Examining a Planning Discourse: How a Manager Represents Issues Within a Planning Frame and How The Others Could Do The Same

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ABSTRACT

The aim of Participatory Design (PD) is to involve the users in the design. Even though the research has shown the success of PD projects in empowering users, little has been said about PD practices within accountable organizations. To transfer PD practices to these business organizations, we need to understand design as an institutional discourse. This paper discusses a sequence of organizational planning interaction and demonstrates how a manager represents the issues within a planning frame and why other participants are unable to act within this frame. The users and even the designer were marginalized from the planning activity. It is postulated that balancing the existing institutionalized power relationships may be laborious within this kind of context. For this reason, it is, instead, argued that we could approach this task implicitly by strengthening diverse frames and, in this way, to pave the way for a more grounded heterogeneous planning discourse inside accountable organizations. This process could be supported by a human mediator, a frame advocate.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

K.4.3 [**Computers and Society**]: Organizational Impacts – *reengineering.*

K.6.1 [**Management of Computing and Information Systems**]: Project and People Management – systems analysis and design

General Terms

Design, Human Factors, Management

Keywords

Planning, frame, discourse, representation

1. INTRODUCTION

Owl, why are you so quiet? I am quiet because of words.

Kaonde proverb

Early European Participatory Design (PD) was a matter of enabling democratic user participation [4]. Securing active engagement of the end users in design was one of the primary means for empowering this dominated party. To understand this engagement, or participation, detailed analysis of interaction between the users and the designers has been conducted [e.g., 3, 22, 24, 32, 33].

Organizational power issues have been central within the PD tradition, especially in its critical past [4] but a focus on power-discursive design arenas has been largely absent since then. Of recent authors, Asaro [4] and Beck [5] have emphasized the insufficiency of blind reliance on participation but counter-arguments against this kind of skepticism have also been presented. For example, Kanstrup emphasizes 'the political aspect inherent in the "participation" and [in] the very idea of "design" found in the Scandinavian tradition' [20, p.82]. However, it is accepted here what Beck underscores as follows:

> Rather than participation, concern with power and dominance needs to be stated as the core of the research field of PD. Thus, analysis and development to be published as PD should be motivated in serving the dominated (and may or may not involve participatory design) [5, p.82-3].

In recent years, these power issues have experienced a kind of renaissance within the PD field [e.g., 12, 13, 19, 30]. These studies are needed in the attempt to bring PD practices to design projects conducted inside accountable business organizations. Power issues are likely to emerge in all so called Organizational Participatory Design (OPD) projects. In these projects, we are likely to find a mini-organizational reality of some kind, especially when representatives of the management are present. Bødker's study makes an exception in showing that the management of an organization "agreed not to participate" for example in a future workshop [10, p.226] but this is certainly not possible in every business organization. For this reason, we need to adjust PD practices within these domains.

Despite the fact that "asymmetry exists in each individual act-response sequence" [35, p.673] in micro-level interaction in a range of design domains, little research has been devoted to the examination of micro-control, micro-domination and micro-power. As one of those few outside the core of the PD community who have studied interaction asymmetries in user-designer interaction, Alvarez [1] has focused on a user interview as a *discourse,* "a mode of action" that is "shaped and constrained by social structure" [14, p.63-64]. She has studied different *frames*, organizers of participants' experience [17], within which different participants act during the interview discourse. Moreover, Glock [16] has examined how designers act within their consistent, shared, primary framework but Orlikowski and Gash [28] and Bijker [8] have studied differences in frames. We extend these latter two studies by investigating how the differences in frames manifest themselves during the heterogeneous micro-level design interaction.

The significance of Alvarez's study lies in showing how asymmetries of interaction come into being when the users' and the designers' frames collide. However, she confines herself to dealing only with talk and devotes no attention to material representations that have been discussed widely in the PD field [e.g., 6, 11, 23]. These material representations need to be understood not only as "shared external models" [27] making the participation of multiple participants possible but also as 'configuration devices' used for configuring the future [26] and the participants' understanding of this future [34].

