Sari Mattila

Multi-Content Revelation through Dialogue Processes
A Study in Understanding the Hermeneutic Primary Task of Small Groups in the Context of Finland and India.

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This work is dedicated to all my teachers, be they in human or equine form. Lifepaths are always a mystery.

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Abstract

This is a data informed, multidisciplinary and phenomenological Study of hermeneutic processes where the empirical context concerns task groups engaged with international border crossings. The Study of dialogue praxis in such task groups reveals processes that deepen the understanding of issues arising in cross-border situations. Cross-border phenomena cannot be well understood without understanding embeddedness of groups and organisations, and how unconscious wishes, pictures-in-the-mind and authority delegation function within and across boundaries. The Study notes that interactions in task groups are more complex and have more dimensions than usually indicated and conceptualised in the literature.

Task groups and group relations knowing to unravel dialogical phenomena are studied using the framework of four primary tasks, which are present in every organisation, to understand and unravel what facilitates and impedes them in cross-border contexts. These primary tasks, into which all tasks enmesh, the normative, the existential, the phenomenal, and the hermeneutic, cover diverse issues in organisational and group evolution and functioning. Important capabilities of a system can be lost, if simultaneity in engaging with primary tasks is disrupted. Therefore, instituting an explicit hermeneutic primary task to inquire, raise working hypotheses, question prevailing rationalities and action modalities can enable organisations and groups within them to learn and know more about their own functioning. Since engagement with hermeneutic primary task enables other primary tasks and organisational goals anchored in its purposes to be kept in mind, its importance for understanding, voicing and formulating strategy is significant. Process observations with respect to the five boundaries of space, time, technology, task, and sentience disclosed various challenges for task groups originating in the two territories, Finland and India, scoped in this Study.

For unravelling group phenomena, this Study used action research methodology with an emphasis on reality testing. By raising working hypotheses, which can be seen as ongoing tentative formulations of what was happening in the here-and-now, feedback loops were established. This methodology gave opportunities for all participating, including the researcher, to reflect on processes and learn from feedback. The aim was to study the exploring and inquiring. Such approaches are found to be of use when mere data will not

suffice, and group members need to establish ongoing hermeneutic circles and spirals to learn to interpret processes, functions and phenomena, that are new or strange and outside everyday experiences. To do this, the unit of analysis chosen was the group.

With a view to explore and interpret dimensions of thinking, feeling and acting, four studies in case form were tracked, two in India and two in Finland. These case studies illuminated struggles when thinking, feeling and acting enmesh as discovered through observations, shared insights and expressions of unthought knowns. Through these cases, problem issues within the groups were tracked and also what these issues highlighted for further understanding and exploration. This knowing put into working hypotheses was discussed and found useful in facilitating deeper insight processes.

This Study revealed efficacy of exploration in dialogical spaces when ambiguity is high. The design of desired cross-border collaborations can be improved through exploration in groups and between groups in forms of collaborative endeavours. The Study finds that rational approaches alone do not suffice in unanalysable environments where there is little or no previous experience or knowledge to undertake analysis through pre-set or known issues or familiar logic. Thinking and theorising for concept development from praxis is a useful supplement to analysis to expand the scope of inquiries by including experiential learning.

The Study concludes that experiential learning in task groups through interpretation of ongoing processes can expand and enrich a group's hermeneutic endeavours for concept development from praxis. Such hermeneutic endeavours can transform a group's own ways of thinking, feeling and action for improved task effectiveness. One such way for any task group is to explicitly institute a Hermeneutic Primary Task alongside acknowledgement of Normative, Existential and Phenomenal ones.

Keywords: hermeneutic primary task, task group, primary tasks, boundaries, dialogue, action research, process, experiential learning.

Tiivistelmä

Väitöskirja on fenomenologis-hermeneuttinen ja kokemusperäinen tutkimus prosesseista tehtäväkeskeisissä ryhmissä. Kansainvälisessä vuorovaikutuksessa ryhmissä ja niiden välillä syntyy erilaisia ongelmakenttiä, jotka osaltaan tuovat esiin toimintamahdollisuuksia tai niiden esteitä. Tehtäväkeskeisissä ryhmissä dialogisten ja hermeneuttisten prosessien tutkiminen tietämyksen syventäjänä ryhmien luonteesta ja käyttäytymisestä avaa uusia näkökulmia, sillä rajoja ja niihin liittyviä ilmiöitä voidaan lähestyä tarkastelemalla ryhmiä ajallisina ja paikallisina. Tällöin tiedostamattomat asiat, auktoriteettisuhteet, rajafunktiot prosesseina ja mielikuvat lisäävät ymmärtämisen tärkeyttä ja syventävät tietämystä. Tutkimus tuo esiin myös sen, että ryhmien kanssakäyminen on moniulotteisempaa kuin yleensä esitetään.

Dialogista suhdetta lähestytään ryhmien välisenä prosessina neljän perustehtävän kautta. Nämä perustehtävät esiintyvät jokaisessa organisaatiossa ja niiden avulla voidaan selvittää sekä ymmärtää rajafunktion haasteita ja mahdollisuuksia. Nämä neljä perustehtävää, joiden kautta muut perustehtävät liittyvät toisiinsa, ovat normatiivinen, eksistentiaalinen, fenomenaalinen ja hermeneuttinen. Ne auttavat hahmottamaan organisaation tai ryhmän toimintaa ja kehitystä. Tärkeitä systeemin sisäisiä mahdollisuuksia ja osaamista voidaan menettää, mikäli näiden perustehtävien välinen tasapaino ja samanaikaisuus häiriintyy. Prosessien tarkastelemiseksi on tärkeää tietoisesti asettaa hermeneuttinen perustehtävä, käyttää työhypoteeseja sekä kyseenalaistaa vallitsevia näkemyksiä ja toimintamalleja. Hermeneuttisen perustehtävän toimiessa prismana, ryhmät ja organisaatiot voivat oppia omasta toiminnastaan. Näin ollen perustehtävien kautta voidaan tarkastella asioiden esiintuomista, organisaation eri tavoitteita, niihin liittyviä ymmärtämisprosesseja ja strategian muotoilemista. Viiden raja-käsitteen kautta, joita tässä tutkimuksessa ovat tila, aika, teknologia, tehtävä ja havaintokyky, ryhmät Intiassa ja Suomessa paljastivat erilaisia haasteita, joita kanssakäymisessä syntyy tai voi syntyä.

Ryhmäprosessien havainnollistamiseksi tutkimuksessa käytetään toimintatutkimuksellista otetta. Tähän liittyy työhypoteesien painottaminen. Näiden kautta voidaan ilmaista hetkellisiä havaintoja asioiden tilasta ja ryhmän tilanteesta. Ajallisina ne eivät ole lopullisia totuuksia, vaan kertovat prosessin tilasta. Työhypoteesien käyttö mahdollistaa palautesilmukan tutkittavien ja tutkijan välillä koko prosessin ajan, sillä keskeistä on

yhdessä ymmärtäminen ja kokemusten käsitteellistäminen. Omasta toiminnasta oppiminen on yksi toimintatutkimuksen tavoitteista ja tällainen lähestymistapa on koettu hyväksi silloin kun pelkkä kirjatieto ei riitä, vaan ryhmän jäsenten on opittava tulkitsemaan omaa toimintaansa ja erilaisia ilmiöitä käyttäen hermeneuttista ympyrää tai spiraalia. Uudet ja jokapäiväisen kokemuskentän ulkopuolella olevat asiat vaativat erilaista lähestymistapaa kuin kokemuskenttään kuuluvat. Tällöin ryhmän tärkeys tulee esiin. Näin ollen analyysiyksikkönä toimi ryhmä.

Ajattelun, havaintojen ja toiminnan eri puolien sekä prosessien tutkiminen ja tulkitseminen mahdollistui neljän erilaisen tapauksen kautta. Näistä kaksi oli Suomesta ja kaksi Intiasta. Tapaukset valottivat ponnisteluita, joita syntyy erilaisissa prosesseissa, joissa yhteisiä näkemyksiä, uusia havaintoja ja aiemmin havaitsemattomia asioita tulee esille. Näin hahmotetaan mahdolliset haasteet, joita ryhmien toiminnassa välttämättä syntyy. Nämä tuotiin esiin työhypoteeseissa, joiden avulla asioista oli mahdollista keskustella ja syventää ymmärrystä.

Väitöskirjassa tuodaan esille, miten dialogisia lähestymistapoja voidaan käyttää yhteisenä tutkimustilana ja soveltaa epävarmuutta herättävässä ympäristössä. Tutkimus tuo esiin myös sen, että rajapinnassa tapahtuvassa vuorovaikutuksessa kohtaamisten suunnittelu ja erilaisten lähestymistapojen pohtiminen ovat tärkeitä, koska entiseen perustuvat tutut toimintatavat eivät välttämättä riitä, jos toiminnan logiikka muuttuu. Kokemuksellisen tiedon puuttuessa epävarmuuksien hahmottaminen kokemuksellisen oppimisen kautta voi auttaa prosessia eteenpäin avaten uusia näkökulmia. Näin erityisesti silloin, jos tiedot ja tietovaranto perustuvat vain luettuun tai median välittämään kuvaan kohteesta. Erityisesti kokemuksellisten ja tiedostamattomien prosessien esiintuonti tähdentää tärkeitä painotuseroja rationaalista lähestymistapaa käyttäviin teorioihin.

Tutkimus päätyy näkemykseen, että hermeneuttinen lähestymistapa kokemukselliseen oppimiseen tehtäväkeskeisten ryhmien avulla rikastaa sekä ryhmää itseään että auttaa käsitteellistämään kokemusta. Näin voidaan muuttaa ryhmän ajattelua, tuntemista ja toimintaa sekä parantaa ryhmän vaikutusmahdollisuuksia. Yksi tällainen hermeneuttinen lähestymistapa on tietoisesti asettaa hermeneuttinen perustehtävä ryhmälle ja tutkia sen kautta muita perustehtäviä.

Avainsanat: hermeneuttinen perustehtävä, tehtäväryhmä, perustehtävät, rajat ja rajafunktio, dialogi, toimintatutkimus, prosessi, kokemuksellinen oppiminen.

Preface

Some journeys are more serendipitous than one anticipates. This was one of those. It was Spring 1997 in Germany, when I listened to Hans-Georg Gadamer speaking in a programme called *Philosophie Heute*. That woke me up from an intellectual slumber. Years later, after much pondering over Gadamer's presentation and why it had such an impact, I embarked on my journey. Gadamer had come across as a feet-on-the-ground thinker, whose ideas were sound, if not always exciting. That robustness, dialogue orientation and understanding of what it means to be in time with others, inspired me – there was an air of experiences beyond vision, available for the senses.

Thus, the journey began from my interest in dialogue processes and sparked the wish to inquire into possibilities of researching dialogic processes concerned with cross-border collaboration to understand what facilitates and impedes task groups. Organisations appear enthused in their quest for increase in their internationalisation and experience interesting dilemmas, enigmatic paradoxes, new thoughts, and underacted possibilities. In the course of the journey, in true dialogical sense, surprises, setbacks, problems, and resolves have emerged, been identified and engaged with; some with more grace, others with obvious learning. I learnt that engagement with human processes is both informing and revelation building.

The list of acknowledgements would not be complete without my nearest and dearest, relatives and friends. To Ajeet for his endless support; to my mother Eila (and her uncanny ability to spot gaps in narration) and Pekka: without your help and encouragement, this journey might have been a very short one; to my father Risto, who always pointed out that learning pays (well, at least internally) and encouraged me. My deepest and loving thanks to you all. To my friends for many discussions about life and the universe – absolute and huge thanks (for all the fish and beyond)!

Summa summarum. My humble thanks to all of you, mentioned or not, who have contributed to this Study to become and be, and to all of you who made this journey worthwhile and contributed to thinking and understanding processes that go on. This has been a very rewarding journey which does not end with this Study, but I do take a pause here with a modicum of satisfaction and much gratitude. To borrow Winnicott's (1982) idea, I learnt my work.

Sari Sofia Anneli Mattila
May 7, Anno Domini 2008

Introduction

There is a growing interest in structuring international interactions between different task groups for creation of value through cooperations and collaborations. While the literature dwells more on firms, especially those that are multinational in character, the functioning of task groups has been understudied from the perspective of what facilitates or impedes their border crossings. There is also much in collaboration that requires sensemaking processes. Complex undertakings take groups, not only individuals, into unknown and unfamiliar contexts which need to be studied from group perspectives. The study of interacting task groups can offer valuable insights into how they sustain simultaneity of normative purposes, cope with existential pressures, invite phenomenal experiences and pursue hermeneutic endeavours.

To unravel and understand issues involved, four cases were studied to inquire into the dynamics of group and dialogue processes. In each of these cases, a hermeneutic primary task was explicitly present. Insights from dialogue praxis are related to findings reported in the group relations literature and practices to raise and yield insights into issues that arise in interactions of human groups. Feelings such as anxiety and stress are a universal feature common to every group, but the engagement intensity and awareness vary from group to group.

This is a data informed phenomenological study of hermeneutic processes in groups where the context concerns international border crossings. Task groups were studied to unravel processes inherent in them for understanding specific problems encountered in cross-border situations. The situations studied were not random, but formed part of evolutionary processes initiated by roleholders embedded in organisations where these groups are connected. Through these processes it became possible to explore complex issues involved in opening new vistas of understanding for engaging with and transforming their capacities for new arenas of action. The usefulness of strategy is not in its written form, but in its linking purpose that guides dynamic and evolving processes. To study group processes the open systems framework of four primary tasks was used. These four primary tasks – normative, existential, phenomenal and hermeneutic – enabled raising of working hypotheses for the group to consider.

The Study is presented in four parts. Part One provides the background to this Study, reasons behind the choice of context and the topic. How this Study differs from previous

studies and other approaches in the literature is elaborated here through developing the research questions and the inquiry frame, philosophical background, data collection and methods of this research, along with considerations of what it meant to be a researcher in the role.

Part Two presents the theoretical underpinnings of this Study. The central concepts of task groups as open systems, dialogue, group relations, and experiential learning are explored through a review of existing literature. This part constitutes the essence of this approach, theoretical considerations and reflections. Here, what is known from the literature is recapitulated to develop what is central to dialogue approaches and the distinctive contribution of this Study towards filling the gaps identified.

Part Three describes selected contexts and provides the cases themselves. Each case is presented independently with reasons why this particular case is relevant here and its significance for this research. In each of the cases, working hypotheses were formulated. Thereafter, theory and cases are discussed together to highlight issues and draw out commonalities from these cases. Then, central issues discovered from the cases are highlighted and related to the literature to illuminate some missing pieces of the puzzles formulated as research questions in the beginning of this Study.

Part Four brings together working hypotheses and links them to realities of organisational life through reflections on the results, and problems faced while doing this research. Important insights and findings are interpreted to draw conclusions. In this part, the scope and applicability of this research are discussed and potential for further research is noted. Lastly, this part presents what more could be done and questions that this Study has raised, but not necessarily answered within this research, to acknowledge limitations of this Study.

This Study concludes that the instituting of an explicit hermeneutic primary task can unravel a lot of processes to the advantage of task groups engaged in cross-border interactions for increased task-effectiveness. The five boundaries of time, space, sentience, technology, and task are all relevant in cross-border phenomena. The Study finds that task effectiveness does not follow from stated strategies, goals and received resources without attention to how management processes are engaged with and where the authority of groups is actually located. Creating and using hermeneutic spaces in task groups engaged with collaborative cross-border interactions reveal more of what constitutes barriers and can enable the design of gateways that are process-driven.

Part I: Exploring Meanings, Ideas and Methodology

1 Background to the Inquiry: Problems of New Horizons

The core of this Study focuses on engagement with hermeneutic primary task in groups concerned with structuring cross-border interactions through gateways across unknowns into new vistas of understanding. Cross-border situations pose some additional strains and stresses for those engaging with them, due to greater ambiguity and uncertainty than what a national or sub-national situation presents. There has hardly been any research using groups as a unit of analysis in cross-border activity structuring. The existing literature mostly focuses on multinational firms (MNCs), but does not include other forms of endeavours. It is seldom that the whole organisation engages with cross-border activities, except those chosen to engage with that part of a project. Therefore these functionaries act as gatekeepers and become carriers of the home "organization-in-the-mind" (Armstrong 2005[1]). Such persons engage and link with other institutions as boundary spanners. This introduces boundary questions for understanding cross-border phenomenon as well as coming to grips with emerging possibilities.

Cross-border situations can be examined through groups engaging in dialogue and instituting hermeneutic processes for knowledge understanding and exploration. The data in this Study was drawn from literature, group meetings, interviews, notes, and other written material. In business firms and in other organisations, persons increasingly deal with phenomena they have little or no knowledge of, as an actual situation. When persons in roles struggle to reach and understand each other, barriers in place of boundaries can trigger processes that curtail instead of expand horizons. It was therefore perceived as essential to inquire into what happens when a group tries to make sense of its task and task environment. Gadamer (2000a: xxxi[2]; 1983) drew attention to this by stating that "understanding belongs to the being of that which is understood", referring to a process where understanding always is already a part of what it is trying to interpret. There is a need to examine dialogue processes to understand where and what we are (Joutsimäki 2004, 2006). This calls for looking into what is happening in societies where organisations

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[1] Armstrong (2005: 3) notes that this concept was first introduced by Turquet (in 1970s).

[2] For the sake of convenience, the English language translation of *Wahrheit und Methode* is used here. The original work was published in German in 1960. It is taken into consideration and acknowledged here that Gadamer saw translations as "new works" due to difficulties arising in translation process. However, translations are widely used in different language areas.

are embedded, since organisations give rise to groups, and projects are undertaken for various reasons that are also connected to larger wholes.

Following this, another reason for interest in cross-border processes arose from the current situation in the Finnish society. While society in itself is difficult to study, two aspects connected to researched groups selected, namely education and business, are noteworthy. These two, based on news and articles, seem to be undergoing a period of fundamental transformation due to increased (felt) need for internationalisation. The society has stepped over "a threshold of a new era" (Anttiroiko and Kasvio 2005: 19), which can be said to have started in the early 1990s when Finland underwent its worst recession, joined European Union in 1995 and finally became part of the European Economic and Monetary Union in 2001. These events necessitated deep structural changes, and Finland's becoming part of a larger whole could itself be regarded as a primary task for the nation as a whole. Researchers have increasingly pointed out that imperatives of internationalisation and the impending demographic shock in Finland place communities at risk, requiring new solutions as well as thinking on immigration and migration policies, on educational policies, and on export potential (Mathur 2001; Mathur et al. 2003, OECD 2007; McKinsey Report 2007).[3] These developments reinforce felt needs for strong internationalisation processes (Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto 2006; Pirkko Haavisto 2004)[4] and Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) (Bank of Finland 2006; UNCTAD 2005)[5] to anchor benefits of globalisation and lessen strains on export driven welfare systems due to increased competition, triggering changes in national needs. Thus, groups studied here are located in a larger context, where wishes and hopes for new linkages have strongly emerged. In this research, wishes and hopes refer to vocalised issues of support which are not acted upon, or are so only in a limited sense.

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[3] OECD, 2007 (http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/39/38088780.pdf, Accessed 7.5.2007);
McKinsey, 2007
(http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/helsinki/pdf/suomen_talous_saavutukset_haasteet_prioriteetit.pdf, Accessed 7.5.2007).
[4] Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto (English name Confederation of Finnish Industry and Employers), 2006, (http://www.ek.fi/ek_suomeksi/kilpailukyky/kansainvalistyminen/index.php, Accessed 23.2.2007); Pirkko Haavisto, 2004 (http://e.finland.fi/netcomm/news/showarticle.asp?intNWSAID=20517, Accessed 7.5.2007)
[5] Bank of Finland, 2006 (http://www.finlandsbank.fi/NR/rdonlyres/43813B8F-5E55-417A-A1B1-990DF75FFF32/0/Sstied05.pdf, Accessed 18.4.2007); UNCTAD, 2005,
(http://www.unctad.org/sections/dite_fdistat/docs/wid_cp_fi_en.pdf, Accessed 18.4.2007)

The change in the world power balance with strong growth of Asia in general (China and India in particular[6]) has added previously neglected countries to the new arenas of action for Finnish organisations.[7] European Union policies, such as the EU-India Strategic Partnership[8], arisen concerns over welfare and immigration policies, and on immigration and multiculturalism, have become everyday news items in public discussions. However, these new issues need understanding and engagement, because they introduce new unknowns, ambiguities and adjustments. In addition to following social, economical and material changes, unfolding realities need observing, analysing and interpreting.

Among developing nations, India, which has many "European" institutions and traditions, is growing fast and undergoing rapid transformation. During 2004-2007, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased at over 8 % per annum, and India became the fourth largest economy in the world. The per capita Gross National Income (GNI) also increased from 450 USD in 2000 to 730 USD in 2005 (World Bank, 2007).[9] For a perfunctory overview, these are important economic indicators. However, if one is to engage with India and Indians in a long term perspective, a wider view of the country needs to be acquired. Understanding of current trends and initiatives, social life, legislation, institutions and economy can open new horizons for business opportunities. Although the growth in some sectors in India has not been as high as in China, life expectancy increased, and poverty ratios declined. While there have been discussions about inertia in public structures and systems, lack of infrastructure, challenges with corruption, poverty, and caste, matters are developing patch by patch at an unprecedented pace beyond these.[10]

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[6] James Wolfensohn, former Chief of World Bank, recently called this shift "tectonic". He also claimed that rich nations are ignoring this shift. BBC Online, 2007c (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7006172.stm, Accessed 21.9.2007).

[7] There have been Indo-Finnish talks on cooperation and trade since 1974. Ministry of Commerce, India, 1974 (http://meaindia.nic.in/treatiesagreement/1974/chap522.htm, Accessed 29.9.2007) and also during Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari's visit to New Delhi in 1996. Ahtisaari, 1996 (http://www.tpk.fi/ahtisaari/puheet-1996/icensu.htm, Accessed 29.9.2007).

[8] European Commission, 2006 (http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/library/publications/25_india_brochure.pdf, Accessed 7.5.2007); Council of the European Union, 2005 (http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2005/september/tradoc_124785.pdf, Accessed 7.5.2007).

[9] India Data Profile 2000-2006, The World Bank Group, 2007 (http://devdata.worldbank.org, Accessed 10.09.2007).

[10] This is vividly presented by Professor Hans Rosling, Karolinska Institutet, in a video lecture where he points out that myths are held about so called "developing countries". By combining different data, he tries to show that social changes precede economic ones. Rosling, 2006 (www.ted.com, Accessed 31.3.2007). The question then arises: at which point are changes noticed and how does this happen? Under-the-surface development is also captured by Bijapurkar (2007).

Ties between Finland and India have received media attention in Finland and from 2005 onwards, articles about India have expanded in scope and become more frequent. The growing interest in Finland towards India has also sparked wishes to create interactions. Some groups have succeeded in creating long term collaborations; others have created representational avenues and trade links, while the majority has only tenuous connections. The interest in Finland towards India has grown immensely through new possibilities, such as direct flights, but also due to increased pressures to link. This can be viewed through heightened wishes to link through research, education and business: much needs to be learnt and many possibilities are still untapped. As the phenomena in itself is vast and untappable in its entirety, this Study chose to focus on groups in Finland and India trying to engage with groups in the other territory with unfolding of possibilities and barriers as well as impediments.

In a changing environment, past knowledge alone does not help much in new arising horizons (Leonard and Sensiper 1998; Leonard-Barton 1995; Senge et al. 2004[11], 2004/2005). To understand what happens between and in groups aspiring to create value adding linkages with previously unknown areas, the border-crossing aspect of group evolvement is an important link in making sense of what impedes or hinders and what enables and facilitates groups to carry out their aims. Benefits are either perceived or benefits need to be unearthed, as and when such issues arise and are reflected upon. The Study of task groups engaged in the process of doing so can yield valuable insights.

1.1 The Issues

In task groups designed for special purposes, the usual notion of a 'leader' does not suffice, since such groups do not begin from the notion of 'leader', but from the notion of 'logos'. It is important to study what happens in such groups, what enhances their task effectiveness and what problems or barriers arise in engaging with tasks. While tasks in themselves belong to groups, they inherently serve organisations as open systems connected to an environment where outcomes are valued. Therefore, one cannot see groups in isolation, but as part of structures and systems that enable or hinder possibilities. A group here refers to a task group within or across uni-organisational boundaries. Thus, it is distinguishable from other collections of people, such as a team or community.

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[11] Senge et al., 2004 (http://www.dialogonleadership.org/Awakening%20Faith.pdf, Accessed 31.7.2006).

a) Group=   persons in close proximity engaging with tasks together in a
                   common space and time
b) Team=   set of people working together, not necessarily in the same space
                   linked by roles and competing
c) Community=   people sharing a habitat or anchored in professional solidarity

A group with a task always tries to make sense of what it is, how it is and what it is supposed to do and why, how and to what extent. With questions of authority, hierarchy, and emotions, barriers arise, and the group itself can be regarded as an explorer, seeker and examiner of knowledge. The group is also depicted as the seat and practice of knowledge in itself following the communitarian epistemology (Kusch 2002), where processes of knowing are put back into the group to carry, hold and develop. Thus, in a 'work group' a task reflects goal(s) and anticipation of result(s).

A framework for open systems involves questions of management, combining task, and human systems into larger wholes. Barnard (1938) already saw organisations as social systems. Since a key underpinning behind open systems is of exchange, how and where this exchange is done becomes central. Studying systems also means examining boundaries, roles and interactions as keys to understanding, since task oriented groups cannot be grasped without thinking of containment, understanding, and learning processes, and efficacy in these.

The open systems framework and the notion of distinctive primary tasks and competencies to distinguish them from one another (Barnard 1938; Miller and Rice 1967; Selznick 1957) are useful to inquire into how organisations view, engage with and understand their being and becoming, and how they work, reflect, and simultaneously engage with multiple primary tasks. Miller and Rice (1967: 25) portray the primary task of an organisation as something it must do to justify its existence.[12] Such a primary task is normative, but by no means the only one. Persons work in organisations also for their own quality of life, and this existential purpose is as primary as the normative one. Since the primary task *actually* pursued may not be only based on conscious deliberation, but also on what remains outside conscious awareness, every organisation has a phenomenal primary task as well. The crux is that an organisation may easily lose its way if there are no self-sensemaking processes in place.

Lawrence (1986, 1992) distinguished three primary tasks an organisation engages with. The Normative Primary Task (NPT) in an organisation deals with the core (*raison d'être*),

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[12] It is noteworthy here that survival itself can become a primary task in place of the original one.

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the reason for existence of that particular organisation. Therefore it is related to stakeholders and their notion of the primary task – discovered or intended. The Existential Primary Task (EPT), within an organisation is related to why persons are part of it and why the organisation wants to be part of them and what meaning is derived together from it. Both these tasks are conscious and rational, residing outside the system domain. Understanding Phenomenal Primary Task (PPT) discloses aspects of the reality of the organisation, the system domain, as it unfolds. Processes that actualise in the life of an organisation are partly beyond awareness.

The concept of Hermeneutic Primary Task (HPT) was introduced by Mathur (2006a), who discovered that there is a fourth primary task, the hermeneutic, through which the organisation engages in inquiries and reflections. The hermeneutic primary task inquires into processes through which it becomes possible to unravel how the other three primary tasks converge or diverge in an organisation as an institution. Without an explicit HPT, situations would arise, where snap decisions precede judgements, and consultants need to be engaged for sense making processes of what is happening. As a process, the hermeneutic primary task has been lurking in the group relations literature (as process observation and interpretation done by consultants), but now it has explicitly been conceptualised as a primary task in its own right along with other primary tasks. This helps in conceptualising and differentiating group processes, and highlighting relevant aspects for organisational use. The framework of four distinctive primary tasks thus enables explorations into what an organisation was set up for, and to inquire how its purposes are translated into action (Table 1).

Table 1: The Four Primary Tasks

Normative Primary Task (NPT)	Existential Primary Task (EPT)
The designed or discovered Primary Task that an organisation engages with to have reason for being. This task belongs to the whole organisation.	The Primary Task why persons become roleholders with an organisation, and what meanings they wish to derive from it. This task also belongs to the whole organisation.
Phenomenal Primary Task (PPT)	Hermeneutic Primary Task (HPT)
The Primary Task actually pursued, consciously and unconsciously, as manifest in phenomena, some of which remain beyond awareness of the actors.	The Primary Task engaged with to make sense, diagnose, and derive deeper meanings about what really is happening.

Sources: Lawrence 1986; 1992; Mathur 2006a; Mathur and Mattila 2007b

While the Primary Task, as a concept, is in no way unproblematic (Dartington 1998), it gives a frame to inquire into processes that can themselves be ambiguous or beyond awareness.

Dialogue praxis as a hermeneutic endeavour refers to processes where two or more parties come together to examine new horizons and to explore emergent possibilities in space and time. Yet, management focused dialogue literature hardly ever discusses aborting a task or difficulties and conflicts in these, leaving such discussions mainly to conflict resolution or negotiation literature. Nonetheless, when humans form groups for tasks and expected deliverables, these groups invariably function through embedded networks of feelings and emotions that are associated with thinking and action, and need attention. These in turn affect how tasks are viewed and interpreted and what barriers arise between sentient groups and their perceived identities (Bion 1961; Lawrence 1992; Lawrence et al. 1996[13]; Mathur 2006a).

In task groups engaged with dialogue processes, especially in the context of cross-border situations, questions of authority and power need to be revisited. Such issues as embeddedness, context, habits, and lived experiences contribute to what is seen as relevant and true, although some parts of these are not shareable as such.

Many actions in organisations are based on issues other than clear, unidimensional, and rational ones. Therefore, exploring emerging issues in groups or through individuals as and when decisions are made, yield important insights into the process itself. The approach introduced as "bounded rationality" (Simon 1955, 1978[14], 1996) drew attention that human thinking is always within some boundaries, real or imagined. Yet, assumptions of rationality have pervaded areas where they do not apply (Sen 1977). Weick (2001) emphasises that it may be futile and costly to maintain the illusion of rationality and order in organisations. What is bounded and why, becomes explorable through action research methods, when participants voice their experiences, worries, dreams, fears, hopes, and wishes. Anderson (1983: 214) stresses that "goals are discovered through a social process involving argumentation and debate in a setting where justification and legitimacy play important roles".

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[13] Lawrence et al., 1996 (http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ispso/html/Free_Association.html, Accessed 29.12.2005)

[14] Simon, 1978 (http://nobelprize.org/economics/laureates/1978/simon-lecture.pdf, Accessed 21.9.2004).

Decision making is a "social act" (Anderson 1983: 202) and can occur simultaneously with the process (Schön 1983). Some issues are rationalised, but underacted upon, thus leaving a large space of "unthought knowns" (Bollas 1987). These are areas 'within known', but not thought of because some issues are pushed to oblivion or just ignored. These can create unthought barriers that influence action, thus rendering the system ineffective, and leave important insights unnoticed or not acted upon. Barriers are not easily recognized, since they may 'lurk' beyond awareness and remain buried under assumptions, routines and structures. Building on these, organisations may also be understood in terms of tensions (Poole and Van de Ven 1989). These tensions are important in providing clues to what needs to be inquired.

Hermeneutics is closely related to interpretations (Gk. *hermeneuin* to interpret), and interpretations to understanding. Interpretation is made using multiple channels, not only language: it is influenced by undercurrents in the group and phantasies[15] lived by and among its members arising from residues and unconscious wishes. Weick (2001), and Daft and Weick (1984) developed modes of interpretation with emphasis on language and culture, but these alone do not suffice, because of needs to look at the capability of "play" (Gadamer 2000a). Interpretation is believed to unearth, to some extent, "phantasies" (Klein 1985; 1987), which are born with regression. Images and beliefs unfold as "pictures-in-the-mind"[16] and address beliefs that are "being frozen in time" (Bain 1999), where something is preserved as it was with no changes whatsoever. Important group aspects such as "basic assumptions" (Bion 1961[17]) explain some of the group behaviour. Basic assumption groups focus on their feelings at the cost of task effectiveness, whereas fantasies are born in human 'minds' because of not knowing, but assuming, based on non-confronted prejudices that were learnt through tradition and got frozen as patterns.

The word 'effective' is used to connote creating something of an impact. It is distinguished from 'efficiency', which in the economics literature is related to the concern that there is

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[15] An important distinction between *phantasy* and *fantasy* is drawn here. *Ph*antasy as a concept was used by Klein (1987) to refer to unconscious processes in states of regression, where something is felt as an actual act. *F*antasy refers to self-level coping mechanisms where no regression is involved (imagined). This important distinction is discussed also by Harrison (2000: 40).

[16] The concept of pictures-in-the-mind was first used by Turquet (1975) to depict what is going on in large groups. The concept takes into consideration inner beliefs, values, norms, and ideas informed by outer information and hidden processes, such as feelings, emotions, defences, fears and anxieties. Pictures-in-the-mind are carried as 'lenses' through which world is experienced and interpreted.

[17] For convenience of reference, the 1961 edition of *Experiences in Groups* is used. It is noted, however, that these papers were published already between 1948 to 1951 in *Human Relations.* The other two papers in this book date from 1943 (related to Northfield Experiment I, and co-authored with John Rickman), and a review of group dynamics which revisited Bion's earlier thoughts on groups, published in 1952.

no "waste" (Samuelson and Nordhaus 1985: 28). However, waste can be seen in human resources as well, and effective organisations transform inputs into "meaningful outputs" with minimum human waste (Chattopadhyay and Malhotra 1991).[18] In organisational functioning human, social and technological inputs are important. Hence 'effective' means being able to explore and work with others in space and time producing outputs to create possibilities and act upon them even when faced with insecurities, ambiguity and barriers. There is a meaningful relation between inputs and outputs. It also means being able to engage with and hold on to processes, to be able to reap benefits of inputs by creating mutual double-loops.

1.2 From Primary Tasks to Processes

The literature strongly supports the assumption that efficacy in experiential learning through introducing explicit hermeneutic primary task might enable better constructs for interactions. Engagement in participative action research can yield important information on how human task groups actually pursue their stated aims and how they understand and capture processes they are in. Practice involves an act of "choosing" (willing), not "wishing" (Gadamer 1983: 81). Yet, groups unconsciously carry wishes even as they consciously engage in choosing and willing. Thus, in groups, there are many aspects to learn from, before embarking on new areas and learning about system responses. Research has revealed that many of those interviewed in organisations are not able to capture events because for them these did not seem important at the time they happened (Leonard-Barton 1995). Therefore, the role of facilitators and researchers to capture such events becomes vital, because rationalising processes that set in after experiences, usually stand in the way of capturing the event as it was felt. Further, strong ties are found to be preferred over weak ties (Granovetter 1973) even when weak ties would offer innovative or more effective ways of relating. Likeminded rationalities of strong ties merely reinforce each others' opinions.

In such situations, if social innovations are called for, organisations may face blocks in fostering more creativity and alternative meanings even when they are in dire need of them. This in itself is a puzzle. When novel ideas and ways of action are needed, these cannot be instituted if the organisation has not learnt to have structures to support inquiries

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[18] Chattopadhyay and Malhotra, 1991,
(http://www.acsa.net.au/articles/hierarchy%20and%20modern%20org%20.pdf , Accessed 31.3.2005).

or to deal with emerging unfamiliar situations. For Schumpeter (1986) innovations are about creative destruction[19], but social innovations for instituting reality checks and efficient processes, are about 'creative daring'. Further, in order to "creatively destruct", an innovation has to "exist". Innovations as goods, services, products or processes, are regarded as the motor behind change and progress (Drucker 2001; 2005), and they need innovative interactions across borders to be creatively utilised. Sandberg (2005: 268) points to the lack of research in innovation management on how, in practice, to go about new markets in international business. This is also highlighted by Ståhle et al. (2004: 5) in their discussion that there is lack of internationalisation in the innovation system. Leonard and Sensiper (1998) refer to the tacit nature of group innovation, which partly builds on experience.

Thus, the literature reveals that inadequate emphasis has been given to social innovations, reflective practices and group exploration. Queries in these add to "cultural" and "social capital" formation (Bourdieu 1986)[20]. The dearth of social innovations in international business systems requires more study and attention, because internationalisation cannot be produced only locally (Kasvio and Anttiroiko 2005; Mathur 2001). Internationalisation by definition, is about experience beyond the familiar. Problems experienced have to do with creating, maintaining and upholding linkages with systems or within systems that work under different assumptions. Therefore, perceptions in one territory cannot be transferred as such to another. Boundaries that need to be crossed do exist, whether based on mind, matter or preference, besides those that are territorial.

An important part of international human contact in groups is to try to create value. This is based on linking organisational purposes by crossing boundaries and implies that there are tasks to be carried out beyond familiar comfort zones. Boundary crossings trigger demarcation issues, which are often solved by erecting (conscious or unconscious) barriers.[21] After the World Trade Organisation (WTO) reached an agreement on services under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS, 1995), non-tariff barriers have become more formidable obstacles than tariff barriers. This agreement changed the trade

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[19] This term was coined by Schumpeter already in 1942.

[20] Bourdieu introduced the concept of Social Capital in 1972. It is closely linked to two other forms of capital, namely economic and cultural, where Social Capital refers to membership in a group thus presenting actual and potential resources available; Cultural capital refers to inequality in resources for different classes in its formation; and Economic Capital to financial gains and resources. All these are in institutionalized form (Bourdieu 1986).

[21] An example of this was on BBC Online, 2007b (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/6571235.stm Accessed 5.5.2007).

environment by enabling different modes of services delivery, by making organisations more aware of the importance of service components and their requirements in cross-border trade. Tariff barriers are more easily identifiable and can be taken into consideration, but non-tariff barriers can be hidden and surface only through experience. Barriers can be visible or invisible or objective obstacles, but these can also consist of singly or collectively held pictures, images, defences, or cumbersome procedures. For this reason, these matters need to be inquired by studying groups in action.

Groups are perceived as having some advantages over a person, especially, when increased emphasis is placed on networking.[22] Groups are important in cross-border interaction, since a group is likely to be the contact medium between two entities, such as organisations or institutions. Thus the group itself becomes a 'spanner' between entities creating tensions. These tensions can be observed and working hypotheses formulated from data. The focus on groups in cross-border interactions influenced questions formulated from researchworthy issues. Since understanding in the "here-and-now"[23] was important, action research methodology was preferred to expand the possibilities of new insights from all participants. This influenced the research design and implementation, and emphasised an interpretative and learning oriented approach above an experimental one, since dialogue, experiential learning and group relations all include elements of double-loop learning. The explicitness of hermeneutic primary task in all task groups studied enabled the conceptual framework in group relation literature and practices to be used for analysis and interpretation.

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[22] Networks are seen as "a set of nodes" (Brass et al. 2004: 795).
[23] The "here-and-now" in one of Lewin's (Fraher 2004; Lewin 1947a) contributions to experiential learning.

2 Research Design

Double-loop learning inquires into what is learnable and learnt, and into processes of learning. It is important in an organisation to foster creativity, open-mindedness and effectiveness, and accentuate how this understanding opens new doors to new spaces, as well as to cultivate inquiring minds and approaches. For this reason, this Study aimed to unravel task group processes involved in dialogue, how they begin, how they are carried out, how and why they are engaged with or aborted in groups through the frame of hermeneutic primary task in a context. Dialogue and related hermeneutic primary task both need to be thought from the perspective how these help to address issues of concern, what hinders or creates development, how transformation and creativity in inter-group relations can be achieved, and to discuss relations between one and many. Figure 1 shows how this process is undertaken.

Figure 1: The Research Process

14
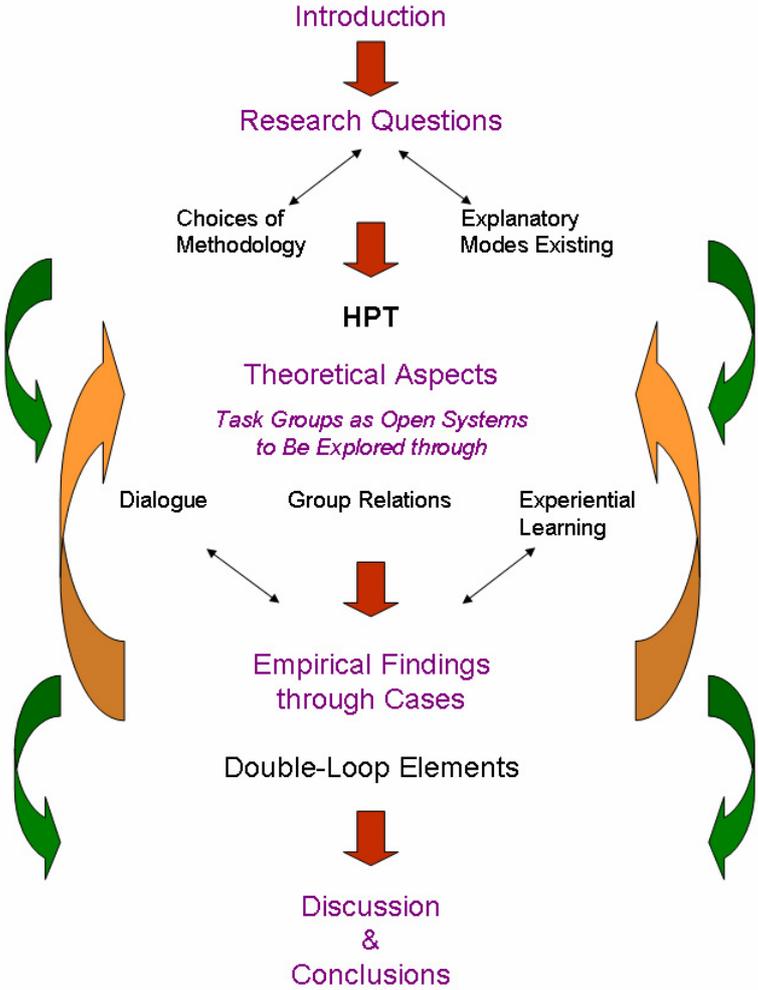
2.1 Primary and Specific Questions for this Study

To understand the hermeneutic primary task in groups (that belong to larger unities) engaged in cross-border interactions as a way of knowing how their primary tasks relate to one another and impact task effectiveness.

The primary question concerns processes through which exploration and examination are taken up or abandoned in a group. The specific questions inquired into are:

1) How do task groups give meaning to group relations through dialogue?

2) In what forms do processes related to the hermeneutic primary task manifest?

3) What benefits do groups seek and obtain by engaging with hermeneutic processes?

4) How does explicit introduction of hermeneutic primary task help in understanding pictures-in-the-mind?

5) How can barriers and resistances to change be explored and resolved through explicit hermeneutic primary task in cross-border situations?

2.2 Research Objectives

1) To find out what issues and problems arise in task groups when engaging with dialogue processes in cross-border interactions.

2) To examine how consciousness of hermeneutic primary task affects intra-group and inter-group processes.

3) To understand how explicit hermeneutic primary task affects interactions and negotiable outcomes.

4) To study the efficacy of action research methodologies for working with explicit hermeneutic primary task as a way of coping and transforming the pictures-in-the-mind.

5) To understand how groups engaging with normative, existential, phenomenal, and hermeneutic primary tasks expand their awareness of their own evolutionary potential and bring it back to their organisations.

The theoretical underpinnings of research objectives are discussed in Part II. This Study aims to inquire into what happens in group processes in cross-border interactions to understand, explore, examine, and analyse hermeneutic processes that introduce and transform pictures-in-the-mind as barriers and gateways to action. The inferences drawn from this research would then offer the possibility to consider alternative ways of facilitating cross-border interactions and hermeneutic processes in and between groups.

The theoretical contribution of this work thus relies on gaining experience of how action research methodologies work in practice and what needs to be taken into consideration when engaging in this form of research and why. Such an empirical study based on context sensitive cases has been regarded as useful by Whetten (1989), who states that the following elements are essential for understanding phenomenon (Whetten 1989: 490-492): relations between factors (what and how), underlying assumptions, asserting limitations in context and setting boundaries for generalisability. As expected in qualitative and interpretative case studies using action research, the research itself was a living process.

2.3 Research Design

This is a data informed multidisciplinary action research study on how task groups engage with hermeneutic primary task in cross-border contexts. From the beginning the main thrust for choosing this approach different from the mainstream in Industrial Management research arose from actual experiences in cross-border situations, literature and the researcher's own insights into such processes. It was intriguing that emerging possibilities were not being effectively engaged with. An interest towards phenomenology, *philosophical* hermeneutics, and understanding processes influenced the design. For this chosen approach, argumentation is as relevant as using empirical material.[24] In action oriented studies, research is also emergent, not static or predetermined.

This thesis is a *monograph*, based on literature, practice, and data gathered from groups and organisations. Organisation here refers to the background entity, either an educational organisation or a business as a whole. Cases are presented as learning institutions, which refer to group settings which can be regarded as "temporary learning institutions (TLIs)"

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[24] For other relevant philosophically or phenomenologically oriented studies, see e.g. Ahonen (2001); Mäkinen (2004); Parviainen (1998); Värri (1997).

(Mathur 2000), or "temporary educational institutions" (Trist and Sofer 1959).[25] In TLIs the idea of experiential learning is central (Chattopadhyay 2005). Following this, the group was chosen as the *unit of analysis.*

This research process commenced in December 2004. To know related research and findings, a literature survey was undertaken. This showed up the gap between use of group relations methods to unravel unconscious phenomena and interfaces that involve deliberate tasking through conscious and interactional modes such as dialogue, and to unexpressed bridges between dialogue and group relations approaches. This pointed to the need to also explore unconscious phenomena. Unconscious here refers to group unconscious and not to individual unconscious, and is approached from an organisation study perspective, not from a therapeutic one.[26] All groups studied were task groups, not therapeutic groups.

The *epistemological* and *ontological* approach here was based on phenomenology and hermeneutics. In phenomenology, starting from Husserl (1995) onwards, the world can be viewed as a phenomenon which can be studied. This raises the question whether a truth can be grasped only by a single cause of reason. Therefore, perceived phenomenon is studied here by using working hypotheses to capture the nature of interpretation and problems unfolding in trying to grasp emerging issues. Kant (1781/1986) has pointed out that 'things in themselves' (*Dinge an sich*) cannot be known, but are sensed through our faculties (reminding of pictures-in-the-mind). The phenomenological stance, from Heidegger (2000) onwards, saw man as part of the world and profoundly tied to it, in an *ontological sense,* where experience of the world is as valid as reason. To place emphasis on group approaches where no single element is being targeted, the study noted the relevance of *communitarian epistemology* (Kusch 2002)[27], which caters to plurality.

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[25] A distinction in group relations literature is drawn between *organisation* and *institution.* The former refers to actual entity, and the latter to a container forming in the mind.

[26] Out of dialogue practitioners, only Patrick de Maré refers to some kind of therapeutic dialogue. This may be due to his thinking being based on Foulkesian Group-Analysis. However, S.H. Foulkes has not been influential in the Tavistock based group relations movement, although he was a contemporary of Bion and they knew of each other's work (Foulkes 1946; Fraher 2004; Harrison 2000).

[27] Kusch (2002) writes that he considered giving his ideas the title of "hermeneutic epistemology" instead of "communitarian epistemology". The reason he dropped hermeneutics from the title was because the Anglo-American epistemologists find hermeneutics sloppy and obscure (Kusch 2002: 5). This is interesting in two ways. Firstly, qualitative approaches share the same kind of "aura". Continental philosophy has for a long time been undervalued against the more "strict and precise" analytic tradition; secondly, this clearly speaks about a group. The discussion of individualism versus communitarism has been raging in USA for a long time and has its roots in history. I do not go into that "battle" here.

The expression '*working hypotheses*'[28] in this Study is used as in the group relations literature. These are 'starting points' and informed, tentative unfolding interpretations that portray something important from a moment as captured by the researcher or group members. These are articulated to be supported, modified or refuted by participants or colleagues. They are always built on data, either discussed, experienced or read and put forward into an interpretation process. Thus, these are not 'truths' in the strictest sense, but snapshots of a given moment to help conceptualise points of experience. Working hypotheses are not to be mixed with hypotheses in natural sciences, since the 'verification process' is social, living, unique, and experiential, not experimental. The aim and purpose is not of proving or disproving hypotheses but to share experienced reality, and purpose of sharing these hypotheses is to enable more hypotheses to be developed as closer approximations for better understanding, while providing thresholds for reflections and actions (doing). Patterns in a dynamic context can themselves reveal significant group processes. In cases, where an action researcher engages with observation and intervention processes, output of data can be processed through narrative approaches, since narrative here is pertinent to shared experiences. However, no case can comprehensively bring out all that is attempted. Therefore, it is necessary to make reality checks while the process is going on. This reality check differs from truth determination, and seeks to make sense of situations at hand to participants, while critically examining emerging issues. It can be done with participants, reflecting on aims and other available material.

It was of interest to observe how notions of being in the same world are actually experienced and understood as they are. Reality, as a felt and experienced continuity, is often sustained and created by images to rationalise it and also to rationalise one's actions (Morgan 1983; Weick 1993). Problems arise when these images do not correspond with perceived reality or are made on false premises, or when the sense of Establishment[29] overrides what happens in reality. The need to collect data through groups engaging with tasks in the here-and-now pointed to action research methodologies as more useful and relevant.

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[28] These are related to Bion's notion of "...because"-clause. Therefore working hypotheses are drawn from data in the group, but here the idea of data is about what is happening, not merely what is spoken.

[29] Establishment in this Study refers to language Bion (1970) used. This means something that has formed into an institution, and therefore thoughts arise of its superior worth over other interpretations.

2.4 Data Collection from Cases in Finland and India

Data collection was thus primarily done with groups. In this Study the research material was collected by using action research, in the form of "listening posts" (as workshops)[30], communications of working hypotheses, feedback and interviews. Listening posts, as the name suggests, listen to participants, seek clarifications, raise questions and generally try to make sense of what the participants bring into the discussion. Thus, material primarily arises from members as they engage with a task at hand, and from that information groups try to build a holistic sense of reality. In addition, when applicable, other material was used.[31] Information gathered through these data collection methods was processed in the form of multiple cases. For the most part, the design was to study groups when they engaged with processes in the here-and-now, and in one case, the process was captured through interviews. This was due to different circumstances where the organisation already had a long history of cooperation. Cases provided access to both past and current evolutionary processes.

Through hermeneutic process, these cases provide material to learn in action and to reflect on theory and explore connections between praxis and concept development. The focus of the Study was on the *Hermeneutic Primary Task* (HPT), through which it was examined how groups deal and engage with new and unknown situations, and how they understand, hold and use hermeneutic primary task. These reflections were put in the form of working hypotheses and discussed while engaging in the hermeneutic primary task.

The empirical part of this Study began in Autumn 2005, when a small Finnish company contemplated a possibility to engage in trade with an Indian company. This introduced prospects for engaging with the process as it unfolded. For any company, doing something new is a challenge, but it is more so for an organisation of small size that engages with something like this for the first time. Although for other reasons and due to unanticipated changes this process did not proceed as far as planned, it introduced some basic problems that an organisation faces and anxieties it carries in reaching out to something new, and

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[30] In listening posts, participants share through articulating their concerns and 'pictures-in-the-mind' and discuss how to proceed towards their stated aims. This can be seen also in the light of open dialogues, although Bohm (1996) would have called these dialogues as "limited" ones, because these had a goal.

[31] As for background material, other resources such as reports, news, articles and memoranda publicly available in print and through web-media were examined. These consisted also of own experiences related to these processes. It was useful to pinpoint where these groups are situated in a larger picture. Especially news highlighted some processes in progress and provided insights into what was expected to happen or had happened.

provided some stepping stones for designing the approach of this Study. It highlighted that some processes get aborted, because management of boundaries requires capacities that may not be present. Some of these anxieties and enigmas carried by groups are discussed in Joutsimäki and Mathur (2006) and Mathur and Mattila (2007a).

This Study analyses and synthesises the learning from four different cases. Each of these is presented separately, but all of them highlight aspects of hermeneutic primary task, discussed in more detail in Parts III and IV. Case here refers to the manner of representation. The First Case is about a Finnish Vocational Educational group trying to develop linkages and networks with corresponding Indian educational institutes through a three-year project. The Second Case deals with a Finnish Medium-Sized Company and issues arising from experiences of engaging with Indian partners. The Third Case deals with a seminar and workshop on India-Nordic Economic Relations in India with one follow-up. This was conducted with Indian businessmen, who voiced their worries and anxieties when exploring opportunities in another space. The Fourth case is a collection of experiences from a workshop on Doing Business in Nordic Europe where Indian managers tried to make sense of Nordic countries as a business area. Here too, worries, questions, puzzles and problems are portrayed. Additionally, own experiences[32] arising from these cases are discussed, as and where relevant. These cases are presented in Table 2 (page 21).

Each case was discussed through the frame of four primary tasks (see Table 1, p. 8) within the context studied. The empirical data used here was gathered between Spring 2006 and March 2007, and the time period varied in all the cases, as depicted in Table 2 (page 21). The process in Case One was the longest, spreading over a year. In Case Two, there were several individual interviews over a month and a case report process. Here the group itself is considered to be "the managers" (-in-the-mind) interviewed. In Case Three, the event lasted for one day and had one two-hour follow-up. Case Four lasted three consecutive days with one two-hour follow-up. The reason to include own experiences, when applicable in addition to these cases, stems from the fact that some processes were stretched outside these events.[33]

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[32] Own experiences have been used as material in psychodynamically oriented studies (e.g. Ranki 2000). It is also noted that in these the research process may not be as straightforward as usually anticipated.

[33] Some approaches to qualitative research take "all-is-data" approach. Here the use of own experience is justified because in two Cases, the researcher also "crossed a border" when changing a space, and was an active participant in all cases.

Table 2: Cases and Data Collection

	Time / Place	Data Collection	Collection Method	Output
CASE 1 **Structuring Educational Internationalisation** (Appendix 1)	February 2006 to March 2007 Finland	6(7) group meetings, and feedback with educators or international coordinators; 3 interviews with management persons	Listening post, interviews, email exchange, working hypotheses	Case Report based on own notes, working hypotheses, and feedback
CASE 2 **A Finnish Company Goes to India** *(Appendix 2)*	August-September 2006 Finland	11 interviews with 9 different persons from management (managers-in-the-mind)	Interviews, archive material, written articles	Case Report based on own notes and material, and feedback
CASE 3 **India-Nordic Economic Relations Seminar and Workshop (INER)** *(Appendix 3)*	November 2006 India	One seminar of 22 participants, a group workshop and one follow-up with total of 13 participants from businesses and academia	Seminar, listening post and working hypotheses	Case Report based on own notes, review forms and working hypotheses
CASE 4 **Workshop on Doing Business in Nordic Europe (DBNE)** *(Appendix 4)*	October-December 2006 India	Experiences in one workshop (9 participants with 6 Visiting Faculty/Resource Persons), and in one follow-up	Listening post, shared working hypotheses in the here-and-now	Case Report based on own notes.

Each case reflected some aspects of dialogue processes and hermeneutic primary task in line with the main question. The experiential learning was considered important, because in such research where interpretation, insight generation, and knowledge quest with groups are emphasised, everyone participates in the learning process, including the researcher. The reason for including one case based on interviews (Case Two) was to study a setting where something was already accomplished, and yet in the process.[34] Through these cases, it was possible to portray some of the barriers, dilemmas, problems, and anxieties held, engaged with and encountered. Based on these, working hypotheses were formed, discussed, re-formed, and reflected upon.

When groups are discussed, it needs to be kept in mind that all these groups had a task, and therefore what happens in the group in relation to its task and how this reflects what is

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[34] A reference here is made to a distinction by Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004). They draw distinction between *learning in experience* and *reflecting on experience*. The former happens in the here-and-now, and the latter after the experience, when time boundaries set in.

aimed for, are both important. Such groups do not gather together or aim at understanding only for their own sake (as a group), but to explore possibilities that exist outside experienced group boundaries in another space. Hence, these are task groups with goal orientation and seek to increase their understanding of themselves in relation to what they are on the verge to accomplish, how and why, and in what circumstances this happens, to enable such endeavours to unfold in the first place. For this to happen, an understanding of their 'target area' is also needed.

The methodology used to gather data for this Study was mainly through listening posts, and the information is analysed and presented in the form of cases. Cases are conventionally used as material for theory-building (Eisenhardt 1989; Ghauri 2004) or where existing theory is inadequate (Eisenhardt 1989). However, this view championed by Yin (1994), and Eisenhardt (1989) has also been challenged by more emergent case theorists.[35] Here the data is contained in a case form to provide background for discussion. Cases provide possibility to explore gathered material in a processed form and give it boundaries as a *historical process*[36] of time and space, and give this process a context (Yin 1994), and are likely to describe recent events (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). However, the case approach Yin (1994) presents is more suitable for more positivistic case studies, since in action research the researched define the course of study, not the researcher. Therefore the assumption of researcher being "in charge" does not apply in hermeneutic approaches, where processes are more relevant than strict preset outcomes. In a hermeneutic case study process, the context, content and actors come together to build a process of reflection and re-reflection, sensing and building.

It was necessary first to distinguish and introduce all cases as particular cases, since they did not share similarities in context, content or actors and were different kinds of groups. Two of them were covered in Finland, two in India, but the connecting thread was the wish to engage with 'the other' or interact with an unknown system across national boundaries. Since the emphasis was on *hermeneutic processes*, participants themselves became less visible than decision and action taking processes through holding of dialogues as a group. To focus on group processes, actual names of organisations or individuals are not disclosed.

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[35] For this insight, I am grateful to Catherine Welch (Colloquim on August 2007 and Case Research Seminar on November 2007, both at Tampere University of Technology).
[36] Ghauri (2004) speaks of joint-ventures as being understood best as historical processes; this is of interest, since Gadamer (2000a) also stresses historicity.

Eisenhardt (1989) and Ghauri (2004) stress the importance of selecting cases to be used. The points to be considered are target population (to whom), accessible population, correspondence to research criteria, problem, and theoretical framework (Ghauri 2004: 112). Since the focus of this Study was on inquiry, it was imperative to create spaces where exploration with unknown could be carried out. In this sense, the selection process was different in some cases, because not all groups were there to begin with, and needed spaces to be created for them to manifest. The main criteria in these empirical cases was that there had to be questions of boundary crossings in the group, in the context of Finland or India. Groups corresponded to the criteria of this research, since all were based on voluntary inclusion in a hermeneutic process. As the theoretical framework included the notion of learning through experiences in the *logos* of task groups and reflecting this process through hermeneutic primary task, all cases held out potential for new insights into these processes.

Cases themselves were hermeneutic processes, where data does not arise only through what is explicated, but also what is not.[37] While other issues can be decided to some extent by the researcher, access is the most difficult part of selection, especially abroad. Being denied access can seriously alter the course of research (Wilson 2004). While this is noted here, 'being denied access' also speaks about group processes and circumstances that provide information. Consequently, relevance of researching processes, as encountered and what these processes in themselves may yield, were considered important.

2.5 Relevance and Significance of the Study

The main aim of this Study has been to gain insights through hermeneutic processes of task groups concerned with cross-border situations, where emphasis is also on doing-in-action, learning from experience, and not only from information. Such groups often engage with issues that are new, and this Study focuses on those problems when reaching out to unthought issues. Task systems, structures and processes in themselves hold specific logics and activities that distinguish one system from another. This research focuses on how using open systems framework, through group meetings, systems reach across their own boundaries towards other systems. Such a group itself is embedded in an organisation, and this embeddedness influences possibilities. This Study inquires into those aspects of which

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[37] Such as "unthought thought" (Armstrong 2005: 27), "unthought known" (Bollas 1987).

the groups are aware and also into those aspects which are beyond awareness at certain points in time during a group's evolutionary trajectory.

The value of this Study arises from understanding how what was beyond awareness is brought into awareness and difficulties in doing so. The structuring of educational interaction between Finland and India has been understudied, but needs to be undertaken because of businesses as benefactors or receivers of education as well as for education goals themselves. This research proceeds to fill some gaps in this space by focusing on what kinds of interactions could be undertaken from a capability enhancement perspective. Problems arising in collaborations, teams and alliances have been identified (Gratton and Erickson 2007; Hughes and Weiss 2007). Also needs for different kinds of Nordic interactions have been expressed (Vanhanen, HS A2, 29.10.2007). In addition, practitioners in Community Informatics and Dialogue Practices researching and working with diverse social groups, are interested in and use group knowing. Thus, this Study is topical reflecting current interests, predicaments and predilections.

While there have been studies about groups (Rosander 2003, concentrating on groupthink), dialogue (Reich 2003; Roman 2005; Vapaavuori 2001, Wink 2007), and organisational defences and action research (Kuittinen 2001), no one has studied task groups using open systems, primary tasks framework, and group relations approaches in the context of Finland and India. Context here frames the inquiry to a specific geographical area. Some philosophically oriented organisational studies (Ahonen 2001; Mäkinen 2004), are based only on argumentation with no empirical part. While this research started with philosophical assumptions, grounding it in empirical data was important since problems arise in interactions which cannot be studied in vacuum. Earlier discussions on dialogue have been either working papers (Örndahl 1999), general in terms of dialogue as a praxis (Brune and Krohn 2005; Shipley and Mason 2004), related to management issues (Moore and Sonsino 2003; Schein 1993; Vuori 2005; Vähämäki et al. 2006), storytelling (Abma 2003), or social or therapeutic work (Seikkula and Arnkil 2005). Combining dialogue and philosophical background with group relations theory along with empirical data from groups in Finland and India striving for business relations thus emerged as a specific and defined scope for this Study.

Research in Social Sciences is sometimes blamed for not having enough impact on society and communities (Greenwood and Lewin 2005: 43). In the 20th century, Dilthey (reported in Kusch 1986: 62) considered it important that human sciences impact the society and life,

and pointed to two kinds of ties: causal in natural sciences, and outcomes in human sciences. Yet, the reasons for doing research, and its purpose, are rarely debated (Reason and Bradbury 2001b: 2). This theory-practice gap needs addressing and points towards a need to design specific spaces for mutually fruitful encounters. Therefore, use of action research was considered central.

This work has relevance for all those organisations or groups that are contemplating on initiating projects or interactions with organisations or groups in India or Finland. It aims at discovering what problems or barriers may arise, and how to design approaches through insights from processes. Since the scope of contact between India and Finland has expanded along with improved opportunities for engagement, this topic is a current one. Interactions with organisations or groups in India, its possibilities and problems, have also been sparsely researched, apart from sociological or anthropological points of view (Tamminen and Zenger 1998; Tenhunen and Säävälä 2007), or from what is called "India-Phenomenon" point of view by a para-statal organisation (Sitra's India Programme[38]; e.g. Grundström and Lahti 2005). Therefore, selecting task groups comprising of Indians and Finns for interaction and/or business development, was considered relevant.

The objectives of this research were presented on page 15. It was considered important to gain understanding of the difficulties experienced in cross-border phenomena and how these could be addressed. Therefore both macro and micro approaches have been taken into consideration to provide some background of the situation for interaction. Macro aspects were present in all discussions. To understand this interaction, action research approach was selected, since this is one of the few methods to inquire into phenomena as and when something happens in here-and-now 'reality'. Being part of the interpretative tradition, philosophical underpinnings of the study and methodological choices taken are discussed. The interpretative tradition here is then linked to qualitative approaches and thereafter to action research to highlight differences between more quantitative approaches, which build on paradigms different from group encounters limited to group relations premises.

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[38] For further information see Sitra, 2007 (www.sitra.fi, Accessed 1.2.2007).

3 Philosophical Background and Research Methodology

This inquiry begins from the ideas of phenomenology and philosophical hermeneutics. Both approaches have been used in human sciences, since they emerge from and focus on human processes. Moustakas (1994: 13) notes that phenomenological research involves:

> *"The empirical phenomenological approach involves return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience."*

Understanding and interpretation belong to human experience as well as to science. It is more than a subjective act: understanding is "an event of tradition" where one is participating in "a process of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated" (Gadamer 2000a: 290). This brings interpretation into the field of human encounters, suggesting that hermeneutics is a "theory of the real experience that thinking is" (Gadamer 2000a: xxxvi). The emphasis on past and present has introduced thinking within dialogue tradition that tries to sense the future (Scharmer 2007). Moustakas (1994: 8) distinguishes between "external" world as only a phenomenon and our "inner" experience as reality. This is the basis for methods such as "Social Dreaming", that have been used to study groups (Lawrence 1998), by exploring matrices of common experience.

Dialogue traditions in philosophy have strong phenomenological and hermeneutical roots. Before the 18th century, the "old" hermeneutics as a method was mainly used to refer to texts and interpret them through defined rules (Grondin 1994; Kusch 1986). What Gadamer represents through his *philosophical hermeneutics* is a process of thinking, reflecting and understanding. He indicated that standing in the life-stream of tradition (which to him meant society, epoch, nexus of prejudices, and experience of the world), a person is inherently part of it. This was termed as force of tradition (Gadamer 2000a). This presents the centrality of in-built ontological and epistemological choices in discriminating what approaches are possible within this design and which are not, and therefore raises interesting aspects to consider in the context of cross-border research and interactions.

3.1 Hermeneutics as Research Ontology and Epistemology

The history of phenomenology in general and hermeneutics in particular has been extensively written about (e.g. Grondin 1994; Kusch 1986; Palmer 1969). The Stanford

Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines hermeneutics as a fundamental approach to "human life and existence as such".[39] Kusch (1986: 37) holds that for earlier hermeneutic thinkers it was more important to distinguish between reasons rather than causes. In a way, interpreting a text bears features similar to interpreting a group: Both may contain conscious and unconscious goals, dilemmas, conflicts, leaps, and unnoticed matters. "Understanding as a task is endless" and the hermeneutic spiral is not only about clarifying pre-understanding, but also revising it (Kusch 1986: 39).[40] It was emphasised by these hermeneutic thinkers that if a human scientist wishes to understand a subject, he/she needs to include himself/herself on the basis of creating self-knowledge and exploring boundedness (Kusch 1986: 64). The first, being part of the process, refers to "double hermeneutics" (Giddens 1982), where it is as important to reflect on oneself as it is to reflect on the subject matter. The latter, which Chattopadhyay (1999) highlights as illusion of identity, brings forth the need to reflect with others to transcend that boundedness which it introduces. Group relations practitioners have been interested in hermeneutic processes for a long time.

While acknowledging the importance of hermeneutic process, Lawrence (1993)[41] depicts hermeneutics first as "interpreting scripture as text", but later extends it to the area of philosophical hermeneutics by stating "I extend this to all situations where language is being used to describe the experience of participating" (Lawrence 1993).[42] Gadamer (2000a: 425) argues that the "…human word is essentially incomplete. No human word can express our mind completely". While he speaks of self-understanding, here the emphasis is on participation, which is partly expressed verbally. Understanding, Gadamer (1983: 109) stresses, is about "inner awareness" informed by experience.

For Gadamer there is a very important distinction between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* (Gadamer 2000a). While they both signify experience, the former is what one has (all experiences) and the latter what one is undergoing, which is interactive and singular. Experience is a process and human sciences are seen as connected to modes of experience (Gadamer 2000a). Gadamer (2000a: xxii) emphasises that these lie outside natural sciences, as "modes of experience in which truth is communicated that cannot be verified by the methodological means proper to science". While this poses a methodological

[39] Ramberg and Gjesdal, 2005 (http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/, Accessed 10.9.2007).
[40] Both Jean-Paul Sartre and Schleiermacher discussed "creative guessing" (Kusch 1986: 43).
[41] Lawrence, 1993 (http://www.human-nature.com/group/chap9.html, Accessed 25.3.2005).
[42] Lawrence, 1993 (http://www.human-nature.com/group/chap9.html, Accessed 25.3.2005).

dilemma for a researcher and her role in research, human sciences operate on different assumptions than natural sciences.

