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Utilizing Participatory Action Research to Change Perception About Organizational Culture From Knowledge Consumption to Knowledge Creation

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Abstract

This study explains how participatory action research has been used to create a new intersubjective awareness of the phenomenon of organizational culture. The question of creating voluntary democratic participation has been crucial for all stakeholders in this case. Through this two-and-a-half-year study including more than 30 workshops, in a marine industry, we have managed to create new beliefs about being part of and responsible for creating the organizational culture. With these new understandings of the culture, which has been dramatically changed, the participants have created new personal knowledge about themselves and working in an organization like this. The management group have discovered that they are responsible for their own knowledge creation.

Keywords

participatory action research, empowerment, dialogue processes, organizational culture, knowledge creation, management learning, change management, organizational learning

Introduction

The empirical material for this article comes from a case study in a Danish manufacturing company, in the marine industry, that is more than 100 years old. Very often as researchers we are not in a position to choose from many companies. This specific company hired in a researcher to work with the actual culture. My approach is strongly inspired by participatory action research (PAR), which has its roots in research in communities that emphasize participation and action in social contexts (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 31). When a researcher is invited into an organization and seeks to create learning with action research, he or she must be aware of the perspectives and lifeworld uncertainties of the stakeholders involved. The fact that it is not possible to control the results of an action research project means that all stakeholders involved are exposed to great uncertainty (Sparre, 2016). The concerns of organizational learning are primarily how something is learned as well as who is learning what. Organizational learning is collective experiential or experimental learning—learning based on doing things together, testing and trying things out, and discerning and analyzing emerging patterns at different "logical levels" in acquired practical experience, habits, routines, skills, and ways of doing things. Thus, organizational

learning is distinguished from merely theoretical learning, which occurs by listening or reading, whether collective or individual (Eikeland, 2012, p. 271). Many of the existing writings and projects of organizational change involve organizational culture in one sense or another. Culture is often seen as either the key issue to be changed or something that is crucial to take seriously in order to make change possible (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016, p. 4). In this case, we see culture as something that the management team create and give to each other, and not as something they have (Sparre, 2016, p. 369).

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

Within the field of action research, there are many directions and approaches. One of these approaches is participatory action research (PAR). Action research does not normally

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start from a desire to change others "out there," although it may eventually have that result; rather, it starts from an orientation toward changes *with* others (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 1). For many participants, action research is not only a completely new and different approach to organizational change and learning but also a new image of what research can be. PAR is a philosophy of life as much as a method a feeling as much as a conviction (Fals-Borda, 1997, p. 111).

PAR is a form of action research in which professional social researchers operate as full collaborators with members of organizations; they have a shared power perspective in studying and transforming organizations. PAR is also an emergent process, with the participants changing their hypotheses, aims, and interpretations as the process develops (Greenwood et al., 1992, p. 3; Kristiansen & Bloch-Poulsen, 2018, p. 131). PAR is an ongoing organizational learning process and a research approach that emphasizes co-learning, participation, and organizational transformation (Greenwood et al., 1992; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Although we use PAR, action research generally seems to be a participatory endeavor (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).

As Greenwood and Levin (2007, p. 5) claim, there are three key elements of PAR: democratic involvement, action, and real research. Action research can also be used to understand an organization by trying to change elements within it (Bargal, 2006; Burnes, 2004). The PAR approach to action research is based on a participatory methodology, implying a dialectical tradition of democratic involvement and real influence (Bargal, 2006, p. 379). PAR emphasizes collective inquiry, action, and experimentation grounded in actual experience of praxis. The PAR process of inquiry and action evolves as it proceeds, and it addresses questions and issues that are significant for those who participate as co-researchers. PAR is not a monolithic set of ideas and methods but rather a pluralistic orientation toward knowledge creation and real social change (Greenwood & Levin, 2007). Most PAR projects are founded on specific tenets.

