AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF MULTIPLICITY: WITTGENSTEIN AND PLURALITY IN THE ORGANISATION

Jed Moore

University of Strathclyde

e-mail: jed.h.moore@strath.ac.uk

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF MULTIPLICITY: WITTGENSTEIN AND PLURALITY IN THE ORGANISATION

Abstract

This paper responds to the stream's call to critically examine the bounds of truth, taking the relatively mundane an example of the term "Agile" and investigating the slack and multiple connotations associated with this term's use in organisational discourse. The term may, at various points be used to mean a company value, a project management method, or a "holistic approach" for improvement. Arguably this variety is symptomatic of the messy "experienced reality" facing practitioners whose organizational lives evolve not as neatly separated linear strands but as a Gordian knot of expectations and hopes. This vagueness has consequences, with meanings often shaped to fit the needs of embedded power relations. The contribution of the paper, then, lies in questioning the apolitical nature of current critical investigative ethnography of pluralistic reported "truths". I argue that by investigating and critically engaging with competing or coexisting discourses or language games and their associated forms of life, we may render transparent or at least partially refocus attention on the conceptual or ideological baggage which shape our consensuses. In so doing we may avoid unwittingly reinforcing the interests of those we aim to critique and instead shed light on whose "truth" we have been conveying as we open up new facets of our lives in organisations.

The events of the past few years have led many to declare that we now live in an era of post-truth; alternative facts, a concept for better or worse now irreversibly lodged in the public consciousness, have existed for far longer than this recent acclaim and condemnation suggests. In trying to generate a coherent account we can choose to treat these problems of reporting as a challenge to be overcome. However, rather than joining the cacophony of voices calling for a return to the hegemony of singular essential facts, perhaps we could gain significant critical insight by exploring this freshly highlighted intersection between reported "truth" and power; while valuing and respecting calls for ethnographic researchers to "describe reality", we see that the very notion of "the truth" is one that is inextricably tied to notions of power and orthodoxy.

The data used in the illustrative analysis will, by necessity, be studies and reports performed by others. However, the illustration is not the contribution, rather it is the method which, instead of trying to "resolve" this plurality of reported experience, will make our lived multitude of meanings the specific target of our attentions; an ethnography of multiplicity centred around Wittgenstein's notions of forms of life, language games and grammatical investigation, utilising his work to inform primarily what John Van Maanen may term the headwork and the textwork of ethnographic research. This descriptive method, built on a critical analysis of existing Wittgensteinian approaches to organisational research and ethnography, aims to bring his philosophical insights more fully to bear and in new ways. Ethnography has undergone many changes, phases and identity crises since the heyday of Clifford Geertz, and while he drew much inspiration from Wittgenstein it would be inappropriate to claim to follow in his tradition. In truth, the ethnographic work would draw more inspiration from is that of Tom Boelstorff or Bill Maurer; work which, while revealing, is deeply reflexive about its position in the world and its inherent limitations.

Introduction

This research answers the stream's call to critically investigate the often-concealed operations of power in our society. This will be realised through an examination of the elements underpinning plural interpretations of terminology found within reflective accounts referred to as "experience reports". These reports are first-hand tales from the field authored by practitioners who are implementing or working with "agile methods" in some capacity (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Wirfs-Brock, 2015). Specifically, the focus will be on the multiple, loose connotations attached to the term "Agile" in a UK government initiative (Andrews *et al.*, 2016; Tune, 2017). This will be supported by an analysis of additional practitioner accounts of agile experience from other contexts. The academic and practitioner literatures are both guilty of using the term variously with references to it as a personal virtue, a holistic philosophy, a project management method or even simply a set of related practices (Dingsøyr *et al.*, 2012; Sutherland, 2014, p. 8; Brown and Anderson, 2015). The UK government introduced new standards in 2014 which, amongst other criteria, require all services to be delivered using "agile methods" (Neal, 2015; GDS, n.d.). They point to the Agile manifesto principles as a primary source (GDS, 2016). However, not unlike the information presented in horoscopes, these are fairly generic and amenable to interpretation; playing a possible role as organisational Barnum statements (Vilkki and Erdogmus, 2012; Bider, 2014; Rost *et al.*, 2015). This work, then, sets to examine the Gordian knot of not always compatible expectations, hopes and ideals tied up in this project as a means to identify the disputed understandings that might provide a nexus for the operation of power.

This paper contributes to the vibrant debate on "alternative facts" through a nuanced critical examination of this freshly highlighted intersection between reported "truth" and power (d'Ancona, 2017; Martinez-Conde and Macknik, 2017); while valuing and respecting calls for the ethnographic investigator to "describe reality", we see that the very notion of "the truth" is one that is inextricably tied to notions of power and orthodoxy (Mckenna, 2009; Marinetto and Davis, 2015). This active search for plurality will hopefully facilitate insights which will satisfy those proponents of the investigative model who would call for outright deception (Fine and Shulman, 2009, p. 181). While the paper's findings are novel, its main contribution lies in the method used to reveal the underlying conceptual and ideological baggage informing the various interpretations; this study is the foregrounding of a full ethnographic project employing these methods. Building upon existing work that draws upon the writings of Wittgenstein (Shotter, 1996; Biletzki, 2003, pp. 159-160; Fayard and Van Maanen, 2015), I argue that we can benefit by engaging more holistically with his proposed philosophical methods, termed "grammatical investigation" (Wittgenstein, 2009, p. 47, PI §90). There will, then, be a reasonably detailed explanation of the methods used here to examine the opinions of practitioners who are involved with "agile" in some capacity. While the influence of Wittgenstein may discourage any attempt to answer the question "what is Agile?", it is still important to establish clearly the starting point for this investigation; we see notions of agility arise in many different contexts, timeframes and literatures (Poon, 2006; Wang *et al.*, 2012). As such, this article will begin with a discussion of the research context. The methods employed will then, as mentioned before, be explored in detail. The research findings themselves will be presented in the form of several primary examples of language in use around agile. These "in vivo" excerpts will be explored with analysis supported by additional research material. Finally, the findings will be discussed along with a critical reflection upon the data source selected.

