



Context is key - How filmmakers
orient to the context in a film
pitching competition.

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Masters' Thesis - Leadership, Strategy and Organisation

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Abstract for Master's thesis

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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>This practice inspired study will investigate the unfolding of interaction and practices between pitcher and judges in a film pitch setting. Using methods informed by conversation analysis, a form of ethnomethodological inquiry, this thesis sheds light on how to identify the practices in interaction that individuals employed, and how they orient to available institutional resources in various ways.</p> <p>In a practice perspective as conceptualised by Schatzki (2002) among others the social aspect occurs in slices of actions that constitute the practice of our social life. In other words, the microsocial actions and interactions that unfold in our day to day lives are part of and produce the 'wider structures' that our social life consists of.</p> <p>In the development of a motion picture production the idea presented as a pitch is a well-established phenomena. This thesis the focus will be on the setting where the 'pitching session' as a phenomenon transpires. To study these practices in the context of motion picture production, I have chosen to study a film pitching session through analysing recorded video data.</p> <p>The analysis in this thesis highlights how this activity unfolds, and how the interaction, rules, coordinating discourse, and explicit formulation of general and practical understandings has the effect of governing activity to conform to the contextual model of film pitching, rather than as an exploration of novel and original projects.</p>	
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1. Introduction

“Although there are things (i.e., songs) around which these series of actions are organised, the things themselves are meaningless in the absence of the actions that envelop them. In fact, it is these actions that make these entities cultural objects.” (Mauws, 2000, p. 231)

The process of making a film is complex as are all social organisations. Some phenomena are crucial for film and tv productions and one of these is pitching to industry practitioners. At least according to industry mythology (Russell, 2013). Pitching is also a prevalent factor of the film production landscape according to many authors (Russell, 2013) and often referred to as a ceaseless activity within in connection to audiovisual producing. Not only is pitching a part of the ‘insider’ activities that are performed in filmmaking industries as a form of short project presentations for consideration of producers and funders, pitching as an event for both established practitioners as well as newcomers are held regularly (Caldwell, 2008). Reputedly they present opportunities for new practitioners to create industry connections as well as possibly amassing collaborators for their project.

The motion picture, and popular culture generally, has come to play an increasingly larger part in organisational research as both an inspiration and a target of critique (Rhodes & Westwood, 2007). Rhodes and Westwood (2007) discuss how popular culture as a resource for inquiry has traditionally been seen with scepticism within the academic sciences. One important aspect of why to study popular cultural objects within organisation theory, as argued by Westwood and Rhodes (2013), is because these products impact and constitute a large part of many peoples’ lives. In my study, direct investigation of these popular cultural products is not accomplished, instead the study of the process through which they are produced is. Thus, I tend to study the actions that create these cultural products as per the introductory quote by Mauws (2000).

Research in film production practices has mostly focused on economic, structural, and commercial components using quantitative methods. Qualitative research of the dynamics of cultural production and gatekeepers’ selection processes are in demand (Peltoniemi, 2015). The discussion in chapter 2 highlights how film production

research has focused on either individual sensemaking processes or general organisational level phenomena without exploring the actual processes and instances of practice where work is accomplished.

The purpose is to shine a light on the practices that produce and reproduce the organisation of filmmaking as a social practice. In a practice-based perspective as conceptualised by Schatzki (2002), among others, the social occurs in slices of actions that constitute the practice of our social life. In other words, the microsocial actions and interactions that unfold in our day to day lives are part of the ‘wider structures’ that our social life consists of and they produce these structures as well. To study these practices in the context of motion picture production I have chosen to study a film pitching session through analysing recorded video data.

1.2 Pitching films

In the development of a motion picture production the idea presented as a pitch is something that one might often hear about. Pitching is not unique to the film industry and as a phenomenon might be familiar to many especially as a fund procurement practice for entrepreneurs and their start-up companies (Chalmers and Shaw, 2017). However, within the film industry the discourse and myths surrounding pitching tend to lean more towards the practical contributions that pitching brings for filmmakers such as promotion, developing pitching skills, and the rare chance of a production company or studio producing one's pitched project.

A pitch within the film industry comes in two forms, “*Pitches* are traditionally oral presentations of a potential property, be it a scripted narrative or a reality show, although it may also come in the form of a written treatment, and can be purchased directly” (Russell, 2013, p. 13, emphasis in original). The definition of ‘pitch’ in this instance is not the act of pitching, but an artefact-like description of an original intellectual property that can be bought, sold, and developed. In this thesis the focus will be on the setting where the ‘pitching session’ as a phenomenon transpires. Similar pitching sessions and various activities relating to film production are increasingly hosted during film festivals (Iordanova, 2015). These activities are gradually transforming the practice of film festivals to constitute a more central role in the production of films, Iordanova (2015) argues. Sometimes observers and

participants must pay a significant amount (around €200-400) to participate in these sessions, according to Iordanova.

Caldwell (2008) differentiates between the *pitch* and a *pitching session* by calling the latter as a form of “semipublic pitchfests” (p. 88) which “theatricalizes the practitioner’s intensely private sphere” (p.85) . These are events that are participated by both established and aspiring practitioners of the film industry. Sometimes the pitchers have even more experience than the ones judging the pitches who often represent or appear to represent industry professionals and ‘insiders’ (Caldwell, 2008). According to Caldwell, the pitch is akin to a performance art, “you have to learn to pitch effectively to get your projects purchased” (p.81), and the quick pace of these sessions reflect the need for quick and promising concepts that inhibit both relatable and original characteristics. Caldwell discusses an account of a large pitching competition held in 2000 where the reception of the ideas were met unenthusiastically by the judges, and exposed the power dynamics between professionals and aspirants in the industry. In the end, Caldwell (2008) describes how the event “accomplished little in the way of actual or new tv programming, the Pitchfest itself clearly fulfilled an important and affirming symbolic function” (p. 87) for the industry practitioners participating in the event, and to “create solidarity, community, and a (perhaps false) sense of empowerment through [...] knowledge about “how things are really done.” (p. 87). The pitching phenomena itself looks “like an interactive way to develop a narrative” and “about who gets to control narrative development and to what degree” (p. 88), according to Caldwell (2008).

The discussion above presents the pitch as an important concept within film production. However, it also portrays it as an activity brought about through conflictual, varying, and sometimes problematic, logics within the practice of film production. Thus, I am interested to study the phenomena on a micro-social level through a practice perspective in order to explore how the phenomena actually unfolds and what the activities can tell us about the film production as a practice.

1.3 Purpose and research question

In this thesis I move inductively from the empirical material in light of methods inspired by conversation analysis. Conversation analysis is the detailed investigation

of practitioners' activities used in practice (Lewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010). The empirical investigation will then be discussed through a practice-based lens. The practice theory perspective offers unique possibilities to study social practices that are derived from close investigation of praxis (Nicolini, 2012). I will elaborate on these themes as we move on.

The argumentation in this thesis is that by applying the methods that are inspired by, but not strictly following the established rules and traditions of, conversation analysis we can analyse the praxis in interaction within a film pitch competition. This analysis will be used as the foundation for my discussion that looks at the analysis through a practice-based lens informing us about what the praxes of film pitching might possibly tell us about the practice of filmmaking. Within the analysis we will build our understanding of context through the orientations to practices displayed publicly by participants (Peräkylä, 2004).

Thus, the purpose of this study is to *address the gap in research on practice-based studies on cultural production practices*. Secondly, *I aim to investigate how film pitching unfolds in a natural setting through a practice perspective and what it can tell us about the practices*.

In this thesis I will investigate the social practices and interactions between pitchers and judges in a film pitching event. The main question my analysis will attempt to answer is: *How is a film pitching session accomplished in real life settings and how does a practice-based perspective inform us about the social practices in the context of motion picture production?* I will present the empirical material through methods inspired by conversation analysis. This presentation also highlights a secondary theme that illustrates the methods used by individuals to accomplish the pitching session interactionally.

I argue that through adopting a practice-based perspective we can see how the practices in film pitching are accomplished in an interactional situation. Firstly the situation where activity unfolds is influenced by the praxis oriented to locally, which is the pitch. How this praxis unfolds is within the restriction of this local context. Within this praxis practitioners orient to shared understandings of practice to accomplish their tasks of judging and pitching.

The analysis in this thesis highlights how the pitching activity unfolds as a part of wider filmmaking practices. It also shows how the interaction, coordinating discourse, and explicit formulation of general understandings has the effect of governing activity to conform to the contextual model of film pitching rather than as an exploration of novel and original projects.

As the data used in this thesis is in video format it becomes relevant to briefly discuss the implications of video-based research in organisational studies.

1.4 Video-based research in organisation studies

The role of video in organisation studies is increasing and a considerable influence on this trend is the fact that an increasing interest towards studying situated action and interaction is emerging within the field (Christianson, 2018). In this thesis we are similarly interested in investigating such situated actions and interactions, and “to learn more about situated action and interaction in organisations researchers must use methods for collecting data that enable them to capture fine-grained information about what people are” (Christianson, 2018, p. 262).

Video data is in this instance an extremely useful tool for such analysis as video material is rich in detail, and it transpires in real time often being recordings of naturally occurring action (Hindmarsh and Llewellyn, 2018). Video has been used for some time in conversation analytic research, and within organisational research there has been increased usage of video-based data especially in the field of sociomaterial work practices (Hindmarsh and Llewellyn, 2018). Furthermore, Christianson states that “when analysing video recordings, the ability to rewind the video and watch it over and over again enables [...] qualitative coders to inductively build theory, returning to the video as the focus of their study changes or deepens.” (p. 262).

In this study I have used publicly available video material as the data that I am analysing. In chapter 4 I elaborate on the methodological considerations of this thesis.

1.5 Structure of thesis

In chapter 2 I briefly explain an outline of film production practices and how these have been studied historically. In part 2.1 I provide a brief description of how the process of developing a film can unfold. This description is a simplified version of the process, and as noted in the chapter the local variations of the process are multiple. However, this part is informative in the sense that it situates the analysis and discussion in this thesis in a background of practices outlined in part 2.1. In part 2.2 I present existing theory and research on film production practices and argue why taking a practice-based approach is relevant.

In chapter 3 I argue for the practice theory approach. I discuss the theory of social practices by explaining the distinctions between *praxis*, *practices*, and *practitioners*. Towards the background of my discussion I present conversation analysis as a viable methodological tool to observe practices in naturally occurring video data.

In chapter 4 I display the necessary methodological frameworks which are utilised in this thesis; these include the data, analysis, transcription method, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

In chapter 5 I present the empirical material and findings that I arrive at through the methods of conversation analysis. I conclude this thesis in chapter 6 by discussing and analysing these findings from the practice-based perspective.

2. Film development practices

Within this chapter we will explore film development practices, and briefly discuss to what extent and through what means these practices have been researched previously. The aim is to provide sufficient background of film practices as a way to situate this thesis, as well as aiding the reader of this thesis.

Film development refers to the part of film production when an idea is developed into an executable project. *Film production* can be taken to mean both the practice of producing a film from start to ‘finish’ and the part of the production when the film is shot. While development can span over several phases a general notion exists that after the script has been developed to a sufficient shape the film's pre-production is commenced. Pre-production consists of organising practices that enable the actual film shoots. This thesis is in some sense focused on the development part of filmmaking practices which is why more focus will be directed towards that area of production. However, practices are not isolated concepts, they are affected by countless variables which is also evident in film production practices. Thus, discussion in this chapter will not solely concern the *development* part of film production.

The chapter starts with an introduction to how a film is produced. After that we move on to discuss how these practices have been researched in the academic fields and consider what the earlier research can inform us about film production practices.

2.1 A primer on motion picture development

The process for an idea to a finished motion picture in distributions is not a predetermined process that transpires identically each time. Social processes like film production vary to a great degree, especially if we compare the process of productions in different countries. However certain aspects can be described on a general level to illustrate what phases are typically passed when producing a film. I will discuss these phases first.

The process of making a film can be a long undertaking with many different phases (Eliashberg et al., 2006). In the outline of the film production process Eliashberg et

al. (2007) identify the 'pitch' as one of the earliest forms of what later is developed into a full-length motion picture. According to Eliashberg et al. (2006), film producers decide which pitches are taken into production; most of these are never completed.

A pitch or a script can be purchased by studios after which they are often developed inhouse. Deciding on which of these properties will be developed to a stage where they are 'green lighted', the decision to start production on a film, is mostly an organisational issue within the US film industry perspective (Elaishberg et al, 2006). The process by which films are developed to the point that the production is undertaken varies. For example, from a Finnish film industry perspective the development of a script can be a process between only a few key roles before funding is secured and the pre-production of the film is started (Hyytiä, 2006). The key roles here are; producer, director, and script-writer. The latter of the two roles is often performed by the same person. However, the modest size of teams that develop film in Finland is a remnant of how film production has historically been practised in the country as today the majority of films are produced by studios or film production companies where more than one person has had the opportunity to impact on the content of script in development (Vermilä & Keinonen, 2021).

Financers for the film are pursued in an early stage of developing a script. In the US market production companies can sign contracts with major studios that ease the financing of films (Eliashberg et al., 2006). Typically, if a major studio is producing a film or the film is produced by a production studio affiliated with a major studio, the film will be released in theatres. In these cases, the majority of the production financing is provided by the studios (Rusco & Walls, 2003). If the film is an independently financed film a production company might be set up solely for the production of one film, these might not be released in theatres. Production companies can seek to independently finance the films by securing funding from private equity firms, film funding companies, and negotiating on future rights of the finished production with other third-party funders (Rusco & Walls, 2003). These practices might vary regionally, and for example many of the Nordic countries have government funded incentive schemes that support audiovisual productions in their respective countries as well as co-productions between productions companies set in different countries (Bondebjerg et al., 2010).

Once the script or pitch owner either finds collaborators or companies that want to develop the film, or the script is purchased by a studio and enters development, then the planning of the film production becomes more systematic (Russell, 2015). At this point the development of what kind of film will be produced is driven by the decisions of stakeholders within a studio or production company, and the individual sensemaking practices that are applied by them. Several projects stagnate in development, but those garnering interest usually proceed (Russel, 2015).

At this point distributors are possibly already attached to the product, and for example within the Finnish context these distributors might also have a say regarding the in what artistic direction the film is developed, but the level of influence varies especially regarding what kind of audiovisual format the script is is being developed for (Vermilä & Keinonen, 2021).

Once the financing has been secured producers of the films can start working on the pre-production. The pre-production includes a myriad of tasks and plans, but some of the most central tasks are finding a director, casting actors, and hiring heads of department (HODs). The latter are persons responsible for the different departments that constitute a film shoot, such as the lighting department or the camera department. These HODs, together with the producer (s) and director, plan and prep for the shoot.

As I am focusing on the development process of film production I will not go into great detail about the process after pre-production. However, after the filming has finished the post-production starts. In post-production the film is edited and the planning for the distribution and marketing for the film is started. The film is then distributed either in theatrical release or through digital channels and streaming services, and possibly entered in film festivals. The complete process from idea to screen can take several years, and sometimes even decades.

2.2 Film production in research

In this part I will discuss to some length about how the academic studies within the field of organisation and management, and to some extent sociology, have approached the subject of film production. I will argue that the study of motion

picture production lacks a perspective of the actions that starting a production entail and I will go on to argue that taking a practice approach will be the most suitable way of addressing this area of research.

