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ORGANISING THE DIFFERENT OR COLONISING THE SYSTEM WORLD

Too often student "research" seems to be a mere "retailing" of "wholesale" text gained (mainly) from handbooks and course lectures. The authors of this article have been asking themselves how their students could "add value" while "doing research" instead of only "(re-)packaging" the same contents over and over again. We were convinced that an alternative was needed to the traditional MA level research paper / thesis; we believe that students should (i) "create context" by linking concepts mastered to actual circumstances and should (ii) "add credibility" to ideas by testifying to their contextual (in-)effectiveness. Thus, we believe that students ought, in their "research" to "organise" concepts and experiences, by displaying the interaction between them – making both the conceptual and experiential more accessible and understandable. Students demonstrate hereby the (in-)credibility of what they have "learned". The authors asked themselves how to translate these values to the world of student / faculty interaction. Their next step was to try and figure out what sort of student research activity and faculty facilitation could stimulate context creation and credibility testing. For the last two and a half years we have been trying to meet these challenges by organising research projects with groups of students where video has been used as the principal research tool, and where "video research reportages" have been the primary research product. In this article we first describe the developed research practice and then comment on its success.

Broadly spoken the students have made: (i) action research videos to create or strengthen possibilities for change and/or to help entrepreneurs, and (ii) video research reports in the tradition of visual anthropology wherein research has been carried out with the use of video as an instrument. How did the students get "information onto tape" and how did they

get "information off the tape"; i. e. how did recording, analysing editing and presenting take place?

Commencing from a practical point of view: What shall we tell our students about how to make a research video? To begin with, one has to realize that video can be used to make any statement – every theoretical notion can be supported (or criticised) with visual material. We reject the cinematic claim that film can record "reality as it is". However rough the cuts, or evident the editing, the image projected is constructed. The "reality" of film or video is recorded via a camera and by a camera-man; ie. it is a (subjective) selection of images. When working with video, one works with people before and behind the camera. This creates difficulties in communication; the camera stands between the researcher and researched. One often has the feeling that the research would progress better if the camera wasn't there. While the researchers can keep the camera in its suitcase and discuss their project with the researched; to make a video reportage the camera eventually will have to be unpacked. The most common research error is to start videoing too soon, ie with too little preparation and inadequate mutual understanding between researcher(s) and researched. Too often film-makers and filmed are ill prepared, and the results are a waste of time and energy, with bad feelings all around. Preparation demands that researchers talk in depth with one another, and talk their project through with the (to be) researched. Trust has to be earned in a world where (most) people mistrust cameras and the people operating them.

For video research to occur, a camera obviously has to be used; but where and how one employs that camera is a question of choice. The camera will have to be put somewhere by someone who decides what is to be recorded and what not. But does the camera stand on a tripod or is it on the shoulder of someone moving about? If the camera is on a tripod, then it records from a single fixed position. The only movement possible is panning (horizontal movement), tilting (vertical movement) or zooming in (i. e. making things seem closer). The immobilized camera, views the world from one perspective, and implies that at any one moment only one point of view is possible. The camera is, in this manner an objectifying instrument. But if one wishes to show that there are many sides to any situation, then one can choose for camera-men who walk move and look at circumstance with their camera(s). This prevents the researchers from becoming voyeurs – with a mobile camera the researcher is one of the things happening and cannot pretend to an