Hermeneutic circle (or spiral, Figure 2), depicts understanding processes and introduces the notion of prejudice. Normally, such a process is influenced by outer and inner reflections. The relevance of exploring or examining is at the heart of these processes when interpreted (wholly or partly) afresh. While the process of interpreting rarely is as straightforward as pictured in Figure 2, this gives a rough idea of how such processes unfold. Here a difference is drawn between a circle, which refers to closed rounds of interpretation processes, and a spiral, where these processes are evolving. It is often overlooked that in the approach Gadamer represents, prejudgements are also derived from life histories and traditions that persons have encountered. Therefore prejudices, as Gadamer explains them, are not only negative in nature, but function as *predispositions,* where the relation between a person and the world is ontologically encountered and explored. A person is part of a context, not an isolated island with only self-seeking processes.

Figure 2: Hermeneutic Circle or Spiral
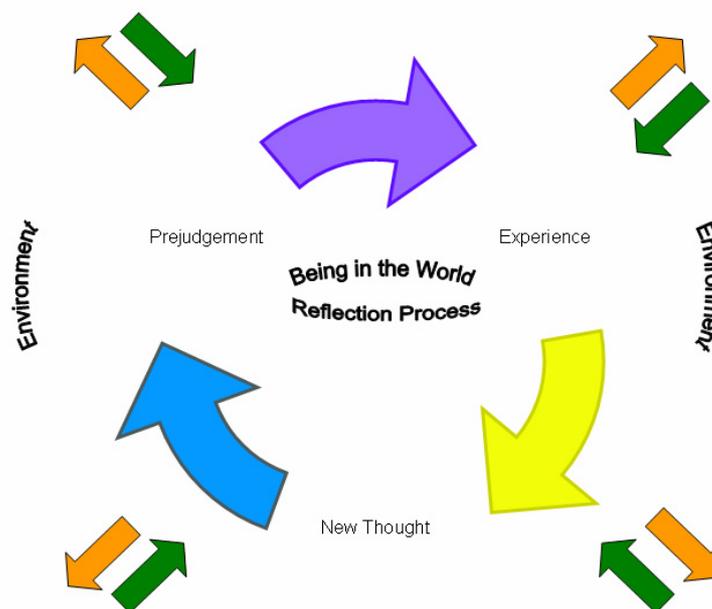
In dialogue traditions, prejudgements must be submitted to confrontation, i.e. one is expected to risk one's prejudices, in order to re-interpret them in the light of new information and insights (Gadamer 2000a). Without this "confrontation", dialogue does not rise up to itself, but remains monologue and would not lead into *Horizontverschmelzung*

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(fusion of horizons: Gadamer 2000a), and new understanding. However, such fusion of horizons does not happen automatically, but requires transformation in thinking. If there is no assimilation or challenging individual or confronting group views, fusion has not happened (Gadamer 2000a; Kusch 1986). One of the Gadamerian insights is that no one is the holder of ultimate truth, and so reality is better approximated when confronted by others, because each and every one has different experiences that highlight aspects which may be beyond one's own immediate knowledge of experiences. In task groups, this approximation is carried out best in interactions with other task groups through structured designs specific to needs. While Gadamer placed a lot of emphasis on language, that by itself does not suffice to explain how "the world" is encountered. Therefore, part of the confrontation does not arise from the spoken forms, but from the experienced cathecting in the form of feelings, emotions, responses, and actions undertaken or puzzled over.

Although Gadamer (2000a) introduces historical consciousness (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*) and tradition (*Überlieferung*) and their significance to us, he did not promote fundamental or uncompromising thinking. In all of their forms these would amount to obstructing the hermeneutic circle or freezing one's horizons (Bain 1999), where a certain picture (usually an old one[43]) is viewed as the "true" or "real". Hermeneutics has been and is larger than a mere method: "Even from its historical beginnings, the problem of hermeneutics goes beyond the limits of the concept of method" (Gadamer 2000a: xxi). In hermeneutics, the idea that understanding and interpretation belong to human experience as well as to science, is central to avoid the "lure of Syracuse" (Lilla 2001).[44]

In human encounters, there is always some ambiguity present, since there is no proof that others' utterances have been correctly understood (Gadamer 1984: 57; also in Moustakas 1994). Through group experience, skill and knowledge combined, navigation for understanding can be improved. For this reason, needs arise to create learning spaces to become more equipped in this. What both Heidegger and Gadamer neglect, is that there is a social aspect in understanding and interpreting as well. Critics of Gadamer have pointed out that he placed man and his interpretative abilities too high on the agenda, and forgot or

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[43] This is often encountered by persons who have a certain picture of a place either through having lived there or through media, but have not visited it since or seen what changes have happened either in the place itself or in people living there. It may be that a person has definite opinions of a place, but has not actually visited it to confirm whether such opinions are still valid or not.

[44] Lilla (2001) refers to processes where thinking is more relevant than understanding systems as a whole. This brings out a process where thinkers impose their own thinking on others and disregard systemic processes that arise.

was not interested in exploring relations and relationships forming interpretative contexts. This aspect was highlighted by Habermas (2001), who brought understanding into the open forum of the public and described ideal speech situations. The public sphere becomes especially important when such issues as tradition are discussed, because tradition e.g. in form of practices cannot be created alone. In addition it is necessary to recall that all thinking is not linguistic. Such "non-linguistic thinking" (Bermúdez 2003) and "somatic knowing" (Matthews 1998) is of interest in sentient groups. This is another of the critiques against Gadamer, who presupposed that language had a strong influence on understanding (Gadamer 1983, 2000a).

Interpretation needs to have the 'both/and' perspective alongside 'either/or' perspectives. The challenge here is to be able to justify the interpretation through empirical experiences gathered and interpreted in the form of cases, and to construct working hypotheses for reflection and discussion. Some researchers do not consider inherent paradoxes or "messiness" a problem, and regard it as an opportunity to inquire into the interactional nature of relational dialectics (Baxter and Montgomery 1996). The very nature of action research has received criticism (Costello 2005). This is emphasised here to the extent that interactions are bound by five boundary conditions of time, task, technology, space, and sentience. Thus, relations are not defined only by rational goals, but also by experiences when these goals are pursued in time and space through roles engaging with tasks with the aid of technology and relying on sentience.

3.2 Exploring the Hermeneutic Primary Task

Within hermeneutics there are vast differences, where some opt for more positivistic directions (such as Emilio Betti and Eric D. Hircsh, see eg. Grondin 1994; Palmer 1969) and on the other end almost Nietzschean nihilistic "all is interpretation" kind of approach championed by Gianni Vattimo (1996). Therefore packing hermeneutics into a parcel without explaining the background selected, gives false impressions. Hermeneutics may have everything to do with understanding, but little with being non-rigorous when it comes to thinking processes. As Gadamer himself wrote, "the genuine researcher is motivated by a desire for knowledge and by nothing else" (Gadamer 1977: 10). He does not emphasise truth, which would be absurd to seek and impossible to attain on grounds of being inherently part of the world one is researching, but refers to knowledge, which is

epistemologically possible as a result of interpretation. Gadamer acknowledges that not every interpretation is true and is therefore not in favour of total relativism. Hence, interpretation builds on insights, inferences, and making working hypotheses from information or data (or lack of it), whereas relativism refers to epistemological premises. The two cannot be equated.

In view of action and words, and their relation to each other, making sense of happenings around call for linking the two. In Dialogue, and through it, an explicit hermeneutic primary task thus emerges as a major pathway in a sensemaking process (Figure 3). There is not only a rationalizing process (Weick et al. 2005), but also a review and exploration process between experience and pictures-in-the-mind, where the latter offers a conceptualised view into the experienced, un-experienced or not-experienced. This is best done within task groups, since there exists capacity to produce different pictures for others to reflect on and explore, in turn, creating a *logos*. While rationalizing is important, it may become a defensive act to prevent seeing how the organisation really is faring (Argyris 2004).

Figure 3: Hermeneutic Primary Task as an Inquiry into Other Primary Tasks

Normative Primary Task (NPT)

The designed or discovered Primary Task that an organisation engages with to have reason for being. This task belongs to the whole organisation.

Existential Primary Task (EPT)

The Primary Task why persons become roleholders with an organisation, and what meanings they wish to derive from it. This task also belongs to the whole organisation.

HERMENEUTIC PRIMARY TASK (HPT)

The Primary Task engaged with to make sense, diagnose, and derive deeper meanings about what really is happening.

Phenomenal Primary Task (PPT)

The Primary Task actually pursued, consciously and unconsciously, as manifest in phenomena, some of which remain beyond awareness of the actors.

This system domain – structures, goals and activities – is the arena, which hermeneutic primary task is concerned with. It refers to instituting explicit self-seeking processes by engaging the organisation and its members into examining how these three different primary tasks relate to and aim to comprehensively understand reality of an organisation. This could also be seen through the concepts of theories-in-use *vis-à-vis* espoused theories (Argyris and Schön 1996), but they emphasise only two levels. As Figure 3 (page 31) shows, the hermeneutic primary task is a window to study other primary tasks within the groups as engaged with and how these groups experience and deal with other primary tasks creating "double-loop learning" (Argyris 2004; Argyris and Schön 1996; Senge 1990).

As pointed out above, this research belongs to the interpretative tradition supplemented with the group relations notion of exploring and examining working hypotheses formulated. An explicit hermeneutic primary task (HPT) enables purposeful exploration of new horizons in the 'normal' course and life of an organisation without having to wait for crises, or crises interventions to occur by consultants. This is important for strategy processes as well, since strategy is not just a plan or set of interrelated facts or wishes (Mathur 2006b). This exploration can be done within an organisation and at the interactive thresholds of its boundaries by interviews, groupwork and reflection keeping a continuous interpretation circle on the move by feeding back into the group insights from previous meaning-making and sense-making attempts as well as new information for it to reflect upon. These interactive processes, where experiences, feelings and existing knowledge get shared among participants, enable waves of ongoing explorations. The primary tasks are important for distinguishing different levels at which an organisation functions for its members who engage with primary tasks they can identify with. Therefore in an inter-group situation, multiple primary tasks exist simultaneously. Due to the focus on the here-and-now through experiential learning, the use of more discursive methods was dropped because of their over emphasis on language.

An explicit hermeneutic primary task enables exploring of the totality, the whole, as far as that totality can be grasped. What is meant by explicit here, is that the process, from the beginning, includes dialectical and confrontational approaches, but also tries to look at what is missed or missing in the encounters: a group can, as a group, only use information which is brought into its attention. It seeks to explore the "coherence of our understanding of what it means to be human" (Fernández-Armesto 2004: 1) engaging with various tasks. For Heraclitus understanding was the uppermost important matter, and it is noteworthy that

he did not equate learning with understanding: "*polumathíe nóon ou didáskei*" ("Learning many things does not teach understanding", Heraclitus, Fragments B40[45]). Thus it seems plausible that if learning is to be effective, hermeneutic primary task can be explicitly established within an organisation using group relations knowledge, skills and methods. This can be done through qualitatively situated approaches by introducing a role of an action researcher as facilitator until such time that the group itself becomes skilled enough to do so on its own, without outside consultation or facilitation.

3.3 Qualitative Research as an Approach

Qualitative research as such is "situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a: 3). This situatedness encompasses some benefits as well as problems discussed later. Marschan-Piekkari and Welch (2004b: 8) point to four current research challenges in international business: contextualisation, design and management of cross-national collaborative research, rethinking (current and alternative) research methods and quality, codification and publication. Taking this into consideration, methodologically this work corresponds to contemporary research initiatives within qualitative research.

While arguing for qualitative research Marschan-Piekkari and Welch (2004b: 8) state that "qualitative research allows for deeper cross-cultural understanding", and may be less biased and ethnocentric. This is due to multiple respondent voices across cultures, but also because of rethinking. Ethnocentrism becomes an issue when the design is defined before encountering the context where research is carried out. This was one of the critiques McSweeney (2002) presented against Hofstede's (1994, 2002) research on dimensions.

Some problems identified from previous researches needed further enquiry. In international research "environmental characteristics, resource constraints, and cultural traits" (Thomas 1996: 497; also in Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004b: 9) are visible, and thus the question of method is of importance. For encompassing these problems first hand, a participative method was essential, since measurable representations of objective reality have no meaning for some kinds of inquiries (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a), whereas the researcher as an object for projections can open new explorations in non-threatening ways (Horney 1970). In this context, it means that not all challenges can be foreseen and

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[45] Heraclitus, N/A (http://www.heraclitusfragments.com/archives/20020801/Fragments.html, Accessed 27.3.2007).

previously identified. Also, measuring without knowledge of the problem itself is of no use, because one cannot define what needs to be measured. The problem of representations without content was extensively discussed already by Kant (1781/1986).

Qualitative approaches have been influential in human sciences or humanities (Denzin and Lincoln 2005b), where life world is seen as an important source of vital data. Denzin and Lincoln (2005a) see action research as belonging to the qualitative research by regarding it as a research strategy, where hermeneutics presents a theoretical paradigm and perspective, and the collection of data can be done through interviews, documents and/or focus groups. The aspect of exploration and not confirmation (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a: 9) makes this Study inherently qualitative. It seeks to include participants and understand dialogue they create between them in a group context. However, text in itself as spoken, is not brought to the forefront here, because observing processes and outcomes are preferred to utterances. It is value-laden in the sense that the philosophical background, experiences encountered from participants and their wishes and aims, unfold a web of previous and current feelings and experiences that do affect choices and preferences. The knowledge here is local and rooted in practice, by inquiring into social processes that provide stepping stones for collaborative activities.

Qualitative research is emergent (Herr and Anderson 2005), and can be serendipitous (Bettenhausen and Murnighan 1985). Since action research is more data driven, the questions, methods, design, and participants may shift in the course of the research (Herr and Anderson 2005). This means that participants and their unfolding experiences, information and knowing do influence the research inquiry at the content level. Qualitative research in cross-cultural settings has an important role in theory testing, claim Harari and Beaty (1990; reported in Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004b: 13). Cross-cultural research also provides insights into what is ethnocentric and what is not. However, this Study does not focus on culture as a concept, since the design does not support speaking from metalevels at which culture is often inquired. Qualitative data is context specific (Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004b). For example, for some inquirers Finland may prove "exotic" as a research context, due to being "a peripheral location" (Alasuutari 2004: 595; reported in Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004b: 17). Change in space brings with it its own dynamics.

3.4 Assessing this Research

For trustworthy research, Yin (1994) discusses four aspects: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. However, Denzin and Lincoln (2005a) introduce another set of criteria for interpretative approaches, which they term as Constructivist Paradigm against Yin's (1994) Positivist Paradigm (Table 3). The main difference is in the background beliefs on what is possible for a researcher to accomplish and what is not. While Yin (1994; along with Eisenhardt 1989) has been the leading expert and authority in case studies, his approaches towards case study do not cater to adequate variety in designs. Therefore, both paradigms are reflected upon to mark the difference. The Constructivist (or Interpretative) paradigm informs this research on what may have interrelationship with the context which is everchanging.

Table 3: Different Case Study Paradigms

Yin (1994) Case Study Paradigm Positivist Study Paradigm	Denzin and Lincoln (2005a); Trockhim (2006)[46] Interpretive (or) Constructivist Study Paradigm
Construct Validity How well the research is designed and carried out, its accuracy or goodness.	**Credibility** Whether the results are credible or believable from participant perspective.
Internal Validity To what extent causal relations or explanations can be established; Note: not important in descriptive or exploratory research.	**Confirmability** To what extent others have observed similar issues, and can results be confirmed by others.
External Validity To what extent the findings can be generalised; also fit between empirical data and conclusions.	**Transferability** To what extent can results be generalised or transferred to another setting.
Reliability How well the case can be replicated with the same results based on gathered data.	**Dependability** The research and researcher need to account for the ever changing context; accounting for changes in research and their affect.

What is important, as presented in Table 3, is that both paradigms aim at assessing good research, but the emphasis is divergent. Validity is one of the main issues of contest between qualitative and quantitative research; Seale (1999) sees it not appropriate for

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[46] Research Methods Knowledge Base, Trockhim, 2006,
(http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualval.php, Accessed 10.9.2007).

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qualitative research (in Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004a: 16). Validity seeks to define good research from pre-existing premises, while credibility seeks participant perspectives. In group encounters, pre-existing premises beyond existing literature or experiences are hard to establish, since every group has its own dynamics and in participative approaches, the participant perspective is as important as fulfilling antecedent research criteria. Problems of truth are present in cross-border interactions, since it is impossible to define whose truth will prevail. This is prevalent in all cross-cultural groups and therefore becomes an insightful source of dialogical encounters. Essentially, both Yin (1994) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005a) are after criteria of assessment and therefore both criteria and their limits are important to be recognized.

In an exploratory case, Yin (1994) does not emphasise internal validity. Problem also arises with multiple case studies, which Yin (1994; see also Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007) considers as replication of design (similar methods over many cases) or embedded (subcases in a larger case). Further, Yin (1994) does not discuss how validity and reliability are addressed when replicability is not an issue, and what this means to research study. In hermeneutic groups, what can be replicated is the method used in the group, but each and every group is different for the following reasons: The here-and-now experiences differ even with the same group; the phenomenon is explored from the group perspective, not from the researcher's perspective; the purpose is to explore issues that come along the way, and are not pre-defined.

On the other hand, credibility derived solely from participant experiences can be limiting, especially when it may be assumed that participants themselves are not clear of their own goals or a group gets biased. Also, discussion of how relative a research can be, is noted. To give an example, Reason and Bradbury (2001b: 6) assert that "all understanding is relative". What makes this difficult from a research perspective is that total relativism leads into a vicious circle of not being able to say anything, because everything is relative. To counter this, what Geertz (2000) discussed of anti *anti-relativistic* stance, is noteworthy.[47]

The opposition to qualitative research often comes from not defining collection methods (Zalan and Lewis 2004), adjustments made in the location of research and validation process (Andersen and Skaates 2004). A predicament is lack of verification in the sense of

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[47] Geertz (2000) discusses that relativism by the mere mentioning introduces discussions that go beyond the notion of which it is trying to bring out: that every system is built on a logic by which it operates. Understanding this logic is the key to unravel what comparisons are possible and which are not.

testing hypotheses as in more positivistic approaches. Be that as it may, what is gained in return is access to real life situations where problems arise and are taken up for examination. Another claim has been that there is no uniform set of qualitative methods (Prasad 2003/2005; reported in Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004b: 19 note 1). Schwandt goes as far as saying that there is no clarity of what qualitative methods actually comprise (Schwandt 2001: 214). Due to lack of clarity among researchers themselves, it is no wonder that qualitative approaches have been considered 'inferior' to quantitative methods that dominate research traditions. However, natural sciences too have different approaches depending on the object of study. What seems to be in question is how compelling and power-inducing research is, since in many cases results are being used to justify decisions and for that purpose results reached are expected to be as unambiguous as possible to avoid expendable controversies.[48] It is, however, stressed here that research is undertaken for many purposes and not only one.

The validation process in this Study is ensured by use of working hypotheses, using different sources of data and feedback from participants (as key informants). The process is put into the form of written Case Reports, which can be reviewed. However, in long processes it is possible to reflect on data outside the group and also raise different questions of procedures over time. The nature of group encounters as time and space bound can be reviewed against other data from written sources. As pointed out above, in an interpretative case study, data arising is context specific and cannot be generalised. One reason for increased emphasis on action research could be that language is not 'binding': saying something does not imply doing, acting or committing oneself. This in a way speaks of the necessity to work with theories and practices, not as separated entities but inherently belonging together, and nourishing each other. This is especially important in education, management and organisations.

The differences between case studies discussed above and hermeneutically informed action research come from how the process is viewed. In Yin's (1994) approach, design is decided in the beginning and shifts in it are not encouraged. Rather, it is emphasised that in such a happening, research needs to be re-started (Yin 1994). Contrary to this, action researchers see the process itself as serendipitous, and changes are part of the process, since they reflect reality as it unfolds. Regardless of these differences, both aim for

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[48] This induces a question of most worth, for whom and why re-search exists. This question is beyond the scope of this study.

rigorous research process. The use of action research was influenced by the research questions of this Study, since there needed to be a match between these and methodology selected.

3.5 Action Research with Groups

A distinctive feature of this Study is the use of action research to onion peel, to analyse and to compare four different case experiences, where participants were familiarized with the methodology. In reviewing literature on research methodologies (Anderson et al. 2004; Booth et al. 1995; Cassell and Johnson 2006; Denzin and Lincoln 2005b; Greenwood and Levin 1998; Göranzon et al. 2006; Reason and Bradbury 2001a), different approaches to the subject matter were found: either quantitative (based on survey methods), qualitative (interviews) or participative. In action research, the "fine texture, the tensions, the heat, the contradictory sensations, the subtle postures, the negotiations, the interconnections" become part of the researcher and researched as a whole (Fineman 2004: 724).

Action research belongs to the phenomenological research methods for the reason that in them role of the group and researcher as a facilitator is central, because focus is on experiences and human consciousness. Therefore, action research belongs to the tradition of *Geisteswissenschaften*. The role of consciousness, what it is and where it resides, if it exists, is debated. It is believed here, following Searle (1992), that consciousness is an emergent feature of the human mind.[49] For Maturana and Varela (1987), consciousness is an autopoietic system (self-organizing). This Study assumes that group processes may evoke emergent and self-organizing processes.

After various shifts, the logical, the linguistic, the historical-cultural and the knowledge oriented (Delanty and Strydom 2003), there seems to be an action oriented shift in process (related to strategy, see Whittington 2006; Reason and Bradbury 2001b: 2, 4) as well as practice and activity as units of analysis (Easterby-Smith et al. 2000). The earlier 20th century "turns" were more language and cognition oriented (Delanty and Strydom 2003: 9). Action in contrast, is related to here-and-now realities and participation, and has gained momentum in the 21st century in form of workgroups for action research (such as EGOS

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[49] From philosophical considerations, much of Mind-research has shifted towards studying brain activities opposed to "mere philosophising". This trend has naturally been strengthened by new possibilities in brain imaging. Discoveries such as "mirror neurons" (New Scientist Magazine 2001, http://www.newscientist.com, Accessed 13.2.2001) or experimentally produced "out-of-body-experiences" give insights into brain functioning, and may at some point give insights into group formation.

standing working group for Action Research[50]; Journal of Action Research) and practice oriented strategy (Strategy as Practice[51]).

The choice of methodology emerged from the need to link hermeneutics and hermeneutic primary task to issues concerning dialogue processes in case settings involving groups. The questions chosen implied action research approach, where the researcher actively participates, knowing that participant observer roles produce some advantages as well as limitations. Since the study draws on literature from philosophy, group relations, dialogue, organisation, and management, it was multidisciplinary in nature. This was further strengthened by observations of other researchers. Andersen and Skaates (2004) assert that research paradigms arise from philosophical assumptions and ontological and epistemological choices. This point is also emphasised by Cassell and Johnson (2006).

Action research is not one methodology but a collection of approaches depending on the inquirer. The connecting thread between different approaches is the "nature" of action research as can be viewed from Table 4.

Table 4: Different Action Research (AR) Approaches

Reason and Bradbury 2001b	McNiff and Whitehead 2002	Herr and Anderson 2005
- participatory, democratic process - concerned with developing practical knowing and historical process - living and evolving process of coming to know - diverse origins	- AR has identity of its own - learning by doing - coming to know through struggle - embraces contradiction; values uncertainty - self-reflection central - multiple values and creating one's own identity	- done by or with organisation or community - orientation to action; either taken, under process or wished to take - reflexivity crucial - systematic collective, collaborative and self-reflexive inquiry - many strands

According to Greenwood and Levin (2005), action research would refer to willingness to act on results, thus highlighting (inter-)action, and in this research to possible outcomes as

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[50]Some of these practices are much older. Group relations movement began after the World War II and dialogue praxis has been used as methodology from about the same time. In relation to the growing interest, the EGOS website discloses: "This standing group has its roots in the growing demand for more practice-oriented forms of research." European Group for Organizational Studies, 2007 (http://www.egosnet.org/groups/action_research.shtml, Accessed 5.2.2007).

[51] They see importance in "focus on the processes and practices constituting the everyday activities of organizational life and relating to strategic outcomes". Strategy-as-practice, 2007 (http://www.strategy-as-practice.org/, Accessed 5.2.2007).

expectations.[52] A certain pragmatic element that becomes essential in action research and gives it a special flavour is missing from many research paradigms. One criteria of action research is: Was it implementable? Did it produce results? Action research can further be experimental (Cassell and Johnson 2006) in the sense that it goes to uncharted territories. Commitment as an act (Polanyi 1958) can be more important than validity for it saves subjectivity from being only that, and gives personal knowing larger scope. Rather than validity, in action research transferability of findings is aimed for (Herr and Anderson 2005). *Sine qua non,* what is found requires to be useful and put into use.

Reason and Bradbury (2001b: 1-2) define action research broadly as "a participatory, democratic process" with an aim of developing practical knowledge for everyday purposes; it is also broadly concerned with "well being". Defined this way, action research is concerned with doing research with those who benefit from results, such as business, academia and consumers. Using these varying triads provide possibility to avoid "lock-ins" since three parties allow enough room for varieties. In many ways, to create sufficient "motors for change", action research is always about groups, communities or other larger entities (beyond one-to-one). It also seeks to create understanding, which is also the core of hermeneutics, by creating multiple voices. Palmer (1969: 13) goes as far as saying that hermeneutics suggests the process of "bringing to understanding". This is done through reflection, mutual sensemaking and collective action with, for and by those participating (Reason and Bradbury 2001b: 2).[53]

An implication of action research approaches is that learning is "embedded" (Granovetter 1973; 1992) in any endeavour that is seriously taken. This learning influences all participants, the researcher included, since all are participating in a common learning experience which is not in any way previously defined by one person. To learn, one does not need experts, but the ability and skill to work with (and not because of) experiences.[54] What a researcher brings into the equation in such methodologies, is his/her skills and knowledge of praxis. In action research modes, the "knower" is not the researcher but the

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[52] A successful action research project was the Mondragón cooperative in the Spanish Basque Area conducted by Greenwood (Greenwood and Levin 1998). Through this research, it was shown that it is possible to create cooperative practices that are effective and at the same time profitable for the groups and organisations that took part in the research. Another was Volvo in Sweden and its autonomous work groups (Williander and Styhre, 2006, http://www.springerlink.com/content/h472k15452037453/fulltext.pdf, Accessed 30.5.2007).

[53] According to Reason and Bradbury (2001b: 2) this liberates body, mind and spirit to seek a better world.

[54] This refers to Horney (1970) and her reflections on self-analysis. Alternative explanations or interpretations are made possible through recognition of projective identifications or transference in dyadic and group experiences.

system, be it a group, institution, organisation or company. In effect, this means shared and reflected knowing in a common space (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Processes in Action Research and Group Reflection

Action Research Process   Group Reflection Process

PLAN   ACT   OBSERVE   REFLECT

REFLECT   OBSERVE   FEEDBACK   WORKING HYPOTHESES
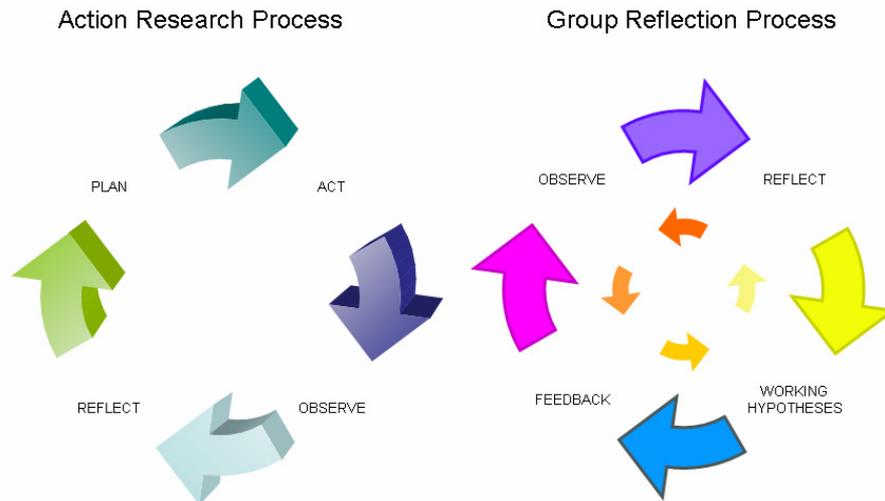
The roots of action research practices with groups partly go back to Kurt Lewin and to Bion (Bion 1961; Fraher 2004; Lewin 1947a, 1947b; Reason and Bradbury 2001b). In Scandinavia, the emphasis has been on developing multilevel participation and democracy in organisations (Gustavsen 1996; Gustavsen and Engelstad 1986). While some of the roots of action research lie in feminist practices, inquiries into questions of gender and Marxist practices on changing the world, some practices have their roots in experiential learning and psychotherapy (Reason and Bradbury 2001b), such as the Tavistock informed approach used here. Some influences root back to "traditional knowledge" where Guru-Chela traditions have been strong and learning mostly experiential, and based on tacit learning and oral tradition (such as the Vedas). In such traditions written knowing has been considered inferior, because it is necessarily stale, limiting, discrete and limited in time (Mathur 2004)[55]. These forms of traditional knowing, rather than knowledge, have not been much emphasised in research and tend to be discarded as 'superstition' without further inquiries.

Action research is about change, but the change is developed and worked upon together.[56] As Gadamer (2000a) notes, in the end all change is about self transformation. Kuula (1999: 10) argues that practical orientation is a special relationship between what is researched and research reality. Through action research, it becomes possible to use groups to gather

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[55] This view was also shared by Plato (see Seventh Letter, Plato 1999e).
[56] For the possibilities and limitations of change through group relations approaches, see Bain (1998).

data and inquire into how things were done and in what way. Rouse and Daellenbach (2002: 964-965) point out that "tacitness" in organisations, is best knowable to an outsider, but also emphasise that while one aims at full comprehension, it is at best an ideal, and not always possible due to e.g. causal ambiguity. Therefore the use of working hypotheses is relevant wherever random processes being studied are more important than a quest for imagined determinism.

Since it was difficult to place the approach used here in any 'ready-made' category, it can be best defined as interaction of Scheinian Clinical Inquiry/Research (Schein 2001) and Action Learning (Kemmis and McTaggart 2005). It is Scheinian in the sense that the relationship with groups was a helping relationship with a stance of inquiry. This seemed the best approach since the whole study was a journey into the unknown; it was also an action learning process, since all were involved into enquiring together. Schein (2001: 233) points to an oft cited Lewin's dictum that "you cannot understand a system until you try to change it", and any intervention by nature is changing something, stressing that "the research process in any form is an intervention" (Schein 2001: 236). The experience here is that change processes, or introducing new ways of looking at matters, inherently bring forth anxieties and set emotions at work, unfolding previously unnoticed boundaries. Therefore, by introducing prospects of change, some hidden layers are expected to surface. Action research is inquiring into the Self with others (McNiff and Whitehead 2002).

Instead of focusing on change due to its connotations, this Study dwells in 'horizons' (Gadamer 2000a). New horizons here mean exploring pictures-in-the-mind and also the background 'organization-in-the-mind' (Armstrong 2005) to allow new opportunities to surface, get discerned and acted upon. To do this, it is often important to step outside the 'normal' or the 'comfort zone', to explore, to the experiential world. Listening posts (as workshops) were therefore used as a method to inquire along with open dialogue approach.

The conundrum in participative research is not whether the researcher gets influenced by participants or groups, but how to use information gathered in ways that benefit inquiries that add to knowing and deepen research initiatives further. Such pulls are important sources of information about group dynamics. Research is a political process as well, especially when dealing with goal oriented organisations, where results are expected. Nonetheless, such expectations are not delimited to action research alone, but are puzzles of all research. Since the design was built on participative methods as action research is,

the researcher has several roles and tasks to carry out (Appendix 5). It is noted that participant observer roles have some advantages and limitations.

To sum up, this research used listening post approach in set workshops. This meant that participants voiced issues more than the researcher, and researcher's role included raising questions and reflecting on arising material. This material was noted down especially from the point of view of group behaviour in relation to its task. An example is when a group engages with arguing about matters that fall outside the stated aims of the meeting. In such a case the researcher would note this preoccupation down. Another important issue was pictures-in-the-mind that were collected when present or discussed. An example is how Finland was viewed as a too small a country to even bother about. Where the group got stuck or advanced was of interest, as well as changes in pictures-in-the-mind and associated transformations.

The listening post thus gives priority to participant views. The role of the researcher is to capture what is happening in the here-and-now. Action research here meant doing research with participants, not on them. It was a helping relationship in the sense that all groups were interested in creating real-life connections. In this sense, it was an intervention, which undoubtedly created its own dynamics as Schein (2001) argues. Thus, it is relevant to keep in mind that these were task groups that had an aim.

In Cases One and Three, questionnaires were also used, and based on responses a summary was sent to participants. When doing this, feedback was invited, as well as when sending working hypotheses to participants after the group meetings. It was emphasised in all cases that working hypotheses can be rejected, accepted, modified, challenged or refuted and alternative working hypotheses formulated. The emphasis was on the group level, not on individual one. Therefore what is reported needs to be viewed accordingly. The inquiry thus focused on task groups, not on individual tasks. The reason for preferring inter-organisational groups was to study what happens in groups that have multiple stakeholders.

Having crystallized the main questions and their significance, and having formulated the outlines of an inquiry frame, a review of the literature to discuss theoretical underpinnings follows in Part II, which discusses the gaps in literature for addressing the research objectives through empirical research.

Part II: Exploring Hermeneutic Primary Task through Dialogue in Groups: Theoretical Aspects

4 Task Groups in Context

This part discusses the five research objectives through the literature survey undertaken to pinpoint central issues in view of research questions. The research objectives of this Study are discussed one by one to indicate what discussions in Part II they relate to and how. The theoretical underpinnings of the hermeneutic primary task (HPT), and its connections to group relations, dialogue praxis and experiential learning are highlighted through this Part II. In addition those issues that are not discussed in the literature, are pointed out.

The First Research Objective, **to find out what issues and problems arise in task groups when engaging with dialogue processes in cross-border interactions**, concerns how task groups work with boundaries of open systems. This discussion is presented in *Section 4.1* "Boundaries as Organising Experience in Task Groups". Boundary questions bring out both group functioning and cross-border interactions of task groups where their container-contained aspect is noted and separately elaborated in *Section 4.2* "Bionian Work Groups and Basic Assumptions". All boundary crossings involve interaction, and issues related to dialogue and experiential learning are explored in *Chapter 5* "Dialogue – An Interplay(ing) Between Parties", where dialogue is discussed in relation to task groups. Specific problems that arise in interactions are highlighted in *Sections 4.7* "Challenges Arising in Group Dynamics" and *6.6* "Problems of Sharing". *Chapter 7* "Crossing Boundaries" elaborates on the discussion of boundaries and their management.

The Second Research Objective, **to examine how consciousness of hermeneutic primary task affects intra-group and inter-group processes**, points to processes groups undergo and the dynamics of a task group in the light of basic assumptions (Bion 1961) that merit discussion. The hermeneutic primary task raises issues which are discussed in *Section 4.2* "Bionian Work Groups and Basic Assumptions". The container-contained aspects are brought forth in *Section 4.3* "Creating a Container with Task Groups" and in *Subsection 6.4.2* "Task Groups as Container Institutions". The inside/outside dynamics of boundary building, containing and holding are discussed in the former, and consciousness of deliberate tasking and building groups with related issues in the latter. All this calls for discussing the open systems framework, which is done in *Section 4.4* "Open Systems

Framework for Task Groups". Issues regarding groups are also discussed in *Section 4.8* "The Large and Small Group Dynamics". The notion of explicit hermeneutic primary task is developed in *Sections 6.2* "Experience in the Root of Learning" and *6.5* "The Group as Knower and Knowable".

The Third Research Objective, **to understand how explicit hermeneutic primary task affects interactions and negotiable outcomes**, concerns management processes, the explicit hermeneutic primary task, experiential learning and pictures-in-the-mind. The explicit hermeneutic primary task is discussed in relation to management processes in *Section 4.5* "Management of Task", and further elaborated in *Section 6.5* "The Group as Knower and Knowable", on how it may serve to understand interactions and negotiable outcomes. The concepts and issues concerning experiential learning and pictures-in-the-mind are examined in *Chapter 6* "Experiential Learning and Pictures-in-the-Mind".

The Fourth Research Objective, **to study the efficacy of action research methodologies for working with explicit hermeneutic primary task as a way of coping and transforming the pictures-in-the-mind**, involves roles, usefulness of action research as a methodology, group dynamics, dialogue and pictures-in-the-mind. The usefulness of action research and related questions of roles are analysed in *Section 4.6* "Roles in Task Groups and Systems". Due to questions of efficacy with processes of coping and transforming pictures-in-the-mind, group dynamics, dialogue and pictures-in-the-mind which relate to this research objective the related discussion flows from *Section 4.7* "Challenges Arising in Group Dynamics", into *Chapter 5* "Dialogue – An Interplay(ing) Between Parties" and *Chapter 6* "Experiential Learning and Pictures-in-the-Mind".

The Fifth Research Objective, **to understand how groups engaging with normative, existential, phenomenal, and hermeneutic primary tasks expand their awareness of their own evolutionary potential and bring it back to their organisations**, relates to dialogue and evolutionary processes in task groups, without which the four primary tasks could not be engaged with. The idea of dialogue in cross-border task groups is discussed to the extent it throws light into complex phenomena of expanding awareness. The relevance of group relations and dialogue approaches is highlighted in the concept of play. Therefore, this links with the discussion on Research Objectives One and Four in *Chapter 5* "Dialogue – An Interplay(ing) Between Parties".

These are the broad outlines of the theoretical underpinnings discussed in this Part that concern Research Objectives. The main discussions are identified here, although some discussions cannot be confined only to one section. The overarching Primary Question *to understand the hermeneutic primary task in groups (that belong to larger unities) engaged in cross-border interactions as a way of knowing how their primary tasks relate to one another and impact task effectiveness*, needs to be kept in mind. The central discussions are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: The Central Discussions in Part II
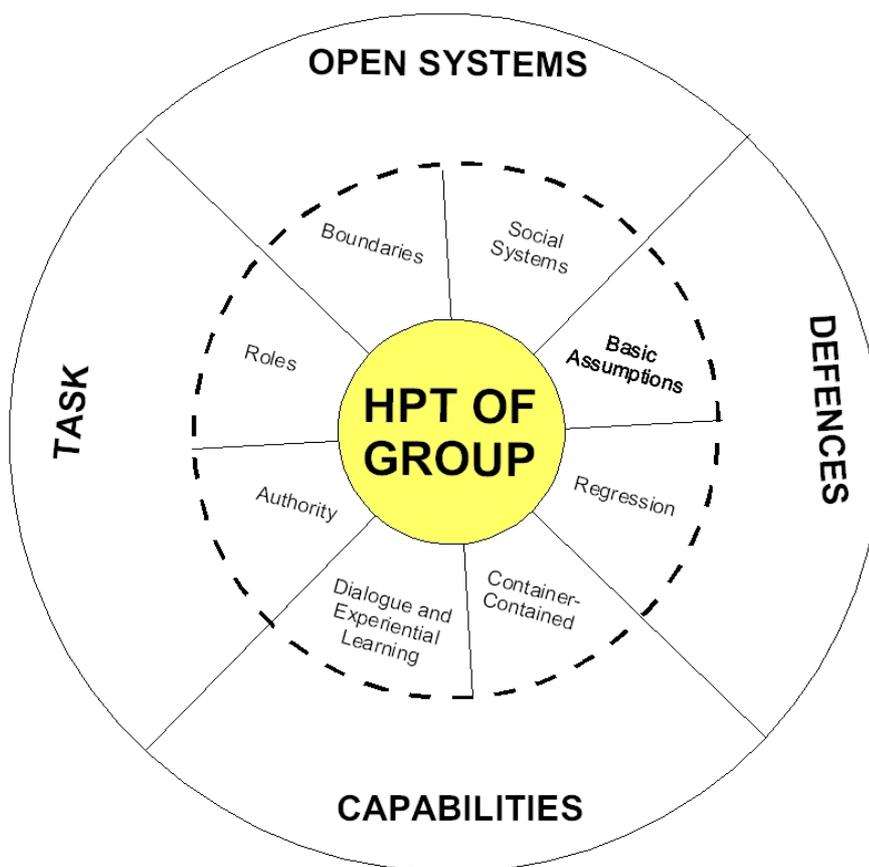
To explore and understand connections and threads in a larger context involving human understanding and action in relation to task and relatedness, a large body of knowledge has been reviewed in existing literature, to throw light on which discussions may be connected and which not when elaborating the concept of an explicit hermeneutic primary task in task groups. Therefore, task group based on open systems framework, group relations literature and Bionian thinking are introduced first, then dialogue praxis and lastly experiential learning.

4.1 Boundaries as Organising Experience in Task Groups

This Study took particular note of the five different boundaries that distinguish one group from another. These five boundaries are *time, space, task, sentience,* and *technology*, as dimensions of human experience. These five boundaries were selected, because they introduce boundary questions relevant to this research and do not emphasise culture as an overarching umbrella. All five are important in work groups. Based on Joutsimäki and Mathur (2006), these five boundaries regulate the flow of other elements that reinforce norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes.

1) Time: mental constructs, such as accounting year, festival days and calendars, the assumptions about birth, death; time as resource, time as a dateline within which to achieve something, etc.;

2) Space: assumptions socially, culturally and intergenerationally arising from where one lives, structures of family and society, notions of personal, private, social and collegiate spaces; location reserved by a task group for its work to be safely conducted;

3) Task: the basis and logic of why task systems are organised for normative work around which a group coalesces and roles arise;

4) Technology: technical means of doing useful things, labour use, distribution of work, skills needs;

5) Sentience: the quality of relatedness of group members in a group to each other and pictures carried about this affecting inclusion/exclusion and cultural distance when the other is perceived as Other.

When crossing or contemplating interaction across any of these boundaries, a need arises to look at hermeneutic processes based on bounded rationalising carried out in one space, since interactions between asymmetrical systems pose additional strains. When insider groups from within the same space opt for common understanding and mental models, they are not able to cross boundaries easily if these have become a "norm" or "truth". For example, such matters as which day is a holiday and how this affects working, can become an obstacle to interactions.

Hernes (2004) points out that boundaries were traditionally seen as rather stable and unambiguous, and tending to equilibrium. Further, boundaries can be used as a lens

between organisations in studying developments between them.[57] Hernes (2004: 13) distinguishes three kinds of boundaries: *mental, social and physical,* introducing boundaries as part of human life, and asserts that boundaries can be considered composite, central and being under construction and reconstruction, thus introducing the notion that boundaries are in constant flux where they get revalued and reinstated. The problem with the approach Hernes (2004) takes of boundaries is twofold: he emphasises the individual through mental and social aspects, and does not consider task as a central theme.

Paradoxically, in unstructured organisations as open systems (Goldstein 1994; Hirschhorn and Gilmore 1992) boundaries play a vital role in self-organising. Without boundaries, there would be chaos. Hirschhorn and Gilmore (1992) point out that one needs to have boundaries, due to the fact that removing traditional organisational ones (hierarchy), creates a need for psychological boundaries. The question then arises, whether removal of hierarchy can be accomplished in full, and whether psychological boundaries enable a working authority system for tasks to be carried out? Boundaries exist also to contain anxiety and without these (e.g. a reporting system, task allocation, authority system and its delegation) the group ambiguity is too high. Goldstein (1994: 109) states that "A successful authority boundary can contain potentially destructive conflict". Thus, the distinction between authority and authoritarian is an interesting one.

Miller and Rice (1967: xiii, note 2) brought forth the concept of sentient boundary, which refers to a boundary around a group within which loyalty is received or demanded. Bertalanffy (1968) reminds us that all entities must have boundaries, either spatial or dynamic. Spatial boundaries exist in "naive observation", and all boundaries are in fact dynamic (Bertalanffy 1968: 215). This means that boundaries are evolving all the time. Hirschhorn and Gilmore (1992: 105) point towards this by distinguishing between "traditional company" and the new "flexible organisation", where changed demands on organisations and the need to "cross boundaries" have become more based on "enacted" boundaries, where ties are rebuilt over and over again continuously.

Boundaries are to some extent imagined or illusionary (Chattopadhyay 1999), and are useful for "descriptive purposes" (Bohm 1996: 86). These are illusions in the sense that one cannot point to a boundary which is not material, and therefore sometimes these illusions of boundary create a 'real' boundary where it did not exist in the first place. This

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[57] And also within the company in form of authority stuctures, roles and meeting customers (Nurmi 2003).

means that boundaries cannot be pointed out and often surface only when a system is faced with pressures.

Katz and Kahn (1966: 18) approach the study of organisation by inquiring what its boundaries are and which behaviour belongs in it and which outside. Here a difficulty of drawing clear lines around an organisation is encountered (Miles 1980). While boundaries are usually located with regard to a group or organisation or any defined set of matters, Abbott (1995) notes that boundaries can be 'made' and that they exist based on actions. By this he means that sometimes boundaries are a conscious choice to include some, and exclude others.

It has not been much considered in the literature that for this reason inter-group activities (for example, intentional seminars) create their own boundary around the group where common language and mental maps (as Schein 1993 puts it) develop with time. Further, exclusions and inclusions are made, not born, based on differences. If exclusion is made, this poses a question whether management then becomes 'absurd', because it refers to managing something which is already designed and regulated, and management gets limited to control over existing categories so that boundaries are not crossed.[58]

Some researchers (Castells 2005) claim that a network society does not have boundaries, referring to access as well as space. Boundaries can be experienced as physical, existential, emotional, sensational, or identity crystallisations (Joutsimäki and Mathur 2006: 4). Boundaries may thus refer to a wide range of human encounters, and cannot be removed without understanding their nature and affect.[59] Thus it is necessary to specify where boundaries do not exist and the extent to which a boundary may still have relevance. Lowering spatial boundaries as access to one market does not imply that all boundaries are removed.

From the flexibility or rigidity of boundaries one cannot infer that boundaries are not needed or that they do not exist, if the organisation changes. Loyalty and effectiveness do not arise from clear definitions of tasks but are expected to do so from relationships carried

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[58] This is one reason why some dialogue theorists dislike the very idea of managing cultural differences.

[59] Without boundaries it would not be possible to distinguish between e.g. Nokia and Samsung, which does not mean they could not share information or other resources. Sharing has become more extensive e.g. in car industry, but this does not mean that the entities, the firms, have no boundaries. Within the European Union, territorial border crossings between the member states have become easier in the sense that procedures for doing so have changed, but national borders still are in place. Instead of visa applications and passport controls, most countries within the EU accept identity cards as proof of identity. However, this procedure applies only to citizens of these member states on the basis of agreements.

out by persons interacting from their roles as part of the organisation. Managers often think that "getting rid of boundaries also means doing away with conflict" (Hirschhorn and Gilmore 1992: 106). This raises the question whether barriers are confused with boundaries, since boundaries refer to space and time, whereas barriers denote mental, physical, legal, psychological, and territorial obstacles. There is also an illusion that conflict is only about confined issues that can be cured with panacea such as increased communication. Thus, a distinction needs to be drawn between the notions of borders, barriers and boundaries.

Borders exist in the descriptive sense that they present something definable and agreed, such as national territorial demarcations. Borders can be "permeable" in the sense that people get in and get out of defined territories, following certain procedures specific to the same. Borders are more "concrete" than boundaries, since they perpetuate categories which can be spatially depicted on a physical map.

Barriers, on the other hand, refer to functional/dysfunctional systemic and structural obstacles of various degrees, e.g. what can be exported to one country and how, and on what terms, when possible in the sense of imposed limits and introductory conditionalities (such as converting Euros to Rupees for transactions).

Boundaries refer to possibilities mentally constructed by acknowledging resources and constraints within limiting parameters, consensually or by acknowledging authority or power. These exist in, between and across groups and define them. Boundaries exist in the minds of the holders as emotional and intellectual structures and create mental spaces; thus, formation of groups, along with their boundary conditions, provide possibilities for interactions across these. This is in a way paradoxical, because to increase interaction one needs to regulate and limit it. Therefore the notion of container becomes vital.

Three kinds of boundary crossings may be visualised here: open, regulated or closed (Figure 6, page 51). A closed boundary implies no exchange and thus no influences, whereas an open boundary has no regulation and is influenced too much leaving the group "at the mercy of others". To create a balance, some regulatory steps need to be taken.

Figure 6: Different Boundaries
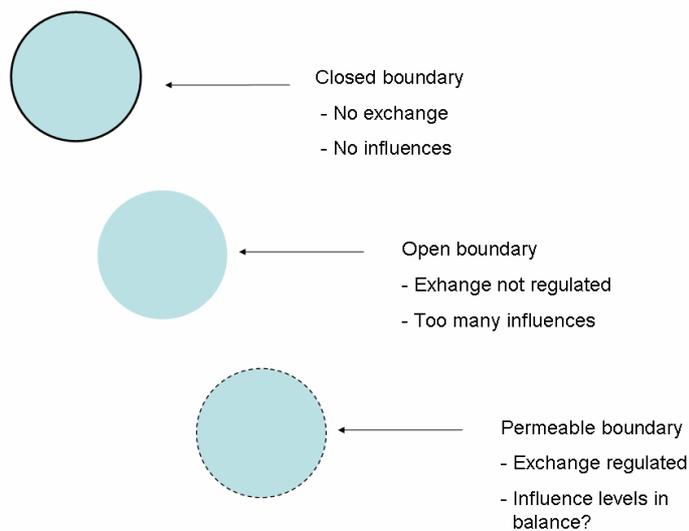
A task group or groups in interaction, either across other task groups or across members in these groups need to continuously negotiate inclusion and exclusion, and also reflect on where the boundary of these groups is formed. For example, if the group is supposed to be multicultural in a space, then whether the membership reflects that goal or not, needs to be explored. According to Miles (1980: 317) "Mostly, they [boundaries] are known to us by the activities performed within and across them." Therefore, research into coalescence or separatedness of groups and grounds for such behaviour is illuminating.

Turner (1981) raised several important issues with boundaries of groups. He found that cooperative inter-group and intra-group behaviour leads to different processes: the former tends to produce biases and competition, and the latter tends to increase ingroup favouritism. Competitiveness within a group affects intra-group cohesiveness, morale, cooperativeness, work motivation, conformity pressures, status, and leadership differentiations, and leads to a process where mutual hostility accompanies ingroup-outgroup biases. In contrast, cooperative inter-group interaction tends to decrease social distance and ingroup-outgroup biases, and when social interaction is minimized and salience of in-outgroup maximized, these different effects seem to disappear. If a group has a feeling of common fate, it induces perceived homogeneity. (Turner 1981: 73-75.) Turner concluded that intra-group competition and inter-group cooperation tend to blur or redraw group boundaries.

Individual boundaries can first be thought of as physical, skin being the normal separator between 'me' and outside, or one's feelings of inner reality. There is a horror or anxiety in

being forcefully joined to another, and lose one's independent being,[60] and therefore there is a need to have a psychological boundary. Managers have realised that rationality is bounded and that boundaries of rationality and irrationality, the in-betweens of "twilight zone" (Kets de Vries 1980: 2), exist. For functionality, there is also a need for "boundaries of responsibility" (Moore and Sonsino 2003: 13). One may also have mental boundaries, which are determined by one's thinking. Consciousness or mind, can be added as the third individual boundary.

'Resistance' in the core organisation, which tries to regulate the boundary in order to safeguard organisational existence, thus becomes visible through activities performed. This resistance becomes activated, when a boundary is crossed, as in cases of cooperation. A crossing expends energy and existence depends on self-regulation (defending from invaders). Also, authority delegated in one system may not "have currency" in another, since this authority and grounds for it are not "known", and a person who is subjected to views of those outside a system may, after exposure, contradict organisational doctrines and produce more anxiety. Interacting with other systems with different expectations, rules, behaviours, and languages can be difficult or conflicting and produce more control systems to guard "foreign influence", which can result in closing the boundaries and trying to manage on one's own. In this sense, organisations are created, built and maintained by human groups.

The distinction made by Daft and Lengel (1986), Daft and Weick (1984), and Weick (2001) between uncertainty and ambiguity (or equivocality) is noted here. While uncertainty can be 'cured' with more information, to address ambiguity face-to-face interactions are needed. Ambiguity is present when thoughts and feelings about events float around and cannot be labelled, and thus put in place (Weick 2001: 49). Feelings of ambiguity are not easily removed but when these are present, they may enhance innovation and change through increased capacity to learn. Uncertainty and ambiguity are both present in cross-border dialogues and interactions. Uncertainty can be addressed by obtaining relevant information, but ambiguity entails capability of holding or containing,

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[60] This is exemplified in art, such as horror movies, literature, paintings and music. Example of the last comes from Genesis and their song 'the Fountain of Salmacis' in the *Nursery Cryme*. The song is based on the Greek tale of Hermaphrodites.

until there is enough clarity to act. Therefore capabilities[61] in coping with both, as needed, become more important.

Enhancing capabilities may introduce "creative tension" (Hirschhorn and Gilmore 1992: 106), which is part of flexible and more open systems: it is not only an intra-organisational, but also a cross-border phenomenon. The uncertainty this introduces increases the possibility for conflict and clashes. In this way, the boundaries that may have been unconscious and invisible, become visible and felt. Therefore, boundary management of different boundaries becomes important, introducing leader-subordinate, common mission, interest and value negotiations (Hirschhorn and Gilmore 1992). Creation of "vacuums" is not enough for effective and interactive functions.

4.2 Bionian Work Groups and Basic Assumptions

The study of task groups from the perspective of distinctive boundary conditions as defining characteristics of the group is a post World War II phenomenon. Previously, the concern was mainly with leadership. The capabilities attributable to a group make it more than a collection of inter-personally interacting individuals. Moreover, the capacity to belong to a group enjoins upon members to puzzle about what is beyond their collective awareness.

For group relations, Wilfred Bion's thinking has been influential. Bion (1961, 1970) is important for the discussion of task groups and their development, because he distinguished between two dimensions of groups, namely the Work Group and the Basic Assumptions Groups. His experiments with leaderless groups and experiences in different groups led Bion (1961) to formulate his basic assumption (ba) states, which refer to regressive tendencies in groups as a whole, not as individuals. These states, basic assumption dependency (baD), basic assumption flight/fight (baFl/F[62]) and basic assumption paring (baP), capture inner states of a group. Basic assumption states are closely associated with emotions, such as anxiety (baD), hate (baF), fear (baFl), love (baP).

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[61] Capabilities are larger than skills (or know-how). Large scale of capabilities refer to abilities, and some capabilities can develop or manifest only in and through collectivities such as groups. Skills refer to specific know-how and professional competencies, such as to adjust, comprehend, learn and basically fathom large contexts and contents. Skills, although an important part of capabilities as a whole, are those that can be honed by training individuals.

[62] Usually this basic assumption is written either baF or baF/F. For clarity, the form of baFl/F is chosen to distinguish between the use of Flight (Fl) or Fight (F) aspect of this basic assumption.

Bion also refers to Freud's idea of losing "individual distinctiveness" (Bion 1961: 142). The threat of a group is that an individual may fear losing distinctiveness in a group, and panics, despite how skilled a person is.

In 'work groups', the task is rational (sophisticated) and rooted in reality, and "maturity" (Bion 1961: 144; see also Kets de Vries and Miller 1984; Lawrence et al. 1996).[63] While there is a distinction between the concept of 'work group' and 'basic assumptions group', a work group can experience basic assumption states, but only one at a time and uses these at various stages of its task. Important differences arise from action orientation and time. Bion (1961: 145) argues that work group functions include "development of thought designed for translation into action". Action in itself means adherence to time and task – hence the 'reality'. Basic assumptions on the other hand are non-reality based emotional drives. This means that the group gets engrossed in its own dynamics and cannot engage with its task, if and when it gets fully swallowed by its emotions. Thus, it is important to distinguish whether these states are present.

The basic assumption dependency (baD) is present when there is expectation that one person, often the leader or whoever is pictured as the leader, will have all the answers. Flight-fight group is there when the group either attacks (fight, baF) whatever it feels is threatening its existence or comfort; or it runs and avoids (flight, baFl). In pairing, the initial ideal is to preserve hope forever by creating a pair to give birth to a "Messiah" as a saviour (person or idea, baP): paradoxically this 'saviour' is expected never to be born because then hope diminishes. In this, the emphasis is on anticipated future event (Kets de Vries and Miller 1984), which is not present in the "here-and-now". This concept refers to the current ongoing reality of the task group. When a group is taken over by emotional states, it seeks uniformity in emotion from other groups in form of "valency".

"Valency" (Bion 1961: 153) is thus a feature of ba-groups, rather than cooperation. This means that one is instantly ready to engage with another on a basic assumption basis. What basic assumption groups seek to do is to prevent development, which requires stepping outside comfort zones, and accepting or exploring new ideas, by creating defences (Bion 1961). One of these defenses is absence of understanding (baFl/F), but without understanding there cannot be development. Understanding is closely related to questioning as an attitude, and is dreaded by groups as a source of "Sphinx", which

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[63] Lawrence et al., 1996 (http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ispso/html/Free_Association.html, Accessed 29.12.2005)

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illustrated disasters (Bion 1961: 162), as if questioning would raise some old or future ills. Anxieties are thus raised and corresponding defences by pairing (seeking allies), release of hate or flight from it, or guilt and depression in baD (Bion 1961: 166). However, these states are phantasies created by the group.

A work group is related to organisation and structure, and ba-groups to disorganisation where continuity (through time) of existence is vital for the group (Bion 1961: 171-172). Structure and organisation, however, cannot help in dealing with ba-phenomena for the reason that structure and organisation refer to rational processes, which cannot deal with emotional drives. For a task group to be a 'work group', awareness is needed, through which "intellectual activity of a high order" can be possible when it becomes aware of emotional ba-states (Bion 1961: 175). Thus, there is a need for leaders and managers to become aware of themselves, and not try to control phenomena that cannot be controlled.

In a Bionian sense (Bion 1961: 178) the leader voices the group and not the other way round, while avoiding becoming "an automaton" as 'an individual who has lost his distinctiveness'.[64] For a work group, verbal connection is essential, but in ba-groups language becomes more a "mode of action" than "mode of thought", and is thus simplified (Bion 1961: 185-186). The quantum of discussion, then, is not the only determinant whether a group functions as a 'work group' or as a 'ba-group'.

The basic assumptions discovered by Bion are all states in groups in reference to a leader – while, paradoxically, he studied leaderless groups. Bionian basic assumptions are building around a person or pair, which are assumed to carry anxieties on behalf of the group. These Bionian basic assumption groups are distinguished from the later discoveries of basic assumption states that seem to focus only on the group or no group at all. These three later ones are One-ness, Me-ness and Group. Turquet (1985) introduced basic assumption One-ness (baO), in which the group phantasises a unified mind, to become "One". Lawrence et al. (1996)[65] discovered a fifth basic assumption called Me-ness (baM)[66], where the group no longer exists, just individuals, or "singletons" (Turquet 1975), in their own worlds. A sixth basic assumption was added by Cano (1997[67]; 1998), basic assumption group (baG), where the group oscillates between baM and baO being neither. These all are defence

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[64] This leader-group connection is also discussed by Read (1963/2002)

[65] Lawrence et al., 1996 (http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ispso/html/Free_Association.html, Accessed 29.12.2005)

[66] In relation to this, it is noteworthy to mention that Gadamer (1983: 87) states that "the *logos* is common to all, but people behave as if each had a private reason". This reflects what happens in baM.

[67] Cano, 1997 (http://www.sicap.it/~merciai/bion/papers/cano.htm, Accessed 5.3.2007)

positions, as Fraher (2004) points out. It is assumed that these six basic assumption states also highlight experiences within and between groups. These six basic assumptions are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: The Basic Assumptions and Their Relation to Each Other

	Leader Focus	Group +/- Focus
One / Whole	**baD (Bion 1961)** Basic Assumption Dependency focuses on the observation that group members seek to be dependent on and part of one person perceived as "the leader". Without leader, nothing happens.	**baO (Turquet 1985)** Basic Assumption One-ness builds on the assumption of becoming one, a totality, where no differences arise, and all share the same goal. Group is one.
Oscillation	**baFl/F (Bion 1961)** Basic Assumption Flight/Fight builds on the assumption that the group must flee or fight according to the wishes, either real or phantasised, of the 'leader'. The constant oscillation between perceived danger and shirking from such, is present. All energies are used either excessively or not at all.	**baG (Cano 1997/1998)** Basic Assumptions Group builds on the observation that a group does not define itself as a group, but assumes it is a group by context (time) and not content (task) and oscillates between being and not being, or belonging or not belonging. Group does not recognize itself as a group.
We / I	**baP (Bion 1961)** Basic Assumption Pairing build on the observation that a group pushes two to pair within a group to keep alive hope for "saviour" in form of ideas or actual beings. The responsibility of creation is put outside the group.	**baM (Lawrence et al. 1996)** Basic assumption Me-ness builds on the observation that in any given time in a group, a member or membership may become disunited and does not perceive oneself as part of any group. There is no group.

While all basic assumptions are important in view of groups, baG has interesting repercussions, but is least discussed. Cano (1998) describes that there is an oscillation feeling in a baG: It is neither baO nor baM. This feeling of oscillation is felt in groups that do not know whether they should be one or the other. Bion (1961: 25-26) points out, that a good group spirit includes following aspects: common purpose; common recognition of its boundaries and members; capacity to absorb and lose members without losing its group individuality; lack of internal subgroups with rigid boundaries; members valued for contribution; capability to face and deal with discontent (and a minimum size of three persons). In baG, these aspects are in question and therefore may provide important insights into groups in cross-border situations. Contact in international level manifests through interactions, which are carried out by individuals and groups. What enables observation within a field is however contingent on some notion of boundaries. Feelings in

dialogue have mostly been seen as interpersonal (e.g. Burbules 1993), not as providing information in a group.

In reviewing the later three basic assumptions, Miller (1998) discusses an interesting point. He argues that the first three discovered by Bion actually refer to 'basic' states of human relations, or "herd instincts" following Trotter (1919). Miller (1998) regards the later three basic assumptions bringing out social adaptation rather than basic human responses. Also, he notes that Kleinian thinking was more prevalent in Bion's writings from 1952 onwards. This work takes note of this distinction, but calls these later discoveries basic assumptions keeping in mind Miller's reservations.

Klein (1985) discussed such key concepts as projection, introjection, splitting, and projective identification in relation to leadership. While Klein was not interested in groups, a short introduction to these concepts is given for the purpose of understanding issues presented later. *Projections* are impulses or feelings people unconsciously disown. These feelings can be felt unacceptable or threatening, and conveniently "exist" only in others. Such coping or defending enables persons to free themselves and open vistas for meaning-seeking and understanding. *Introjection*, on the other hand, is something unconsciously taken from others' behaviour patterns into us, as a feeling. In *splitting* one distinguishes between good and bad by separating them. In *projective identification* feelings are first projected on to others, and then believed that the projectee actually has those feelings. In addition to these, regression and phantasies about reality elaborated by Klein (1985; 1987) form the core of group relations theory.

Bion (1961) noted that people learn best through experiential learning, but hate learning experientially because a group evokes regressive feelings that were once part of one's experiences as an infant, and from time to time the group seems to behave as if in psychosis (Fraher 2004). Hate of learning comes from the fact that adults often derive their learning through trial and error, and no one likes to err or make mistakes. Klein found that some experiences encountered, trigger memories (primitive phantasies) of experiences that happened in childhood (Klein 1985; 1987). Bion built his ideas partly on Klein's object relations theory (Bion 1961, 1970; Klein 1985).

For an adult, regression occurs when complexities of the situation are stronger than capabilities in coping and working with that situation. This triggers retreat or regression to previous states of behaviour that often have their origin in infancy (Klein 1987) or are

more fully learned (Weick 1990). Thus, the concept of regression is an important part of group functioning and may create pressures on 'container-contained' functions.

Another aspect that needs to be addressed are transferences and countertransferences (eg. Armstrong 2005; Bollas 1987; Kets de Vries 2001; Klein 1987) arising in groups and influencing how a group is enabled to engage with its task(s). Winnicott (1982) notes that transference is possible only in the presence of trust. However, these have not been studied in task groups engaged on cross-border connections, and thus there is a gap in literature to be studied.

4.3 Creating a Container with Task Groups

The container-contained concepts were introduced by Bion (1970, 1985). The processes themselves were discernable already in experiments with leaderless groups (1940s) and other group encounters Bion (1961) experienced. While Bion's thinking is often taken in relation to therapeutic groups or therapy in dyads, his experiences included also task groups (Bain 2007; Bion 1961, 1970; Zinkin 1989).

Conceptualising the processes of container and contained, Bion (1961, 1970, 1985) deliberately moved away from a dyad, and focused on groups as a whole (Hinshelwood 2007). Miller (1998: 1503) refers to this as focusing "on the study of processes of the group or organization as a system". This opened a door for considering transference as a group phenomenon, and not as an analyst-analysand dyad. Having said this, it must also be noted that Burrow (1927) had already brought ideas about transference in relation to the group, but had not conceptualised or developed either basic assumptions or container-contained processes.

The concept of container is of a space where something is held. When there is a need to create an impact, organisation in a group is needed. As noted in *Section 4.1*, increased interaction needs regulation and limits, and thus a container. This movement from elementary to more complex (Zinkin 1989) creates need to form a container for something to be contained. This also refers to another issue, namely to the question whether individuals alone are able to create containers that are complex enough for cross-border interactions without groups?

In discussing the "Establishment" Bion (1970, 1985) deliberates over the relationship between the 'Mystic' and the group. An Establishment is something that achieves a high

status without any reality check for some time (Bion 1970; Symington and Symington 1996). A Mystic in Bion's (1970, 1985) thinking refers to "genius", who is both destructive and creative, and has a relation to Establishment which is emotional by nature. This Mystic needs to be contained by the group for it to successfully change (Zinkin 1989). In task groups this means that the group needs to be able to contain its insight-processes so that the group does not perish or *vice versa.* Zinkin (1989: 228) points to the dynamic nature of a group by viewing "the group constantly as having the task of a container".

Thus a group, its container and what is contained can be changed only from within by the members (Zinkin 1989). While organisations may tend to equilibrium, complexity arises from processes of disequilibrium, with a need to create containers to hold that complexity. The need to have task groups arises from this, and also points to container becoming an entity (-in-the-mind) in its own right.

In later literature, both Isaacs (1999) and Schein (1999) use the concept of container, but do not refer to Bion (1961, 1970, 1985), whose thinking predates both. The use of container and contained in Isaacs's thinking resonates Bion's, although there is no reference to him. The difference between Isaacs and Bion in the "subject matter" is thus interesting, but by placing the 'container' as a space, Isaacs creates a 'contained', which refers to dialogue to be held by the group. The main difference seems to be that Isaacs (1999) claims that a container can be made, and it is only matter of time until the process takes off, while group relations notions take into consideration that a container can also be punctuated, demolished or not even formed in the first place.

In his work, Isaacs (1999) discusses four stages of dialogue, where dialogue is the aim, but not the beginning. The four stages are *"Instability of the container", "Instability in the container", "Inquiry in the container", and "Creativity in the container"*. Thus he views dialogue as an evolving process from general discussion towards deeper thinking, which is central to dialogic approaches. First people are very polite, avoid controversies and try to be pleasant. Therefore it is noteworthy, that the "birth" of a container is not inevitable. Then a "crises" or puzzlement emerges, through which some form of pondering or reflection takes place. This will in turn lead to dialogue and flow, where one is totally immersed and focused in activity (Isaacs 1999). Flow is not a mysterious state, but difficult to find rationally. It is a feeling of easiness of thinking, writing and doing. The paradox is that to get to flow, a lot of work must be done, before the 'ice melts and a tap opens', in a

figurative sense.[68] However, the group relations literature concentrates more on the 'held" than the flow. From Isaacs's description one cannot infer whether the flow refers to a task group or to a basic assumption group from the group relations perspective. The concept of 'task group' is missing from Isaacs's vocabulary.