The motion picture industry has been an interest for many researchers within economic and organisation studies (Eliashberg, Elberse & Leenders, 2006). For the most part the interest has been in elaborating on different aspects pertaining to the performance of a motion picture product through quantitative methods, and in a literature review about the very subject Hadida (2009) indicates how this interest towards performance has increased especially in the late 1990's and early 2000's. The interest towards the film industry is also evident in Peltoniemi's (2015) review, where she studies the research of mass market cultural industries in management and organisation studies. Most of the 314 reviewed articles (137 pc.) addressed film industries in some capacity (for reference, the second most studied industry was the music industry, which was addressed in 87 out of the 314 articles). Investigating why such a vast interest exists towards the film industry is not the aim of this thesis, but as Peltoniemi speculates, the popularity of researching cultural industries stems not only from the economic and policy connections of those industries, but also from "researchers' passion for and interest in sectors such as film, music and video games." (Peltoniemi, 2015, p. 2). In the studies that addressed film, the least studied subjects were within the theme of industry dynamics (Peltoniemi, 2015). Similarly, Eliashberg, Elberse et al. (2006) recognize the lack of research in the dynamics of the production process of a film (p. 642). This argument is reiterated by Russell (2013) in his dissertation about the sensemaking processes of industry professionals in Hollywood.

Russell (2013) presents individual sensemaking practices of film producers, in his dissertation about film development in Hollywood. Russell's dissertation offers interesting insights on how practitioners rationalise their own heuristic approaches on decision making, framing it as a social process where producers navigate their practice according to what they think 'makes sense'. Russell is driven by the argument that these social processes have not been sufficiently investigated. Russell (2013) describes how decision makers in the industry understand and display their sensemaking practices. The social processes that Russell argues drive the film selection process follow either a logic of adhering to current formulas or are

furthered by the influence of highly regarded industry insiders. In different ways these phenomena advance certain productions in Hollywood.

However, if these discursive practices are taken at face value, especially in academic research, much is lost trying to generate film selection tools and models based on information posited to be founded on ‘objective’ data. This is highlighted in Eliashberg et al.'s (2007) research paper where they pursue an objective to develop a film selection tool that statistically analyses storylines in films, which they compare to historical data on box office success of films having similar story ‘traits’. The aim with such a tool is to render the selection of which films to develop more efficient, and garner higher financial returns. The problem however lies in their assumptions that the story is one of, if not the central, aspect that determines the success of a film. Their assumptions originate from discursive practices and statements by film practitioners about the centrality of a ‘good script’, “the rationale for our approach is simple. As industry insiders acknowledge, a good story line is the foundation for a successful movie” (Eliashberg et al., 2007, p. 882). In reality, or something closer to reality, there is no such thing as a simple rationale to which film will be successful, as was extensively discussed by Russell (2013) in his dissertation. In his perspective, these statements can be seen as some of the several discursive practices of how success of certain films is justified *post-hoc*.

2.2.1 Organisation

In earlier organisation studies of the film industry Faulkner and Anderson (1987) describe film production as temporary project-based organisations. Interestingly in their quantitative findings was that between the 60’s and the late 80’s over a third of all the films produced in Hollywood were produced by only one tenth of the active producers which were regarded as the core of Hollywood producers. The study is over three decades old but it can still inform us about film organisation from a historical perspective.

The early sociological studies of film production in Hollywood were by Leo C. Rosten in the late 1930’s (Caldwell, 2006). Rosten’s studies of the film production practices in Hollywood were critical with the aim of addressing the perceived influence that motion pictures have on audiences and how the realities of production

have an effect, intended or not, on the final content which is released (Sullivan, 2009). According to Sullivan (2009) Rostens key contributions to the studies of film production are that “cultural production is firmly situated within social and economic networks” (p. 50) and that a focus on the tension between artistic and economic demands was, and still is, an important phenomenon to study.

A large part of the contemporary research of film production has been directed toward the selection process where the focus is on developing models through quantitative means that supports decision making regarding the choice of film projects (Eliashberg et al., 2007).

Eliashberg et al. (2007) study focuses on the econometric side of selection practices, and similarly to the studies discussed by Peltoniemi (2015), they emphasise the macro-organisational processes of motion picture production but not the microsocial process where selection occurs.

Within the organisation of film and tv- productions Manchester UK Johns (2010) found that the local networks are primarily the first points of contact for production companies when seeking funding. These local contacts can be broadcasters or third-party funders. Additionally, the process of hiring of crew and key personnel for the production was mainly through the personal networks and local practice networks of producers. Johns’s study highlights the importance of local proximity between actors, which is evident in the historical location of Hollywood studios.

How the collaboration between practitioners is organised, for example who has an impact on the creative outcome, depends on the directors' individual practices, according to Flocco et al. (2018) who studied creative leadership in filmmaking through media discourse. According to their interpretation the directors’ practices can range from autocratic to democratic levels of creative control in the film development process.

Hadida et al. (2021) look at decision making within the film industry, from an ‘institutional logics’ perspective. Institutional logics are “the formal and informal rules of” (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804) specific social organisations that individuals have internalised and use subjectively to regulate their behaviour to achieve organisational goals (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Hadida et al. (2021) argue

that the changing landscape of digital distribution of films has impacted key decision makers' selection processes. As the conventional way of deciding what films to produce in major studios emerge by heuristics geared towards box office success, the new digital landscape of film distribution has brought about another logic that streaming services are guided by. This new logic is focused on attracting long term customers by offering a broader and more specific supply, according to Hadida et al. (2021).

Mould (2009) describes how film practices can be productively studied through Actor-network theory (ANT), as film industries characterised by their temporary project based organisations are examples of an industry where ANT can offer a richer empirical description of the practices within it. ANT is like practice theory a perspective that focuses on how actors within a network of practice connect and interact to produce an organisation of work (Mould, 2009) (here actors refers to nodes in organisations having the ability to take action not *film actors*). Like practice theory, which is discussed in the next chapter, the ANT perspective does not look at structures but the practices and their connectedness.

2.2.2 Work

Working within the film industry is characterised by working on short term projects where practitioners are hired on temporary basis by production companies that produce films (DeFilippi & Arthur, 1998). A general notion within the filmmaking industry is that work is fast-paced and requires constant project seeking to secure one's future employment (Mehta, 2017). The industry is notorious for the scandals and harsh working environment and questionable practices have been reported in several filmmaking regions some of which have been known but only recently taken seriously by the public (Sorensen, 2018). The representation of gender and sociocultural diversity in key roles is poor (Christopherson, 2008).

Randle et al. (2015) find that “underrepresented” worker groups within the field of film and television in UK, felt the barriers to enter the field were effects of the ‘classes’ that they themselves identified to represent, how the work was organised, (short term projects), and how the hiring and collaborations practices were organised (network and informal recruitment). From a Bourdesian perspective, Randle et al

interpret that the informants in their study regarded the attainment of different forms of capital, social, economic, or cultural, as a requirement to gain access to central work within the field. Their study offers interesting ideas about the sensemaking practices within a field of culture production, but as they point out themselves, they did not pursue investigation into *how* these attributes were ascribed to practitioners in practice.

Alvarez et al. (2005) study how film directors, who diverge from a perceived mainstream culture of filmmaking, shape their own structures within their filmmaking practices and how these structures protect the directors' "idiosyncratic identities from the isomorphic pressures of the field." (p. 883). From a new institutional perspective, Alvarez et al. argue that film directors who are known for their own particular filmmaking styles, resist the canonical pressure of the filmmaking field through three identified tactics. One of these tactics is to assume a role of 'writer-director', this, they say, is a specific tactic that the filmmaker does to "obtain degrees of freedom in the pursuit of exclusivity and inclusion." (Alvarez et al., 2005, p. 875). Additionally, Alvarez et al. say that the studied directors shield their own filmmaking vision by establishing a close collaboration partnership with a trusted producer as "A stable director–producer partnership enhances the director's control over the artwork" (p. 878). The third means to the ends of controlling artistic vision, according to Alvarez et al., is by setting up shop and establishing an exclusive production company because it "allows the grouping and management of artistic and business inputs from within, thus accentuating a director's idiosyncrasy." (p.880). Alvarez et al. go on to theorise how this all leads to the filmmakers producing their own microstructures and "their own iron cages of personally imposed (isomorphic) pressures and normative standards." (p. 884). Alvarez et al. present an interesting study from the perspective of new institutionalism and institutional logics. Theories and studies that adhere to institutionalism can be complementary to practice-based perspectives (Loundsbury et al., 2021) and we will touch upon this subject in the next chapter. While Alvarez et al. study established directors work through secondary sources and media analysis, Elsbach and Kramer (2003) take a more macrosocial perspective in their study of film pitching.

Elsbach and Kramer (2003) study the process through which expert decision makers assess the potential of a creative project. The context of their study is a film pitch

meeting, and their intention is to “investigate how expert decision makers judge the creative potential of other people in situations in which such assessments must be made on the basis of purely subjective evidence provided during interpersonal interaction” (p. 284). Elsbach and Kramer argue that a severe lack of research has been directed on this subject. They position themselves in a systems view on assessing creativity, defining it as an intersubjective phenomenon that exists between people and where certain persons (gatekeepers) have the means to deem someone as displaying ‘creative prototypes’. They argue that decision makers adopt cognitive schemes to assess the creativity of pitchers pitching film or television ideas. These schemata they say are based on stereotypes associated with creative individuals and the “dynamic, relational cues perceived as indicating collaborative potential”, i.e., if the decision makers experience fondness of the pitchers. Elsbach and Kramer (2003) highlight the importance of the dynamics of context, but many questions are left unanswered of how the process actually unfolds. The research does, interestingly enough, move closer to the actual situation of ‘doing’ practice, which they highlight as beneficial and somewhat novel in creativity assessment research. However, the psychological view on social judgement displayed in the study does not take into account the complexity impact of social interactional situations, nor does it address how commonly understood social structures might have an effect on the judgement process.

This area of study, where the processes within cultural production are investigated, has not been much researched. Peltoniemi (2015) mentions that “research on selectors has ignored the processes through which the power to select is assigned.” (p. 15). In other words, how cultural products are ‘selected’ and through which processes some are assigned the resources to accomplish this activity. In this instance selector is another word for gatekeeper.

According to Foster et al. (2011) gatekeepers are “brokers who mediate between artists and audiences” (p. 248) and explain that there exists at least three distinctive types of a gatekeeping role in cultural production; “as co-producer, as tastemaker, and as selector” (p. 248). While this study is not designed to investigate gatekeeping practices *per se*, it inevitably becomes a relevant question in the context of film pitching competition, where the judging side of the competition is also those who choose the winner of the competition, and can be seen as a typical gatekeeping

practice. However, within the framework of practice theory and conversation analysis, which is discussed in chapter three, such a categorization should be invoked through actually investigating how and why the judges' work in pitching competitions 'fits' the description of gatekeeping.

Within the context of film industry gatekeeping, Strandvad (2009) studies the activities of Danish government film consultants who work with filmmakers in a collaborative practice of funding and development. Strandvad suggests that the work of organisational representatives who function as both selectors and developers within cultural fields could be more aptly described as cultural intermediation contrary to gatekeeping, as their work is more dynamically involved in the production process than the typical 'gatekeeper' definition implies.

Additionally a study about the dynamics between the key decision makers in film production has been conducted by Hyytiä (2004). She finds that in the work of developing the film, collaborators work for long periods of time together, constantly negotiating to produce an outcome, which at times can be taxing on the individual practitioner. Hyytiäs study is situated in the context of the Finnish film industry at the beginning of the millennia. As discussed earlier, the practices and organisations within the Finnish film industry have experienced a great deal of change during the last couple of decades (Vermilä & Keinonen, 2021). However, Hyytiäs study focuses on the emotional aspects of work which I think offer more enduring perspectives than the accounting of organisational or practical forms within the industry might offer.

Finally, Cattani and Ferrani (2008) studied the social networks in the filmmaking industry and found that filmmaking practitioners not only had to display their creative abilities in order to establish themselves as respected practitioners within a local context. They also accomplished considerable work in order to manage their social networks and ties, which proved to be a substantial aspect in shaping the practitioners positioning within a filmmaking practice network.

2.3 Concluding remarks

The first part of this chapter highlights the fact that any film that has made it to screens, at home or in a cinema, has most probably been the product of a long and unique process. A process which has different local variations.

The earlier research that I have discussed above shows a plethora of methods and perspectives that can be assumed when investigating the film industry. Most of the research focuses on economic, structural and commercial components using quantitative methods. But, I have also discussed studies that investigate film industries through qualitative methods as well, and for example Mould's application of ANT for the purpose of studying production practices is distinctive in this regard.

The discussions highlight how film production research is typically investigated from a dichotomous perspective. Either individual sensemaking processes are highlighted or the research concerns general organisational level phenomena, without exploring the actual processes and instances of practice where work is accomplished. If we for example think about a pivotal moment in a film's production, we could highlight the practice of finding collaborators to work with on a film project. But studies rarely if ever have looked at instances where this might actually occur, or where parts of it will. If we want to know what the practices consist of, we need to look at the actual work being accomplished. Interviewing practitioners' or analysing how organisational moves have impacted the industry, undeniably yields valuable information of the sensemaking and discursive practices of practitioners, and meaningful quantifications of the industry, but from a practice perspective, we cannot see how these processes unfold in real situations.

I believe that through adopting a practice-based perspective, film production practices can be investigated in a way that addresses the internal process through which practices are accomplished. In the next chapter, I will discuss practice theory and conversation analysis, and what adopting a perspective situated within these might entail.

3. Practice theory and conversation analysis

“A practice is a social phenomenon in the sense that it embraces multiple people. The activities that compose it, moreover, are organised. The second commonality is the idea that important features of human life must be understood as forms of, or as rooted in, human activity – not the activity of individuals, but in practices, that is, in the organised activities of multiple people.” (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13)

Practice theory (henceforth PT) is an assemblage of research streams that pursue the theoretical proposition that social practices can potentially explain social activity. The aim of this chapter is to develop a heuristic approach founded on practice theory principles. It should be pointed out that PT is no more *true* than other theories that attempt to explain the social (Reckwitz, 2002), but it offers a unique perspective that I believe offers rich and novel descriptions of social reality. Analysing practices in action can be accomplished through research methods inspired by an ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Miettinen et al. 2009). Next we will address practice theorising from a perspective which is mostly relevant for this thesis and for what I consider to be foundational for my work practices and how to study them.

3.1 Establishing a practice-based perspective

Adopting a practice-based perspective has considerable implications, as Schatzki (2001) contends that a practice perspective implicates not only the unit of analysis, but also an ontological understanding on how the social works. Cunliffe (2011) underscores that researchers should reflect over their assumptions of knowledge and reality, in order to produce rich descriptions of the realities that are investigated. These metatheoretical positionings include the epistemological and ontological assumption through which a researcher sees the studied surroundings. What these assumptions consist of impacts the outcome of the research, Cunliffe argues. Thus, the purpose of this discussion is to illustrate some foundational concepts of a practice-based approach with a research method inspired by conversation analysis, to

illustrate why such a perspective offers a unique view on organisation, which is applied to the analysis of the empirical material.

PT has a scattered history in social science, but new-found interest has been directed towards it as a theory for social organisation (Miettinen et al., 2009). PT offers a novel perspective on human agency, the ability to ‘do and say things’ out of free will that accomplishes certain work, as part of wider social structures, which is a conflictual perspective to dominating theories of organisation (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011).

