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Enterprise social software appropriation: A dance of animacy

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Abstract

By viewing organisational appropriation of enterprise social software (ESS), this research-in-progress paper explores the juxtaposed relationship between two practices, that of client and consultant, as they work together to co-design a joint ESS solution for the client’s workplace. The lead researcher’s embedded relationship in a case organisation, who specialise in ESS, enables in-situ observation of the breakdowns and tensions between practices. Through a design and practice-based perspective, the taken-for-granted assumptions of both practices are animated through useful tensions as design-based activities unfold. A double hermeneutic process emerges in which the two practices work towards understanding each other’s practice as well as their own respective role in the project.

Keywords: Enterprise social software; practice theory; appropriation; design research; ethnography
1 Introduction

When a consultancy and a client company work together in a project, their organisational practices are juxtaposed, sometimes in stark relief. Tensions, (mis)interpretations and a clash of cultures become visible. These ‘moments of contrast’ provide an avenue to explore how clients and consultants navigate their differences to create new ways of working with technology. By providing a reflective account of the lead researcher’s embedded and ongoing relationship with a consultancy implementing enterprise systems, this paper reveals the people and technology assumptions as organisations consider the appropriation of new technologies into their workplace. The Ripple Effect Group (REG) is a boutique consultancy specialising in social business, predominately in the area of malleable enterprise social software (ESS) (Richter and Riemer 2013). The lead researcher has been ‘embedded’ within the REG practice since March 2016, playing a dual role of practitioner-researcher, which has allowed for reflection between empirical and theoretical contexts as a way to study practice-based IS phenomena. One such phenomenon has been witnessed as REG work with different client projects regarding the introduction and use of ESS inside their client’s workplace. The juxtaposition of practices, those of a client and a consultant, have been observed across multiple client projects.

Contrasts between the work performed by the REG practitioners, and their clients’ a priori project assumptions, elicits an animated process that is useful in exploring the appropriation of ESS. The concept of a ‘dance of animacy’ (Ingold 2013) enables preliminary theorising of appropriation of ESS as a designed activity. Researcher embeddedness enables articulation of the ‘coming into being’ for ESS practices, that is, of technology corresponding with employee routines and practices, through a process of co-design. In this view, REG and their client work to design a holistic process enabling employees to appropriate ESS as part of their working practice and, secondly, how employees might then correspond with ESS in relation to the needs of the client. This co-designed process occurs through the animation of taken-for-granted practices, and the use of resultant tensions, between the REG and client practice. This relationship has been seen to unfold via the enactment and subsequent breakdown of practice-in-tension, and for which the tensions from such breakdowns help in the overall design solution for ESS, which is intended for the macro-level organisation. In guiding our research we ask, ‘how do the consultant and client practices interpenetrate as they animate both employee feedback and project requirements through the lens of their respective practice?’

This paper proceeds as follows. Firstly, by discussing the nature of ESS as a type of malleable software, which requires a focus on end-user practices, we articulate ESS “solutions” as practices, something that can be designed. Design is achieved through the resolution of breakdowns and tensions during which people and technology come to correspond in response to organisational context. Secondly, in looking at the juxtaposition of practices, we posit that researcher embeddedness provides an opportunity for observations to be made about practice interactions and their subsequent breakdowns in reference to ESS projects. We then proceed by arguing that such breakdowns are useful as they produce tensions which are used to explore practice-based phenomena. Such observations are made possible through an established relationship with a company that specialises in ESS. Finally, these embedded observations enable us to theorise how practices can potentially emerge when people and technology come to correspond in ESS appropriation practices.

2 Enterprise Social Software (ESS)

Enterprise social software (ESS) first emerged inside the workplace in the early 2000s and was seen as the technical solution to bridge the gap between employees as knowledge creators, and employees as knowledge consumers, in a more real-time, social, and collaboratively iterative process (Leonardi et. al 2013). Such software is often categorised under the banner of social collaboration tools, channels and platforms, which have technical ‘features’ such as wikis, blogs, pages, spaces, and discussion forums (Weiss et. al 2015). These tools and systems work across heterogeneous devices, and can be used to connect employees in digitally and geographically dispersed workplace contexts (Jarrahi and Sawyer 2015). ESS technologies are considered to be types of malleable end-user software (MEUS) in which end-users have to experiment with the technology and determine its usefulness for themselves (Richter and Riemer 2013). Malleability means that there is no predetermined purpose assigned to ESS usage when it is introduced inside an organisation. Rather, usage supports social processes, as the technology is appropriated by employees to design novel ways to accomplish work as opposed to offering a prescribed method in which to work in (Germonprez et al 2011).