As container spaces, dialogue literature does not discuss 'temporary learning institutions' (TLIs), but this concept is befitting for task group spaces. A TLI can be used to capture more complex issues concerning the task groups by forming a container for the thoughts to evolve. Task groups as container institutions thus have a special significance for this Study when the focus is on cross-border interactions. Something precious is lost if the container aspect of a group is neglected to give attention only to individual and inter-personal dynamics.

Task groups form an important function in cross-border interactions by taking its task to a higher complexity. An individual interacting alone with an institution is at a disadvantage and has a hard time in relating with it precisely for this reason. The power relation may get too skewed in terms of resources, if there is no possibility to share the concentrated emotional loads; these become manageable when distributed across membership of a group or institution. This has been neglected in the "traditional" dialogue literature, and the adoption of an open systems approach in this Study requires this.

4.4 Open Systems Framework for Task Groups

This Study builds on the notion of open systems framework. Collectivities design or locate task and sentient systems to carry out their purposes. Boundaries are part of open systems thinking, where the whole is as important as its parts. Such issues as labour, skill needs and distribution of work, are all within systems. The group as a nodal point of research stems from the notion of open systems, introduced by Bertalanffy (1968, 1972).[69] He claimed that "social phenomena must be considered as 'systems'", since complex interactions in the society point to groups rather than individuals:

> *"Events seem to involve more than just individual decisions and actions and to be determined more by socio-cultural "systems", be these prejudices, ideologies,*

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[68] Corresponding to the saying: 80 % perspiration and 20 % inspiration.
[69] Bertalanffy (1972: 407) points to systems theory history starting from Aristotle.

pressure groups, social trends, growth and decay of civilizations, or what not" (Bertalanffy 1968: 8).

Bertalanffy (1972: 421-422) distinguishes three types of systems: real, conceptual and abstract. Real systems refer to those that can be observed and exist independently of the observer, whereas conceptual systems refer to symbolic constructs. Abstracted systems are a subgroup of conceptual systems, and refer to science with interplay between reality and conceptual systems. This interplay occurs through tactile experiences. Open systems rely on exchange of components (Bertalanffy 1968: 141). This exchange, and levels at which it is undertaken, affects the quality of interactions.

Systems theory had a strong influence on group thinking (Lewin 1947a; 1947b; Miller and Rice 1967), since it discusses boundaries, roles and interaction as keys to understanding. The "socio-technical system" approach of Emery and Trist (1960) also emphasises this. Systems are "complexes of elements", made by numbers, species or relations (Bertalanffy 1968: 54). Influenced by these views, organisations are now generally regarded as open systems (open as flame, cells and organisms different from closed or static ones such as atoms, crystals). Systems interact with other systems, give and take, and become more complex (Bertalanffy 1968; Miller and Rice 1967). A 'work group' can be considered as an open system (Lawrence et al. 1996)[70], since it is open to interaction benefitting its task effectiveness. Contrary to this, basic assumption groups are closed in the sense that their work is based on feelings arising in them and are bound within such groups rather than their task which needs outside interaction.

Autonomous work groups were tested by Rice in 1950s in Calico Mills, Ahmedabad, India.[71] Miller and Rice (1967) experimented with ideas in open systems theory along with ideas on learning. They introduced a new way to study groups and how these function in "Systems of Organisation" by reorganising sentient groups (groups capable of sharing feelings) (Miller and Rice 1967: xiii, note 2). Sentience enables sensing of data in ways that are neither limited to intellect nor necessarily conscious or explicit. Some of the information needed arise through working hypotheses presented in the group. A sentient being is able to use 'hunches' for inquiring.

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[70] Lawrence et al., 1996 (http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ispso/html/Free_Association.html, Accessed 29.12.2005)

[71] These experiments led to research on "socio-technical systems", and later research with Miller, whom he met in India. Ahmedabad used to be, and still is to some extent, one of the key centres for textiles. Gujarat is the home state of Mahatma Gandhi, who believed in encouraging small business and entrepreneurship through group processes.

A hunch may contain important information (Mintzberg 1990), but only if the group is able to consider it and reflect on it as part of a hermeneutic process.[72] This process is needed, since mere exchange of information does not yield benefit beyond a limited threshold in the long run, and needs to develop into a reciprocal interaction. Poole and Van de Ven (1989: 567) disclose that organisations are viewed by most theorists as "social action systems" constructed by people.

Miller (1978) introduced the notion of "living systems" and the centrality of "life" as a concept. For understanding the totality, Miller (1978: xiv) highlights the need to recognize "interrelationships among coacting components" as important. Coacting places task groups in situations where actions are reciprocated. Anderson and Jap (2005: 75) claim that "relationships that appear to be doing well are often the most vulnerable to the forces of destruction that are quietly building beneath the surface of the relationship". This means that overt 'harmony' does not tell about covert battles. In this vein, silence and agreement are not necessarily signs of system harmony (Gk. *harmos*, joint). This is taken as a thought that in interactions and interrelationships what is not stated, discussed and brought into the open, can be potentially dangerous and may cause more problems than explicit disagreements.[73]

4.4.1 Organisations as Entities in Open Systems Framework

Systems thinking later found its way into management studies and ideas of learning organisations (Burgoyne et al. 1994; Easterby-Smith et al. 1999; Senge 1990), although Bertalanffy or Miller are seldom referred to in these studies regardless of their ground-breaking work. Systems are highlighted here, since crossing borders and boundaries introduce some elements that do not surface in intra- or inter-group situation in the same space, where they can be dealt locally with less friction of space. Intra- and inter-organisational learnings are important, and increasingly emphasised in organisational studies due to processes these introduce (Holmqvist 2003). What can also be considered, is

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[72] This is reminiscent of the division Plato made between knowledge and belief, which he distinguished further to two categories, higher and lower. The distinction between belief and knowledge, discussed in Meno (Plato 1999a), is that belief may be correct, but one does not know, and thus it cannot be the basis of decision as knowledge can be. The Dividing Line between knowledge and belief is discussed in Republic (Plato 1999c: 509D–513E). The Mundaka Upanishad (in Radhakrishnan 1953/1994, Section I: 2) also distinguishes between lower and higher knowledge.

[73] Roy (1998) expresses this succinctly by using phrases such as "Small Things" for those matters that are nonchalant and "Big Things" for those that are important, but do seldom – if ever – get voiced.

how pictures of the system interact with possibilities perceived, as an ongoing reality, not necessarily in terms of foreseeable causal connections.

A social group (collection of social individuals) is a purposeful system (Ackoff and Emery 1972: 213), meaning that purposes drive goals, not the other way round (Mathur 2006b). Only through advances with technology has it become more evident that place is no longer as static as thought; but distances between those performing tasks even through technology, remain. This introduces challenges when sharing of knowing may depend more on the technical platform and not on the totality of actual needs. These problems related to technical barriers and malaises are discussed by Thurk and Fine (2003). Additionally, Himanen (2007)[74] maintains that face-to-face interaction remains relevant for innovations and creativity.

Organisations are differentiated and integrated entities or systems consisting of interrelated parts. A group can also be viewed as a "temporary system" (Weick 1990: 587) when it is of defined duration; also groups are created for specific purposes and can evolve their own identities. The notion of 'primary task' as a picture of the core task into which all tasks enmesh constitutes the living core of the task system. Sometimes tasks take space from other systems, such as human system (Menzies 1986). The classical view of an organisation system regarded it as a closed one, where there was no interaction with other systems and its structure was simple (Juuti 1992).[75]

From the psychological point of view, the behaviour of a group is observed less than behaviour of individuals (Ackoff and Emery 1972). The same observation is made by Kusch (2002), in the field of philosophy. In organisation literature, teams are much discussed, but groups and group behaviour in interaction have been swamped by studies of individuals (leaders, managers, employees), and the discussion has focused on efficiency, results and innovation. Teams are emphasised from the perspective of creativity, productivity and innovation, since these have long been perceived to be ingroup qualities, but advances in research on networks is changing this bringing with it boundary questions.

Without a systemic perspective groups have no foundation, since groups are usually part of larger wholes. The newer versions of groups as communities-of-practice (Brown and

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[74] Himanen, 2007 (http://www.teknologiateollisuus.fi/files/15064_suomalainen_unelma.pdf, Accessed 7.5.2007).

[75] On the other hand, if we look at the old systems of Manors or Ruukkis or Mill Communities such as the former Verla Mill in Finland (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), these were self-sustaining and rather complex from schools to shops, but the systems themselves were perceived smaller and were more linear.

Duguid 1991; Lave and Wenger 1991; Thompson 2005) cannot exist without some ground level systems on which they are build, however spontaneously. If they work for any length of time, they become institutions of learning and thus create boundaries to keep the learning inside the community, until that learning is formed and can be released.[76] In some cases, complexity has increased consultation even when it is not in the best interest of an organisation, and it is critiqued that costs are easier to define than benefits, which require commitment (Sorge and Witteloostuijn 2004). Such commitment needs groups to hold, take initiatives further, and work through anxieties that unknown situations are bound to create, while remaining cemented.

Systemic views become accentuated where visions of cooperation and collaboration arise. These approaches need to take into consideration both the systems, the task and the human, to be successful. The complexity introduced in cross-border interaction beyond mere exchange needs therefore requires to be discussed, introducing both sharing and reciprocity as processes.

4.4.2 Open Systems in View of Cooperations and Collaborations

A purposeful system starts with a normative primary task. To create processes, for there to be exchange or sharing, something needs to be exchanged or shared. Therefore it needs to be explored, what this "something" could be. De (1980: 97) found that the human systems tend towards ideal seeking and open-system type of learning, where the aim is to create "critical consciousness", and the emphasis on *being with* rather than *being in* the world. De (1980: 109) points out that from *dichotomous dynamics*, one needs to advance towards counselling and a process based on dialogue, and thus introduces the need for container building. Pouring knowledge and pourer of knowledge do not exist in processes which are reciprocal.

One of the early researchers to look into the nature of cooperation was Follett (1940). Kanter (1994) observed that even business alliances are living systems and that there is a difference between collaboration and exchange, where exchange is based on giving and taking; collaboration in working with, not on. Value-chain partnership can be captured as a "marriage" between partners, and thus the deepest collaborative arrangement. However,

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[76] Take for example The Open Office Project: while anyone with suitable skills can participate, the community has boundaries and gatekeepers. They too report results in the form of programmes, but the work itself is not open in the sense that the process is not openly stated on the website. If there are no boundaries, then the system is too open to hold that knowledge and information long enough to create any visible results. In order to participate, one has to register and by registering, one becomes an insider.

some researchers have seen marriage as rather static, and proposed the metaphor of "dancing" instead (Wilkinson and Young 1994; reported in Wilkinson et al. 1998: 494).

Mathur (2007a) points to difference between collaboration and cooperation, where collaboration is doing something inside commonly held notion of boundaries and cooperation mere exchange of commitments while remaining rooted in separate systems (Figure 7). The former seeks to "create something together", the latter to "getting something back from what you put in", thus introducing that mere exchange does not replace reflective interaction. Bertalanffy (1968) focuses attention on exchange, but merely leaving it to that does not help complex organisations in their attempts to link.

Figure 7: Collaboration versus Cooperation
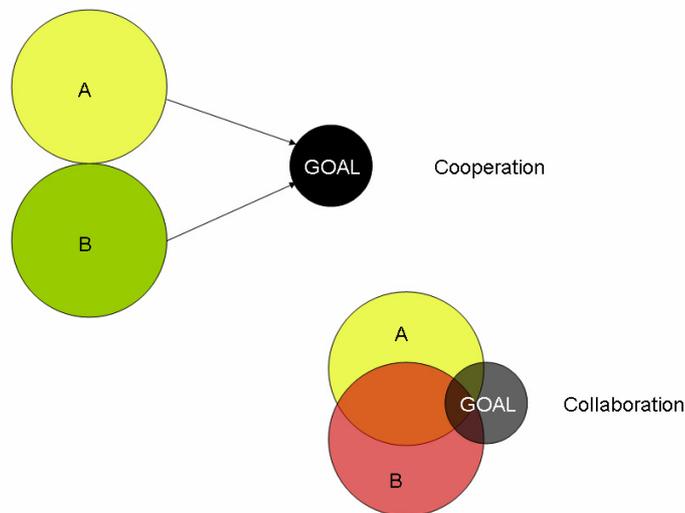
A turbulent environment may also cause fragmentation, since one can easily become obsessed with issues directly related to one's own field. Cross and Parker (2004) bring this forth by highlighting that managerial work has become more fragmenting than holistic. They stress usefulness of technologies in creating avenues for new kinds of interactions, but argue that building avenues to more collaborative practices from scratch is not easy if these practices did not previously exist. Ignoring this aspect can lead to late learning, especially in projects. Cross and Parker (2004: 93) call this the "unshared knowledge problem". An interesting and often neglected aspect here is, that many projects are, in the first place, undertaken to increase collaboration and collaborative practices. However, if what Cross and Parker (2004) argue is true, one needs to try to build collaboration practices before embarking on journeys to increase it. Collaboration is a group phenomenon, and predisposition to collaboration, if studied, can produce insights and inform management practices that could reduce costs in time and money.

4.5 Management of Task

In an organisational setting, groups are formed for action to undertake activities that support tasks and are thus distinguishable from therapeutic groups. Action groups need to engage with tasks that require performing to create something, such as understanding possibilities in another country. In task based groups, the use of group relations approach, dialogue and experiential learning is to create spaces of exploration, not to do therapy. While the group relations literature in the Tavistock tradition draws from systemic and psychoanalytic literature, from the very beginning it has also focused on understanding what happens in task groups, where therapy was not an aim. Therapeutic groups on the other hand refer to spaces for focusing on individual, group or organisation level problems to gain self-understanding with the help of a trained therapist. This Study chose to research action groups that have a clear task to create results outside of themselves.

Tasks imply management, because resources can have alternative uses and become constrained at some stretch. There are four reasons why management is preferred as a theoretical construct in this Study's context. It can refer to a person (as a manager), a collectivity (as management), a process (managing/management) or a discipline of study (management). The difference, similarity and confluence between leadership and management is a matter of ongoing debates. In the broadest sense it can be defined, as Moore and Sonsino (2003: 2) do, as "something we are and something we become". Within this view, they equate talk with action, but mere interaction does not suffice.

Yukl (2002: 3) portrays management as doing with, leadership as doing on, and the latter can be defined in various ways such as mobilizing resources, process of influencing, giving purpose, starting evolutionary processes, sensemaking processes, articulating visions and values, and creating environment for accomplishments. Kotter (1990) emphasises ability to influence and enable as well as align and motivate. Since management is seen as a process inherent in groups, in this Study it is not located in one person, but in the group as a whole.

'Management' has often been confused with 'leadership', and less seen as a collectivity (as a picture-in-the-mind). Most organisation literature reflects situations only through a leader, leadership as a quality or manager. While conversational aspects are acknowledged as in Moore and Sonsino (2003), the literature does not consider two-way exchange with a group, but only inter-personally with individuals. Moore and Sonsino (2003) do emphasise that leading is conversing and language is the basis of human networks as "strategic

conversation", which has three levels: debate, discussion and dialogue. What makes it strategic in their minds is that leaders are seen as the most important change agents.

Mintzberg (1994) stresses that commitment to the journey is of most worth, since engaging people, informal learning and thinking can be more important than formal planning. Management is seen here as a process involving an explicit hermeneutic primary task. While management (from managing director onwards if not a sole proprietor) and members in a strict sense are both employees, the "organization-in-the-mind" (Armstrong 2005) produces an adversarial two-level structure against which life in the organisation is understood. This refers to the old I-Thou/I-It problems (Buber 1995, 1999, 2002): to be particular in universal or part of a whole or to be seen as an object or as a person. This two-level structure also institutes 'in minds' a distinction between "leaders" and "followers" which may carry a hidden inkling of "Thinkers" and "Doers".[77] Such practice may become problematic if the goal is to focus the opposite, such as sharing, participation, and responsibility.

With reference to task groups, Schön (1987)[78] discusses that a "reflective practitioner" is capable of responding to situations by "reflection-in-action" and "knowing-in-action". This is central, because of the dynamic nature of management important in groups. This means that management may be viewed both as a collectivity and as a process, depending on the context discussed, in order to focus on group dynamics within dialogue spaces. To highlight the importance of reflection, Schön (1987) discusses "indeterminate zones" of uncertainty, confusion, messiness, undefined or unknown problems as becoming much more important, but also laments that much of schooling aims at acquainting oneself with defined problems and right answers given by an educator.[79] This is evident in the so called cultural Do's and Don'ts.

Often, when ambiguity is high and goals not clear, control aspect of managing may take precedence over process. Instead of creating more spirals, loops and circles of control, one can create processes where the opposite is emphasised. Enzle and Anderson (1993: 263; see also Ghoshal 2005: 85) describe this spiralling control as "a pathological spiralling relationship", where surveillance leads to more surveillance. If management gets reduced to control, dialogical approaches cannot flourish.

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[77] This is vividly portrayed by Kolanad (2005: 252).
[78] Schön, 1987 (http://educ.queensu.ca/~russellt/howteach/schon87.htm, Accessed 5.4.2007).
[79] Schön, 1987 (http://educ.queensu.ca/~russellt/howteach/schon87.htm, Accessed 5.4.2007).

The same applies to dialogue, which as a process is similarly not often noticed. Senge (1990: 94-95) offers a management principle: "Don't push growth; remove the factors limiting growth", since one can be unaware of some structures, which "hold us a prisoner". Similar thinking is reflected in the notion that people "create their own constraints" (Weick 1979: 243), which reflects an inherent observation that omnipotence is wishful and framed. The tendency to interact with persons perceived as similar, is also noted (Brass et al. 2004).

While 'management by talking' is an important feature of interaction, language serves only as a bridge from point to point, and principles of leadership or management cannot be derived from it. Nor can leadership or management be understood without attention to all forms of communication (communication in its widest sense connotes participation). One mode of communication is language, a double-sided coin, which enables mediation, but can also lapse into words void of meaning. Senge (1990) discusses this problem with words by bringing in the need for emotions and vividness as well as "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi 1991). Building on above, the problem seems to be twofold: One, that dialogue is not leader driven, but group originated and belongs to members in that group (because one cannot have dialogue alone),[80] and second, the erroneous assumption that all that is needed are professional talkers and more results would automatically emerge. However, as Schein (1993) observed, executive dialogue is not enough.

Group encounters based on open systems approach have shown that when all levels of organisational hierarchy are around one table for discussion, there always arises unknown information that surprises all parties. While dialogue is important, the overemphasis on language and rational approaches are seldom successful by themselves. One problem identified with so called rational approaches has been that these do not take into consideration why something emerges and what this emerging is telling the group. Acting without thinking together may lead to persuasion or meaningless rhetoric where groups cannot evaluate what has been said or proposed, since in dialogical approaches feedback is essential for group and individual evaluation within the group. A part of effectiveness in groups arises from being able to innovate, create, and confluence different aspects into new horizons.

New horizons raise possibilities to create novel approaches. Micklethwait and Wooldridge (1996: 328) claim that in management the only lasting advantage is to be superior.

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[80] Self-dialogue where one is perceived to have an inner discussion with oneself, thus creating, infact, a small dyad or group, is disregarded here, although some forms of writing build on such a dialogical approach.

Superiority or any other needed process, in turn, may require crossing boundaries, be they subcultural, hierarchical or other (Schein 1993). This calls for deeper understanding in order to become equipped with engaging with challenges and requirements of "turbulent times" (Ashkanasy 2006: 82),[81] where a latent image is of increased changes in the environment commonly subsumed under the catch-all cliche of 'globalisation'. This turbulence in turn requires "boundary-role autonomy and flexibility" (Miles 1980: 342). When predictability is questioned, the role of understanding needs to be widened from singular actor (such as one firm or group) to many (Wilkinson and Young 2005), giving rise to network thinking.[82]

Noorderhaven (2004: 98) emphasises the role of self-reflexivity and dialogue in international business. Self-reflexivity and dialogue are needed to find centrality in one's group to be able to interact effectively with similar or different group with heterogenous members. This means that international business builds on processes rather than mere exchange and points towards need to research management differences between local entities and foreign entrants. This aspect has been studied by Ali-Yrkkö (2007)[83] from the perspective of investment.

Process thinking has also become more important in notions of value creation inside organisations (Denison 1997), and processes are emphasised here because of *how* rather than *what* (Schein 1999). Kuhn and Beam (1982: 325-326) argue that there exists "metamanagement" implying that managing the process means managing the organisation. All these point towards acknowledging that interaction methods are necessary for management (as a collectivity and process), and also for growth of roleholders within the organisation on whom the onus of effectiveness is entrusted.

4.6 Roles in Task Groups and Systems

Bion (1961) saw persons always belonging to some group regardless of their location in time and space. This refers that there can be a 'group-in-the-mind', even though there is no spatial proximity (Weick 1993). Persons as roleholders live in and have relationships, are

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[81] Ashkanasy (2006: 82) refers to John Reed (Chairman and CEO of NYSE).
[82] It is noteworthy that Wilkinson and Young (2005) refer to Emery and Trist (e.g. 1960), thus bringing a loop back into Tavistock thinking. This can be called a "Norway Loop".
[83] Ali-Yrkkö, 2007 (http://www.etla.fi/files/1770_Dp1081.pdf, Accessed 3.4.2007).

in relation to others and experience relatedness. Taking up, being in, and stepping out of roles is an important part of everyday life.

McNiff and Whitehead (2002) note that action research is an inquiry into the Self, and when this dialogic inquiry is being carried out, Self resides in the group itself. Roles are always connected to boundaries, since these are in connection with tasks, whether professional or personal ones. Roles are interfacing containers of a part of self through which persons interact with other persons in and outside organisations.

Figure 8: Role Space
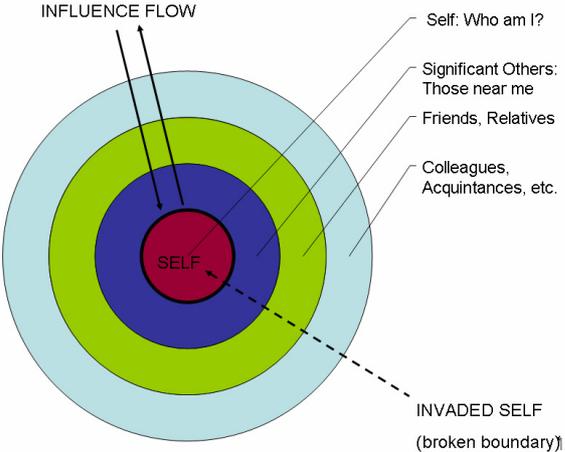
As a person one has to keep in mind one's role space (Figure 8) and role-set (Figure 9). In a role space one has boundaries around the self, which one guards as the primary identification space. This space is usually one's own, and not invaded by anyone (as is in the case of abuse, incest, or other such violations). Next in role space are the layer of one's immediate family, then family at large, relatives and friends, then co-workers, community and relationships there, etc. The rings go further and further.

Figure 9: Example of a Role-Set

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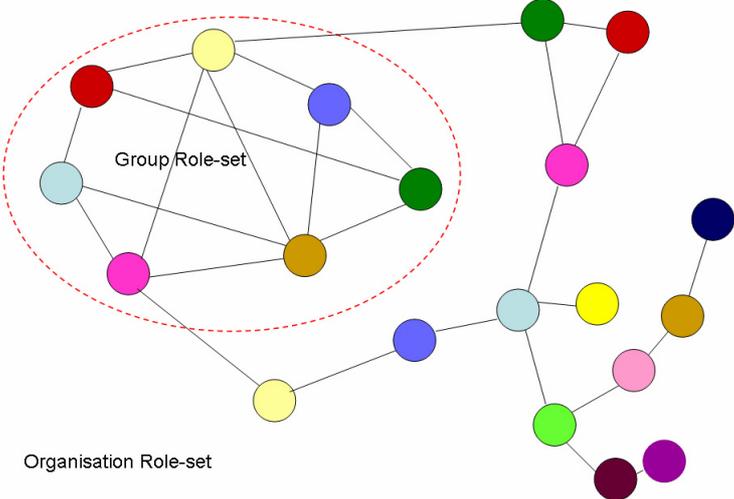
A role-set (Merton 1957), on the other hand, is about how roles in an organisation system relate, made on the basis of task. It defines relations of roleholders to others within an organisation. While it is necessary to delegate some authority, this does not mean that "all" authority needs to get delegated. *De facto,* this sometimes seems to be the case, when members complain about possibilities to engage with their tasks, since *de jure* authority is felt to be needed for tasks: if I have authority, I may engage with the task, if authority is impaired, I do not. While this is true to some extent, it also contains a trap of delegating undue authority to others, or the perception that authority has been delegated when no such authority exists in the first place. This can be called as 'assumed authority'.

Each person has a "status set" to which these role-sets are allocated (Merton 1957: 111). Various roles can be peripheral or central, thus having different expectations from roleholders or others. A role-set as a relationship between role-holders, portrays differences in power, access and authority. The degree to which this role-set gets insulated from social structure, lessens competing pressures yielding privacy, because it is not observable by others. However, lessened competition insulates and creates static, "frozen in time" (Bain 1999) pictures. When abroad, status-occupants can be far apart and thus vulnerable to pressures from role-sets they are in, because of isolation. To lessen feelings related to threat of annihilation, the creation of communities, associations, institutions, lessens this vulnerability to some extent. In a situation of conflict, role-relations may get disrupted. This may lead to "residual conflict", which alleviate efficient action (Merton 1957: 118). There can also be role-role conflicts for the same person if the same resources and energies are needed in more than one role.

4.6.1 Role Boundaries in Task Groups

An important boundary exists between "task system" and "role-holders" and the system survival is dependent on collaboration between people. Regulation of this boundary is the distinctive task of management. How groups engaged in cross-border tasks handle this, merits study. Role boundaries are usually the culmination of negotiation process within a larger context, and needed mainly in relation to others and tasks. However, perceptions of role and pictures of self go hand in hand, since role stresses affect ability to function as boundary negotiator. Klein (1985) sees self as a whole of the personality. From this it is understandable why the self needs to be protected and why the boundary between self and others is important.

Permeability and blurring of ego boundaries (organised part of the self) develop in couples (Horwitz 1985: 25). If collaboration is seen as a "marriage" (Kanter 1994) or "dancing" (Wilkinson et al. 1998) between partners, it is expected that some "blurring of ego boundaries" can happen, and partners will learn progressively about the core of the other organisation. Therefore, a healthy relationship is capable of projection and introjection without loss of "stable identity" (Horwitz 1985: 27).

In High Reliability Organisations (HROs), expectations start from incompleteness, not completeness (Weick and Sutcliffe 2001: 32). Such elements as safety, communication, respectful interaction, competence in personal role filling, and engaging with tasks assigned to that role are important in HROs. This means there is a scope to explore, and that learning from mistakes becomes more essential than learning from success (Weick and Sutcliffe 2001). Such approach bases itself on the notion that boundaries, roles, management, and systems related to these get tested only in catastrophes, and to avoid this, a learning on learning needs to be continuous. "Trust, honesty and self respect" in a role system are essential for keeping the group together and functional (Weick 1993: 643).

The paradox of "Empty Raincoats" (Handy 1994) is worth recapitulating. The empty raincoat is the symbol of a paradox: namelessness, being just a number, role occupant with no space around, being just raw material (Handy 1994: 1-2). What Handy refers to is a question whether "roles" enable meaningful engagement with existential primary tasks or whether they are devoid of it. This calls for questioning roles created to fill roles, namely rhetoric in role levels.

In discussing consultancy as a helping relationship, Schein (1999) does not bring up problems of internal and external consultant or facilitator. Anyone, who takes a role within a task group, becomes inherently part of the group, and in most cases embedded in an organisation. Facilitators from within the organisation may be curbed by perceived or real threats, if the group addresses discomforting issues. While this can similarly happen to an external consultant, the pressure is different, since an external consultant can step out of a role more freely. One reason for using consultants is herein, since the ambivalent or hostile feelings members in an organisation may hold, are pushed onto an outsider. Similar processes in larger groups may lead to disowning members who are different.

Taking the idea of "Role Space" and "Role-Set" in groups, these can be termed as 'Group Space' and 'Group Set'. In the former, the group is seen in relation to its stakeholders, and

in the latter, as relation of groups in and between systems. The Self then refers to a container, and invaded Self to a broken boundary, which impedes its task function. If the boundary is broken and it has lost its container function, the boundary negotiation process in the 'Group Space' becomes impossible between groups. The inability to link from group to group introduces a phenomenon where individuals may replace groups as boundary spanners.

It may be concluded that conscious roles are sources of learning in groups. One of the most pressing problems in groups has been fear of role allocation, for the reason that no one in a small group wishes to be "higher" than the other. Hierarchy has referred to the "sacred ruler" (Gk. *hierarkhes*), and thinking that higher is better. This leads to non-allocation of resources, and low learning. While groups can be sources of great creativity and innovation, there are also problems that need attention.

4.6.2 Roleholding through Research in Cross-Border Contexts

Kögler (1996: 258) speaks of "epistemological advantage of an outsider", meaning that this increases self-reflexivity in a group. An important aspect influencing questions related to research methodology is that the role of the researcher need not be that of a detached observer, but instead that of a participant-observer in the discussions and processes. This also anticipated the choice of action research methodology, since there feedback and participation processes are expected. By participation, the researcher is able to sense directly how matters are engaged with or left in a process and thus gains access to problems that are real to the participants. This requires using self as an instrument and not standing above or outside. This presents problems, anxieties, role and boundary considerations for the researcher, and also considerations of level of objectivity. Participation here means that research is done "with people" instead of "on people" (Heron and Reason 2001). This means working with problems that groups or organisations have, and making sense of them.

The researcher had several roles related to these cases. In the First Case, her role was to conduct action research sessions as a facilitator in groups and participate in the process as a participant researcher. This role was agreed between the institution and the researcher to benefit the group and research their progress. The Second Case had the researcher in the role of case writer and interviewer. Both organisations were new to the researcher, since no previous attachments existed. The Third Case involved the researcher in multiple roles: as

a visiting scholar in India, as a hostess in organising the event, as an anchor person in the event itself and as a facilitator. Here too, the organising educational institute was new, and the group encountered was previously unknown. The Fourth Case was an opportunity to engage as facilitator, visiting faculty and researcher. Likewise, this was a new group. The Chronology of Events in Researcher Roles in these cases is presented in Appendix 5.

Some parts of this research were done in conjunction with the Finland-India Economic Relations (FIER) Project and meant that in some groups, there were two facilitators (Cases Three and Four). For clarity's sake, that was explicitly pointed out in research plans and applications to the various institutes, and facilitator/researcher role was also acknowledged in the FIER report (Mathur 2007a). Some insights during this research were also discussed through conference proceedings and publications (Joutsimäki 2006; Joutsimäki and Mathur 2006; Mathur and Mattila 2007a; Mathur and Mattila 2007b).

The push and pull between being researcher and facilitator in the midst of being taken as an expert/consultant/knower was felt throughout in groups. In the beginning of the research process this danger of being perceived as a "knower" and being pulled into consulting roles was strong and present. The decision to have the facilitator/researcher role in groups was taken for two reasons: 1) to explore how facilitation as a process observer works in this setting and what issues arise, and 2) because the matter in question was such that it needed facilitation. While being a facilitator, one is also a group member.

While a researcher benefits by being part of a process, and gains access to material and group encounters that might not be possible otherwise, there are drawbacks too. One is that close proximity to a group may increase bias, which in itself is an interesting aspect. This bias can only be addressed with efflux of time, which enables reflection processes on immediate results and using various sources of information to crosscheck. Another possibility is to have multiple researchers. Yet another problem is that it is not easy to construct participative spaces, and one cannot do it only by oneself. Therefore, such approaches may also create unintended processes within groups that affect designs. However, precisely this highlights that processes need to be studied more from the group perspective, especially when encounters have become varied and persons may originate from differently embedded contexts.

From the perspective of hermeneutic primary task, which builds on assumptions of being in the group and using self as a tool for understanding and action research premises of co-

participation, it was important that the researcher inquires with the participants. It is also vital that such participant-researcher inquiries are researched from self-reflective standpoints as well to discover what problems arise and how to improve such practices through experiential learning.

Groups, as Bourdieu (1990: 88) described them, have an underlying purpose of creating what he termed as "social magic", which refers to utterances creating new realities, whether positive or negative. Therefore, what are established as "truths" by the "Establishment" (e.g. media), can create a reality where none exists. To actually explore to what extent "realities" are "real" for the group, is one of the key group functions. It needs to be highlighted here, that curiously the researcher was perceived in India as representing "Finland-as-a-whole" and in Finland "India-as-a-whole". This was intriguing from the perspective that in all groups the researcher was perceived as the "Other" or the "Unknown" even when processes did not support such illusions. It also showed how important it is for group members to inquire into spaces not yet reached through another one in the role of a mirror.

Dealing with workplace or task problems, keeping people informed, responding to suggestions, and giving people a chance to comment and suggest on proposals, are all group explorations, where the subject matter is not the group, but the task. Further, these are all dialogic tasks, where language is essential, but not everything. Dialogue is not a "magical herb" (Mathur 2003: 162) which cures all ailments. This because groups often have limited powers, their tasks are narrowly defined and not all problems are solvable on this level; nor can the group necessarily have impact on some problems even if they discover them. [84] Groups that can give "only suggestions" may do futile work, since there is no stated commitment on furthering the findings. However, dialogue when understood wider than mere discussion, offers one route to understanding how realities enmesh.

4.7 Challenges Arising in Group Dynamics

A collectivity of people in organisations is seldom competent to act as a group, based only on the assumption of proximity. This lack of group competence was studied by Weick

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[84] This has been one problem of internet based democracy initiatives as well. Experiences with democratic e-practices showed that introducing technology does not necessarily increase interaction, since a reciprocal link does not contain only one-way-traffic. Also, such practices tend to be top-down and controlled by the power holders (Anttiroiko et al. 2005; Häyhtiö and Keskinen 2005).

(1993) in Mann Gulch Disaster, where he concluded that acting as a group could have saved those who perished. One pair was saved, because they stayed as a microgroup and pooled their knowledge; a third person survived, because he continued to hold the group in his mind, although the group had panicked and disintegrated into individuals. Unless there is a conscious goal to develop group capabilities and deal with problems arising, a group remains easily just a collection of singletons (Turquet 1975; or baM, Lawrence et al. 1996[85]), or crowd. Group has to be experienced as a group for it to develop working boundaries, and this learning cannot be achieved outside it. Organisations are meant to be social systems, where being reduced to singletons will destroy the system, since there would be no social glue left to prevent collapse. Weick pointed out that a group needs to train itself and learn to be a group.

The "10:00 Fire Syndrome" (Weick 1993: 635) encountered in organisations highlights inability to act when built images of future action are not based on reality, and people get lost trying to match their actions to reality that is different from their images. When one cannot "make sense" of what is happening and why, the experience may lead to shock and this results into losing meaning and inability to act. Once the meaning is lost, why should one act and for what?

Kahn (1990: 702-717) speaks of "psychological conditions" such as availability (attention to task), meaningfulness of the task ('return on investment') and psychological safety (absence of fear of negative consequences). These are essential in group resource investments. Schein (2004: 262) has noticed that every unit has its own occupational culture and sub-culture based on: 1) its primary task, 2) perception of primary stake holders, 3) realities in the environment within which it functions. Arising from these, groups encounter problems that need to be addressed.

Steiner (1974) laments that group processes in general (and as social phenomena) have been neglected. Tajfel (1978) stresses the need to distinguish between interpersonal and inter-group behaviour, and Sherif (1967: 12) observed that "whenever individuals belonging to one group interact collectively or individually, with another group or its members in terms of their group identification, there is an instance of intergroup behaviour". Thus it is relevant that group activities require more studies.

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[85] Lawrence et al., 1996 (http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ispso/html/Free_Association.html, Accessed 29.12.2005).

All organisations and all people experience defensiveness. According to Argyris (2004: 212) "defensive reasoning is dangerous to organizational performance and effectiveness". To cover up mistakes and actions not taken, "defensive reasoning" is taken up (Argyris 1990: 10). This reasoning is based on twofold thinking patterns: The espoused theory, where the pattern is based on beliefs of right action; and theory-in-use where pattern is what actually is thought (Argyris 1990: 13). These two present two aspects of human behaviour, the ideal and the actual. A problem arises when the gap between the two becomes wide and the actual becomes shadowed by the ideal – not as an ideal to be reflected upon, but as a belief of who we are and how we are. The problem here is not what Argyris (1990: 21) points out as control, since one can try to control only what one knows, not what is hidden. The problem of "skillful unawareness" is different. It is an action pattern which can develop to shield incompetence – instead it makes it seem that the person is effective. Argyris explains that this is due to being skilled and thus acting automatically to quickly fix problems: "Although we are not aware when we are skillfully producing designed errors, other people are aware. They are able to see us getting in trouble because they are observing the actions of other people" (Argyris 1990: 22).

Defences are 'operated' by individuals, but they create a social defence system, which is on an institutional level. If there is discrepancy between these, there will be a breakdown (Menzies 1986: 425). Defence systems try to hide some aspects not wished or wanted to confront or deal with. These can also manifest in habits and procedures that are forced on a newcomer to introject to prevent any change or disruption of what is felt comfortable. Menzies (1986) discusses about "wastage", by which she means those who need to leave the system, not because of their talent or wish, but because there were inhibitions to their personal development. This leads to impoverishment of a social system and in such an institution changes are highly resisted.

In this work, references to the unconscious are used in the sense of unawareness, beyond rational thought, as unthought if known, or unknown. Conscious often means something of which one is aware and can reflect upon and unconscious to that of which one is not aware (Edwards and Jacobs 2003). Edwards and Jacobs refer to three levels of unconscious, depending on how easily something is accessed. Since unconscious often refers to therapy and deep recesses of mind, it is strongly stressed here that this Study speaks in terms of group unconscious, which refers to unawareness and therefore seeks to explore unthought knowns and unknown thoughts (Bollas 1987) that can be sensed in task groups. Therefore,

what is interpreted in the group, is not the group itself, but its functioning in relation to its task, goals and organisational purposes, if expressed or as discerned. Alongside conscious and unconscious approaches one can address also the tacit and explicit dimensions of thought (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995).

Common problems in groups are anxiety, regression, splitting, conflict, hierarchy and management, phantasies, authority and task corruption. This will be discussed next.

Anxiety and Regression

Heidegger (2000) thought that human existence is based on *Angst* (anxiety). According to Bion (1961) and Klein (1985) anxiety is one of the most common feelings of persons inside organisation systems. Are groups run by the *thanatos* anxiety, or by *eros*? For a group it is easier to have a leader to tell what to do and to relieve some anxiety, since a group easily labels and rushes for answers instead of exploration succumbing to transference needs (Kets de Vries 2001). Pondy (1992) argued that organisations are based, not on cooperation, but on conflict.[86] Some sensitivity to group processes needs to be taken into theories of interactions.

Anxiety is a feeling which is not related to anything that can easily be pointed out. It is a fear of unknown, which pervades persons or groups when they cannot deal with ambiguity coming close to stress. All this seems to suggest that there are unknown thoughts and unthought knowns that remain hidden, and induce defensiveness of groups, into regression.

As pointed out earlier, regression involves loss of individual distinctiveness (Bion 1961). In regressive states one returns to earlier experiences to seek comfort from them instead of interpreting what is happening in the here-and-now. The earlier experience is taken 'as it was'. On the other hand, awareness of individual distinctiveness may lead to panic (Bion 1961). It is reported that stress is most intense when the gap between capabilities and goals is very small, and achievable within a whisker.

Thus, stress introduces regression to what has been previously and most fully learnt (Weick 1990: 576). This means that educating groups is important, especially when they need to address problems that may cause anxiety and regression. These newly learnt responses, Weick (1990: 577) reminds, are more vulnerable than older and simpler ones,

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[86] To be precise, Pondy has thought both ways: in 1966 and 1967 he had an opposite view than in his 1992 article. This he admits himself. Therefore it is assumed here that actually organisations are based on both cooperation and conflict, but manifestations differ based on group behaviour.

and become susceptible to stress and regression. One implication of this for cross-border interactions is that crossing a boundary may mean leaving a more "orderly" situation for a more "complex" one. A part of this comes in the form of unfamiliarity and different systemic responses and coping with multiple interpretation tasks at the same time. This may result in emotional and interpretative overload, due to limited processing capacity (Weick 1990, 2001). That, in turn, can lead to lapse of cognitive control, and uncontrolled actions, as unconscious mistakes.

Anxiety is widely discussed in the group relations literature (e.g. Armstrong 2005; Bain 2006; Bion 1961; Lawrence 1979; Mathur 2006a, 2006b; Menzies 1986). Why is it important to have a group around? Where do we need groups? Why do companies have boards and management? One possible explanation is in how anxiety is held, coped with, contained and managed. The question of the threshold at which anxiety transforms from containment in inter-personal space to group matrices as containers is an important one.[87] This has implications for the design and structuring of appropriate negotiations. In Finland, companies are often of micro size (0 to ten employees in addition to the entrepreneur), and with small boards. In India similar groups may be anything from seven to thousands. Large group phenomenon is more prevalent in India.

Splitting

'Splitting' as a concept is a Kleinian conception adopted in group relations literature along with many other psychoanalytic concepts to highlight processes, not merely therapeutic contents. Krantz and Gilmore (1990) note that splitting is a social defence. By splitting, one refuses to deal with the inherent problems and ambiguities within the organisation or within the group. Often these are complex problems and would need engaging with. Splitting leads to two ways of dealing with problems and anxieties that trigger it: either to build a hero culture ("heroism"[88]) or to put trust into management tools or techniques ("managerialism") (Krantz and Gilmore 1990: 195-199). Menzies (1986) found that in order to deal with anxiety, nurses tend to split their contacts with patients. Patients become tasks, and feelings are split from the work by detachment.

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[87] For example, a proprietor within a small organisation cannot easily share anxieties with people he could trust due to its size. Therefore, outside help in the form of consultancy fulfils also such needs. Contrary to this, in a limited liability company, one has a managing board.

[88] Khurana (2002) referred to this as the "Curse of the Superstar CEO". This refers to behaviour where it is always anticipated that someone outside comes and saves the firm (what in Bion's terms may be either basic assumption dependency or pairing depending on the overall behaviour of the whole group).

Mathur (1987) argues there is a strong pressure in organisations to separate rational from irrational thus creating a "split", as evident in separating responsibilities for human resource from operations. Discussing the importance of role boundaries, he points out that over-stepping them may require others to redraw theirs. An example of boundary crossing is given of a person blurting out information unrelated to his/her role when he/she cannot contain anxiety without having means of taking care of unintended effects of such information. As Mathur (1987) discusses, people in organisation systems often project issues on managers, when they do not wish to engage with them. Splitting can also arise from fear of conflict, if and when conflict is perceived as power or power enhancing. Another fear that conflicts may arouse, concerns dysfunctionality. Conflict can also be used as defence, because it disrupts and creates dissent.

Conflict

Conflicts are a pervasive phenomenon of human groups. In conflict, people like to "battle", "object" and "downplay" (Lat. *conflictus*, from *conflīgere*, to combat). It is a "gradual escalation to a state of disorder" (Pondy 1966: 299). Pondy (1967: 298) describes conflict as involving antecedent conditions, affective states, cognitive states, and conflictful behaviour. These introduce 1) scarcity of resources and differences in policy; 2) stress, hostility, anxiety; 3) perception or awareness of such situations; 4) and resistance up to aggression. All these conditions are perceived as synonymous with conflict. When such feelings as anxiety, frustration and dissatisfaction become insoluble, and there is disagreement or only incompatible choices are available, conflict occurs (Pondy 1966: 247). The produced role strain, role ambiguity or role conflict due to unclear role-sending or self-sending of attitudes or values, contribute to the escalation (Pettigrew 1968). Pondy's (1967: 300) model identifies five stages of conflict:

A) latent: driven by competition over resources perceived or actually scarce, drive for autonomy, escape of control, and divergence of goals (subunit) when needing to co-operate; role conflict in role-set.
B) perceived: "semantic model" (conflict resolution by bringing in more communication to cure misunderstanding)
C) felt: "tension model" (whole personality involved)
D) manifest: open aggression
E) aftermath: legacy of conflict which is suppressed but not resolved

The "Barnard-Simon model of inducements-contributions balance theory" (Pondy 1967: 296) offers a solution where conflict is resolved by participants in three ways: withdrawing, resolving or securing. Pondy argues that in this model by March and Simon

(1958, reported in Pondy 1967: 307), equilibrium is sought after and any friction is seen as a "breakdown" or "malfunction of the system". This is a reactive stance, where conflict produces wishes to reduce it. To malfunction, or to break down, a system needs to have *a priori* set of rules of "normal" behaviour (the zero point of departure). These are system specific, but also have habitual, structural and social dimensions. Pondy (1967) reminds that in an organisational value system three aspects are important: productivity, stability, and adaptability. Therefore, whether a conflict is "functional" or "dysfunctional" has to be seen in relation to these, since not all conflicts are dysfunctional. Such a situation arises for example in case of "whistle blowing", where a downright illegal function (as in case of Enron) is exposed with associated employer-employee conflict.

In dialogue literature, conflict is scarcely discussed; rather "shared meaning" is emphasised (Bohm 1996; Isaacs 1993, 1999; Senge 1990). Debate is seen by Isaacs (1999) to render no valuable input into dialogue. In this sense, dialogue has in some ways become parallel to consensus. The problem here is that dialogue then may get identified only as "comforting" conversation, but not as a method to inquire. While it is important to create an atmosphere of trust, organisations are task oriented entities that need addressing difficult questions as well. The main idea has been to reduce tension by being more open and communicative.

However, increasing openness and communication may be one source of conflict, and works poorly in "strategic" conflicts or in highly competitive surroundings. Many organisation researchers (Boulding 1962, Katz and Kahn 1966; March and Simon 1958) have seen conflict as undesirable, and in many cases dialogue researchers have too.

The human reality includes conflict and so it is important to understand that in dialogue as well. The old Roman imperative of *Divide et Impera* can be used in organisations by managers. Sorensen (1963: 310) observed this phenomenon, where a manager deliberately "creates dissent and competition" to act as arbiter when conflict escalates. This approach can be used by consultants as well, in trying to create future work opportunities (dependency). Conflictual situations also reveal power and hierarchy structures.

Hierarchy and Management

Kant (1784/2007)[89] argued that one's goal is to reach maturity and get out of the state of a child, in other words, to take authority and responsibility of oneself and others. To give

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[89] Kant, 1784/2007 (http://philosophy.eserver.org/kant/what-is-enlightenment.txt, Accessed 27.3.2007).

prominence to the process nature of management, control mechanisms, and the need for them requires to be explored.

Hierarchies introduce critical boundaries, since they affect collaboration and trust, of which there are two types: competence-based (ability) and benevolence-based (vulnerability) (Cross and Parker 2004: 99). Related networks are divided into two different categories: awareness ("who knows what") and access ("who is accessible to whom") (Cross and Parker 2004: 36-37). All in all, these may also point to fragmentation and lock-in into existing groups and ties, and following patterns or routines that have come to the end of their life-cycles from the organisation primary task perspective – although Cross and Parker do not use this concept.

The myth of management as a monolith has not been discussed much. In Group Relations Conferences (GRCs) this myth becomes visible. GRCs are designed as spaces where members can explore group relations as in a regular organisation (Trist and Sofer 1959). Helped by consultants or facilitators, this is made possible through reflection with others. Curiously, here too these consultants can be perceived as "The Management" by members; a management which says what to do and against whom one tries to rebel. As portrayed in the Group Relations literature, one explores one's authority relations in this way. The intriguing part is that management (in its collective noun sense) becomes a monolith that seems to sit on a platform just giving orders. When members feel to be bound under a role, it seems that they also create a management to counterbalance that, and treat management as an inseparable totality, not being a collection of individuals with differences.

What contributes to the myth of management, is a picture of omnipotence which actually does not exist (this may relate to misplaced "family logic"). The balance between task allocation, authority delegation, and role clarity, all lead to groups being able to engage with their tasks. Where this balance is distorted, problems occur, especially when members share diverse backgrounds, leading to fantasies about origin and nature of matters. An example is "all Europeans are alike". The import of such assumptions by groups are often unconscious. By doing so members may overlook that authority originates from the Self and that authority in expert groups may reside in role holders on the basis of skills.

Phantasies

The distinction between *phantasy* and *fantasy* needs to be kept in mind (see page 10, footnote 15). *Ph*antasy here refers to unconscious processes in states of regression, and

*f*antasy to self-level coping mechanisms where no regression is involved. Phantasies are modes of mental representation where the connection to time and thus reality has been severed becoming a collective "phantasmagoria". One of the most severe cases of phantasy is what Kets de Vries (1978, 1980) terms as "*folie à deux*".[90] *Folie à deux* can happen to any group which becomes detached from the reality. It refers to 'adoption of mental processes' of another being, such as a superior; and points to "illusions of grandeur and delusions of persecution" (Kets de Vries 1978: 907), thus reflecting Bionian pairing in its worst sense. Two aspects feed into this, one being dependency and the other identification. Hubris on the other hand is a denial of our historicity and reflexive dimension which understanding is (Linge 1977).[91]

This phenomenon needs attention, because it may manifest in resistance to change or mirror oneself outside. Independent-mindedness is not often the preferred mode of thinking in organisations. As Kets de Vries (1978: 917) points out, managers seek congruence in belief systems from their subordinates to avoid e.g. "nonobedience to authority" and "confrontation". It is as if the manager would like to have copies of himself around him. That is the second danger of mirroring oneself outside. One way of avoiding this kind of behaviour is workplace democratization and understanding how these processes work (Kets de Vries 1978: 922-923). Sharing power and bringing up different views for exploration, makes responsibility rest on more people.

Group phantasy of any kind can arise and persist easily. A shared phantasy can be the idea of being 'best in the world' or that 'everything is perfect', as long as group members share the basic phantasies by cooperating and sharing collective beliefs and values. Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) identify that phantasies are common in organisations which thrive on basic assumption cultures. In a view on "modern organisations" Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) write about flight-fight basic assumption groups, and their paranoid tendencies as

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[90] Kets de Vries uses the form "fantasy" instead of "phantasy", which is preferred here (see also page 10, note 15). He describes the last months of the Second World War and Hitler's bunker in Berlin. A recent film, *Der Untergang* (2004) vividly and horribly describes what happens when a group of people participated in a shared phantasy their leader had and which they willingly shared.

[91] "All progress is said to depend on unreasonable people, pushing the envelope", Mathur (2006a: 2) reminds. One such person was Alexander the Great: He 'pushed the envelope' further than anyone so far had done. He was known to be a good listener, was able to contain emotions of other people, knew his army, was excellent strategist and tactician, and he knew how to build information channels. However, he too had his dysfunctional sides. One of them was that he did not know, or did not even want to know, how to build systems, and the other that without reality check, he succumbed to hubris and relationships with key persons deteriorated. Thus his empire, vast as it was, crumbled after his death due to internal competing forces (Kets de Vries 2003). Systems are not dependent on one person and the maturity of a system or a group can be evaluated based on whether it can work with, without or regardless of one person.

requiring more study. Sometimes organisations get trapped by their phantasies by not exploring alternatives or making decisions based on too narrow information. Such mental representation could not possibly be observed or evidenced except as part of a process or phenomenon under study.

Some of these unconscious processes were already captured by Smith (1790: 5), who portrays these while looking into empathy (which he termed sympathy): he points out that there are passions which (occasionally) seem to "be transfused from one man to another, instantaneously" without knowledge of what caused them. Such processes can be addressed only through double-loop learning experiences, such as dialogue, experiential learning and group relations.

Authority

Notions of authority and tradition are central in Gadamer's (2000a) thinking. For him authority means superiority in knowledge, and even this needs to be earned (Gadamer 2000a). While taking cognisance of authority he speaks of the idea of temporary authority[92], referring to circumstances where, until the cognitive faculties of learner are 'developed' enough (being a novice), a standpoint is 'borrowed' until one's own understanding develops. This often happens in learning processes, where it is impossible to discern what issues are central when starting a process, such as learning a language. This ability develops only when a wider perspective is gained, but does not mean it is necessary to blindly believe and take matters as they have been presented and hold on to what has been said until its truth can be verified. Here authority refers to higher level of knowing, not a position or authority structure, referring to apprenticeship (in the sense of *Meister und Gesell* –tradition). A fundamental aspect of hermeneutics is that it aims at a *holistic view* on matters.

Fromm (1967: 9) distinguishes two kinds of authorities, rational and irrational. The first is a source of competence and the latter a source of power over others. Problems arise, if knowing of the other cannot be accepted or explored. In view of organisational values of productivity, stability and adaptability (Pondy 1967: 308) it is necessary to think about how conflict, roles, tasks, and authority delegation work.

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[92] Gadamer uses this in relation to classical texts (for example Plato's, Aristotle's, Kant's, Hegel's) which he thinks contain superior knowledge. It is related to learning which can come through understanding.

Shotter (2006: 585) calls for "a different form of engaged, responsive thinking, acting, and talking that allows us to affect the flow of processes from within our living involvement with them". Such spaces are created by dialogue, and need to be examined in groups. According to Weick (1993: 641) most organisations need "curiosity, openness, and complex sensing". This applies for groups, too, since in organisation life some part of authority needs to be entrusted or delegated to others for the organisation to function. As roleholders, employees of a particular department are trusted to hold information and not disclose it outside their boundaries of work. Authority is delegated upwards to superiors to define and redefine tasks to some extent and expectations of getting these done is delegated downwards. In this way organisations continuously live in an authority delegation network, where relations are redefined daily. Without delegation of authority, functioning becomes impaired. Thus, authority begins with self, is embedded in organisational roles with reference to tasks and manifests in task groups.

Corruption of Practices

Task corruption is an unconscious or manipulated shift of primary task to another one, which is not communicated, for example, to customers. Chapman and Eastoe (2006: 119) present an insightful illustration of a financial institution which shifted from its articulated normative primary task of customer service into a primary task of increasing shareholder value. Primary task can be said to be corrupted for not articulating the shift. It is as if one were on the way abroad and at the airport learns that the airline one was ticketed on does not even exist, although he was sold a ticket by a respected travel agency. For those using the services of such an organisation and realising the unarticulated shift, the result can be a feeling of betrayal.

Organisations, having been born around some core function, may have temporary shifts of primary tasks without them being corrupted. Miller and Rice (1967: 27) give such an example of an educational institution short of staff. This shortage leads to "getting more staff", which becomes for a while its primary task over teaching, because preoccupation of the system is with getting staff. In the same manner, getting students from abroad or constructing new buildings, may acquire status of primary task. These may take resources, time and primary focus from the stated normative primary task of educating. Whether these are temporary or become shadow tasks is of interest.

These realities may sometimes lead into withholding information and learning how to lie. This holding is in dire opposition to organisation or group objectives of sharing and openness, thus portraying a paradox. Schein (2004: 260) calls this "constructive lying", introducing a paradox where, on the one hand, sub-systems tend to suppress information, and, on the other hand, openness and sharing (the 'imperatives' of the new knowledge society) are demanded. A newcomer is asked to learn, or to be domesticated, into 'truth practices' of when and where to distort information, what version of truth to tell and in itself understand the variable nature of truth. The foregoing is what Schein calls "information management", the need to learn the "idioms" of the occupation (Schein 2004: 261-262). This points towards "management" as a shield, rather than inquiry, and may also become a form of defense. It also implies context changes, where "our values" are imposed without critical examination of their reasonableness.

4.8 The Large and Small Group Dynamics

To highlight two differing processes, a distinction between large group and small group is drawn.[93] Large organisations as well as nations can be regarded as large groups. Essential for this Study at hand are the processes these introduce. Whereas small groups (less than 12 members) can interact on face-to-face level where members can listen to each other without shouting, members in a large group cannot, without dividing into smaller fractions. For this reason, large group phenomena are best studied through group relations (e.g. Kreeger 1975).

A member needs to attend to an internal struggle when arriving in a large group as a singleton for finding one's place in the group without being homogenized. Turquet (1975) distinguished between Member Individuals (M.Is) and Individual Members (I.Ms). When a singleton is in a large group, he/she can either become homogenized in the group (M.I.) or retain his/her individuality and boundary in the group (I.M.). A large group pushes for the former (conformity), while for the individual the latter is more sought after (individuality).

Organisations consist of what are called management and members, in addition to other stakeholders, within which groups are an organised set of role-holders. The other

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[93] A micro group (a "family" group) is usually less than seven (2 to 6). A small group varies in size from seven to twelve members. Of splitting, Miller and Rice (1967) say that around a membership of twelve, the group starts to split into subgroups (the 13th member problem). Miller (1956) on the other hand speaks of the "magical seven" (+/- 2). Grouping refers to the group feeling of being as a group and not a collection of individuals. A median group usually consists of 13 to 22/24 persons, and a large group of over 24 persons.

possibilities are a mob, which has its own 'collective' mind that dictated it, or a crowd (Le Bon 1896/1995)[94]. The latter two refer to large group behaviour, whereas a group begins to form from two or three. It is thought that groups are guided by different rules than individuals, in the form of group mind (Rosander 2003: 13). However, a strong group mentality can lead to groupthink (Janis and Mann 1977). Groups are also tools for task fulfilment (Miller and Rice 1967), and as collections of persons, these are capable of feeling (sentient) and hence high technical demands may frustrate human needs to the extent they adversely impact performance (Thurk and Fine 2003; Trist and Bamforth 1951). Yet, organisational groups are required to reach many goals.

The differences between small and large group thus reflect possibilities and strategies available for an individual as a group member. Interpersonal relationships are easier to maintain in a small group compared to a large one. The latter is the "seat" of myths, stereotypes, fragmentation, and other phenomena. Therefore, in cross-border interactions, both small group and large group need to be taken into consideration.

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[94] A crowd is an unorganised, usually large set of people. See Le Bon, 1986/1995
(http://etext.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=BonCrow.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=
/texts/english/modeng/parsed&tag=public&part=all, Accessed 15.5.2006).

5 Dialogue – An Interplay(ing) Between Parties

The empirical study was structured keeping in mind existing dialogue, experiential learning and group relations literature, especially from the perspective of hermeneutic primary task and boundaries. Special effort was made to examine connections between them. There seemed to be a paucity of dialogues in the world – in the midst of so much discussion. Therefore the notion of hermeneutic primary task cannot be connected only to what is spoken or language as such. Although dialogue is central in transformative approaches (Schein 1993), it needs to be encompassed in a wider perspective than a mere discussion method. Nonetheless, it has been studied that dialogue practices are crucial in community building (Putnam 2000), as are the need for trust, esteem and justice (Bendapudi and Bendapudi 2005).

In relating to territories vastly different to one's own, dialogic group practices introduce new horizons, dilemmas and problems. They are dialogic in the sense that understanding as an aim is present. Some of these problems are knowledge and belief related involving questions of legitimacy, truth, knowledge, information, and value of testimony. These surface not only in an epistemological sense but also ontologically: Whose truth and/or knowledge prevails (Mathur 2003)? Who is right/wrong? Can I trust this person/these persons? Is this information valid? These are only a small fraction of thoughts that cross one's mind. From these, the praxis of exploring dialogue through hermeneutic primary task in real processes, is developed.

The possibility of interaction with people in another space and interactions in multiethnic groups introduces challenges which can be termed cultural, but point towards held pictures of reality. Schein (1993: 41) observed that subcultures develop in organisations and that effectiveness depends on communication across these subcultures. However, new challenges arise when this phenomenon is taken across boundaries. Thomas (1996) refers to the need to look beyond the concept of culture. Such issues as multiculturalism, diversity and tolerance are emphasised in organisations, education and strategies.

As a concept, dialogue is used in a variety of ways, as depicted in Table 6 (page 89).[95] All this points towards a vast area of diversified dialogues, where even the concept of dialogue

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[95] This is by no means an exhaustive list.

is approached differently. To specify the dialogue approach used in this Study, it is seen as a process in interaction and a space for inquiry.[96]

Table 6: Dialogue Use

Author(s)	Dialogue Approach	Relevance Here
Abma 2001; Abma et al. 2001; Greene 2001; Karlsson 2001; Schwandt 2001; Widdershoven 2001	Evaluation Dialogue	- to create improvement processes e.g. in the social sector; along with hermeneutic perspective
Abma 2003	Storytelling Method	- connection to dialogue methods
Anderson et al. 2004	Communication Studies	- hermeneutic approaches
Baxter and Montgomery 1996	Relationships	- emphasis on difference
Bohm 1996; Buber 1999; 2002; Gadamer 2000a; Kögler 1996	Open Dialogue and Philosophical Dialogue	- philosophical background; dialogue method
Ellinor and Gerard 1998; Göranzon et al. 2006; Isaacs 1993; Isaacs 2001; Lehtonen 2004b; Levine 1994; Moore and Sonsino 2003, Schein 1993; Vuori 2005; Yankelovich 2001	Organisational Approaches	- dialogue in organisational research; dialogue use and method; dialogue concepts
Kögler 1996	Critical Hermeneutics	- dialogue and hermeneutics
Gidoomal 2003, Maoz et al. 2004; Parikh and Garg 1989	Cultural Dialogues	- differences in perception, diversity
Brune and Krohn 2005; Shipley and Mason 2004	Philosophical Praxis	- dialogue used in practical level in groups or with individuals; ethics

In many ways, dialogue as a concept has been treated and used very loosely in the literature, meaning something similar to discussion. Very often it is seen as discussion between two parties, since the prefix "*dia*" is interpreted as meaning just two (a dyad).[97] It can be described as "discussion directed towards exploration of a subject or resolution of a problem".[98] However, here the idea of *logos* as depicted by Gadamer (1977) is noteworthy: the subject matter is relevant, not only reason.

Dialogue and dialectic have the same root, but dialectic is often seen as an art or a skill of investigating or discussing. This points and counterpoints into dialogue being seen as

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[96] In this way one can differentiate between the context (dialogue) and method (dialectic) in Plato.

[97] From L. *dialogus*, from Gk. *dialogos*, related to *dialogesthai* 'converse', from *dia-* 'across' + *legein* 'speak'. Sense broadened to 'a conversation'. Mistaken belief that it can only mean "conversation between two persons" is from confusion of *dia-* and *di-*. Online Etymology Dictionary (http://www.etymonline.com, Accessed 31.3.2004). Dialogue and dialectics have the same root, but *dialektikē*, is a techne, art of discussion. *Dialogemai* can be divided into prefix *dia* (through, connection) and *legō* (to say, speak, bring up, collect etc.) (Hofferd, 1992: note 3-4; Liddell and Scott (and Jones, LSJ) 1925/1968: 388, 400).

[98] Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2002: 395).

different from conversation or discussion.[99] For Greeks, though not for Plato, dialectics had a "negative" connotation (Gadamer 1991: 18). By this Gadamer means that it is built on critique that peels off the matter in question so that its "being" can be revealed. Instead, Plato found another way for his approach which was to awaken a person's own wish to inquire. Some writers (Ellinor and Gerard 1998; Isaacs 1993, 1999; Senge 1990) posit dialogue and dialectics against each other, but they need not be, and both can be regarded as parts of an inquiry process.

The dialogue tradition owes much to Plato and his unique style of presenting problems and attempts to disclose them in a dialogical style (albeit not often "dialogically", as dialogue is often understood as democratic, sharing or reciprocal). While Plato did write in dialogue form, his "method" is dialectical. It is based on questions and answers and often, it is a long Socratic monologue. Despite the hard critique of Plato's account of the ideal state in the Republic (Popper 1966; Russell 1948), there are many strands noteworthy in Plato's thinking (or in the issues thought about in his Academy[100]). The basic paradoxes, thoughts, riddles, problems, and issues remain relevant, such as experience, knowing, power etc. These include problems of knowledge and the role of belief, midwifery, dialectical "method", learning to think and encountering new horizons.[101] Plato pointed out, that we do not know (in the strictest sense) and thereby are not prepared to examine our lives and beliefs and learn more (Plato 1999: 22d-23b). Gadamer points to this saying that Socrates had a doctrine of not knowing, *docta ignorantia* (Gadamer 2000a: 362). Not knowing does not imply the end of dialogue, but the beginning of inquiry, if the group so wishes.

For many, Buber (1995, 2002) stands out as the "father" of many modern dialogical approaches. His seminal *Ich und Du* portrays the basics of dialogical relationship, where two dimensions in dialogue, the "I and Thou" –dimension and the "I and It" –dimension,

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[99] Conversation, from L. *conversationem* "act of living with," prp. of *conversari* "to live with, keep company with," lit. "turn about with,". Originally "having dealings with others," also "manner of conducting oneself in the world;" specific sense of "talk" is (as a synonym for "sexual intercourse" from at least 1511). Discussion, from L.L. *discussionem* "examination, discussion," in classical L., "a shaking," from *discussus*, pp. of *discutere* "strike asunder, break up," from dis- "apart" + quatere "to shake." Originally "examination, investigation, judicial trial;" meaning of "talk over, debate". Online Etymology Dictionary (http://www.etymonline.com, Accessed 31.3.2004).
[100] For history of Plato and the Academy, see e.g. Guthrie (1975, 1978).
[101] In it a teacher 'extracts' already existing 'knowing' from the pupil by posing questions. To put this into a group situation, the facilitator and the group itself try to do this, by exploring to what extent does the group 'know' and where it needs to improve, change, discard or update its 'knowing'. An example is *Theaitetos* dialogue which is about knowledge. Along with questions of knowledge, Plato explains what a Philosopher is and what he means with *maieutike techne* (midwifery). Then the knowledge question is resumed, but the dialogue ends in *aporia* (Plato 1999b).

are introduced. The first is the most authentic, since in the beginning there is a connection, which in time becomes diffused. In this I-Thou points to inner; I-It to outer world (Buber 1995). In addition to these two levels, Freire (1970) brought into the dialogue discussions the importance of all voices, even those who are oppressed. He therefore questions assumptions of likemindedness and sees dialogue as empowerment and voicing. This point is important, since dialogue can be used for dominating purposes. An example of this is the question whether dialogue is a tool for making others accept made decisions.

5.1 Dialogue as an Event of Play

Thesleff (1999) suggests that Plato's dialogues may have been written keeping in mind that the reader acts as an audience in a play, where philosophical questioning and dialogue are being carried out. Some of these dialogues, especially *Theiatetos* (Plato 1999b: 143e), do function in that manner. The purpose was to be like Socrates, which meant being a potentially real philosopher (Thesleff 2000: 56). In the same vein, by creating learning institutions to contain dialogues, persons have possibility to learn in experientally safe surroundings.

Dialogue for Gadamer (2000a) is *mediation,* where the idea of play is everpresent. Play, as interplay between parties, is something that exists in itself in and between. As he notes, *paidia* (play) is very close to *paideia* (education). Gadamer (2000a: 102) adds that "play fulfils its purpose only if the player loses himself in play", which is seriously taken.[102] Rioch (1985) observed groups and noted that members are afraid to play. Play features also in pedagogically oriented dialogue (Burbules 1993). The interplay of subject matter gets easily curbed within a space of inquiry, if there is a wish for certainty. Here 'play' is distinguished from 'game' in the sense that former refers to a free play and the latter to achievement or being preoccupied with winning or losing.

Winnicott (1982: 44) was interested in the concept and notion of "playing together". In groups members 'play' in the sense that they co-create future by acting towards it. Playing makes a space to be created, since for any "creative tension" (Hirschhorn and Gilmore 1992: 106; Winnicott 1982: 65), a vacuum is not enough without a task. This points to a search for dialogue space. While potential space initially points to the interactive

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[102] Or as Gadamer puts it: "Alles Spielen ist ein Gespielt-werden" (Gadamer 1986: 112). Here he explains that the subject is the play itself, not the player. "Spiel ist ja niemals ein bloßess Objekt, sondern hat sein Dasein für den, der es mitspielt, und sei es auch nur in der Weise des Zuschauers" (Gadamer 1997: 17).

experience and learning between mother and child, here it would point to the space created for interactive experience and learning between persons and groups. Winnicott (1982) emphasises playing as an experience, not only as play; he also observes that in order to *do* something, one must *be*, referring to the experience of "I am", before "I do". "Doing things takes time. Playing is doing" (Winnicott 1982: 47). If one thinks of a group through this, in order to accomplish something as a group, one needs to have a group which is willing to explore and take risks, and not just a collection of discussing individuals.

