

SOCIALIZING MECHANISMS IN THE ROUTINIZED PRACTICE IN THE NEWSROOM

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Abstract

Based on ethnographic observations in newsrooms and interviews conducted with 12 Danish journalist trainees, this paper will analyze and categorize *socializing mechanisms* in the newsroom – that is social actions performed by the experienced journalists and the editors – the *socialising agents* – in order to encourage the interns to act, think and feel in ways desirable for the organisation. In these socialising processes we see both the *very visible and explicit* ways of socializing clearly demonstrating that an intern has displayed culturally desirable or undesirable behaviour. And we see the *more invisible and implicit* ways of socializing consisting of everyday actions in the routinised practice aimed at making interns behave in a certain way. The study presented is part of a recent linguistic turn within newsroom studies where the detailed analyses of the micro-level of discourse and interaction is combined with the analyses of social structure, institutional roles, identities, and cultural practice.

Keywords : Socialization, newsroom studies, socializing mechanisms, tacit expert knowledge, interns

1. Introduction

Socialisation processes have been described as very important both when it comes to how newcomers become a part of a particular organisation, develop knowledge, skills and role clarity and when it comes to job satisfaction, productivity and commitment to their job and to the organisation (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg 2003; Bauer *et al.* 2007; Saks & Ashforth 1997; Ashforth *et al.* 2007). Therefore, effective and efficient socialisation processes and onboarding processes are important for all types of organisations (Derven 2008; Wanberg 2012). Consequently, knowledge about how socialisation processes take place in the routinized practice in an organisation becomes very valuable as a point of departure for creating and optimize these processes.

This article focuses on socialisation practices in the newsroom. The analyses demonstrate how journalist interns entering this professional community of

practice (Wenger 1998) via legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger 1991) and socialisation processes learn both professional norms and craft skills and thereby become culturally competent members of this professional culture. The ambition is to analyze and categorize socialising mechanisms in the newsroom – that is social actions performed by the socialising agents (Feldman 1994) in order to encourage the interns to act, think and feel in ways desirable for the organisation (Goodwin 1994; Carr 2010).

This research project is part of the recent *linguistic turn* within newsroom ethnography, where researchers perform micro-level analyses of discourses and interactions in the routinized practice in the newsroom in order to understand how the social structure, the professional culture and the professional expert knowledge is constructed and reconstructed in this practice (see for instance Perrin 2013; Cotter 2010; Gravengaard & Rimestad 2011; 2014). Thereby this paper will also serve as a description of the added value originating from combining the ethnographic and the linguistic perspective when studying the development of professional practice and professional expertise.

So far, much research on socialisation within the profession of journalism has focused on the products of socialisation (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2014), that is on the interns. Using surveys, researchers have studied how attitudes, values and norms change during the period of internship (Bjørnsen et al. 2007; Hanna & Sanders 2012; Elmelund-Præstekær *et al.* 2008, 2009; Hovden *et al.* 2009). However, these results do not reveal how and why we see these changes and they can not explain what actually happens in the socialisation processes in the media organisations. Therefore, socialisation processes have often been termed a black box.

Previous research focusing on the process of socialisation (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2014) has, on the other hand, discussed how a newcomer becomes a professional in diffuse, tacit and extremely informal ways (Preston 2009; Harrison 2006; Donsbach 2004; Breed 1955; Furhoff 1986). However, not much research has focused on micro-level analyses of actions, interactions, conversations and discourses in the actual day-to-day practice in the newsroom even though this has been described as one of the only ways in which it is possible to gain a more detailed knowledge about the professional socialisation that takes place in the newsroom (see for instance Jablin 2001; Slaughter & Zikar 2006; Ashforth *et al.* 2007, Griffin *et al.* 2000; Rimestad & Gravengaard 2011)

In this paper, I initially define and discuss the concepts of socialisation and socialising agents and describe how tacit expert knowledge is often passed on to newcomers in tacit ways. Hereafter, I present the research design and lay out an analysis of socialising mechanisms in the newsroom, describing both the explicit and visible and the more invisible and implicit socialising mechanisms aiming at demonstrating whether an intern has demonstrated culturally desirable behaviour or not. Finally, I discuss how an explication of tacit professional knowledge is an important part of creating effective and efficient socialisation processes, and I describe how researchers and professional practitioners can engage in knowledge creating relations facilitating these processes.

