COMMUNICATION &LANGUAGE at work

A practice-based perspective of discursive change in collegial conversations. Explicit and implicit communication at work.

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between explicit and implicit aspects of communication at work and especially how discursive change is enabled in that relationship. The studied context is collegial conversations in Swedish School-age Educare settings. The purpose is to elaborate on practice-based perspectives on reproducing and changing discourse in communication at work, contributing to productive teacher discourse. This paper proposes two aspects contributing to reproduction of discourse: *shallow consensus* and *intersubjectivity*; and two aspects enabling discursive change in collegial conversations at work: *multivoicing* and *revisiting events*. Identified aspects of (re)production in collegial conversation shows positioning and constructions of group belonging in work teams are important to make conversations productive. This paper contributes to elaboration on the literature of collegial discourse and communication and literature on team-based work.

Keywords

Communication, workplace, School-Age Educare, discursive change, organizational learning

1 Introduction

Collegial conversations in educational contexts are often seen as a means for professional learning and development (Cooren et al, 2014; Lefstein et al, 2020). In this paper, collegial conversations are understood as important social and discursive practices in doing workplace communication and collegial teamwork. The study explores collegial conversations in School-age Educare (SAEC) settings, a non-compulsory part of the Swedish educational system for 6–12-year-old children. SAEC is characterized by a mix of pupils' leisure time, voluntariness, and a curriculum-based learning practice. Work at SAEC is organized in work teams, set out to organize, plan, perform and evaluate the everyday practice, placing collegial communication in the center of work.

Collegial collaboration and conversations in SAEC are of special interest due to its challenging conditions of being an educational practice with unclear goals and unstable work teams. To contextualize the studied collegial conversations, and why SAEC is of special interest to explore, the practice needs to be described. SAECs' are located in school premises and takes place before and after school hours, often sharing space with the primary teaching. SAEC is described as playful activities such as arts and crafts, sports, play and outdoor activities (Haglund, 2018). More than 85% of all children aged 6-9 are listed in a SAEC setting, making SAEC an important arena for children' leisure time and learning outside school hours. During the last decades SAEC has undergone several reforms and budget cuts, resulting in critique of not providing equal and qualitative leisure-time pedagogy (Skolinspektionen, 2010; 2018). One of the problems identified is lack of educated teachers and inconsistency in work teams, characterized with many personnel changes in settings (Haglund, 2018), which makes work in SAEC a continuous process of change in collegial group belonging. Despite Sweden being one of the few countries providing university education for teachers in SAEC, the majority of individuals working in SAEC are lacking pedagogical education. A consequence is that the differences in educational level among employees results in many different and personal assumptions on how to conduct SAEC education (Hedrén, 2022). Adding most of SAEC work teams experience insufficient possibilities for planning in collegial conversations, it's clear that working in SAEC is a complex teamwork with challenging prerequisites. In this study I elaborate on what aspects of discursive patterns in collegial conversations can contribute to increase possibilities for productive discourse.

Teachers' collegial conversations and language are often told to be insufficient and not theoretical enough to provide deep and developed understanding of instructional practice (Norrström, 2021). In this discussion it is often foreseen that language is a part of doing collegial work, it is not transcendent from work (Havnes, 2009). Conversations and communication as work also includes a social dimension. Collegial conversations are not only talk *about* practice – it is talk *as* practice, worth studying in its own (Cooren et al, 2014; Havnes, 2009). In times of consistent personnel changes in SAEC work teams, members constantly construe group belonging and negotiate with new members. That makes collegial communication important both as discursive practice and social practice in SAEC work, like several of today's work contexts.

Language and collegial conversation at work have been extensively explored (e.g., Cooren et al., 2014; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The point of departure in this study is Ellströms (2010) theory on practice-based innovation at work, and positioning theory (Harré and van Langenhove, 1999). A practice-based perspective on language at work entails focusing on the micro-level of interaction, with an interest on language as a part of doing work (Cooren et al, 2014). Positioning theory is used to analyze the tensions between explicit and implicit communication, with a special focus on discursive change in teacher communication. Both social and discursive aspects are included within the scope of practice-based perspective on language at work. Therefore, collegial conversations are communicative constructions of doing and belonging in collective work processes.

The aim and scope of this paper is to elaborate on how communication at work maintains and/or change discourses of the instructional practice from a practice-based perspective. The aim is to analyze (re)productive discursive patterns in collegial conversations in work teams, hindering and enabling productive teacher discourse. Although the studied context is SAEC settings, the aim is to provide theoretical and empirical contributions also appliable to other work team-based contexts.

2 Previous research

The research presented to frame this study are delineated to literature prescribing normative teacher discourse and the relation between prescribed and actual communication in pedagogical settings. Overview of literature on collegial conversations in SAEC settings shows a lack of research focusing on teacher discourse and practice-based discursive change. Therefore, the literature is broadened to teacher discourse and work in general and in an international perspective. To begin with, this research overview also includes literature on organizational learning

and different logics in work and learning at work, framing the study's relevance in a broader sense than the narrow context of SAEC.

2.1 Organizational learning

Organizational learning can be described as the process of how an organization changes it´s values, norms and knowledge in order to maintain or change the work process (Basten & Haaman, 2018). Organizational learning can also be understood as the organizations ability to transform individual knowledge into organizational knowledge. Therefore, organizational learning has one individual dimension and one group dimension, relevant to this study. Organizations need to provide systematic structures to utilize individual knowledge, which is difficult due to the lack of knowledge on how to implement such systematic structures (Basten & Haaman, 2018). Research on practical perspectives on how to implement organizational learning is still limited.

In a literature review Basten and Haaman (2018) describes how empirical studies of organizational learning relates to theories of organizational learning. They find that empirical research of organizational learning focus on different perspectives of either people, processes, or technologies. One theory of organizational learning relevant when studying discursive change in work teams, is the theory of organizational knowledge creation, focusing on people and processes (Nonaka, 1994). This theory builds upon two dimensions of knowledge creation, tacit and explicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is expressible in words and symbols and can therefore be communicated and shared in the organization. Tacit knowledge is personal and more difficult to communicate. Tacit knowledge is rooted in actions, values, and engagement in the task (Nonaka, 1994). Organizational knowledge creation theory has a dynamic understanding of organizational learning, developing both tacit and explicit knowledge. This also includes a social dimension, meaning that socializing new work members means transferring both tacit and explicit knowledge of work.