omniscient viewpoint. Furthermore, we instruct our students to keep the lens of their camcorders as wide as possible, to get a stable image. When they want a close up, they have to walk closer to their subject. TV aesthetics has familiarized everyone to tapes which look unedited – i.e. appear not to have been filmed by a camera-man, conceived by a director and realized via an editing process. The viewer is not to be aware that the finished tape is a subjective construction involving compromises, messy decisions and (often) failing technique(s). The spectator is not meant to perceive that "reality" is inconsistent and unmanageable. In the research videos, the process of making the video is visible – camera-men obviously walk about, ask questions and make observations; editing is not hidden via cut-away shots, listening shots or other masking techniques. Instead of "pseudo-objectivity" the hands of the researchers are visible. The makers of the tape are obviously present; their actions, involvement and ideas are a theme of the tape. While the researchers do construct the "image" seen of themselves, the audience also sees the researched reacting to the researchers. The videos involve layer upon layer of "seen" and "seer": the researcher knows that s/he is seen by the researched and that the audience sees the researcher knowing that s/he is seen by the researched. Thus in our work, we encourage the researchers to disregard TV aesthetics and to focus on the researcher / researched relationship. But at the risk of self-contradiction, one aspect of technique does have to be done "just right." The sound has to be good. A clear sharp picture of a conversation made with a microphone at too large a distance, producing poor sound quality, will lose audience attention within the minute! Clear sound of a conversation, mounted under pictures of Slovak soup, may raise comments about the researchers' surrealistic approach, but will nonetheless seem to be comprehensible.

Shots made for research are mostly quite long. What is recorded needs to include answers to the questions: How could this happen? and How did this end? Obviously one does not want to switch on the camera too late, or turn it off too early; but recording too much makes editing very difficult. Video tape may be cheap but it remains a superhuman task to make a good editing plan from ten hours or more of (raw) material. Thus it is very important not to shoot "more of the same." One should only go on videoing if the new material presents new challenges, issues, information. Our objective is not to video the same thing(s) over and over again, but to move on to new or alternative levels of understanding. After the researchers have recorded a shot, they can do two things; they can record another shot or play the shot already made either back to the people taped or

to others. The first option generally leads to "more of the same". The second, the play-back option, can lead to change. By showing a shot to the people taped, the researcher can become involved in a fruitful interaction with the research subjects and get "depth" information. John Collier, the photographer and anthropologist, argues that this happens because the researcher and researched focus together in dialogue on the images jointly examined. (Collier, 1986) The divide between researcher and researched is, in effect, bridged. It is not so much that the researcher addresses the researched, as they both address together the images. Furthermore the images seem to sharpen the memory of the researched, and make what might only be an interview into a conversation. The rather inflexible role divisions within the interview, are replaced by an open flow of information. A mutual and collaborative effort to reconstruct what they images mean, results. The "interviewer" is replaced by a "questioning partner". In our research practice shots are simultaneously played-back and the reactions are recorded. This process we call a feedback loop: i.e. we feed some of a system's output back into the system in order to generate response. Managers have claimed, after the fact, that they decided to change their way of presenting new information to colleagues on the basis of viewing completed feedback loops. Policy makers have stated that the viewing of feedback loops had made it clear to them that their language use was counter productive, and that they should bring the language of policy much closer to the language of practitioners. Upon viewing a feedback loop made in a Slovak steel factory (see below), faculty from regional training institutions were enthusiastic to embrace the technique for training purposes in order to change from purely prescriptive to more descriptive teaching. Instead of dealing with Western "principles" videoed feedback loops opened the possibility of examining local patterns of practice.

How researchers choose to construct feedback loops is a key decision in their research strategy. Firstly, one has to choose the situations where one elects to initiate a feedback loop. For instance, in 1995 we facilitated a student research project with four Dutch students cooperating with four Slovak students videoing in several Slovak factories.

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The researchers had to select which situations they believed lend themselves to creating a feedback loop. Anything can be questioned: when Dirk Schouten first entered a Slovak steel factory he stuck his finger accidentally in the grease on a machine and asked: Does