2. Socialisation processes

Cotter (2010) describes, how interns must learn both practice-related skills and the complex set of values underlying these skills, as the goal seen from the organisations' perspective is to make newcomers think and behave in ways that are considered appropriate and valuable by the organisation. This happens through socialisation processes in the newsroom.

Via their legitimate peripheral participation in this particular community of practice (Wenger, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991), interns are gradually introduced to the tasks and challenges relevant for the organisation and are involved in solving these. Often this happens in collaboration with the professional veterans, that is the experienced journalists. By talking and collaborating with the experienced journalists and editors and by observing and imitating these experienced professionals' way of thinking and behaving, the interns gradually become more culturally competent (Briggs 1986; Goodwin 1994, 1996; Carr 2010) moving from legitimate peripheral participation towards full participation in the professional community of practice.

Members of an organisation create and recreate the culture and values of an organisation on a daily basis via the routinized everyday practice, and it is in this practice, that socialisation processes take place. The newcomer participates in the routinized everyday professional practice in the newsroom and it is by focusing on this practice and on interactions involving the newcomer that we can gain more knowledge on the actual socialisation processes as all interactions may be sites

for socialisation processes to take place (Goodwin 1994; Kulick & Schieffelin 2005; Markauskaite & Goodyear 2014).

The newcomer meets a range of more experienced journalist, editors, editor-in-chiefs, secretaries, lay out persons and others in the media organisation and these people all affect the intern via their interaction with him or her. At the same time the intern is not just a cultural robot (Eide 2010) who automatically internalises the values and norms of others. The intern is also capable of making his or her own choices and is thereby an active participant in the creation and recreation of the organisation (Field & Coetzer 2008). In this way, the professional identity of the intern is negotiated in a dialectical interplay between personal and organisational ambitions, values, norms and goals (Dahlgren *et al.* 2014; Eteläpelto *et al.* 2014; Akkerman & Meijer 2011).

In our research project on interns, we often experienced how the interns in the beginning of their internship period made an effort to 'fit in' and do what was expected from them. However, we also saw a development where many of the interns eventually engaged in more discussions challenging what "is usually done" in the newsroom and causing changes in the organisation (see also Bell & Staw 1989; Ashford & Taylor 1990). Furthermore, Fenwick & Somerville (2006) and Wells (2007) point out that organisational norms and values can be acquired, ignored or rejected by newcomers. With the words of Foucault (2002): In socialisation processes, we see both "power" (structure, the experienced journalists, culture and routines in the organisation) and "counter-power" (newcomers who challenge these things), and structure and actors mutually affect each other in the everyday practice.

Even though socialisations processes are dialectical and co-produced, the focus in this paper is on the organisation and on the members of the organisation; on what they actually do in the routinized practice. Not because this is the only important element in the processes, but because it is one of the most important elements and because these processes are so complex, that a narrow focus is needed in order to provide thick descriptions of these practices.

3. Socialising agents with tacit expert knowledge

The experienced members of the media organisation are important for the interns' socialisation processes and Feldman (1994) terms these: "*socialising agents*". Socialising agents can be all members of the organisation interacting with the intern, but the most important socialising agents are the experienced journalists and editors interacting intensively with the intern on a daily basis. Socialising agents affect attitudes and behaviours when they support, help or coach the interns (Beery 2000). Reichers (1987) point to the newcomers' collaboration and interaction with the socialising agents during the first months as the most important arena for socialisation processes. Also, often newcomers point to this interaction and this period as the most valuable (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson 2006).

Socialisation processes are very often informal learning processes (Scollon & Scollon 2001) situated in the routinized practice and aimed at solving organisational problems and achieving organisational objectives, for instance finishing up a news story or getting hold of a particular source for an interview. Therefore, the socialisation process is seldom planned in detail and rarely has explicit learning goals. Hence, socialisation often takes place in tacit ways (Markauskaite & Goodyear 2014; Gherardi & Perrotta 2014; Gravengaard & Rimestad 2014, 2015) via the interns' participation in the professional practice where the primary goal often is not one of learning but one of delivering a media product of a certain quality before a given deadline.

Add to this, that experienced professionals are what Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986) call "intuitive experts" because of their vast amount of tacit expert knowledge (Polanyi 1958, 1983). Professional practitioners often find it very difficult to put large parts of their professional knowledge into words, because much of this knowledge is constructed via and closely attached to their professional practice. Therefore, much professional knowledge is not voiced but *done* in practice. Schön (1983) describes how the professional practitioners' actions can demonstrate a knowledge beyond what the practitioner is able to tell others, when he introduces the concept of "knowledge-in-action". Consequently, much tacit professional knowledge is passed on to newcomers in tacit ways (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2011, 2014) also contributing to creating blurred and intangible socialisation processes.

