

Potential for change in pedagogical and institutional practices: A nexus analysis of a hybrid education export meeting

Maarit Leskelä & Leena Kuure

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Potential for change in pedagogical and institutional practices: A nexus analysis of a hybrid education export meeting

Maarit Leskelä

PhD, Researcher

Research Unit for Languages and Literature

University of Oulu

maarit.leskela@oulu.fi

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6887-9443>

Leena Kuure

PhD, Emerita

Research Unit for Languages and Literature

University of Oulu

Associate Professor (Docent)

University of Eastern Finland

leena.kuure@oulu.fi

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8929-5789>

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Abstract

The context of this study is education export from Finland to Austria. The focus is on how a hybrid education export meeting between a Finnish business representative and three Austrian teachers in their school is constructed and what emerges from this encounter. The nexus-analytical research strategy involves engaging, navigating and changing the nexus of practice of interest. Social action and interaction are seen to emerge at an intersection of participants' historical bodies (experiences, familiar practices, beliefs), interaction order (mutual relationships) and discourses in place (discourses circulating in the material space). The research materials include video recordings of meetings accompanied by observation notes. The analysis focuses on in situ interactions but also wider discourses stemming from the past, visible in the material space as frozen actions. The study sheds light on the hybrid education export meeting as a site for the teachers to negotiate shared understandings about their professional practices and their development in the workplace. The study provides implications for developing meeting practices as well as teacher education considering the needs of both teachers and business professionals taking part in education export encounters.

KEYWORDS: change, discourse, education export, interaction, nexus analysis, technology

Introduction

In today's technology-rich workplace, employees engage in diverse practices that are constantly in flux. Digitalisation has changed the pace and nature of work, which requires continuous learning and adaptation to new situations. Therefore, communication in the workplace is of great importance: The employees need opportunities for sensemaking in various constellations of colleagues to establish shared goals thus constructing their workplace and work (Valo & Mikkola, 2020). A routinised part of working life is meetings, ranging from formal board meetings to random encounters between co-workers: they initiate action and have the power to shape employees' behaviour (Laapotti & Pennanen, 2020). As Laapotti and Pennanen (2020) argue, meetings are held not only to coordinate work or achieve certain objectives but also to talk the organisation into being.

The workplace that we are dealing with in this study is situated in the context of Finnish education export directed to an Austrian school. Education export has become an important topic in Finland following the success of its schools in the global PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) assessment run by OECD (Dervin, 2016; Sahlberg, 2011; Schatz et al., 2015; Van der Vlies, 2020). The advanced digitalisation of Finnish schools has further boosted education export activities (Schatz, 2015).

According to the World Trade Organization (2022), the concept of education export encompasses a wide range of activities. These include sending pedagogical professionals abroad, providing degree programs to international students, and acquiring commercial presence abroad via branch institutions. This study concentrates on the latter form of education, namely, the international sale of educational services

and immaterial goods, such as distant courses and educational software.

We examine a hybrid education export meeting between a business representative in Finland and Austrian teachers gathered in their school classroom. The participants are negotiating via a video connection about the possibility of taking into use a Finnish mobile and internet-based application, named here as Fini. School staff can use Fini to help students accomplish various learning tasks and navigate their learning paths. Although education export is a business venture, the meeting is rather informal. The backbone of the encounter is the presentation given by the business representative and the teachers join in to make sense about how Fini could be used in their school. The decision about the purchase is made in school administration but the teachers' voice will be heard as they are the central users of the application for the benefit of the learners, the school community and the guardians of the students.

The rationale for the study arises from the scarcity of academic inquiry in the field. Most published research on education export focuses on university-level degree studies while there is a lack of academic research on international sales of educational services and immaterial goods (Juusola & Nokkala, 2019). Although the research body on technology-mediated meetings in business settings has grown in recent years (e.g., Oittinen, 2018; Räisänen, 2018, 2020), their context is seldom within education export (exceptions include Leskelä, 2023, 2024, 2025).

As earlier findings on Finnish-Austrian education export meetings indicate, the encounters involve abundant sensemaking about the nature of learning, teaching and institutional practices reaching to wider educational aims in society providing thus a site for pedagogical

cal development (Leskelä, 2023, 2024, 2025). The workplace meeting can be seen as intercultural. However, as Lahti (2015) points out, sharing cultural knowledge is rather seen as an interactional achievement with fluid referents, boundaries and membership than as either hindering or enhancing interaction as previous theorisations have suggested. Thus, intercultural aspects are discussed here only if participants somehow make them relevant in their (inter)actions or the first author's observations direct attention to them (see Lahti, 2015).

Nexus analysis is used here as a research approach seeing social action as emerging from situated (inter)action between participants with their histories and mutual power plays that echo discourses across diverse time spans (Scollon, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2004). 'Situated' in this context entails that social action arises from the circumstances available as a moment-to-moment achievement (Suchman, 1996). The term (inter)action, on the other hand, emphasises the multimodal nature of human communication: Language is only one among the many resources for carrying out social actions (Norris, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 2004).

