

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

*An Inductive Exploration of Group Learning and Knowledge Generation
through Group Reflection and Psychoanalysis*

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the University of Hull

by

Gary John Shepherd MBA, MRes

March 2010

Contents

Introduction	6
<i>The aims and objectives of the research project</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Influences from the literature</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>A philosophical view</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Research methodology</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Research analysis</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>New theoretical framework</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>A brief introduction to the following chapters</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>27</i>
Literature Review	29
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Organisational Learning</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Psychoanalysis</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Action Learning</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>A critique of these themes</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Discussion</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Definition of learning</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>The contribution to knowledge</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>A theoretical framework</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>83</i>
Methodology	85
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>Aim of the study</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>Ontological and epistemological considerations</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Dewey's ontological view</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>The epistemological view of psychoanalysis</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>A philosophical position</i>	<i>94</i>
<i>Action Research</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>The structure of this action research project</i>	<i>96</i>

<i>Data gathering techniques</i>	98
<i>Projective drawings</i>	100
<i>The projective drawing method</i>	103
<i>Conclusion</i>	106
Fieldwork Results	107
<i>Introduction</i>	107
<i>The organisations involved in this research</i>	108
<i>The use of power relationships in group learning and reflection</i>	110
<i>Learning to reflect as an effective group</i>	121
<i>The uncomfortableness of group learning</i>	133
<i>Drawing upon the unconscious</i>	143
<i>Facilitating deeper levels of learning and reflection</i>	153
<i>Conclusion</i>	157
Discussion	159
<i>Introduction</i>	159
<i>An overview of the project</i>	160
<i>Discussing the groups psychoanalytical processes: The PhD 1 Group</i>	162
<i>Discussing the groups psychoanalytical processes: The PhD 2 Group</i>	167
<i>Discussing group reflection and emotion</i>	172
<i>Discussing the projective drawing methodology</i>	178
<i>Discussing the facilitation process</i>	185
<i>So how do groups learn?</i>	189
<i>The data that doesn't fit</i>	195
<i>Conclusion</i>	196
A New Theoretical Framework	198
<i>Introduction</i>	198
<i>Missing elements to group reflection and learning</i>	199
<i>The data that doesn't fit</i>	201
<i>Why doesn't the data fit?</i>	204
<i>Synchronicity</i>	210
<i>Synchronicity and management learning</i>	215

<i>New knowledge creation</i>	220
<i>Synchronicity and spirituality</i>	224
<i>Advaita Vedanta</i>	228
<i>The ontology of Advaita Vedanta</i>	229
<i>The epistemology of Advaita Vedanta</i>	231
<i>The link between Advaita Vedanta and Western philosophical thought</i>	234
<i>Creating a theoretical framework</i>	235
<i>Learning and experience</i>	237
<i>The Ego and its perception</i>	238
<i>Empirical investigation through contemplation and meditation</i>	240
<i>The mentoring role</i>	242
<i>Changes in my philosophical position</i>	245
<i>An overview of the theoretical framework</i>	249
<i>Conclusion</i>	250
My Reflections on the Research Process	252
<i>Introduction</i>	252
<i>1. The research design</i>	253
<i>2. The project implementation</i>	259
<i>3. The analysis</i>	264
<i>4. The discussion chapter</i>	267
<i>5. The new theoretical framework</i>	271
<i>6. Conscious reasons for being a researcher</i>	275
<i>7. Unconscious reasons for being a researcher</i>	279
<i>8. Original philosophical notions</i>	285
<i>9. New philosophical notions</i>	287
<i>10. Conclusion</i>	293
Conclusion	296
<i>Introduction</i>	296
<i>Conclusion of findings</i>	297
<i>The limits of the research</i>	308
<i>The opportunities for future research</i>	322
<i>Tensions within the thesis</i>	333

<i>Validity of the research</i>	339
<i>Conclusion</i>	342
References	343
Index	358

Introduction

This thesis aims to explore a rather simple question in relation to the process of how knowledge is generated within the organisational group. The question posed and pursued using an inductive methodological approach is ‘how do groups learn?’

This deceptively simple and almost child-like question has helped me to engage with a wide range of philosophical and methodological approaches to group learning and knowledge generation. By using such a straightforward notion I have been able to construct a sophisticated research project which posits a range of conclusions and responses to my original question and demonstrates the complexity of organisational learning in general. The conclusions I generated reveal a series of discrete interconnections between the individual, the group and an enmeshed series of psychological processes which both assist and prevent groups from generating knowledge and learning.

Along with generating a number of new insights into how groups learn, this simple question has enabled me to construct and propose a new theoretical framework for group learning and knowledge generation. The framework itself sets out to explore some of the most basic taken-for-granted notions of our Western world-view, ideas which form the bedrock of our epistemological certainty and which are hardly ever held up to critical scrutiny.

In the opening chapter of my thesis I will provide the reader with an overview of the research project and describe some of my projects aims and objectives. In this chapter I will also discuss a number of important notions which underpin the research and which I reference by describing some key figures within the literature. As well as offering important insights within their own research paradigms, the key figures from the literature I followed have also helped inspire me as I carried out the process of crafting the fieldwork design.

The chapter goes on to discuss the philosophical viewpoint which the research adopts in order for the reader to appreciate the particular paradigm I am operating within; this is obviously important as the research paradigm dictates the research and analysis methods which I am methodologically bound to use. After this section I aim to provide an insight into my research methodology and research design and discuss the reasons for creating the research fieldwork as I have done. This chapter ends with a brief outline of the other chapters which make up this thesis and which I include in order to assist the reader navigate through the work.

The aims and objectives of the research project

This research project aims to explore the notion of how groups learn. As a way of answering this question I intend to work with two small organisational groups who are interested in exploring ways to solve some of their problems through the process of group reflection. I aim to work with these groups by adopting an action research methodology which I believe will be the most appropriate way of meeting both the problem solving

needs of both organisations and the projects needs in generating rich data. Each of the research groups will attend their own regular hour-long tape recorded sessions each week where they will discuss and reflect upon some of the organisational problems closest to their hearts.

The project aims to explore the notion of how groups learn by observing both research groups in the cyclical act of reflecting upon their experiences. At the onset of the project each group will be taught how to reflect upon their experiences in a number of ways. The groups be taught three different styles of reflection, I aim to teach them how to reflect as individuals, as a group of reflectors and how to reflect by using critical methods (Habermas, 1972). The objective of encouraging the research group to reflect at three different levels of reflection is to move reflective practices on from the 'reflective practitioner' model (Schön, 1983) to the group model where each group member becomes engaged in the practice of organizing reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004). Organizing reflection is a methodology for reflecting upon group experiences which brings to the fore the many ways in which the group are instrumental in shaping their own organisational issues. Through the practice of organized reflection this project seeks to identify and explore novel ways in which the group itself can initiate their own methods of problem solving, knowledge generation and learning.

This research project has an interest in exploring the groups' unconscious psychological processes which it proposes drives much of an individual's attitudes and behaviours. By adopting an action learning methodology which focuses upon reflection in order to

generate new learning and knowledge, I anticipate that each group will begin to change their view of their problems and begin to understand how both their conscious and unconscious attitudes and behaviours affect the organisational issues they are reflecting upon.

There seems to be a host of instances within the working day where our behaviour seems to be controlled by unseen irrational drives which we find inexplicable. Losing our temper, behaving in a childlike way or disobeying the rules of the workplace for instance are all behaviours which we may engage in but may seem quite beyond us to explain with any level of rationality.

We all engage in this type of irrational, unconscious behaviour from time to time and it seems to affect both our personal and our organisational relationships with others. I believe that this kind of unconscious behaviour also affects the individual and the group's capacity to generate knowledge and learning. One of the main objectives of this research therefore, will be to discover if group learning is indeed affected by unconscious processes and if so, which processes in particular seem to have an effect on the research participants.

I aim to explore the groups' unconscious processes through the adoption of a novel and rarely used methodological tool known as projective drawing. Projective drawing is a technique which has its roots in psychology but is rarely used within the management sciences. Projective techniques posit the notion that individuals construct their reality

within their mind and create a framework of how the world should operate according to this highly subjective world-view.

As the individual interacts with the outside world they make sense of their experiences by simply 'projecting' their internalised world-view onto the external objects they encounter (Klein, 1959). I aim to explore the group's unconscious 'projections' through the use of a technique which requires my participants to draw pictures of their organisational problems. After drawing a picture of the organisational problem I intend to teach my research participants how to reflect on these images and explore both the images overt and covert content. This act, I anticipate will help group members to project their unconscious world-views onto the images and allow other group members to observe and reflect upon this content, which I anticipate will generate new learning opportunities.

I believe that by drawing pictures of their problems, the group members will be able to engage with their own internalised world-views on which their problems will be projected. By reflecting upon a range of drawn images over time, group members will be exposed to a number of their own projections and this may help generate insight into how the problems they are experiencing are based not upon reality but upon their internalised way of seeing the world.

The objective of using the projective drawing methodology will be to explore if the unconscious can be accessed over a regular period of time within a group in an action learning setting. If the groups are able to access unconscious content of their drawings

and reflect upon these, then this may open up the way for new learning and knowledge generation as the groups begin to change their internalised world-view and begin to address a number of their organisational issues.

Influences from the literature

The research project I designed and the methodology I intend to follow have been greatly influenced by the work and writings of my first PhD supervisor Professor Russ Vince. Professor Vince has a long established, successful internationally recognised research career exploring the ways in which organisational members learn through processes of reflection, where he incorporates both non-traditional data gathering methodologies and psychoanalytical philosophies to explain his research findings.

Professor Vince was one of the earliest organisational researchers to use projective drawing methods within management studies to uncover a group's unconscious attitudes and emotions to their working environment. He also proposed the notion that organisational groups undergoing stressful change processes often endure sustained political and emotional pressure which affects them personally and affects their ability to function and respond to organisational challenges. Along with Michael Reynolds, Professor Vince has been instrumental in challenging the notion of the reflective practitioner as an exemplar of reflective practice in favour of a new approach to reflection involving organisational groups which seems more critically challenging and provides more opportunity for individual and group knowledge generation (see *Organizing Reflection* by Reynolds and Vince, 2004).

Professor Vince's wide ranging and unique research approach interests me for a number of reasons. As I have worked with Professor Vince at the beginning of the PhD process I have been able to discuss with him and understand his philosophical point of view and approach to organisational learning. I am equally interested in the notion of organizing reflection with organisational groups and in approaching the issue of reflection by adopting a psychoanalytical lens to explain group behaviour. This research project incorporates many of Professor Vince's views and philosophical positions which I have combined with other writers to create a unique approach to answer the simple question 'how do groups learn?'

A towering influence within the organisational learning literature comes from the writings of the philosopher, pragmatist and educationalist John Dewey (1859-1952) who proposed that the basis of learning was through the act of reflecting upon experience. Dewey was a highly influential writer throughout the 20th Century who propounded a pragmatic philosophical view that rejected notion of the 'reflex arc' of psychology where human interaction was viewed as a motor response to stimulus. In place of the psychological account, Dewey proposed that senses, thoughts and actions formed a complex biological system which 'experiences' the outside world in a range of different ways. Reflecting upon these range of experiences held for Dewey the basis of all human learning.

This work is largely based on the notions Dewey proposed in regard to learning from experience and relies upon this as one of its taken-for-granted assumptions. Within this work I have developed a methodology and practice which calls for my research participants to reflect upon their experiences and this act forms the starting point of their own knowledge generation and learning.

Another writer who has been influential in the development of my thesis is Donald Schön (1930-1997). Schön was a leading figure in the field of personal reflective practice and developed the notion that organisations could benefit greatly by utilising reflective techniques. Schön proposed that the organisational professional should spend reflective time at the workplace in order to learn from their workplace experiences and become challenged, puzzled and curious about them.

I have also been influenced by the work of David Kolb (1939-) who developed the notion that learning seems to be a cyclical process which we move in and out of at various stages of the process. Kolb's 'experiential learning cycle' (Kolb, 1984) model is seen by many to be the cornerstone of experiential learning techniques and is used throughout the world. The project I have developed relies on this type of cyclical approach to experiential learning as my research groups will be required to repeat set patterns of reflection as individuals, as a group and by critical means as a way to generate discussion, reflection and learning. It is mainly through the writings and notions of these researchers that part of my research project has been built. As a consequence I am a great

proponent of organisational learning through individual, group and critical reflection using the cyclical process of reflection upon experience.

There are another group of writers, however, who have influenced my thesis and the research project and who have helped me to understand the way in which the unconscious mind seems to directly affect ones ability to generate knowledge and learn. These writers, from the psychoanalytical school fascinate me and have in fact helped push my ideas into a distinctive corner of the organisational learning field where few traditional organisational learning researchers ever venture.

The first writer to influence my work within the psychoanalytical paradigm must be the grandfather of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) who, in the early 20th Century pioneered notions of the unconscious and its effect upon human behaviour and experience. Freud proposed that for the greater part of our lives we are all driven by motivations which are largely unknown to our awareness but which affect our daily behaviour. A constant battle seems to be raging within most people, according to Freud between the wants of our irrational motivations which may be sexually charged or extremely sadistic on one hand and our desire to behave as 'normal', reasonable adults on the other.

This unconscious battle often spills out into ones consciousness and may be played out in host of different ways such as through emotional outbursts, victimisation of others, depression, fits of anger or even uncontrollable laughter. Freud's work has been pivotal

for other psychoanalytic researchers in their expansion and development of his theories of the unconscious.

Other researchers in the field have taken Freud's notions and developed theories which counter his own but have moved the field of research forward in some important ways. I am interested in the work of Freud as I believe it will help me to explain in quite a novel way why some people learn and others do not, or why some people may be good at reflecting on their experiences whilst others find the process too painful or complicated.

My psychoanalytical interest is not solely based upon Freud's, however, as I have also been influenced by other psychoanalytical researchers who have redefined some original Freudian notions and moved the whole field into more humanistic territory.

Melanie Klein (1882-1960), for instance developed a whole new approach to the study of the unconscious and provided new insight into the way psychoanalysis views the growing infant through her 'object relations' theory (Klein, 1959). Klein believed that as the infant developed their mental capacity to think they slowly became aware that they were not the centre of the universe (as they had been when they were a newborn) and often had their own needs ignored by their caregiver. This realisation, Klein proposed generated periods of extreme hatred towards the caregiver when the infants' needs were not met and also periods of extreme love to the caregiver when the infants' needs were met.

Klein proposed that the young child did not have a well enough developed logical capacity in early infancy to understand that caregivers are often inconsistent with their attention. This fact she proposed, led the infant to create a fantasy of a sometimes 'good' and a sometimes 'bad' caregiver. This is the basis of the theory of 'splitting', which Klein believed is a position adults still revert to in times of extreme stress or anxiety.

Wilfred Bion (1897-1979) was a psychoanalytical researcher who studied groups and group development. He has been influential to my work by proposing a theory known as the 'group-as-a-whole' (Bion, 1961). Bion worked both between and after the wars in British military hospitals with groups of service personnel and was interested in how a group behaved in relation to one another. Bion developed the notion that groups need to have a role and meaning in order for them to be effective, however, groups were not really very effective as they tended to lose their impetus quite rapidly unless they could be led by a strong leader who would offer them the psychological support that they needed throughout the task.

The most interesting notion in my opinion which Bion developed and which I aim to use within my group work is the idea of the group-as-a-whole. This notion states that groups which meet regularly over a period of time, begin to take on the psychological traits of their members, their hopes and fears, their anxieties and their joys. Once a group is established, according to Bion's theory the group can be regarded by researchers as a single entity in itself which will display the combined traits of its members.

I aim to incorporate the notion of the group-as-a-whole in my methodology when conducting this research. In doing so I think that I may become less confused with the overt psychological processes operating in the group, which should make my data analysis relatively less confusing. Exploring the organisational group as a 'group-as-a-whole' will also give me the opportunity to experience the group holistically as a single entity. This should help me to understand the broader narratives of the group's discussions and prevent me from becoming stuck within the minutiae of individual conversations.

The final great influence on my research project comes not from any individual but from a critical philosophical movement known as the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School were a movement which developed in the early twentieth century through researchers such as Wilhelm Reich (1970), Erich Fromm (1966) and Herbert Marcuse (1966) who questioned the functionalist and techno-rationalist Western world-view and contended that science was not the repository for all knowledge. Members of the school critiqued the scientific world-view which had become dominant in the West by exploring how society was imposing restrictions and narrowing free thought on its members. The Frankfurt School developed new ways to explore the social milieu through 'critical' means which espoused the emancipation of free thought and questioned the power-holders intentions within society.

I aim to adopt a critical approach within the reflective sessions in an attempt to surface an understanding in the group of their own role within society in general. I believe that it

was important when studying group reflection for the group itself to have the opportunity to reflect on the context of their own functioning within a larger apparatus than merely that of the organisation itself. Although this kind of critical reflection is quite difficult to pursue in many ways, I believe that some of its notions may lead to individual or group empowerment which I hope may lead to learning, personal development and organisational change.

A philosophical view

In order to create a philosophical view within a research project, it is important to understand ones ontological and epistemological position. Once we have established our ontology and epistemology, we can begin to choose methodologies and techniques of data gathering and interpretation which correspond to our views and which give the research academic credibility.

Ontology is an area of philosophy which questions our reality and asks ‘What is real?’ Epistemology is an area of philosophy which asks ‘How do we know what we know?’ By combining our ontology and epistemology we create a philosophical position which then forms the bedrock of the research project. This research project aims to develop a philosophical view from the work of both Dewey and of psychoanalysis and proposed a philosophical position grounded within a postmodern framework.

Ontologically speaking, I believe in notions derived from Dewey in that reality is constructed by individuals through their day-to-day experiences of the world which is re-

enforced through the act of reflection on these experiences afterwards. I also believe that reality can be experienced through such things as intuition and ‘hunches’ as well as somatically, through our bodily senses. It is through such an ontology that I believe individuals learn and create context of themselves within the world.

My epistemological view derives from the field of psychoanalysis and in particular from Bion's approach. Bion rejected both determinism and teleology, two common epistemologies within psychoanalysis which he described as too ‘rigid’ (see Methodology chapter) in favour of an approach which aimed to suspend the ideas surrounding memory and desire. In doing this Bion believed that the psychoanalyst could generate critical uncertainty where new knowledge free from dogma could emerge. Following such an approach, however, would undermine epistemological certainty and leave a vacuum which would be unsettling for the individual but which would be relatively free for new ideas and knowledge to emerge. In such a vacuum Bion believed, individuals could realise that their knowledge was actually based upon their own subjectivity, which itself was derived through childhood conditioning and their ongoing life experiences.

After developing my ontological and epistemological view I looked for a philosophical framework which could incorporate them both and which I believed in. I decided that my philosophical view was that of postmodernist. The postmodern view rejects the meta-narratives of Western industrialisation and describes reality as linguistically orientated, subjective and socially constructed through symbol and interaction between other members of the group. Postmodernism also states that we can never really know

ourselves outside of the confines of language and concepts as humanity is defined and situated within language. The postmodern view enabled me to construct a research methodology which incorporated the notions of reflection upon experience and also the notions derived from psychoanalysis.

Research methodology

My research question asks ‘how do groups learn?’ and consequently the research methodology aims to explore this question. The first thing that I decided after considering how to address the question was that the research would be crafted using an inductive approach (Foote-Whyte, 1991, Greenwood and Levin, 1998). The inductive approach aims to generate new theory by gathering a rich amount of data from a very small research sample and teasing out new insights from this data.

Induction does not rely on hypothesis testing as a methodology as it prefers to gather data and set aside any preconceived notions as to what the data will disclose. In this way the inductive method can help establish new knowledge and generate new research hypotheses. I was very interested in using the inductive approach within this research project as I felt that the field of combining organisational reflection and psychoanalysis was so novel that it required inductive research as a way to generate new hypotheses for future researchers.

The methodological framework I intended to use would need to be robust enough to enable the two research groups who had volunteered to work on the project to meet and

reflect on their issues over a number of months and to be a place for my own facilitation and direction. I also required the methodological framework to be able to allow participants to surface conscious and unconscious content within a safe and structured environment. Along with this I required the methodology to allow me space to record group members undergoing acts of reflection and utilise other data gathering techniques which would help me in the analysis phase. After considering my requirements I decided that Action Research would be the most suitable methodology to adopt.

The traditional action research project sees individuals come together as a group in order to work out their own problems using reflection with the support of others. The individuals present their problem to the group, which is then discussed and reflected upon. In an action learning group (or 'set') the individual presenting the problem is seen to be the world's expert in it, which consequently limits the advice which other participants can impart. Instead of giving advice, other group members are encouraged to seek clarification, understanding or more detailed explanation from the presenting group member. A facilitator directs the reflective action and ensures that each member has their say and becomes involved in the whole reflection process. Finally the facilitator ensures that each participant creates an action plan of how they will tackle the particular problem in the future. The success of this plan becomes the subject for discussion in the next reflective session.

The action research project I devised is novel in that it is based upon action research principles but with a number of differences. I intend the action research group to be

comprised of members from the same organisation who are all interested in reflecting on their organisations problems. Each group will meet once a week to discuss a single organisational problem and through this process the group will gain an understanding of how others within the group experience and rationalise the particular problem.

The group will reflect on their problems using the three types of reflection discussed earlier, as individuals, a group and by critical methods. This approach should enable group members to understand their problems from a number of different perspectives as opposed to merely the single perspective of their own experience. The research design is also novel in its use of the projective drawing methodology which will help to surface both conscious and unconscious behaviours and attitudes.

Research analysis

After the research data has been collected I aim to analyse the transcriptions of the action learning sets by using a technique derived from Discourse Analysis known as Hermeneutics (Gabriel, 1991). Discourse analysis is a methodology which uncovers multiple meanings within documentation and transcripts by examining the underlying structure of sentences, wording and phraseology within the data (Grant et al., 1998). This approach to data analysis is useful to postmodern researchers as it acknowledges the multiple meanings and subjectivity of the text under investigation. By reading and re-reading texts the researcher is able to uncover different layers of meaning held within. After uncovering these multiple meanings, researchers are able to describe in greater detail the narratives which they felt were being enacted within the research study.

Hermeneutics is an approach to data analysis which is popular with researchers studying psychoanalytical mechanisms operating within the organisation. Hermeneutics allows the psychoanalytical researcher to generate hypotheses in regards to the meaning of the text in question based upon their own psychoanalytical theory. The text is then explored by the researcher for deeper structures within the sentences and for indications of hidden dimensions and meanings in order to gauge the utility of the original hypothesis. If the original hypothesis proves unfounded, the researcher then returns to the data in order to construct a new hypothesis which they once again go about testing (Wallace et al., 2003).

By using a hermeneutic approach to my data analysis I aim to generate a number of insights as to the psychological processes at work within the research groups which may facilitate or prevent learning from occurring. The objective of carrying out this work is to derive a number of unique research conclusions from the data which I anticipate will add to the body of existing knowledge within the organisational learning paradigm and form the basis of my contribution to the field.

New theoretical framework

As I developed the research design and methodology I was aware that there may emerge the opportunity to create a new theoretical framework within the organisational learning paradigm, if I could identify certain empirical data which would add a new dimension to group learning and which had not been acknowledged by other researchers within the field. As I was adopting an inductive research approach the possibility that I may have

been able to derive new insights from the data was always in my mind. On completing the research analysis it became evident that I certainly would have the opportunity to develop a new theoretical framework, after I identified a selection of empirical data which did not fit within any of my own research categorisations or feature in the current organisational learning literature.

After I completed the data analysis exercise I noticed that there were a number of anomalies within the research data which did not seem to fit into the categorisations I had created and defined. These anomalies comprised of a number of puzzling incidents which occurred within the action research group itself and which were passed off by the whole group (and by myself in fact) as merely coincidental. It was only when I realised that the data actually had an empirical value within the project and had validity as data in its own right that I began to view it differently. From this point on, I began to explore the data more rigorously and craft it into a new theoretical framework for organisational learning.

Before creating the new theoretical framework (see New Theoretical Framework chapter) I discussed the reasons why my original research methodology and philosophical view seemed incapable of capturing the ‘coincidence’ data which the whole research group were eager to dismiss. I went on to consider a range of new literature from the field of psychoanalysis, management research and Eastern philosophical thought as a way to contextualise the anomalous data findings. After carrying out more research on this and related subjects I finally developed and proposed a new theoretical framework for group learning.

The new theoretical framework I developed questions the way in which groups dismiss anomalous incidents (such as the coincidences in this research project) and totally disregard the opportunity which exploring such incidents may have in generating new knowledge and organisational learning. My approach which is based upon critical reflection asks why we immediately dismiss some empirical experiences as ‘nonsense’ before reflecting upon them and allowing us the opportunity of generating insight from our reflections. My intuition tells me that we do this because of our cultural beliefs and our scientific Western ontological tradition, which we all unconsciously ‘hold’ and which I refer to as our ‘philosophies-in-use’.

The approach I developed helps to question our Western philosophies-in-use through an augmented action research methodology I developed. This methodology utilises a critical Eastern philosophical tradition as a way to describe reality in a new way and then enables us to explore our Western notions of reality through a number of methodological processes based on contemplation and reflective insight.

By developing a new theoretical framework and incorporating new ideas from the literature I have had to change the philosophical view I held at the beginning of the research project. I consider that my changing philosophical position is important to discuss as it has implications as to how I view experiential learning, reflection and psychoanalysis, in the future. It is for this reason that I aim to discuss my changing philosophical position within the New Theoretical Framework chapter of the thesis and

describe what implications a new philosophical view may have for my future research work.

A brief introduction to the following chapters

In Chapter Two (Literature Review) I will describe and explore the three ‘strands’ of literature which have informed this research project. I will also critique this literature and develop a theoretical framework which accommodates its main tenets whilst taking into account some of the views expressed in the critique. Chapter Three (Methodology) describes my philosophical position and the methodological approach I adopted in regards to the research itself. In Chapter Four (Fieldwork Results) I introduce the two research groups and begin to describe and explore some broad areas within the data I obtained throughout the project. This work leads on to Chapter Five (Discussion) where the data is explored in more detail in order to provide my own psychoanalytical interpretations of both research groups’ dynamics. The chapter continues by discussing how these groups engaged with reflection, projective drawing and my facilitation and asks what effect these approaches had on the group psychodynamic and their ability to learn and generate knowledge.

Chapter Six (New Theoretical Framework) goes on to discuss my proposal for a new theoretical framework for organisational learning, which is based on the notions of synchronicity and grounded within the paradigm of Eastern philosophy. In Chapter Seven (My Reflections on the Research Process) I discuss the various ways in which I have affected the research itself and explore how my own preferences, opinions and biases

have coloured every stage of the research project, both consciously and unconsciously. In doing this I intend to acknowledge my effect on the research itself and to demonstrate methodological rigour. In the final chapter of the thesis (Chapter Eight, Conclusion) I will sum up the conclusions of the research findings and discuss the limits of this research thesis. This chapter concludes by making recommendations to other researchers who may be interested in developing a project based upon these ideas with suggestions for future research.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the research project and provided the reader with a general overview of the projects aims and objectives. The overall aim of the research project is to explore how groups learn using a projective drawing technique to surface conscious and unconscious attitudes and behaviours. I aim to carry out this research project by adopting an action research methodology which will enable my research participants to reflect upon their experiences and their organisational problems over a number of research sessions.

In this chapter I have also described the writers that have influenced this research from the management literature and their specific areas of expertise that have informed the project. Key writers in this chapter were Dewey and his work on reflection, Vince and his notions regarding organizing reflection and Freud who developed his original notions in regard to psychoanalysis. I have also explained my own philosophical view, which is based upon notions of the postmodern. Furthermore I have explained the methodological

approach I intend to adopt in regard to the project and which will be utilised in order to generate credible data which I will use within the research analysis and findings phase of the project. Finally I have described how this research has led to the development of a new theoretical framework for group learning which has impacted upon my own philosophical view, which I aim to discuss in a later chapter of the thesis.

In the following chapter I intend to review the literature which formed the basis of my research project and which draws upon three distinct research paradigms; organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning.

Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter of the thesis I intend to describe the main theoretical influences and research paradigms which have enabled me to craft the research design. I intend to explore the antecedents of each research area and give the reader a flavour of the writers I personally consider to have had the greatest affect on the paradigm and upon me as a PhD researcher. My research has been informed by three main theoretical ‘strands’ which have developed from the fields of organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning.

The organisational learning strand interests me as it deals with how our everyday experience can generate learning through the process of reflection. If reflection is structured and cyclical this may become a reliable way of gaining consistent reflective insight. If reflective practice takes on a critical perspective and is developed to be a group activity as opposed to a solitary one, then organisational learning has tremendous potential to be beneficial to organisational groups engaged in both problem solving and organisational change programmes.

I believe that psychoanalytical writers can offer new insights into how groups learn through their exploration of our unconscious processes, attitudes and behaviours which seem to either prevent learning from taking place or which help facilitate learning. By exploring researchers who developed theories of the unconscious and theories of group

behaviour this thesis brings the unconscious into the centre of group knowledge generation practices.

It is important when carrying out a research project that the correct methodology is utilised which serves the needs of both the participants and the researcher. Action learning underpins the methodological practice of action research and is concerned with exploring how groups generate knowledge using reflective techniques within an 'on-site' learning environment. Although action learning is a relatively new approach to group reflection and learning it seems to be extremely popular and successful way for groups to interact and develop new knowledge.

This chapter also discusses the voices of some of the key writers from other research paradigms who disagree with the notions of the researchers I have chosen. This is an important part of the literature review because having voices from both sides of the argument will assist the reader in gaining a balanced view of where the literature review stands within the wider context of management research.

The final part of the chapter proposes a theoretical framework which I will follow when carrying out the research project itself. The framework is based upon the literature I have reviewed but also acknowledges some of the voices of criticism from other writers. After developing the framework the chapter finishes with an introduction of my next chapter, the research methodology.

Organisational Learning

Organisational learning is a wide, diverse subject which has been studied from many different perspectives and given many different interpretations. There are a number of different approaches to the study of learning (Antonacopoulou and Gabriel, 2001), for instance some researchers examine the end result of learning (Bass and Vaughan, 1969), others look at the learning process (Revans, 1977) whilst other researchers explore the psychological aspects of learning (Reynolds and Vince, 2004). The field of organisational learning has grown in significance to many management researchers over time (Easterby-Smith, 1997), and has begun to move away from exploring organisations from a technical-rational perspective and moved towards the organisation as a social entity (Easterby-Smith and Araujo, 1999, Vince, 2001).

This thesis has a particular interest in organisational learning within the field of management education and the philosophical writing of the American pragmatist John Dewey (1859-1952) and his notion that experience and reflection facilitates learning (Dewey, 1916). Dewey was a towering influence, particularly in the United States within the disciplines of philosophical reasoning and education throughout the 20th Century.

Dewey's insights concerning learning were based on the premise that experience is gained through the transaction of the individual with the social world (or world of work for instance). As the individual is always transacting with the social world, experience is both continuously flowing and can be examined in the here-and-now (Elkjaer, 2004). Dewey described experience as more than thinking and emotion, the physical body and

intuition also play a part of experience and this may lead to an individuals reflective inquiry (Dewey, 1917, 1938).

Dewey opposed the notion of the 'reflex arc' of psychology which described human behaviour from a functionalist perspective as a mechanical sequence of events which lead to the formation of a motor response (Bernstein, 1966, Dewey, 1896). Dewey opposed this view by proposing that senses, thoughts and actions are much more complex and in themselves made up a unified system which 'experiences' the outside world in a range of different ways. The reflex arc, according to Dewey should actually be a circuit (Dewey, 1896).

Dewey proposed that knowledge was evolving in the moment through human experience and that thinking was the processor of experiences in the mind which constructed solutions to problems by the application of thought (Dewey, 1933). The process of thinking over these experiences in the mind (reflection) and generating new insight is the key to Dewey's philosophy of learning (*ibid.*).

Dewey posited that learning stems from inquiry and that inquiry is stimulated when the individual experiences that 'something is wrong' or uncomfortable. The individual may have a sense that something is wrong based on their perceptions alone or may use their intuition or they may use their intellect. At first they may attempt to resolve their uncomfortableness through a 'working hypothesis' or by using mental models of past experiences and then test this in order to 'solve' the problem. Uncertainty must disappear

before the problem is satisfactorily solved. If new learning is to be gained from the experience, then reflection on the relationship between the definition of the problem and its solution must occur, after such reflection a new understanding of the experience will have been developed.

Dewey believed that it is only when the relationship between the thoughts and feelings of the experience and the solution to the problem has been explored, that the individual will have gained new knowledge on the issue and their reaction to it (Dewey and Bentley, 1949, Elkjaer, 2004).

Adopting similar philosophical principles to Dewey, David Kolb (1939-) has been an influential researcher within the field of experiential learning, particularly in relation to the development of his notion of the 'learning cycle' (Cunningham, 1994). This model is seen by many researchers as a foundation for understanding learning and organisational learning as a cyclical process (Dixon, 1994, Kolb, 1984). The model itself aims to describe the way in which experience and reflection can lead to new knowledge generation. According to Kolb, learners need to have four sets of specific skills if they are to be effective. Learners need to have the ability to appreciate concrete experiences, to be observant and reflective, to have the ability to generate abstract concepts and finally, the ability to actively experiment with the experience (Kolb, 1984 p. 30, Holman et al., 1997). The model has been popular to many researchers as it seems to create linkages between deductive and inductive approaches through its abstract and concrete processes (Vince, 1998).

Although the philosophical foundations for the learning cycle have been criticised in the past (Miettinen, 2000) the cycle remains a popular tool. Some researchers have noted that the cycle pays too much attention to individual experience and social reality rather than group experiences within politically oppressive structures (Vince, 1998). The cycle lends no real attention to the here-and-now experience of the world (Yalom, 1985) and there is no realisation that individuals may adopt unconscious defences against their experience at times when their anxiety prevents them from learning from their experience (Vince, 1998).

Donald Schön (1930-1997) has been similarly influential within the field of organisational learning with his work on thinking styles and individual reflection. Schön became interested in the way in which people think and act in situations which seemed to be incongruent with each other. This led to the notion of *espoused theories* and *theories in use* (Argyris and Schön, 1974, Raelin, 1993) which seemed to suggest that theory and action were not connected, as common sense would suggest that they should be.

Schön was of the opinion that learning involved detecting and correcting errors. Typically he suggested when an error occurs the solution to the error is sought from within the established system with no thought of the influence the system has in creating the error. This is known as single loop learning; (Argyris and Schön, 1974, Usher and Bryant, 1989). Alternatively the basis for the error could be explored by questioning the way in which the system is fundamentally set up and how the system contributes to the

error. This thinking style is known as double loop learning (Argyris and Schön, 1978). Through these notions Schön (with the collaboration of Chris Argyris) advanced the field of experiential learning considerably, as the practitioner now had a set of methodological tools with which to work (Finger and Asun, 2000).

Schön went on to bring the notion of reflection into the workplace by describing the way in which professionals should utilise reflection in the form of the *Reflective Practitioner* (Schön, 1983). Schön challenged the techno-rational basis for knowledge in the workplace and described how professionals should be puzzled, or challenged or confused by situations and begin to reflect on them using their intuitions and emotions in ways which would help them understand the situation in new ways. This was reflecting in the moment and known as reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983, p. 68).

After the experience had passed Schön recommended that the manager should write down the experience, or speak to a supervisor and explore his/her actions within the experience, the results of the action and what may have been the outcome if another way of behaving would have been tried. This process is known as reflection-on-action and helped to develop ideas and alternative solutions to the problems encountered (*ibid*). Although there has been some debate as to how reflection on and reflection in action are distinct (Usher et al., 1997) and how it is sometimes impossible to think on ones feet all of the time, (Eraut, 1994) Schön's insights into reflection and the reflective practitioner are still the cornerstone of organisational learning practices.

Critical Management Studies (CMS) attempted to use principles of reflection and critical methods in order to empower managers with new understanding of the organisation. Some management educational researchers, who were interested in moving from a technical-rational explanation of the organisation, began to develop methods of critical reflection which questioned the basis of organisational systems and the impact of management decisions on society at large (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992a, Reynolds, 1998). Critical reflection is derived from work carried out by the Frankfurt School and further developed by Jurgen Habermas (1972) and attempts to develop the linkages between methods of reflective practice and the influence of the organisation upon the social world.

The philosophy of critical reflection fits well into Argyris and Schön's notions regarding triple loop learning (Argyris and Schön, 1974), but aims to question the way in which managers themselves operate, the way administration processes work, power relationships between organisational members and the levels of influence groups actually had within the workplace. This movement aimed to stem the tide of the technical-rationalist viewpoint within the organisation (Nord and Jermier, 1992). CMS also aimed to develop the notion that organisational groups were just as important as the individual and that reflection should assist the whole group with problems as opposed to simply the power holders (Reynolds and Vince, 2004).

Critical Management Education (CME) is another form of critical reflection which brings into question the philosophical underpinnings of management educationalist thought and the results of such thought within organisational life (French and Grey, 1996). Some

researchers within this school question the vocational and competence base of many management qualifications and their utility in generating critical thought (Thomas and Anthony, 1996). Others critique the models of positivist administration techniques such as financial and quantitative measures against newer systems of control such as vision, culture and reward systems which inevitably continue to restrict behaviours, as control remains in the hands of the few (Roberts, 1996).

Although the critically reflective practices had importance in uncovering ‘unsaid’ and taken-for-granted ways of working, the approach itself has been generally treated with caution, as in excess it may undermine the organisation and its members positions due to its extreme criticality (Fay, 1987).

In response to the need to move reflection from the reflective practitioner to a group setting, some researchers have suggested a process of Public Reflection (Raelin, 2001). Individual reflection alone, according to some researchers, without the collaboration of others to give perspective may be actually quite limited and sterile (Taylor, 1997). Public reflection, on the other hand is the act of reflecting as a group on thoughts, feelings or actions in order to generating new knowledge. This type of reflection is best suited to work within project teams but has utility to individuals, groups and to society in general (Raelin, 2001, p. 2).

Public reflection aims to avoid confrontation within the reflective process by creating conversation about experiences, known as learning dialogues. Learning dialogues are

broad narratives which explore thoughts, feelings and behaviour as a narrative, this method deters participants making statements and observations which may seem unreflective, judgemental or accusatory. Although this type of reflective practice seems 'safe' it still utilises critical aspects in order to assist the project team with the 'dismantling' of their working problems (*ibid*; p. 5).

Another attempt to develop the idea of group reflection at work is through the practice of Productive Reflection. Productive reflection builds upon the work of management education and notions of organisational learning to create a new way of learning through combining the concepts of individual and group reflective practice in order to contend with the complexity and chaos of postmodern organisational dynamics (Boud et al., 2006). The overall aim of this approach seems to be that reflection in both of its forms should become a part of the managers daily work schedule and be designed into the working day to inform organisational practice (Ellestrom, 2006).

Productive reflection is a relatively new concept which encompasses a number of different theoretical approaches by a number of practitioners. There seems to be a lack of examples of how organisations have utilised this type of reflection, but many examples of when reflection within organisations is lacking (Bou, 2006). Recently it has been proposed that in order to aid group critical reflection a number of methodological tools could be introduced by researchers. Among these tools are group storytelling, which transmits shared meanings to the group and encourages social cohesion (Boje, 1991a);

reflective dialogues which surface aspects of problems which are unknown and uncertain, but by their discussion seem to help uncover new meanings (Schön, 1983, 1987); and reflective metaphors which express concepts through the use of often simple analogies which may then be explored from a critical perspective (Hill and Levenhagen, 1995).

A recent approach which seeks to develop the notion of reflection away from the reflective practitioner and towards group reflection is that of Organizing Reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004). Organizing reflection considers that reflection should be seen as a critical (Reynolds, 1998) and a social group process (Easterby-Smith and Araujo, 1999) which facilitates learning and contributes to the management of work and recommends tools to achieve this aim.

Some tools which are proposed include peer consultancy groups where managers meet and reflect on issues in small groups within an atmosphere of joint analysis and consultation in order to generate new types of knowledge without the influence of other peers or controlling individuals (Vince, 2002a); Organisational role analysis, where the individual role of the manager is explored in depth as a way to differentiate between the individual as a person and the role which the individual adopts within the organisation (Reed, 1976); and group role analysis where a whole group meets in order to explore and reflect on the dynamics played out within the organisational group and how roles within the group affect a range of practices within the organisation (Triest, 1999). This methodology also recognises that there are a number of levels of reflection, the individual, the group and the social political or critical level (Vince, 2002a).

The second theoretical strand of this work has been informed by the literature on Psychoanalysis and describes the range of approaches psychoanalytic researchers have used in order to combine their theories with theories of the organisation.

Psychoanalysis

The roots of Psychoanalysis can be traced back to the seminal work of Freud (1856-1939) in the early 20th Century. Freud pioneered psychoanalytical thought and developed the notion of the unconscious and its effects on both human behaviour and human experience (Freud, 1986).

Because of Freud's work the social sciences began to appreciate the human condition as vastly complex and irrational, driven by hidden motivations which seemed to operate outside the awareness of most people (Freud, 1988). The Freudian model of the mind was divided up into three dynamic regions, known as the ego, the superego and the id. These regions, according to Freud battled constantly with one another in order to direct their own often unreasonable or inappropriate wishes and fantasies into consciousness (Freud, 1984a).

The containment of the majority of these types of thought led the individual to adopt a range of unconscious defence strategies which acted as 'suppressors' and enabled the individual to lead a mostly 'normal' life. Freud's influence within all areas of social science was substantial as it expanded psychoanalysis beyond the original analyst/patient

relationship into areas as diverse as religion, art, culture and into the management sphere into areas such as leadership, work relations and group behaviour (Gabriel, 2005).

As psychoanalytical management and group research developed, two epistemological approaches became prevalent. Some researchers studied the organisation 'psychoanalytically' (Gabriel, 2005) and explored how the organisation formed a key part of Western society and culture.

These researchers were interested in the demands on the individual and the effects of worker relationships both at work and away from the workplace. They also studied the effects of fantasy and emotion on individuals, organisational groups and the wider society. This approach seemed to be theory based and have wide application within the study of leadership, authority, group behaviour, creativity and psychological contracts for instance (*ibid.*).

Proponents of the psychoanalytical approach to organisations generally held a more critical view of the workplace and society and were influenced by scholars such as Wilhelm Reich (1970), Erich Fromm (1966), Herbert Marcuse (1966), Theodor Adorno (1950) and their colleagues in the Frankfurt School.

The main tenet of the Frankfurt Schools' approach was to question the extent that positivism and scientific fact could be relied upon for epistemological truth within the social sciences (Horkheimer, 1995a). Researchers contended that positivism effectively

blocked other forms of social research and enquiry into an alternative reading of reality by its insistence on scientific 'facts'.

The Frankfurt School viewed early dominant structural-functionalist views as encouraging a technical-rationalist orientation which discounted critical accounts of the organisation (Carr, 1989). Researchers of the Frankfurt School looked upon society as consisting of narratives which were evolving and transforming through normal social interaction and through forces of organisation, power and control which they sought to study by using critical dialectical logic (Carr, 2000).

Researchers also utilised psychodynamic theory to explore the 'hidden' dimensions of individual and group relationships, which they believed helped to conceal the true nature of the organisation from its participants. Many researchers with such an epistemological orientation viewed the organisation as a therapeutic setting where organisational reality was concealed from the majority of group members in order to 'protect' them (*ibid.*). Organisational members would shield themselves from psychological harm through unconscious processes identified by Freud such as repression, regression, rationalization, denial, sublimation and reaction formation, for instance (Freud, 1985, Geuss, 1981)

One of the main criticisms of the Frankfurt Schools approach was that such a critical perspective could create an atmosphere of psychological and organisational tension as realisations of the true structure of the organisation were uncovered. Using critical methods within the organisation as a researcher has always carried the risk that the

organisation and its members will become psychologically 'damaged' as they are exposed to more and more critical views. The Frankfurt School philosophy sought to highlight social control mechanisms but never provided a solution to counter these forces which always seem to be required to some extent if a society is to be organised into productive groups.

The second notable method of using psychoanalysis within the organisational context stems from the idea that organisations may be viewed as 'psychoanalytical clients', with researchers using a series of interventions in order to 'make them well'. This approach is known as 'psychoanalysing organisations' (Gabriel and Carr, 2002) and sought to improve the functioning of the organisation through exposing group members to their own unconscious actions and behaviours over time and helping them to create strategies and action for change.

Researchers using this approach tended to concentrate on repressed unconscious feelings like fear, rivalry and frustration which seemed to prevent the organisation performing the way it should do (*ibid.*). Psychoanalytical researchers understood the organisational system in a different way to traditional management researchers and tended to give clinical descriptions to processes which they interpreted as problematic to the organisation. The organisation system may have been described, for instance as paranoid, grandiose, anxiety ridden or repressed. Members entering the organisation or the particular group which had such a diagnosis could become 'infected' with the

psychological ‘symptoms’ depending on how strong their own inner psychological functioning may be (*ibid.*)

One of the most influential establishments for psychoanalysing organisations and group dynamics is the Tavistock Institute, which was created between the First and Second World War in an attempt to develop new behaviourist explanations of how work groups form, interact and develop (Loveridge et al., 2007). The Institute relies on Freudian notions to challenge the socio-technical perception of group working and promotes its ideas through a number of interactive ‘group conferences’ which help develop a consultants’ expertise of using the psychoanalytical approach to group working. Although these conferences are held worldwide, the most notable conference is held annually in Leicester in the UK, where participants experience working within authoritarian power structures and experience how this impacts on themselves and their peer group (Miller, 1989).

A number of notable researchers emerged from the Tavistock Institute and had an effect on how researchers understand the psychoanalysis of groups. Melanie Klein (1975) played an influential role in the development of psychoanalysis and groups with her work on Object Relations and the primitive defence mechanism known as ‘Splitting’. Klein discovered that this mechanism is adopted by the individual to polarise parts of the social world into ‘good’ or ‘bad’, enabling them to manage the anxiety they experience in their world (Klein, 1952a, 1959). Some theorists contend that this mechanism begins in very early infancy as the ‘super-ego’ is developed (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988). The ‘good’

elements of the splitting process go on to form the 'ego-ideal' which is actually a fantasy of how the social world would be if the individual or group were the centre of the universe (Schwartz, 1990).

Klein viewed the world of the infant as a powerfully unsettling place, in which the child came to terms with a range of strong impulses including hate and annihilation and attempted, for the first time to separate reality from their internal fantasy. The infant experienced a host of loving emotions and hateful, destructive fantasies as it interacted with the world. As these feelings were powerful, upsetting and unmanageable to the infant, they were disowned and 'projected' onto caregivers. Consequently the infants' world became a confusing place of terrifying, dangerous, evil or good, nurturing and loving experiences. Klein termed this state of being as the 'paranoid schizoid position' (Horwitz, 1983).

As the infant grew, and began to form deeper relationships with its parents, it began to realise that it would not be annihilated or destroyed after all and that its parents were sometimes 'good' and sometimes 'bad' (Klein, 1975). It then occurred to the infant that they themselves had projected the hateful and destructive feelings onto the caregivers and further realise that their own feelings of anger or hate may have damaged their parents in some way. Consequently the infant experiences sadness or guilt about their actions as they acknowledge that they actually care for the object of their anger. This guilt is then turned inward and marks what Klein refers to as the 'depressive position' (Horwitz, 1983).

As an adult, we still move between the paranoid schizoid and depressive positions in response to stress (Klein, 1946, Ogden, 1982) and regress to more primitive states when we experience a threatening fantasy of the world. Joining a group is such a threat, as in a group we must forfeit some of our own established identity to encompass the groups identity. Klein believed that groups were the perfect place for splitting to occur as the anxiety formed within a group would force the individual into a regressed state (Klein, 1959).

Projective identification is closely linked to Klein's theory of splitting and often occurs in groups. As anxiety increases group members may 'split' objects into good and bad. They may then attribute their own good or bad qualities onto the object as it would be too anxiety provoking to hold these qualities intrapsychically. Unacceptable qualities of the individuals own personality can then be seen to have a separate existence far away from the individual or the group (Ogden, 1982).

Elliott Jaques was a founder member of the Tavistock Institute and studied under Klein. His contribution to the field of psychoanalysis was the discovery of the way in which social systems and groups are themselves formed as a defence against unconscious anxiety (Jaques, 1951). Jaques posited that the group is utilised by individuals to reinforce their defence against anxiety, particularly early infantile anxiety which is played out through splitting and projective identification. Members of groups for instance may elevate their own group to the fantasy of 'the best' whilst seeing other groups as the

extreme opposite of their group, such as 'evil' or 'bad'. Group actions may also be 'split' and be completely justified within the individuals group but totally demonised in relation to other groups (*ibid*). Jaques later clarified this position by declaring that badly organised social systems actually cause the anxiety as opposed to collusive group members. Importantly anxiety still plays a major role in Jaques' philosophy (Jaques, 1995)

Wilfred Bion (1897-1979) who worked at the Institute between the wars with hospitalised military personnel was one of the most influential. Bion developed a substantial theoretical framework explaining how groups work from a psychoanalytical perspective (Bion, 1961). He explored the way in which individuals in groups form relationships with one another as a way to fend off their own anxiety.

Bion noted that the dynamic of a group creates the circumstances for psychological defense strategies, as groups by their very nature tend to provoke anxiety and encourage regression into earlier states of being (Bion, 1961, Freud, 1955). Splitting and projective identification are commonly witnessed in groups as is multiple projective identification, due to the availability of a number of individuals to project onto. Bion identified that groups display both a paranoid schizoid behaviour and wish for group annihilation; and a depressive behaviour which wishes to keep the group intact and prevent annihilation with its ensuing loneliness.

Bion observed that after a while individuals within the group connect with one another in such a way that the group itself becomes an object (Scheidlinger, 1974). The group then begins to have shared experiences through the psychological connectedness of its members and becomes a 'Group-as-a-whole' (Bion, 1961). When the group is at such a stage of development the facilitator is able to analyse psychological defences and behaviours as belonging to the group as if it were a single entity that mirrors the structures of the individuals within it.

Bion explored small groups working on tasks and found that groups had difficulty with keeping to the task at hand and would 'play out' particular themes as a way to avoid working on some tasks (Bion, 1961). Bion called a group engaged in a task the 'work group'. The work group almost always distracted from the task in hand as the groups shared fantasies distracted from the task in hand onto other issues. Bion called this group state the 'basic assumption group' (*ibid.*). Bion described three kinds of basic assumptions; 1. dependency, 2. flight or fight and 3. pairing. Bion also made the link between the basic assumptions and defenses related to Klein's paranoid schizoid and depressive positions (Klein, 1975).

Bion also identified the way in which group members sought to identify leaders who could maintain the groups' status and defend them from perceived attack. Bion identified a number of processes which groups utilised such as projective identification, splitting, denial, fantasising and the idealization of the group leader (Ogden, 1982, Alford, 1994). The notion of the 'Ego Ideal' was also explored by Bion to explain how group members

forfeit parts of themselves (their individual ego) in order to uphold an idealised version of the group, which helps them to manage their own anxiety (Freud, 1985).

If the ego ideal is strong within the group, eventually more and more of the individual ego will be forfeited until the group becomes 'all powerful' (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1976, Sandler, 1960). In organisations it is important to be aware of this fact as many individuals within current day work groups lay much importance on their work role and seem to lose much of their own personal identity as a consequence (Carr, 1993, 1994, 1998).

As researchers gained more understanding of the ego ideal within the workplace and the effects that it had on individuals, theory began to develop of the fantasy which surrounded the whole organisation known as the 'Organisational Ideal'. Through charismatic leadership and sublimation of the individual ego for the organisations vision, researchers noted how values, cultures and behaviours (Trice and Beyer, 1993) were helping to create unconscious attachments to childhood needs of protection and love from a more powerful omniscient figure (Baum, 1989). It was noted that much of a leaders role seemed to be to promote the organisational ideal and set rewards for reaching the ideal through communication initiatives in order to help individuals 'bond' with the organisation at quite a deep psychological level (Carr, 2000, Schwartz, 1987, 1990).

Management researchers who explored the link between the way in which organisations are structured and the administration practices they adopted began to notice certain

psychological personality traits that individuals working within such organisations shared. The notion of 'Psychostructure' describes the organisational type and the psychopathologies which this encourages. This work examines anxiety, depression and defences against anxiety (Bier, 1986).

The organisational psychostructure selects favourable characteristics and moulds other characteristics in order to create a useful employee. Those employees within the organisation that are promoted to higher managerial positions are further moulded to new psychostructures before they can become effective within their role (Maccoby, 1976). Some researchers have noted that some successful leaders have reported serious emotional problems which they do not exhibit while at work, however, out of work problems such as depression, anxiety, drug and alcohol misuse seriously affect their social lives away from the organisation. This seems due to the psychostructure of the organisation and the requirements of performance in the workplace (Bier, 1986).

Psychoanalytically minded scholars have also become interested in the way in which authoritarian relationships at work between managers and their subordinates seemed to meet the psychological needs of both parties as they seemed to reinforced and mirror earlier childhood experiences (Oglensky, 1995). Researchers identified that subordinates become emotionally 'attached' to their immediate superiors and alter their interaction with them in order to replicate earlier childhood relationships with their caregivers.