The ambition to study socialisations processes in the everyday practice in the newsroom focusing on the socialising agents and both the visible and explicit socialising mechanisms as well as the more implicit and hence invisible socialising mechanisms, demands a research project designed to capture both the tangible and the intangible parts of these processes.

4. Data and methods

This article is based on an ethnographic research project where we¹ followed 12 Danish journalist interns before, during and after their internship period. These interns worked for two national Tv stations, two national daily newspapers and two national tabloid newspapers. The internship period lasts one year in Denmark and before this, the students have attended the university or journalism school for 1½ - 2 years. After the internship period, the students return to the educational system. The interns' salary during the internship period is 2700\$ a month.

The research design consisted of:

- Participant observations made during a year following all 12 interns three full working days each. We made audio recording of meetings, interviews and other professional interactions.
- Semi-structured interviews with the trainees before, during and after their trainee period.
- Semi-structured interviews with the person responsible for the interns in each of the media organisations involved in the study.
- E-mail inquiries to the trainees three times during the internship period.

Combining ethnographic studies of the routinized practice and analyses of reflection-in-action (Schön 1983) in the newsroom with reflections-on-action (ibid.) and contextual data, this research design allows us to base our analysis of both the visible and more invisible socialising mechanisms on something very tangible, that is on the actual interactions and conversations in the newsroom and on how the involved parties describe this practice and their own role in it. This

¹ This research project is conducted in close collaboration with Lene Rimestad, Journalist, PhD, Centre for Journalism, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark.

makes it possible to describe a range of important socialising mechanisms found in the newsroom.

5. Socializing mechanisms in the newsroom

In the rest of this paper, I will analyse and categorize socialising mechanisms in the newsroom. Socialising mechanisms are defined as social actions performed by the socialising agents (Feldman 1994) in order to encourage the interns to act, think and feel in ways desirable for the organisation (Goodwin 1994; Carr 2010).

Socialising mechanisms are social actions found in both the formal and the informal interactions in the newsroom and they are more or less explicit. As shown in Figure 1. below, the socialising mechanisms can either function as “rewarding” actions and demonstrate that the intern has demonstrated a particularly suitable behaviour, or they can function in a “sanctioning” manner demonstrating that the intern has shown an inappropriate behaviour not approved by the organisation.

Furthermore, we see both the very visible and explicit ways of socialising clearly demonstrating that an intern has displayed culturally desirable or undesirable behaviour. And we see the more invisible and implicit ways of socialising consisting of everyday actions in the routinized practice aimed at making interns behave in a certain way.

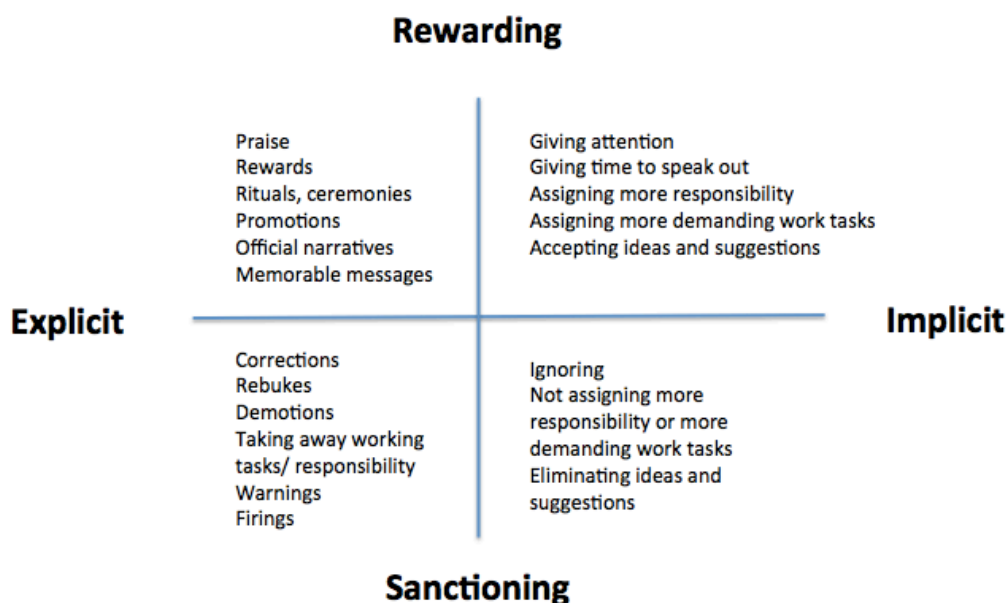


Figure 1. Socialising mechanisms in the newsroom (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2015).