Whose "Agile" is it anyway? – Research context

In 2001 a group of software developers, self-identified "organisational anarchists", gathered at an impromptu conference to discuss emerging alternative methodologies which were becoming more

prevalent in the industry (Fowler and Highsmith, 2001). This meeting has gone on to attain almost biblical significance for a group of practitioners who are broadly united by their interest in what was, at the time, called the "agile methodology movement". The reach of this agile movement has been fairly widespread; in businesses with developers we now see other areas such as marketing, HR departments and even governments engaging with the concept (Howey, 2016; Legault, 2016; Tune, 2017). The Government Digital Service (GDS) was founded in 2010 with the aim of facilitating a "digital transformation" of the UK government. One of the major cornerstones of this transformation is a move in government projects towards this form of "agility" (Andrews *et al.*, 2016, pp. 3-4; GDS, 2016).

Despite the widespread acceptance of "agile methods", there is a recognition among both practitioners and theorists that in its usage the term Agile is actually vague and subject to somewhat plural understandings (Abrahamsson *et al.*, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Perhaps the heart of the issue is best captured by the experiences of Alan Padula:

> *I was at a non-agile conference and asked 28 Product Development leaders if they thought they knew what agile was. All of them raised their hands. I then asked how many of them thought their definition of agile was the same as their neighbors. None of them raised their hands.*

> (2016, p. 2)

Most agree that there is a dire need for greater clarity, or at least coherence, within the Agile discourse (Dingsøyr *et al.*, 2012; Bider, 2014). While this sentiment is certainly to be encouraged, generally the approach taken to this within industry is to engage in "alignment training", which has been seen to result in a degree of "power-related dysfunctionality" and coercive "groupthink" (Whitworth, 2008; McAvoy and Butler, 2009). Rather than downplaying the significance of this dissonance, we will attempt to engage with it and investigate seriously the plural presentations, as well as those attempts to establish hegemonic control over the concept. In keeping with the philosophy of Wittgenstein, the goal of this project is not seen as definitively capturing competing discourses through analysis. Rather, the aim of the investigation is to combat hegemony and highlight the "blurred" character of concepts in operation (Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 52, 94, PI §109, §241). Reframing Agile and associated terminology as part of a "language game", we seek to explore the role of power in interactions between these possibilities in the context of GDS's "digital transformation". The primary source of our investigative material will be first-hand accounts of "agility", produced by practitioners from within and outside this particular case (Wirfs-Brock, 2015). These "experience reports" will be supplemented with other relevant secondary research, namely academic research and reports produced by both governments and NGOs (Dingsøyr *et al.*, 2012; Andrews *et al.*, 2016; GDS, n.d.).

Methods

While a commitment to ethnography certainly reveals something about the research methods to be employed in pursuit of this projects aims, it indicates little that is specific; ethnographers often adopt "custom built" methods (Angrosino, 2007, p. 69), and are given to theoretical bricolage (Maurer, 2005, pp. 14-17; Cunliffe, 2010; Watson, 2012). To aid in the process of articulating a coherent method in the face of this, we will turn towards the framework offered up by John Van Maanen. He identifies three intersecting elements which can be used as a frame to deconstruct an ethnography: fieldwork, headwork and textwork (2011b). We will explore the research method through a discussion of these elements as they relate to this project.

Headwork

On the importance of a guiding "headwork", Van Maanen (2011a) speaks metaphorically but with authority when he says "one could not just pick up rocks without some sort of theory to guide them". The term "headwork" here is understood to represent the conceptual underpinnings of one's ethnographic work. This largely covers the theoretical rationale around what data one is most interested in collecting and the choice of analytical approach. There are a wide variety of theoretical positions in operation in the field but the researcher is not restricted to these (Angrosino, 2007, pp. 2-14; Holstein and Gubrium, 2008); many ethnographers distance themselves from holistic bodies of theory, eschewing coherent platforms for informative "theoretical cocktails" (Angrosino, 2007, p. 69; Van Maanen, 2011a; Watson, 2012). It is in this latter tradition that we will proceed. Drawing inspiration from a selection of works critically investigating organisational discourses, both ethnographic (Shotter, 1996; Fayard and Van Maanen, 2015) and otherwise (Pondy, 1989; Kelly, 2008), we turn to the philosophy of Wittgenstein to provide a suite of sensitising concepts for analysis and a sense of direction to the data gathering process.

Wittgenstein was concerned with the impact that unreflexive language use and abstraction from context have on our ability to resolve philosophical questions (Wittgenstein, 2009, p. 52, PI §109; McGinn, 2013, p. 6)[i]. There is a great degree of affinity identified between ethnography and Wittgenstein (Biletzki, 2003, pp. 159-161; Holstein and Gubrium, 2008, p. 378; Ybema and Kamsteeg, 2009). Similarities are evoked through many aspects of his work: emphasis on language as tied to holistic "forms of life" and his admonitions to refrain from abstract theorising and instead focus on description and deconstructing hegemonic and unexamined understandings (Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 52, 94, PI §109, §241). His notions of language games (ibid., p. 7, PI §7), forms of life (ibid., p. 94, PI §241) and depth grammar (ibid., pp. 170-171, PI §664) lend sensitising concepts to the analytical project. His concern with language in use gives us a scope of activity to reflect upon and investigate with our research. We improve our overview of the "depth grammar" of a word by attempting to produce a "surveyable representation" of the word in use (ibid., pp. 54-55, PI §122). However, it is not just linguistic data we are interested in. Rather it is any data relevant to the use of expressions which can be considered as part of the "language game"; a showing of a badge perhaps, important historical information, even a frequently referenced colour sample if it is relevant in the application of language (Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 10-11, PI §16; McGinn, 2013).