the grease belong here? What is its purpose? Is there too much or too little grease? Who is responsible for greasing the machine; who controls whether it is greased? Who can one question about the grease? Anything can serve as a point of departure; often one cannot know ahead of time how rich (or limited) any given starting point will prove to be. In another project, Hugo Letiche began by questioning the inability, reported by chance by a secretary, of the fire department in a major city to schedule required training. It emerged via the research that the fire brigade's leadership lacked control over what actually happened in the fire stations; the city government (eventually) had to impose a new (less military) organisation model to re-install meaningful coordination. Secondly which of the material videoed, does one select to play-back? The Dutch students videoed burnt bread, mold on the walls and a puddle of water on the floor, in a Slovak bakery. They wanted to use these images to provoke bakery employees and management to discuss "quality". But the Slovak students resented the videoing strategy, and saw it as "ethnocentric". In their eyes, instead of leading to revelatory discussion, these images would only reaffirm Central European assumptions about "know-it-all" Westerners. When we asked a group of Polish managers to help make video material to be fed back to their skilled work force, to better understand the skills actually available; they refused, protesting that managers have nothing to learn from workers. When Dutch shots of managers, talking about their personnel, were shown to employees in the same branch but at other sites and from another employer; the reactions to the images were powerful. The "friendly" "democratic" manager was attacked as "too good to be true" and "obviously a fake"; the "cold business like" manager was complemented because "at least you know where you stand with him." For the managers it was revealing to hear how employees saw and evaluated them. Despite the difference in leadership style, the managers identified readily with one another; though personnel only saw differences. For the managers, the problem of leading their organization, with what they perceived to be very weak middle management, forced them to exaggerate their points of view. The feedback loop to personnel was highly revealing; personnel had not identified concern with middle management as important to senior management behaviour. Short video passages were used for feedback, which highlighted the chosen attitudes/issues. The interaction between personnel and management was, in effect, constructed on the video editing table. Both sides claimed that the material was revelatory; despite the successful triangulation {two parties examine video material and both embrace its "reality"} we should not lose sight of the researchers'

determinant and subjective role. Thirdly, who does one show the material to – only those directly involved or also their colleagues, bosses, clients, others in similar situations, etc.? Which reactions to feedback, are videoed and selected to be shown to (which) Others? When working in Slovakia and Poland we had to be very aware of the position of the researched. Central European companies are very afraid of bad publicity. If the researched reveal negative things about the company, which management would not want known, the research could cost someone their job. When the videoing was completed in Poland, we were summoned to appear at 6:30 am with the researchers, to permit top management to examine all the raw data, to see if we would be allowed to take it with us. Because we had not broken certain taboos – we hadn't filmed the use of alcohol at work, we hadn't filmed the desolate and totally empty R and D department, we hadn't filmed the oldest machinery or worst messes; we hadn't videoed worker evaluations of their bosses – we were permitted to keep the material. As already mentioned, when working in Holland researchers showed tapes of managerial behaviour to workers in a similar company, elsewhere in the country to get unbiased reactions. The researchers' original plan had been to show the material to workers in the company where the managers were in charge. This would almost certainly have generated dull polite responses. Who would dare to comment powerfully on his/her boss and on video? When extracts of the commentary were shown to the managers, they formulated their vision of their behaviour with a clarity and directness lacking in their initial statements. The managers responded insightfully to comments which normally we expected would be difficult to deal with. The managers thought the method had been very valid and were happy with the confrontation. In fact they requested us to show the material to their own workers to clarify the problems and choices faced.

Fourthly, what material is included in the final version of the tape, which is presented to all parties involved and/or to a research forum? In the Slovak research the Dutch students edited out all discussion with the supervisors about ethnocentricity and organisational analysis. The tape problematises "quality" – is "quality" a facet of organizational structure as the Slovak managers and students argue, or a result of desired processes of interaction and thought, as the Dutch assert? While the faculty supervisors discussed differences between formal rationality and emergent thought at length with the students, these passages (and all references to them) were edited out. The students chose to claim the process point of view as their own, and did not want to display their thought as