Via these types of socialising mechanisms, the organisational culture and its basic underlying assumptions (Schein 2004) along with the professional expert knowledge is created and recreated in the routinized professional practice in the newsroom as it becomes visible to the intern what is and what is not cultural desirable ways of behaving and thinking in this particular community of practice. In the following section, I will describe both the explicit and the implicit socialising mechanisms, how they are used and with what effect.

6. The explicit and visible socializing mechanisms

The explicit and hence very visible socialising mechanisms demonstrate very clearly when an intern has demonstrated a culturally desirable or undesirable behaviour seen from the organisation's perspective. Both the rewarding and the sanctioning mechanisms clearly show the intern and the rest of the organisation what is the desired mind set and way to behave in this organisation, and very often these professional and organisational norms and values are also explicitly voiced by for instance the editor. The explicit socialising mechanism functioning in a rewarding way can be:

Praise

In these incidents, the intern is praised for having done a good job, for instance for creating 'a good news story' or finding an important source. This explicit praise can be set forward by the editor or colleagues and we find it both in formal story-meetings and written feedback and in more informal conversations. As an example, in our data, we have a conversation between an intern and an editor, where the intern is praised for his coverage of a fatal drowning accident where young school children lost their lives.

Example 1: Well done!

The intern describes how he got an interview with an important person and what he will write about the accident. *(Not shown here because it takes several minutes, and thereby pages)*

Editor: "Arh, it is really brilliant. Now look, your story will be on the first pages in the newspaper. We will give your story about the accident 4-5 pages tomorrow, right? Your story will be the first story in the newspaper. It is the best story, we have!"

(Editor, 02.04.2011)

Rewards

Rewards are given to demonstrate that the intern has demonstrated a particularly valuable performance much appreciated by the organisation. One of the most important and common rewards is the intern having his or her news story on the front page or as top story in the news bulletin. This most distinguished place in the media product is given to the intern when his or her story is assessed to be the best story of the day. Other rewards can be: allowing the intern to participate in excursions for the press; allowing him or her to try new and longer formats, for instance features; asking the intern to do interesting tasks, for instance to interview the national football team.

Rituals and ceremonies

Rituals and ceremonies mark special occasions where the intern has made an exceptional effort or is expected to do so in the near future (Harrison & Beyer 1984). To journalist interns the introduction days in the media organisation are such rituals, functioning as run-up to their internship period. Also winning the Kravling prize (*Kravlingprisen*) given to the best intern of the year in Denmark – and being nominated for this prize in the first place – is a ceremony and a ritual emphasizing the exceptionally skilled intern and honouring him or her.

In a tabloid newspaper in our data it is a ritual that the editor-in-chief asks journalists who have written a particularly good news story affecting and perhaps changing something in society, to write a brief to the top-management describing how he or she created the idea, how the working process has been and what effects the story has had outside the newsroom. On the day when the intern we followed was asked to deliver this kind of brief to the editor-in-chief and thereby participate in this ritual, this was a very visible sign that the interns' story and work effort is especially valuable to the organisation and therefore much appreciated.

Promotions

When promoting journalists, the top management selects members of the organisation who has displayed a behaviour and mind set most appreciated by the organisation and awards them a higher status in the organisational hierarchy. Perhaps the intern is allowed to work at his or her favourite news desk for a longer period because he or she has performed well, or the intern can be given the possibility to work with the high-prestige news desk, for instance at the Danish

parliament. Perhaps the intern is given the opportunity to assume a position as middle manager or perhaps he or she is offered editing work tasks in the newsroom. Also, the intern can be asked to prolong the internship period in the media organisation or can be offered a temporary job or perhaps even be offered a permanent appointment in the media organisation after the internship period is over and the intern has finished his or her education.

Official narratives and memorable messages

Both official narratives (Cooperman & Meidlinger 2000) and memorable messages (Stohl 1986) point out the norms, values and hence the desired behaviour in an organisation. Official and planned narratives illustrate and animate the values of the organisation, and they are created by the organisation.

For instance this can be a narrative from our data, where an editor tells all the new interns about:

Example 2: Four frontpage stories

“the time when an intern had four out of seven frontpage stories within her first week as an intern”

(Editor A, 09.02.2010)

accentuating a particular way in which to be a good intern.