Textwork

Van Maanen draws an important distinction in his seminal "Tales of the Field" between the writing that takes place during fieldwork and deskwork (Van Maanen, 2011b). Ultimately, as ethnographers we must interpret and articulate our findings in some way. The process of analysis is handled in a variety of manners in ethnography literature and practice. However, this project takes as its primary exemplar the grammatical investigations of Wittgenstein (2009), also drawing influence from the financial ethnographic work of Maurer (2005). While these two works are fairly different in many ways they share an important practical similarity. Maurer (2005, p. 17) and Wittgenstein (2009, pp. 11, 56, PI §17, §130-131) both disavow any notion of their project as an analytic one. Rather, each seems focused on an approach which could be approximately described as the juxtaposition of thickly described "objects of comparison" (ibid., p. 56, PI §130-131). In the case of Maurer, as an ethnographic example, we see him exploring Islamic banking and alternative currencies through the linking of various relevant vignettes using an approach mostly characterised by theoretical bricolage (Maurer, 2005, p. 17). In Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations (2009) he similarly interrogates the nature of a great many phenomenon, pain for example (ibid., pp. 95-100, PI §244-263), by presenting a wide range of comparative alternative interpretations grounded firmly in variations in

use. This is not to say one can get away from the practical task of sorting through the data, and certain elements are expected of a credible ethnographic project (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2009, pp. 59-63). Starting early in the research process, the author engaged in a recursive "grounded" loop of organising and reviewing notes, coding and comparison (Angrosino, 2007, pp. 67-76; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2009; LeCompte and Schensul, 2010, p. 150). Taking the advice of Watson, we reject the a-theoretical approach to "grounded theory" engaging mindfully with both theory and the context (Watson, 2012).

As such, this process will draw light inspiration from the Gioia methodology for structure (Gioia *et al.*, 2012). However, we depart radically from this approach in line with Wittgenstein: Instead of searching for "terms", we transcribe "significations" verbatim which are pertinent to our topic of investigation. We abandon "themes" and "dimensions", searching instead for "family resemblances" which aid in populating a "depth grammar". Rather than going on to generate theory, the aim is to assemble a "surveyable representation" such as this which can serve to highlight "lateralizations" (Maurer, 2005, p. 17; Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 37, 54-55, PI §67, §122). This process is realised practically using the reference management software "Qiqqa" to facilitate a manual, in vivo coding approach. After an initial reading, the texts are scoured for any talk or action which plays a role in language games around "agile". These "significations", illustrative examples of language in use, are highlighted in-text on this second pass reading. The next stage in the analysis is the identification of "family resemblances" between the significations; these are analogous to the "themes" discussed by Gioia et al. (2012). Once apparent connections between the significations have been identified, the in-text annotations are tagged in Qiqqa with the appropriate resemblances. This allows for the production of reports which can be filtered via tags to collate all significations which resemble one another in the role they play in the agile "language game". These reports enable the final stage in the analysis; the development of a "depth grammar" for the observed language use. This revolves around drawing out multiple distinct groupings of shared usage patterns within these similar significations. Returning again to the language of Gioia et al. (2012), we are distilling the "aggregate dimensions" from the themes. The end result is a picture of the observed meanings in operation around the concept in question. However, these findings are not presented in summary form as with Gioia et al.'s (2012) data structure. Rather, the depth grammar informs the creation of a narrative account, the "surveyable representation". The researcher explores the relevant significations verbatim to allow for the conveyance of more than reified analytical conclusions to the reader. Emulating Maurer and Wittgenstein, the hope is that, while remaining alive to our own "warping" influence, we can effectively act as a prism; refracting (not truly reflecting) overlaps, interconnections and contradictions we that we may have observed during research onto the reader. Ideally this would be facilitated with a rational and moderated degree of member checking. A recursive etic-emic loop such as this, which questions the perspective of the researcher and brings the research closer to practitioners, is a key goal for many ethnographic projects which have responded to modern criticisms and seek reflexivity (Maurer, 2005, p. 75; LeCompte and Schensul, 2010, p. 161; Watson, 2012). Though this is not within the scope of the current project, it would certainly be employed in the full ethnography.

<u>Gathering "Tales of the Field"</u>

Reflecting on the third element of Van Maanen's ethnographic skeleton we see a looming issue. Certainly, using the term "fieldwork" in reference to the data collection process of this project would be something of a misnomer. The absence of any presence in the field, physical or otherwise, certainly poses problems for any project claiming the moniker of "ethnography"; as a method, ethnography is inherently orientated towards harnessing long term immersion in the field for the

purposes of data collection (Angrosino, 2007, pp. 15-16; Van Maanen, 2011a; Watson, 2012). Unfortunately, there was a profound mismatch between the timescales available for the production of this paper and those required for embarking on a full ethnographic field study. It was not possible nor planned to obtain access to a site for the collection of primary research data to serve as analytical substance for this project. However, we do have access to one fairly revealing source of secondary data focused entirely on the operation of Agile; practitioners are encouraged to write auto-biographical accounts, "experience reports", chronicling their working engagements with the concept (Angrosino, 2007, p. 50; Wang *et al.*, 2012; Wirfs-Brock, 2015). These accounts may not be authored by ethnographic researchers. Nevertheless, the narratives presented in these experience reports are experientially focused representations of social realities; very much first-hand, empirical "tales of the field" (Van Maanen, 2011b, p. XIII).

Following in the spirit of those ethnographers before us, we accepted that we cannot be "choosy beggars". Thus we foreground, through the data we can currently access, a full ethnography employing the same methods utilised here. We support this approach with a discussion of the shortcomings specific to this particular secondary source (Fine and Shulman, 2009, p. 179; Schensul and LeCompte, 2013, pp. 61, 77-78). We initially focused our analysis on experience reports presented at the Agile and XP conferences made available online by the Agile Alliance, in addition to relevant theoretical contributions. As the experience reports were analysed, a distinct area for potential investigation was uncovered through a UK government initiative focused partially on Agile. Just as we would do if we had obtained access to a site, efforts were made to collect perspectives from an array of "Agile actors", such as consultants, general practitioners, business management and "non-believers". This is no perfect solution, we have no way to get an appreciable feel for the context that surrounds these reports, nor can we seek clarification or different perspectives than those presented. While it would be putting it lightly to say this is not an ideal ethnographic data source, it is worth emphasising again the purpose of this project; while the findings are interesting, it primarily foregrounds a full ethnographic project utilising the methods trialled here. These findings are presented in organised in the form of quoted "significations", drawn directly from the texts analysed, which show language use in action around "agile". The role that the various elements of these "significations" play in language games around "agile" is then explored. The findings represent a collection of alternative modes of representation expressed through use. With this in mind, the "significations" explored are intended to build and thicken a description of language in use.