Thus, dialogue can also be seen as a "communicative event" (Abma et al. 2001) rather than a method or technique. When regarded as a method for resolving difference, it becomes persuasion dialogue. Connected to dialogue building is *Bildung* as an event that may "foster understanding and respect across difference", and also carry within genuine willingness to understand what the other is saying (Abma et al. 2001: 166, 169). In countries like USA, where class and race differences have been high on the political agenda, dialogue is used much in evaluation of stakeholders' views, perspectives, values, experiences, dreams, and hopes.

The idea of dialogue is to make an impact. Therefore it must have resources, arena and possibility to influence (Gustavsen 1985). Some resources have stretch, but not all resources are stretchable. This is different from saying that there are "no resources", since an organisation could not function at all without resources. However, resources often seem to connote only financial ones, and there is an emphasis on growth regardless how resources are used, and what is gained in using them. It is seldom considered that problem solving capabilities, innovative practices, interaction capabilities, group, time, and space are also resources. One reason to engage in dialogues in a group is to explore what are really resources and what can be done with them and at what cost.

5.2 Organisations as Dialogue Containers

Creativity is propounded in organisations, but also feared as a source of Sphinx (disasters). Where stakeholders make a nexus of contracts to enable inter-group and intra-group interactions, groups are formed for a reason and that reason is usually connected to and is inseparable from human life. For example, groups get formed around education, either to structure some connections, participate in or create interlinkages. Groups are influential in

the sense that needs to create links with others for work purposes exist through networking intiatives. Such successful group initiatives have been reported by Wilkinson et al. (1998).

The relation between groups and their home organisations is interesting. Organisations can be conceptualised in many ways. Hatch (1997) regards an organisation as a node of culture, social structure, physical structure, and technology in an environment. Organisations can also be seen as knowledge creating communities (du Toit 2003). They may be goal-directed, deliberate systems with an identifiable boundary (Daft 1986; reported in Weick 2001: 7). However, in today's organisation world, characterised by transience and united by common purposes, organisations have become instruments and tools and their boundaries have become more elastic, although not defunct.

Organisations can also be viewed as a vortex for value creating processes (Shrivastava et al. 1994). On the basis of the theories surveyed in the literature, it is clear that dialogue and group relations knowledge stand to benefit from other approaches, to make them more sensitive to changing environments and situations. Topics such as adult education, intercultural learning, group dynamics, counselling, supervision, and mediation are listed by Ropers (2004: 11)[103] as possible candidates for broadening what he terms as "intervention methodology" in dialogue projects.

Isaacs (1993; 1999; 2001) raises two important matters concerning dialogue. For one, its power lies in understanding the use of dialogue, by refining or processing even the deepest disagreements into working dialogues. This, although not all disagreements – if and when escalated into conflict – can be verbally solved (Pearce and Littlejohn 1997). Transparency aims work poorly if a conflict is strategic or intentionally created. One builds for future, not for current situation (Lederach 2005).

The other is the use of the idea of container where dialogue begins with conversation, when people come together. Dialogue, in this sense, is a deepening of this conversation and it raises possibilities of speech to bring out meanings that have been repressed or supressed under everyday language use. Isaacs makes a point that one key to the success of a dialogue project is that action has to parallel thinking and continues by pointing out that there are three different "languages": Meaning and content, feeling and aesthetics, and action and deeds (Isaacs 1999: 208-211).

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[103] Ropers, 2004 (http://www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/ropers_handbook.pdf, Accessed 15.3.2007).

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5.2.1 Creating Bridges through Dialogue

Baxter and Montgomery (1996: 142-143) discuss dialogue and relational dialectics from the perspective of Bakhtin and Marxist philosophy, oscillating between dialectics and dialogue termed as "relational dialectics". Here, the notion of "Open self", as well as "Dialogical self", is socially located with a permeable boundary, occupied by multiple voices but is not sovereign. In their critique against methods and mainstream scientific research, a point is made that in relational dialectics "inconsistencies and contradictions are not necessarily signs of research failures" (Baxter and Montgomery 1996: 211). In fact they claim it is the opposite, since relational dialectics seeks to unearth multiple voices and meaning systems. Good dialogue is also portrayed as honest and non-strategic (Abma et al. 2001; note the difference to Moore and Sonsino (2003) and their strategic conversations). Therefore dialogue starts from the group and not from pre-existing expectations. For a task group this implies that the group has authority and space to engage with its task, which is not pre-constrained reducing the group to mere 'muscles'.

Ellinor and Gerard (1998) view dialogue as a bridge between now and the future, which dialogue builds. They note that dialogue helps in handling conflict, making decisions and solving problems, but see dialogue as having like-minded people gathering together to make collective agreements, building gateways through processes that are not entirely verbal. The two primary aspects emphasised are capacity for metacognition and impersonal fellowship. The former is viewed as being able to elevate the usual discussion and view the totality, and the latter as holding back one's own wishes and desires. It is, however, curious that Ellinor and Gerard do not reflect why only the likeminded come together to discuss issues and whether likemindedness is a precurser or a result of dialogue? Since more and more groups are multi-ethnic, likemindedness becomes rather ideal, to start with. They do not discuss how to proceed when the assumed "norm" is absent or missing.

Inherent in dialogue approaches is its quest for equality and trust in the sense that dialogue seeks multiple voices without which it is not dialogue. The guiding principles introduced by Yankelovich (2001) in dialogue are: 1) equality and absence of coercive actions, 2) listening with empathy, 3) bringing assumptions into open. There are ten "potholes" the mind may succumb into: holding back, being boxed, premature action, listening but not hearing, different starting points, showboating, scoring, contrarianism, pet preoccupation and aria singing (Yankelovich 2001: 130-143). These focus on issues that are inherent in all group action and reflect Bionian (Bion 1961) basic assumption states. Similar issues are

portrayed by Isaacs (1993) when highlighting suspension of action and not acting on urge, but exploring that urge to act.

Yankelovich (2001: 16) sees dialogue as a "missing skill".[104] By this he tries to point out that dialogue has a character of its own and is not just a form of conversation. I-It relations (Buber 1995, 2002) are seen as a growing mode of relations and creating "silo effects" (Yankelovich 2001: 150-152), which are isolating and fragmenting. This also reflects above discussed Me-ness aspect of basic assumptions (Lawrence et al. 1996).[105] For this reason, the role of dialogue is to cross barriers that get built without noticing it.

In developing helping relationships, Schein (1999) emphasises the use of dialogue in order to enable an organisation help itself instead of giving power outside itself. When people solve problems by themselves, even if helped, effects are believed to last longer, and through exploration, it is possible to identify hidden, new and blind areas of ignorance[106], which can be encountered even in expert organisations. Despite this, Schein (1999) claims there exists a difficulty of accepting the other and the power the other offers, which introduces authority questions. Dialogue in itself is a "form of managed conversation" speeding up the development of the group (Schein 1999: 201-203, 212). The development pace comes partly from the fact that in a group issues can be addressed on the spot with multiple "ears and brains". Therefore all have a chance to participate and time is saved in the sense that everyone needs not individually dig up the information and then to discuss it. Here it is of interest that Schein divides thinking and feeling into two different spheres, and does not discuss benefits of informed working hypotheses based on thinking and informed by feelings, although these contribute to understanding.

What builds a bridge between group relations and dialogue, can be seen in Scharmer (2001, 2007) and the concept of sensing (or not yet embodied or self-transcending knowledge). This is an emergent feature of dialogue, where the past is not enough to engage with but future, being reminiscent of Social Dreaming approach (Lawrence 1998). Both build on unknowns and construct on something which has not yet emerged as a conscious thought. This shifts dialogue as a method away from Kolb et al. (1984: 31; also in Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004) and his learning cycle (concrete experience,

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[104] Yankelovich teaches dialogue-based learning. Viewpoint Learning, 2007 (http://www.viewpointlearning.com/, Accessed 6.4.2007).

[105] Lawrence et al., 1996 (http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ispso/html/Free_Association.html, Accessed 29.12.2005).

[106] As in the Johari Window (Luft and Ingham 1955), where the group tries to explore areas known and unknown, through four fields of open, hidden, blind and unknown.

reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, active experimentation). It also makes connection with working hypotheses, which can be used to capture emerging futures, as approximations. Sensing as a concept no longer presupposes overt transparency.

5.2.2 Linking Dialogue to Group Relations

As a method of inquiry, dialogue entered Nordic societies in the 1960s. In Norway and Sweden, dialogue practices have been used in a variety of ways, either calling it 'dialogue praxis' or through working conferences where dialogue processes have been exercised. One example of using dialogue informed by group relations practices has been the Norwegian Industrial Democracy Project (1963-1969). Gustavsen (1985, 1996; Gustavsen and Engelstad 1986) used dialogue as an approach to introduce more democratic practices into organisations. It is noteworthy that in Nordic countries the idea of democracy has been central in dialogue practices as well as in German Civic Dialogue Practices.[107]

Dialogue in such contexts means democratic discourse (Habermas 2001), because all participants are supposed to have an equal opportunity to express their opinions (Gustavsen and Engelstad 1986). This approach included the idea of socio-technical systems, which was brought in by Fred Emery, who came to Norway in the early sixties. Emery built his Tavistock informed ideas on four pillars: socio-technical thinking, systems theory, leadership function and social ecology (Emery and Trist 1960; Gustavsen 1985: 462-463). Gustavsen developed different kinds of principles that democratic dialogue has to fulfil in order to be democratic. These are: interaction, all concerned are invited to participate, activity and expressing one's views are a duty, all are equal, experience counts, experiences are legitimate, understanding what under discussion is vital, all opinions are justified, opinions have to be stated aloud, respect for others' opinions and grounds, all roles and authorities can be taken under discussion, enduring different opinions, dialogue needs to produce practice oriented agreements (Gustavsen 1992: 3-4; Lehtonen 2004a: 16-18). This means that dialogue in general emphasises sharing and joint exploration. However, more discussion does not necessarily create more inclusion.

In Finland, dialogue was used for social inquiries and in therapeutic approaches (Seikkula and Arnkil 2005), studying leadership in health care institutions (Vuori 2005), for

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[107] Nelson, as the "founder" of 20th century Philosophical Praxis method known as "Socratic Dialogue", emphasised the need for educational and civic dialogue. His work is carried on by Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Philosophisch-Politische Akademie e.V in Germany and Society for the Furtherance of Critical Philosophy in England; about Socratic Dialogue and Nelson, see also Brown III, 2004 (http://friesian.com/method.htm, Accessed 6.4.2007).

organisational development from leadership and learning organisation perspective (Heikkilä and Heikkilä 2001; Heikkilä and Heikkilä 2005; Vähämäki et al. 2006) and in work environment development (Lehtonen 2004a; Lehtonen 2004b). Dialogue or dialogical approaches have been present in studies regarding different phenomena in an organisation. Vapaavuori (2001) examined what he called a 'snag' between two employees and how this situation could be dealt with by dialogue. Kuittinen (2001) researched a blocked situation in a family firm. Both studies used Argyris's (1990, 2004; Argyris and Schön 1996) theory of Model I and Model II learning. For this research what Seikkula (1994) and Seikkula and Arnkil (2005) discuss in relation to systems at margins or social networks is noted, since these are based on creating common understanding.

5.3 Dialogue as Understanding of Process

The Gadamerian approach to hermeneutic understanding requires openness, and this reflects the basic requirements in dialogue. Widdershoven (2001) points to three kinds of "Gadamerian" knowledge: First, as behavioral and thus objectifying (manipulation), second, understanding as one is (point of view), and the third as being open to what the other says (what the other needs). The third kind of knowledge is mutual, and thus dialogue. The mutual in this context is termed as collaboration, where both give and gain, and a third space, a container for the collaboration is formed.

In collaboration, "mindfulness" of others (Weick and Sutcliffe 2001) is called for.[108] Mindfulness means continuous updating and deepening of interpretations with the Other. This can be experienced when one is confronted with strangeness (Weick 1993: 645). Awareness in such a situation calls for 'broadening one's view' by introducing, experientially, the limitations of one's own horizons (Widdershoven 2001: 255-256).

Widdershoven (2001) introduces the importance of dialogue (in evaluation). He emphasises that "one cannot assess or improve a practice without entering into a dialogue with the parties concerned" (Widdershofen 2001: 253). For him the central issues Gadamer brought into dialogue space are understanding as sensemaking, fusion of horizons, understanding process as 'play', role of prejudgement, limits to one's horizon, and the role of consensus in dialogue (Widdershoven 2001: 253-263). The insight shared with readers

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[108] Mindfulness actually refers to Buddhist thinking where it is one of the key concepts; it refers to becoming aware of thoughts and actions through meditation. In a way this happens in a group too, if we think of meditation here as phenomenological-hermeneutic process.

is that consensus as understood normally is not what Widdershoven thinks Gadamer was after. Consensus as common agreement is thus being questioned.

Abma (2001, 2003) criticises dialogue for its aim at consensus, which she sees as downplaying differences and introducing dominant discussions into the dialogue. Those who have weaker or divergent voice may be left unheard, and consensus may just hold on to status quo. Widdershoven's (2001) reply to this is that understanding needs repetition of stories. Any consensus is open to breakdown and that introduces a new opportunity, since there are abundant amount of interpretations and no single story ever fully accounts for the situation. Thus, hermeneutic understanding does not exclude differences but regards them as vital to the meaning making process (Widdershofen 2001: 258-259). Discussion about consensus is important, because it defines what content this word is given. While consensus refers to agreement, it may be seen as levelling or giving in. This Study notes this discussion, and maintains that consensus is not an aim of dialogue presented here.

5.3.1 Critical Aspects in Understanding the Other

Through the idea of "learning community" (Pedler 1994; reported in Reynolds and Trehan, 2003: 163), playing aspects of groups have been emphasised. Reynolds and Trehan (2003: 163) claim that "participative methods privilege notions of 'group' and 'community' and reinforce values of consensus that potentially diminish the importance of difference." What they imply is that hegemonism of the group over diversity can be portrayed as consensus in ingroup settings where boundaries are drawn in such a way that diversity cannot be accommodated. In its extreme, this would militate against the hermeneutic primary task, which seeks to include the listening to each and every voice to explore.

In Truth and Method, Gadamer expresses one of the key ideas of dialogue, namely listening, succinctly:

> *"In human relations the important thing is ...not to overlook his [i.e. the Other's] claim, but to let him really say something to us. Here is where openness belongs. But ultimately this openness does not exist only for the person who speaks; rather anyone who listens is fundamentally open. Without such openness to one another there is no genuine human bond." (Gadamer 2000a: 361).*

This places the responsibility of successful dialogue on all parties, two or more. However, openness itself is possible only in the absence of powerplay. Therefore one of the keys to authentic dialogue is listening, and this is emphasised in all dialogical approaches, but the

problem is that listening is open to hostility. Participants are often more prepared to argue and present their viewpoints, rather than to listen. Arguments are seen as distraction, since these often lead to competition or rivalry, which are outside dialogue domain. Therefore the relation between openness and confrontation becomes vital. Gadamer sees in dialogue that it is confrontation which is key to transformation, not necessarily agreement. Confrontation does not mean conflict, but ability to play within a dialogue space. More is needed than just 'nice agreements', since clashing interests impair dialogue-reducing interaction to games. Therefore the question of trust cannot or will not necessarily be addressed only by mere meetings. Mathur (2007b) stresses this and points out that a common mistake is to try to build trust through contact on the assumption that contact reduces hostility and anxiety.

Building on Gadamer's ideas, Kögler (1996) adds aspects of social power into the interpretation process. Kögler expresses this by introducing three spheres, which are termed symbolic, practical and subjective. Symbolic sphere includes beliefs and assumptions, practical habits and practices and subjective biographical events and experiences. He also takes as a starting point the Other rather than self, in order to shed more light on oneself.[109] In inquiries, what is being understood is prior to understanding being.

Using Bakhtin's (1981) idea, language lives in dialogue and culture is dialogue. Since many notions of the world are dichotomous or dualistic, dialogue seeks to overcome these by bridging. In Mohanty's (2004)[110] conception the world is undivided, there is no "East" and "West". These are pictures-in-the-mind, that are learnt in the many different ways the World is presented to us in various atlases (Mathur 2000). While these may be pictures, these are neither rendered irrelevant nor unimportant. What is same and what is different can be more complex than just mere habits. In exploring theoretical knowledge, Plato (1999d: 260b) had observed that the goal of dialogue is shared understanding and this understanding is in a constant flux of whole and its parts (Thesleff 1999). Shared here means not just stated (as an utterance), but as something everybody can understand though

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[109] This means, putting this to the context of a group, that speaking is actually not the main function of dialogue, but it is a) listening, and b) starting from the other, c) letting oneself to be confronted. In many ways these go hand in hand, and added to Plato's notion of midwifery, as reflective questioning and helping relationship (here: raising questions to inquire), dialogue spaces can be conceived also as "listening posts". These are spaces for "multilogues", for many to inquire together.
[110] Lecture by J.N. Mohanty (3.4.2004) in the Philosophical Event (Suuri Filosofiatapahtuma) in Tampere-talo.

not necessarily accept. Sharing as a process is different from accepting or agreeing, because sharing is in a space and accepting is an individual process, where the boundary negotiation is done within oneself. Also, it points to creating a logos, which belongs to the groups, not individuals.

More recent approaches have been developed around reflexive dialogue and Schön's (1983) influential thinking. These dialogue approaches bring out different voices and reflective practices, building strongly on the Anglo-American thinking on race, gender and ethnicity (Anderson et al. 2004; Baxter and Montgomery 1996). In contrast, Putnam (2003) claims that the study of dialectics concentrates on contradictions, or to situations created by oppositional forces (both-and, either-or). This inherently dualistic stance is important and critical to negotiation practices, and control in relation to this refers to guiding, steering or directing this process. A very crude and basic difference between dialogue and dialectics is that dialogue is seen as an event where all participate and dialectics as back and forth movement, which may even rely on semiotic symbolism (Bakhtin 1981); however, in conversations both elements are present, and the overall process is more important. Contrary to this, in Plato's dialectics, 'inquiry into' is prevalent, and thus distinction from dialogue as portrayed by later thinkers, is diminished.

Ideal speech situations (Habermas 2001) are free of power struggles and honest, but often there is asymmetry involved.[111] This may prevent communication (Karlsson 2001), produce unsafe environment for openness or may indicate social exclusion (Abma 2001). The latter is reminiscent of the I-It relation Buber had in mind. There is a need to focus on details as well as on a larger picture, in order to grasp the meanings and values of what is mediated and of the mediating agency itself in groups and between groups. The constant interplay between facts and beliefs, whole and its parts, action and thinking produces countless variations of life and being.

To conclude, all so called dialogues are not "dialogues". There are monologues, duologues, multilogues and powerlogues, where few people speak and others listen or admire. There is no one-size-fits-all dialogue. It can be used in all kinds of settings from multicultural ones to organisational contexts to promote awareness and trust between parties.

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[111] Only in the 'ideal world' all persons have symmetric capabilities. In short of these, there is always asymmetry involved due to differences in capabilities among other.

5.3.2 Interpretation and Dialogue

Exploration goes hand in hand with interpretion skills that can be developed with suitable constructions. Interpretation is important for managers and groups for two reasons: to make sense of the problems, and if needed, to act based on them. Interpretation is often taken for granted and yet responses to the environment are needed, since it is a "basic requirement" (Daft and Weick 1984: 284). Interpreting is done all the time, and therefore processes inherent in it are often too close to be noticed.

Table 7: Interpretation Modes

Mode	Environment	Stragegy Used	Data
Enacting	unanalyzable	active and intrusive	trial and error
Discovering	analyzable	intrusive	measurement probes
Conditioned Viewing	analyzable	not intrusive	established data collection
Undirected Viewing	unanalyzable	passive	limited, soft information

Source: Daft and Weick 1984, modified.

Table 7 portrays how what Daft and Weick (1984) call enacting, becomes central in new surroundings with few existing links and direct experiences. Some organisations are active and try to change the rules by trial and error, while others are passive and accept information given (Daft and Weick 1984: 288). In relation to this, they portray four different ways how an organisation may try to interpret its environment. In an enacting, due to low information levels and capabilities in interpreting environment in that context, it is unanalyzable to begin with and thus calls for different approaches to those which are analyzable. However, the need for hermeneutic processes does not diminish with more available information, since all information in relation to purposes needs to be examined.

Daft and Weick (1984) portray that there tends to be assumptions of answers, but a situation cannot be imagined where the answer actually needs to be built based on questions. By and large this happens in cross-border situations, where assumptions may need to be reconstructed. One cannot know for sure. The pursuit of any illusion of knowing for sure does not give room for exploration by replacing exploration with certainty and risk averseness. Collaboration is not built on the "correct and right", but on the verisimilar. The

point is that while interpretations of environment and related pictures-in-the-mind as well as assumptions based on these are made, there needs to be flexibility to change those if a need arises or perceived facts change.[112]

What is stated is not everything and every statement is preceded by the unsaid, which then becomes understandable through utterance (Gadamer 2000a). As individuals struggle to make sense of what is happening in groups, organisations and institutions, these in turn struggle to understand themselves and their position. Wittgenstein notes that there is no "I" who is the thinking subject and also that the subject is not part of the world, but at the border of it (Wittgenstein 1997: Tractatus 5.631-5.633).

Wittgenstein spoke about "nonepistemic interpretation", where one cannot imagine not to know what is thought to be known, since knowing is taken for granted (reported in Arnswald 2002: 27). This taken for granted is very much present in everyday interactions as well as in dialogue and group settings. Arnswald (2002: 29) continues to link this Wittgensteinian notion to dialogue by saying that as long as there is some form of exchange, in the fora of discourse, there is possibility to persuade the other, either by dialogue or by argument. However, as the Socratic Dialogue tradition reveals, dialogue is not a coercive method, but an understanding process.

These processes can be "conscious" or "unconscious", thus introducing risks taken in decision making while aiming at understanding. Tversky and Kahneman (1974) found that risk averting is usual if outcomes are expected to be generally good and the opposite when generally bad. Such notions as bounded rationality and alternative rationalities (Simon 1955), show that rational approaches also have their limits. This points to a need to create spaces for multiple voices with dialogical emphasis.

Some researchers see organisation as a 'text', where dialogue carries within itself the "organizing-ness" (Taylor and Robichaud 2004: 400), of getting organised. There is also fragmentation in thinking, which in turn poses problems. Dialogue, in this sense, aims at producing larger pictures, when combining different views. In relation to dialogue, Bohm and Peat (1987) have an idea of "implicate order". By this they meant how energies become visible and then invisible in the universe, thus bringing out importance of time and space. In this way, discussions are seen as having an organising effect.

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[112] Someone was perplexed by the constant changes in John Maynard Keynes's thinking. He is said to have responded:" If the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do, Sir?"

5.3.3 Challenges in Creating Dialogue Spaces

There are a lot of limited dialogues (families, negotiations, trade-offs), but not much questioning of the fundamental assumptions (Bohm 1996). An example of a limited dialogue setting is a family, because there are hierarchy, sentience and authority structures. In limited dialogues purposes and goals are present, whereas in "open" dialogue there are none (Bohm 1996). This distinction is interesting for several reasons: The change of basic assumptions (may lead into looking at conscious and unconscious processes), authority and hierarchy (as control structure[113]) as opposite to dialogue and two levels of dialogue, may merit different treatment and different uses. Following this, most of the organisational dialogues are limited, due to reasons that someone draws boundaries on what issues are discussable and which are not. However, in that limitedness, by having a goal, structure, and organisational hierarchy if not in group, there is something that an open dialogue necessarily does not own. This is the relation to task. By studying task groups, there is a possibility to step outside the ordinary, and confront structures that seem to be limiting and become aware of dynamics of process.

In dialogue, one is committed to what is said, planned, discussed – brought into the open. Therefore the use of own experiences is encouraged, and use of "authorities" discouraged, since one needs to hold commitments and relations oneself. For Burbules (1993: 74, 80-83) commitment serves as a "communication standard" (truth, sincerity, rightfulness) and a "rule" (participation, commitment and reciprocity). Here authority is placed back to individuals or groups. Authority as a concept thus refers to inside and outside processes.

Saariluoma (2003) introduces "mistakes in thinking"[114], by referring to two kinds of mistakes, active and passive. Active mistakes in thinking are those where a wrong line of action has been chosen. Passive mistakes in thinking, on the other hand, are those where action is not undertaken, even when called for. Group processes may also introduce one way to avoid such mistakes through commitment to task in the here-and-now.

Dialogue seeks to unfold through interaction what is in the minds of the participants in the here-and-now. In creating successful change the importance of communication and overall planning along with having goals and working from that prospect are emphasised.

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[113] The "Holy Order" of "Herrschaft der Heiligen" (Schischkoff 1991: 296).

[114] In Finnish "ajatteluvirheet" (Saariluoma 2003: 16). An example cited is the Chernobyl accident, where safety instructions were broken along with overestimating skills and knowledge, thus "breaking the camel's back" (Saariluoma 2003: 16, 82-3.) This comes close to what Weick (1993, 1995, 2001) has written about "sensemaking in organisations" (see also unconscious mistakes, page 79).

Participation, openness and transparency are needed (Garvin and Roberto 2005). Here it is considered that change processes are not void of human aspects.

Disputes or arguments often lead to thinking by oneself, defending one's views and holding on to them. This is counterproductive to dialogue and certainly to a harmoniously functioning group, if it leads to shattering debates and either-or thinking. Dialogue cannot emerge when there is a wish to subject the other (Isaacs 1999). Subordinating the other is often done by using some form of authority outside the group: a book, idea, person or equivalent. For this reason too, speaking only of oneself and one's experiences have value. The person must be capable of defending one's own views without outside authorities to understand and hold responsibility of one's thinking and actions. The opposite happens through basic assumption states (Bion 1961), where the group becomes occupied of itself rather than its normative primary task by giving up one's own authority outside oneself and thus defending oneself from thinking or changing.

One other extreme Isaacs mentions are the "abstraction wars" where matters are diluted from practice in a way that makes it difficult to understand or grasp them (Isaacs 1999: 43). Therefore experiences are important, since the language used needs to be kept within the awareness of others, and this can be done only if the members of the group are able to connect and engage with it. For example bringing in authorities beyond the group curbs exploration, since those who cannot share this discussion have no way of commenting on it, if there is no common language, understanding, or information to draw upon. Such authority "throwing" is often done in groups to draw power into the discussion when position in the discussion is felt weak or failing. The difference between reference and power is whether the information is available to others in some form or not, and whether this information can be examined or contested by the group. Another example is starving the group by offering no content through abstraction.

Dialogue here is an overarching concept of trying to link with others in realising something together and the result of that activity. It does not exclude debate or discussion, but includes them in a similar way as "mother's love" embraces or contains all, including sorrow. This relates to Bion's (1970) discussion on container-contained. It is more important to direct one's attention towards the possibility of building dialogue than excluding parts of it; the main issue is whether the group can hold on to learning or starts to disperse it too early.

The pull for comfort is well documented in group relations experience, and therefore engaging with tasks is urgent.[115] Discussions lure into believing "talking is action". Since dialogue as a method is based on linguistic interaction, the importance of experiencing or doing may be left unattended. Still, doing has to be learnt as Venkula has pointed out (2005; see also Weick 1990). Therefore adding group relations methods to dialogue will bring more light on to what needs to be focussed on when working with groups and individuals. How task groups evolve through dialogue processes can reveal a lot about their potential as containers of transformation.

The main difference between dialogue and group relations approach stems from requirements for transparency or transference. Dialogue seeks the former, while group relations the latter. In reviewing both these approaches, a broader view of human groups can be attained keeping in mind that some processes in them differ, and both have their strengths and weaknesses.

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[115] This is relevant in groups whose normative primary task is neither discussion nor therapy.

6 Experiential Learning and Pictures-in-the-Mind

Experiential learning has been the core of the group relations movement. This movement began after two massive, destructive and horrible World Wars. The idea was to study group behaviour so that such extremities or atrocities would never come about again. Experiential learning was emphasised after the World War II, when all kinds of group interactions took place from T-Groups (Basic Skills Training Group, started by National Training Laboratory, NTL) to J.L. Moreno's Psychodrama Groups.

In sensitivity training groups or T-groups, members shared emotions in a rather monological nature, whereas in group exploration emotions are not taken up for their own sake but as information of the group process, as and when such emotions arise. This distinction is vital, since T-groups were used for personal growth, and not for task purposes. The emphasis on purpose in a task based group dialogue is not on resolving individual, intra-personal or inter-personal problems, but to increase effectiveness in group endeavour by introducing elements that make groups better equipped to handle what arises in processes they engage with. For this reason, management is a task of groups as well, and cannot be instituted from outside beyond what is delegated to groups in the first place.

In an interview with Bradford, Porras (Porras and Bradford 2004) recalls that study/training groups became popular in 1960s. These were taken up in order to help people transform themselves, and make them inter-personally effective. Organisational Behaviour (OB) and Organisational Development (OD, started in NTL) took their first steps during that time. Experiments with therapeutic communities (Harrison 2000) brought new light on how groups work and focused on essentials in creating good governance by placing responsibility of oneself back to individuals. One such, and perhaps the most famous, experiment was in Northfield Military Hospital during the World War II.[116]

Bion, together with J. Rickman, designed a programme for the inmates in Northfield Hospital (Fraher 2004; Trist 1985)[117]. Whiteley (2004: 237) points out that the central innovation these two psychoanalysts brought into that programme was discussion groups,

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[116] Although Northfield is usually the most cited one, Whiteley (2004) points out that it may be that the seeds of this development were already sown from 1792 onwards, when in France Phillipe Pinel and in England the Tuke family started to promote a more human treatment of inmates. Other projects of "living-and-learning experiments" include Homer Lane and the Little Commonwealth, Q camps in England etc. (Whiteley 2004): 235). Other experiential experiments could be ashrams, convents and other communities.

[117] Fraher (2004) explains that Rickman was a Quaker, and reflects that from him Bion got some ideas for his leaderless groups and group therapy.

where the group's own internal tensions were discussed within the group, by the group (Bion 1961). Bion also let inmates to organise themselves, which enabled authority and responsibility be exercised by persons. Although they succeeded with the programme itself, due to other conflicts within military hospital and hierarchy, they were dismissed after six weeks and Harold Bridger and S.H. Foulkes took over (Fraher 2004; Harrison 2000).

Foulkes (1946), who worked with Patrick de Maré, introduced Group-Analysis developing on the thinking of an American psychoanalyst, Trigant Burrow (1927), who had been developing group-analytic methods in 1920s, but also drawing upon Kurt Lewin (Whiteley 2004: 237-238). To Burrow, disorders in human behaviour were essentially social and interrelational (1927; Whiteley 2004: 238). The Foulkesian group analysis was at this point more concerned with the relationship between individual and the group. Earlier, Lewin had hosted a workshop in 1946, where he experimented with an idea that adults learn more effectively through experiences, and through his ideas of "force field" struck a chord in the group relations oriented minds (Fraher 2004). Regardless of the emphasis on group behaviour, the group relations movement itself has been subject to splitting (Fraher 2004).

In introducing organizational learning, Schein (1993) discusses group dynamics and uses dialogue to facilitate learning. A differentiation between sensitivity training and dialogue is drawn, where the former is about sharing emotions and the latter exploring "complexities in thinking and language" (Schein 1993: 43). Another distinguishing feature arises between improving inter-personal skills (Sensitivity training) and building a group (dialogue) for intra-group and inter-group issues. Schein (2001) also sees helping relationships as central in dialogic approaches.

6.1 Collective Reality and Group Phenomena

The most commonly used notion of a learning organisation in dialogue and management literature is that of Senge (1990). His emphasis on dialogue envisages learning organisation as having five different disciplines to fulfil: systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team learning. Senge (1990) claims that cooperation between professionals is rooted in conversations. The four important aspects for Sengean dialogue are: a mutual quest "for deeper insight and clarity"; tension between dialogue and hierarchy; a need for facilitator; and playfulness. All these aspects are

highlighted in study of groups and task groups, too, as discussed in earlier parts. There is a need for emotions and vividness – conversation alone does not suffice (Senge 1990). His approach has also been criticised for not going far enough by Flood (1999), who criticised Senge for not going deep enough into systemic thinking. The problem with Senge's approach from the perspective of this Study is that he considers only existing systems (as in the "Beer Game"[118]), which differ from collaboration presented here, since a system may not yet exist or is being formed. As can be viewed in Figure 10, the platform for organisational learning is much wider than the one Senge has promoted. Also, by including depth into the approach and acknowledging the work done before, the picture becomes fuller and therefore also more usable.

Figure 10: Organisational Learning: a Re-View
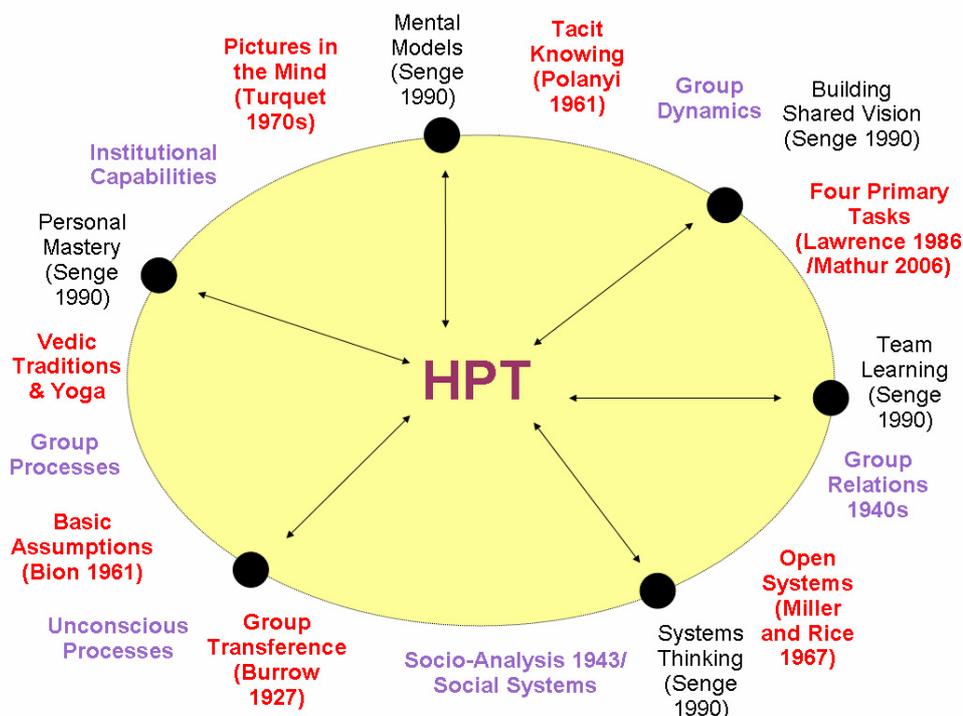
According to Armstrong (2005) organisations are carried as pictures and experiences in personal minds and this impinges upon the manner possibilities are experienced. This reflects Senge (1990: 60) and his thinking of "mental models". 'Pictures-in-the-mind' function as reference points for making judgements or preliminary belief formation and are formed based on experiences, observations, media, discussions or any other form of human

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[118] This was developed in the 1960s by Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Senge 1990: 27).

interaction.[119] These are formed pictures that are carried within and get projected when the matter is discussed. Therefore, it has been perceived that in dialogue, confrontation is essential to challenge and to examine these pictures and to make one reflect upon them and their felt influence.

Pondy (1967: 310) found that "tolerance of divergence is not generally a value widely shared in contemporary organisations, and under these conditions latent and perceived conflicts are also likely to be treated as costly". While there is a lot of rhetoric[120] in favour of diversity and difference, it is often the opposite that results from too diverse or different opinions. Therefore problems that arise in dialogical cross-border initiatives, need highlighting. One such problem is being "culturally overtrained" (Schein 1993: 41), or over-embedded in one context. From this perspective, experiential learning and dialogue approaches provide a new horizon, since such pictures-in-the-mind as rationality and communication need to be revisited.

Norms as form of control have been studied by Bettenhausen and Murnighan (1985; 1991), who claim that norms in a group develop early and these are guiding until challenged. Depending on respective interests, pictures-in-the-mind carried can help or hinder in interpreting novel situations. An example is the stereotypical divide: westeners are rational and easteners emotional; the former ones use the head, the latter the heart; westeners think of task, easteners of totality.[121] It is important to understand what issues may and/or do produce bafflement and affect decision making and effectiveness within organisations, when they are confronted with difference. Despite talk of welcoming diversity and difference, these are often considered as a nuisance, source of difficulties and introduce exclusion and division (Reynolds and Trehan 2003). Some researchers have introduced a need for "humility to learn from others, and an appreciation for diversity" (Bendapudi and Bendapudi 2005: 125). The kinds of diversity that are called for, need interactive methods to explore and act upon.

Juuti (2001) discusses experiences as the content of people's lives, and that there may be expectations that others' life worlds are similarly constructed without verification of that.

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[119] From the perspective that "cinema mirrors reality" one may ask why Bollywood films, so important to Indian audiences, depict large group collectivities and why Finnish films often portray war or estrangement from the society and its norms?

[120] Rhetorics, in its most notorious definition, has been depicted as "just words", something on paper or spoken what is written/said, but no one thinks of following or taking any notice. Perelman (1996) clarifies this by noting that all discourse, that aims to influence one or more people, are within the field of rhetoric and that it speaks about the power of suggestion.

[121] This was experienced in one seminar outside this Study, where precisely this argument was given.

In this respect diversity is always "something else". Heikkilä and Heikkilä (2001) see it important to understand the Other as the Other, and as a thinker separate from oneself, and to know the background and attitudes underlying one's own thinking processes. They distinguish between "private" dialogue (such as reading, thinking by oneself, self-dialogue) and "allgemaine" dialogue (with others) – To them genuine dialogue seeks to promote thinking by oneself. (Heikkilä and Heikkilä 2001: 7-10.) Through dialogue practice also a fear for change had been observed. Sometimes there is fear of "catastrophic change" (Armstrong 2005: 20, 57; Bion 1970). Both are related to what dialogue practicants have reported when consulting or facilitating in various organisations, due to common fear of dialogue bringing out issues that are unbearable or threatening.

As noted earlier (p. 98), Reynolds and Trehan (2003: 163) stress participative methods, but fear that these may reduce the importance of difference, if focussing only on consensus. They seek a "critical pedagogy", an exploration of difference, further pointing out that management education has mostly been concerned with ideals, proposals, preferences, and alternative solutions to problems, not with age, gender or ethnicity in connection to power or its distribution (Reynolds and Trehan 2003: 165). This is not an issue of gender studies only, since ethnicity is not gender bound. What constitutes power distribution is also the source of how much diversity and difference is accepted within an organisation, and the source of harmony within it. To 'manage' differences in this connection may imply suffocating them: matters can be 'managed' to death by force where they are not welcome. Freire (1970) draws attention to education and how education can be a tool for oppression by those holding and wielding power.

6.2 Experience in the Root of Learning

For Gadamer (2000a), experience is something that happens, and it is a process.[122] It is universal, not in the sense of content, but in the sense that everyone has experiences. It is also a process where earlier experiences can be clarified and modified. Experience is something where more can be known. He distinguishes two kinds of experiences: those one has had and which confirm expectations, and those that will occur as new ones

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[122] Gadamer (2000a) introduced such concepts as "historically effected consciousness" (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*), "preunderstanding" (*Vorbegriff*), "hermeneutic circle (or spiral)" (*hermeneutischer Zirkel*), holistic approach, language, idea of play (*Spiel*), and understanding as an event. Although Gadamer placed these concepts strictly in the sphere of philosophical hermeneutics, they serve as mirroring points to experiential learning.

(Gadamer 2000a: 353). Only those experiences earlier encountered or happened can be anticipated. Gadamer discusses that an experienced person has experiences, but still is open to new ones and even through *pathei mathos*, which means learning from suffering (Gadamer 2000a: 356). If the experience is a real one, one may also become aware of one's own limitedness. The phenomenological-hermeneutic starting point brings the world of interpretation amalgamated into the experiential world. Hermeneutics brings human life into the centre. Kögler (1996: 216) contains it as "ridding the human sciences of every impulse towards objectification".

Based on Gadamer's thinking of experience and looking at experiential learning versus learning as such, a tentative difference between these concepts can be drawn. Experiences cannot be separated from the person who experiences them, as an experience. It can be reduced on paper and be described, but others will never experience the same as originally encountered. Experience is felt through the whole system of being. Since learning in organisational literature mostly refers to information passing and holding, it is important to distinguish that learning happens in multiple ways, where experience cannot be substituted with information. With this comes a problem whether experience is needed to understand information, or does it suffice alone.[123]

Experience based approaches have gained foothold because many situations involve "uncertainty and uniqueness" (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004), and see the learning process cyclical. However, there are two distinctive processes: reflecting on experience (action learning) and learning in experience (learning-in-action). Referring to Kolb's learning cycle, Senge and Scharmer (2001: 243) claim that this form of "traditional training" violates learning principles, because two aspects need to be fulfilled for learning purposes, namely contextuality and social aspect. Learning has to retain its roots to experience and to its use.

One form of experiential learning is through vocational education and training programmes that enable the participants "learn by leaving" for another country. Capability and skill requirements have changed due to developments in technology, changes in demand pattern in the market and globalisation. Therefore experiential learning through placements is supposed to increase intercultural understanding, promote free movement of workers,

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[123] An example of the dilemma is *anamnesis*: whether knowing is recollection or not? Gadamer (2000b) cites mathematical concepts, some of which cannot be derived from experience. This has puzzled philosophers from Plato (1999a) onwards, as in his dialogue of Meno.

internationalise education and training, provide placements abroad, and to improve employability. Kristensen (2004: 114) notes that:

"...workers must possess international and personal skills, and moreover develop a capacity for redefining their professional and personal identities, in tandem with the change in (and in some cases complete disappearance of) professional profiles."

Learning in placements happens through exposure. A situation of diversity under semi-structured conditions is massive enough for it not to be repressed or ignored. These learning situations include some degree of interaction with culture and mentality of the host country, possibilities for independent problem solving with regard to culturally conditioned conflicts, experience of 'disjuncture', and possibility of assisted reflection on experience both during and after experience (Kristensen 2004: 6-8).

6.2.1 The Paradoxical Nature of Group Learning from Experience

The inevitable presence of multiple primary tasks, the normative, the existential and the phenomenal in every organisation presents a challenge of how to engage with them simultaneously. In a sense this poses a paradox, because the phenomenal primary task would not arise if an organisation system could choose to rationally engage with the normative and existential ones.

Winnicott (1982) observed that the capability to hold on a paradox is vital, and thought that it "should not be resolved" (Winnicott 1982: xii) without examination, because paradoxes have value. This refers to "negative capability" discussed earlier. The tension that arises from paradox creates energy in task groups, and presents one view why such processes are needed.

Thus, paradoxes present a way to present "theoretical tensions or oppositions" (Poole and Van de Ven 1989: 563). The paradox of work and work environment, according to Järvinen (1998: 31), is that we want to succeed, but at the same time wish to avoid work. Mental work is demanding and it is possible one is not prepared to do that when change is required and this leads into abandoning change processes. Bion (1970) also claimed similarly. By distinguishing between the world of work and the inner world, Järvinen (1998: 34-38) is reflecting Bion's distinction between work group and ba-group states.

Handy (1994) discusses the importance of paradoxes in the *Empty Raincoat*, but also stresses that paradoxes cannot be managed without willingness to accept risks in return.[124] Thus, he laments the limitation inherent in letting management processes be substituted by administration, adjudication or control. The will to look beyond immediate needs and worries, to build organisations strong enough to work with and work through problems despite challenges, is important instead of sticking to one level control or blindness to processes. Certainty is groped for in turbulent times, in small and big issues, since people wish to have quiet lives, and their dilemmas resolved by others (Handy 1994: 93). The 21st century has shown this has not been the case, and dilemmas, paradoxes and ambiguity have become endemic features of our times. Certainty is a gift of history; uncertainty and ambiguity are inevitable parts of a process that is unfolding.

The two paradoxes in our being are the drive to be separate and autonomous, and experience at the same time, feelings of sameness and difference (Miller 1999: 98-100). Basically what is important in terms of group and organisation, is the feeling of belonging – whether this exists or not. In group relations conferences homogenous collectivities have been used in order to explore differences in cultures (Lehtonen 2004a), but also the other way round. What needs to be held in mind is that human groups respond to group pictures held in group consciousness.

Hard experiences are seldom used as learning material. However, this is essential for finding meaning and learning in the process of becoming extraordinary (Bennis and Thomas 2002). Group processes are very powerful. In no other setting can one see problems related to self in relation to others than in groups. This powerfulness makes it also frightening and anxiety provoking and can hinder relevant processes. Dialogue also needs to be studied from power and legitimacy aspects derived in task groups.

When a person does not understand what is happening or what is it that one is supposed to learn, one easily becomes angry and defensive as in the experience of Meno (Plato 1999a: 70a). People feel vulnerable, out of control, incompetent, lose confidence, and do not know what they are doing (Schön 1987).[125] It is the confusion that makes experiential learning hated, and the feelings of being regressed to childhood again, and yet it is claimed that

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[124] Handy (1994: 81): "We have no chance of managing the paradoxes if we are not prepared to give up something, if we are not willing to bet on the future and if we cannot find it in ourselves to take a risk with people. These are our Pathways through the Paradoxes, if we have the will. The pursuit for our own short-term advantage, and the desire to win everything we can, will only perpetuate animosities, destroy alliances and partnerships, frustrate progress, and breed lawyers and bureaucracy of enforcement."

[125] Schön, 1987 (http://educ.queensu.ca/~russellt/howteach/schon87.htm, Accessed 5.4.2007)

adults learn best experientially. This was what Lewin also concluded after his experiences with group work (Fraher 2004).

Reason and Bradbury (2001b: 6) write that "we" in the "West" have become strangers to experience, since there is a separation of mind and matter. While this reminds one of the "blame it on Descartes" arguments, it needs to be examined. There seems to be a curious separation of feelings and reason, more than mind and matter. Reason and Bradbury (2001b) claim that experience has long been separated from reason, and thus a large chunk of experiential learning has been wasted (in the sense it has not been used to inform or understand). Experience invariably brings in feelings, since these belong to the experience, and thus transform or fertilise group matrices.

6.2.2 Creating Potential Spaces for Task Group Learning

The potential of a space gives members an opportunity, but in the end, learning and experiencing are in one's own hands, and cannot be produced by an outsider. However, here a task group as a mirror becomes essential. Alongside the idea of "Potential Space" (Winnicott 1982), reflection has become important for needs to have mindful and sensitive relationships with others be it at work or outside. Schön (1983) termed this as "Reflective Practitioner". Also in such a practice, the philosophical background used can be viewed through the notion of carrying this as a phenomenon in one's mind as one works. Schön's influence can be noticed in the later reflective practice (Göranzon et al. 2006), reflective learning (Göranzon et al. 2006; Miettinen 2000; Senge et al. 2004/2005), and reflective dialogue (Göranzon et al. 2006).

Experiences from other fields of knowledge, such as breaking in horses, suggest that one prerequisite for trust and learning to occur is to create safety, to be "joined up". As Roberts puts it in that context, it is about learning environment, not teaching. Although he speaks of young colts, this approach has also interested organisations (March 1998[126]; Roberts 1997). While horses are not equated to humans here, such experiences may suggest that trust building has many dimensions, which build on different "languages".

Learning is by no means automatically created by training. This relationship between training and learning is paradoxical, since it has been thought in organisations that training inevitably produces learning (Antonacopoulou 1999; 2001). In addition it has been

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[126] March, 1998 (http://members.forbes.com/global/1998/0504/0103024a_print.html, Accessed 8.10.2007)

observed that teaching does not necessarily create learning (Chattopadhyay 1986) and has even been found to reinforce defences against learning.

Thus, there is a need to have a theory that is working, so that managers can learn to facilitate learning processes (Abma 2003: 221). Since the environment, as Abma (2003) puts it, is changing faster and has become turbulent, there is a constant need for learning. Turbulence is present when outcomes are not predictable (Wilkinson and Young 2005). Antonacopoulou (2001: 328) defines learning as "liberation of knowledge through self-reflection and questioning". She emphasises that only 'double-loop learning' (Argyris and Schön 1996), and not single-loop learning is what is meant here. There is a relationship between learning and changing: Some clarity is needed for meaningful learning as well as flexibility but not predeterminism (Antonacopoulou 2004). There may exist a goal to seek for awareness and understanding and further development and growth. The problem is that training programmes often do not emphasise learning, but may push towards conformity, myths and organisational expectations.

According to her studies, Antonacopoulou (1999; 2001: 337) explains that managers equate training with learning and work from this assumption, but paradoxically, it can also be a major obstacle for learning, if it "provides limited scope for questioning and experimentation". The paradox between training and learning is interesting in an era of constant education. However, education has also become business, since it is valued in the market as a way to add value for the future, to competitiveness, source of capacities, skills and knowledge. The idea of 'life-long learning' has permeated all sectors of life and learning is an imperative. But does this ensure learning?

In conclusion, learning seems to exist only through experiences linked to it, and not *a priori* of experience. However, learning is sought after in many organisations (as training), because it is thought that learning is automatically produced because of training. This lessens the value of group experiences in organisations, if learning is equated to training.[127] To engage in dialogue within a group is an ontological experience, where learning goes beyond skill formation for individuals to capacity building for groups and their membership to think, feel and act. Bain (1998: 413) stresses that for organisational learning to happen, "organisational awareness" needs to be raised.

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[127] A question arising here is, does training produce experts? Is a degree holder an expert because of that degree or because of capabilities, and does everyone have these capabilities to be called an expert regardless of degree?

6.2.3 Meaning Making as a Learning Process in Task Groups

An important research question in this Study concerns the nature and horizon of learning through dialogue in groups.[128] Learning takes place in human minds and bodies, but also in potential spaces (Winnicott 1982). An organisation learns in various ways: firstly, through members becoming more learned, secondly, through getting new members who have new knowledge, not previously present in the organisation, and thirdly, by creating inter-group learning designs. A more static view of learning is to see it through routines (Levitt and March 1988). Earlier, individual learning was emphasised, but lately processes of reflection at organisational level have gained importance (Reynolds and Vince 2004).

Simon (1996: 176) points out that learning in organisations is a social phenomenon, since transmission and creation of knowledge are important. Gavetti and Rivkin (2005) assert that making wrong analogies can make one go astray; on the other hand making good ones will lead to success. There are two traps in using analogy, namely having too strong an anchorage to a solution made and having the bias of just accepting confirming information (Gavetti and Rivkin 2005: 54-63).

Abma (2003) sees organisational learning as a collective enterprise where storytelling and dialogue play an important part, and constitute a heuristical process (*heuriskein,* to find) to help people find and learn themselves. In this sense 'play' becomes central. However, usually the organisation seeks to define what should be learnt, since it seeks returns on investment. Learning being collective and interactive, a socio-cultural approach is put forward, since the interest is not in the product, but in the process itself (Abma 2003; see also Brown and Duguid 1991).

Therefore meaning-making processes and experiential learning come forth as ways to translate and understand diversity and multiplicity, since aims of plurality, inclusion and involvement are shared with dialogue approaches. Personal sharing and reflecting become important, but are only part of the puzzle. Greene (2001: 182) states that respect, inclusion and engagement are essential in dialogue in evaluation context (Abma 2003: 223). These are important in other contexts too and certainly in groups.

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[128] Weick (1991: 116) laments that organisation researchers adopted the concept of "learning" at a time psychologists were discarding it as useless. Learning and culture, as concepts, are problematic in their vastness. As Adler (1967) amplifies, reading is learning, but he regards it as a waste of time for finding out what others have discovered, instead of learning to discover oneself.

Sharing experiences within a group and across groups to inform each other also of feelings and thoughts and seeking to understand them, is one crucial foundation in all collaborations.[129] While many things can be done alone, in most cases information sharing is needed in order to make sense of the world around and in that sharing a group is rudimentary. A group needs to vocalise its thoughts and feelings through its members thus bringing out issues which are problematic and those that are not. This was already noticed in the experiments with therapeutic communities (Whiteley 2004)[130].

Organisations wish to exercise control in a way that leaves little or no room for reflection, and learning. For Plato, according to Miller (1980), the search for truth was also a pedagogic wish to get others interested in searching as well. This wish is inherent in the dialogue tradition, as well as in Group Relations, and in the Schönian (Schön 1983) ideal of inquiry.

Drucker (2005) highlighted that only a few people work and achieve results by themselves, meaning that managing oneself requires ability to work with others. This in turn implies taking responsibility for one's relationships and also for communication. (Drucker 2001; 2005). Managing oneself with others is even more complicated: While groups are needed for task performance, being in a group is also challenging.

6.3 Identity as a Source of Experiential Learning in Task Groups

Without understood and experienced identity, a group cannot reach out to another group for carrying out tasks beyond its own boundaries. Philosophical praxis, in its varied forms from philosophical counselling to forms of dialogical encounters with groups, has demonstrated the strong impact dialogue has on people and their understanding of Self and of Others (Brune and Krohn 2005; Kessels 1997; Shipley and Mason 2004). The aim of using dialogue is to build trust by creating a container, which enables participants to contain and reflect, but also to create trusting boundary conditions.

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[129] Here, *ceteris paribus,* it is taken "for granted" that other issues such as services and goods shareable as the basis of collaboration are in order. There is no ground for collaboration, if these basic matters as structures for services/goods cannot sustain or are not prepared to support collaboration pressures.

[130] What is stressed here is that even if many of these experiments were successful and innovative, political powers did not support them to continue. One such case is Maconochie's experiments with prisoners in the 19th century. It is noteworthy that movements such as therapeutic communities have democratic tendencies that are up front considered worthy. The question then is, why such movements, regardless of their successes or their worthiness, are not used more?

When building groups, systems and institutions, it does not suffice howsoever much persons work on their own or with others, if there is nothing to detach or anchor those, be they institutional structures, either temporary or lasting (as long as these last). Mathur (2006a: 2) asserts that:

> *"Without groups, complex transactions of society that require open systems, porous boundaries and the bridging of frictions of space, time, technology, task and sentience to enable flows of goods, services, capital, people and ideas would not be possible".*

For a group, its identity or identities are important for finding out how to relate to the outside world. Hardy et al. (2005: 69) argue that collaboration is relationship building through discursive practices and common constructions, with tension between "cooperative" and "assertive" talk. However, they also propound that most collaborations are not ambiguous, but based on "some fixed pot of resources" (Hardy et al. 2005: 74). Without having boundaries or role differentiation, authority cannot be taken or given. Having clear roles, is a prerequisite for being able to function within and across boundaries. The delegation of authority requires it, since persons cross over with what they have been delegated with and this delegation needs to be as transparent as possible. Also one has to be sure of what kind of authority is delegated in order to be able to function accordingly (observer, delegate or plenipotentiary). Taking up roles and defining boundaries need negotiations where tasks and related authorities are defined by the group, and group identity arises also from these.

In groups, processes of stereotypic social identification, depersonalization (change from personal to social) and "deindividuation" (loss or shedding of identity) have been reported (Festinger et al. 1952). Group membership becomes more salient in conflict, confrontation or encounters with outgroups thus emphasising the normative in the group which may be different from individual beliefs (Turner 1981). These need to be explored. According to Trist (1985: 7), Bion's leaderless groups, through spontaneous situations, enabled members to affirm both their individual and social identities. Taking off designated leadership as a construct, enabled new leadership patterns.

In discussing stigmas, Goffman (1963) differentiates between "virtual social identity" and "actual social identity". The first is based on assumptions by others around, and the second on what the person actually possesses. Stigma means "undesired differentness" from

expectations and assumptions (Goffman 1963: 15). There exists a social norm, which is regarded as the true and right, and those who follow this, are respected. A contrary experience is encountered if one deviates from that, and gets a stigma with accompanying lack of respect and regard. Goffman also distinguishes between social and personal identity and "ego" identity, where social and personal are part of collective identity building where others play a significant part, but the "ego" identity is subjective (Goffman 1963: 129). Thus, one is part of constant identity building. Social identification is reported to build on perceptions of oneness and categorisation (Ashforth and Mael 1989).

While dialogue can be used to address difficult issues due to its capability as a space to contain, in everyday approach dialogue is often seen as "good discussion". Therefore "positive illusions" (Taylor and Brown 1994; Taylor and Gollwitzer 1995) about life and possibilities in it are needed. Such illusions or fantasies as self-level coping avenues contribute greatly to well-being, since these positive illusions in the form of possibilities also affect capabilities in terms of change and new opportunities as held pictures. There is a dire relation of being able to engage in cross-border interactions or/and with group processes as held possibilities in the first place. This engagement and interaction is best carried out through dialogue.

Well-being and quality in groups are created jointly. Some researchers have argued that there needs to be a more positive image of human beings (Ghoshal and Moran 2005a, 2005b). Russell (1948) discussed that self-interest is misunderstood, since he thought that it would be best if all would actually think of their own good – this way people would also cooperate. Through the notion of productive attitude it has been observed that constructive approaches lessen the feeling of separateness (Fromm 1967). This highlights the importance of taking into consideration both care and justice, and the particular and universal. Fromm (1967) portrays that a mature person is capable of loving, working and managing role spaces, but one part of maturity comes along with ageing. Only a person capable of handling one's spaces is really able to relate to others. In a similar vein, Bion (1961: 43) emphasises that without love, understanding cannot exist. Altruism and love are some examples of human emotions present in organisations as are avarice and lust for power. Nishida (1990) also emphasises this as an aspect of self which unites.

6.4 Power, Task Groups and Institutions

Groups seldom function in isolation, and are usually parts of larger totalities. Unfortunately the relationship between a group and its totality is sometimes strained. Constantly recurring project work of short term nature may blur the totality of its importance, or the other way around. If the internal exchanges and relations are strained or forgotten, project results may get ignored or buried under other issues. This may lead to waste in the same fashion as Menzies (1986) found in nursing systems, where those doing well in the project (as nurse trainees) did not get emotional feedback, got frustrated with it and quit.

Power can be unequal or levelling and the former consists of sanction power, formal power, referent power and expert power; and the latter, levelling forms, include persuasion power, influence upwards and downwards, and professional skills (De 1980: 122). For Merton (1957: 113), power is a "capacity to impose one's will in a social action" and authority "culturally legitimized organisation" of it. If power does not get equally distributed, it gives rise to conflicting demands and coalitions based on it. Power is important in relation to dialogue, because of the supposed weight that words have as a carrier of 'truth' (Gadamer 2000a). This raises a question whether truth is sometimes equated with power. Kögler (1996: 256) brings this forth when discussing gap between "agent" and "theorist", where the former is considered naïve and the latter holding the truth.

There is a strong bias towards rationality as the best and only way of using one's mental powers. However, are human beings rational? According to Bertalanffy (1968: 115) human behaviour falls short of "principle of rationality", reflecting what Simon termed as "bounded rationality" (Simon 1955, 1996). Rationality is different from reasoning, seeking grounds for decisions made. Many economic theories assume that individuals are rational, and that problems faced are only problems of allocating scarce resources. Simon (1978: 344)[131] refers to two fallacies in theory making: one, the assumption that a scientific inquiry cannot be useful (practical), and the other, that if it cannot be put in practice immediately, it is not worthy at all. This has also been said about dialogue, and points to the need to understand how and why institutions value resources and produce responses.

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[131] Simon, 1978 (http://nobelprize.org/economics/laureates/1978/simon-lecture.pdf, Accessed 21.9.2004)

6.4.1 Institutions with Tasks and Task Groups

The role of institutions in economic development can be improved through three key functions: 1) coordination and administration, 2) learning and innovation, 3) income redistribution and cohesion (Chang 2005: 3). If resources could be utilised better by another group "it may be better for the society not to protect the existing property rights and to create new ones that transfer the properties concerned to the former groups" (Chang 2005: 10). Results need to be anchored, for them to serve organisation and its purposes. While dialogue has been used widely, it has lacked the creation of anchored responses. To quote Jean Monnet: "Nothing is possible without men (here: people); nothing is lasting without institutions". This view is supported also by Selznick (1957).

Kanter (1994) revisits this notion in relation to partnerships. While not every project needs a complex institutional surrounding, to have long term collaboration there is a need for some form of anchoring, recognition and resource allocation to carry on beyond immediate needs. Collaboration can also be built on basis of temporary learning institutions. Without a container, any good initiative is short lived and withers away. If so, dialogue stays as an experience at a micro-level, but does not have further reach at meso- and macro levels. Institutionalisation is one key to successful partnership, without which there is no formal status for the relationship (Kanter 1994). Therefore suitable forms of institutions need commonly shared exploration.

All stakeholders from managers to shareholders engage with different functions in organisations and both require continuous monitoring for balanced processes. According to Handy (1994) it seems as if shareholders are needed more, because organisations as groups strive for short-term gains rather than long-term. The problem with this is that shareholders do not build future companies as managing processes do. If management processes get hijacked by tradeoffs with financial gains, will this lead to corrupted normative primary tasks?

Plurality of stakeholding is important in cross-border situations. This is important when barriers are discussed, because these need understanding and expert knowledge from each of the parties in question, and also possibility to inform processes.[132] The need to have

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[132] This is necessary and desirable to the extent such matters can be decided and acted upon nationally. Routes to international treaties, such as GATS, or EU legislation or relations, are long and take different approaches, but also here, what can be affected, is knowledge of problems encountered. The problem is, that to be able to progress these initiatives, a considerable amount of authority (of skill, experience, status, representational legitimacy) is required.

different parties present at the same time comes from the experience that changes are possible only if and when they are argued for and experienced by members in the same space with those present who can actually take these initiatives further. Furthering initiatives has been a weak point in discussion based approaches, and thus dialogue can at times frustrate by not producing results beyond the boundaries of the group. Also, in such situations, a semi-world is created where issues can be reflected and re-reflected by those who are experts in their own fields. However, there seems to be lack of studies in dialogue processes in task groups or from the perspective of how task groups evolve from dialogues. Often, dialogue groups are inward-looking groups where processes in the group are more in focus than what happens outside the group. Therefore, self-understanding has been more emphasised than understanding what it means to be part of a group and a system. A temporary learning institution has the possibility to focus more on the group and inter-group processes.

As organisations are based on individuals, groups and group members, addressing emotions is integral. Emotions here are seen as reactions to feelings. Emotions and feelings are a "political process" (Fineman 2004: 720). Understanding and sensing changes in environments and responding to them creates a need for "emotional intelligence" (Gardner 2004; Goleman 1997, 2006; Goleman et al. 2001) and "emotional sensitivity" (Gardner 1983; 2004; Fineman 2004: 726). However, Fineman (2004) points out that emotional intelligence does not produce information about what is different in cultures and about ethnicity. To have "local" emotional intelligence, introduces a need to anchor and be part of the context thus introducing a need to span beyond one's comfort zone; also pictures-in-the-mind can be studied best in large groups with diverse membership. Fineman (2004: 736) continues that understandings derived in another context without measuring them, may be less precise, but likely to be "abundant in insight, plausibility and texture".

Why two levels, the individual and the organisation, are highlighted? Individuals, if left alone, work differently from a group: while processes such as writing, require solitude, left alone for a length of time a person becomes easily impoverished due to lack of human stimuli. Also, if a group is always together, it leaves no room for individual thinking. In this way, what Stacey (2001) portrays as a split between the social and the individual, need not exist, if the relationship is seen as interplay of all elements.

Stacey (2001) criticises the systems approach and sees moving towards emphasis on interpersonal relationships as moving away from systems. He aptly points out that it cannot

be assumed that a person is only "codable" human capital and thus definable. However, in the systems approach, boundaries are porous, fluid, permeable in most cases and therefore not static, as Stacey seems to suggest. Also, systems theory is concerned not only with relationships, relations, and relatedness which are bases for exchange and collaboration, but also boundaries which seem to provide a container in order to organise experiences and knowing.

6.4.2 Task Groups as Container Institutions

The idea of container is missing in Stacey's thinking and thus his emphasis only on relationships becomes too fluid, and moving from the individual into process, without any node of knowledge. As Stacey noted, persons cannot only be seen as "manageable knowledge", but neither can persons be seen only as a vortex for interactions. Taking away the "agency" (here: authority) introduces a problem of void, because the idea of constant construction assumes that persons are like PC-screens that refresh themselves continually. However, humans do have experiences, but one experience or new knowledge gained does not "refresh" totally, nor do interactions. If one changes, that change happens gradually, and partly unnoticeably.

Organisations as entities use routines for continuity. Routines may be viewed either as sources of learning or obstructions to learning. Weick (1991: 117) observed that organisations have a "response system which is designed to emit the same response". This is fine, if the environment stays the same and different responses are not needed. When the environment does not respond to designed responses, then there is both scope and need for change or at least a different response. Be it knowledge or experience, others are needed also for reality check, because they can give feedback from a different vantage point.

A Group belongs to the participants of the group. In learning experiences this is highly important and has been emphasised by research (Argyris 1990: 137). However, this is difficult for the group to understand and often boundaries get broken thus breaking the learning experience. Examples are people who 'like to participate, but cannot be there and then', people who only 'observe' and pass on information thus affecting containment.

There are also problems related to listening and caring. Both of these features need time and space to emerge, and thus they are often ignored. Even if it is realised that human beings need both, in work environments they are mostly cast aside as belonging to another sphere of action, namely between friends and families. Chattopadhyay (1999) refers to this

saying that organisations are not families; these are different spheres with different tasks. However, the use of "familial logic" is extended outside family structures as well.

Pascale and Sternin (2005) highlight hermeneutics when discussing change, pointing to the importance of looking into indigenous sources of change and engaging persons in it, since some problems can be solved only by those experiencing it. Restating the problem shifts the mind set and encourages discovering. Moreover, problems may stay unsolved because of fear of risks, since the path is littered with potential losses and other risks (Pascale and Sternin 2005: 77). In this process, candour is as crucial as concrete speaking.

6.5 The Group as Knower and Knowable

For a group to become a knower or knowable, a container needs to be established. This means that the group develops boundaries and roles, and keeps these boundaries intact, while engaging with other groups outside it. The metaphor here could be that one does not wish to buy an orange without peels (compromised), but in order to eat it you need to peel it; there has to be exchange and collaboration.

Kusch (2002) reasons that the role of "knower" is problematic, since it raises questions of authority, power and legitimacy, but knowledge has social status and is primarily held by groups. If one lacks the above, no matter what "expert knowledge" the person may have, it is not heeded to since access to resources is missing:

> *"After all, questions of testimony, expertise, and trust are intertwined with issues of power and privilege. The powerless in society are not usually taken to be trustworthy witnesses even when it comes to providing information about their own lives." (Kusch 2002: 52).*

Refering to Plato and his Cave allegory, Miller (1980) observes that ascension does have a risk to the person's self image or respect, psyche or identity. One is in danger of being misunderstood, and in that, only goodwill is important. This goodwill can be hidden (person is favourable or symphathetic) or it can be out in the open (person is openly antagonistic or inimical) as illwill. This is important in the pedagogic situation.

A lot of emphasis has been put on tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995). However, two questions arise: how is this tacit knowledge formed and is it the experience of trying to express that knowledge which is primary to Nonaka and Takeuchi?

Or is it the experience prior to it being identified as tacit knowledge that renders understanding? Another important notion is what Polanyi (1961: 460) brings out stating that skills cannot be learnt by just putting different parts together, rather there is a need to look into the "joint purpose".[133] Greenwood and Levin (2005: 49-50) support this view, and emphasise that much of knowing is tacit and that they prefer to use the word 'knowing' instead of 'knowledge', because the former points to and is linked to actions.