The memorable messages (Stohl 1986) are messages given from the experienced journalists or editors to the interns, and these messages are remembered and thought upon by the newcomers for a long time. It can be the editor who tells all interns on their first day at work:

Example 3: What we look for

“that only one of you will be hired by this newspaper after the internship period. And what we look for in an intern is somebody who works hard, find the good stories and is full of initiative”

(Editor B, 09.02.2010)

Or it can be the last sentence said at every morning meeting:

“Now, go look for that tiny thing that really makes a difference”

In both cases the memorable message explicitly and unmistakably points out what is the culturally desirable behaviour.

However, we also see many explicit and visible socialising mechanisms functioning in a sanctioning way, demonstrating that the intern has displayed ways of behaving and thinking not approved by the organisation (I will describe these mechanisms in section §7).

Corrections of actions and/or values

When actions or utterances are corrected, it becomes visible that the intern is doing something wrong, or that the intern does not display the 'right' values seen from the organisation's perspective. Corrections can deal with relatively trivial matters, for instance that the intern use a particular word in a wrong manner ("balance of payments" or "marginal tax") or the intern express him- or herself in an unclear manner and the editor says: "You need to be much more to the point". The corrections can also concern more fundamental phenomena as for instance the values or the knowledge, the intern demonstrates to possess or not possess (Nielsen 2010).

In our data, an example of this is taken from a Tv-station where an intern suggest finding a new case for a news story only a few hours before deadline on a weekly program.

Example 4: A new case

Intern: But do you have a case? Because I might know somebody who would fit right in
Editor 1: They have a case
Intern: Okay
Editor 1: I say "no" to you in a strict manner because we need to wrap it up now
Intern: Okay
Editor 1: We do not need any more new cases, because now we have ...
It has to be enough now
Editor 2: Now you need to deliver

(Newsroom, 02.28.2011 min: 11:50)

The intern does not demonstrate the 'right' behaviour and the 'right' way of thinking and this is explicitly corrected by the two editors. He should spend his time finishing up the news story not looking for a new person to interview.

Rebukes or demotions

In some cases, the editors or experienced journalists rebukes the intern very explicitly because he or she has demonstrated culturally undesirable behaviour. An example from our data is described by this intern at a newspaper who has e-mailed an idea for a new news story to her editor:

Example 5: An old story

I had seen a good news story that I thought had only been printed in the local media. He [the editor] came to me afterwards and said: “Thank you for the idea. However, if you had read your newspaper, you would know that this story was printed on page 4-5 yesterday” And then he left. I had not seen this because it was in the paper from Saturday and I had not read this paper. You know, I was not at work on Saturday.

(Intern, 08.02.2011 min 5:26)

It is fine that the intern suggests a new idea, but the idea does not demonstrate that the intern knows the demands made on ‘a good news story’ (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2016). Also it becomes evident that the intern does not know which news stories have been printed in the newspaper. The intern is rebuked for not having the necessary professional knowledge and for not demonstrating the required behaviour.

Degradation or taking away working tasks/responsibility

Taking away working tasks from the intern and degrade him or her are even more clear signs, that the intern has displayed a behaviour and/or mind set not appreciated by the organisation. An intern can be removed from a particular story or from a news desk because he or she has not met the demands put forward. And in less serious cases, the editor can “keep an extra eye on the intern” because he or she “messed up” and the editor “wants to make sure that it does not happen again”.

Warnings or firings

An intern can also be given warnings for serious transgressions of acceptable behaviour or for violation of his or her contract. In some cases, this unacceptable behaviour can lead to the intern being fired.

However, we also find a range of more implicit socialising mechanisms accomplishing the same as the explicit socialising mechanisms, only in a more invisible and subtle manner.

7. The invisible and implicit socializing mechanisms

As established earlier in this paper, both the basic underlying assumptions (Schein 2004) in the professional culture in the media organisation as well as large parts of the professional expert knowledge in the newsroom are tacit knowledge. This knowledge is demonstrated *in* the routinized everyday practice but is very seldom explicitly voiced. Therefore, much of the knowledge that the intern needs to learn is not put into words and is therefore learnt in tacit ways. Consequently, we find more invisible and implicit socialising mechanisms in the routinized practice. These are everyday actions aimed at demonstrating whether the intern demonstrates culturally desirable ways of behaving and thinking or not. However, this happens in a much more unnoticed way than for instance a promotion or praise. In our data, we have observed the following mechanisms:

Paying attention to what the intern says or giving the intern the chance of speaking out – or the opposite: ignoring the intern or not giving him or her the opportunity to be heard.