PAR provides multiple opportunities for practitioners to co-create knowledge and integrate theory and practice in ways that are unique and practical to a particular group (McIntyre, 2008, p. 67). Action research focuses on improving learning, not on improving behaviors (Mcniff & Whitehead, 2010, p. 19). Good professional action researchers create a balance of support through a variety of actions, including direct feedback, written reflections, pointing out comparable cases, and citing cases from the professional literature where similar problems, opportunities, or processes have occurred (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 125). In the spirit of PAR, initiatives are only launched if they have been initialized or approved by the participating co-researchers. Action research reports are often called "storytelling," which is an insulting attempt to disqualify the general knowledge gained in a specific AR study (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 67). Because PAR leads researchers down previously unfamiliar pathways, involvement in the process is likely to stimulate us to think in new

ways about old and new theoretical problems, thus generating provocative new ideas (McIntyre, 2008, p. 49).

Our Research Question—Or Opportunity Issue

Change in organizational culture requires change in leadership forms in every walk of life (Martin, 1992, p. 61). At the start, leadership is particularly important in those social areas that are fundamental from the point of view of power over the culture (Lewin in Burnes, 2004). When we work with action research and take our role as a co-researcher seriously, it may seem a little contradictory to set up a precise research question before starting the case study. In this actual case, we transformed our research question into an opportunity issue. Because the local Danish case company is in a transformation from a production unit to a knowledge and service unit, the management team have a desire to change the perception of the ruling culture. We therefore take the following approach in our research:

> How can participatory action research be utilized to create new intersubjective perceptions about cultural changes in a management team?

When we want to work with culture, based on three culture analyses (Figure 1) and we built on the framework from Martin (1992, p. 174) we see the PAR approach as an obvious choice.

Methodology and Data

The Cultural Board and the Young wild group had in total involved approximately 40 managers. In the tradition for AR, we do not aim to create reliable data, but trying to help the employees in a specific group. This article draws on a phenomenological hermeneutic understanding framework and the dialogue tradition within action research (Alrø & Hansen, 2017; Berger & Luckmann, 1971; Bourdieu, 2008; Coghlan & Brannick, 2010; Gadamer, 2007; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Recognizing that knowledge of science and practice are different issues is not to say that they stand in opposition to each other, rather that they complement one another (Van de Ven Andrew, 2007, p. 3). This study focuses on interaction-driven research in an organization's workplace (Kristiansen & Bloch-Poulsen, 2011; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Doing scientific work in a kind of emotionally vulnerable organization is not merely copying methodological blueprints written up in textbooks; it also entails applying research methods in the complex settings of the social world, settings characterized by fear and insecurity (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 57). PAR is relevant because it is multidisciplinary and multiform, involves collaboration or cooperation among a group of managers, and involves key stakeholders, even though it includes the
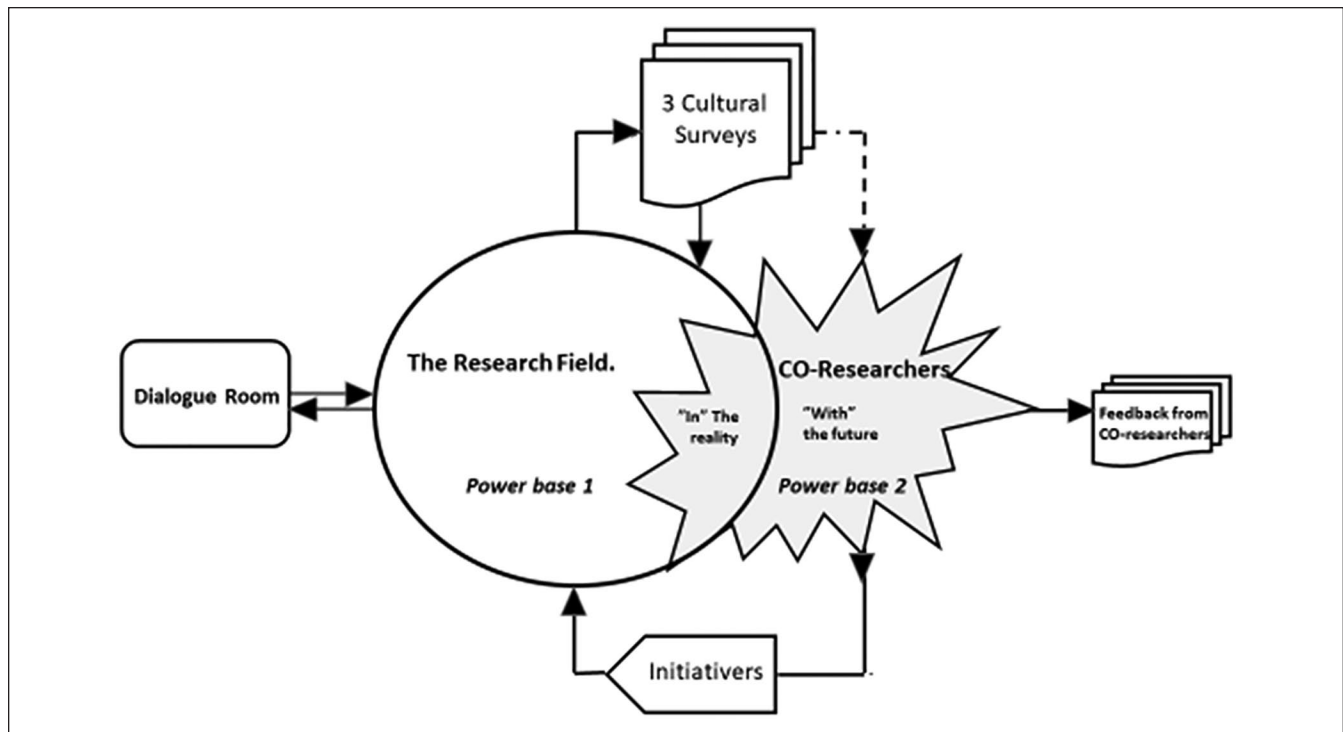
Figure 1. Projects overall structure with cultural analyses, dialogue rooms, power bases, and so on.