The patterns of authority which the subordinate had grown up from childhood around seemed to create the blueprint of any future relationship and attachments (*ibid.*). Furthermore, researchers noted that the subordinate often ‘transfers’ some of the attributes from the earlier caregiver (mother or father) onto the superior and may relate to the superior as if they were actually the parent a phenomenon known as ‘Transference’.

Transference was originally identified by Freud (1912) who determined that our present relationships and reactions within them are shaped in large part by our earliest parental relationships (Sennett, 1981). This unconscious process may be played out with an odd familiarity, as thoughts, behaviours and feelings stemming from childhood are re-experienced in the here-and-now. Some researchers consider that our adult lives are made up of a mixture of here-and-now responses and much older interactions based upon fantasy, old conflicts and unfinished psychological processes (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983).

A more recent development within psychoanalytical theory is that of emotion at work (Vince, 2001). Emotion has been studied from both a social constructionist viewpoint (Fineman, 1993, Hochschild, 1979) and a psychoanalytic frame (Kets-de-Vries and Miller, 1985), and has contributed to an understanding of the importance of behaviour and attitude and its effect on organisational functioning (Bain, 1998).

The study of emotion at work contends that a range of unconscious psychodynamic forces play significant parts in the way in which organisations are structured and operate

(French and Vince, 1999, Hoggett, 1992, Trist and Murray, 1990). Researchers who study emotion at work are interested in the irrational and unconscious group (psychodynamic) forces which drive an individual's behaviour and create group problems within the organisation (Long, 1999, Vince, 2002b). Understanding the psychodynamic forces and their effects is the main aim of this approach (Obholzer, 1999).

Russ Vince was one of the first researchers to establish a link between emotions and organisational politics and contended that political action and intention tends to create unconscious individual and group anxieties, fears and defences (Vince, 2001). Emotions within this context therefore become reactions to anxiety imposed in some measure by external forces that attempt to control and influence the organisational dynamics. Vince went on to link emotion and politics to organisational learning, and described how he felt learning to be affected by emotion.

Vince contended that learning creates conscious emotion and unconscious anxieties which are in some part related to the politics of the organisation and partly to do with resisting change (Vince, 2001). Other researchers have linked learning with anxiety (Antonacopoulou and Gabriel, 2001, Kofman and Senge, 1993, Schein, 1993b, Vince and Martin, 1993) but failed to link these views to organisational politics.

The next section explores the third strand of this literature review; action learning and explains the way in which reflection plays a key role in surfacing conscious and unconscious emotions within the psychodynamic of the organisational group.

Action Learning

As organisations changed and became less hierarchical and more responsive to their customers needs, the requirements of managerial training also began to change in answer to this. Researchers studying human resource development (HRD) called for new ways of management training which would replace off-site simulated training with a new epistemological approach to practice which worked on the day-to-day problems of management which could be carried out within the workplace itself (Raelin, 1999). The key to such training was to help managers combine their explicit knowledge of organisational processes and tasks with their tacit knowledge or feelings of the right way in which to do things, within the context of action (Pleasant, 1996, Polanyi, 1966).

In effect this approach helped managers to surface their hidden knowledge and to understand how this contributed to the organisational tasks they were familiar with. Training managers in-house as opposed to training establishments was known as ‘work based learning’. The approach was typified by notions that learning was derived from on-the-job action; that the creation and use of knowledge was a group process; and that this encouraged learning which questioned taken-for-granted assumptions about organisational working practices (Raelin, 1999, p. 14).

A facilitator would be utilised within this type of group learning environment in order to suggest ways of learning through reflection and to surface organisational patterns which may have an effect on the group and their understanding of the issue at hand. The

facilitator helped to define different modes of reality and assisted participants to explore different perspectives in a reflective manner (Lyons, 1991, Marsick and . 1988).

Action learning has its origins in the 1920's at the Cavendish Laboratory of the University of Cambridge (Rimanoczy, 2007); and was developed by Revans (who was a member of this group) into a work based learning approach to experiential management education and development (Revans, 1971, 1982).

Over time action learning has been utilised in a range of ways and has come to mean 'different things to different people' (Weinstein, 1995). All action learning is based on the philosophy of learning from experience through participation within groups made up of fellow learners. It is also presumed that human beings have the ability to shape their environment and can follow methodologies which will influence this, as a way to improve the human condition (Marsick and O'Neil, 1999).

Revans described action learning as a tool for development which required participants to become involved in real-time problems which have components of complexity or anxiety associated with them and which required a behavioural change in order to improve the problem itself (Revans, 1982, pgs. 626-27). action learning approaches may be classified in a number of ways based on the theoretical underpinnings of the particular researcher (O'Neil, 1999). Notionally, there seem to be three main 'schools' of action learning, the Scientific school; the Experiential school; and the Critical Reflection school (Marsick and O'Neil, 1999).

The scientific school of action learning seems to be the closest to Revans original concept and determines that problem solving may be approached through systematic thinking (Sutton, 1997). The problem is first analysed and the system and its environment are identified and then understood (Revans, 1970) and then a process of hypothesis setting, testing, experimentation and review are undertaken (Revans, 1982). Another system which operates in-line with these processes are the human reactions, expectations and emotions which lead participants to a change in behaviour through a process of learning from the issue at hand (Marsick and O'Neil, 1999, Revans, 1970).

Researchers in the experiential school of action learning base their projects on Kolb and the Experiential Learning Cycle and give equal weight to all elements of the cycle, which begins in action and leads to experience and reflection (Kolb, 1984, Mumford, 1994, Vince, 2002b). The attractiveness of this approach seems to be that learning is the central aspect of the action learning meeting (Mumford, 1991) and occurs at each level of the cycle (Bunning 1992). Researchers using this approach also advocate a range of reflective learning tools such as reflective diaries and logs which help participants explore their experiences and behaviours in an in-depth way (Mumford, 1996, Reynolds and Vince, 2004).

Proponents of the critical school of action learning utilise theories derived from the experiential school but are interested in questioning the taken-for-granted assumptions which make up the organisation and its problems (Mezirow, 1990, 1991). Critical

thinking is a very powerful tool of reflection within an action learning setting as it has the opportunity to enquire at the very root of organisational problems (O'Neil and Marsick, 1994), which can alter perceptions and influence attitudes and behaviours to the way in which society in general is viewed (Marsick and O'Neil, 1999). An action learning project utilising this approach tends to examine and question behaviours, values and attitudes and cause quite an imbalance within the participants own sense of self and questions the utility of organisational norms (Marsick and Watkins, 1992, Pedler, 1996, Weinstein, 1995).

Co-operative Inquiry is a similar type of action based approach to experiential learning which differs due to the fact that researchers and participants help to co-create the terms of the research project and elements of the research design. Peter Reason (1998a) was one of the key proponents of this approach which advocates and encourages full participation, the utility of human agency, criticality, political and social reflective inquiry and the spiritual dimensions of the human experience (Heron, 1996, Heron and Reason, 1997).

There are two main dimensions to a co-operative inquiry project. The first dimension seeks to use democratic and emancipatory processes through inquiry to re-locate knowledge from institutions of learning (such as universities) into the everyday world of the workplace. The second dimension seeks to change the participants predominantly 'Western mindset' and modernist philosophy in place for a postmodern understanding of the world which rejects functionalist views of the organisation (Reason, 1999).

Some researchers who followed a postmodern reading of organisational learning espoused the notion that all employees should be given the opportunity to actually shape the organisation and help contribute to its overall performance (Smith and Saint-Onge, 1996, Smith and Sharma, 2002). The key to creating such an empowered workforce was espoused to be through the combination of action learning and by the adoption of methodologies which surfaced emotion at work (Smith and Sharma, 2002).

Some researchers disagree with emotionality within the workplace and suggest that displaying emotion at work is viewed with suspicion by many organisations. Connecting individuals with their emotional lives at work and allowing the enactment of genuine emotions is in some way seen as divisive and unintelligent (Putnam and Mumby, 1993) It seems, however, that those organisations who neglect the emotional element of human behaviour may be missing some very important opportunities for workforce empowerment and increased knowledge generation (Smith and Sharma, 2002).

Action learning was the vehicle adopted to facilitate emotionally driven learning methodologies as this practice encouraged individuals and groups to become more honest and open in their interactions with one another (Revans, 1982). The action learning methodology seemed very important for researchers to utilise as it provided a safe environment where individuals could share their honest feelings about the organisation and its underlying issues. This helped researchers facilitate new ways of looking at the

organisational issues at hand and helped participants explore the emotional 'hold' which the organisation itself had on them (Phillips, 1988).

This approach tended to be a more encompassing type of action learning intervention as it seemed willing to embrace a range of philosophies which helped the reflection of emotion. Some of the philosophies included counselling (Egan, 1986), psychodynamics (Hirschhorn, 1990) and Eastern philosophies such as Hinduism and Taoism (Capra, 1976, Smith and Sharma, 2002).

Facilitation with this type of action learning approach was important as it was very directive and encouraged issues to be explored through the emotional impact that the issue created. The importance of the emotional content of such learning sought a 'realness' which could spread outside of the action learning group and through to meetings for instance. 'Real meetings' would discuss the operational issue as well as the emotional perspective in order to give the meetings a more human dimension and to make management decisions more humanistic and less mechanistic (Smith and Sharma, 2002).

Vince & Martin (1993) were also concerned that action learning acknowledge the emotional and psychodynamic elements of the human condition and were keen to develop action learning as a useful tool for both learning and organisational change (Vince, 2001, Vince and Martin, 1993). Vince highlighted the fact that there are emotional elements to learning and change, such as the repression of anxieties caused by

an unconscious unwillingness to move outside the normal mode of being; or ones 'comfort zone'. This anxiety is expressed in a number of irrational psychological 'defence strategies' which render learning and change difficult and call for the navigation of such issues with an experienced facilitator.

Furthermore Vince contended that individuals involved in action learning tended to inevitably bring and enact social and political power relations to their groups. This seemed unavoidable as political action, like emotion is believed to be part of the human condition (Vince and Martin, 1993). Vince believed that both emotional and political affects were rooted in psychological anxiety and an unconscious fear that anxiety would become unmanageable. The group member for instance, may fear 'getting it wrong' and also be anxious about the social/political repercussions that getting it wrong may lead to (Vince and Martin, 1993, p. 207). In order to counter these issues Vince recommended a move away from the 'scientific' mode of action learning and the incorporation of psychological and political factors into action learning programmes (*ibid*, p. 210)

A further approach which utilises action learning in new ways was developed at the University of Lund's MiL Department in Sweden and is known as Action Research Learning (ARL). ARL was developed as a way to challenge the established management development practices of the 1970's (Rimanoczy, 2007) and to bring leadership and learning as opposed to management and teaching to the fore (Rohlin, 1996).

The ARL model aspired to develop ‘value-based leadership’ which transformed managers into ‘strategic actors’ who were able to generate their own theories on leadership through the process of individual and group reflection (Rimanoczy, 2007).

Although the MiL model adhered closely to the Revans model of action learning (Revans, 1982) it differed in the utility that the facilitator or ‘coach’ had within the process which became more directive, and the development of team projects as opposed to the individual working on their own projects within the group (Rimanoczy, 2007).

ARL shifted away from its original focus upon leadership training and began to be used within other learning applications within management in general. This helped the approach to strengthen and become more widely accepted (*ibid.*). ARL originally had three main theoretical objectives 1. to develop leaders who thrive on change, who are comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty, 2. to build trusting relationships, and 3. to develop learning based on action and reflection using real time interventions on current challenges (Rimanoczy, 2007 : 248).

The facilitator role, for example is a more engaging role than traditional action learning roles, in that the facilitator helps to broaden learning out by utilising a range of learning tools (Rimanoczy et al., 2000) and also enables more reflection by ‘holding back’ and only intervening when requested by its participants in order to create space for deeper reflection (Mumford, 1994).

ARL groups are also encouraged to give feedback to one another as a way of increasing self-reflection and a way of understanding the implications of their own behaviour on others (Rimanoczy, 2007). ARL groups also tend to be designed to provide participants with unfamiliar settings in order to raise levels of awareness and reflection (*ibid.*). Finally the ARL approach tends to encourage ‘deep dialogue’ as participants are encouraged to reflect upon their problems from an intellectual, emotional and spiritual level in order to expand the realms of the learning experience and promote cognitive and behavioural change (Dilworth, 1998b).

A critique of these themes

In order to present a balanced view of organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning it is important to pay some attention to researchers who have critiqued these themes and explored the limits of their effectiveness. Many feminist views for instance have highlighted the masculine bias in psychoanalysis and the way in which gender is ignored. Critical views have questioned the utility of action learning within profit driven organisations who see people as ‘human capital’, whilst some functionalist researchers have argued that double loop learning ignores certain epistemological flaws in the technique, making the generation of knowledge highly questionable. The following section intends to explore a range of critiques in order to create a more considered view of the limits to the approaches taken within this thesis.

Some researchers have been interested in the subject of experiential learning and exploring how various writers have defined the subject. Malinen (2000) for example,

examined the experiential learning theories of a number of writers including Kolb, Schön and Revans and discovered that adult experiential learning was a “complex, vague and ambiguous phenomenon which is inadequately defined, conceptually suspect – and even poorly researched.... Its theoretical and philosophical foundations are fragmented and confusing... There are too many interpretationsamong the theorists and practitioners that no single, clear definition of these foundations can be constructed” (*ibid.* p.15).

Other writers contend that the focus of experiential learning on the process of reflection is simplistic and reductionist (Britzman, 1998a, Sawada, 1991) as its emphasis on rational control and mastery seem to place the notion of knowledge creation within a one-sided masculine world-view (Hart, 1992, Michelson, 1996). Some writers point out that experiential learning theories do not address the complex processes surrounding the notion of desire within experience, despite the contention that the reflective process is guided by the learner’s intentions and desires.

Desire seems to be a central principle which forms the foundation of the human experience and knowledge development, according to psychoanalytical theories but which experiential learning scholars have yet to address. In the same vein, the notion that people can reflect in a rational way and ignore their internal unconscious experience misses the point that the unconscious is responsible for much of the conscious interpretations of our day-to-day experiences (Britzman, 1998a). If the unconscious and an individuals desires are ignored by experiential learning, researchers contend, then a range of internal defences will be overlooked and the relationships which individuals

create within their minds as they segregate themselves from others will also be lost (Ellesworth, 1997).

There have also been criticisms of the way in which experiential learning and reflection have become a step-by-step process which seems to curtail creativity. Researchers are concerned that this type of step-by-step reflection forces individuals to see the universe as consisting of separate sense objects which have little relationship with one another. This way of looking at the world leads to learning goals which seek to 'bridge separations' as opposed to creating a holistic view of the external universe (Sawada, 1991).

Many researchers have questioned Kolb's assumption that experience is concrete and separate to reflection, especially within a postmodern context where the person, the context and the experience suggest a much more fluid relationship (Usher et al., 1997). Experience is seen as much too complex to be bound and categorised as Kolb attempts.

Feminist researchers have further criticised the way in which critical reflection de-personalises the learner as an autonomous and rational 'Self' who can rise above the dynamics and contingency of experience (Michelson, 1996). Michelson goes on to propose that reflection presumes that knowledge is extracted and abstracted from the experience by the processes of the mind, which ignores the possibility that knowledge is constructed through socially held power relationships which make knowledge and power mutually determined. In this view experience becomes knowledge driven and cannot be known outside of the predominant socially available meanings.

Other feminist researchers have highlighted the restrictiveness which current theories of experiential learning are based and suggested alternatives to the current masculine viewpoint. Michelson (1999) for instance advocated a rewriting of knowledge and meaning through the notion of experience as a ‘carnival’ where all repressing and over-determined theories may be transgressed and new knowledge could be created within a wider play of possibilities (*ibid.* pgs. 145-146).

Orner (1992) and Tisdell (1998) both argue that by the adherence to a distorted view of ‘concrete experience’ leads educators and facilitators to attempt to free individuals from their misconceptions and ideologies, which is a mistake according to Michelson (Michelson, 1996) who proposes that learners should be encouraged to explore the meanings and knowledge claims of society from within their own culture as a way of exposing them to new meanings of their self and the social context of their experiences (*ibid.*).

Researchers have also questioned the way in which proponents of experiential learning view the Self. The experiential view of learning assumes that the individual is a primary actor and is involved in knowledge creation from a conscious and rational perspective. Within this view the individual is assumed to be a stable, unitary Self, regulated by rational thoughts and intellectual activity. The learner is also assumed to be able to access experience through a rational process of reflection which it is assumed he has the power, motivation and capacity to direct (Clark and Dirkx, 2000).

Other views question the way in which the Self is contextualised and prefer a description of the Self as shifting, multiple or illusionary and contextually defined. To some writers the real Self does not exist outside the stories which we tell in particular contexts, which in themselves are reshaped by other alternative contexts. Other writers question the boundary between the notion of Self and non-self and contend that the flow between them may be quite permeable and mobile (Fenwick, 2001).

Some researchers have criticized psychoanalysis for promising the impossible, in that the theory of psychoanalysis suggests personal freedom from exploitation and oppression. In practice these objectives may actually be impossible for a number of people to achieve for a variety of reasons. In such cases the conditions which should have been overcome may become in fact, much worse (Clarkson, 1995, Marcuse, 1966).

Stein (2002) for instance admits that sometimes the intended outcome is not achieved by psychoanalytical researchers and the factors which should have been avoided have not been avoided. Psychoanalytic researchers continue to idealise their work, however, and make spurious claims. It is also claimed that researchers within this area feel that their methodologies are free from being misused by others and that psychoanalysis shows little concern for the wellbeing of individuals over the requirements of the organisation (Driver, 2003).

Furthermore there have been some criticism of the way in which psychoanalytically grounded studies have concentrated on a small part of the organisation without carefully analysing the overall complexities of the full system before recommending an intervention (Diamond, 1993, Levinson, 1972). This approach tends to lead to departmental imbalance and unexpected results for both the organisation and its members (Gabriel, 2002).

Using a psychoanalytical framework for organisational learning seems to be problematic for some researchers who question the notion of the 'conscious' and 'unconscious' and the way in which psychoanalysis divides the two concepts. Vandenberg (1999) for example demonstrated that individuals use both consciousness and unconscious modes of thought at the same time (whilst driving a car and talking for instance) and argued that there is no need to propose an unconscious element to experience.

Mezirow (1990), however, comments that the unconscious in many ways helps to facilitate learning but also states that intellectual reasoning is needed to control and direct critical thought away from the distracting habits of the mind which leads to undesirable actions. By using our rational minds, Mezirow believed, individuals are actually able to overcome the logical contradictions and unjustified, under developed beliefs which psychoanalytical theory asserts must be simply accepted as interminable dilemmas (Mezirow, 1996).

The work of Bion and group dynamics has come under scrutiny from some feminist researchers who view it as an inadequate and incomplete framework for describing the

way in which people behave in groups (White et al., 2001). Bion's method of conducting research within the confines of a military hospital and making the results of his experiments universally generalisable to every section of society seems, by some to be less than inclusive. Bion's contention that the way in which to treat his research subjects was to establish a discipline based on the existence of a common enemy and an officer who would pull the group together and create responsibility in the group may have been contextually correct for the circumstances, but flawed as a universal principle of group behaviour (Bion, 1961, White et al., 2001). An alternative reading of the way in which groups behave from a women's voice perspective would encompass the notion of group interdependency being bound together with a fuller understanding of how emotions, friendship and support helps the group to develop (Gilligan and Pollack, 1988, Miller, 1986).

Researchers interested in restoring the role of the human subject within the organisation are both welcoming and wary of psychoanalytical management perspectives. They welcome the new insight which psychoanalysis brings to the organisation and the importance psychoanalysis places on the role of the individual, however, they are wary of the risk of psychoanalysis becoming a tool of domination wielded by the organisation itself to the detriment of individuals within it (Kersten, 2001). This can be avoided, it seems only if psychoanalytical researchers recognise and name the power, control and dysfunctional systems within organisations and work with organisational members to surface and confront these issues as a matter of course (Fassel, 1990, Kets de Vries, 1985, Ryan and Oestreich, 1991).

Some feminist writers are encouraged by the use of psychoanalysis within the workplace, particularly with its ability to ascribe new meaning and understanding to work based behaviour. There is a view, however, that psychoanalysis needs to encompass the issue of gender within its philosophy in order to make a valuable contribution to management learning (Lowe et al., 2002). Studies suggest that gender plays an important part in the roles each participant plays within a group and the ways individuals react to one another (Hearn and Parkin, 1991), but unfortunately this is an area that psychoanalysis itself has paid little attention to (Lowe et al., 2002).

Some feminist psychoanalytical writers contend that the differences between the male and female upbringing, together with childhood experiences are distinctly different, this fact creates implications for workplace identity and gender interaction, as both females and males have been 'raised' to perform specific gender related roles (Chodorow, 1987). By encompassing gender into management psychoanalysis deeper questions may be posed as to the role of certain neuroses and their importance within the organisation, together with the way in which these neuroses impact on both individual and organisational performance (Jacobson, 1995, Jorstad, 1991).

Other researchers argue that psychoanalytic theory dwells too much on the internal experience and does not give enough consideration to the external systems that bind the changing human mind and its psychic traumas to its changing contexts. Psychoanalysis often pays little attention to the context of the situation the individual finds themselves in,

or the systems which surround them (Lave, 1988). Although the context may be acknowledged to affect the person, people are still viewed as autonomous agents of knowing with their own psychic systems, which are fundamentally separate from other contextual systems. Psychoanalysis further assumes that learning can take place as an entirely mental process, with little regard to the patterns of participation in continually evolving communities. The psychoanalytic view may confuse learning and doing, individuals and their symbolic tools, and communities of their activities as separate processes (Fenwick, 2001).

There also seems to be a moral question surrounding the psychoanalytical view of individual learning. Fenwick, for example poses the question that if all versions of a persons experience were equally valid and encouraged, then how can new ways of learning and being be given primacy over any other? (Fenwick, 2001).

Some writers have questioned the utility of organisational learning within the workplace context where production and profit are the most important factors. Organisations who prioritise indicators such as production and profit tend to view their workers solely as 'human capital' (Hart, 1992, p. 26) and look to the economic benefits of the organisation over the experiential learning opportunities that reflection may bring to the individual. As a result of this interplay researchers have noted, both learning and managing become the discourse of the organisation, leading to an unhealthy 'situated' understanding of both, as opposed to a fluid, evolving exploration of social narratives which would question a

range of social and political taken-for-granted viewpoints (Tennant, 1999, Usher and Solomon, 1999).

Researchers adopting a functionalist approach have questioned the pretence that double loop learning creates reliable knowledge by exploring the epistemological basis for such claims within a learning organisational framework (Henderson, 1997). Other theorists have tackled the question from a similar viewpoint but have attempted to examine double loop learning notions using the philosophical works of Popper (Blackman et al., 2004, Firestone and McElroy, 2003, Popper, 1979). Researchers contend that although double loop learning tests theories in use (Argyris and Schön, 1996) the knowledge on which the theories in use are based are often unjustified and untested to begin with, making them epistemologically unsound. This point brings into question the notion that double loop learning is in fact a sound basis on which to generate new knowledge.

The only way to surmount this problem according to Popper (1979) is to explore the original theories in use and rely only on knowledge which is falsifiable, or at least criticisable, (Blackman et al., 2004). This would require the formulation and testing of the conditions under which all knowledge claims could be proved as wrong with as much rigour as the conditions for accepting them as true. From this critical appraisal of knowledge claims many theories in use will be disregarded even if they appeared to explain the problem under consideration (*ibid.* p. 18). The weakness of double loop learning according to Blackman et al. (2004) seems to be that reality testing occurs after

the solution to the problem has been formulated and not within the original problem itself.

Action learning in its fundamental form has been criticised as it does not challenge the prevailing organisational structures of control, power and dominance which obstruct both individual and group emancipation (Willmott, 1997). By being able to name such structures of power and control, researchers believe that ways and means of resisting them will appear (Allman, 2001). By opening up organisational learning to critical thought through action learning, new possibilities to shape and transform the social world and identity within organisations may be formed (Giroux, 1992).

Researchers have also criticised the way in which action learning seems to be elitist, as its structure encourages using only 'invited' participants who conform to organisational norms and fails to intentionally mix gender, learning ability, class and race etc. with a view to creating new knowledge which may be socially emancipating but organisationally suspect (Fenwick, 2001). Accordingly action learning excludes many viewpoints such as the non-knowledge-generating workers and the 'low skilled' (*ibid.*). This may lead to action learning projects which are in fact exploitative and economically, rather than socially driven.

The notion that action learning is necessary to stimulate both individual and organisational learning and growth (Garratt, 1983, Revans, 1998a) has been questioned by some researchers who do not agree that an organisation advances purely through the

epistemological advancement of its members (DeLoo, 2002). One of the problems with this contention is that action learning is notoriously difficult to define and unclear as to its objectives (Revans, 1976) another problem is that the organisation is also extremely difficult to define (Brown, 1960). There are also issues with the notions of how action learning set members use their varying levels of rationality and intelligence in relation to their problems and how much of the 'unseen organisation' such as its politics, for instance may be ignored when attempting to create organisational 'solutions' (DeLoo, 2002, Vince and Martin, 1993). Unfortunately when action learning programs are evaluated they seem to lead to much personal growth but very little organisational growth (Harrison, 1996, Wallace, 1990) which has led to a number of researchers to call for methodological changes in order to increase its organisational effectiveness (Pedler, 1997, Weinstein, 1994).

Finally some researchers have questioned the utility of using critical reflection within the organisation as it seems to create conflict between the power holders and stakeholders and engender dissonance between organisational members (Rigg and Trehan, 2008). Researchers found there to be a distinct difference from carrying out a critically reflective action learning project from within a learning establishment (a university) to carrying out a similar project from within an organisation. The differences arose from the complexity of relationships that individuals had to manage and the power and emotion which was exerted from many sides of the organisation as the project pulled in one direction, trying to change the environment, whilst the organisation pulled from the other direction as it attempted to keep its internal and external customers happy (*ibid.*).

Discussion

I believe that there may be new ways to explore how groups learn by combining a number of approaches derived from the literature review of organisation learning, psychoanalysis and action learning. My intention within the research project is to use a mixture of ideas derived from my literature review, to give me some indication into how groups may learn. I propose to approach the overall research question of ‘how do groups learn’ by developing a number of sub-questions which have derived from the literature I have read and which are designed to point the way towards answering my main research question. By utilising some key ideas from the literature I intend to craft a methodological approach in my research project which will examine notions of learning from new and fresh research angles, which may shed new light on the way in which groups learn.

As I am interested in the process of organizing reflection through group interactions for instance, I intend to have my research participants’ work through three levels of reflection on their particular problems. This approach is quite novel and will allow me to explore how groups come together to problem solve and to reflect on the problems which are causing their organisations concern. The literature on each type of reflection seems to be quite extensive and well researched at the moment; however, I have found little evidence of researchers using specific methodologies in order to develop a group’s individual, group and critical reflective faculties in tandem. One of the sub-questions I would like to answer therefore is ‘how can I combine individual, group and critical

reflection in such a way that both solves organisational problems and generates new knowledge and learning?’

As I reviewed the literature on action research, I found a number of innovative action research projects, but none which utilise a format where only one problem was worked upon over time by the whole of the research group. After reading through the literature and finding no evidence of such a methodology I became interested in using the action research methodology and my reflective techniques in this slightly different way. My research would encourage participants to concentrate on just one group problem as opposed to individuals working on their own single problems within the session as I think this will intensify group reflection and generate a new type of reflective insight. My second research sub-question therefore will be ‘is it possible for groups to generate knowledge and learning by concentrating their reflective efforts on a single problem as opposed to working on their own problems in isolation?’

The literature on projective drawing indicated to me that a projective drawing technique may be a very simple and novel way to tap into my participants conscious and unconscious thought processes. The research describing this technique suggested to me a methodology which is both easy to teach and powerful in its interpretive potential. As the technique had been used before within the management paradigm I was confident that its use would not be too radical for my research project. I was also comforted that the technique had been previously carried out successfully by management researchers who themselves had an understanding of a number of psychoanalytical theories such as

projection and transference. For these reasons I consider that utilising drawings as a data gathering methodology will be a most suitable approach.

Projective drawings help people surface both conscious and unconscious thought in a non-threatening and supportive way. I became curious as to how a drawing methodology could assist groups with their reflective endeavours if the drawings were done within an action learning framework and the activity were carried out on a regular basis over many weeks. Could groups learn from regularly surfacing their conscious and unconscious content and how would this affect them cognitively and behaviourally? The sub question linked to this area of the research project therefore will be ‘what may groups learn and how will they react to a process of organized reflection which utilises projective drawing as a methodology to surface conscious and unconscious thoughts, feelings and behaviours?’

The projective drawing element of the research links learning and reflection to the literature on psychoanalysis and forms a bridge with which to study learning from a Freudian perspective. Drawing on the literature concerned with psychoanalysis, I am interested in the whole notion of the ego and how ones combined unconscious defences may be employed to aid or to deter the learning process. Psychoanalysis provides a rich framework which seeks to explain human behaviour as a defence against the anxiety of living and interacting within our everyday life. There are many psychoanalytical authors who have researched specific elements of the human condition and formed categories explaining them through a Freudian lens. There are also a number of well known

management researchers who use psychoanalysis as a way to help organisations solve their own particular problems.

After reviewing a range of this kind of literature I have noticed that there seems to be an emphasis on the ‘expert consultant’ who ‘solves’ the organisational problem through the adoption of psychoanalytical methods. This research project is more interested in exploring how groups themselves surface their own unconscious material (through projective drawing) and reflect upon their own psychological defences (including a defence against new knowledge and learning) within a framework of organized reflection. I believe that some learning is anxiety provoking, it does foster defensive behaviours and thoughts, which I believe participants may be able to overcome with the support of other group members. A further sub-question which I would like to explore within the project therefore, will be ‘what psychological effect does reflection and projective drawing have upon the individual and the group’s ego defences, their anxiety levels and the ability to generate new knowledge and learning?’

Definition of learning

It is important at this stage of the thesis to develop a working definition of learning if I am to explore and comment upon the extent to which groups learn within my research project. After reviewing the authors of my literature review and reflecting upon how they understand the term ‘learning’ it seems to me that learning is a variable practice which may include a vast array of activities and processes that combine within a confusing system of subjective thought and philosophical paradigms. Learning may be viewed

through the eyes of the pragmatist as empirical experiences reflected upon and codified. It may be defined by the organisational psychoanalyst as a process of surfacing unconscious anxieties and changing thoughts and behaviours. To the scholar of action research it may be viewed as the completion of a cyclical process which culminates in a change of behaviours or a new understanding of a problematic issue.

My own definition of learning acknowledges learning as a process which has a number of elements which themselves have a complex interconnection. In its simplest form I believe that learning must derive from a process of reflection upon an empirical experience which disturbs and concerns the individuals' everyday behaviour. This idea is posited most notably by Dewey. The experience itself, however, may be a bodily sensation, a feeling or an intuition for instance which is unsettling and does not necessarily need to be wholly cognitive. Furthermore I believe that the unsettled experience is one which arises and prevents the individual from behaving in their habitual mode of behaviour.

I believe that reflecting upon the experience, forming hypothesis and interacting with the experience in a different way is the only way to develop learning and new knowledge. If a habitual experience were simply noted by the experiencer and no reflection upon it were carried out, then I do not consider learning to have occurred. One of the problems of reflecting upon our experiences is that there are a host of taken for granted beliefs already embedded within us which colour the way in which we experience the world. Cultural conditioning, childhood experiences, the media and school learning contribute to our repertoire of taken for granted. Although it is impossible to 'clear the slate' and ignore

our own taken for granted repertoire, I believe a process of critical reflection should be employed within a reflective process in order to at least surface and explore how individuals are constricted by their own history.

I also believe that learning has both a conscious and unconscious element. Using the literature derived from psychoanalysis I believe that the human mind consists of an unconscious ego which actively defends itself from the anxiety associated with some learning experiences. I believe that in 'defending' itself, the ego effectively blocks us from actively reflecting upon some of our experiences as they may provoke too much anxiety which may be unmanageable. This defence mechanism may be displayed as processes such as splitting, transference and projection for instance. Learning has also an emotional element, which is called into play when the experience is anxiety provoking. Emotions such as fear, frustration and anger may emerge as a result of the experience and prevent reflection from taking place.

Using this philosophy, I am of the opinion that individuals may unconsciously prevent themselves from learning through reflection as the process itself may be deemed to be unmanageable to the fragile ego. Learning in this context becomes a process of uncovering hidden defences and surfacing the associated anxieties associated with them. This is not to suggest that the only way we learn is by surfacing our unconscious content, but it does suggest that there may be different levels of learning itself, some learning which does not provoke anxiety and which is easy to reflect upon, and some learning

which is more difficult to achieve as it requires us to 'go deep' into our defences in order to access.

My definition of learning therefore would be as follows:

'Learning is a process of knowledge generation based upon the practice of reflection and hypothesising. By reflecting upon a range of unsettling internal and external environmental experiences and by altering one's cognition of the experience, individuals may learn. In order to acknowledge the situatedness of our own cultural view, an element of criticality should be adopted within the learning process.'

Learning is also a multi-levelled process which is controlled to some extent by the unconscious. The unconscious controls the extent to which reflection and hypothesising may be utilised. Some experiences which provoke great anxiety may not be capable of reflection, as they may be experienced as just too emotionally or physically threatening to the fragile ego.'

The contribution to knowledge

I am aware that this research project is quite novel in a number of ways. The way in which I have combined views from the literature of organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning to create a research project for instance, seems to be quite a new way to explore the management learning paradigm. The research project itself has some interesting and novel methodological approaches.

The way in which I intend to utilise projective drawings to gather data from both my participants and from myself, for instance and the way in which I will craft the action learning activity as a 'one problem' group approach seems also quite new. My analysis of the two research groups and the way in which I will utilise hermeneutics and the group-as-a-whole way of analysing my data is also I believe quite novel and may help generate new insights which may help to form a new theoretical framework of management learning- should the opportunity arise.

I believe that my main contributions to knowledge within the field of organisational learning will be as follows: I will extend the understanding and practice of organizing reflection and show how it will be possible for groups to reflect on their organisational problems using a combination of individual, group and critical reflection.

I will also contribute to the understanding of group practice by suggesting how an action learning framework may be adapted to assist the organisation in their problem solving/reflective pursuits by concentrating upon one group problem per-session. This practice may then be adopted by other researchers in the field of action learning and reflection.

I also intend to contribute to the methodological practice of non-traditional data gathering techniques by utilising the projective drawing approach. Using projective drawings over an extended period of time and concentrating on one group problem within each session will enable me to develop the drawing methodology which can consistently surface

conscious and unconscious thoughts from my research participants. This contribution may help researchers interested in how groups may be able to 'self generate' reflective material.

Finally I believe that by using the drawing methodology, the data analysis element may be more transparent to the psychoanalytical researcher as projection and transference may be more evident when adopting a hermeneutic method of analysis. By allowing research participants to concentrate their reflections upon their own projections and transferences, I hope to develop a data analysis practice which makes these psychological processes more transparent and useful to the psychoanalytical researcher.

A theoretical framework

It is now possible after exploring the literature to develop a theoretical framework which will guide and inform the rest of this research project. The literature that has been selected clearly rejects a socio-technical explanation of the world, in favour of a postmodern critical perspective.

This research will utilise notions of experience, learning and reflection found in the writings of Dewey (1916) and will adopt a critical perspective within its reflective activities. The relationship between organisational learning, politics and emotion will inform much of the research design and utilise principles based on organizing reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004) within the research project itself. The research will also be

interested in moving away from a reflective practitioner model and into one which explores reflection within the group setting.

It is also important for the research group members to reflect at different psychological levels as this will enable learning insights to be of a higher order, addressing the personal, group and social levels of knowledge generation (*ibid.*). In this way it is anticipated that the issue of context within the research project will be addressed (Lave, 1988).

In place of exploring notions of desire (Britzman, 1998a), the research project will concentrate its efforts on examining the notion of emotion in the workplace, which is similarly considered to be at the root of much psychoanalytical thought and key to understanding organisational learning and reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004)

This research will be informed by views based upon the philosophy of psychoanalysis, in particular around notions of the unconscious creating ego defence mechanisms as a way to alleviate anxiety. Of particular importance to this theoretical framework are the notions of ‘splitting’ and projective identification, developed by Klein (1946) and the Freudian notion of transference (Freud, 1912). Although the work of Bion (1961) is of interest, it seems that criticism of the approach as being too narrow are quite valid and likely to offer only partial explanations of the workings of a group (White et al., 2001). The notion of the ‘group-as-a-whole’ (Bion, 1961), however, does seem valid within the research context and the research project will adopt a perspective which identifies the group as a whole, as opposed to a collection of individuals.

In view of some criticism that psychoanalysis ‘promises the impossible’ (Marcuse, 1966) it is important for the research project to appreciate the limits and effectiveness of its interventions. With this in mind, the research project will ensure that it underplays the significance of the insights which it shares with the research project group members and ensures that valid psychoanalytical insights are only those which can be agreed between the research participants and the researcher. In this way the issue of researcher transference will be minimised.

It is also important that the research project is emancipatory and socially beneficial as opposed to being solely for the benefit of the researcher and the organisation in question (Kersten, 2001). In order to ensure this is the case, the research project will be designed in such a way as to enable participants to share critical insights of their organisations and their colleagues within an atmosphere of support, trust and safety.

In order to facilitate reflective practices, the research will adopt a theoretical framework which acknowledges learning dialogues and the interdependence of reflection between group members as a method of learning (Smith and Sharma, 2002). Finally the research project itself will be designed using an action learning framework which will utilise insights from the critical school of action learning (Marsick and Watkins, 1992).

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the three strands of literature upon which the research is based. The research will use notions derived from the organizational learning, psychoanalytical and action learning literature. It seems that the mere notion of asking ‘how do groups learn?’ is interwoven with considerations and perspectives from a number of diverse research paradigms and views. It also seems apparent that organizational learning is not as clear cut as one would have expected with many researchers involved in numerous different studies which all explore the subject from their own area of interest and point of view.

I appreciated this even more as I began to look at the voices of dissent to the notions I had proposed to use. These researchers also had their own paradigms and research specialisations which seemed to be diametrically opposed to the notions I am interested in adopting. As a direct result of listening to the voices of dissent among other research paradigms I began to consider which of the research views I had an interest in would form a framework which I could adopt and follow throughout the project phase.

In the next chapter of the thesis I will describe the research methodology I wish to adopt. I will also describe its philosophical underpinnings and discuss the tools I intend to use within the fieldwork phase of the research project.

Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I will describe the methodological considerations I employed within the research design phase of the thesis. Both my methodological and philosophical positions were developed in order to answer the seemingly simple research question of ‘how do groups learn?’

This chapter discusses the aims of the study and the reason why I decided to use an inductive approach to the research. It also explains the criteria I used for ensuring that my research, which is based on a qualitative approach is academically as robust as it can be through the use of notions such as coherence and rigour.

The chapter continues with a discussion of my ontological and epistemological view which is based upon some of the writers I have critiqued within the literature review chapter. This discussion leads on to my philosophical position which I describe as postmodern and which dictates the methodologies which are acceptable for postmodern researchers to use. I then intend to go on to describe the data gathering techniques which I will employ which are based upon discourse analysis and hermeneutic theory.

In the final section of this chapter I intend to describe the methodological tools which the research will use, such as action research and projective drawing. These tools will enable me to surfacing through the process of reflection a groups conscious and unconscious

attitudes and emotions and which I anticipate will lead to organisational learning and new knowledge generation.

Aim of the study

The study aimed to answer the simple question ‘how do groups learn?’ by exploring how organisational groups solved real organisational problems through a multi-layered process of reflection and how this process impacted upon their learning. It was important that the group adopt a methodology which could assist them to reflect both as individuals and as a group; and that their reflections should encompass the social, political and unconscious realms of their experience. Action research was the preferred methodological tool upon which the study was based.

As the aim of the research was to study a change process within the research groups, a qualitative methodology using an inductive approach seemed the most appropriate (Foote-Whyte, 1991, Greenwood and Levin, 1998). The inductive approach seeks to generate new theory of the world by utilising data gathering methods which generate rich data from a small research sample. This approach differs from that of positivism which seeks to fill in gaps of knowledge through hypothesis testing. Inductive researchers tend to carry less preconceived ideas about what their research findings may reveal into the field with them, and are less burdened with theoretical constructs from the research literature. By adopting this approach, they become more receptive to the underlying themes that the research project develops, and to the relational subtleties between themselves and their research participants (Patton, 1980).

From the onset of the research project I intended that the research should aim to be academically robust and well structured. There seems to be much criticism from researchers who come from a positivist tradition that qualitative research somehow lacks authenticity or is less valid than their own particular field. It is due to these kinds of views that I gave careful consideration to the qualitative approach which I would adopt. As qualitative research seems to include numerous approaches based on a range of theoretical assumptions, however, I found it quite difficult to develop a consistent framework of techniques with which to conduct research and to evaluate its results (Fossey et al., 2002, Kline, 2008, Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

After reading a range of literature concerning research methodology and design I decided that it was important for this research to incorporate a number of practical aspects which would give its design credibility to other qualitative researchers. I decided that my research would be designed around and reflect practices which used notions of both Coherence and Rigour.

In order to create an academically robust framework with which to build a qualitative research project, some researchers proposed that qualitative research requires a 'coherent' approach. Coherence is the technique of designing a research project which is based upon the researchers' stated epistemological view and which utilises a range of methodological tools and approaches which are relevant to that epistemology. To have a coherent research project also requires consideration of the data gathering and analysis techniques

which are to be used throughout the project and which other researchers from similar epistemological backgrounds have used, or advocate using. Coherence also involves demonstrating how the research findings fit within the philosophical and epistemological framework which the researcher adopted at the onset of the research (Howe and Eisenhart, 1990 , Poggenpoel and Myburgh, 2005).

Some authors have suggested that procedural and methodological ‘rigour’ should be employed when carrying out qualitative work. (Fossey et al., 2002, Tobin and Begley, 2004, Tuckett, 2005). Rigour is demonstrated, for example through the disclosure of the methodological considerations on which a research project is based or the prior assumptions that the research holds in relation to the research question.

Rigour also includes the researcher disclosing their rationale for using their preferred research tools to answer the research question, as well as considering how the research may be made more credible through techniques such as triangulation of data for example (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Rigour also adopts the process of reflection, by giving the researcher the opportunity to reflect on the biases that they may have to the research question as well as the way in which the completed research may have been influenced through the direct participation of the researcher with the participants. Finally rigorously developed research should be able to describe the implications of the research findings to others within the field and describe how the results may affect or change professional practice (Tobin and Begley, 2004).

Ontological and epistemological considerations

Ontology is our understanding of existence, our being in the world and how this creates our notion of 'reality' (Appleton and King, 1997, Guba, 1990, Pesut and Johnson, 2008). An ontological position should encompass 'claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality... In short, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality' (Blaikie, 2000, p.8). This research derives its ontological perspective from the works of Dewey and its epistemological perspective from the work of Bion and psychoanalysis.

Epistemology is a core element of philosophy and is concerned with the theory of knowledge, especially in regard to its methods, validation and 'the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality, whatever it is understood to be (Blaikie, 2000, p.8). Epistemology sets out to describe our set of beliefs about the nature of knowledge (Carter and Little, 2007), including 'the relationship between the knower (inquirer) and the known (knowable)' (Guba, 1990, p.18). It is what we believe 'constitutes legitimate knowledge' (Pesut and Johnson, 2008, p.117). Our epistemological view is influenced by our ontological perspective of the world and both informs and limits the type of knowledge claims that we can make.

This work utilises views derived from Dewey and from psychoanalysis (see Literature Review chapter), to propose a philosophical position grounded within a postmodern framework. The following section explores in more depth the philosophical basis of Dewey's work and that of psychoanalysis and explores how both views can be encompassed within a postmodern frame of reference.

Dewey's ontological view

I believe that Dewey's ontological view, certainly in regards to his work concerning the 'reflex arc concept in psychology' (Dewey, 1896, pgs. 96-109) demonstrates his position as a transactional constructivist (Vanderstraeten, 2002). The reflex arc theory, derived from the psychological paradigm that Dewey objected to, presumed that human beings are passive entities and only act in response to external stimulus (Backe, 1999). Dewey disagreed with this proposition and believed that humans transacted, interacted and gained knowledge from a direct relationship with objects within their environment, claiming that without the 'knower' there was no knowledge (Dewey, 1985, p.367).

Constructivism has its roots in philosophy, psychology and cybernetics (Von-Glasersfeld, 1995, p.8) and takes a non-positivist stance in stating that rules and principles have no independent existence outside an individual's theorizing of them. Constructivists do not view phenomena as objectively existing, but rather are interested in our relationships to the phenomena and the way in which we create theory around phenomena, as a result constructivists see no separation between the researcher and the object of research (Berger and Luckman, 1966, Mir and Watson, 2000).

Dewey seemed to view experience as a transactional element of human interaction with the world and 'a means of penetrating continually further into the heart of nature' (Dewey, 1981, p.5). Dewey also stressed the importance of the utilisation of symbols between people as a way to generate understanding of the world (Dewey, 1988, p.121). Symbolisation, Dewey posited necessitated a co-operation and shared agreement between

people and the requirement of socialisation into the development of knowledge. The acquisition of knowledge therefore, was viewed as a creative and participatory act (Vanderstraeten, 2002). As a consequence of citing the construction of knowledge between the transaction of individual and the environment, and the way that this becomes 'real' to the individual, I believe that Dewey may be considered to be a transactional constructivist (*ibid.*).

My view, in common with Dewey is that reality is constructed by the individual through their day-to-day experiences of the world and re-enforced through reflection upon the experiences afterwards. I also consider that reality can be experienced through our intuition and 'hunches' as well as through our engagement with the world and our somatic reactions to some situations. These somatic reactions may also reinforce our experience of the world and determine how we operate within it. I believe that this ontological approach facilitates learning and helps individuals to gain an understanding of their place within the world.

The epistemological view of psychoanalysis

This research is also influenced by the philosophical assumptions of psychoanalysis, which have developed over time from a number of different sources. Freud himself seemed to hold a deterministic ontology, stating that the libido was the determinant of all psychic phenomena. Jung on the other hand explored the limits of this ontological view and proposed that the notion of teleology explained psychic phenomena more robustly and saw humans as purposefully striving towards their own individual self-development (Horne et al., 2000).

The philosophy of determinism posits that every event, occurrence, our cognition, behaviour and action are causally determined by an unbroken chain of prior occurrences. This view necessitates that humans may not change the course of the future or future events through their will. There are two particular 'schools' of determinism that may be of interest to psychoanalysis, the environmental and biological schools. Environmental determinism holds that the environment rather than social conditions determines the culture of a society (Baer et al., 2008), whilst biological determinism proposes that behaviour and desire are appropriated through our genetic makeup (Honderich, 1993, Suppes, 1993).

Teleology holds that all things in the universe have been designed for, or are moving towards a final result and that there is an intrinsic purpose to all that exists, teleology is the most common expression of teleologist thought. Later teleology was explored by Kant and Hegel. There seem to be two different 'final causes' within teleological thought, one is concerned with the utility that the individual may have to other individuals or society, the second final cause involves the individual realising its utility in perfecting its own nature (Wright 1968, , 1976).

In contrast to these views, Bion advanced the philosophy of psychoanalysis by rejecting both teleology and determinism as too fixed and concrete, stating that it would be 'un-psychoanalytical to adhere to some rigid system as a substitute for using our minds' (Bion, 1990, p.201). Bion believed in the notion of suspending ideas surrounding memory and desire in order to create a dislocation of both determinist and teleological thinking. This act would create tension between what could be known and what it is

impossible to know, which would develop into psychological angst (Eigen, 1985, Horne et al., 2000). Bion's later philosophical thought seemed to bring psychoanalysis into the post-modern era, as he began to question the key assumptions of psychoanalysis (Horne et al., 2000).

Postmodernism is an epistemological view of the world which has wide ranging usage throughout the social sciences and is extremely difficult to define (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). The understanding of postmodernism which I prefer describes the technological, economic and social reality of the enlightenment 'modern' period as being superseded by a new kind of 'reality' based on capitalism (Clegg, 1990, Lash and Urry, 1987). With the new era comes uncertainty and disengagement about the future, a future which was once quite certain in modern times (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Postmodern ontology 'abandons the rational and unified subject postulated by much modern theory in favour of a socially and linguistically decentred and fragmented subject' (Best and Kellner, 1991, p.4).

Postmodern thought (Rosenau, 1992) calls into question certain metaphysical concepts, especially causality. Derrida (1973) for example posits that because we are beings who construct language, we can never fully understand the meaning of our experience and never fully 'know' ourselves as a result, even if we attempt to 'deconstruct' our language in order to get to the core of experience, we would be trapped in iteration of language itself. One of the main tenets of postmodern thought is the reliance on language as a

signifier of reality and the notion that language cannot in fact signify reality, it can merely give the appearance of reality (Latour, 1990).

A philosophical position

My philosophical position therefore, proposes that reality is created by the individual through their relational interaction with the environment. Reality, I believe is also created through the process of symbolic interaction with other individuals and through the facility of reflection upon experiences, which may create the impression of individual and group knowledge. Further to this, I believe that new knowledge creation is situational to the environment which we live in and that the 'truth' we can claim to know is subjective and transitory.

I believe that through the application of psychoanalytic thought and the adoption of critical perspectives of reflection, individuals may be able to appreciate the tenuous foundations of their own reality and the true extent of their knowledge about the world and embrace the notion of subjectivity in relation to their organisational problems.

Though the critical approach may seem anxiety provoking for the individual and group, psychoanalysis takes great care to ensure that the individual is 'emotionally held' throughout their journey of postmodern discovery and that reflective practices which may uncover revelations about the individuals ontology are maintained at a level which the individual and group are able to accommodate.

In the next section I will describe the research methodology which I adopted and the tools and processes I used in order to gather the data for my research.

Action Research

Action research is another concept which is notoriously difficult to define, as researchers are unsure whether action research itself refers to ontology, epistemology, methods or theory (Agar, 2006, Hillon and Boje, 2007). Action research was developed by Kurt Lewin but popularised by Revans (Dehler and Edmonds, 2006) and uses the technique cyclical iteration to assist problem solving or managing change situations. Typically an action research project would involve a group of people coming together on a regular basis to work on their own problems by planning, gathering data, taking action and then reflecting on the outcome of the action taken upon the issue. Later they repeat the cycle and create new plans in order to take further action in regards to the problem. The role of the researcher within an action research project is one of collaborator in both the problem solving and knowledge generation element of the project (Greenwood and Levin, 1998, Lewin, 1946).

Central to the technique of action research is the understanding that those who are affected by the issue, work upon the issue directly in order to create actionable change (Raelin and Coghlan, 2006). The technique is utilised widely by psychoanalysts for this reason, as action research can create the environment for first-hand observation of organisational members, their unconscious and emotional attitudes and the interpretation and working out of the organisational problem (Diamond, 1993).

For the past 20 years action research has been developed in tandem with action learning methodologies by some researchers, as both approaches seem to fit well together (Sankaran et al., 2001, Swepson et al., 2003, Zuber-Skerritt, 2003). Action research adopts a cyclical methodology to instigate learning and uses collaboration in order to generate knowledge. It also assists both the individual and group to learn (Revans, 1982) through 'first person' and 'second person enquiry' (Reason and Torbert, 2001). Action research is well suited to be utilised along with action learning as the change which an individual plans to make within the project ultimately involves taking a critical view of the situation and undergoing some kind of re-education in order to change their patterns of thinking and behaving. Re-education may also bring with it challenges to the organisational status quo, as the individual begins to question the social structures which have created the issue under investigation (Argyris et al., 1985).

The structure of this action research project

My research project was based on an action research methodology with a number of changes to the technique which were designed to provide richer data and a more intense individual and group reflective environment for learning.

As I was interested in organizing reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004) I decided that I would require the research group to work on a joint problem which affected them all as an organisational group. Using principles derived from Bion (1961) I would attempt to

view the group-as-a-whole and understand their psychodynamic and emotional behaviour as an indication of a shared organisational fantasy, defence and anxiety.

Although the research group worked on the same problem theme, I was keen to understand how individual members viewed this theme from their own perspective. Each person was given the opportunity to describe the problem by reflecting upon how they viewed it individually and how this affected them on both an individual and a group level.

Group members were taught how to use reflection in order to generate knowledge. The project utilised single loop, double loop and triple loop reflection and learning techniques (Argyris and Schön, 1974) as methods of surfacing levels of individual, group and critical reflection.

After the group had reflected upon the problem theme, I encouraged them to create plans for action which would necessitate them to approach the issue in a different way. I intended that the group session would end with group members stating the action they intended to take, the results of which could be reflected upon the next time that we met.

Data gathering techniques

I used two data gathering techniques throughout the project. I recorded every action research session with a voice recorder and transcribed the recordings at a later date. I analysed the content of the transcriptions using both a psychoanalytical and critical perspective, in order to surface interesting underlying emotional and socio-political themes which suggested to me the way in which the groups were learning. I used the approach of Hermeneutics (Gabriel, 1991, Ricoeur, 1981), which is a type of Discourse Analysis, to generate findings from the data.