derivative. The supervisors thought "ethnocentrism" was crucial to the videoed material: according to them the Dutch researchers dominated the investigation and analysis process. Though the Dutch researchers claimed to be "democratic co-researchers" with their Slovak partners, they clearly set the agenda. During the feedback sessions, wherein the eight students examined +/- six hours of video material, taping most of their discussion the Dutch consistently set the agenda. For instance, at one point the Slovaks demanded control of the analysis, insisting that the (political) past, which only they understood, determined the interactions. Within the minute the Dutch returned the discussion to definitions of "control", and were back in control! The researchers chose, in the Slovak tape, to deconstruct their own activity – repeatedly asserting that the tape is a construct, the object of their compromises, inclinations, fantasies, conceptualizations. Their control of the (chosen) theme, "control", is problematized. This is appropriate because a key problem for the researchers was to determine just what it was they were trying to make explicit. The difference between the Slovaks and Dutch was unstable – when the researchers got down to working together it quickly became unclear what was typically Post-Communist and what not. Slovakia then seemed more to be a difference in circumstances than of consciousness. Through familiarity, the research achieved complexity. The Dutch constantly questioned authority and rules; if something was forbidden they demanded why, and what to do about it. The Slovaks withdrew into themselves, when confronted by authority. In discussion it emerged that the Dutch expected rules and laws to make sense and to serve the general welfare – their commitment to the "rules" was strong. The Slovaks doubted whether rules and laws would ever be just, rational or constructive – they expected institutional logic to be perverse. When the Dutch got angry and wanted to oppose the law; the Slovaks retreated into passive resistance, effectively disempowering authority. The more the researchers compared their experiences, the more unclear it became whose opposition was the stronger or the more effective. The tape is a message about unsettled conditions, full of unresolved issues. Contrastingly a tape made by Rotterdam Management School MSc students with beginning Turkish entrepreneurs, appealed successfully to its Turkish target group to respond to the pretended "realism": This is our reality; here at last we recognize our problems and ourselves. This tape on Turkish beginning entrepreneurs, demonstrated how unsuited the Dutch bureaucracy is to meet their problems: the civil servant interviewed ends up advising the Turks to break the rules (ie the law) as the only way to

survive – Just make sure you sell a lot; the social workers refused to answer questions on camera because their exploitive role "cannot support the light of day"; the bank(s) are perceived more to discriminate against Turks than to help them. The video examines the Turkish principle of Atilgan (courage) which may lead entrepreneurs to fight on against all odds, disappointments and failures; but doesn't necessarily ever lead to success. The tape confronts the viewer with a mismatch between Dutch and Turkish "realities". Its power is that it is intuitively perceived to be "realistic" by both audiences; making discussion possible. The Turks do not "own" the voluminous "social science" reports on "their problems" – the "reports" remain mere university and/or government text. The Turkish "text" most often remains locked up in their own community. Two texts about the same problems and issues rotate ineffectively around and around one another. The tape is a fragile but effective bridge between the two. Here "realism" is crucial to the success. To summarize by means of an illustration: when the research methodology is the most effective successful feedback loops are achieved which lead to change. On entering the Slovak factories, the researchers had to decide what behaviour to problematize. Feedback loops begin by asking someone to show (tell) the researcher what they do. The researcher continues by asking the researched to: explain what they are doing, right now ? Why they are doing it in this way? and If they have ever done it differently – How? Possible additional questions include: Who is your client – i.e. who depends on what you do? and How is what you do, controlled? Workers in the Slovak factories (or anywhere else) find it a bit peculiar to be faced by Masters' level students carrying camcorders, posing questions. One Slovak student wanted to know, after the fact, if the Dutch researchers had noticed that the workers had "found them just a bit odd" walking around the factory with their hard hats talking to and videoing workers. Management at the factory informed us that "it was not the custom to interview workers;" though they did not forbid us to do so. After a couple of hours, though, the researchers were rather suddenly informed that their "passes" were only valid for another twenty minutes. The most successful feedback loop occurred when the researchers retreated into a shed in the middle of the steel factory and talked to the two "girls" who worked there. The original reason for approaching them was that the noise level was a bit better in their shed than elsewhere. It turned out that they weighted steel products and labelled them according to destination and quality. They reported that they experienced the steel factory on occasion as "chaos". The researchers decided to investigate what they meant by "chaos". It became clear that

in this major export oriented factory, management was unable to pre-determine "quality". Post-production controllers discover that (some) output was substandard. That portion of the output was then re-routed for sale to "less critical markets": such as the Ukraine. Management is incapable of pre-determining which "quality" to produce, when – "quality" determination is a form of roulette. While the Western researchers were bolded over by all this, the Slovaks took it in their stride. The "girls" resented having to re-label steel which the controllers had determined was second or third quality. The "girls" job was to check quality/destination labels attached to the rolls of steel and to change them when controllers had determined this was necessary. But the "girls" thought that all labelling should be correct; i. e. that they should really have nothing to do! Thus while their job depended on corrections having to be carried out, they resented having to make any such corrections. They seemed to think that having nothing to do would be a normal state of affairs. When the researchers showed their shots of the "girls" to (Slovak) managers, the commentary was that it was strange that we were talking to the "girls":

What any individual worker has to say is not important. S/he will only see one particular little aspect of the production process. Workers do not understand what is going on.