Extant ESS research has focused on the implementation, adoption and post-adoption of ESS inside organisational contexts (Turban et. al 2011; Meske and Stieglitz 2013), giving primacy to the technology and framing it as influencing or causing end-user outcomes. Other researchers have argued
that less emphasis should be placed on the technology per se, and instead the focus should be on educating employees about ESS, such as having consultations with them, ensuring appropriate training and ensuring employees are included at each stage of ESS’s formal introduction inside the organisation (Richter et. al 2012; Baxter and Connolly 2014). Having either a technical or people-based focus, however, often ignores organisational context, as the same software can be introduced into two different workplaces and have seemingly different usage outcomes (Mettler and Winter 2016).

3 Designing for Practice

Given the malleability of ESS, its usage can be viewed from a design perspective in which practices themselves have to change. The definition of practice is therefore twofold. Firstly, we posit that a person’s being in the world can be seen as part of some type of practice which naturally constitutes a relationship with technology (Dreyfus and Wrathall 2005). In this view, REG and their client group are each bounded in their own respective practices, and each use technologies in direct relation to the enactment of their practice. This relationship plays a role in how each practice perceives technology. Secondly, practice itself is what the client’s employees are also involved in as part of their role in the client’s organisation. Both REG and their client group have to work together to design a solution for changing technology’s role in employee practices. This view aligns to the idea that practices themselves go through a process of prototyping in which social routines, behaviours and attitudes need to be understood before any technical change can take place (Reckwitz 2002).

In this regard, changing employee practices can be seen from a design perspective, in which technology is viewed as something that is socially co-constructed and brought into being via breakdowns and phenomenological interpretations regarding the enactment of practical behaviours (Sandberg and Tsoukas 2011; Grand et. al 2015). Phenomena can therefore be explored at the intersection of where people and technology meet, and where practices change to better correspond and enfold new technologies or processes. Instead of adopting new technology “as–is”, organisational practices and routines change, as activities, routines, vocabulary and tempos come into correspondence with in-use technologies. Pragmatic contexts of practice and the role of discourse aligns to the idea that organisations are designed (Romme 2003) and can be designed via an inquiry into the changing nature of practice. Practice involves negotiation of meaning which is derived from discourse, and breakdowns of discourse can be revealed as community meanings are challenged as a practice moves from a theoretical stance and into an experienced reality (Wenger 1998).

3.1 Designing for ESS appropriation

However, the malleability of ESS and the importance of organisational context means that designing a singular solution for ESS usage would be difficult, as numerous and different practices exist within the same organisation (Nicolini 2012). Introducing ESS as a ‘blank slate’, or ensuring employees use it after it has been physically introduced inside an organisation, instead requires what Dourish (2003) calls the need for appropriation when deploying interactive technologies. Instead of following a top-down linear approach to ESS introduction, and requiring change management or customisation to the software post its physical implementation inside the organisation, appropriation is instead “the way in which technologies are adopted, adapted and incorporated into working practice” (p. 467). In this research, appropriation reflects the dynamic nature of the technology and the ongoing dynamics of activities, discourse, tempo and control which are bounded by collective end-user practices. Designing for appropriation must allow for unexpected aspects of malleable technology usage (Dix 2007).

We take the stance that designing for ESS appropriation is therefore based on a process of organisational creation (Romme 2003). In this view, design is pragmatic, ongoing and value-laden as events unfold in unique contexts (Germonprez et al 2011; Ingold 2013). Design approaches for the organisation are achieved through the juxtaposition of practices involving people, technology and discourse to achieve better correspondence among them. The Ripple Effect Group are relevant in this regard, as they specialise in the design of solutions regarding ESS inside workplace contexts.