2.2 Different logics of work

This section takes its point of departure in theories on logics for development in work. These logics are not normative descriptions of preferable conduct of work performance, but the logics can provide thinking models to understand why some work teams are efficient and comes up with new ideas and why other work teams having difficulties developing work. Ellström (2010) describes two logics of work important to this study, *logic of production* and *logic of development.* In this study, I elaborate on how collegial communication is an important aspect in both logics, although language and communication are not highlighted in Ellström's theory. Ellström focuses on the actual work and developing efficient methods for work, though his point of departure is organizational learning.

In the logic of production, the reproduction of the explicit work processes is a driving force of the work practice. In terms of communication at work, the logic of production implies a reproduction of discourse and discursive patterns. There is not a focus on trying to develop or change how anything is used to be carried out, and co-workers are also reproducing their positionings in the work team. Standardization and implementation are words Ellström (2010) use to describe how the logic operates. In terms of professional or organizational learning, mainly adaptive learning is enabled. With a strong logic of production, high quality products can be the outcome, but it is difficult to develop work process and therefore also improvement of the product.

Logic of development is signified by *innovation.* This logic is driven by creativity and a will to explore and develop new ways of conducting work. Ellström (2010) describes innovation as a change that in extension is leading to more effective ways of reaching organizational or production goals. Innovation can be either a product or a process. In this study, innovation is discursive change, namely changes in how co-workers are talking about the instructional practice or changes in positioning each other or the task. Ellström (2010) is not mentioning discursive change or collegial communication, disregarding a crucial part of collegial work process. By looking upon teacher discourse from an innovation/reproduction perspective, new knowledge is enabled in understanding how talk of practice and talk *as* practice enables change in instructional practice.

In developing organizations, one of these logics cannot work alone, tension or dynamics between implicit and explicit work processes that development is enabled, in solving problems or clearing misunderstandings appearing in the dynamics between what is already known and innovative ideas (Ellström, 2010). Therefore, to enable discursive change in a work team, one co-worker simply cannot suddenly begin to make interpretations not recognizable by the Others. That will make the co-worker seem obstinate or out of the blue. Innovation needs to come forth in relation to the already known. Empirical research shows how potential learning and development lies in conflicts and emergencies (Granberg & Ohlsson, 2005; Havnes, 2009; Lefstein et al., 2020). Diversion and different opinions are therefore a better logic for learning and development at work, although it may be seen a

disadvantage for the social climate and cohesion in the group. This makes positioning a suitable analytic focus in research on discursive change in work teams.

Other logics at work, highlighted by scholars are the logic of New Public Management (NPM) and the logic of polyphonic (Starbaek Bager, 2019). NPM is similar to the logic of production in focusing on product, effectiveness and standardization. NPM is a common logic for today's work. Starbaek Bager (2019) thus, in line with Granberg and Ohlsson (2005), argues that a *polyphonic* logic is more productive and innovative. The polyphonic logic includes many different voices and is characterized by development through tensions at work. Many scholars have criticized a strive for harmony at the workplace and argues that it is delineating development of work (Granström & Ohlsson, 2005; Ellström, 2010, Starbaek Bager, 2019).

2.3 Productive teacher discourse

Work in educational settings is characterized by communication with students and with colleagues. There is extensive literature on teachers' professional learning communities and the professional development outcome in such communities (Horn & Little, 2010; Lefstein et al., 2019). Such studies often result in normative models and theories on prescribed ways for successful communication for professional and organizational learning. In this study, prescribed communication is understood, in line with Ellström (2010), as *explicit work process* (see below in *Theoretical framework*).

Productive teacher collaborative groups share common characteristics, according to Sutton and Shouse (2019), Lefstein et al (2019). Scholars (Colnerud & Granström, 2014; Lefstein et al., 2019; Horn & Little, 2010) repeatedly state engagement, shared practice, in-depth reflection, and theorization of practice as successful aspects. These successful aspects have become presumptive and normative for teacher communication. The extensive literature on teachers' professional learning communities rarely takes upon the social role and function of language and interaction for decision making or problem solving (Cooren et al., 2014), although there are examples (Sutton & Shouse, 2019; Havnes, 2009). Teachers' collegial interactions enables and delimits possibilities for work teams to plan, perform and evaluate instructional practice. For example, teachers in collaborative groups always negotiate their status among colleagues. Teachers' status may differ in different conversations such as staff meetings, informal conversations in the hallway or in professional development networks (Sutton & Shouse, 2019). Positioning between co-workers is connected to a task-level of group-behavior, meaning that collegial interactions are affecting how the mutual task is apprehended and acted upon (cf. Hirvonen, 2016).

Although shown to be successful for development and learning, the mentioned communicative aspects are rare in empirical studies of teacher discourse (Colnerud & Granström, 2014; Norrström, 2021). Norrström's (2021) study distinguishes two different discourse-orientations in teacher team meetings, a vertical and a horizontal discourse-orientation. The vertical orientation includes theorization and abstract pedagogical discussions and are described as normative and desirable communication. Nevertheless, Norrström's (2021) study shows how teacher teams tend to stay at a horizontal discourse-orientation in their meetings. A horizontal discourse-orientation is characterized by concrete and practical discussions of situated events, not reflected upon in-depth. Topics in these discussions are handling sick-leaves, scheduling, or solving emergencies in the everyday practice. Staying at this horizontal discourse-orientation delimits teachers' possibilities to develop instructional practice. Norrström's (2021) findings are in line with previous literature on teacher collaborative talk (Colnerud & Granström, 2014), also highlighting the lack of pedagogical theories and lack of ambition to reflect in-depth to reach new understandings and knowledge. In horizontal discourse-orientated discussions, tacit knowledge, assumptions, and un-reflected interpretations are used in argumentation. Therefore, actual teacher communication, as described for example in Norrström (2021), equals what Ellström (2010) means are *implicit work process*, namely the way work is empirically conducted, regardless of how the work is prescribed.