The field of PT is fragmented (Schmidt, 2018) and the authors within the field are not entirely in agreement on what practice theory is (Schatzki, 2001; Nicolini, 2012; Schmidt, 2018). Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens, and Michel Foucault are some of the authors responsible for the foundations of practice theory as we know it today (Schmidt, 2018), as well as the philosophers Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein (Hui et al., 2017). In the field of organisation, PT is presented as a viable ontology by authors such as Davide Nicolini, Elizabeth Shove, Andreas Reckwitz, and Silvia Gherardi among others (Lammi, 2018). Gherardi (2016) believes that many researchers agree on some fundamental elements of practices which are “actions, individuals, contexts, artefacts, rules, symbols, texts, discourses, and embeddedness” (p. 682). According to Gherardi (2016), the disagreement lies in which role they play in social practices.

PT is an umbrella term for social science theories having some common argumentative characteristics and, according to Reckwitz (2002), offers a unique perspective on the makings of social life. The start of the contemporary use of PT in social science today has its beginning in the 1970’s (Reckwitz, 2002). Its foundation lies in the dissatisfaction with “the purpose-oriented and the norm-oriented models of explaining action” (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 246). Instead of analysing for example strategy as an entity or fund procurement practices as governed by rigid exogenous structures, research through a PT perspective would strive “to understand how actions produce outcomes” (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011, p.1249) that are a part of strategy or fund procurement practices. In other words, practice theory grants no primacy to either the subjectivist or objectivist explanation to social action, as Schmidt (2018) states, practice theory tries to “primarily strike at ‘objectivism’ [...]

while keeping ‘subjectivism’ [...] in check” (p. 3). Or as Whittington so succinctly describes it “Practice theorists aim to respect both the efforts of individual actors and the workings of the social.” (Whittington, 2006, p. 614). Explained in different terms, individuals perform social actions voluntarily, and not strictly determined by norms or objective exogenous social structures. Further, “practices consist in organised sets of actions” (Hui et al., 2017) and Schatzki (2001) argues that these practices form the basis of human sociality.

In PT ‘practices’ does not refer to individual (or individuals’) action (s), but to a collection of multiple peoples’ actions that accomplish a social practice (Schatzki, 2012). PT offers a perspective on organisation and social interaction as “an ongoing production and thus emerges through people’s recurrent actions” (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011, p. 1240). In other words, through the practice lens social organisation is an ongoing production that emerges from social action engaged in by human actors. Different social practices are accomplished, maintained, and transformed in emerging situational contexts that are socially constructed.

PT challenges perspectives that posit the social to be based only on cognitive functions and/or subjective perceptions, and perspectives that the social is rigidly structured, and human agency is only possible within the boundaries of a structure (Nicolini, 2012). The focus is instead on social practices, as the foundation for human interaction (Schatzki, 2001). Therefore, an explanation of what is meant when theorising social practices is central (Lammi, 2018).

3.2 Practitioners, praxis, and practices

Identifying activities that constitute some of the elements relevant for the profession under scrutiny is not an easy task but is an important question to explore. In this part I address some of the characteristics for social practices in order to attain a better comprehension of what I mean.

Firstly, an elaboration on the distinction of different practice terminology. Three words that are often used when approaching practice theory are, ‘practitioners’, ‘praxis’, and ‘practices’ (Whittington, 2006). Praxes (plural of praxis) are the activities that are performed to accomplish a practice. The practice in turn is the

connected mental and physical activities, as well as materialities, that form a socially shared practice. These praxes are carried out by practitioners that embody several practices simultaneously (Whittington, 2007). All three of these constructs are interrelated and connected in a practice perspective (Whittington, 2006). Below I will discuss how these can be distinguished within a PT perspective.

3.2.1 Praxis

The term *praxis* refers to the activities and actions that are performed by individuals when accomplishing a practice (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). Central to a practice approach is to study the everyday actions of work (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). Applying this line of reasoning, looking at the actions a manager and the ‘managed’ engage in while in work interaction informs the analyst better of what the practice of management might be, than other forms of investigation. “Praxis forms practitioners” (Whittington, 2006, p. 627) and in addition to forming practitioners, praxis also forms practices (Jarzabowski, et al., 2007).

These actions, or sayings and doings, can be part of several practices simultaneously (Nicolini, 2012) and as such a perspective is considered, practice theory can be seen as a flat ontology (Lammi, 2018). This implies that no distinction between micro and macro phenomena exists, which are typically distinct in ‘tall ontologies’ where “a tall ontological view begins from the point of view that there is something in the ‘macro’ that conditions the micro” (Lammi, 2018, p. 225).

The activities can be carried out by individuals, but practice theory takes materiality in different forms and gives *things* agentic value (Lammi, 2018). This means that objects and artefacts are part of the activity network of a practice, and have the ability to take action. However, individuals carry out praxis through intelligibility and intentionality (Schatzki, 2002), meaning they understand what they do and why they do it. “Intelligibility can be understood as a relational construct between humans and other entities, achieved through practices.” (Lammi, 2018, p. 48). Further on this theme, Gherardi (2016) argues that an individual's knowing and doing is not separate from each other, but emerge co-jointly.

Praxis can, in other words, take many different forms. What kind of praxis is central to a practice varies, but for instance language, in its many different forms like;

conversations, sayings, discourse, texts, play a crucial role in several practices (Schatzki, 2017). If we were to draw up an analogy of a painter, her praxes could include creating paintings, procuring equipment, and mixing paint, to name a few, which are the “the closely observed activity of” (Whittington, 2006, p. 628) painting praxes.

3.2.2 Practices

Social actions are collectively understood actions performed by individuals (Schatzki, 2012). Individuals perform social actions voluntarily, and not strictly, determined by norms or objective, exogenous social structures (Schatzki, 2002).

Practices, in turn, are the local manifestations of mutable “pattern[s] which can be filled out by a multitude of single and often unique actions reproducing the practice” (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 250). In other words, practices are the embodied shared understandings of how practices are performed and locally produced and reproduced, but the impacts of which are boundaryless (Whittington, 2006). Further, Practices consist of organised action performed through bodily expressions of knowledgeable individuals and artefacts. A practice is processual, generating order as it unfolds over time (Schatzki, 2001). These smaller actions and events are what comprises practices, and within a practice-based approach these everyday sayings and doings that display practices, are brought into focus, instead of focusing on the macro structures of organisations as phenomena in itself (Nicolini, 2012)

The organisation of practices can be theorised in different ways, one of which is Schatzki’s (2002) description of how practices are arranged, “a practice is a temporally evolving, open-ended set of doings and sayings linked by practical understandings, rules, teleoaffective structure, and general understandings” (p. 87). Practical understanding is the ability of a person, who is part of a practice, to understand what is going on and how to carry out a practice. Rules as part of a practice are the explicitly stated ways of doing a practice, “Rules are programmes of action that specify what to do.” (Nicolini, 2012, p. 166). This is a mysteryless aspect of practice that links actions together, according to Nicolini (2012) although some interpretation on the application and relevance of rules is required by individuals in practice.

Teleoaffective structure is possibly the more elusive aspect that links actions together within Schatzki's perspective. As Nicolini describes it, teleoaffective structure is the way "all practices unfold according to a specific direction and 'oughtness', or 'how they should be carried out'" (p. 166). Another way to describe it, is how the order of the actions that we performed is based on the feeling of how a particular practice should be accomplished, while pursuing the ends achieved by the practice (Lammi, 2018). The teleoaffective structure of a practice is both negotiated and emerging interactionally in situational contexts, and is not an immutable formation. Further, the teleoaffective structure "is learned by novices through instruction and corrections when they are socialised into a practice" (Nicolini, 2012, p. 166) and works in an enabling and restrictive way. The fourth principle, general understanding, is the practitioners' "reflexive understandings of the overall project in which people are involved" (Nicolini, 2012, p. 166). In other words, how the persons involved in a practice implicitly or explicitly understands the purpose of actions and practices is the general understanding shared by practitioners.

Different practices are related to each other, and can be dependent on one another, and the dependence on practices can be seen to be organised by importance to the organisational aim (Seidl & Whittington, 2020). For example, Seidl and Whittington (2020) illustrated how the dependence of practices were drawn attention to in a global pandemic crisis, where some practices were uprooted in order to avoid having to relinquish other, perhaps more important, practices.

The practice perspective adopts a perspective that social life consists of practices that are linked together and can overlap, and one can still talk about 'larger' phenomena without implicating that these larger phenomena determine the investigated practice, but that the larger phenomena are part of other, possibly overlapping, actions that constitute different practices (Lammi, 2018). These practices "fill out the social context in which people proceed" (Schatzki, 2017). In this view, context is the 'history' of practices.

Continuing on the painter analogy, practices could be understood as, the local understanding of what is a good painting, how exhibitions work to legitimise a painter, and what techniques are considered appropriate in the field, for instance. These are social in the sense that they can be accomplished interactionally, but also

individually in private. Private practices are still social as they are performed through an understanding that relates to other practices and practitioners. A painter cannot convince other practitioners of innovative painting methods, if the painter cannot illustrate how these are better and novel to that which came before.

3.2.3 Practitioners

Finally, the *practitioners* are individuals that are carriers of these practices, who performatively accomplish these practices through bodily routines (Schatzki, 2002), and are shaped by praxis. However, all individuals are carriers of multiple practices (Schatzki, 2002) and are not bound deterministically to a single one.

The different practice perspectives attribute different degrees of centrality to the role individuals play in social practices (Gherardi, 2016). However, in Schatzki's (2002) perspective, individuals are often regarded as the carriers of practice, and through bodily sayings and doings, practices are enacted in different situations. Through a practice lens, the individual can intelligibly participate in practices by relating to "different symbolic structures of knowledge" according to Reckwitz (2002, p. 245). The distinction that practice theory brings forth, is the individual's orientation to a shared symbolic knowledge that that enables or restricts them, in contrast to perspectives that would describe the individuals knowledge as stemming from either the mind, or from knowledge that exists separately from the individual in the form of structures of normative social behaviour (Reckwitz, 2002). The fact that individuals have agency within practice theory is still second to the basic tenet of the theory where the activity, i.e. what is conducted in practice, is more central to any practice than the individual and their thoughts (Nicolini, 2012).

Individuals as carriers of practice, who are considered as influential in their respective social field, have an advantageous position to impact how practices are shaped and legitimised in certain fields (Whittington, 2006). These "Actors' particular activities cannot be detached from society, for the rules and resources it furnishes are essential to their action. Society is, in turn, itself produced by just this action" (Whittington, 2006, p. 615).

What these can be taken to mean in the painter analogy, is that they are seen as the practitioner that carries out these activities in their praxis through relating to the practice of painting (and other practices) as a heuristic guiding their decisions.

3.3 Social practices

What practice theory seeks out to explore, is the possibility that human social actions are carried out according to standards that the individual, in a given situation, understands to be the socially shared, reasonable, action aimed at specific ends in a specific practice. Theodore Schatzki is among those who have sought to explain the characteristics of social practices as a theoretical concept (Lammi, 2001). Schatzki (2002) argues that social practices are collections of “bodily doings and sayings“ and new “actions are continually perpetuating and extending practices temporally successively over a period of time” (p. 73). In other words, actions that take place in a coherent process and belong together with each other because they are accomplished in the pursuit of certain ends for a practice (Lammi, 2018), and these practices constitute the organisation of the social (Schatzki, 2002).

For Schatzki, social practice means adopting a new and unique ontological thinking, which means that not only are practices the unit of analysis in studying the social, but are constitutive of the social as a whole (Schatzki, 2001). The three parts of practice theory, praxis, practice, and practitioners is a helpful way to describe practice theory in an instructive light.

Recent development has also led to the formative alliances being drawn between institutionalism and practice theory. Schatzki (2021) presents how practice theory can be supplemented by institutionalism and the concept of institutional logics. Institutions in institutionalism are “diffuse, long-standing, and far-reaching entities that pervade social life or form contexts for particular events and actions” and “persisting pervasive behavioral patterns” (Schatzki, 2021, p. 127). For Schatzki, the perspective of institutionalism can serve as an illustration of how practices can be conceptualised in a wider scope. In his perspective practices could be explained as the small slices that constitute institutions and their reproduction, these practices are linked by the activities that in institutionalism is called ‘institutional substance’

which Schatzki (2021) regards to be the same concept as ‘general understandings’ in PT.

Social practices, according to Feldman and Orlikowski (2011), can be studied in three different ways; empirically focusing on actual work, theoretically linking actions and social structures, and a philosophically driven investigation on practices as fundamental to understanding human sociality. The main focus in this thesis will emphasise social practices that are accomplished in real life settings of work and social interaction with the perspective that these “doings of everyday life are seen as constituting a foundation for social order and institutions” (Miettinen et al., 2009, p. 1312). Within Feldman and Orlikowski’s framework, the focus lies on empirically investigating locally situated actual ‘doing’ of work, as well as considering how these actions are linked to possible social structures that are being produced and maintained.

However, one can go about multiple ways to explain practice theory and the discussion above is merely one of them. It should not be regarded as an exhaustive explanation as PT offers tremendous theoretical depth if one is willing to plunge in. Continuing, I will address why I believe that conversation analysis offers an interesting tool within the scope of this thesis, for analysing practices in naturally occurring video data.

3.4 Conversation analysis as a tool to see practice

Conversation analysis (CA) is a subcategory of ethnomethodology. (Silverman, 2014). The aim of ethnomethodology “is to provide convincing accounts of the methods used by members to produce and reproduce organisation and society” (Nicolini, 2012, p. 135). As a subcategory, CA is primarily focused on talk as action (Peräkylä, 2004). It offers a unique method for analysis of praxis in interaction. We know that practices are not solely enacted in interactional settings, but they undeniably constitute a considerable part of them (Reckwitz, 2002). Using the methods inspired by CA, we can observe and analyse how praxes are enacted in interaction. This part will present important arguments in order to understand why using CA is a usable tool in studying practice.

3.4.1 Analysing social interaction

Even though practice theory does not afford primacy to social interactions as the producer of sociality, in the sense that social interactionist theories do, the phenomena of social interaction plays an important role in our production of practices (Rackwitz, 2002). Goffman (1983) contends that the impact of situated social interaction has a considerable impact on social structuring, and indicates that a large part of organisational work is accomplished in socially interactional situations. With these considerations in mind, the potential of analysing social interactions as a way to learn more of our social structuring, is highlighted. By analysing social interactional situations, a researcher “can start to recover how people produce ordinary activities in ways that exhibit an orientation to apparently over-arching considerations.” (Llewellyn et al., 2009, p. 1433).

Nicolini emphasises that CA, “suggests that the only legitimate way of theorising practice is by providing exemplars and instructive descriptions” (Nicolini, 2013, p.147). In other words, CA makes it possible for the researcher to orient themselves to the actual unfolding of interaction where work occurs. Work being in this case the individual's orientation to accomplishing specific ends for the purpose of the work identity that they orient to in the interactional setting. However, this thesis does not argue that CA is the *only* way, but *a* way. To further support the choice of method I turn to Llewellyn and Hindmarsh (2010) who stated:

”As practice-based studies are centrally concerned with the detail of ‘ordinary activities’ there is no need to bend or twist ethnomethodological terms and categories [...] Thus ethnomethodology and conversation analysis have rightly been presented as a distinctive approach to engage the burgeoning interest in ‘practice’ in organisation studies” (p.11).

3.4.2 What to observe?

Ethnomethodology (and in connection CA) refers to an analytical gaze that studies, in detail, humans everyday activities and practices, in other words, the methods through which individuals conduct social life. (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). Ethnomethodology is the study of “members talk and conduct” (Garfinkel, 1967, p.