This study examines a planning frame within which a manager uses not only his talk but also a wall chart to configure the other participants' understanding of the emerging designs during the planning discourse. It is demonstrated that the users and the designers were unable to act within this planning frame maintained by the manager in his 'foregrounded' organizational position. Therefore, these other participants became marginalized from the manager's sustained storyline. It is argued that framing and representing within frames are inherent elements embedded in the construction of new organizational realities and need to be considered in our attempts to strive for inter-subjectively produced design discourses. A range of representations need to be introduced and used [11] and different frames supported by a 'frame advocate' to reinforce a collective frame.

2. FRAME, DISCOURSE AND REPRESENTATION

Frames are important elements in understanding interaction. Frames as organizers of experience also have a significant role in meaning-constructive institutional discourses of design. Not only frames but also representations have a significant role in design discourses. These issues are discussed next in more detail.

2.1 Frames as Organizers of Experience

Erving Goffman's *frame* denotes "a principle of organization that defines a situation" [17, p.11]. Frame is a deeply-internalized 'orienteering map' appearing to a person as a natural organization of how things are, or should be, and what is, or should be, going on in a particular situation at a particular moment of time. Different people are likely to have their own views of what is going on. Hence, they are likely to act within different frames in

the events "that incorporate the will, aim, and controlling effort of an intelligence, a live agency" [17, p.22]. Different motives involved in these events can explain why different individuals may act, consciously or not, within different frames.

The main shortcoming in Goffman's view of frames is that "the flow of social life becomes a series of still-life, framed pictures, where social intercourse is depicted, but not analyzed and explained" [31, p.501]. Goffman's theory forgets the temporal dimension; it "ignores time as the medium in which social life happens" [31, p.520]. However, frames cannot "stand separate and unrelated" as a static social framework that has been "decided in advance" but they are "constructed in an innovative and unique process of interaction" [31, p.505]. An individual does not just act within his or her frame but he or she is making tactical moves to maintain that frame.

Unlike Goffman, Bijker [8] emphasizes that frames, or *technological frames,* are constructed not only in space but also in time during interactions around an artifact being developed. In this situation, different frames of different participants "slide into one another" [31, p.505]. Bijker [7] seems to underscore that it is normal that one frame may then become the 'pervasive' one. However, this frame cannot ever structure the interaction of these participants completely because "different actors will have different degrees of inclusion in the frame (actors with a high inclusion interacting more in terms of that technological frame and actors with a low inclusion to a lesser extent)" [7, p.173]. The disguise of collective continuity is possible even if the participants' own frames differ fundamentally from each other and some participants have only a low inclusion in the 'pervasive' frame maintained unilaterally by one participant only.

2.2 Representing in Discourse

Human interaction is 'the construction yard' [29] and language is a tool that can be used to construct descriptions of the world:

> A central feature of any description is its role in categorization; a description formulates some object or event as something; it constitutes it as a thing, and a thing with specific qualities. The description presents something as good or bad, big or small, more violent or less violent, although often with more subtle options. Another common role of descriptions is to present some action as routine or, conversely, exceptional. [29, p.111].

These inherent classifications [9] embedded in descriptions are capable of *re*-presenting things politically. Potter gives an example: "Describing a reporter as a *hack* may serve one kind of activity, while describing the same person as a *journalist* may serve another" [29, p.200, italics in the original]. Hence, verbal representations can be used to strengthen particular impressions. Nevertheless, material representations are likely to delimit the boundaries of imagination even more. With a material representation, "participants interact not only with each other but also with the object to which they attach their comments", and this material 'texture' is not only "manipulated" but "the talk produced appears to some degree to be *organized by* [it]" [2, p.92, italics in the original]. Goodwin emphasizes that when "talk and image mutually enhance each other, a demonstration that is greater than the sum of its parts emerges" [18, p.297]. That is, a verbal argument provides "instructions for how to see the highlighted sequence" that is materially presented while this same

sequence provides "seeable proof for the argument being made" [18, p.301-2]. This mutually amplified compound demonstration turns out to be an extremely powerful tool for "setting parameters" for future activities and even "configuring" other participating subjects' understanding of these activities [34, p.61].

A person is drawn into a *discourse*, a strip of using language in its social context [14] when doing things with other people. Discourse is "a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other" [14, p.63]. It is also "a mode of representation" [14, p.63] that can be understood as politically constitutive in that "it contributes to reproducing society (social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief) as it is, yet also contributes to transforming society" [14, p.65]. Discourse is not only a site of power struggle but it is "a stake in power struggle" [14, p.67].