3   Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework in this study is Ellström's (2010) theory on explicit and implicit work processes. To analyze how different discursive patterns are maintaining or changing discourse at work, positioning concepts (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) are used. Firstly, a description of the concept *discursive change*.

3.1 Discursive change

From a critical discourse perspective, communicating is a dynamic and transformable discursive event and every utterance is an act (Fairclough, 1992). It is emphasized that discourse is social, reproduced or transformed in social interaction. Discursive acts and events are not stable and predictable, they are situated and contextual (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). Discursive change often arises from social dilemmas where old customs and

understandings are not sufficient to comprehend a social situation or phenomenon (Fairclough, 1992). Old customs then must be used in new ways to resolve dilemmas, enabling change in discourse. For example, something needs to be explained differently for the listener to understand or to reach a common solution for a problem in a work team. Arising from social events, dilemmas enable discursive change in disagreements or friction between humans in interaction. In line with positioning theory, Fairclough (1992) states a dialectic relationship between the social practices and discursive practices. Every social interaction affects discourses, be it as change or reproduction (Fairclough, 1992; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). In this study, discursive change is understood as a process of normalization of new and innovative ways of talking about something. Such process can begin with controversial expressions of something. For discursive change to be established, new ways of expressing must be repeated into convention and become uncontroversial and normalized. Though, it is not a linear and conscious process, but evolving over time in social events. In collegial conversation, discursive change can be analyzed through change in perspectives, new concepts or words being used to describe something, repositioning colleagues or the task etc.

3.2 Explicit and implicit communication

Ellström (2010) base his theory on explicit and implicit work processes in theories of organizational and individual learning. Work processes are aspects of work performance affecting the actual production, such as decision making, systems, leadership or administration. In educational work, actual production is equivalent to the instructional practice. Therefore, work processes include relational work and collegial communication is a crucial work process in conducting teamwork in different context, here studied in SAEC. Ellström makes distinctions between the prescribed practice of doing something and how the work is carried out. He emphasizes that in everyday work, both dimensions of work are necessary to perform routines and act upon problems. I will be using the concepts *explicit* and *implicit communication* to explore discursive change in collegial communication in SAEC work teams.

In this study, explicit collegial communication is the theoretical and model-based ways of teacher communication described above, including prescribed ways of attaching and interacting to children and to co-workers in everyday work. Ellström (2010) points out that explicit work processes sometimes are overachieved since they often do not entail detailed methods to reach (what) goals.

The implicit communication includes discursive patterns that are performed, regardless of intentions (Ellström, 2010). The implicit communication is often based on tacit knowledge and assumptions and is specific to individuals and contexts and includes specific relations and interpretations of the task. Aspects of positioning and power are affecting implicit communication.

3.3 Positioning theory

To understand and explore discursive change, positioning theory is suitable for examining production and transformation of discourses in social interactions, such as teachers' collegial conversations (Herbel-Eisenmann et al., 2015; Hirvonen, 2016). Positioning theory aims at investigating discursive production, reproduction, and transformation in human interactions (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). Based on social constructionism, positioning theory elaborated roll theory and added a fluid and transformable understanding of social interaction, often illustrated in a conceptual triad of mutually related aspects of social interaction: *positioning*, *social force/speech act* and *storyline*.

Positioning in social interaction is how "I relate to the Others", and the moral orders laying in the positioning of the self and others. Moral order are assumptions and beliefs of rights and duties the speaker expresses in redescribing previous (or forthcoming) events (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). What can be said and done in social interaction are though affected by *double dialogicity* (Linell, 2003): "There is a dialogue (i.e., interaction with prior actions and events and possible next actions) on at least two planes, which we may call *interaction in situations* and *sociocultural praxis within (situation-transcending) traditions*" (Linell, 2003:220). Hence, what possibly can be said and done in collegial conversations are enabled both in situated interactions between individuals *and* by the way similar conversation in the context usually is carried out. Therefore, discursive change is a change in sociocultural praxis. Hirvonen (2016) expand the positioning concept and include a *task-oriented* positioning in small-group interactions. This is of importance in this study due to the interest of discursive change from a practice-based perspective, focusing on both change in relational and task-oriented discourse.

There are different terms used to describe and analyze what is being uttered in social interaction, *speech acts* or *social force*. Speech act puts analytical focus on what kind of acts are performed: questions, suggestions, demands and so on. Social forces are used to focus on the response and the interactional dimension of utterances (cf. Hedrén, 2022). It could also be described as "what the utterance implies the Others to do", without including speaker´s intention of the utterance. This is in line with Linells (2003) dialogistic perception of participants in a conversation

as coauthors of the own and the Others utterances, placing the others response in analytic center of collegial conversation and collective meaning making (cf. Hedrén, 2022).

Finally, in the positioning triad there is *storylines*. Storylines are the aspect describing the greater narrative or the greater story being told in conversations. Storylines are patterns of discursive constructions made in and through interactions. Analysis of storylines enables a macro-perspective of micro-analysis of social interaction (Davies & Harré, 1990), making positioning theory suitable for analysis on, for example, how discourses of societal phenomenon as gender or racism are produced and transformed in situated interactions.

4 Methodology

This paper builds on a larger research project (Hedrén, 2022). The aim of the larger project was to analyze SAEC staff's meaning making in collegial conversations. This study is a further analysis of discursive patterns found and presented in Hedrén (2022).

The collegial conversations carried out in this study are designed to enhance meaning making and discussion about everyday decisions and dilemmas. The conversations were inspired by video stimulated reflection (VSR) (Cutrim Schmid, 2011). VSR is a methodology wherein researchers use video sequences of everyday practice, to enhance reflective discussions about teacher practice and 'teacher thinking'. The conversations are researcher-initiated and not occurring in work teams' everyday practice. Therefore, the VSR-approach also enables new methods for collegial communication lasting even after the research project. The researcher's role is to enable discussions, not to partake in them. Hence, the design of the study enables development of collegial conversations rather than evaluating already existing collegial meetings.