The research materials include video recordings from a hybrid meeting between the Finnish business representative and the teachers from the Austrian school. The first author's observations and experiences are also drawn on in data analysis. The approach suits well to capturing phenomena of complex nature, viewing situated action in its sociocultural framework. The study sheds light on the complex configuration of practices and discourses at an education export meeting. The findings provide ground for a multifaceted understanding of how communication and sensemaking evolve in education export meetings and how their emergence is

linked with discourses and practices reaching beyond situated (inter)action.

Background for the study

The theoretical background outlined below deals with definitions related to workplace communication, education export and meetings including their material environment.

Workplace communication, interaction and (inter)action

We start this section by delineating the concepts of (workplace) communication, interaction and (inter)action as they are used in this study. Following Norris (2004), we understand communication as a multimodal phenomenon, not just spoken or written language, emerging when people use various semiotic resources to make meaning. Norris (2004) further considers communication to be mediated via various tools such as language, concepts or technology. It is also layered in that different modes may work together or separately in variable ways (e.g., talk, gaze, spatial arrangement). Communication is also contextual, shaped by the social, cultural, and material settings in which it occurs (Norris, 2004). By interaction we refer to communication on a more concrete, situational level. The combination of action and interaction, referring to social action more broadly than just language use, is expressed in short as (inter)action (Norris, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 2004).

Workplace communication involves situations where different genres, technologies and interactional practices merge into a multilayered whole, which emerges in a multilingual, manifold and often digital environment where the

participants draw on different resources simultaneously (Blåsjö & Jonsson, 2023). In technology-mediated or -supported meetings, social action has been shown to be polyfocal (Scollon et al., 1999), which refers to how people direct their attention to a diversity of aspects at the same time beside their orientation to the main thread of the negotiation (Johnson & Mabry, 2022; Jones, 2004; Schmidt, 2020). Distributing attention is essential even in face-to-face environments when participants regulate their focus and use of diverse interactional resources (Norris, 2004). Leskelä (2023, 2024), illustrates how German and Austrian teachers participating in an education export meeting where the lingua franca is English engage in solving language-, product- and work-related problems and issues (re)directing their attention during the negotiation. Technological issues are also sorted out to maintain the meeting connection and ongoing negotiation. In the encounter, the interactional practices of negotiations, collegial discussions, developmental reflections and technological troubleshooting intertwine, for example (Leskelä, 2023, 2024).

Material environment for a communicative situation

Different artefacts and objects in the material environment have an impact on the communicative situation (Norris, 2004). They can be seen as frozen actions encompassing accumulated histories of previous actors (Norris & Makboon, 2015). For example, at a crime scene the investigator uses such traces of past action to envision the course of actions guiding the criminal investigation further. In a hybrid education export meeting, the meeting space such as the classroom may reveal to the education export professional what kind of pedagogical culture is prevalent in the clients' school, and

thus, advance shared understandings about the product under negotiation. Frozen actions are durable and persist across a longer time span than gestures and talk, but they contribute to identity production in the same way as any action telling about people's lives, values and even their profession (Norris, 2004; Norris & Makboon, 2015; Scollon, 2001).

Leijon (2016) has examined the relationship between material space and learning. Entering a space, social actors "read" it in their own ways and bring this reading into situated action: They have expectations about the genre of practices and the affordances of the space for action (p. 120). Social actors can exercise their agency in shaping the circumstances for collaboration as in manipulating the placement of furniture and their own positioning in space (Tapio, 2018, 2020). Schoolscape researchers have also shown how the signage in the school environment brings forth language ideologies at the expense of others (e.g., Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee, 2021; Dressler, 2015; Szabó, 2015). In meetings, presentation programs integrate their creators' ideologies and beliefs about potential users' needs while some applications may also work as hubs or nexus joining together different people, objects, genres, discourses and spaces, among others (see Blåsjö, 2022; Zhao et al., 2014). The material environment is not just a separate context for communication but an integral part of meaning making.

Education export as a context for workplace communication

Education export meetings as sites for workplace communication are a phenomenon that teachers in the field have not usually experienced personally – neither in Finland nor in Austria. Nevertheless, there are many Finnish

teachers who have been involved in education export in some form as the current market niche in the country is primarily in teacher education and the Finnish comprehensive school system (Schatz, 2015). Such teachers have been hosting educational visits and become employed by education export companies for schools abroad where their expertise on curriculum design, pedagogical approaches and the school environment among others has been drawn on (Schatz, 2015).

Education export does have monetary aims, but it can also be viewed more broadly as transferring intellectual capital as a reciprocal process benefiting both providers and receivers (Juusola & Nokkala, 2019; Lönnqvist et al., 2018; see also Finnish National Agency for Education, 2020; Laihonen & Hasanen, 2018; Suhonen et al., 2022). Earlier research on education export has primarily focused on the provision of educational contributions in higher education (Schatz, 2015, 2016). In some countries education export has long roots. Australia, the USA, and the United Kingdom have been in the leading position, followed by Canada and New Zealand, all primarily in the higher education sector (Schatz, 2015, referring to Cai, Hölltä & Kivistö, 2012; Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). In Finland, education export started to grow, especially after the government decision of 2010 to join the education export scene with the intention of developing a national brand with a focus on quality education (Schatz, 2015). In Austria, education export has been strong in terms of the number of international students enrolled in higher education institutions (Dornmayr & Lenger, 2010; Stieger, 2010).