Discourse analysis is an approach which uncovers multiple meanings of written documents by analysis of their sentence content and structure, the choice of words used or phrases preferred. This methodology is quite an unstructured and interpretive approach to data analysis (Fairclough, 1992, Potter and Wetherell, 1987). One of the benefits of using discourse analysis is that it accommodates a postmodern worldview by acknowledging the existence of multiple, possible and coexisting organisational realities within inter-personal work relationships (Grant et al., 1998).

Researchers using discourse analysis read and re-read texts to understand how participants construct themselves and the world around them. Broad themes are then generated and literature pertaining to these themes is accessed in order to give the researcher an understanding of the possible context of the discourse. The texts may once again be read in light of the new knowledge gained from reading the literature and new categories may emerge. It is most important for the researcher to concede the situatedness

of their own position and to understand that the discourse analysis itself is ultimately a reflection of the researchers' own socially constructed world-view. (Coupland et al., 2005).

I decided to choose a hermeneutic approach to discourse analysis as it seemed to be able to accommodate the postmodern psychoanalytical stance I held to the research project (Kets-de-Vries and Miller, 1987). The methodological approach to analysis recommended by Ricoeur (1981) is known as the 'hermeneutic arc' and requires researchers to form a hypothesis of the meaning of the text based upon their intuition and then to classify the text into a number of hierarchical elements. The researcher then begins to analyse the 'deep structure' of the text which lies beneath the surface structure in order to generate the underlying meaning within (Wallace et al., 2003).

Hermeneutics is closely related to the work of psychoanalytical consultancy within organisations (Gabriel, 1991, Kets de Vries, 1987) in that both approaches seek to uncover covert messages from text and propose the construction of unconscious needs. Levi Strauss and Freud were both interested in the way in which phrases, links of words or metaphors were used repeatedly by individuals, and which such use led them to have a deeper emotional content than their usual every day speech. (*ibid.*). The use of such words created signifiers (de Saussure, 1915) that recurred in everyday interaction and held a higher degree of emotional meaning and literary weight for the individual.

Psychoanalysts utilise hermeneutics to derive meaning from their research texts by looking for processes of transference between their research subjects (For a definition of transference see the Literature Review chapter). When instances of psychological transferences are discovered by researchers, they consider these as part of a deeper additional sub-text (Gill, 1982, Greenson, 1967, Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984a). Once the researcher has a number of sub-texts and has an understanding of the way in which the individual uses transference, more over-arching textual themes can be developed and unconscious defence mechanisms can be identified (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1987).

The methodological approach to psychoanalytical hermeneutic data analysis is as follows:

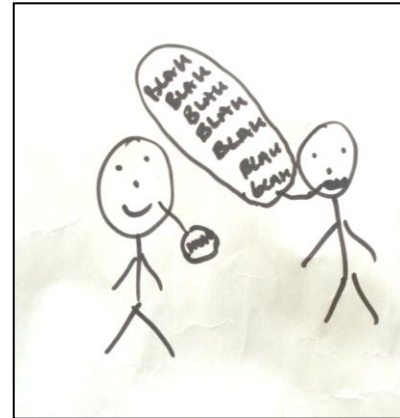
1. Look for central themes within the unstructured text (Levi-Strauss, 1955)
2. Look for elements which may have logical centrality but also deep unconscious or emotional significance, search for background histories of respondents (Freud, 1900, Freud, 1920, Greenson, 1967).
3. Reality test initial explanations of the text by reference to other peoples experience and their reading of the situation (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1987).

Projective drawings

I also used the technique of Projective Drawing as a way to gather pictorial, conscious and unconscious data from the group and for my own individual reflective purposes.

After each session I created my own projective drawing of my experience of the research group work and recorded my thoughts as a way to individually reflect upon my own experience as both researcher and group participant (Bryans and Mavin., 2006).

The use of images and image interpretation has been a popular approach to surface an individuals' hidden attitudes, emotions and defences within the field of psychology for many years. Early attempts by psychologists to diagnose the underlying state of a patients mind utilised techniques which allowed the



subject to 'project' their inner unconscious thoughts onto images presented to them.

This gave the psychologist an opportunity to evaluate the state of the subjects mind and help formulate a diagnosis. From the battery of tests which were devised, one of the most famous early psychiatric projective tools was the Rorschach Technique, which used randomly distributed ink-blot as images, with the subject being asked to describe the picture they saw within the blots (Bell, 1948).

Both Freud and Jung took an interest in the use of image creation with their patients. Freud's theories of the unconscious nature of emotional repression and childhood sexual development led him to believe that drawings created by his patients were covert messages from the unconscious underlining the typology of a patient's neurosis (Agell and Rhyne, 1998). Jung on the other hand, regarded the symbols created by his patients

within their drawings as indicating a connection to more ancient human evolution and group collective consciousness (Jung, 1990).

Within the field of organisational and management studies, the use of images as a research methodology is limited (Kearney and Hyle, 2004) and still at an early stage of development, with researchers unable to agree on how best to utilise this method of data gathering (Symon and Cassell, 2004).

One of the first ways in which images were utilised in management studies was by comparing and contrasting employees' emotional attitudes towards departmental change within a large office. Subjects were asked to draw an image of how they felt before and after the installation of a new computer system. This approach helped to link the emotional attitude of workers with their feelings through the use of the projective drawings. The study was groundbreaking in that it suggested that the organisation was more like a living, thinking, feeling organism than it was a machine (Zuboff, 1988).

There have been calls for management researchers to encompass a range of visual data gathering techniques into their work due to the unique properties of pictorial approaches. Visual techniques have the capacity to surface and communicate a much wider range of organisational issues with a depth and clarity that words seem inadequate to provide, as individuals often struggle to verbalise the subtlety of their inner world of imagery (Meyer, 1991). Some researchers have even gone so far as to claim that visual images are as valuable a tool for data gathering as words or numbers, in that they contribute to

organisational understanding by linking rational thought with hard to capture interior psychological conditions such as feelings, attitudes and emotions (Stiles, 2004).

Researchers interested in this approach have used images as a means of allowing workers to voice their unconscious reactions to turbulent organisational change and shifting power relationships, which were actively ignored at the conscious level (Vince and Broussine, 1996). Images were also used to diagnose and surface individual issues which were hampering organisational change programmes and destabilising power relationships within the organisation (Vince, 1995).

Within management education the production of images has been linked to the process of reflection, which is especially useful due to the nature of rich conscious and unconscious data that drawings can generate for reflective practice (Korthagen, 1993). Recently researchers have proposed that the use of images as data gathering tools are important for the reflective practices of both research participants and researchers alike, a view which I endorse and have utilised within this research project by creating my own images of the research sessions and reflecting on their meaning (Bryans and Mavin., 2006).

The projective drawing method

I used the projective drawing methodology in order to surface conscious and unconscious attitudes and emotions, and to facilitate the process of multi-layered reflection. The way in which I used the drawing methodology in each session was as follows:

A sheet of A1 paper was provided for the drawing session and each group member was given a black felt tipped pen. I instructed the group to discuss and then decide upon an organisational problem which affected them all and which they were prepared to work on in the session in order to generate action for change. After the group agreed on a topic I instructed them to ‘think of an image that represents the way you see the problem from your point of view’. After this, the group were instructed to draw their images onto the sheet of paper. At the conclusion of this stage, all group members had drawn their images onto the same sheet of paper.

I then began to facilitate the reflection process. Each group member was allotted a ‘turn’, where they would present their drawing to the group and cycle through the three levels of reflection. In the first level of reflection the participant simply described their picture and the problem as they imagine it to be. They were then encouraged to think of different ways in which they could view the problem using their own reflective skills.

The second level reflection opened up the reflection process to group comments and group interpretations of what the individuals drawing could mean from another viewpoint. Throughout this stage the individual was encouraged to clarify, challenge and attempt to reconcile the groups’ interpretations with their own. By engaging in such a way, I hoped to encourage the individual and the group-as-a-whole to encompass other views and consider other possible ‘realities’ to the stated problem.



The third level of critical reflection required the group to attempt to put the individuals' interpretation of the problem into a much wider social and political frame and begin to get to the root of the problem itself by exploring such basic taken-for-granted notions of power, control, privilege and exclusion. This was intended to give the research members an awareness of the wider context of their problem and to help them appreciate how their organisation operated within the structures of social and political dynamics.

When every participant had presented their drawings and been through the process of reflection, they were asked to create individual plans for action. I asked them 'based on the reflective work that you have done today, how are you going to interact with the problem in the future in order to change your experience of it?' The action research session finished after every group member had created their own action plans and we had set a date for the next research session.

When I returned to the office, I created my own projective drawing of the session and described how I had felt and how the session itself had affected me. This work was to be used later when I would reflect on my impact to the research project as both a researcher and a participant of the research project (see My Reflections on the Research Process chapter).

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the philosophical and methodological design of the research project which aims to explore how groups learn. As this is a qualitative research project I was keen to show how I would make the research credible in terms of both its coherence and rigour.

Using a postmodern philosophical framework and a hermeneutic data analysis approach I suggested that the research should be designed using an action research methodology which adopted projective drawings as a way to engage with the reflective process. In the next chapter of the thesis I aim to discuss the initial results I obtained from carrying out the fieldwork in early 2009 and explore their meaning in reference to the question of how groups learn.

Fieldwork Results

Introduction

In this chapter I intend to explore the results of the data gathered throughout the fieldwork stage of the research by describing my research findings. After gathering and transcribing the data, I began the process of creating categories which seemed interesting in providing indications to my research question ‘how do groups learn?’ with reference to the main tenets of my literature review; organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning. After I completed this process I revisited the literature in order to gain a broader appreciation of the data and to gain an understanding of the implications of my work within a wider context.

This chapter has been divided into five sections which explore the data in relation to 1. organisational power, 2. the difficulty of being part of a reflective group and 3. the emotional impact of using reflection to surface hidden feelings. The other sections within this chapter explore 4. the way in which group drawings helped the reflection process and 5. how the process of reflection was deepened through group efforts.

This process was extremely beneficial to me as a new researcher as it helped to identify patterns and interesting narratives which were hidden within the data and which reoccurred in the groups’ reflective sessions. This level of data seemed to show that each research group had a number of very similar issues which they worked upon, such as being unable to reflect as a group or needing my facilitation to keep the reflection process on track. The groups also seemed to be struggling with their own particular organisational

issues such as the way in which power was distributed between group members, for instance or the level of anxiety which the reflective session itself generated, preventing deep reflection from taking place.

The organisations involved in this research

This research project was run in early 2009 with two separate organisational groups who both expressed an interest in using reflective techniques as an aid to solving some of their organisational problems. Both organisations came from the South East of the United Kingdom and operated as small independent businesses.

The first organisation will be referred to using my coding as the PhD 1 group. The PhD 1 group are a medium sized kitchen and bathroom manufacturing and design company who have been in business for over 20 years. The Managing Director established the company and still takes an active part in its operations as he oversees the sales performance, job estimating and the logistics concerned with on-site fitting. The company have a workforce of around 15 staff working within the main factory, the administration office and on-site as equipment fitters.

The PhD 1 research group itself comprised of three participants, the MD, the office administrator and the manufacturing designer. This group met for around six months once a week for an hourly session. I facilitated each session and used a digital tape recorder with microphone to capture the discussions. After the group had finished each

session I took away their projective drawings for further analysis and when I returned to my own office completed a personal projective drawing of the session.

The second organisation will be referred to using my coding as the PhD 2 group. The PhD 2 group are a private care organisation which looks after the needs of vulnerable people who have mental health problems. The organisation began life in 2003 and is a small privately run business. The business was also established by the Managing Director who too takes an active participation in its day to day operations. The business employs seven people who all have National Health Service (NHS) or care working backgrounds and whose duties include visiting their vulnerable clients, helping their clients to manage their day to day affairs and managing the administration and external reporting responsibilities with the Local Authority.

The PhD 2 research group comprised of four participants, the MD, the office administrator and two community care workers. This organisation was different to the PhD 1 group as three members of the research group were related to one another. The MD was married to the administrator and their daughter was employed as a community care worker. This group met for around five months around once a week for an hourly session. I facilitated each session and used a digital tape recorder with microphone to capture the discussions. After the group had finished each session I took away their projective drawings for further analysis and when I returned to my own office completed a personal projective drawing of the session.

Key of group contributors

PhD 1 Group: Thomas (T) is the Managing Director (MD), Ruth (R) is the administrator, Gloria (G) is the designer

PhD 2 Group: Brian (B) is the MD, father of Christine and husband of Gill (G). Gill is the administrator and mother of Christine. Christine (C) is a community care worker and Natalie (N) is also a community care worker.

Facilitator: Gary Shepherd (GS)

Key to Abbreviations

A direct reference from a group member or the facilitator	“ ”
A pause in speech
Words inserted into the narrative in order to give context to the sentence	[]
Describing physical actions or responses	()

The use of power relationships in group learning and reflection

From the inception of my research project I anticipated that my work would most likely uncover hidden power relationships between the group members involved in the study as the process of reflection developed. According to Vince (2001) power is derived from the interplay of an organisational members political actions (actions which give them or their followers some sort of perceived ‘advantage’) and the groups emotional reactions to the political climate and the political activities they experience. The distribution and use of power according to Vince seems to be a factor which can assist or prevent learning from

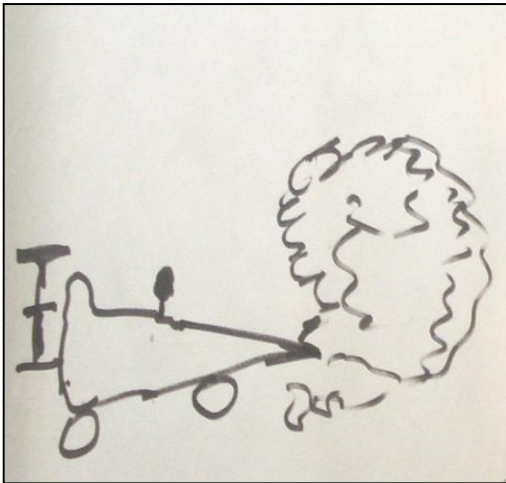
occurring. The identification of such power relationships seemed to be extremely difficult for its members to notice from within the group itself as these relationships seemed to be largely hidden or ignored.

My initial plan when I had identified hidden power structures within a group would be to assist the group to discuss the notion of power and control and reflect on how this may be impacting upon them and stifling group learning. I realised that there may have been some resistance to this suggestion and was aware that my observations may have been totally ignored or re-contextualised by the group as part of their unconscious psychological defence mechanisms.

My findings, however, suggested that certainly within one particular group, revealing such power relationships would act as a catalyst to invigorate group problem solving and re-initiate a different level of group learning. This section therefore, predominantly deals with my findings from the PhD 2 group.

My initial observations of the power relationships within the PhD 2 group were that the main power was held by the MD (who had founded the company approximately seven years ago). As the founder of the company and husband/father the MD held a confusing number of interrelated roles which seemed to give him a great deal of power and autonomy in deciding how the organisation was run.

In this extract the administrator (G) is looking at a drawing produced by the MD (B) and re-interpreting it as she sees it. This interaction reveals tensions within the power dynamic as the administrator tells the MD that she does not like his way of ‘racing ahead’ with projects as she seems to be the one responsible for the messy outcome. This kind of interaction became quite common as the group gradually surfaced and then finally confronted the issue of power and privilege within the group:



“G- Cos[sic] I can see your pictures a racing car and there's a cloud of smoke and that's you driving, I don't know where me and Natalie or Christine are, and I can also see it as a hillside and one tree and you know a path going into a foggy patch...It feels safer to me because its not as fast and I can walk...”

B- Because you don't like me racing ahead do you?....

G- No I don't cos [sic] I'm the one that ends up picking all of the pieces up and trying to catch hold, and clearing up after you all of the time...”

As the reflective sessions became more involved and more intense, these type of confrontations seemed to occur more and more with this particular group. It was evident to me that the power dynamic was skewed towards the MD but this had not been acknowledged within the group as an issue, but had remained as a taken-for-granted state of affairs.

Another factor I believe that made the power dynamic more difficult to understand or recognise within the group was the act of ‘disguised emancipation’ that the MD used in order to exert overt control the staff members. Disguised emancipation is a phrase that I have coined to describe ways in which power is seemingly given to other less powerful group members, but which in effect stays with the power holder. In this excerpt the MD speaks to a member of the group encouraging her to ‘be honest’:

“N- I don’t really know what to say!

B- If you think that we've got it wrong and you don’t feel that you're part of the team, you know, I really want you to be honest”

‘Being honest’ and telling the MD that he has ‘got it wrong’ and stating that the junior group member doesn’t feel part of the team are all highly anxiety provoking strategies and very threatening on a number of levels. After witnessing numerous interventions of this kind I came to the conclusion that the MD was quite skilful in disguising his continued exertion of power through seemingly emancipatory statements.

Reframing and discounting were also common strategies used in both of the research groups and seem to have been adopted as powerful ways of either allowing or preventing learning from occurring. To reframe an experience is a positive technique which looks at a particular situation in one way and then re-interprets it in another more useful way.

I found that groups who were willing to reframe their experiences tended to be in a position to allow honest reflection to arise in order to change the status quo. This action is a common technique used in reflective practices and is essential to generating a greater understanding of the social world. In this excerpt a member of the PhD 1 group reframes the lack of customers as a business opportunity, which leads her to feel positive about the organisations current situation:

“R- I feel really quite positive at the moment. I really don’t think that we are going anywhere as in, you know we have got a slight lack of customers but I’m encouraged by the fact that we’ve got enquiries we’ve got surveys going out, we’ve got our promotions on, and our offers on, and whereas this time last year it possibly would have been a case of “no” I’m not giving any percentage off and I’m not doing this.. Its completely altered in a way that were looking at things in a completely different way as you’ve already said and its in a very positive manner, yeah, although we are giving money away literally and it is genuine offers, it still feels really positive to me and I think that comes across not only in here, but I think it comes across to the customers aswell, so to me, were not half empty, were half full and were filling up.”



Discounting experiences on the other hand is a technique that ensures the status quo remains intact through actively denying that experiences can be interpreted in another

way. To discount an experience is to deny the opportunity for reflection as this may expose the group to unwanted group insight. In this excerpt the PhD 2 group MD vigorously discounts the need to deliver extra administration services to an external organisation 'on principle':

"B- I'm aware of what they ask us to do, and I'm happy to go along with them for the things I think are important for our clients, what I really, really kick against is bureaucracy for bureaucracies sake. They say we've got to send these statistics in for Head Office

G- We should have to... we were told

B- And I say if you want that information, you have it, you bloody send it... I'm not sending it

G- And then it's down to ME...

B-I'm not doing it! I'm not doing it!"

I observed the discounting process used extensively by the MD in the PhD 2 group, along with other techniques such as disguised emancipation in order to keep power within the MD's control. This unconscious strategy, however, also had ramifications on the groups' ability to generate new knowledge and learn new things.

Later in the project the PhD 2 group confronted their own power and privilege issues but it did take a little time for group members to even become aware that power and privilege were factors which caused many of their organisational problems. In this excerpt the MD

reinforces the belief that he does not hold power, whilst later on in the group meetings he acknowledges that he has been holding onto power to the detriment of the group and their development.

“B- I don’t feel like I’ve got all the power I think we’ve all got quite different roles within the business and I think were able to move within those roles and I don’t think there’s anything that I would ask Natalie to do that I wouldn’t do, I feel proud of what I’ve created at the beginning but I couldn’t be where I am now without Gill and Natalie and Christine and previous workers”

In this excerpt the MD admits that he has more power than he originally thought he had and that this power has been affecting other members of the group:

“B- Until last week I wouldn’t have considered that we did treat everyone working here in the same way, until it came into my awareness last week about the power and privilege some of us do have. Because I like to think that I’m a really fair, inclusive person erm.. and that came as a bit of a shock and yeah, I can see, Gill and I talked about it and yeah, it’s not that accurate probably and what we’ve decided is that, although Gill and I are partners in the business, we are a partnership and everybody works for the business and that’s how I wanted it to be and I’m really shocked that I’ve not been the same with Natalie as I have with Christine at work, I was unaware of how I was...”

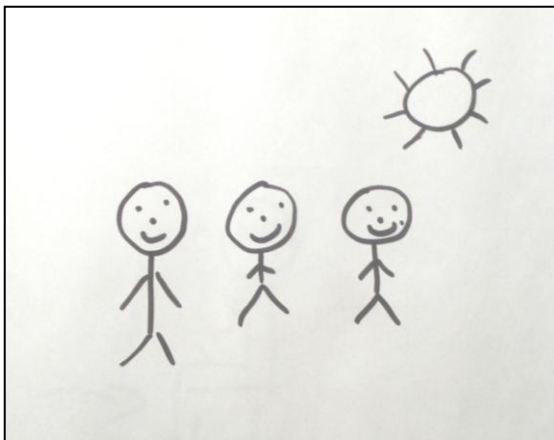
My fieldwork uncovered a secondary, underlying power relation which I felt exerted as much influence as the original one I had discovered. In effect my studies revealed that the PhD 2 group had two separate, intrinsically linked structures of power and control operating simultaneously, which affected the whole groups' ability to grow and change. I have termed this dynamic a 'duplex power relationship' and it is interesting because it operated by the refusal of a group member to co-operate within the group through a self-enforced and sustained absence.

The group member who I am referring to is the daughter of the MD and administrator and only attended the first group meeting and the final two group meetings. Her absence was noted by the group and it was evident that her non-attendance was creating a high amount of extra work and anxiety for the remaining group members. The action of keeping away from the organisation also had the effect of exerting a powerful force onto the organisation as they attempted to manage the employee's absence and ensure services remained consistent. I am of the opinion that the absent employee was exerting her power by the withdrawal of her labour as a way to protest against the excessive control which the MD exerted. The following excerpt demonstrates the strain which the group were under:

"G- Well there are lots of pressures, especially when people are absent, its not easy to get emergency staff, I don't know where to go to, we need somebody else to come in and help us both, even if it was to work for today, but that's impossible, they need to build a relationship with the clients

B- Its all very relationship focussed isn't it? It's not like, [in the NHS] "go and take this persons temperature, or give this injection" its all relationships..."

In one session, the administrator disclosed that she had spoken to the absent employee on the subject of power and privilege and was surprised to learn that as a family member, her daughter considered that she had less power and privilege than other members of staff, as this excerpt shows:



*"G- That was our perspective, we thought to ourselves "If Christine wasn't Christine, then would we be managing her differently?" but since things have come to a head with Christine, I wonder if she feels that she is **disadvantaged** by being a*

member of the family and that's why, a big reason why she's not at work, she's very angry that she's not getting treated the way Natalie's getting treated....."

Her perception is that she doesn't have power and privilege because she is a family member, whereas our perception is that she did have power and she did have privilege..... In a way it feels a little ironic that the person that is having the issue with being absent is a family member and not an ordinary member of staff.....one of the things that Christine said to me and I don't think she'll mind me saying this, is that "in a way there's no getting away from mum and dad" because she works with us and we meet

as a family, have meals together...and there seems to be no break between work and home.”

Considering the power dynamics at work within this organisation, with the MD using a number of techniques to disguise power and stifle new world-views and the absent member using her power to disrupt the groups day-to-day functioning, it seemed unsurprising that the organisation had issues with learning and change, which were seriously affecting their development.

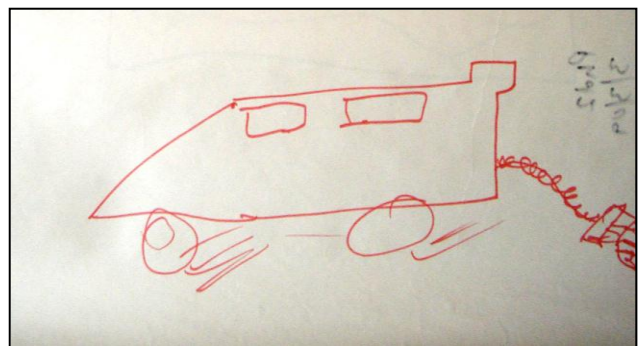
When the absent member did eventually return to the group, it was after the MD had made some real behavioural changes which saw him relinquish some of his power and face up to the realisation that the organisation could not progress without a fairer and more honest level of power sharing.

As a consequence of the reflective process, the group established a number of new norms of behaviour which supported the new spirit of power sharing. I think that establishing new norms were important for this group, as these led to new responsibilities for members of the group, a reigning in of power from the MD and a more structured approach to day-to-day work for the staff. This excerpt shows how the administrator reflects on old behaviours within the group and proposes new ways of behaving as an alternative.

*“B- I think we need to recap on last week, you know, because for me it was never an issue until it came into my awareness last week about boundary stuff between Gill and I
G- I think the dynamic that played out last week is something that [often] happens, I think that Brian has a fear of being controlled, so if I suggest something that’s different he immediately interprets that as me trying to be “one up”, be bossy, be controlling whereas I don’t see it that way, I think that we should put all the ideas up in the middle and lets discuss them and see what’s fit for purpose.”*

It was through reflective discussions such as these that the group developed their new norms. As a consequence of both the introduction of new norms and the re-emergence of the once-absent family member the power dynamic once again seemed to shift. The new dynamic which I observed had the MD in a more passive role (as he had given up some of his power) and put the administrator and family staff member into a new powerful role, which seemed to establish them as ‘upholders of the new norms’. The final excerpt in this section shows how the group subtly admonish the MD for trying to ‘race off’ by himself with little consideration for others within the group.

“B- Ill go first, I’m not a very good drawer but that’s supposed to be a Ferrari and there’s a chain at the back with all of these weights on, that’s kind of holding me back and I don’t know really where all those weights and chains are coming from but that’s how



I feel. But you know, I want to go and put my foot down, you know but there's something kind of holding me back

G- When you say that you're a car that raised the question to me "where do we sit in?"

B- I'm not the car, the business is the car that's flying ahead, its not me

G- OK

C- Are we the chains then?(looking serious)

G- I thought about that too (looking serious)

B- No I just feel that something's holding me back from moving forwards

C- Holding you back or the business?

B- Business, cos [sic] its about the business isn't it, its not about me, its how I feel"

Learning to reflect as an effective group

At the onset of the research process it became evident that both of the research groups were unfamiliar with the notion of reflection and it seemed a real struggle for them to get to grips with the process. Before I introduced the subject of reflection and carried out my training on ways to reflect in the group, I attended some of the organisations problem solving meetings in order to gain an understanding of their current problem solving techniques.

The PhD 1 group seemed to be 'list makers' and attacked their particular problems in functionalist ways by describing the issue and then creating a solution within minutes. The solution was then scrutinised by the group, as they questioned who would be responsible for this and that and what type of procedure needed to be implemented in

order for the problems to be resolved. At the end of these meetings it seemed as though a large list of activities had been generated in order for a seemingly simple problem to be resolved. There seemed to be no reflection within the group, or any type of critical view on the real reasons the problem may have occurred. It seemed to me that at the end of these sessions, the PhD 1 group had more problems to contend with than they had actually begun with.

“T-Well I think if we..... sat down and wrote a list, we’ve probably got about ten different projects going on.... Website..promotion...showroom, maybe what we ought to do, I mean it must be, it must be creating a bit of pressure, maybe we ought to write a schedule or a program so that were taking some of the pressure away and get a bit more ordered.”

The PhD 2 group on the other hand seemed to go about problem solving in a more inclusive way, with each group member commenting on the problem and each giving a possible way of solving it. Finally there would be a sort of consensus reached within the group which would form the solution to the problem. Although on the surface this seemed a more effective strategy, the solutions themselves seemed to come from the MD mostly, with the range of ‘solutions’ limited to the ultimate wishes of the MD. This group also used quite a restrictive range of solutions which after a while seemed less inclusive and more predictable. Reflection was not really evident within this group either as there seemed to be no understanding of reflecting in a structured way on the experiences of the past.

In both groups, I felt that learning had been curtailed as a result of using 'old solutions to new problems' which relied heavily upon opinion to the detriment of real reflective practices or discussions.

The first few sessions of the project saw both groups tackle the practicalities of reflection, as I observed them learning to reflect instead of using their former problem solving strategies. The first interesting activity I observed were both groups undertaking periods of unstructured reflection. Unstructured reflection is a term I used to describe the way in which group members unsuccessfully attempted to reflect as part of a group. Instead of reflecting, the group would seem to undertake activities of past-timing, reminiscing and making unsubstantiated statements, which were not reflective whatsoever.

In the early stages of the project I also noted that the group were actually quite poor at defining the problems which they were to reflect upon. In order to begin a reflective process I required my participants to identify a problem which they could discuss throughout the session. Even this request seemed to be very difficult for both groups to achieve. I wondered if the poor problem definition was a contributory factor to the problem itself, in that the group seemed to be as unaware of describing the problem as they were of solving it.

Eventually the groups learned how to ask reflective questions and how to use reflection to develop a greater awareness of the problem itself. The reflective process became quite

complex over time, with the groups reflecting from the three levels I had taught with relative ease. The groups were able to challenge each others assumptions:

“R- I just wonder whether the picture you drew reflects the way you (Thomas) deal with the customer i.e. Thinking to yourself when its getting to the point that you should be making a sale, “how am I going to close this sale, why are they not buying, why do they not want this offer?” and that knocks your confidence as you are not as confident in closing that sale and does that [come across] to the customer?”

and to pose questions which opened up new avenues of investigation:

“R- What my question was, to Gloria, how do you combine the two? how do you build a relationship up and ask the relevant information for the questions that you need answering?.. and we do have a system where you ask those questions, but its always [completed] after, then when they’ve left the showroom its down to Gloria to discover why they’ve not taken the sale up...”

It was evident that both groups sought new ways to understand their organisation through examining the behaviour of their members through reflection. One technique which was widely utilised was that of ‘dismantling’ a group member’s behaviour in order to learn how their own thought processes worked. This excerpt shows the process as used by the PhD 2 group:

“G- It seems to me that what you're saying is that you almost dropped your frame of reference before you went in and made yourself open and receptive to his via asking him questions, its almost like before you would have gone with a script in your head that you would have used to talk with him, and somehow you managed to let your feelings float away and you went in asking open questions, which were very genuine and very helpful, and in doing that you've entered into his world rather than in the first place it was almost like you were bringing him into your world...”

In this example a group member dismantles the dynamic that occurs when a new project starts and highlights the problems this brings for her:

“G- There's more dynamics going on than were giving ourselves credit for... I think I hold a lot of anxiety for Brian when he starts a new project, or I worry about the aftermath of it all, what he leaves and I think out of that there is something about I wish that he would let me lead, I wish you'd be more open to new ideas and to new ways of thinking and not be too rigid about that you already know them, to be a bit more flexible... everything's about competition though Brian its not about one person being more powerful than the other its about working together to be more effective”

As this project was based on action learning principles, I was keen to find out each week if the problems reflected upon at the previous weeks session had in fact stimulated new action. I was pleased with the responses that I received. It seemed that by using the drawn

images to surface group emotions and by using reflection in order to explore the group problems, behaviours and world-views were indeed changing.

I was comforted that I had achieved my goal of working with real world problems and creating real solutions with the project and was also extremely curious as to how this had come about. My curiosity stemmed from the fact that the group members never set any actions at the end of their sessions, I had tried to instil this discipline into the group at the beginning of the project but it didn't seem to suit the style of either group, I decided to compromise by ensuring that I asked about what action had been taken since our last meeting when we reconvened the group each week. These excerpts are typical of the comments the group made throughout the project as we began each session:

T- Its not easy this but to be fair, the way things have changed in the office this must be having some effect... it must be having a positive effect on us, we don't sit down, draw pictures and reflect at the minute but there's definitely a change of environment and atmosphere all round.....

"G- I think there's been a shift in that, a big decision and a shift, were not in that battle anymore, I don't know what you've done Gary but were not there anymore... I think the needs of the client group are far simpler than we thought, and we have changed our [service delivery] provision to reflect this"

“C- From the last time I was in with the group to last week, I noticed a big difference in Brian and Gill, just in their point of view and their perception of things, it seems like they’re owning the faults and willing to change and accepting that, which is having a big affect on the group dynamic, on the business on the home, and because I know Brian and Gill personally I can see it more I think... I wish I could have been there a bit more but I do feel I’ve taken something away from it.”

Although both groups benefited from the reflective process in general, only one group became quite sophisticated in their reflective practices. The PhD 1 group seemed to be more willing to embrace the process and explore a wider range of problems in a reflective manner. In contrast the PhD 2 group seemed to be happy to work very intensely on their particular main problem (of power and privilege) and then seemed to ‘shut down’ in terms of their participation with the project and the extended learning opportunities which exploring more issues may have brought. I think the PhD 2 group were more interested in tackling their main issue and then completing the process. This style fits in with the action learning adage that only ‘real problems’ (the groups’ main problem for example) should be addressed if action learning is to be considered useful.

The PhD 1 group, however, were much more willing to look at a range of organisational problems once their main issue (lack of customers) had been addressed. I felt that this group were more engaged with the process and more flexible in their attitude to problem solving. I think it is also important to note that the PhD 2 group were struggling with

issues relating to power and control which, even after their resolution would still affect their individual ability to work in a more engaging and reflective way.

The PhD 1 group developed their reflective style in two main ways, they learned how to pose sophisticated reflective questions and they began to engage their feelings on the issue as well as their intellect.

Sophisticated reflective questions are questions which are more ‘thought out’ than usual questions and give the impression that they are trying to ‘move the process along’ as opposed to merely asking for clarification of an issue. These questions also seem ‘multi-layered’ as they have the ability to join together conversations from previous sessions whilst giving clues to new ways of looking at the topic under discussion. In attempting to describe ways in which sophisticated reflective questions differ from other styles of reflection I am aware that my vocabulary seems to be inadequate to sum up what I experienced in the group. There was a distinct change in the reflective style that I had initially experienced, however, even though I am finding difficulty in describing exactly what this was. This example shows the team posing multiple questions and a group member seeking clarification in order to understand a situation from another viewpoint:

“R- isn’t that part of taking responsibility? to make his own mind up, isn’t that what you want him to do?”

T- well if that’s what he’s doing yeah... maybe.. am I seeing it differently?”

R- I don't know, try to explain it a bit better then... because I might be missing the point somehow

T- I don't know whether I can

R- can you give me an example?

T- yes when he didn't check that sink last week, (LAUGHS) he went out and it was cracked, he had Friday where he could have checked it..”

The second technique used by the PhD 1 group to deepen their reflection was by engaging their feelings on the issue as well as their intellect. The first indication I had of this was when I observed the group taking long reflective type pauses as they pondered an issue. This was in contrast to the early stages of the research where both research groups seemed to fill as much of the space as possible with their opinions, statements of fact or observations. The group seemed to use the pauses as a means to be reflective in quite a different way.

I believe that silence within groups can often seem unsafe to group members, as we are generally conditioned to converse all of the time and not leave pauses in speech. The PhD 1 group seemed to be willing to forgo the security of incessant talk for an opportunity of accessing ‘something’ more precious from their reflections. The ‘something’ that I observed seemed to be based on their here-and-now feelings as opposed to their here-and-now thoughts. After noticing this for the first time, I began to adopt a strategy within my facilitation of allowing the silence to ‘creep in’ as a way to assist the groups’ reflective efforts.

I believe that the way in which the PhD 1 group reflected is important in my understanding of group learning and reflection. I think that the technique the group used is interesting and may help me to create a new theoretical framework which I will explore in a subsequent chapter. This excerpt shows the way in which ‘something’ else was accessed through the pauses. The group are looking at an image that has been created and begin to access their feelings in the here-and-now:

“T- It looks to me that you're looking at the website through a broken hole or something in a fence...(PAUSE)

G- A peepshow

R- (LAUGHS) yes!

T- you couldn't quite get to it could you, because were on the other side of the fence...

GS- what does that feel like?

T- Not good

(LONG PAUSE)

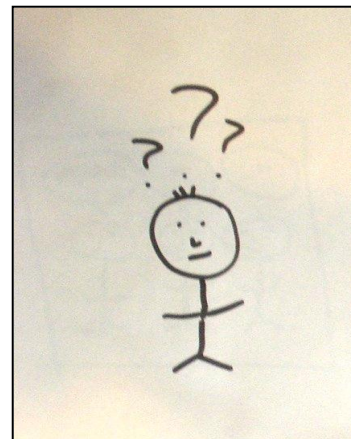
R- I don't think the whole picture feels good, I think it really does..

T- no it doesn't (LAUGHTER)

R- I feel quite unsettled

T- Yes

G- yes



R- It really does give a feeling of how everybody's feeling which is really, really anxious, probably more anxious than anyone's really said

T- yeah

R- in respect of the whole thing”

It was important for me to check out with the group if the reflective sessions were actually having a positive effect on them and the organisation in general. I was curious to know if the reflective process had been able to successfully tackle problems and make some sort of change to the organisation. From my perspective I would deem the project a success if I could detect the group incorporating new learning into their organisation.

This new learning could be inferred by things such as changes in group members' behaviour, new insight into the problem or new methods of interacting as a team. I interviewed each group member in order to gather information as to the success of the reflective process. The following statements seem to indicate success within the criteria I described:

“T- But I think from my point of view we are working more as a team, or we have been, but I think that's changed, you do find yourself reflecting a bit and thinking a little but differently I suppose, or trying to.... But I certainly feel quite happy about what we've been doing, I think it has brought us together to be able to discuss things more”

G- Maybe it was a little bit uncomfortable at times, I have to say because you have to be very honest when you're drawing, but you have to find a way to be honest without hurting people or offending anyone. I think I may have done, possibly, it hasn't affected my working relationship but in the beginning it was awkward. In the beginning some of them were difficult, as they were personal as opposed to organisational"

"GS- What do you think about the way people have reflected [using individual, group and critical reflection]?"

G- I think its been quite interesting to actually to hear what other people say they can see things so differently from me and its interesting to understand that I have a completely different way to look at some things and come from a completely different angle, so I think it was quite interesting from the point of view that when you're all working together you're seeing it in one way and you assume everyone else is seeing it in the same way, but I think its quite a surprise to discover that that's actually not correct"

"GS- What as changed

R- For the organisation, we are now working as a team, often before we were working at odds with each other, but since you've been we have started to gel together. For me we're thinking more like a group, with our own individual opinions. As an individual I think the biggest thing is that I'm trying not to be as emotional with the working life as I have been, I've felt by taking some emotions out of it I've been more effective, before I started thinking differently I would take the problem home with me and ponder over it, whereas now I'm finding looking at it from a more business like point of view, it makes

me feel less anxious and stressed, it also frees me, as I don't feel so tied to other peoples stuff, its empowering me . I can put things into a different perspective”

The uncomfortableness of group learning

One of the indications that the action learning project was psychologically challenging were the reports of physically uncomfortable symptoms which some group members reported experiencing. This indicated to me that the work which the group were doing was in some way threatening to their ego and most significantly, to their own world-view. I believe that this was actually quite a healthy thing as I considered that by managing the emotion generated through the reflective process the group may have had the opportunity to challenge and change their established world-view. In this excerpt a group member describes being uncomfortable:

“G- Well I've just got a really thick black place in my chest that I can feel cos [sic] I know that were not doing the higher stuff..

B- Well we are doing the higher stuff, were not doing the routine stuff,”

In this example a group member comments that her sleep pattern has changed, indicating to me that the reflective sessions are beginning to impact on her conscious awareness:

“G- I was really stirred up last week and I couldn't sleep Tuesday night, I was tossing and turning and got up in the middle of the night, I think what you said to Brian last week when he described his “moving the black cloud” in his drawing and you said “why don't

you move yourself?" I found that really quite profound for me, and that really made me think about my struggle and I think its time to give up the struggle of trying to be something were not, I think there's something about that gap, some resistance in us and just say "this is how it is""

Generating physical uncomfortableness through reflection seemed to be rather common within the study. In terms of its utility, I believe that it certainly helped uncover repressed and unconscious attitudes about the true way in which some of the issues were impacting on the members of the group. I believe that it was important for the group to both voice their uncomfortable emotions and to reflect on the meaning of such an emotional reaction in relation to the problems under discussion. In this way new knowledge and learning may have had an opportunity to be generated.

There were some instances of course, where reflection was unconsciously avoided as a way to prevent the group experiencing further psychological threats and uncomfortable emotions. I think that the group certainly used tactics to confound or delay the reflection process but I also believe that these occurred for the most part out of the participants' awareness.

One popular tactic to avoid uncomfortable emotion I noticed, was to create unrelated conversations which delayed the beginning of the action research session. The longest delayed start I recorded was 20 minutes, with the group discussing the images from previous weeks work as opposed to the group contending with the thorny issues at hand.

Another behaviour which I observed quite often as a defence against uncomfortableness was the creation of confusion within the research group. Confusion is the process where an individual in conversation with the group unconsciously notices that the subject they are reflecting upon is psychologically threatening. As a way of avoiding an anxiety provoking subject the individual will confuse their conversation by making a number of distracting statements, which the group then begin to discuss. These statements upset the flow of conversation and led to the group forgetting the original reflective point as they have been distracted by less relevant but more psychologically 'safe' conversations. The PhD 2 group were especially skilled in this practice which sometimes made their reflective efforts very difficult to follow for me and for other participants.

I also observed confusion being spread by some group members through the omission of certain steps within the reflective process. I had been very careful to teach the group how to go about drawing, reflecting and surfacing their problems and new world-views and had put into place a step-by-step procedure to be followed by everyone. I noticed that at certain times when the reflection was becoming intense or psychologically uncomfortable, the power holders would begin to take control of the group and facilitate the process by missing out a crucial step within the reflection. I think that this behaviour was an unconscious attempt to protect the group once again from feeling emotions which were deemed to be anxiety provoking or too psychologically harmful. As well as this behaviour being very distracting for me, I believe it prevented the group from generating emotions which may have led to new knowledge about their problems being generated.

Both groups were actually very good at exploring their emotional defences, once they had surfaced them as they would use them to work on their organisational problems. Even though this was the case, there still seemed to be periods when the process of reflection became too much for the group as it seemed they became psychologically depleted. At such times the group would spend a while distracting from the task in hand and may indulge in a little 'self congratulation'.

Self congratulation I believe is a process where the tired and fragile ego can allay its anxiety by basking in the remembrance of past 'battles won' and obstacles overcome. I consider self congratulation to be an ego defence against more probing and intrusion by other members of the group. Both groups self congratulated when they should have been reflecting, however the PhD 2 group used the technique extensively in a number of sessions.

On reflection I can now see that this was quite a subtle way for the PhD 2 group to psychologically cry 'no more!' as the adoption of self congratulation coincided with the resolution of both the organisational problem and the power and privilege issues. This is a typical congratulatory excerpt taken at one of the final PhD 2 sessions, it is quite obvious from the tone that there is no reflection or urgency to change anything at this point:

“G- I don’t know if this is an appropriate time to say, but I think out of everybody you're the one that’s changed the most and thank you... I don’t know if that’s been easy for you Brian but I'm so glad that you seem more easy going now and more relaxed and less...

C- Stressed... Its you aswell though Gill I've noticed a big change in both of you, I suppose that with me having quite a long break off sick, maybe I noticed the difference a lot more cos [sic] I wasn't here for the everyday little changes

G- We did stress a lot and Natalie used to bang our heads together!

C- But I think you both seem more comfortable, not as stressed



B- I think we've defined our roles better and I'm quite happy for Gill to take a lead on some things and me to take a lead on other things, I'm glad you've recognised that change in me Gill. It seems to be working for the business and it seems to be working for me”

One of the research groups in particular communicated their uncomfortableness in quite a subtle way, through the use of laughter. From the start of the study I noticed how prevalent laughter was within the PhD 1 group and I became very interested quite quickly in what this may be covering up or transmitting to other members of the group. The laughter seemed to be initiated by the business owner but also came from the other group members.

The laughter ranged from a solitary laugh, a group chuckle or a full blown boisterous group laugh and seemed to be directly related to the issue under discussion or to an instruction that I had given in the session. As I reflected on the laughter I wondered if it operated on both a conscious and unconscious level. On a conscious level I would have commented that the group were 'happy, friendly and positive' which they were, but on an unconscious level I think that the group may have been quite sophisticated communicators of their anxieties and defences.

The PhD 1 group were very good at concealing their anxiety through the use of laughter, but this group were also able to develop a reflective technique which helped them utilise their reflections by embracing their anxieties. In the following paragraphs I will attempt to explain the technique I observed in order to make it a little clearer.

The PhD 1 group managed to access a deeper level of reflection than the PhD 2 group and as a result I felt, generated deeper understandings of the problem under discussion by accessing their anxiety. I would describe the technique used by the PhD 1 group to reflect at a deeper level and generate new awareness of their problems as 'messy navigation through the reflective process leading to intuitive conclusions'. This technique was used in only a few instances by the group, and this was towards the end of the project, however, all of the participants involved agreed that they had developed a powerful new reflective technique.

‘Messy navigation’ is the way in which the group reflected on their thoughts and feelings in combination when exploring a problem. The group allowed themselves to move away from the main issue, and explore connected, ancillary issues which they would then describe from both an intellectual and from an emotional point of view. The group would still use the rules of reflection but they would add a ‘feeling’ component to this. The feeling component asked ‘what are you feeling right now?’ Along with this reflective technique the group would also prevent intellectualisation of the problem and stop themselves from ‘spiralling down into problem solving mode’. By preventing intellectualisation, the group managed to reflect on their here-and-now thoughts and feelings until a new level of awareness surfaced.

From my observational point of view it seemed that as long as the group were talking about the problem in general terms, they would eventually uncover a link between their thoughts and uncomfortable emotion or anxiety which seemed to be at the heart of the original problem. The ‘intuitive conclusion’ the group eventually arrived at was more powerful than a solely intellectual problem solving approach, as it seemed to engage with the processes of anxiety and feelings running through each group member.

This excerpt shows a group member commenting on the power of the navigational process after it was used (under facilitation) for the first time:

“T- we usually have a discussion when you’ve gone, and so we did that and we all generally thought it was enlightening didn’t we? It made us realise what we have actually

been doing all these weeks, to me it wasn't really apparent until we did the last group, but all of a sudden I understood it a lot more and a light went on.. The fact that we were doing it ourselves, it was when you said "your spiralling down to try to solve the issue" and immediately we knew we were I think that was the key words wasn't it?" ... I just felt at the end as if the answer just dropped out, it was good wasn't it?"

This is an example of the trust a group member has in the process of talking about a problem in general terms, with the conviction that a new level of awareness of the problem will emerge. The group are discussing an idea of putting their products onto a web portal known as a webshop, but this idea has caused numerous problems for them in the planning stages:

"R- I do feel, that it would be a good idea to discuss the webshop as I think that there are other issues that will emerge once we start discussing it. I am left wondering when or how we get the shop going..."

G- The webshops a good one to talk about really as in we need to know what products to put on, what advertising, the transportation and lots more, how are we going to get it started

T- that's true and its probably good that we discuss it because the way I see it, we all see it in different ways, I do think maybe its worth it..."

G- Yes

R- Yes"

In this extract, the group decides to use anxiety that a problem causes as a subject to reflect upon. This is a very different and exciting way of approaching the original problem:

“GS- So what is the question you will draw?”

R- “What are the anxieties beneath the launch of the webshop”

T- that’s good yes”

This is an excellent example of the way in which the group were beginning to link the organisational problem with their underlying anxieties:

“R- I just find that really significant, although it’s a wash hand basin that’s broken there it looks very fragile and all I can see looking at the drawing is an eggshell, it does look very fragile and separate, it seems two separate things there to me

T- what the truck and the wash basin?

R- Yes

(PAUSE)

G- well for me perhaps it kind of represents the anxiety for me of the webshop, probably not the delivery but the whole thing and where its going... whether it will be successful and the anxiety about the viability of it, I think when I look at it that’s what I see in Thomas’s picture

(PAUSE)”

Finally a group member states how her image relates to her fuzziness around the problem under discussion and the anxiety this may cause. Another group member seems to use the idea of being blank and how 'filling up' the blank may remove anxiety. I also notice in this piece that pauses seem to indicate a deeper level of reflection:

"G- Mine is obviously the website, we haven't got much on it at the moment and that's why its blank, I've drawn around the outside because it feels kind of fuzzy and that represents the plans that we've got, but the plans that we've got feel very fuzzy, we do have anxieties about it but I don't feel that we've quantified what those actually are, we haven't sat down and talked about it I think there is an anxiety about it, so it al feels very fuzzy to me

R- Hmm....

(PAUSE)

R- Well, I suppose looking at it and using the word blank is quite appropriate, because the screens blank, that also leads me to say that that's the way its been thought about at the moment there are lots of blanks that have not been filled in... (PAUSE) although the line around here is a transparent vision, instead of a line that comes round and completes it or contains it, it seems more like a transparent, sort of mirage

T- Yeah it looks like a thought

R- so there is nothing solid there to get hold off except the webshop which is a tactile thing, again I guess if the blank can be filled in, the vision will be more solid, the screen will fill up and the anxiety will be removed along the way"

Drawing upon the unconscious

The images the group created were very often simple stick figures of people interacting or speaking to one another, sometimes objects such as cars, trees and houses were drawn and in some cases whole imaginary environments were created. The images didn't seem to evolve from simple to more sophisticated pictures over time as I originally expected, but seemed to keep at the same level of 'artistry' throughout.

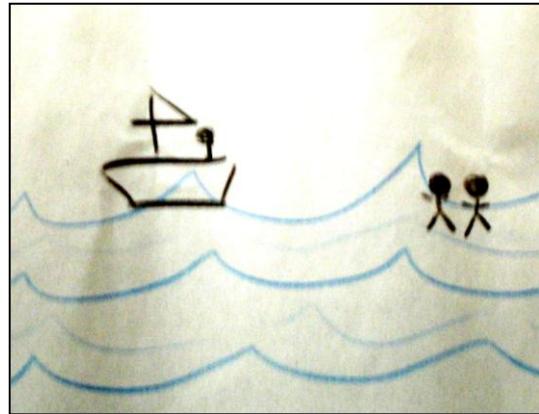
The images were an integral part of the reflective process as it was through reference to them and comment on their content that the group created their topics of discussion. Sometimes the images made obvious statements and reflection began around the interpretation of the statements themselves. Other times the images were oblique and contained hidden meanings which the group explored in order to generate new understandings of the problem. Here is an example of an obvious interpretation of a drawing created by a group member. In this excerpt a group member begins to reflect on the meaning of her own created image of a crossroads:

"G- I was thinking we're at a crossroads, and we've got choices and options of where we go and how we change things for the better and move on its like we've learned, I feel like I've learned a process, something's come to my awareness of a process with a different perspective of what I had before and now its like "what do I do with it?" and its not just down to me its down to me and Brian and the team really"

The crossroads image was quite obvious and simply drawn. The reflections of what the crossroads represented to the artist, however, surfaced the complexity of their own world-view at the time. I believe that this is much of the beauty of using images as reflective tools.

In this excerpt the same group member begins to reflect on what another artist's image represents to her. The image was interpreted as a boat and two people by the side of it:

"G- From where I'm looking it just seems like two people have missed the boat, there's been a chance, but they've missed it and in a way that seems like where I am. In a way we started off the business as one thing and through the pressure of funding this change agenda has come in and we still resisted being this Civil Service and still trying to do it



our way, the clients way, and the boat that were actually signed up to is sailing past us and were still in the water and were trying to get on board; or if we are trying to get on board there's some resistance to it, but in the meantime were left struggling, floundering, its all become too much really

C- Just trying to keep your head above water?

G- Yeah"

The two previous examples suggest the unconscious attitudes and anxieties the same interpreter holds. The commentary when taken together shows that this group member is uncertain about which direction the business is going and seems to feel that the group (represented by the two people) have ‘missed the boat’ and are floundering in finding new ways to operate the business. As I watched the process of organisational transformation over time, it was clear to me that this particular member was having difficulty with where the business was heading and how the business needed to change to solve the organisational problem.

It was also interesting to find some images were re-interpreted by the group as looking like ‘something else’ entirely. I encouraged each person to tell me what they thought the drawing was and to reflect along the lines of what they were seeing within the drawing. This was also an important part of the study, as it once again tapped into the group members own unconscious attitudes, anxieties and emotions.

This technique is very powerful as it opens up discussion and questions world-views in sometimes very challenging ways. In this example, the artists’ drawing of a car was interpreted as a hill and led to some interesting confrontations which highlighted the vast difference in the way both saw the dynamics of the company:

“G- Well I really didn’t know what Brian’s drawing was, I didn’t know if that was a sports car or that it was a pathway with a hillside and these were pebbles on the road

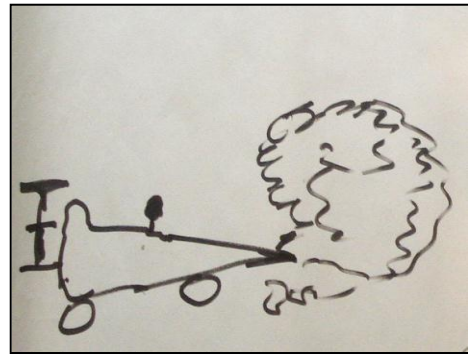
going to, like a distance that was unclear, but really it was more about going forward and it being unclear

GS- What's the difference between what you thought the drawing was and what it actually was?

G- Well, what did Brian say "a high performance" and I don't think of it as being a high performance company, the University described us as a "unique multitasking service", so I don't see us as a high performance, but I know you [Brian] see us like that.... I'm thinking if I saw it as a pathway on a hillside, it would be much more tranquil and there's less pressure and it's more reflective as I can walk that path as quickly or as slowly as I want

B- How can that be a hillside when it's a bloody car!?

G- Well if you look at the gradient of it, then it's a bit like...