Findings

As was previously discussed in our exploration of the "textwork" of this ethnographic project, the findings of this investigation are not to be simplified and presented in a summary form or overall theory; the depth grammar reified into a diagram which holds the promise of a comprehensive graphical representation (Gioia *et al.*, 2012). Instead, the analytical output of our repeated readings is used to collate revealing significations which are presented to the reader verbatim. The relevant elements of the significations are highlighted to the reader and through this we explore the depth of meaning attached to the particular samples of language in use; we build up and present a "surveyable representation" of the concept in use to convey the "lateralizations" observed by the researcher (Maurer, 2005, p. 17; Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 37, 54-55, PI §67, §122). So it is we proceed by focusing upon our first signification which relates to the presentation of "agile" in the UK government:

> *For many civil servants I spoke to, GDS were not the heroic saviours they were in my eyes. GDS were a bunch of egos in London who had started putting hurdles in*

the way of getting their job done. I noticed this apathy present at all levels, from individual contributors, to middle management, to senior executives. For a number of different reasons, the values GDS espoused - the focus on user needs and the agile mindset, weren't radiating to all in government. This intrigued me a lot. I could see how bad government IT was. I could see the wasted money and horrific IT systems pushed on both citizens and civil servants. Why wasn't everybody passionate about improvement?

(2017, p. 5)

Nick Tune, a consultant, wants to know why everybody isn't passionate about agile in the government. We see through his eyes the "heroic saviours" GDS, "radiating" agile values throughout the organisation. However, his peers are dragging their feet. "Why wasn't everybody passionate about improvement?" he laments. We make a notable jump here from rejection of a specific body or practice to a more general "dispassion for improvement"; GDS values equate to improvement, dissenters are merely "apathetic". The use of language here gives us a particular impression of the nature of "agile". It invites us to picture agile as an implicitly virtuous personal "mindset". What does an agile mindset actually entail in practice? There is no clear answer. Let us take those who refer to principles of the Manifesto as some criteria of sorts. Certainly, this gives seems to give us a sense of direction. However, the principles themselves are recognised to be functionally very vague (Abrahamsson *et al.*, 2009; Vilkki and Erdogmus, 2012); paraphrasing Wittgenstein, this interpretable "signpost" does little to alleviate doubts about where we must actually go (Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 44-45, PI §85-86). Of course, imprecision is not necessarily problematic, but the importance is raised when groups are given authority to lead organisations via them on agile "journeys" (Wittgenstein, 2009, pp. 45-46, PI §87-88). What's more, the way the author refers to the government agency responsible for the change is revealing; the GDS are "heroic saviours", "radiating" transformative values throughout government. These are representations which had a significant presence in the recorded experiences of the agile community which we sampled and many practitioners identify personally with the concept (Whitworth, 2008; Brown and Anderson, 2015; Willeke and Marsee, 2016). Agile here can be considered more than something you do, it is imagined as something which you are; carrying with it an expectation to "be" something new rather than simply being a toolset you can draw from (McDowell and Dourambeis, 2007; Tietz and Mönch, 2015; Padula, 2016). The language surrounding agile practices and values often takes on this quasi-religious character, painting the "philosophy" as something close to a belief system. In addition to previously noted image of "saviours" who "radiate values", we often see talk of "true believers" carrying forward the vision (Grabel and Dubovik, 2016). Some of the consultants and agile coaches in the field use terms reminiscent of itinerant preachers; Jeff Howey, says of his work:

Always, some of the most satisfying moments in a Coach's career include observing those moments when an acolyte graduates to an evangelist.

(2016, p. 7)

Others talk enthusiastically of their teams "drinking the Kool-Aid" and embracing agile (Jochems and Rodgers, 2007; Hile, 2014). This obviously tongue-in-cheek statement is a reference to the "Jonestown Massacre" in 1978, where over 900 people died in a "mass suicide" ordered by their religious leader (Richardson, 2014). Although meant as a joke, it nevertheless draws attention to a growing number of "non-believers" who refer to agile as a cult, or at least feel it encourages cult-like behaviours (Whitworth, 2008; Kern, 2016; Freudenberg, 2017). Of course, if one looks there is a total absence of the worst excesses that characterise these parasitic organisations. However, there are

some interesting potential parallels to explore which come to light: "zealous" commitment to the "cult"; claims of "the one true answer"; a group with elitist overtones, possessing an "us vs them mentality" where dissent and doubt are discouraged (Langone, 2015; Owen, 2015). Certainly, we can find evidence of this in the self-reported experiences of Brown and Anderson:

> *This experience report was sparked by my dismay at watching people quit as their organization is attempting to transition to Agile. One phrase I heard starkly sums up why; "They can't be helped". It's a real mental and emotional challenge to help an organization undo decades of conditioning and adopt an Agile culture. The frustration when dealing with people who "just don't get it" can tax the most patient and tolerant among us.*

> (2015, p. 1)

We see much of this same attitude reflected in the practical experiences reported by Nick Tune in the UK government, as well as in the other research, articles and experience reports tapped to deepen our insights. The expectation of complete and authentic conversion is emphasised by Tune when they reflect on the "transformation" in the UK government:

> *Leaders at all levels need to understand, embrace, and promote the core values of agile rather than just the rituals. Core values like iteration, collaboration, and customer focus enable business agility. But the rituals alone - stand ups, user stories, scrum masters - provide only the illusion of agility. Teams that only adopt the rituals will maintain high cycle times, thus they will be bottlenecks. If leaders do not understand the core values, they cannot discern the bottlenecks, and they cannot remove them.*

> (2017, p. 1)