What defines the factory is the system – the total structure of order. Quality is as good as are your systems. When the systems are good, no one can make a mistake – the system makes sure everything works as it should.

For the Dutch, quality depends on personnel taking maximum responsibility for the effectiveness of their task(s), and thereby creating a permanent process of control. For the Slovak workers / managers, errors are the responsibility of controllers who evaluate production and do what ever they have to do. In this case, the lack of a common vision between the Dutch researchers and the Slovak workers / managers led later, to a feedback loop of dialogue between the Dutch and Slovak researchers. The managers rejected the "girls" idea of how the factory ought to be, and their concept of "chaos". The "girls" claimed that "they did not have friends/family in the direction building", so they could not progress to positions of responsibility. The "girls" had withdrawn into inner opposition; they refused to be active or to accept responsibility, terming any appeal on them to work (harder) as "chaos". Not only couldn't the researchers convince them to redefine their situation in more active terms; the researchers were unsure if they ought to even try to do so. The "girls" rejection of the "work ethic" was perfectly adaptive to

Communist conditions; who were the researchers to force change? By recording the "girls" description of themselves, their manager's reactions, the comments of outside consultants and the researchers' analyses, a complex social mosaic about work in Slovakia was pieced together. The taped material was revelatory of the ingrained opposition to change in Central Europe. Young Slovak researchers may reject the old culture of dependence, where what you do has little or no effect on what happens to you; they may accept that contemporary Slovakia is (ought to be) a society where the person is (more) responsible for him/her own self; but the factory "girls" have not accepted that any new social logic has taken hold.

Why is it important to us, as faculty members, to encourage such video research projects? What do we think MSc students can learn via this form of research which legitimates the time and effort involved? For the one author, the use of video to produce criticisable validity claims; and for the other author, the production of micro statements about the life world, is important. What do the differences and similarities between these two concepts mean? Are we producing "good research" within two different paradigms, and if so what does this mean for the robustness of the concepts?

For the one author, video research reportages make the principle of the differend visible. (Lyotard, 1988) Pieces of text succeed one another, often contradicting one another, without any evident principle of judgement. Do the "girls" not understand their function; or is there a communication problem, or is there a problem of work discipline? The "girls" claim that the "chaos" in the factory makes their work, on occasion, stressed and unpleasant. The manager claims that the "girls" are not there to routinely control the paper work accompanying the steel rolls, but to take care of unstructured situations. A Slovak researcher sees the problem as the "girls" who resist having to solve problems and deal with exceptions, because they want the factory to run perfectly from itself, without they having to take any responsibility. A Dutch researcher claims that there is a "communication problem" between the "girls" and the manager since they do not share common definitions of tasks, goals and responsibilities. A Slovak Professor argues that the problem was cultural – the "girls" are trying to define their situation so that they do not have to do any work; they want to be paid for sitting and doing nothing. The conviction of the one does not necessarily exclude the truthfulness of the other. The video is a document of heterogeneous voices; no single principle can be applied to judge them all.