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) also bring out an important facet that a lot of practical knowledge is learnt by doing, although certain practices may get lost when generations change if this knowledge has not been explicitly gathered and codified. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) seem to be concentrating on "ripe" tacit knowledge[134] which is codifiable by procedures such as "modelling tacit knowledge" (hiljaisen tiedon mallintaminen, Toivonen and Asikainen 2004). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) speak of tacit knowledge, which can be seen as an inert totality, already separate or about to be detached from the knower and therefore can be extractable.

In contrast, Polanyi (1961: 466) speaks of tacit knowing, which is an ongoing process of knowing and part of that beingness (ontological), claiming that "knowledge is an activity which would be better described as a process of knowing". Göranzon et al. (2006) argued that not all tacit knowledge can be codified. This view is supported by Edwards and Jacobs (2003), and through portraying three levels of unconsciousness they claim that not all unconscious processes can be tapped. Hence it seems that what is termed as "tacit knowledge" is only that which is available to consciousness when thought about.

6.6 Problems of Sharing

The importance of communication and sharing is emphasised by Weick (1990). He points out that "speech exchange and social interaction are important means by which organization is built or dismantled" (Weick 1990: 583). It is not only the building quality of this interaction, but also a question whether it can lead to the demise of an organisation, too. In Critique of Pure Reason, Kant (1781/1986) discusses the link between thinking and sensing, by stressing relations between thoughts and content as well as between intuition

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[133] An example Polanyi gives is medical diagnosis.

[134] Actually this is a contradiction, but the term "ripe" refers to the illusion that someone has something ready to be codified. In fact, tacit knowledge should be termed as tacit knowing, because it often refers to practices.

and concept. In task group dialogue one tries to understand perceptions through concepts, linking them to experiences.

One cannot build "network organizations on electronic networks alone" (Nohria and Eccles 1992: 288), since communication is not merely medium dependent. Direct experience how interacting with spaces and times different from one's own can introduce unforeseen problems, despite stated urge and need to connect and co-operate, introducing inter-organisational and inter-spatial crossings. To understand that divide between 'thought' but not 'realised', the thought but unknown and the unthought but known, it was important to think in which way one could examine a setting, where groups could explore issues that introduce or provoke anxiety – whether neurotic, signal or realistic (Freud 1933; Stein 2004: 1253). Neurotic anxiety is built on fears of the unknown and has no target, whereas signal anxiety warns of danger. Realistic anxiety releases energies to deal with current situations (compare with de Bono (1991) and his notion of "Orange Gumboots" as a mental state of prospective danger). Anxiety in relation to groups was discussed on pages 78-79.

As in any communication, there exist barriers or possibility of barriers. Scott (1995: 65) expresses them in relation to what is essential for successful negotiation:

-What is spoken, may not be heard;
-What is heard, may not be understood;
-What is understood, may not be accepted;
-The speaker may not discover what the listener has heard/understood/accepted.

These principles apply to all communication (of which negotiation in all its forms is a part). Therefore, feedback loops are needed for action research. However, the problem arising is that it is up to the members whether they participate and interact and with what intensity.

One problem with dialogue literature and tradition has been that it does not encourage creation of weak ties, if inclusion is only for the like-minded. This is a problem, since anything new would require one to take steps to go beyond existing frames and to be prepared to risk one's horizons and possible consequences it introduces. Obtaining information from previously unknown territories or spaces, also entails building a new 'weak-ties' network in Granovetterian terms (Granovetter 1973). This Study particularly focuses on such a context to address this gap in literature.

Since dialogues are not carried out in vacuum, embeddedness (Granovetter 1973; also discussed in Mathur and Mattila 2007a) has relevance to groups and persons. Embeddedness came into discussion in the economics literature from 1980s onwards. The issue in brief was: Do our feelings and our belonging to society affect our behaviour as economic entities or not?[135] Arguments in favour of embeddedness were: They do, since one is not only a *homo economicus*, 'rational being' (Granovetter 1985; 1992) with only economic gains in mind, but values and actions are chosen based on other considerations as well. The counterparts in this debate saw behaviour only as opportunistic and bounded (Williamson 1985). In this Study, persons are regarded as embedded in their environment, being influenced by it and influencing it, as parts of Life World or Being, in a hermeneutical sense.

Granovetter (1973) noted the importance of weak ties along with strong ties. Strong ties are formed with close groups, such as friends, family, work associates, even between colleagues and other institutes within the same field. Precisely this makes them strong: continuous and regular contacts. The idea Granovetter presents is that in such groups new information, at some point, tends to get exhausted. People tend to speak of similar issues in known groups, especially if other groups they interact with, are quite similar to each other (reminiscent of the Ellinor and Gerard 1998 "likeminded"[136]). Weak ties, on the other hand, are ties that are not regular. They are weak in that sense (as a bond), but their "strength" is in the potential of new, relevant information that does not get discussed in the existing strong-ties-groups. Since there are no "common grounds", as happens often with long term groups, and because of dissimilarities in background and ties, information that would not otherwise arise has a chance to surface. Therefore, obtaining a wide spectrum of information would require more weak ties and learning to build them.

To take this idea further, weak ties need to expansively encompass and include differences in ways of understanding the world. The richness of international or supranational ties lies not only in information. Many of them become quite established as institutions of interaction. What is even more important is that these ties become pathways to highly diversified information derived in face-to-face interactions with people holding different

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[135] Samuelson and Nordhaus (1985: 415) point out that decisions can be made out of habit or unconsciously, but there exists an assumption that persons act quite consistently.

[136] This reflects the notion of Fellowship or in Finnish "Hyvä veli –kerho", where the group exists to help its members, but boundaries are closed for any outsider who does not fulfil requirements. This creates a high barrier, and the group becomes a semi-closed system, since information flows in, but exchange with outsiders is limited or non-existent.

backgrounds and thus experiences. The Whorfian hypothesis presented by Bertalanffy (1968: 222) raises the possibility there could be *a priori* structures in human cognition.

> The *"commonly held belief that the cognitive processes of all human beings possess a common logical structure which operates prior to and independently of communication through language, is erroneous."*

What is meant by this is that the language used partly determines our world view and also how we think of it. Understanding one's environment and oneself could be one of the reasons that enable some organisations to succeed while others fail.

In thinking of collectivities, research has proceeded from "human capital" (Pigou 1928: 29) to "social capital" (Bourdieu 1986; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998); from "emotional intelligence" (Goleman 1997, 2006; Goleman et al. 2001; Payne 1985) to "social intelligence" (Goleman 2006; Kihlstrom and Cantor 2000); and from "inquiring into" to "inquiring with" in action research. In addition, practice oriented Action Communities have been created (Senge and Scharmer 2001). All this reflects that more and more emphasis is given to groups, and not only individuals.

Human capital can be conceptualised as the availability of skills, talent and know-how required, but also as knowledge and values (Kaplan and Norton 2004), or education (Putnam and Feldstein 2003). One part of human capital are skills and know-how of leaders and managers, and groups. The four attributes, knowledge, skills, sensitivity, and anticipation correspond to four symbolic artefacts, which are magic book (answers), magic sword (victory), magic herb (cure), magic mirror (future) (Mathur 2003: 162). These also reflect wishes of basic assumption groups, since groups seek answers to deal with anticipated future challenges through miraculous cures.

Groups have also been studied from the perspective of communities and loss of social capital (Putnam 2000).[137] To keep communities (such as cities or organisations or teams) together, to encourage them to be active, capable and skilled people are needed. This is highlighted in the notion of communities-of-practice (Brown and Duguid 1991; Lave and Wenger 1991; Thompson 2005). Thompson (2005: 151) maintains that introducing more control through more structured interaction is likely to lead to the "demise of the community itself". Goleman et al. (2001) noted that others are needed in order to improve one's emotional intelligence, which is an important part of group and organisation life.

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[137] Putnam (2000) reported this in the context of USA.

Ghoshal (2005) called for other approaches to management theories than those prevailing at the moment (particularly agency theory). He claimed that the gloomy picture of human beings, what Hayek called "pretence of knowledge" (Hayek 1974)[138] brings out what the theories have been trying to control – namely self-interest. Through a process that Giddens (1982) called "double hermeneutics" the picture painted becomes real in a process of self-fulfilling prophecy. As human beings act with intentionality – as a mental state – ethical and moral aspects are inseparable. If a theory does not include them, it excludes practices that are fundamental in human experience. Social phenomena are complex and capturing them needs other kinds of approaches (Ghoshal 2005). Task groups, by acting intentionally, create their own ethical and moral boundaries and their own aesthetic nature when engaging with cross-border activities.

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[138] Hayek said in his Nobel Lecture that this "pretence of knowledge" comes from the fact that in social sciences one "pretends" that all phenomena are measurable when these in fact are not. Hayek, 1974 (http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economics/laureates/1974/hayek-lecture.html, Accessed 12.3.2007).

7 Crossing Boundaries

A spatial crossing involves crossing from one large group to another and the struggle to hold on to identities. As discussed, large groups invoke feelings of annihilation. This is always a multilevel process of leaving, adopting, rejecting, reflecting and withdrawing or engaging. Many issues can be dealt with information and this cuts some corners, but people still cannot answer a question "what is it really like there?" without experience. Turquet (1975) discussed about becoming part of the group either as M.I. or I.M (see page 86), and if neither happens, remaining a singleton. Processes as "becoming native" (M.I.), adapting (I.M.) or remaining an outsider (Singleton), are noticeable in boundary crossings.

In group settings, intra-, inter- or cross-border, "testimonies" are offered in the form of experiences. Hardwig (1991) raises an interesting question, that arises in cross-border interaction when meeting for the first time to negotiate: How does one rely on either experience or testimony? On what basis does one trust (an interpersonal and inter-group quality), and on what basis do we evaluate evidence? It is important to stress this, because one form of testimony is statistics (whether perceived as accurate or not; and if yes/no, then why?). There seems to be tendency towards believing one's own group more (here on national basis) than the other one, regardless of whether the information is accurate or not. Hence the importance of space and time as organising factors, to engage with task through technology and sentience.

Legitimacy is important in all human functions. Since it is based on continuous learning, negotiation and participation, it is never static. However, without legitimacy nothing gets done. In cross-border interactions this becomes more evident, since social structure does not necessarily support other kinds of legitimacies, thus creating frustration and feelings of misunderstanding. While Thompson (2005: 152) argues that more participation by becoming part of the "virtuous circle" leads to more learning and participation, this may not be true of other spaces, unless one is able to negotiate for oneself a space understandable and acceptable for that particular context. Nor does participation automatically lead to "virtuous circles" due to other struggles, such as power.

Three important aspects of dialogue processes and hermeneutic primary task from group perspective are trust, collaboration and reciprocity. Trust is one of the key issues in inter-organisational and cross-border interactions. In a network both may be present, thus making the process sensitive. Miettinen (2005: 145) distinguishes between trust and

trusting. Trust refers to something which exists as a bond, and trusting to something which is expected, *a priori*, without proof. Hardwig (1991: 693) raises a question in terms of epistemology: is knowledge based more on trust or on evidence? So do we trust others and think what they say is true because of that trust; or do we think what is said is true because it has evidence? How do we know whether to trust the evidence? Trust is considered important, because without it there is no willingness to share information or reciprocate. Therefore, it is necessary also to distinguish between processual and procedure based trust. The former refers to subject matter itself and the latter to steps in doing so. Much emphasis is put on interpersonal trust, but in many cases such trust belongs only to a latter part of partnership as an "add-on" (as institutional trust). In cross-border interactions, it is important to know what enables trust and what does not.

Collaboration refers to doing with and not alongside (Mathur 2006b). It combines trust and reciprocity, not only as personal attributes, but as organisational responses. In collaboration, groups are essential, not just persons in organisations. This is so because one person cannot make an organisation, which is an entity, collaborative. While persons across borders and boundaries can collaborate, as often happens in academia, this requires commitment from actors as well as changing routines to include such activities. Routines are seen as central in learning (Levitt and March 1988), but these also create barriers to import new information that does not fit into existing routines.

Reciprocity refers to mutual and two-way exchange, where what is offered to the other, is corresponded by the other. It is a relation (Burbules 1993). This means that if some privileges are given to a group in one space, it is expected that equivalent ones are extended also to the reciprocating group. It means listening and being alert to the other. An example of reciprocation problems can be visas: whether they are given or not depends on reciprocal treatment.

Reciprocity is needed when exploring organisation capacity and effectiveness to engage with new horizons. When organisations are concerned with entry modes in new spaces, courses of action cannot be decided only by benchmarking existing practices, since no space, time and opportunity is the same. Organisations in spaces such as nations are subjected to laws, institutions and practices unique to that space and learning to understand these differences and where they stem from takes time. Such time taking is essential in learning (Levitt and March 1988). In discussion with others in order to explore possibilities, learning to know existing networks and creating new ones, it is both

necessary and possible to engage with the process of creating effective change. On the other hand researchers have reflected on the "virus" demanding permanent change (Sorge and Witteloostuijn 2004: 1205), while processes usually take longer than expected. It often happens that entry to a market is explored for years or a non-profitable enterprise is sustained over a decade in gestation before it becomes profitable.[139] These are costs that can be inhibiting or prohibiting, and there is need to know if these can be mitigated.

To avoid "parasitic relationships" (Mathur 2006a: 9), it has been noticed that cross-border group tasks may need several parties, such as governments, business and academia, to keep the hermeneutic primary task in function. This points to the need for countervailing power. Splits are created by separating experiences and reasoning. Organisations are neither rational, nor irrational – they are both (Kets de Vries 1978, 1980, 2001; Kets de Vries and Miller 1984). Splitting these two, Mathur (1987: 181) calls a "search for unicorns". The role of management is to help people to engage with their tasks and roles by understanding what is happening in them and in their relationships with others. In relation to "potential space" (Winnicot 1982), Lawrence (1986) speaks of inspecting other realities: by changing space and by doing it with others. The aim in this is to become "disillusioned" (Lawrence 1986: 62), and let go of images that do not sustain reality.

7.1 Cross-Border Interaction

Dialogue is not only sharing, listening, being towards the other, but being in relation to others and relating with them in real time with boundaries. Weick (2001: 41) found that when "temporal and spatial boundaries are exceeded, orderliness, predictability, and sensibleness decline". It is the dialogical bond that makes participants responsible for each other and thus create, at best, I-Thou relationship. But when there is a group reaching towards another territory, relating through dialogue becomes more of an exploration. The container to sustain two groups from different spaces has not yet been formed. The two are apart, as pictured in the Figure 11 (page 133), where groups embedded in organisations approach to create a contact. This is the first phase.

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[139] The longest case I have come across was the Tata Steel endeavour, which took 15 years to achieve profitability. This was at the time of British Raj. In contrast, service enterprises have hardly any gestation period nowadays.

Figure 11: Contact
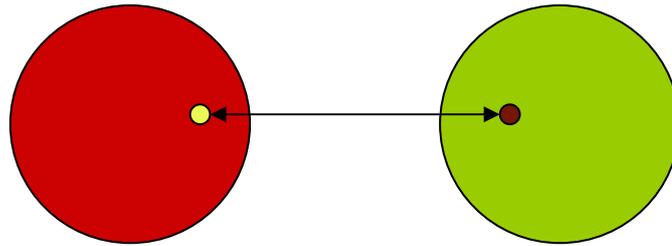
Groups fulfil containment needs through inter-group interaction. A contact is always a mystery, since it cannot be known for sure what may happen, only what the issues of interest are. When it comes to relating for creating opportunities for cross-border interactions, it is not enough to just "think on one's own" – even in one group. Therefore the need to interact and exchange arises. No group located in one space can compose another in a different space dialoguing by itself (except as a phantasy or illusion). A link needs to be created for the purpose of exchange, as pictured in Figure 12. To be successful, this exchange needs to be reciprocal and equal. Usually, what gets exchanged first, are queries and basic information.

Figure 12: Exchange
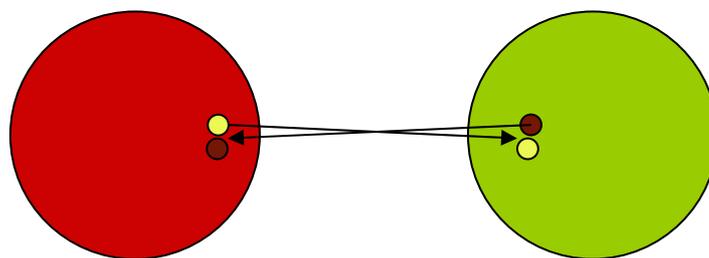
For Bion (1970) a container is an "imagined" space in the sense that it does not physically exist, but is needed for the interaction to happen and to hold to that which is interacted as contained. A container is built on trust-transference interaction. In Figure 13 (page 134) such place is created by two parties, but this space is not yet integrated. The process of containing is similar to thinking: it needs its own undisturbed space and time to develop.[140] Being able to contain is also referred to as "negative capability" (coined by the poet Keats in a letter to his brothers in 1817; referred to in Armstrong 2005: 27-28; Bion 1970: 125; French 2001: 481). What this concept means is that the person is able to hold on to emotions until these have formed into new ideas and thoughts. On the contrary, many seek

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[140] Why else would writers seek "secluded locations" or people feel sorry for not having spent enough time with their families during writing processes? The need for a container, be it one's head or a group, is a real need.

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to "disperse" (Needleman 1990), to explain, and react emotionally or physically. Container is something similar as having the horse-in-hand, where the contained is the interaction, not the horse.

Figure 13: Common Space for Exploration
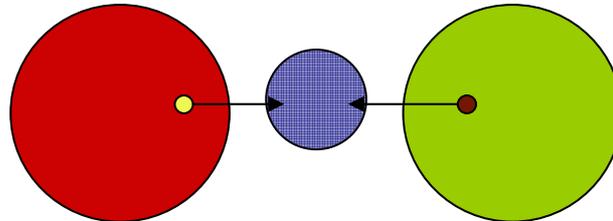
If knowing as a process leading to knowledge is within the knower and not outside, then the group becomes a container for knowing processes in the way that it is within its capabilities to create opportunities that are new and beneficial. If experience is part of the knowledge, then in this case the group becomes a "container" for the "contained" (Bion 1970; Zinkin 1989). In containment, what is held is done so by all parties, which interact closely, and are thus able to create a trusting relationship and work in close proximity, in terms of boundary engagement. This process is highlighted in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Containment
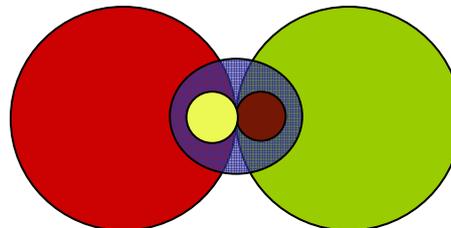
Maintaining group boundaries, and yet allow new matters and insights of knowing to simmer, be explored, thought of and tasted, is achievable only when trust and mutual processes are in place. Individuals may have facts, pieces of information, some spoken or unspoken thoughts, insights and ideas that have no ground to grow until they are brought into a common matrix (Bion 1970; Lawrence 1998) and developed further. Lawrence uses this concept of matrix instead of group processes in Social Dreaming. The word comes from Latin *uterus*, meaning "a place out of which something grows" (Lawrence 1998: 17). Just facts apart do not suffice, since knowledge is not just collected "googling" – bits and pieces of information. Therefore, the nurturing of cross-border interactions to reach containment stage, requires self-reflectivity as well as confrontation to become aware

where and what kind of problems really may hinder the situation. What Kanter (1994) called "marriage" between value-creating entities, would be found here, since the quality of boundaries change, and permeability and diffusion increase even if entities stay independent and apart.

The containment aspect also reflects Seikkula (1994) in relation to discussion of boundary/networked systems. It builds at the margins, for example between a family system or a hospital system, but belongs or resides in neither. This also reflects potential space if there is enough room for creative tension and possibility for new insights to arise.

What makes this a process of knowing are thorough thinking, feeling and integrating processes and acting on it by making it "real", visible and possible for others to participate – in a context. Weick (1993; 1995) and Weick et al. (2005) would call this "sensemaking process", and here it is called an understanding process. One way to differentiate between sensemaking (Weick 1993, 1995), understanding (Gadamer 2000a) and experiential learning (Bion 1961, 1970), is to see them as parts of a process. Sensemaking is a process of dealing with ongoing reality, where unknown and unfamiliar are converted into the rational and orderly. Understanding as a process, in contrast, engages past to present with an eye to the future by revealing patterns that are larger than orderly rationality.

Experiential learning can be captured as here-and-now learning through insights and confrontations in real-time experiences and reflection in a social setting. This enables members of a group to derive more learning from their own and others' experiences. These experiences may be captured as insights, which are differentiated from intuition, since insights always build on experiential material, whereas intuition can be purely based on reason. If we cannot find "strategic rationality" (Weick 1993: 636), are we able to act? A cross-border interaction will always require some sunk costs that cannot be recovered.

In a group, the idea is to explore, create and innovate – not necessarily to reach consensus. To explore with others, giving and taking are at the initial stage when opportunities are only surfacing and do not reveal the treasure trove of potential synergies and reciprocity horizons. The process itself has to be open ended, not predetermined, to leave room for the process to evolve further. The container-containment relationship must be such that neither presses the other out (Bion 1970). Therefore, boundary issues and ways of crossing boundaries become relevant.

7.2 Doing Research in Another Cultural Context

This research was carried out 'here-and-now' when the phenomena were occuring. Some part of the research was done in India. Being abroad adds to challenges: George and Clegg (1997: 1015) found that some locations may add to 'insecurity'[141], or they may add to time and cost, and also how it can be difficult for people of another location to understand the researcher, and vice versa. This means felt and experienced level of uncertainty and ambiguity. Being abroad increases need and capacity of being alone (Winnicott 1958), as well as reaching out, but also enables reflecting where norm boundaries exist. Persons travel with their norms, beliefs, values and attitudes, which do not change when crossing a boundary; neither do people at the other end change their norms, beliefs, values and attitudes, when encountering a person with his/her baggage.

Due to previous experiences of India it was expected and anticipated that some matters might take more time. On the other hand, it was important to get material from both countries. Wilson (2004: 422) in her research observed, that the Indian and 'Western' management literature do not often meet. This is a problem, since it reduces possibilities to understand and keep up discussions with the other territory. Indian researchers write mainly in Asian management journals (and Finnish researchers in Finnish/European/ American ones). Books published and printed in India, are often sold only there, and mainly targeted for the Indian readers. All in all, this leaves a gap of 'existing unknown knowns', which are hard to bridge in a different space without access to the other.

The possibility to do research in India was expected to give new insights of the actual, challenge and revisit some old ones, and give contemporary interpretations to both. "Foreignness" to systems and structures of another territory gives some freedoms, because one is not part of the social structures. On the other hand, frictions in understanding each other may arise due differences in values, habits and beliefs. Thomas (1996; also in Marchan-Piekkari and Welch 2004b) calls the former being outside the dominant focus (usually the time to do research in other contexts is too short to really 'anchor' oneself in the location).[142] In this way the "liability of foreignness" Zaheer (1995) points out, is limited.[143] Being a foreigner may also work to the advantage the researcher, as Wilson

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[141] This may be imagined or real, since some insecurity comes from not knowing or being able to read local life world; the writers, however, made their study in Sri Lanka under a state of emergency.

[142] Fly-in-fly-out research, which refers to short visits.

[143] This research discusses whether multinational enterprises should import capabilities or copy local ones.

(2004) has experienced, since people may open up in a different way, unencumbered by local considerations. However, she also observed that when reciprocity is called for, the researcher must open up and be prepared to discuss herself as well ("tit-for-tat" inclusion).

As Thomas (1996) pointed out above, it is a different challenge to do research abroad. One benefit is overcoming and challenging own pictures-in-the-mind and that enables the researcher examine assumptions anew, since it may push to review one's own premises, prejudices, and practices highlighting how situated those are (both ways: in oneself and in others).[144] This is so not only in terms of research, but also as a human being brought up in a different location and belonging to a different (large) group. This process in itself is a hermeneutic one and increases sensitivity for an international business or culture researcher. The challenges experienced cannot be fully known until they have been faced, because one cannot anticipate what problems surface abroad. Sengun (2001: 68) stresses that culture becomes evident when in another setting – as part of the psyche. Deep understanding of other spaces cannot be acquired only by information. In being "foreign" (or even 'alien'), one is ontologically placed outside one's comfort zone (e.g. everyday routines), where integrating past and present (Sengun 2001: 66) has not happened. However, doing research is different from migrating, due to a shorter time horizon. Visiting a location is not the same as committing to the location, a process which comes when relocating. Therefore, when relocating, the confusion and struggle is "at its maximum" (Sengun 2001: 65).

A challenge can also be a "pathway" into understanding. Researchers abroad at locations far away tend to run into unanticipated challenges, and they may see, interpret and locate hierarchical systems, valid structures and relationships differently from how locals do. This may lead to 'negative personal experiences', which are likely to occur in strange and foreign locations partly due to different value systems.[145] Grisar-Kassé stresses (2004: 157) that it is difficult for a researcher to be confronted by a situation, if he/she cannot lead the research process further, because this may release mixed emotions ranging from helplessness to rage (sometimes involving regression).

A regressive stage lasts until there is acceptance or balancing of the situation, and the naïveté of being a foreign researcher lessens. This is also a boundary awareness process,

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[144] Although the capability of challenging one's own views exists in every researcher, whether this is done or even noticed, is another matter. In situations which are new, this is unavoidable.

[145] It can be argued that value systems are quite similar: people value their family, work, relatives, friends etc. Rather than systems they can be called 'value habits', because these are learnt and then carried out.

and it is here the "dividing line" of beliefs and values actually exist through understanding differences, and gaining awareness to use that understanding. Grisar-Kassé (2004: 159) suggests that "demystification of sovereign researcher" in control might help in the acculturation process by being better prepared. In fact similar (not the same) experiences are likely to be encountered by those who take up work assignments in other cultural locations. If one spends longer time in "foreign" locations, feelings of uprooting emerge.[146] Experiences are bound by what is individually encountered, and experiencing *in situ* gives information of how it feels to be in minority. In this way, whatever is experienced is researchworthy material through the double hermeneutic process. If research were not to reflect or inquire into "negative experiences" (Grisar-Kassé 2004) or "insecurities" (George and Clegg 1997), a part of the human experience and learning in crossing borders is lost.

Wilson (2004: 429) writes that her wish to have workshops was constrained due to "logistical difficulties or misunderstandings". The process may become prone to negotiations, require adaptive abilities and become serendipitous (Wilkinson and Young 2004). Gaining access to organisations can be difficult (Gummesson 1991; Wilson 2004), but it can be even more so abroad where the researcher may not be known, one's university may not be recognized, the context is strange, the researcher looks different and aims may not be understood or people may suspect them. Therefore, participation in local networks can be crucial.

The challenge that comes forth in cross-border research is termed as "distance" (or space) by Noorderhaven (2004). Without this, there would be no international business or research on it. This distance has a double role as experienced by actors and as social reality, which can differ from one's own (Noorderhaven 2004: 84). This distance introduces behavioural consequences born and acted out in a setting that may not be understood by a newcomer. Therefore it also provides a phenomenological journey into oneself where one can gain knowledge through hermeneutic understanding and reflection. It is phenomenological in the sense that one needs to construct and see the phenomenon in its totality, and hermeneutic, because one needs to interpret it. Doing research abroad in locations far away from one's own, might also introduce some new hermeneutic processes into research communities as well.

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[146] Uprooting is discussed by Parikh and Garg (1989) in connection with Indian Women and in dialogues with them.

The literature survey in Part II provided theoretical underpinnings of the inquiry frame and showed up gaps in the literature concerning the research questions and their objectives. Inquiring into how task groups evolve while engaging with an explicit hermeneutic primary task in cross-border contexts was found both feasible and researchworthy.

Part III: Understanding How Task Groups Evolve through Dialogue, Group Relations and Experiential Learning

8 Dialogue, Group Relations and Experiential Learning

Dialogue, in many ways, is seen as reflecting only the spoken, but dialogue practitioners have noticed that at some point feelings and emotions also set in.[147] Therefore, it was decided that instead of spoken as "text", this Study would focus on group feelings and pictures-in-the-mind as well as fills and gaps in interactions, followed with questions arising from the process itself. Thus, task groups were studied not only through what was brought in through articulation, but also what was not. The latter is based on what could be known in view of existing information, and from the process.

Since this work involved doing research in two distinctive territories, some important aspects of India in relation to Finland are noteworthy in respect of this study (Appendix 6). With aspirations for internationalisation and needs to create interactions with previously unfamiliar partners, it has become more relevant to fathom wholes as well as particulars, since both aspects are essential for understanding (e.g. FinnSight 2015: 2006a, 2006b).[148] As environment, work, and social reality are felt more complex, these also get reflected in groups that try to engage with issues from the perspective of their tasks.

In hermeneutic approaches, looking only at the group does not reflect issues that give rise to them in the first place (T4 types of environment[149], Wilkinson and Young 2005). Educational initiatives, collaboration projects, intitiatives in business, or changes in action environments are such. Sometimes trust, which is central for engagement, starts to form when spaces for inquiry are created and where group members can inquire themselves, and by doing so push boundaries further or create new ones.[150] It is important to study understanding processes in group encounters, since cross-border phenomena introduce unique issues, some of which are experienced as new or challenging and some as familiar. The phenomenon of group formation is, more often than not, backed by wishes of

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[147] E.g. Isaacs (2001) and Scharmer (2007) point to this direction.

[148] Finnsight 2015 –programme, 2006a, 2006b (http://www.finnsight2015.fi/, Accessed 19.2.2007; http://www.tekes.fi/julkaisut/FinnSight_2015_laaja.pdf, Accessed 3.10.2007).

[149] By T4 type of environment Wilkinson and Young (2005) refer to turbulent environments where dynamics arise from actions and re-actions. In such environments collaborations beyond singular entities become vital for survival and the need for sensing and understanding increases.

[150] See e.g. Chattopadhyay (1999) and his discussion on boundaries as illusionary. However, illusions are created by boundedness to time and space and thus are part of human experiences. Problems arise when such boundaries are not flexible, permeable or reflective.

fulfilment and reflects issues taken up in a larger context. These wishes are built on expectations arising from scoped opportunities. What is intended in a group can become curtailed if pictures-in-the-mind do not permit boundary crossings or boundary shiftings.

India has gained more media space in Finnish and world media during the last two years and has become an important country to look into for organisations such as educational institutions and private companies. This is reflected, for example, in Helsingin Sanomat Archives from 2000 to 2007 (See: Intia/talous). Yet, the country is still often perceived only from a developing country or exotic perspective.[151] Thus, in order to study what creates mutually beneficial interactions, it was important to understand how and where differences arise, what the blind spots to inquire into are, and how diversity manifests in group settings where different people with diverse institutional backgrounds try to reach understanding. These groups can be considered as Temporary Learning Institutions (TLIs), where meetings are sources of new insights for members themselves, and insights for further testing outside these gatherings. For this reason, groups were studied as the unit of analysis for prime material in order to follow processes – or lack of them – inherent in wishes to link.

An organisation here refers to an ongoing totality, such as enterprise, educational institution or government organisation. Groups, in this Study, refer to task groups of organisations such as project groups, *'ad hoc'* groups, which are groups that are spontaneously coalesced around a topic, or other short term groups. This means their task is of limited time, and time plays an important part in short term interactions.

Processes central to this approach are followed through four studies portrayed as cases. Therefore Part III discusses the context and the content of cases in particular, and theory in general, when and if related to experiences emphasised during this research. Each case is first presented briefly to introduce those aspects that were discussed in group experiences at the time of these studies.

The working hypotheses each case brought forth are further elaborated in Chapter 9. These working hypotheses highlight processes and issues that arose from interactions and contexts, were shared, and may be more generalisable in nature to enable understanding of such phenomena in a larger context.

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[151] This is related to more general discussions on "Otherness". Peltonen (2003) argues how in discussion of international human resource management, one often sees others as "Others", exotic and strange, and critiques this viewpoint.

8.1 Case One: Structuring Educational Internationalisation

Case One introduces a process in structuring educational internationalisation (Appendix 1). The case presents an Asia-Programme, which included India as one of the four target countries. This programme was initiated by the Education Centre "A" which provides vocational, adult and upper-secondary level education and training. "A" was created in 2006 by merging existing educational units into a larger one and is sustained by a Regional Educational Consortium. The meetings with two different groups studied here were conducted with participants from different institutions. In Group One, participants were either teachers from different fields (such as commerce, healthcare, technical subjects) or international coordinators, from three different vocational institutions. In Group Two, participants were from four different institutes (two vocational institutes, one adult education institute and one polytechnic). In addition to these meetings, three interviews within the coordinating institute were undertaken. Both groups were met within the same programme, and the aim was to understand India, and structure educational ties.

The Finnish education system has begun to structure more cooperation initiatives with India only recently. Although some Finnish educational institutions have already had connections with selected Indian ones since early 1990s, these were mostly based on student and teacher exchanges. During the past few years (2001-2007) the possibility of linking with India and Asia were discussed in educational programmes and objectives (Opetusministeriö 2001; 2005; 2006a; 2006b; 2007).[152]

Due to pressing changes in Indian educational landscape and increased need for education at all levels, for any related institution this is an interesting time to create new linkages and collaborations on a different and large scale, and to aspire for a larger footprint in developing new exciting interactive knowledge vistas (Appendix 6). For this reason, structuring of educational internationalisation with institutions in India is at a very promising stage. In these discussions, vocational education has featured less. Vocational education is also more complex in India where it can partly be considered as higher

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[152] Opetusministeriö, 2001, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2007
(http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2001/liitteet/opm_511_23kvstrategia.pdf?lang=fi, Accessed 12.7.2006; http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Kansainvaeliset_asiat/ ohjelmat_ ja_aloitteet/aasia/Ohjelman_valmisteluaineistoa/tutkimusdoc.pdf, Accessed 3.3.2007;
http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2006/liitteet/opm_31_Korkeakoululaitoksen_rakent eellinen_kehittaminen.pdf?lang=fi, Accessed 12.7.2006; http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/ Julkaisut/2006/liitteet/opm_2_opm09.pdf, Accessed 12.7.2006; 31.5.2007.
http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2007/liitteet/tr31.pdf?lang=fi, Accessed 5.6.2007).

education and partly as training. In the vocational sphere two different governmental bodies, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, intersect. Due to its normative primary task (NPT) in skill development, vocational education needs to cater and to be sensitive for business trends and to have knowledge of them for being able to update related skill needs. Thus it was decided in Education Centre "A" that following such a process within this Asia-Programme would be helpful.

It was assumed that instituting a hermeneutic primary task (HPT) would be helpful in inquiring into the group and its needs. When studying the HPT, it is necessary to find out where the group is at that moment and what its pictures-in-the-mind are that either hinder or promote its normative (NPT) and existential (EPT) primary tasks. The idea is to develop an understanding of the group, its goals, purpose of its tasks, and relate them in reality where the group is embedded. In this Case One, one of the aims was to develop understanding and links to institutes in India. This meant a primary identity which was that of an interest group (institutional links) and that of learning (continuous education for teachers). Therefore the task was twofold: to have access to group experiences and relate them to larger totalities. The "reality" portrayed here is derived from existing information, such as news, laws, articles, decisions, memoranda, and experiences. The HPT sought to inquire into tasks and thinking processes in connection to these, creating reflection processes against horizons of possibility, and examining effectiveness of doing so from an outcome perspective.

The planning, designing and implementing of such programmes interest members for various reasons, reflecting existential primary tasks, but not limiting to these. All groups, organisations and even larger entities have existential primary tasks (EPT). In groupwork, whatever material within the group is available readily at hand, is used, and in this context it means previous experiences or assimilated information by group members and insights arising during group meetings. What is not brought into the group cannot be used by the group. For this reason, discussions reflect what has been 'carried-in-the-mind' by the membership as and when groups assembled. In between, there existed a space which here is seen as phenomenal. In this space, possibilities are engaged with or not.

8.1.1 Inquiring with Group I: A Process of Revelation through Dialogical Interaction

The first group convened three successive meetings. Since the primary task in the first meeting was to introduce the research, its goals and to make a study agreement with the

group, it was a short one. The reason to make a study agreement was to have a common aim for the group and based on this it was agreed to examine "Modern India". As this case followed action research principles, the use of working hypotheses and feedback were encouraged.

Right at the beginning the group members started discussing about a study BBC had reported on their website. That study found that 44 % of Finns and Frenchmen were "hostile" towards India, while others were "lukewarm".[153] The group reacted to this with surprise, which happens often when something is an "unthought known" (Bollas 1987). It was raised for the group to consider, whether there was a need somewhere to hold onto a picture of India as an underdeveloped country? When this working hypothesis was offered to the group, it triggered discussion, because for many, this had not been thought of and some found it difficult. Confrontation here arose from the picture-in-the-mind the group members had of themselves as being tolerant, since it had not been challenged by examining a contrarian viewpoint.

Issues that emerged during this discussion concerned Indian culture, strangeness, civilizing mission of education, religion, mystic India, about whether the programme or programme participants have anything to offer, and about some confusion of the pictures-in-the-mind and 'updating' them. A thought arose and was noted that India was somehow feared and it was viewed as one monolith block. This because, as one of the participants said, one can become obsessed ('hurahtaa') about India, and thus drew attention to an earlier thought trend of India as a semi-religious haven. Alongside this bafflement about India there were issues about the programme itself: How will it proceed? What can "we" (the group) do? When listening to the participants, it seemed that there were more concerns about the process than the content. It seemed to be difficult to speak about India (strangeness?) and members wanted to speak about the process, which was more concrete and near. This also reflected anxieties as definite results were not yet in view.

The group touched on topics such as "whether a teacher teaches without knowing experientially about the subject in question", and "what if, in a teacher role, one needs to teach without having the needed skills in that particular subject". This was brought in, because of a target area that was fairly unknown on multiple dimensions. Members expressed worries that it is for education to open up new doors; but how can one open them without knowing new matters oneself, because it is assumed that a teacher knows.

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[153] BBC Online, 2006 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4676304.stm, Accessed 3.2.2006).

There seemed to be both ambiguity and uncertainty present due to boundaries that existed as walls beyond which one has difficulty to see.

At the end of the session, participants were given articles from *India Today* (a periodical similar to *Suomen Kuvalehti*) to read and familiarize themselves further with India. These articles about India dealt with upcoming malls and economic growth and its pains from Indian perspective. Such articles were resources to open more doors into the Indian mindset, raise thoughts, and bring to the group an experience of an Indian periodical. Since the process was much discussed, the group decided to continue discussions next morning. However, the meeting did not take place. This was in itself intriguing, because it pointed to the group as a whole forgetting something that was agreed.

The second meeting began with an exploratory exercise where group members shared their pictures-in-the-mind held of India (What comes to your mind when you think of India?) and whether they had visited India and why (Only three had visited India and all as tourists). The pictures that were shared (portrayed in Figure 15) reflected those in the first meeting, and consisted of cultural issues such as poverty, history, novels, Bollywood movies, religions, meditation, yoga, food, and visits to India. Largely absent were education, business and politics, and changes in the social structure, urbanization, development and initiatives to sustain it.

Figure 15: Presented Pictures-in-the-Mind about India by the Group I Members
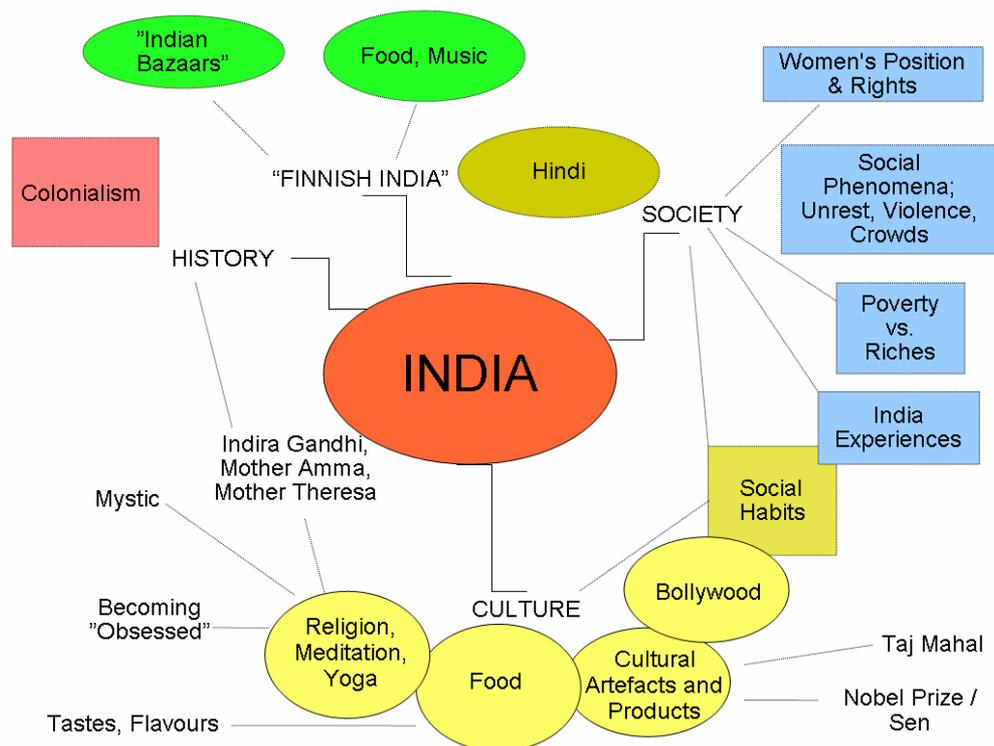
Some of these pictures shared in the group were familiar ones from the Finnish media. However, media often captures events where controversy, bizarre events, curiousness and contradiction are present. Moreover, these pictures have concentrated on what was held, not on processes.[154] This means that pictures may freeze or become static. Therefore, dialogue around these pictures (Figure 15, p. 145) was needed to engage with them, not only as processes within the group and its strong ties, but also with the target area; this to see whether changes are occurring and reasons behind creation of spaces for new insights.

A diverse country, which India is, can be difficult to grasp due to its vast internal differences. Therefore any picture is likely to have some bearing on truth, and makes discrimination between issues challenging. However, such issues as "poverty", "women's position and rights", "social habits" etc. do not necessarily reflect changes and differences that are more prevalent than these concepts themselves.[155] Sometimes, pictures held are difficult to let go of, because it means working with oneself and with groups around.

Due to the input of new information through given articles and thoughts these had raised, the group members turned to discuss about the rapid (visible) technological rise in India and how education has been changing the country. While education system, and education as a whole, was rather unknown to the group, some institutes such as Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) were familiar, for the reason that most Finnish discussions around education in India have centered on these. As a process observation there-and-then, it seemed to narrow reflections on the landscape and keep other important developments out of sight. In those articles given during the previous meeting, some worries as to whether the current trend of growth in India would sustain, were pondered upon. It was remarked in the group how shopping habits had changed and how much more was bought on credit, which could be captured as a familiarising feature. At the same time, it was noted with curiousity that cows still wandered on the streets. It was brought into the group that Finland has woken up to changed India rather late, and this introduced a time perspective. Then the group went on to examine pictures about happiness

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[154] One sometimes tends to forget one's own paths and processes to current stages of being. A path always involves discussions. In India such States as Rajasthan which is often held as backward when it comes to women, has outperformed other states in implementing National Rural Employee Guarantee Act, 2005. On the other hand, literacy rates there are among the lowest of all States in India. It is possible to be ahead on some aspects while backward in others.

[155] In one conference in Finland where India was discussed, a lady got up sounding very distressed when asking about India. She was concerned about poverty and asked how do rich persons (Western) avoid being attacked by poor persons (Indians)? The presenter then asked this lady when was the last time she visited India. She replied: Never.

versus duty, where happiness was seen as a human goal in Europe and duty in India. These reflected discussions on India being primarily a country of "past" in the sense that cultural tradition and history have been brought to the front as a glorified picture of something gone.[156] Such encounters also brush up discussions of value and beliefs held by respective parties, and how space and sentience are being held.

Examples of Bion's (1961, 1970) ba-states emerged in the group processes. In one session members proceeded to ask how things actually are in India? What is the role of women? What can "we" as Finns give to Indians? There was a constant bombardment of questions, as if the researcher was an India Incarnated (baO) sitting with all answers. Whether there was a hope of comfort (baD) by lifting anxiety and filling a void, or need to further as soon as possible what was perceived as a task as it was held (baFl/F), needed to be examined. The need to have definite answers was strongly present, and there was a strong pressure to convert the researcher into a teacher, and for group members to behave as students. Such search for definite answers curbed further examining, and the researcher was stressed to keep herself in the role of listener and was constantly pushed into taking on a role of expert. This reflected the different expectations of the group as a whole with a struggle over whether the researcher 'should' hold these or whether the group as a container 'would' hold them.

As there was a vacuum of knowledge and experience in the group, someone was expected to fill this gap, and such encounters highlight needs of knowing rather than thinking.[157] The problem then arises with drawing a line where and when there is enough knowledge to engage with the task and will that knowledge enable a task become task in itself, or will knowledge become the task. Group Relations experiences have shown that a group can get caught in vicious circles where knowledge becomes so important that the group forgets its normative primary task. Continuous ingroup dialogues can lead to ba-behaviour, because when directed only inside a familiar boundary, a group loses touch with advancements elsewhere, and thus reality (the "whole picture"). A group needs outside inputs when its own knowing does not suffice, but needs to engage with the whole group, too. Written

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[156] This is reminiscent of Max Müller's attitude that India would be a great place were it not for Indians, which he thought had "spoiled" his ideal India. He discouraged his students to visit the country. From a scholarly perspective this is interesting, since it reintroduces a question of" whether the scholar needs to have experiential knowledge to understand the subject and if so, when?".

[157] Knowledge here refers to knowing from experience. Experience is different from written "knowledge", since it is gathered through all senses and not only intellect being in space which is unfamiliar.

material alone is not sufficient to raise encounters that challenge. Striking a balance between ingroup activities and interaction in open systems thinking is therefore relevant.

To find out what the group did think as its task, and thinking of the processes after this meeting during summer holidays, a thought arose that there existed a strong need to discuss about aims and the process itself, more than the target country at this point. The difficulties with task seemed to reflect unclear or conflicting aims. This manifested itself in the group, which was still struggling with unthought knowns while at the same time the programme did have aims – these were different in the sense that group had responsibility to define its task within the programme aims (parts *vis-à-vis* whole). What was attempted earlier in the process, arose strongly now, and seemed to point towards felt unclarity in authority delegation and to a futile feeling coming out of the process. This is an experienced phenomenon when roles are not directly discussed but assumed in the group or when members are either oblivious of their related tasks or not being backed by their organisations. It also reflected that the group was not proceeding in its thought task (which it imagined it had) and some other (task) was curbing its progress.

If information was the concern, there had been many excellent lectures on these target countries and on India in particular as a prelude to groupwork. The participants had familiarized themselves with material about these countries (such as Finpro Country Portfolios[158], among other material). But this did not seem to be enough. This material often brought out only a Finnish perspective and thus was more familiar to the group. The material also spoke only about business perspectives and not education. What needed addressing within the group was a focus on what was central to group task: to use knowing for providing educational material, understanding of culture and people creating it. It is difficult to think of possibilities in another space, since one cannot know what is possible by thinking process alone from afar.[159] At this point the key seemed to be in the process and how that process would benefit the participating organisations as well as members in the group.

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[158] Finpro, 2006, 2007a and 2007b (http://www.finpro.fi/fi-FI/Market+Information/Country+Information/Aasia/India/, Accessed 13.3.2006, 29.3.2007 and 2.11.2007).

[159] Travelling is one example of this. While there are excellent booklets to consult before embarking on a journey, there are still surprises that occur, because a space contains more than can be captured in words. Booklets can also be misleading when portraying something in more positive light than it actually is. Also, some unthought knowns arise due to carried pictures-in-the-mind about diverse historical roots and embeddedness. To be a European in Asia is also a different experience leading to confronting historical residuals.

After the second meeting and having done one interview, the researcher asked participants how they connected the group process to their respective organisations and to themselves. Therefore, before the third meeting, a questionnaire was sent to all participants (Appendix 7). Through this it was learnt how participants themselves thought of what was going on and how they felt about the process. The highlights of the answers given by group members are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Group I: Highlights of How the Group Saw Itself Based on the Questionnaire

	Group Preoccupations and Pictures Held	Related Feelings
Main Problem or Challenge	- making sense of the task - carrying out the task - content	- fragmentation - vastness; high anxiety - frozen predispositions
Held Roles and Attitudes	- producer of knowledge - own roles as educators were viewed as clear - changes in attitudes towards Asia	- wishes of concreteness, and expert knowledge - fear of failure - wishes for high class projects - dependency for inputs
Working Hypotheses on Aims and Expected Results	- not more than talk - expectations of cooperation - producing educational material - creating contacts	- expectations and wishes of interaction, trust, mutual understanding and cooperation - incoherence and vagueness
Expected Benefits	- networking; contacts - getting in touch with globalisation - benefits for immigrant education, work opportunities for students, information about Asia - course preparation and implementation	- need to have current information - creating educational material - helplessness about resource inadequacy
Organisational Support	- organisations not always supporting (changes) - participating in existing portals - taking learning into educational plans	- for some there was support, some were unclear - needs for multiculturalism and communication skills - 'shut in, shut out'

In thinking about these answers later on, several bundles of problems surfaced. One was the enormity of the felt task, high anxieties and fear of failure. The second was role allocation with authority delegation and support within organisations to create a sustained group with its own task boundary, and not just a local one, because there was dependency for inputs beyond the group's own boundaries. The third was group membership and group goals as a group, where anxieties can be shared, engaged with, and brought forward. The fourth surfaced as group tendency towards a vicious circle where same issues kept on arising time and time again. It was also felt that "minds" were scattered due to the previous reasons. Everyone wanted to find right links, and partners, create a good working network,

but how? Members were reflecting on how to do cooperation and how to picture the changes. They wanted to know about educational contents, to increase cultural awareness, how to take into consideration business life and its challenges and how to face challenges and act on the global market. At this point these processes seemed to need more attention and awareness.

As participants reflected upon what was seen as normative primary task in their home organisations, it became evident that the group normative primary task was neither clear nor strong, and resulted in splits as subgroups held by different organisations along their own felt boundaries or along individual tasks (splitting/baM). In a sense, the group was 'shut in' by those it represented and 'shut out' from relating as a group to groups in the other territory.

8.1.2 Understanding Organisational Background

Interviews in the coordinating institute were important in gaining more understanding of the process from the management perspective. Based on interviews it seemed that there had been some difficulties in the process. As was pointed out above Finnish National Board of Education (later FNBE) was shifting its focus towards Asia, simultaneously retaining focus on Europe – that was itself in an enlargening process. Those, who were looking for funding for new projects needed to apply for what is applicable if they wished to have projects, since these are largely supported by outside institutions. At that point, there arose understanding about strategic importance of Asia, also in vocational education. This required rethinking of what would be offered in educational institutes and why, and what skills might be needed in the future, but also what were the resource constraints. Also the emphasis on creating a multicultural society, slowly increasing immigration, and new educational policies were becoming important. This stressed a need to have an Asia Programme. Issues emerging were:

1) Partner selection: network building and discouragement of only bilateral connections by FNBE; previous experiences, trust, cooperation abilities. "EFFECT"

The reason given in the interview was that this way it is expected that information spreads better and there is more effectiveness. This was interesting from boundary making perspective, since it demonstrated that when space is created by shifting a boundary at will, organisations respond by filling it. It showed that for some endeavours, also a financial boost is needed for organisations to step in.

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2) Reorganisation: programme initiation before change, bringing a large number of existing educational units under "one umbrella"; different organisational structure; new people, new organisation and new internal relations in the form of changes in the role-set, tasks, authority and structures. "SURVIVAL"

This resulted in a situation that this particular programme was not felt anchored anywhere, since what previously existed, did no more and new structures were only in the stage of creation. The other was that there had been a number of people willing to attend to the programme and only a small number were selected. The selection had caused speculations why someone had been selected and not others. A need for such a programme was expressed, but also questioned. Some expressed the need, because of the growing interest towards Asia; others felt that this was not part of stated aims. So, an internal balance was still to be achieved.

3) Unclarity: expressed anxiety over the success; different opinions over India and its importance; number of projects; resource constraints. "EFFORT"

Many projects are time limited, tending to come and go. The experience of time constraints was expressed through limited management time, since projects were running in the midst of new reorganisation. It was also voiced that for some people in such large organisations, internationalisation was still somewhat external to 'real' work, outside and remote "fiddling with". One problem voiced during interviews was getting recognition for degrees from abroad. These had also introduced prejudices and fears. It was felt during the interviews that only with activity and openly engaging with cooperation can the project succeed. Clarity was expressed on the issue that the society needed higher level international skills and know-how, linguistic skills, and cultural sensitivity. While there seemed to be interest towards India, concrete links were missing, and continuation of this part of the programme was unclear at that point (There already existed some links with other countries).

4) Internationalisation needs: create opportunities for teachers and students to have international experience; networking, and learning; curriculum needs; strategies "FUTURE"

The future was emerging through anxieties of change. In addition, it was expressed that there were sometimes difficulties in getting teachers to leave for international exposure,

while possibilities for this did exist. In interviews it was stressed that projects need to go hand in hand with the strategies and agreements made within the organisation to create the desired impact. Meanwhile there seemed to be little time for needed interactions and clarifications of relations and relatedness within institution(s). Based on this, everyone did their best, building on assumptions that were not necessarily backed. India as a target area pushed this in the front, since India had not been included in the projects before.

In these interviews comparison between China and India came up. Some interviewed held previous experiences of China, and interaction with Chinese. There arose curiousity about India and questions of what opportunities it would provide. The questions floating were: Is India like China? If not, how does it differ? What can be gained by linking with India? It sounded as if through this particular project such questions had a possibility to arise, because it created discussions and controversy, and thus pushed the coordinating institution to engage in intra-discussions. While in Autumn 2006, China and Vietnam were identified as key areas, India was added in Spring 2007.

Based on these interviews, it also seemed that networking as such was quite a new phenomenon. This was brought out in one interview. Internationalisation, networking and needs of the business community gained more importance along with EU after year 2000, and thus network approach was adopted during last four to five years.

8.1.3 Group II: The Experience of India from a Finnish Perspective

In Autumn 2006, when the researcher was to leave for India for the other part of empirical work, continuation of the India part of the programme was still unclear and discussions were underway. While the researcher was in India, the Group I was supposed to meet in November, but there was difficulty expressed in finding the time. After returning from India in January 2007, the researcher learnt that the November 2006 meeting had not taken place, and secondly, that a delegation of six members was about to leave for India in three weeks. Half of this Group II (or Delegation Group) had been members of the Group I and half were new members. It was then agreed to continue the process with this second group ("EFFORT").

During the first meeting, which was held only a few days before the departure, group participants shared thoughts on the process and discussed next steps. This meeting was attended by five out of six members. Since a different group composition brings new dynamics, changes in the group were discussed ("FUTURE"). It was also the first meeting

after the researcher returned from India. Pictures held by this Group are summarized in Table 9.

Members discussed that India is a large country and that one will find all kinds of things there. Partly due to this they wanted to make sure the journey is successful. One of the group participants had previous links, and these were utilized now. The group had a full five-day programme with eight planned visits to various institutes of interest within one state, namely Gujarat. In the beginning it was thought that cooperation would materialize with Pune, due to Finnish activities there (Tampereen Kauppakamari -lehti 1/2006)[160]. It was discussed in the group that Gujarat is an interesting state from business point of view and it has emerged as the number one location for Indian companies and a hub of development.[161] ("EFFECT").

Table 9: Pictures Held by Delegation Group (Group II) before Experiences in India

	Group Preoccupations and Pictures Held	Related Feelings
Main Problem or Challenge	- practical matters - presenting solid agenda - wish to build: trustful, knowledge oriented, reciprocal relations	- what will be needed? - mentioned goals enough? - anxiety and excitement
Unknown Thoughts	- comparison of India with China - needs of potential partner	- curiosity - anxiety over success - helplessness over resource dependency
Issues of Time and Space	- working hours - need for shared time	- expressions of limited time - fear of failure

The second group was clearly more focused and clear about its primary task, because it did not have any conflicting tasks. It also benefited from experiences in the first one and persons with previous experiences, in the sense that this instilled some feeling of safety in the group. ("SURVIVAL").

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[160] Tampereen kauppakamari –lehti, 2006 (http://www.tammistoknuutila.fi/kauppakamarilehti/Lehtiarkisto/2006/1_06/intia.html, Accessed 3.3.2006). Pune is an active 'small' town of ca. 5 million people, and has good educational institutes, but many businesses are expanding elsewhere due to rising land prices.

[161] The group had decided to explore Gujarat, which is one of the most advanced states in India, but comparatively unknown and unexplored in Finland. Gujarat has strong business environment. There are a number of high class SEZs being built there, along with 40 ports. It also has good energy supply. The researcher experienced first hand the 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit 2007' in January 2007 (http://www.vibrantgujarat.com/, Accessed 25.2.2007) where Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth of USD 102 billion were signed. All the major Indian industrial houses like Reliance were there.

Meetings after the visit to India

There were three meetings after the group members visited India. Since it seemed schedulewise impossible to get the whole group together at a short notice and soon enough after the visit, group members were met in three sessions. The reason to meet quickly after the visit was to touch on gained experiences in their freshness, before they were lost in the hurly-burly of everyday life, and before reasoning and rationalising set in. This was captured and voiced by one member, who had already started to experience this change. This brought out time boundary in building linkages from the perspective that the more time lapses, the more barriers arise from everyday matters thus leading to a lost opportunity. The members were conscious of this.

The visit had been felt as successful and everyone in this group was enthusiastic about it. However, the experiences were diverse. Since everyone in the group was looking at the process from his/her point of view and usage for the benefit of the background organisation, they all seemed to derive different meanings. This visit had left a strong impact on the mindset of the members and many matters highlighted earlier were re-thought after the visit. This can be compressed into remarks such as: "I shall never again think everything is perfect in Finland"; "There exists know-how elsewhere too"; "There are as good or better schools in India as/than in Finland". The possibility of having seen India "from inside" was considered an important aspect. While on the other hand it was known that education has its problems in India, the recognition that despite these there exist schools with at least equal status compared to Finnish ones, was important learning for this group. Both aspects of reality – good and bad – were acknowledged.

After visiting India opportunities were seen differently. Some members said that this experience had changed their attitudes towards India and some even pointed out that earlier it had not interested them. It was also felt that this visit gave something to work with in the home institute. It was reflected by few members that Finns have often been the "giving side" in many projects and now with India it was felt that there were gains too. A strong feeling was expressed that they needed to work hard if there is to be future collaboration. These visit experiences are summarised in Table 10 (page 155).

Table 10: Group II: India as an Experience before and after the Visit

	Pictures Held before the Visit	Pictures Expressed after the Visit
Changed Pictures	- there is nothing to learn - can Indian knowledge be trusted? - education better in Finland	- learning can occur anywhere - knowing is universal - "goodness" is not in the material - reflecting on good and bad
Unknown Thoughts	- Finnish Education as a picture-in-the-mind - pride in Finnish system and knowledge - comparing with China - opportunities were not identified or were difficult to express	- surprises over high quality and technical standards - questioning whether only "model institutions" were selected - high standard is in the people, not in technology - interaction seen as integral part of education; the presence - comparisons with China were given content; India was seen more "Western" - the sense of opportunities was held
New Insights	- local habits unknown - poverty, cows, congestion - adult education important	- surprises over held images which were different; unpreparedness for some local customs - being treated "godly"(162) - reference to changing environment, technology - different conceptions of education and its purpose

What was also captured was a strong need for close connections between the institutes and worklife. Finnish institutions do not monitor employment and placements as Indian institutes often do.[163] It was learnt that the Indian industry works more closely with educational institutions than in Finland. The group also found common areas of interest: business education, welfare for senior citizens, and ICT education. This was also reflected in decisions to put more emphasis on cooperative business education.

When reflecting on the process, it seemed that emergence of two different groups provided evidence of two primary tasks existing simultaneously that could not be addressed by the same group, due to authority delegation limits. The first group had a strong normative primary task in increasing knowing about India within the Finnish educational system. This by its nature falls within the role of a teacher, who is responsible for diffusing that knowing. Since there were wishes to interact, this shadowed the assumed NPT, and to avoid corruption of it, another group had to be formed, because the first one got stuck. This was captured by one member after the group meetings. This second group, by formation alone, had the authority to start negotiating interactions between groups, and also started this process. However, it also seemed that without the process being somewhat curbed and getting stuck, it might have been dismissed altogether. Here some creative tension arose

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[162] The concept of "visitor is godly" (*Atithi Devo Bhavah*') was heard and felt. This notion can be found in Indian epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata.

[163] Placement records are used as one criteria of quality, especially in business education or "technical education" institutes. The picture is that if one does not get employed, what is the reason to get such education, where is the value created from education and whether there is any positive rate of return on educational investments.

from wishes not being met, and curiosity became stronger than cautiousness. The real interactions showed that there are untapped possibilities and that held pictures did not present the whole "truth", and were failing to account for the phenomenal primary task of engaging in a cross-border context. Therefore it was a strong learning experience out of which the group and institutions could draw their own inferences for future plans.

8.1.4 Learnings from the Process

Case One included many stages from entrepreneurial activities to moments of hesitation and uncertainty whether India is to be included or not, until India was seen in a different light and the potential to build linkages was experienced. Asia (here: China, India, Japan and Vietnam) altogether became a target area that was identified to be of great importance. Due to persistence and rethinking among group members this process continued. In such a case, the interaction between groups and organisations as a whole becomes important. In addition, the project group interaction as a node of new exploration needs to be acknowledged.

The Indian level of expertise and know-how had surprised the group and introduced cognitive dissonance, which disturbed previously held pictures-in-the-mind, either conscious or unconscious. This showed that changes in India were not fully registered. The visit had given new insights on developing home institutions as well, and "aired" some assumptions of the level of technology as a 'picture-in-the-mind', which was previously not held. India was potentially seen as an equal partner, and members were surprised about this, since earlier pictures had not supported such a view. Cooperation and developing it with local companies was regarded important, and this came strongly forth during the visit. It also became clear that with the visit the whole process gained new vitality, because members could actually speak from their own experiences and not about abstract knowledge. The key learnings are summarised in Table 11 (page 157).

Instituting HPT can be helpful in cases such as this, when there is ambiguity and uncertainty, since to a large extent one is dealing with internal barriers and pictures-in-the-mind which may hinder or help new vistas and avenues to open through reflection processes. This means listening to the group needs as well, and formulating steps together. Tasks built from strong NPT have greater propensity to create desired outcomes. This can be done by institutions themselves creating spaces for reflection and exploration between different actors in and outside the group. A facilitator would be needed only if the process

gets hindered or until such time that group develops its own capabilities of mobilizing for next steps, through hermeneutic understanding of its own group processes.

Table 11: Learnings from Case One

Case One	- It seemed that educators think less of their own pictures-in-the-mind, due to the nature of them being the "knower", because there is an unexamined thought that one needs to teach pictures-of-the-world as existing in books and other resources. For educators such group dialogue on various issues could be beneficial for reflection and also for getting outside the familiar, using groups, instead of working alone.
	- There seemed to be lack of discussion and thinking on boundaries and role allocation as a group process, which was pictured to be same in intra- and inter-group processes. This may lead to two outcomes, because either the group does not form itself as a container or the work gets loaded on few people thus affecting the hermeneutic primary task. This stresses that role taking, holding and giving along with appropriate authority delegation needs to be discussed more, because the formation of boundaries and adjacent boundary management might help in group formation as well as highlighting the difference in micro- and macro-level groups.
	- The interest level on a project such as this seems to vary in different institutions. This is reflected in the need for similar projects and their role in the organisations and inter-organisational linkages, because these seem to be taken up not because of the normative primary task needs, but because of the phenomenal primary task.
	- The possibility of building new vistas of understanding gets overloaded with task requirements which arise out of pre-existing frames, because the group thus acts more like singletons with single individual task instead of joint group task. This also affects anxiety sharing and impairs use of alternative channels of interaction.
	- The possibility to look outside the routines may benefit the whole group, because experiences shared and held give new insights into routines.

Responses from members on presented working hypotheses highlighted needs to modify some of them thus stressing a need for sharing, and also that raising them gives opportunities for process checks. For example, there were discussions about the group aims and whether job distribution was noticed or not. The rationale in raising working hypotheses lies in this, because members can participate in this process by offering, accepting, refuting, dismissing, changing, or discussing these. The central idea is to bring them under scrutiny within the group, and thus into active awareness. This is important, since such matters easily get pressed down by rationalising, and thus reinforce imagined or unexamined predispositions.

8.1.5 Examination of Case One in Relation to Four Primary Tasks

This case presented why it is important to view the four primary tasks and what enables or impedes task processes. For one, for containment of issues, the container – here the task group itself – needs to be suitable for the endeavour. For members of the first group, the normative primary task was to engage with the programme aims. However, as is presented here, the existential primary task was to gain information as a means of keeping the group

active and supported for time spent on it. From the perspective of their normative primary tasks in their home institutions this was a valid aim. The phenomenal primary task was to extend beyond their normative primary task, which did not initially proceed due to authority allocation being inconsistent with their normative primary task, not with their phenomenal one.

The transcendence into containing a cross-border initiative required a new container, which became Group II. An interesting part of this was that only two institutions of the three original ones were part of this other group. In processes experienced during the meetings, the institutional containers comprising members from three different institutions acted according to their authority delegation. Those groups that had entered with more flexible authority or were able to re-negotiate this during the process, stayed with the process. To strengthen this, other members outside the original ones were invited to join.

This case highlighted the importance of creating such containers that are both institutionally ("home institutions" and institution as members gathering together to form it) and process-wise flexible and able to re-negotiate boundaries. Since there was no other group in view when this "temporary learning institution" began, it was holding all the aims within its realm of task. However, the use of the same group would have required institutions in themselves to be engaged with the process more actively to gain results (which can be inquiry based). If the boundaries cannot be flexible to include new processes arising, then the only option is to terminate the process or create new containers for enabling it. This is precisely what happened.

From the research perspective, the insights members generated during and after this process, were thought provoking. After the process had captured the container-contained 'problematique', a member expressed it. It was also visible from the process that institutional engagement is vital for such processes and in a task group, the members are in key positions to negotiate and engage their home organisations into examining their own wishes and activities. Only through this could the group comprising of different institutes create flexibility and understanding for new vistas that are not currently in the active thought.

8.2 Case Two: A Finnish Company Goes to India

Case Two presents a medium-sized Finnish technology manufacturer "B" and its process in creating business links with an Indian partner (Appendix 2). The company has existed since 1960s and has been gradually internationalising already from the beginning. India came into possibility landscape in the company "B" in early 1990s. At that time, Soviet trade had disappeared with the collapse of Soviet Union; the European market was too saturated and filled with existing and strong competitors with low growth in the area; and, Nordic Europe was considered too small and already tapped. This was also the period when Finland was struggling with one of its worst recessions which affected "B" as well. Due to these reasons the company started to look at Asian markets which showed signs of growth, but were not much explored yet. This development was reinforced by company's new vice president, who had previous knowledge and experience of Asia. India was targeted in 1993, first by choosing an existing Indian company with field specific know-how as a representative.

This case, based on interviews with company owners and managers, shows that processes take their time but even with limited time and resources it is possible to create new business opportunities and learnings. The interaction between resources and will to create possibilities therefore becomes an interesting target for research in small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) that engage with internationalisation processes. The main aim was to understand experiences with India seen from a Finnish perspective. Since the company had experience of doing business in India, this aspect was considered important in the view of HPT. Here, the unit of analysis was the "management-in-the-mind" as a group.