4 The Ripple Effect Group

The Ripple Effect Group (REG) offers expertise in the digital transformation of work, social learning, social media, and enterprise-wide technologies. Instead of taking a technology or people-centric approach to ESS’s introduction and use inside an organisation, REG take a design-centric stance. In this view, REG see the introduction and use of ESS through the principle of co-design, which rests on the belief that employees are the experts of their own experiences in the workplace. Therefore, no one stakeholder or audience group is deemed to be more important than any other user of a particular
technology (Naranjo-Bock 2012). REG work directly with their client to design solutions for what social technologies to select, including any customisation, as well as designing tactics that can help with appropriation and employee ESS usage. To design such solutions, REG utilise their Head Start methodology which incorporates a human-centred approach and agile project methods, as stated:

> Our design thinking guides our discovery activities to uncover the problem through developing a deep understanding, or empathy, with people in their workplace context. This human-centred approach elicits real user stories that identify how modern collaboration and information management tools could improve business outcomes. We explore these through design activities, including interviews, workplace observation and workshops.

The REG Head Start method is an agile approach to understanding the employee experience based on an organisation’s context. Such an approach aligns to the malleability characteristics of social software, which directly emphasises the role of the end user employees throughout the technology’s introduction process and its ongoing usage. This user-centric approach is further embodied by REG who state that their main consultancy contribution to their client will be the creation of between six and ten ‘authentic personas’. Personas are an amalgamation of actual employee experiences which are uncovered through various project and user-centred design activities, and are also often used as a linguistic tool to aid decision making for technology design and usage solutions (Friess 2012). However, the user-centric approach REG takes to social software is often confronting to their clients and encounters numerous challenges when enacted in-practice. The lead researcher has seen this unfold as a result of being embedded with the REG practice since March 2016.

### 4.1 Researcher embeddedness

Most ESS studies are performed from a distance rather than a researcher ‘being there’ to see ESS projects as they unfold, and thus miss the activities of co-design. Researcher embeddedness is a term originally coined in a journalistic sense when reporters went to war to report on events as they unfolded (McGinity and Salokangas 2014). Such embeddedness has been suggested in reference to academic researchers actively being involved in practice in an ethnographic manner (Baskerville and Myers 2015; Sandberg and Tsoukas 2011). This allows a researcher to actively help the practice understand their encountered problems (Hartman et. al 2009), and use the combined embedded involvement and deliberation of problems as a way to study practice as a unit of analysis (Reimers et. al 2013). Such a relationship has the potential to produce empirical outputs that are reflective of actual business processes, whilst also helping the business improve their practices (McGinity and Salokangas 2014). The role of self in relation to practice allows for methodological inquiry into IS phenomena; in this case with the resultant outcomes between REG and their clients as the two become juxtaposed together and experience breakdowns and tensions.

### 5 Method: Practice Breakdowns and Tensions

The word ‘breakdown’, in this research, refers to the breaking-down of specific aspects of practice as REG and a client enact and juxtapose their practices in a joint project. Practitioners, as experts of their domains, act in non-deliberate ways as they perform their day-to-day activities. When REG surfaces employee practices via their Head Start method, they are, at the same time, surfacing and animating their own practice. In turn, this surfaces and animates the client practice as they work with REG in both a project management sense and in being privy to employee involvement in the Head Start activities. How REG and their client manage their joint project and interpret employee practices via the lens of their own respective practice brings to light the potential and emerging new ways of organisational sayings and doings (Sandberg and Tsoukas 2011). However, for this to take place, the REG and client practice need to understand one another as much as they need to understand employee realities. A breakdown in this regard can be a simple ‘why’ question that encourages members of practice to intentionally take note of their practice and explain it to others (Tsoukas 2010; Wegener and Aakjaer 2016). The overall purpose of a breakdown is to “let the practice reveal itself through the moments it temporarily breaks down – namely, the moments when things do not work as anticipated” (Sandberg and Tsoukas 2011, p. 347). Examples of such breakdowns are shown below in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Questions</th>
<th>REG Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We want to know who is using what technology. Are you able to identify this?</td>
<td>It's not about understanding individual employee experiences. Instead, it's about understanding an employee’s world based on their job practices, which naturally includes other employees as part of a social process. Employees might only be using a certain technology because they only know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essentially, we want our social technology to be used in a more streamlined manner and in-line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with other tools and systems. | that particular technology exists. It’s about the purpose behind such usage, not the technology itself.
---|---
You state that one of your main deliverables will be personas and user journey stories. Why do you use these? You also state that you will only create six personas. Is six enough? | Personas are about capturing the essence of employees such as their behaviours and attitudes. It’s like a soap opera analogy – the story and the world of people unfolds through the lens of around six main characters. User stories reflect the experiences that the cast (personas) goes through in terms of their thoughts, actions and emotions in relation to a particular scenario. Technology usage is then brought to life through a practical example involving people.
---|---
We need to know what you need in terms of workshop organisation. What kind of employees do you want to be there? How many? We were thinking of inviting employees from different levels of the corporate hierarchy, and of tenure differences. | It would be good to include employees from the areas of the business we didn’t get to talk to during the interview phase. In this sense, breadth of the different work types is beneficial. We want to be able to empathise with employees based on what the organisation looks like from their particular place in it at this point in time. We’re trying to capture context of work, as opposed to just capturing organisational knowledge or specific job responsibilities.