In this study, work teams filmed sequences of a chosen routine activity. Once every two weeks the work teams separately sat down with the researcher and watched the filmed sequences and discussed how to improve the routine activity. In the conversations, the researcher had a list of topics for the work teams do discuss upon. But it was important during the data production that the work teams "owned" the conversations, meaning that the most important thing was that the conversations were fruitful to them. Therefore, the list of topics where often left aside, giving space to the discussions necessary for the co-workers (see below).

The analytical focus was the collegial interaction rather than how the work teams developed the activity.

4.1 Data production

Data consists of ten recorded collegial conversations in two work teams (F-1 and 2-3) in one SAEC setting. Data was produced in spring 2019. The F-1 work team consisted of four co-workers. Two of them, Gunilla and Irma, had long experience of working at SAEC. The other two, Linda and Lisa, had only worked at the SAEC for less than a year. The four co-workers had worked together in the previous six or eight months. The 2-3 work team consisted of four co-workers, of which three, Viktor, Nina and Erik, had worked together for more than ten years. The fourth member of the work team, Emelie, had only worked at the SAEC for a year and in this work team for the last six months. The social climate in F-1 can be described as they "agree to disagree". Co-workers are not at the same page in how to organize SAEC activities. The social climate in 2-3 on the other hand can be described as "agree to agree", they express that they share the same tacit knowledge and beliefs about how the job is done. Hence, the work teams differed in group cohesion and common experiences. The internal power dynamics was made visible in the analysis, envisaged co-workers with long experience of work in SAEC more powerful than co-workers with pedagogical education.

The work teams themselves decided a focus for the conversations, a problem or question they wanted or felt they needed to develop or improve in everyday practice. Both teams chose the snack time routine, though co-workers experienced a loud and messy activity in the canteen. They had ambitions of snack time being quiet and comfortable for everyone, with opportunities for new social interactions amongst the children (Hedrén, 2022). Through the research project, the participants wanted to develop and improve the snack time routine.

Five conversations in each team were carried out once every two weeks. Work teams were responsible of filming one or more sequences from the snack time and bring the film to our meeting. The films were between 15 seconds up to four minutes long, filmed with a co-worker´s iPad or phone. The researcher had not seen the clip before the meeting. Every conversation started with watching the film followed by an invitation to describe what happened on screen. I did not to interfere in the discussions, though I was going to analyze collegial interactions. It was also of interest to see what the participants chose to discuss and what they construed as important to develop and improve in the snack time routine. Participants watched the film a second time with the instruction to try to notice things they did not pay attention to the first time. The conversations lasted between 30 and 75 minutes each, in total approximately eight hours of recorded conversations. Conversations were recorded and transcribed to enable a positioning analysis with focus on both *what* was said and *how* it was said.

4.2 Data analysis

Three positioning concepts guided the analysis: social force, positioning and storyline, including both discursive and social aspects of discursive change in collegial conversations (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999).

The first phase was to familiarize with the transcripts by reading and re-reading the texts. Analysis of different pronouns (I, we) when utterances were represented by the individual co-worker or the work team collectively, was conducted. A close-up analysis of different utterances with different pronouns and the response these utterances received from the colleagues enabled an analysis of social forces (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999), contributing to findings of how conversations were directed in different ways. This revealed a pattern of how response of utterances was determining what was accepted to say and do.

Second phase included looking for reoccurring ways of positioning each other in different levels, and what affects positioning had on what was said and how the conversations were (re)directed. One pattern revealed in this phase was a shallow consensus affecting the work teams' interaction patterns in directing the conversations towards "safe" topics. In F-1, the safe topic was to keep reproducing an image of the problematic snack time. When they stayed in this construction of 'the problematic' they upheld consensus. But when trying to solve or discuss solutions of the problematic, disagreements followed. In the 2-3 work team, the safe topic was to talk about the well-functioning snack time. When reproducing this image, co-workers upheld consensus. But when someone tried to problematize and to question a routine, the response was immediate neglect or ignorance. Patterns of these types of positionings revealed the bigger storylines of 'the problematic' and 'the well-functioning'.

A third phase of analysis included the concepts of innovation and reproduction, used to problematize, and analyze findings from positioning analysis further in relating them to what could possibly be new and innovative in SAEC work teams' conversation based on revealed patterns in collegial interactions. I returned to the findings from the first phase and what was accepted to say and not. A reading of data looking for explicit communicative aspects, were conducted to see differences in explicit and implicit ways of communicating. That made visible new aspects of work teams implicit communication and how conversations are maintaining and potentially changing discourse. Representative excerpts from data have been chosen to illustrate discursive reoccurring patterns found in analysis.

5 Findings

Results from analysis are presented as communicative aspects in SAEC collegial conversations contributing to reproduction of discourses and communication: *shallow consensus* and *intersubjectivity*, and aspects contributing to innovation in collegial conversations: *multivoicing* and *revisiting events*.

The discursive patterns described below are to be seen in the light of collaboration and the will of being and acting as one team in the SAEC practice. That means, relational aspects such as getting along and confirming each other as co-workers are important when a group is forming and functioning (Hwang & Nilsson, 2014). Hence, the discursively reproductive and innovative aspects from the studied settings are communicative ways to construct or withhold a collaboration or unity in the work team. Therefore, the positioning analysis shows how positioning in collegial conversations are bridging social and discursive practices.

5.1 Discursively reproductive aspects

Analysis of the F-1 and 2-3 work teams showcases two different patterns of discussing the snack time. Although using different communicative strategies, both work teams tend to reproduce discursive constructions of the snack time and the social relations in the work teams.