2.3 Formation of Design Arena

The design arena is a dynamic complex of representing things in discourse within different frames. In examining, for example, planning as an institutional discourse, a critical observer can unmask this discourse as a mode of power struggle. He or she can recognize a dissensus as for frames. There are likely to be conflicting frames and participants having different degrees of inclusion in these frames. For this reason, these participants may only be partly included in the ongoing discourse or even excluded from that. It could be said that certain frames are 'embedded' in representations or representations are used within particular frames. A material representation used within the most powerful frame, a 'master' frame (Frame X in Figure 1), can be used by the one who acts within this frame to strengthen one's position during a power struggle. The advocate of this material representation tends to marginalize other participants who act only partly within the master frame. To put it briefly, a person may attempt to win other participants over by using certain interaction strategies in a particular sort of discourse within a certain type of frame by means of certain types of linguistic and, especially, material representations.
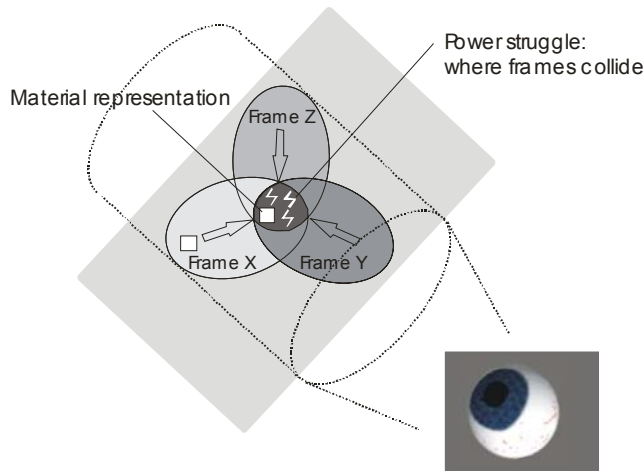

Figure 1. Formation of design arena.

3. STUDYING FRAMES AND DISCOURSES

I worked as a participant observer during the requirements determination project that has been studied here. This ethnographic fieldwork helped me to gain an insider view, for example, of a meeting where the representatives of a client organization and the designer from a software house were planning new working procedures and tasks. Video recordings proved to be invaluable since they captured discussions and enabled me to reconstruct uses of the material afterwards.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used to describe texts that were produced during interaction, to interpret the relationship between this text and the interaction and to explain the relationship between this interaction and its social context [15]. I chose one episode of the data demonstrating some notable differences in frames of the participating subjects. During the analysis, supported by a transcript, the episode was watched repeatedly on video. The vocabulary, the grammar and the textual structure of the text were focused on. What is it that is going on, who are those involved, what relationships are at issue and what is the role of language during interaction were answered. Also some social determinants were addressed. [15].

A set of strategies for recognizing different frames was kept in mind. First, single clauses were analyzed to find out potential uses of conflicting wordings and conceptualizations. The second strategy was to recognize what expressions are "relatively prominent" or "important" and what are "relatively backgrounded" or "unimportant" for different participants in their talks [15, p.110]. The existence of differences in frames is possible also in those cases where some utterances of different participants appear mutually exclusive or even absurd when analyzed in the same context. There may also be differences in frames when an initiative of one participant is passed over in silence and a reciprocal interaction mode does not follow from this initiative. In addition, different speaking and listening positions, dominating and marginalized positions [15], were looked at to recognize conflicting frames. It may be an indication of differences in frames if one participant appears to be in control of the interaction situation more than the other participating subjects. It is also possible if there is one actor having an outstandingly low inclusion in what another participant is talking about. Moreover, being passive can be an indication of having trouble understanding what the others are talking about which, in certain situations, may be an indication of differences in frames. We need to remember that not only frames but also organizational structures can explain interaction. We cannot recognize frames without analyzing the discourse simultaneously. For example, a person who tends to be outstandingly passive does not always have to be outside the master frame but he or she may also have other reasons to stay as a bystander.

To understand how material representations were used within particular frames during a power struggle, I studied the relationship of a material representation to how talk and interaction are organized around it and how control features are used around it by the dominating participants. For example, if one refers to a material representation in one's talk frequently or makes an active use of it around it, this may in some situations indicate one's attempts to control the topic with this representation. Drawing others' attention to a material

representation, when explaining things, may also indicate topic control.