Overall, there is a lack of research dealing with other forms of education export than provision of studies to incoming students in higher education. Considering the interactional and

discursive aspects of educational export meetings, the research body is almost non-existent despite Leskelä's (2023, 2024, 2025) studies on meaning making and teacher agency in hybrid meetings between Finnish business representatives and German and Austrian teachers (see below). Filling the research gap is important for a deeper understanding of the communicative intricacies of education export meetings to be able to provide the participants opportunities to strengthen their professional practices both as exporters and clients. From a national economic perspective, addressing this gap is also essential for supporting the sustainable development and competitiveness of education export.

Making meetings happen

Bläsjö's (2022) study of communication in the workplace illustrates how interdiscursive practices stemming from different domains may intertwine to make a meeting happen. In education export, such domains include business, pedagogical and technology development, education, and administration to name a few. For speakers of English as a foreign language, the interactional configuration may cause challenges as in experiencing disempowerment in situations where English is used (Lockwood, 2015). However, communicative success is not only dependent on language skills but on the efficient use of diverse semiotic resources and modalities for meaning making (Räisänen, 2018, 2020; Räisänen & Kankaanranta, 2024). In multilingual environments especially, this includes engaging in translanguaging as participants draw on their full linguistic and multimodal repertoire to make meaning (Canagarajah, 2011; García & Wei, 2014; Norris, 2004). Encountering technological problems, silences, or disagreements participants may also use diverse multimodal means and material objects

to establish the progress of the main activity (Oittinen, 2018).

Education export advances through negotiation and sensemaking, which require creating productive circumstances for collaboration. Co-presence, mutual monitoring and central situational focus have been highlighted as important aspects of meetings (Wasson, 2006, referring to Goffman, 1963). Technology-mediation has not changed the idea of co-presence, but participants' perception of mutuality through attention, emotion, and behaviour characterise it better according to Campos-Castillo and Hitlin (2013). Wasson (2006) prefers the term interactional space, referring to contexts, where the participants of an interaction are co-present to each other. Interactional space thus encompasses all distributed spaces where social actors engage in mutual interaction with each other through whatever technological tools they have available (Wasson, 2006).

There may be varying views about what is perceived as productive in a meeting. For example, opportunities to engage in chitchat beside the main focus of a technology-mediated meeting can be experienced either as beneficial for building trust and rapport or as a waste of time (Johnson & Mabry, 2022; Schmidt, 2020). Studies from hybrid education export meetings with English as a lingua franca have shown how German-speaking customer teachers engage in side-exchanges drawing on their entire linguistic repertoires in interaction (García & Wei, 2014). Being able to use one's own language, for example, alleviated uncertainty about the technological issues discussed and advanced the achievement of shared understandings (Leskelä, 2023, 2024, 2025).

As Laapotti and Pennanen (2020) point out, it is not only the agendas that are followed in

meetings, but organisations are also talked into being. As they conclude, meetings should not only be examined as an interactional accomplishment *per se*, but as part of a systemic whole where meetings together with other processes contribute to achieving organisational goals. This study tackles with an interesting subject exploring what happens in an education export meeting which is new for the teachers in Austria but also for the Finnish business representative in terms of their knowledge about the local circumstances where the product should be taken to use. Due to the nexus-analytical research strategy, the perspective involves exploring the meeting in relation to its wider dimensions as well (see below).

Nexus analysis

Nexus analysis is adopted as a research strategy in this study. Its roots lie in mediated discourse theory drawing on diverse fields of inquiry such as linguistic anthropology, ethnography, (critical) discourse and interaction studies and activity theory among others (Scollon, 2001). The terms nexus analysis and mediated discourse analysis (MDA) have been used interchangeably in many studies (Kuure et al., 2018). However, we adhere to Scollon and de Saint-Georges' (2011) understanding of mediated social action as the basis for nexus analysis, which is seen as the historical, ethnographic and methodological grip to conduct research. In other words, nexus analysis as a research strategy is based on the view of social action as mediated (Scollon & Scollon, 2004).

Focus on social action

Nexus analysis switches the emphasis from the study of language to social action, which is

carried out through material or symbolic mediational means or semiotic resources (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, drawing on Wertsch's, 1991, 1998, application of Vygotsky, 1978). Social action is situated in a unique moment and material space, i.e., at a site of engagement, where different practices make that action possible (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). It is enabled by the interconnected cycles of participants' historical bodies, the interaction order that they produce together and the discourses in place circulating at different scales of time and place (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). Historical body (applied from Nishida, 1958) refers to a social actor's lifetime experiences and understandings that contribute to creating mutual interaction orders (Goffman, 1983). Diverse discourses circulate in place, some at a slower pace, others more rapidly (Gee, 1999; Blommaert, 2005). Nexus analysis has a focus on historicity and complexity, captured by examining different cycles of discourse, reaching from situated action to broader scales even on societal level (Canagarajah & de Costa, 2016; Hult, 2017).