11). Adopting a conversational analytical gaze implies that one investigates “practices [...] as spatio-temporal accomplishments obtained by knowledgeable actors who use a variety of (ethno) methods, tools, techniques, and procedures.”(Nicolini, 2012, p.134). This also means that in the frame of the analysis, other categories, such as exogenous contexts and social structures are not invoked, *a priori*, by the researcher “unless they play a visible role in the conduct of an actor” studied (Nicolini, 2012, p. 134). In the analysis of this thesis, we will comply with this principle, but the unseen factors that might impact practice are more freely explored in the discussion in chapter 6.

As Schatzki (2017) indicates, the different activities that are included in practices are many, one of which is “conversation [...] To theorise it, practice theorists might draw on the established body of work called ‘conversational analysis’” (p. 133).

CA has two ‘programs’. The first is ‘basic’ CA which takes an interest in normal everyday talk between individuals. The second is interested in the analysis of talk specific to particular social organisations, where the participants' communication observably reveals an orientation to the organisation, and its objectives, at hand. (Heritage, 2005; Lewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010). Within the vocabulary of CA, such talk is called ‘institutional talk’ (Lewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010). Institutional CA focuses on “linguistic resources at various levels [...] which all are mobilised to accomplish the interactional work of institutions.” (Drew & Sorjonen, 1997, p. 1). This institutional talk can also be conceptualised as institutional interaction, which Arminen (2005) describes as a “type of social interaction in which the participants (A and B) orient to an institutional context (C) [...] for accomplishing their distinctive institutional actions” (p. 32).

Not establishing context before analysis is an important principle in CA, instead context is derived from the publicly stated orientations by the studied actors (Nicolini, 2012). Chalmers and Shaw (2017) remark that typically, in organisation research, “context is treated as an exogenous constraint, judiciously established by the researcher (and, notably, not the data subject).” (p. 22), which gives the researcher an unbalanced influence on producing the context. From a CA perspective, talk and interaction are contextually two-layered. Firstly they are

understood as the ‘immediate context’ where talk and action is understood, and secondly, they are situated in the ‘larger’ context of action (Chalmers & Shaw, 2017).

Similarly as in the theories of individual agency in practice theory CA approaches context and structure as something which is continuously reproduced and reshaped by members' interaction, instead of the assumption that an exogenous structure according to which members actions are determined exists (Heritage, 2005). In CA different institutional contexts can be invoked, and the unfolding of interaction can have multiple possible trajectories, depending on what context and identities the members involved in the interaction orient to. A major task in CA is showing how these members orient to these contexts, what they achieve by it and how it shapes the ongoing construction of the local context, which is accomplished through pointing at evidence that the members themselves present (Heritage, 2005). As Arminen (2005) describes it “in studying institutional interaction, then, the task is not only to identify and describe sequential patterns but to analyse and detail their use in the accomplishment of the institutional activity” (p. 37). The objective with approaching practice with methods inspired by CA, is to see how practices are oriented to in interaction, through sayings and doings.

In the situation where practitioners enact praxis, two things are achieved according to Garfinkel (1967). They produce the specific local setting and render these settings understandable. The practices are, in other words, reflexive and analyzable (Garfinkel, 1967). And by studying practices in interaction, the researcher might see how practitioners “display a [...] orientation to the institutional relevancies at hand and how they may accomplish an institutional activity through the interactional practice.” (Arminen, 2005, pp. 49-50). However, as Nicolini and Monteiro (2017) contends, practice is more than only seeing what people say and do, sayings and doings are a starting point for practice researchers. Using methods inspired by CA, I aim to look at this starting point, the sayings and doings, in order to see the relation to other practices (Nicolini, 2017).

3.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I presented a brief overview of practice theory within social science.

I have relied to a large extent on Schatzki's explanations of practice. However we have also found support in many other authors' work, to establish a practice-based outlook in this thesis. The three main categories that I have chosen as support for explaining practice has been the distinction between, practices, practitioners, and praxis. Practices are the collections of activities that fulfil certain goals, praxis is the process and enactment of these activities, and practitioners are the embodied carriers of practices enacting praxis.

I have presented conversation analysis, as a subcategory of ethnomethodology, as a viable method for studying practitioners' interactional praxis *in situ*. I have highlighted how there already exist prior argumentation for the usage of CA in analysing practice, and how I will utilise methods inspired by the tenets of CA, without adhering to the strict methodological CA traditions, which grants some freedom in our discussion. As I argued, CA offers a great method to analyse the departing point in practice theory, which are the doings and sayings. These will then be discussed in the light of a practice perspective in chapter 6.

4. Methodology

In this chapter I will first outline the data that I have worked with within the scope of this thesis. I then move on to discuss the process of analysis adopted in this study, and the transcription method used to analyse the interaction. This chapter ends with considerations about the validity, reliability and ethics in this thesis.

4.1 Data

Using material recorded of physical interaction I can draw on some established methods in order to gain an insight into how pitching sessions and interaction between pitchers and judges “shape and are shaped by institutional context” (Chalmers & Shaw, 2017, p. 28).

After searching for film pitches through many different search engine aggregators and sites, including; Vimeo, Youtube, Facebook, Duckduckgo, Google, Bing, I found around 10 different sorts of pitching events having taken place at some point in the last 5 years.

The pitch competition that I chose to analyse was published online publically and took place on the 28th of January 2020 during a prominent film festival in the US. The pitch was broadcast live, and posted on the organisation's Facebook pages (Independent Filmmaker Day, 2020). I specifically chose this recording for the fact that the recorded event transpires in a physical space where participants interact with each other, and the recording has minimal editing.

The benefit of using recorded video interaction alone gives me the opportunity to revisit the material over and over again instead of relying on fieldnotes and memory. Video-based research offers the opportunity to analyse interaction and practice on a detailed level (Hindmarsh and Llewellyn, 2018).

4.3 Analysis & Interpretation

CA offers a unique although trimmed view on practice as it looks at which practices individuals use to organise, make sense of the situation, and with what ‘vehicles’ the

context is produced. Some basic tenets for CA include that you only illustrate what the participants themselves use, show and act. Llewellyn and Spence (2009) note that one must still adopt some level of interpretation to know what is referenced in a certain situation although this interpretation concerns general understanding of ‘what is going on’ in the data observed.

Llewellyn and Hindmarsh (2010) argue that CA is used as a way of seeing that which the observed members see. In other words, I can orient myself as a researcher to see the film pitching setting in the same way as the people in the setting themselves orient their interaction and practices to that of being a part of a film pitch session.

The practices that members use achieve two things at the same time. They produce the specific local setting in which they are acted out and at the same time the actions render these settings understandable. In other words they are reflexive and become analyzable not only for participants but also for observers, according to Garfinkel (1967). Strictly speaking a researcher “is only possible to witness, as seemingly objective and concrete phenomena, a business presentation, a recruitment interview or an auction because they are continually being built and reproduced that way by members.” (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010, p. 4)

Peräkylä (2004) outlines a simplified process of utilising CA analysis even if the process in reality is not linear. CA investigation starts with the steps of selecting the sites of research, selecting the recording method, and transcription of data. After the data has been gathered the researcher starts an “unmotivated exploration of the data” (Peräkylä, 2004, p. 170). According to Peräkylä, the researcher is guided by intuition when looking at the data in order to find interesting departure points for the close analysis. In my work this has largely been true as I watched the recording several times, I then summarised the different pitches and questions generating a textual overview of the recording. I took note of the interactional moments that I found to be interesting for different reasons, and transcribed some of the moments of unfolding interaction. Instead of transcribing the complete data set, which in CA is a laborious task, one can explore the data to find instances that are then transcribed (Peräkylä, 2004).

The transcription allowed me as a researcher to become closely acquainted with the data. At this phase Peräkylä (2004) advises the researcher to ask questions like

“‘What is the action in this segment of data?’, ‘What are the relevant next actions that it gives rise to?’, ‘How is this action perceived by the other interactants, as shown in their responses to it?’” (2004, p. 170). With largely these questions in mind I present the observations of unfolding activity in chapter 5. As I am not strictly speaking conducting a precise CA study some of the steps become irrelevant.

An important task in CA is to show how different categories and identities are oriented to and invoked in institutional talk. Other programs that can be pursued through analysing institutional talk and interaction might be to show how something is relevant by pointing to where the members accomplish it *in situ*, that is, the categories they choose to invoke as it occurs in the original observed situation, according to Heritage (2005). Another task is to show how invoking or orienting to a specific identity or category is consequential, what effect does it have and how is it relevant?

In chapter 5 i highlight specific instances that i believe exemplify a span of unfolding interaction where organisational and “the institutional character of talk might be revealed” (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010, p. 32)

Peräkylä (2004) mentions that if the aim is to investigate institutional phenomena the last step in the research is to try and “understand the wider implications, for social relations and social structures, of the phenomenon under investigation.” (p. 173). Which is undertaken in chapter 6 in relation to practice theory.

To analyse practices I commence from Schatzki’s (2012) reasoning that analysing the usage of language is important to understand practices. Schatzki argues that speech and text, together with ‘doings’, work “best to conceptualise practices as combining the nondiscursive and discursive and not to distinguish between non discursive and discursive practices” (2021, p. 124). We can only, however, see fragments of practices (Lammi, 2018), meaning what is presented in this thesis is not exhaustive accounting of practices in any way.

4.2 Transcription method in CA

The transcription method looks odd at first glance, though the different annotation references different human conduct and interaction. Below you can find the notation system used by Llewellyn and Spence (2009), which is also used in this study.

Adapted from Jefferson (2004)

(.7)	Length of a pause. (tenths of a second)
(.)	Micro-pause (< 0.2 seconds)
= []	A latching between utterances Indicates overlap of speech
(())	Non-verbal activity
-	Sharp cut off
:	Stretching of a word or letter
!	Animated tone of voice
()	Unclear fragment
° °	Quite utterance
CAPITAL LETTERS	Loud voice
> <	Talk in between is quicker
< >	Talk in between is slower
↓ ↑	Rising or falling intonation
<u>Underline</u>	Indicates emphasis

The transcription method for CA does not offer a simple illustration of the data, nor is it meant for that. Rather, it works mainly as a tool for the researcher. The rigorous transcribing of the detailed interaction between participants in the naturalistically occurring data works in favour of the researchers aim of getting closely acquainted with the data according to Llewellyn and Hindmarsh (2010). Llewellyn and Hindmarsh emphasise that the transcription of bodily movements is also quite opaque. Thus, they advised to supplement standard conversation analytic transcription notation with “Snapshots” and corresponding time in the recording for

the specific frames where the turns of talk, that are referenced to in the text, occur in the recording.

4.4 Validity & reliability

The findings of this study is not intended for the theorization of general assumptions, and thus the question of generalizability is irrelevant¹. However, I will present some notes on validity and reliability here.

Silverman (2014) explains that a qualitative study's reliability is improved if the transparency of the research process is displayed in a sufficient manner, as well as the transparency in theoretical stance assumed by the researcher. I believe that I have displayed such transparency in my discussion of practice theory and conversations analysis in chapter 3, as well as my research process in this chapter.

Validity, which has its origins in quantitative research, can also be practised in qualitative research (Silverman, 2014). Here, Silverman (2014) also mentions transparency, as well as other forms of steps like comparing the data. In this regard, the method of CA makes the analysis method quite transparent, as the requirement is to present the data as observable by others than the researcher alone (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010). Furthermore, as the analysis is focused on the actions and sayings that are publicly displayed (Peräkylä, 2004), the evidence is presented in a transparent manner "so that others can judge for themselves the persuasiveness of insights and analyses." (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010, p. 24). Arminen (2005) states that "researchers can and should enhance their sensitivity to the potential relevance of institutional contexts in order to improve the validity of their studies." (p. 35). In the scope of this thesis, such an enhancement has been presented in chapter 2.

I have also chosen to include a clear text transcription of the actual pitches that preceded the interaction presented in chapter 5 in the appendix. This is an activity which does not strictly adhere to CA research methods, but an activity that I personally have decided on as I believe it can offer contextual support to the reader

¹ CA studies can be of quantitative nature. If that would be the case in this thesis, the conditions for reliability would be different.

of this thesis. Because of restricted scope I have chosen to analyse practices unfolding interactionally and not the content of the pitches themselves.

4.5 Ethics

All researchers should concern themselves with ethical questions in research. As technological advances have been made during the past decades, the amount of video-based and visual research has increased (Harley & Langdon, 2018). When using publicly published user generated content in video-based research some ethical questions should be brought into attention (Legewie and Nassauer, 2018).

First is consent. In online video-based research, obtaining consent can be very difficult if not impossible (Legewie and Nassauer, 2018). This is entirely true in the case of this thesis as the video data that I have chosen to study is publicly uploaded, and from an organisation that I have no affiliation with. Legewie and Nassauer (2018) mention that acquiring consent is not always required based on the nature and the intention of the study. As I see it the nature of this study is firstly a display in my abilities as a graduate student to fulfil university curricula requirements, and, as this study is not intended for publishing in journals, the acquiring of consent in order to fulfil ethical requirements is not a strict requirement in this case.

The nature of my inquiry is to understand how to analyse practice on a general level, and I am not analysing sensitive content. Furthermore, as the organisation responsible for the publishing of the content, has published these events on different social media sites, and as their description of their organisational mission includes to “foster the development, production and promotion of projects” (Independent Filmmaker Day, 2020), they are according to Legewie and Nassauer (2018) recorded in a public sense which “makes its use without consent less problematic” (p. 12). Furthermore, I have chosen to omit real names from the analysis, referring to participants as pitchers and judges, to emphasise the fact that our analysis is focused on practice.

5. Empirical material

The question answer part of a film pitch offers insights on how interactants within the setting orient to institutional contexts within the realm of possibilities that the locally produced setting enables them. The analysis shows the practices through which pitching and judging is produced, and how the actors within the setting utilise references to institutional contexts in their respective interactional actions. The analysis can possibly be descriptive of relevant context derived resources on an institutional level as well as in what manner they are made relevant in the question and answer part of the film pitch.

A prominent aspect of ‘doing’ film pitching is the ability of pitchers to understand what contexts the judges are orienting to in their questioning, and how the pitcher in turn responds to this and manages to produce, or reproduce, a context that in large part is goal oriented in the sense that they are trying to ‘make the case’ for their project.

5.1 Producing a context for the pitch competition

The recording starts with an intro screen with the details of the pitching event, location, schedule and collaborating organisations. The recording cross transitions to a busy conference room. In the conference room, which is now in view, we see audience members finding their places and we hear general chatter among them. A manner of familiarity between the members can be sensed in the busy conference room. On the other side of the room we see the judges for the pitching event, who were already sitting down, side by side, at a wide table. Given that we can see the judges orient themselves to an identity as ‘judge’ (line 9, extract 1) allows us to categorise them in such a way within this analysis. The pitchers are standing to the right of the judges’ table ready to pitch.



Figure 1. 00:00:42 Snapshot at line 8.

The first turn at talk starts by one of the five judges, Judge 3 from left to right, addressing the attendees at the session with general instructions regarding the competition. Snippets of the first five minutes of the recording will be analysed in the next two extracts.

Locally produced intention

The first extract shows how the contextual space for the pitching competition is produced in practice. The effects of Judge 3's introductory statements aim to produce the purpose of the competition, as well as implicit rules to the pitchers. The unfolding sayings and doings also informs us of the relations between participants. The extract will illustrate how the context of the competition is produced in this local setting, and how Judge 3 orients to different identities and social structures that are made relevant in this specific setting.



Figure 2. 00:03:21 Snapshot at line 29, Judge 3 (left) and Judge 4.

