to discuss.
- Otherwise, please feel free to contact any of the people detailed in the Information Letter.

Confidentiality

- Please be assured of your confidentiality.

Verification of Transcript / Case Study

- There may be a need to verify the transcript or the case study report. Would you be willing to receive a copy and read it?
- If so, what email address should I send it to:

  …………………………………………………………………

Thank you

- Thank you for your participation today.
- I really appreciate your time and effort to assist me, and your honest responses.

EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

Research Title: Power Relationships and Authentic Organisational Learning
Chief Investigator: Lindsay Garratt

Welcome and Introduction

- Thank you for volunteering to participate in this interview and assisting me in my research.

- I would like our discussion today be as informal as possible, but obviously I have some protocols that I need to follow as a researcher.

- Please relax and make yourself comfortable.

- Please feel free to ask any questions as we go.

Information Letter

- An information letter has been sent to you.

- I have also a hard copy for you to take away with you today.

Project Aim

- The project aims to explore the extent to which organisations create an environment that encourages learning, and to identify the factors that affect the type of learning that occurs in organisations.

- Our particular focus is policing organisations, and we hope to conduct two organizational case studies for this research, one of which is the Oceania Police.

Your Involvement

- I have selected people from randomly from a list of more than 200 names supplied to me by the Oceania Police.

- Each of the people selected will be invited to discuss details about their observations and experiences in their organisation.

- The content from our discussion today about your experiences will form the basis of one of the case study within your organisation.

- There will be approximately 12 case studies of individual experiences from Oceania Police.

- In our discussion, I will be asking you a series of questions about you, your organisation, and your experiences.

- I encourage you to be open and honest with your discussion with me, and to be critical in your discussion.

- Please do not feel that you need to give political correct or official responses. I am interested in your experiences, and I encourage you to dig deep in your thinking.

- I have been in policing for 26 years, but please don't assume that I have the same knowledge or understanding as you. So please speak up. I am interested in what you have to say about your experiences.

- I may challenge what you say, but that is purely to gain a better understanding. So don't be put off by that.

- Likewise, please feel free to challenge anything I say. I will not be offended if you disagree with anything I say or about anything in the organisation.

- I will be writing notes and reading questions from time to time, but that is to help me to guide the discussion. So, please ignore.

Risks

- Every effort has been made to minimise any risks with this research.

- Part of my role is to ensure your confidentiality is maintained and your general wellbeing.

Signing Consent Form

- There is a Consent Form for you to read, and sign if you agree to participate.

- Before I ask you to sign the Consent Form, do you have any questions?

- Could everyone please read the Consent Form and please sign if you are happy to participate.

- (Pause while participant reads and signs Consent Form).

Audio Recording

- As indicated in the Information Letter and the Consent Form, this interview will be audio recorded to assist me in the analysis process.

- I will turn the recorder on, but please ignore it.

- Turn the digital recorder on.

Questions

- We will start.

- This is case number……… on the …..…(Date)……..

ICE BREAKING AND CONTEXT

Q14. Tell me a little about yourself, and your background in your organisation.

Q15. Tell me a little about the type of organisation in which you are employed.

    15.1. What are some of the traditional values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms that you see in your organisation?

15.2. Do you see the organisation as changing or staying the same?

    15.2.1. In what way?

15.3. It has been said that there are hierarchical and paramilitary traditions in your organisations. Would you agree with that? (If not, how would you characterise your organisation?)

    15.3.1. What does that mean to you?

LEARNING SPACE

Q16. I am going to ask you about the types of dialogue or discussions that take place in your organisation. By that I mean: two-way communications between two or more people whereby you and others engage in inquiring, questioning and challenging each others thinking about issues. Tell me a little about the types of dialogue in which you participate in your organisation?

Q17. Typically, is the majority of your dialogue about the day-to-day business of a technical nature such as problem solving or achieving goals?