Research process and research materials

Nexus analysis advances by engaging, navigating, and changing the nexus of practice, i.e., a network of linked practices (Scollon, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2004). In the engaging phase, the research looks around, asking what is going on there. The focus is then delineated, sifting and analysing the materials thus navigating the nexus of practice more closely. Changing the nexus of practice involves considering how the study may alter it in different ways. Direct transformations are not expected, as situated action is complex when understood as arising from social and material assemblages, across diverse timespans (Leijon et al., 2022).

This study explores an education export meeting between a business representative in Finland and three teachers in a client school in Austria. The research questions are the following: How is a hybrid education export meeting between Finnish service providers in Finland and Austrian teachers in their school constructed and what emerges from this encounter. The research process is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. The research process (drawing on Scollon & Scollon, 2004)

Research tasks	Description
Engaging the nexus of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research topic and our zones of identification were established. • The data were explored for initial understandings and delineating focus.
Navigating the nexus of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data were examined qualitatively using theoretical insight (meetings as hybrid (inter)actional constellations involving frozen action). • Three discourse cycles were identified in the data: constituting shared interactional space, constructing the product and fitting the product in pedagogical practice.
Changing the nexus of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contributions of the study for change were considered.

Considering our positionalities in research is necessary when doing nexus analysis as research like any social action always involves the idea of intersecting aspects social actors' historical bodies, interaction orders with others and discourses in place (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). Thus, we necessarily bring to our research our own backgrounds, experiences, understandings and beliefs, we engage in research as members of our academic communities and enact and produce discourses that are relevant or contested in those communities. To strengthen the trustworthiness of our research we have discussed all the phases of the research including our analyses and interpretations thoroughly throughout the research process.

Discussing our perspectives to education export we were able to establish our zones of identification or the legitimate position with the nexus of practice of interest (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, drawing on Burke, 1950). The first author, who acted as the onsite researcher in Austria, was a pedagogical professional, a Finnish-speaker from Finland, also fluent in English and German (the lingua franca of the meeting was English). The researcher was familiar with the education export company and had visited their customer schools, gathering data, interacting with school staff, observing what was going on there (see Leskelä, 2023, 2024, 2025). The second author, also from Finland, was involved in earlier studies giving methodological guidance but became a co-researcher in this study having experience from teaching and research on teacher education but not from education export.

In engaging the nexus of practice, we examined the research materials and narrowed down the focus to an education export meeting. From the data archive, materials from one school in Austria were selected for closer scrutiny in the

navigation phase. This included video footage captured during the 41-minute meeting with a Go-Pro camera and a mobile phone. In addition to the recordings, the first author's observational data from the school were also used in the study. The setting for participation was the following: There were three class teachers together with the researcher (first author) in the classroom of an Austrian school and the business representative was located in Finland.

Although this one meeting selected in the spotlight of the analysis may seem to provide a small amount of data at first sight, it produces an abundance of aspects to explore to achieve an understanding of the education export meeting as a nexus of practice. In other words, even a small amount of data can provide an information-rich case for achieving an in-depth perspective to the phenomenon in focus as Patton argues (2014). This is also an important feature of nexus analysis, which does not separate situational phenomena from their wider connections. Thus, it allows the researcher to zoom in to look at situated (inter)action and zoom out to view linked wider-scale discourses and practices, which is necessary in addressing the complex and dynamic nature of participants' meaning making (see Pietikäinen, 2012). The trustworthiness of the study has been strengthened through triangulation of different kinds: Different data types and methods were used; and two researchers conducted the analysis also discussing their interpretations together (Patton, 2014).

Findings

The analysis of the research materials revealed three aspects intertwined during the education export meeting – constituting a shared interactional space, constructing a shared understand-

ing of the product, and fitting the product into their pedagogical practice.

Constituting a shared interactional space

Viewing the video materials and discussing the first author's experiences from the meetings, we saw an abundance of signs of the participants constituting shared interactional spaces throughout the joint activity in progress (Wasson, 2006). The important moves towards it were taken anticipatorily and in the initial stages of the meeting, however. The education export meeting examined in this study took place in an ordinary classroom where frozen actions engrained in the artefacts echoed voices of educational theorists, educators, architects and designers across a lengthy time span (see Norris, 2004). Figure 1 illustrates the setting and material environment of the meetings in more detail as well as the positioning of the participants in the space. Mika (Mi) joins the meeting from Finland via videoconference, Beate (B), Anke (A) and Marlene (M) are sitting at the tables,

and Liisa (L), the researcher, is positioned close to the wall at another table.

The picture panel from the school in Austria shows how the space for the meeting is separated by an opening or broad door from another part of the classroom. Researcher Liisa's account of the material space is given below in a condensed form:

(1) This is part of Beate's home class. She is a class teacher. There are desks joined together into a bigger "table" and a few for smaller groups. On the left-hand side, there are windows, and on the opposing wall, there is a bookshelf. At the front, there is an area reserved for students' work, books and other materials and a movable beamer. On the desks and the shelves, there is a wide range of items that have been created or placed in the space for pedagogical use such as transparent boxes with name stickers for modelling clay and other materials for handicraft or geometry tools hanging below the blackboard. Children's drawings and other products are placed on the walls.