Extract 1.1

1 J3 O- okay, befo:re (.) you stand up and pitch
 Reali:ze that you are gonna be pitchin:g your pro:ject in front o-
 2 of >a lot of people<
 3 aight so umm so (1)
 4 feedback is very important
 5 so even if you get it after you pitch from people at the tables
 6 we want you to feel comfortabl:e when you pitch (1)
 7 MC okay-
 [AAh You have two minutes! To do your pitch a::nd (1) ((checks
 8 J3 notebook))
 9 uu w- we as judges >will have to confer<-
 10 =there is one person that's a client of ou:rs
 11 and I'm gonna recuse myself (.) from- (1.2) ((turns gaze at MC))
 12 MC okay, so let us briefly introduce uuh who the judges are
 ... (judges 5 and 4 present themselves)(28)
 13 J3 hi (Name Surname) and i: (.5)
 14 would love to hear a great story that we can work on and move forw-
 15 bud() realize (.3) if you've never pitched
 16 realize that we're h- we're very (.5) comfortable her:e
 17 and we want you to feel comfortable pitching us↓
 ... (judges 2 and 1 present themselves)(41)
 18 MC co() why don't you explain the benefits-
 19 J3 oh-okay so: the winner o- of the pitch (.)
 20 wi- will get will get between twenty: and forty thousand dollars
 21 fo(r service) in their movie:
 22 uum (.) you will have one year from today! (.) to use it! (1)
 23 oaight
 24 a-a-and i can tell you something parenthetically
 We've done this for seven or eight years:: and offered this (.)
 25 each ti:me:
 26 and so far nobody's ever cashed in:↑!
 cause they haven't got their act together to do anything in that
 27 year:!
 28 so: i challenge all of you i- to: (.) to (.3)
 29 to have it done in that one year period of time↓

At the very beginning, Judge 3 turns on a hands free microphone that can be attached to the ear. He also seems to be the only one of the judges that has a similar

microphone, giving him an advantage to be able to speak without having to wait to gain access to one of the handheld microphones that are used at the event.

As he starts speaking at line 1 in Extract 1, sitting at the centre of the table with the other judges, he speaks loudly to no one in particular but to the audience in general. The first statement about ‘pitching’ “in front o- of >a lot of people<” and that he wants everyone to feel comfortable, has some effects. Firstly, the reassurance of security can be a sign of orienting asymmetrical identities of power between him as judge and the pitchers. Such a statement generates a context in which judges have access to asymmetrical resources contrary to the pitcher, in this case resources in the form of knowledge of how pitching is accomplished. Secondly, by stating that the pitch will be listened to by “>a lot of people<”, it draws attention to the fact that an audience is present, producing a context where they are held accountable for their conduct in front of many.

On line 6 When Judge 3 finishes his initial turn at talk, and the MC identifies a turn where he can chime in with his turn at talk on line 7, Judge 3 uses a filler word to continue his turn at talk. He does so in a mildly louder voice, as to be heard over the MC’s talk. This interrupting also shows an orientation to asymmetrical relation to the MC, as Judge 3 is able to interrupt another participant's speech without being sanctioned. One category of asymmetry that enables interruption is Judge 3’s unrestricted access to a microphone, which allows him to be heard by the whole room at any point when he starts speaking.

After the interruption, Judge 3 continues on the same topic as before, giving general instructions, but after taking the turn at talk from the MC, he checks a notebook on line nine while interrupting his sentence to raise another issue about recusing himself from judging one of the pitchers in the upcoming session (lines 10 and 11). In this particular series of interaction, Judge 3 uses the continuation of a previous sentence as a means to take back the turn at talk to himself. As he continues talking he changes the subject and clearly shifts his orientation from the context of judging identity to that of what is apparently an identity orienting to the Judge 3’s profession as a lawyer. Interrupting and appearing to continue producing the same context of the prior turns at talk, is a method that works as a segue for participants to change the

subject to something relevant for the interrupting person to orient to, but which is otherwise irrelevant in the context of any prior utterance.

Extract 1.2

8 J3 [AAh You have two minutes! To do your pitch a::nd (1) ((checks
notebook))
9 uu w- we as judges >will have to confer<-
10 =there is one person that's a client of ou:rs
11 and I'm gonna recuse myself (.) from- (1.2) ((turns gaze at MC))

In this way, when the MC starts his turn, Judge 3 seems as if he was not finished with his turn at talk, managing to regain the turn, and getting across a piece of information which in itself, was not linked with anything that was previously said.

The remaining judges present themselves between line 12 to 13 and 17 to 18. I have chosen to omit these parts from the analysis for the sake of brevity. In between however, on lines 13-17, Judge 3 repeated the earlier subject of safety, as if continuing his sentence from before, emphasising the need for all to feel comfortable while pitching. When Judge 3 states in line 6 that “we want you to feel comfortable when you pitch” and line 16 “realise that we’re h- we’re very (.5) comfortable her:e”, he orients to a collective we, this can be taken to mean a ‘we’ as in ‘we the judges’ but can also be an orientation to the identity as representatives of the ‘profession’ of film financiers. Talk in this instance is directed to not only filmmakers about to pitch but also specifically to novice filmmakers who have not pitched before in contrast to the representatives of the profession who are experienced. Here the orientation to a contextual identity as competition judge is locally produced, but extending the context to include their experience and profession in an institutional aspect displays their orientation to other categories that are not merely locally produced.

Between the lines 19 and 29, Judge 3 explains what kind of prize the winner of the pitching competition will receive, (‘between twenty: and forty thousand dollars fo(r service) in their movie:’). Judge 3 also states how previous winners, dating back ‘seven or eight years’, had lacked the ability to ‘get’ ‘their act together to do anything’ (line 27) with that money, which the winner receives on the condition that it is used within a year of winning the competition. Here we can consider two issues

that Judge 3 has highlighted: firstly which is that the pitchers should feel comfortable even if they are un-experienced and secondly that an expectation of ability exists. In this instance of the film pitch setting, a dilemma arises in the assurance of safety yet the setting of specific standards and the expectation to reach them.

By drawing attention to the prize, Judge 2 constructs a link between the local context, this particular pitch session, to an external context. In this case the context of ‘the real world’ where film productions are accomplished. The statement includes a context of time frame, “you will have one year from today!” (line 22), which suggests a sense of urgency for or carrying out whatever project wins the competition. He also introduces a challenge to however wins, “so: i challenge all of you i- to: (.) to (.3) to have it done in that one year period of time↓” (line 28 and 29), thus further constructing an extended context to the outside world of film production. The statement is uttered in a rather playful way, which lends to the understanding that the statement is in fact, not serious.

Extract 1 shows how one of the judges, Judge 3, produces the local context of the pitching competition through his speech. Within the production of the context and the interaction with the MC, some of the asymmetrical orientations to power are established and displayed. The access to material means, as in the microphone, is one of these resources. Another of the resources is through orienting to the context of judging identity, which in this setting enables Judge 3 to perform an act of reassuring. This instance can be compared to that in the study of job interviews by Llewellyn and Spence (2009) where only interviewers reassured job candidates and not the other way around, displaying the clear asymmetrical power relations.

5.2 Question framing

Extract 2 displays the practice of contextualised questioning by a judge, and how this questioning poses a challenge for the pitcher. We will take a closer look at the feedback and questions by Judge 1, where she produces specific contexts as frames for the questions posed to the pitchers, and how the pitcher orients to and understands this immediate context produced by the judge. The practice of framing the question is not only part of shaping the immediate context but is also shaped by

social structures, as they are understood by the judge invoking them, and is an example of how a practitioner's understanding is publicly displayed.



Figure 4. 00:32:14 Snapshot after line 1.

Extract 2

1 J1 How: (.6) liberal are t- ((P7 hands mic to J1))
 2 how liberal are the Montreal girls=
 because if this is a- (.4) a project that would appeal to the
 3 middle east
 if they're too liberal hhh it won't appeal to the middle east and
 4 what are you showing
 I can tell you straight away it will appeal to the younger
 5 P7 audiences of the middle east!
 6 because we have been testing the-the stories
 7 and we have (.3) connections there with Egyptian producers hhh
 it will possibly never be sold (.7) as (.3) um as it is without
 8 cutting some sce:nes
 because there are some LGBT characters ((MC starts moving closer to
 9 P7))
 10 there's some sexuality-↑
 11 no: uuh nudity or anything like that, but just in the mind.
 12 How you express that (.) self-awareness and (.) confidence (.)
 13 so uh we don't (.) really rely on those sales
 But we know (.) the film is already (.) very popular through our
 14 social media (.3)
 The Middle Eastern youth really wants it ((MC gestures for the
 15 mic))
 16 ((P7 hands over mic to MC))
 17 MC Thank you:



Figure 5 00:32:45 - 00:33:06 Snapshot from line 9 to line 16.

Judge 1 asks “how liberal are the Montreal girls?=” (line 1), this question is immediately contextualised by Judge 1 who states “if they're too liberal hhh it won't appeal to the middle east” (line 4). Here, Judge 1 locally produces a context which is stated as a normative fact located outside this setting, the context being that the nature of the project can become an issue for a supposed target audience. Interestingly she also implicitly produces a context for the intentions of the project itself, that it strives to appeal to a middle eastern audience. However, the production of context in this instance can be seen as erroneous, as the project's intended audience was not explicitly stated prior to this by the pitcher or any one else. In fact, the ‘middle east’ is only referred to in the pitch as the native country of one of the characters in the story, and as a filming location for the production. In other instances the pitcher mentioned collaborations with organisations in the Canadian audiovisual industry. Nevertheless, Judge 1 produces a context for the project as one planned to ‘appeal’ to a middle eastern audience. To further investigate the contextual orientation, it could be useful to examine how Pitcher 7 understands this statement.

On line 5 to 7, Pitcher 7 responds by saying “I can tell you straight away it will appeal to the younger audiences of the middle east!”. The statement supports the argument that Judge 1’s statement is both relevant and intelligible by Pitcher 7, who responds to the question. However, this is not a strong case as the context produced

by Pitcher 7 to support the answer, only vaguely touches on the subject of “appealing” to a specific audience, which suggest that Pitcher 7 understands the statement as an important issue for Judge 1, and not one which is necessarily relevant for the pitcher or the project that she pitched.

Pitcher 7 does evidently orient in some capacity to the issue brought forward by Judge 1 and continues to contextualise the story as we see on line 10 and 11 “there’s some sexuality-↑ no: uuh nudity or anything like that, but just in the mind.”. The dash after the word “sexuality” indicates a sharp cut off. After the cut off, Pitcher 7 quickly adds to her statement that the mentioned sexuality is not depicted in graphic nudity. Thus, the pitcher continues to display sensitivity to the issues produced in prior statements by quickly elaborating on an issue that has become sensitive in this particular context. The most relevant line of answer by Pitcher 7 to Judge 1’s question is on line 13 “so uh we don’t (.) really rely on those sales”, which is a direct contradiction to the context produced by Judge 1, but as she has already oriented intelligibly to the prior context, this statement does not have a significant effect on deconstructing that context as erroneous, it only works as a parenthetical acknowledgement.

As the interaction continues and Pitcher 7 elaborates on her answer, the MC moves slowly closer to the pitcher from line 9 forward after glancing down to the phone in his hand. The action of the MC which takes place on line 9 to 16 and can be seen in the three pictures in Figure 5. The MC’s movement towards the pitcher who, contrary to the previous pitchers, is presenting on the left side of the judges’ table, illuminates the facilitators’ bodily practices that in other instances are subtler. In this case the facilitator orients to a role of the keeper of time limits and as the question and answer part is continuing the MC moves closer, across the judges’ table, which demonstratively indicates that the time is running out. In other circumstances this interaction is more subtle, as the MC stands in close proximity to the pitchers and a smaller gesture might suffice as demonstration. This highlights an interesting part about the pitching context where time is limited and within this limit, the pitcher is forced to compromise on what can be said in order to successfully accomplish pitching.

Another interesting instance of producing context occurred earlier in the pitching competition in the question and answer part of Pitcher 5's pitch.

Extract 3

1 J1 have you looked at-
 2 have you looked at what nbc is broadcasting right now at (.2)
 3 >kinda that time slot that you're looking at?<
 4 (.5)
 5 P5 No
 6 J1 cause that- i- i-
 7 >i think that was really cute and i think it's original<
 8 i just <wonder about:t> (.5)
 9 >youknow< advertising dollar go to pay for whos watching a:nd (.4)
 10 >advertisers don't really seem to care< about (.5)
 11 [the older generation]=
 12 P5 [(the older audience)] ((nodding))
 13 J1 =so i just worry (.) about
 14 if >you've done your research on that<

In this turn at talk, what stands out, is the formulation of the question, and especially the produced context of advertiser practices. First, she mentions in line 7 how she personally orients positively to the pitched project. This produces a context where she as an individual states her fondness for what was presented, enabling her to separate her individual statement from that which comes next. Next on line 9 the statement “advertising dollar go to pay for who's watching” is introduced with a “>youknow<” indicating a quick and matter of fact manner of delivery. This statement works as an explanation of advertising rationale, which is relevant for her next utterance on line 10 and 11 “>advertisers don't really seem to care< about (.5) [the older generation]=”. At line 11 and 12, the bracketed text indicates that the utterance of the pitcher and the judge are said over each other. This indicates that the judge's turn at talk displayed a design that the pitcher could understand and resulted in him coming to the same conclusion that the judge was headed at. It could be argued that the pitcher arrived at the same conclusion either as part of shared practice, or if this rationale was not familiar to him from before, as part of socialisation of practices. Moreover, the distinction between the individual voice and the invoking of the advertising rationale in speech, offers interesting insights into

how practices are reproduced in speech, and how the practitioner disassociates herself from the ‘authorship’ of the statement as the statement can be interpreted as problematic.

The interaction in Extract 2 highlights how the framing of a question with a produced context can be challenging for the pitcher. Whether the context is relevant or not for the pitcher, the response and understanding engenders the shared constructed context in the local setting. The pitcher is constrained to manage the produced context from an unfavourable context into a favourable one. The extract also shows us the MC’s bodily practices as a facilitator of the event, and how the understanding of that practice is manifested in the enacted doings of a practitioner. Furthermore, extract 3 highlights possibilities of observing socialisation *in situ*, and how practitioners orientation to certain practices can be enacted in speech as well as made distinct from the individual practitioner.

5.3 Misaligned shared understanding

Extract 4 shows an unfolding interaction where the knowledge of the shared understanding of practice is asymmetrical, and how this affects the pitching. In Extract 4.1 Pitcher 12 has just completed his pitch after which the question and answer part of the pitch commences. This extract is interesting for the sanctions that are imposed upon the pitcher by Judge 3 (from line 7) and how the interactional context from that point forward is shaped by the incongruous shared understanding between the judge and the pitcher is the cause of the sanction.



Figure 6, 00:49:14 Snapshot after line 8 in Extract 3.1.