4. RESEARCH SITE AND CONTEXT

This current study involves two organizations, the Funding Department of the Finnish Slot Machine Association (RAY) acting as a client and a software house ('*Incognito*') acting as a provider for a new financial-administrative information system. The ultimate objective of RAY's funding activities is to promote the health and social welfare of people in Finland. Funds are raised through gaming operations and funding is granted to support activities undertaken by non-profit societies and foundations in the health and social welfare field. Revenues from RAY's gaming operations were EUR 604.5 million in the year 2002.

A requirement determination project was set up for the new system. The project ran for the first six months of the year 2000. According to the project plan, the aim was "to determinate a system to support the payment procedure so that this system and those systems supporting the supervision and preparation form a coherent whole, integrating all parts of the system".

Prior to the process planning meeting on February 14, which is the focus here, three requirement determination meetings had been held at RAY on January 12 and 19 and February 2. Designer Pekka ('*Incognito*') had acted as a chair in them. He had used the determination documentation of the current HP 3000 system as a primary material representation supporting requirements elicitation interviews and the process of talking about each function of the current system. Based on these interviews, he built use cases to describe the tasks to be performed with the system.

This interview frame was already questioned for the first time on January 12. Researcher Sari and Funding Secretary Marja (RAY) suggested a possibility of observing the actual work practice but Designer Pekka implicitly rejected this idea. Then, on January 19, Project Manager Keijo (RAY) hinted at the possibility of building a process diagram. Pekka did not respond to this idea. On February 2, Project Manager Keijo and System Manager Tuula (RAY) suggested a wall chart technique and gave reasons for why it should be used to describe the payment process. For example, Keijo said: "It clarifies people's thoughts, as it helps them to see things on the wall, for example, to see that this goes here and that goes there". Researcher Sari also came round to their view. Nevertheless, Designer Pekka disregarded these efforts and continued on as before.

On February 6, Tuula sent an email to Pekka and implicitly went against the use of the determination documentation of the current HP 3000 system:

> The danger is, if we build too much on the old practices, that this practice will remain as it is and only the user interface will be changed from character-based to graphic. We now have access to totally new technology, which gives a much different platform and much more alternatives to change operating procedures, work practices, and division of tasks.

On February 7, Manager Timo (RAY) appeared to support this business process re-engineering approach in his response:

> The points Tuula highlights are good ones. Processes and their needs ought to be determined and then described.

Designer Pekka bent to the managers' will but these two messages had thrown him off balance. He was wondering about the managers' intervention. As we arrived at the meeting room at RAY on February 14, we could hardly believe our eyes. A process diagram was there on the wall (a segment of that is presented in Figure 2). We were told that System Manager Tuula had built it together with Manager Timo and Funding Secretary Marja to describe the existing payment process.
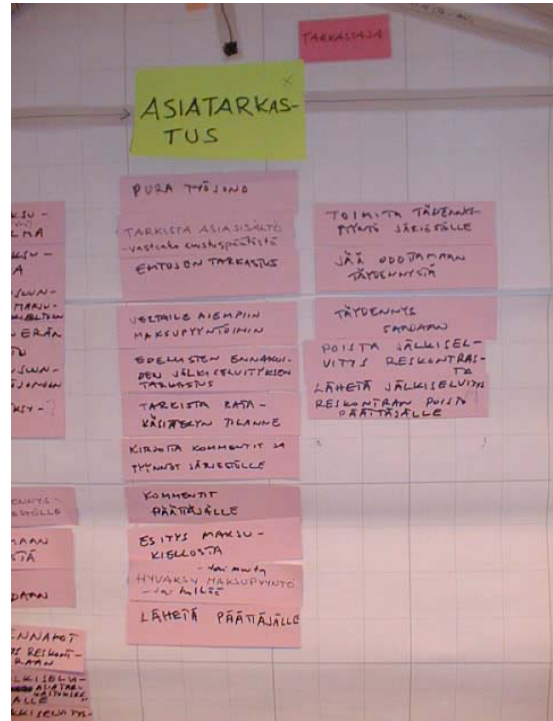

Figure 2. A small fragment of the original wall chart.