5.1.1 Shallow consensus

In the search for common denominators, co-workers in the work team F-1 repeatedly adhered to construing *problems* in their conversations. In construing problems, they find unity in the work team, manifested through confirmations and recognition. The excerpt below is a conversation between Linda and Irma when discussing how the new routine of designated seatings in the canteen is working out. The excerpt shows how Linda begins by acknowledge that the new routine brings forth children´s responsibility of adapting by remembering and finding the new set:

<div>

Linda: well…they are taking…they try to take responsibility, they can go and pick something up to eat, they have responsibility when they go and sit on their *new* seat

Irma: mm

</div>

Linda:	then we walk around [in the canteen] and remind them to, you know, sit straight and…last week it was a lot of, you know, practicing, one goal was to take responsibility
Irma:	mm
Linda:	over yourself
Researcher:	did they, do that? Did they..?
Linda:	well, at least the first graders
Irma:	yes, but we talked a lot about that: *you* mind *yourself* and *you* mind *yourself* and I mind myself, and that is the best. Cause if I must mind all of you, then it will be difficult for me to mind myself
Linda:	mm
Irma:	so we often talk a lot about that, because they [the children] are often gossiping about: she did this and she did that, you forget what you did yourself
Linda:	mm

(F-1, conversation 2)

The excerpt is characteristic of how co-workers in F-1 is turning an initial construction of something positive (here the children's responsibility) into a storyline of the problems occurring in the canteen. Irma does not fully agree and directs the conversation towards descriptions of the children's problematic behaviors, despite Linda's previous utterance of the new routine as a possibility for the children to practice responsibility. Linda does not hold on to her opinion but falls into Irma's construction of the problematic. This repeated discursive pattern is reproducing constructions of the problems that the work team wanted to solve in participating in the research project. If the co-workers adhere to the storyline of the problematic situation, the work team acts as one unit. But when someone suggests a solution or express ideas of what could be done, the unity is challenged and the co-workers are also challenging each other as co-workers, manifested in disagreements between individuals. Adhering to the problematic therefore is a way to function as a group but is not an innovative way of developing the instructional practice.

Analysis of collegial conversations in work team 2-3 shows a different discursive pattern, which nevertheless reproduces constructions of the task and the social relations between the co-workers. This work team is more established as a group, since three out of four co-workers have worked together for a very long time. A repeatedly occurring discursive pattern construes a storyline of the *well-functioning* snack time and well-functioning work team. When adhering to construction of the well-functioning, the work team is unified and reproduces this image of the snack time, even if they agreed on that this routine needed to be developed in the beginning of the research project.

The excerpt below is a part of 2-3:s second collegial conversation, where the co-workers discuss a routine with a "pearl system" for the children's seatings in the canteen. In the pearl system two of the children are canteen hosts each day. They stand in the entrance of the canteen with a bag full of pearls in different colors. The color of the pearl represents the table where the child will sit during snack time this day. In this way each child has different seating and different friends to sit with during snack time each day. The co-workers have watched a video sequence with the children entering the canteen. The excerpt is a discussion of how the co-workers interpret this sequence:

Erik:	[…] it is the habitual way
Emelie:	mm
Erik:	*everybody* knows it, we don't need to talk about that you should take a pearl, it´s… *that* I think is shown [in the video]
Nina:	mm
Erik:	you go there and: that's right, there are the two canteen hosts
Viktor:	mm

Nina:	yes
Viktor:	no, no one is, it's none of these three [in the video] that in any way are trying to… *change* or anything
Erik:	no
Emelie:	no, exactly
Viktor:	or trying to walk right pass
Erik:	no, but this feels like…I *think* it is a good example of how it use to be, although it can be more crowded
Emelie:	yes, exactly
Erik:	yes, it could happen other stuff, but *generally* it looks like this
Emelie:	definitely

(2-3, conversation 2)

A discursive pattern characterized in 2-3 collegial conversations is that every co-worker is verbally active in the discussions, but in different degrees. Every co-worker is active in confirming and encouraging the others in construing the well-functioning snack time and the well-behaving children in the videos. The repeated confirmations of the positive utterances, showcased in the excerpt above, contributes to a construction of the unified and satisfied work team. The discursive constructions are made together, and everyone is agreeing on the constructions being made. But this reproduction of the well-functioning is not leading to new perspectives or understandings of the snack time routine or the children's actions, they are just repeatedly confirmed. In that way, adhering to the well-functioning is discursively reproductive.

Although the two work teams construes different storylines in trying to uphold the collaboration in a united group, there are also similarities. On a storyline level, the problematic and the well-functioning derives from *shallow consensus*. Positioning analysis shows the social forces that drives co-workers to create and uphold collaboration and sense of belonging in the group, and how these forces easily can turn into consensus-seeking. In the participating work teams, co-workers are finding consensus in the storyline of the problematic, and the storyline of the well-functioning. The consensus is of shallow character, meaning that consensus does not entail negotiations of the instructional practices or normative consensus about how the instructional practice should be carried out. Instead, the shallow consensus is about the staff's *experiences* of the instructional practices. In F-1, the shallow consensus is about the co-workers' experiences and feelings of the snack time as a problematic activity. In the 2-3 work team the shallow consensus is about the co-workers' experiences and feelings of the snack time as a well-functioning activity. In this way, it is not the actual instructional practice that is negotiated in the collegial conversations, it is the co-workers' experiences of it. That implicates the relational dimension of work teams conversations and everyday practices. The experiences and personal evaluations of a situation being good or bad are important and put in front in the development of the snack time, perhaps more important than what the children are doing or how they are experiencing the activity. In Ellström's (2010) vocabulary, shallow consensus can be understood as one aspect of implicit communication, based on tacit knowledge and assumptions. Implicit communication is reproductive and makes development difficult in work teams.