disadvantaged along with the empowered in making decisions through all phases of the research project (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 385). The fact that PAR is context-specific means that practitioners draw on a variety of quantitative, qualitative, and creative-based methods to engage participants in the construction of new knowledge (McIntyre, 2008, p. 49).

When working on changes in social processes and organizations, it is acknowledged that one must rely on a research approach based on the subjects, namely, the humans in the organization, as irrational elements of the organization. In a phenomenological lifeworld perspective, all humans are working out from their own lifeworld, and from an organizational perspective that can be seen as irrational. Every person in the organization is unique and possesses its own subjective lifeworld. These human subjects help define a common experience reality in the form of the intersubjective understanding of the organization that they define and possess in common. The subject has thus partly created the organizational structures based on their own world of life, which unfortunately can later function as a kind of limitation on their own ideas. Scharmer (2010) writes, "Thoughts create organizations and so can organizations keep people locked" (p. 62). Berger and Luckmann (1971) argue that all knowledge is socially designed and that this does not mean that all knowledge is equally valid. What or where is the starting point for changing a social culture in an organization?

The Actual Case Study

Figure 1 shows a graphical representation of this case study (Flyvbjerg, 2011). We have carried out three cultural surveys, which have been processed together with the researchers. Each survey has resulted in concrete actions in the form of involved workshops. We have articulated that there exist two power bases. One power base when we are in operation and another when we act as co-researchers (Figure 1). The organization considered in this study had undergone some serious and radical changes. In the transition from Production to Service, the Production had declined significantly, and several employees had been laid off. Many of the managers have a tradition and background of focusing on methods of functional structural change and problem-solving activities to achieve a specific output. In such contexts, it is often found that specific consultants, specialists, are hired because they possess the skills deemed necessary to solve a specific task. This approach to specialists is also a highly accepted and widely applied approach to strategic learning and change processes in many technical organizations (Sparre, 2016, p. 274). When employees repeatedly experience being seen as *customers* of new knowledge or as knowledge consumers, as portrayed by external specialists, some may find that their own competencies in their own lifeworld are neglected or not assessed as valuable. Alvesson and Spicer (2016) have a term called Organizational Stupidity, and the described behavior can slowly lead to a passive and reactive approach