B- There's a fin at the back!

G- Yeah but I didn't...

B- And a funky kind of thing at the back for balance

G- Yeah but Ithis is a kind of

B- There's a thing at the back that keeps it balanced

G- This is like one of those... pictures that looks like two things at the same time... and I was wondering is that what's happening to our family and the business, we are two things at the same time....

B- Yes but that's in your fantasy, it's not in my drawings!

G- Don't get critical about the picture and the interpretation of the drawings, I can read both of them in there

GS- The way you both described this picture is integral for me, you're both partners in this business and you see the same picture in two completely different ways

G- What scares me about Brian is that sometimes his decision making is too impulsive, he gets the job done there's no doubt about it, but he doesn't sort of reflect enough, or think of the options enough, for me

B- I think "make a decision, even if its the wrong one..do it!" whereas you can...

G- Well I say "lets have a think about this, let's look at the options here". So why do you just make decisions and do it? Why do you operate like that?

B- I don't know... Ill have to think about that

G- I'm the one that thinks about consequences and Brian doesn't think about consequences and that in a nutshell is it..."

The images themselves seemed to have quite a lasting effect on the group members and seemed to enable them to continue the reflective process away from the sessions. It could be that the simplicity of the image was easy to retain in memory and the deep reflective sessions created a narrative for the image when it was remembered by the interpreter. In this example, a group member recounts his reflection of an image he drew of a black cloud enveloping the organisation and the realisation that he can either move the cloud or move himself away from the cloud:

“B- Last week I felt there was a big cloud above me and the cloud was blocking out the sunshine, but since last week I’ve reflected and thought about how I can either move me or move the cloud and I’ve done both. I think the sunshine’s much more visible to me than it was this time last week, in so far as I’ve said more to a lot of people and I feel happier, I feel the sunshine’s out like it is today, but if we’d have done this yesterday I don’t know if the picture would be the same, as it was grey and it was cold but as a business, I feel it’s a lot more sunny we’ve got money coming in a lot better now and I think the clouds moved in so far as the business is moving on quite quickly now and I feel really like Mr Happy.”

On some occasions a member of the research group drew an idealised view of their current situation or the organisation as a whole. This seemed to be an ego defence which allowed the group to engage in fantasy which allowed their fragile ego the opportunity to take a break from reflection and simply rest. This type of drawing was often created when the individual was weary of reflection or unwilling to reflect or when the group were in a ‘self congratulatory’ mood, where little reflection was actually generated.

In this example the artist relays the feeling of safety she felt in childhood when she swam, her subsequent drawing was of the sea and of her swimming around in it. It was obvious from the way in which she described the image to me that she was unwilling to reflect any more on this particular occasion:

“G- Well in a way, I suppose the only image I've got is under the sea, this is the seabed and there's some plants and you know how the sunlight comes down onto the sea and there's patches of light and illumination, it reminds me of snorkelling, and down at the bottom its more sinister, there might be a rocky outcrop and a bit of shadow over there. So in a way it's been like a journey of discovery and the water for me means I've been comfortable in it and I could spend all my time in it...and as a kid the one place I had was the water and there are stories about after eight hours in the sea I still wouldn't come out and dad used to have to swim out for me, I just love water, so being in the sea is like a safe and lovely place for me.”

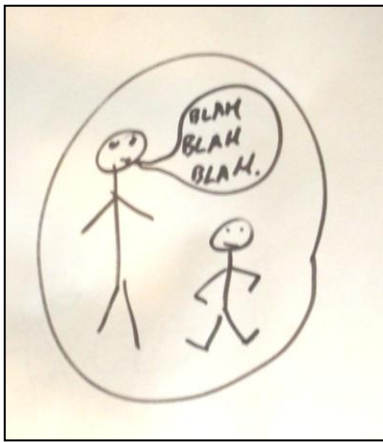


Sometimes group members would draw things as a way to express their conscious feelings which they worried may have been deemed inappropriate to verbalise. In this way the image was used to surface already known content by the artist in order for a specific issue to be reflected upon. In this excerpt a

group member describes her drawing which shows a figure saying “blah blah blah”. This was a hint to the business owner that she didn't really understand the instructions he was giving her:

“G- Maybe if there’s a particular task to be done that somebody has assumed that I know exactly what to do, when I really don’t...What I was doing with “blah blah blah” is saying that the other persons’ not really hearing what I’ve said.. that I don’t know”

I spoke to the Managing Director about this later and he recounted how he felt about the image:



“T- I’ve tried to take the positive out of it, even when Gloria drew the picture of “blah blah blah” that was obviously me I thought “don’t have a go at me, wait a minute!” (LAUGHS) and I was a little bit offended but when I thought about it, there’s a reason that she drew that obviously and that’s how she found me and I reflected on that and you’ve got to take the positives out of it haven’t you? And it gives you an understanding of why some things actually happen”

It was clear to me that the production of the group drawings were having a profound effect on the levels of reflection which the groups were able to achieve. Through the images the groups seemed to be able to access a rich language of emotion, feeling and rationality which ensured that the problem was viewed from many perspectives and learning seemed to be the result. The PhD 1 group became quite proficient at engaging with the images by looking for alternative explanations of the images and not simply accepting the image at face value.

This skill, in my view allowed their reflective sessions to be rather more encompassing to the group and the problem under discussion. This is an example of the way in which an image was re-interpreted (under my facilitation) and led on to discussions about the business owners selling techniques. The subject was “why are customers not being converted into sales?”

“T- (LAUGHS): [In my picture] I'm just wondering “why?” that's me wondering why and the other one was an open case... er.. I think I maybe don't understand why people aren't buying.. because I don't think its anything I've done different to what I've always done, which has always worked even though I don't consider myself a sales person, what I'm doing is no different and I wonder if you've got to do something different at the minute. And the open case is not closing it, the sale...”

G- Erm..well... I guess while the case is still open there is still a chance, there's still an opportunity there to close the sale,

GS- Can I just make an observation, in the picture you're sitting down, why did you draw it sitting down?

T- Well, presumably when I'm sat with a customer that's what I do, sit down having given him the design and the price

G- Maybe he feels like it is something that is not within his control...hence he's sat back from it a little....

GS- Another thing I'm curious about -Thomas please just stand up and look at this bit- what's going on here?

T- I was trying to draw myself with my arms folded, ... I was trying to, it was an afterthought really...

GS- what do you think this could be if it wasn't just an image of you just crossing your arms?

T- Err... it could be a saxophone..

GS- and what are you doing with the saxophone?

T- I've no idea...not playing it!

GS- what are you doing with it then?

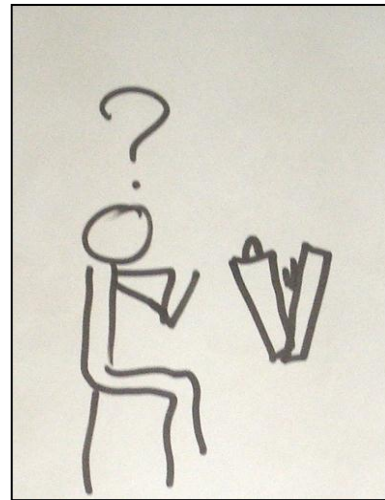
T- well its under my chin innit?...

R- You're resting your chin on it (LAUGHTER)

GS- and probably that's why your wondering how to play it! Do you play the saxophone?

T- No I've always wanted to be able to play it though!"

R- well that speaks volumes doesn't it!? You're not actually blowing it from the mouth, you're blowing it



from here [the chin].. its not quite as clear-cut as being able to voice it or blow it out through the instrument.. you're restricting yourself perhaps? Or could it be a distraction?"

(The group go on to talk about reasons why the organisation doesn't capture market research information from their potential customers).

Facilitating deeper levels of learning and reflection

This section deals with the techniques that I adopted as the facilitator in order to help the PhD 1 group to reflect at a more emotionally connected level. The benefit of my facilitation I believe was that the group changed the way in which they thought about the organisational problem and explored the way in which they experienced the problem, were part of the problem or influenced the problem.

The first technique that I consistently tried to adopt with both groups (with varying levels of success) was to teach group members how to take 'ownership' of their opinions and reflections. 'Taking ownership' derives from psychotherapy circles and is a method of speaking that recognises that experiences are not universally similar, rather that they are unique to each one of us. In conversation, people tend to generalise their opinions and take for granted that everyone feels the same way as they do about the issue in question, here is an example:

We all know that some people are lazy and some people are hard working and that's one of the problems we've got in the organisation

On closer analysis of the text the individual is distancing themselves from their own opinions (that people are lazy) and taking for granted that this fact is a contributory factor to organisational problems. In this example no further exploration or reflection is needed, we all seem to agree that some lazy people are causing the organisation problems.

I encouraged the group to take ownership of their opinions by simply replacing the general for the particular through the use of the 'I statement'. The 'I statement' works by 'giving back' the sentence to its originator and confirming the subjectivity of the view they hold. Using the 'I statement' the example above would now look like this:

"I know that some people are lazy and some people are hard working and that's one of the problems I feel the organisation has"

This statement feels more empowering and more brazen, and invites other members to engage with the originator and expand the conversation in a number of ways. The notion of laziness could be explored, the notion of hard working could be reflected upon or the organisational problems could be examined further, for example. I found the 'I statement' a very useful and powerful tool of reflection due to the power it had to bring group contributors back to their own opinions which the group could then explore.

I also introduced both groups to a number of different ways of looking at their organisational problem by introducing a selection of theoretical notions. The theories I introduced were derived from both organisational and psychotherapeutic literature and were given to the group to consider as certain issues unfolded. At the onset of the research I didn't plan which theories to introduce (although I had a number of them that I could select from) I merely observed the way in which the groups were reflecting and the problems they encountered from reflecting in their 'old' ways and offered advice. Sometimes the advice which I offered was taken on and I was able to explain the notion

more thoroughly to the group and sometimes the advice was ignored or discounted, in which case I would not pursue the advice any more.

I introduced notions such as 'Power and Privilege', a classic of the critical reflection school which seeks to uncover hidden control mechanisms operating out of the organisations awareness but affecting the organisation to a great extent. 'The Organisation as Family' which has its roots in psychoanalysis and psychotherapeutic writings, was introduced in the PhD 2 group (interesting because although the organisation was made up mostly of family members, they never considered the dynamics that played out were due to their own family roles). 'Freudian Slips' which obviously derives from psychoanalysis and indicates that 'there are no such things as accidents', which I introduced when artists stated "I don't know why I drew that, I didn't mean to". I also introduced notions of 'Anxiety and Uncertainty' which are once again from the psychoanalytic school and which posit anxiety as an ego defence when a challenge of an individuals established and comfortable world-view is perceived.

Another technique which emerged from the group work as if by accident was the use of the deliberate pause. In the early stages of the project both groups looked to me to direct the reflection and to 'keep track' of the order of the process. I would invite people to speak or guide them as to the level of reflection they were to explore. In later stages I became less directive with my instructions, especially with the PhD 1 group, who managed to run three sessions with much less guidance. The deliberate pause was simply an intentional silence I chose when group members looked to me for guidance or for

assistance with their reflection. The technique developed into a useful tool when I realised that once the group understood that I would not speak and that it was 'safe' to have silence, they seemed to relax into the silence and become more sensitive to their emotional state.

The pause really came into its own after some of the group realised that they were able to access alternative views of the problem they were working on by listening to their feelings. Listening to feelings led to a more honest reflection of the group's thoughts of a situation which seemed to be charged with emotional content as well as intellectual content.

As I watched the PhD 1 group in the latter stages of the project, I noticed that some problems were un-solvable, such as 'time management' for instance. It was interesting to note the behaviour of some members when they realised that no 'solution' would be found within the session. At such times I observed two of the group in particular trying to think their way to answering the problem. Intuitively I made an intervention and instructed the group

“don't try to spiral down with your thoughts to try to get a solution, keep reflecting, keep asking questions like what does this mean to me? How do I feel? What do I think about this? And trust that something will fall out”

This instruction transformed the group as they stopped thinking of solutions and began to feel their reactions to the situation. Eventually the group came to a conclusion about the subject which satisfied them all, I rated this as a great success!

Afterwards the group commented on the power of the technique and how it surfaced a more 'realistic solution' to their problem. I was pleased to witness the technique in use at the penultimate session, which had a similar successful outcome. I intend to explore this technique more in a later section of my thesis when I will propose its use within a new theoretical framework of group organisational learning.

Conclusion

I was extremely pleased with the results of the research fieldwork as it seemed that each group really worked as well as they were able on the group tasks which I realise were often extremely difficult. It seems that this type of group reflective methodology is very effective within the project for surfacing a range of interesting and useful insights into how groups learn. The use of the drawing methodology has been invaluable in bringing to the fore a host of reflective discussions and revealing a range of hidden attitudes, emotions and behaviours. The action research method has also been very successful in allowing the research groups a safe reflective space which supported their positive behaviour and gave them the ability to learn whilst providing a nurturing environment in which to do so.

The research methodology has been effective in its ability to surface issues surrounding power, control, psychoanalytical anxiety, uncomfortable emotions and group defensive techniques. It has also been useful in creating group coherence and an effective space for individuals to experience some quite deep levels of reflection.

In the following chapter I intend to discuss the research findings more deeply by utilising a psychoanalytic lens as a way to establish the underlying dynamics which affected the groups' performance and ability to generate new knowledge.

Discussion

Introduction

In this chapter I aim to discuss the data derived from the research project and which I compiled in the previous Fieldwork Results chapter. In discussing the data, I hope to be able to generate some new insights into how organisational groups learn. I will discuss the fieldwork results in relation to the three areas of my literature review and contextualise the findings in line with the themes of organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning.

In terms of notions surrounding organisational learning, I am most interested in exploring how my research group utilised reflection and the effect that the reflective processes I adopted had on the groups ability to learn (Dewey, 1916) I am also interested in how the group managed their emotional states and their internal power dynamics within the context of this project, I am particularly interested in the learning opportunities which resulted from the practice of this regular and structured organized reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004). In this section I will also explore the way in which the projective drawing methodology contributed to the groups' reflective work and the surfacing of conscious and unconscious emotion.

Using a psychoanalytical lens I will explore the dynamics of the group and its members, attempting to describe the fundamental psychoanalytic processes which I saw being played out. I will also question if the psychological group behaviour can be interpreted according to Bions' theory of the 'group as a whole' (Bion, 1961).

Furthermore, I am interested in discussing the way in which the group adopted critical approaches to their reflection within the action learning set (Mezirow, 1990) and how the role of facilitator changed from the traditional role to a more participative model with particular reference to the way in which this affected the groups ability to generate new knowledge. Before beginning the discussion I think that it is appropriate to recap on the research project, its aims and the methodology I adopted.

The chapter ends as I give my own interpretation of how these two particular research groups generated knowledge and seemed to navigate their way through the learning process. Within this discussion I give eight new insights into organisational learning which I believe are new and novel contributions to the organisational learning field. The insights are all based upon my empirical research and are derived from a psychoanalytical reading of group learning.

An overview of the project

The research project was set up to investigate the question of how organisational groups learn. Having no preconceived hypothesis with which to test or answer this question I opted to use an inductive approach to gain as much rich data as possible and to analyse the data using content analysis and hermeneutic methods afterwards (see the Methodology chapter).

I identified two organisations to work with, who had previously stated that they had organisational problems they wished to explore by being part of this research project. I used action research as my methodological tool and created two organisational based action learning sets. The action learning set was a little different to the normal set in that each member of the group would work on a single problem in the session and created an individual drawing showing their interpretation of the problem. This approach was intended to surface both their conscious and unconscious thoughts and attitudes to the problem and generate richer data for analysis. The drawings themselves would become reflective tools which set members would refer to as they were discussing the organisational problem. Both action learning sets were taught how to reflect in three distinct ways, individually, as a group and by utilising critical reflection.

The one hour sessions ended after all set members had reflected on the particular problem in question using individual, group and critical reflective methods. This was usually enough time for the problem to have been extensively discussed and reflected upon to everyone's satisfaction. At the conclusion of the session I had intended to ask group members to create action plans of how they intended to deal with the organisational problem when it was next encountered and to provide feedback to me at the next set meeting.

It became apparent relatively quickly that the group were not willing to carry out this task. In response to this, I decided to ask the set members each week if they had

addressed the problem differently and if the problem was still causing them as much difficulty as before they worked upon it.

In each case the response to the question was that the problem had been approached and tackled differently, with it seeming to be less of a problem than it had been when it was brought to the set meeting. Set members were able to solve a number of their organisational problems using the research methodology and seemed to have made psychological transitions in relation to their own attitudes and behaviours. The groups also seemed to have acquired new knowledge of themselves and their group process and seemed to have also learned quite a lot about the problems they experienced and the tools which they could adopt to solve them in the future.

Discussing the groups psychoanalytical processes: The PhD 1 Group

In this section I intend to examine the two organisational groups' particular psychological orientations based on the research data and to use the conclusions of this work to help me understand the impact that such orientation may have had upon group knowledge generation and organisational learning.

According to some psychoanalytical management researchers, both the organisation and its members display pathological behaviours which are the root of many organisational problems and are played out through the attitudes, behaviours and day-to-day struggles of organisations members. One of the aims of psychoanalytical management research is to identify and name the most severe organisational pathologies in order for the organisation

to work on these as a way of solving their most difficult problems (Gabriel and Carr, 2002).

After a number of meetings with the PhD 1 group I began to take notice of the type of behaviour that occurred again and again, the way the groups spoke to one another and the way in which the organisational problems were described, drawn and reflected upon. The group were respectful of one another, the Managing Director was sensible and had an air of the mischievous about him as he was always ready to lighten the mood with a quip or a joke. The other two staff were friendly and professional, each seemed to have good verbal skills and understanding of the roles they occupied. This group seemed to be well mannered and thoughtful, the administrator had been with the organisation for around three years and took her role very seriously, whilst the designer had been with the organisation for under a year but was a competent professional in her work.

The problems which the group brought to the sessions seemed to be important to the ongoing success of the organisation, the first problem which was discussed was 'lack of customers' with other problems being brought such as closing sales, the performance of staff, time management and marketing issues. It seemed that these problems were important to bring to the sessions and were treated with seriousness throughout.

My opinion of the group after my observations was that they were a well functioning, friendly team who were attempting to gain some clarity on their organisational problems by taking part in the project. My interest in looking at the group from a psychoanalytical

perspective was to study the group's pathologies and to gain an understanding of how the pathology affected the opportunity to both reflect and learn.

I reflected on the group dynamic and read through the data in an attempt to explore if the group were displaying behaviours related to unconscious ego defence routines such as 'splitting' and projective identification, developed by Klein (1946) and the notion of transference (Freud, 1912) which act as quite extreme strategies for alleviating anxiety. I also explored the data to ascertain if I could identify the group falling into the categories which Bion suggested of 'flight or fight', 'dependency' and 'pairing' (Bion, 1961).

After listening to many hours of recorded sessions I found very few examples of the group polarising and exaggerating their opinions around situations or of people making them seem either all good or all bad ('splitting' behaviour). There were few instances of the group mistakenly attributing their own shortcomings onto other people or situations (projective identification) and I saw no evidence that the group were alleviating their anxiety by any of Bion's notions, such as 'flight or fight', 'dependency' and 'pairing' behaviour (Bion, 1961). Similarly the group showed few signs of such attitudes as pomposity or over exaggeration of their status (grandiose thinking) or behaviour which ensured that only one of the group were the most important but needed to be constantly and inappropriately indulged or given high levels of attention (narcissism) (Gabriel and Griffiths, 2002).

This is not to suggest that the PhD 1 group were free from psychological defence mechanisms, or that the group did not have unconscious processes which operated out of their awareness but which had an effect on their behaviour. I believe that the group were certainly defending from their joint anxiety of the organisation closing, or to put it another way of 'dying', but the way in which they did this did not seem damaging to individual members or overly counterproductive to the reflective process.

The way in which I observed the group defending against the anxiety of the organisation ceasing to exist was through the use of laughter, jokes and humour to communicate uncomfortableness with one another about certain subjects and to shift attention from threatening subjects to elsewhere. I observed the group becoming anxious about the prospect of the organisation surviving in difficult times and saw group members go to great intellectual lengths in the sessions in order to prevent this becoming realised. I think that the organisations success was closely associated with the groups' fantasy of its own immortality and survival. If the organisation 'died' then I believe that this would bring the issue of mortal death close to all of the group members, which I believe was too painful to contemplate.

I think that our greatest fears, which we constantly repress in order not to address it is the fear of death (Thanatos). Death signals the end of the mortal ego and is very much a taboo subject in the Western world, even though death is a fact of life and is inevitable for everyone. In order to defend against the possibility of ego death, I believe that the group put a lot of energy into 'pulling together' to prevent the organisation dying and to

prevent themselves from having to consciously contemplate their own mortal death. As the group pulled together, their anxiety about death diminished for a short while, only for it to emerge once again by the day-to-day realities of organisational life.

Furthermore I feel that the group dealt with anything which was closely related to the notion that the organisation may die, such as the competence of staff, the lack of customers or the failure of the latest marketing efforts for example, needed to be dealt with by laughter and humour, which had the effect of diminishing the power that death would hold over the fragile group ego. Gabriel and Griffiths (2002, p. 219) suggest that no matter how good our defence against anxiety is, we will never alleviate anxiety through the use of using stronger defence mechanisms:

“Organizations deploy a variety of defences against anxiety...Some defences consist of placing barriers and boundaries which protect individuals and groups... If you are in a city with massive fortifications, [then] these may allay fears of immediate invasion, but they also create a sense of constant exposure and threat and a need for vigilance and wariness. In a similar way, people in organisations, notably in times of change and crisis experience massive amounts of anxiety, irrespective of the defences aimed at containing it”

The group displayed their humorous behaviour throughout the project but it seemed to diminish in the final weeks when they began to reflect at deeper psychological levels and began to tap into their unconscious and emotional feelings as a way to problem solve (see

the Research Findings chapter). It seems that as the group became more competent at accessing their fears and reflecting on the reality of their situation, the humour was replaced to some extent by a deeper contemplative attitude which was much more 'real' and accessible to problem solving as opposed to being hidden and the subject of repressed fantasy of the ego death. I think this behaviour tackled the groups defence mechanism through bringing their unconscious fantasies into consciousness thereby alleviating the need to build up more and more powerful ego defences as their anxiety levels grew.

Discussing the groups psychoanalytical processes: The PhD 2 Group

The PhD 2 group were very different in many respects to the PhD 1 group and displayed a different set of psychological traits. After I had observed the group over a number of weeks, I began to note their particular behaviour and the reoccurring patterns of speech, the groups' attitude and their method of problem solving which gave me an understanding of some of the processes they used. This group were originally four in number but after just two weeks became three and became four again only in the last two weeks of the project. This was due to one member of the group taking a prolonged leave of sickness which seemed to be linked to a power struggle which she was involved in with the Managing Director and administrator, her father and mother.

The PhD 2 group were mainly a family business led by a dynamic, eager to succeed and driven MD who had grown the organisation from its inception over the last seven years. The MD was communicative, seemed fair within the group and seemed respectful of

other group members' views. The administrator was married to the MD and was a little more reserved than her husband and seemed to be anxious, quietly spoken and less confident. The third group member was younger than the administrator and MD and was very quiet and cooperative, almost shy but by all accounts a very able member of the organisation. The group member who was absent for most of the time (the couple's daughter) seemed very friendly and articulate as well as quite headstrong and on the occasions that we met, quite opinionated in a forceful type of way. On reflection it seemed to be the relationship between the couple's daughter and the Managing Director and her own enforced absence from the group which helped to surface much of the families' organisational issues.

Over the projects life I experienced the group as being quite confrontational with a range of hidden and unsaid attitudes, some of which were slowly brought out into the open through the act of projective drawing and reflection. The MD and administrator were quite often involved in personal tussles regarding the problems which the group reflected upon and tempers sometimes flared. There seemed to be a real feeling of resentment towards the MD from the administrator who seemed to use some reflective sessions as a way to expose the MD's perceived weaknesses. As a researcher this felt quite overpowering at times as I felt like I was actually more like a referee than an impartial observer to the groups' reflections and emotions.

Interspersed with this behaviour were periods of calm and quite thoughtful reflection which really assisted the group to move through a lot of issues mainly revolving around

the MD's behaviour and the future direction of the organisation. Another interesting thing about this group was that the group member who was not related to the family seemed to view the organisation in a completely different way from the rest of the group and frequently commented that she was surprised with the levels of conflict or animosity which other group members discussed with one another. It was interesting to me that this group member had an almost idyllic view of the organisation which she kept in place throughout the research project and through the turbulent reflective sessions which ensued.

The problems which the group brought to the sessions were very broad and mainly revolved around questions as to the future direction of the organisation and the behaviour of the MD, the administrator and the absent daughter. Throughout the project the group worked mainly on the power dynamic which was evident and the notion that the MD held overt and covert power which he was unwilling to relinquish and which the family members, on discovering such relationships now wished to share. This group seemed to be constantly aware of the time and seemed to be ruled to a large extent by the clock. The group were also skilled in defending against anxiety by avoiding beginning reflective sessions by chit-chatting and 'past-timing' using self congratulation and reminiscences to avoid the reflective work.

In the final few weeks of the project the group decided that the project should end before the planned end period as they felt that there was nothing left to discuss and no more problems to solve. This initially concerned me, as I considered that there was much more

to gain from keeping on with the sessions and working through the other issues concerned with the shift in power relations and the organisations new direction. On reflection I think that the group made the correct decision as I can now see that the reflective sessions were becoming simply too anxiety provoking for the MD and administrator. I can now see in retrospect that the major organisational ‘battle’ (it seemed like a battle at times) between the power holder and the rest of the organisation had been won and a pause in the proceedings was needed by the entire group for recuperative purposes.

When I reflected on the dynamics of the group I felt that there were unconscious psychological behaviours being played out. It was helpful to use the theory of the group-as-a-whole in order to take the emphasis away from particular individuals in the group and to attempt to view the group as a holistically functioning entity. I believe that the group were playing out a primitive stage of childhood development which Klein identified (Klein, 1959) when the very young infant begins to realise that they are no longer the centre of the universe and that their needs are not always catered for all by the all powerful mother figure. As the child realises this, they experience new feelings towards the mother of rage, hatred or abandonment when she is absent and feelings of overwhelming love, safety and security when mother is attentive.

Klein believed that the very young infant did not have the developmental understanding to cope with such extreme feelings towards a once all loving mother and so ‘split’ the mother into two separate entities, the all good caring mother and the all bad neglectful

mother (Klein, 1975). In times of heightened anxiety individuals revert back to more primitive ways of thinking and behaving as it seems that their capacity for adult thought begins to diminish. I believe that the PhD 2 group were dealing with some very anxiety provoking material in terms of their organisation, the MD as power holder and the future direction of the organisation and feel that the work we engaged in regressed the group for a time into the primitive tussle between power holder and 'split' child. If the MD represented the groups' mother then the administrator seemed to represent the child splitting the MD into 'all bad', with the third member of the group splitting the organisation into 'all good'. Klein also believed that groups were the perfect place for splitting to occur as the anxiety formed within a group would force the individual into a regressed state (Klein, 1959).

It was interesting to see how the fourth group member returned to the sessions only after the major work had been done and the MD had relinquished a lot of his power to the group. This group member's role seemed to be to uphold the new norms that the group had created from their reflective sessions and to ensure that the MD did not take away the power which he had recently released to the group. I think that the missing group member played a key role in being absent as this enabled the splitting to occur and the power dynamic between the MD and the administrator to be the main object of reflection.

The two groups displayed two distinctive psychodynamic traits and behaviours. I felt that the PhD 1 group were much more well-developed emotionally and did not demonstrate their anxiety through regression into a former childhood state; they did however defend

against the anxiety of their situation by using humour and laughter in order to make the situation seem less threatening to them than it unconsciously was. The PhD 2 group on the other hand I felt did regress into a former childhood state and split off members of the group into all good or all bad as a way to manage the stressful situation of organisational change.

In the next section I intend to discuss the way in which the two groups tackled the reflective process and explore how this affected them emotionally and how the group reacted to the structure of organised reflection. I will discuss these issues with reference to the group's psychological orientation and relate this to the learning and knowledge creation which the two groups were able to access.

Discussing group reflection and emotion

At the onset both groups struggled to understand how to reflect in an affective manner and seemed to prefer unstructured reflection which involved using past-timing language in order to reminisce about past events or situations. Over time the research groups began to learn how to ask reflective open ended questions and how to engage one another in discussion which could lead to reflection being surfaced.

Both groups had their own style of problem solving which needed to be curtailed before they could effectively engage in the reflective process. The PhD 1 group needed to stop solving problems by making lists of things 'to do' and the PhD 2 group needed to learn to

involve the entire group in the process as opposed to allowing the MD to make all of the decisions for other group members.

One of the main problems which both groups had when reflecting on their issues was that they each had a poor understanding of what the problem actually consisted of and as a result they found great difficulty in describing the elements of the problem. It seemed that both groups understood that they had problems, however, when they tried to describe elements of the problem to each other their language was vague and imprecise.

From a psychological perspective I think that the group were repressing the full extent of the problem from their conscious mind in order to be able to manage the anxiety which the problem provoked. Having to recognise only part of the problem and 'not understand' the majority of the problem seemed to keep the problem and the subsequent anxiety at a safe distance for the group to be able to manage.

No matter what the groups psychodynamic structure I was pleased to note that after a while the groups could use all three levels of reflection in an effective way to begin to address their issues and begin to understand about their impact on the problems they were attempting to solve. The techniques which the groups adopted for reflection were quite sophisticated and involved posing open questions, effectively listening to others without interruption and seeking clarification if they did not understand a group member's statement.

Both groups became proficient in taking apart concepts and behaviours of other group members in order to learn how others thought about the problems and how this differed from their own way of thinking and behaving. It was extremely useful for the groups to use the projective drawing technique to help surface and reflect on their conscious and unconscious processes as the drawn images were rich in reflective material, no matter how well or how badly they seemed to have been drawn.

I believe that the key to the group's reflective success was each member's willingness to go along with the reflective process and contribute to solving problems as opposed to merely going along with the process because they were required to do so by the leader. This seemed to be the case even when it was patently difficult for the groups to carry on reflecting as the subject matter was uncomfortable both groups persevered.

Both groups did, however, experience problems with critically reflective activities and needed my external interventions in order to begin to reflect with a critical eye. Critical reflection seemed to be problematic in that both groups could not really take a psychological step away from the organisational issues they were describing or experiencing, in order to generate new ways of looking at the roots of the problem based on the societal system they were operating within. This is hardly surprising as I believe critical reflection requires the individual to challenge some basic taken-for-granted assumptions of society and its philosophical underpinnings. I also believe that to be critically reflective involves the psychological act of reflecting as a subject within a

societal context when at the same time experiencing themselves as being the object of such critical reflection.

To ask the group to critically reflect on their experience of the organisational problem and at the same time to ask them to explore why the organisational system is set up in a way that undermined their own notions of power and autonomy seemed to be quite difficult and anxiety provoking. I believe that the PhD 2 group tackled the critical question of power and control within their own organisation very well, as this was evidently an extremely difficult question to address critically. The result for the PhD 2 group as they tackled the question was to regress them into an earlier childhood state as a form of primitive emotional defence against psychological harm.

There came a time when the PhD 2 group decided to end the project rather earlier than we had agreed as it seemed that they were not prepared to reflect on any more problems as they believed that they had worked all of them out. This group were much more willing in the final stages of the project to waste some of their reflective time with chit-chatting, reminiscing and self congratulating behaviour, which indicated to me that their particular process was nearing its natural end.

The PhD 1 group did last until the end of the project and were much more willing to persevere with the process and this I believe had great benefits in terms of their learning and knowledge generation. The PhD 1 group reached deeper levels of reflection and insight and managed to connect with their problem solving on an emotional and

intellectual level, this generated a new type of solution to the problem which 'felt' more complete than reflection alone. Deeper reflection seemed to require more skills than 'normal' reflection as it called on the group to be reflectively honest, quiet, reach a point of mental 'stillness' and use language which communicated both their emotional state and inner thought process.

Deeper reflection seemed very powerful and helped the group address problems by tapping into a hidden part of the groups' consciousness. I think that the PhD 1 group had begun to learn the basic techniques required for deep reflection throughout the project and were psychologically open to the possibility that they could surface new ways to problem solve if they relied on their reflective skills and allowed themselves to feel their emotional connection to the issue.

I believe that the basic group psychodynamic also had a large part to play in the success of the deep reflective work. The PhD 1 group in my opinion showed few signs of splitting, projective identification or transference etc. and seemed to be more psychologically stable than the PhD 2 group, who I believe demonstrated fundamental psychological developmental issues around power, love and hate. It may be that the PhD 1 group were the only group robust enough to carry out deep reflective work in this particular project and that the PhD 2 group had a range of issues to deal with in relation to the power dynamic and their splitting process before they could even contemplate accessing deep levels of reflection by accessing their emotional reservoir.

Emotionally the reflective process was often uncomfortable for both research groups who reported a range of unsettling physical feelings including insomnia, particularly in the early stages of the reflective process. It seems that in the early stages of group reflection individuals would become more vulnerable after surfacing the content of some of their unconscious fears and anxieties. The PhD 1 group seemed more capable of handling this type of emotional pressure and carried on with the reflective process throughout.

The PhD 2 group seemed to require some respite between some of their reflective sessions and took this through deploying unconscious delaying tactics such as past-timing and chatting before the group began its work. I think that this activity was vitally important to the PhD 2 group as it seemed to give their group ego some relief from confronting the uncomfortable issues which they were working through relating to the MD and the way in which power was administered. I also noticed that the PhD 2 group used verbal confusion together with long rambling speeches in order to divert attention from the reflection in hand and onto a completely different subject area. This seemed to be the most subtle, widely used and effective strategy employed by the group in the first half of the project and had the added effect of bringing the reflective sessions back to a number of safe subjects which had very little relevance to the problem in hand.

As the PhD 1 group utilised their emotional energy to connect with the problem in a deeper way, the PhD 2 group seemed to use their emotional energy to fight between themselves in a battle for power. The PhD 2 group seemed to have a reservoir of energy which they used to confront the object of their splitting process, the MD. The MD in turn

needed to deploy his emotional energy in defending himself from attack and attempting to take on board most of the critical comments aimed at him in a more constructive way. At times the reflective process itself seemed to become deadlocked by emotional defence and accusatory attack which seemed to have no constructive aim. At other times the group were very reflective and behaved in an almost too good to be true fashion with all group members agreeing how wonderfully together the group were.

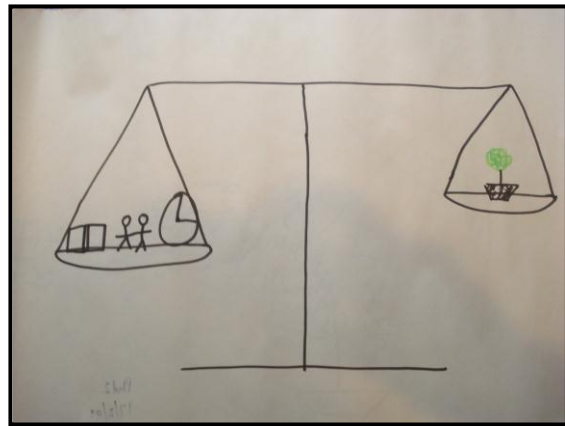
As I reflected on this process I came to the conclusion that the group were experiencing a terribly difficult time in working through their psychological issues and realising that everyone could be good and bad in equal measure some of the time. The way in which the group seemed to swing from harmony to acrimony I believe was a real reflection of the difficulty the group had with viewing themselves merely as people with some good and some bad points and not as idealised mother or child figures.

Discussing the projective drawing methodology

The projective drawing element of the research was very important to the project as this was set up to be the vehicle which captured in pictorial form the groups' overt and covert beliefs, attitudes and emotions. Both groups were initially uncertain of the drawing process and how it could help solve their problems and both typically stated that they were not 'good drawers'. After a few sessions the technique came into its own as the group became familiar with trying to use their drawings as the discussion point for the varying levels of reflective activity.

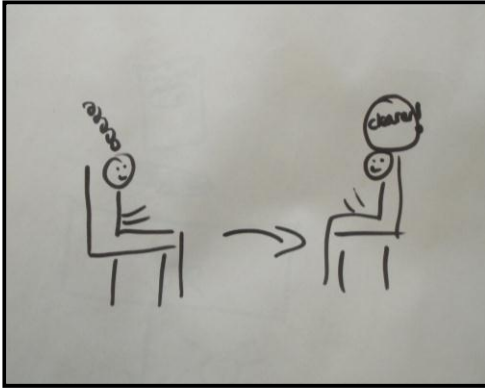
The projective drawing session worked in the following way: I asked the group to draw an interpretation of the problem that we were discussing in that particular session and each drew their images on the same sheet of paper. After the drawings were complete the group took 'turns' in describing their drawings to each other and with my facilitation, used the three levels of reflection to achieve this.

The first level of reflection simply involved the individual describing their drawing and the thought processes which accompanied the image. Although this was simple, this stage was effective in helping the individual verbalise the problem in a new descriptive way. It also gave the group the opportunity to hear the explanation of the problem and how the artist interpreted the problem which was inevitably different from other people's views of the issue.



This level of reflection required no particular analysis as it was intended to be merely an exercise in voicing the mental constructs which made up the problem; it required no intervention from others and simply stated the artists perceived world-view. The power in this level of reflection I believe was of holding up ones inner thoughts to an audience and watching how the audience reacted to them. This level was reflective in so much as the presenter was creating an argument of how they viewed a problem and defending this

based on their own world-view of what the problem represented to them and why it was problematic to their thinking.



The second level of reflection required the group to question the artist, the drawing itself and the attitudes which were apparent from the presentation. This level had a number of ‘ground rules’ of behaviour. Group members who questioned the presenter were required to be civil,

honest and supportive throughout and use their open questioning to elicit more information on the presenters world-view.

It was important that this activity was as productive as possible and allowed everyone within the group to reflect on the image and give useful feedback to the presenter. This stage was very important as it gave the presenter the opportunity to have their world-view questioned and their lines of reasoning pursued. This level also enabled the group to learn how to reflect and think in a different fashion from their normal thinking style. As the group all had the opportunity to be both presenters and questioners I believe this helped them to respect other peoples’ views and thought processes.

The third level ‘critical’ reflection was achieved as the artist considered the implications of what had been said and attempted to examine all of the drawn images in order to identify an underlying theme. I also had a hand in the third level reflective process by

prompting the presenter to think about the type of social system or the type of taken-for-granted assumptions that the organisation operated in and which prevented them from becoming emancipated from the system. This was the hardest level of reflection and one which I felt didn't need to be explored deeply in every session, as once an issue was critically identified its theme carried on through a number of weeks. The PhD 2 group for example used the critically reflective issue of power and privilege as a basis for most of their reflective work, it seemed that once the group had grasped a critical issue then other critical issues were not needed for knowledge generation and learning to continue.



Eventually it did not make a difference if the image drawn was quite easy to understand or quite oblique. Simple to understand images were reflected upon quite rationally whereas more complex or oblique images were explored (again with my assistance) for their deeper meaning and unconscious content. Both groups carried out these tasks well, with the PhD 2 group seeming to draw more simple and less taxing images towards the end of the project when it was clear that their ego defences were once again coming to the fore with an unwillingness to reflect any further.

The PhD 1 group became proficient in exploring a range of images and surfacing the groups' unconscious content simply by allowing themselves to wonder what the images

looked like and what they could be, had they not been told by the presenter. This technique came near the end of the project but was really very interesting as it seemed as the group using this technique were actually unlocking their unconscious imagination and projecting this onto the images. This was quite exciting as it allowed the group to readily access their own repressed thoughts and feelings in a safe way, allowing for reflection upon these things which led to the group uncovering more knowledge of themselves and their internal process.

When the presenters announced that they had made a mistake in their drawing and had drawn something that they never intended to, I took this as an unconscious ‘slip’ and encouraged it to be reflected upon. According to Freud, many of the mistakes that we make are not actually mistakes at all but are attempts by our unconscious to bring something of relevance into our awareness (Kahn, 2002). The PhD 1 group became very good at spotting unconscious slips and also of reflecting on them in order to surface new and hidden attitudes to their organisational problems which led to discussions on individuals real intentions, their limitations and their fears of acting in certain situations for example.

I felt that the drawing and presenting process itself for both research groups was an excellent tool in the project and able to quite quickly surface attitudes, anxieties, unsaid feelings and metaphors and bring these into the groups’ awareness. Often a group member would give what they believed to be an ‘impartial’ interpretation of an issue in a drawing and would be totally unaware that their own attitudes which they regularly

voiced were contained within their 'impartial' comments (see Literature Review chapter on Transference).

This I feel was much of the power of the projective technique in that it surfaced in very simple ways attitudes, behaviours and emotions which were clear for others to witness but very difficult for the individual themselves to spot. By encouraging everyone to voice their feelings of the drawn images in this manner over a number of group meetings, I believe that individuals had the opportunity to reflect on themselves from a totally different perspective and identify attitudes which were stifling their problem solving and learning abilities.

The drawn images seemed to have the ability to have a lasting effect on some people and remained in their consciousness long after the session had ended. Many of the drawings were quite simple but the stories which went along with them of how the problems were affecting people or how the issue seemed to be overwhelming, enabled some people to retain the image of the drawing in their consciousness. Some people reported that they suffered insomnia after the drawing sessions and told of how the images went through their mind as they thought about the issue. There were times when individuals solved elements of a problem by mentally changing a drawing which they were thinking about in order to make it more acceptable to them. I believe that the images simplicity was the key to their ability to be retained in the memory coupled with the strength of the problem which it described. I feel that this helped the individuals tackle the problem away from

the group sessions as the simple image seemed somehow to show the problem in very basic terms which was easier for the mind to apprehend and deal with.

As the process went on it became easier to identify if the group were willing to engage in serious reflection by examining the images they had drawn and observing the length of time they gave to their first level reflections. The PhD 2 group were quite adept at drawing images which were self-congratulatory and unrepresentative of the problems they brought to the group when the reflective process became too challenging for them. As this group were often addressing deep issues of power, love and hate it seemed as though they needed more 'down time' between their reflective processes in order almost to regroup and reconnect with themselves within a non-threatening environment. This was quite frustrating for me as the reflective work was not being done to any great extent, the group were merely involved in looking on the 'bright side' of their organisation or of the problem without becoming overly critical or reflective.

Again as I now reflect on this issue I can see that this was a psychological defence which was essential to the group's wellbeing and emotional stability. I now believe that I was dealing with a group who were certainly challenged by a strong leader who held the majority of the organisational power to the detriment of other group members and upon the groups' realisation of the existence of such power the group often regressed into a childhood state. Drawing images of an idyllic organisation or of a simplified problem I feel was the technique that the group-as-a-whole used to help distance themselves from anxiety.

The PhD 1 group on the other hand seemed to be able to utilise the drawn images in a rather different way towards the end of the project by exploring the hidden meaning and metaphors which were held within the images. This group worked with the images as a tool to surface emotional content which they then reflected upon and generated insights. As this group were less psychologically defended than the PhD 2 group and had more energy to devote to the reflection process itself they seemed to be able to generate deeper levels of emotional reflection by using the drawings as a springboard into their reflective practice in an open and exciting way.

Discussing the facilitation process

As the project went on it became clear that both groups required much more intervention and support from me as the project facilitator than I had originally intended to give. Before the research began I considered traditional action learning set facilitators and project researchers to be mainly concerned with keeping the action learning set to agreed boundaries in terms of time management and norms of behaviour. I considered that the whole object of an action learning set was to enable the set to become autonomous and to operate independently from the facilitator in the final stages of the project. This indeed was my original aim at the start of the project; to leave the group at the end of the research in a position that they could carry on with their reflective set sessions without my support and direction to assist them.

My original understanding of how an action learning set operated lacked any real world experience at facilitating an action learning set and the requirements of the set members. In a traditional action learning programme the set members come to the group in order to work on their individual problem by presenting their particular problem to the group and then utilise the groups' collective experience in order to reflect, question assumptions and develop alternative strategies to tackle the problem when it is next experienced. At the end of their allotted time the set member who is presenting the problem forms an action plan, a type of contract for change which they use in order to approach the problem differently when they next come across it, usually this is before the next action learning group meet again. The set facilitators' job is to oversee this process and to support the presenter by ensuring other set members contribute to the problems new solution in ways which empower and encourage the presenter (Revans, 1998a).

My particular research project was very different in many ways from the traditional action learning set and this is why it required a different approach to facilitation. The sets I created concentrated on only one problem as a group and used projective drawing techniques in order to surface each group members own attitudes and emotions to the problem. As well as learning how to problem solve differently through reflection, both groups also had to contend with reflecting at different levels both individually and as a set.

On top of this requirement both groups had to learn how to use the projective drawing methodology as part of their reflection and to learn how to surface their hidden attitudes

and emotions using pictorial methods. The result of this new approach to action learning was that the group did indeed surface a range of attitudes and emotions that they were already conscious of and ones which they were unaware of. This created an opportunity for the groups to generate new knowledge of their problems and themselves as organisational members and helped them to learn the impact they had over the problems they were experiencing.

In my opinion this would not have been at all possible if I had behaved as a traditional action learning facilitator, the groups definitely required a more directive approach to their reflections and the assistance and guidance of the project researcher. As a directive set facilitator for instance, I introduced the groups to a number of theoretical concepts which allowed them to reflect on their organisation in a more critically reflective way, which was successful especially in respect of the work the PhD 2 group carried out around the organisational power holder. By directing the groups in their critical reflection of the state of power relations within the organisation the PhD 2 group were able to reflect upon a host of issues in new ways which led to fundamental shifts in the organisations power structure and the organisations strategic direction.

As well as being generally more directive throughout the research project I found that my role as facilitator was changing particularly in terms of my interaction with the PhD 1 group when they began surfacing deeper levels of reflection as the project drew to a close. What interested me about my intervention with the PhD 1 group in its final weeks was the way in which I adopted a number of strategies to help the group generate deeper

levels of emotionally charged reflection. It seemed that these strategies were successful in helping the group develop new ways to approach and resolve their organisational problems by connecting their emotions and thinking together.

The technique of using the 'I' statement for instance helped individuals to 'own' their feelings and attitudes and prevented the use of generalised comments which were less likely to be challenged as they seemed to be seen as 'truisms' within the group. As I began to experience the PhD 1 group as more reflective I introduced longer and longer periods of silence into the reflective space. This seemed uncomfortable at the beginning but soon the group became accustomed to my silence when they were reflecting and learned that the benefit of being silent and pausing was that feelings came into their awareness more easily. I think that the silent reflective space was very beneficial to the PhD 1 group as they seemed to be more relaxed and sensitive to their own emotional states and were less willing to begin 'filling the space' with conversations if it seemed more appropriate to reflect without speaking.

Over time the group became more confident of their periods of silent reflection and began to realise that within the silent space they could access alternative problem solving solutions by listening to their emotional bodily state and allowing this to be their guide to the resolution of the issue.

When the group used this quiet reflective space to tackle issues which were actually unsolvable, like the issue of time management for instance they reported that they were

able to alleviate a lot of the anxiety around the issue just by being quiet and tapping into their emotions. This gave the group some sort of perspective on the problem and allowed the group to accept that the problem would always be around but they actually had a choice of how to interact with the problem in order to lessen its anxiety causing impact.

So how *do* groups learn?

In this section I intend to give my interpretation as to how organisational groups learn based on the empirical data I gathered in the research project and using the information in this discussion chapter as reference material. Answering such a broad question as 'how do groups learn' is very difficult, if not impossible for any researcher to accomplish and I realise to make such a sweeping statement would be foolish.

I am able to comment, however, on the way in which I observed my research groups learning or not learning in some cases. My aim in developing such a broad research question was to enable me to explore through an inductive research methodology the way groups who are engaged in organised reflection generate knowledge or are prevented from generating knowledge according to their particular organisational makeup. I believed that the results of such a project would provide a number of suggestions of learning which were new to the research literature and which could assist future researchers when tackling the topic of organised reflection.

The research showed, in line with other similar works that organisational groups who meet with one another over a sustained period of time may be viewed by researchers as

being one psychological entity. This entity can display destructive psychological pathologies in the same way as individuals with personality disorders do. The destructive pathologies seem to be held within the makeup of the group members and may be brought to the surface through acts of reflection and critical reflection which call into question the truthfulness of certain precious, taken-for-granted group notions.

The group holding such a pathology seems to regress to an earlier childhood state as a form of defence against the anxiety of confronting such deeply held taken-for-granted notions. As the group regress, unconscious defence mechanisms come into play which protect the group from psychological harm. These defense mechanisms such as time wasting, past-timing and confusion can hinder subsequent reflective and critically reflective practices and may certainly curtail any subsequent learning opportunities which present themselves to the group.

Based on this work I believe that the following conclusion is the first of the new insights I can bring to the field of organisational learning:

1. Psychologically challenging critical group reflection may hinder organisational learning as it may inadvertently create group regression and generate defensive routines which curtail knowledge generation and organisational learning.

Within such a group that seem to have regressed and are defending against the anxiety of their situation it may seem that a large amount of 'in fighting' goes with varying intensity

throughout the action learning sessions. If the group have a willingness to explore their own erratic behaviour, as the PhD 2 group did then reflection will still be possible.

The type of reflection this kind of group undertakes, however, will be based around solving the internal issue which caused the anxiety and regression. Learning and knowledge generation will tend to emerge from the group as they navigate their way through the issues which they were originally defending against. The reflection which this group carries out may be shorter and more truncated than usual as it seems that this type of group use a great deal of energy in defending against their anxiety, leaving them less energy to use for reflection, knowledge generation and learning. This leads me to the following new insights for organisational learning:

2. In groups that have regressed, in order to defend themselves from psychological harm the reflection process is shorter and more truncated. Learning and knowledge generation are achieved as the groups uncover the roots of their defensiveness and address their anxieties around these issues.

3. Groups who adopt regressed defensive routines seem to split the energy they have available for reflection between defending against their anxiety and carrying out reflective practice. This leads to the group becoming less effective reflectors and prevents them from experiencing deep levels of emotional reflection and learning.

Other types of group may show less extreme psychological defensiveness and not revert to regressive childhood states at all. This type of group will seem more emotionally stable and will probably show higher levels of acceptance and mutual respect to one another. Just because a group do not regress to earlier states is not an indication that the group are free from defending against their own anxiety. The group will certainly be defending against anxiety but will be more able to express, rationalise or release such anxieties through their internal interactions than groups that actually regress. This type of group will be able to generate knowledge and learn through the use of individual, group and critical reflection without it causing undue psychological defensiveness. These conclusions lead me to the following new insights for organisational learning:

4. Groups who do not regress will be more emotionally stable and have the ability to manage their anxiety more effectively. Their ability to utilise a full range of reflective techniques will be higher than those groups that are utilising their energy to defend themselves from anxiety by regressing to earlier childhood states. This will increase their capacity to access or generate deeper levels of knowledge.

The projective drawing methodology was a very effective tool in both groups and was extremely useful to surface conscious and unconscious feelings, attitudes and emotions. The methodology seemed to be effective due to its simplicity and its ability to stimulate a wide variety of reflective discussions. Even though the images were simple and even though some group members stated that they could not draw, the methodology

consistently surfaced reflective discussion points for the individual, the group and from a critical perspective.

Sustained use of the methodology led to deeper and deeper levels of reflection for one group as they began to look for hidden meaning and metaphor within the images. As the group became more comfortable with using the projective drawing technique it was possible to detect more individuals projecting their own attitudes onto the drawings. The individuals involved were unaware that this was happening and thought that they were merely giving an unbiased reflective opinion.

This had the effect of bringing their own unconscious thoughts out into the open where they could be discussed, reframed and reality tested. The images seemed to have the ability to connect with some people at an emotional level which assisted them in solving their group problems and getting more in touch with their own attitudes and feelings. Which lead me to the following new insights:

5. Projective drawing undertaken over a long period of time within an action learning setting stimulates reflection and allows groups the chance to deeply reflect on their problems on both an intellectual and emotional level.

6. New learning and insight are possible by using the drawn images to uncover hidden emotion inaccessible to the normal thinking mind.

The facilitation process was much more directive than in normal action learning projects. This was because there were many more facets to the reflective sessions and these needed to be controlled. A number of theoretical concepts were introduced through this type of facilitation which helped group members gain a more critical insight of their organisation.

The facilitation process also enabled individuals to 'own' their opinions and to keep on track with the type of reflective practice they were supposed to be carrying out. For one group the facilitation enabled them to access deep levels of reflection and emotion simply by assisting with the establishment of a silent reflective space. This was extremely useful in terms of the groups' problem solving ability and their understanding of how their emotion and intellect could work together by 'feeling' the resolution to their organisational problems. Which led me to the final new insights for organisational learning:

7. Active facilitation in reflective sessions is most important in order to direct group members to deeper levels of knowledge generation and emotional connectivity.

8. Facilitators who can help generate insight within groups and create new practice in response to the needs of the group can stimulate new knowledge generation, new learning opportunities and may help to create a link between reflection, the emotions and the intellect.