Designer Pekka ('*Incognito'*), Researchers Sari and Jarmo (*the University*), System Manager Tuula and Project Manager Sami (*RAY, the Information Systems Unit*) and Manager Timo, Senior Supervisor Asko, Junior Supervisor Erkki, Preparing Officer Hannu and Funding Secretary Marja (*RAY, the Funding Department*) attended this February 14 process planning meeting. First, the wall chart was walked through. Then, Manager Timo and System Manager Tuula moved ahead to the future payment process.

System Manager Tuula proposed her sketch as the groundwork for the new payment process. She introduced her suggestion together with Manager Timo. After that, Designer Pekka accepted this groundwork hesitantly. This paper concentrates on the discussions about handling long-term payment plans. Higher-level tasks and document flows were emphasized as for the new process.

Interestingly, the manually processed payment plans were not mentioned on the wall chart describing the current payment process. Payment plans were mentioned only in the new process. In the Project Term Definitions, dated May 4, they were explained as follows:

At the beginning of each year an organization [a non-profit society or foundation] can mail a payment plan for the certain due item with the expected due date and installment.

Due items can be building projects or particular purchases to be done on projects for which non-profit societies and foundations request funding. In the current work practices, payment plans were handled without any customized computer support. So far, they had only been stored as paper files in the manual binders.

Before the afternoon coffee break, it was agreed that payment plans would be discussed after the break scheduled to finish at 2:10 p.m.. However, Manager Timo and System Manager Tuula came back earlier, even before I switched on the video camera at 2:09 p.m.. When I came back, the managers were already deep in planning but, for example, Funding Secretary Marja was still absent.

5. MONOPOLIZING THE CONVERSATION, MASTERING THE FUTURE

This episode starts with Manager Timo dominating the stage. Timo adds a new card "creating a payment plan" to the wall chart under the Supervisors' responsibilities. He then fetches a pen from the table and is deep in thought. He does not even give a glance at anybody else. After returning to the wall chart, he adds text to one card. His acts can be interpreted to show skillful control of the planning process. He controls the topic by modifying the wall chart within the planning frame. While Timo does this, System Manager Tuula turns to Designer Pekka who is standing further away. She maintains the current planning frame by re-representing aloud what Timo is writing: "That is target settlement day and the amount of money. After all, that is what it means". That is, she also accepts Timo's viewpoint. Soon, she specifies: "that is queued installments". She does not, however, explicitly invite Pekka to this actual construction process but only informs him about its state. Pekka reacts to Tuula's specification with a thoughtful "um" implying either that he cannot follow what is happening since not participating actively or that he is just attempting to understand what is going on around the wall chart. Designer Pekka does not have access to Timo's thought process and the reasoning behind the decision but only to the outcome of this process since Timo does not reveal his thoughts. Moreover, Pekka seems to have no access to the planning frame. By contrast, Tuula is involved in it and is capable of understanding things within that frame. This is indicated by her ability to act as an intermediary between Manager Timo and Designer Pekka. In fact, she maintains the power relationship in which Pekka is a marginalized receiver excluded from the construction. Standing passively aside indicates this marginalized outsider position (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Designer Pekka in his marginalized position.

Manager Timo soon turns to look at System Manager Tuula. He says: "Er, then, there is also *Approving a Payment Plan*". Talking to her indicates that they are in on it together. Even though Timo addresses his remarks to Tuula, it turns out to be Supervisor Asko, sitting at the table, who writes a new card. This task of writing new cards and rolling Blue-Tack balls had already been given to him before the coffee break. Asko appears to have internalized his role as a clerk. He seems to know he is supposed to react even to implicit requests to write cards. Timo is successfully maintaining the planning frame. He does this by using the process language embedded in the process diagram. His talk is organized by nominalized tasks. Asko seems to have been excluded from this planning frame. He acts only as a non-participating response-giver. Soon, Manager Timo relaxes a bit, stays in place and turns to look at Tuula. After rapidly glancing at Asko, as if checking the status of writing, he turns back to Tuula and says: "Then that process has been handled". By pointing to the wall chart, he makes concrete what he is referring to. With these acts, he seems to legitimatize the wall chart representation of the new process. He finally grins at Tuula. This could simply imply he is satisfied with the planned process, but due to their shared frame, this grin could also be understood to imply something like "we did it".