So, we see there exists the possibility for "false" agility. Teams are warned against the risks of paying lip service to agile. The capacity for leaders to perform is tied to their ability to truly understand and "embrace" the "core values" of agility. However, given our prior discussion regarding the clarity of the concept, hopefully we can now appreciate this can be a highly contestable and moving goalpost. This discussion becomes even more complex if we consider the principles being reinterpreted fairly broadly to fit marketing and education or even inverted in the case of the defence industry (Gariano, 2015; Legault, 2016; Willeke and Marsee, 2016).Take the issue of command type control in Agile as an exemplar. There are many different approaches to the relationship between command and agile: some feel that a command approach to agile isn't agile at all and call for servant leadership and various forms of self-organising teams (Fry and Greene, 2007; Helfand, 2015; Howey, 2016); others seem comfortable with command which serves to encourage "agility". Indeed, Tune praises the "unusual dictators" GDS for their unilateral decision to implement agile and use assessments with public standards to enforce this. The rhetoric around illusory or shallow agility is very closely interconnected with story. Returning again to Nick Tune's experience, they direct us to the moment that they felt marked the end of this particular "journey":

> *On a sunny summer afternoon, during an enterprise IT show-and-tell session, all my ambitions of affecting change in government instantly crashed and burned. My mission was inexorably going to fail. It began when an enterprise IT project manager announced she should now be referred to as the scrum master… I do not hold the project manager responsible in any way, nor was there any malice on her*

The failure of the agile transformation was set in stone, it seems to our author, by enterprise IT. The problem is pitched as one of commitment to the "agile mindset"; the values that the Government Digital Service (GDS) espouse are not being internalized and the practices, which IT is seemingly engaged in, cannot yield improvement alone. Tune, echoing the sentiments offered by the exiting head of GDS in 2015 Mike Bracken, feels the organisation is failing due to its attempt to be "half agile". We get very little information on the practical progress of the agile rollout after this "catastrophe". However, there are other sources we can turn to which may help provide additional context. The Institute for Government (IFG) released a report in October 2016 which examines the state of the digital transformation in government. This document paints a picture which confirms, in some ways, the one painted by Tune while also lending extra depth to the account; it seems it is not only the other IT departments which are potentially to blame for the "failure" of agile. This quote from the report by Andrews et al. is telling:

> *digital teams used to a much purer version of agile approaches still see "great machines [of governance] built on top of them". They see it as extensive reporting; having to satisfy the centre of government as well as departments, with long lead times as decisions go up the chain and then back down. The result is frustrated digital teams and almost invariably delays. We heard of some governance decisions taking almost as long as their first (Alpha) phase of development and one department told us that, at one point, all of its projects that were behind schedule were waiting for approvals from the Cabinet Office.*

(2016, p. 22)

Through this document, we find a wider organisational perspective on the events which Nick Tune reflects upon. It seems that the silver bullet of "true" agile has hit upon something of a barrier in the form of government bureaucracy. This is something we have found before in the experience reports analysed here; Joe Gariano (2015) describes the challenges of integrating agile principles into the defence industry where he faces similar bureaucratic structures. There are also other examples of practitioners who have integrated, albeit occasionally begrudgingly, with traditional teams (Hile, 2014; Rayhan *et al.*, 2016). In this sense, it is fair to say that not every practitioner views the need to integrate with a traditional organisation as the death knell for any notion of "agility", though the notion is not isolated to this report (Legault, 2016).

Let us reflect, through this alternative perspective, on the events surrounding and indeed precipitating the formation of the GDS in 2010. In what is apparently an unusual move, the government brought in "new people" to set up this department (Andrews *et al.*, 2016, p. 3). While the stated primary drivers of the department's formation are broad, there is an admitted primary focus on the financial concerns which precipitated the founding of the department; their existence and aims are ultimately couched in the ongoing legacy of post-recession austerity and spending cuts (Manel, 2013; Andrews *et al.*, 2016, pp. 7-10). The foundation of this improvement is based upon several key elements. IFG identifies these as user research, agile development, simplicity and interoperability, and this overlaps with what Tune reports (Andrews *et al.*, 2016, p. 27; Tune, 2017). In line with their fiscally conservative purpose, the department has been imbued with the power to impose "spending controls" to enforce these changes. These controls apply to any IT project above five million pounds and now include an outright ban on contracts worth over one hundred million. A

2013 BBC interview with Mike Bracken, former head of the GDS, sheds some light on the underlying purpose of the department. We meet him on the day of an important meeting with larger IT firms the government has been working with "about how we need to work smarter and quicker and cheaper". He goes on to discuss the government's issues with the existing situation, "what a Parliamentary committee described as an oligopolistic supply chain". The purpose of this meeting then is to convey that the government is now only interested in working with suppliers in "certain ways", citing a desire to "to do is do things in a quicker, more agile way, much more cost effective" (Manel, 2013). These quotes match up with the way in which the spending controls are discussed by Andrews et al. throughout the IFG report:

> *The spending controls have several aims: not only reducing government IT spending by breaking up large contracts, but also bringing about changes in the way government thinks about IT.*

(2016, p. 28)

The way Mike Bracken employs the term agile in the preceding interview is important. It also ties in with clauses in GDS service standards, on which spending controls are assessed, calling for agile development methods (GDS, n.d.). In order to combat oligopoly in the IT industry, things need to be "quicker" and more "agile". The government is ultimately the end customer in this market. In dictating that firms must employ agile development methods the government is demanding greater flexibility in their contracts. This is confirmed by the above excerpt from the IFG report which identifies "breaking up large contracts" as a key aim of the GDS spending controls. Ultimately, many practitioners associate the term agile with notions of "flexibility" and "customer responsiveness". However, the implications of this are left open to interpretation. This significant split in the interpretation of what "flexibility" implies is also seen when we look at the discussion around "visibility".