The data that doesn't fit

Within the research project there seemed to be a proportion of material which I recorded in the PhD 1 group but which I was unable to use in my analysis. I could not make this data fit into my analytical frame as the data seemed so obscure that it seemed unsuitable to place within the categories I had developed. This concerned me as I had anticipated that I could utilise all of the empirical data from the project into the projects distinct categories. As I reflected on the data I realised that it was the projects methodological and philosophical framework which was not suitable to incorporate the data of this kind. The data I am referring to is composed of events which are generally classed as 'coincidental' by many people and which are ordinarily passed off without further thought.

I was also interested in this data as there seemed to be quite a number of instances when coincidental events occurred in the PhD 1 group and which seemed to be connected to the organisational issues under discussion at the same time. When the coincidences arose the group reaction was either to laugh, ignore or completely miss the significance of the occurrence, even though on re-reading the events they did seem to be significant and relevant to the group's immediate discussions.

I wondered about these events and about how a theoretical framework may be developed which would allow such commonly ignored occurrences to be taken seriously. I further wondered that if events such as these were given more weight and were able to become the object of serious reflection, what this may mean to organisational learning and knowledge generation. Could the development of a new theoretical framework help

generate new knowledge? what effect would such knowledge have on the problems which organisations faced in their day to day operations?

In the next chapter I intend to explore the data which does not fit and to incorporate this into my thesis by creating a new theoretical framework which allows for such unusual data to be utilised within the organisational learning paradigm. Creating a new theoretical framework from such data is both novel and contentious but I feel that within this thesis I must include all of the empirical data which I gathered and create conclusions based upon the inference of even the most counter-intuitive empirical events.

Conclusion

This chapter of the thesis explored both of the research group's behaviour from a psychoanalytical viewpoint and came to a number of conclusions about how their make-up affected their ability to reflect deeply and generate new knowledge. By categorising each group's behaviour through a psychoanalytical lens I believe I have made each of their *modus operandi* more explicit, which I propose is somehow linked to their ability or willingness to reflect and learn.

This chapter also explored the projective drawing tool and the way in which it helped the group access different levels of reflection and discussion. I believe that this is a strength of the methodology in general, as it definitely helped each member of the group engage with one another in some rather interesting reflective debates.

In this chapter I also explored a new way of operating as a research facilitator within an action research group. The great benefit of using action research as a methodology I feel is its methodological malleability as it may be adapted in many ways to suit the research requirements or the methodological preferences of both the researcher and their subjects.

Finally in this chapter I proposed eight new insights into how groups learn which are based upon my research findings and form part of my unique contributions to the organisational learning paradigm. Some of my insights included the notion that groups who are very psychologically defended may struggle with critical reflective techniques which may push them into regressive behaviours of early childhood which may prevent learning occurring. Groups regressing in such a way will tend to expend their energy on defending their anxieties as opposed to reflecting upon problems at any deep level, for instance.

In the next chapter I aim to discuss a selection of the research data that does not fit into any of the established categories I developed at the research analysis stage. This data will assist me with exploring how psychoanalytical research and management research has addressed the issues of coincidence, synchronicity and our Western philosophical notions of the empirical experience. The chapter will go on to develop a new theoretical framework for organisational learning which utilises such data and is based upon the critical Eastern philosophy of Advaita Vedanta.

A New Theoretical Framework

Introduction

In this chapter I intend to propose another new insight within the field of organisational learning by creating a theoretical framework based on a selection of the empirical data I gathered. The new framework is based upon so called ‘coincidence data’ and aims to help reflective groups critically question their deeply held Western cultural ontologies, or ‘philosophies-in-use’ as a way to generate new knowledge and learning.

The chapter begins by exploring a portion of the research data which does not fit into any of the research categories developed in the data analysis phase. The occurrences within this data are commonly referred to as ‘coincidence’ by most people and activated my curiosity as to why such events were automatically ignored by the research group. The chapter continues with an analysis of the projects methodology and an exploration as to why such empirical data was dismissed by everyone. The next section explores the work of Carl Jung who was a great exponent of coincident data and its implications which he named ‘synchronicities’.

After discussing some management researchers who have an interest in synchronistic notions the chapter proposes that a new theoretical framework is needed to help groups explore events which we all currently seem to dismiss. My opinion as to why we almost all disregard such data is due to our ingrained ‘philosophies-in-use’ which I propose to explore by using elements of the critical Eastern philosophy of Advaita Vedanta.

The chapter concludes with a discussion on the methodological ways in which a research project would use the new philosophical framework which emphasises such new approaches to group organisational learning such as group mentoring, using ‘generative’ language and creating a contemplative and relaxing environment for reflection to be carried out.

Missing elements to group reflection and learning

As a result of the research findings and after exploring the literature on organisational learning, I believe that there may be missing elements to group reflection and learning which do not currently feature in the management learning paradigm. In the past researchers have explored reflection and learning through notions of experience, power, politics, social relationships and psychoanalysis, for example. This research has identified such elements which seem to confirm these views but has also uncovered something new in the data which seems to suggest more subtle factors than had previously been recognised may be at work within the group.

My new theoretical framework proposes that the Western mindset is constrained in its limits to learning by its cultural acceptance and understanding of the nature of empirical reality. By reflecting on experiences from our Western point of view individuals automatically seem to dismiss and omit incidents which do not fit into their Western way of thinking. There may be a number of events and experiences, however, that are empirically valid but which research groups automatically ignore due to their long-established understanding of reality (or their ‘philosophies-in-use’). If groups could

explore and challenge their current philosophies-in-use then I feel they may be able to generate new ontological and epistemological knowledge which may be helpful to explore a range of organisational problems and issues.

My methodological approach to this project, for instance has been based on the presumption of a complex, thinking mind which operates in a particularly Western way in terms of its notions of reality and the knowledge which may be generated. The new theoretical framework I am proposing explores and challenges Western notions from a new critical Eastern philosophical point of view. With an Eastern philosophical approach to group learning, I hope to broaden the realms of acceptable knowledge and to provide learning groups with new insight into the effect they may be having on their own organisational problems.

The new theoretical framework derives from my investigations into a proportion of the research data which does not fit in with our current understanding of organisational learning or group theory. As a result of my investigations, I have become much more critical of the taken-for-grantedness of Western ontology and epistemology itself. In particular I have become curious as to the primacy of Western truth claims in relation to other opposing ontological views especially as some elements of the scientific paradigm now seem to incorporate such views into their own philosophies. I am also curious in regard to the 'unsaid' cultural boundaries between the 'real' and 'unreal' in terms of the subject and object of reflection and as a direct consequence, the impact that these boundaries may have on any attempts to learn as a group.

The data that doesn't fit

After I had transcribed the research data and created categories and sub-categories which corresponded to the main themes of my literature review, I began to examine portions of the data which were left over and did not 'fit' very well into the categories I had created. On the face of it this data did not seem too promising as it consisted of such things as interruptions from phone calls or from other staff members who needed to speak to one of the research group, there were also some amusing occurrences and a number of odd coincidences.

I reflected on the data and tried to understand what it may be suggesting to me and why there was so much data which seemed superfluous to the study and uncategorisable. My feelings were that this data, although very confusing may actually be useful as it may help suggest a new way to understand organisational learning. At this stage it may be helpful to describe some examples of the data I looked at, as this will help to paint a picture of the kind of occurrences which puzzled and interested me so much. The following examples demonstrate a number of occasions when the research group were discussing something and an interruption from outside of the room seemed to correspond to their discussions. This type of event was passed off as a coincidence by members of the group. It was only in the analysis stage of the data gathering process that I had the opportunity to encounter the events once again and consider the wider implications of what this 'coincidence data' may be suggesting.

Event 1. As the group were discussing how their workload was becoming too much and they were finding it very difficult to work due to constant interruptions from the telephone, they were interrupted by a passing salesperson who left a calling card for Office Angels, a service which would solve their particular problem by providing a receptionist to field all of their organisational calls and free up other members of the team to complete more essential tasks.

Event 2. The group were discussing in depth and for the first time the performance of an employee and how this person displayed little or no initiative to some group members but was quite well regarded by others. The group were in the middle of reflecting and debating on the actual capabilities of this employee and how much he was actually 'carried' by other staff members. In the depths of the discussion the said employee opened the meeting room door and began to behave in the same way as some of the group were talking about, clearly revealing his lack of independent thought and awareness. This had never happened before and would never happen again in the six months that I met with the group.

Event 3. When the group were deep in discussion and reflecting on the best way to work in partnership with wholesale suppliers, a wholesale supplier knocked on the door and left a sales brochure for them.

Event 4. As I was discussing the notion of boundaries within the team and the way in which boundaries would actually help the group to keep their roles separate and not

mixed up, the MD's wife appeared and began to noisily distract the whole team, clearly impinging on the boundaries I had set for our meetings and conveniently demonstrating the importance of the point I was attempting to make.

The data which didn't seem to fit would be often called coincidence or chance, but as there seemed quite a number of these instances, I was less eager to disregard them and more willing to explore their likely meaning. We have all learned as children the difference between what is possible and what is impossible, furthermore we all understand that events follow actions and that no event is possible without a preceding and connected action. To our Western mindset the events that I gathered were coincidence and accordingly nothing else should be made of them, nevertheless they still puzzled me. I reviewed the experiences from a critically reflective viewpoint and became convinced that in some way a new approach to organisational learning may lie within such events.

The reasoning that finally convinced me to pursue the coincidence data was when I realised that these occurrences actually happened to the research group and were empirical experiences which the group were all witness to. It was due to a number of external group factors such as my research philosophy and my methodology for instance, that I believe the experiences were deemed unsuitable to reflect upon and ignored. I believe that the way in which I set up the research project and the philosophical stance I adopted prevented me from exploring these and other similar experiences more fully. I now feel that if the group were encouraged to reflection upon such coincidental

experiences, it may in some way have helped them to learn more about the problems they were discussing, the effect of the problems on other organisational members, and the impact this may have had on the organisation in general.

In the next section I will explore the reasons why the research group were never encouraged to reflect upon these experiences. I intend to pay particular attention to the research project set-up which I believed prevented the coincidence data from becoming the object of group reflection.

Why doesn't the data fit?

In the following paragraphs I intend to re-examine my research philosophy and methodology and surface any areas which I believe actively prevented the research group reflecting upon the coincidence data. I am of the opinion that the coincidence data was worthy of reflection and may have been able to contribute to individual and group knowledge. I am also of the opinion that the project did not have the most suitable philosophical and methodological basis which would have made reflection and knowledge generation upon such an unusual set of data possible.

The philosophical approach which the research was grounded upon was that of postmodernism. I used the postmodern lens due to my rejection of a socio-technical explanation of the world and my belief that reality is constructed through a mixture of our childhood conditioning and our here-and-now experiences, which create a narrative of our ongoing experience of the world. Although I am still a proponent of the postmodern,

I think that the coincidence data suggests our conditioning of what is a 'real' experience is very strong within each of us and affects what we will *reject* just as strongly as what we will *accept*. Subsequently I believe that our conditioning creates within each person a set of limitations in terms of acceptable reality at a very subtle level which most of us have no awareness of. It seems that through these unconscious limitations we contribute to society and negotiate with others the boundaries of what is 'normal' and what is 'real'.

In order to accept coincidence data as worthy of reflection therefore, I believe that there is a need to use a somewhat different kind of critical reflection which can help surface our inbuilt *philosophical* taken-for-granted as well as the social, political and organisational types we are used to.

One of the main unsaid philosophical taken-for-granted for example is the notion of causation which determines that every action precedes an event. Within the scientific paradigm causation is one of the foundational building blocks of a positivist approach to the world. Coincidence data challenges the notion of causation as it suggests that in some situations, action and events may not be linked as strongly as once believed. There are exceptions to the rule of causation even within the scientific paradigm however. Within the realms of the quantum mechanics for example, causation is challenged by a principle termed by Einstein as 'spooky action at a distance', where electrons can be made to effect each others movement even though they are in different research laboratories and separated by many miles (see Herbert, 1988). In this case it is impossible for causation to be the controlling factor of such 'spooky' action.

Similarly chaos theory, complexity theory and systems theory have all demonstrated the reality of an unseen order which overrides causation and shows that in some profound way, everything is connected to everything else (Zohar, 1997). I believe therefore, that there may be a case for examining coincidence data as it occurs by exploring our own philosophical presumptions of the world and checking these with our empirical experience.

This research project also utilised elements of Bion's work in relation to the group-as-a-whole theory. This theory states that when individuals in groups become familiar with other members of their group they tend to connect to one another in such a way that the group itself becomes an object. This leads to the group having a range of shared experiences due to their psychological connectedness. When a group is in such a state, the facilitator can explore the group-as-a-whole as opposed to the group as a set of individual members.

As I was interested in the psychoanalytical formation of the group, I was predominantly looking for signs of group members becoming a group-as-a-whole and attempting to appreciate their experiences from a purely psychodynamic viewpoint. I could observe that processes such as splitting and projection were occurring and that one research group in particular seemed to be exhibiting schizoid behaviours (see the Discussion chapter). The other research group seemed to conform less to Bion's notion of the group-as-a-whole and seemed to be more calm and co-operative with one another.

It was within this research group that all of the coincidences occurred. This encouraged me to wonder if members of each group were actually connected in different ways, as a traditional group-as-a-whole ‘flight or fight’ group (the PhD 2 group) and one group connected through a yet unidentified process which utilised elements of co-operation and calmness as a means of connection (the PhD 1 group). As the research was set up to monitor classical Bion grouping sets such as ‘flight or fight’, ‘dependency’ and ‘pairing’ there was no opportunity to explore coincidence experiences or such a group connection as this was outside the remit of the project.

I have already commented on the philosophical reasons why I think the coincidence data was passed off, but I am of the opinion that the structure of the reflective act also had its part to play. One of the key tenets of the research project was to observe groups in the act of reflecting upon their experiences and to derive notions of how groups learn from these observations. It was important for the group to reflect at an individual, group and critical level and along with this for unconscious attitudes and emotions to be surfaced. The way in which the reflection sessions were structured left no room for reflection upon the coincidence data itself, as this data did not seem to be taken as experiences worthy of reflection.

The way in which the group were made to reflect seems in hindsight to be quite functionalist and prescriptive. The group were not given very much freedom to use their reflective sessions in contemplation of their overall experiences. For the most part my

role was to facilitate reflection in quite a strict way, suggesting the type of reflection that the group members should engage in and ensuring that everyone had an opportunity to reflect within the space of the session. It was only towards the end of the project that one of the research group managed to reflect without my assistance in a deep and contemplative way, a way which generated substantial learning benefits to certain members of the group.

I believe that in order to create enough 'space' for such types of reflection, the research project would have needed to be less structured in its requirements for set reflection and more accommodating to reflect on a wider range of here-and-now experiences. This would require the facilitator to be familiar with the different levels of reflection, but flexible enough to omit certain levels of reflection if an experience was of such interest that the group could benefit from concentrating solely on that experience for the length of the session, for example.

As I reflected on the coincidence data I began to review the pragmatic work of Dewey and in particular the way in which he described experience. According to Dewey, experiences are a means of transacting with the world in order to penetrate 'continually further into the heart of nature' (Dewey, 1981, p.5). Dewey also spoke about the importance of generating a shared understanding of the world through symbolic communication in order for a society to agree on the realms of knowledge (Dewey, 1988, p.121). I believe that the research project disregarded the coincidence data too readily as it was not deemed to be a valid experience.

Dewey on the other hand proposed that we should actively engage with all experiences in an attempt to penetrate nature. This statement suggests to me that nature is still a great unknown to man and in order to engage fully with nature we are required to cross frontiers of epistemology through experiences which may seem to contradict our philosophical conditioning.

Along with this view Dewey proposed that we should use all of our senses in order to engage with the world of experience, this would include engaging with our intuition and 'gut feelings' (Dewey, 1917, 1938). Although coincidence data may be philosophically challenging, its impact upon us creates wonder, amusement or other types of emotion which suggests that on a 'gut feeling' level, our experience of the world has shifted slightly and there may be more to the world than we are actually aware of. On reflection I consider that the research project may have been too cautious in defining the limits of what a valid experience actually is and as a result played down the coincidence as an experience worthy of reflection from our 'gut level'.

In the next section I will explore how researchers have investigated coincidences, paying particular attention to the work of Carl Gustav Jung who labelled this type of experience a 'synchronicity'. On viewing the literature it seems that synchronicity is rather more common than one would expect, which raises the issue of how this type of experience may be used within the paradigm of organisational learning and new knowledge creation.

Synchronicity

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), the Swiss psychoanalyst wrote extensively on the nature of meaningful coincidences which he termed synchronicity. After many years of study and collaboration with other scientists (most notably the Nobel Prize winning quantum physicist Wolfgang Pauli) Jung incorporated the concept of synchronicity within his philosophical notions of the collective unconscious and archetype theory. Jung defined synchronicity as ‘an acausal connecting principle’ (1955/1972).

Jung believed that there were two types of coincidence, the ‘mere’ statistical coincidence cited within causal theory and the meaningful coincidence (synchronicity) which have the ability to profoundly affect the recipient due to the implications on the Self. Meaningful coincidences are different to ‘mere’ statistical coincidences in a number of important ways. According to the notion of causation, coincidence results through ‘mere’ statistical chance and if the coincidence were to be investigated fully its cause could be explained.

Repeated coincidences do have significance as it is assumed that there must be an unknown underlying event which is causing the occurrence and which can be investigated to reveal its cause (Verene, 2002) The type of coincidences Jung became interested in seemed to have no connection with causation and were much more personally relevant than the ‘mere’ coincidence.

For an event to comply with Jung’s definition of synchronicity, two factors must be involved; the appearance of an image from the individuals unconscious into

consciousness either directly as insight, or indirectly as a dream for example; and an objective situation which coincides with this content (Jung, 1952b/1970, para.58). In a typical synchronistic event the recipient already has an indication in their consciousness of a future experience or circumstance. At a future date this experience or circumstance actually appears in their world without the causational factors being involved in its appearance.

Jung classified three types of synchronicity:

1. Something comes to mind and is preoccupying. Unexpectedly what has come to mind actually appears.
2. The coincidence of a psychic state with a corresponding (more or less simultaneous) external event taking place outside the observer's field of perception. For example an event or circumstance comes to mind and becomes a preoccupying thought. Later one learns that such a thing happened at the same time as when one was thinking of it.
3. The coincidence of a psychic state with a corresponding and not yet existent future event that is distant in time and can only be verified afterwards (*ibid.* para. 984).

It seems that according to Jung there may be a range of experiences which can be classed as the synchronistic, the overriding factor which connects them to one another is the internal experience becoming apparent in the external environment. It is possible that

there were more experiences such as these within the research group which were not surfaced due to my own philosophical framework. The experiences which were recorded in the research group seem to correspond with the many hundreds that Jung explored over the years and which led him to create his unique philosophical framework. One of the most famous coincidences Jung writes about occurred when he was with a client in a psychoanalysis session:

‘One of my patients has a dream in which someone had given her a scarab, a costly piece of jewelry. While she is telling me this dream, a large insect starts tapping on the window, in an obvious effort to get into the dark room. I open the window and catch the bug: it is a gold-green bug that closely resembles the scarab in the woman’s dream. I hand the beetle to the patient saying ‘here is your scarab’ she opens to the arational and becomes open to change and healing’ (Jung, 1955/1972, p.5).

Jung also found coincidences occurring after his own dreams, for example he cites this synchronicity which came about as he worked on a research project:

‘I am investigating the non-linear psychological development of the Self, and I have a dream of a well-fortified castle. I am painting this image in the centre of a mandala [a circular symbol] when I receive *The Secret of the Golden Flower* from Richard Wilhelm with a request to write a commentary on it. This text confirms my ideas about the mandala and the circumambulation of the centre. Also, Richard Wilhelm’s book

describes the picture I am drawing: the yellow castle is the germ of the immortal body. This is a great synchronicity for me' (*ibid.*).

As Jung studied a number of synchronistic phenomena he recognised that within this kind of experience there may lie the potential for learning and psychological transformation. Jung theorised that if the recipient were able to link their external and internal experience and reflect on them both deeply, they may be able to understand how they fit into a much larger, holistic living system.

This statement has obvious implications for both individual and organisational learning in that the synchronistic experience may lead organisational members into new levels of reflection and also new knowledge of their relationship to their perceived problems (Mansfield, 1995). If everyone is connected to one another for instance, then do individuals or groups have an unseen but direct affect on the problems they encounter? In synchronicity the Self comes across 'an important aspect of its own nature' (Verene, 2002) and is left to wonder at the connection between itself, the cause and the effect. If synchronicity is explored deeply, then the opportunity for new knowledge to unfold is ever present.

Traditionally Cartesian philosophers have given little thought to synchronistic coincidences, as the overriding scientific paradigm has sought to develop reason, logic, mathematics and analysis as opposed to intuition and personal insight. This model of philosophy tends to consider the notion of the Self only in terms of a computer like

thinking mind and ignores the paradoxical and unreasonable. Although 20th Century philosophical movements such as existentialism, hermeneutics and postmodernism have sought to expand the narrowness of the philosophical paradigm, they have still largely ignored the important humanistic dimension of the Self, which is important in order to understand such synchronistic events (*ibid.*).

Jung on the other hand studied the ancient philosophers such as Plato and Pythagoras and the systems which developed from their work and saw how self-knowledge could be generated through inner exploration, a notion which Cartesian philosophy outrightly rejected (*ibid.*). As a result of studying synchronicity Jung became convinced that the realms of the psyche and the realms of matter were different aspects of the same reality. Jung considered that synchronicity empirically proved that the Self and the world were in fact one thing. This idea is not new and stems from Greek philosophy and is shared by many of the world's great religions who view the universe as consisting of a holistic system, with each part of the system working in conjunction with other parts for the same goal (this is teleological thought, please see the Methodology chapter).

According to this notion every individual part of the system is important for holistic functioning; 'Just as in a living body the different parts work in harmony and are meaningfully adjusted to one another, so events in the world stand in meaningful relationship which cannot not be derived from . . . causality' (De-Laszlo, 1958). Jung proposed the agency which seemed to join the self with the world was something known as the *unus mundus* or the collective unconscious, which existed just outside our range of

consciousness but was accessible through such phenomena as synchronicity, insight and intuition (Von-Franz, 1992, p. 40). As a result of this work, Jung created a philosophical view which went beyond the realms of the psychoanalyst and his client and moved into ontological explanations of the natural world. This seemed to be in accordance with Jung's wish as he sought to create a 'unified holistic conception of nature and the status of man within it' (Lindorff, 1995a, p. 584).

There have been few researchers who have studied synchronicity and its role within management disciplines, however, the synchronous experience has led a growing number of researchers to question traditional ontological and epistemological views of the world and to place synchronicity within a much wider context.

As a result of this some researchers have become interested in such themes as the importance of individual creativity in management learning, the development of more intuitive styles of knowledge generation and the link between the internal experience and the external world and how this may facilitate ontological insight.

Synchronicity and management learning

Some management researchers who have explored the subject, view synchronicity as a narrative which becomes evident due to the paradoxes we experience in life and which helps the individual to generate new understandings of their connection to the environment. By becoming aware of the story we create within our lives and through noticing synchronicity, Durant believed that individuals may be able to grasp the

connectedness, order and beauty of their lived experience (Durant, 2002). When viewed in this particular way, synchronistic experiences can help facilitate meaningful changes within an individual's life if the synchronicity is regarded as a creative force which straddles the divide between one's inner experience and outer reality.

According to Durant (2002) synchronicity does not end with the experience itself, but should be allowed to have an effect upon the individuals' physical and emotional senses in order to access its true potential for learning and creative change. This may be achieved through quiet reflection, stilling the mind or allowing the emotions to come to the surface and to be 'felt' as a valid experience in themselves.

Opening up to synchronistic experiences may help individuals and groups to begin questioning the cultural conditioning which all societies and organisations create, an idea that I am very interested in. The synchronous event challenges the rules of reality and undermines our cultural notions of the 'closed off' inner and outer experience which we all live by. In doing so it makes less distinct the boundaries between the subject and the object, which has the potential to lead to reflection on our ontological stance of ourselves as separate beings in the world. Durant (2002) believes therefore that as well as being acausal, synchronicity is also post-structural as it can lead to a shift in our ontological world-view.

Some researchers propose that the synchronistic experience should be viewed through a critically reflective lens in order to challenge the established philosophical paradigm.

Critical management learning approaches question organisational agendas, power and control and seek to help emancipate learners by reflecting on the wider issue of the individual working within a societal system and questions the taken-for-granted which they work within (Burgoyne and Reynolds, 1997). The emancipatory paradigm, according to Howard (2002) questions the basic philosophical view of management learning in that it explores how to break through barriers imposed by our experience of organisational life. Such barriers lie within our own taken-for-granted, our assumptions and our cultural conditioning of how the world works and how we fit into it. Using a methodology derived from the synchronistic experience and the philosophical notions of the Self and world, management researchers may be able to utilise critical approaches to question philosophical assumptions in new and creative ways. I think that it is very important to pursue synchronistic experiences in this way as I believe that the notion has the capacity to open up new opportunities for group knowledge generation and learning within the organisation.

One consequence of attempting emancipation by critically reflecting on our basic philosophical world-view is that the individual or group begin to develop 'metanoia' (Senge, 1990). Metanoia according to Senge is a paradigm shift of focus within the mind which enables the individual to see that they have the capability to create the world rather than merely reacting to the world which they experience as being out of their control. This fundamental shift in perception and behaviour is one of the central requirements if we are to become fully developed adults operating in the world (Mezirow, 1991). Once the individual embarks on this particular road, synchronistic events begin to emerge

which act as assistants along the path to self awareness and transformation and provide encouragement and comfort (Jaworski, 1998).

As synchronicity is interpretive, some researchers consider it important to allow into our frame of reality the possibility that life does not exist separately outside ourselves if we are to generate any kind of new knowledge from it. Once the notion of connectedness is accepted, learners may then be able to utilise the synchronistic experience as a way to interact and react to problematic situations in new and different ways. The paradoxical nature of synchronicity demonstrates the discontinuity of cause and effect in some circumstances and led Handy to question if it is actually correct or even possible to eliminate paradox from the organisational world in order to gain control over it. The elimination of paradox from management research is impossible and undesirable as it seems to be a factor within most empirical investigations and an indication of a greater connectedness to the environment (Handy, 1996).

The painter Cameron (1992) proposed that within each of us and throughout the universe there is a creative life force which gives rise to synchronicity. Cameron believed that by dedicating oneself to creative acts, the connection from ourselves to the universal life force is revealed through the increased number of synchronicities which we experience. Creativity is not restricted to artists but is apparent when anything new is being brought into the world (May, 1959). Reflective techniques, projective drawing and problem solving in general may also be considered as creative acts if the underlying intention of the activity is to generate new knowledge or new understanding of a situation. Creativity

flourishes with a mindset of humour and mental and emotional levity, which helps the research group cope with the paradoxes which both synchronicity and creativity engender within once they are explored (Durant, 2002).

According to Durant the best environments for creativity and synchronicity to occur and which should be considered when leading groups are those which are (emotionally) safe, spacious, comfortable and which contain resources ‘with which to... interact with one another and with the world’ (2002, p. 9). Having an environment which facilitates creativity and which is able to respond to the groups physical needs such as the need to rest, play, communicate, be alone and be with the group all help to encourage synchronicity. Coincidences occur when we are at or near ‘boundaries or are experiencing transition states’ such as when we are in meditative states or when we are travelling by public transport and we are exposed to other people, to media, books etc. (Combs and Holland, 1996).

Synchronicity seems therefore a useful tool for management research as it may help to assist the innovation process by exposing the differences between the way we think the world is and the way it reveals itself to us. In surfacing the differences between what is thought to be and what reveals itself to be there I believe that there is an opportunity that new creative innovations may present themselves as we expand our ontological understanding of the world. By reflecting on the meaning of our own lives and their connection to the greater whole, organisational members may be able to give a new

perspective to their role within the organisation and a new meaning to their working roles (Durant, 2002).

New knowledge creation

Synchronicity seems to allow organisational members the opportunity to reflect on the interconnectedness of themselves to the wider world and creates the circumstances for epistemological questioning which may lead to ontological insight. Some researchers such as Scharmer (2001) have become interested in an emerging paradigm within the discipline of knowledge management which is based upon the notion that the subject and object are linked by an unseen force, and use this proposition to generate knowledge which is not yet 'embodied' in the world as either explicit knowledge or tacit knowledge.

It is well established within the field of knowledge management that there are two types of knowledge which individuals and organisations utilise in the normal course of their operations. The first type of knowledge is known as explicit knowledge and is based on evident facts, accounting systems are based on the explicit knowledge of organisational costs, for example. The second type of knowledge is known as tacit knowledge and is commonly referred to as knowledge in use. This type of knowledge is used when carrying out processes. An organisation implementing change programmes will utilise tacit knowledge as its basis for implementing behavioural change, for instance (See Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

A third type of knowledge is becoming more important within organisations who have mastered both explicit and process driven knowledge. This new type of knowledge is known as 'not yet embodied' or 'self transcending knowledge' and utilises the individuals' senses, intuition and insight; allowing them to 'tune into and actualize emerging business opportunities' before they appear in the world (Scharmer, 2001, p. 1).

Self transcendent knowledge is a type of knowledge which emerges before the subject and object split and before the knower and known appear in consciousness. In order for organisations to create extremely successful new products or services within established markets they need to have the ability to 'sense' what the next new initiative should be. By having creative teams and leaders who are more attuned to their emotions, psychology and their own embodiment in the world, leaders and team members are more likely to be receptive to phenomena such as meaningful coincidences which may lead to the development of new products or services.

Self transcending knowledge can be thought of as 'tacit knowledge prior to its embodiment' and crosses the boundary between the external environment and the individuals internal experience, in much the same way as the synchronistic experience does (Jaworski and Scharmer, 2000). This type of knowledge is the scarcest resource to gain and the most difficult to attain and has been described by Senge as 'personal mastery' (1990) It is believed that self transcendent knowledge exists in a reality which is not yet realised but brought into existence through action-intuition (Nishida, 1987) or a process known as presencing (Heidegger, 1993).

One drawback with attempting to explain such knowledge is that it is difficult to describe what it actually is, as it lies within the realms of our intuition and insight and exists in the place where our thoughts and our actions originate. Self transcendent knowledge arises from a pure experience of ourselves and the world (Nishida, 1990) and is facilitated through Schön's notion of 'reflection-in-action' (1983) which requires the knower to be both an enactor of actions and an observer/reflector of the same actions simultaneously.

In this state of affairs knowledge exists both outside and within the knower, creating a feedback loop of connected thoughts, emotions and feelings. Some researchers refer to this knowledge as 'wisdom awareness' and state, as Jung did that mind and world are not separate but 'two aspects of the same underlying field' (Scharmer, 2001, p. 6).

Self transcending knowledge may become an important concept within management learning and organisational development circles, if researchers are willing to question the links between the inner experience and the outer environment. At the moment, within the learning paradigm there are very well developed practices and procedures for generating and diffusing explicit knowledge. There are a little less developed practices of how to manage and disseminate tacit-embodied knowledge, and very few and less defined methods of developing and disseminating self transcending knowledge (Scharmer, 2001, p. 8). This seems to be due to the difficulty in creating the correct environment for such knowledge to be created.

Self transcending knowledge relies on the ability of teams to engage in a cyclical learning process which explores the relationship between praxis (shared action), and shared reflection (reflecting deeply on experiences using critical reflective tools for instance) leading to the formation of a shared will (Scharmer, 1999). This process leads to a new praxis which is then once again explored in a cyclical fashion. When teams become involved in this cyclical process they create an opportunity for their reflections to become deep and their emotional state to become heightened, allowing self transcending knowledge to develop 'in the space' within the session. All of this activity is costly in terms of the time such groups need to make available for the practice and in terms of the commitment which the organisation and its members must bring to the process.

Finally, researchers believe that in order to access self transcending knowledge it is important that individuals communicate using a style of speech appropriate for such knowledge generation (Scharmer, 2001). When groups are attempting to surface explicit knowledge they can do so by asking questions and receiving factual answers which will support their understanding. Groups who are engaged in generating tacit knowledge will use reflective practices in order to surface answers relating to the way in which processes work. Those groups who are concerned with generating self transcending knowledge, however, need to develop dialogue which is 'generative'.

Generative dialogue taps into imagination, inspiration and intuitive knowledge and allows group members to 'sens[e] and actualise what wants to emerge' (Jaworski and Scharmer, 2000). Again examples of this type of knowledge generation are limited and

hard to describe, but they revolve around shifting the focus of learning from the reflective dialogue to a state of emotional ‘sensing’ which often involves periods of contemplative reflection ‘intentional quietness or sacred silence’ (Scharmer, 2001, p. 12).

Synchronicity and spirituality

There is also a growing interest in some management development circles of synchronistic type phenomena and the ontological questions which it inevitably raises. Of particular interest to some researchers is the notion that the subject and object are not separate in the traditional Cartesian sense, but are linked by an all pervading universal force. The study of the link between subject and object in this sense is through the notion of spirituality (Howard 2002).

As evidence of such growth, the Academy of Management set up a special interest group to study issues relating to management, spirituality and religion and there are a growing number of conferences, books and websites dedicated to this subject area. As further evidence that this new type of thinking is gaining ground in the UK, it is interesting to note that the prestigious Cranfield School of Management introduced an MBA elective on the issue of Spirituality and Organisational Transformation. Although the term spirituality covers a wide range of religious, agnostic, New Age and Eastern thought and practice, the main thread running through such thought is that there is an ‘unseen order of things behind the veil of materialism’ (Howard, 2002, p. 1).

Regardless of the individuals belief system some researchers consider that everyone has a spiritual life in the same way as they have a day-to-day life and an unconscious life for instance. The spirit may be ignored or actively denied but it is nevertheless still with each person throughout their life and may actually be a vast untapped reservoir of personal learning and growth.

Some people on the other hand, embrace their connectedness to the external environment and learn to use synchronicity as a way to develop themselves and understand the world from a new philosophical perspective. Due to the fact that so many people deny this aspect of their existence, there is a greater opportunity to explore this issue within management learning and question how organisational life may be transformed if the notion of the connection between the Self and the environment were considered (Howard, 2002).

It seems that there may be a small but highly original field of thought existing within some schools of organisational learning which demonstrates a willingness to explore notions of synchronicity and spirituality in order to generate new ontological and epistemological insight. I believe that there is a case for creating a new theoretical framework which promotes the critical exploration of our taken-for-granted 'philosophies-in-use' through the adoption of techniques aimed at surfacing, reflecting on and questioning our Western assumptions of mind and matter and of cause and effect.

The aim of questioning a groups' philosophies-in-use is to explore the notion that thought and matter may actually be two different expressions of the same thing. With this in mind, the new theoretical framework I propose will be used to consider how a groups' internal experience may be affecting their external environment and the link this may have to their experiences of group organisational problems. If the group are able to embrace such thinking, I believe that the way in which they generate new knowledge and think about their organisational problems could be markedly transformed.

The researchers I have critiqued in the previous pages have already laid the groundwork for exploring the inner and outer experience and the type of knowledge which doing so may create. According to these researchers, it seems that groups should be encouraged to become creative and intellectually 'play' with the ideas of paradox and synchronicity (all three kinds of synchronicity) in order to expand their thinking. There should also be an opportunity to access emotions and feelings and to reflect on these within a psychologically stimulating but safe space.

As well as being encouraged to be creative, the group should also be encouraged to be critically reflective, particularly in relation to their philosophical notions of mind and matter and the implications of adhering to such notions. By reflecting upon synchronicity and paradox and the philosophies-in-use, it may be possible for group members to examine their empirical experiences in light of their philosophical taken-for-granted in order to create the correct circumstances for 'metanoia' to develop.

If groups are to develop new ontologies through philosophical questioning, there may also be the opportunity for them to be able to access self transcending knowledge through generative dialogue and the creation of a physical environment which encourages periods of stillness and intentional quietness. I believe that by creating such an environment the group and organisation may be able to access completely new and innovative ways of learning, problem solving and interacting with one another within the organisational setting.

Finally I believe that it is important to concede that some individuals and groups may never be prepared to embrace new ways of looking at the world by exploring the difference between their internal and external experiences, simply because it is just too challenging. Doing this type of work, I feel needs a certain amount of preparedness in using critical approaches of the organisation and a comfortableness in being able to question ones own motives, attitudes and behaviours. It is only after the group have been using critical approaches within their learning environment for some time that I believe the time would be right to introduce this new theoretical framework.

The danger of introducing a model which questions individual and group philosophical notions too early in the learning process is that it may be psychologically threatening for some people and may raise too much anxiety and defence (as I explained in the Discussion chapter). This anxiety may make group members reject the theoretical notion altogether and could lead to a stifling of learning opportunities which the framework seeks to offer. For this reason I feel that the new theoretical framework should sit within

an action learning project and become a subject which the group naturally ‘discovers’, as opposed to the facilitator introducing the notion at the beginning of the project. This approach will be more of a group evolution than a facilitator driven directive which would be introduced when the group were ready. This unfolding methodology would be much less psychologically threatening and anxiety provoking to everyone involved.

I intend to base the new theoretical framework on an Eastern philosophical system of thought known as Advaita Vedanta which has a long history within the Indian sub-continent of assisting individuals to discover their own connection between themselves and the universe and which provides a critical response to our Western Cartesian thinking styles. In the next section I intend to describe some of the main tenets of Advaita Vedanta and describe how the theoretical framework will be tailored to incorporate the philosophy.

Advaita Vedanta

The philosophy of Advaita Vedanta (*Ad-wigha Vedanta*) is similar to that underlying many Eastern religions such as Hinduism, Sufism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism. It emerged in India around 4,000 years ago. The word Vedanta means “the end of knowledge” Advaita means “not two” and this really sums up the philosophy, ultimately there are not two things, all are actually one (Deutsch and Van-Buitenen, 1971).

Vedanta is a philosophy which bases its ontological foundation upon India’s three great ‘jewels to the world’, the three books of Indian poetry, verse and instruction known as

The Baghavad Gita, The Upanishads and the Vedas (Johnson, 1994, Hodgkinson, 2006, Easwaran, 1987). These works have been used for millennia by spiritual seekers to gain ‘self-realisation’, to apprehend their authentic selves and to discover their eternal link to the universe around them. Although these great books form the major philosophy of the Hindu religion, Advaita Vedanta holds no interest in religion, as it prefers to concentrate on the ontological and epistemological questions such as ‘Why are we here?’ and ‘What is reality?’

Advaita Vedanta is a philosophy which explains reality through the direct experience of self-realised spiritual individuals who have explored their internal experience and its link to the external environment through a process of critical reflection and contemplative practices (Nisargadatta, 1973). Advaita Vedanta contains no dogma, no creed and requires no religious persuasion; it merely holds forth a new way of looking at the world and offers a way to test this ontology through the process of critical reflection and self-inquiry.

The ontology of Advaita Vedanta

The basis of Advaita states that there are ‘not two things’ and that the universe is intelligent and connects imperceptibly to everything within it, this is the same notion which some management researchers posit and what Jung proposed to be the *unus mundus* (Von-Franz, 1992). The way the universe is connected to everything else is through an energy known as *Brahman* (Deutsch and Van-Buitenen, 1971). According to Advaita, Brahman is real and without quality or distinction. It is undifferentiated, pure

consciousness and the only true reality. In order to orientate the mind towards Brahman, it can be described as the experience of living to ones full potential, in awareness of the truth of reality and in never ending joy (*Saccidananda*) (*ibid.*).

Management researchers who acknowledge there may be a link between the internal experience and the external environment have no real ontological explanation as to why everything seems separate to us, and yet sometimes behave (as with synchronicity) as though it were inextricably connected. The philosophy of Advaita Vedanta has a well established explanation as to why this is the case with its notion of *Maya*.

As the Brahman energy is everything and the only true reality, the world in which we live and experience duality, change and multiplicity is a creative illusion known as maya. The illusion of maya prevents the individual experiencing the totality of the Brahman energy and gaining true knowledge of their own connectedness to the universe.

The illusion which is maya is born and establishes itself within the thinking mind through the ego. The ego comprises of our thinking mind which is composed of the totality of our understanding of the world, our experiences and our philosophical rationalisations of how we think the world operates. Unfortunately according to Advaita, how we think the world is and how it actually is are two different things, because we all base the reality of our world upon a number of psychological and philosophical errors in our reasoning (Mahadevan, 1938). Advaita explains that our upbringing, early childhood experiences, the culture we live in and our level of education for example all combine to create a maya

of ego perception, which keeps us from experiencing the connected reality as it actually is.

Vedantists consider the world to be simply a collection of name and form, with no real ever lasting substance apart from the all pervading energy of Brahman. The view that all is but name and form is very reminiscent of the social constructionists ontology where shared meaning and knowledge are agreed between actors according to their cultural conditioning (Berger and Luckman, 1966). According to Advaita Vedanta, in order to surmount maya the individual needs do nothing but simply 'realise' the true nature of the Self through a process of critical reflection on their experiences and by observing the process of their own egoic minds, using the ontology of connectedness as their philosophical foundation (Godman, 1985).

The epistemology of Advaita Vedanta

In Western thinking we have a number of epistemological views, based upon ontological frameworks which allow us to choose a 'reality' and to derive knowledge by adhering to the rules of that reality (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). The Advaita school differs to this way of understanding knowledge as it insists that there is only one reality which is Brahman and two levels of knowledge, one derived from empirical truth and one derived from the illusion of maya. Advaita Vedanta sets up two levels of knowledge, basic knowledge and true knowledge. Basic knowledge is the knowledge of 'the field', of the universe. That is knowledge of every object in the field of the known universe which Vedantists believe to be representations of the illusionary maya (Hodgkinson, 2006).

Knowledge of the field is commonly sought by most people and gaining it leads to our recognition of 'intelligence'. There is nothing at all wrong with this type of knowledge and self-realisation may be assisted by an intelligent quest for such knowledge, however, knowing 'the field' is not really knowledge of the reality of the connection to all things. It is said that an unenlightened man has 'knowledge of the field' but a wise man has knowledge of the 'knower of the field'. To be a knower of the field is to understand the true epistemological position of our self and our true connection to the whole universe as the Brahman energy (*ibid.*).

A knower of the field recognises that the mind is a tool of illusion and separation with its constant definitions, judgements and narratives. By recognising this and looking beyond the field there is an opportunity to understand the illusion of maya and to become a knower of the field. According to Advaita the true Self lies beyond the field and is not influenced by thoughts, feelings or emotions and cannot deteriorate, wither or die. We can realise our true Self at any time, as it is always in our consciousness 'witnessing' our thoughts (*ibid.*).

Epistemologically, the Vedanta states that all knowledge is intrinsically valid, however, knowledge can be falsified by a contradictory experience but this knowledge can never be verified by external means. There are six methods of attaining valid knowledge; using our perception, making inferences from experience, by using comparison, by the act of

not-knowing something, by postulation or conjecture and by the testimony of self realised teachers (Satchidanandendra, 1989).

I believe that there is a real opportunity to develop knowledge and learning if groups were to entertain the notion that they may be linked to everyone and everything else through an inexplicable energy and that organisational problems may be the result of applying basic knowledge of 'the field' in ways which lead to unforeseen outcomes within the ego driven world of maya.

I think that the attractiveness of the Advaita Vedanta philosophy is that it proposes a new ontological framework and then encourages individuals to empirically test for themselves its own truth claims. Advaita seeks to test truth claims through examining the errors of perception which we all make and questioning how reliable our senses actually are in bringing us truth of reality.

It also proposes that our egoic mind is filled with taken-for-granted thoughts of how we believe reality is, when on critical inspection it can be found that these thoughts are actually false supposition most of the time. By advocating periods of stillness and reflection Advaita proposes that the real Self and its connection to the universe can be found in moments when the ego is quiet and the individual simply observes life without the minds chatter. In this space the Self comes to the fore and an experience of connection to others can be witnessed.

The link between Advaita Vedanta and Western philosophical thought

Some areas of Western philosophy have long been interested in the link between our sense perception and the empirical knowledge of the world. This interest has led to the development of science through philosophers such as Locke, Berkley, Hume and Kant. The Vedanta however takes little interest in philosophical problems of perception, such as Hume's concern with asserting the causal connection between an observed effect and its action, or Kant's conundrum regarding the sequence of our sense impressions as we watch a boat travel down a river. Advaita Vedanta in contrast sees these philosophical questions as arising from the field of the universe and relegates this type of epistemology to the category of basic knowledge. The Vedantists primary concern is to ask much larger ontological questions such as 'What is real?' and 'What is the Self?' (Hodgkinson, 2006, p. 24). When the Vedanta does explore our sense perceptions and the senses, it is always in order to develop inferences of how our experience of our true Self is hidden by the maya of the world.

Some Western philosophers have very similar views on the nature of the Self as the Vedantists. Hume (1956) for instance stated that as he ventured into his own Self, he always came across a perception such as cold, light, hatred or pleasure and never caught himself without an added perception getting in the way. Hume instinctively tried to separate his real Self from his mind and found that his mind made it extremely difficult.

This led Immanuel Kant to develop the idea of a transcendent unity which required the existence of an all encompassing Self to give the object of each human experience any

meaning (Kant, 1996). Both of these philosophers seem to be acknowledging the Self as a real, all pervading ‘something’ which is obscured by our own thoughts and sense perceptions. The all pervading Self, according to Vedanta is actually Brahman, the intelligent energy which pervades everything. The mind that conceals Brahman is actually the individual ego, a further construction of the illusionary maya.

Creating a theoretical framework

The theoretical framework I am proposing seeks to critically explore and challenge the notion that individuals are separate entities who do not effect their environment in any other way than through causation. In the tradition of other critical approaches, I intend to utilise Advaita Vedanta as a way to emancipate individuals and groups through questioning a number of philosophical taken-for-granted and providing an opportunity for new knowledge and learning to grow from this.

By surfacing instances of synchronicity in all of its forms, I intend to generate critical reflections of how reality looks from a Western scientific paradigm and then suggest how the world may look from an Eastern paradigm of connectedness using the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. It is through the questioning of how groups create their own philosophies-in-use and through challenging this by exploring the Vedanta philosophy that I anticipate to activate group learning and knowledge generation.

As individuals and groups are bound to be at different levels of acceptance of the notion of critically reflecting upon their philosophies-in-use, I intend to introduce this concept

only when the group is comfortable with exploring new critical paradigms and taken-for-granted social systems. The theoretical framework therefore, will be an 'add-on' to other critical reflective practices and will only be introduced at a time appropriate to the group's developmental need.

The methodology which will underpin the new theoretical framework will be based upon action research principles and utilise an augmented action learning model to generate reflective insights and surface unconscious psychoanalytical content. I envisage that this strategy will provide future research groups with a solid foundation for their reflective activities and enable them to meet on a regular basis, reflect and discuss their experiences in psychological safety. The critical element of the methodology, that which questions our Western viewpoint will be introduced by reflecting upon the groups established philosophies-in-use and giving the group the space to consider the grounds for believing this level of reality over their own empirical experience of the world.

In the next section I would like to discuss the differences between the new theoretical framework and traditional action learning methods and describe how the new framework will be used by groups engaged in action research to explore the connection between themselves, their problems and the organisation. In the final part of this section I will discuss the philosophical changes which have taken place within my own ontological viewpoint in order for me to develop such a theoretical framework. I feel that this issue is very important as my new philosophical view influences my research and will guide the way in which I will construct future organisational learning research projects.

Learning and experience

The most profound difference between the new theoretical framework and the established Western view of the world is the way that learning and experience are understood. The literature review chapter established a link between experience and reflection from the traditional Western mindset and placed ontological and epistemological limits of both based upon the 'real world' as we commonly experience it. The Vedanta, however, as this chapter discusses sets up two views of reality and its experience and distinguishes them as being either within the field or outside the field of maya (Satchidanandendra, 1989).

The Vedanta philosophy acknowledges the reality of the world and acknowledges that it has an epistemological value, but the extent of the world's value from a critical perspective is judged to be limited, as it tends to discount the human experience as connected to the whole (*ibid.*). According to the Vedantic philosophy the world and everything in it, by its very nature is changeable, transient and impermanent and it is this fact that the Vedantists suggest makes any search for ontological and epistemological truth impossible (Hodgkinson, 2006).

As human beings we are uniquely equipped with sentience, and this allows us to become reflective and to generate new knowledge. We are also composed of universal energy and are linked to everything within the universe in profound yet very subtle ways; our Western conditioning generally prevents us from exploring this aspect of ourselves. A

new type of learning springs from reflection based upon subtle experiences such as synchronicity, when the minds chatter is quietened and contemplation is induced. In this different experiential 'place' glimpses of new knowledge may be experienced and investigated.

To gather new ontological and epistemological experience of ourselves therefore, we need to reframe our notions of 'reality' and begin an exploration of our subtle link to the universe through such things as synchronicity, fantasy and imagination and reframe experience in a much larger context. By following this course of action, we may be able to develop a much deeper understanding of ourselves and of our problems. This in turn may become the 'jumping off point' for group investigations of our linked experiences and attitudes and the relationship between how we think and what subsequently develops within our larger environment.

Pursuing this line of reasoning, the new philosophical framework must have the capacity to explore both types of ontologies, that of the field of the universe and that of experiences outside the field. As a way to achieve this goal, I feel the need to re-appraise the notion of the ego from my psychoanalytical understanding to the Vedantic understanding.

The Ego and its perception

Throughout the research process I have understood the ego to be one of the key elements of the human mind, identified by Freud and developed by other psychoanalytical

researchers (Freud, 1984a, Gabriel, 2005, Kets de Vries and Miller, 1985). The ego changes our behaviour, alters our perception and through processes within the unconscious makes us act in incomprehensible ways sometimes.

To the Vedantist, however, the ego is not the repressing vehicle of our drives, sexuality or aggression, nor is it the controller of our wants and needs. Quite simply the ego represents the multitude of thoughts emerging from a distracted mind, thoughts deriving from mental over-stimulation and superfluous thoughts that make up the minds normal mental 'chatter' (Nisargadatta, 1973). If we consider Freud's complex notions of the ego, super ego and id against the very simplistic philosophical notion of the ego creating 'mind chatter' then we may appreciate that the new philosophical framework will have little interest in *how* the mind chatters or *why* the chatter is suppressed.

These questions become less important to the researcher because ultimately mind chatter equates to the human Self becoming embroiled within the field of maya (Hodgkinson, 2006). Much more important within the new philosophical framework will be questions of how to quieten the chatter of the mind in order for intuition to develop within a session and how to reflect on such intuitive insights in relation to the organisational problem under review.

If we are to learn of the unknown territory of our human connection to the universe and the events and problems which we draw towards ourselves, then we must attempt to disengage the raging ego from our reflective practice. Although we can never 'switch off'

our chattering mind, we can quieten it (as the PhD 1 group managed to do on a number of occasions) and allow silence and contemplation to calm our thoughts and enable ourselves to experience the problem from a less egotistical and a more intuitive place.

The study seemed to show that such an effect was achieved by one of the groups. I noticed a distinct difference between the collective attitude of the PhD 1 group, who were adaptive, co-operative and used humour in their interactions and the collective attitude of the PhD 2 group who seemed to be much more egocentric, passive aggressive and controlling. The PhD 1 group experienced a number of synchronistic experiences and were able to reflect on their problems from a much deeper level of awareness by the act of disengaging their minds and avoiding consciously thinking of the problem in general.

The PhD 2 group on the other hand were more intense and combative with each other in many ways and cut reflective sessions short once they considered that they had reflected enough, preferring to become self congratulatory and consequently closed down their reflective processes together with their intuitive abilities.

Empirical investigation through contemplation and ‘stillness’

One of the goals of the new theoretical framework in practice will be to quieten the mind to such an extent that intuition and insight, which had previously lain dormant due to the minds chatter, has the opportunity to surface and become part of the group experience. I was very impressed with the way in which the PhD 1 group managed to become much more insightful and reflective by stilling their minds and I wish to pursue this within the

new framework. I am hopeful that by the act of quiet reflection, new learning about the organisational issue and the groups' link to the problem may become apparent, as it did on two occasions with the PhD 1 group.

It is all too common for our Western mindset to relegate mental realisations that seem to 'pop' into our heads as mere fantasy and unimportant from an empirical point of view. By quieting the mind and allowing thoughts simply to appear, I am hopeful that we may actually be accessing a great deal of empirically valid personal experiential data. My aim in attempting to quieten the mind is to disengage it from the habitual responses and preconceived reactions which are the result of conditioning and over stimulation of the senses in order to make way for insight. Over stimulation of the senses may be caused by a group member constantly speaking, other members having to listen to overpowering opinions for any length of time, physical agitation expressed by fidgeting or external noises impinging upon the groups psychological space, for instance.

The Vedanta considers that new epistemological insights can be gained through the act of merely sitting quietly with a peaceful mind (Nisargadatta, 1973). In direct opposition to the Western view of 'thinking problems through' the Vedanta recommends becoming reflective by acts of meditation based upon techniques of breathing and relaxation. It is safe to say that the basis of Vedantic philosophy was derived from meditative and contemplative practices which viewed experiences gained from such states as empirically valid and as 'real' as the day-to-day world (Godman, 1985). My theoretical framework

will introduce the notion of 'stillness' as a mind calming strategy, which I hope will help create the required conditions for epistemological insight to surface.

The mentoring role

Within most action research projects the leader of the group is primarily the set facilitator who organises the timetable of presentations and ensures that individuals perform their reflective functions in the prescribed way (Revans, 1998a). The facilitator will sometimes assist in the reflective process by stimulating discussion or by asking questions to the presenter which may help to enhance the presenters own reflective practice. From my literature review it seems that the facilitator is quite rarely an active participant in the group, as the aim of action research is to help individuals work on their own problems with the collaboration of their peers (Revans, 1977).