to organizational change and slowly make the employees partly blind as their knowledge of the organization becomes a type of tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 2009). In such cases, we can talk about elements of organizational stupidity (Alvesson & Spicer, 2016). Organizational learning is learning to do or perform something better—learning by doing and practicing—together, by adjusting to each other as individuals, to the solution of the total task, and mutually to the partial tasks of each other (Eikeland, 2012, p. 272).

When invited into a PAR project, one can imagine considerations such as the following: *Could this project hurt me, or could it create value for me? What does it mean that the person in the organization's top power position recommends the project? What has previously happened to the organization's participants in similar projects? Do I trust the person who supports the project? If I do not choose to participate, I do not risk anything. Is there a way in which participation in such projects can promote one's career, or have I seen examples where someone in the organization has been penalized for participating in such projects?* Human uncertainty in the organization is real and is a fact (Sparre, 2016).

When we work together, we continually generate new cognitions, creating new intersubjectivity. The research field of this action project was the overall management team, which was between 30 and 40 employees. The management team articulated this project and described it as a process by which the organization could transform from a production culture (with the consequently derived sense of self) into a knowledge and service organization. A mantra has been articulated: *from production culture to knowledge culture.* In any participatory process, there is always a tension between participation as an instrumental means of accomplishing something and participation as an end in itself (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 190).

How Did We Organize the Process?

Two introductory meetings were held for the management team, where the researcher described the framework and purpose of the new learning and change project. The researcher presented the motivation for the project and introduced a vacancy notice where interested employees could apply to become part of the project. From the beginning, it was stated that participation was voluntary, and the participants could not expect any payment for the effort. However, it was emphasized that the participants could expect to gain great insight into their own and the organization's development. It was also crucial that the participants themselves would be the driving forces in the project and that the researcher should not control or steer the content of the project. It was a great challenge for the co-researchers that the previously widespread practice of using external specialists for managing change projects should now be replaced by the co-researchers themselves, who were now taking responsibility for their own actions.

The vision was to create an experience of dialogue between equal subjects employed in the same organization and in the same context; therefore, we disqualified the classic qualitative interview form (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 127) because we did not want to put ourselves in a power relationship as researchers interviewing subjects in an organization. A dialogue space (Figure 1) for all members of the organization was created to invite them to join a dialogue if they wanted to have a free and open talk about anything at all. To get out to this dialogue office, one should wear safety shoes, as the office, with its location away from the headquarters, appeared to be a sanctuary, far away from the leaders and far away from the normal ruling power structure (Foucault, 1980). We wanted to create a so-called "Power Free" space (Figure 1, Dialogue room) for the employees, although such a space is only a linguistic illusion (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009). Nevertheless, we attempted to create a power distance from the top management. The office could instead have been in the main building, but such a location could have had some other unfortunate implications that linked the researcher more closely to the management, and we wanted to reduce this connection with that specific location.

This dialogue process has most likely created a larger intersubjective recognition of, or for, the theory of culture, thus distorting the previously acquired experience of culture (Figure 2). Based on the managerial applications, employment talks were conducted with those who had reflected on the advertisement. The conversation served as a balance of expectations, and all were "employed." We chose to form groups called "The Cultural Board" and "The Young Wild."