6. CONFIGURING THE OTHERS

Manager Timo breaks in on the ongoing discussion. Before interrupting, Timo steps over to the wall chart, says "well", coughs and has a break. These interrupting habits indicate his politeness. After this short transitional period, Timo turns to Supervisor Asko, points with his finger where he wants the next card to go and formulates an imperative: "Write … write then down that, er, 'Modify a Payment Plan', and do it twice" (Figure 4). In doing so, Timo skillfully switches the focus back to the planning frame that he now resumes to sustain. By pointing at the wall chart with his finger, he draws the others' attention to the stage and the wall chart he is controlling. He maintains the focus and controls the topic by classifying things in process terms originating in the planning frame and manifested through the wall chart.

Figure 4. Manager Timo controls the topic.

Preparing Officer Hannu, who had been speaking before the intervention, breaks off his speech immediately and lets his personal frame go, as Timo starts with his line. Also Asko reacts quickly. He begins to write a new card. Hannu and Asko appear to know what they are supposed to do. This could be interpreted as indicating the existing institutionalized power relationship between the Manager and the two employees. This relationship is now reproduced within the planning frame organizing the planning discourse in a way that would be difficult for the other employees to be active in the actual construction. Manager Timo formulates a justification for his decision in order to persuade the others. He commences this justification by saying "because it has to be" but he is forced to break off since he understands there has been a mistake in his expression "Modify a Payment Plan" in the previous utterance. He replaces this by correcting: "Or Update a Payment Plan". Designer Pekka and Funding Secretary Marja react in a positive way. They say: "Oh yes". Pekka rewords Timo's opinion in the background: "It needs to be possible to modify them". This indicates either that he attempts to give an impression that he is involved in the current frame or that he is considering out loud Timo's suggestion or both. This implies that he is able to follow Timo's monologue to some extent but he cannot, however, act as an active member within the current frame. Nevertheless, it cannot be known whether Marja understands Timo's point since she only says "oh yes" but does not join in on the discussion. Having no access to the ongoing construction process would indicate her marginalized position outside the planning frame. This outsider position may originate in the existing power relationship between Timo and her. Supervisor Asko then asks: "Which one?". He needs to know what to write on a new card. He, however, does not question his role as a clerk. Immediately, Timo glances at Asko and replies: "Update". To further clarify his opinion, Timo not only justifies in his talk that "one needs to be able to update it then" but also points to the two points in the process, to the Funding Secretary's and the Supervisors' tasks where the updating needs to be possible. Pointing with his finger is not so much about conveying anything of real substance to the other participants because he is not close enough for that. This is more about maintaining the correct focus in the power struggle with his finger serving as a pointer.

After discussing the process of updating payment plans more or less jointly with the other participants, Manager Timo proceeds to the finalizing stage. This is possible since he finds himself in a dominating position, as the one who can act within the planning frame. He goes back to the wall chart, points his finger at the Funding Secretary's responsibilities and begins to configure the process and the other employees: "In other words, I think that all updates for the payment plan…". He glances in the direction of System Manager Tuula and Supervisor Asko but he soon re-orients towards the wall chart and, after a short break, moves his finger to his own responsibilities on the wall chart and finishes his proposal: "…must come up until here". He uses his finger movements to demonstrate a process on the wall chart. The others keep silent during Timo's turn with attention focused on the wall chart. For example, Supervisor Asko and Funding Secretary Marja sit stock-still and follow Timo's construction of the wall chart. It is open to doubt whether these other members are able to see where Timo is pointing his finger at. The word "here" cannot help the others because it is an indexical expression. Nevertheless, it is clear that the others stay as marginalized outsiders as to the planning frame that Timo is maintaining. Some of the marginalized others might be able to follow Timo's monologue (i.e., they can be partly involved in the frame) but they cannot propose a reciprocal interaction mode in which they could act more actively and productively. That the only active person is in an executive position may explain why the other members are passive. Theirs can be such a culture that if the manager says that something "must" happen like he or she prefers it to be, it is likely to be difficult for his/her subordinates to question his/her will. Here, acting within his planning frame and organizing and supporting his talk according to the structure of the wall chart helped Timo to create and sustain an exclusive discursive universe.