There is no direct usage of the term "visibility" in the agile manifesto. Despite this, in practitioner circles the term has become highly associated with agile as one of the primary benefits (Laanti *et al.*, 2011; Howey, 2016). In practice, we see that often visibility is interpreted to mean insight into the progress of project tasks. This is generally rendered on a team level (Hsu, 2016). However, occasionally we see this extended to include personal visibility. This more exposed situation invites social pressures to performance. Visibility in this sense is used to imply transparency regarding individual performance, rather than team progress (Cottmeyer, 2008; Hasebe and Le, 2016). Ultimately, in environments such as these "visibility" manifests a strong social coercive pressure which regulates performance, not dissimilar to Barker's notion of concertive control (Barker, 1993; Whitworth, 2008; Kilby, 2015). Similarly, a good number of "agilistas" see the need to moderate the aforementioned process of "flexible" change (Dingsøyr *et al.*, 2012). Failing this, they may see the need to temper expectations about the possibility of flexible development as with Gariano in defence (2015). However, there is also a dark side; being agile as a developer often ends up being communicated as maintaining a willingness acquiesce to customer demands, no matter what the issues. Unfortunately, we can see this reflected in the experiences relayed by Andrews et al.:

> *Agile development requires iteration and flexible timelines; yet big programmes have interdependencies and often firm deadlines, particularly if they are aiming to achieve savings. As one director general told us: "However agile we want to be, we've got to work towards a date." ... Elastic dates and evolving designs make planning things like this almost impossible. The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee and the National Audit Office have cited this lack of*

Conclusions

In the representation presented we find two primary groups each trying to control, for different reasons, the definitions of agile; a departing group of external consultants attempt to take with them the possibility for authentic change, while the interpretation of agile is shaped by government to influence IT supplier relations. The research method employed here highlights the wielding of power and existence of conflict revealed and facilitated through language use. Nick Tune represents the consultants and "outside expertise" who were brought in at the inception of GDS to spearhead the transformation. He aligns himself with the "GDS old guard", such as Mike Bracken, who left the organisation in 2015. In his eyes, the government is not "agile" and they have failed in their efforts to transform. However, by accessing alternative perspectives which give us a wider view on the "organisation" of government we can see that not all share this opinion. The institutional perspective within the wider government is that the regulatory requirement for "agile methods" has achieved many of its initial aims; breaking up the large-scale IT contracts that used to be prevalent and forcing suppliers to become more responsive to government demands. It is the slackness around the definition of agile which enables the government to shift the status quo in the IT industry under the premise of mutually beneficial improvement. Here the "agility" lies in the newfound contractual flexibility and the shifts in the balance of power between the government and IT "oligopolies". Ultimately, we see that the open interpretability of agile principles and rhetoric results in a disputed understanding which enables those with the most power to influence the viable language around agility; the government can demand flexibility in contracts and break up large existing partnerships through an insistence on supplier "agility". This notion of agility bears little relation to the holistic mindset which Tune and other "agilistas" like him advocate. This conception emphasises the importance of commitment to the mindset and constant agile training and alignment work; authentic conversion to the agile "faith" which is largely propagated, and was indeed mostly founded, by consultants. Our grammatical investigation of "agile" and the language surrounding it has yielded a representation of the term in use. Here we can see these coexisting systems of sanctioned meaning, or "grammars", in operation in the observed "language games" around the term. In developing and exploring our representation we have highlighted particular patterns of use which form part of this overall "depth grammar" for agile. This representation is presented to the reader to translate observed overlaps, conflicts and connections; "lateralizations" within the depth grammar identified in the experience reports and other research material analysed. We have explored this primarily through our investigation of how UK government departments and their stakeholders have been impacted by or attempted to control the contested connotations of agile. Regardless of Tune's pessimistic assessment, the UK government rhetoric around agile is still very much active. Certainly further research could still be conducted continuing to explore the changing nature of "agile" within the UK government as the digital transformation progresses.

Critical Reflections and Limitations

When drawing data like this from secondary sources, it is worthwhile to consider the limitations which that secondary source may possess as part of one's research process (Fine and Shulman, 2009, p. 179; Schensul and LeCompte, 2013, pp. 61, 77-78). The primary sources utilized for this study were agile experience reports, with supporting data drawn from a range of sources. This includes newspapers, specialist blogs, reports from non-government organisations and published research.

The agile experience reports themselves were initially collected from a database of publicly available reports published online by the Agile Alliance. These reports were then supplemented with other experience reports identified from the supporting research to diversify away from this single institution. This brings us to the first limitation of the experience reports. As the reports are published by agile organisations, written by agile practitioners and many make extraordinary claims of efficacy with little evidence, they are often considered to be somewhat unreliable (Dingsøyr *et al.*, 2012; Barroca *et al.*, 2015). However, if we proceed considering this bias and remain sceptical on any claims of efficacy this should not interfere too greatly with the other insights provided into the organisation. The experience reports are also not ideal due to the "flattening" of the research context; others have already taken the snapshot, we can only access what they have laid out before us. This limits the applicability of the method as we rely on practitioners capturing the right data.

There was a large store of assessments performed by the GDS available online which may have offered further insight (Neal, 2015). However, these were not analysed as they contained mainly technical details and evidence was found in the primary research material which suggested that these would possibly be unreliable; Nick Tune (2017) describes at least one team manipulating the details provided for the assessment to ensure that the criteria GDS set out were seen to have been met. Obviously, this entirely secondary research data and smattering of non-local supporting research is not an ideal ethnographic dataset. As we identified in the discussion on methods, this project lacks the vital added reflexivity which a rational program of member checking would have perhaps generated. The author again emphasises here that this research project foregrounds a full ethnographic study utilising the same methods. Given the limitations in time and resources available the author feels that this serves as an adequate early pilot study. The results generated here indicate that greater insights could be delivered this aforementioned full ethnographic study (Angrosino, 2007, p. 50). This would allow exploration in greater depth of both the method and research direction set out here.

---

[i] Following the conventions of other authors who publish around Wittgenstein references are attached to the remark number. PI indicates the remark comes from Philosophical Investigations (Grayling, 2001, Glendinning, 2006, McGinn, 2013).

References

Abrahamsson, P., Conboy, K. and Wang, X. (2009) '"Lots Done, More To Do": The Current State of Agile Systems Development Research', *European Journal of Information Systems*, 18(4), pp. 281-284.