17.1. Do you feel free to discuss matters of a technical nature?

17.2. Have you experienced a situation(s) when you did not feel free to engage in dialogue of a technical nature?

    17.2.1. Is there anything about the traditions in your organisation that made you feel that way?

    17.2.2. Is there anything about the other people that made you feel that way?

        17.2.2.1. Did the other people support the traditions in your organisation?

    17.2.3. Is there anything about the corporate direction that made you feel that way?

    17.2.4. Is there anything about senior management that made you feel that way?

    17.2.5. Is there anything about the Commissioner that made you feel that way?

    17.2.6. Is there anything about government that made you feel that way?

    17.2.7. Is there anything about the views held in society that made you feel that way?

    17.2.8. What else made you feel that way?

Q18. Do you engage in dialogue other than of a technical nature?

Q19. Do you engage in a dialogue with others (whereby you inquire, question and challenge each other) about issues that are against the existing order of things, such as the following:

Hand participant card

- traditions (that is the dominant values, beliefs, attitudes and norms) in your organisation;
- taken-for-granted things in your organisation;
- moral issues, equal rights, or social injustices in your organisation;
- power relationships in your organisation;
- issues whereby your thinking goes against the dominate thinking in your organisation, including that of senior management?

19.1. Generally, do you feel free to say what you think in your organisation?

19.1.1. Is there a limited to what you say?

19.2. Have you experienced a situation(s) when you felt free to engage in this type of dialogue?
(Or felt more free than other situations)

19.2.1. Tell me about that situation.

19.2.2. Who were the people there (no names)?

19.2.3. What sorts of things were said?

19.3. Have you experienced a situation(s) when you did not feel free to engage in this type of dialogue?
(Or felt less free than other situations)

19.3.1. Tell me about that situation.

19.3.2. Who were the people there (no names)?

19.3.3. What sorts of things were said?

POWER RELATIONSHIPS

Q20. Thinking about a situation(s) when you did not feel free to engage in this type of dialogue, what is it that made you feel that way?

20.1. Is there anything about the traditions in your organisation that made you feel that way?

20.2. Is there anything about the other people that made you feel that way?

20.2.1. Did the other people support the traditions in your organisation?

20.3. Is there anything about the corporate direction that made you feel that way?

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20.5. Is there anything about the Commissioner that made you feel that way?

20.6. Is there anything about government that made you feel that way?

20.7. Is there anything about the views held in society that made you feel that way?

20.8. What else made you feel that way?

Q21. Thinking about a situation(s) when you did feel free to engage in this type of dialogue, did you feel completely free or were you still a little guarded in what you said?

21.1. What is it that made you feel that way?

21.2. Is there anything about the traditions in your organisation that made you feel that way?

21.3. Is there anything about the other people that made you feel that way?

21.3.1. Did the other people support the traditions in your organisation?

21.4. Is there anything about the corporate direction that made you feel that way?

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21.6. Is there anything about the Commissioner that made you feel that way?

21.7. Is there anything about government that made you feel that way?

21.8. Is there anything about the views held in the society that made you feel that way?

21.9. In there anything else that made you feel that way?

ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Q22. When your discussions are about the day-to-day business of a technical nature such as problem solving and achieving goals, would you say that learning in your organisation is generally about following the corporate line?

22.1. In terms of learning, what was the outcome?

22.2. Does it affect your learning?

Q23. Thinking about a situation(s) when you did feel free to engage in discussions about issues that are against the existing order of things (such as outlined above), how did it impact on yours and others learning?

23.1. What was the outcome?

23.2. Did it influence your thinking?

23.3. Did the conversation affirm or change your view?

23.4. Did you feel free talking to others about this conversation?

Q24. Is there anything else that you would like to say about how dialogue happens or does not happen in your organisation, or the impacts on organisational learning?

Conclusion

- That concludes the interview today
- Turn the digital recorder off.

Check Out

- A debriefing is to be conducted at the conclusion of the interview. That is, check out to ensure that participant feels comfortable prior to departure.
- How do you feel about the interview today?
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- If so, what email address should I send it to:

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Thank you

- Thank you for your participation today.
- I really appreciate your time and effort to assist me, and your honest responses.