Being given attention as well as time to speak – both in face-to-face conversations and during editorial meetings – often signals that editor and colleagues are interested in giving the intern the possibility to speak out, because they are interested in hearing what he or she has to say. During our stay in newsrooms, we often experienced interns being given much attention and much time to talk right after having handled a given work task particularly well. In these cases, the interns were allowed to talk for several minutes about their accomplishments without being interrupted by the editor or other colleagues: The intern was awarded the scene at the editorial meeting or in the newsroom and was given the opportunity to explain how he or she managed to create a particularly good story or get at interview with a very important person. The amount of space, time and attention given to the intern is implicitly signalling that the intern is worth paying attention to – and thereby a token of desired behaviour.

However, we also saw the opposite pattern – that is, how editors very quickly can interrupt an intern, sometimes in the middle of a sentence, if the editor finds

what the intern is saying is irrelevant. Often the purpose of this interruption is that the editor can have a chance to describe his or her own wishes and demands concerning a particular news story and asking the intern to meet these demands, or that the editor wants to change the topic of the conversation into something that he or she finds more relevant. Interrupting or perhaps speaking at the same time or in overlap with the intern signal that the intern does not adequately meet the expectations and demands existing in the media organisation.

The following example is from an editorial meeting at a Tv-station. Here the intern is given the possibility to speak by one editor (Editor 1), who shows interest in the interns' idea about how to cover the story about a Danish film ("In a better world") winning an Oscar and lets him describe the idea. Editor 2, however, does not like the intern's idea, interrupts him and suggest a new and better way to frame the coverage of the Oscars.

Example 6: Covering the Oscars

- Intern: In relation to the question of what this means for Danish film in general:
I perhaps have an idea. I was thinking:
Two Danish films have previously won an Oscar in this category:
"Babette's Feast" and "Pelle the Conqueror", right?
- Editor 1: Yes
- Intern: Then we could talk to (*inaudible*) and Ghita Nørby who have been involved
in these films – and then we could talk to a film expert who could put it into perspective and compare with today
And then we could use clips from the two films – and then move forward to Bier's film today
I mean "In a better world"
And then we could make it like this. I think we could make it like this
- Editor 1: Yes
- Intern: Then perhaps we can also use the pictures from today
- Editor 1: Yes... Yes, because ...
(...)
- Intern: Ghita Nørby, she is a well-known Danish actress that everybody knows
- Editor 1: Yes ... The question is however, if this is actually more important to the directors than to the actors
I know too little about that
- Journalist 1: Well, Sofie Gråbøl said in a radio interview that she hoped that this would mean that they would notice her
Or something like that, right?
- Intern: Also one of the others said that, eh... William

He also participated in “In a better world”
He hoped that this would be a stepping stone for him,
so that Hollywood would notice him
I mean, they are also over there
They are also over there, the actors
Editor 2: (*in overlap*) Well, what is important today is that this is a glory day
I mean, we had an Oscar
Before we start describing all the perspectives, right?
I mean, this is huge, right?
And we need to stay there
It would be nice with a portrait of her, right?
Because she is the main character

(*Newsroom, 08.28.2011 min: 23:08*)

Assigning more demanding work tasks to the intern – or the opposite: not giving the intern the responsibility suited for his or her abilities and qualifications

Even though it is not explicitly stated, giving more responsibility to the intern demonstrates that the organisation is satisfied with the intern and his or her performance and wants to give the intern new challenges and new possibilities. If the intern has handled a demanding work task and is given the same kind of work task a few weeks later, this often signals that the editor was satisfied with the way the intern solved this task the first time. This is not necessarily stated by the editor, rather it is the action: giving a similar task to the intern, that signals this. The recognition is implied in the action to assign this task to the intern – or perhaps assign him or her with an even more difficult task.

Many interns in our study underline the importance of demonstrating knowledge, commitment and skills in relation to the editors. One intern puts it this way:

Example 7: Trust

“In the beginning they [the editors] need to know that they can trust you before you get permission to do certain things. You need to show that this is what you want and that you are able to do it”

(*intern, 02.28.2011*)

Being given more demanding work tasks is taken as a sign that the intern has succeeded in doing this.