Andrews, E., Thornton, D., Owen, J., Bleasdale, A., Freeguard, G. and Stelk, I. (2016) *Making a success of digital government*. London. [Online]. Available at: https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/IFGJ4942_Digital_Government_Report_10_16%20WEB%20(a).pdf.

Angrosino, M. V. (2007) *Doing ethnographic and observational research*. SAGE.

Barker, J. R. (1993) 'Tightening the Iron Cage: Concertive Control in Self-Managing Teams', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38(3), pp. 408-437.

Barroca, L., Sharp, H., Salah, D., Taylor, K. and Gregory, P. (2015) 'Bridging the gap between research and agile practice: an evolutionary model', *International Journal of System Assurance Engineering and Management*, pp. 1-12.

Bider, I. (2014) 'Analysis of Agile Software Development Methodologies from the Knowledge Transformation Perspective', *BIR 2014*. Lund, 2014. Springer, pp. 143-157.

Biletzki, A. (2003) *(Over)Interpreting Wittgenstein*. Springer.

Brown, C. and Anderson, S. (2015) 'Exploring your Congenital Agility', *Agile2015*. Washington, 2015. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-6. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/exploring-congenital-agility/.

Cottmeyer, M. (2008) 'The good and bad of Agile offshore development', *Agile2008*. Toronto, 2008. IEEE, pp. 362-367. doi: 10.1109/Agile.2008.18.

Cunliffe, A. L. (2010) 'Retelling Tales of the Field', *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(2), pp. 224-239.

d'Ancona, M. (2017) 'Ten alternative facts for the post truth world', *The Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/may/12/post-truth-worst-of-best-donald-trump-sean-spicer-kellyanne-conway.

Dingsøyr, T., Nerur, S., Balijepally, V. and Moe, N. B. (2012) 'A decade of agile methodologies: Towards explaining agile software development', *Journal of Systems and Software*, 85(6), pp. 1213-1221.

Fayard, A.-L. and Van Maanen, J. (2015) 'Making culture visible: reflections on corporate ethnography', *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 4(1), pp. 4-27.

Fine, G. A. and Shulman, D. (2009) 'Lies from the field: Ethical issues in organizational ethnography', in Ybema, S., Yanow, D., Wels, H. and Kamsteeg, F. (eds.) *Organizational ethnography: studying the complexities of everyday life*. SAGE, pp. 177-195. 9.

Fowler, M. and Highsmith, J. (2001) 'The agile manifesto', *Software Development*, 9, pp. 28-35.

Freudenberg, S. (2017) 'When the culture becomes the cult', *Agile in the Wild*. Available at: https://salfreudenberg.wordpress.com/2017/03/11/when-the-culture-becomes-the-cult/.

Fry, C. and Greene, S. (2007) 'Large Scale Agile Transformation in an On-Demand World', *Agile2007*. Washington, 2007. IEEE, pp. 136-142.

Gariano, J. (2015) 'Hardened Agility: Deploying Agile at a Defense Contractor', *Agile2015*. Washington, 2015. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-8. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/hardened-agility-deploying-agile-defense-contractor/.

GDS (2016) *Agile and government services: an introduction*. Gov.uk Service Manuals. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/agile-delivery/agile-government-services-introduction.

GDS (n.d.) *Digital Service Standard*. Gov.uk Service Manuals. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/service-standard.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G. and Hamilton, A. L. (2012) 'Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research: Notes on the Gioia Methodology', *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), pp. 15--31.

Grabel, D. and Dubovik, S. (2016) 'Transforming an Advertising Agency: Bringing an Agile Mindset Beyond Engineering', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/transforming-an-advertising-agency-bringing-an-agile-mindset-beyond-engineering/.

Hasebe, Y. and Le, M. (2016) '6 days/week with 20hr of engineering day and multiple releases in one day - Yahoo Search', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/6-daysweek-with-20hr-of-engineeringday-and-multiple-releases-in-one-day-yahoo-search/.

Helfand, H. (2015) '8 Years Agile – From Startup ScrumMaster to Agile Coaching Group at a Company of 500', *Agile2015*. Washington, 2015. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/8-years-agile-startup-scrummaster-agile-coaching-group-company-500/.

Hile, E. (2014) 'Head On Collision: Agile QA Driving In A Waterfall World', *Agile2014*. Orlando, 2014. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-9. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/head-collision-agile-qa-driving-waterfall-world/.

Holstein, J. A. and Gubrium, J. F. (2008) 'Constructionist Impulses in Ethnographic Fieldwork', in Holstein, J. A. and Gubrium, J. F. (eds.) *Handbook of Constructionist Research*. Guilford Press, pp. 373-395. 19.

Howey, J. (2016) 'Practicing Agility in Human Resources', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/practicing-agility-in-human-resources/.

Hsu, T. (2016) 'Agile Transformation at Nickelodeon Digital', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-8. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/agile-transformation-at-nickelodeon-digital/.

Jochems, R. and Rodgers, S. (2007) 'The Rollercoaster of Required Agile Transition', *Agile2007*. Washington. IEEE, pp. 229-233. doi: 10.1109/AGILE.2007.59. Available at: http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/4293601/.

Kelly, S. (2008) 'Leadership: A categorical mistake?', *Human Relations*, 61(6), pp. 763-782.

Kern, M. (2016) 'Agile is Dead'. Available at: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/agile-dead-matthew-kern.

Kilby, M. (2015) 'Can you be remotely agile?', *Agile2015*. Washington, 2015. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-8. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/can-remotely-agile/.

Laanti, M., Salo, O. and Abrahamsson, P. (2011) 'Agile methods rapidly replacing traditional methods at Nokia: A survey of opinions on agile transformation', *Information and Software Technology*, 53(3), pp. 276-290.

Langone, M. D. (2015) 'Characteristics Associated with Cultic Groups - Revised', *ICSA Today*, 6(3), p. 10.

LeCompte, M. D. and Schensul, J. J. (2010) *Designing & conducting ethnographic research: An introduction*. Rowman Altamira.