The "The Cultural Board" (20 employed) consisted of managers with greater management and budget responsibility, whereas "The Young Wild" (20 employed) was younger managers with fewer elements of power and leadership. The two groups participated in a joint kick-off day at which the project was started, but after that day, the researcher arranged workshops with the two groups separately. During the research period of 2.5 years, there were more than 30 workshops (4 hr each) and three major culture analyses for the two groups. The Young Wild and The Culture Board (see Table 1) present the emerging perspectives (from 2.5 years of PAR; 30 workshops) from PAR participants along the following dimensions: (a) changes in hypotheses, (b) aims, and (c) interpretations. These three dimensions were cited in the literature by the author(s).

Participation Empowerment—From Subjectivity to Intersubjectivity

Real equal participation is the central ingredient of this research study. The label "participatory" signals "a political power commitment, collaborative processes and participatory worldview" (Kindon et al., 2007, p. 11). The impact of stressing participation is that all those involved in PAR projects are known as powerful participants, not subjects or
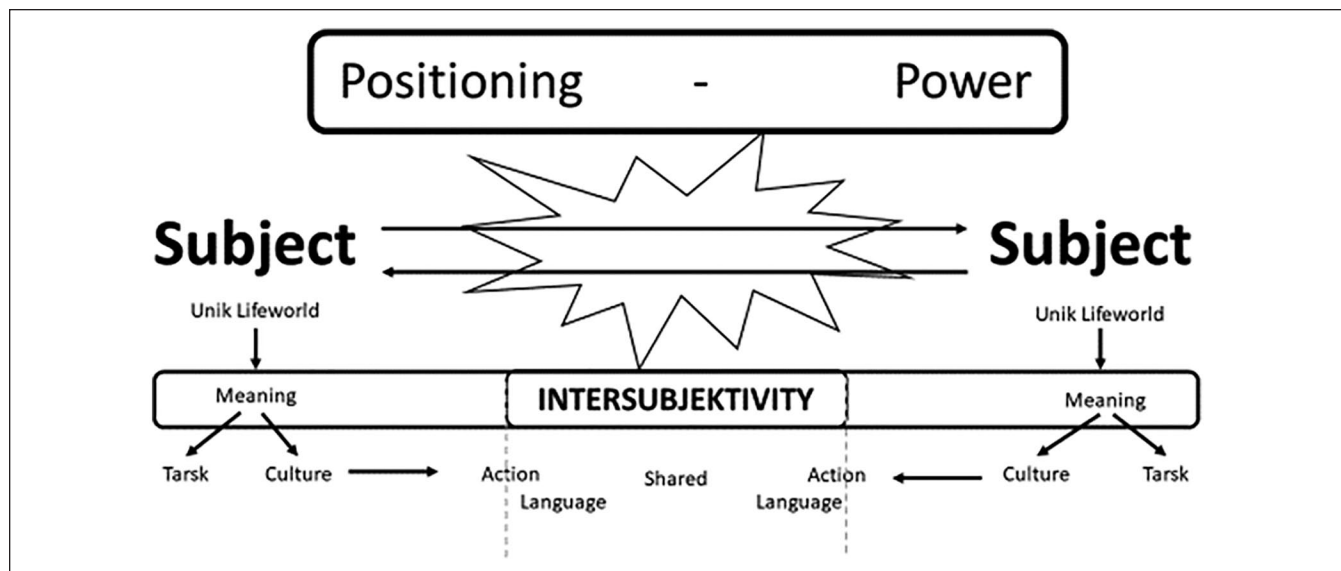
Figure 2. It is when we listen we create new intersubjectivity.

Table 1. Content Analysis (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

No.	Source	Types of data	Types of use
28	***Management*** meetings	Reports and interviews	Observations
12	***Cultural Board*** meetings	Reports and interviews	Dialogs
12	***Cultural Board*** workshops	Workshop materials	Observations
8	The ***young wild group*** meetings	Reports and interviews	Dialogs
12	***Young wild group*** workshops	Workshop materials	Observations
1	Cultural rapport from 2013	Mix methods 12 themes	Used in workshops
1	Cultural rapport from 2014	Mix methods 12 themes	Used in workshops
1	Cultural rapport from 2015	Mix methods 12 themes	Used in workshops
8	Self-videos from participants	Story telling	Dialogs and analyze
2	Workshop conference	Observations	Dialogs and analyze
>24	Meetings in the dialog room	Some on tape—Not all	Dialogs and analyze

informants, who actively engage in research that is motivated by and focused on meeting their own needs.