7. VAUDEVILLE IS OVER: "IS THAT IT NOW?"

After placing the last cards on the wall chart, Manager Timo throws his pen on the table as if symbolically finishing the construction and relinquishing control. He puts his hands in his pockets and leaves the stage. Everybody remains quiet. This silence lasts for the next forty seconds until Funding Secretary Marja glances at Asko as if trying to encourage him to express an opinion. She finally says "vaudeville", nods at the wall chart and becomes quiet again. She might use the term "vaudeville" to denote the same as "wow" in which case she would be impressed with the wall chart. However, if she knew the original meaning of this term, that is, "a theatrical entertainment consisting of a number of individual performances, acts, or mixed numbers, as of singing, dancing, gymnastic exhibitions, etc." [Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary], she might implicitly question her passive spectator role during the theatrical construction monologue. The 'magic' word "vaudeville" beautifully condenses a collective message of the user population: There was no chance of actively contributing to the actual construction. Having nothing else to say may indicate that Funding Secretary Marja does not have the courage to express her real opinion or she simply does not have anything else to say.

After the next forty seconds, Supervisor Asko breaks in: "Is that it now?". It could be speculated that he asks this question to break the long silence. He does not provide an answer but someone else

is given the floor to answer his question. After the twenty seconds, System Manager Tuula repeats what Asko said. Marja's "um" and "good question" coupled with laughter, together with Preparing Officer Hannu's irritated answer "I don't know" implies that they either do not understand the process, they simply do not have any opinion or they feel they cannot go against the Manager who 'owns' the planned process. Even though Timo is not Hannu's manager, it may be sufficient that Timo is the Manager. Counter-opinions are not expressed. Thus, the new process is implicitly accepted. Designer Pekka finally decides to change the topic. This transitional period finishes the episode.

8. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this paper has been to penetrate a manager-framed and -sustained planning discourse. The in-depth examination of a group of members from different organizations and organizational locations exposed the institutional discourse studied here as a power struggle. To begin with, the planning frame was demonstrated to be sustained by the two managers of which one modified the material representation of the new process and another re-represented this process with her talk to the designer. Then, one manager was shown to configure the process and the other employees by organizing his talk in the process terms used in the material representation. The manager maintained the focus and controlled the topic with this material representation. Finally, the other participants were shown to have trouble even assessing the new process. This may be a sign of different degrees of inclusion in the planning frame during the power struggle.

Figure 5 underlines frames and material representations as key elements providing resources for the construction of new processes and for configuring the future and the other participants in the organizational/institutional planning discourse, a power struggle. The figure tells that members of a planning group may act within their own frames but one of those single frames may

appear to be the 'master' frame in a power struggle. Framings are dynamically sustained. Different members have different degrees of inclusion in the master frame in their interactional positions that are maintained during the power struggle. This means that they may act within different frames and experience the construction of the process from different perspectives. Different frames provide the members with conflicting, even mutually exclusive, means for co-acting through their interactional positions (extensions of organizational positions) and for understanding what is, or should be, going on in an interaction encounter during the construction of new processes. These differences in frames may stem from the diversity of organizational-cultural backgrounds. Differences in the pervasiveness of frames may originate in the powerful organizational positions and how a powerful person acts within the master frame. Master frames can be sustained (or made more powerful) in the powerful positions with one's talk and a material representation supporting one's talk in one's interactional position during a power struggle. The structure of this material representation forms "grammar for *constructing* the object" [21, p.90, emphasis in the original] (e.g., a new process or an information system et cetera) whereas a frame provides a lexicon for understanding discourse and modifying representations. The lexicon of the master frame and the grammar embedded in a central material representation may be used to delimit the discursive universe defining or, at least, suggesting what may be spoken and done. For this reason, it may be used not only to include those who are familiar with it but also to exclude from the construction those participants who are unfamiliar with it. What turns out to be significant in the construction discourse is how people represent issues with materials within their frames during the power struggle. During this struggle, frames, organizational/institutional structures and material representations serve as resources, but how the process finally unfolds is what finally matters.
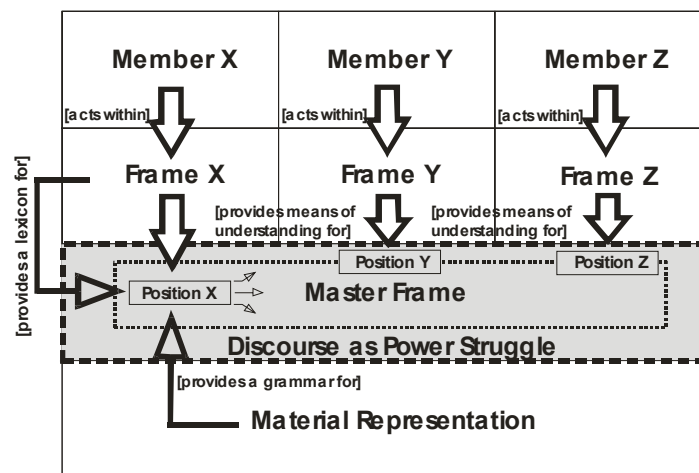