Extract 4.1

1 P12 so (.) >there you go<
2 MC thank you::
3 comments from the judges
4 J2 ((Raises hand towards Mc))
5 J3 what's you:r-u budget (1.4)
6 P12 u:h hh (.8) >about a hundred thousand<
7 J3 °uhkay well y-° when someone asks you- >justa little advice<
8 when you come and pitch: (1)
9 <a:nd someone asks you: what your budget is>= >when you pitch
again:<↑ (.3)
10 =uh don't say about a hundred thousand
11 i would rather you say it's a hundred thousand
12 because when about↑ w- a hundred thousand
13 we: tend to think that you really dont know what the budget is
14 P12 ((nodding in response))
(2.5)
15 J2 What demographic do you imagine pr- marketing this too
16 and who do you think would really: uh be receptive to it
17 (1.5)
18 P12 hh ((gazing up then down)) what demographic [um-
19 J2 [male female young ol:d (1.4) rich poor
20 [tsk]
21 yeah i guess um: (.5) >i dunno< that's a good question
22 um i guess the audience would be kind of (.) um (.3)
23 tsk im trying to think of the festivals that we've entered in
24 an- and it's usually kind of middle aged (.) folks um (.4)
25 you know streamingservices I'm not really sure what demmographic or
how that works
26 (.6) um (.9) I- I don't know↑ i think it has a fairly broad appeal
27 J1 are you aware of the feature film that robert redford did
28 >the old man and the gun< (.4)
29 J4 ((turns to face J1 and visibly amused turns to face P12))
30 P12 tsk (.4)i am not-
31 J4 ((pointing towards P12 facing J1)) thats that story
32 J1 that's that story
33 J4 hehe
34 P12 does- do that include the tellers interviewing the tellers

35 J1 no its ()
 36 P12 an- and I think that what makes it different
 is the: (.) tellers: an- and (.) apologizing an- and yuoknow having
 37 that aspect to it=
 38 J3 s[o-
 39 P12 [cause I don- I don't! wanna do another just bankrobber story
 40 MC Thank [you
 41 J3 [so] your gonna
 42 so your project is a project on redemption
 43 P12 yes
 44 J3 okay

What is interesting about the sanction introduced by Judge 3, from line 7 forward, is not that Pitcher 12 can not present a reliable estimation for the budget in itself, but *how* it unfolds, which lends to the notion that the embodied performative manner, in which Pitcher 12 answers, is consequential to how he is perceived by other practitioners. In extract 4.2 we can take a closer look on the relevant lines where Judge 3 makes public his orientation and issue with Pitcher 7's answer.

Extract 4.2

7 J3 °uhkay well y-° when someone asks you- >justa little advice<
 8 when you come and pitch: (1)
 <a:nd someone asks you: what your budget is>= >when you pitch
 9 again:<↑ (.3)
 10 =uh don't say about a hundred thousand
 11 i would rather you say it's a hundred thousand
 12 because when about↑ w- a hundred thousand
 13 we: tend to think that you really dont know what the budget is

What this makes public is an understanding that the word choice, used by Pitcher 7, was in this interaction the reason for the sanction (“don't say about a hundred thousand”, line 10) and the usage of that word “about” leads to the judge losing faith in the pitcher institutionally relevant abilities. A clear methodological limitation is presented here, as we investigate only the public utterances and interactions to determine how members orient to certain contexts. The reason to bring this up is because a number of the earlier pitched projects, before Pitcher 12, had undefined

budgets but where not sanctioned by any of the judges, which contributes to an understanding that the sanction by Judge 3 was prompted by the P12's hesitation and display of uncertainty shown in line 6 "u:h hh (.8) >about a hundred thousand<". The production of uh sounds in reaction to the question gives a sense of improvisation to the answer, this might have caused the pitcher to produce an immediate context where his abilities might be questioned. Thus, Judge 3 was prompted to lecture Pitcher 12 as a sanction for answering in an unsatisfying manner. However, exploring possible 'actual' reasons that led to Judge 3's sanction, is speculative but also worth taking into consideration within the frame of the analysis.

After the initial interaction between Judge 3 and Pitcher 12, Judge 2 poses a question to the pitcher stating "What demographic do you imagine pr- marketing this too?". Initially Pitcher 12 orients to this question by repeating it in line 18 "what demographic [um-". If we examine how Judge 2 orients to this repetition, Pitcher 12 produces a context of confusion and a misunderstanding of the question. Judge 2 is thus prompted to elaborate on the answer possibilities ("[male female young old (1.4) rich poor", line 19). However, it could be well argued that Pitcher 12's repetition of the question, as an initial reaction, was not a cause of misunderstanding the question, but a cause of him not having a ready answer, making the repetition a practice of stalling that was misperceived by Judge 3. Following this line of argument, Judge 2's orientation to the hesitation to understand the question, could have been influenced by the interaction where Pitcher 12 was sanctioned by Judge 3.

Another interesting point to highlight about Judge 2's behaviour on line 19 where he helps the pitcher with possible answer categories is how the behaviour is interestingly similar to the behaviour in the study by Llewellyn and Spence (2009). Individuals orienting to differing institutional power relations, as the interviewers in a recruitment situation, refrain from offering answer alternatives for struggling interviewees. A possible explanation is that the interactants in such a setting orient to a shared institutional understanding that certain interview and questioning situations are one sided, specifically for the purpose of testing the interviewee, and how the interviewee answers is more of relevance than what the particular details of the answer is (Llewellyn and Spence, 2009). Similar behaviour is shown throughout this pitching event, except in this case, where Judge 2 deems it necessary to help the pitcher by providing possible answers. Demonstrably, Judge 2 has for this moment

ceased to orient to asymmetrical questioning rights; engendering the question if the prior interaction has altered the context which Judge 2 orients to. Such an alteration could materialise in how Judge 2 identifies the pitcher's project which reshapes the context of the project to one where the project is no longer considered a credible contender.

Finally, on line 27, Judge 1 asks if the pitcher is aware of another released film "are you aware of the feature film that Robert Redford did >The Old Man and the Gun<". This visibly amuses the panel of judges and most of all Judge 4 who states "that's that story" (line 30) while faced towards Judge 1. The question by Judge 1 is in this interaction understood as a question about a similar film that has already been produced. In this interaction the members scrutinise the pitcher's knowledge of an existing film, and as he is not aware of the film, a context is produced where the originality of the project is questioned. This line of questioning brings forward a context where originality is tested and questioned, indicative of how individuals orient themselves to institutional perspectives in the local production of context.

After asking the question, Judge 1 hands the microphone back to the MC, before Pitcher 12 answers (See Figure 13). The aforementioned behaviour differs to other instances of question and answering, where Judges usually hold on to the microphone during the pitcher's answers, so as to technically be enabled to respond to, interact with, and elaborate on the given answer. By giving up this resource before hearing the answer indicates that whatever the pitcher answers is not of any contextual consequence for the judge; hence, the question works as a statement of a kind, or perhaps a slight. However, Pitcher 12 manages to mitigate the impact of this interaction by counter-inquiring about some aspects to the story by asking "do that include the tellers interviewing the tellers". The negative answer by Judge 1 enables Pitcher 12 to construct a differentiation between the project he pitched and the project which is mentioned as a comparative piece, which is seen in Judge 3's response on line 41 "so your project is a project on redemption" indicating that he has identified the difference.



Figure 7, 00:50:12 Snapshot from line 29.

Extract 4.1 showed how the context oriented to in interaction is produced locally turn by turn. It also demonstrated how differing shared understanding led to public sanctioning and how such a public sanction might have influenced the unfolding interaction and other members' understanding of the local context. What this interaction also brings to light is how such an understanding can be derived from noticed changes in behaviour, and how the members interactively orient to institutional perspectives in their construction of an intersubjective reality. Furthermore, the manner in which one conducts oneself shows the embodied aspect of knowledge, or lack thereof, in practice, which other members orient to in settings where practice is interactional.

5.4 Orienting to implicit institutional contexts

In extract 5 we will examine the feedback and question interaction which unfolds after Pitcher 13 has finished presenting. Extract 4 illustrates how Pitcher 13 can invoke discursive mean making practices to accomplish pitching, these in turn are reinforced by the judges' practices. Specifically this extract shows us how the pitcher understands the implicit context of the questions and statements by the judges, which in turn prompts her to produce a local context that supports her identity as a film producer. Pitcher 14's contextualization is at times produced without explicit question by the judges, which indicates a shared understanding of the institutional practice, and shows a productive shaping of local context which is both practical and goal oriented.



Figure 8 00:54:07 Snapshot at line 15.

Extract 5

- 1 J3 Umm, the thing that so exciting about this
- 2 J3 Because I've worked on several movies that are based o-on fa:ct
- 3 J3 Um i-it's a-a great a project to work on a true story=
- 4 P13 =mm
- bu-but fictionalize it to an extent that-th-that >you can have a
- 5 J3 very exciting film.<
- yeah, I am also working with Donaldson and Kalif about the rights
- 6 P13 to this story
- 7 Because the only person still living is Christian,
- 8 >and he's in jail so<
- 9 so we can't pay him for his rights or even acquire them from him
- 10 so we're safe in that respect
- And Donaldson is helping me with any other issues that might be a
- 11 concern
- 12 Where we don't necessarily need to acquire rights for it_
- 13 J4 It really made me feel like a modern day goodfellas kinda [style]
- 14 P13 [eh yes::]
- 15 J4 without the whole storyline like that [which is great] yeah.
- 16 P13 [it is jus-just]
- 17 Just not mafia based [That's] kinda the fun part,
- 18 J4 [Right] ((hands microphone up the judges table))
- 19 P13 these are just everyday guys
- 20 J1 What portion of your budget is above the line?
- Uu, at the current moment, our, it's about one point two, above the
- 21 P13 line, we're-

22 I'm waiting to get my director attached to really go after cast
 23 even though I have some interested cast available
 24 because the story takes place over a span of ten to fifteen years
 25 we can go younger with our cast and hit=
 26 I'm just gonna throw some names out
 27 =you know the Zach Efrons and the Taron Egertons at that age group
 28 and then age them up as we go
 29 Or we could start older
 with the like the Sebastian Stans and the Chris Evans and kind of
 30 that world
 31 and make them look younger as we go
 32 But I would like that to be the directors decision: †
 33 cause i:: >try to protect the director's vision at all costs<

On lines 1 to 5 Judge 3 displays an orientation to previous experience and states to the pitcher that she should “fictionalize it to an extent that-th-that >you can have a very exciting film” (line 5). In the statement Judge 3 constructs a challenge for both the project and the pitcher to overcome. The statement can be understood in a way that if not fictionalised in some sense, it could either be a dull movie by staying particularly true to the ‘real story’ behind the project or a project that cannot be completed because of rights issues between the real people that the film is based on and the production company. Further, As Judge 3 does use the word “exciting” to describe what the film could be, lends to the understanding that he means to fictionalise the story as to not be a dull movie. We can see, however, that the statement in itself is quite vague and once again we turn to the other party in the interaction to investigate the interpretation in practice.

Examining Pitcher 13’s response contributes to an interpretation that she understands the statement as a rights issue, as she starts outlining facts about obtaining rights, “yeah, I am also working with Donaldson and Kalif about the rights to this story” (line 6). Pitcher 14’s orientation to Judge 3’s statement as a rights issue shows how Pitcher 14 acts in a goal oriented way, understanding the context produced by Judge 3 as an implicit institutional issue that must be addressed. The judges display of receipt tokens through nodding, as Pitcher 14 talked on lines 6 to 12, indicates that what she is saying is both understandable by the judges, relevant, and contributing to

the unfolding context. In other words, Pitcher 13 is interactionally accomplishing the task of pitching her project.

Interestingly, on lines 14 to 17 a similar film is mentioned by Judge 4, “It really made me feel like a modern day goodfellas kinda [style]” (line 14), this time however, it works in the favour of the pitcher and her project, which is in contradiction to what we saw in extract 3. To pinpoint what exactly is the cause of this difference in context and how the orientation by the Judge in this case is a favourable one is difficult. As we saw in extract 4.1, I argued that originality was questioned by the judge; however, here originality is not questioned, and rather the similarity to a famous film is seen as a beneficial aspect of the proposed project. From a speculative point of view, the cause of this might relate to how the judges orient to the identity of the pitcher, her professionalism and skill in displaying intelligible arguments that are relevant to a shared institutional perspective. Additionally, Pitcher 14 observes a potential conflict with comparing the project to an existing film by differentiating her project similarly to Pitcher 12, (“Just not mafia based [That’s] kinda the fun part”, line 17).

On line 20, Judge 2 asks the pitcher about the budget stating, “What portion of your budget is above the line?”. In response to the question, Pitcher 14 initially gives an estimate using the word “about” similarly to Pitcher 12, although dissimilarly she avoids sanctioning by the judges. In her response Pitcher 13 produces a context for *why* the budget is not fixed, this occurs on lines 21 to 33. Here she describes the possibilities and open ended issue of casting as both a possibility for the quality of the project and as a challenge that affects the budget; producing a context for the undetermined budget. In line with interactional analysis, the turn at talk by Pitcher 14 is deemed relevant and descriptive through the display of receipt tokens, such as nodding.

Pitcher 14 ends the turn by stating that these decisions will be made, if possible, by a director that will eventually be a part of this project as she tries “to protect the director's vision at all costs<”. In this turn at talk, Pitcher 14 produces context to why the planned budget is still in a state of flux. Then highlighting that work has gone into resolving these issues although that no decision has been made as the project

still needs a key decision maker that in this context is a director. And by stating that she wants to protect the director's vision she is both orienting to a institutional context where these decisions could be made without the director if need be, except that in this instance the pitcher is orienting to a specific identity as a producer that wants to work in a way where the directors artistic vision is protected. This is an interesting example of orientation to a specific identity in practice that the pitcher uses as a tool in which the context for the unanswered questions is produced in interaction.

(On line 21 and 22 the pitcher repairs her talk as she first indicates an orientation to a collective we, “we’re- I’m waiting to get my director attached”, repairing it to an individual ‘I’. This repair is interesting as it implies a possible existence of a larger team behind this project. By using I am instead of we are, the pitcher changes the responsibility from something more communal and not entirely in her realm of control to produce a more personal sense of responsibility where she is the central driver of this project, this can work for her advantage as she seems to be the sole representative of the project at this event, regardless of the fact if team behind the project or not.)

On line 27 Pitcher 13 mentions famous actors in reference to the type of actors that could be cast to the film, “you know the Zach Efrons and the Taron Egertons at that age group”. Such a practice constructs references to the context of film actors that are suitable for the different roles, using famous actors the pitcher create a context for the recipient to understand what the casting for this project might look like, even though none of the named actors have any affiliation to the project at this point, only mentioning the possibility works as a creation of a context which is understandable in a institutional setting.

Extract 5 illustrates how Pitcher 13 orients to implicit contextual factors on which she produces context for issues regarding the pitched project. The analysis in this part has heavily relied on the fact that Pitcher 13’s production of contexts are intelligible for the judges through the showing of interactional receipt tokens in the form of nods, agreements, and favourable comparisons.

5.5 Aggressive feedback and reproduction of context

In extract 6 we see how Judge 3 actions and talk contribute to a practice typical for gate keeping, and how Pitcher 16 responds to these with practices of legitimation. In more specific terms, extract 6 illustrates how Judge 3 goes about creating an adversarial immediate context for the pitcher, but also how this adversarial context can be dismantled and *re*-produced. The extract starts at the end of the Pitcher 16's presentation, the interaction unfolds as follows.



Figure 9, 01:01:18 Snapshot after line 1.

Extract 6.1

1 P16 thassit
 2 [audience applause]
 3 J3 [ok umm, (2.1) usually: (1.4)-]
 4 th-th-those movies get fun[ded] (.4)-
 5 P16 [mhm]
 6 J3 -by organizations (.) that are sensitive (.3)to your issues ↓
 7 P16 [mhm]
 8 J3 and there are a lot of organizations (.) around the wo:rd
 9 uuh th-that ha- that deal with sickle ce:ll↑
 10 P16 mhm
 11 J3 and you should contact some of them:
 12 and tell them what you wanna do:
 13 so you can do a documentary: on the effect that it still ha:s
 (.3)
 14 but (.4) that's principally where >your gonna get< money

15 you won't geddeif- (.3) from investo:rs (.3)
 16 who are not sensitive to your cau:se
 17 so i recommend that you go to (.2) these organizations
 18 whose mission is (.6) >to help people like you<
 19 P16 °okay thank you°



Figure 10, 01:01:30 snapshot at line 8.