The difficulty is that the term "participation" covers a multitude of different levels of engagement. Participation may describe active involvement in all aspects of a PAR project or be limited to particular stages and times. Who participates, how they participate, when they participate, and why they participate are questions that expose real differences among researchers, and these differences are reflected in the wide range of diverse projects that identify themselves as PAR (Chambers, 1995). In addition, there is a danger of viewing participation as a single activity—ignoring the interactions between the diversity of individual interests—and assuming that the group has a clear and consistent identity and that the goals of the project are coherent and uncontested. It is important to consider how the relationship between participation and power within the group is explored and to consider the effect of the participatory process on external stakeholders

(Project sponsors). What seems to unite the participatory approaches, however, is that the researcher is not the primary actor. The participants, to varying degrees, shape and mold the research process to their own ends. This work will create intersubjectivity, and the group will slowly develop a shared intersubjective worldview. This project requires real involvement, action and research (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 5), and a primary purpose of the research, as a participatory process, is to produce practical knowledge that is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their lives (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 4).

Many great research articles have been produced with data from "The Swampy Lowland" while those who have contributed experience no value or benefit from the efforts. The dilemma Schön (1983) describes is the reality between the co-researchers and the researcher. The co-researchers focus on improving their everyday lives, and researchers focus on creating new scientific acknowledgments. To meet

the two parties' goals is the great challenge and benefit of action research:

> The core social relation is directed towards the We-relationship and all other notions of social forms that are applied by actors in their everyday social life are derived from this. (Clark & Fast, 2008, p. 121)

Intersubjectivity is the term, the central component of the life world, and multiple realities constituting the individual's life world are connected to consciousness present in the adult (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974, p. 21). The lifeworld constitutes the world of life that is common to many individuals (Gadamer, 2007, p. 236). Schutz (2005) focuses specifically on understanding—through intersubjectivity—how we in the world of life understand each other. The life of the individual has fragments of a common sense, shared meanings constructed by people with the fellow human beings with whom they enter into relationships; it is knowing in action. When we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions of everyday life, we show ourselves to be knowledgeable in a special way. Often, we cannot say what we know. When we try to describe it, we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate (Schön, 1983, p. 27):

> We have been accustomed to a consultant or a manager who told us what to do. For a long time, we were a little unsure of you because you did not just manage the process. Today I can see what you've done for us. (Quote: Co-researcher, 2015)

Empowerment

When the mandate, in the form of empowerment, is given to the participants, so that they are enabled to execute their new positions as co-researchers, we can talk about "indirect capacity building" (Brix, 2018). Power is distributed in the organization, and the subjects can now act more freely (Figure 1, the power base 2):

> Definitely. Management is no longer "dictatorship" but "democracy," where it is a group that makes decisions. In addition, the mood is improved. There is no longer the same "rigid" system. It is a shorter way to do things. (Quote: Co-researcher, 2015)

At one of the earliest meetings with the organizations' top management, it became clear that there was something that could not be touched or discussed. The power frame was made clear:

> You might as well accept that our organizational silos are not in play or at discussion and if you cannot accept this, you might as well stop your project right away. (PK November 2012)

From the start, there was a very clear and visible power structure in the organization. Some of the earliest actions were to empower the management participants in the project in relation to the rest of the organization. There will always be a close relationship between local knowledge and power (Foucault, 1980). Foucault (1980) offers a nuanced and complex meaning of the concept of power. The ingrained ideas about power exertion as something preferably negative, used for control and alignment to promote a particular behavior, are extended to something we all have to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the context we are part of. One must have some power in a relation, and there is always a touch of position power in all relations. Each individual subject possesses a unique combination of knowledge, skills, and motives that influence the actions of the individual in the social context of an organization. We find that people act differently in what appears to be the same situation, and this can be explained by individuals' different unique cognitive comprehension schemes:

> It's not a fight I want to fight, and if I did, it would affect my situation (Negatively). (Quote from a leader)

The individual participants in the project must learn to be proactive and take responsibility for their own development. The aim of the project was to start a journey from knowledge consumers to knowledge producers in an action research project, with the goal of creating a learning community. A democratic participatory learning process requires that participants are empowered and believe in their own insights so they can be reactivated in new dialogues and established in new power constellations. We aim to co-create a dialogue model that partially compensates for the ruling power structures, and through dialogue processes, participants are involved in the processes of creating and facilitating their own change agendas (see Figure 1). We want our co-researchers to be more aware of their own being in the organization. "The world of life is the life we live in the natural setting and which never in itself can become an object for us but, on the contrary, is the foregoing basis for all experiences" (Gadamer, 2007, p. 235). Powerful change agents make a difference in how meaning is developed and how groups relate to the social world (Alvesson, 2013, p. 156). Because there is power in any relationship, small as it is in Denmark (Hofstede et al., 2010) between humans, we are always locked in advance into the decision of whether we will use power for the other or not (Løgstrup, 2012, p. 66). In Figure 2, we have created an image to explain the phenomenon of intersubjectivity, and by that image we try to understate why the dialogue is important to build up mutual understanding about the position power.

Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn

When we speak, we quite literally hear ourselves thinking, and this initiates a relationship with ourselves (Crossley, 1996, p. 58). In the many workshops we held, our groups had many dialogues, which created new external and internal

shared learning points. We worked proactively with listen-to-learn sessions. Listening is probably the least explicit of the four language skills, making it the most difficult skill to learn. The key medium of most social interactions for Wittgenstein, Schutz, and Mead is language (Crossley, 1996, p. 38):

> Before, I was often annoyed by the people who talked about "the good old Alpha Spirit" and "like this we did in the good old days," but now I have gained a better understanding of why they are so deep in them. (Quote from Co-researcher)

Why are some colleagues annoyed when someone talks about the "Alpha Culture"? Why do they say that? Can it be that they feel they do not belong to the old times? By listening and learning, co-researchers can develop an understanding and together create a new intersubjectivity about our internal language and the values behind it. When we together create new insights about behavior and power relations, we can start to change things. When an employee says, "I don't know anything theoretical about Culture, but I know when is not working, because then all communications goes bananas" (Quote from Co-researcher).

Success, Failure, or Something Else With PAR

Action research cannot fail, but that is not the same as being able to control some specific output. We will always build up some intersubjectivity (Figure 2). Greenwood and Levin (2007) state that projects always take off in unexpected directions and that the researcher will have to adjust to this on the fly (p. 129). The primary purpose of action is not to produce academic theories based on action, nor is it to produce theories about action, nor is it to produce theoretical or empirical knowledge that can be applied in action. Rather, the purpose is to liberate the human body, mind, and spirit in the search for a better life (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 5). PAR takes place within a community of inquiry, which is capable of effective communication and self-reflection. This self-reflection is not a license for "anything goes":

> I can hardly defend that I come to these meetings, as we are busy in the department and that means my colleagues must do my job. (Quote: Employee from the young wild)

> Well fought! You really had good intentions to make it very free the first year. Unfortunately, I do not think there was so much out of it, as with tighter frames for what we should do. But I understand why you chose to create free frames. It's probably not something we were ready for. (Quote: Employee from the culture board)

As described in the above quote, some co-researchers found the facilitation of this project a bit too free; they felt they were lacking direction from the main researcher. They were not used to being completely responsible for the action to be carried out. They have become reactive participants in their own working life. In 2013, there were many statements that implied that there was a lot of fear in the organization, and after 3 years, this feeling seems to have improved dramatically (Table 1).