5.1.2 Intersubjectivity
Analysis shows response to interpretations, suggestions or other speech acts are decisive of what topics are accepted to talk about and what topics are not. In 2-3 work team, Emelie, the only co-worker without long experience or pedagogical education, is challenging the storyline of the well-functioning. Her interpretations of events in the videos are sometimes deviant from the others, and the others response to her utterances is a discursive pattern shown in the analysis. In the excerpt below, Emelie's utterance is responded with a normalizing comment, showing her as a new member of the work team that it is not accepted to put the blame for a problem on the children:

| Viktor: | isn't the routine that we eat snack at two o'clock, the bell is supposed to ring at about five minutes to two and that you might already have given them heads up |

	about that the bell will ring soon. And when it finally rings, we will start cleaning up
Emelie:	yes, and one thing that doesn't show on the video is that it is four boys sitting and hiding in the laundry room and doesn´t want to go to the canteen. And that is pretty much the biggest problem
Nina:	but that happens now and then
Emelie:	mm
Viktor:	I'm thinking like this, you [Erik] say it is a routine that we do it like this
Erik:	mm
[…]	

(2-3, conversation 1)

Emelie's expression of "the biggest problem" is neglected by the other co-workers. Emelie's interpretations are repeatedly ignored or neglected in the collegial conversations in 2-3. The excerpt is representative for a discursive pattern that interpretations that the colleagues do not share or confirm, are neglected in this way. The consequences of lack of collegial recognition are made visible through positioning analysis. It is especially prominent in interaction between recently employed co-workers and the more experienced co-workers. It is understood as a way of socializing new co-workers into a discursive practice in the work team, occurring both work teams (see Hedrén, 2022 for further elaboration).

A pattern of the importance of collegial recognition also appears in the analysis of dialogues between experienced co-workers. In the excerpt below Irma and Gunilla are discussing a specific sequence from the snack time where the staff spontaneously started to read riddles in the canteen. The excerpt shows how the response of the other cause a personal dispute between two individual co-workers:

Irma:	[…] they talk a lot when the first ones get in and then the second ones are coming in. But as soon as the riddles begin, the silence begins. The interesting thing is, they all want to hear the riddles and everyone wants to *answer*. And if you don't sit on your seat, you don't get to answer. That's why…
Gunilla:	have we said that? Have we expressed that? So everyone knows?
Irma:	well, I have told the ones standing beside me and jumping: no, go and sit down, you don't get to answer the riddles if you stand up
Gunilla:	no
Irma:	it has been so obvious [the rule]
Gunilla:	mm
Irma:	I *might* have told everyone, I don´t know
Gunilla:	yes, but I'm thinking
Irma:	sometimes I say things without thinking about it
Gunilla:	I'm thinking it could be smart to *say it*
Irma:	yes
Gunilla:	so that it kind of *just* the ones sitting on their seat that gets to answer the riddle
Irma:	but I think it is so, I mean: you all have to sit if you want to answer the question. And then I guess I have told them loudly so that everyone hears
Gunilla:	exactly

Irma:	but I don't know if I put it like this: now you need to sit on your seat if you want to answer, I guess I never did that
	[…]
Irma:	yes, we can for sure do that. Anyways I think that they are *sitting*. And they are very focused, and you can tell they think it's fun.

(F-1, conversation 5)

A discursive pattern, exemplified above, is how the degree of recognition in the Others response is impacting conversations both socially and discursively. The excerpt above shows the social impact of the lack of recognition from the other. Irma starts off by talking about how the children calmed down and started paying attention to the riddles during the snack time. Gunilla responds by directing the discussion towards if and how the children were informed of this rule that Irma thought was the key for making the children calm down. Instead of continuing discussing riddles as a possible solution för the problem with the messy situation in the canteen, Gunilla start an examination on Irmas way of informing, or not informing the children about the rules of the riddles. The excerpt shows example of that lack of recognition from the others tend to turn the collegial conversation into personal and individual opinions and disputes.

Positioning analysis shows how social forces of recognition are limiting the co-workers' possibilities to put forth their own interpretations and therefore also limits the possibilities of innovation and new understandings of the instructional practice. In this communicative strategy *intersubjectivity*, the importance of the others to share and recognize the individuals' interpretations, is a reproductive aspect of the collegial conversation. Intersubjectivity is repeatedly occurring in both work teams and is also connected to the socializing of new co-workers into the group, by fostering them into norms about what is accepted to talk about and what is not. Intersubjective aspects of collegial conversations can be understood with Ellström's (2014) logic of production. In such logic of production recognition and what has been working before are guiding lights in implicit collegial communication. In such communication co-workers are not seeking for new perspectives or innovations but trying to cope with already known and tested ways of performing work. Both the intersubjectivity and the shallow consensus are aspects of collegial conversations that contribute to reproduce rather than innovate SAEC work and collaboration.

5.2 Discursively innovative aspects
In this section discursively innovative aspects of discursive patterns will be described. Ellström (2010) emphasize that innovation is not only the big and revolutionary changes, but also small steps towards a bigger change. Although the reproduction of the problematic and the well-functioning storylines are characterizing the work teams' collegial conversations, there are aspects that could lead to more productive and innovative ways of communicating. Contrasting the reproductive aspects with sequences where the storylines are challenged shows examples of discursively innovative aspects of collegial communication. Two such aspects are *multivoicing* and *revisiting events*, which will be described in the following.

5.2.1 Multivoicing
The constructions of storylines in the two work teams' conversations includes challenging interaction disturbing the socially unifying dialogue adhering to 'the problematic' and 'the well-functioning'. F-1: s shallow consensus-seeking often results in parallel lines of argument, driven and expressed by the individual co-worker. On the opposite, 2-3:s shallow consensus often results in collective redescriptions of events on the videos, in which everyone is participating in telling the same story. This has been further elaborated in Hedrén (2022). Analysis shows a few "cracks in the wall", sequences where the parallel discussions or the co-constructing of redescriptions are turning into potentially discursive innovative communication. In the excerpt below Gunilla and Irma are discussing the riddles and whether the riddles could be the solution of children's bad behavior in the canteen during snack time. Initially, the discussion has the character of a personal dispute between the two co-workers shown above.

| Gunilla: | I'm curious, how is it that…I´m thinking that they can actually manage to go get another sandwich meanwhile Irma is reading the riddles. Completely silent. And then go back to their seat without talking to anyone, which is something we have *said* and *talked about* and *asked about* and *nagged about* and it hasn't worked before. They kind of didn´t do it although we, we think we tried to say it. But now |

there is some kind of *motivator* in this [with the riddles]. And now they are doing it. How can we sort of…

Irma: mm

Gunilla: get them to take that with them always, in some way

Irma: but when you find something that catch their eye…that's what is about, isn't it?