Table 1: Examples of ‘practice breakdowns’

The questions the client asked revealed the thinking behind the REG practice and their Head Start method. This in turn also allowed REG practitioners to better understand the views and needs of their client. The two practices tried to understand each other just as much as they were trying to understand what they each needed to do in order to deliver on their joint project. This required different things from both practices, as REG had contractual obligations to meet, and the client needed to deliver on a goal that their organisation had committed to achieving. The client presented to REG with a dichotomous view regarding people and technology, whereas REG view employees from a holistic and purpose-driven perspective. We argue that the juxtaposed relationship between the two practices is ongoing throughout the project and produces useful tensions which unfold via a dance of animacy.

6 Findings: A dance of animacy

When REG and their client commence a project, a dedicated project Wiki space is created on REG’s internal system. On this central location, members from both the client and REG practice can post notes, documents and asks questions of each other. The purpose of the online platform is to allow for project activities to take place at times when the two practices are situated in their respective workplace contexts. The two practices come together face-to-face when directly engaged in various project management meetings, or in aspects of REG’s Head Start method which involve employees from the client’s organisation, such as workshops and webinars. In this regard, there is a coming-and-going, an animation of the REG and client practices, throughout the project’s lifetime. In each interaction, certain breakdowns and tensions ensue. As a result of these breakdowns and tensions, the revelation of various practice assumptions become visible and open for investigation. However, depending on the context, the nature of the dance and what it is that becomes animated can change. This can be explored via the three questions from Table 1.

For example, the first question asked by the client in Table 1 can be seen as eliciting what Nicolini (2012) refers to as a tension between creativity and normativity. The client is treating the joint project as having a technology focus, in which there is an assumption that employee usage of technology alone is what will determine the right cause of action for an eventual social technology solution. Conversely, REG are more exploratory and creative in their approach to understanding the project, as they see technology as something that is only ever revealed by what employees are currently doing in the context of their work. In this regard, the juxtaposition of the two practices reveals the perceptions that both practices have about people and technology. This difference of opinion is then animated, or essentially ‘brought to life’, in reference to the client’s second question from Table 1.

6.1 Interaction between practices

The REG personas and user stories reveal why REG focus on employees and not technology, and also includes how the client can be involved in the user journey process. In one such user story, REG created a scenario based on a function of their client, such as Human Resources (HR), and demonstrated what opportunities HR had in achieving a type of project goal based on what it was that employees would do in relation to a scenario, such as the launch of a HR engagement campaign:
HR is seeking employee input for how customer interaction can be improved. The campaign is launched via video on the corporate intranet. HR will use analytics to know how many employees watched the video, and are hoping that 30% of viewers then provide a suggestion.

The user journey story would then demonstrate, via the cast of personas, what experience, steps and thoughts employees would likely have based on the video’s launch. This includes how employees might find out about the video, as some might receive it via one-on-one sharing, as well as what type of employees would be sharing, and to whom, in order to connect the content to others. We see in this example an instance of interaction (Ingold 2013) in which the client’s reflection on their own practice is juxtaposed against REG’s practice, which revealed employees as the ultimate drivers of the client achieving their engagement campaign goal. While not controlling of directing an outcome, the juxtaposition provides a glimpse of what could be, a different world the client could be inhabiting. This is based on what employees are already doing and what they would likely do as a result of the scenario being enacted ‘in-practice’.

As a different type of interaction example, as shown in the third question from Table 1, the client sought clarification in relation to a practical activity, in this regard a workshop, which would involve employees from the client’s organisation. Such workshop activities help in the overall research that REG uses for designing their personas and user stories. However, the organisation and logistics of getting ‘the right employees’ into the workshop revealed the practical concerns of each practice (Nicolini 2012). The client focused on tenure and hierarchy, seeing knowledge of organisational history and employee position as important, as the final social technology solution is intended for the whole organisation. REG, on the other hand, were more concerned about uncovering the range of employee work contexts, which would align with their co-design principle in viewing no stakeholder or employee group as being more important than others. In one client context, trying to plan for such a workshop revealed some in-house tensions for REG and, in turn, revealed the nature of the dance of animacy that unfolded between REG and their client when the workshop was conducted. The observations of these tensions were further explored through the lead researcher’s embedded REG relationship.