This was my original intention too; I planned to be as unobtrusive as I could be, to help facilitate the groups by keeping their discussions 'on track' but generally sitting back to observe the groups as they reflected. It was evident from the very beginning that the way in which I had set up the study meant that I had to be much more directive and participative than I had planned. One of the reasons for my increased participation was that the groups seemed confused by the number of reflective activities that they were expected to carry out. Sometimes they were not sure of what to do with the images they had drawn within the reflective process itself and needed guidance on how to continue, whilst at other times the groups needed to have clarification as to the implications of their reflective thought in order to stimulate a group discussion.

The study suggests that the way in which the project mixed reflection, drawn images and learning seemed to require a different type of facilitation from the normal action researcher/facilitator role. If we also consider the new philosophical framework and its expectations to explore the synchronistic and subdue the chattering mind, then I believe that the researchers' role needs to be re-considered and reformulated. The traditional facilitator had responsibility for 'hosting' an action research set and ensuring that participants described and reflected upon their particular problem within a given time frame in order for everyone to have a 'turn' before the end of the session. This research project was different because it only had a single problem for the group to concentrate on and a multi-layered reflection process with which to surface epistemological insight.

In light of these factors I consider a more suitable role for the researcher to adopt would be a role I describe as 'group mentor'. A group mentor would guide the group through the multi-layered reflection process and help stimulate group discussion based on the results of their reflection. I noticed that this seemed to be the most difficult thing for the groups to do especially at the beginning of the research project. I believe that the mentor should also have an understanding of 'the field' and the 'knower of the field' and be able to help the group in some way create distinctions between their day-to-day experiences and their subtle experiences which may suggest a more profound link to something much larger than themselves, the group or the organisation.

It would be up to the mentor to carry a mental model of these different ontological viewpoints and to be able to skilfully instigate reflection when such things as synchronicity or intuition emerge within the group. The mentor would also be responsible for creating a suitable environment for mindful reflection to develop. To create the best conditions for mindful reflection the mentor would establish ground rules such as group confidentiality, non-threatening behaviour, the safety to express feelings and co-operation between group members.

Along with the ground rules the mentor would communicate in a supportive and understanding way encouraging the use of 'generative' language, thereby giving everyone the opportunity to express themselves honestly. Finally it would be important for the group mentor to create an environment of calmness and contemplation in the sessions, giving the ego an opportunity to slow down and rest. The way in which the mentor would achieve this would be by conducting themselves in a calm and contemplative manner and pacing their group interventions in order to demonstrate how other group members should behave.

The group mentor role would be a significant departure from the facilitator role and become quite specialised as a consequence. The group would still work on their organisational problems and still reflect on them through the use of drawn images and multi-level reflection, however, the pace of the group would be slower and the opportunity for mindful reflection would increase substantially. This may lead to group members becoming more reflective, more sensitive to their part in the organisational

problem and more empowered to create personal change, as they did in this research project.

I am very interested as to how group learning can be enhanced using such mentoring methods and am equally interested in how the groups will respond to the mentor taking such an active interest in synchronicities or intuitive insights. I believe that the way in which the mentor understands and explains the philosophical differences between Western ontology and Eastern ontology is the key. Each ontological view of reality has validity based upon the philosophical thinking which leads to the ontological conclusion. The mentor needs to be equipped with both of these philosophical understandings in order to help the group learn another way of seeing their organisation and its problems and the greater connections between themselves and the wider world.

Changes in my philosophical position

The new theoretical framework I have developed from the inductive research project has had an influence upon my own philosophical position which I think is very important to discuss. At the onset of the research I believed in a postmodern reading of the social world for instance and that early childhood influences affected and informed the way in which we create meaning in the world. I understood that the unconscious had a large part to play in our construction of reality but I was unsure that there was such a thing as a 'Self'. Due to this uncertainty I was happy to regard my research philosophy as intrinsically postmodern. After creating the new theoretical framework, however, I feel

that I have shifted my philosophical position predominantly in terms of my understanding of the notions of the Self.

My ontological view, after completing the new theoretical framework needs to encompass the notion that there exists a Self within the individual which has a purpose and drive but which is largely unknown to the thinking 'egoic' mind. After examining the empirical 'coincidence' data and reading the management, psychoanalytical and Eastern philosophical literature contained within this chapter I have come to the conclusion that as far as my philosophical position is concerned, I believe that there is a Self or 'spirit' which is hidden from the ego and which is connected to the environment through forces which are as yet immeasurable to current scientific methods.

If I were to label the new philosophical view I have developed I would have to contend that I hold notions similar to those held by proponents of Advaita Vedanta and therefore my philosophical ontology may be classed as Vedantist. What is the equivalent philosophical position of a Vedantist within the Western qualitative research tradition and how does my new philosophical position alter and affect the views I hold in regard to experience, reflection, learning and psychoanalysis?

The first implication of my new philosophical viewpoint is that I do not think that the title 'postmodernist' is an appropriate description of my new ontological stance. As my research has led me to conclude that there actually exists a Self which has direction and

purpose I do not think that my view fits into the postmodern view of a socially constructed milieu (see Methodology chapter).

As a way to develop an understanding of my new and emerging philosophical view I turned to the work of Morgan and Smirchich (1980). The authors proposed that ones ontological and epistemological world-view indicates the methodological research paradigm which one may operate within. I used the Morgan and Smirchich continuum to explore my changing philosophical views and to help me contextualize my new epistemological approach.

My new philosophical position describes reality as a projection of human imagination which can be explored, reflected upon and changed through the subjects will. I see the Self as an interconnected consciousness or ‘spirit’ residing within the individual but which is largely hidden from view by the power of the thinking mind or ego. I hold the view that our reality is largely subjective and in order to explore this we should embark upon methods of research which suspend our belief in anything within the field of knowledge and ‘bracket off’ our existing biases and attitudes. In this way I believe we can generate insights into new knowledge and learning. The ontological and epistemological views which I now hold seem to correspond with Morgan and Smirchich’s categorisation of phenomenology and subjectivism (*ibid.* p. 493).

I do consider that Dewey’s notions of experience and learning can still be accommodated within my new philosophical view, as experience is subjective in nature and reflecting

upon our experiences will lead to learning upon these particular experiences. Consequently I believe that group learning is still a valid exercise in this context as the individuals subjectivity is called into question by other subjective group members. This leads to individuals adapting their subjective understanding of the world to encompass new viewpoints which they then adopt as their own (see Literature Review chapter).

Psychoanalysis posits that the individual creates their own reality from their subjective experiences of the world which they carry with them from infancy. It also proposes that the unconscious seeks to protect the ego from psychological harm by repressing and defending certain thoughts and feelings (see Literature Review chapter). I can also accommodate this view within my new phenomenological philosophy as the minds projections and fantasies can be seen as ways in which the projection of reality is subjectively controlled. I believe that the ego controls the reality of the individual as a way of establishing its preferred world-view on the mind and utilises repression and other psychological techniques in order to achieve its aims.

It seems that I have shifted my philosophical approach from the postmodern to a phenomenological and subjectivist world-view. This view feels more congruent to me than holding a view which did not accept the Self or notions of a directive and connective force which links individuals together. I am satisfied that the new view which I hold still seems to be able to accommodate the main tenets of my original research philosophy and literature review in that experience, reflection, learning and psychoanalysis are still intact and have a place in any future research I carry out.

An overview of the theoretical framework

Finally I would like to present an overview of the main aspects of the theoretical framework in a simple bullet point format to enable readers to appreciate the main tenets of the approach I am proposing. The new theoretical framework will comprise of:

- A methodology which is based upon general action research principles and introduced to participants when it is considered that the research group are psychologically ready to consider the implications of an approach based on such an unusual critical philosophy.
- A technique based on a critically reflective approach in regard to culturally held philosophies-in-use which aims to explore the notion that the individual and the external environment are linked via an unseen energy which at times overrides causation.
- A philosophical approach based on Advaita Vedanta which will enable groups to question their culturally held philosophies-in-use by proposing a new way to experience the world and a new way to generate knowledge and learning.
- A tool which questions the way in which the ego and our perceptions create a world which is contradictory to empirical reality and seems to be coloured by our past learning experiences.

- An approach that utilises the skills of a group mentor, using ‘generative’ language to facilitate ontological reflection and to create the circumstances for group psychological safety and confidentiality.
- A methodology which sets up the reflective space so as to subdue the ego and allows the opportunity for synchronicities to be discussed and self transcending knowledge to be experienced through the use of contemplative practices and ‘stillness’.

Conclusion

This chapter has developed a new theoretical framework for group learning based upon the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta and its critical approach to ontological reality. The framework has been built upon empirical experience of ‘coincidence data’ and work from a number of writers who have been prepared to question basic assumptions about our lived experience and the way the world seems to reveal itself to us.

The new framework seems to be a development of the critical theorists work as it aims to question our most basic and taken-for-granted notions in the hope that emancipation of thought and of experience will follow. The framework also seeks to develop reflective practice in the way in which it proposes to use the skills of a group mentor to help create the correct type of circumstances where such critical and foundational notions relating to ones philosophy can be discussed and explored.

In the following chapter I intend to reflect upon my experiences of the research project itself and discuss how my own personal influences and biases may have contributed to the research design, the data analysis, my conclusions and the development of the new theoretical framework.

My Reflections on the Research Process

Introduction

As a qualitative researcher I am aware that I have influenced the research process with my own attitudes, biases and viewpoints which have had a direct affect on my thesis. Unlike researchers working within a positivistic paradigm, I have had the opportunity to colour my research with my conscious and unconscious attitudes, biases and emotions. I have created the research design according to my own preference; I have run the research groups using my own conscious and unconscious agenda; I have presented the data according to my own research biases and developed the data findings in favour of my own changing philosophical views.

I believe that it is therefore important to make an honest, rigorous and critical attempt to disclose my own diverse agendas as far as possible by surfacing my reasons, attitudes and biases for creating the research as I have done. By doing this within a chapter of the thesis I believe that the work itself and my status as a researcher will gain a little more credibility (Symon and Cassell, 2004). This view is similar to that of James and Vinicombe (2002) who argue that researchers need to have an awareness of their own agendas and explore how these agendas affect the research they are involved with. The authors suggest that researchers should explore their personal interests and perspectives, how the data is collected and interpreted and the personal characteristics of the researcher and how this influences research decisions.

In this chapter therefore, I intend to explore the research process from my own point of view as a way of uncovering my deeply held personal agendas and preferences. I have split the chapter up into a number of sections covering such topics as the research design, the project implementation and the analysis. I intend to give the reader an appreciation of the background to the research, the external interests that had a bearing upon the work, the thinking behind the research itself, the unconscious attitudes that may have shaped the research process and my changing philosophical notions which affected the project.

1. The research design

The first question that I think I need to consider is why the notion of using psychoanalysis within the research project interested me. I was first introduced to psychoanalytical notions such as transference and projection when I was conducting my Masters in Research (MRes) degree at the University of Hull Business School. On the MRes course I attended a module on Non Traditional Research Methods run by Professor Russ Vince.

Professor Vince introduced a number of non traditional methodologies to our group including the projective drawing methodology. I became intrigued as to the way in which drawn images could present both conscious and unconscious attitudes and emotions of the artist and provide the researcher with a totally new way to view the organisation and its members. The majority of the class seemed to be quite puzzled or very sceptical of this approach, but this made the subject area even more appealing to me. I think the reason why this was so appealing to me was that the methodology seemed to be novel, to

have only a small number of researchers interested in it and was based on psychoanalytical concepts.

Most of my cohort were carrying out statistical research projects or research which used a social constructionist philosophy, but these approaches didn't seem to provide the depth of authenticity which I felt projective drawings and psychoanalysis did for me. I became convinced that by using a research methodology based on psychoanalysis, I could possibly contribute something new in the academic area of organisational learning within a PhD project.

After reading a number of articles and books on psychoanalysis I began to become more intrigued and more confused in equal measure. I quite quickly realised that I would need to know more than a textbook description of psychoanalysis if I were to use notions derived from psychoanalysis in practice with a research group. Quite early on in the research, as I was compiling literature for the MPhil. upgrade, I attended a week long Tavistock style (see the Literature Review chapter) psychoanalytical conference in Paris. This experience gave me new methods to view my own way of being in the world which had a profound impact on my individual world-view and philosophy and on the subsequent direction of my research.

The conference was comprised of around thirty people who all came together in order to experience a week of being involved with one another as an organisation. They did this through their personal interactions within different sized, facilitated groups. Many people

were unaware of the object of the conference aims as they had been sent by their organisation to 'experience' it and gain their own understanding of their psychological processes. Running the conference were around ten psychoanalytically trained facilitators who helped to navigate us through the experience and were involved with interacting with us in a number of different sized groups over the week.

Our experience of the organisation which the conference had created made me feel the powerlessness of being involved in something which I had no power over. This led all of the conference participants to experience high levels of anxiety and psychological defensiveness. One of the roles of each facilitator was to analyse group member's behaviour and to identify their psychoanalytic interactions which they would then point out in rather oblique ways as a way to help us understand what was going on within the conference. The effect the conference had on me was to make me appreciate that I held a range of attitudes and behaviours which were quite disruptive to my learning patterns as they seemed to be holding me back from embracing certain types of change in my life.

After the conference I decided to enquire about training opportunities in my local area in order to learn more about psychoanalysis as I was very excited by the potential for the conference to stimulate learning on many levels. I enrolled on a four year psychotherapist training course soon after, where I began to learn and am still learning about the way in which the unconscious affects our experience and moulds our life. I believe that this action has stood me in good stead to have a greater appreciation of the psychodynamics within groups and between individuals and the impact our unconscious has on a range of

our behaviour. In training to be a psychotherapist I believe that my research is grounded in practice as well as theory of psychoanalysis, which I believe was very important to the project.

My interest in organisational learning and reflection came about from my years as a business manager and the requirement for me to increasingly improve my department by learning from the mistakes I inevitably made. My experience of reflection within the organisation was that it was only carried out by self-reflective individuals and was used predominantly (in my case) to help problem solve and improve performance in order to avoid the wrath of the MD if I 'got it wrong'.

As a business manager I think that I had an innate sense of reflection and trying to keep one step ahead of the MD in order to avoid conflict. The culture I managed was quite combative and sales performance focused and this intensified the pressure to make my reflection an often used skill. After my own experiences as a reflective practitioner (see Literature Review chapter) in business I understood the value of reflection and was keen to teach others how to use reflection to problem solve and generate knowledge and learning.

Psychoanalysis involves a great deal of reflection on the part of the therapist and the client if change is to be initiated, so creating a project that had reflection as a key activity seemed to compliment the psychoanalytical approach. Professor Vince was also instrumental in helping me understand reflection by discussing the work of Dewey

(Dewey, 1896) and Schön (Schön, 1987). I was also aware that Professor Vince (who became my PhD Supervisor for a time) based his research on the works of Dewey.

I used action learning in order to encompass a group learning style which used reflection and the notion of organizing reflection, again influenced by the work of Professor Vince and his co-author Michael Reynolds (Reynolds and Vince, 2004). The group format attracted me as it took me back to the Paris conference group and I wondered how I could use the experiences of the conference to surface my research groups unconscious attitudes and emotions. I was also interested in the way in which groups solved their problems and the way they draw their problems through the projective drawing technique.

My MRes dissertation used projective drawings and although I did not have particular psychoanalytical experience on the MRes, the results of the dissertation were still very interesting in their power to help individuals describe deeply held unconscious attitudes. Within the PhD project I was keen to use my new found knowledge of psychoanalysis and my experience as a trainee psychotherapist to explore the group problem solving and learning process in a more substantial way.

By combining the three subject areas of my literature review section, organisational learning, psychoanalysis and action learning I was attempting to create a framework which would explore notions of learning and reflection from a rather different point of view than most researchers would. I considered that the benefits of such an approach to

the organisations involved in the research would be to give them a completely new and refreshing way to look at their problems and the way in which they themselves contributed to their problems by their own attitudes and emotions. On my part I was interested in creating a thesis which was refreshingly different and was intellectually challenging for me. I enjoy learning new things and putting my learning into practice and I felt that using the three subject areas would be a really good opportunity to stretch myself and produce a relevant piece of work which may be able to help contribute to the organisational learning debate.

In hindsight I don't think that I realised the complexity of combining three subject approaches. I think that I could have made my thesis much easier by simply having one research area or even just two research areas, but I felt that the narrative I was building up in the early stages of the thesis required me to have an understanding of and refer to the history of all three subject areas in order to create a logical story. Psychoanalysis is important, so too is reflection and overriding that is the group work which combine to create a project which is original, novel, effective to its research groups and interesting to the researcher.

I decided to choose the inductive method as opposed to the deductive method as I felt that the methodological approach that I was using was quite novel and untested in many ways, which seemed to suggest the use of an inductive methodology. The approach was novel in that I was trying to combine a project which organized multi-level reflection within groups using a projective tool in order to surface both conscious and unconscious

reflective data to help the groups change their organisational problems and learn about their own group processes.

With this approach in mind I don't think that I was really interested in researching another researchers theories through the deductive methodology and much preferred the idea that I was 'trail blazing' my own research in new directions for organisational learning. I think the benefit of the inductive approach was that the research project was quite open-ended and non-prescriptive as to the research results. The problem with an inductive approach was that the project could easily have become too open ended, ill defined and fuzzy as the research may have lacked the kind of direction which a deductive methodology would have had built into its design. This did happen to a lesser extent and I worked well with my supervisor in ensuring that I adhered to boundaries of practice which we both reviewed within our regular meetings.

2. The project implementation

The way I picked the research group was by speaking to my business contacts and sending e-mails to organisations that I thought may be interested in taking part in the project. I did have a couple of false starts when I met with a couple of organisational managers who expressed their interest but as I met their teams the teams felt uncomfortable and decided not to pursue the project. This felt a little unsettling especially as I was aware of the novelty of the approach. I decided to put less focus onto the psychological aspect and more on the problem solving element of the research, as recommended by my supervisor.

I think the participants had a great effect on how I carried out the research. I found that I was naturally passive within the research group and allowed them to make some subtle changes to the practical elements of the process. I did feel a little too passive at times, when the PhD 2 group stated that they would like to finish the project before the end of the agreed time for example. On reflection I felt quite powerless to persuade the group and simply agreed with their decision when I think I should have been more challenging than I had been. I almost always felt nervous in a deep unconscious way and felt that at any time any group could call a halt to the process and my fantasy was that this would ruin my project. I do think I must have over adapted to the groups as a result of the anxiety I felt. When the groups did make decisions like not wanting to set action plans, I was generally OK with it at the time but on reflection it was lucky that my over adapting worked out well for the project after all.

I think that my day to day fantasy was that the research group wouldn't learn anything and would not really understand how to reflect and how to learn from their reflections. My fantasy also was that the groups would be defended against the notions of the unconscious and not be willing to even consider the unconscious and its effect on their behaviour. Over time I think that I learned to relax more but I was always wary of the possibility that the MD may call me into the office to put an end to the research.

I am unsure as to how far my attitude affected the groups themselves. All that I honestly know is that they were always friendly and actually gained a great deal from the project

(as both groups were often keen to tell me). I know how the groups affected me but I am really unsure about how my attitude affected the groups, I did become very adaptive and this had an effect on the things that I allowed and did not allow, although I did draw the line with many things, I felt it important to let the groups express their own wants and needs within reason.

I do not think it differed with each group as I had an underlying anxiety about both groups finishing the project earlier than expected. Initially I felt that I was trying to be fair minded with the groups but on reflection I became over adapted to their needs. I think that this attitude may have come across as being *too* friendly and may not have been strict enough for my research needs to be fully met. I did have an agenda to get my own research needs met, but my anxiety seemed to stem from my trying to placate both groups as well as trying to facilitate them in an objective way at the same time.

The groups seemed relaxed with my style, and they seemed very comfortable even when the research group uncovered uncomfortable things which they reflected upon. When the groups didn't respond to what I wanted and it was a vital part of the project design, then I became quite insistent and argued my point very well, once the groups saw the reason for some things such as them all reflecting in the order I had taught them then they were generally very compliant.

Sometimes of course the group didn't respond the way I wanted them to, for example when the MD of the PhD 2 group changed the order of group members reflection. I

became internally angry but did not show my anger, I simply waited for the opportunity to make a correction and explained to the MD and group that the group had done something incorrectly and they needed to be sure to stick to the procedure in the future. I was comfortable with this type of non-blaming approach to problems, as I sought to involve the whole group and to avoid conflict with particular group members. Again it was due to my worry that the research group would curtail the research and I would not have the data I needed. In this way I can see that I was quite manipulative and sought to keep my feelings repressed and keep me in an anxious state of adaptivity.

Once I had recruited the two research groups I was very careful to manage their expectations of what they could achieve with the research project. I was very aware that to over promise any organisational outcomes would really compromise my position as a researcher, the research project itself and the data which I could be expected to gather from the research. For this reason I met the group and explained the project in quite broad terms. I had realised that to give too much information may scare the groups away, as they had done to two other potential groups. I told the research groups to expect to be able to work on problems in a group using some new techniques that I would show them. These techniques I said would change their understanding of the problem and hopefully would help them to approach their problems in different ways. The two groups were keen to begin and expected to learn new techniques of problem solving, which is what I could confidently provide them with, in the end of course both groups gained a lot more from the project than merely learning a new set of skills.

Before I met both groups I had a meeting with the Managing Directors who discussed their needs and their organisational problems. I had a very good idea of the type of outcome both organisations were looking for as a consequence of these meetings and I was confident that the project could deliver what I said. I regularly encouraged the groups in the early stages to give me feedback as to what the project had done for their problems as I realised that this was important for them and would be a factor in deciding if they kept with the project. I believe that both groups got what they wanted and voiced the opinion that they were both impressed with the projects approach and results.

I got my research needs met by ensuring the group kept reflecting in the sessions and kept bringing their group problems to the sessions. I also had my needs met by ensuring the group kept drawing their problems each session and on a practical level by ensuring that my recording equipment was always fully charged and ready to capture the data. I also got my research needs met by being a fair facilitator I think, and ensuring that the reflective space was safe for everyone to be able to say what they really thought without fear of being attacked. This worked well most of the time, although there were occasions when one of the group would forget the rules and become quite intimidating, in these instances I had to balance the need for obtaining useful research data with ensuring the psychological safety of the group members involved as I facilitated a resolution to the situation.

3. The analysis

I managed the process of transcription quite well as the project went on as I recorded the data and then transcribed it throughout the same week. At the end of the fieldwork I was almost ready to begin the data analysis. The amount of data that I had was quite daunting to begin with and I spent a lot of time simply reading and re-reading the transcripts to try to give me a sense of what the group were actually saying (see the Methodology Chapter).

. I first created broad sections related to similar subject groups that I could identify and re-read lots of journal articles from the literature review to give me a taste for the type of subjects that were really very interesting to the study, such as the role of power and privilege and the use of laughter as an ego defence (see the Fieldwork Results chapter).

As I generated more categories I began to feel less anxious in myself as it became more evident that the research project had actually generated data which was useful and possibly novel.

The pictures that the group produced were all photographed and electronically filed for easier reference. I looked at some of the pictures once again as I was preparing the transcripts to help me connect more to the sessions I had recorded and to enable me to see for myself what I made of the images afterwards. I didn't use the images to do any analysis on the groups after the sessions as I felt that this would be unfair to the groups. Putting my interpretation onto another's images without them having the opportunity to respond to my thoughts would in my opinion only encourage my own transference (see Literature Review chapter) which I wanted to avoid. I intend to use some of the pictures

throughout the thesis in order to give the reader an idea of the style and type of images created by both groups and to give the work some pictorial interest

In respect of how I came to create the categories that I did for the study, a lot of them naturally came from the literature I had read, but others were derived from my observations of the group's behaviour which I thought to be particularly interesting and which I had no idea of being in the literature at all. At the beginning of categorisation I think I used the way in which the two groups behaved in line with what the literature told me as a starting point for categorisation (see Literature Review chapter). Later in the process I went on to explore my own feelings in relation to the two research groups and used these feelings as a way to create some of the categories (see the Fieldwork Results chapter).

There was a point where I realised that I could potentially make most of the transcribed data fit into almost any of my created categories and at this stage I began to become a little concerned with my categorisation approach. I was concerned that if I took any of the conversations I had recorded out of context to any great extent then I could make my data fit with my agenda. I am sure that this did happen as an unconscious process simply because there were large amounts of data to analyse and this required high levels of extended concentration. I tried to keep myself focused on the task in hand, however, by re-reading the transcript elements that I used and then reading them again more fully in relation to the conversations that were going on in the group to ensure that the elements I used coincided with the actual content of the conversations.

It was also difficult for me after I decided that the PhD 1 group were ‘good’ for being compliant and co-operative throughout the project and the PhD 2 group were not so ‘good’ as they argued quite a lot and finished the project earlier than my planned end date. As I went further into the data analysis I would find myself ‘splitting’ the two groups into good and bad groups in my imagination and started to look for particularly good things that the PhD 1 group did and particularly bad things that the PhD 2 group did.

I stopped myself from polarising the two groups after I realised that I was splitting and remembered that the process of splitting indicates anxiety and regression into a former childhood state. I then understood that neither group were particularly any better or worse than each other and what I was witnessing with the groups different behaviour was their best efforts to make sense of their organisational problems and to keep themselves psychologically ‘safe’. This realisation gave me great comfort and prevented any more splitting behaviour.

When I was close to finishing the data categorisation I began to notice that there were a number of incidents (the coincidence data, see New Theoretical Framework chapter) that I had simply ignored as I originally believed them to be irrelevant to the study. As I came across more of these incidents I began to reflect in quite a critical way as to why I felt that the data was *obviously* irrelevant to theories of learning and knowledge generation

and what part of my own social conditioning allowed me to think that the data was unimportant in the first place.

At this point I created a new data category ('the data that didn't fit') and began to listen to both the content and the context of the narrative without the prejudice of thinking that the data was 'wrong' or that it was 'inappropriate' for the study of learning.

My point of view in including the data was that the incidents that occurred were actually part of the study as they did happen within the timeframe of the action learning set and there did seem to be a strange link to the content of what was being discussed at the time. It was also true that the incidents were ignored by all including myself at the time and that there seemed to be no reflection around what the incident may have been about as we all used our philosophical framework to rob the incidents of any learning opportunity. In creating a new category of this data I believed that I was using my own critically reflective process within the analysis stage in order to surface something new in terms of identifying new incidents of reflection within an action learning context.

4. The discussion chapter

I thought that it was tremendously important within the discussion chapter to link the three themes of my literature review to the data categories from my fieldwork. I reasoned that the psychoanalytical framework was the most important thing to bring in and that it was important to use my knowledge of psychoanalysis to evaluate both organisations

defensive routines and to attempt to understand how this process affected the groups ability to generate knowledge and learn.

I found the discussion chapter quite interesting to compile and write as it seemed to pull together and make more sense of the data that I had highlighted in the previous chapter. I found that the way in which I had structured the fieldwork results chapter made it quite easy for me to highlight the most relevant points and use these points as a basis of the discussions that followed. I think by working this way I was able to give the results and the discussion more fluidity.

I think that the discussion section was well balanced, for example I gave a lot of thought to the way in which I chose to analyse the psychoanalytical structure of both groups. I realised that as I had differentiated between the behaviour of each group that there would obviously be a difference in their group ego defences. I felt that it was important to come to an analysis of the groups defences based on what I saw, heard and experienced in the sessions.

The PhD 2 group for instance did seem to 'split' and have periods of time when the MD was 'all bad', and periods of time when the business was 'all good'. There were even two members of the group who shared the splitting, with the MD as the object of the splitting process. The PhD 1 group were more difficult to label as they didn't seem to follow the notions contained in Bions' work or to any particularly obvious psychoanalytical notions. I reflected on the supposition by Elliot Jaques that everyone is defending against some

sort of anxiety (see Literature Review chapter) and saw that the PhD 1 groups defence was against the feeling of annihilation represented by their concern for the survival of the organisation.

The way I wrote the discussion chapter suggests to me that my method of analysis is to look for differences within groups and to highlight the differences as a way to generate knowledge. I also looked at the group's similarities but preferred to explore what was different within the group's structure. I could have examined the groups by looking only for their commonalities, however, I believe that this may have been a little one-sided and not really very reflective.

It is true that by writing the discussion chapter I wanted to give the impression that I was both a competent researcher and a competent psychoanalytical researcher. I think that it was quite difficult to create a project using psychoanalysis as a philosophical base when I was really a newcomer to this work. I think that attending the psychotherapy training over the last three years has given me a tremendous insight into the workings of the unconscious but I consider that my analysis of the workings of the group to still be quite subjective and open to my own process of transference (see Literature Review chapter). I am comfortable with my role as a researcher, however, as I have run smaller research projects for my two Masters degree dissertations and am quite comfortable with the analysis process in general. I hope that the way in which I have structured the research and highlighted areas of the data which are interesting and novel makes for a good overall thesis.

I think that this project was very novel and had a number of elements which were new and which made a contribution to the organisational learning debate. I think the practice of using projective drawings in an action research project was novel and generated some quite interesting insights into the way problems are viewed and addressed through group reflection and surfacing the unconscious. I think the way I had groups engaged in organizing reflection by reflecting on three levels and surfacing both conscious and unconscious elements was also very novel and very beneficial to both groups learning and problem solving abilities.

I believe that this technique was very powerful in generating a range of discussions which really questioned the group's processes. My discussion chapter formulated eight new insights in relation to group reflection and the psychoanalytical process which I believe operates within groups according to their anxieties and defences. Finally I developed the new theoretical framework which suggested a new and novel way to explore a group's philosophies-in-use using the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta as a way to challenge our Western style of thinking and taken-for-granted.

I think that it was important to create the new theoretical framework from the data which didn't seem to fit into my original categorisations as I found it very novel, interesting and philosophically stimulating to discover such data and seek a way to make it actually fit. I have always been interested in making sense of things and the way in which the data became tantalisingly elusive to fit into any category set me on a path of determination to

find out how it may fit. It was very enjoyable to try to find theories which I could use to explain the coincidence data, and quite a challenge to find philosophical notions which also agreed with synchronicity. It was a real struggle to find any management literature which encompassed synchronicity which I could use as a stepping stone towards the notion of Advaita Vedanta. I was very pleased with the final outcome, however.

5. The new theoretical framework

I felt that I needed to create the new theoretical framework on one level, as a way to justify using the inductive research methodology. The inductive approach gave me free range to explore a very wide subject area and the potential to derive insights from the data, but I felt that using the inductive approach somehow required me to show readers that although I used a wide ranging methodological approach, I was also able to think in a very precise manner and successfully create a new framework. I also think that the new framework gives me the opportunity to continue my research on group reflection and learning by utilising the framework in future studies within a deductive paradigm which seems to be quite an exciting prospect, as I begin to test out my theory with future organisations.

The framework seems complicated on one hand, as I have proposed that not all organisations will be able to access the framework depending on their organisational anxiety and defences. This puts the framework within a psychoanalytical sphere of management consulting and restricts the use to those organisations that are free from major pathological traits such as splitting or extreme transference for example. If the

framework were to be used with organisations that were very emotionally defended then I would be concerned that they would not be able to accept the underlying principle that our philosophical structures are merely cultural taken-for-granted.

I am quite happy with the way in which I explored the philosophical and methodological notions in the new theoretical framework chapter, notions which underpinned the project and surfaced why they were not adequate to use with the coincidence data. I was also pleased when I found other, quite limited management research which were open to explore the connection between the inner experience and the outer. I think that bringing in Advaita Vedanta gave the chapter and the new framework a solid philosophical foundation, as Vedanta has been used for centuries to explore the experience of the subject and object. On reflection I do not think that the chapter was too complex, I see the chapter as being important in following a line of reasoning which itself leads to a well thought out conclusion and a new theoretical framework.

I do not think that things need to be complicated in order for them to be academic, however, I do believe that to be an academic it is important to be able to show a line of reasoning and to demonstrate new ways of thinking about issues in order to give insight or clarity. I have attempted to give new insight by creating the theoretical framework which explains how group members may be able to reflect at new levels in order to access knowledge from their feelings and rational minds.

I do believe that the justification for using the framework is complex and built upon research work which is very new and quite controversial to many, however, this work is underpinned by empirical data and the framework itself has been in use in other forms (Advaita Vedanta) for centuries. I feel that in a way I am taking my research back to older philosophical notions which have been forgotten in the postmodern age, but which still have some usefulness especially if we can once again think of the Self as an interconnected entity and not merely as a construct of our language patterns.

I think that I was drawn to exploring the works of Jung for a number of reasons. Jung was primarily a psychoanalyst who studied under Freud. I was very interested in psychoanalysis and so I read some of Jung's work early on in the research process and became aware of the story of Jung and his research which centred around man's soul (Jung, 1990). I was also intrigued by the way that Jung had developed his own area of psychoanalysis which was quite different philosophically from the work of Freud and which adopted the notion of man being on a spiritual path as the basis for his work.

I was attracted to synchronicity simply because there happened to be a number of synchronistic occurrences in the research and these became very interesting to me as a research category. I felt that in some way I was not really contributing anything new to the field of organisational learning if I was merely making observations about the group process and the psychological factors which were happening within the group. I know that this is not really the case, as everyone who carries out an inductive piece of research

doesn't necessarily have to generate a new theoretical framework, but I was inspired by the data that didn't fit and by Jung's 'trailblazing' work.

I believe that it was very important for me to make the connection between synchronicity, management research and Advaita Vedanta in line with my own philosophical thoughts of organisations which have developed and changed over time. I am a very keen proponent of critical reflection and I think that fact explains why I am so enthusiastic to bring into question our philosophical taken-for-granted. I believe that the technical/rational paradigm which most organisations operate within actually constrict as much as they liberate. By becoming more philosophically critical I think there are new ways to generate learning and knowledge through questioning the inner and outer experience and exploring how they sometimes meet and defy our explanation.

I have tried to make the new framework logical and easy to follow but I am aware that it is very novel and may easily be criticised by researchers from more traditional backgrounds. I think that this is OK in some respects as I believe that research which is based upon empirical data and which is backed up by literature from renowned scholars or institutions is acceptable in its own right. I think the work may be seen as 'wacky' in that it originates from psychoanalysis, a less well known field of management and then develops notions which question causation, a mainstay of the scientific paradigm and finally goes on to propose a research methodology which is based on Eastern philosophical thought. For all of this, I still believe that there may be many researchers who will find this work interesting as it really does critically question some established

Western notions, some of which are culturally peculiar to us and which many cultures look at in different ways.

6. Conscious reasons for being a researcher

I am aware that being a PhD researcher is both demanding on my time and my energy but very enjoyable as this research is ultimately very engaging. I think that the research demands thought and demands one to have quite a structured mind, in order to explore concepts and link concepts together in a rational way. It requires an immense amount of reading, both articles and books and in my particular case required me to enrol on another course to give me a grounding in psychoanalytical concepts.

I was also keen to become a researcher as it gave me a different experience of 'being in the world', one that I had not encountered before to a great extent. The PhD enabled me to become a student but this time on a full time basis, which gave me free reign to study almost anything I became interested in around management and organisational learning. Finally I think being a PhD researcher opens up my life to opportunities which I would not have had as a business manager, it is much more philosophically rewarding to do a PhD than to be in the world of operations management.

The biggest thing I gained from being a researcher was freedom to explore concepts and writers that I had not come into contact with before. I gained the freedom from having to work full time in a job and was given freedom to mix with and share ideas with different PhD researchers at conferences and in the University itself. I also gained knowledge

about the research process from my supervisors which helped clarify what I was actually doing and how I should be doing it.

I don't really feel that I held power over my research participants, but I am aware that I was in a powerful position throughout the research process as I was the organiser and facilitator. I think that the power that I had was tempered by quite a high level of anxiety around the process, anxiety that the research groups were providing me with the correct type of reflective data and concern that the groups were actually getting what they needed from the project. I had glimpses of my power from time to time when people looked to me for direction and I felt powerful carrying out some of the facilitation work in the groups, but I was quite keen not to use this power to undermine or invalidate the group's processes or their defensive behaviour. On reflection I would like to think that the type of power I held over people was benevolent and emancipatory.

Why did I decide to do the PhD in the first place, why wasn't I happy with the two Masters degrees I have? I think that my drive and ambition pushed me to go for the PhD in some ways to see if I had the capacity to do it and create a thesis. I don't think that the Masters degrees satisfied me in some ways, I was eager to follow the educational process to its conclusion I suppose and to see just how different learning would be at the highest level. I think working on a Masters dissertation and a PhD are very different and require different sets of skills, like the tenacity to carry on for a long period of time by working alone. By trying to contend with the stresses and anxieties of daily life and also fitting in time to read and write; and the requirement to control the amount of reading undertaken

and to narrow my subject area down into manageable segments in order to make the PhD focused and structured.

Up until writing this chapter I wouldn't have considered myself to be a driven or a motivated person, however, I am driven and motivated and must be to have come so far in the PhD process. I think my drives and motivations come from a great curiosity with life and a willingness to explore the reasons why we as a society behave as we do. I think that my great drive is to really know myself and this may be why I have taken on the psychotherapy course as well as the PhD course. I am interested in knowing myself in a critical way as I am often puzzled by my past behaviour and I wonder about what motivated me as a younger person to behave as I did.

I don't think that I would have been as motivated as I have been if the research and the PhD itself were not fun. I think that it is vitally important to me that the work I do is intellectually engaging and challenging but also has elements of fun and excitement to it. The process of doing a PhD seems like a puzzle which is solvable but which needs lots of time and patience to solve, as all of the clues to completing it are hidden in things like the raw data, journal articles, with the supervisor and with other research colleagues. By looking at the process this way it becomes a challenging and engaging 'game' in which I follow the clues in a logical fashion in order to win.

I don't know that I want to prove anything to myself in relation to the PhD research in terms of my capabilities. I think I have an awareness that I am bright and engaging so I

don't really need proof of that. I think what I may be trying to prove to myself if anything, is that being different to 'the crowd' is acceptable and OK.

I think my research has sought to challenge taken-for-granted notions which organisations hold and which leads them to develop a number of problems. I have been keen to allow my research groups to experience group problem solving differently and to think differently from 'the crowd'- that is from the majority of people who engage in problem solving without reflection. This in turn proved to them that there was a different way to carry out problem solving and that this way, although it was new and different, was OK. Maybe there is something about wanting to prove to myself that it is OK to think differently to others and this is what I want to prove to myself...

It seems a little difficult as I ask the question 'so what do I want to prove to others' to consider that I actually do need to prove anything. I seem to be quite a closed in, self-sufficient type of person who doesn't need others in order to operate effectively in the world. This I realise, is my own fantasy and not congruent with the reliance on others that I have, both practically and emotionally on a daily basis. It seems a little awkward to even approach the question of wanting to prove things to others as I don't think that I do. Maybe I am not comfortable with the word 'prove' as this surfaces images for me of someone undermining people using a superior attitude and becoming dominant through applying such proof. I don't want to prove anything to others in that way, but I think that I do seek approval and confirmation that my work has been useful in contributing to

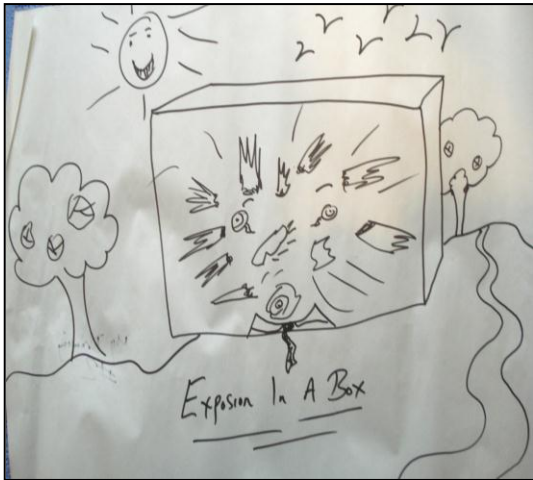
notions of organisational learning and I really would appreciate the approval of my peers for the hard work that I have done throughout the PhD.

7. Unconscious reasons for being a researcher

Throughout the research I have been creating my own projective drawings showing how interacting with both of the research groups was affecting me. My intention was to compile the drawings and use them to reflect on the unconscious processes that may have been operating for me.

I think that it is useful to surface my own unconscious attitudes and emotions at this stage in order to give my personal reflections a different perspective and to try to create a new understanding of the way in which my unconscious process affected both research groups through my underlying attitudes. I carried out the analysis by taking each drawing and looking for both the obvious and less obvious messages they contained. The images were interesting as I was able to find a range of subtle messages within each of them which seemed to portray my own unconscious attitudes about people or situations which I have recognised through my own personal psychotherapy experience.

From the range of images I created throughout the study I selected to discuss four which were representative of general themes throughout my drawings. The drawings are entitled Explosion in a Box (Figure 1), Running Man (Figure 2), Hanging Around (Figure 3) and Jigsaw Puzzle (Figure 4).



Explosion in a box was created to show the pressure I felt at the size of the research task itself. The image is of a Perspex box in the middle of the countryside which contains something which is exploding due to some unseen pressure. The thing exploding in the

box is my head.

Figure 1 Explosion in a Box

Outside in the countryside trees grow, the sun shines, flocks of birds fly overhead and a meandering path leads over a hill to an unseen destination. Although the sun is shining it seems to have a malevolent look about it which makes the image seem to me a little menacing.



Running man is meant to represent the way in which I felt after working with both groups and trying my best, only for the groups to be unappreciative of my efforts. The two men running actually represent me, as it seemed that I had to be in two places at the same time.

Figure 2 Running Man

The two paths are the roads leading to the organisations and the large arrows in front of me represent the urgency I need to attend each group. A dark cloud overhead represents a feeling of worry I have before seeing each group, as I am unsure of their reactions to me. Finally each group are represented to the left and the right of the picture by heads floating like worried balloons over a mass of question marks and untapped psychic energy.

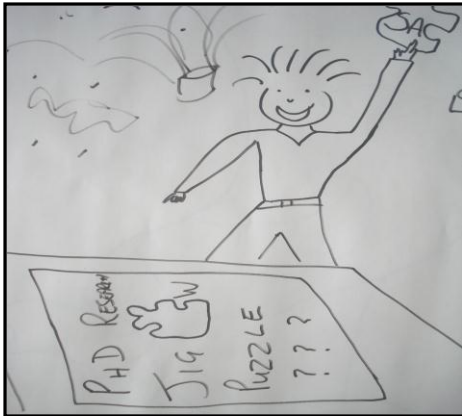


Figure 3 Hanging Around

Hanging Around is intended to demonstrate the loneliness I felt as I carried out the research project and the feeling that the success of the project rested with me.

I am represented in this image as a man hanging over a cliff, trying to scabble up holding onto a precariously thin rope. A solitary bird who is safe on the cliff-side watches nonchalantly. Above and on top of the cliff three people stand, hands in pockets looking at the rope obviously unprepared to do anything apart from watch the spectacle unfolding. The first person asks “What are you going to do now?” It seems that no one has any intention of helping the man but all are interested in watching the ‘action’.

Jigsaw Puzzle represents the moments in the research where things really worked out well and the research group gained new insights into the process. It also represents the relief I felt as the project began to make more sense to me as a facilitator. In the picture a



spiky haired young man holds up a part of a jigsaw puzzle whilst all around him in the background fireworks explode in celebration of his achievement. On the table in front of the man is an almost complete jigsaw puzzle, waiting for the final piece to be inserted in order for it to be finished.

Figure 4 Jigsaw Puzzle

I think that there are a number of unconscious attitudes portrayed in the drawings which may give an indication as to the way I work and understand the world to be. I think the drawings show that I am quite an independent researcher who 'goes it alone'. I manage the pressure of research alone almost as if I were encased in a glass box (as seen in Explosion in a Box). People never see me 'explode' as I internalise my anxiety well.

I think that I do have a fantasy of how people will react to me and I am very anxious when the situation becomes uncertain and when I cannot provide what I believe the group wish (as shown in Running Man). My fantasy of what others expect from me is unsubstantiated but I still feel anxious when I have to perform or 'give' of myself, as a consequence I have an underlying anxiety of disappointing people.

The problem I have with being such an independent researcher is that I often get myself into situations which seem to be impossible to get out of (as shown in Hanging Around) and which I'm not really used to getting out of with the help of other people. At times like this my attitude is to dig deep for my resourcefulness and to extricate myself from the situation with great and unnecessary individual effort. Finally when I do achieve something I really feel like celebrating, as the individual time and effort I have had to put into the venture has created high levels of anxiety which release when the task is completed (as shown in Jigsaw Puzzle).

I think that the analysis of the images may suggest that my research was heavily reliant on my individual effort which probably induced high levels of personal anxiety. As I seem to need to please others and have anxiety around displeasing others, the research may have been compromised by favouring the research participants above the research project.

This may have played out in the control the PhD 2 group had in calling a halt to their research earlier than planned. Maybe if I had been more decisive with the PhD 2 group I could have insisted they adhered to our agreement and complete the research. I think that it was not healthy to keep my anxiety repressed and could have used this anxiety more effectively if I could have discussed with the two groups my own fantasies and fears.

There have been times when the research project was very difficult for me and when I felt that I had metaphorically ‘painted myself into a corner’. On these occasions my instinct was to work the problem out alone, relying on my own competence. Although I appreciate that problem solving and individual effort is required for a PhD researcher to a large extent, I feel that not taking the advice or help of other people such as my supervisor or other Doctoral colleagues may have contributed to an extension of my anxiety and prolonged a more swift resolution of the problem.

I can see that such patterns as the ones I have described happen in my daily life too and certainly affect my behaviour and my attitude to the way I interact with situations. I believe that these traits did actually affect the way in which I handled the research and the way the research developed over a period of time. I obviously had an unconscious impact upon my research participants which in turn affected to some extent their interaction with the project. Although I concede that my attitudes had an affect on the research I cannot honestly say that I may have behaved any differently if we ran the research again next week. I believe that such unconscious and ingrained anxieties may be quite difficult to overcome in a short period of time.

I think that it is helpful, however, to surface unconscious content as this helps the mind to apprehend such behaviours. I believe that it takes a strong and persistent will to become less anxious and not to allow behaviours that have been part of our character for years to suddenly disappear. I am working on my unconscious behaviour through individual therapy sessions, which are very similar to the reflective sessions I ran for the project and

which help me over a number of months to surface and challenge my own ingrained attitudes and behaviours.

8. Original philosophical notions

It is clear to me now that my philosophical position has changed quite considerably over the past three years. This is due to a large extent to the books and journal articles I have exposed myself to, the conferences I have attended and the psychotherapy training I have become involved in over the term of the PhD. If I were to honestly ask myself what was the major influence driving the research process, then I would undoubtedly say that my changing philosophical views have affected the research the most.

Before I began the PhD research I had little idea of how the unconscious actually affected our conscious behaviour, or to what extent this occurred. Before beginning the PhD I enrolled on another degree, the Master of Research and designed the dissertation to utilise projective drawings as the research tool. Even when this work was completed, I was still under the impression that our behaviour was mostly under our conscious control and that the unconscious played a small part in our life. My philosophical view at this time was that unconscious attitudes and emotions may be surfaced in the research project but I was quite unsure as to the extent the unconscious may affect a groups problem solving ability.

I regarded the projective drawings in the early stages of the PhD as a valuable tool with which to surface *something* interesting about other people's attitudes and emotions but I honestly lacked a theoretically grounded framework and context with which to view the

drawings. This lack of framework meant that in the early stages of the PhD I had to rely on the assurances of others such as my supervisor that the projective drawings were really valuable and that they could become the backbone of my attempts to surface the unconscious within my research group. Again, philosophically I was unsure about the benefits of projective techniques in generating learning and knowledge.

After I began the PhD I started to become more interested in the notion of reflection and the writings of Dewey (see Literature Review chapter). I knew that reflection worked as I had used its techniques as a reflective practitioner in my organisational life. My philosophical view at that time was that reflection led to learning, which was beneficial to the individual, although I had no idea of how group learning using reflection could work or even if it did work at all. I also had quite a narrow view on what learning actually was or could be. After attending a conference in 2007 in Copenhagen, however, I was exposed to the notion that learning could be initiated through a wide and diverse range of human activities within or away from the training room which could lead to new knowledge generation. My view that organisational learning could only happen within the training room was very narrow and restricted me in many ways in the early days of my PhD research.

I was also unsure about how to actually use critical reflection within my study as it seemed quite a powerful and yet a potentially damaging theory to implement within a research group. Philosophically I believed that we should question a range of situations from a critically reflective position in order to have an understanding of the agendas of

other power holders who had control over our lives. Practically, however, I considered adopting critical reflection within an organisation to be potentially damaging for everyone concerned if the issue was not handled delicately. Once again I had to trust my instinct and the advice from others that it was possible to be critically reflective and to keep the research participants psychologically free from harm if I introduced the theory well.

9. New philosophical notions

As the research years progressed my philosophical views began to change as I read more widely and began to experience new ways of being in the world. Reading more and more literature gave me a deeper understanding of reflection, critical reflection and projective techniques which certainly changed my philosophical viewpoint to a large extent.

It was the practical experiences of the world in the last three years which really helped me change my basic philosophical views, however. On reflection I can see that there were three main activities which I undertook which gave me a new experience of myself and helped to shape my notions of reality and what knowledge really can be.

The first great influence on my philosophical view was experiencing psychotherapy training and becoming a trainee psychotherapist. Over the past three years I have trained in psychotherapy and learned a number of Freudian and post-Freudian theories of the unconscious, of childhood development, notions regarding the Self and notions regarding mental health.

I work in a training group of around ten trainee psychotherapists and after we have learned new theories and techniques we carry out practical exercises which bring the theory to life. I can honestly say that training to be a psychotherapist and learning so much theory has changed my philosophical view of the unconscious and the extent to which the unconscious affects us. I now believe that the unconscious is one of the main driving forces in many people's lives and that learning is either helped or prevented through the makeup of our unconscious personality.

The second influential factor over the past three years has been my actual experience of being a psychotherapy 'client'. In order to become a psychotherapist it is important to undergo psychotherapy and uncover the specific processes which lead us to think, feel and behave in particular ways. I have weekly therapy sessions which last for fifty minutes with an experienced and qualified psychotherapist. In my sessions I bring a range of my own stories, feelings, thoughts and attitudes which are gently 'unpicked' in order to uncover my own taken-for-granted world-view.

Therapy really begins when I bring situations which are emotionally challenging, which are affecting my happiness or which affect other people in negative ways. It is when we look at this material in the session that we begin to uncover differences between how I think the world is and how it actually is. These differences generally prevent me from being happy and content with my life as they deeply affect my attitudes and behaviour. There is much work in this type of session which I think uses lots of reflective and

critically reflective techniques in order to access hidden and taken-for-granted notions which we generally base our experience of the world upon. I think that being in therapy has given me a great experience of my own internal conscious and unconscious processes which have convinced me of their existence. I have been much more confident to use the notions of the unconscious within the research group as a direct result of my own therapy sessions.

A third and final influence upon my philosophical viewpoint over the last three years is my deepening interest in spirituality. Spirituality is the kind of term which means different things to different people and so is liable to create much confusion when it is being discussed. Spirituality has become for me, an exploration of my Self and the way in which I create the reality around me. I think, as do social constructionists (see the New Theoretical Framework chapter) that we create our reality through our narratives. I also believe that we have a Self which has its own independent reality which is mostly unknown to us but which may influence us, if we quieten the mind and give it a chance to be heard.

I have become mostly interested in the notion that through critically questioning our reality and following our Self intuition, individuals are able to change their lives to become more fulfilled, happier and live closer to the reality of the natural world. Over the last three years I have read widely on the issue of spirituality and the Self and have also experienced in more and more depth different levels of reality and Self through the process of regular daily meditation sessions.

The experience of meditation helps relax the body and slow the chattering mind in order for the Self to come to the forefront and for the mind to lie in the background. Through meditation I have become much more reflective, I have changed some of the priorities in my life and have begun to realise that behind my chattering mind I am able to have a new and peaceful experience of my own life.

These three things have definitely changed my philosophical beliefs over the last three years. By reading more widely through the literature review process and following some subjects which personally interested me, I began to seek out practical ways with which to test out my new knowledge. I tested out my new knowledge by enrolling on a psychotherapy course, taking personal therapy and deepening my spiritual practice over time. The results of this activity mean that I have now developed a philosophical position which is based much more upon my own experience, backed up by theory, which seems more robust than having a position based on mere theory alone. I believe that my changing philosophical views did affect the research project, especially in the way I worked with the groups in practice and the way I developed the new theoretical framework.

I think that I worked more psychotherapeutically with the research groups in the project and became very involved with surfacing their unconscious attitudes through the images. I seemed to be very involved with the way the groups related to one another and to the unconscious content and context of their speech patterns. I also offered the groups a

number of ways to contextualise their own attitudes and behaviour in a similar way in which a psychotherapist would with a client.

I did this in order to help the groups appreciate the range of their own unconscious attitudes and behaviours and the affect this had on their problems. I think that this approach was ultimately beneficial to the research in that it helped solve a number of organisational problems as both of the research groups later confirmed.