Gunilla: mm, but I'm thinking I would like to, their way of doing it, to go get a sandwich without talking a lot on the way. They are welcome to talk at the table, but. This way of poking their friends on the way, taking a detour across the room and go get stuff many many times and…how can we implement that in a *normal* snack time, *without* this extra *thing*

             [silence for 2 seconds]

Irma: that would be *desirable*

Gunilla: yes

Irma: but I think that's *difficult*, cause when they don't *have* this thing that they find interesting and fun, I might as well just: hey you, what are you doing later at recess? Do you want to come home with me later? I mean, I'm more interested in that

Gunilla: yes, but now we know they *can*

Irma: yes yes

Gunilla: Since they show that *now*. And it is sort of, *that* you want to achieve

Linda: but how do you find that?

Irma: but I think the key is to find something they think is *interesting*

Gunilla: mm [silently]

Irma: something they find fun and interesting

Gunilla: mm but I want them to take that responsibility with them

             […]

Linda: I think it has to do with maturity

Gunilla: mm

Irma: yeah, I think so too

(F-1, conversation 5)

When analyzing the sequence further, it is shown that what on a social level is interpreted as a personal dispute, brings forth essential pedagogical questions such as: How can we change or develop children´s behavior? How can change be sustainable? Does behavioral development come from within or externally with help from different motivational stimulus? Is possible change connected to the child´s maturity and age? These are questions on a theoretical level, prescribed in explicit communication. In F-1 work team, these questions are not brought up for discussion, neither before nor after this sequence. Therefore, it can be understood as an innovative disturbance in the common constructions of 'the problematic'. The dialogue in the example shows several different voices bringing forth these pedagogical questions. Hence, the example shows that disagreements on the social level can be fruitful on the discursive level.

The co-workers in this study seems unconscious of this form of potentially innovative discussions for the most part. The potential is made visible through the results of the positioning analysis. For the potentially innovative discussions to become discursively innovative and in that way also enable pedagogical abstract

questions, co-workers need to be aware of the potential in disagreements and disputes. Hence, development of SAEC practice through collegial conversations are complex social practices, especially when, as in most SAEC settings, the work teams are instable and often changing its members. Discursive innovative collegial conversations are then challenging the work teams social relations and collaboration.

In 2-3 work team, analysis shows far less potentially innovative sequences equivalent to the one in the excerpt above, albeit the storyline of the well-functioning work team. Discursive patterns in 2-3 can be described as *monoperspectival,* meaning co-workers co-construct and express one-sided redescriptions of events from the snack time routine viewed on the videos. The monoperspectival communication includes a compliance with the speaker, repeatedly following a certain pattern: the speaker utters an interpretation of the event – the others confirm and agree – the speaker tries to problematize his/her own interpretation – the other comply and continue to agree with the speaker. This certain pattern also illustrates the reproductive shallow consensus described in previous section. When co-workers comply with the speaker, possibilities of potentially discursive innovations decrease. The potentially discursive innovative communication illustrated in the excerpt above can be described as *multivoicing*. Multivoicing means several voices are accepted to be active and heard in collegial conversations. Albeit multivoicing is challenging the shallow consensus and therefore also the social relations in the work team.

5.2.2 Revisiting events

The design of the studied collegial conversations is providing certain possibilities for potential discursive change. Watching a video sequence repeatedly during the conversation enable the co-workers to go back and forth in time. Many sequences in the conversations, in both work teams, contains discussions were the second view of the video enables co-workers' ability to notice new aspects of the filmed events. Often, they change their interpretation of their own experiences of the events as problematic or well-functioning. This way of discussing previous events also encourage co-workers to remember and redescribe events from the past where he/she has changed the interpretation of an event. In the excerpt below, Irma describes how she at first was watching a girl breaking a rule in the canteen, to stand at the counter and cut your fruit. The children are supposed to sit at the table and cut the fruit. When Irma redescribes the situation, she includes a story of how she got a new perspective of children breaking rules:

Irma:	I was thinking about the other day, when we talked about that thing with them not being allowed to stand at the counter to cut their fruit…stand and just leave it there
Gunilla:	no
Irma:	I thought about it the other day, it was some one of the girls in preschool class standing there…
Gunilla:	yeah
Irma:	she was cutting
Gunilla:	yes
Irma:	and then I thought, I'm going to wait here and watch what happens here
Gunilla:	no
Irma:	she was cutting for a long time I'm sure it wasn't a kernel left there
Gunilla:	no
Irma:	somewhere, and then I thought: oh, ok…and then she put the peel and the kernels on a piece of paper and went to the bin and threw it away
Gunilla:	ok
Irma:	so, what I'm thinking here is that we really need to…give them a chance
Gunilla:	mm
Irma:	she was standing there, but she cleaned up after herself, they do that

Gunilla:	yes
Irma:	in most cases, I think, we…reprimand them to quickly, like: hey you, you weren't supposed to do like that. But then again…she did clean up after herself

The discursive pattern of bringing up memories or noticing new things when returning to a video sequence is enabling co-workers to express and share their own discursive innovations, meaning their experiences of changing perspectives or getting a new understanding of something, as the excerpt above illustrates. Irma first describes the event and then adds an analysis of it. In this way her revisiting the event transforms her private reflection into a pedagogical and common knowledge: don´t judge the children's doings too fast – "give them a chance". The reoccurring discursive pattern can be described as *revisiting events.* Analyzes shows that revisiting events also enables re-positioning of both the constructed event, and the speaker's experience and interpretation of the event. In previous section it is described how the reproductive aspect of collegial conversation materializes in negotiations of the co-workers' experiences and interpretations of the event, which is often expressed in terms of what emotions the events affect. Revisiting events becomes a way of disturbing or challenging this emotionally oriented interpretations, by enabling a re-positioning. In other words, the revisiting enables transformation of interpretation. Van Langenhove and Harré (1999) describes redescriptions of past events as examples of *social time,* in which interpretations of an event can, and probably will, change from the present experience to the future redescription of the same event. What actually happened is therefore never an objective and stable matter, construing events in instructional practice flexible and negotiable.