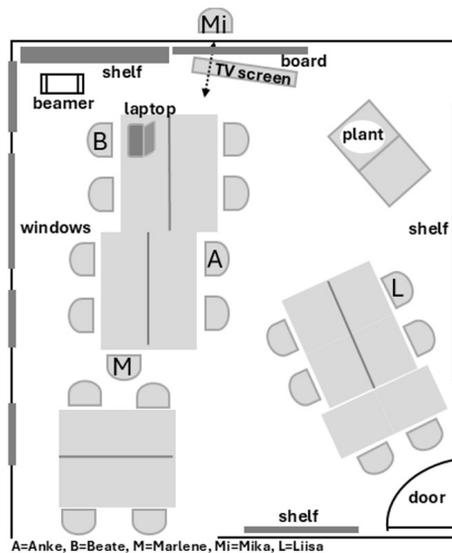


Figure 1. Classroom as a space for an education export meeting

The frozen actions embedded in the design of furniture and classroom equipment bring in discourses of flexible pedagogy answering to the needs of different learners. The design and the placement of furniture allow students to interact and work together easily. Mediating modern understandings of learning and teaching, the furniture is suited to different configurations ranging from independent, teacher-led study to collaborative or station-based work for groups of different sizes.

The presence of technology in the classroom is not overwhelming. In front of the blackboard, there is a big television screen on wheels. Beate herself is using a laptop for the meeting running the application for the video connection. This enables linkages between distributed spaces depending on what the device is used for, and which applications are employed. In this case, the screen binds the company representative from Finland and the schoolteachers in Austria together in the same interactional space.

Considering the discourses circulating in place, Mika is likely to read the material environment as something close to his own experience of education as it resembles the Finnish school environment that he knows well (see Leijon, 2016). In this sense, the historical bodies of teachers and the service provider seem to draw on shared pedagogical ideals, implying balanced interaction orders between teachers and pupils and discourses in place.

Looking at how the interaction in the meeting proceeds, the following summary combines the observations on the video data and Liisa's observations on site:

(2) As the meeting starts, Mika from Finland appears on the screen and starts introducing himself. Immediately, Beate at the laptop interrupts

his talk making sure that the voices are audible to all. There is some troubleshooting about microphones and the problem is solved. Mika continues by stating his scarce preliminary knowledge about the participants and the school, checking with the teachers that his understandings have been correct (e.g., the school provides primary education).

When the connection opens, the teachers and the researcher are sorting out the technicalities of the video conference. At the same time, they are placing themselves in the classroom to create an optimal setting for visibility and participation for the meeting, around the big table constructed of desks (see also Tapio, 2018, 2020). Researcher Liisa positions herself on the side close to the video camera recording the meeting while the other camera is placed in another angle.

The participants are engaging in the construction of their shared workspace, or interactional space by configuring the material environment, adjusting the positions of furniture, computer screens and camera as well as themselves to create a fruitful communicative environment for the meeting (see Tapio, 2018, 2020). Beside these actions, especially before and at the beginning of the meeting, they also strengthen the trusting atmosphere, co-presence and rapport through various multimodal interactional resources. These resources include using first names, smiling, directing gaze, changing body posture, and formulating turns as in asking questions in a polite way (see Johnson & Mabry, 2022; Norris, 2004; Schmidt, 2020).

In the interactional space, diverse discourses circulate as the participants are creating linkages between the abstract product and their professional pedagogical practice asking questions and confirming their interpretations. They also engage in translanguaging practices as they by the

side of the main activity keep confirming various language issues. For example, the teachers occasionally initiate sensemaking amongst themselves or with the researcher related to terminological uncertainties or issues concerning product- or pedagogy-related usage details as observed also by Leskelä (2024).

Constructing the product

Mika, the company representative, has a particular understanding about the product being sold as his historical body has become shaped throughout the Finnish school system, as a school student, student teacher, in-service teacher and now an education export specialist as regards pedagogical applications for education. However, it is a different matter how the other participants view the application as their historical bodies stem from different pedagogical and professional experiences and discourses. It is all the participants who will together construct Fini as a product in their mutual interaction.

In the meeting, Mika is using a slideshow and screen sharing to provide structure for the presentation and the discussion and to demonstrate the qualities of the product. The teachers are listening, giving some backchannel and engaging in some sensemaking shortly now and then. Every now and then, someone asks for clarification and in the end, the presenter asks if anybody has any questions. This triggers some questions and discussion about details related to the product and its potential in use. After the video conference is closed, the teachers start to exchange ideas about the presentation and the product together with the researcher joining in. It is possible to see in the video data how the teachers' exchange of ideas accelerates when they have the opportunity of reflecting on the

use of Fini in their personal professional contexts. Gradually, they are gaining stronger voice to talk about it as teachers responsible for their own work. Thus, it is all the participants that contribute to the shaping of a shared product, which is also important from the perspective of successful education export.

Another mediational means that contributes to presenting the product in special light is the slideshow used to structure the presentation. It is a company product, which Mika aligns with quite tightly, even though some diversions are taken in the unique situation of the meeting. Figure 2 gives a conceptualisation of the slides in terms of the image that is created through visual and language resources.