Simultaneously, not providing new challenges or more demanding work tasks can signal that the editor does not feel that the intern is yet ready to deal with these new challenges. He or she is “not yet skilled enough” but has to learn more before being appointed a certain work task. When for instance the Tv stations in our data insist that the interns team up with an experienced reporter or the newspaper organisations insist that the interns have to begin their internship period writing for the web in order to build up experience, these are both signs that the interns do not yet possess the necessary knowledge and skills demanded to work alone.

Letting the intern develop and work with his or her own ideas for news stories – or the opposite: Eliminating the ideas presented by the intern.

Interns are only allowed to work on their own ideas for news stories if the editor finds that these are good ideas. Thus being allowed to work on his or her own idea demonstrates that the intern has produced an idea meeting the demands to ‘a good news story’ put forward by the editor and the organisation. This is an implicit recognition of the interns’ knowledge and expertise. Also, not being allowed to develop ideas themselves or having ideas eliminated display that the interns are not able to meet these expectations (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2011). For the intern experiencing many eliminations of his or her ideas, these eliminations implicitly demonstrate that the intern has not yet learned to develop an idea, that will be conceptualized by the editor as ‘a good idea’ (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2016) – that is, the intern has not demonstrated the requested mind set and knowledge.

Asking the intern for advice – or the opposite: never ask the intern about something he or she might know.

Asking an intern about something that for instance the editor does not know or asking for the intern’s opinion on a given matter demonstrate that the person asking expects the intern to either have this knowledge or have a valuable opinion on the matter, whereas never asking the intern shows that the editor does not expect that the intern can formulate something important. Thus, asking the intern for advice is an implicit recognition of the intern’s expertise.

This list shows how the more invisible socialising mechanisms – without doing it explicitly and directly – can demonstrate that the organisation appreciates and values the intern’s skills, performance and work effort, and how the opposite

actions can signal that the intern does not display culturally desirable behaviour. Also the editors and the experienced journalists can demonstrate a lot about appreciation – or the opposite – by using body language, tone of voice, gaze, gesture and mimicry (Stivers & Sidnell 2005; Due 2012; Kjær 2014; Goodwin 2000; Nielsen 2010). These actions also function as both rewarding and sanctioning socialising mechanisms at an implicit and more invisible level.

8. Tacit knowledge passed on in tacit ways

In order to have effective socialisation processes, the newcomers need to know how their behaviour and way of thinking is evaluated by the organisations and the professional veterans, but they also need to know why these things are evaluated in a certain way. Otherwise they need to guess and this prolongs the learning process as well as creates insecurity and perhaps frustrations. As an example, the intern needs to consciously translate the implicit socialising mechanisms into praise and a sign that he or she has demonstrated culturally desirable behaviour. However, the tacit way in which this recognition takes place means that the intern also has to figure out for him or herself just what it was, that he or she did well. That is not always easy for the newcomer and can cause confusion and insecurity.

For instance, when it comes to learning one of the most important professional concepts – to create ‘a good news story’ – much of this happens in tacit ways. As an intern in our data puts it: “Sometimes I have wondered why an idea was eliminated (...) In these cases you can just feel that this is not a story we are going to write”. The tacit professional expert knowledge is not put into words.

Furthermore, praise framed as summative feedback (Shute 2008) – for instance: “Fantastic news story” – is not as detailed and informative as the formative feedback (ibid.) where the professional veteran explicitly points out *what* exactly was good in a particular news story. Hence the formative feedback entails that the newcomer has a steeper learning curve as he or she is given the possibility to learn the expert knowledge more quickly than if this knowledge remained tacit. If cultural undesirable behaviour is never accompanied by guidance on how to act and think in different ways than the ones displayed (and sanctioned) the newcomer finds it very difficult to get a hold of these norms, values and ways of ‘doing the rope’ – and this can obstruct learning.

Very often it is very difficult for the experienced professional practitioners to explicate their tacit professional knowledge. This example is taken from a meeting, where an experienced journalist tries to teach three interns what a good headline is:

Example 8: A good headline

All four meeting participants read a headline of an internet news story written by one of the interns participating in the meeting. And the experienced journalist starts evaluating the headline.

Experienced journalist: I do not think that it is good. Ehhh....

I don't really know

It is a little hard to point out why exactly

I don't know if I would click on it

I think the text below it is good

(...)

Ehhh, it is a little difficult to put my finger on it....

(Journalist, 09.23.2010 min: 7:34)

Eventhough the experienced journalist clearly feels that the headline is not as good as it could be, it is very difficult for him to explicitly explain why this is the case. Consequently, it becomes difficult for the interns to learn what they can do better as they have to guess what is wrong with the headline.