8.2.1 Challenges of Internationalisation

Small and medium-sized companies experience different problems than large multinational companies (MNCs), due to more evident resource constraints. Large MNCs are expected to manage on their own, whereas SMEs may need help through financing, capability building and clustering. In Nordic countries such as Finland, para-statal organisations exist to syndicate knowledge and allocate financing, and industry level societies or federations pool networks to partly hold and carry risks. Large companies benefit from being pre-

known[164], even if they do not yet have operations in certain countries. One such example is IKEA, which has no stores in India, but is known to many through extensive use of its catalogues by local carpenters. Therefore, were IKEA to initiate business in India, it is widely known already.[165] For a SME, building this awareness is one of the most crucial factors in a large country such as India which has a fragmented market: vast and diversified, with many international and local competitors. To be recognized will take time and effort, and patience is needed. Therefore, such countries are not easily entered without long term plans and readiness to learn.

The company "B", portrayed here, started full fledged collaboration with an Indian partner in Autumn 2006. Before this collaboration started, there were various steps which indicated that entering spaces is not a one time endeavour, but a long process that may include several steps and time. From the Finnish perspective, the company was an early India starter, prospecting possibilities and entering India already in 1993. Since market conditions in Europe and Nordic countries were saturated, the company needed to find out where to focus its marketing efforts. Asia was selected due to its high market potential. One of the countries selected was India.

For this reason, looking into this case provides a window into what hermeneutic processes a medium-sized company needs to engage with in order to connect with new and different markets. While the company "B" in question had a long history of internationalisation efforts, India as a market place was new to them and differed from many others.[166] For one, the Indian market was and still is somewhat protected (e.g. retail) and local players do have some advantages, since they know the game and are known in their areas. Also there has been a "rush" to India by international players, who are drawn there by growing markets and the development boom. In addition, to understand how to do business in India – to know its laws, structures, systems, habits, etc. – cannot be achieved overnight. Even

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[164] Knowledge transcendence even before actual arrival into the market.

[165] This has also been experienced by the researcher. IKEA reportedly knows of this copying. Curiously, although IKEA has not yet entered Indian market, local companies have stepped in to fill the gap, such as Home Town by Home Solutions (India) Ltd. If IKEA finally decides to start in India, it will be interesting to see what happens in the market. About use of catalogues see e.g. Sen, 2006 (http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2006/02/12/MNG41H6PEF1.DTL, Accessed 27.10.2007).

[166] E.g. differences between India and China. It is noteworthy that Indian leaders are often discussed (e.g. Knowledge@Wharton 2007c, http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/india/article.cfm?articleid=4238, Accessed 4.11.2007), but Chinese not. However, this research emphasised that Indian managers tend to focus more on "people management, motivating employees and so forth", as Cappelli pointed out.

large MNCs have failed in entering Indian market when unaware of local sentiments or misreading the market.[167]

8.2.2 Understanding Challenges through Interviews

Due to resource constraints, it was decided to start with a representative. Resource constraints can be many, not only material or financial: these can also refer to skills, capabilities such as language and local knowledge. Market entry was done through representatives, since local knowing and existing networks were needed, as well as capable service provider in case of problems, updates, service, or replacements of equipment. These representatives were local firms with adequate skills and capabilities to handle product-service linkages. For access reasons these need to be local. Using representatives with existing links gives resource leverage, because financially one can balance by reason of financial resources not being tied to fixed costs. However, there are downsides as well, since a representative may have other representations which sell more easily and with more profit.[168]

This entry strategy provided some access, but was not very successful due to low penetration into the market beyond the selected location. Although many representatives were tried, none of these collaborations proved to create enough inclusion, and were short in duration.[169] Therefore, after initial experiences, the company decided to look for a suitable partner with reach to more than just local market. Once such partner was identified, it took some years to build trust and reach agreement. In late 1990s other countries also woke up with regard to India and sudden rush into the country pressed down prices. By that time there was already some expertise regarding Indian market.

Therefore one issue that emerged in interviews was timing. As the company got to know more of the Indian market through trial and error, it also learnt. There were expectations and experiences that contradicted and/or engrossed attention. India in itself for company's own salesmen was quite 'exotic, but interesting' in the beginning and introduced some

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[167] An example of the different mindsets was given during Confluence 2006 at Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, where Ford Company was discussed. When Ford first tried to penetrate Indian market it failed to understand market dynamics and clientele there. The price level differences – what is affordable to many, not few – has not always been understood outside India. Therefore Indians have advantage in producing goods and services for the local needs, while many imported goods are bought only by those who are affluent. Prahalad (2005) developed his concept of the "bottom of the pyramid" by highlighting the significance of understanding contrarian perspectives.

[168] Especially with products that have long life-cycles from 15 to 30 years, depending on the product.

[169] As was pointed out in one interview, getting 5 % of local market is easy, but beyond that no more.

culture shocks. Asia in general was new for the most, and there were differences in work habits and trust building processes. Differences in pictures about Finland versus India are summarised in Table 12.

Table 12: Differences in Finnish and Indian Pictures-in-the-Mind

	Presented "Finnish" Pictures	Presented "Indian" Pictures
Roles	- technical finesse and know-how - multiple roles - need to be expert in both above	- job division - need to be good in one role - expertise divided
Orientation	- product - "agreed" seen as a product and clear - time calculated: forward orientation - multitasking (everything done oneself) - small number of people	- persons - "agreed" seen as evolving process - time experienced; orientation concentrated on here - expectation of job division and shared responsibility - large masses (scale)
Trust	- procedure based - technical superiority - salesmen enough to sell products - humility, respect and listening - diversity can be a problem; creates needs to familiarize with	- process based - interaction superiority - top management needed to build initial trust for sales - need to discuss at right levels - diversity seen as richness
Management Needs	- seminars for customers - needs for multicultural approach and language skill development - possibility and access to organisational support; government interest and support in export sector	- needs for collaborative seminars and workshops with partner and customers - need for good English skills - companies expected to manage on their own
Market Needs	- best quality and design - price sensitivity along local prices - price an issue, but not always deciding factor - known product in Europe; needs for market knowledge based on quality, environment friendliness and price - in Finland, product-service linkages strong and mature	- adequate quality and design - price sensitivity along market prices - high price sensitivity - unknown in the beginning: needs for market knowledge elemental - in India, product-service linkages need to be created
Technical Needs	- large product range - EU regulations; environment reguirements	- different needs - local, changing regulations depending on each state

With the challenges of internationalisation and not with India alone, the company has built its structures to meet the needs of new situations. This also happened step by step. Every country added brought new challenges and learnings which in turn influenced management and structures (large re-organisation in 2000); for example, building capabilities in documenting, creating specific customer services (customer service department in 1997),

training programmes (since 1973, but more focused in 1990s), re-organisation of production (2000 and 2006), stressing language skills on all levels, emphasis on cooperation in R&D with different institutes and larger R&D facilities (1996 and 2007), and establishing a factory in China in 2002. In the end of 1990, the company introduced more management level education and increased internal communication, as well as internal flexibility, and organisation change in 2000 aimed to introduce more clarity between operations and also a more internationalised outlook. Some attitudes changed along with internationalisation and also the need for various languages. Now the company is on the verge of contemplating on needs to have other in-languages than Finnish. Language needs and internationalisation create dialogue pressures, since specific requirements arise and communication becomes a key feature of organisational understanding and functioning.

The problems became visible in two ways: through technical systems and through human systems, and their confluence. In this case, the socio-technical systems were honed firstly in systems of local proximity, and secondly in various interactions with other systems across borders as the internationalisation proceeded. Therefore the core systems have local features that cause felt frictions in time and space, namely in ways and habits of doing and understanding that doing. While previously it was thought, both in Finland and India, that one needs to proceed incrementally from one step to another, experience has shown that more and more technology companies directly target export markets instead of local markets. The reflection was, that without demanding customers, the company would not have evolved as it did: there was a need to think together. The pressures created by customers have stressed needs to stay ahead or at least at par with recent developments. While trial and error was seen as beneficial, the focus was on having clear goals and responsibilities, and it seemed that this clarity had grown hand in hand with experiences.

Another aspect was environment, which is a blessing and panacea to all energy related firms. It is a blessing, since it fuels needs for new products that are created by innovations. It is a panacea, since much of organisational survival relies on routines – in this case, those products that are "breadwinners". It was stressed in the interviews that R&D was one of the key issues to keep the company focused even when facing stringent times. Although competition among international players was more levelled in India where many were importers, finding matching price-product levels took learning. It was reflected that having large markets with many products may introduce a picture of "cheapness". On the other

hand, environmental regulations in India vary, and although there are highly polluted areas, environmental knowing and caring is rising with needs for better living space. This means that product development requires to take care of multiple spaces (those where products are sold), but manufacturing has its limits.

With products such as "B" has, the challenges in India arise also from used fuels, since indigenous fuels such as gas, coal and oil are mostly used, whereas in Europe the focus is on renewable fuels such as biofuels. In India, where food production is important for reasons of large population, biofuels are viewed with mixed thoughts. Oil and coal are easy to store, which give these a benefit in volatile price markets. Burner technology as it is now, is based on innovations made in 1930s, which means next generation burners are yet to surface. However, even the existing ones would reduce No_x and CO_2 levels considerably. Local emission levels are decided and monitored by each state organisations and requirements differ, and EU standards may not always be enough.[170] Therefore local knowing and acceptance is needed: knowing to see where trends are leading to, and acceptance both legally and locally. These, however, were hindsights but reflected some issues that had been central in the learning process.

This case also brought out that internationalisation is to some extent a creation of will and capabilities. Both need to be present, since the competition is not necessarily easier outside Finland, where different local and international players mix and therefore moving into positions early enough is essential. While the company did not have huge success during the first ten years, there was ample learning of the local business life and environment which contributed to later success. Also, it was able to market its products and increase brand knowledge of its products. After years of negotiations, it finally got a partnership with an Indian Boiler Manufacturer with a large and known network of customers, beating one large competitor over this partnership. Already in 2002 to 2003 company's focus had changed to Own Equipment Manufacturers.

In reflecting what caused the company to succeed and create collaboration in 2006, were such principles as customer orientation against product orientation, flexibility, ability to tolerate other persons from different countries, strong personal relationships with long term perspective, and commitment to process. Trustworthiness, reliability, honesty, and mutual understanding were mentioned as key elements shared as values by the two partnering

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[170] India has come up with its own pollution stardards, but the division of power between Central Government and States needs also be taken into consideration.

companies (both are family owned). Creating a trusting relationship was seen as a process that has no borders. Still, it was reflected that there is a lot to learn. One part of learning is ability to let go of past knowing, and ability to trust persons from other cultures. As the Managing Director of this company pointed out, to succeed one needs to have self-confidence, in one's own products and organisation and also in oneself as part of the organisation. Without this it would be meaningless, since abroad no one is going to respect you unless you respect yourself.

In India one needs to adjust to local problems as well. For example, with burners there is excessive heat and above all, sand (besides price-quality issues). Locality calls for innovations needed in that specific area. As Knowledge@Wharton (2007b[171]) brought out in their article about Nokia and its success in India, they pointed to these aspects: clear focus, early investment in brand building and manufacturing, R&D, distribution and local innovations. One such innovation was including a flashlight – a feature that has applications in India. Similar issues emerged with "B": early market entry, learning, partnership with an Indian company, price-product range according to customers, adapting products to local markets (market needs). A lesson of India's developing market, by Kapoor (in Knowledge@Wharton, 2007b) is that Nokia built a ladder from low end to high end. Since the market is evolving, one cannot use same principles as in a mature market, but there needs to be possibility for the customer to choose. This brings out a question that determines post-entry strategies: is one there to stay or is it just a phase?

Locality may also mean participating in community building, social programmes and creating possibilities for less fortunate, because the task of a firm is seen more wholesomely than it is in Finland. Therefore thinking of one's locality, centrality and ownership also reflects boundary questions and where these are set.

8.2.3 Learnings from the Process

Case Two brought into the fore the question of when is it the right time to enter a market. It also highlighted that it is important to adapt into the market, not the other way round. This adaptation may call for mindset changes, where instituting hermeneutic primary task is of help. Some companies, such as in this case, need to do so by accumulating experience in the market space. This experience cannot be gained in another territory, because of local

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[171] Knowledge@Wharton, 2007b (http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/india/article.cfm?articleid=4220, Accessed 4.11.2007).

elements that cannot be imagined or experienced or understood in a space different from where operations are - in addition to needed business acumen.[172]

One may ask whether there could have been another route to India? While this is hindsight, important learnings can be derived from this experience. Hermeneutic primary task cannot exclude business or market problems from its knowing, since these reflect anxieties and fears in companies as groups. These key learnings are summarised in Table 13.

Table 13: Learnings from Case Two

Case Two	- In systems such as companies, capabilities need to be honed with time and in view of purpose and normative primary task, because in human responses phenomenal primary tasks may take precedence over normative one, since cross-border interactions introduce insecurities due to unexplored or uncommon value habits.
	- Timing is critical, because windows of opportunity have limited openings and starting only when windows are open will lead to processes being delayed. This also points to the need to have some enabling capabilities first, and all around capabilities second.
	- While trust is often spoken, it is less approached as experiential learning situation, where different levels of trust need to be understood, because frustration and anxiety are signs of process difficulties that need to be addressed on the level they unfold. Therefore process designs are important and lead to change processes, if and when they are allowed to inform existing ones.
	- Dialogue processes can be long in cross-border interactions and lead to the need to be more prepared beforehand, because of needs for clear responsibilities, tasks and authority structures, as well as to be able to picture what value additions are essential for organisation survival and growth.
	- Strategic visions and their importance for capability building were highlighted here, because without purposes as leading threads, building long term sustainability becomes impossible, since short term problems overshadow long term aims.
	- Capabilities enable boundary shifts, because of balance between weak and strong ties.

In this case, there were issues that arose from group relations perspective. One is that in order to cope with anxieties of producing multiple choices, this led into creating entities that could carry such tasks forward. From Normative Primary Task perspective, it seemed that responding to the changing business environment induced changes in NPT, which led to new factory arrangements. This points to early creation of a group in internationalisation, rather than relying on the whole firm's specific NPT. Another issue is relating skills and capabilities. While the company has always had skilled people, it also needed to hone capabilities, since mere skills did not suffice abroad. Learning to know and

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[172] Therefore more research needs to be carried out on the spot when something is done in another space as it happens, to tap into the problems encountered, misinterpreted or imagined. Time plays a part, since some experiences change in time and this change should also be captured (difference between sentiments when something is happening, and some time after it has happened). These three elements, space, time and sentiments are important in cross-border interactions and thus should also be studied more in international business.

respect other spaces as well as becoming aware of different working styles and trusting one's business partner, seemed important learnings. The emphasis on creating mutual learning spaces, first in local proximity and later in other spaces, leads to this thinking. Communication and learning to do so have proved to be important.

8.2.4 Examination of Case Two in Relation to Four Primary Tasks

This case was reflection *on* matters and processes that had happened. While this provided a different view into matters its here-and-now container was understood in a reflective hermeneutic space based on interviews with the group members. These interviews were carried out at a later point in time with two generations of owners and managers. Not all groups are assembled at the same time, and this refers to the "group-in-the-mind". The argument that we are always part of some groups (we identify with) is present here.

The persons interviewed from management provided their perspectives of the cross-border context and their evolutionary processes. They were also persons that had themselves participated into creating international links.

The process of reflection on matters over a longer time span here is noteworthy. In Case One it was pointed out, that access to here-and-now -memories and feelings fade with time and may make the process more rational than it really might have been. This can be captured in the expressions of "culture shock" and "exotic". Also, it was expressed that process took time to root and could be solved only through cooperation.

As the normative primary task of the company is to provide solutions in the energy sector, and having the existential as well as phenomenal primary task of creating wealth (also from the perspective of Company Law) and well-being, time is of importance. This raises the question whether such processes could be facilitated with different entry designs. For example, it is worth considering whether local knowledge and transferable knowledge from the home country can be blended already in planning.

8.3 Case Three: India-Nordic Economic Relations (INER) Seminar and Workshop

Case Three presents an India-Nordic Economic Relations seminar and workshop targeted to managers interested in doing business in or creating linkages with Nordic countries (Appendix 3). The seminar part of the event was designed to bring out basic information about each Nordic country (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) from the perspective of doing business there. The workshop objective was to experientially understand how Indian businessmen – wishing to explore business opportunities in Nordic countries – cope and adapt to differences in laws, institutions, public systems, and management processes in these. This workshop was part of an INER event, where government representatives, businessmen and academics came together to explore interaction. The event was seen as an evolution process, a collective learning to the group. The aim was to clarify opportunities and to reflect on barriers and gateways.

Since the seminar in a way worked as disseminator of information, it also functioned as a background for the workshop. The aim was to use information to gain questions, which in turn would be discussed in more depth at the workshop. What typically happens in such seminars is that after presentations people individually voice questions with presenters which can fail to benefit the whole group, or build group containers, since questions and answers inspire others to ask and answer as well: many issues brought up are common.

The reason for two part event, a seminar and a workshop, was to deepen the knowledge of the participants. Since these aims have two different approaches, it was originally thought that it would help to distinguish between them. Therefore also the selection of whom to invite became important and was the task of the organisers, since they had more insightful knowledge of the local businesses. The chosen design also implied that the number of participants would be limited, as the target group needs to be selected rather than relying on chance. There are reasons for this:

1) trust, that there is no cut-throat competition,
2) interest, which affects level of discussion,
3) access, which is provided by keeping the number low,
4) feasibility, that the information is of use, and
5) container, which is created by reliance on the process.

Initially the idea was to have an India-Finland economic relations workshop, but it was felt that there was an advantage in taking the whole Nordic area, since it could provide useful

benchmark and expand the scope of the encounter. Nordic cooperation is rather unknown in India although this cooperation could introduce interesting opportunities. Finland also seemed very small for Indians and thus has often been neglected. After discussions it made sense to look into totality in order to gain both economic weight and also interest. This kind of approach was rather new, since the aim was to engage all Nordic governments and to look at the Nordic area known to firms as possible business partner. Although my focus had been on Finland-India Economic Relations (FIER) project, including other Nordic countries as well seemed fruitful for following reasons:

1) The Nordic Region of five countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) have had a long history of cooperation and open market policies predating the EU (Since 1950s).
2) The region as a whole gets more weight, since population is small (altogether around 24 million), but economic weight high (high GDP/person levels).
3) These countries share similarities in terms of social and economic structures and systems (e.g. Finland and Sweden have a lot in common[173]). Also differences are important to acknowledge.
4) All countries have limited resources and combining them from time to time for special purposes was seen as a beneficial aim.

8.3.1 Inquiring into the Background

The keynote speaker introduced implications for India and Nordic countries for the changed business environment due to WTO agreement comprising the service sector, namely General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS in 1995). This has opened new windows for services and organisations. The four different modes of service supply (WTO Secretariat, 2006)[174] are:

MODE 1: electronic cross-border services (such as internet services)
MODE 2: consumption abroad (such as medical tourism)
MODE 3: commercial presence in the consuming country (setting up a company in an other country)
MODE 4: movement of natural persons (service in another country without necessarily being citizen or becoming resident of that country)

The importance of GATS and EU-India relationship to both India and Finland relations is high. This means that there are favourable possibilities for businesses to link and issues of concern that can be addressed at higher levels, to bring these out. Some of these involve

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[173] There is a body of laws "virtually identical in Finland and Sweden". Oikeusministeriö (Ministry of Justice), 2007 (http://www.om.fi/Etusivu/Perussaannoksia/Historicalbackground?lang=en, Accessed 14.5.2007).
[174] World Trade Organization, 2006 (www.wto.org/English/tratop_e/serv_e/gsintr_e.doc, Accessed 23.1.2007)

awareness of existing barriers. This keynote was essential as a background for the workshop, since these issues were addressed there.

However, the European Court (Opinion 1/94, Nov. 15, 1994[175]) decided to emphasise exclusive European common competence only in the First mode, electronic cross-border services. In effect this meant that movement of people, an integral part of many services, was curbed and left for each member state to negotiate and decide on other Modes (2, 3, 4) bilaterally.[176] Under the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) agreements, the aim was to mutually improve opportunities in business, lower barriers and create possibilities to engage with new areas.

8.3.2 Workshops as a Space for Inquiry

Since the workshop participants were mostly from India, the discussion centered around Nordic countries. In the beginning of the workshop, time was taken to explore what group work is in such a setting. To understand the group situation one needs to look at the five important boundaries: feelings, task, space, time, and technology, and therefore these were introduced. Feelings come in when there is no task or disowning of the task, however transiently: an important distinction between 'work group' and ba-group made by Bion (1961). One example of a group with feelings is a family, which is to be distinguished from 'work group'. This means that task itself is a boundary, which determines activity.[177] Although the group seemed a little surprised with this beginning, later developments in it brought this back concretely. It was discussed in the group that space boundary in a group setting needs to be secure, without any disturbing noise or traffic in and out. Only those who are in the room (as a space) may participate (be members of the group). Persons who wished to be "observers" were asked to join the group, so that this would not violate trustful group boundary. This created what is called here a "wall of anger" that was directed to one of the facilitators. Therefore an experience of "deskilling" was part of the

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[175] European Court, 1994 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:61994V0001:EN:HTML, Accessed 21.3.2007). This is an interesting matter, since now, the reverse is being tried when shortages of able persons are already experienced.

[176] Due to this European Court decision, bilateral GATS matters cannot be brought under EU jurisdiction even by delegation of powers or EU-India Summit intents.

[177] While family is also a system (My thanks to Professor Miettinen for reminding of this), the introduction of task is problematic. Although family members have tasks, to see the system itself only as a task will create problems, because when feelings set in, task becomes secondary. For a family, the significance lies in intra-group enhancement (e.g. safety, comfort, needs, capabilities, togetherness – as providing a platform for development), while task groups are set for inter-group interactions (e.g. reaching set goals, creating gateways, professional horizons – as a platform for performance).

process. When negative feelings are projected to a person (and transference is common in small groups, as are projections and introjections), occasionally he/she may take in such feelings as introjections that can temporarily produce "deskilling".

Time as a boundary is important, and forms the basis on which private and social lives are organised. It came out in the group that keeping time in the event was different for Indian and Nordic participants. Most Indians were late (lax time boundary) and all Nordics in time (strict time boundary). Keeping time boundaries is essential in a 'work group', for example in terms of time limits, because a 'work group' does not wish to 'waste' time; in addition, technology serves as an enabler or as a barrier. An example given here was the microphone and how it captured noises from other rooms or did not function at all. If any of these boundaries are affected, the group cannot function in full, since its attention is drawn to matters not belonging to its task, but someone else's. This was stated as one reason for task division in India.

Whatever values, norms, beliefs and attitudes the group holds, these influence group process. Therefore it is important for members to understand who are in the group and what they expect to derive from it. Transfers across boundaries and managing boundaries form the essence of group work. For example working becomes difficult if space is invaded all the time: this happened in the beginning when people came in and out of the group without any notice, which is common in India, because people are accustomed to come in without knocking or without reserving time, which makes task engagement a challenge.[178]

In groups quality and trust may be compromised and boundaries get blurred or broken easily due to different expectations. Selection of participants creates commitment, because it builds a boundary. An aim of the event was to explore barriers and gateways through the workshop. To know what can be known and to what extent, and at the same time learn from mistakes and problems is vital for all kinds of businesses - small and large.

8.3.3 Pictures-in-the-Mind and Other Mental Constructs

In such a setting where a seminar is free of charge and the workshop is based on voluntary inclusion, the authority to join or not, begins from oneself. Money creates commitment in the sense that investment (money) creates a wish for returns on that investment. This

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[178] This prompted me to wonder, whether knocking in such circumstances is actually seen as a negative act, since it may seem as if there is not enough self-confidence to enter, without being given a permission.

element was lacking and showed up among the participants, who were caught up by discussions of worth, size and amount. The idea floated around was that "free" is not wanted, but priced is. Price is a value indication on readable basis.[179] This seemed as an escape from task, because of the preoccupation with an issue that had no relation to group task thus representing ba-Flight aspect.

The businessmen who attended the workshop were from small enterprises, and rather inexperienced in this form of working. There emerged thoughts that were related to this: 1) small enterprises lack a reasonably priced forum to explore their ideas; 2) big enterprises do not publicly wish to discuss their plans and views, since they have resources to do that privately on their own or with the help of a consultant; 3) small companies often lack in structure for ingroup discussions. The data arising from the group suggested that some members were looking for "saviour" (baP)[180] in the form of the facilitator pair to tell them how to proceed with their business. One member monopolized the space, and had difficulty accepting the membership as a resource group until a facilitator stepped in and offered a working hypotheses about dependency (baD). This phenomenon of monopolizing the space is well known to happen in e.g. Socratic Dialogues.

Questioning singly outside the group can sometimes be a process of trying to convert a facilitator into a private consultant. This is called basic assumption Me-ness (baM), where people are mainly concerned about themselves and fail to see the possibilities the group as a container would provide, due to the assumption that 'my problems are specific', and fear of failure. The container building for future needs is thus lost. In groups also those questions one has not thought of, do surface, and such pooling of "unthought knowns" (Bollas 1987) is important, for it provides learning from all. For this reason, it is important to share problems, anxieties, knowledge, and prejudgements – everything that has any relevance to the topic, group aims or is common enough to be shared – because the beneficiary is the group itself.

This kind of workshop is designed to be a "listening post" or a "think-tank" in itself to explore whatever ideas the businessmen have in connection with the content, and to create an ongoing process. In such a setting, business ideas can be developed, if and when cut-

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[179] As an individual experience, price is an important part of value indication. It is more important in countries where good education is expected to be priced – the higher, the more distinguished clientele. This differs greatly from Finnish education thinking, although here too, management education can be costly. How perceptions of value and price intersect both in India and Finland, differ and need more study.

[180] Although this basic assumption is called "Pairing", it can refer to any pair and is not gender bound.

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throat competition is absent. As issues are discussed together, actions taken and actions contemplated can be learnt from, if and when ba-states are transcended. Collective learning in a group is an evolutionary process, and it belongs to the whole group. The central aim, however, is not to please the group but create a container for future interactions that reach out across borders, because a complex phenomenon can never be fully processed. This means that responsibility of actions remains with members and not with facilitators. Here comes the starkest difference between 'work group' and dependency group (baD, Bion 1961). When members are able to negotiate between group task and self motivation, a group can in such cases function as an information clearer, knowledge pool and dispenser.[181] Concerns and Pictures-in-the-mind are highlighted in Table 14.

Table 14: Concerns and Pictures-in-the-Mind Held

Concerns Held by Indian Businessmen	Pictures-in-the-Mind Held
1) Entry costs: how much in total? What is included in entry costs?	1) Nordic countries are too expensive to start with. [182]; Reluctance to explore this: This reflected that different entry modes were not explored. Nordic landscape from business perspective was strange, due to institutional differences, especially the role of society in business life.
2) In India one needs to depend only on oneself	2) Finland was seen similarly, and possibility to receive institutional help was a surprise. This reflected different expectations on the role of enterprise in these countries.
3) Entry modes; only exports	3) It was thought that remaining an exporter only was sufficient and most cost beneficial, and other possibilities were excluded. Creative thinking based on current product portfolio was experienced new (such as thinking of product-service linkages).
4) Creating cost benefits	4) Thinking that only price will suffice in different markets; such issues as quality and service surfaced. With rising price levels in Europe, the picture held was that Indian products would automatically be successful.
5) Institutional differences	5) Thinking that one can succeed without taking into account differences; inadequate planning

It was concluded that entry costs in Nordic Europe could actually be manageable if one knows the economical and institutional structures and has capability to interact with different institutions. The bigger hurdle can be institutional differences, not costs. This

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[181] It should be remembered that such para-statal organisations were created to help organisations. These do not exist in India, where even entities such as FICCI and CII compete with each other.

[182] The exchange ratio between Rupee and Euro was 57.3434 to 1 on April 16, 2007. It must also be remembered that Rupee is not freely and fully convertible currency on capital account transactions. The Rupee is convertible on current account and trade account for stated reasons.

refs to institutional structure that works with a different mindset than the Indian one.[183] There was a strong belief in the group that when a business decides to locate outside national borders, the capability of this new entity will be evaluated during the first six months. While Nordic countries wish companies to use para-statal agencies for information clearance, these Indian businessmen were reserved on this account, and surprised about the possibility.

After the first workshop, participants were asked to fill up a review form (Appendix 8). The feedback from the workshop based on the review forms and experiences was shared with the participants. Below is the summary of working hypotheses:

1) One of the important learnings seemed to be the possibility of sharing experiences with others, and getting to know the other side by direct contact, because this helps companies to adjust their mindset in a different way and also directly experience and seek understanding these issues. Experiences often differ from given information in many ways: for example what the entry costs really will be, since not all costs can be calculated, nor are they always as thought. Costs of doing business were often pointed out, but also questions of sustainability and costs of setting up an organisation. On the other hand it was also a surprise that these[Nordic] countries could offer cost advantage. Lack of information was seen as one of the major barriers.

2) Some of the barriers were pictures-in-the-mind (pitm), some lack of information. The importance of boundaries, tasks and roles of role holders were seen as learnings, also in the form of understanding differences and giving new gateways of looking into issues, because the Nordic Economic landscape differs in many ways from that of India. These countries have certain pictures of their own of what they can offer. These sometimes differ from the possibilities that Indian businessmen see. The pictures held in India and in Nordic countries may sometimes have a huge gap between them. It was realized during the event that information is money, since it helps in avoiding potholes.

3) Ignorance with regard to opportunities and challenges in higher education was seen as a barrier but also a gateway. Government regulations about recognizing education programmes in India, arose as a concern. In this way the possibilities were seen in both business areas as well as in education, because educational initiatives, especially in the field of management, were seen important.

4) Questions and issues raised by the group members were seen as a source of insights, because cultural aspects in addition to business itself did give learnings to shape the pitm. A perceived difficulty to register organisation in Nordic countries was also expressed. What was unexpected was the helpful attitude of these countries.

5) Bringing governments, academia and businesspeople together was seen as a good idea, because this way direct information could be obtained from the representatives of these countries and plurality of perspectives. There was a lot of enthusiasm and positive outlook

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[183] Not only as functions, but also as mindsets. This has been highlighted by many individuals when coming to Finland or being abroad.

in doing business between India and Nordic countries and it had been unanticipated how much synergy there already existed.

6) The meeting was seen as an excellent forum bringing together academia, governments and industry, although it was felt that the workshop itself was not well attended. It was surprising that people could come in without invitation. All in all, in many ways this kind of event was new and was seen as having immense opportunities and a high level of interest was perceived. However, it was also wished that some presentations should be more specific and tell about Nordic Countries vis-à-vis India.

7) Since the process had been initiated, there was a wish to see concrete results emerging from this process and also a wish to have more such fruitful meetings to exchange ideas 'inhouse', because there seemed to be a lot of learning during the event and this exchange also speeds up the process. It was wished that the group should meet more often. It was an insight to realize there actually is help available to set up a business. Based on these experiences new forms of interaction can be designed.

In the follow-up event three weeks later, the worries were voiced more strongly in a smaller group size. In the meeting it became clear that for a small firm, there is a strong need to pool anxiety caused by uncertainty and ambiguity. If this cannot be done in the firm itself, one looks for such avenues outside. This comes in the form of trying to find out how things would unfold if certain decisions are made. Pooling thoughts temporarily relieves anxiety, since the carrying then is done by several persons, and each of them is able to contribute on issues voiced. Being a small group, this workshop exhibited "family group dynamics", where inter-relationships become more evident and and the group oscillated between baD and baFl/F. However, with this transference of feelings associated with task related issues within focused context made it possible to examine what may be causing what and how to proceed in examining both content and context and one's reactions to these. In this way the facilitators could temporarily help in "lifting the lid" by carrying part of the anxiety for it to be 'seen and explored', but this may also lead to dependent relationships where hierarchy sets in.[184] While such settings are needed and though these give small firms opportunity to look at their own processes, those firms seldom have human resources to do this. It seemed that it may be advisable to have larger groups from seven to twelve.

The discussion here focused on business, making good business plans and understanding difference in market entry. There was a discussion on Indians having too much reliance on

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[184] This was also experienced by the researcher with two small firms in Finland. Communication practices are not taken up because there is need to achieve something, but to "sound out" and use "mirrors", to take distance from oneself in order to "see" one's own thinking from afar. This creation of "space between" highlights phenomenal primary task and understanding unthought knowns.

themselves, which could be captured as the phantasy "we will succeed everywhere". The group then discussed such issues as "envy", institutions and their features, mindsets and how people see the other, since success is not only an internal ability, but needs to be reflected in context.

8.3.4 Learnings from the Process

In Case Three, the original idea was to have a series of seminars (three) on varying themes: The first would have been to give an outline and basic information, the second to discuss management issues and the third to focus on education. These different emphases were based on feedback during the process. Education has become a "business" as well and thus an integral part of GATS. In order to have time for reflection in between, the events were designed to be at two week intervals.

To have an ongoing process was thought important, since it would give possibility to deepen insights and work with issues at hand where and when they arise. Using Nordic representatives in group meetings gave possibility to promote skill transference between persons from different areas, expertise and embeddedness. This is important, since by doing so, issues that arise there and then can be immediately addressed, and members not necessarily aware of their assumptions can undertake safe explorations. Real transference, however, needs a container which is prerequisite for it. Since the group as a whole could not hold on to task, it failed in container building. One reason for this was unexpressed hostility carried in the space as latent conflict.

The first meeting can be very unsatisfying, if the participants hesitate to grapple with the working style, concepts, thoughts, ideas, and images, and the "real process" is not experienced. It also takes time to form a good basic group to hold and work with the concepts, and to understand the meaning of a group as a container. All issues do not arise in the first meeting, but keep evolving along the way. Thus, intervals are needed. Understanding of boundaries and how these get violated, may help in setting up processes that can be sustained for a length of time in inter-organisational interaction. For this reason the Institute in Case Three and I, as a visiting scholar, decided to join hands. The topic and idea were initially greeted with enthusiasm and all possible help was promised by all parties. As seen here, processes do not often carry forward due to reasons belonging to the process. Questions of power, privilege and prestige encroach dialogue spaces, too.

This workshop provided ample learnings from group behaviour inside and outside the event. Such issues as boundary questions along with role allocation, hierarchy differences and mindsets were all experienced. Issues related to conflicts also needed attention and demonstrated that in conflictual situations discussion methods may not suffice when group norms are pervaded by power and hierarchy. Curiously, it may not mean that inter-personal trust is lost, but it may unleash processes where an institution is pitted against an individual or group. Such issues highlighted the need to study these more in cross-border interactions. Learnings from the Case Three are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15: Learnings from Case Three

Case Three	- Values are always assumed to be better and higher on the dominating or more resource-endowed side, which also brings in counterproductive processes in groups and between small and large entities, because power and prestige seem to override understanding.
	- Role definition, authority structures, tasks and delegation, as well as dispute resolution mechanisms need to be central part of management education, because what is explorable through experiential learning methods, can be used to increase effectiveness.
	- Keeping track of processes and informing others is vital for the systems to be able to exchange information at multiple levels, because the relative closedness introduces problems in cross-border activities that cannot be addressed only through one level groups, but need all parties to be present and jointly examine these issues.
	- The aim of effectiveness is not correctness, but functionality, harmony, and ability to be able to reach needed information at any given time, because conflicts do surface, but how these are worked with is more important than avoiding them. Conflicts also bring out organisational malfunctions, immaturity, and development possibilities.
	- This kind of workshop needs two or more facilitators that can share and reflect on the processes as well, because it is important to do so from the learning point of view, since the anxieties get easily pushed onto facilitator or both, and need to be reworked through reflections.
	- This seminar highlighted also a possibility of inter-governmental cooperation in India to make some areas known and give adequate facts about them, because such settings give room for interesting inter-organisational discussions and change of pictures for all parties. This way possibilities of addressing both uncertainty and ambiguity are increased.

8.3.5 Examination of Case Three in Relation to Four Primary Tasks

This process was interesting not only from content point of view, but from the perspective of groups as containers. While the content in this event was revealing in terms of providing insights into what issues are important in cross-border activities from business point of view and from an information gathering perspective, the real input was presented through group behaviour. Thus, this case strongly differed from other Cases and provided a window into problems groups engage with.

It was exemplified here that a container is not built solely on the basis of proximity in time and space. Collection of people does not provide a container, nor does it ensure healthy process. Group members need to engage with the normative primary task of the group itself keeping in mind the centrality of that task, not what phenomenal tasks they carry from outside in their minds into a space. While every task group has a phenomenal primary task as well, here this means PPT which is outside the normative primary task of the group in question. Such issues as authority and power that reside outside the current primary task, will break the container because of unconscious engagement with it rather than with the issue ostensibly at hand. Such issues as preoccupation with monetary aspects of whether a workshop should cost or not, were not within the normative primary task of this task group which was designed to explore issues that concern cross-border initiatives. Such issues were concerns of the organiser, but were difficult to keep apart. This experience demonstrates that in cross-border interactions the task group container is weighed by its capacity to engage with differences, not only by good discussions within it.

Due to power struggles in another space, sudden changes in persons and related unconscious anger over who was really in charge, were seemingly present in the event, and this was brought into the group by some members. Instead of dealing with these when and where there is a time and space for this, it was taken in to a group that had a different normative primary task, namely that of exploring pictures-in-the-mind, barriers and gateways in interaction between two territories. A breach of container happens, because not all members are aware of this, nor is it in their domain of knowing. It is visible through group behaviour and presents itself in the capacities of facilitators. In this case one of the facilitators got deskilled which led to problems of participation and raising working hypotheses. This means that one member of the group is deprived of contributing to the group to gain insights and this is likely to create problems later on. This can also mean that the group may not wish to assemble under the same container.

This process was unconscious because there were no signs of discontent or anger before the event and it arose unexpectedly. In such processes the group members behave by attacking or fleeing (baFl/F). It also resulted into baM, where members do not form a group and the social process of creating a container is lost. The first meeting is thus important, because the foundation for future ability to hold and keep, is created. As the container is held in the minds of participants, their feelings of the meeting affect future participation.

The case also demonstrated difficulties in creating spaces for interaction when there are frictions of space and time.[185] The container needs to be built from where it is held. It is difficult to build one beyond a certain distance, because one cannot anticipate what processes are engaged with. The more experienced the container builder is (individual or institute), the more reliable can the process be, but this is difficult to assess from afar. But it is also noteworthy that not all spaces of learning are alike: a seminar needs a different container from a task group setting. One, the seminar boundaries can be more flexible than a group meeting where more sensitive issues are bound to arise. Also, the membership size is often larger in a seminar, with less commitment. Thus, understanding qualities and needs of different containers, requires careful consideration.

In PPT groups, where phenomenal issues become central, the normative primary task can get enveloped and the existential primary task undervalued. This means that the group does not engage with normative aims, but aims expend energies to relieve emotional distress.

From the perspective of I-Thou –processes, the Otherness was introduced by a member being "Foreign". While some members seemed to hold this as a valuable source of information, the split came from others' silent accusations on matters that were not brought in (except surreptitiously to hijack the normative primary task of the group). Thus, there emerged two groups into one: two family groups with family dynamics and authority issues. While the other half was a dependency group at times, it wished to create a father-child process. The other half being a flight-fight group, created a warlike situation. This meant that also the two facilitators were split: one was being held as the "leader" and the other one as the "enemy", where accountability was not shared but placed in one member.

This Case highlights the importance of understanding primary tasks from the perspective that there are multiple primary tasks which are simultaneous. It means that in cross-border situations where physical movements are taking place, the issues that arise in interactions cannot be fully planned – either from the perspective of content or the process. The discrepancy between said and felt manifests only at sight, and in proximity. Having said that, it is also important to take this in view and create processes where such issues are addressed to unveil the primary reasons behind actions when authority and power become discrepant.

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[185] The administrative formalities delayed the researcher to begin her work in India and hampered the process. The rescheduling adversely affected the planning process for the seminar and workshop, because follow-up events now clashed with examination schedules in the host institute.

8.4 Case Four: Workshop on Doing Business in Nordic Europe (DBNE)

Case Four portrays insights from a Workshop on Doing Business in Nordic Europe with one follow-up, conducted in India (Appendix 4). The workshop was part of Finland-India Economic Relations research, and was structured for business managers, with an interest in exploring Nordic countries. The workshop lasted for full three days and consisted of a core group of nine members and visiting representatives from Nordic countries. Participation in such a process portrays one example of a working group that was able to use its combined knowing and reflect on experiences together. Such groups have possibilities to create institutions that outlive group encounters and create containers that are beyond current time and space limits.

The workshop followed dialogic principle of confrontation, since all aspects were questioned and re-questioned, and everyone could participate through arguments and counter-arguments. The unique design of having businesses, academia, government representatives and invited resource persons present at the same time contributed to discussions, because all brought their intellectual and emotional repertoires with them. One of the aims was to highlight possibilities and problems in Nordic countries and also differences in mindsets that Nordics and Indians have, to enhance capabilities for interaction. The benefit was that these could be addressed on the spot with persons from business and country presenters, both present in a setting that belonged to neither. This demonstrated that space and time do have influence on persons and processes, and that creative frictions are useful in learning.

8.4.1 Inquiring into Spaces

There are actually three levels of interactions of Finland with India: EU, Nordic and bilateral. European countries among themselves differ as much as Indian states, but this fact is often overlooked in India (as is Indian diversity in Finland). The aim was to present Nordic countries as an entity, its differences between five countries, their shared similarities due to long time joined histories, location and interaction. Nordic commonalities were quite unknown to group members, and Nordic countries have mostly been looked at independently, not as an area – or just part of Europe. Discussions also highlighted strong similarities and mind-sets Nordic countries have, despite some differences, and focused on what the differences between India and Nordic countries meant

as pictures-in-the-mind for this group and their information needs. These latter differences are summarized in Table 16.

Table 16: Pictures-in-the-Mind Presented and Information Needs

Picture-in-the-Mind	Information Needed	Difference Emphasised
Nordic Welfare State	- differences between Nordic countries themselves, and difference between Nordic countries and India	- power division in a direct democracy - constitution and its role in institution building - rationale behind welfare state
Nordic Cooperation	- shared historical events (such as Kalmar Union 1397–1524); Nordic Council (Norden[186]) since 1950s - difference in EU membership - portability of entitlements and responsibilities	- strong cooperation predating EU (labour and capital movements); EU members (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) and non-members (Iceland, Norway) and how this affects trade
Small Populations	- concentrating on Nordic area - education and innovation	- high GDP and PPP - educational systems
Institutional Support and Institutional Differences	- access to laws and regulations in English - understanding institutional differences as institutions and as mindsets - management practices	- wish to have direct access to information; documents not often easily available - access to judiciary, quality of decisions, ability to function in English, documentation needs etc. - task and role allocation, authority delegation
Time Horizon	- different fiscal years (Finland January 1 to December 31; India April 1 to March 31) - different calendars (holidays; school year, festivals etc.); time difference; use of time	- needs to know local habits to structure interactions and meetings - in Finland meetings are scheduled on weekdays; in India they are often during weekends
Privacy	- differences in private and public	- use of databases[187]; collecting names and addresses; work/holiday habits
Judicial System	- *Finland:* Code Law system informed by German, Swedish, Russian legal systems, Constitution 2000; - *India:* Case Law judiciary; Constitution 1949/1950[188] - guarantee of equal treatment; fair arbitration process, cost of legal system	- there are few bilateral agreements; the two territories are not reciprocating - practices are built also on cultural value habits[189] and practices - arbitration and mediation practices in English

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[186] Norden, 2007 (http://www.norden.org/, Accessed 14.5.2007).

[187] E.g. health databases have been of interest due to small populations having long time records of health and genetic diseases, good databanks with efficient data collection that run through the whole society. Discussions on database use for biotechnology, life sciences and pharmaceuticals have been reported in Finland, too. In Iceland an exclusive 12-year-licence was granted to a subsidiary of bio-tech company DeCode Genetics in 2000. This spurred discussions on e.g. privacy, human rights, intellectual property rights.

[188] Indian system was based on long local traditions starting from the Vedas through Maurya and Moghul periods and English legal system to a Case law judiciary with local small village Panchayats still operating (Agarwala 2004). India's legal system after the Independence builds on the Constitution (1949/1950) giving rights and responsibilities to different actors, including the Union of India and the States (Kashyap 2005). Ministry of Law and Justice, 2007 (http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/welcome.html, Accessed 2.3.2007).

[189] 'Value habits' as a concept is also used in their "Straight Talk" –series (Book 6.) by Deloitte, 2007 (http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/article/0,1002,sid=63956&cid=67406,00.html, Accessed 29.5.2007). While there is emphasis on shareholders and values that get in the way of performance, here 'value habits' refer to those habits learnt without reflection of why and where.

When there are three levels of interaction, it is difficult for a company in India to picture what belongs where. In EU interactions, Norway and Iceland are not included, although they do have economic area agreements with EU. From a Nordic perspective, all are included. While it is rational to engage with an area, not all are EU members, and thus in some matters there is a divide – despite interaction. However, it was pointed out by group members that thinking of an area brought in new vitality.

Through different presentations, it seemed that Nordic countries often introduce themselves as being the "gateway to Europe" (or between East and West). They all also shared interest in life sciences, information technology, and technology in general and were presented as ideal places for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Both of these were questioned: How do these countries then differ? And if they are so well developed and industrial hubs, why are inward FDI flows low? This was seen as puzzling. It seemed to interest why so much weight is put onto ICT (Information Communication Technology), and not other areas of know-how, since most Nordic countries compete over this. The existing Nordic self-pictures-in-the-mind were also questioned, and by this questioning important differences became visible between countries. This gave members information that actually arose from interest. Above displayed that the so called "India Rush" is shared by many countries, not only Nordics. Therefore, aspirations for interaction could be built more on inter-collaboration, where applicable.

Indian members of this group wanted to have information in English in order to be able to read themselves. Therefore it seemed that for such companies, presented through membership, para-statal clearance agencies may not be sufficient, and for smaller companies these may be expensive. However, it proved difficult to find legislation in English – apart from old, unofficial translations of few laws. Such laws as company laws, tax laws and other company related important information, could not be found in English and could not either be provided later.

In the follow-up, eight weeks later, there were three persons and two facilitators present. The aim of this follow-up was to discuss about experiences gained, possibilities explored, and current ideas and problems. In this way existing possibilities in engaging with Nordic countries could be discussed after the group members who were embedded in larger organisations, had time to think about these. This meeting gave insights into how task engagement was taken forward and how different possibilities had emerged as real options

which were in process at different stages of progress. Therefore, such a knowledge-inquiry group can be an important bridge builder between countries.

8.4.2 Learnings from the Process

Case Four brought out a balanced group process, which was able to create a container beyond the group itself. It also showed that organisational structures enabling the group to assemble and engage with its task, need to be solid. Another aspect of this group was knowledge arising from interactions and re-understanding issues from a different point. This meant that also those from Nordic countries could see problems and challenges arising when a foreign entity enters their space.[190] The need to think of the different approaches seemed important. The group members within this case demonstrated that their approach was simple, but effective. The need to establish strategically proper moves was rooted in discussions within the organisations: Only then there is action. Thus this approach builds on solid data, social ties and experiences. Also, here the group members seemed to have enough authority delegation to engage with the task fully. These learnings are summarized in Table 17.

Table 17: Learnings from Case Four

Case Four	- While Governments work to provide information to their own citizens and businesses, there might be blindness to other ways of thinking, because direct interaction with firms that seek information is beneficial.
	- Persons occupying different spaces may sometimes fail to realise that others work with different mindsets. These mindsets introduce border crossing problems, because both see their own as norms and stick to their value habits without reflecting on them.
	- Understanding differences in institutions, structures and systems between countries relieve anxieties and lower boundaries for interactions, because it reduces imagined barriers and gives groups possibility to engage with issues that are most important, instead of losing time in getting caught in structural cobwebs.
	- Finnish support system may contribute to vulnerability in another system, because there are needs for more pro-active behaviour, in terms of self-confidence and initiatives taking risks.

In this case, it surfaced that in task groups relating to other members makes it possible to build on insights seeking new ways to interact, not only by outsourcing, but looking into different possibilities that are reciprocal, because the group is not only a "physical one", but also group-in-the-mind that consists of those who have participated. This meeting gave insights into how task engagement was taken forward and how different possibilities had

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[190] E.g. knowing that all official papers in Finland need to be translated in Finnish or Swedish to be accepted; along these one can leave an English version

emerged as real options which were in process. Therefore, such a knowledge-inquiry group can be an important bridge builder between countries.

8.4.3 Examination of Case Four in Relation to Four Primary Tasks

This case provides a counterpart to Case Three, since it had similar aims. The representation in this group was from large and medium-sized firms. Processes in this group differed greatly. While containers can be made, they can also be discovered where and when members feel it necessary to create one. When a container is made, it is a conscious process of providing a safe space for exploration where inquiries may arise. The suitability of a container for members of a group drawn from diverse organisations may be easier to establish when there is similarity in their normative primary tasks without the threat of competition in the same product/service market. The container in such cases provides a collaborative space where the competition is about generating better ideas without knowing in advance which ideas would benefit whom more. In this case the container was made and planned so, and was accepted by the group as its task space.

In this learning space, the "subject matter" was engaged with, and the container evolved as the group processed. Thus, the boundaries were managed effectively without the container itself becoming the topic of discussion as happened in Case Three, where the 'containerability' of the container had become unsustainable.

The group in Case Four experienced more freedom and responsibility for its content and process, resulting in a rich body of knowing that was shared across its membership. It was also possible to directly clarify or contest knowledge that was not held relevant or was not enough. The possibilities and challenges were thus directly confronted.

A process such as this does not mean that it cannot be improved or that there were no basic assumptions engaged with. The difference here was that ba-states were engaged with from the group's primary identity as a task group. Thus the preoccupation with ba-states did not become the primary task, and yet enabled some worries and anxieties to be shared and processed.

9 Hermeneutic Primary Task in Groups: Understanding as a Task

What is intriguing about groups and what the group relations literature (cited in Part II of this Study) refers to, is that groups, now and then, behave in ways that are not in line with members' skills, maturity levels or capabilities, even when this is known. It seems, based on experiences in this Study and in literature, that expectation of rationality is so strong that members find it difficult to believe there are other assumptions (manifest and lurking) at the same time. Thus, problems are sought to be explained away by rationalisations. The Study is consistent with what Argyris (2004) found about rationalisation as a defence, but notes that whether this is individual or social, needs further inquiries. During this Study, it was found that theories mostly speak about individuals, not of groups as a whole (e.g. Moore and Sonsino 2003; Scharmer 2007), even when theories seem to be discussing wholes.

Each group in this Study shared some features in common:

1) A normative primary task, an existential primary task, and the imperative to engage with both. Each group explicitly instituted a hermeneutic primary task to make sense of its own evolution.

2) Formation as a task group, with allocated roles, responsibilities and authority delegation along with working boundaries. Working as a group meant using the group as a sounding board in developing ideas, issues, work related matters, insights, worries, anxieties, suggestions. In fact, group processes produced their own phenomenal primary task.

3) Groups were able to contain, hold, develop, and share issues with other groups and keep their larger systems informed and be influenced by the larger systems, if needed, through hermeneutic endeavours.

9.1 Task Groups Revisited

Task groups portrayed here experienced and exhibited Bionian (Bion 1961) ba-states, discussed in the literary survey in Section 4.2. For example when the "educator" (or facilitator) is treated as a leader ("omnipotence", baD), and instead of working with raised working hypotheses, group tries to deny these altogether or places the "blame" on others

outside (avoidance, baFl), or attack (baF) someone. This came out clearly in Case Three. In Cases One and Three, a pair formed when two members took the lead for the group to act as if to save it, thus relieving the group of its anxiety ("saviour", baP), although in the end a group may seem reluctant to hand its power outside of it–a struggle evident in all four cases. The difference between becoming wholly led by basic assumptions or being a work group led by task seemed to depend on whether feelings portrayed led to new insights or not. A leadership problem (baD) is relevant e.g. when no one else can be trusted to give an answer and all expectations are directed to only one person, and this does not change. Such process was visible in all cases to some extent.

What Cano (1998) indicates about baG oscillating between baO and baM seemed important and observable in cases, when the group could not decide whether it is a group or just a collection of singletons (Turquet 1975). Group formation happened most fully in Case Four, where the group actually formed a functioning container. There was also some evidence of oscillating between own wishes and group aims (see Cano 1997[191], 1998), as well as between groups. On the other hand there was a need to distinguish within groups whether the issue was about persons and basic assumptions or about a given task, or both at the same time. Crossing a boundary also meant possible experience of large group anxieties (Turquet 1975). A nation can be regarded as a large group and entering another nation may raise some fears of annihilation as an individual. This also brought out needs to understand group's behaviour in dialogue processes, especially through more socially attuned, later basic assumptions (baM, baO, baG). Such processes, as becoming a "full member" an I.M. (Individual Member, Turquet 1975), need more attention.

A small firm may operate on assumptions of Me-ness, instead of One-ness (Case Three). Unless this gets consciously worked with, no new idea finds breeding ground, because complex situations suggested the use of a container and trusting others became essential. The idea of small company may be tightly coupled with the owner, thus making it impossible for anyone else to perform that function unless it is consciously delegated. Therefore it seemed that for a change to occur, self-image of the owner needs to change, as well as current role-set (Merton 1957). Thus, the Study agrees with what Bion (1961, 1970) and later group relations researchers and practitioners have said about the presence of both work group and ba-groups. It was found that these help in understanding task groups, but need to be accompanied by dialogic approaches, too. What Miller (1998) said

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[191] Cano, 1997 (http://www.sicap.it/~merciai/bion/papers/cano.htm, Accessed 5.3.2007)

about the social nature of later basic assumptions, merits more study than possible from material here. These concepts have been used less in cross-border contexts where groups exhibit such behaviour patterns.

Assumptions of sameness (One-ness) are difficult in any group, but magnify in cross-border situations. This was reflected in cases and brought out a need to examine 'pictures-in-the-mind' and whether these really uphold notions of equality or avoid them by confusing equality with sameness. An example is whether one extends equivalent rights to the other or not: there is no equality in status if one space is held as inferior to another, until and unless it somehow becomes the "same". The requirement for reciprocity was brought forth by Burbules (1993). This Study suggested that this requirement is important in collaborations. Sometimes the knowledge offered by the other was not accepted which brought out interesting questions of value. These learning aspects were present in all cases. The difference between learning and training (Antonacopoulou 1999, 2001), and learning together (Abma 2003), was highlighted.

The cultural overtraining (Schein 1993) was found to exist in these cases, but often went unrecognized. The recognition took place with groups engaged in cross-border activities that perceptions do change along with introducing new aspects (Case One, Case Four). In these cases, information alone was not adequate, but real experience was also needed. These crossings produced some oscillations. How this relates to such basic assumptions as baO/baG and baM needs more study, but it can be tentatively noted here that cross-border situations enforce these especially in relation to large groups. HPT as an explicit primary task is informed by project lapses and problems, as information. This aspect was not studied in the literature and the gap was filled here. The "indeterminate zones" (Schön 1987)[192] are important sources of information, and less discussed. Conflictual situations in the cases brought more information about systems and structures in question than about explicit agreements.

The cases studied showed clear distinctions between 'ba-groups' and 'work group', where the latter could understand ba-states to further processes through HPT, whereas the former could not. The difference is that a 'work group' uses feelings to further its task, whereas in ba-group feelings become the task. Task groups were not explicit in the literature, which is noted here. It also showed that in task groups, normative primary tasks (of background organisation and group NPT) can coexist without a clash or corrupting each other, if the

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[192] Schön, 1987 (http://educ.queensu.ca/~russellt/howteach/schon87.htm, Accessed 5.4.2007).

members are able to negotiate their own boundaries regarding the task, and the two NPTs enmesh with one another without losing their distinctive characters. The levels at which phenomena were studied, varied in the literature. Thus, the use of four primary tasks and five boundaries to understand phenomena in this Study, was quite unique.

If members regress to their "previous" normative primary tasks, the group cannot establish or sustain its own one. This meant that it was not actively thought that a task group develops its own NPT, which is not necessarily the same as in the "home organisation", because of different role allocation and group task as a whole. The problem with this is that group *de facto* loses its container ability, if members are not able to create a space for group task, but retain only their previous individual ones (or those of their home organisations). This confirms, within these cases, what Bion (1961) and Weick (1990) discuss about regressing to previous, more learnt states of know-how. This would suggest that being in a group has to be learnt, for the group to be strong enough. This is also what dialogue literature suggests (e.g. Isaacs 1993), but in different terms.

An education situation can be seen through ba-states, too. When an educator serves as a temporary authority (Gadamer 2000a), a baD is in action along with a 'work group' (the members). This may help in the education situation itself, but if this becomes a held picture of truth, the group gets stuck with its task. Fromm (1967: 45, 96-97) thought that the quest for certainty blocks the quest for meaning: The paradox was that while belongingness is sought after, at the same time there exists a wish to be apart. While Schein (1965) stresses that coordination is to do with task, not with people, it is important to be aware of members in a group while facilitating (or process-consulting) them. These were portrayed in cases.

At some point every group runs out of its own knowledge resources and seeks interaction. If this interaction is embedded only in similar groups, what Granovetter (1973) termed as "strong ties", the knowledge base for interactions is built on experiences where potential for creative tension is limited. Therefore, in interaction it is essential to define the nature of knowing that is needed and seek to form "weak ties" (Granovetter 1973). Thus, cross-interactional dialogue spaces are important since by having such, the knowledge base gets confronted, discussed, argued, modified or even refuted. Such processes are important in designing interactive boundaries for task groups, and based on experiences in this Study, it is of most worth when done by a group with ability to build a container, where members themselves resolve the balance between needs and resources. This container building, as portrayed earlier, may take time.

One of the problems with group work is creating adequate response links. Group work is time consuming and may be seen by organisations as of low benefit. In all cases, group formation was discussed, but not all groups took cognisance of it. However, more emphasis on the process itself and less on the content could benefit organisations beyond any focus achievable by marshalling organisation resources through external consulting or internal struggles alone. However, this is presented as a conclusion in a limited context. On the other hand in systemic thinking one sees the system as a whole, linking to others. This is significant, because one cannot change all matters only in the group, since there are issues that involve larger groups. This was evident in all cases. It seems to be an insight all researchers or practitioners having systems thinking background encounter experientially.

This kind of exploring is highly particular, because it focuses on the group and on the participants and works only with the material that is presented or not voiced (but could be expected to be voiced, given the context and the participants). For this reason it cannot be universalised, but is contextual, and also based on the here-and-now as an experience. What added to the confusion was that hermeneutic primary task (HPT) as a concept or as an approach spoke very little to the participants. As a concept, HPT is new, and enables distinguishing processes in groups.

While boundary management and role allocation are important and much discussed in the literature reviewed here, the Study found that these are hardly, if at all, discussed outside group relations literature. It seemed that boundaries were taken for granted, unproblematic and easy to cross. However, as Case Two points out, this is not so. The level of clarity of task and engaging with it differed in all cases. Only with conflictual situations did the task come under questioning. The Study found it curious that tasks are not questioned more, especially when outcomes are valued. This introduced a need to look into this issue.

Explicitness and tacitness come out only in relation to task and task engagement. While there was no explicit hate of learning, cases suggest that this phenomenon is beyond awareness. Case Three was the only one where hate of learning as a process may have been present, but due to other simultaneous processes, this remains an assumption. This particular aspect needs further studies in different settings.

The realisation that knowable spaces cannot be known without entering them, dawned gradually and proved difficult for groups. Thus, boundaries and boundary management in task groups and organisations need more experiencing. There is adequate amount of

literature discussing boundaries, but experiences in this Study point to the need to experientially explore them. It was interesting that suggestions of cross-border seminars where issues that needed exploration in order to go deeper into subject matter by the groups themselves, were not pursued. Instead the expectation is that one "knowledgeable" person can tell what to do and how. However, members of a group develop such a vast knowledge base and set of experiences and expertise that one person alone can never achieve. A facilitator can provide only an anchorage point for the groups to engage further with their task. Also, as was experienced here, pooling different levels of knowing added greatly to understanding processes. Therefore both horizontal and vertical knowing processes (Figure 16) are needed.

Figure 16: The Need for Vertical and Horizontal Knowing Processes
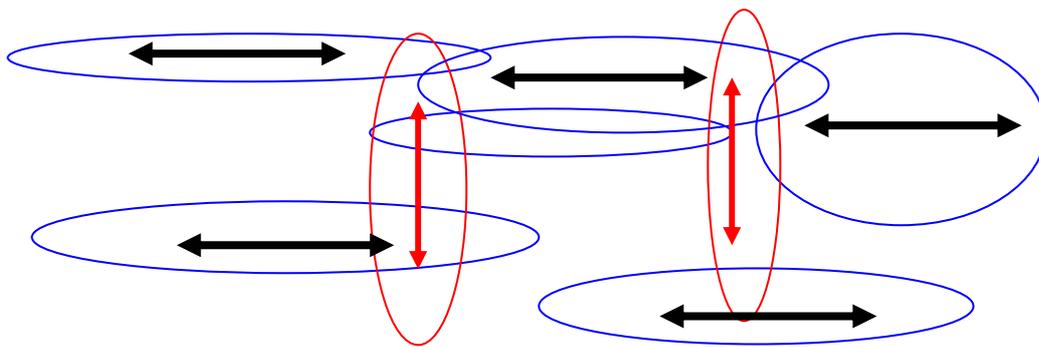
In each of the different cases, experiences of the matter at hand directly influenced pictures-in-the-mind. Examining these gave information to inquire where possible "clogs" were. Introducing a new area required this, since in the absence of experiences, information was elusive: One does not know for sure whether this or that aspect is essential or not. It must be kept in mind that groups are only one way of learning. In addition, pictures-in-the-mind often went unexamined, when there was no felt need to do that, and if there was little to substitute or to change existing pictures, these were left untouched. This highlights the importance to create educational avenues for those who need to understand new issues, and to offer exploration seminars or workshops as spaces to do so. Thinking and knowing processes are fundamental in understanding. While the concept of pictures-in-the-mind refer more to large groups, they were found to be useful in small groups, too.

Here, trust seemed to belong to the process, when it was perceived as existing. What Winnicott (1982) refers as a trust-transference reciprocity, was noted here. Transference in

cross-border contexts need to be explored in different settings, and was found important in this Study. When trust belongs to the process, individual trust is secondary because it is inter-personal. In a group process, trust belongs to the group itself based on how and what it is achieving. This suggests that trust as a process and 'work group' belong together. If there is only interpersonal trust, the task may become curbed if that trust gets violated. The Study showed how difficult it is to offer testimonies and avoid being taken as a knower, and how dependencies arise. Whenever the person giving the information was regarded as "expert", he/she was regarded as more reliable. These findings resonate with Kusch (2002) and Bion (1961).

The steps in Figure 17 are built on the thinking of Plato (1999c: 509D–513E). Plato discussed that application is most important, but never wrote about it beyond reflecting on educating a Philosopher.[193] In order to understand, one needs to distinguish between different levels of information and internalise working hypotheses in order to apply them. Working hypotheses cannot be abstract constructs, but have to be meaningful enough to function as reflection thresholds. This would happen, if the working hypothesis contained a 'because...' -clause based on the data of shared experience.

Figure 17: Steps of Understanding
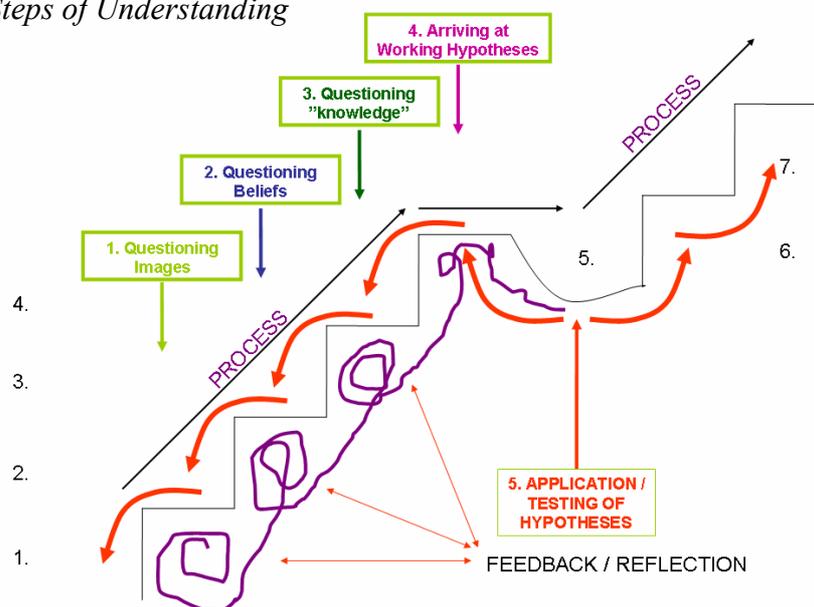
The so called 'western' thinking tradition is based on the Socratic example (as Socrates was portrayed by Plato), where Socrates is not the 'knower', but a 'facilitator'. This may

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[193] Plato became acutely aware of "systemic challenges" when trying to introduce his ideas in Syracuse. In systems, one is not concerned only about individuals. This is what Bion and Rickman also found out in Northfield Hospital Experiment I (Harrison 2000)

imply that for exploration, a capable and skilled outsider is needed to bring in new insights and to question existing routines and practices. However, there often exist needs to put this person into the role of a "knower", and thus restrain oneself from the act of thinking. When persons try to minimize responsibilities of the process of thinking, the authority is pushed to others. This can, in Bionian conception, either lead to dependency (baD) or flight-fight (baFl/F). Bion also observed that because thinking is hard, one tries to avoid it (Bion 1970). What is portrayed through these steps (page 191), is that a process of arriving at working hypotheses is manifold and requires thinking, experience and rethinking. These steps highlight that application of knowledge is as important and through that one can start the process anew. Doing is one part of knowledge creation, as Venkula (2005) has also noted.

The literature surveyed here also assumes that change processes start from organisations, not from groups. It was found, in the course of this Study, that change processes can begin from task groups, but outcomes are influenced by whether the organisation boundaries, structures and systems are flexible to accommodate new insights. This study agrees with Zinkin (1989) that new insights need to be contained for change to happen. It was also found that there is more optimism in the literature than the "reality" accounts for, and this was considered interesting. For example, the problems and challenges of power are seldom discussed.

Cases portrayed here reflected that dialogical encounters are needed by groups for understanding how to create access to their own pool of knowledge and confront issues that were not visibly relevant. Some issues surface only when an inquiry is taking place. Such experiences were also brought up by Hughes and Weiss (2007): Assuming knowledge where such does not exist will create problems later on when hidden assumptions surface, either through conflict or frustration. Rationality therefore would here mean that clarity is assumed based on a picture-in-the-mind "we all are similar and thus understand perfectly", when local habits, beliefs and values enforce familiar logic based on spatial proximity.

"*Esse est percipi*" was Berkeley's idealistic view on matters, leading to discussions whether something actually exists even while no one is perceiving it. The idea of "phenomenon" reflects a notion that something has to be made visible or articulated. It is as if there would be a national "visibility mission" regarding India. To see is to exist; to see is to have found. However, the myth of "rationally skilled adults" (Mathur and Mattila

2007b) is present, where it is expected that rationality presides over other forms of behaviour and being adult means being able to handle (or to manage) just any situation at hand. This is noteworthy, since not all situations are manageable within short term perspective and introduce a need for "negative capabilities" (French 2001) and "capacity to be alone" (Winnicott 1958).