As the conceptualisation indicates, the slideshow is aimed to be viewer friendly: Visualisations are used to refer to different functions of the product and the amount of text is not excessive to ensure easy viewing. Colours as a semiotic resource cannot be bound to certain meanings as their grammar is socially produced (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2002). From our perspective, the colour scheme on the slides appears as peaceful and nature-like, based on light shades of green with black text to highlight essential information. The visual imagery emphasises the ideologies of education that arise from Vygotskian (1978) perspectives to learning, including meaningful interaction with others – educators and parents but also other social actors in the community such as peers and schoolmates. The pictures with animals of different sizes in pairs and groups referring to adults and children support the reader in interpreting the visuals suggesting such values. Metaphors are also used about learning, e.g., a cub crossing a river suggests that learning involves meeting and overcoming challenges. The picture related to pedagogical management, is



Figure 2. A conceptualisation of a presentation slide

somehow different from the others as it refers to the teachers’ administrative responsibilities as in applying learning analytics to monitor students’ progress. The picture shows an animal in formal outfit pointing at the role of research in developing this side of the teachers’ work: the black top hat indicating a doctoral degree in the Finnish context and the black case suggest that there is a formal, perhaps scientific element in the design process of Fini.

If slideshows are treated only as texts, as products of visual and textual composition, their multifaceted nature is obscured (Zhao et al., 2014). Seen as multidimensional, multimodal social practice, the slideshow involves simultaneously three dimensions: the software designed by a company, the artefact (presentation slides) created with the software, and the way it is used in a presentation (Zhao et al., 2014). The slideshow is an example of frozen action. All the actors that have taken part in the emergence of the presentation at some point have drawn on the circulating discourses of their time,

their understandings and experiences (historical bodies) and the interaction orders that they have formed with others (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). The discourses of education and digitalisation have circulated the design, production and presentation phases in different ways, also linked to discourses of funding and pedagogical ideologies (see Leskelä, 2023, 2024).

While presenting the slides, Mika sheds light on the wider societal context behind the Finnish curriculum reform and Fini. In the flux of the Finnish success in the PISA process, education export has become strengthened, and Fini has been developed to be used abroad as well. Evaluation is highlighted as an important aspect of the product, which the teachers welcome by positive comments and backchannel. The vocabulary and concepts used in the presentation and in the slides support creating a picture of teaching and learning as arising from modern values in education. Examples of these include presenting evaluation as a continuous and broad process involving various social ac-

tors such as learners themselves, their peers and parents beside the teacher. Long-term documentation is also highlighted as a tool for making progress visible and, hence, a necessary resource for evaluating the learning process (e.g., learning journals, portfolios, reports, assignments). Diversification of teaching for different learners is also given as an important aspect of Fini allowing personalised learning paths and goal setting by the students themselves as well as the teachers. Pedagogical management is considered important, which becomes visible in the teachers' lively interaction and positive tone after that aspect of Fini is introduced.

Fitting the product in pedagogical practice

During the presentation, meaning making goes on about the relationship between the teachers' daily work as teachers. The digitalisation of school is a dominating discourse in the meeting flowing between funding policies, power configurations related to technology acquisitions, status of the technology infrastructure and teachers' solutions in organising teaching for learners of different kinds (see Leskelä, 2023, 2024). In the course of Mika's talk, teachers occasionally confirm interpretations from him or ask for support from each other or Liisa, the researcher. The situation changes drastically, however, when Mika notices that he needs to

be elsewhere, and the meeting has to be concluded when 31 minutes has passed. So Anke, Beate and Marlene as well as researcher Liisa say their farewell to him, Beate waving her hand (Panel 1 in Figure 3) and stay together another 10 minutes discussing heatedly about the past encounter.

Right after the connection ends and Mika disappears from the screen (Panel 2 in Figure 3), Beate turns towards Liisa at the camera asking, "*are you happy with us*", while Anke claps her hands together strongly once, also turning to Liisa. Marlene is not visible in the picture, but she joins the others in showing relief about the meeting being over. Liisa answers quickly, "*danke*", and continues, "*yeah, I'm really happy with you you did really well ... extremely well*". Again, joint laughter follows, and a lively discussion starts with Liisa.

Beate's question asking whether the teachers had performed well in the meeting reveals that the situation is not something they are familiar with even if they do not bring it up in any way during the conference itself. Thus, the experience has broadened their repertoire of practices in the teachers' work, i.e., provided new elements for their historical bodies as teachers. During the discussion with Liisa, the teachers are elaborating their thoughts on the functionalities of Fini and check their interpretations

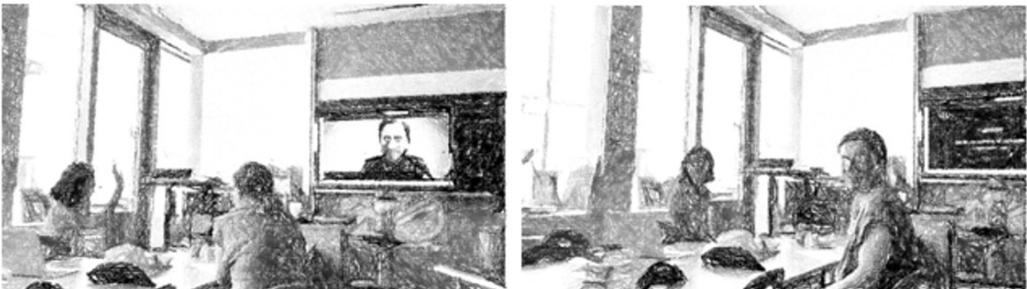


Figure 3. Ending the videoconference (panels 1 and 2).