Each fragment follows in a stream of contingency. The fragments are all linked to one another via editing; but there is no necessary logic to the order of succession. The "girls" have been put in the spot light; the knitting woman who controls the crane which brings the steel to be weighed and removes it afterwards, has remained in the shadows. Pure contingency determines what's where. At any one moment only one fragment of video can be displayed; presence is realized by denying visibility to all the other fragments. The visible is a product of blotting out all other alternative visibles. Myriads of possible tapes are left unrealized in the achievement of any one "text". Each "text" exists only by excluding all other (possible) "texts". The principles of inclusion (ie the "texts" chosen) are grounded in the extreme subjectivism of choosing what will be permitted to be "visible", and are made concrete in a process of outermost constructivism (ie the editing of tape fragments to create a holistic illusion of "reality"). Subjective principles (conscious and/or unconscious) of constructivism guide the researchers' bricolage of fragments. The researchers make, together, an "editing plan" wherein they determine the order of fragments. Somehow they have to decide what to include and in which order. At a minimum, the researchers employ tacit theory to construct their tape; but most likely parts of their theory are explicit. Making a video, together in a research team, forces one to discuss principles of reality construction. What will have to be shown and explained, for the images to make sense? What has to be included and what is irrelevant? What is important and what is trivial? To make a video, researchers have to be self-conscious about their criteria of judgement. It is not enough to present data (raw, unedited shots) or information (ordered but unexplained material); the viewer demands understanding (a "text" where the viewer learns who is doing what, where and why). The researchers have to edit their material to make "sense" of it. They have to abandon immediate experience, and the unlimited possibilities of the raw material; and commit themselves to a structure. The concepts used to formulate one "text" from the myriad of potential stories are the researchers' theory-in-action. In order to deal with the cacophony of the differend, the researchers have to embrace theory and construct some sort of "order". Hereby they experience the subjectivity of "ordering" and "understanding"; and have to take responsibility for their "solutions". They experience first hand that "meaning" is something one constructs and that "understanding" is a product of (conceptual / observational) bricolage. Traditional MSc level research, often does not go far enough in revealing these insights into the epistemology of research. Video research, undertaken in small teams,

forces the researchers to deal with the differend and thereby to realize how radically contextually bound any research "text" really is, and how the researcher "fabricates" the context which seems to give meaning to the "text".

For the other author, video reportages make communicative action concrete and visible. (Habermas, 1985) The video reportage confronts its audience with a criticisable validity claim. The tape is shown to the "girls" who in a feedback loop see themselves, their supervisor who looks at them, the researchers look at both the "girls" and the supervisor and we (the audience) examine the final tape. The tape is a constructed artefact; but its construction is grounded in rationality. The tape is entitled: Changing perspectives on steel and control. Footnote: The titles are only shown at the end of the video. It opens with a shot of the outside to the steel factory, followed by an interior shot. One of the researchers mutters, almost inaudibly, "we didn't"; which is followed by sounds from the factory and a man's voice speaking Slovak. Then we see a Slovak researcher entering the "girls" shed:

Thomas: Dobry' deň. Môzte odpovedat na niekoľko otázok? Ako dlho pracujete tu v zeleziarnach?

Girl: Rok 1 februar bol rok.

Thomas: A akú vykonávate funkciu?

Girl: Evidentka.

Translation:

Thomas: Good day. Could you answer a few questions? How long do you work in the steel factory?

Girl: First of February, it was a year.

Thomas: What is your function?

Girl: Stock-taking.

A girl leaves the shed with a form in her hand, as a researcher via voiceover states: "This is the largest steel factory in Slovakia. In this factory these two girls have to weight and complete the administration forms for different rolls of steel." An appeal is made on the viewer, as competent observer, to accept that the tape as a "text" wherein the researchers tell the viewer what ever it is they have to say. The "text" is a criticisable validity claim. The choice of scenes and sounds, from the almost unlimited number of possibilities, indicates that a structure of meaning and significance is at work. We assume that the researches want us to understand their video. At various moments in the tape they address the "me" of the viewer directly, to explain, offer commentary and to editorialize. The researchers are claiming that the tape is their "truth" about (some aspects of) the