These cases also showed that seeing oneself only as a rational adult inhibits aspects of play (e.g. Gadamer 2000a; Rioch 1985; Winnicott 1982) which are important when inquiry is undertaken. The myth of rationality (Sen 1977) curbs groups from seeing aspects that conflict with this image. Often, a presence of such a myth can be sensed when no questions or thoughts arise even though the matter in question is not known. What this myth does not unveil is how to deal with situations where skills in one space are not enough in another. Where existing knowledge leads to dead ends or vicious circles, inquiries with new members bringing in 'weak ties' and different assumptions may point to gaps in knowing and change thinking processes. Although containers (Bion 1961, 1970; Isaacs 1993) are needed, getting curbed by ingroup mentality presents problems in reaching out across time and space, which introduce new challenges and require more efforts. Inquiring within hermeneutic primary task is a revelation that not everything is known, and this realisation freed thinking processes to discover new meanings by group members. This was experienced in all groups.

This research shows that in order to inquire what is going on, by explicitly introducing hermeneutic primary task and inquiring through it, one can tap into issues that are hidden phenomena and deal with those that arise. Hermeneutic primary task is therefore concerned with "how the group is faring" in its explicated and perceived primary task, or whether there is another task, which is actually engaged with. This research agrees with other studies in that human aspects of any endeavour need to be addressed as much as technological aspects, and highlights importance of that in two ways: 1) structuring possibilities to share experiences with one's own organisation as well as with partners; 2) creating avenues for learning using these experiences as valid information to help in examining such matters. However, realisation that experiences or in many cases lack of them may contribute to barriers-in-the-mind, was often forgotten and created constraints, as Weick (1979) formulated it. Therefore, the need for dialogue practices and hermeneutic primary task has become greater, not lesser.

The reason for engaging in hermeneutic primary task is to become aware of dynamics in, between and across different tasks and also relate these. The more these involve ambiguity, the more inquiry is needed to begin with. This becomes essential, because ambiguity involves emotions and emotional dynamics where face-to-face interaction is indispensible, since it is the "core of organizing" (Weick 1993: 642).

Attention to normative, existential and phenomenal primary tasks enables mitigate resource loss or unclear tasks, and to clarify what is being attempted. This putting a process of reflective planning above plans means that plans give a frame but are likely to be modified when context is new. This highlights Minzberg et al. (1998) and their idea of 'getting the hang' of an elephant. Plans are also needed for "mutual agreement" of various parties. The more resource allocation is needed, the more task clarity is called for, but this also means keeping the process intact by creating spaces for interaction and reflection. Herein lies a trap of continuous discussions where a vicious circle is formed, and the group becomes more occupied by its internal processes than its task. The evidence in cases pointed towards this. Clarity here would mean some form of shared meaning of what is to be achieved, its duration, resources needed and related authority delegation. This shared meaning needs to be grounded both in reality and in common agreement based on dialogical inquiring with members across boundaries.

Some cases highlighted that there was no clarity of aims regarding what the groups and their organisations aspired to do with Finland/India to begin with. This was interpreted to be due to lack of information and experience. On the basis of experiences in cases, one needs to argue that it would be helpful first to clarify what purposes groups are set for, not what goals drive them. This is consistent with the idea Winnicott (1982) presented as "I am", before "I do". This calls for conscious focus on purposes driving goals (Mathur 2006), and not the other way round. In some cases, the task was seen as a project where shifts are more difficult to accomplish, if and when needed, because of time and task limits. Therefore, a project is not always the best way to start collaboration efforts. In one of the cases, the task was to look for easy solutions by trying to extract answers from facilitators. Inquiry processes could also introduce aspects beyond rational and known in structured and unstructured explorations. This is especially important for nationally embedded groups with rather homogenous (from education perspective) background, since there is an unvoiced assumption of agreement where none actually exists. Also, such dialogues as to where boundaries need to be set, are important in understanding differences

in time, space and sentience. Boundaries are made, not only drawn (Abbott 1995). The findings from this Study underscore the importance of creating new spaces, and managing boundaries.

Groups can explicitly take up role allocation in the group when members are present to clear doubts and unexpressed expectations. There were examples in the cases where role and authority allocation presented problems for being too vague. These pointed to difficulties a group has when grappling with issues that require the group to take authority over its own tasks and build structures through role allocation. However, in many cases, a group does not like to distinguish between its members easily, and if there is task conflict, then role allocation does not work. Role boundaries exist for members to be conscious of changing task needs, not as concrete walls. The difference between group endeavour and individual approach is whether there is room for collective inquiry with its own normative primary task, or whether members remain rooted in roles only as part of their home organisations. This means that if tasks are seen only through one's own role, group membership as a possibility essential for learning to study and to enlarge that role, may get curbed. This happens in short encounters. While a task group is not a therapeutic comfort group, it needs to fulfil some aspects of existential primary task to keep participants engaged.

Technology aided approaches are useful, but need to be supplemented with real time encounters, where boundaries are experientially shared in tactile experiences in real time and space. Technology has created new spaces and tools, but focused face-to-face interactions in the beginning, and during the process, enhance understanding. Here, technology asymmetry introduced both surprises and setbacks. Also, self-understanding of what is technologically advanced varied from case to case. A group interfaces within its matrix and keeps everyone experientially connected. These issues can therefore be planned well in advance to enable participation, and take into account cost perspective. This shows that timing is as important as nature of meetings.[194] It is often presumed that the above is known. However, groups may discover this when they get stuck or keep repeating similar

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[194] There are times both in India and Finland, when meetings should be avoided, because of national holidays or embedded habits. For example in Finland times such as Christmas, Easter, Midsummer, Summer holidays and last week in May (especially in education) and in India around Republic Day in January, or Independence Day in August, October with several holidays, or Diwali. Whereas in Finland cities become empty and quiet islands during holidays, in India they become congested and celebrations can go on for days. Also higher security measures are applied when important events are approaching. All this calls for understanding of time, not to get stranded.

procedures. From a hermeneutic perspective, when these spirals introduce new aspects into the group, such loops are enhancing. If, however, a group finds itself visiting similar issues time after time without possibility of new inputs or outputs, then it may be caught in a vicious circle. Insights from the cases of this Study are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Important Insights

	Important Insights	Manifestation of Symptoms	Solution
Case One	- group behavior - lack of experience and information constraints	- erratic elements - process slowness - baD and baO	- creating inquiry groups - boundary management (made, not just drawn)
Case Two	- timing - trial and error; adaptation	- entry modes - long gestatation - baFl/F	- use of local knowledge - networking
Case Three	- importance of group task, roles and boundaries - role of facilitator - insights into a working mode where different actors come together and benefits derived from this - conflict - competition	- deskilling; the membership struggles with good versus bad in the Kleinian conception - ba-states, in this case, baM - resource scarcity; need for enabling workshops	- sensitivity to process and unconscious phenomena - feelings of the group are an important source of information, because ba-states may appear. - noting down actual problems through research - developing designs for smaller enterprises
Case Four	- insights into what problems and gateways may arise between Nordic and Indian Businesspersons.	- need for specific knowledge - baD/baFl/baF - counter-dependency	- needs to create cross-border educational spaces for companies - need for designing gateways beyond brokerage intermediation

Unclear boundaries signifying unstable container cannot be negotiated since boundaries are made from commitment. The container-discussion was found important and needing more studies and attention. For Isaacs (1999) and Scharmer (2007), container building seemed unproblematic, but this Study maintains that it has its complexities, and can be considered as "unlearned capability". To include new members, a group needs first of all to feel as a group with boundaries in its first encounter with another group, to negotiate new boundaries and then to form them anew. The permeability of boundaries gets tested here, and also whether there is enough flexibility to shift boundaries to include others and relocate the center within the boundary by negotiating, decision-making, managing and control of spaces that may include two different territories. It was learnt that structured programmes in group settings enable an organisation to see itself from outside since a programme has a task and goal, which comes from two directions: from the purposes of the organisation (or lack of them) and from the programme and group itself. Disconnectedness

arises from lack of boundaries, or that they are too flexible or broken. This may affect group unity and task effectiveness. This rupture was so severe in one case that the group could not continue. Reasons for that emerged from conflicts that were not resolved and left as residuals. Unclear hierarchy and changes in role-holders contributed to this.

Cases showed that processes are hard to build solely on hope or going to a place without having any purpose in mind, since short term goals cannot replace purposes for which the organisation exists (Mathur 2006b). Therefore, questions of phenomenal primary task and value-addition come up. Such a dilemma can be approached with specific designs, such as seminars that address issues of possible cooperation, and later, collaboration. Some cases portrayed a wish for cooperation while others entered collaboration. The difference between cooperation and collaboration is analogous to having exchange and having a marriage (Kanter 1994) or having a dancing partner (Wilkinson et al. 1998). This suggests that contacts precede visits, and visits are expected to build on contacts, and this came through in one successful case. It points to prior data collection and risk taking, which varied in different organisations. Since windows of opportunity were perceived differently, timing was crucial in collaboration initiatives. There are two noteworthy issues to highlight: one is commitment and the other is cost–as time, effort, money, and opportunity.

9.2 Common Features Arising from Cases

While cases in this Study were conducted in different settings and with distinct groups, they portrayed some commonalities between them. These can broadly be put into three categories:

1) Group Phenomena

a) Identities crystallise between small and large groups and understanding how these affect carried pictures helps when crossing borders.

b) Groups as entities may start living their own lives regardless of why they are originally created.

c) Groups need to look into communication channels and how communication is carried out as a group task. Communication linkages are more important for credibility than content.

d) Content and context of dialogues and group processes are not inseparable for understanding.

e) Great importance attaches to pictures-in-the-mind: What is carried and why?

2) Structures, Roles and Authority

a) Structures to facilitate group and organisational interfaces and building on these to enable other kinds of activities, are important.

b) Structure building goes hand-in-hand with strategic visions, and in their absence, becomes fragmented.

c) The need to examine whether structures support or hinder (cross-border) interactions, is ongoing.

d) Holding, delegating and developing roles and related authority, requires collectivities such as groups and organisations.

3) Boundary Questions

a) Identification of needs and working with problematic issues and practices are well achieved through instituting an explicit hermeneutic primary task.

b) There is a strong need to enhance capabilities beyond mere language skills.

c) Engaging with dialogues across boundaries through designed seminars and workshops to clarify own strengths enables new learning by locating a third space for collaboration.

d) Value-addition with perspective: without long term aims, purposes cannot be translated into goals. While conscious purposes do not always reflect unconscious goals, purposes build futures, short term goals do not.

e) What is absent, can be brought in. No boundary crossing is without learning.

All cases showed that the distinction between uncertainty and ambiguity was useful, since they point to phenomenon that may co-exist or be apart. However, both need to be addressed. For enhanced group work, a group needs to engage with workshop-type working and be limited to the extent there are facilitators (8 to 12 members per facilitator). This favours a deep and focused working environment, with possibilities to go back and forth with the subject matter, especially when time is limited. Since it takes time to 'group', there needs to be a possibility to continue processes that have begun. To enable back and forth feedback to inform and guide the process, contact sessions need to have adequate gaps in between. Such gaps also provide useful reflections spaces.

The working hypotheses raised to be discussed in Part IV are:

1) Collaborative workshops provide access to unthought knowns and anxieties belonging to members that carry them into cross-border situations, beyond their own awareness.

2) Interactive barriers arise from interactions and how the five boundaries of space, time, technology, sentience, and task are held, provides deep insights to groups holding them.

3) Primary tasks reflect organisational imperatives carried by members because of embeddedness. Therefore group primary tasks are central to group endeavours.

Cases brought out aspects of dialogue in groups and group behaviour. For hermeneutic inquiries these background pictures are quintessential to fathom what is happening in the group at a given time. Aspects related to five boundaries surfaced, as well as pictures-in-the-mind, which sometimes facilitated inquiry and sometimes hindered it. In addition, aspects about content were highlighted. These cases were all different, thus bringing out four distinctive features of groups, namely seeking, aspiring, connecting, and engaging, as in Figure 18, which portrays hermeneutic primary task in group process. It combines experiences and existing knowing from dialogue, group relations and experiential learning into a group process in the context of hermeneutic primary task.

Zinkin's (1989) discussion on containers and their dynamic nature, is noteworthy. Containers are not "set" and unchanging. This was found here too, but limitedly. It was also found problematic that some container discussions lacked references and therefore did not openly state how and where from the ideas were developed.

Figure 18: Hermeneutic Primary Task
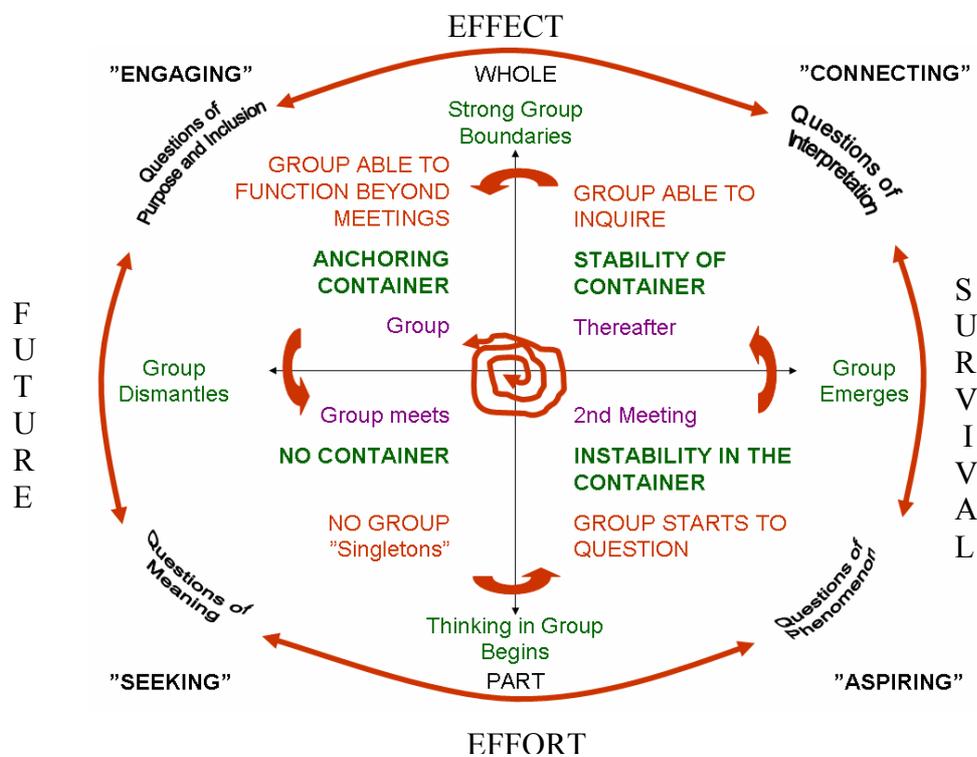
Note: This spiral is modified from Isaacs (1999). Here the hermeneutic primary task is shown as a group process.

Figure 18 (page 199) captures the process nature of hermeneutic primary task in a group. It is an ongoing spiral with start and end, since a group is of limited time. If a participating group or groups get institutionalised, e.g. become more or less permanent, a second level process begins. Every group goes through group formation process, and this is a neverending one in the sense that every change will introduce new dynamics into groups. In cross-border situations where two or more groups coalesce, a group process will ensue. The more heterogeneous the group, the longer a period of instability may take. For example in conflict situations, instability in the container may mean denying someone a membership in the group. In cross-border situations, where ambiguities are high in the beginning, such group workshops are one way of dealing with inherent anxieties before they start appearing as barriers in the process itself.

Part IV: Revelations in Dialogue Processes: Hermeneutic Primary Task Revisited

10 Hermeneutic Primary Task Revisited: Crossing Boundaries

Based on experiences in presented cases and discussion on theory related to these, this part reflects contextual and content issues arisen in conceiving the original research questions and research objectives of this Study. These cases in the Finland-India context raised three levels of insights: about Finland-India Economic Relations (FIER) in terms of cross-border initiatives, secondly about group knowing and enabling institutionalities necessary to reduce barriers, and thirdly about the hermeneutic primary task (HPT) itself. In FIER, experiences pointed to a need for Collaboration Process Management. Barriers reflected needs to work with issues that raise them, such as desired arrangements, but also 'pictures-in-the-mind' or lack of knowing; Methodological issues were raised along the journey to highlight needs for management education specifically dealing with interaction and communication learning, along with considerations of how to improve such encounters and research on them. In view of these, hermeneutic primary task is revisited, and discussion regarding method undertaken thereafter.

The main gaps identified from the literature survey in Part II of this Study concerned the following aspects of research:

a) Lack of studies on task groups in cross-border situations

This research strand is only arising because of felt needs to understand, practice and adapt to different surroundings. More and more persons need either to uproot themselves or become accustomed to changes in workplaces, and organisations are more and more involved in participating in international value chains and constellations for their sustainability. For these reasons, cross-border interactions are relevant for human well-being and understanding, and designing new forms of international collaborations.

b) Need to understand what facilitates/constrains cross-border interactions from a dialogue perspective.

Dialogue was important here, because it has a basic orientation towards interaction. A broader view of dialogue including cross-border interactions, needs to be attained. This involves ethics, understanding, working with differences and new management thinking by

studying groups as containers where new transformations and evolutionary processes informed by experiential learning are born.

c) Usefulness of combining dialogue approaches with group relations knowing.

In cross-border phenomena, when groups brush against each other in their views, values, norms, attitudes, and beliefs, it is important to discuss, clarify, and inquire in order to be able to maintain trust, and to develop new avenues for interaction and collaboration. For example, with later dialogue discussions, the need for institution building – which has been central in group relations – is also recognized (Senge et al. 2004/2005).

Finland-India Economic Relations related insights pointed out issues of design, participation, 'pictures-in-the-mind', education possibilities and building lasting relations. The empirical study also pointed out difficulties and barriers on the way and needs to engage with problems on those levels where they exist, and stressed needs of understanding group phenomena with related issues of boundaries, roles and authority, especially in cross-border situations and how these contribute to anxieties and 'pictures-in-the-mind'. Understanding national embeddedness and boundary questions cross-border interaction introduces, was found important, especially when rationality is a starting point. This brought out issues of understanding and information gathering, and reflection on these. While possibilities were acknowledged in all groups, to actually tap them was another challenge, which raised questions of resources, networking and being creative when previous paths do not exist.

Sometimes projects are needed to first create interactions (Figure 19, page 203), although such interactions do not necessarily lead to long term collaboration or cooperation (see Figure 7, p. 65). The problem arising here was that when such interactions are not built on long term purposes, they can easily become just "visits", where energy is expended with no value creation. Another aspect, however, was the nature of possibilities in space and time. Sometimes seeing is needed, but without guiding purposes and if there was insufficient commitment to search and inquire, possibilities would not even arise regardless of stated aims. The window of opportunity was not easily taken as a reality.

The window of opportunity is time and space bound. Those, who have created some presence in India early enough, will benefit if they have succeeded in establishing trustful

presence.[195] Trustful here also means unthreatening to local values and beliefs. This is an issue in education, since USA, for example, despite having a large number of Indian students in USA, still evokes a lot of opposition in India. Examples are discussions on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and Foreign Educational Institutions Bill. Discussions often raise the spectre that "western" (read: American) values will be imposed upon Indian values and beliefs. This corresponds also to discussions in Finland, when a group is trying to keep out of its boundaries something that it does not wish to deal with.[196]

Figure 19: Crossing Boundaries

Across
Boundaries
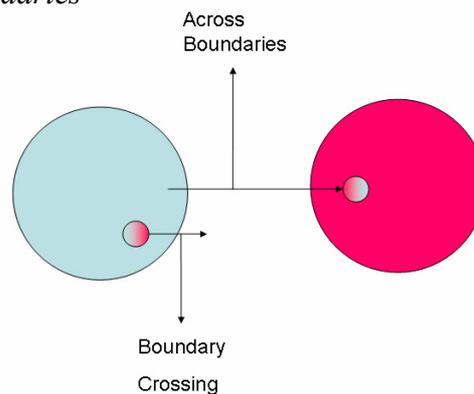
Boundary
Crossing

As seen in Figure 19, boundary crossing involves stepping outside a known group, be it part of an organisation, nation or any other group. In situations where larger groups around are fairly familiar, such crossings do not often involve great thought (such as leaving work to go home). The matter gets more complex, when one needs to address issues that are beyond knowing or experience, and when one territory is substituted for another. This was highlighted through these cases in the way matters were discussed, in experiences encountered and anxieties held. Routine thinking (e.g. Levitt and March 1988) introduces traps, if and when it is not examined or the tradition discussed. Tradition therefore cannot be only past, but ongoing and present as well. Some scholars argue that when in India, existing axioms or learnings need to be forgotten or revalued (Knowledge@Wharton, 2007b).[197] Yet memory does not erase at will, because learning requires experiential validation to be internalised.

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[195] Möttölä (2006) refers to this. It is said that those coming to India too late, are going to have to pay ten times more than those who were there early. For example, acquiring land will be difficult and costly.

[196] The paradox here is that it does not seem to affect values and beliefs when persons are sent abroad to study. What is discussed, however, is how much such studies cost! Some of these professionals also return to India with their modified, changed or accepted values.

[197] Knowledge@Wharton, 2007b (http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/india/article.cfm?articleid=4220, Accessed 4.11.2007).

10.1 Collaborative Process Management

Cases also pointed out the need for inquiry seminars especially when trying to relate with an unknown partner and to explore social innovations. It was also experienced that getting such groups together was difficult.[198] This calls for new designs and linkages that go beyond current ideas. Indians have become more aware of the need to have more quality education in India. Different collaborations with Indian partners need exploring.[199] The problem encountered during this research was that new possibilities were not explored with possible partners, and "what to give" was taken as a leading guide when thought in Finland. This does not suffice in a changing environment, where institutions, laws, and needs are changing.

Figure 20: Hermeneutic Primary Task and Crossing Boundaries

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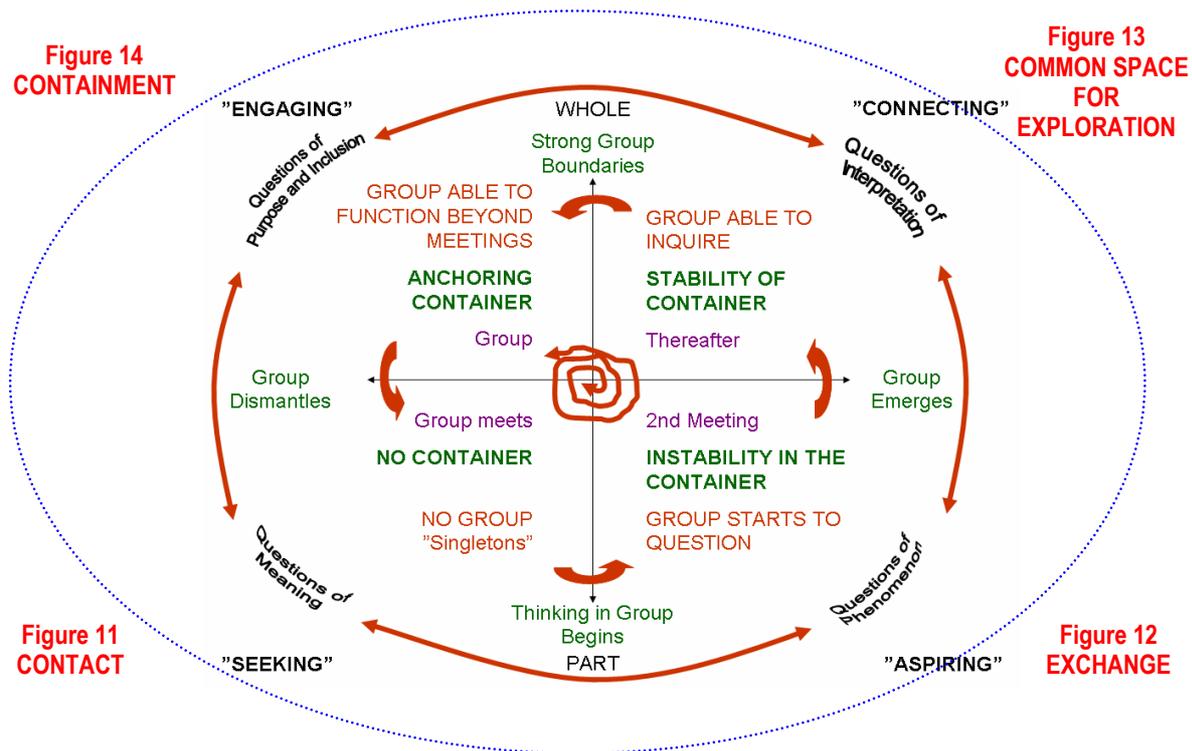
[198] This is also reflected by Wilkinson et al. (1998), and by the new IMD President J.R. Wells, who said that companies underestimate the benefits of inter-organisational learning, and focus only on intra-organisational learning (Mahajan, 2007, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Education/Lead_the_ranks/articleshow/ 2396042.cms, Accessed 5.11.2007)

[199] One example of recent collaborations is Arene, 2007b (http://www.arene.fi/ajankohtaista.asp?id=364, Accessed 5.11.2007). However, here their collaboration emphasis is on recruitment, and less on research.

In Chapter 7, border crossings were discussed. The four crossings presented refer to the four quadrants (Figures 11-14, pp. 133-134) in hermeneutic primary task. This refers to the process of engagement, where a crossing introduces needs for hermeneutic primary task, since it creates needs for understanding processes. This process is highlighted in Figure 20 (page 204).

Diversity is featuring in discussions in today's organisations, but there was little discussion on this aspect on the group level. The assumptions of similarity seemed to be stronger than needs to understand what otherness actually means. Dialogue literature (Ellinor and Gerard 1998; Isaacs 1999) often points to likemindedness, which is unsustainable to start with in a more diverse group, where multiple 'pictures-in-the-mind' are carried by its membership. In organisations, combinations of groups, too, have become diverse. Having said this, there are also dialogue researchers who do take diversity issues under discussion (Anderson et al. 2004; Baxter and Montgomery 1996). Here, one needs to discriminate between individual level and group level discussions. The latter has been less emphasised.

Problems with communication are often dealt with more text, email or talk, but these do not suffice, since much remains beyond awareness of persons and groups, which needs to be addressed. Thinking that cross-border interaction is simple if one just gets enough information, is false and leads to problems. The cases brought out differences in creating intra-group roles and inter-group roles. While intra-group roles are built on normative primary tasks within an organisation, inter-group roles need to take into consideration boundary crossings and impacts it creates. No inter-organisational group can function in isolation. Members carry their own organisational normative primary task (NPT) with them to another group. If this NPT is forgotten or pushed away, then, in effect, link with the home organisation is severed. In general, roles are (and were) not much discussed in groups and this has been noted in Group Relations Conferences. Without role-taking or role-allocation, role holders cannot engage with tasks, and are "empty raincoats" (Handy 1994). While such groups can be very comfortable to work in, less exchange closes them and with that closing they turn inwards. Such problems have been reported, for example, by Kotter (1990). In participative research, groups try to draw researchers into their own pathologies and thus rip the researcher of his/her ability to research. This is difficult to discern, unless discovered when it is happening. Also the lack of 'process guides' to unravel and discuss phenomena itself has been felt.

In inter-group situations it becomes essential to define what needs to be communicated, shared or "owned" (here in the sense of "held"). The regulation of communication is needed for new knowing and skills to arise. This is brought out in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Fields of Balance Creation

		OWNED	
		low	**high**
S H A R E D	**low**	Afraid to participate in the process; low in ownership of knowing and skills and low in sharing.	Afraid of sharing information; ownership in knowing too high; no belief in sharing.
	high	"Outsourcing" or sharing existing knowing and skills to the extent ownership becomes very low.	Situation of balance where ownership in knowing and skills are balanced with sharing. Enables containment and collaboration.

Insight and clarity, playfulness and need for an outside facilitator in most cases is obvious, (the group can work within itself too, and a facilitator may help if the group gets stuck) but there is something misunderstood about hierarchy. It always points to something which was 'made of bone and cemented forever', ignoring that all organisations have hierarchies, flat or deep. All hierarchies derive legitimacy from authority and its delegation. Hierarchy here is seen as role and authority structure and problems arise when members start pushing (delegating undue) authority and thus responsibility upwards (Chattopadhyay 1999). This leads to creating the illusion of "management which is responsible for everything" and relinquishing the state of maturity into adolescence while expecting omnipotence from the top in the form of good and bad.

10.2 Barriers in Interactions

Cases suggested that 'pictures-in-the-mind' can be powerful barriers, since these curb examination also in places where benefits surpass downsides. By not looking into the issues at all or through lenses that bias the process, gives precedence to basic assumptions and task distortion. Working with such barriers then becomes difficult, unless there is a change in the systems providing access to information supplemented by meetings where issues of uncertainty and ambiguity can be addressed.

Finland and India do not have agreement on mutual recognition of professionals, nor legal reciprocal jurisdiction. An Indian doctor cannot work in Finland or the other way round. Recognition of professionals, visa application procedures, not being juristically reciprocal territories, all introduce different problems. A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is under discussion between EU and India[200] and it could address some of these questions.[201] The WTO "Mode 4" movement of natural persons is one important part of services but so far EU has been protectionist even inside the Union territory. These issues cannot be solved by discussing barriers in groups alone, and call for interventions at higher levels. The oft referred 'cumbersome paperwork' falls partly in this category and leads to attestment of documents and other needed legal procedures at both ends.[202] This may suggest some disparities between systems. Thus, some procedures are not changed by group discussions, and need to be addressed at appropriate authority levels. Therefore, more important at first is to identify on what level the issue perceived as a problem, lies. This calls for understanding institutional differences and how these institutions function, and is one of the reasons for engaging in group discussions. Barriers are presented in Table 19.

Table 19: Barriers in Interaction

Barrier	Expression	Solution
Sentient	- emotions and feelings	- engagement in the group
Distance	- bridging gaps by technology or visits	- information and discussion
Unthought Knowns (Bollas 1987)	- engagement in groups	- working hypotheses
Tariff	- legislation, agreements in national, international and supranational levels	- policy research, advocacy
Beliefs, Values and Habits	- conflicts, inter-personal issues, group pathologies	- group work to understand nature of difference and work with it
Technology Asymmetry	- communicating gaps	- adaptation
Time Perceptions	- priority conflicts	- planning, information
Task Conflicts	- legitimacy and authority conflicts	- sensitivity and courage to build synergies

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[200] At the moment EU and India are having disagreements on WMD and human rights clauses of the agreement. Johnson, 2007 (http://www.ft.com/cms/s/142ebb18-ca6a-11db-820b-000b5df10621.html, Accessed 15.4.2007))

[201] Financial Express, 2006 (http://www.financialexpress.com/fe_full_story.php?content_id=142646, Accessed 22.2.2007).

[202] Examples of visa related problems are portrayed e.g. by Raghavan, 2006 (http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2006/11/20/stories/2006112000180900.htm, Accessed 29.5.2007).

While culture is often discussed in connection with groups, organisations and nations, this Study did not focus on culture or cross-cultural issues. Instead, an approach emphasising 'pictures-in-the-mind' was chosen. For one, culture is not some monolith stamp put on countries as Hofstede claims (1994; 2002; Hofstede and Hofstede 2005). Hofstede and his dimensions have been critiqued by McSweeney (2002) because of either-or approach and assuming too much based on too limited data. Especially balance between individualism and collectivism were of interest here, since these vary according to local values, customs, beliefs and practices, and even personally. Culture is seen more as a play, not "a regnant central process or directive structure" (Geertz 2000:201). Nor is culture a "commodity", separate from life and living (Read 1963/2002).

Numerous examples of this were noticed by group members and the researcher. What actually belongs to collective or individual sphere is more complex than seen from outside. There is a need to think in what way and where individualism or collectivism can be applied, since these reside more in particular practices, habits, values, but not in nations.[203] However, the nearest applicable description of culture in this setting comes from Schein (1992). He describes culture as artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions. These are valid also in groups, based on what is brought into the group by individuals. Schein stresses that if the group carries on for a length of time thus holding and nurturing within itself pictures of what it is and communicates this to others, it develops its own "culture". Therefore, short time "ad hoc" or task groups exhibited in this Study do not necessarily develop a culture in the sense Schein (1992) described it above.

While feelings here meant capacity to sense, emotions referred to reactions. Instead of speaking of emotional intelligence (Goleman 1997, 2006; Goleman et al. 2001; Payne 1985), one could speak of Informative Feelings. In the cases studied, this difference came forth when some issues were considered and discussed also highlighting feelings attached to them, and when members reacted on some issues without explicit noting of their feelings. This "dispersing" (Needleman 1990) instead of "containment" (Bion 1961, 1970) or using "negative capabilities" (French 2001), was one feature that needs attention in engaging with the hermeneutic primary task. Containment as well as engagement are important in cross-border interactions since in most cases one cannot know what to expect when beginning.

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[203] This was a realisation arrived at when discussing the paucity of wastebins in India. This insight emerged from a discussion with Professor Prem Pangotra at IIMA, how things which are seen as collective, may not be so. Collective and individual are present in all "cultures", but these may not always be noticed.

10.3 Five Boundaries and Primary Tasks

Cases also portrayed that boundaries create different mindsets through time, space, technology, sentience, and task (Section 4.1, page 47). This refers to institutional settings, understanding, structures, and systemic responses. The need for boundary flexibility was experienced in these cases and also whether such flexibility was missing or not even thought of. Systems and structures can be designed so that they give adequate ventilation possibilities and encourage responsibility and authority taking. The five boundaries of time, space, task, technology, and sentience played a part in these cases.

1) Time: mental constructs, such as accounting year, festival days and calendars, the assumptions about birth, death; time as resource, time as a dateline within which to achieve something, etc.;

Time was brought in by thinking of entry timing (window of opportunity), visit timing, and legislation; it was also present in different habits (timing), and also in efficacy in the task. Discussions on old/new highlighted this boundary as well as hopes for delivery.

2) Space: assumptions socially, culturally and intergenerationally arising from where one lives, structures of family and society, notions of personal, private, social and collegiate spaces; location reserved by a task group for its work to be safely conducted;

Space and its role came through as being present or being virtual, differences in 'pictures-in-the-mind', and how these differed or changed when travelling, and arisen opportunities for capturing them. Also distance as enabling or disabling factor portrayed this boundary. What was considered as task space, private, social or collegiate spaces, came out from cases. Space was also present in embeddedness and value habits.

3) Task: the basis and logic of why task systems are organised for normative work around which a group coalesces and roles arise;

Such issues as keeping on the task or succumbing totally into ba-states were present, bringing with it in/out dynamics and work/ba-group struggles. Issues of task and related management were noted through role allocation or its absence, and whether purposes were viewed as central for tasks and whether goals were derived from purposes or not; task introduced a choice between collaboration or competition.

4) Technology: technical means of doing useful things, labour use, distribution of work, skills needs;

Technology came in through products and linkages with human systems, as possible ways of interacting and cooperating, as carrier or conduit for images through space and mode of interaction. Technology asymmetry was noticed, and assumption of the technological levels in another space (either overtly or covertly); this refers also to roles, task allocation and capabilities needed for task engagement.

5) Sentience: the quality of relatedness of group members in a group to each other and pictures carried about this affecting inclusion/exclusion and cultural distance when the other is perceived as Other.

Sentience was pictured through feelings and 'pictures-in-the-mind'. All these were found to interact and enmesh creating new vistas of thinking or preventing them to emerge. The exclusion, "Otherness", strangeness as well as capacity to be alone or contain, were all part of this boundary; trust and vulnerability in small and large groups; collaboration or competition?

Figure 22 portrays how sentience located in a group functions as an organising "Self", sensing and allocating resources to work with other boundaries. Thus a person needs to be committed, but also flexible in changing environment. Wrong NPT may lead to failed mission. Also, having many NPTs in one short programme may be too demanding. In an intra-organisational group, primary tasks reflect organisational tasks, whereas in an inter-organisational group this becomes more complex.

Figure 22: Five Boundaries
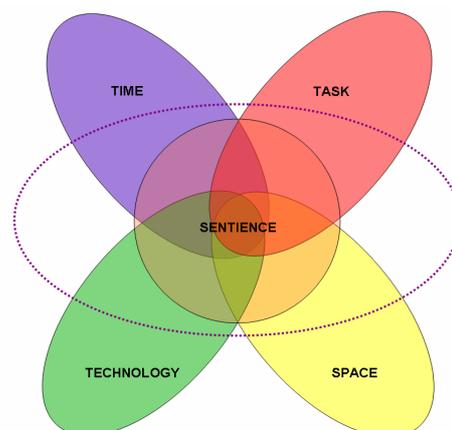
Figure 23 (page 211) gives a picture of an organisation. Throughout the study the significance of four primary tasks in revealing patterns of how they juxtapose with each other became more obvious with corresponding boundary issues. The first issue in

organisations is to define or locate the organisation's normative primary tasks (NPT) and how other primary tasks, existential primary task (EPT) and phenomenal primary task (PPT), enmesh with it, and either support or hinder it. These are termed here as "macrotasks" on organisational level. In an organisation, groups embedded in it are supposed to reflect these primary tasks through group functions, thus creating "microtasks" in intra-organisational level, which enmesh with primary tasks of the whole organisation.

Figure 23: Intra-organisational Group
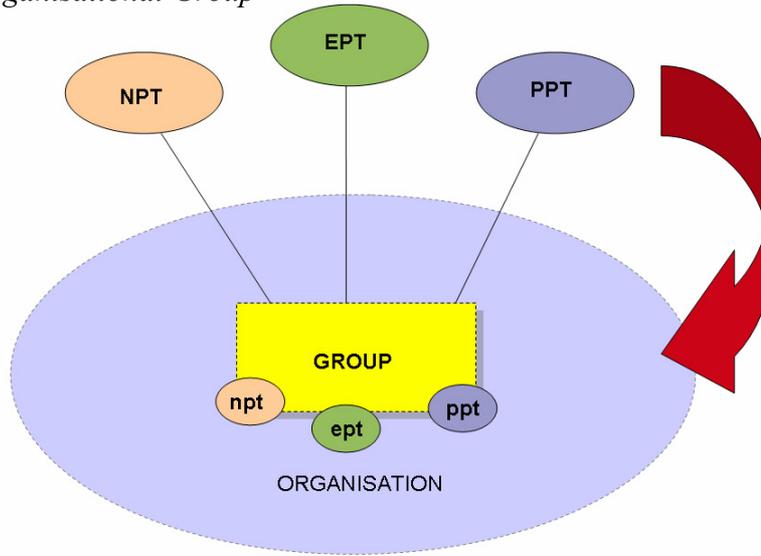
Here the boundary questions arise within one organisation and groups in it reflect organisational goals, while they have their own primary tasks related to their roles in the organisation. In contrast, Figure 24 portrays primary tasks in the whole organisation in relation to a group embedded in it; but this is not enough, if the organisation needs to engage with other organisations, which also have their primary tasks.

Figure 24: Intra-organisational Group and Hermeneutic Primary Task
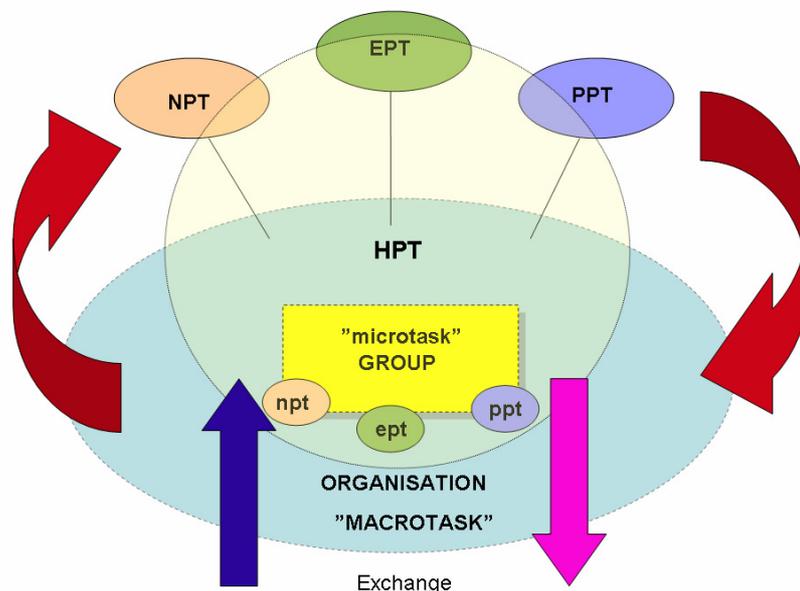
Thus, it is advantageous for a hermeneutic primary task to be explicitly instituted, and by doing this, groups embedded in organisations may function as "antennas" for new areas of knowing. Without at least some parts of the organisation engaging with this sensing, new possibilities and areas of normative primary task enhancement may remain unthought. The need for exchange can be derived from this or follow from this process.

While understanding boundaries is essential in grasping problems and barriers, there is one more issue that needs to be discussed. When a boundary is crossed, the Other needs to be encountered. If the boundary does not shift or is not permeable, there cannot be inclusion. If this is true, then thinking of creating interactions needs to address such questions as when does interaction become real and when does one create inclusion.

Introducing an explicit hermeneutic primary task in the initial phase and keeping it alive does contribute to effectiveness, since the aim is to clarify practices by bringing them into awareness where they can be examined in view of organisational purposes, thus emphasising open systems approach. This is achieved by bringing into awareness unthought knowns (Bollas 1987). A basic assumption group cannot engage with cross-border interaction, because it does not build on task which is essential in such endeavours. Effectiveness seeks to create impact and results, while efficiency in this context would mean using resources without waste. However, this does not imply impact, since resources can be efficiently used without creating anything new.

Figure 25: Inter-organisational Group
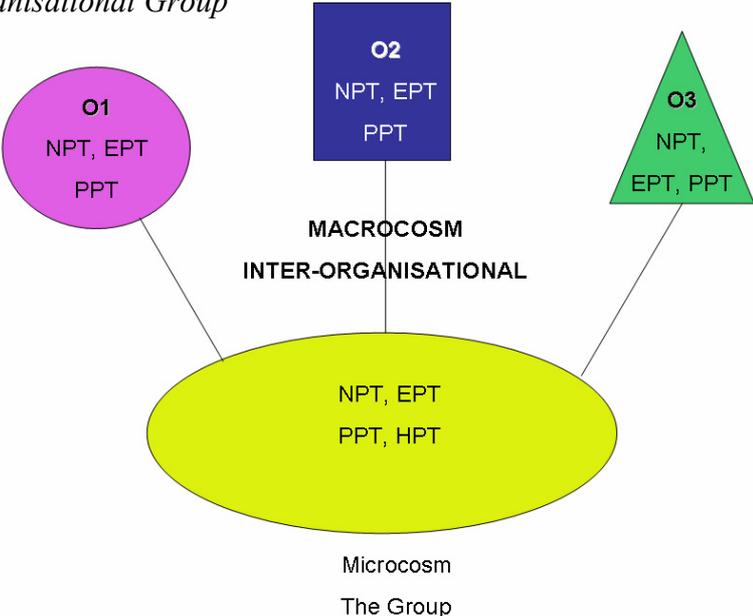
What is noteworthy in Figure 25, is that macrocosm in inter-organisational collaboration does not consist only of one organisation, but many, each with their own unique primary

tasks. In intra-group situation, groups embedded in organisations are supposed to reflect organisational primary tasks. However, these groups in inter-organisational functions can create a new group that has its own primary tasks beyond the ones they originally had. This happens in networked projects, where project goals design or locate new normative primary tasks. Therefore questions of role, boundary, task, time and space become more evident, since an inter-group is trying to build these within its means, but still retain its original embeddedness in background organisations.

In hermeneutic primary task one can see three levels where insights are usable. One is finding out the state of organisation in question. Second one is related to establishing usable and workable here-and-now. The third is about creating capabilities for now and future. While thinking is important and essential for any of these three, without commitment to act and do, such thinking has low value for understanding and shaping organisational trajectories.

10.4 The Sixth Boundary: Understanding

The five boundaries have formed one of the cornerstones of this Study. However, during this research it became evident that a connection between these boundaries needed to be established. All these five boundaries, task, technology, sentience, time, and space, refer to issues that are both outside and inside a person's mind (as a picture). The missing part was, what actually creates or combines experiential learning in groups? As the focus here was on hermeneutic primary task as an approach, the missing link was *understanding*. Figure 22 (p. 210) already suggested that a connecting thread needs to include this, because sentience alone does not suffice. Thus, the sixth boundary needs to be understanding (Figure 26).

Figure 26: The Sixth Boundary
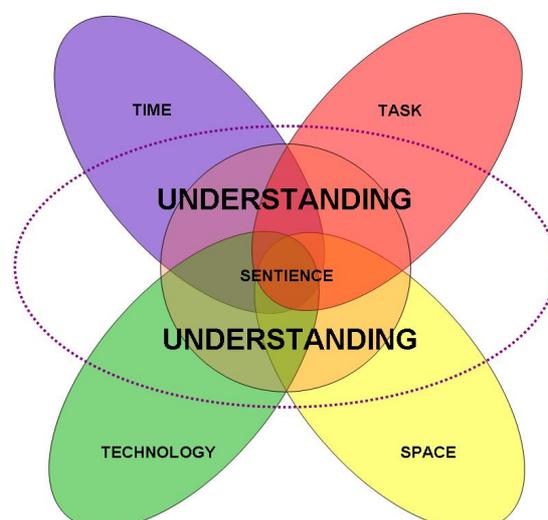
This aspect of understanding supplements the other, without which the boundaries do not hold together, because there needs to be an interpretation element present. Understanding as interpretative and reflective fulfils this function and gives scope to other tasks.

The nature of effectiveness depends on understanding which is related to other five tasks and also primary tasks. Often procedures and tasks are viewed rational and unproblematic, but they produce no real output in terms of value. Thus, understanding as a boundary needs to be added to inquire what is actually happening in the task group, organisation and systems when they engage with their primary tasks.

10.5 Reflections on the Research and Researcher Roles

This Study inquired into the hermeneutic primary task in the context of Finland and India to research what are the barriers and gateways in Finland-India relations through task group work. Regardless of many earlier opportunities and expectations (Korhonen et al. 1997), studying of trade potential (Mathur 1998), or expectations of flight routes, the links did not develop as expected, even though India liberalised its economy greatly in 1991 and henceforth. The Finnish Prime Minister, Matti Vanhanen, visited India in March 2006. As he himself pointed out, he was the first Finnish PM to visit India in 45 years (Vanhanen and Government Communications Unit 2006).[204]

This Study adopted action research as its methodology, because of expectations of new insights from engagement. There was a dearth of research as well as interaction, and this needed addressing. Action Research method gave access to practical issues of cross-border aspirations and enabled to get in touch with day-to-day problems. It also enabled praxis to inform concept development.

The chosen method requires access and time. Access into groups is always limited, and it is difficult to find suitable groups. One way is to structure group meetings with specific goals. This was done in some cases. Time refers to number of meetings, which do not have to last more than two hours at a time. While time gives more insights into processes and group behaviour, short meetings also provide inputs that lead to desired outcomes. Therefore short interactions are also needed, because these, above all, build motivation.

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[204] Vanhanen and Government Communications Unit, 2006
(http://www.vnk.fi/ajankohtaista/puheet/puhe/en.jsp?oid=150461&c=1&toid=4949&moid=4952, Accessed 7.5.2007).

Short term groups also raise issues of group behaviour, functioning and grouping. Therefore, not even these are to be dismissed. For future research, this will be important: beginnings and endings have reasons and sometimes they are hidden behind other issues.

This Study also brought insights of experiential learning and how this learning occurs. It has connections to dialogue, hermeneutic primary task, action research, process, group, experiential learning, and boundaries. The inquiry frame, the concepts and framework used are not necessarily new. They are new in this context, if not in content.

The context gave possibility to engage different actors, which was fruitful especially in initial stages, where the exploration is more of possibilities than very specific company/group/organisation issues. It would also be possible to have different sessions for common issues and more individual issues (from the organisation point of view). This would need some form of institutionalising on a broader base. Miles's (1980) insight that authority delegated in one system may not be valid in another is important. He too points out that the boundary spanning person is likely to be regarded as an anxiety raiser and to some extent an outsider because of his/her role.

The downside of this method is that it requires a lot of work, participation and engagement. The facilitator is part of the process, which can introduce some bias, if the person lacks skills to notice projections, introjections, transferences, and counter-transferences in group-behaviour. This bias will need time, reflecting and using other material to see what is essential and what is not, but also experiential learning to build capabilities. On the other hand, this is organisational reality, and such issues need to be experienced also by researchers to understand what kinds of challenges arise. These can further or additionally be researched using other methods.

The received feedback supported the idea of having similar seminars and workshops as were portrayed in this Study. While the group meets around an issue, it is the group, not the facilitator, who voices what is needed. If it were the other way round, it would become a lecture. The important fact in groups is, that the group itself thinks and feels through unthought knowns to get in touch with itself more fully. This is important in view of what Weick (1990) said about regression to previous stages when under stress and pressure. This is the key to hermeneutic primary task. If the process can be helped by different facilitators with different knowledge bases suitable for the task at hand, then such use is justified, but not always necessary.

Roles that the reseacher took up provided invaluable insights into differences between organisational functioning within these cases. Some insights and thoughts are shared here. The focus is on organisational functioning, differences and discussion on frames of experience.

First, there was a clear difference between organisational functioning *vis-à-vis* individual. In the Finnish context, the issues were discussed at collegiate levels, which meant that within certain limits (e.g. programme budget) matters were arranged quite autonomously. Where larger issues were involved, such as exploring interlinkages and collaborative initiatives, the authority delegation issues set in. This was seen as rational functioning from Finnish perspective.

In one Indian case authority delegation was different, because the institute the researcher collaborated with, was a private one. This is the first distinguishing factor: due to systemic differences, higher education in India is largely carried out by private institutes in collaboration with deemed Universities or by acquired university status from University Grants Commission (UGC) or recognition from All India Council for Technical Education AICTE, both apex bodies in evaluating and upholding institutional standards and development. AICTE is mainly concerned with institutes that provide technical education, under which much of undergraduate management education outside universities belongs.

Privacy itself is not a dividing factor, but introduced surprises that were not anticipated before. The institute had strong hierarchical systems, and levels of autonomy and hierarchy delegation were low. Roleholders were not able to go by task-based logic. This meant that every issue, small and big, needed authorisation. Learning about a different hierarchy system while doing research is always a challenge. Since structures that enable some level of role autonomy, were not in place, changes in key roleholders affected processes in Case Three.

Therefore there was additional pressure on managing self in role in Case Three. With this experience, the overlapping roles were too exhausting, while learning was high. One learning was that one needs to know the system more thoroughly before engaging in a process that produces ambiguity. This means spending time in the organisation before embarking into more challenging arenas.

In other cases, roles were clearer and consistent from role perspective. The difference in the Indian context and in the Finnish one was, how a researcher was viewed. In the Indian

context an academic was always viewed with high respect due to the status academics in general have. The role of scholars in India is very active and their opinions and research are intensely followed. The experience in Finland is not the same, although doing research is respected and organisations can be supportive too.

The question of cultural bias needs to be addressed in two ways. First, whether there was ethnocentricity present, and second, whether this affected results. In Finland, the ethnocentricity becomes visible through homogeneity. As one dialogue practicant remarked in personal discussion about groups, it is more difficult to have homogeneous groups than diverse. The reason for this was that in homogeneous groups issues are dealt with assumed rationality and with little or no reflection on the process, apart from results. It then easily becomes mechanical, which brings problems if the same group is to engage with cross-border activities. Therefore, it is claimed here that ethnocentricity is more difficult in the "native" group than in some other. In addition, in India it was possible to have an Indian co-researcher.

In a group that is diverse or is originating from a different space, the assumption from the beginning is that there are issues that may be misunderstood, not captured or misinterpreted. To avoid real bias, there is a need to discuss with locals about the processes and also reflect on research done by others. In a new and foreign group, therefore, it is best to start with letting the participants bring out issues and only then unravel meanings from these. 'Listening post' as an approach gave opportunity to tune in to discussions before embarking into interpretation. Also, what was noticed especially in the Indian groups (more clearly in Case Four), was that participants took time to explain their stance whenever there was uncertainty or unclarity between the researcher's view and the participants' meaning. Also, one needs to stress that these differences are revealing too for understanding why and where such differences in views and opinions arise. One needs to spend time in the location, and therefore the researcher chose to be in India as a scholar and learn in action what issues are important when involved in cross-border issues. The reflections on the experience in addition to experiencing it oneself, were eye-opening and also illusion-breaking.

The frame of experience, to be in a role in another space, has a different quality than visiting and highlights the need for institutional experiences, not only "cultural" in the sense of habits. The experience of "Other" becomes alive where one is visibly different and conscious of experiencing minority. In such experiencing one already needs to engage

with introspection and inquiry to process what is familiar and what is strange to distinguish between processes that are individual and which belong to larger entities, such as groups and organisations. While systems in India and Finland differ, they also present unexpected similarities when one takes time to explore them deeply.

To conclude, bias can be present only when one is not conscious of it. To exclude this as far as it is possible, the reflections on material have included also those persons who participated in the form of feedback. For further research, it is emphasised that a dual task design might be necessary in these kinds of approaches where both rational and unconscious material is arising. This would call for two or more researchers to be present.

11 Discussion and Interpretation

This Study relied on open systems approach through dialogue to understand how task groups engage with hermeneutic primary task in cross-border situations. The issues involved consisted of experiential learning, boundaries, dialogue, hermeneutics, action research, and primary tasks in groups. Through these, important issues such as management, process, role, anxieties, identity, context, and content were discussed. The larger content of cross-border interactions involved questions with implications for different international and supranational agreements. The study emphasised importance of participation and action. The primary question was approached through reflective mirroring of actions, plans, and implementation in a research frame tracking four primary tasks. The five research questions related to the five objectives were researched in cases through dialogue, group relations and experiential learning literature. What this Study has found about them, merits discussion.

The **primary question**, *"to understand the hermeneutic primary task in groups (that belong to larger unities) engaged in cross-border interactions as a way of knowing how their primary tasks relate to one another and impact task effectiveness"*, was the overarching question on how groups can help in exploring new situations in the midst of uncertainty and ambiguity. It was answered through the study of task group processes with explicitly instituted hermeneutic primary task.

The question of effectiveness was not addressed on a quantitative basis. Rather, it was decided to focus on the process of understanding the trajectory of purposeful group engagement as the basis of this inquiry. This led into a) resource reallocations in action, b) new arrangements and aims, or c) aborting the task. Thus effectiveness means that as groups become aware of their real possibilities within their frame of experiences, and seek to engage more effectively with the totality of four primary tasks (NPT, EPT, PPT, HPT), they open new pathways for engaging with Normative Primary Task. To become aware is twofold: first, familiarity with the subject matter itself; second, the organisation's familiarity with itself and support for discovering more hermeneutic endeavours.

In this Study, revelation means that which unfolds, whereas salvation would imply imposing known categories and solutions on group.[205] For this research, it was necessary to understand how the relatedness within and between boundaries is held, what these boundaries are and how they affect processes. The study developed understanding about how a group deals with problems it faces, thus engaging with its hermeneutic primary task.

Problems identified arose from within and between actors, through relatedness, which referred to the picture of construct of how members figured where they stood with respect to each other as members of the group (role-set); relationships, which brought out the inter-personal relating to each other in the past or present; and relations as forms of relationships. It was found to exhibit characteristics of a container of transformations that, to create a team, it takes at least a day to "become a group". The connecting thread between cases studied was inquiry into what learning would be needed and what kind of education could support that in situations where ambiguity is high and mere information does not suffice. It highlighted needs for interactions, collaboration and new designs to approach situations where there are no existing blueprints.

Commonalities of experiences in the four different cases yielded valuable insights despite difficulties unique to these groups. What was found about effectiveness and hermeneutic primary task, is that group exploration affects how the issues at hand are seen. An example of this was how Nordic countries addressed unknown blocks arising from institutional factors that have impact. Effectiveness lies in the notion that time and resources can be spared when issues are addressed together and worries, anxieties and problems voiced early in the process and knowing what is at hand, is utilized. These, based on this Study, are often similar. However, for deeper insights and addressing more specific questions, a group has to be treated as ongoing as long as it has primary tasks to engage with.

The idea of primary task was not easy for a group to fathom. Every group had a normative primary task, which was stated in the reason why the group existed: to explore Asia from educational perspective, to explore Finland or Nordic countries from business perspective, to understand issues involved in engaging with understanding others, or to understand how pictures in group reality are revealed and transformed in the hermeneutic experiences. The problems arose from different views on when aims actually reflect group task and when not, and also when they clash with wishes that are not supported by actions.

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[205] For the use of concept *revelation,* Lawrence (1998: 127) states that "original Tavistock tradition is grounded in the 'politics of revelation' rather than those of 'salvation'".

The specific questions focused on understanding dynamics of task groups in cross-border contexts and how this affects group relations and group processes, how an explicit hermeneutic primary task affects outcomes, 'pictures-in-the-mind' and evolutionary potential of task groups based on how they engage with primary tasks. These are covered here one by one.

1) How do task groups give meaning to group relations through dialogue?

Objective: To find out what issues and problems arise in task groups when engaging with dialogue processes in cross-border interactions.

This question concerned working with boundaries of open systems in task groups. It was found that boundaries organise experience in task groups, but these groups are often unaware of boundary issues. Thus, this Study suggests that groups may get hindered by boundary questions. Especially complex boundary questions need more attention. The container-contained aspect was not familiar to any of the groups and groups were seen as quite a simple matter. However, as discussed in Part II, and highlighted through cases, it is not unproblematic. The related discussion on basic assumptions and work group was found useful, but cannot be the sole content of discussion. However, boundaries, basic assumptions and dialogue provide insights on processes that are important. It was found that all boundary crossings involve interaction, and issues related to dialogue and experiential learning, were discussed along with specific problems in interactions.

Dialogue in general was seen as "good" in all the cases and the groups. However, this dialogue was often pictured more as discussion, not as a space or as an endeavour related to hermeneutic primary task. What arose in groups, through feelings which were put out in the form of utterances, was that there was overemphasis on what was said at the expense of what actually was happening. Conflicting situations, although few, introduced gaps in understanding or hierarchies emphasising power.

The question raised was answered to some extent through the experiences, but the pictures that were held and evolving, varied from group to group. In certain cases, the group did not see itself as a totality, but more as a collection of representatives. However, in some responses it was seen that organisations used groups extensively which does not necessarily imply that group relations have been thought about. This material is not sufficient to give elaborate answers, but suggests that further studies from this perspective

are needed. Interconnections and boundary questions emerged as important aspects of managing processes, since they affect both structure and design of systems in inter-group interactions.

Dialogue processes in cross-border interactions were mostly seen as non-problematic. Issues arose only when these were discussed, which also brought in a thought that sometimes discussion itself can be a barrier, if it focuses more on problems rather than gateways.

2) In what forms do processes related to the hermeneutic primary task manifest?

Objective: To examine how consciousness of hermeneutic primary task affects intra-group and inter-group processes.

This question concerned processes groups undergo and the dynamics of a task group in the light of basic assumptions. The hermeneutic primary task raised issues which were discussed through work group/basic assumptions groups -thematique. Here the container-contained aspects were elaborated and discussed. The inside/outside dynamics of boundary building, containing and holding were elaborated upon and consciousness of deliberate tasking and building groups with related issues were discussed. The open systems framework was discussed as well. The phenomena of large and small group dynamics, were also addressed and the notion of explicit hermeneutic primary task was developed.

Based on the material, the hermeneutic primary task manifested in questions, re-thinking of processes and issues and new insights. It also manifested in seeing loopholes in the process, brought out by basic assumptions and container-contained problems. When the group sets about peeling the matter at hand and looking into decisions made or discussed, decisions to be made from a new perspective without losing its primary task, there is the manifesting of hermeneutic primary task. It does not mean a change in decisions needs to happen, but that the background and justifications used are explored with new information. It also manifests in the ambiguity and exploration of new issues.

This question which brought the hermeneutic primary task explicitly to the forefront, was the goal of the whole meeting in all the groups: to introduce thought processes into the working environment. In many cases in Finnish context people concluded that they rarely have time to reflect, while in the Indian context it seemed to be part of the work culture (within the range of the participants). This is based on the notion that the background

organisation (if there was one) was keen to know what is happening and what kind of information and insights are gained. The reason to introduce hermeneutic primary task in a group in the first place is to enable the group to reflect on what is essential in their task, how does it benefit the totality, and what, if anything, needs to be changed. Without hermeneutic reflection, resources may get wasted into projects that have no support, even if they could be beneficial. Therefore, it needs to be thought out at all levels why one is doing this and what kinds of matters surface, and how to proceed.

3) What benefits do groups seek and obtain by engaging with hermeneutic processes?

Objective: To understand how explicit hermeneutic primary task affects interactions and negotiable outcomes.

This question concerned management processes, the explicit hermeneutic primary task, experiential learning and 'pictures-in-the-mind'. The explicit hermeneutic primary task was discussed in relation to management processes and further elaborated. In addition, the concepts and issues concerning experiential learning and 'pictures-in-the-mind' were examined.

Groups often contribute more than information. The third question about what benefits do groups seek and obtain from engaging with hermeneutic process, could be answered through the first saying that hermeneutic primary task as a working concept is new and some explaining along with experience is needed. On the other hand, without knowing the concept, although it was introduced in all cases, groups seek first and foremost, information. Through such information seeking in a shared group they become aware that there are multiple issues other than those concerning mere information which call for understanding processes (such as 'pictures-in-the-mind' and barriers). This happens in groups more easily, since one cannot know what issues someone else may raise; also the role of the facilitator is to bring issues forth from his/her understanding of the group and the task. Therefore, a group session is to some extent unpredictable, but based on feedback, loops within the group mature in the here-and-now and introduce new dimensions for individual thinkers and the group. The hermeneutic process is difficult, since the group members need to grapple with issues not familiar to them; here the group can be facilitated by a process-observer and this was acknowledged in the cases where groups engaged with HPT in their 'here-and-now' experiences.

The questions 4 and 5 portrayed two elements of hermeneutic primary task, namely the function of 'pictures-in-the-mind' and barriers in thinking. These were informative for the participants themselves as well as for the researcher (and facilitators). It is here that hermeneutic primary task becomes visible and can be understood as effectiveness raising. If there are strong 'pictures-in-the-mind', these may hinder new exploration and the same is true for barriers. The difference here is that 'pictures-in-the-mind' are within individual or group thinking and barriers exist in mindsets and between groups. It is possible, to some extent, to become aware of how 'pictures-in-the-mind' work with these, but barriers, such as passiveness, need removing. The need to become aware of these and the importance of dealing with them surfaced in every group.

4) How does explicit introduction of hermeneutic primary task help in understanding pictures-in-the-mind?

Objective: To study the efficacy of action research methodologies for working with explicit hermeneutic primary task as a way of coping and transforming the pictures-in-the-mind.

This question concerned roles, usefulness of action research as a methodology, group dynamics, dialogue and 'pictures-in-the-mind'. The usefulness of action research and related questions of roles were analysed and questions of efficacy with processes of coping and transforming 'pictures-in-the-mind', group dynamics, dialogue and 'pictures-in-the-mind' were discussed.

One way of understanding here was to explore how space and time bound 'pictures-in-the-mind' are. The friction of space introduces a gap, which cannot be easily crossed. This matter can be explored and researched more in a shared seminar, where these issues would be addressed by the potential partners in a search mode. The problem with 'pictures-in-the-mind' is that here one needs confrontation in the sense that existing pictures need to be sufficiently challenged. Sometimes written material is "sufficient", sometimes a deep experience is needed.

For some, this process of engagement with HPT introduced new and unexpected insights. These manifested in looking at issues from a different angle and in seeking more information on the issue. In some cases the group workshops led to reconsideration of strategy and links to the other territory, which were initially considered as non-interesting or difficult. Without the workshop this may not have happened, since the area was not even contemplated. This is one example of how awareness can lead to new avenues. Also,

decisions based on data alone are not always valid, because data seldom points to hidden possibilities, and focuses more on discrete aspects.

5) How can barriers and resistances to change be explored and resolved through explicit hermeneutic primary task in cross-border situations?

Objective: To understand how groups engaging with normative, existential, phenomenal and hermeneutic primary tasks expand their awareness of their own evolutionary potential and bring it back to their organisations.

This question concerned dialogue and evolutionary processes in task groups, without which the four primary tasks could not be engaged with. The idea of dialogue in cross-border task groups was discussed to the extent it illuminated complex phenomena of expanding awareness. The relevance of group relations and dialogue approaches was highlighted in the concept of play. This research question linked with Questions One and Four.

The data from this Study shows that good results are gained in inter-group sessions where participants with different institutional backgrounds come together to engage with, explore, discuss, and reflect on various issues within the primary task. Diversity seemed to introduce new possibilities getting out of institutional norms and ways around group barriers. Due to sub-division within primary tasks, people tend to look only into their own institution and their own role in it, and the holistic picture may become blurred. This tends to proliferate 'pictures-in-the-mind' and assumptions. Therefore the possibility to look into these is enhanced when all participants do not have the same background. Additionally, there are gains when people with different territorial backgrounds do the same. Since the beliefs, attitudes, values, and norms paid attention to boundary questions such as how time and space notions differ, these gave ample room to examine the held pictures. Therefore use of cross-border seminars with flexible possibilities to address needed issues have been beneficial. An example from the cases is that those settings where academia, government officials and businessmen have been together, the level of discussions and insights gained by all participants were powerful. This was due to the reason that there can remain gaps in understanding what the two other parties know if the third is absent. What comes out of that functioning could never be experienced except in such a tripartite setting. While for a Finnish official a specific law is transparent and thought to be easily available, he/she may not understand why a company in India is fussy about getting it in English. The assumed

rationality of actions may remain unquestioned without getting these parties together and instituting an explicit hermeneutic primary task to understand what the issue really is about and why this is important to all parties. Without this, the issue may remain a superficial fighting point, and thus a barrier.

To conclude the results based on this material, there is a need to explore new beliefs, values, attitudes, and norms, and revalue old ones in organisations, not just in groups. Some organisations, while they seemed structurally prepared to work through groups, were as much in need of understanding issues as others. However, these processes of dealing with their learnings were more professional, since their structures already had space for such interactions. The question then is, at what level does one need to engage with the task? Some issues were very preliminary due to lack of basic information or experience, while others were highly sophisticated to the extent that experts on various issues were needed. The design thus becomes important. One big discovery was that no matter how large the organisation, it is worthwhile to explore areas that have been left outside the conscious planning. There may be benefits that have not been rightly portrayed or put in context. This is where mere information without feedback does not suffice. Resourcewise, for many organisations it is more beneficial to explore first and decide then, but many decide first and explore possibilities later.

11.1 Groups in a Changing Environment

Doing research in two different kinds of contexts, as India and Finland are, was a rich and highly educative process. To the researcher, it opened up new kinds of questions based on different ways of relating to the data and contextual challenges. This is the kind of experience one cannot have in any other way than doing it oneself. What seemed to be "clear" and "simple" in the originating country, at times turned out to be very complex, and what seemed difficult at home, turned out to be easy, after all. Thus the perceptions of distance – time and space – play a part in our understanding of the phenomena and also in our capabilities of engaging with them.

A keen interest in Finland towards India grew from 2005[206], which curiously was the time General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) transition period ended (see also Appendix 5). In recent years, funding possibilities to engage with India have become more varied (EU-projects, CIMO, Sitra Fellowships in 2007). The European Union (EU) through regulations and directives, has introduced gradual changes in the Finnish mind-scape, but still there remains the hypothetical "lonely Finn" – remote in mind and in space. The so called globalisation is both creating and dismantling barriers. While tariff barriers are lowered through World Trade Organisation (WTO) discussions, the non-tariff barriers have grown. These indicate mind-sets for how rules and regulations are nationally made and implemented, how cumbersome procedures in reality are, who makes decisions and how transparent the actual procedure is (e.g. how easy it is for the person/company to get information about the process and content of it; the cost of doing so).