with Liisa with reference to its applicability in their daily work. Considering the possibility of the school purchasing the product as a result of education export the opportunity of the teachers to interact with Liisa is important. The exchange of ideas and sensemaking is taking place freely, probably due to the relationship between Liisa and the teachers being more collegial than the transactional relationship between the teachers and Mika as a company representative. The change in participants brings along immediate changes in interaction order from a panopticon with the presenter as a hub for interaction related to the main focus of the meeting to a collective where colleagues more freely share ideas (Scollon & Scollon, 2004).

The examples also illustrate education export as a reciprocal process, where both the seller and the potential buyers learn from each other. As Mika is not present in the final phase of the meeting, Liisa bridges the gap and mediates the teachers' perspectives over to the company. Furthermore, Mika's opportunity to get into contact with the teachers as potential users of Fini can be valuable in developing the product further rather than communicate with administrative staff who are not involved in teaching themselves.

Discussion

This study set out to explore how a representative of a Finnish company carrying out education export and teachers at an Austrian client school together construct a hybrid education export meeting and what emerges from this encounter. While exploring the discourses circulating at the encounter, three activities appeared to be salient: constituting a shared interactional space, constructing and understanding of the

product and fitting the product to the teachers' pedagogical practice (Table 2).

As Table 2 shows, the education export meeting emerges at the intersection of participants' historical bodies, the interaction order they establish between themselves, and the discourses circulating in place.

Historical body

The study explored how the participants drew on their historical bodies in constituting a shared interactional space, making sense of what the product is and how it could be used in their daily work. The teachers were accustomed to many kinds of meetings dealing with the school organisation, schoolwork as well as communication between the school and homes, but they had no experience of being in the role of customers in education export meetings. The education export meeting around Fini provided them with a kind of trigger for rethinking and reforming their earlier understandings and practices (see also Leskelä, 2023, 2024).

The discourses with longer trajectories in history became partly recycled in the participants' interaction, and partly through frozen actions embedded in the material and interactional space such as classroom design and the slideshow used to characterise Fini's functions. The discourses stem from the teachers' personal experiences in education as learners or education professionals but also from more distant participants who have contributed to the shaping of educational tradition, visible in design and objects in the meeting space (see Scollon & Scollon, 2004). This observation substantiates perspectives from other studies that put emphasis on meetings as events where organisations are talked into being as co-workers are construct-

Table 2. The education export meeting as an intersection of participants' historical bodies, the interaction order they form together and discourses in place

Emergence of education export meetings	Aspects of social action		
	Historical body	Interaction order	Discourses in place
Constituting a shared interactional space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teachers' educational background • Past experiences about learning and teaching • Familiar pedagogical practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Configuring mutual relationships in terms of power, status, membership, agency, emotions, identities, knowledge • Use of multimodal resources in building trust and rapport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant discourses having traces beyond the situation (different scales of time and space, past/present/future) • Frozen actions (mediational means in material space echoing past discourses) • Shaping space to enable action
Constructing the product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slideshow as a semiotic aggregate, frozen action (actors: software designers, slideshow creators, presenters and listeners) • Sensemaking about interpretations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company representative at the foreground giving the presentation, teachers as listeners • Researcher monitoring and providing support for interpretations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking (how Fini is used elsewhere) • Responsibilities in infra-structuring (e.g., funding, support, technology acquisitions, training) • Approaches to pedagogy and technology use in education
Fitting the product to pedagogical practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher's experience • Balancing between own pedagogical experience and scenarios enabled by Fini 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher from background to foreground • Collegial interaction order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulating pedagogical approaches, views of learning, personal solutions to aspects of teaching

ing new knowledge and practices balancing between the familiar and the new (Laapotti & Pennanen, 2020; Leskelä, 2023, 2024, 2025).

Different means are used to mediate meanings such as the slide set that the business representative used as a backbone for the presentation. It can be seen as frozen action as its history involves software designers, business profession-

als using the slideshow application to create a particular kind of picture of Fini, and the slideshow presenter who gives a particular presentation version to a particular audience. As Blåsjö (2022) has observed in her research on texts in the workplace including slideshows, our study also revealed how the slide presentation in the classroom functioned as a hotspot for stopping to build shared understandings. The teachers

were able to intervene the presentation with questions, make sense together by the side of the company representative's talk, confirm their interpretations or ask for support from the researcher. In constructing an understanding of the product, circulating discourses were important for sensemaking as the participants were able to clarify aspects related to the possibilities of the teachers, students, and other actors to use Fini for the purposes they considered relevant. In this way, the slideshow offered a site for elaborating historical bodies questioning and reflecting on the discourses that it mediates as frozen action.

Interaction order

Considering the interaction order, the interactional space was being constructed through multimodal resources building trust and rapport using familiar address forms, gestures and gaze expressing affiliation and emotion but also through physical movement to arrange the space in the way that everybody has access to each other. The teachers were engaging in short-term meaning negotiations and translanguaging beside the main negotiation to make sense of linguistic issues and some features of Fini, as Leskelä (2024) has pointed out.