The new theoretical framework was heavily influenced by my interest of spirituality and Eastern spirituality in particular. As my own interest in spirituality has deepened I have become more and more convinced that there is a Self, a view which most postmodern researchers would seem to discount. This is curious because at the beginning of the research I would have also classified myself as a postmodern researcher who denied the existence of the Self.

My new philosophical view I believe is closer to subjective phenomenology than it is to the postmodern. It feels as though phenomenology itself is much more representative of this new world-view than postmodernism as I honestly do believe that the Self exists in everyone and is connected through imperceptible means to the external environment. Our ego is the tool which I believe prevents us from experiencing the Self fully and helps to create our subjective experience of reality. Through such acts as meditation, critical philosophical enquiry and psychotherapy I believe the Self may be surfaced and empirical reality may be explored.

By creating a new theoretical framework based on notions of the Self, I think that I injected quite a lot of my own biases into the work. I don't believe that introducing the new framework was the wrong thing to do, after all I did have empirical evidence of coincidence data and it was extremely interesting to me. This data led me to other writers who questioned the link between our inner and outer experiences. This in turn led me to the proposition that our Western ontological view was only one of many such views, and on to a model of philosophy which questioned the foundations for such a view.

It seems that at a conscious level my motivations for engaging in the research process had much to do with becoming more engaged in the learning process itself and exploring new philosophical territory. I believed that my skills as a researcher were well suited to the PhD and found the challenge of completing a PhD research process both rewarding and fun. From a conscious point of view it seems that I am driven by curiosity with life in general and the social world in particular; I also have a conscious sense of needing to feel OK about being different from others and being accepted as a different kind of thinker.

Unconsciously I feel quite alone within the research process itself and develop anxiety which I never express to the research group when the pressure of research becomes too intense. I hate to disappoint others but have a terrible habit of orchestrating problems due to my solitary approach which ultimately leads to the disappointment I fear. With the resolution of my self created problems come immense feelings of relief and happiness as I congratulate myself as to my ingenuity and intelligence. Conveniently for me my

unconscious process rapidly deletes the memory of the situation and how I was the architect of my own problem in the first place, making me prone to repeat the unfortunate cycle over and over again.

As a result of the years spent studying for the PhD, my philosophical views have altered dramatically. At the start of the research process I had only feelings, hunches and second-hand testimony of the power of the unconscious, of projective techniques, of critical theories and the power of emotion. I had little empirical understanding of how all of these issues were linked together or how they may explain how organisational groups learn and generated knowledge. Due to my willingness to embrace new notions such as psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and spirituality I have begun to combine the theories derived from the literature of organisational learning and reflection with my own internal empirical experience. In doing so I have begun to craft a new philosophical understanding of the world and how group members and I operate within it.

10. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates to me both the range and complexity of my attitudes, biases, conscious and unconscious views which have all had an affect on the research at every stage. Before writing the chapter I was aware of how much literature I had read and how this must have affected the research, but I had little understanding that throughout the last three years many of my extra-curricula activities were having an equal effect on the process.

It was interesting to highlight the story of how my own motives contributed to the research and equally fascinating to look at my projective drawings and uncover some of my hidden unconscious attitudes which coloured my interaction with the research. It seems that qualitative research projects such as this really need to have the researcher give a quite detailed 'back story' in order for readers to understand amongst other things, the changing philosophical views of the researcher and the impact of these views upon the whole research project.

As a qualitative researcher I am aware that my results are not replicable or valid in ways which make them statistically robust as those of quantitative research. As a social scientist my role is not to create statistically valid replicable experiments, but to discover the 'finely grained' texture of our social world and organisational systems and bring this to the fore. In this way I am able to contribute to other such work which provides unique 'snapshots' of life within the complexity of post modernity. Such research will be influenced by my own biases and I believe that my biases cannot ever be eliminated from the work.

I still am of the opinion that attempting to surface my own research biases has, in fact strengthened my role as a credible researcher. Throughout the chapter I have attempted to disclose the biases which have affected the PhD research process and made this work in many ways unique. I believe that in many ways my work is very similar to every other qualitative researcher working today. I believe that all researchers have their own preferences, biases and stories to tell as to why their research work is so attractive to

them. I also think that the researcher must go on their own personal ‘journey of discovery’ throughout the life of their own project which will spread into their work by conscious and unconscious means.

I think that one of the fears I have of being so open and candid about the research work is that to some my honesty may totally invalidate the hard work that I have done within the project, the literature I have read, the data I have gathered and the analysis I have undertaken. I think that this chapter is really very important but I also understand that to expose oneself to the ‘glare’ of public scrutiny may be allowing the basis of my work to become devalued. I certainly hope that this is not the case and would agree with Bryans and Mavin (2006, p 120) who advocate researchers disclosing their conscious and unconscious attitudes and biases ‘to reflect upon and become critical of their views of what research is and could/should be and what researchers could and should be and do’

Conclusion

Introduction

In this, the concluding chapter of the thesis I intend to discuss the range of insights gained from the research itself and their implications to management research. I will explore the limitations of the research and its utility within the organisational learning paradigm. Finally I will recommend further areas of research which may be pursued by other organisational researchers in the field as a result of my projects findings.

This thesis used an inductive approach to explore how organisational groups learn. The approach was influenced by writers and researchers from the organisational learning paradigm and also from writers who adopted a psychoanalytical perspective in terms of organisational behaviour. A number of key notions such as reflecting upon experience, action learning, psychoanalysis and projective drawing methods formed the basis of the research process and influenced the research design and implementation. The research itself aimed to explore the way in which individual reflection as exemplified in the reflective practitioner model could be developed into a practice which saw the group itself utilise reflection in a structured and sustainable way, through a process of organizing reflection (Reynolds and Vince, 2004).

The research had many novel aspects including the use of projective drawings within an action learning framework, the development of a methodology which used different levels of reflection in order to surface conscious and unconscious thought processes and the development of a new theoretical framework which could help groups to question

their deeply held philosophies-in-use. The research also developed a number of original insights into how groups learn through its use of the inductive approach. In the next section I intend to discuss my research project in a little more detail.

Conclusion of findings

The research project explored the question ‘how do groups learn?’ and went about answering it through the adoption of psychoanalytic methods within an action research framework. The research findings seem to have shown how organizing group reflection can be extremely rewarding in terms of how groups may co-operate with one another and generate new knowledge and instigate learning.

Within the group model I adopted there is still scope for the reflective practitioner (see Literature Review chapter) to have a role, as each member of the group are still an individual, however, the individual practitioner when becoming part of a reflective group has the opportunity to view their own attitudes, behaviours and emotions from the perspective of others and it is this fact I believe, which helps to generate much of the learning and new knowledge.

By concentrating on one problem alone the group began to see the differences between how they saw the problem and how others experienced it. Using a single problem within a single session was important to organizing reflection, as the subject of reflection was the same for everyone within the group. This meant that the group were able to see differences within each others point of view which they could reflect upon and compare

with their own point of view. After having reflected upon their differences some group members may decide to change their attitudes or behaviour in light of the prevailing group consensus.

Over a period of sessions the group became more aware of both their individual attitudes and their groups attitudes to a number of organisational issues. This awareness was once again useful as the groups realised that they tended to view all problems in a certain way with little innovative thinking occurring before the reflective sessions began. After each reflective session it was clear that there were a number of ways to view the problem and the groups seemed to slowly gain an understanding of this. It was in this way that organizing reflection worked very well for both research groups within the study.

Each group had certain psychological limits to their reflective practices, but this did not prevent them from generating new knowledge, learning and adapting their behaviour to engage with problems differently. I believe that it is important for the researcher not to set up any expectations as to how much reflective practice each group will be able to achieve, how effective this may be or how deeply the group may be able to connect with their feelings. Each group seems to me to be at different stages of psychological development and maturity, which seems to have an impact on the level of reflection which may be achieved. Considering that each group may have different abilities to reflect the facilitator should have no preconceived 'plan' as to the levels of reflection which the group may achieve but should alternatively give each group the opportunity to achieve the best that they possibly can.

Within this research project the two research groups learned how their own conscious and unconscious attitudes and emotions affected how they interacted with one another and how the problems which they worked upon seemed to be linked to their own world-views. Throughout this process group members began to see themselves and their actions from a 'higher' vantage point as they watched and gradually changed their own behaviour in line with the feedback they received throughout the sessions. As the groups got used to the act of reflecting on a number of different levels they learned skills of seeing the world from other points of view and perspectives, this aided their behavioural change and seemed to give them permission to think in new and sometimes innovative ways.

It seemed to be quite surprising to some group members when they realised that each member of the group had a different idea of what the problem they were tackling actually was. There seemed to be a shared fantasy within both groups that everyone could see the organisational problem from only one narrow perspective which all agreed upon. In reality the range of interpretations of the problem showed how diverse the problem actually was. Some group members used the reflective space as a way to disconnect their rational thinking mind from their emotions, whilst other group members connected with their feelings to help solve elements of their group problem.

This research strongly suggests that learning and knowledge generation occur on many different levels, at the conscious and unconscious, the emotional and behavioural, and

individually and through the group. Although learning and knowledge were generated throughout the research process, a high proportion of this new learning seemed to be quite uncomfortable and difficult to attain as these were connected to quite rigid and long-standing unconscious defence processes established specifically to stave off the anxiety of generating new learning.

From a psychoanalytical perspective this research seems to suggest that different groups learn different things through reflective sessions according to the behavioural and attitudinal traits of their members. Groups who are more psychologically defended against anxiety for instance, seem to need to learn about how their defensive processes impacts on their experience of other people and organisational problems. In such a group the whole emphasis on organisational problem solving may be to work on the psychodynamics of the group itself. This is very beneficial to the group as it helps lower defensive anxieties and facilitates organisational learning and problem solving.

Groups such as this seem to be less able to carry out deep levels of reflection which involve tapping into authentic feelings and emotions, as their psychological defences actively avoid such depths of reflection as this may bring up unmanageable feelings to individual group members. It seems that psychologically defended groups may utilise more of their thinking processes and less of their feeling processes within reflective group sessions.

Furthermore the research seems to suggest that embarking on critical group reflection with certain groups, may inadvertently trigger a process of extreme group anxiety which may then lead to the adoption of irrational but necessary defensive strategies in order to protect the group ego. Within such groups the reflective process may become much shorter and more truncated. I have witnessed, for example group members actively avoiding sustained reflective periods and regressing to earlier childhood states in order to defend themselves from anxiety.

This regression process aims to protect the group ego from reflecting on material that may prove to be potentially damaging to its functioning. This defensiveness, if ignored will inevitably prevent problem solving, real learning and knowledge generation from occurring. The group itself, along with the facilitator must be willing to engage with the root of this defensiveness and carefully explore the reasons for such behaviour through reflection, in order to engage once more with the learning process.

I have found that there also seems to be a difference in energy levels between groups who are running defensive strategies and groups that are less defended. In groups who are defending their anxieties they seem to have less energy available to use for reflection, as much of it is being 'siphoned off' by the ego to be used in defensive activities. In less defended groups I have noticed that they seem to have much more energy available to engage in the reflective process and use this to access deeper levels of emotional reflection.

Groups who do not regress to previous childhood states seem to be much more emotionally stable as they seem to have the ability to manage their anxiety more effectively. In groups such as this reflection will also tend to be more effective, to last longer and to be more-wide ranging, as the group has more energy available to engage with a range of reflective techniques which generate new knowledge and learning.

The research has also demonstrated the effectiveness of the projective drawing technique as one which is useful within action learning methodologies to surface both conscious and unconscious content. The technique has been extremely effective when used regularly over a number of months in allowing groups to deeply reflect on their own attitudes, behaviours, emotions and unconscious processes at both an intellectual and an emotional level. I found the projective drawing methodology to be an invaluable tool for developing reflective practice within the group. Using the same sheet of paper for the drawings added an extra dimension as each member were able to see how one another viewed a certain organisational problem.

As a researcher it was important for me to understand the concept of transference (see Literature Review chapter) and to appreciate that any interpretation of the drawings was a subtle reflection of the commentators own world-view and psychological process. In groups that are very psychologically defended, there may be a tendency to unconsciously control the extent of their reflections by drawing images which are non-threatening and quite innocuous. This seems to be a defensive measure aimed at preventing group

members from entering deep levels of reflection which may be quite emotionally challenging for them.

I believe that the added benefit to using the projective drawing technique is that it helps groups to generate new learning about themselves, the organisation and the social world in general. The methodology also seems effective in helping to uncover parts of the group process which lie at the emotional level and which is generally inaccessible to the everyday 'problem solving', thinking, organisational mind.

The research project also found that the role of the facilitator in helping to generate new knowledge and learning seemed to be extremely important within this type of psychologically demanding action learning project. The facilitators' role seemed to be important as it directed group members to deeper levels of reflection and knowledge generation by assisting them to reflect in a structured way and allowing them the permission to experience reflection through both the intellect and other senses. The facilitator's role I developed was one that was both challenging in terms of critical reflection and supportive in terms of the depths of reflection some individuals encountered as they tried to link their emotions to the reflective practice.

As a group facilitator I was aware that my method of assisting group members with deeper levels of reflection was quite effective and helped group members to surface a range of new knowledge about their problems, which in turn generated new learning. Consequently I believe that developing a facilitation role which is both reflective and

emotionally holding and one which incorporates a range of tailored reflective techniques is the best way to enable group members to engage with their conscious and unconscious processes. This enables group members to access a deep level of reflection which contains elements of thinking but also elements of emotional feeling for the issue under reflection.

This research was based on an action learning format but had a number of key differences which made it quite novel and very effective. The action learning sessions were different in a number of ways, for instance groups reflected on one problem in a session and used projective drawing as the tool of reflection. This change of format did not seem to affect the group in terms of its learning, reflecting or changing their behaviour, in fact I believe that these changes had a positive impact on the learning process. Both groups decided quite early on in the research project that they did not want to set action plans at the end of each session and as a result I regularly checked with them at the beginning of each session by inquiring if they had approached the problems differently.

Although the groups did not set action plans I found that they did interact with the problems differently and as a result changed their attitudes and behaviour in relation to the problem, consequently the groups learned to interact with the problem differently. This model had a great flexibility which was very useful to each group as they both reflected at different levels of emotional intensity. The model could easily accommodate reflective practices which had different levels of emotional intensity and which required different skills from the facilitator and generated different types of reflective insight.

The facilitators role itself within the new action learning model was different from traditional models as the facilitator was required to be much more directive in order to lead the group through the different levels of reflection by utilising the projective images. I believe the facilitators role strengthened the reflective practices and the levels of reflection each group achieved by assisting each group and its members to keep focused. By helping the groups to focus on the images and the level of reflection they were embarking upon the facilitator was able to remove the burden of remembering the reflective procedures from the group, which allowed them to concentrate more keenly on the act of reflection itself.

After reflecting on my process as a researcher it is clear to me that this research has been largely based upon my own psychological attitudes, my likes, dislikes and preferences. The new theoretical framework for instance derives from my own interests in critical philosophies and Eastern thought. The research also reflects the stages of my own personal development, my training as a psychotherapist and my fascination with the unconscious process, which have all influenced how I constructed the research and how I carried out the project 'in the field'.

It has also become clear to me that I have influenced the research through my own unconscious anxieties and fantasies, seeking to 'go it alone' in some areas and absorbing the pressure of research internally as opposed to sharing my anxiety with others. I think that it has been useful to surface my anxieties, aspirations and fascinations within the

research process itself by undergoing a period of personal reflection as I feel that somehow the work has gained a certain level of honesty and criticality. As a result of this I feel that I am able to view my research as an authentic aspect of myself and as something which could provide a real contribution to other researchers in the field of organisational learning.

It seems that throughout the research journey my philosophical point of view has slowly shifted and changed. Originally I was of the opinion that reality was constructed through narrative and symbolism which had formed in the large part, due to our experiences of the world we had as infants. My original view point could have been described as postmodern in the first year of research, before I embarked upon my training as a psychotherapist or had the experience of running any research groups.

At the end of my thesis my philosophical view has changed considerably, in that now I accept the notion of a Self which exists within each individual and which connects with a universal energy force, a notion which almost all postmodern writers outrightly reject. I now consider that my philosophical orientation could be better described as phenomenological subjectivism.

My acceptance of the notion of synchronicity has been strengthened due to the empirical work and the literature I have read on the subject and I am persuaded that there is an unseen link between ones internal experience and the external environment. By

accessing these insights I have been influenced by Advaita Vedanta and the Eastern critical approach to our widely held notions of Western reality.

The influence of Advaita Vedanta led to the development of a new theoretical framework for organisational learning which would critically explore a group's philosophies-in-use (see New Theoretical Framework chapter). The new theoretical framework seeks to complement other critical research methodologies in that it aims to emancipate group members through empirically exploring the extent and limits to their own philosophies-in-use.

By doing so the new framework aims to assist groups challenge their taken-for-granted view that they are merely spectators within a world which they have little power to influence either consciously or unconsciously. The framework also seeks to expose groups to new and novel notions held by millions of other people in numerous cultures around the world that their day-to-day participation in the world has much more bearing on their environment than they once considered.

Exploring philosophies-in-use has the potential to generate a host of new knowledge and learning in many areas for both the organisation and the individual. I believe that this framework may sit well alongside other critical views of the organisation, of society, critical views about power and privilege and views of the individuals' role within a Western postmodern society (see Literature Review).

The limits of the research

Each research project utilises a range of philosophical and methodological viewpoints which define the project and the research paradigm but which also sets the research apart from similar work within the field. It is important to establish in the conclusion chapter not only how the research project moves the paradigm forward, but for writers to explicitly express the limits of the research and the taken-for-granted which the research incorporates. By making the limits of the research known the research itself becomes more transparent and in becoming so helps the reader understand where the work stands in comparison with other similar work within the field.

This research incorporated a qualitative philosophical and methodological approach to the study of organisational learning. By utilising this approach the thesis limits itself to researchers who adopt a similar research philosophy and who reject the notion of using positivism and quantitative techniques within the realms of social science. Although scientific advancement has successfully relied on the positivistic paradigm to generate its knowledge for the past few hundred years, I believe that the social world is much too complex to be described by positivist methods such as statistics and data sets.

Although the research may have not been able to generate results which comply with the scientific requirements of replicability for instance, I believe that this approach to knowledge generation is unsuitable in this case due to the fact that human interaction is extremely complex, largely chaotic, unpredictable and ever changing. The scientific paradigm is extremely useful when there exists a small set of variables within a study

which may be identified, isolated or changed. The research I undertook, however, had an enormous number of many different variables which were constantly moving and changing. These variables would be virtually impossible to isolate and to still enable me to derive rich, meaningful data needed for this inductive research project. The research was certainly limited to using a qualitative research philosophy, however, in this particular instance I believe that it was the most suitable approach to adopt.

The research project is also limited by its reliance upon psychoanalysis as a research ontology. There are very few organisational researchers who utilise psychoanalysis within their work as a way of explaining the effects of organisational behaviour on groups or individuals. Many organisational researchers prefer to view human interaction in terms of social constructionism where narratives, ideas and meaning are shared and negotiated between individuals and groups through the complexity of language and symbols. Many other researchers within the field adopt philosophical views which have positivistic roots and seek to explain the organisation in functionalist terms relying upon data which they are able to quantify, control and measure. To such researchers the notion of a hidden part of ones mind which psychoanalysts class as the unconscious which controls our behaviour, thoughts and feelings may be too complicated for some on one hand and completely unprovable for some on the other.

This does not mean to say, however, that there is no place for psychoanalytical research within organisational learning or management studies. I believe that the insights which this research derived have been very interesting, successful and effective to the field and

more importantly the groups involved in the research have experienced learning, personal change and organisational growth as a direct consequence of adopting this approach.

One of the reasons I believe that psychoanalysis is still quite an obscure area of management theory may be due to the initial complexity of the discipline and the great deal of energy needed for researchers interested in psychoanalysis to begin to comprehend and grasp the subject. In my case for instance I needed to attend a week long Tavistock style conference in Paris as a way of initially understanding the basis of psychoanalysis and then I embarked upon a four year psychotherapy course (which I have not yet completed) and began weekly psychotherapy sessions as a client in order to give me a theoretical and practical understanding of what psychoanalysis actually is. If other researchers were interested in using psychoanalysis within their studies then I imagine that they would need to undergo a similar grounding in the subject as I have done, certainly if they wished to run projects based upon psychoanalysis.

Along with psychoanalysis the research utilised projective drawings in order to surface conscious and unconscious content from its participants. Once again the notion of projection is one which sits within the paradigm of psychoanalysis as one of its key tenets and which limits the use of the technique only to practitioners who hold a psychoanalytical ontology. The use of drawings as a way of researching people within organisations is very new and still quite novel; and to researchers who come from other research paradigms it may seem quite irrational. The notion that a simply drawn picture shows anything except the image which has been drawn would, to many researchers be

completely dismissed as unprovable fallacy. When people draw images they draw what they intend to draw, the picture comes straight from the individuals mind and it is clear for everyone to see. To most researchers there is nothing hidden away or controlled by an 'unconscious' within drawn images and attempts to prove that this is not the case would be philosophical folly. It is true that we can never prove the unconscious empirically and we can never prove that an image represents anything except what the artist insists that it is and this seems to be the reason why projective drawings in organisational studies have limited use.

On the other hand, psychoanalytical researchers using projective methods do have great success with their studies in a diverse range of research paradigms by linking drawn images to the unconscious process. To a psychoanalyst, the images themselves portray the inner workings of the mind which are seen through the drawings which contain metaphor, fantasy and childhood reasoning. By viewing the image without a preconceived notion as to the content of the image and by listening to the artists' explanation of the image, the psychoanalytical researcher can gain an understanding of the individuals' unconscious process at work.

If such images are drawn regularly, as in the case of this research, then the task of finding unconscious attitudes and anxieties becomes much simpler. By linking projective techniques to the multi-levelled reflection process, the researcher is able to identify repeating patterns of fantasy, anxiety or defensiveness linked to certain subject matter. In this way the projective drawing process becomes an invaluable tool to access a range of

anxieties, emotions and defences which once surfaced may become the subject for change and the catalyst to learning.

This research is also limited in scope by its utilisation of small project groups involved in reflecting upon their experience as a way to generate new knowledge and learning. Small groups contain within them a number of individuals who all may hold totally different attitudes and understandings of the problem under reflection and disagree vehemently with others interpretation. For a study to actively generate a group consensus of the problem or aim to understand the problem from many ontological viewpoints is, to many researchers unachievable. Questions which arise from such reflective sessions may be concerned with who within the group actually sees the problem in its 'true' light and when groups engage in reflecting upon their experience, who decides if the reflector is basing their reflection experience on fact or fantasy.

This question consequently leads to questions relating to truth claims generated by the group who could be viewed as basing their reflections upon a skewed version of reality in the first instance. Taking this line of reasoning as many researchers following a functionalist paradigm do, it is doubtful if any real learning can occur from the act of reflecting on a group experience which may simply be based on fantasy and which multiplies the confusion in direct proportion to the size of the group.

These questions will certainly limit the research in terms of how valid its results may be to those of a positivist or quantitative ontological viewpoint. From such a viewpoint

questions relating to truth claims and the trustworthiness of experience are certainly valid and create concern. For postmodern researchers and those involved in qualitative work, these questions are far less important. Working with groups who all hold different ontological world-views help to create a rich mixture within the research project itself and are much more representative of the way in which the real world is structured. It is very common, for example for the managing director of an organisation to hold one deep seated view of a problem and for other staff members to hold diametrically opposite views or views which are only partly shared by others.

Seeking to incorporate such diversity within the problem solving arena does generate more rich textural data and may help to deliver results which are equally rich and textured and which are useful to help both solve problems and facilitate the learning process. Developing narrative which describes the problem seems much more effective to working groups than strategies which develop lists and statistical analysis of the problem variables and which then embark upon journeys which attempt to control the uncontrollable group experience.

The argument which questions the truth of ones experience and the notion that reflecting upon the 'untrue experience' leads only to poor insight or learning is an interesting one for the psychoanalytic researcher. Within a psychoanalytic paradigm there are no 'untrue experiences' for the individual to reflect upon, as the reality of their own world is seen as a purely subjective one which can never be shared with others due to the fact that each person has a unique reality derived from their early childhood conditioning. To talk about

untrue experiences the way a positivist researcher may do suggests that everyone must agree with the way in which reality is structured and that there exists common experiences which everyone has undergone and from these experiences each one of us has inferred the self same ontological conclusions. This is clearly not the case as each person has a host of different experiences every day and from such experiences is free to read into them or reject them as they wish.

Using such a line of reasoning the reflective sessions seek to generate individual and group learning through a process of sharing the individuals' ontological reality and comparing this with other members of the group through the act of reflection. As the group reflect, learning and behavioural change are instigated as group members begin to realise that their world-views are different from their peers. This realisation stimulates a conscious and unconscious process of decision making and change where the individual considers letting go of unproductive elements of their world-view and replacing them with more useful views they have been exposed to in the reflective session. This process seems to have occurred many times within the research project and helped generate new knowledge and instigate attitudinal and behavioural changes.

Using an action research methodology may also be viewed by some organisational researchers as making its conclusions very limited in application to other work within the field. Using action research is a time consuming, organisational intensive and highly subjective approach to data gathering. There are no structured interviews or surveys

conducted for instance and the groups partaking in the research project are in no way representative of the organisational mix in terms of sex, ethnicity, age or social status.

The problems which are dealt with within the research itself are all 'management problems' and again are unrepresentative of the problems that other workers who do not have access to the project may be experiencing. As a result of these issues action research may be seen as oppositional to an all encompassing and inclusive research strategy which aims to emancipate the whole organisation, or even help emancipate a representative group of managers and workers, but a tool to help extend management oppression for its own ends. This state of affairs which action research inevitably brings has as its final outcome a means for the company to help generate larger profits which may largely be to the general detriment of individual shopfloor workers.

It is true that using the action research methodology does indeed take time and a great deal of commitment from the organisation and its members as each project often takes many months to complete (as did this project). Participants within any action learning group are all generally time poor and have many other activities which they could be engaged in if they were not involved in the research. It is a testament to the power of action research that the participants did find time from their busy work lives to engage with the project for as long as they did. I believe that this demonstrates that the organisation gained a host of practical and operational benefits by being so engaged. Although the research project was never designed to conduct formal interviews, to issue questionnaires or sought to develop any measure of validity which could be useful to

functionalist researchers, it did generate a large amount of high quality, rich transcription and image data which qualitative researchers would find very interesting and useful in their field.

I think that the critical objections which some researchers may make in terms of how action research is unrepresentative of the organisation, how it may be elitist and how it does not aim to emancipate but establish more control over others are valid points of view. It is true that I had no input into either who would attend the group meetings, their job roles or their status within the organisation. I never insisted that the project concentrated on problems from all around the organisation and not just with management issues. Nor did I insist that a representative voice from the shopfloor workers was needed to make the reflective sessions more balanced. In this way I can understand that organisational writers who hold critical emancipatory views may see little merit in the methodology I incorporated.

In my defence I believe that the action research project did not aspire to such high aims at the onset - aims which I believe are quite unrealistic for 21st Century, postmodern organisations. I believe that workers are largely content with their working conditions and the working practices they engage in, owing largely to the reams of employee legislation enacted over the past twenty years ensuring their overall safety and comfort in the workplace itself.

I do agree, however, with the notion of criticality and of emancipation not of the group collective (as many people do not actually wish to be emancipated!) but of the individual. Individual emancipation in my view is vitally important if people are to begin to stand on their own two feet and begin to think and plan their own lives for themselves in new ways. Individual emancipation is a slow *individual* process involving such methodologies as action research, which aims to demonstrate how our attitudes ensnare us within a cage of oppression. Individual emancipation involves learning new ways of being in the world by questioning how things are at the moment and seeking to change them for the better. It also involves holding a mirror up to our own behaviour and allowing others to comment on how they experience it and using reflection to contemplate this feedback.

I have become a great advocate of using critical methods within my own life through my psychotherapy training and within the organisation through my experiences of groupwork within this project. My point of view differs from more radical critical theorists as I do not take it for granted that everyone 'needs' emancipation to be free. On the contrary my experience is that most people do not wish to be emancipated and are quite happy living and operating in the world in their own way, blissfully unaware and unconcerned of the control system that both supports them and binds them.

This research is probably most limited by the ideas contained within the new theoretical framework which I believe may restrict its attractiveness to a whole range of management researchers. The new theoretical framework proposes that in certain

situations the notion of causality ceases to exist, as the internal human experience seems to be mirrored by an external and physical event by way of 'synchronicity'. Synchronicity is a notion developed in the early 1900's which re-interprets some chance happenings as being in some way significant to an individual's interpersonal growth and development. This notion will seem totally ludicrous to all but the most open minded researcher. Causation is a tried and tested phenomena which explains such mundane things as why we let go of an object that it falls downwards each time, or why when we push a toy car it moves in the direction which we exert the force.

After exploring the notion of causation and synchronicity I went on to explore the very small and specialised area of management research concerned with linking ones internal experience with the external environment by way of mysterious 'connections'. These connections purport to inexplicably link human interaction with the universe in general and may hold great power for individual learning and knowledge generation. Along with such notions I explored the idea of generating 'not yet embodied' knowledge through our sense perceptions.

The reason why this type of research is led by such a small group of researchers is that to many people these notions are statistically unprovable, difficult to produce in a consistent way and scientifically dubious. There is no evidence at all that we are connected to the environment through any kind of energy. Our internal experience - to the social constructionist for instance is totally generated through narrative and symbolic interaction and does not have any kind of mystical element. It is also difficult to imagine the reaction

of managers in the organisation who are not familiar with the notions I am interested in if I were to suggest they were connected to everything and could tap into knowledge they had not yet realised in order to develop an organisational competitive advantage.

After laying the groundwork for the new theoretical framework I proposed that the world which we experience from our Western point of view may be limited in its scope and potentiality. I went on to recommend a critical framework be developed which questioned our own philosophies-in-use as we interact with synchronistic experiences or the inexplicable event within a research group setting. To incorporate the new framework I revisited the notion of the Self which is a foundational notion in many humanistic paradigms but which has been lost within the postmodern management milieu.

There do not seem to be any researchers within the organisational management field who actively question our Western philosophies-in-use and for very good reason. In questioning the basis of our Western reality I believe that I may be undermining or destabilising a raft of notions which are in daily use (as taken-for-granted) and upon which we all build the edifices of the organisation, the family, society and the social world in general. The difficulty in questioning ones philosophies-in-use is that it may be unrewarding in terms of organisational utility but may be very emotionally damaging for the individual if they are led into areas of critical questioning which they are unwilling to venture or unaware of its consequences.

In order to ground my new framework in theory which was historically well established and is still used by millions of people in the East, I proposed to use notions contained within the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta as the basis for group exploration. Advaita Vedanta is a critical approach to the world which questions our ontological view of reality whilst advocating a theory of connection between the individual and the environment through an unseen energy field.

Once again, to many researchers within the management field the adoption of a theory which seems counter-intuitive to Western ontology and which seems to have elements of the mystical or religious will be grounds enough to reject the new framework altogether. Advaita Vedanta rejects Western ontology and seems to replace it with a meaningless view of the world where nothing is as it originally seems and the individual is constantly deluded by *maya* (see New Theoretical Framework chapter). The limits of the new framework seem to be that it may be unacceptable to both positivists and postmodernists in its rejection of both scientific reality and socially constructed narratives which reject the Self outrightly. I believe that these types of reactions from researchers within the management paradigm may limit the research to being of interest only to a few researchers and possibly even at this stage of organisational research – possibly to just myself.

Having explored the limits of the new theoretical framework I think it is only reasonable to provide a response to the criticism which the framework may generate. It is important to stress at the onset that the basis of my theoretical framework came from a number of

empirical experiences which occurred within one of the research groups. This is important to me as the empirical nature of the experiences has encouraged me to follow my own intuition and allow it to develop in whatever way seems to be authentic.

I believe that there is a subtle difference between our personal experience and scientific fact. I reject the belief that science can explain everything in the universe or that anomalies between how science dictates the world should be and what actually is are simply 'errors' and not worthy of further exploration. I believe that human interaction is infinitely complex and ultimately unknowable and that the human being exists within a complicated interconnection of experiences, thoughts and feelings. Science in my view can never isolate human interaction and claim the truth in terms of how the individual experiences the world or how the world interacts with the individual. It is upon this basis that I believe the world is most exciting, unknowable and full of potentiality. This view of course will be outrightly rejected by researchers from the positivistic management paradigm as being 'unscientific', it is the view I take, however, and one that leads me to pursue the new theoretical framework.

I also believe in the notion of the Self and that the Self aspires to evolve towards its own truth and individuation. This belief is based upon the literature I have read over the past year and the empirical experiences I have had of my own Self whilst in my psychotherapy sessions. My view is once again based on my own empirical investigations and the views of other like minded scholars in the field.

As a proponent of the critical approach to individual development I am very interested in exploring the philosophies-in-use which both I hold dear and which others may inadvertently hold. I appreciate that to explore such a delicate subject area takes tact, patience and a great deal of emotional support, however, I believe that such an exploration may lead to powerful insight and learning which may emancipate individuals and their organisations in some way.

Finally I am very persuaded by the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta in the way in which it allows for inquiry into Western philosophical thought and recommends that individuals test its truth notions through empirical experience. I believe that such a tried and tested method of critical enquiry as Advaita Vedanta is a very safe, logical and robust vehicle which may assist groups to explore their taken-for-granted in an atmosphere of support and understanding.

The opportunities for future research

This thesis has linked together a variety of themes, generated a range of novel new conclusions and uncovered a number of original and interesting opportunities for further research within the field. In this final section I aim to discuss some of the more interesting opportunities and explore how researchers may craft new research based upon this work.

The organisational learning paradigm has very few insights derived from taking a psychoanalytical view of the group, but is an area which I believe holds much promise

when exploring the boundaries of learning and knowledge. More researchers are involved in work regarding the organisational group itself as they aim to generate the kind of knowledge which is both practical and insightful. By combining research on groups with research that explores psychoanalytical attitudes and behaviours, I believe that new insights into the learning paradigm may be developed. My research for instance, proposed that different groups have different psychological characteristics and this affects the groups ability to reflect and consequently to learn.

By using a research methodology which explores the group-as-a-whole researchers may find ways to understand why some groups are dynamic, responsive and ‘nimble footed’ within the organisation and why other groups within the same organisation seem to be abrasive, toxic and uncooperative. I have found that groups who get along with one another have a greater capacity to generate ‘useful’ knowledge, as opposed to ‘warring’ groups who seem to be psychologically ‘stuck’ within entrenched attitudes and outdated modes of being.

My research clearly proposes that groups that get along with one another may not be as psychologically defended as groups that do not get along. In regards to group learning, I believe that the friction developed within argumentative groups may actually prevent reflection from taking place as the group regress to psychologically defensive positions which they first established in early childhood.

It would be interesting to carry out a further research project with more organisational groups and study their reflective practices and problem solving methods. The new research could put its emphasis on exploring the levels of group defensiveness and how this affects the groups' ability to reflect and learn. Researchers interested in such a project could be much more actively involved in feeding back to the research groups the defensive positions which each group displayed. In my study I made my own psychoanalytical conclusions after the fieldwork stage was completed within my analysis chapter. It may be interesting for a researcher to be more proactive than I was and to provide each group with reflective feedback within the fieldwork stage itself. The research could then explore how such reflective feedback helps or hinders the research groups to overcome their defensiveness.

This research would be interesting in that it would certainly generate new group knowledge and facilitate learning of some kind, but there is a chance that the groups may become even more deeply entrenched in their defensiveness and see the whole project as counter-productive. This would certainly not be a 'bad' research outcome as it would provide researchers with some useful and interesting data on the group defensive process within a psychoanalytical framework. I believe that the ultimate result with such work should be to help the organisational group grow, develop and attain new levels of knowledge and learning, however, within a psychoanalytical study the risks of group regression and sabotage may always be present as we are dealing with primitive protection instincts.

I consider that one of the great successes of the research project in my view has been the sustained use of projective drawings as a methodology to surface the minds conscious and unconscious content. By using the projective drawings as a basis of reflection and by encouraging the research groups to reflect upon individual, group and critical levels of reflection the ‘floodgates’ were metaphorically opened. The methodology was important as it initiated *discussion*. Discussion then led to reflection and reflection led to group members questioning their own and other people’s attitudes, behaviours, motivations and idiosyncrasies.

The images which were often so simply drawn actually held an enormous amount of information about the artist and their world-view. Sometimes the reflection focused on what was missing from the drawing as opposed to what the drawing contained, but this did not detract from the quality of reflection. The drawings had the ability to surface the unconscious especially when combined with the artists own description of the image and this often became a fertile ground for deep and meaningful group reflection. Finally the drawings had the ability to hold a mirror up against anyone who cared to decipher the images of other artists, as the process of transference showed that the person deciphering the image was really uncovering their own internal world-view (see Literature Review chapter).

I think that the projective drawing methodology combined with the psychoanalytical philosophy has a great deal more to offer the researcher who see a gap within the field and are interested in working with organisational groups. I am always impressed that

such a simple act of drawing can be so revealing and generate so much rich content, as the drawing is described to the group and the group begin their reflection of how they see the drawing themselves.

One way in which the projective methodology could be utilised is by exploring how members of a group see themselves in relation to their peers for instance. With such a project the research group would draw a representation of the way in which they believe they interact with others or how they perceive others interact with them. This approach to group learning could identify issues such as group image, attitudes and perceptions and act in a similar way to this research project as a way to derive new knowledge and learning about oneself and the group process.

Projective techniques are also ideally suited to work with groups who are engaged in organisational change processes with the advent of new technology into the workplace or groups who have to manage working with a lower staffing ratio than they had previously done. Researchers may also be interested in carrying out projective drawing work with individual leaders within an action learning setting and work on the leaders interpersonal and psychodynamic skills as opposed to working on problem solving *per se*. It is still possible of course for leaders to embark on problem solving projects which deliver a host of interpersonal learning outcomes and surface psychologically valid attitudinal content and this may be another option for researchers who find projective drawing interesting.

There are of course a number of gaps within the organisational research literature relating to the type of notions I put forward in my new theoretical framework chapter and which only the very brave researchers may give some notice to. There are no organisational researchers at this time studying the psychoanalytical interplay between a group's inner experience and their outer experience of the world in relation to synchronistic events for instance. There seems to be a deathly silence within all but a few management researchers who have had the courage to explore synchronicity and the organisation. This fact opens up the field with immense opportunities for those researchers who have an interest and are inquisitive enough to explore notions of synchronicity.

One of the main questions is how would a researcher go about creating a project which could explore synchronicity? I believe that there is scope for a research project to explore the fundamental taken-for-granted of organisational life and how these taken-for-granted affect our ability to utilise reflection. If we developed a research project which had a basis of critical reflection and used researchers who were interested in *all* empirical experiences which occurred within a group, then such a project may be viable.

If these researchers were also willing to pursue the experiences of the group and facilitated the groups exploration of those experiences then I think synchronicity would emerge. It is important to remember that synchronicity is not just mental precognition, but can occur in dreams or in our day-dream like fantasy and according to some researchers is more common than we imagine.

What would the exploration of synchronicity provide to the organisational group? I think that this is a difficult question to answer as on the face of it there does not seem to be a direct correlation between the organisation and synchronicity. If we look at researchers who have worked within the bounds of synchronicity, it is quite clear that there is a great deal of benefit to the organisation if its members are more attuned to themselves, their environment, their peers and the needs of their customers.

It may be the case that having groups of employees in the organisation who are skilled at dismantling a host of taken-for-granted philosophies and who are more aware of their influence on the wider environment generates new levels of innovation, lateral thinking or employee relations. I think that at this stage it is really almost too early to anticipate any concrete benefits to the organisation, however, I believe that researching the link between the individual and the environment is important and will be ultimately rewarding.

Another interesting line of research which could be pursued would be to study how organisational groups would react to a research project which used some of the philosophical notions of Advaita Vedanta to critically explore their organisational problems. I imagine that this type of research project would need to be run within an organisation who were very open minded and who were willing to take on new ontological insight in order to gain some kind of competitive advantage by thinking and learning differently. Such an organisation may be an innovative marketing, design or

advertising company who were constantly required to think in new ways in order to fulfil their customer brief for instance.

Critical Advaita Vedanta may have the potential to challenge this type of organisations knowledge generation style and help the organisational group develop new ways of servicing their customers' requirements for innovation and lateral thinking. As a project this would be very interesting as researchers could explore the way in which Western philosophy interacts with Eastern philosophy and how this is utilised within organisational groups. Would such an approach lead to new knowledge generation or would it merely increase a group's defence against the anxiety of being exposed to a new critical philosophy? for example.

Another area of great interest to me and which there is very little academic study from organisational researchers is the psychological role and responsibilities of the action learning set facilitator within groups embarking on reflective practice aimed at surfacing both their conscious and unconscious attitudes and behaviours.

In the traditional action learning set the role of facilitator is quite well documented and described. The facilitator in such a role is seen to be a cross between the referee and a timekeeper, ensuring that each set member has their allotted time to discuss their organisational issue, whilst guaranteeing that everyone else within the set adhere to the group norms and set rules. The set facilitator may have a voice within the session aimed at helping the reflective sessions move along smoothly or stimulating debate if the set are

missing some facts which are important to discuss. Apart from these functions it seems that the set facilitators' role is to stay mostly silent in order to allow the set itself to develop into a free-standing, reflective 'entity'.

My experiences as a set facilitator were much different from the traditional role and seemed to be more helpful to the group in navigating through quite a complex set of reflective activities. My role seemed to be to direct the group members as to when to draw their images and the level of reflection they were required to adopt within the overall process. I also gave my own insights into the groups reflective discussions and my opinion of their psychological functioning from time to time. This helped open the group up to attitudinal insights which were obscured from them, but which certainly had a direct affect on everyone.

Where my role was quite different, however, was when I began to navigate one of the groups into deeper levels of reflection through the use of coaching techniques, intentional silences or enabling the group to discuss their feelings in a safe, 'holding' environment. From such interventions the group began to develop a new experience of the problem and of their relationship with it, which generated new knowledge and learning within the whole group. My interventions gave me the impression that my role was to lead the group - in a similar way a mountain guide would do - into unknown reflective territory and stand back once they had reached their metaphorical destination and watch the interactions and insights which would occur.

Researchers who have a similar interest in generating group knowledge through innovative facilitation methods may also be interested in carrying out research based upon my methodology. The research group could potentially be involved in any kind of reflective practice and any problem solving activity over a period of time, utilising levels of reflection in order to generate insight.

I believe that the most important thing that researchers interested in carrying out this type of facilitation work must have is a decent grounding within both the psychoanalytical and philosophical arenas. It is important for facilitators to have a grounding in psychoanalysis as this will help them identify unconscious games, defences and anxieties which would be very useful for the group to become aware of. Similarly researchers may benefit from their own inquisitiveness around certain philosophical notions such as the Self, ontology and epistemology for instance. Armed with such inquisitiveness researchers may be able to critically challenge the general group consensus as to their certainty of reality or the limits of knowledge generation and learning etc.

The final area of research which is untouched by management researchers at the moment but which again seems to be full of potential to the brave researcher is that of using Advaita Vedanta to critically challenge our Western notions of reality. This topic may be extremely controversial to many researchers as it sets out to challenge the ground of Western thought. One of the difficulties I have with recommending future research by using this notion is the type of context that this research would sit comfortably within. I do not believe that a free-standing research project critically challenging the Western

world-view may be suitable for groups to partake in, as this may be too controversial and could lead to chaos within the group. The exception to this rule is obviously when a group naturally begin to challenge Western notions and the opportunity to explore the subject emerges.

I think at this early stage of development of the idea, the most suitable place to establish such a research project would be within the remit of individual coaching for organisational leaders, senior managers and chief executives. If this were the case and a research project were to operate I could imagine that there would be the opportunity for such people to benefit from questioning our Western truth claims. This research would need to be constructed as a critical exploration of a leaders taken-for-granted philosophies-in-use and could benefit the leader by giving them a wider appreciation of Western thought as being just one of many existing in between other cultural world narratives.

By running such a project the researcher could explore a range of notions as to the psychological attitude of the leader in relation to their philosophy-in-use or how the Western view allows or prevents cultural learning to occur or simply how decision making may be affected by ones deeply held Western philosophies-in-use. Once again my recommendations for further research are very novel and explore difficult, un-chartered management territory. In this case especially I believe that the most suitable way to proceed with the research is to formulate an inductive approach to the exploration

of Advaita Vedanta and leadership with the intention of developing a more structured deductive project in a second research phase.

Tensions within the thesis

This thesis has attempted to bring together a number of epistemologically diverse approaches into unified methodological frameworks, which it might be argued do not seem to fit together upon first glance. As a result of combining such diverse approaches I am aware that running through the work are a number of underlying tensions and epistemological anxieties.

In this section of the thesis I would like to surface some of the tensions which I have found the most interesting and at times the most frustrating. The aim of discussing and surfacing these tensions is not to 'solve' or resolve any of them as this would be impossible. My aim is simply to describe and discuss the dilemma I faced as I progressed through the work and to communicate the nature of the dilemma to the reader. The first tension I aim to discuss is one between my focus on the internal mind (through theories of psychoanalysis) and my focus upon the external conditions concerning reflection and learning (through Dewey's pragmatism).

At the start of the work I stated that the thesis would be informed by the pragmatic works of Dewey and by the psychoanalytical works of the Freudian school, two approaches which seem to hold competing epistemologies. I felt that the works of Dewey (who has an enormous influence of many organisational learning researchers) and his views of

learning as situated within experience, derived from uncomfortableness which could lead to reflection and the development of new action; seemed the most convincing description I could find of how I believe learning takes place. After reading a range of literature concerning organisational learning I was not convinced with either the functionalist models of learning, or convinced with the explanation of learning as a biological process. Dewey's model therefore seemed to me as one which I felt to be 'correct' and which I intended to utilise as the basis for my work.

My interest in psychoanalysis had begun at a very early stage of the PhD itself as I attended a Tavistock style conference in Paris. This conference, the subsequent training courses I attended and the literature I read made me interested in notions of the unconscious and its effect upon enabling or preventing one from learning. The literature I read (and indeed my own instinct) suggested to me that human activity was driven by unconscious processes. I therefore reasoned that the unconscious was an active element in the learning (or failing to learn) endeavour.

The tension emerges from my attempt to combine both approaches within my epistemological framework at the beginning of the thesis. I rather quickly discovered that in order for my framework to make sense I needed to have an ontology and epistemology which could sit together appropriately. The main issue with my epistemologies was that the pragmatic work of Dewey emerged from a philosophical field which took an ontological view that experience was the only reality and that in order to learn individuals should disregard the frameworks they hold, as these tended to colour their experience.

Psychoanalysis on the other hand, is an ontology based upon a framework which researchers use in order to assist individuals and organisations to learn more about their own minds, their behaviours and their emotional states. The framework of psychoanalysis is derived from Freud's work and is quite prescriptive in its philosophical view.

I found the tension inherent within both approaches quite difficult to manage within my theoretical framework. It seemed almost counter intuitive to work from two opposing ontologies within the work, however, I felt and knew that both approaches had an inherent validity to the research, as I believed that learning based reflection could actually be affected by the unconscious mind.

I believed that I had to attempt to resolve the tension in some way, if only for my own peace of mind. I spent many hours researching different philosophical schools of thought in order to find a way to fit the views of Dewey and Freud together. I decided to resolve the impasse by citing both of these works within a postmodern framework. This solution, however, still holds tension but seems to be the only way I have found to combine both philosophical camps. I believe that the resolution of these tensions which still remain unresolved may be the focus of a further research project based upon my work.

A second tension within the thesis emerged as my view of the Self changed. At the onset of the research I had defined myself as a postmodernist researcher, whilst at the conclusion of the work my philosophical position had changed and I described myself as

a phenomenologist. It is quite unusual for researchers to alter their whole philosophical focus as a result of just one piece of work as changing from one view to another requires a radical shift of orientation. To the reader of the thesis it may be very disorientating and puzzling for ones view to change, even though the time between writing the first research proposal and the final draft was a number of years. I acknowledge the tension which underlies my change in perspective but I can observe the metamorphosis occurring throughout the Discussion and New Theoretical Framework sections of the work.

Postmodernism is a view which denies the existence of the Self as residing within the being of the individual and prefers to describe the self as constructed through our social interactions and the signs and signifiers of our social world. As we communicate with others we change the context of our-selves and adapt our persona to accommodate the situation. We use stories and parables to give context to our past and future reality which we constantly share with those who we interact with.

The research element of the thesis was designed in order to analyse the way in which groups solved their organisational problems through a postmodern lens. This approach regarded the group-as-a-whole as one socially constructed entity that would be analysed within the bounds of psychoanalytical theory. Later chapters of the work created their own tensions as I began to uncover literature which described an individual Self as opposed to my original postmodern socially constructed self.

Phenomenology on the other hand describes reality as a projection of human imagination which can be explored, reflected upon and changed through the subjects will. The Self within subjective phenomenology is seen as a real entity of the human being which is connected through consciousness to the individual. By exploring experiences and attempting to 'bracket off' past experiences individuals are able to learn and gain new knowledge.

There exists a tension between postmodernism and phenomenology as both views are diametrically opposed to one another in relation to the Self. Using one theoretical framework at the beginning of the research and a different one at the conclusion of the work is definitely unusual, but can be explained by the amount of extra-curricular activities I engaged in throughout the research project. As I enrolled on a psychotherapy course at the start of my PhD I became familiar with both Freudian and humanistic schools of psychoanalysis.

As I analysed the research data a few years later, I was quite persuaded because of my own experiences and new knowledge that the Self actually existed; my Discussion section I believe then began to show this change. The New Theoretical Framework chapter 'showed my hand' as a phenomenologist and my Reflections on the Research Process chapter discussed the change of viewpoint. The tension which I generated in the work evolved from my own inner journey of discovery and experience which I learned the philosophy of postmodernism could simply not explain.

A third tension within the thesis exists as I work within a number of theoretical frameworks whilst adopting non a-priori standpoints at the same time. At the onset of the thesis for instance I advocated using the theoretical framework of psychoanalysis to develop the initial methodology and analyse my data, whilst suggesting the use of Dewey's pragmatism, which advocated a non a-priori approach to interacting with experiences in order to learn. As I have already discussed this moulding of two diverse philosophies caused me some consternation throughout the development of the philosophical framework, as I attempted to 'square' the philosophical 'circle'.

After I had analysed the data and went on to create my new theoretical framework I once again came across tensions which developed between a-priori and non-a-priori modes of thought. The new theoretical framework I developed, for example led me to the works of Jung and Advaita Vedanta and finally to the philosophy of phenomenology.

Within the requirements of a phenomenological approach to experience, the individual is required to 'bracket off' their former experiences and interact with the environment with a non-a-priori mind. The act of approaching experiences with a value free mind may be very difficult indeed, especially as the individual will have had years and years worth of experiences which they have learned to attach value judgements onto.

As a researcher who purports to have a phenomenological philosophy, my position is quite difficult and has its own underlying tension. My own tension arises from the fact that I believe in a non-a-priori approach to experiences, yet I do not actually advocate the

same within the thesis as I propose a new theoretical framework with which to work in the future.

This tension seems similar to my original tension of psychoanalysis and pragmatism. It seems that throughout the work I have proposed the blending of approaches which seem to me to have some relationship and corresponding utility, yet which in their philosophical application may be problematic to other researchers.

As I stated at the beginning of this section, I believe that there are no resolutions to these particular tensions and to propose to 'solve' them may indeed be impossible. It is interesting, however, to surface and discuss the underlying anxieties as they demonstrate the dynamics involved in crafting work which is both novel and innovative within the research field.

Validity of the research

This research project was conducted within a methodological framework which utilised both rigour and coherence to strengthen its credibility. A further element which I believe enhances this work is its methodological validity. Validity emerges from credible research methods such as rigour and coherence and provides other researchers with the confidence to use the original research project methodologies and practices within their own work (Golafshani, 2003). I believe that the issue of validity may be especially relevant for researchers who are interested in furthering the field of knowledge within organisational learning, reflection and psychoanalysis.

One of the main reasons that I believe the research has validity is that it actually achieved its overall aim of answering its main research question of ‘how do groups learn? The way in which I answered the research question was to develop a number of sub-questions which informed my final analysis. An example of some of the sub questions are as follows:

Within the thesis I asked how I could combine individual, group and critical reflection in ways that solved organisational problems and generated new knowledge and learning. I also asked questions of the utility of knowledge generation techniques which were derived from new action learning methodologies which I had developed.

Other sub-questions asked how learning would be affected by projective drawing methodologies which surfaced conscious and unconscious thoughts and feelings. I also asked questions relating to the psychological effect of reflection and projective drawing and how these techniques may influence the group’s ego defences, their anxiety levels and their ability to generate new knowledge and learning.

I demonstrated the validity of the research in a number of other ways throughout the thesis. My philosophical positions for instance were apparent, relevant to the methodology and were themselves the subject of reflection and analysis. The literature I reviewed I believe was wide ranging and appropriate to the project and was balanced through the use of critique from writers holding different philosophical positions to the

main authors. The projective drawing methodology I utilised was based upon the appropriate philosophy and the results of the data I gathered from the drawings and the transcriptions were analysed by means of the accepted hermeneutic method.

Where I did change the methodology of any technique, for instance within the action learning fieldwork element, I was careful to reveal the changes that I had implemented and was keen to discuss them and their impact to the research outcome itself.