6.2 The role of self and metaphor

Due to the nature of the REG practice, the lead researcher is required to take a hands-on role in practice and be more than just a mere observer. For example, one such discussion at the REG office involved the lead researcher being involved in brainstorming ideas for potential workshop activities based on the third question from Table 1. The brainstorming session required the REG practitioners to work through the unknowing of which employees would in fact be invited to the workshop, which elicited a type of tension in trying to plan for abstracted people. However, the same argument could be made of the client practice in which they could not prepare their employees of what to expect in the workshop as REG were still deliberating workshop activities. From the client’s perspective, they also needed to know the nature of the activities in order to organise an appropriate venue, such as a conference room equipped with whiteboards or interactive media.

If both REG and their client are trying to understand each other’s practice as much as they need to understand the practices of the client’s employees, then the same understanding of practice is also true of the lead researcher. In this regard, the lead researcher is trying to understand the juxtaposition between REG and their clients via an academic practice lens. In one such academic setting, a paper was being discussed that used metaphor as a method to get people to describe how they used social technology (Panteli et. al 2017). The lead researcher suggested, in the in-house brainstorming session with REG, that such an activity could be modified and used in the workshop. This would be achieved by getting employees to describe their workplace culture via a metaphorical lens, such as a zoo.

Such a dual relationship between industry and academia aligns to the idea that an embedded researcher helps the practice work through some of their problems. The metaphor activity was eventually conducted by REG in several of their client workshops, but unlike the animacy of personas and user journey stories that outline ‘what could be’, the workshops revealed ‘what currently is’. As the client attended workshop sessions and were directly involved in the activities, they were able to bear witness to the REG practice as it unfolded. In turn this also meant they were then privy to the complex organisational realities that were revealed by workshop participants. In this sense, the client practice was at the mercy of the REG tempo and their sayings and doings (Nicolini 2012), but were also exposed to the practices of the employees they were seeking to impose a social technology solution onto. Understanding this interaction arguably comes from directly being involved in its unfolding, which can be explored via a different type of metaphor.
Understanding practice through experience

The use of metaphor is also true for the lead-researcher in trying to explain and explore what it is they observe between the REG and client practice. One such idea came to the lead-researcher when experiencing parasailing: a type of kinaesthetic encounter in which the observations they had previously made about REG and their clients in workshop settings became interpreted through readings and knowledge of Ingold (2013) and the experience of parasailing, as described below. This is similar to the notion that both the REG and client practice each filter the other group’s practice, as well as aspects of the joint project, through the lens of their own individual practice, and by working through the tensions that occur as a result.

We would be parasailing in pairs. The boat went faster when the chute was in use, as speed and propulsion kept the primary line between boat and chute taut. It was rocky, bouncy on the boat. But once attached to the parasail and up in the air, the feeling was different. Floating above the sea and looking at mountains in the distance was almost tranquil, peaceful – a somewhat meditative state. There was no discomfort, no bouncing. Unlike the experience on board the boat, up in the air was a smooth ride. It was as though the two ends derived their meaning from their opposite state, yet they were wrapped up in the same unified, unfolding process. The two ends, perceived in duality, had implicit unity to them – and this was only possible via the tension of the rope; for without it, parasailing would be obsolete.

By using parasailing as the metaphor, the face-to-face interactions between REG and their client can be explored via a useful tension. In the workshop example, the learning of the other practice takes place as the client practice metaphorically experiences the REG and employee practices from an elevated and animated viewpoint. In this view, the client practice corresponds accordingly with the unfolding flow of workshop activities and begins to interpret the world of employees differently, as a parasailer would see things differently in the air versus on-board the boat. As REG ‘drive the boat’ or run the workshop, they encounter breakdowns as participants ask questions as to why REG are doing what they are doing. However, REG in turn can ask questions of the participants as a way to reveal the practices of employees. This can influence where REG ‘drive the boat’ next in the workshop. As the client practice is involved in the workshop, a type of useful tension ensues via breakdowns as the collective practices in the room engage in a hermeneutic process for interpreting one another. This interpretation was only possible as REG and their client came together in a metaphorical parasailing act involving the ‘elements’, who are the client’s employees, via a dance of workshop animacy.