The teachers also expressed their emotions in relation to behaviour in the meeting positioning themselves as being evaluated. However, they showed agency in their collaboration during the meeting, envisioning possible changes in their pedagogical practice when using Fini in their work. At the end of the education export meeting, the participants had the opportunity to engage in collegial discussion with the researcher as the company representative logged off. The researcher was positioned first by the teachers as the "task owner" as she had suggest-

ed to the school the possibility of having such a meeting with a Finnish service provider about technology for pedagogical purposes. However, the researcher transformed the nature of the discussion adopting the position of a teacher colleague rather than somebody in charge of the situation. With her, the teachers had a lively discussion where all (also the researcher) brought up challenges and problems and for which the researcher was able to share her personal experiences. In this phase, what was foregrounded was fitting the digital solution (Fini) together with their daily work at school, partly as a long-term challenge, and partly as something that teachers encounter every day. The findings show how interactional choices may result in a change in the interaction order and even contribute to a perspective change in making sense of the product and pedagogical practices in question.

Discourses in place

The aspects of social action, i.e., historical body, interaction order and discourses in place can never be separated from each other – they all have an impact on each other and emerge from different configurations of the whole (see Scollon & Scollon, 2004). They can be viewed analytically one at a time but bearing in mind that they are interconnected. Thus, many of the findings presented above could also be discussed under the heading of discourses in place.

To conclude, we can say that there were a wide range of discourses circulating the meeting, related to funding, product features, digitalisation of school and pedagogical aspects but also to teacher agency and identities (see also Leskelä, 2023, 2024). In the confines of the material space these discourses were mediated and supported also by the frozen actions (Norris, 2004)

in the classroom where the meeting took place. They revealed for their part longer trajectories of discourses circulating across global, societal, national and local scales in terms of education and how it is funded, organised, and put to practice, i.e., how curricula echoing wider discourses are finally put into practice in the daily life of school (see also Tapio, 2018).

Conclusion

As can be seen in the discussion above, the hybrid education export meeting provided the participants opportunities for sensemaking, expanding their understandings about technology use for the benefit of education and Fini especially in the context of their own local pedagogical and administrative practices. The study also shed light on the complexity of change, as discourses of the past continue circulating in innovation. As Scollon and Scollon (2004) maintain, agency is embedded in all actions that social actors take, i.e., the teachers can either hold to their previous, familiar practices or shape new understandings, but how the sensemaking turns into actions remains to be seen.

However, we can say that all the participants' historical bodies were renewed and transformed somehow: The participants were making sense about what is familiar and what is new and what could change if anything. As for education export, the situation was new for the Austrian teachers, but also for the company representatives as they had little knowledge about the local circumstances in terms of technology purchases and infrastructuring including the acquisition of equipment, support and the configurability of the product with their practices at school among others. Thus, it was not just the teachers that had the opportunity of considering new directions for their peda-

gogical institutional practices. Sensemaking around concepts and product features showed that something seemingly familiar may prove to be complex and interpreted differently by different participants. This highlights the fact that elaborating shared understandings and goals takes time and is not a straightforward and quick process. The findings could be utilised in providing training in education export, e.g., to increase participants' awareness of the delicate construction of communication *in situ* but always linked with wider discourses and practices. This would enable education export practitioners to intentionally raise sensemaking for shared understandings questioning even what seems already shared and familiar.

This study focused on one hybrid education export meeting, which could be considered a shortcoming in many types of research in terms of the scope of data. However, as was discussed in the section on the research approach, nexus analysis looks at situated action, but the analysis is not restricted to the (inter)actional sequences only. Instead, situated (inter)action is viewed as a nexus, where discourses and practices developed across diverse timescales become salient and analysable. Furthermore, the researcher's participatory observations serve to strengthen the interpretations. Nevertheless, the nexus analysis proceeds through cycles of engaging, navigating and changing, usually with repeated cycles. Thus, this study has shed light on the diversity of aspects at work in hybrid education export meetings, which may open new paths for research. What would be an interesting avenue for further research is to follow a workplace community for a longer stretch of time and identify important moments for sensemaking where change may take new directions. This would involve a more participatory approach among the members of the workplace.

Considering the implications of the study from the education export practitioners' perspective, the findings suggest the importance of going deeper to explore the clients' local circumstances, e.g., prevailing pedagogical and administrative practices, which have an impact on their agency to participate in transforming education. Furthermore, the researcher as a mediator for sensemaking appeared an important actor for the teachers in judging the relevance of the product for their use. For teachers, the study foregrounds the importance of exploring new arenas such as education export negotiations to become engaged in decision making that affects their work. For researchers, the use of nexus analysis shed light on the complexity of the nexus of practice of education export, which opens an abundance of possibilities for further research.

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OTSIKKO JA ASIASANAT SUOMEKSI:

Muutospotentiaali pedagogisissa ja institutionaalisissa käytännöissä: hybridimuotoisen koulutusvientikokouksen neksusanalyysi

ASIASANAT: diskurssi, koulutusvienti, muutos, neksusanalyysi, teknologia, vuorovaikutus