Education in Finland is undergoing a change, and it is increasingly regarded as a business.[207] In India, the new legislation will define rights and responsibilities of foreign institutions there. The demand for educational services in India is great at all levels and thus it is a very interesting country to follow from the Finnish perspective as well. The much touted e-learning and tutoring possibilities have been utilised in India (such as HeyMath, possibilities on one-on-one tuition, and distance education offered by IGNOU).[208] The number of delegations visiting India has increased within the recent two years, especially after travelling became easier when Finnair after over ten years of waiting opened its first route to Delhi, and the potential to be actualised is vast.[209] These delegations have consisted of businessmen, educational delegations and also educational institutes trying to create linkages with student and/or teacher exchange. Therefore, the GATS agreement affects education, too. In understanding a target area, whether something is possible within certain resources or not, becomes an issue for consideration.

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[206] There have been studies of India (Sitra India Programme, www.sitra.fi), periodicals from Talouselämä to Seura have published articles related to India; largest newpapers (Aamulehti, Helsingin Sanomat) have sent their representatives to India. Previously, news about India were mainly about crises, famine or other negative aspects; now it is about the boom in IT-sector, construction boom and the emerging modern, but still multifaceted India. What also is important, is that Finns are more present in India now, which to some extent reflects and triggers more interest.

[207] For reference, see the Ministry of Education report 2007:31. Opetusministeriö 31.5.2007 (http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2007/liitteet/tr31.pdf?lang=fi, Accessed 5.6.2007) where it is highlighted that Finnish education should be sold to Asia. Selling implies business, and education as service falls within GATS.

[208] HeyMath, 2006 (http://www.heymath.com/, Accessed 5.10.2006); BBC Online, 2007a (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6312771.stm, Accessed 3.3.2007). The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is considered as the largest provider of distance education in the world.

[209] More of this in "Finland-India Business Prospects 2007-2017" (Mathur 2007a).

The two countries studied here have their own respective weaknesses and strengths, and similarities as well as differences. Finland has been an innovation country (based on competitiveness surveys) and the state through para-statal organisations (such as Tekes, Sitra, VTT, Academy of Finland) has been supporting research and development, mostly in the fields of information technology, life sciences, and technology in general. But will this support hold in the EU-India discussions and WTO discussions? On what levels and in what ways can governments support businesses in the future?[210] Manufacturing has been relocating away from Finland since 1980s due to high total costs and market pressures for presence abroad. India, on the other hand, does not have such para-statal structures, and R&D is mainly financed by companies. Indian Chambers of Commerce (such as Confederation of Indian Industry, CII and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, FICCI) compete with each other.

The need for preparing for a multicultural society came out strongly. Much of the discussion has stressed the need for building citizenship. However, this citizenship has been a far dream for many immigrants. Gidoomal (2003: 1063) stresses that "Citizenship is vital to a viable multicultural agenda" and that it brings "with it a sense of belonging, of owning one's cultural environment": Feeling of "being in" (space) or "being an" (context). This sense of belonging and being part of is one of the large issues of globalisation where groups, large and small, try to adjust to changes affecting persons and locations.

Gidoomal (2003) refers to earlier research by Alibhai-Brown (2001) and Malik (2002)[211] that the concept of multiculturalism needs to be explored first. Both writers point out that the language used is outdated and has grown beyond the realities of the situation. Malik (2002)[212] cautions for the possibility that multiculturalism may actually suppress tolerance and respect, because multiculturalism – in order to treat all equally – needs universalistic principles, which do not cater to differences. One reason for feeling this is that so called minority participants of a multicultural society are not often asked what they really think, feel, experience, and go through; how they see their situation and what to their minds would change the situation. That is reserved for the majority to decide: to act *on,* rather than *with*. This is why the rule of law that protects minorities as such is as important as the electoral representation that gives a voice to the majority.

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[210] These have been discussed e.g. in the case of Airbus and Boeing and their competition.
[211] Malik, 2002 (http://www.newhumanist.org.uk/523, Accessed 19.5.2007).
[212] Malik, 2002 (http://www.newhumanist.org.uk/523, Accessed 19.5.2007).

The motto for paradoxes in learning experiences can be pictured through Plato. In quest of what is 'virtue', Plato in Meno (Plato 1999a: 70a; Värri 1997) stated the famous paradox of how can one study something if one does not even know what it is and how can one then recognize it when it is found? In many cases organisational life is such, and learning in particular. This means problems of unknown, and new areas beyond experiences that still need to be included in decisions. The idea, as far as it concerns this Study, is of need for information that comes from a plurality of sources, but information alone cannot solve problems, and direct experience is needed to inform knowing.

11.2 Learnings from this Study's Findings

Learnings from this Study were threefold: context, hermeneutic primary task and method. Context learning involved group work in Finland and in India, and country specific knowledge about India and Finland from Indian and Finnish perspectives. It also highlighted problems due to differences in institutional structures and embeddedness and ways to solve or address these. Hermeneutic primary task learning gave insights into task group processes, intended and unintended, role and authority taking/giving, 'pictures-in-the-mind' and need for dialogical encounters in and across groups, either existing or deliberately set. Method, namely action research, involved learning of how groups engage with tasks, how this can be studied, how groups benefit from action research and what issues arise with using such a method. All these will contribute to future research projects. These learnings are summarised in Table 20.

Table 20: Learnings from this Study

Context	HPT	Method
- understanding organisations and cross-border interaction in situ	- how vicious circles arise, sustain and dissolve	- importance of experiential learning when context is new
- what kind of information educational institutions, governments or companies need in changing contexts	- learning about large groups (such as nations), when studying small ones	- need to practice and make use of working hypotheses
- differences in habits, values and beliefs, norms, attitudes	- using these differences to inquire	- reflections on methods that enable inquiries with feedback loops
- learning to observe boundaries	- understanding boundaries	- learning to use boundaries
- learning to work with different parties and using inter-group approach	- groups need to learn to define and work with their own NPT, as a group	- action research is less familiar to participants; education

The structural differences between the two countries contribute to different mindsets and attitudes. The use of para-statal organisations as information disseminators is widespread in Finland, but India does not believe in such orchestration by the public sector and relies more on market mechanisms with minimal role of government involvement (Mathur 1998). This may be one reason for hiatus and requires to be looked into why some Finnish organisations have taken a great deal of time to settle in India. Nokia took time to find its way in India, and a case in this Study also took years to finally settle there in a more permanent way. It may be asked whether the Finnish companies rely too much on the information clearance houses, and do not actively seek collaborations with Indian companies. The risk pooling, while known to all companies, can be a more prevalent feature of Finnish companies. It surfaced on the basis of this material that for different levels one needs different approaches. For those, who have none or little previous experience of the target country, lectures and a knowledgeable facilitator can be helpful to promote a) interest and b) facilitate with formulating questions of most worth. This can be done in groups. A facilitator can help with progress, reviews, roadblocks, and also information needs and discuss whether there are gaps or misinformation. The latter arises from not getting into the sources of information, or getting wrong information or neglecting important aspects. In a group, 'pictures-in-the-mind' get voiced and discussed. This also informs the facilitator of what is needed and when, because the process consultation or action research role of the facilitator may help in engaging with HPT. Building only on lectures is not sufficient if the group as a whole cannot discriminate what is essential and what is not, especially if basic assumptions take over the work group mode.

For purposes of new horizons, cross-border inter-group spaces are one way of defining needs, wishes, and hopes for future, along with existing knowing, structures, development needs, etc. Such groups/seminars require participation from different levels and arenas of thinking and action to create some understanding of systems across borders and how structures highlight these. An example of this is pictured in Figure 27 (page 231). A collaborating group adheres to equality, where all members can contribute, according to dialogic principles.

The need for both horizontal and vertical knowing processes came strongly out from this Study. In group terms, this means that while groups need to retain their boundaries, these need to have vertical or lateral connections to other groups on same and different levels by creating inter-group spaces. There are benefits, when the same group deals with the facets

of the same phenomena at different levels. The problem is timing: if time is valued, then inter-group interaction for design, initiation and, along-the-way-facilitation, can shorten unproductive in-betweens when matters do not have to be discussed on separate and different levels in different times.

Figure 27: Collaborative Group
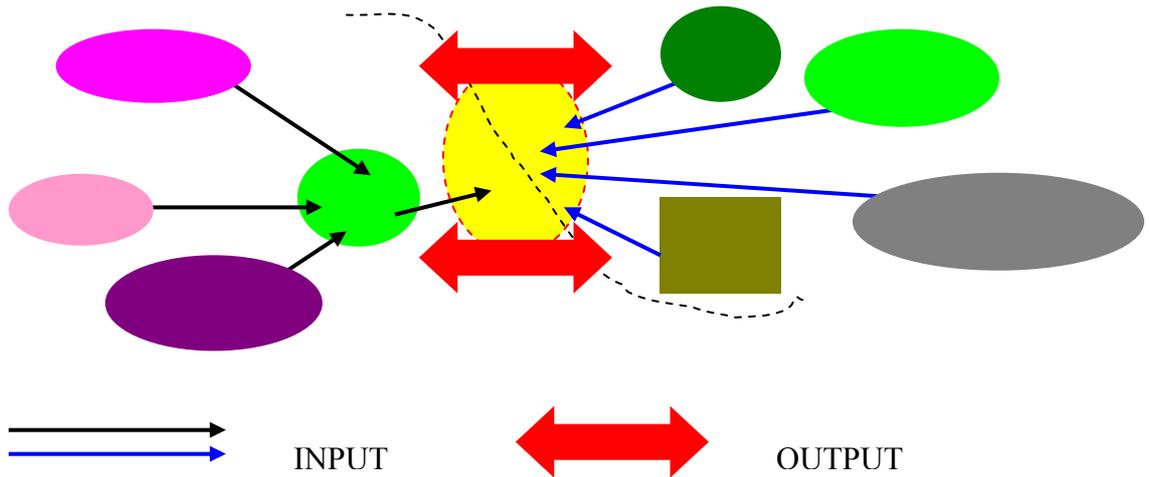
Figure 28 tries to capture this. First there is enthusiasm in hope of new horizons, followed with exploration. Due to experiences, a reality check is needed and that may happen on the spot, but often back home. Since reality check usually balances experiences, some form of disappointment is experienced. Only after this it is possible to really evaluate learning and proceed with the task.

Figure 28: The Route of Knowing
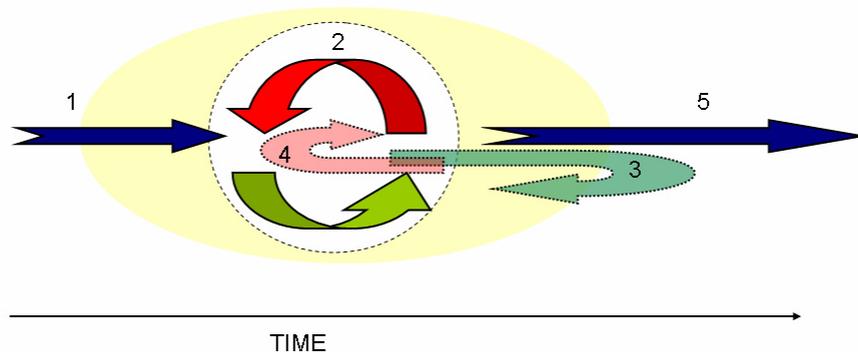
The process of hermeneutic thinking: first one has an experience (1) which is then processed and thought through (2); when some time has elapsed, it gets revaluated (3) and is processed again (4). After this, it breeds new experiences (5) and the process begins anew.

The process of hermeneutic thinking is not circular, since this would mean same issues arising in similar manner all the time, nor is it merely spiral. Hermeneutic thinking, in its connection to memory and tradition (as history), is more like a Self that builds on expanding rings of understanding. The balance in hermeneutic primary task comes from drawing from the tradition, building upon it, but remaining free to encounter new insights through new understanding without being curtailed by the past. The ability to engage with designs for future is more relevant than the past. Therefore, it seems plausible that dialogical approaches bring revelations that build on unthought knowns in task groups.

The hermeneutic primary task is important in all 'judgements' that require interpretations of ongoing understanding of a dynamic and evolving set of interfaces along boundaries in task groups. This is particularly so when an organisation or a task group intends to explore and to approach the unfamiliar; for example, marketing new products/services to new customers, using skills and knowledge the organisation or group has not previously used or developed. These are bound to raise anxieties that need to be addressed.

Above all, this was a learning process into the unknown and working with diverse groups. Through this experience it became possible to deepen one's understanding as well as inform theory. By engaging with such research it was possible to reflect on dialogue, group relations and experiential learning literature, and acquire deep understanding of the field which would have remained shallow without real experiential learning. For this reason, engaging with groups in two different territories, was insightful.

12 Conclusions

This Study was based on literature and data drawn from four different cases. It pointed to three levels of inferences, namely about Finland-India Economic Relations, reducing barriers for cross-border interactions and collaborations, and using action research methods to draw data, develop working hypotheses, share and test these in the here-and-now situations with task groups. It showed dynamics that arise in cross-border task groups. This Study has demonstrated that by instituting action research methods, such as explicit hermeneutic primary task, new insights can be drawn. It also points out that multiple methods enrich research inquiries and combining them produces new insights for expanding the body of knowledge relevant in our times.

The objectives of this Study have been met through this research studying groups engaging with dialogue processes in cross-border interactions and these were extensively discussed. The potency of an explicit hermeneutic primary task in groups was examined and also its implications highlighted. This Study has thrown light on how hermeneutic primary task can be engaged with and given some insights for further studies and research.

The Study also points to the need not only for explicit forms of communication, but also for understanding unconscious behaviour and group dynamics. Another large issue at hand was action research as a methodology to cope with and transform 'pictures-in-the-mind'. Based on cases, there is scope for developing suitable designs for explicit hermeneutic group practices. In understanding how to engage with normative, existential, phenomenal, and hermeneutic primary tasks, groups expand awareness of their potential and bring it back to organisations.

The Study has found that using hermeneutic primary task helps in engaging with tasks more effectively. It also points towards the need to create spaces for such learning, especially in ambiguous situations. Such situations arise for example when a country which is previously unknown, is engaged with. Such learning spaces, according to this Study, are places where all aspects of the endeavour can be brought into the open along with related needs for information. However, as was pointed out, 'ingroup' phenomena are strong and groups may tend to keep their boundaries closed. Therefore, cross-border interactions provide possibilities to inquire into assumptions that are embedded and go unexamined. Intra-group processes and inter-group processes can illuminate each other.

The overall learning is that the scope for future possibilities is partly in discovering new ways to interact. This calls for designs that enable possible partners to engage with such discovery processes, buiding on their respective knowing and expertise.

13 Limitations of This Study

This Study has several limitations, some designed and some serendipitous. The former is part of the plan, the latter arises from contexts. Due to limited access related to original plans, these were representative cases, and need to be considered only in the context of this Study and in the context they were experienced and studied. They serve as material for what kind of pathways and problems arise in dialogue processes in view of hermeneutic primary task and also raise insights from empirical observation versus theory. These portrayed issues that have been reported by different scholars or arose from the context itself. Group behaviour has both theoretical reach as well as specific features. The insights from groups studied in the cases partly support each other in focusing on problems of border-crossings to new areas.

One limitation was that participants in India were all from managerial positions. This means that their views presented very context specific information and all in context of creating business opportunities. In Finland the one case was predominantly involved with issues arising from educational initiatives and discussions; the other case shared the Indian context of management wishes to create more opportunities. Although working hypotheses were sent to participants, one cannot know without wider response whether everyone agreed to them. In this sense the researcher had to rely on what material was presented and accept what was not, even if thought. This presents the challenge in written responses as well, because one cannot use sensing methods through technology when issues are not brought out by their holders.

This research used group level data, which means that specific issues concerning individuals were not emphasised. This in itself poses limitations on the material, and gives insights into what was happening in the group as a whole.

This was not an extensive study in differences between the two territories, and was carried out within resources. It has raised many researchworthy questions for further research and more extensive studies using a variety of methodologies. Action research was chosen for this thesis for the reason that it provides access to knowledge and insights that otherwise would not be possible, and places the researcher in the here-and-now lived experience with the participants: he/she cannot escape facing the similar problems, challenges and successes than the group itself experiences. It is "a living, evolving process of coming to

know rooted in everyday experience" (Reason and Bradbury 2001b: 2). Thus, the material arising is limited due to its emphasis on data focusing on participation.

As a method, action research brings back to hermeneutic approaches notions that morals, ethics and practice belong together and cannot be separated. This is because in participative research all parties carry responsibility, including the researcher, and this cannot be delegated, since that would detract from qualities of the lived experience. The Enlightenment emphasis on reason deleted the moral considerations, and chose freedom over morals (Christians 2005).

One limitation arose from the fact that the research plan in India could not be fulfilled exactly as planned, which is acknowledged. It would have deepened the process, since the original idea was to have at least three meetings per group. What was gained as learning from the experience has been used here, but it does not replace fully some missed opportunity. This is interesting for research plans and designs, and how designs interact with outcomes. However, no matter how long or short the meetings are, or how many are undertaken, there are group dynamics at work, which needs to be kept in mind.

In action research one limit is the number of researchers. Since different researchers, by experience, do capture different phenomena while in the process, the use of more researchers can bring out more and different insights. For a larger study, it would be beneficial to have two or more researchers. Also, longer periods make it possible to institute practices that take some time to develop and understand. Therefore time is critical in learning new approaches.

According to Yin (1994), similarity in case design is emphasised (see also Eisenhardt 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). The design was to study task groups in a cross-border context when they aspire to contact another one in a different space, and therefore the medium (Gadamer 2000a), or the Potential Space (Winnicott 1982) was of interest. This aim was achieved; cases portrayed issues in ambiguous situations and gave information about needs in such situations. These cases provided an unusual access (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007; Yin 1994), but also reflected on issues of what it means when access is denied (Wilson 2004).

These cases were neither taped nor filmed.[213] Yin (1994) stresses that notes are better when there are no plans to transcribe tapes. It was adhered to here that notes are enough, since emphasis was not on spoken text, but on group phenomena and outcomes, and both are better captured without external interference. Also, a large body of diverse literature was used in order to reflect on phenomena researched here.

Cases were credible for members and facilitators, since these addressed existing and emerging issues. Cases do not portray internal validity; they are too few and for such a number, causal relations are not relevant. These results can be confirmed from various instances: news, articles, studies, and this has been done along the way by using adequate referencing. These cases cannot be generalised, but they have generated insights and findings that may be generalisable with more studies. They also give indications as to what aspects need further inquiry or research. They are reliable, because of using working hypotheses and keeping participants aware of these. Also, results can be used as working hypotheses for groups in cross-border interactions to inquire what has changed and what has not.

With regard to the discussion on what is reliable and what is not, it must be noted that reliability is an ethnocentric issue. Some strands of discussion are reliable due to cultural background in one space, but not in another. The discussion about anti *anti-relativistic stance* by Geertz (2000) is relevant in this connection. Since this research relied on data arising from participation, it could not have been captured by more quantitative methods without dropping the original approach of inquiring into hermeneutic processes through experience. While this approach lacks in generalisation of all inferences, it brings out issues that are both necessary and evident to be further inquired.

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[213] This applies to all cases presented here. It was thought that this could have introduced defensive behaviour and avoidable anxieties and fears which could have distorted the process. Especially when doing research in another country, it is important to think of what data collection methods are suitable for that particular setting and context (Broadfoot 2000). It is also noted here that for the most part it is assumed in the literature that the research method used is that of interview, which varies from having a task group where participants come from different organisations.

14 Scope for Further Research

Inquiring into the importance of hermeneutic primary task, the methods and processes by which groups and organisations engage with primary tasks continues through conference papers and other publications, as practice and method based on hermeneutic philosophy and building on experiential learning and by carrying on *Finland-India Economic Relations* research. As pointed out in this Study, there are numerous barriers and gateways to research more deeply. Therefore a comprehensive study using a methodology mix (survey, interviews and groups) is needed, especially to inquire into possibilities in education and training.

This Study brought up one problem, which concerns "*Problem of Knowledge Separation*". By this is meant that in cross-border phenomena, it often happens that "knowledge" and "practice" are separated by residing in two or more different countries. What could be inquired into is, whether this separation leads to enhancement or diminishing aspects of knowledge. One example is paper industry, where codifiable knowledge (tacit knowledge) will be accessible only as far as there is practice to keep it renewed. When generations change, and collective memory fades, what happens to that knowledge and how to keep important knowledge traditions alive?

Hermeneutic inquiries also inform Community Informatics which is now a special branch of information building, knowledge management and sharing. Such issues as groups, group behaviour, knowledge, knowing, thinking with related aspects are important in endeavours to create more inclusion and lessen exclusion. What barriers and boundaries such endeavours induce, especially when more and more communication is directed through technological means by using new and innovative platforms? Dialogic approaches are increasingly used to unravel communal problems and issues for policy advancement.

This research is a beginning of a larger project to look into feasibility of dialogue and group relations approaches from dual task perspective. This thesis has covered a large body of knowledge to inquire into what hermeneutic primary task could be and what is gained by using it. This process will continue.

15 Summary

This Study focused on dialogue processes through group encounters by instituting hermeneutic primary task to be discussed through specific contents. Thus it was able to tap on some unconscious phenomena and unthought knowns present in cross-border groups, and highlight barriers and problems arising in engagement with multiple primary tasks and managing open systems boundaries.

This Study had four distinctive parts, where the first part concentrated on background and empirical methodology along with specific research questions. The second part discussed theoretical underpinnings of the inquiry frame to address the five research objectives formulated. The third part presented four cases, and represented the study of task groups. The fourth part then discussed both literature and cases highlighting aspects of hermeneutic primary task. The methodology chosen for this Study was action research, due to the nature of the questions asked. Participative methods yielded valuable information in this context.

The Study highlighted different barriers, problems and 'pictures-in-the-mind' through cases, which were researched in Finland and in India. These task groups participating in the study, manifest various aspects of uncertainty and ambiguity, which are common in new situations where previous knowing does not exist. The cases portrayed some specific problems and also need for interactional designs.

Based on this Study, three kinds of conclusions were drawn. The strengthening of Finland-India Economic Relations requires sensitivity to institutional differences at all levels to reduce barriers and also to consider new practices. It showed that intra-organisational interaction is different from inter-organisational, and that knowing and awareness can be enhanced from the systemic process perspectives. The insights from an explicit hermeneutic primary task were found to yield valuable potential for evolving and transforming task groups. Limits of this research and the scope for future research, yielded valuable insights for next steps.

The Study discussed that hermeneutic primary task helps in improving organisational functioning by revealing issues hidden in phenomenal tasks that inhibit interactions. It was also shown that diverse groups are preferable when familiarizing with a new country. It pointed out that working with the five boundaries of space, task, time, sentience, and technology has direct influence on task performance and understanding in groups and organisations seeking cooperation and collaboration across borders.

The capacity to let Knowledge and Knowing be affected by a hermeneutic process recognises the potential of any task group as a container for transformation. The researcher is conscious that writing this dissertation has been an exercise of aesthetic authority recording lived experiences with task groups into endurable form of knowledge akin to a new realm of experience.

The Study concludes that using hermeneutic processes when new vistas of thought are needed, may enhance group performance, as group behaviour is an indispensable part of organisational life and roles.

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17 Appendices

Appendix 1: Case One, Structuring Educational Internationalisation

Case One in this Study presents an Asia oriented programme. Education Centre "A", provides vocational, adult and upper-secondary level education and training. The organisation was created in 2006 by merging existing educational units into a larger one and is sustained by a Regional Educational Consortium. It has approximately 19.000 students with a budget of around 58 MEUR (2005), thus making it the second largest vocational education centre in Finland. This Institute is a member of European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. It participates actively in many projects and is part of various networks with foreign partners.[214] "A" was the coordinating institute in the programme.

The project "A"discussed here, has been supported by the Finnish National Board of Education (later FNBE). The programme was initiated through presenting a grant application made to National Education Board in early 2005.[215] That particular year there was a newly introduced emphasis on important non-European countries. At that time such countries as China and Russia were mentioned. Based on the letter FNBE had sent, it was thought that emphasis on China, India, Japan and Vietnam could be introduced and was accepted. Since Russia had long been a major partner in business and specifically in the Consortium's Regional area (an EU-NUTS Level 3 area) and there already existed established educational programmes with Russia, it was considered that an emphasis elsewhere could be more beneficial. This was also the time the so called "China Phenomenon" expanded to include "India Phenomenon". Thus, one part influencing the decision was the current trends that were unfolding in the area.

India was taken as one of the target countries, since it is less familiar in Finland and the linkages were not much developed. This was seen at that moment as an important aspect. For Finns, India was still perceived as "educational wilderness". The reason for this was that few had visited even the top management institutes and explicit knowledge of the Indian education system and how it operates and differs from the Finnish system was

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[214] The Principal of the Education Centre "A" explains in their printed leaflet that cooperation on various levels is a prerequisite for success.

[215] This procedure is common to all projects in Finland. Yearly FNBE gives special grants for specific internationalisation projects. Another large supporter for various projects is European Union (EU-projects).

scarce.[216] This, backed with different images of India, made it a very intriguing research context. The other reason for this emphasis was that businesses were increasingly either shifting to Asia or linking with Asian countries, and there was a felt need for increased multicultural education for young students and further education for adults. This was felt in these institutes through their links with local businesses and their representative agencies. Education was broadly viewed as skills building in a way that enables any student to work wherever work is available.[217] These skills included increased need for linguistic abilities and cultural sensitivity on top of professional skills and know-how.

Thus, four Asian countries were targeted within this programme. The first meeting of this group (February 2006) had comprised lectures and discussions of all selected countries to obtain a general view of the area from people who were either natives of this area or experts on these countries (or both). In this phase the researcher connected with the group, but this meeting was not yet part of the exploration process. This first meeting had persons from five different organisations, but due to later changes, the number of organisations reduced to three. In the beginning there were a total of 20 participants; in the meetings and group sessions the number of participants fluctuated between 11 and 14 persons. To present some background for this programme and some basic aims central to it, the group aims outlined by the educational group in its coordinator role, are presented below in brief:

- *Collaboration in vocational education with partners outside European Union;*
- *Building cooperative capabilities in multicultural environment*
- *Knowledge of the target Countries*
- *Educational material*
- *Multicultural communication skills*
- *Capabilities for cooperation and networking*

These aims outline the design as given by the coordinating institute. The main focus here was on the task group itself, and on the organising institute "A" in its programme coordinator role. The programme itself was an integrated whole of various parts, and the research studied the group meetings within it. This and similar programmes in Finland are usually coordinated by one organisation and this particular one was coordinated by

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[216] Finnish education system is more centrally led by Ministry of Education and FNBE, than the Indian education system. However, the same picture seemed to be projected on India. Indian educational structure is more decentralized and States have more power over many decisions than the Centre does – apart from foreign affairs and defence.

[217] However, workforce mobility within country and between countries has been low in Finland compared to India. The picture-in-the-mind has been that work comes to where person lives, and not the other way round.

institute "A". The two other institutes that participated from the beginning were ""A1""
and "A2". Each institute had selected and sent its participants into the programme.

Data Collection and Design

The unit of analysis here was the task group. The method used to gather data was a
combination of 'listening posts' and open dialogue in an action research frame. The group
meetings focussed on reflections arising from the group processes (here-and-now). The
purpose for these meetings was to discuss about India and what anxieties, worries and
problems are perceived in relating to India and furthering the programme objectives. Also,
it gave possibility to raise working hypotheses for the group to consider, and reflect how
the group received and responded to these. Data collection was done through making own
notes, participant feedback and sending workshop participants working hypotheses based
on discussions. The sessions were not taped, because that could have introduced defensive
behaviour and avoidable anxieties and fears which could have distorted the process. Also
steps taken after sessions were important. The research aim was to observe how the group
engages with its hermeneutic primary task as a whole. Outside the groups the main contact
person was the Programme Coordinator.

The process had three clear parts: group meetings, interviews and personal interaction. The
group meetings were conducted with two distinctive groups. Participants in the First Group
(in total 20 members) were either teachers from different fields (such as commerce,
healthcare, technical subjects) or international coordinators. It included participants from
three different institutions. Participants were chosen by each institute before the researcher
met the group. In the coordinating institute, selection of participants was done by the
Managing Board. The Second Group (6 members), which planned to visit and eventually
made a preparatory visit to India, had three persons from the first group. It consisted of
principals, teachers and international coordinators from four different institutes. The three
interviews were conducted with people who were in managerial positions in the
coordinating institute with reference to the programme. Additionally, interaction through
email was conducted with the participants.

For Group One, the first meeting was designed to be a short one, 45 minutes. Not everyone
was present (14 out of 20 selected participants were present). The aim here was to
introduce this research, clarify task and roles and make a "study agreement". The second
meeting lasted 1.5 hours. The aim of the session was to understand the held 'pictures-in-

the-mind' among participants in relation to India. This time the meeting was held in a room with a long oval desk. That obstructed visibility and access, since tools and artefacts can also be constraints. The third meeting took place over two sessions, one of 1.5 hours and the other for 1 hour, both the first thing in the morning on successive days. Both meetings were conducted in a circular sitting form. The first one went into reflecting over the process after a long summer holiday, and it seemed that people were searching for connecting with what they were normatively expected to be doing. The second meeting reflected on the processes of the previous day. These group meetings took place as follows.

Group I meetings
23.3.2006   14 participants + researcher
6.4.2006   12 participants + researcher
24.-25.8.2006   12/11 participants + researcher

To understand more about the germination of this process and how it was evolving, some key persons were interviewed, since the coordinating institute was in a central position. The first interview was conducted in Spring 2006; the other two were done in Autumn 2006. For the first one there was a prepared checklist of questions, but all interviews were open-ended meetings. Focus in these interviews was on India only.

Interviews:
23.5.2006   Programme Coordinator
28.8.2006   Principal of the Coordinating Institute
21.9.2006   Vice Principal of the Coordinating Institute

Group II or the reviewed in this Study included six persons from four different educational institutes. These members comprised of two principals, two international coordinators and two teachers. Three of the participants had been in the previous teacher/coordinator group (Group I) and had previous experience of this method. Therefore HPT and working hypotheses were discussed in the group and some issues of it were also highlighted in the feedback and working hypotheses shared with the group. These meetings (which were held in a conference room) were focused on issues before the visit, and meetings after the visit focused on reflections on what was experienced.

Group II meetings:
21.2.2007   5 participants + researcher
9.3.2007   3 participants + researcher
16.3.2007   2 participants +researcher
23.3.2007   1 participant + researcher

This part of the empirical study ended in March 2007.

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Appendix 2: Case Two, A Finnish Company Goes to India

Case Two presents a Finnish technology company, Company "B", which is a medium-sized (SME) Finnish technology manufacturer with about 290 employees.[218] Its products are in the energy sector, mainly burners for small households, industrial burners, burners for ships and power plants and industrial processes. The company has existed since 1960s and was gradually internationalising from the very beginning. The internationalisation process started first through Soviet Union barter trade, where exports were mainly indirect through ship builders, plant builders or boiler manufacturers. Step by step, the company engaged with more direct sales, as well as cooperation with Own Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

India was targeted in 1993, first by choosing an existing Indian company with field specific know-how as a representative. This was not successful and similar experiments followed one after the other. Towads the end of 1990s, the Company "B" started a negotiation process with a large Indian company, and this process took about five years. It proved crucial to convince the possible partner of mutual benefits in the form of cooperation, being based on respective strengths. Cooperation started in 2004, when it was agreed that part of the product range of the Finnish Company "B" would be marketed in India. After two years, in 2006, this cooperation was upgraded into full fledged collaboration when the Indian partner began to use widely the product range. In addition, more collaboration on design, innovation and R&D were expected on mutual basis. To create a local presence and to compete with local prices, Company "B" set up a factory in China in 2001. This was seen as a natural step since the distance from Finland to the emerging market area was considerable. In this way the company was able to serve Asia, but so far with limited product selection. The most technically demanding burners were still built in Finland.

The main aim in this case was to study experiences of Company "B" with India, seen from a Finnish perspective. Since the company had experience on doing business in India, this

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[218] It must be noted here that at the time of the Study and during the time portrayed in the case, the company had less than 250 employees. European Commission Recommendation, C(2003) 1422 final. Commission of European Communities, 2003 (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/decision_sme_en.pdf, Accessed 3.12.2007) regard an SME to be either less than 250 persons or with turnover less than 43 MEUR per annum. The company has thus reached a threshold where it can be considered as a large company, now that it has grown.

aspect was considered important to understand how Company "B" evolved its understanding from the perspective of HPT.

Data Collection

Data collection in this case was done through making own notes during interviews and collecting data from the company during one month supplemented with publicly available sources as Patent and Registration Office (Patentti- ja rekisterihallitus), trade journals and other possible sources published and available. The focus in this Study was on managerial decisions to choose a location and partners far away from Finland and also what this entailed for the organisation itself. It was a successful case of actually going to India and thus offered contrast to other cases, where groups were still in the process of doing so. The unit of analysis here was the management in the organisation as a 'group-in-the-mind'.

The first contact was established in June 2006, when the company was visited in its headquarters. There and then, an overview was received of the company from two active functionaries, the managing director and the head of sales. At this point, a possibility to research "B" as a case was discussed. This interaction put the researcher directly in contact with one of the owners and principal functionaries of the company. The data collection was carried out in September 2006, when the researcher interviewed company managers. There were 11 interviews with 9 different persons. Thus this case was based on interviews, some of which were conducted over several sessions.

Case Three presents an India-Nordic Economic Relations (INER) seminar and workshop. The seminar part of the event was designed to familiarize Indian businessmen with basic information about each Nordic country (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) from the perspective of doing business there. In the seminar, each Nordic country was presented by country representatives originating from each of these, to give maximum impact of differences. The idea of having a seminar before the workshop was to disseminate information for further discussion. Embeddedness in the country of origin in form of education, experience and knowledge of the systems was thus brought into direct contact with the group membership. No instructions as to what to present were given to country presentators, only the topic "Doing Business in 'X'". This provided them freedom to decide what they regarded as the best way to introduce a particular Nordic country and what would they like to highlight from it.

The aims of the event were to crystallise issues and challenges for the attention of (according to the brochure):

(a) Policymakers and advocacy organisations to consider what role they may play in strengthening and facilitating Indo-Nordic Economic Relations

(b) Academia to know what capabilities need to be developed through new educational initiatives for management development for entrepreneurs and managers to avail new attractive opportunities between India and Nordic countries and the issues that need further research.

(c) Entrepreneurs and managers of businesses in India to develop capabilities for doing business with their counterparts in Nordic Europe and vice versa.

The seminar objective was to bring together industry, government and academia to understand together the trade, investment and business partnership opportunities and the choice of entry modes for creative and sustainable forms of international business between firms in India and Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). The seminar part consisted of 22 members.

The workshop objective was to understand from the experience of industry, government and academia the scope and challenges of how firms in India doing business or wishing to

explore business opportunities in these Nordic countries, cope and adapt to differences in laws, institutions, public systems, and management processes. The two related workshops were attended by total of 13 participants, from among (the total of) 22 seminar participants.

Data Collection

Initially, planning for such an event started in April 2006, when the researcher visited the organising institute for the first time. It was agreed to have this seminar, provided she obtained funding as a Visiting Scholar. This was confirmed at the end of September 2006, and the researcher left for India in the middle of October 2006.

This workshop was designed as a 'listening post'. Data was collected during the event (as background material) based on issues raised, and in the workshops based on discussions. This collection was done through making own notes, participant feedback through review forms and sending workshop participants working hypotheses based on discussions in the workshop.

The workshop was conducted in a circular structure and two facilitators attended this workshop. Notes were taken by both facilitators individually and key happenings in the event/workshop were discussed after the workshop. In addition to these, based on the researcher's notes, a report was prepared for the organising institute. The unit of analysis here was the group, from the perspectives of the seminar group and of the workshop group, respectively. The former portrayed interesting group phenomena, which was higlighted in this Study, while the emphasis was on the latter. The participants were invited by the organising institute.

In the workshop the initial idea was to have the upper limit of 24 persons (2 x 12, or one big group, since there were two facilitators that were both familiar with group relations work). The reason was that a small group between 8 to 12 was viewed as desirable for face-to-face interaction, and these ratios have worked well in study groups reported in group relations studies. Smaller groups (less than seven) tend to be higher-anxiety groups where group formation is difficult and tends to get hierarchical inter-personally. Larger ones make it difficult to discuss because large group dynamics come into picture and the number of voices becomes too extensive for more focused interaction, besides the possibility of fragmentation and splits. This is noteworthy especially in short encounters (such as a two-hour workshop). Also more facilitators are needed for larger groups.

The workshops were both 2 hours long. One workshop was held 30.11.2007 and the second 18.12.2007, both in India. The whole event (including the seminar group) on 30.11.2007 took one day. In the event, the researcher acted as an anchor person, and managed the relations with country representatives before, during and after the event. This was agreed with the organising institution, which was responsible for the organising part. The brochure for the event was done in collaboration with various parties. The letter and the review form for the workshop were designed by the researcher, as well as the programme itself.

Appendix 4: Case Four, Workshop on Doing Business in Nordic Europe (DBNE)

This case portrays insights from a Workshop on Doing Business in Nordic Europe with one follow-up, conducted in India. The workshop was part of Finland-India Economic Relations research, and was designed for company managers, interested in exploring Nordic countries and was open for participation to any organisation interested to explore this region. This group concentrated on making sense of Nordic Europe as a business area for large Indian companies present. This sensemaking process was facilitated by country representations, discussions of differences in management, lectures on several institutional aspects and issues arising within the group.

Some Nordic representatives where present only for a few hours, some for one day and some for two to three days. Those who participated longer, shared experiences that this had been beneficial. The reason for this was that a) grouping takes time (it is claimed in group relations practice that it takes 25.5 hours based on experiences), b) when a collection of persons form a group, they also start forming relationships which may lead to initial trusting and sharing processes, and c) one can follow the logic of discussion, since bits and pieces do not give a larger picture.

Data Collection

This workshop was partly a listening post, and reflected similar issues as the INER workshop with a different group. Data Collection was done through own notes and observations. These notes were placed in the form of case report and highlighted issues such as 'pictures-in-the-mind', and structural and institutional differences presented by the group. The unit of analysis here was the group as a whole, including those who stepped in and out of role during the workshop. The enrolment of group members and visiting faculty was managed by the organising institution.

During the workshop researchers had three roles to fulfil: a researcher, a facilitator and a visiting faculty. The participation in this workshop was agreed in Spring 2006 and the workshop itself was held October/November 2006, and thus preceeded the INER workshop (Case Three). Based on experiences here, it was agreed with the organising institute of INER event that the focus would be on Nordic countries, instead of only Finland. This workshop was held during the time the researcher was a Visiting Scholar in India.

Appendix 5: Chronology of Events in Researcher Roles

Autumn 2005	Empirical part begins with a small Finnish company. Process is later terminated because of the expansion of this company where such a process required the researcher to step into another, conflicting role and demit the designed action researcher role.
February 2006	Case One: first contact is made in Finland with the Group I in Case One and it is agreed with the Programme Coordinator to research the process. The researcher participated as a listener to a programme related presentation on India.
March 2006	Case One: first (1/4) Group I listening post and workshop is held in Finland. Here the role of the reseacher was that of a listener in the listening post and an action researcher. She also participated in the following lectures that dealt with countries and issues regarding the programme.
April 2006	Case One: second (2/4) Group I listening post and workshop held in Finland. The role of the researcher was that of a participant in the group, a listener to the group and action researcher for the research.
April 2006	Case Three: first visit to the institute that later organized the INER seminar/workshop in India to plan for such an event and to plan for a possibility to stay in the institute as a visiting scholar for a period of time. The roles involved the action researcher as a visitor and as a Finnish Scholar presenting her research to the Faculty of the Institute, as well as a possible Visiting Scholar role.
May 2006	Case One: first interview (1/3) in Finland with the Programme Coordinator. The role of the researcher here was that of interviewer to understand the background of this programme.
June 2006	Case Two: first visit to the researched Finnish Company. The meeting was held with two persons from the top management. A possibility of case research was discussed with two researchers present in a listening post mode.
August 2006	Case One: third (3/4) and fourth (4/4) Group I listening posts and workshops in Finland where the roles of the action researcher were those of listener and action researcher in the designed listening workhops and participant in the whole event (2 days).
August 2006	Case One: second interview (2/3) in Finland with the Principal of the Coordinator Institute. The researcher was in the role of interviewer trying to understand the status of the programme from the management point of view, while continuing to hold on to her action researcher role.
September 2006	Case One: third interview (3/3) with the Vice Principal of the Coordinator Institute. The researcher was in the role of interviewer, trying to understand the status of the programme from the management point of view, while continuing to hold on to her action researcher role.
September 2006	Case Two: the company was visited in its headquarters in Finland three times over four days during this month for interviews. The role of the

	researcher was to conduct these interviews to understand processes of internationalisation as an action researcher.
October 2006	The researcher leaves for India as a Visiting Scholar under the Bilateral Programme organised by CIMO, Finland / UGC, India.
October-November 2006	Case Four: DBNE Workshop in India where the researcher participates in the workshop for business executives as a Visiting Faculty, resource person and an action researcher where two researchers were present. The role of action researcher is connected to that part of the Finland-India Economic Relations Research Programme, where listening posts were conducted to understand actual problems arising in this context between two territories.
November 2006	Case Three: the INER seminar/workshop was held in India during the researcher's stay there in cooperation with the institute where the researcher was as a Visiting Scholar at that time. Before and during the seminar / workshop the researcher was in the role of bridge builder (presenter for the seminar), organiser (design, brochures, planning), collaborator with the institute, anchor for the event, and a listener and an action researcher in the workshop, where two researchers were present. This workshop was part of the Finland-India Economic Relations Research Programme listening posts, and designed to understand Nordic area from the perspective of Indian Participants and problems in relating to the other area.
December 2006	Case Three: the INER Follow-Up is organised in India. The researcher was in the roles of organiser, listener and an action researcher with another researcher.
December 2006	Case Four: DBNE Follow-up organised in India. The researcher was in the role of listener and action researcher with another researcher.
January 2007	The Researcher returns to Finland from India.
February 2007	Case One: the first (1/4) Group II workshop and listening post, where the role of the researcher was that of a listener and action researcher when the group was preparing for a visit to India.
March 2007	Case One: the second (2/4) Group II listening post, where the role of the researcher was that of a listener and action researcher after the members of this group had returned from India. Workshops after the visit were conducted in three parts due to difficulties getting the whole group together at the same time.
March 2007	Case One: the third (3/4) Group II listening post, where the role of the researcher was that of a listener and action researcher after the group visit to India.
March 2007	Case One: the fourth (4/4) Group II listening post, where the role of the researcher was that of a listener and action researcher after the group visit to India.

The empirical part of this research Study was completed in March 2007.

Appendix 6: India in Context

India as a whole has been rather unknown in Finland (Särkkä 2006; Grundström and Lahti 2005). Therefore, to build up the background for this research Study, several issues related to economy, social life, legislation, opportunities and current trends and initiatives were examined. Finland as an economic area differs greatly from India in size, scope, position, history, and institutions (Mathur 1998, 2007a). Studies on economic relations on pre- and post-GATS era have revealed large trade gaps (Mathur 1998; Mathur 2007a). Other studies have concentrated more on specific sectors in India and some aspects in terms of doing business in India have surfaced through Sitra financed 'India Programme' during 2005-2007 and related publications on "India-Phenomenon" (e.g. Grundström and Lahti 2005).[219] A previous study (Korhonen et al. 1997) of India as business area had scratched the surface, and basically provided only lists of contacts and general descriptions.

In addition to these the Indian society and some of its challenges have been discussed by Tamminen and Zenger (1998) and Tenhunen and Säävälä (2007). Such studies have given insights into aspects of societal fabric. To contrast against Indian diversity, Finland is often pictured as homogenous due to her small population. However, Finland too has various subcultures along with their distinctive ways of developing perspectives and interacting (e.g. Saami People, Karelians, Finnish-Swedish population, immigrant and migrant populations). In many ways, experiences of Finland at first have been seen exclusive, and inclusion of foreigners and assimilation processes have taken time, or have not even happened. Now this picture of homogeneity is being supplemented by wishes of multiculturalism and internationalisation on a large scale.

It is noteworthy that the world's second largest population consists of many religions and linguistic minorities (Jews, Zoroastrians, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists to name a few), who found refuge or dwelling in India and assimilated there after they had been banished from their original abodes, often after religious and power disputes, or when seeking better economic status. India has thus been on the receiving side of immigrants and migrants for hundreds of years, and this has contributed to the fact that Indian society is seen as

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[219] Sitra has had an India-programme since 2005, where they have tried to look into the Indian segments, such as textiles, mobile industry, Nokia and life in general. But the writers themselves stressed that these were pieces of investigative journalism, where they wanted to portray the multiple faces of India.

inclusive and multicultural. India also has a long history of world trade and well-developed ancient civilizations such as Indus-Saraswati culture.[220]

India is referred to as a rising superpower due to its internal resources, growth perspectives, people and focus on education. It is also still referred to as a developing country, whereas Finland is pictured as fully matured. Depending on different predictions, India is expected to be fully developed, with current growth, earliest by 2020 and latest by 2040. In terms of her size and population this is a huge step. India is on a growth path, and although there are some notable challenges, especially the established civil administration web left by the British and cultivated by the Indians, one can see infrastructure projects all over India. The drainage on public spending is mainly on the overgrown and inefficient public sector (Jalan 2005). Since the rate of growth has been unprecendented, the spread and scope of infrastructure projects is daunting. To overcome this constraint, more and more public-private partnerships (PPPs) have been introduced (for airports, ports, Special Economic Zones). India is also a democracy, where minds of the people cannot be known to anyone, since mere economic growth does not influence polling. This was witnessed when the BJP (Bharatya Janata Party), lost out to the Congress Party led coalition in 2004 election. Public pressures on Government on issues affecting groups of people are common. The States of the Union of India enjoy considerable legislative and regulatory autonomy, and are presently governed by a wide range of coalitions varying from State to State.

Indo-Finnish relations have not been highly visible since the inception of Indo-Finnish Joint Commission (1974), or from President M. Ahtisaari's visit in 1996. In Spring 2006, just before the Finnish EU Presidency in the latter half of 2006, the Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen finally made an official visit to India (after 45 years). During the EU Presidency, Finland hosted the EU-India Business Summit, where the current Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was present, and bilateral discussions were also held. President Halonen visited India informally in January 2007. These visits have signalled some changes in relations. During her visit President Halonen invited the President of India to make an official visit to Finland. In Autumn 2007 more interactivity of Finnish SMEs was

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[220] E.g. the former port of Lothal (2400-3000 BCE) in Gujarat, which is one example of heavy trade already in the late Indus-Saraswati culture (Agarwala 2001); another site in the post-partition India is Dholavira, both in Gujarat.

called by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Kamal Nath (Department of Commerce 2007c).[221]

Asia in general and India in particular have surfaced as key interests for both business and educational institutions in Finland. The strategic partnerships between India and European Union have gained momentum, since in 2004 EU trade with India was 33 billion Euros, up from 4.4 billion Euros in 1980. The Joint Action Plan of 2005 to increase trade and economic cooperation is an indicator of the importance of bilateral link to EU (European Commission Trade Issues, Bilateral Trade Relations/India 2007)[222]. In addition European Union has been negotiating, a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on the basis of strategic partnership with India, and broad based agreement on trade and investment (Department of Commerce 2007a, 2007b).[223] While these negotiations are still in process, these initiatives acknowledge the growing importance of linking EU/Finland to India.[224] The research context was chosen keeping all this in view.

The growing weight of trade between Finland and India has been reported (Mathur 2007a). Businesses aspiring to create presence in India need to be prepared to be there for a length of time 'with its warts and all', building up a business, systems and workforce, cultures, standards, innovation (Jain et al. 2006: 104). This message is also emphasised by Azim Premji, Wipro, and Jagdish Khattar, Maruti Udyog (Fortune Conferences, Global Forum 2007).[225]

The ideas and images of India have been varied, in many ways mystical and phantasy based and in many cases plain wrong and onesided.[226] Often India has been seen through its long history of spirituality (Gurus, Sadhus and different more or less religiously oriented movements), or just having negative impact on "Western Rationality" through magical thinking (see e.g. von Wright 1999). The divide perceived has been that westerners are rational and easteners emotional. As with the case of China previously,

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[221] Department of Commerce, 2007c (http://www.commerce.nic.in/pressreleases, Accessed 2.11.2007).
[222] European Commission, 2006 (http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/library/publications/ 25_india_brochure.pdf, Accessed 7.5.2007); European Union, 2007 (http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/india/sum09_05/05_jap_060905.pdf, Accessed 14.5.2007).
[223] Department of Commerce 2007a, 2007b (http://commerce.nic.in/India-EU-jap.pdf, Accessed 14.5.2007; http://www.commerce.nic.in/pressreleases, Accessed 2.11.2007).
[224] EU/Finland because of the two level initiatives: On EU level, comprising of the member states, and bilateral between India and Finland.
[225] As "seeking out India on her own terms" and taking "time to understand the country", respectively. Fortune Conferences, 2007 (www.timeinc.net/fortune/conference/global 2007, Accessed 4.11.2007).
[226] Although Indian writers, such as Amartya Sen (2005), point out that whatever is said of India, the opposite is also bound to be true.

media images of India seemed to portray it as a place where hunger is widespread, catastrophes frequent, poverty endemic and ubiquitous and everything is cheap and of low quality, leaving the picture at that. The Indian culture in itself was admired (temples, music, dance, religion, clothes) and many went to India to backpack and search for themselves; music and literature gave inspiration also to artists. On the whole and by and large, India was not seen as a land of huge business opportunities and its quality, thinking and innovation were regarded and portrayed as inferior. Even now (2006/2007) some of the news portray India as being slightly bizarre in some ways, but the tone is of curiousity, not contempt.[227]

Due to GATS, trade in services came to be recognized for its importance. The grace period granted to member states of WTO ended 31.12.2004. Interestingly this coincided with the time when India started to be perceived as a "phenomenon" in Finland (years 2005-2006)[228]: This followed the earlier "China Phenomenon": While China had been seen as a "manufacturing centre", India has been depicted as a "service centre" along with outsourcing discussions. This can be said due to India's growing emphasis on ICT and IT skills and because of language orientation.[229]. In India, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is widely discussed. What has now surfaced, is that India not only has the technology and know-how but also skilled people to carry it further, honed management systems, and capabilities in international business – and large private financing capabilities.[230]

The Indian change process was for a long time hidden under the Licence Raj and surfaced after early 1990.[231] While India, after it gained its Independence in 1947, steadily grew between three to five percent per annum, the growth was too slow (called "the Hindu rate

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[227] An example of this is the "India Rising" news series that Helsingin Sanomat published during winter 2006/2007.

[228] During the period of 2005 to 2006 the number of India related programmes (cultural), articles and news increased; also finally Finnair put up the first direct flight from Helsinki to Delhi end of October 2006 after a wait of 12 years. The former Ambassador of Finland to New Delhi, Marjatta Rasi, tried to get that connection already in 1994.

[229] The Indian education system requires that schoolchildren try to learn at least three languages: English, Hindi and the local language if not Hindi or a foreign language. This has also been the source of language battles in different parts of the country (such as West-Bengal, Karnataka). English, although a reminder of colonial times, remained as a uniting language in a country full of languages and dialects.

[230] This is also emphasised by Jain et al. (2006: 96): they say that low cost producing alone does not explain why companies are interested in India. In a private conversation in December 2006 it was claimed that "there are more millionaires in Mumbai than there are in Europe". This tells something of the change in India.

[231] The debate in India about the now Prime Minister, then Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh's role in modernizing the economy after the 1991 economic crises, is still going on. Indian society has an inbuilt interactional nature, where decisions are widely debated. Therefore not one person can be held "responsible" for changes. This "argumentative" tradition has been highlighted by Sen (2005).

of growth") and small for wider recognition. India was still too 'underdeveloped', yet Swedish companies went to India already in 1950s (Sandvik in 1959 and even earlier Swedish Match in 1920s) and the Danes had realised the trade potential in India by exporting ice to Calcutta long ago, Finnish companies, apart from exceptions like Airam, Kone and Wärtsilä, still did not explore India before 1991.[232] Airam tried its wings in Southern India in 1960s; Kone went to India in the 1980s[233]; Finarte started producing designed carpets in 1990; Wärtsilä entered India in early 1980s and established a manufacturing site in 1989.

The abolition of the licensing system and economic reforms in industry, finance, trade and services generated an unprecedented growth rate of 8-9 % per annum. The licencing system did not affect only foreign companies, and curbed Indian manufacturing as well, by making competition almost nonexistent, and monopolies thrived. One such area that benefited from abolishment of licence system was precisely telecom, which became one of the locomotives of the fast change as well as a ready demand market.[234] Dismantling the licensing system introduced new challenges to previously monopolistic companies, since these had benefited from the protected system and some of them were unprepared for suddenly hardened competition. Others restructured fast. India, in the eyes of the world, suddenly became an IT-hub. The speed of change has surprised Indians themselves as well (Jain et al. 2006). IT-sector had largely been unmonitored and unregulated and was thus able to grow without constraints of licensing. Such firms as Wipro (which started in 1945 with producing vegetable oil and soap) and Infosys (born during the licence system in 1981) are now known to many Finns.

One of the reasons India was not seen or taken into consideration might have been that Indians were focusing on their own problems till the 1970s. After the independence it was crucial to stabilize the country in terms of food production and capacity to produce other primary goods. During the period many previously private companies were taken under public ownership (such as Tata started "Maharaja" airline Air India). This was the time of "self-reliance" mistaken for "self-suffiency" (Mathur 2007a; Mathur and Mattila 2007a),

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[232] This despite of existing maritime routes to India from Finnish ports, especially during sail ship era.

[233] KONE formed a joint venture with Best & Crompton Engineering Ltd in 1984 in the name of Beacon KONE; they started 1987. Later the joint venture became KONE India and 100% subsidiary of KONE Corporation.

[234] The person who contributed hugely to the "telecom revolution" was Sam Pitroda, currently head of the Knowledge Commission, India. The revolution started from freeing the market from its earlier constraints, where telephones were seen as "luxury items" and therefore not available to everyone.

and meant that India tried to manage everything on its own. Alongside with practised licensing curbing growth of varieties in terms of businesses, it made some goods very difficult to obtain (such as cars, telephones and other products seen as luxury items). Such policies also meant that Indians became good in creating their own versions of needed products (example of this is Wipro, which produced the first homegrown PC in 1984) for their own markets which demanded reasonable prices, but contributed to creating low-quality in absence of competition, when looking at mass production only. Nonetheless, there were also indigenous innovations.[235]

India has been a growing power since its independence – in many ways. The British left behind an impoverished, hungry and divided country. The formation of Pakistan (East and West, later Pakistan and Bangladesh) and India as separate entities in 1947 was filled with violence and unrest. Since the signing of the Constitution[236] (passed November 26, 1949, applicable January 26, 1950. The latter date is also the Republic Day). From the beginning five year planning has formed the spine of the economy and the current (10th Plan) ended in 2007. In the next plan, The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) much emphasis has been laid on education and agriculture.[237]

The GATS agreement opened new vistas of exploration over cooperation and collaboration in services. Since over 70 % of the Finnish economy and about 55% of the Indian economy comprises of services, this sector is crucial for future well-being, and bilateral trade. The service sector is growing fast in India and is an important part of the future of the country – the demand for services is greater than the supply (this can e.g. be seen in aviation, education, transport, health care, tourism). For example, all major industrial houses from Tatas to Birlas are entering retail business and building retail chains.[238]; thus, the service sector in India is changing and growing fast. For this reason the four modes of service linkanges formed were in the background for this Study.

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[235] This is also pointed at in Finpro Country Report (March 2006 and 2007a, http://www.finpro.fi/fi-FI/Market+Information/Country+Information/Aasia/India/, Accessed 13.3.2006 and 29.3.2007).

[236] Ministry of Law and Justice, 2007 (http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/welcome.html, Accessed 2.3.2007).

[237] Ministry of Finance, Government of India, Budget 2007-2008 (http://indiabudget.nic.in, Accessed 1.4.2007). The increase in the budget is 34,2 %; education was, along with agriculture and infrastructure called as "winners" by Knowledge@Wharton 2007a (http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu, Accessed 1.4.2007).

[238] Retail business is to some extent still regulated. It is possible for foreign companies to set up one brand shops and partnerships with Indian counterparts (which e.g. Wal-Mart has done), but not setting large retail chains of multistores. Nowadays a foreign retail company can hold 51 percent of shares in a joint venture or partnership, thus providing control over the company. See also Vaswani, 2007 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6636241.stm, Accessed 14.5.2007). Birla, one of the large industrial houses, announced its retail plans on May 2007.

Indian Educational Initiatives

Education with its changing landscape is interesting in the context of Finland and India. At the moment India cannot provide enough educational places on any level due to the large demand. The pressure is acutely felt in the institutes of higher education, such as Indian Institutes of Management and Indian Institutes of Technology.[239] However, education at large (from vocational education to training) is seen as ticket to social development and its importance to growth is known, and it can be regarded as a "bedrock" for development (Gupta 2002: 42)[240]. However, this alone does not suffice.[241] Education from primary school onwards is one of the keys to sustained and planned high growth (Planning Commission, 2006)[242]. In 2002 the Constitution of India was amended to make Primary Education free (Ramachandran and Ramkumar 2005).

Human development and employment opportunities are important in every country, and also in India, where the number of unemployed were estimated to be 35 million in 2002 (Gupta 2002)[243]. One of the keys to employment is employability: capabilities and skills, and this skill shortage is already felt. Demand for services in tourism and health care is rising, not only in the country itself, but also in form of health care tourism; also energy solutions are called for. This calls for actions from micro, small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) as well, in the form of public-private partnerships.

While education and educational institutions are undergoing a drastic change in Finland, it is the same in India too. In his August 15, 2007 address to the Indian Nation, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh promised a large scale expansion in education on all levels (e.g. Parsa 2007). This means, that during the 11th Five Year Plan, increase of public spending will increase four fold from the previous plan up to 45 billion Euros, consisting of a rise from 7.7 % to 19.4 % from GDP. This means e.g. universalisation of curricula, 6000 new schools, 30 new Central Universities (16 of them in states that did not have one previously), 8 new Indian Institutes of Technology, 7 new Indian Institutes of

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[239] These institutes, such as National Institute of Design (NID, Ahmedabad), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs currently 6, one more coming up in Shillong) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs, currently 7, one more expected to start in Gujarat state in 2007), are of national pride and places of excellence. Therefore seeking admission in such a prestigious place is common.

[240] Gupta, 2002 (http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/pl_vsn2020.pdf, Accessed 29.1.2007).

[241] E.g. in Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (http://iimahd.ernet.in, Accessed 5.5.2007) alone, around 200.000 students seek admission to it's MBA programmes annually for batch size of 250.

[242] The Planning Commission, 2006 (http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/app11_16jan.pdf, Accessed 30.3.2007)

[243] Gupta, 2002 (http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/pl_vsn2020.pdf, Accessed 29.1.2007).

Management, 5 new Indian Institutes of Science, 10.000 Industrial Training Institutes and 50.000 Skill Development Centres – thus placing strong emphasis also on vocational education, just to give a few examples.[244]

There exists a wish among Finnish Institutions to structure interactions with Indian educational institutes and to understand the Indian education system. The Ministry of Education (Opetusministeriö) in Finland in its Committee Report 2001, discussed about the national education strategy and internationalisation of different educational systems. Along with many other European countries, Finland is expected to face demographic shock from 2010 onwards. This shock along with high dependency ratios due to diminishing younger generations has led educational institutions to look for new avenues in search of new students. India presents the opposite, with its large young population. The problem, however, is how to utilize that capacity and how to get adequate skills and capabilities to all, and also keep up with the other training and education needs (Planning Commission, 2006)[245].

Finnish Educational Asia strategy (2006) points out that the cultures and societies of Asian countries are not well known in Finland. The previous (pre 2005) links have mainly been developed by higher education institutes and universities, and even these have been scarce. The synergies and complimentarities between Finland and India have never been explored systematically at intergovernmental level in education. Due to this aspect, and structural and systemic differences between Finnish and Indian education, it has also been difficult for Finnish ones to evaluate Indian institutions from afar. For example, the Foreign Educational Institutes Bill[246] will determine more clearly what the duties and responsibilities of foreign educational bodies are, and it will give guidelines to

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[244] These have been reported in Prime Minister's speech at Red Fort on the occasion of India's 60th Anniversary of Independence. Singh, 2007 (http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/2282440.cms, Accessed 15.8.2007). These are reported also by National Knowledge Commission's media report, 2007 (http://www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/downloads/news/news59.pdf, Accessed 23.9.2007)

[245] The Planning Commission, 2006 (http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/app11_16jan.pdf, Accessed 30.3.2007).

[246] Lakshman, 2006 (http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/oct2006/gb20061009_517543.htm?chan=search, Accessed 27.1.2007). This bill is currently under discussion.

cooperation.[247] In addition, heated discussions on reservations have introduced new challenges.[248]

The Education Ministry action programme (2006:9) mentions India as one of the main countries along with China (Opetusministeriö 2001, 2006b).[249] The European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) 2006 was held in New Delhi, where Finnish institutions of higher education were present. However, there are very few institutions in Finland that have had cooperation with Indian institutes, and mainly it has been in form of student or teacher exchange.[250]. Student exchange has been encouraged by Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) and India is one of the areas mentioned in CIMO action and financial plan 2008-2011 (CIMO 2007b).[251] Recently Sitra has allocated 200.000 Euros from its India-programme to generate new exchange for Finnish institutions.[252] These "Sitra Fellowships" are administered by CIMO and work is also going on for a higher education strategy to market Finnish education system and education in Asia. So far the Asia programmes in Finland have not included India accentuating an "India void" in Finland.[253], India has been less present in networks so far (CIMO 2007a)[254]. "Universities of Applied Sciences" (Ammattikorkeakoulut) have been aggressive in creating networks and linkages.[255] However, more discussion has focused on higher education and less on vocational education. Competition for cooperation in education is fierce. Universities are being

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[247] This refers e.g. to reporting and possible requirements for quotas (reservation discussions). Since these discussions are still ongoing including Court orders and inquiries, nothing definite can be said about the impact and final result.

[248] E.g. Demonstrations shown by students. Kripalani, 2006 (http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/may2006/gb20060519_993959.htm?chan=globalbiz_asia_t odays+top+story, Accessed 27.1.2007); Also the Supreme Court, 2006.

[249] Opetusministeriö (Ministry of Education), 2001, 2006b (http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2001/liitteet/opm_511_23kvstrategia.pdf?lang=fi, Accessed 12.7.2006; http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2006/liitteet/ opm_2_opm09.pdf, Accessed 12.7.2006).

[250] E.g. Helsinki School of Economics has cooperation with IIMA, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad and IIMB, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore on Master's level and through Partnership in International Management Network; another active institute has been University of Jyväskylä.

[251] CIMO, 2007b (http://www.cimo.fi/dman/Document.phx/~public/Organisaatio/TTS20082011.pdf, Accessed 15.4.2007).

[252] Sitra introduces itself as "the Finnish Innovation Fund". Sitra aims to promote the economic prosperity and the future success of Finland. Sitra's aim is to be a respected partner in building a knowledgeable and innovative society." Sitra, 2007 (http://www.sitra.fi/, Accessed 1.2.2007)

[253] See e.g. Asianet, which consists of East-Asia and South-East Asia. Asianet, 2007 (http://www.asianet.fi/, Accessed 15.4.2007)

[254] CIMO, 2007a (http://cimo.uutiskirje.fi/newsletter/korkeakouluyhteistyo/1_2007/sivu3.php#aasia, Accessed 15.4.2007).

[255] Such as Pinnet, 2007(http://www.pinnet.fi/, Accessed 15.4.2007).and Arene, 2007a (http://www.arene.fi/, Accessed 15.4.2007), which had a joint excursion for Principals in Delhi and Bangalore, where an agreement was signed. Arene, 2007b (http://www.arene.fi/ajankohtaista.asp?id=364, Accessed 5.11.2007).

attracted from all over the world (see e.g. Sengupta 2007)[256]. The only stop to further acceleration is that the law governing foreign educational bodies has not been formulated.

The above highlights how wishes exist and evolve within a large group such as a nation or as a national territory, as perceived. In Finland, the Ministry of Education is largely responsible for guidelines on education, what is accessible and what is not, which influence structures. Therefore, such discussions as to where to link, do reflect national desires as well as organisational aims. For this reason the background in relation to India, needed to be outlined in some detail.

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[256] Sengupta, 2007 (http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/26/world/asia/26india.html?_r=1&oref=slogin, Accessed 2.10.2007).

Appendix 7: Case One, Questionnaire for the Educational Group

1) Mikä on mielestäsi keskeinen ongelma / haaste ohjelman toteuttamisessa?
Question 1: In Your opinion, what is the central problem or challenge in the programme execution?

2) Millaisena koet oman roolisi ohjelman toteuttamisessa?
Question 2: How do you see your own role in the programme?

3) Miten haluaisit ongelmaa lähestyttävän yhteisten tapaamisten aikana?
Question 3: How would you like this problem to be dealt with during the group meetings?

4) Mikä koulutusohjelman tapahtuma on eniten vaikuttanut suhtautumiseesi kohdealueisiin? Millä tavoin tapahtuma on vaikuttanut muutokseen suhtautumisessasi?
Question 4: Within the programme, what has mostly affected your attitude towards the target areas? In what way has the programme effected this attitude change?

5) Millaisen työhypoteesin (ns oletuksen tavoitteista ja toteutumisesta) antaisit ohjelmasta tällä hetkellä?
Question 5: What kind of a working hypothesis (your picture of the goals and how they will be realised) would you presently give of the programme?

6) Mitä hyötyä koet ohjelmasta olevan työllesi ja taustaorganisaatiollesi?
Question 6: What benefits do you see this programme has for your own work and background organisation?

7) Onko taustaorganisaatiosi ollut kiinnostunut ohjelmasta ja kokemuksistasi? Millä tavoin ja miten sitä on hyödynnetty, jos on? Miten tuloksia voitaisiin hyödyntää?
Question 7: Has your background organisation been interested in the programme and your experiences? In what way has it been utilized, if it has? How do you think these results could be used?

8) Onko ohjelma tähän asti selkiyttänyt ajatuksiasi kohdemaista, omasta roolistasi ja kansainvälistymisestä? Kuvaile millä tavalla ?
Question 8: Has the programme thus far clarified your thoughts about target countries; your own role, and internationalisation? Describe in what way?

9) Mikä on mielestäsi taustaorganisaatiosi päätehtävä ja tukeeko ohjelma sitä?
Question 9: In your mind, what is the primary task of your background organisation and does the programme support it?

10) Käyttääkö taustaorganisaatiosi ryhmiä ongelmien käsittelyssä, uusien asioiden suunnittelussa ja erilaisten työtapojen etsinnässä?
Question 10: Does your background organisation use groups in problem processing, making new plans and finding alternative ways of methods of working?

11) Miten ohjelma on näkynyt omassa työssäsi ja taustaorganisaatiossasi?
Question 11: How has the programme become visible in your work and organisation?

12) Mitä odotat prosessilta?
Question 12: What do you expect from the process?

13) Mitkä ovat organisaatiosi ja sinun tavoitteesi ohjelman suhteen? Onko niistä keskusteltu ja miten?
Question 13: What are your organisation's and your aims in terms of this programme? Have aims been discussed and in what way?

14) Mikä olisi sinun ehdotuksesi ohjelman jatkoon?
Question 14: What would your proposal be for the future programme?

1) How would you like to take this process forward in your own organisation? _____
_____

2) What learning did this event give you and your organisation?_____
_____
_____

3) How does this event help you/your organisation to effectively engage with Nordic Countries?_____
_____

4) What issues struck you as most relevant in regard to your business (please, mention the business your in)
_____
_____

5) What barriers and gateways seemed important in your field? Why?_____
_____
_____

6) What surprised you during this event? _____
_____

7) What was familiar?_____
_____

8) Other insights?_____
_____

9) Suggestions for the organiser?_____
_____

10) Where from did you hear of this seminar?_____