When Pitcher 16 finishes with an indication of her turn at talking being finished ('thassit') and silence Judge 3 initiates his turn at talk by stating a preliminary 'okay' indicating that he is about to assume the next turn. Doing this immediately after Pitcher 16 is finished presenting, while the others in attendance are still applauding her pitch, indicates that Judge 3 does not orient to applauding the pitcher as a token of encouragement. This in itself is not strong evidence for Judge 3's orientation to the context produced by the pitcher, as one could argue that similar behaviour would be displayed if one were excited about a pitch. To further understand Judge 3's contextual orientation, we move to examine his turn at talk that starts on line 3.

Judge 3 starts his statement with "[ok umm, (2.1) usually: (1.4)-] th-th-those movies get fun[ded] (.4)-" (line 3 and 4). Here, Judge 3 creates a separate category for the project that Pitcher 15 has presented, "those movies", which produces an adversarial context for the project, indicating that, in his view, this film is of another category than the films that *should* be pitched in the local setting. The statement is also indicative of the institutional context that Judge 3 orients to and attempts to render relevant in the local setting, where Judge 3 orients to an identity as a representative of his profession.

Consider the word choice on line 15 and 16 in Judge 3's statement, "you won't geddeif- (.3) from investo:rs who are not sensitive to your cau:se". Interestingly Judge 3 has earlier in the event oriented to an identity of film investor (Extract 1), and in this instance chooses to refer to such investors in a third-party, but not as himself, which practically this dilutes his personal culpability in the adversarial context he is producing.

Additionally, Judge 3 locally constructs a context for the pitched project, categorising it as a project which should be funded by "organizations whose mission is (.6) >to help people like <" (line 17 and 18). The entire statement produces an adversarial context for the pitcher and works as a sanction for Pitcher 15. Furthermore, the statement is delivered in a manner that does not produce an intelligible context onto which interactants can continue producing context, prompting the pitcher to respond with "°okay thank you°" (line 19). The expression of gratitude indicates however that the pitcher recognizes the asymmetrical power relations and is illustrative of the limitations that the pitcher is faced with in this situation, as there is little room to contradict the statement. However, as we shall see when the interaction develops so do the opportunities that reveal themselves for the pitcher, who is able to capitalise on them and deconstruct the adversarial context in extract 7.

Extract 6.2

19 P16 °okay thank you°
 20 (1.5)
 21 J5 So what is your goal with this-there's a lot of
 22 information that you gave us:
 23 and a lot of different perspectives that you could be taking-
 24 so
 24 >what do you want your audience to get out of this<↓
 25 P16 um what I want my audience to get out of this is (.3)
 26 is definitel () build awareness for sicklecell=
 27 =I already have a companion piece that's (.4) won awards
 28 it's also been on PBS (.3) locally
 29 (.5) uum the film- the series that it's on uh in miami
 30 it is uuh called filmmaker series-
 31 -and it just won a local emmy=
 32 J5 (fuh yeah)
 33 P16 =filmmaker series

34 J2 ((gazes to his left in front of J3))

35 P16 (.6) so uuhm (.) it does get a lot of attention

36 I also just screened it at the:

37 last years american: black film festival

38 so it has been gettin alot of attention

39 one of the things i have heard about getting funding

40 from researchers or from other (.) >sicklecell organizations<↑

41 is that it can have a little bit of an imbalance

42 and then inves- and then distribution may not want to touch it

43 such as PBS (.) so,=

44 J3 =okay uuh thankyou

45 MC ((Moving in towards the pitcher to receive the microphone back))

46 (thank you), thank you give her a round of applause!



Figure 11, 1:02:33 Snapshot at line 32.

The question and answer part of Pitcher 15's presentation continues, after the statement by Judge 3, with a question by Judge 5. His question, on lines 21 to 23, is an invitation for the Pitcher to elaborate on her proposed project, indicating that he continues to orient towards an identity of a judge to whose tasks includes questioning the pitcher in reasonable manners, while maintaining neutrality. Much like a neutrally presented questioning by judges in a business pitch discussed by Chalmers & Shaw (2017).

Pitcher 15 starts her turn by orienting to the produced question by answering it first, which occurs on line 26. The answer is given quickly, and immediately after line 36, Pitcher 15 changes the topic to discuss achievements linked to the pitched project. Discussing relevant topics, such as film festivals, Tv stations and awards that are relevant to the institutional context of audiovisual production, is a tactic that we have

seen deployed in earlier interactions. To produce context in such a way is legitimising both the pitched project and the pitcher themselves. From a conversational analytic point of view, the topic shift is an interesting tactic by the pitcher and allows her to start deconstructing the adversarial context produced by Judge 3 in extract 6.1. Chalmers and Shaw (2017) illustrate an identical tactic in their study where a similar topic shift, as on line 27 in extract 6.2, acts “as a ‘buffer’ to avoid a direct confrontation with the judge”.

Determining the significance of tactics and statements that aim to legitimise a certain undertaking in an institutional context might be tricky, but once again, we can turn to analyse the interaction more carefully to see how such a tactic might be understood. When the pitcher mentions that a series linked to her project has “just won a local emmy=” (line 31), Judge 5 reacts with what sounds very close to a spontaneous “(fuh yeah)” (line 32). The volume of the talk at this point is quite low as the Judge is not holding a microphone, but the strong reaction is apparent from the gestures and there is no question about the nature of the reaction as there might be about the specific words used. What is interesting is the reaction in itself, such a strong reaction both indicates that the tactic is well understood and relevant, but also surprising, all the while reinforcing an intersubjective understanding of relevance towards the prior stated comments. The reaction can perhaps also be interpreted as a minor show of dissent towards Judge 3, and an indication by Judge 5 that he does not support the adversarial context.

At line 39, Pitcher 15 orients to a more direct confrontation towards the adversarial context produced by Judge 3. Here another, subtle, topic change is initiated as she is still on the topic of creating a legitimised context for her project on line 38, but as she moves forward she addresses the funding issues, brought up by Judge 3, stating “one of the things i have heard about getting funding” (line 39). After this shift, she manages to deconstruct the context of Judge 3, by stating how funding practices, in such a way that Judge 3 described, is in fact not feasible for her project because it might harm its legitimacy as a independent audiovisual production (“and then invest and then distribution may not want to touch it”, line 24). Here Pitcher 15 rejects the enacted context by Judge 3, deconstructs it, and produces a context that in her view more accurately describes reality.

If we consider the complete passage of interaction from line 25 to 43. What the pitcher accomplishes is first orienting to the question so as to build on the immediate prior context, after which she produces a legitimising context for her project, countering Judge 3's statements more subtly. She then moves towards more direct confrontation and deconstruction of the adversarial context created by the judge. Thus, she skillfully manages to reproduce a favourable context, that in the start was not as much so.

The interaction ends with Judge 3 ending the pitcher turn at talk by stating “=okay uuh thankyou” (line 44) is typically performed by the MC when he considers it is time to move on. Judge 3 carrying out the action in this instance, elicits an understanding that it works as a sanction and as a way to restrict further statements by the pitcher. Such a tactic works to “severely restrict which persons may speak [...] and the type of contribution they may make” (Heritage, 2005, p. 117). The restriction shows clearly how the asymmetrical relation to power impacts what kind of pitches are heard.

In this part we have taken a closer look on how Judges orientations to certain contexts can produce adversarial and hostile context for pitched projects. We have also considered the different tactics that were employed by the pitcher to deconstruct and reproduce a more favourable context, and how such an act can lead to sanctions by those who have asymmetrical access to power in the local setting. Analysis of the extract in this part, makes an important argument about how the ‘micro’ interaction can work in maintaining oppressive intersubjective realities, but more interestingly how the actor manages to display deviant behaviour towards unacceptable social structures.

6. Analysis and discussion

Chapter 5 presented the empirical material by applying an analytical layer offered by CA inspired methods. In this chapter I will analyse and discuss the practice (practices) that the activities observed constitute. As practices are the primary unit of analysis when approaching organisation through a practice-based perspective (Reckwitz, 2002), I will adjust my analytical gaze from methods of individuals to practices which are displayed in “the organised activities of multiple people” (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13). The discussion will mainly regard the site of practice, as well as three of the four elements that link activities in Schatzki’s (2002) conception of practice theory.

6.1 The site of practice

The practice perspective informs us about the importance of materiality, not only in the objects that are part of accomplishing the practice, but also the spaces where the activities of these practices unfold (Nicolini, 2012). These spaces are both physical and non-physical (Schatzki, 2002).

Observing the film pitching competition allows us to appreciate facets of how the activity is produced in a physical space, and according to what elements this specific phenomena unfolds. As the empirical material was accounted for in chapter 5, the first statements were in regard to the material and social space where the competition takes place. From the very onset the activity displays formal and ceremonial principles that are adhered to. Materially these take the form of how the layout is designed and in the spatial positioning of the participating individuals (Potter & Hepburn, 2010). The judges sit at one central table inhabiting a place where they are both seen and heard constantly (eg. Figure 1). When a pitcher presents they are standing towards the judges with the audience behind them. This physical layout is similar to other formal settings observed elsewhere such as the setting of the school board hearing analysed by Potter and Hepburn (2010). It is difficult to draw conclusions as to how participants orient to the setting, but the similarity and display of formal procedures likely influence how practices are accomplished. Situated beside the judges’ table is the MC, or the facilitator of the event, who assumes a

standing role which enables him to have a more flexible and reactive role in facilitating the timekeeping and microphone distribution.

The bodily actions performed by the facilitator as the timekeeper is displayed in several instances. In extract 2 (ch. 5.2) one of these instances was presented. What I believe to be noteworthy is that some of the activities and explicit rules for the pitching competition were stated as we saw in extract 1. However, there were no mentions of any time limits in regards to the question-and-answer part of the pitches, thus, the limits were accomplished interactionally (Potter & Hepburn, 2010). Despite the lack of explicit formulations of these limits, the activities of the facilitator accomplished the task of regulating the time usage, and this was understood and adhered to by the participants. This adhering is displayed in actions such as ending the turn and forfeiting the microphone. I suggest that what we observe here is one of the socially understood collective actions that accomplishes pitching, the adhering to time limits embodied through the facilitator as a carrier of practice (Schatzki, 2002).

Continuing on the subject of materiality we draw attention to the usage of technology in the pitching competition. Sociomateriality refers to the constructed role of technology in organisations as socially emergent through how they are used and understood in practice (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008). The pitching event displayed some, but not many, elements that can inform us about the sociomaterial aspect of the practice. One such element was the usage of the microphone as the mediating artefact of voice and turn at talk. However, I believe that the subject of sociomateriality and the wider effects of technology in film production practices and organisations is a substantial topic which is not extensively displayed in the empirical data for this thesis. How the possibilities of technology informs filmmakers' practices are explored more extensively by Caldwell (2008, ch. 1).

From the physical space we move on to the non-physical space where the pitching is produced and accomplished, as conceptualised by Schatzki (2002). A non-physical space can be conceptualised in different terms, for example an 'activity space' is a non-physical space composed of actions and "where activities are performed" (Schatzki, 2002, p. 43). In this sense the activities that unfold in the conference room is the activity space of film pitching, and the city where the film festival takes place is the activity space of other film industry practices. A more encompassing concept

for time and space inhibited by practices is what Schatzki calls the ‘site‘ of the social practices (2002, p. 63). The site has three aspects, the physical, the non-physical as underlined by the physical (activity space), and the abstract realm of the context of which a practice is part of (Schatzki, 2002). In this view the site wherein the film pitch competition transpires can be interpreted as the site of film production practices, and the film industry in a wider sense. The pitching competition is organised alongside a prominent film festival in The US located physically in the proximity (same town) as the festival itself. Even though the organisers hosting the competition are separate from the organisers of the film festival itself, the hosting of pitching sessions, and other activities that are part of film production practices, are increasingly held jointly during film festivals as in this case (Iordanova, 2015). These activities are gradually transforming the practice of film festivals to constitute a more central role in the production of films, Iordanova (2015) argues. Thus, by situating the pitching competition within a site, it can be considered as a practice relating to the film industry.

6.2 The ordering of practice

In chapter 3.2 I discussed the internal organisation of practices from the perspective of Schatzki’s conceptualisation on the matter. As a reminder it was established that the ordering of how practices might unfold occurs through “doings and sayings linked by practical understandings, rules, teleoaffective structure, and general understandings” (Schatzki, 2002, p. 87). As has been stated this thesis is not an attempt to account for a complete picture of practices, instead it illuminates a part of the practices that can be accounted for, and consequently this means that every aspect of practice cannot be accounted for. The teleoaffective structures of practices in the terms of Schatzki's practice perspective is one aspect of practice that a conversation analytically inspired practice study is not able to answer. At least not without the access to the individual's thoughts and feelings via additional research methodologies. For this reason I will not pursue analysis of the teleoaffective structures, and will instead focus these last sections to the examination of how the rules, practical understandings, and general understandings of practices are manifested in the actions and interactions of the participants.

6.3 General understandings

By considering practice theory as supplemented by ideas inspired by institutionalism (Schatzki, 2021) we can begin to interpret how the social activities and methods are performed and understood by the participants of the competition. By analysing the general understandings of a practice one can proceed to investigate which logics practitioners subscribe to as social activities are enacted in the perspective of practice theory (Schatzki, 2021). These ‘general understandings’ is what guides practitioners in a manner that they perceive to make sense for the practice at hand, in this instance the production of film. Practices overlap and thus a practitioner as a carrier of multiple practices is not solely adhering to the general understandings of *one* practice (Schatzki, 2002). This is because general understandings can also be conceived “as concepts, values and categories.” (Welch & Warde, 2017, p. 185). Thus, general understandings need not relate explicitly to one single practice. These understandings can be articulated through sayings, from texts, and in the actions of individuals. Especially if a saying is an explicit articulation of an understanding it can be understood as ‘coordinating discourses’ according to Schatzki, (2021, p. 128). Following this notion the empirical material can inform us about the general understandings displayed during the pitching competition.

The analysis of extract one displayed the explicit production of the local non-physical site for the pitching competition. This included the coordinating discourse of stating that everyone should feel comfortable in the pitching ‘space’. To take this coordinating discourse at face value as one of the general understandings within the context of film pitching, and film production more widely, is slightly problematic. Because as we saw in extract four and six the actual manner in which the practice of feedback is given can hardly be described as an activity that fosters the feeling of comfort and constructive development.

However, the coordinating discourse in the first extract can tell us something about the activity of pitching as a part of film production practices. The first point to underline is the statements by Judge 3 about how participants should feel comfortable and be open to feedback as they are pitching in front of an audience. As discussed in the last parts of chapter 5.1 the resources to act in such a way is derived from orienting to the identity as representative of the profession which is relationally

produced in regard to the pitchers as the aspiring practitioners. This discourse reinforces the stance discussed by Caldwell (2008) of how pitching accomplishes certain symbolic work for the participants involved. Furthermore, the dilemmatic speech discussed in the analysis can be compared to the dilemmas identified by Potter and Hepburn (2010) in the work of school board chairing where the chair alternated in orienting between authoritative and more looser forms of ruling. The dilemmas might be indicative of institutional logics that are conflicting but are still very much used as methods to accomplish practice. Following Schatzki's (2021) reasoning, the discursive practices should not be distinguished from the non-discursive. In this instance the dilemma arises in the production of a context (discursive) where the pitcher should feel comfortable even if the judging practice is not actually inducing of such a feeling (non-discursive). Thus, pointing out a problematic but possibly necessary practice from the perspective of the practitioners.