As an example of how difficult it can be to explicate the tacit professional knowledge for the experienced practitioners, I here quote a reaction to the above description of socialising mechanisms, delivered by an experienced editor in an article about this research project (Sayers 2015):

Example 9: Putting our profession into words

“We are so good with words, but incredibly bad at putting our own profession into words. We talk about gut-feeling and a ‘nose for news’. We instinctively sense what a good news story is - or a good headline - but we can not explain what makes them so good (...) Many of us who have been editors for a long time have experienced a craftman training, not an academic education, and we seldom reflect upon our profession in an academic manner. We have never learned how”.

Therefore, it becomes essential for media organisations – as well as all other organisations – to reflect upon what learning opportunities they as organisations offer in the everyday routinized practice and optimize this in order to maximize the learning potential for the newcomer (Fuller & Unwin 2003; Filliettaz 2014).

They need to put an effort into explicating as much as possible of their professional expert knowledge, and reflect upon and discuss which socialising mechanisms are most suited to facilitate the best learning and socialisation processes.

Also, as pointed out elsewhere (Gravengaard & Rimestad 2016), the educational system and the media organisations are very different learning environments making different demands on the journalism students and rewarding different values and behaviours. This “double professional socialisation” (ibid.) is also an important challenge when aiming at creating effective socialisation and onboarding processes.

9. Conclusion

Effective and efficient socialisation processes can reduce the newcomers’ uncertainty in the first months in the news organisation as well as enhance the interns’ level of role clarity, sense of belonging to a group, job-satisfaction and self-efficacy (Bauer *et al* 2007; Sacks *et al.* 2007; Wanberg 2012) and thereby facilitate further growth, additional learning and higher confidence (Ashforth *et al.* 2007).

Using a theoretical framework allowing an ethnographic, linguistically sensitive approach to the routinized everyday practice and the socialisation processes, gives us the possibility to describe just how the tacit knowledge about the craft, the profession, the organisation, and the culture is passed on – often in tacit ways – to newcomers; in this case to interns in the newsroom. Therefore, we can now articulate a more nuanced insight into important parts of the intangible socialising processes in the newsroom. This example of the new linguistic turn within news ethnography advances media production research as well as organisational socialisation research in general.

The socialising mechanism are important parts of the routinized everyday socialisation processes in the newsroom, and because of this, they are often strongly attached to a practical and tacit knowledge seldom put in to words and therefore seldom discussed by the practitioners. This research project facilitates the explication of important parts of the professional practitioners’ tacit expert knowledge about how socialising processes take place in the newsroom and how

they as socialising agents are important actors in this process. Putting this practical and tacit knowledge into words gives the practitioners an opportunity to gain a more nuanced insight into their own professional practice and this new explicit knowledge can become an important point of departure for further discussions and reflections concerning the optimal socialisation practices in the newsroom. For instance: Is what the organisation and the professional veterans do the best way to create effective socialisation processes? Which socialising mechanisms are productive and counter-productive to the organisation's goals and to the interns' goals?

Hitherto many researchers have described how the relation between journalism and media scholars and the professional practitioners – journalists and editors – have been lacking both mutual interest, respect and understanding (see for instance Zelizer 2004, 2013; Josephi 2009). This research project – along with others – has an explicit ambition to integrate these parties in a more close cooperation. In order to present the added value of this research project and facilitate knowledge transformation between researchers and practitioners, we have done the following in order to create dialogue and collaboration with the professional practitioners in the field of journalism:

- Written a book aimed at journalist students before, during and after their internship period. ('Journalists in internships' ('Journalist i praktik')).
- Created a webpage aimed at practitioners who work with interns every day and at educators working with students who have internship as a part of their education (www.praktikantvejleder.dk (www.being a mentor for an intern.dk)).
- Undertaken a range of workshops with experienced journalists and editors in several media organisations.
- Published articles in magazines and on webpages read by students and experienced journalists and editors

Hence this research project is also an example of the new development and the "new research value chain" (Gravengaard 2016) within the recent linguistic turn in news ethnography where scholars engage with practitioners in a "knowledge-creating relation"; collaborating, engaging in ongoing dialogue and reflection, discussing conclusions and findings, and developing tools for

improving practice and reflections on practice. All of this is done with the ambition to bridge the gap between practitioners and researchers and practical and academic knowledge (Perrin 2013; Berthoud & Burger 2014; Burger 2015).

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