Figure 5. Key elements in power struggle.

The key resources presented in Figure 5 could be used in our attempts to address Beck's politicized agenda of PD when transferring PD practices to the organizational/institutional planning contexts inside business organizations. Our analysis gives us reason to speculate that inside an accountable

organization mere participation could be insufficient since interaction in the construction discourse is a function of the existing organizational/institutional power relationships. Participation is likely to be highly insufficient if there are any strategic attempts to reproduce the existing power relationships.

Addressing "the legitimacy of anyone not only to propose solutions, but to suggest what the problems are" [5, p.83] especially in OPD projects should not be based explicitly on challenging and inverting strongly institutionalized power relationships inside business organizations. We could, instead, approach the imbalance of power in the organizational planning context from a frame perspective. It is not enough to have the planning frame but we also need to discuss processes in relation to real practices within the 'storytelling' frame to ground these designs on employees' practical experiences [cf. 32]. The users do not necessarily have to be educated to plan new processes. It is enough if they can make visible their knowledge of their work practices to make it possible for the planning-oriented members to plan new processes. Figure 6 compares a collective frame, including two supplementary frames, with the *master frame* mode (Figure 5). This *collective frame* mode could be beneficial since the storytelling frame alternates continuously with the planning frame.
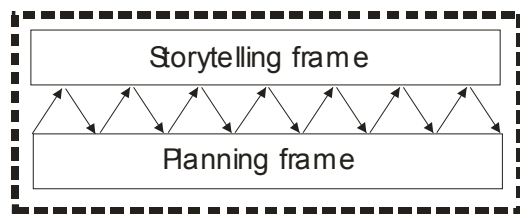

Figure 6. A collective frame.

There is a need for continuous transitions between the planning frame and the storytelling frame within a collective frame. For example, an external observer (e.g., an ethnographer) could be involved in OPD projects. His or her aim could be to enable the transitions between these two central frames. He or she could aim to understand how interaction unfolds, to notice if certain participants (especially users) cannot participate and express their opinions, to strengthen different frames by skillfully switching between them, to understand views within these different frames and to make different opinions visible by translating them for those who are unable to understand them. One possible means for making different views visible and intelligible could be to use alternative material representations [cf. 11] that could enlist different purposes in co-interpretation or even co-construction processes.

A collective legitimation of this frame perspective is certainly needed to make this new approach possible. The most powerful participants also need to accept a frame advocate and regard his or her position as legitimate. However, based on our findings, this might be one of the most difficult tasks to do. An external observer (e.g., an ethnographer) should be able to act in a legitimate position but power struggles can also emerge with this frame advocate. It would be difficult to assign an external mediator a strong position because power relationships cannot be produced until the people meet and interact with one another. All in all, this frame-based approach could be one potential means for enlisting different participants in planning. It is worth remembering that mediators filter views of the others [cf. 25]. Frame advocates can be assumed to *re*-present views and, thus, could end up in a strongly biased position in the struggle for legitimation. But would this position be right? It would be impossible to provide any panacea for this legitimation dilemma

from the outside. These problems deserve more attention in future studies. The purpose here has been to provide a model that could help researchers in the OPD field in their attempts to support the multi-framed construction discourse inside accountable organizations. This model serves as a meta-frame providing a lexicon and grammar for dealing with the institutional construction discourse.

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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