factory. Furthermore, they postulate normative legitimacy, ie to have the right to tell "me" their truth. They claim to be truthful and authentic in their intentions and emotions displayed on the tape. The tape is an invitation to the viewer to respond; the question What do you think of it? arises fairly immediately. The viewer quickly becomes a source of criticisable validity claims. The tape exists thus within an unending cycle of criticisable validity claims constituted by the three elements of truth, normative legitimacy and authenticity. We need to distinguish, in the tape, between two different worlds of communication. On the one hand there is the system world of "quality" "management" "control"; and on the other there is the life world wherein researchers and researched exchange addresses, talk about themselves and are "personal". The steel factory represents task oriented rationality (ie the system world) while the researchers and researched often try to reach shared understanding (ie be centred in the life world). Communication in the factory is often instrumental, ie the "girls" paper work is directed to results, with which they (evidently) do not identify. But one cannot organize a steel factory, only by way of "rational" cognitive structures; there will be no motivation, creativity or commitment. By asking to the "girls" What do you do? the researchers have brought the life world of understanding and interaction into the work situation. Working with video, in work situations, draws the self-evident need for people to communicate into the research process. In pen and paper research, what the observing researcher writes down remains "invisible" to the researched. In video research the researched sees what is being done with the camera and, via feedback loops, can comment on the "raw data". Video research is much more accessible to dialogue than are questionnaires, statistics and objective observation. Contemporary society is based, of course, on the wealth which the factory system and its technology (system world rationality) produces, but it is still more dependent on people, cooperation and trust (life world phenomena). Critical social theory points out that the danger exists that system world rationality will encroach further and further on the life world; leaving too little room for subjectivity, the personal or spontaneous. Such a society would be terrorized by technical rationality and performativity. Video research exists by paying real attention to the concrete persons "researched" – as in any meeting of persons, the quality of interaction depends on the normative legitimacy and authenticity of the encounter. Researchers can administer questionnaires purely within a system world rationality, but to achieve feedback loops in video research they have to achieve life world legitimacy with the researched.

In our experience, management student (MA/MSc) research has been part of the effort to colonize the life world by the system world. Students, attempting to master the linearly constructed, managerial perspective on organization, finance, production, logistics, marketing, etc., want to define desired material ends and then determine the means which need to be committed. Management is, de facto, identified with the system world and with a logic of (hyper-) performativity. But contemporary models of managing, no longer assume a "command economy" or a radical division of heads and hands, with managers giving orders and labourers blindly following them. In theory, it is accepted that self-managed labour processes may well be the most efficient and that empowerment may lead to improved results. But student research seems, at best, to define "managing" as the mostly linear process, in a (post-)industrial society of organising the material prerequisites to social existence. Students prioritize the logic of production, ie the framework of the system world; and accept the devaluing of subjectivity. Habermas, in his theory of communicative action, reveals the tension between the system world and the life world. He focuses our attention on the danger that the system world will continue to ever further colonize the life world, leaving a smaller and smaller zone of personal experience behind. Where there used to be "free time" there is now a recreation industry; where persons used to "go their own way" there are now "life styles" and "life style products". There isn't much left of the "individual" who possessed a personal voice and a "story" of her/his own. Has the logic of the system world overmastered individual consciousness and reduced dialogue to hyperreality? For the Postmodernist, "criticisable validity claims" are a station long passed. It makes no sense to oppose system logic, as if the production of material existence could in contemporary society answer to any other criteria. Nor is it realistic to pretend that contemporary culture is anything else than the reign of system logic. The Postmodernist acknowledges the cultural hegemony of the system world and asks What to do now?. In the Habermas tradition, the person tries to protect his/her life world space from system world encroachment. Postmodernism assumes the mastery of system world, but a writer such as Baudrillard discovers, nonetheless, that he possesses subjective individual life world experience(s). (Baudrillard, 1988 & 1990) Perhaps the "subject" and its consciousness should have disappeared, but empirical experience reveals that the "subject" can manipulate signifiers and make "text". Micro statements of existence are possible: researchers and researched can collude as "subjects" in video research and thereby create "text". The Habermas position reveals two cultures: those of

performativity (system world) and of experience (life world); Postmodernism reveals the experience of performativity. Postmodernism has a holistic view of the contemporary hyperreal society while Habermas identifies two fundamental forces which have to be dealt with (however uneasily) in rationality. Are the videos, bearers of criticisable validity claims (ie ultimately identifiable with their rational significance) or rather indeterminate fields of interaction, making a bit of human activity visible in "text" (ie parole)?

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