Findings and Concluding Remarks

Organizational life—as the culture that is made up of tasks and activities that are often somewhat disorganized and invisible—is the way most people still practice and think of an organization. Although necessarily present—and more or less consciously—in almost all types of organizations, these tasks are usually not conceptualized theoretically and systematized practically as a permanent and visible part of the organization (Eikeland, 2012, p. 274). Our findings show that there is great potential in working with participatory action research for organizational knowledge creation and bridge building between practice and theory concerning organizational culture. This PAR approach actively involves participants (co-researchers) in experimenting, acting, exploring, and verbalizing their own organizational lifeworld. This study has created a massive organizational change in the intersubjective understanding of the language of the ruling culture. Our qualitative surveys show that the participating co-researchers argued that their personal learning has been significant. Furthermore, joint action, mutual inspiration, and knowledge sharing through reflexive dialogues inspire co-researchers to seek new knowledge from the relevant literature and research within the field. Through the active engagement of employees and managers, the project seems to have built bridges between practice and theory and to have paid special attention to the verbalization and externalization of tacit knowledge about the organization's own culture (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Polanyi, 2009).

Wittgenstein (1953/2009) talks about creating and recognizing our world through our language. Table 2 shows a linguistic change in the qualitative texts from our three cultural analyses. Words such as fear, insecurity, and anxiety appeared in the analyses 14 times in 2013 and they were almost entirely gone 2 years later. It was clear that the language in the organization had changed significantly.

The changes in personal organizational paradigms—from knowledge customer to knowledge creator—were not without frustrations among the co-researchers. Going from reactive to proactive is a complicated process that takes time, and all participants have to be very patient in that process:

> I have been frustrated by how hard it is to change people's mindset—including my own. In addition, how difficult it is actually to "DO SOMETHING" to change the culture. It's easy to sit and talk about what you could do, but actually get started with some actions—yes, that's another matter. (Quote from a co-researcher)

Table 2. Radical Change in the Language About Fear and Uncertainty Among the Involved.

	Qualitative statements with words like fear, scare, cautious, uncertainty, and insecurity (A)	Qualitative statements with general criticism (B)	Qualitative positive or neutral statements (C)
2013	14	76	104
2014	10	37	196
2015	1	25	189

I have learned the term "culture is something one gives to others." It is very important to recognize the importance of having a good culture and that culture is something that has to be "lived" between people and not hung on a dusty poster in a corner of a room. (Quote from a co-researcher)

Quite early in the project, we saw (from the cultural survey) that the present management team was not sufficiently visible and was ineffective. The management group was reorganized from 14 to five managers, and the new management team was given more involvement and responsibility from the top manager. What does that mean for the internal power relationship between the new leaders and the old top manager when the latter gives his power to the former? The new management group showed, despite the power issue, a unique and new value-based approach to management.

During a break, a leader came to me and stated,

I think that the reason we soon agreed that our culture is strong may be related to the fact that we constantly go and tell each other that we have a strong culture. It is a completely unreflective answer that we always use.

Organizational culture is not something we have in our surroundings; it is something individuals convey to each other through our interactions and language every single day. Culture is only what we do to each other. Organizational culture goes home every day from work, and it is what we do when we come back the next day that determines our culture. Culture is not just the others. The Organizational culture is you. You are the culture; you give it value, and you can change that value yourself. Culture is something you give to your relationships.

There is a difference between you and us. You're a researcher first, then a person who participates in a project. We are the managers, the ones who are here, who participate in everything. We're learning through this project how to do research. Nevertheless, we are participants first, and then researchers (McIntyre, 2008, p. 8).

It is a misunderstanding that generalizable knowledge is more valuable than concrete knowledge. Any specific and unique case study is so deeply founded in many researchers and practitioners that one even doubts one's own contribution. The whole of the scientific tradition derives from the positivist position of seeking generalizable laws that can create new knowledge.

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