I was aware of the difficulty of becoming embroiled within the research project and understood the significance of my own situatedness as a researcher and as a participant. As a consequence of this I openly reflected upon my own biases, my conscious and unconscious thoughts and my preference for creating such a research project by means of an extensive chapter which shared my reflective thoughts. Finally as I developed my own new theoretical framework I was careful to bring in more literature from writers within the new field of study and cite their contributions. Along with this I was open in revealing my own change of philosophical orientation which had developed as a direct result of my own experiences, learning and extensive reading of the literature over the lifetime of the project.

As a result of my diligence, I believe that other researchers will be able to utilise this work with confidence, in order to help progress the field of organisational learning. Researchers may be able to use my research in a number of ways. The projective drawing methodology could be adopted within an action learning environment for instance. This

would enable researchers to study reflection from a conscious and unconscious point of view and explore how problem solving may be developed using such a technique. Other researchers may wish to utilise the augmented action research methodologies I developed within the thesis and concentrate their research project upon a single group problem whilst facilitating group members' reflections in new and productive ways. Using some of my project findings, other researchers who have backgrounds in psychoanalysis may wish to explore group defences against anxiety and their effect on the way groups learn. Of particular interest may be the levels of learning which groups may achieve and the corresponding levels of defence the group may display.

Conclusion

The final chapter of this thesis discussed the research project and its results. The chapter went on to explore the utility of the methodological approach which I adopted and the new insights I generated within the organisational learning field.

The chapter also critiqued my overall research approach by challenging some of the limits of the research project itself in order to give the reader an appreciation that the research is limited by its philosophical and methodological taken-for-granted.

The chapter ended with recommendations for future research which other management researchers may wish to take up should they have an interest in following my work within the organisational learning paradigm.

References

- ADORNO, T. W., FRENKEL-BRUNSWIK, E., DLEVINSON & SANFORD, N. (1950) *The Authoritarian Personality*, New York, Harper and Row.
- AGAR, M. (2006) An ethnography by any other name. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol. 7 Issue 4, Article 36.
- AGELL, G. & RHYNE, J. (1998) Dissertation: Drawings as personal constructs, a study in visual dynamics. *American Journal of Art Therapy*, Vol. 36, Issue 4.
- ALFORD, C. (1994) *Group Psychology and Political Theory*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press.
- ALLMAN, P. (2001) *Critical Education against Global Capitalism: Karl Marx and Revolutionary Critical Education*, Westport CT and London, Bergin & Garvey.
- ALVESSON, M. & WILLMOTT, H. (1992a) (Eds.), *Critical Management Studies*, London, Sage.
- ANTONACOPOULOU, E. P. & GABRIEL, Y. (2001) Emotion, learning and organisational change. *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, Vol. 14, Issue 5, pp. 435-451.
- APPLETON, J. & KING, L. (1997) Constructivism: a naturalistic methodology for nursing inquiry. *Advances in Nursing Science*, Vol. 20, Issue 2, pp. 13-22.
- ARGYRIS, C., PUTNAM, R. & SMITH, D. (1985) *Action Science*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- ARGYRIS, C. & SCHÖN, D. (1974) *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- ARGYRIS, C. & SCHÖN, D. (1978) *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*, Reading, Mass., Addison Wesley.
- ARGYRIS, C. & SCHÖN, D. A. (1996) *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method and Practice*, Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley.
- BACKE, A. (1999) Dewey and the reflex arc: The limits of James's experience. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, Vol. 35, Issue 2, pp. 312-329.
- BAER, J., KAUFMAN, J. C. & BAUMEISTER, R. F. (2008) *Are we free?: psychology and free will*, New York, Oxford University Press.
- BAIN, A. (1998) Social defenses against organisational learning. *Human Relations*, Vol. 51, Issue 3, pp. 413-29.
- BASS, B. & VAUGHAN, J. (1969) *Training in Industry: The Management of Learning*, London, Tavistock Publications.
- BAUM, H. (1989) Organizational politics against organizational culture: a psychoanalytic perspective. *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 28.
- BELL, J. E. (1948) *Projective Techniques: A Dynamic Approach to the Study of the Personality*, New York, Longmans Green & Co. .
- BERGER, P. L. & LUCKMAN, T. (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Garden City, NY, Doubleday.
- BERNSTEIN, R. J. (1966) *John Dewey*, New York, Washington Square Press, Inc.
- BEST, S. & KELLNER, D. (1991) *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations* London, McMillan.

- BIER, D. L. (1986) *Modern Madness: The Emotional Fallout of Success*, Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley.
- BION, W. (1961) *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers*, New York, Basic Books.
- BION, W. (1990) *Brazilian Lectures*, London, Karnac.
- BLACKMAN, D., CONNELLY, J. & HENDERSON, S. (2004) Does double loop learning create reliable knowledge? *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 11, Issue 1.
- BLAIKIE, N. (2000) *Designing Social Research*, Cambridge, Polity.
- BOJE, D. M. (1991a) Learning storytelling: storytelling to learn management skills. *Journal of Management Education*, Vol. 15, Issue 3, pp. 279-94.
- BOU, E. (2006) Productive reflection at work. *Management Learning*, Vol. 37, Issue 3, pp. 410-413.
- BOUD, D., CRESSEY, P. & DOCHERTY, P. (2006) (eds.), *Productive Reflection at Work*, London, Routledge.
- BRITZMAN, D. P. (1998a) *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects: Towards a Psychoanalytic Enquiry of Learning* Albany NY, SUNY Press.
- BROWN, W. (1960) *Exploration in Management* London, Heinemann.
- BRYANS, P. & MAVIN., S. (2006) Visual images: a technique to surface conceptions of research and researchers. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, Vol. 1, Issue 2, pg. 113.
- BURGOYNE, J. & REYNOLDS, M. (1997) *Management Learning - Integrating Perspectives in Theory and Practice*, London, Sage.
- CAMERON, J. (1992) *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*, New York, NY, Jeremy P. Tarcher
- CAPRA, F. (1976) *The Tao Of Physics*, London, Fontana.
- CARR, A. (1989) *Organisational Psychology: Its Origins, Assumptions and Implications for Educational Administration*, Geelong, Deakin University.
- CARR, A. (1993) The psychostructure of work: `bend me, shape me, anyway you want me, as long as you love me, it's all right. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 8, Issue 6.
- CARR, A. (1994) For self or others?: the quest for narcissism and the ego-ideal in work organisations. *Administrative Theory and Praxis*, Vol.16, Issue 2.
- CARR, A. (1998) Identity, compliance and dissent in organisations: a psychoanalytic perspective. *Organization*, Vol. 5, Issue 1.
- CARR, A. (2000) Critical theory and the psychodynamics of change: A note about organizations as therapeutic settings. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 13, Iss. 3, pg. 289.
- CARTER, S. & LITTLE, M. (2007) Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: epistemologies, methodologies and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol. 7, Issue 10.
- CHASSEGUET-SMIRGEL, J. (1976) Some thoughts on the ego ideal. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Vol. 45, pp. 345-73.
- CHODOROW, N. (1987) *Feminism and difference: gender, relation, and difference in psychoanalytic perspective"*, in Walsh, M. (Ed.), *The Psychology of Women*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press.

- CLARK, M. C. & DIRKX, J. M. (2000) *Moving Beyond a Unitary Self: A Reflective Dialogue*, in A L Wilson & E R Hayes (Eds.), *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education New Edition*, San Francisco, Josey-Bass.
- CLARKSON, P. (1995) *The therapeutic relationship in psychoanalysis, counseling psychology and psychotherapy*, London, Whurr.
- CLEGG, S. (1990) *Modern Organizations: Organization Studies in teh Postmodern World*, London, Sage.
- COMBS, A. & HOLLAND, M. (1996) *Synchronicity: Science, Myth, and the Trickster*, New York, NY, Marlowe & Company.
- COUPLAND, C., BLYTON, P. & BACON, N. (2005) A longitudinal study of the influence of shop floor work teams on expressions of 'us' and 'them'. *Human Relations*, Vol. 58, Issue 8, pp. 1055-182.
- CUNNINGHAM, I. (1994) *The Wisdom of Strategic Learning* London, McGraw-Hill.
- DE-LASZLO, V. S. (1958) *Psyche & Symbol: A selection of writings of C. G. Jung*, Garden City, NY, Anchor Original.
- DE.SASSURE, F. (1915) *Cours de Linguistique Generale*, Geneva.
- DEHLER, G. E. & EDMONDS, R. K. (2006) Using action research to connect practice to learning: A course project for working management students. *Journal of Management Education*, Vol. 30, Issue 5, pp. 636-670.
- DELOO, I. (2002) The troublesome relationship between action learning and organizational growth. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, Vol. 14 Issue 5/6, pg. 245.
- DERRIDA, J. (1973) *Speech and Phenomena*, Evanston IL, Northwest University Press.
- DEUTSCH, E. & VAN-BUITENEN, J. A. B. (1971) *A Source Book of Advaita Vedanta*, Honolulu, The University Press of Hawaii.
- DEWEY, J. (1896) *The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology*, in J. A. Boydston (ed.) *Early Works, Vol. 5*, , Carbondale & Edwardsville Southern Illinois University Press.
- DEWEY, J. (1916) *Democracy and Education*. The Middle Works of John Dewey Volume 9: J A Boydston (Ed.). Carbondale & Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press.
- DEWEY, J. (1917) *The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy*, in J. A. Boydston (ed.), *Middle Works Volume10*, Carbondale & Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press.
- DEWEY, J. (1933) *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process*, in J. A. Boydston (ed.) *Later Works, Vol. 8*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press.
- DEWEY, J. (1938) *Logic, the Theory of Enquiry*, New York, Holt.
- DEWEY, J. (1981) *Experience and Nature*, in: J. A. Boydston (ed.) *John Dewey: The Later Works, vol. 1*, Carbondale IL, University of Southern Illinois Press.
- DEWEY, J. (1985) *The problem of truth*, in: J. A. Boydston (ed.) *John Dewey: The Middle Works, vol. 6*, Carbondale IL, University of Southern Illinois Press.
- DEWEY, J. (1988) *The Quest for Certainty*, in: J. A. Boydston (ed.) *John Dewey: The Later Works, vol. 1*, Carbondale IL, University of Southern Illinois Press.
- DEWEY, J. & BENTLEY, A. F. (1949) *Knowing and the Known*, in J. A. Boydston (ed.) *Later Works Vol. 16*, Carbondale & Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press.

- DIAMOND, M. A. (1993) *The Unconscious Life of Organizations: Interpreting Organizational Identity*, London, Quorum.
- DILWORTH, R. (1998b) Action learning at Virginia Commonwealth University: blending action, reflection, critical incident methodologies, and portfolio assessment. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, Vol. 11 Issue 2, pp. 17-33.
- DIXON, N. C. (1994) *The Organizational Learning Cycle: How we can Learn Collectively*, London, McGraw-Hill.
- DRIVER, M. (2003) Nothing clinical, just business? Reflections on psychoanalytically grounded organizational diagnosis and intervention. *Human Relations*, Vol. 56, Issue 1, pg. 39.
- DURANT, R. (2002) Synchronicity: a post-structuralist guide to creativity and change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 15, Issue 5, pp. 490-501.
- EASTERBY-SMITH, M. (1997) Disciplines of organisational learning: Contributions and critiques. *Human Relations*, Vol. 50, Iss. 9, pp. 1085-113.
- EASTERBY-SMITH, M. & ARAUJO, L. (1999) *Organisational learning, current debates and opportunities*, in M Easterby-Smith, J Burgoyne and L Araujo (Eds.), *Organisational Learning and the Learning Organisation*, London, Sage.
- EASWARAN, E. (1987) *The Upanishads*, St Ives, Penguin.
- EGAN, G. (1986) *The Skilled Helper*, Monterey, CA, Brooks Cole.
- EIGEN, M. (1985) Between catastrophe and faith. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Issue 66, pp. 321-30.
- ELKJAER, B. (2004) Organizational learning: The 'Third Way'. *Management Learning*, Vol. 35, Issue. 4, pg. 419.
- ELLESTROM, P. E. (2006) *The meaning and role of reflection in informal learning at work*, in D Boud, P Cressey, P Docherty (Eds.), *Productive Reflection at Work*, London, Routledge.
- ELLESWORTH, E. (1997) *Teaching Positions: Difference, Pedagogy and the Power of Address*, New York, Teachers College Press.
- ERAUT, M. (1994) *Developing Professional Knowledge and Competence*, London, Farmer.
- FAIRCLOUGH, N. (1992) *Discourse and social change*, Cambridge UK, Polity Press.
- FASSEL, D. (1990) *Working Ourselves to Death*, San Francisco, Harper.
- FAY, B. (1987) *Critical Social Science*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- FENWICK, T. J. (2001) Experiential learning, a theoretical critique from five perspectives. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education*. Columbus OH, University of Alberta.
- FINEMAN, S. (1993) *Emotion in Organisations*, London, Sage.
- FINGER, M. & ASUN, M. (2000) *Adult Education at the Crossroads, Learning our way out*, London, Zed Books.
- FIRESTONE, J. M. & MCELROY, M. W. (2003) The Open Enterprise. *Knowledge Management ~ Consortium International Online*, available at: www.kmci.org.
- FOOTE-WHYTE, W. (1991) *Participatory Action Research, 1st edition.*, Newbury Park, CA., Sage Publications.
- FOSSEY, E., HARVEY, C., MCDERMOTT, F. & DAVIDSON, L. (2002) Understanding and evaluating qualitative research. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* Issue 36 pp. 717-732.

- FRENCH, R. & GREY, C. (1996) (Eds.), *Rethinking Management Education*, London, Sage.
- FRENCH, R. & VINCE, R. (1999) *Group Relations, Management and Organisations* Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- FREUD, S. (1900) 'The interpretation of dreams'. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. V*, London, Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.
- FREUD, S. (1912) *The Dynamics of Transference*, London, Hogarth Press.
- FREUD, S. (1920) 'Beyond the pleasure principle' *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVIII.*, London, Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.
- FREUD, S. (1955) *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego. In J. Strachey (Ed. and Trans.), The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* London, Hogarth Press.
- FREUD, S. (1984a) *The Unconscious, On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis* Harmondsworth, Pelican Freud Library.
- FREUD, S. (1985) *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego*, in Freud, S., *Civilization, Society and Religion*. Harmondsworth, Pelican Freud Library.
- FREUD, S. (1986) *An outline of psychoanalysis, Historical and Expository Works on Psychoanalysis* Harmondsworth, Pelican Freud Library.
- FREUD, S. (1988) *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* Harmondsworth, Pelican Freud Library.
- FROMM, E. (1966) *Escape from Freedom* New York, Avon Library.
- GABRIEL, Y. (1991) Turning facts into stories and stories into facts: A hermeneutic exploration of organizational folklore. *Human Relations*, Vol. 44, Issue 8, pp. 857-875.
- GABRIEL, Y. (2002) Notes from an email correspondence with M Driver, 23 March 2002.
- GABRIEL, Y. (2005) *Organisations and their Discontents- Miasma Toxicity and Violation. . Critical Management Studies 4 Conference*. Cambridge.
- GABRIEL, Y. & CARR, A. (2002) Organizations, Management and Psychoanalysis: An Overview. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 17, Iss. 5, pg. 348.
- GABRIEL, Y. & GRIFFITHS, D. S. (2002) Emotion, Learning and Organizing. *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 9, Issue 5, pp. 214-221.
- GARRATT, B. (1983) *The Power of Action Learning, in Pedler, M. (Ed.), Action Learning in Practice*, Aldershot, Gower Publishing.
- GEUSS, R. (1981) *The Idea of Critical Theory: Habermas & the Frankfurt School*, Cambridge, Cambridge University.
- GILL, M. (1982) *Analysis of Transference, Vol. I, Theory and Technique*, New York, International Universities Press.
- GILLIGAN, C. & POLLACK, S. (1988) *The Vulnerable and Invulnerable Physician. in C. Gilligan, J. V. Ward, and J. M. Taylor, with B. Baldrige (Eds.), Mapping the Moral Domain*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- GIROUX, H. (1992) *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education*, London Routledge.
- GODMAN, D. (1985) *The Teachings of Shri Ramana Maharshi*, St Ives, Penguin.

- GOLAFSHANI, N. (2003) Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report* 8, 4, pp. 597-607.
- GRANT, D., KEENOY, T. & OSWICK, C. (1998) *Of Diversity, Dichotomy and Multidisciplinarity' in Grant, D., Keenoy, T. and Oswick, C. Discourse and Organization, (eds.), London, Sage.*
- GREENBERG, J. & MITCHELL, S. (1983) *Object relations in psychoanalytic theory*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
- GREENSON, R. R. (1967) *The Technique and Practice of Psychoanalysis*, New York, International Universities Press.
- GREENWOOD, D. & LEVIN, M. (1998) *Introduction to Action Research - Social Research for Social Change*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage Publications.
- GUBA, E. (1990) *The alternative paradigm dialogue. In: The Paradigm Dialogue, E Guba (Ed.), Newbury Park, CA., Sage Publications.*
- HABERMAS, J. (1972) *Knowledge and Human Interests*, London, Heinemann.
- HANDY, C. (1996) *Beyond Uncertainty*, Boston, MA, Harvard Business School Press.
- HARRISON, R. (1996) Action learning: route or barrier to the learning organization? *Journal of Workplace Learning*, No. 8, pp. 29-41.
- HART, M. (1992) *Working and Educating for Life*, London, Routledge.
- HEARN, J. & PARKIN, P. (1991) *Women, Men and Leadership: a Critical Review of Assumptions, Practices and Changes in the Industrialized Nations"*, in Adler, N. and Izraeli, D. (Eds.), *Women in Management Worldwide, 2nd edition*, New York, M.E. Sharpe.
- HEIDEGGER, M. (1993) *"What is metaphysics?"*, in Krell, D.F. (Ed.), *Basic Writings: From Being and Time to The Task of Thinking, 2nd ed., Martin Heidegger*, San Francisco, CA, Harper San Francisco.
- HENDERSON, S. (1997) Black swans don't fly double loops: the limits of the learning organisation? *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 4, Issue 3, pp. 99-105.
- HERON, J. (1996) *Co-operative Inquiry: Research into the Human Condition*, London, Sage.
- HERON, J. & REASON, P. (1997) A participatory inquiry paradigm. *Qualitative Inquiry* Vol. 3, Issue 3, pp. 274-94.
- HILL, R. C. & LEVENHAGEN, M. (1995) Metaphors and mental models: Senseaking and sensegiving in innovative and entrepreneurial activities. *Journal of management* Vol. 21, Issue 6, pp. 1057-74.
- HILLON, M. E. & BOJE, D. M. (2007) The social ecology of action research. *Management Research News*, Vol. 30, Issue 5, pg. 359.
- HIRSCHHORN, L. (1990) Leaders and followers in a postindustrial age: a psychodynamic view. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, Vol. 26 Issue 4.
- HOCHSCHILD, A. R. (1979) Emotion, work, feeling rules and social structure. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 85, Issue 3, pp. 551-75.
- HODGKINSON, B. (2006) *The Essence of Vedanta, the Ancient Wisdom of Indian Philosophy*, London, Arcturus Publishing.
- HOGGETT, P. (1992) *Partisans in an Uncertain World: The Psychoanalysis of Engagement*, London, Free Association Press.

- HOLMAN, R., PAVLICA, K. & THORPE, R. (1997) Rethinking Kolb's theory of learning in management education. *Management Learning*, Vol. 28, Issue 2, pp. 135-148.
- HONDERICH, T. (1993) *How Free Are You? - The Determinism Problem* Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- HORKHEIMER, M. (1995a) "The end of reason", in Arato, A. and Gebhardt, E. (Eds), *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, New York, Continuum.
- HORNE, M., SOWA, A. & ISENMAN, D. (2000) Philosophical assumptions in Freud, Jung and Bion: questions of causality. *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, Issue 45.
- HORWITZ, L. (1983) Projective identification in dyads and groups. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, Vol. 33, pp. 259-279.
- HOWARD, S. (2002) A spiritual perspective on learning in the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 17, Issue 3, pp. 230-242.
- HOWE, K. & EISENHART, M. (1990) Standards for qualitative (and quantitative) research: A prolegomenon *Educational Researcher* Issue 19 pp. 2-9.
- HUME, D. (1956) *A Treatise of Human Nature* London, Everyman.
- JACOBSON, K. (1995) Where there is power, there is no eros: a Jungian interpretation. *American Review of Public Administration*, Vol. 25, pp. 21-43.
- JAMES, K. & VINNICOMBE, S. (2002) "Acknowledging the individual in the researcher", in Partington, D. (Ed.), *Essential Skills for Management Research*, London, Sage.
- JAQUES, E. (1951) *The Changing Culture of a Factory*, London, Tavistock Publications.
- JAQUES, E. (1995) Why the psychoanalytical approach to understanding organisations is dysfunctional. *Human Relations*, Vol 48, Issue 4, pp. 343-349.
- JAWORSKI, J. (1998) *Synchronicity - The Inner Path of Leadership*, San Francisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler.
- JAWORSKI, J. & SCHARMER, C. O. (2000) Leadership in the New Economy: Sensing and Actualizing Emerging Futures, working paper, Society for Organizational Learning. Cambridge, MA.
- JOHNSON, P. & DUBERLEY, J. (2000) *Understanding Management Research*, London Sage
- JOHNSON, W. (1994) *The Bhagavad Gita*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- JORSTAD, J. (1991) Contemporary leaders: power and powerlessness. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 12, pp. 21-31.
- JUNG, C. J. (1952b/1970) 'On synchronicity' in M Fordham, H Read (Eds.) *The Collected Works Of C.g. Jung, Volume 8: Structure & Dynamics Of The Psyche*, Princeton, Bollingen.
- JUNG, C. J. (1955/1972) *Synchronicity :An Acausal Connecting Principle* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- JUNG, C. J. (1990) *Symbols of Transformation*, Princetown, Princetown University Press.
- KAHN, M. (2002) *Basic Freud*, New York, Basic Books.
- KANT, I. (1996) *Critique of Pure Reason (Translated by WS Pluhar)*, Indianapolis, Hackett.

- KEARNEY, K. S. & HYLE, A. E. (2004) Drawing out emotions: the use of participant-produced drawings in qualitative enquiry. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, Vol. 4, Issue 3, pp. 361-82.
- KERSTEN, A. (2001) Organizing for powerlessness: A critical perspective on psychodynamics and dysfunctionality. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 14, Issue 5, pg. 452.
- KETS-DE-VRIES, M. & MILLER, D. (1984a) Neurotic styles and organizational pathology. *Strategic Management Journal*, Issue 5, pp. 35-55.
- KETS-DE-VRIES, M. & MILLER, D. (1985) *The Neurotic Organisation*, London, Jossey-Bass.
- KETS-DE-VRIES, M. & MILLER, D. (1987) Interpreting organizational texts. *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 24, Issue 3.
- KLEIN, M. (1946) *Notes on some schizoid mechanisms, in Envy and Gratitude and Other Works, 1946-1963* New York, Free Press.
- KLEIN, M. (1952a) *On observing the behaviour of young infants. In M. Klein, P. Heimann, S. Isaacs, & J. Riviere (Eds.), Developments in Psycho-Analysis*, London, Hogarth.
- KLEIN, M. (1959) Our adult world and its roots in infancy. *Human Relations*, Vol. 12, pp. 291-303.
- KLEIN, M. (1975) *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works, 1921-1945*, London, Hogarth.
- KLINE, W. (2008) Developing and Submitting Credible Qualitative Manuscripts *Counsellor Education and Supervision*, Vol. 47, Issue 4, pg. 210.
- KOFMAN, F. & SENGE, P. (1993) Communities of commitment; the heart of learning organisation *Organisational Dynamics*, Vol. 22, Iss. 2.
- KOLB, D. (1984) *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall.
- KORTHAGEN, F. A. J. (1993) Two modes of reflection. *Teacher & Teacher Education*, Vol. 9, Issue 3, pp. 317-26.
- LAPLANCHE, J. & PONTALIS, J. (1988) *The Language of Psycho-Analysis, Nicholson-Smith, D. (Trans.)*, London, Karnac Books.
- LASH, S. & URRY, J. (1987) *The End of Organized Capitalism*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- LATOUR, B. (1990) Postmodern? no simply amodern! steps toward an anthropology of science. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, Issue 21, pp. 145-171.
- LAVE, J. (1988) *Cognition in Practice: Mind, Mathematics and Culture in Everyday Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- LEVI-STRAUSS, G. (1955) The structural study of myth. *Journal of American Folklore*, LXVIII, Issue 270, pp. 428-44.
- LEVINSON, H. (1972) *Organizational Diagnosis*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- LEWIN, K. (1946) Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues* Issue 2, pp. 34-46.
- LINCOLN, Y. & GUBA, E. (2000) *Naturalistic Inquiry* Newberry Park CA Sage
- LINDORFF, D. (1995a) One thousand dreams: the spiritual awakening of Wolfgang Pauli. *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, Iss. 40, pp. 555-569.

- LONG, S. (1999) The tyranny of the customer and the cost of consumerism: An analysis using systems and psychoanalytic approaches to groups and society. *Human Relations*, Vol. 52, Issue 6, pp. 723-743.
- LOVERIDGE, R., WILLMAN, P. & DEERY, S. (2007) 60 years of Human Relations. *Human Relations*, Vol. 60, Iss. 12, pg. 1873.
- LOWE, L., MILLS, A. & MULLEN, J. (2002) Gendering the silences: Psychoanalysis, gender and organization studies. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 17, Issue 5, pg. 422.
- LYONS, P. (1991) A Social Learning Paradigm for Management Education. *Proceedings of the Eastern Academy of Management Annual Meeting*. Hartford, CT.
- MACCOBY, M. (1976) *The Gamesman*, New York, Simon and Schuster.
- MAHADEVAN, T. (1938) *The Philosophy of Advaita*, Madras, Ganesh & Co Ltd.
- MALINEN, A. (2000) *Towards the Essence of Adult Experiential Learning: A Reading of the Theories of Knowles, Kolb, Mezirow, Revans and Schon*, Jyväskylä, Finland, University of Jyväskylä.
- MANSFIELD, V. (1995) *Synchronicity, Science and Soul-Making*, Chicago, Open Court Publishing.
- MARCUSE, H. (1966) *Eros and civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, Boston, MA, Beacon Press.
- MARSICK, V. J. & O'NEIL, J. (1999) The many faces of action learning. *Management Learning*, Vol. 30, Issue 2, pg. 159.
- MARSICK, V. J. & WATKINS, K. E. (1992) *Informal and Incidental Learning in the Workplace*, London, Routledge.
- MARSICK, V. T. & ., L. C. (1988) Developing Leadership in International Managers-An Urgent Challenge! *World Business*, Issue 23, pp. 3-11.
- MAY, R. (1959) *The Nature of Creativity*, New York, NY, Harper & Brothers.
- MEYER, A. (1991) Visual data in organisational research. *Organisation Science*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, pp. 218-36.
- MEZIROW (1991) *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass.
- MEZIROW, J. (1990) *How Critical Reflection Triggers Transformative Learning*, in J Mezirow (Ed.), *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- MEZIROW, J. (1991) *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- MEZIROW, J. (1996) Contemporary paradigms of learning. *Adult Education Quarterly*, Vol. 46, Issue 3, pp. 158-173.
- MICHELSON, E. (1996) Usual Suspects: Experience, Reflection and the (En)Gendering of Knowledge. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, Vol. 15, Issue 6, pp. 438-454.
- MICHELSON, E. (1999) Carnival, Paranoia and Experiential Learning *Studies in the Education of Adults*, Vol. 31, Issue 2.
- MIETTINEN, R. (2000) The concept of experiential learning and John Dewey's theory of reflective thought and action. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, Vol. 10, Issue 1, pp. 54-72.

- MILLER, E. J. (1989) *The Leicester model: Experiential study of group and organisational processes* London, The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations.
- MILLER, J. B. (1986) *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, Boston, Beacon Press.
- MIR, R. & WATSON, A. (2000) Strategic management and the philosophy of science: The case for a constructivist methodology. *Strategic Management Journal*, Issue 21.
- MORGAN, G. & SMIRCICH, L. (1980) The Case for Qualitative Research. *The Academy of Management Review*, Issue 5, pp. 491-500.
- MUMFORD, A. (1991) 'Action Learning Moves On', unpublished draft.
- MUMFORD, A. (1994) A Review of Action Learning Literature. *Management Bibliographies & Reviews* Vol. 20 pp. 2-16
- MUMFORD, A. (1996) Effective learners in Action Learning sets. *Employee Counselling Today* Vol. 8, Issue 6, pp. 5-12.
- NISARGADATTA, M. (1973) *I am That* Mubai, Chetana Ltd.
- NISHIDA, K. (1987) *Last Writings: Nothingness and the Religious Worldview*, translated and with an introduction by Dilworth, D.A, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press.
- NISHIDA, K. (1990) *"An Inquiry into the Good"*, Abe, M. and Ives, C. (trans), New Haven, CT, Yale University Press.
- NONAKA, I. & TAKEUCHI, H. (1995) *The Knowledge creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- NORD, W. R. & JERMIER, J. M. (1992) *Critical social science for managers? Promising and perverse possibilities*, in M. Alvesson and H. Willmott (eds) *Critical Management Studies*, London, Sage.
- O'NEIL, J. (1999) The Role of Learning Advisors in Action Learning, (unpublished dissertation), Teachers College. New York, Columbia University.
- O'NEIL, J. & MARSICK, V. J. (1994) *Becoming critically reflective through Action Reflection Learning*, in A. Brooks and K Watkins (eds.) *The Emerging Power of Action Inquiry Technologies, New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, San Francisco Jossey-Bass.
- OBHOLZER, A. (1999) *Managing the unconscious at work*, in R. French, & R. Vince (Eds.), *Group Relations, Management, and Organization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- OGDEN, T. (1982) *Projective Identification and Psychotherapeutic Technique*, Northvale, NJ, Aronson.
- OGLENSKY, B. D. (1995) Socio-psychoanalytic perspectives on the subordinate. *Human Relations*, Vol. 48, Issue 9, pg. 1029.
- ORNER, M. (1992) *Interrupting the Calls for Student Voice in Liberatory Education: A Feminist Postculturalist Perspective*, in C Luke & J Gore (Eds.) *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy* New York, Routededge.
- PATTON, M. (1980) *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, Beverley Hills CA, Sage.
- PEDLER, M. (1996) *Action Learning for Managers*, London, Lemos & Crane.
- PEDLER, M. (1997) *Interpreting Action Learning*, in Burgoyne, J. and Reynolds, M. (Eds.), *Management Learning: Integrating Perspectives from Theory and Practice*, London, Sage Publications.

- PESUT, B. & JOHNSON, J. (2008) Reinstating the 'Queen': understanding philosophical inquiry in nursing. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 61, Issue 1, pp. 115–121.
- PHILLIPS, A. (1988) *Winnicott*, London, Fontana Press.
- PLEASANTS, N. (1996) Nothing is concealed: de-centering tacit knowledge and rules from social theory. *Theory of Social Behaviour*, Vol. 26, pp. 233-255.
- POGGENPOEL, M. & MYBURGH, C. (2005) Obstacles in qualitative research: Possible solutions. *Education Issue* 126 pp. 304-311.
- POLANYI, A. (1966) *The Tacit Dimension*, Garden City, N.Y, Doubleday.
- POPPER, K. (1979) *Objective Knowledge, Revised* Oxford, Clarendon Press.
- POTTER, J. & WETHERELL, M. (1987) *Discourse and Social Psychology*, London, Sage.
- PUTNAM, L. L. & MUMBY, D. K. (1993) *Organizations, emotion and the myth of rationality*, in Fineman, S. (Ed.), *Emotion in Organizations*, London, Sage Publications.
- RAELIN, J. (1993) The persean ethic: Consistency of belief and action in managerial practice. *Human Relations*, Vol. 46, Issue 5, pp. 575-621.
- RAELIN, J. (1999) The design of the action project in work-based learning. *Human Resource Planning*, Vol. 22, , Issue 3, pg. 12.
- RAELIN, J. A. (2001) Public reflection as the basis of learning. *Management Learning*, Vol. 32, Issue 1.
- RAELIN, J. A. & COGHLAN, D. (2006) Developing managers as learners and researchers: Using Action Learning and Action Research *Journal of Management Education*, Vol. 30, Issue 5, pp. 670-690.
- REASON, P. (1998a) Political, epistemological, ecological and spiritual dimensions of participation. *Studies in Cultures, Organizations and Societies* Issue 4.
- REASON, P. (1999) Integrating action and reflection through co-operative inquiry. *Management Learning*, Vol. 30, Iss. 2, pg. 207.
- REASON, P. & TORBERT, W. R. (2001) The action turn: toward a transformational social science. *Concepts Transformation*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 1-37.
- REED, B. (1976) *Organisational role analysis*, in C. L. Cooper (ed.) *Developing Social Skills in Managers*, London, Macmillan.
- REICH, W. (1970) *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- REVANS, R. (1970) *The managerial alphabet*, in G. Heald (ed.) *Approaches to the Study of Organizational Behavior*, London, Tavistock.
- REVANS, R. (1971) *Developing Effective Managers*, London, Longman.
- REVANS, R. (1977) Action Learning. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 1.
- REVANS, R. (1982) *The Origin and Growth of Action Learning*, London, Chartwell Bratt.
- REVANS, R. W. (1976) *Action Learning in Hospitals: Diagnosis and Therapy*, Maidenhead, McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- REVANS, R. W. (1998a) *ABC of Action Learning, 3rd edition*, London, Lemon & Crane.
- REYNOLDS, M. (1998) Reflection and critical reflection in management learning. *Management Learning*, Vol. 29, Issue 2, pg. 183.
- REYNOLDS, M. & VINCE, R. (2004) *Organizing Reflection*, Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing.

- RICOEUR, P. (1981) *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (J. B. Thompson, Ed. & Trans.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- RIGG, C. & TREHAN, K. (2008) Critical reflection in the workplace: is it just too difficult? *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 32, Issue 5, pg. 374.
- RIMANOCZY, I. (2007) Action learning and action reflection learning: are they different? *Industrial and Commercial Training*, Vol. 39 Iss. 5.
- RIMANOCZY, I., TURNER, E. & PEARSON, T. (2000) Learning coach handbook internal publication, available at: www.LIMglobal.net.
- ROBERTS, J. (1996) *Management education and the limits of technical rationality: The conditions and consequences of management practice*, in R French & C Grey (Eds.), *Rethinking Management Education*, London, Sage.
- ROHLIN, L. (1996) What do we mean by action reflection learning. *MiL Concepts*.
- ROSENAU, P. M. (1992) *Postmodernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads and Intrusions*, Princeton NJ, Princeton University.
- RYAN, K. & OESTREICH, D. (1991) *Driving Fear Out of the Workplace*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- SANDLER, J. (1960) "On the concept of superego", *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*. New York, International Universities.
- SANKARAN, S., DICK, B., PASSFIELD, R. & SWEPSON, P. (2001) *Effective Change Management Using Action Learning and Action Research*, Lismore, Southern Cross University Press.
- SATCHIDANANDENDRA, S. (1989) *The Method of the Vedanta*, London, Kegan Paul International.
- SAWADA, D. (1991) Deconstructing Reflection. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 37, Issue. 4, pp. 349-366.
- SCHARMER, C. O. (1999) "Organizing around not-yet embodied knowledge", in Krogh, G.V., Nonaka, I. and Nishiguchi, T. (Eds), *Knowledge Creation: A New Source of Value*, New York, NY, Macmillan.
- SCHARMER, C. O. (2001) Self-transcending knowledge: sensing and organizing around emerging opportunities. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol. 5, Issue 2, pp. 137-150.
- SCHEIDLINGER, S. (1974) On the concept of the "mother-group." *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, Issue 24, pp. 417-428.
- SCHEIN, E. H. (1993b) How can organisations learn faster? The challenge of entering the green room. *Sloan Management Review*, Winter, pp. 1-19.
- SCHÖN, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, London, Temple Smith.
- SCHÖN, D. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- SCHWARTZ, H. (1987) The psychodynamics of organisational totalitarianism. *The Journal of General Management* Vol. 13, Issue 1, pp. 41-54.
- SCHWARTZ, H. (1990) *Narcissistic Process and Corporate Decay: The Theory of the Organization Ideal*, New York, New York University.
- SENGE, P. (1990) *The Fifth Discipline, The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*, New York, NY, Doubleday.
- SENNETT, R. (1981) *Authority*, New York, Random House.

- SMITH, P. A. C. & SAINT-ONGE, H. (1996) The evolutionary organization: avoiding a Titanic fate. *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 3 Issue 4 pp. 4-21.
- SMITH, P. A. C. & SHARMA, M. (2002) Rationalizing the promotion of non-rational behaviors in organizations. *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 9, Issue 5 pg. 197.
- STEIN, H. F. (2002) Notes from a telephone interview with M. Driver, 27 March 2002.
- STILES, D. (2004) "Pictorial representation", in Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (Eds), *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*, London, Sage.
- SUPPES, P. (1993) The transcendental character of determinism. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, Issue 18, pp. 242-257.
- SUTTON, D. (1997) *In search of P*, in A. Mumford (ed.) *Action Learning at Work*, Aldershot Gower.
- SWEPSON, P., DICK, B., ZUBER-SKERRITT, O., PASSFIELD, R., CARROLL, A. M. & WADSWORTH, Y. (2003) A history of the action learning, action research and process management association (ALARPM): from Brisbane to the world through inclusions and networks. *Systems Practice of Action Research*, Vol. 16, Issue 4, pp. 102-113.
- SYMON, G. & CASSELL, C. (2004) "Promoting new research practices in organizational research", in Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (Eds), *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*, London, Sage.
- TAYLOR, E. W. (1997) Building upon the theoretical debate : A critical review of empirical studies of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory. *Adult Education Quarterly*, Vol. 48, Issue 1, pp. 34-59.
- TENNANT, M. (1999) *Is Learning Transferable?*, in D Boud & J Garrick (Eds.), *Understanding Learning at Work*, London, Routledge.
- THOMAS, A. B. & ANTHONY, P. D. (1996) *Can management education be educational?*, in R French & C Grey (Eds.), *Rethinking Management Education*, London, Sage.
- TISDELL, E. J. (1998) Poststructural feminist pedagogies: The possibilities and limitations of feminist emancipatory adult learning theory and practice. *Adult Education Quarterly*, Volume 48, Issue 3, pp. 139-156.
- TOBIN, G. & BEGLEY, C. (2004) Methodological rigour within a qualitative framework. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Issue 48 pp. 388-396.
- TRICE, H. & BEYER, J. (1993) *The Cultures of Work Organizations*, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall.
- TRIEST, J. (1999) *The inner drama of role taking in an organisation*, in R. French and R. Vince (eds.) *Group Relations, Management and Organisation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- TRIST, E. & MURRAY, H. (1990) *The Social Engagement of Social Science Volume 1*, London, Free Association Books.
- TUCKETT, A. (2005) Rigour in qualitative research: Complexities and solutions: Part II. *Nurse Researcher* Issue 13 pp. 29-42.
- USHER, R. & BRYANT, I. (1989) *Adult Education as Theory, Practice and Research*, London, Routledge.
- USHER, R., BRYANT, I. & JOHNSTON, R. (1997) *Adult Education and the Postmodern Challenge: Learning Beyond the Limits*, New York, Routledge.

- USHER, R. & SOLOMON, N. (1999) Experiential learning and the shaping of subjectivity in the workplace. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, Vol. 31, Issue 2, pp. 155-163.
- VANDENBERG, D. (1999) Review of teaching positions: Difference, pedagogy and the power of address by Elizabeth Ellsworth *Educational Studies*, Vol. 30, Issue 1, pp. 74-79.
- VANDERSTRAETEN, R. (2002) Dewey's Transactional Constructivism. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 36, Issue 2, pp. 233-246.
- VERENE, D. P. (2002) Coincidence, historical repetition, and self-knowledge: Jung, Vico, and Joyce. *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, Iss. 47, pp. 459-478.
- VINCE, R. (1995) Working with emotions in the change process: Using drawings for team diagnosis and development. *Organisations and People*, Vol. 2, Issue 1, pp. 11-17.
- VINCE, R. (1998) Behind and beyond Kolbs' learning cycle. *Journal of Management Education*, Vol. 22, Issue 3, pg. 304.
- VINCE, R. (2001) Power and emotion in organisational learning. *Human Relations*, Vol. 54, Issue 10, pp. 1325-51.
- VINCE, R. (2002a) Organizing Reflection. *Management Learning*, Vol. 33, Issue 1, pp. 63-79.
- VINCE, R. (2002b) The politics of imagined stability: A psychodynamic understanding of change at Hyder plc. *Human Relations*, Vol. 55, Issue 10, Pg. 1189.
- VINCE, R. & BROUSSINE, M. (1996) Paradox defense and attachment: accessing and working with emotions and relations underlying organizational change. *Organization Studies*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, pp. 1-21.
- VINCE, R. & MARTIN, L. (1993) Inside Action Learning; the politics and the psychology of the Action Learning model. *Management Education and Development*, Vol. 24, Issue 3, pp. 205-15.
- VON-FRANZ, M. L. (1992) *Psyche and Matter*, Boston, Shambhala.
- VON-GLASERSFELD, E. (1995) *Radical Constructivism. A Way of Knowing and Learning* London, Falmer Press.
- WALLACE, B., ROSS, A. & DAVIES, J. B. (2003) Applied hermeneutics and qualitative safety data: The CIRAS project. *Human Relations*, Vol. 56, Issue 5, pg. 587.
- WALLACE, M. (1990) Can action learning live up to its reputation? *Management Education and Development*, No. 21, pp. 89-103.
- WEINSTEIN, K. (1994) Experiences of action learning: a dialogue with participants. *Management Bibliographies and Reviews*, No. 20, pp. 17-40.
- WEINSTEIN, K. (1995) *Action Learning: A Journey in Discovery and Development*, London, HarperCollins.
- WHITE, J., MCMILLEN, M. C. & BAKER, A. C. (2001) Challenging traditional models: Toward an inclusive model of group development. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, Vol. 10, Issue 1, pg. 40.
- WILLMOTT, H. (1997) *Critical management learning*", in Burgoyne, J. and Reynolds, M. (Eds.), *Management Learning: Integrating Perspectives in Theory and Practice*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.

- WRIGHT, L. (1968) The Case Against Teleological Reductionism. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 19, Issue 3.
- WRIGHT, L. (1976) *Teleological Explanations: An Etiological Analysis of Goals and Functions*, California, University of California Press.
- YALOM, I. D. (1985) *Group Psychotherapy*, Washington DC, American Psychiatric Press.
- ZOHAR, D. (1997) *Rewiring the Corporate Brain*, San Francisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler.
- ZUBER-SKERRITT, O. (2003) A model for designing action learning and action research programs. *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 9, Issue 4, pp. 143-149.
- ZUBOFF, S. (1988) *In the Age of the Smart Machine: The Future of Work and Power*, Oxford, Heinemann Professional.

Index

- Action learning... 29, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 71, 72, 83, 96, 107, 111, 125, 127, 133, 159, 160, 161, 185, 186, 187, 191, 193, 194, 228, 236, 257, 267, 296, 302, 303, 304, 305, 315, 326, 329
- Action research 86, 95, 96
- Action Research Learning.....59
- Advaita Vedanta.....228, 229, 230, 231, 233, 234, 235, 249, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 307, 320, 322, 331, 333
- Anxiety...34, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 54, 59, 82, 94, 97, 113, 117, 125, 136, 141, 142, 155, 164, 165, 166, 167, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 184, 189, 190, 191, 192, 227, 228, 255, 260, 261, 266, 269, 271, 276, 282, 283, 284, 292, 300, 301, 302, 305, 311
- Archetype
theory210
- ARL..... 59, 60, 61
- Attitudes
and emotions... 11, 56, 95, 101, 102, 103, 134, 145, 161, 162, 164, 168, 178, 180, 182, 183, 186, 187, 188, 192, 193, 207, 227, 238, 252, 253, 255, 257, 258, 279, 282, 284, 285, 288, 290, 291, 293, 294, 295, 297, 298, 299, 302, 304, 305, 311, 312, 317, 323, 325, 326, 329
- Baghavad Gita.....229
- Basic assumption
group48
- Bion
Wilfred47, 48, 66, 67, 82, 89, 92, 96, 164, 206, 207
- Brahman229, 230, 231, 232, 235
- Causation 205, 318
- Cavendish Laboratory.....54
- Childhood
conditioning49, 50, 51, 68, 101, 148, 170, 171, 172, 175, 184, 190, 192, 204, 230, 266, 287, 301, 302, 311, 313, 323
- Coherence
in research methodology 87, 88
- Coincidence
data.... 197, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 266, 271, 272, 292
- Constructivism 90
- Co-operative Inquiry.....56
- Critical Management Education36
- Critical Management Studies36
- Critical school
of action learning..... 55, 83
- Data gathering
techniques 11, 86, 87, 98, 102, 103, 201, 314
- Defense mechanisms 190
- Dependency
group48, 164, 207
- Depressive
position45, 46, 47, 48
- Determinism92
- Dewey
John .. 12, 31, 32, 33, 81, 89, 90, 91, 208, 209, 256, 257, 286
- Discourse analysis..... 98
- Eastern
philosophy...58, 200, 224, 228, 235, 245, 274, 291, 305, 307
- Ego.....40, 44, 45, 48, 49, 82, 133, 135, 136, 148, 155, 164, 165, 166, 167, 177, 181, 230, 231, 233, 235, 238, 239, 244, 249, 250, 264, 268, 301
- Ego-ideal 45
- Emotion..... 51
- Epistemology..... 89
- Espoused theories* 34
- Experiential school
of action learning 55
- Facilitator . 48, 53, 54, 59, 60, 110, 153, 160, 185, 187, 206, 208, 228, 242, 243, 244, 255, 263, 276, 282, 298, 301, 303, 304, 305, 329, 330
- Fantasy41, 45, 46, 49, 51, 97, 146, 148, 165, 167, 238, 241, 260, 278, 282, 299, 311, 312, 327
- Feminist
views..... 61, 64, 66, 68
- Fieldwork 7, 107, 117, 159, 264, 267, 268, 324
- Flight or fight
group..... 48, 164, 207
- Frankfurt School36, 41, 42
- Freud
Sigmund14, 40, 51, 91, 99, 101, 182, 238, 239, 273
- Functionalist
approaches...32, 42, 56, 61, 70, 121, 207, 309, 312, 316
- Gabriel
Yiannis..... 166
- Generative
dialogue..... 223
- Group**
Research1, 47, 97, 110, 180
- Group as a whole82, 159
- Group mentor 243
- Hermeneutic
approach to data..... 99, 100, 160
- Hermeneutics..... 100, 214
- Hinduism.....58, 228
- Holistic
functioning63, 213, 214, 215
- Idealization
of the group leader 48
- Image
interpretation 101, 102, 104, 130, 142, 143, 144, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 210, 212, 280, 281, 310, 311, 316, 325, 326
- Images.... 101, 102, 103, 104, 126, 134, 143, 144, 145, 147, 150, 174, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185,

192, 193, 242, 243, 244, 253, 264, 265, 278, 279, 283, 290, 302, 305, 311, 325, 330	
Inductive	
approach ... 6, 33, 86, 189, 258, 259, 271, 273, 296, 297, 309, 332	
Jaques	
Elliott..... 46, 47, 268	
Jung	
Carl.....91, 101, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 222, 229, 273	
Klein	
Melanie..... 44, 45, 46, 82, 164, 170, 171	
Knower	
of the field..... 89, 90, 221, 222, 232, 243	
Kolb	
David..... 13, 33, 55, 62, 63	
Learning...6, 12, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 81, 82, 83, 86, 91, 96, 97, 98, 110, 111, 113, 119, 123, 127, 130, 131, 134, 150, 153, 159, 172, 175, 181, 183, 186, 189, 190, 191, 193, 194, 197, 199, 200, 208, 213, 215, 216, 217, 222, 223, 224, 225, 227, 233, 237, 238, 241, 243, 245, 249, 255, 256, 257, 258, 262, 266, 267, 270, 271, 274, 276, 286, 288, 292, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 307, 310, 312, 313, 314, 317, 318, 322, 323, 324, 326, 330, 331, 332	
Learning cycle'33	
Limits of the research 296, 308	
Maya.....230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 237, 239, 320	
Mentor..... 243, 244, 245, 250	
Metanoia..... 217, 226	
Methodology.. 7, 11, 39, 86, 95, 96, 98, 102, 103, 159, 160, 162, 186, 189, 192, 193, 197, 203, 204, 217, 228, 249, 250, 253, 254, 258, 259, 271, 274, 296, 302, 303, 314, 315, 316, 323, 325, 326, 331	
Not yet embodied	
knowledge..... 221, 318	
Ontology 89	
Opportunities	
for future research .57, 69, 127, 159, 190, 194, 221, 227, 255, 275, 322, 327	
Organisational ideal'49	
Organisational learning.... 6, 12, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 52, 57, 61, 66, 69, 71, 81, 82, 107, 157, 159, 162, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 200, 201, 203, 209, 213, 225, 254, 256, 257, 258, 259, 270, 273, 275, 279, 286, 293, 296, 300, 306, 307, 308, 309, 322	
Pairing	
group48, 164, 207	
Pauli	
Wolfgang210	
Peaceful mind241	
PhD 1 group... 155, 163, 165, 167, 171, 172, 175, 176, 177, 181, 182, 185, 187, 188, 195, 240, 266, 268	
PhD 2 group... 167, 171, 172, 175, 176, 177, 181, 184, 185, 187, 191, 240, 260, 261, 266, 268, 283	
Politics	
in teh workplace52, 72, 81, 199	
Positivism 41, 86, 308	
Postmodern93	
Postmodernism.....93	
Productive refection 38	
Projective drawing 100	
Projective identification 46, 47, 48, 82, 164, 176	
Psychoanalysing organisations 43	
Psychoanalysis....28, 29, 43, 44, 46, 61, 65, 66, 67, 68, 82, 83, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 107, 155, 159, 199, 212, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 267, 269, 273, 274, 293, 296, 309, 310, 331	
Psychostructure..... 50	
Qualitative	
methodology.. 86, 87, 252, 294, 308, 309, 313, 316	
Quieten the mind..... 240, 241, 289	
Reality..... 34, 42, 45, 54, 70, 89, 91, 93, 94, 167, 193, 200, 204, 205, 206, 214, 216, 218, 221, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 235, 237, 238, 245, 249, 287, 289, 299, 306, 307, 312, 313, 314, 319, 320, 331	
Reflection. 7, 11, 12, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 69, 72, 81, 82, 83, 86, 88, 91, 94, 96, 97, 99, 103, 104, 105, 107, 110, 112, 114, 115, 121, 122, 123, 124, 126, 128, 129, 130, 134, 136, 139, 142, 143, 147, 148, 150, 153, 154, 155, 156, 159, 160, 161, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 199, 200, 204, 205, 207, 208, 209, 213, 216, 222, 223, 224, 229, 231, 233, 237, 238, 241, 242, 243, 244, 250, 256, 257, 258, 260, 261, 267, 270, 271, 272, 274, 276, 278, 286, 287, 293, 296, 297, 298, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 311, 312, 314, 317, 323, 325, 326, 327, 330, 331	
<i>Reflective Practitioner</i> 35	
Reflex arc 12, 32, 90	
Regression..... 47, 171, 190, 191, 266, 301, 324	
Repression.....58, 101	
Revans	
Reg.....54, 55, 60, 62, 95	
Reynolds	
Michael11, 257	
Rigour 88	
Rorshach Technique..... 101	
Scarab 212	
Schitzoid	
position 45, 46, 47, 48	
Schön	
Donald..... 13, 34, 35, 62, 222, 257	
Scientific school	
of action learning 55	
Self.. 136, 210, 213, 214, 221, 222, 223, 225, 231, 232, 233, 234, 239, 273, 287, 289, 291, 292, 306, 319, 321, 331	
Self transcending knowledge' 221	
Small groups..... 39, 48	
Spirituality..... 224, 225, 289, 291, 293	
Splitting..... See , See , See , See , See	
Spooky action at a distance..... 205	
Taken-for-granted	
assumptions...6, 37, 53, 55, 70, 105, 112, 174, 181, 190, 225, 233, 236, 278, 288, 289, 307, 328, 332	
Taken-for-grantedness..... 200	
Taoism58, 228	

Tavistock Institute	44, 46	Upanishads	229
Teleology	92	Validity	245, 315
Thanatos	165	Vedas	229
<i>theories in use</i>	34, 70	Vince	
Transference	51	Professor Russ	11, 12, 52, 58, 59, 253, 256, 257
Unconscious. 11, 40, 43, 46, 49, 51, 52, 59, 62, 66, 86,		Western	
99, 100, 101, 103, 165, 166, 167, 170, 174, 177,		world view.....	6, 41, 165, 200, 203, 225, 228, 231,
181, 182, 190, 192, 193, 205, 207, 210, 214, 225,		234, 235, 237, 241, 245, 270, 275, 292, 307,	
239, 252, 253, 255, 257, 258, 260, 265, 269, 270,		319, 320, 322, 331, 332	
279, 282, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291,		What is real?.....	234
293, 294, 295, 296, 299, 300, 302, 304, 305, 309,		Working hypothesis	32
310, 311, 314, 325, 329, 331			