However, neither the parasail nor the boat dictates the tension and the feeling of being pulled back and forth between REG and their client as they try to understand their joint project. They are the same process that requires tension to remain in the act of parasailing. What this suggests is that depending on the context, either REG or their client is the one driving the boat and the other practice experiences the parasailing perspective. Although both ends can alternate their position, they can never experience what it is like to be on the other end of the parasail at the same time. As stated by Ingold:

As with any dance, this should be read not laterally, back and forth, but longitudinally as a movement in which partners take it in turns to lead and be led or – in musical terms – to play the melody and its refrain (Ingold 2013, p. 101).

For example, initial project meetings take place at the client’s workplace. What the REG practitioners see and hear about the client’s problem and workplace context is driven by the client practice. However, when REG conduct their workshops, the client experiences and is involved in the REG practice. In this regard, the overall ESS project, which unfolds via breakdowns, correspondence and the juxtaposition of practice, seems to produce the dance of animacy through a type of useful tension.

Discussion

We theorise that the dance of animacy occurs when the taken-for-granted assumptions of practice are revealed and elevated through practice breakdowns. These breakdowns then elicit tensions as the two juxtaposed practices, that of client and consultant, have to work together to co-design an ESS solution for the client’s organisation. This suggests that neither practice is imposing themselves onto the other practice during such projects. Instead, their juxtaposition represents two ends of the same process, and for which the tension between the two ends is what is used for the project to continue to unfold. What we propose is taking place is a somewhat double hermeneutic process. Each practice is trying to understand the other practice’s interpretation and understanding of the same project. Meanwhile, they are also each trying to filter the findings from the project activities with employees, as created from the
enactment of the REG Head Start method, through their own practice lens and in relation to their respective responsibilities for the joint project.

The design of ESS is therefore not a technical solution for the organisation nor is it one that takes an employee-centric focus. Instead, a holistic re-imagination of practice via a process of design is taking place for both the client and employees within the client organisation. At the start of their project, the client perceives social software as the solution that imposes itself on employees. However, by enacting their Head Start method, REG reveals that they are not there to design a technical solution for their client. Instead, they are trying to help their client understand that employee practices change through the emergence of behaviours that correspond with technology and social context. In turn, the client’s a priori expectations of the project need to change. This is so they can, in turn, empower themselves to achieve their goals if they embrace the realities of employee practices. By understanding the world of employees ‘as is’, the client practice would be in a better position to change such practices and design what ‘could be’. The ESS solution is therefore designed through a process of animation between the two juxtaposed practices, and for which appropriation reflects the changing nature of practice. This suggests that in addition to practice breakdowns taking place, a different type of breakdown, such as identities of practitioners within the client practice, might also be contributing to project tensions. Further investigation of this is possible through the lead researcher’s ongoing embedded relationship.

8 Conclusion

In this paper we have discussed the juxtaposed relationship between two practices as they work together on a joint project regarding enterprise social software. We suggest that the two practices are engaged in a dance of animacy as they work together to try and co-design a solution for how ESS can be integrated into employee practices within a workplace context. Through processes of interaction, we theorise that practice enactment via a joint project is something that is animated and brought to life via breakdowns and tensions. In this regard, breakdowns and tensions are seen as useful in keeping the dance of animacy alive between the two practices as they try and understand one another in addition to their own respective roles in the joint ESS project.

This paper contributes to the IS field in two ways. Firstly, through researcher embeddedness, ESS projects can be explored via an appropriation lens in which practice and organisational context are given primacy over a mere technical or people-based focus. Secondly, our research design and method sees organisational change as something that is designed via an inquiry into practice-based phenomena. Such an inquiry sees practice as something that is animated and brought to life via breakdowns and useful tensions. This inquiry into practice allows us to explore organisations as being designed through the activities, discourse and tempos of juxtaposed practices.

9 References


Acknowledgements
This work-in-progress paper has presented ethnographic accounts by the lead researcher who plays a dual practitioner-researcher role between The Ripple Effect Group (REG) and a University context. The provided examples reflect the observations of the lead researcher as a result of being embedded with the REG practice. The Ripple Effect Group have given permission for the use of such ethnographic accounts and the mentioning of their name. Client information has remained anonymous to protect the identities of those organisations.

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