Legault, M.-C. (2016) 'Agile Marketing a new reality – really ?', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-6. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/agile-marketing-a-new-reality-really/.

Manel, J. (2013) 'Inside the UK Government Digital Service'. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-22860849.

Marinetto, M. and Davis, L. (2015) 'Could academics take on the role of investigative journalists?'. Available at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/could-academics-take-on-the-role-of-investigative-journalists.

Martinez-Conde, S. and Macknik, S. L. (2017) 'The Delusion of Alternative Facts', *Illusion Chasers*. Available at: https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/illusion-chasers/the-delusion-of-alternative-facts/.

Maurer, B. (2005) *Mutual life, limited: Islamic banking, alternative currencies, lateral reason*. Princeton University Press.

McAvoy, J. and Butler, T. (2009) 'A Failure to Learn in a Software Development Team: The Unsuccessful Introduction of an Agile Method', in Barry, C., Conboy, K., Lang, M., Wojtkowski, G. and Wojtkowski, W. (eds.) *Information Systems Development*.   Springer, pp. 1-13.

McDowell, S. and Dourambeis, N. (2007) 'British Telecom Experience Report: Agile Intervention – BT's Joining the Dots Events for Organizational Change', *XP 2007*. Como, 2007. Springer, pp. 17-23.

McGinn, M. (2013) *The Routledge guidebook to Wittgenstein's Philosophical investigations*. Routledge.

Mckenna, B. (2009) 'How Anthropology Disparages Journalism'. Available at: https://www.counterpunch.org/2009/03/10/how-anthropology-disparages-journalism/.

Neal, O. (2015) 'What we've learned from almost 100 assessments', *Data at GDS*. Available at: https://gdsdata.blog.gov.uk/2015/03/27/what-weve-learned-from-almost-100-assessments/.

Owen, M. (2015) 'Is Agile a Cult?'. Available at: https://www.batimes.com/articles/is-agile-a-cult.html.

Padula, A. (2016) 'Large Scale Agile Transformations: An Insider's Guide and Toolkit', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-8. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/large-scale-agile-transformations-an-insiders-guide-and-toolkit/.

Pondy, L. R. (1989) 'Leadership is a Language Game', in Leavitt, H. J., Pondy, L. R. and Boje, D. M. (eds.) *Readings in Managerial Psychology*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 224-233.

Poon, D. (2006) 'A self funding agile transformation', *Agile 2006*. Minneapolis. IEEE, pp. 342-350. doi: 10.1109/AGILE.2006.2.

Rayhan, S., Mony, G. and Newby, S. (2016) 'Delivering BI Projects Using Agile', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-8. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/delivering-bi-projects-using-agile/.

Richardson, J. D. (2014) 'The phrase 'drank the Kool-Aid' is completely offensive. We should stop saying it immediately.', *The Washington Post*. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/11/18/the-phrase-drank-the-koolaid-is-completely-offensive-we-should-stop-saying-it-immediately/.

Rost, D., Weitzel, B. and Naab, M. (2015) 'Distilling Best Practices for Agile Development from Architecture Methodology', *ESCA 2015*. Dubrovnik/Cavtat, 2015. Springer, pp. 259-267. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-23727-5.

Schensul, J. J. and LeCompte, M. D. (2013) *Sepecialized Ethnographic Methods: a mixed methods approach*. Rowman Altamira.

Shotter, J. (1996) 'Living in a Wittgensteinian world: Beyond theory to a poetics of practices', *Journal for the theory of social behaviour*, 26(3), pp. 293-311.

Sutherland, J. (2014) *Scrum : The Art of Doing Twice the Work in Half the Time*. New York: Crown Business.

Tietz, V. and Mönch, A. (2015) 'Facing Fake-to-Fake: Lessons Learned from Distributed Scrum', *Agile2015*. Washington, 2015. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-10. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/facing-fake-fake-lessons-learned-distributed-scrum/.

Tune, N. (2017) 'Agile in the UK Government: An Infiltrator's Secrets', *XP 2017*. Cologne, 2017. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/agile-in-the-uk-government-an-infiltrators-secrets/.

Van Maanen, J. (2011a) 'Ethnography as Work: Some Rules of Engagement', *Journal of Management Studies*, 48(1), pp. 218-234.

Van Maanen, J. (2011b) *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. University of Chicago Press.

Vilkki, K. and Erdogmus, H. (2012) 'Point/counterpoint', *IEEE Software*, 29(5), pp. 60-63.

Wang, X., Conboy, K. and Cawley, O. (2012) '"Leagile" software development: An experience report analysis of the application of lean approaches in agile software development', *Journal of Systems and Software*, 85(6), pp. 1287-1299.

Watson, T. J. (2012) 'Making organisational ethnography', *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 1(1), pp. 15-22.

Whitworth, E. (2008) 'Experience Report: The Social Nature of Agile Teams', *Agile 2008*. Toronto, 2008. IEEE, pp. 429-435. doi: 10.1109/Agile.2008.53. Available at: http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/4599518/.

Willeke, M. and Marsee, S. (2016) 'Embracing the Agile Mindset for Organisational Change', *Agile2016*. Atlanta, 2016. Agile Alliance, pp. 1-7. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/embracing-agile-mindset-for-organisational-change/.

Wirfs-Brock, R. (2015) *Experience Report Initiative*. Available at: https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/initiatives/experience-report-program/.

Wittgenstein, L. (2009) *Philosophical Investigations*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Yanow, D. and Schwartz-Shea, P. (2009) 'Reading and writing as method: In search of trustworthy texts', in Ybema, S., Yanow, D., Wels, H. and Kamsteeg, F. (eds.) *Organizational ethnography: studying the complexities of everyday life*. SAGE, pp. 56-82. 3.

Ybema, S. and Kamsteeg, F. (2009) 'Making the familiar strange: A case for disengaged organizational ethnography', in Ybema, S., Yanow, D., Wels, H. and Kamsteeg, F. (eds.) *Organizational ethnography: studying the complexities of everyday life*. SAGE, pp. 101 - 119. 5.