At the same time, analysis of 2-3:s collegial conversations also show revisiting events can contribute to reproduction of the well-functioning storyline. The excerpt below shows Viktor revisiting an event initially interpreted as problematic and in need of change:

Viktor:	I thought it looked messier the last time [they watched the video]
Nina:	no, I don´t think its that…well, I guess you are blunted by the job, but…
Viktor:	no one is laying on floor or anything [laughs]
Emelie:	maybe it wasn´t so bad
Viktor:	I thought it was at first

(2-3, conversation 1)

When revisiting the filmed event, co-workers with Viktor in the lead, re-position the initial problematic situation in the canteen shown in the film, to a well-functioning or "not so bad"-interpretation. This discursive pattern is repeatedly occurring in 2-3 work team. Analysis shows that revisiting in this way contribute to a normalization of behavior, conflicts or dilemmas shown in the videos. Normalizing processes keep the storyline of the well-functioning intact and inclusive even of problematic aspects. In some cases, revisiting events transforms from problematic to desirable. Therefore, it is a risk that revisiting events also contributes to reproduction of co-workers' experiences of the filmed events but does not include renegotiation of the events themselves.

Hence, both multivoicing and revisiting events are potentially discursive innovative aspects of collegial conversations, although they require a consciousness in the work teams of setting the social relations and the internal hierarchies aside when discussing development of instructional practice. Multivoicing and revisiting events enables a consciousness of the complex nature of instructional practice and the multiple ways of understanding everyday events (cf. Granberg & Ohlsson, 2005). Analysis also shows that memories and experiences from previous similar events are also potentially enabling new perspectives. These aspects can be understood with Ellströms (2010) logic of innovation, making disturbances, challenges or questioning useful for innovating discursive practices.

6 A practice-based perspective of discursive change in collegial communication

A practice-based perception of language and interaction at work implies analysis of what language and interaction "actually work" (Coreen et al., 2014:4). In this study I have described how language at work are operating at both a social and a discursive sensemaking level, used to comprehend and develop the social world of the snack time

routine in SAEC. The study contributes to knowledge on *how* social relations in work teams are hindering and enabling certain discourses and that social and discursive practices are intertwined. The tension between preferable teacher discourse and actual teacher discourse have not been explored sufficiently, risking that differences in explicit and implicit communication are reproduced in and through research, leaving a troubling gap of practice-based perspective on how work teams can achieve discursive change in communication (cf. Cooren et al, 2014). Such knowledge is necessary for supporting work teams productive conversations, even outside the context of SAEC.

Analysis also showcases how a practice-based perspective on discursive change, a repositioning in task-orientation or in social relations in conversations, is enabling communicative innovation in the mutually related tension between explicit communication, implicit communication, and social climate in work teams. This does not mean that practice-based knowledge is sufficient for development and learning; dilemmas or problems of some kind is crucial for productive communication. For a successful communication in work teams, co-workers need practicing in identifying and bring forth situated and engaging dilemmas in collegial conversation. In line with Staerbek Bager (2019), this study indicates collegial conversations need grand questions and questioning rather than in firsthand grand theories. A practice-based perspective on analysis of collegial conversations is enabled when emphasizing and focusing on situated and local questions and ways of questioning.

The multivoicedness or question(ing)-based communication provides changes in communication in work teams, already stated by for example Granberg and Ohlsson (2005) and Fairclough (1992). This paper provides empirical knowledge on *how* dilemmas create possibilities for discursive change, but also how these possibilities are hindered by co-workers group-belonging and will to collaborate. The potential changes showcased in this study can also be interpreted as negotiations of power, interpretive priority and as socialization of newcomers in the group.

The strong reproductive aspects of collegial communication, shown in this paper, has elsewhere been described as lack of professional language disabling pedagogical staff to theorize events in instructional practice (Colnerud & Granström, 2014; Norrström, 2021). In this study, the prominent production logic is foremost caused by lack of a conversational culture in SAEC settings, revealing the need of research problematizing the explicit and prescribed teacher discourse, not only examining and evaluating implicit communication. There is a need for knowledge on how to provide and enable sufficient resources for teachers to linger on a problem, to revisit events, to move beyond consensus-seeking and instead embrace uncertainties and complexity in everyday practice. But that requires a certain amount of time and desire to understand instructional practice in new ways. One small step forward in creating a more constructive communicative culture in work team is to *revisit collegial conversations*, to make sure to recapitulate what was said and done in the last conversation, trying to notice what subjects or dilemmas caused the most discussions and so on. That could be a first step towards a conscious and practice-based teacher discourse.The aspects of innovative discursive patterns, multivoicing and revisting events, can though be questioned if they really enable *new* and inventive ways of discussing and understanding instructional practice. It is argued that in SAEC with a lack of tradition to reflect or systematically discuss events in collegial conversations, the bare fact of staff having the opportunity of meeting in reflective conversations can enable new ways of understanding and problematizing assumptions. The innovative aspects need to be achieved in small steps, getting closer to a conversational culture at the workplace, characterized by dialogism.

7 Implications

Innovation processes, may it be physically maneuvering work processes or discursively changing constructions of the work practice, begins with disturbances, questionings or emergencies when performing work process or interact with other people (Ellström, 2010). This study argues that in collegial conversations innovation processes are bridging sustainable wellbeing of co-workers in a work team and the need of developing the work practice. The study also shows how the latter often challenge the former.

The paper contributes with different important practice-based points for work teams in different contexts. Analytic results contribute to work team communication by implying that conflicts and dilemmas does not in firsthand need to be avoided, although it may seem troubling for the social climate in the work team. Conflicts or dilemmas can be used to create consciousness about co-workers' different assumptions. To uphold collegial collaboration, it is also made visible how work teams tend to reproduce discourse by discussing mainly their experiences of the instructional practice, rather than the instructional events themselves. This could be a consequence of a diffuse work description making too great a room for personal opinions and feelings. A dilemma is how to balance the personal engagement for the task and the focus on the actual task.

The result of this study has relevance and can also be applied to other team-based work contexts. Collegiality and how it is described in the paper is common to several kinds of work. Though, SAEC is a good example of a complex and challenged workplace of today.

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