The introductory statements by Judge 3 can be viewed as explicit understandings of the purpose for the event. This situates the activity within the wider practices of film production and the connection to other practices is established. In practice terms I argue that this illustrates the general understanding of this practice as stated explicitly by Judge 3. The understanding here is that pitching is performed as an activity to develop pitching itself, and as a way to actualize the production of a project.

Moreover, general understandings that are not directly related to the practice at hand can constitute an element of how a practice is carried out (Welch & Warde, 2017). I argue that the extracts presented in chapter 5.2, the framing of questions with presupposed contextualization by the judge, display how these general understandings are oriented to in practice. In extract 2 (ch. 5.2) such an instance is displayed as the question is contextualised by the concern of how values believed to be held by audiences in a specific geographical and cultural area impact the prospects of commercial success for a product that appears to not adhere to these values.

In extract 3 (ch. 5.2) a contextualisation of the question is produced in a similar manner as in extract 2. In this instance we covered the method how the practitioner disassociates herself from the authorship of the discursive practice in chapter 5.2. Adopting a practice perspective our interest turns to the content of her statement to analyse how general understandings of practices might overlap. Here the practitioner

orients to the understandings that could be described as primarily relating to advertising practices. Similar sensemaking is discussed by Russell (2015) in his dissertation based on interviews with film practitioners. Russell describes how both film and tv decision making is in parts driven by a narrow categorization of audiences according to preferences for different gender and age groups. This practice is more prominent in the tv industry because of the advertising traditions of tv. The categories are derived from various market research practices and, according to Russell, have a large impact on the heuristic decision making by industry practitioners.

These instances of contextualisation can be perceived as a manifestation of the overlapping of practices and general understandings that practitioners orient to. Within this film pitch session this practice corresponds with film practitioners' sensemaking practices discussed by Russell (2015). The practitioner displays discursive practices that orient to values that can be described as “broad cultural conceptions” (Welch & Warde, 2017, p. 183), which constitute a part of how to understand the general understandings of practices. Next I will move on to the concept of rules. Precisely how rules are formulated and conceived in practice varies.

6.4 Rules

Nicolini (2012) discussed how rules are often set by the powerful. Rules “have the explicit purpose of orientating and determining the future course of activity, and it is for this purpose that they are introduced into social life by those with power or authority.” (Nicolini, 2012, p. 166). The interactions presented in chapter 5.2 could be indicative of these rule formulations.

In chapter 5.3 the misalignment of the general understanding is acknowledged in the interaction. We observed how such an occurrence might impact the local production of context as well as how a breakdown in practice can lead to expressing the rules of a practice. The rules expressed in this instance were a reaction to the manner in which the interaction unfolded, I argued, and concerned the pitcher's display of production budget uncertainty. Schatzki (2002) describes rules as “explicit formulations, principles, precepts, and instructions that enjoin, direct, or remonstrate people to perform specific actions.” (p.79). A similar explicit formulation was presented in chapter 5.4 where the judge expressed rules of categorization. The judge

attempted to express the rule of why a certain project could not be categorised in a way that would allow it to be a legitimate project within the local established setting.

Watson (2017) states that rules that are stated explicitly as a way to direct other practitioners conduct can be perceived as a conventional form of power. However, within practice theory power is best understood as an effect rather than a property (Watson, 2017). Watson also argues that practice theory has not yet been able to show how practitioners accomplish “those actions and means through which the conduct of other people is more or less deliberately conducted” (p. 175).

I argue that the two instances discussed above, and presented in chapters 5.3 and 5.4, display interaction that can be perceived as precisely an action where a practitioner directs the behaviour of another practitioner by the expression of rules. In the instance discussed above the activity illustrates the formulation of rules as Schatzki (2002) discussed them as “interjected into social life for the purpose of orienting and determining the course of activity, typically by those with the authority to enforce them” (p. 80). Here, the authority is obtained contextually as the practitioners orient to their practice at hand and to the roles of judges as the individuals with authority to formulate these rules. The usage of rules in the instance that was observed in extract 6.1 (ch. 5.5) also indicates how rules and power are intertwined with practices that effectively relate to gatekeeping practices. In this instance the projects are dismissed by referring to rules of the practice.

Whether these rules are formulated on the spot by the practitioner or actually derived from prior experience is difficult to establish. Nevertheless, these instances clearly display how a rule is expressed in practice. For Watson, however, whether this actually is how a power is manifested in practice, depends on if it impacts the behaviour of the practitioners conduct in the future (Watson, 2017). Within this thesis I cannot offer evidence of such phenomena, but I believe that highlighting the phenomena found in my material is already interesting in itself and offers a point of departure for further research within the discussion of power in practice.

6.5 Practical understanding

Practical understanding is the ability of a person part of a practice to understand what is going on and how to carry out a practice. In Schatzki's (2002) terms practical understanding is “knowing how to X, knowing how to identify X-ings, and knowing how to prompt as well as respond to X-ings. ” (p. 77). If one is allowed to call any part of PT as ‘straightforward’, it could be the concept of practical understanding. In 5.4 we see how Pitcher 13 intelligibly orients to relevant contexts that are not explicitly stated, this has the effect of producing a stable instance of unfolding practice between the judges and the pitcher. Extract 6.2 (chapter 5.5) also displays interaction that can be regarded as performing actions where practical understandings of the practice at hand is expressed.

Practical understandings in action originate from practitioners orienting to general understandings that enable them to intelligibly decide what makes sense to perform next (Warde & Welch, 2017). In chapter 5.4 Pitcher 13 displayed her practical understanding by giving answers to questions that were not explicitly stated. The content of the information given concerned rights issues, budget questions, and using the practice of comparables to her advantage. A comparable or ‘comp’ is a term for a sensemaking practice discussed by Russell (2013) that entails the assessing projects as similar to certain prior film or television series, thus working as an interpretive guide on the proposed project. In chapter 5.4 we can observe an unfolding of interaction that displays a logic curiously similar to a logic discussed by Caldwell (2008) who highlighted how pitch sessions essentially incentives pitches to conform to a formulation that follows a logic of “’just-like-but-very-different’” (p. 83).

In extract 6.2 the practical understandings are displayed through the referencing of awards and credits of other projects. Russell (2013) contends that awards and other sought after resources are symbolic signifiers within the filmmaking industry. In extract 6.2 Pitcher 16 orients to these practical understandings and uses them as a way to deconstruct a prior established context and to accomplish pitching through categories relevant to the specific setting.

As “a skill or capacity that underlies activity” (Schatzki, 2002, p. 79) the discursive practices by Pitcher 13 and 16 display how practical understandings are manifested in activity. Welch and Warde (2017) say that “practical understandings are the

property of particular practices” (p. 187), and the same can be stated by the practices discussed above that effectively relate to the film industry in particular.

6.6 Conclusions and contributions

Film pitching is an interactional situation governed by local rules and accomplished in the context of a locally produced site where participants are linked by a shared understanding of the institutional context. Through the analysis we established how the activity of pitching is in this context situated in a ‘site’ of social practices as constituted by three layers; the physical space, the non-physical activity space of pitching, and the abstract contextual site of film production in general.

Adopting a practice-based perspective has allowed us to analyse how practitioners establish how the context for the pitch is produced, and how the pitching is situated within the site of film making practice. This informs us about how the activity is context contingent, the context is however not solely produced intersubjectively, but by practitioners that orient to elements of practice, some of which were observed here. These include the activity space, the physical space and the site of the practice.

From a practice perspective what the analysis brings forward here is how participants in an interactional setting of practice display their orientation to several overlapping practices. The ‘general understandings’ that inform practitioners can in some instances be harmful for practitioners without access to equal resources, which questions the activity of pitching as it may thwart some practitioners' possibilities. These understandings are exhibited in the material through discursive accomplishments. The judges are enabled through the local context of pitching which enables the judges to *perform* judging according to general understandings of this activity as part of the practice.

The coordinating discourse, explicitly stating practical or general understandings (Shatzki, 2021), was conflictual with the actual manners in which activities were carried out. I argued that this was a display of similar dilemmatic institutional logic as displayed by Potter and Hepburn (2010).

General understandings can also relate to other aspects that are not exclusively the concern of one practice. Adopting a practice perspective can show how these understandings relate and overlap between practices (Welch & Warde, 2017). The

contextualisation of questions in chapter 5.2 illustrates an instance in practice where such orientation to ‘general understandings’ occurs.

The analysis of ‘general understandings’ contributes firstly by illustrating how general understandings are governed and “performed through immediate interpersonal interaction, in the details of speech, bodily conduct and human interaction.” (Watson, 2017, p. 180). Regarding the pitching session itself the analysis has shown how the site of the pitching activity enables some practitioners (the judges) to exercise their own orientations through practice, which puts the whole activity of pitching in question. Caldwell (2008) discussed how the pitching session appears to be a phenomena that caters more to the symbolic positioning practices of practitioners, than as a possible platform for aspiring practitioners to develop original and interesting audiovisual projects. The analysis in this thesis highlights how this activity unfolds and how the interaction, coordinating discourse, and explicit formulation of general understandings has the effect of governing activity to conform to the contextual model of film pitching, rather than as an exploration of novel and original projects.

Many of the doings and sayings are also a large part of how rules are either communicated or formulated in practice. For instance if a judge was dissatisfied with the way a question was answered they might have explicitly stated how it should have been executed. These instances quite clearly indicate how the rules and understandings are conveyed in practice and about the practice. I argued that these instances can be informative of how rules are expressed and enforced in practice, especially in context of practice where the rules are not always codified and explicit. I also argued that the rules are used in practice to accomplish other activities, for instance gatekeeping practices. Furthermore, rules and their formulation can be indicative of how power is conventionally understood (Watson, 2017), thus the methods through which the phenomena was observed works as an inspiration for further studies of power in practice. An undertaking which is unfortunately outside the scope of this thesis.

Finally, I discussed how practical understandings are manifested in the observed material. These understandings were displayed in unfolding interaction where practitioners oriented to implicit contextual elements relevant for the practice at

hand. In another instance the practical understanding was displayed through discursive practices orienting to symbolic signifiers within the field of filmmaking, displaying in Schatzki's (2002) terms the "knowing how to prompt as well as respond to X-ings." (p. 77). These observations contribute practically for individuals interested in pitching and filmmaking as a phenomena, and within practice theory they inform us where to look when looking for manifestations of practical understandings.

The distinction between general understandings, rules and practical understandings in observed instances of practice is difficult to establish. A clear distinction between these elements is not one that I can produce within this thesis. However, I attempt to create some distinction by discussing certain parts of the material as a manifestation of specific elements in practice, and one could definitely argue where these observed instances belong within the concept of practice. For instance, the contextualization of questions could serve as a formulation of rules if a practitioner would orient to it as such. I believe however that the phenomena analysed here have served as sufficient illustrative examples within the concepts of 'general understandings', rules, and practical understandings. One should also remember that these elements never exist in isolation within the perspective of practice theory (Schatzki, 2002).

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Appendix

Appendix 1, Pitch transcriptions

<p>Pitch 7</p> <p>Montreal. Imagine, what if you met somebody who will completely turn your life upside down?</p> <p>Somebody like me? Yes, it is based on my true story and real events, so this project has been incubated through the TIF filmmaker lab program. It was selected as the top ten in Canada and the top 20 in the world in 2018 and since then we have been able to raise the funding. We raised 1.5 million. I'm shooting this summer and I'm looking for \$50,000. US rights and world rights, excluding Canada. So I can go shoot my back story scenes in Egypt.</p> <p>The story Of Montreal girls is about a young Egyptian boy who goes to study medicine to become a doctor in Montreal. And when he meets two Montreal women over there they will change his perception. And he will. They will change his perception and reveal him to his destiny, which is to become a poet.</p> <p>So right now I'm at the stage where I'm already in pre production. It's fully cast. It's a wonderful authentic cast and we have stars from Montreal Quebec from Canada. No international stars. I have to be transparent about that, but it took me 4 1/2 years to find the gems. The authentic real actors from those ethnicities to play the characters.</p> <p>So right now, I strongly believe that just showing, speaking about my project brings awareness and it puts me in a stronger position to reach that goal.</p> <p>Thank you very much.</p>
<p>Pitch 12</p> <p>[Pitcher 14 presents a video trailer 1m42s]</p> <p>OK, Fishing Hat Bandit. This is a story about a serial bank robber. One of the most notorious bank robbers in Minnesota.</p> <p>It's not just about him, he wants to make amends with the tellers. We have Some of the tellers' interviews and he wants to meet them and apologise to the tellers because it's very traumatic for the tellers and you don't really get to hear about the tellers too much.</p> <p>So, there you go. Thank you.</p>
<p>Pitch 13</p> <p>So [Project Name] is, actually, the incredible story of four men who robbed an armored car at gunpoint in 1994 and got away with it. This is a feature film; it's how we're doing it, a true story narrative.</p>

What ended up happening is these guys got away with this robbery for almost 11 years. The leader of the group ended up getting paranoid that they were going to get caught and go to jail. So, he started systemically murdering the other members of the group, who were all friends of his that he went to school with, and ultimately ended up being caught when he murdered his best friend at the end who had set up a taped confession to be sent to the FBI. By the time he was caught in 2004, he was a multimillionaire. He had a series of successful gyms throughout Long Island and vehemently to this day denies that he was guilty of this but is now serving 3 consecutive life sentences in upstate New York with no chance of parole.

Our budget for this is about 4.2 million. We are looking to shoot this in either, out on Long Island - I have an established relationship with many people, I've done many movies out on Long Island - or in New Jersey, depending on where we can get the better tax credit, since New Jersey includes above the line. The script is done, it's been vetted, it's been workshopped. We're at a good point with the script right now, and because the movie itself is a lot of white men, including the FBI agent and the detective that continued to pursue this story for the over 11 years before it was solved, we have decided to create diversity behind the camera where we can't put it in front of the camera because the true story is men in Long Island essentially behaving badly.

We have myself as producer. I am pursuing a female director, at the moment. The script is with [Person] at the moment. I don't know if you guys are familiar. She's got a short at the Baftas right now that she directed. And I've got a stage of female DP's. I'm trying to create diversity where I can't do it on screen.

Pitch 16

OK, I just want to say thank you for this wonderful event. It has been a struggle and a pleasure. Altitude is not nice. My film is a feature documentary about my personal journey to find and receive a cure for sickle cell disease, a hereditary disorder that affects millions globally. It causes excruciating pain, it also shortens lifespan and affects organs on the organs in your body. It has life threatening complications and over 1000 Americans and millions are affected globally. Along my journey, I speak with researchers and doctors and patients about the systemic marginalization that goes on in the medical community, and also surrounding. Because it's really a lot of African Americans are affected by it, and there's a lot of marginalization and racial undertones going on in the ER's.

I'm also going to discuss the recent breakthroughs in clinical trials such as crisper and bone marrow transplants, and the setbacks in those clinical trials. I'm raising \$50,000. I also just received and completed the. Excuse me 'cause. I just did it. Groundwork lab so that I could be in their fellowship when it starts in April, that's it.