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The importance of the meeting in relation to entrepreneurial learning - two learning environments within a Swedish context; a research circle and a school musical

Jonas Christensen[1]* Balli Lelinge[1]

[1]Malmo University, Malmo, Sweden

*Corresponding author: Jonas Christensen, email: jonas.christensen@mah.se

Abstract:

The purpose of this article is to examine the importance of the meeting in relation to entrepreneurial learning, by examining two learning environments within a Swedish context based on different types of meeting: a research circle in higher education and, in collaboration with teachers and pupils from primary school, the process of establishing a school musical. The methods used to achieve our aims were interviews, focus groups and action-based research. The theoretical interpretative framework is based on the individual and the individual's interaction with the surrounding environment. One conclusion is that there seems to be the potential for knowledge when different players with no previous experience of cooperation meet. A prerequisite for the development of this knowledge, which can be developed and can then contribute to new thinking, seems to be closely connected with the existence of a participative approach. The two studies demonstrated a key aspect of change in how resistance is handled, when it initiates and encourages both individual and collective action competence. Consensus in disagreement is seen as a driving force behind knowledge acquisition. In a safe and respectful environment, there can be disagreement on the substance under discussion, and yet actors can take on this challenge and reach a conclusion, albeit a temporary one.

Keywords: Collaborative learning, Entrepreneurial learning, Sweden, Participative approach, Learning environment, Motivation

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Introduction

Malmo University strives to be part of society at every level. Whether regionally, nationally or globally, its focus is on making the world a better and fairer place. Therefore, its mission is to be an active hub for research, education and innovation. The research is often multidisciplinary and undertaken in

collaboration with partners from outside the university. This article reflects the dynamism of the researchers who need to move within the undergraduate and graduate sectors, and in collaboration with the community. An explicit goal of Malmo University is that, regardless of faculty affiliation, it will stimulate employees to collaborate across boundaries, and also initiate cooperation with actors outside the university. This article aims to shed light on the dynamics between practice and theory. To understand the practice, we need to be in the practice, which is a starting point in this article. Other questions that this article will highlight are the challenges that we as researchers in higher education face when we interact with a practice, but also when we meet across faculties to penetrate common cross-discipline issues.

In the second half of the 20th century, the Swedish education system has undergone great and sometimes dramatic change. This development has intensified in the last 15 to 20 years, and similar patterns of change are also exhibited in higher education (1). Swedish teacher education has gone through a number of reforms since the late 1990s, which, among other things, has meant an increased adaptation to other EU member countries' educational systems. Enterprise- and market-oriented thinking, including the demand for an immediate benefit to society, with a focus on measurable impacts and outcomes, has had more and more of an impact on pedagogical research as the debate on school and teacher education has continued (2). The Swedish education system faces major challenges due to the wave of international knowledge measurements (e.g. PISA) and statistical indices from an education horizontal perspective. This way of measuring and comparing within education is conceptually related to marketisation and business alignment. Meanwhile, during this period and with influences from business, the concept of entrepreneurship made an entry into the Swedish school and teacher training arena. In the wake of the arrival of this concept in this sphere, great resistance to it and a number of discussions about it at various levels have been noted (3). But although there is a lot of criticism over the entry of the entrepreneurial concept into the training and educational sphere, it has nonetheless taken a central place in higher education (4). One such example is how the authorities use the term frequently in policy documents for the entire school system. The Swedish National Agency for Education (thereafter referred to as the Agency) has, for example, entire web pages devoted to the subject, and encourages schools to seek development funds to stimulate entrepreneurial learning in its educational activities. The European Commission's report *Education for Entrepreneurship* (5) suggests that activities motivating the creation of entrepreneurial talents should be introduced in schools, and that schools should encourage students' entrepreneurial abilities, such as creativity, initiative, risk-bearing capacity and independence. The report presents one of the main measures aimed at increasing entrepreneurial spirit in the European Union, and also recommends boosting investment in entrepreneurial learning and encouraging the younger generation to become more entrepreneurial. The entrepreneurial approach is presented as an innovative way of teaching, able to provide significant advantages over traditional education methods (6). The Agency believes that the entrepreneurship approach constitutes an educational approach, at the same time as giving students knowledge about entrepreneurship itself. The Agency (4) report *Create and Dare* outlined entrepreneurial learning as a "global curriculum", in which the school should encourage individual

enterprise in students at an early age. The report, however, plays down concerns about the problems that could be inherent in unthinkingly copying the school models of other countries. These concerns centre around the fact that these entrepreneurial ventures were created and justified based on local conditions, based on specific problems that needed to be resolved in those conditions. Entrepreneurial learning has had a major impact in a relatively short time in the debate about how we improve modern schooling. The significance of the concept of entrepreneurial learning, however, is changing, and seems to have different interpretations. Thus, we believe that there is a need to question the way in which we talk about entrepreneurial learning from a wider perspective: what is explicitly meant by an entrepreneurial approach, and what specific logic supports the number of entrepreneurial learning methods in higher education? This article aims to examine the meeting's importance in relation to entrepreneurial learning, which has been done by looking at two learning contexts, each based on different types of meeting. It is not enough to only experience the meeting; it also requires an attitude from the individual – to be daring, or to break the force of habit and see the primary problem as something which is not without opportunities.

The term 'entrepreneurial learning'

Johannisson (7) argues that entrepreneurship should be a basic approach, but the school puts obstacles in the way of developing this. Johannisson's goal for the school is to develop an entrepreneurial environment comprises different characteristics. He expects that these characteristics include creativity, play and experimentation, which actually pretty frequently clash with the school's established knowledge-sharing processes, working methods and disciplinary order. He believes that children have already naturally mastered entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship can therefore become a natural way of life in their world. However, according to Johannisson, Swedish schools stimulates the children to be employed by someone and young people to a culture and learned helplessness. Instead, he argues, the school should stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit which the child already possesses. The school should therefore recognise and take advantage of the driving force that already exists in the child (7, p. 94).

Aspelin (8, p. 99) argues that Johannisson excessively embellishes the child and black painting the school. Aspelin argues that "the entrepreneurship pedagogy purpose is to educate individuals who are undertaking something with something or someone in order to achieve something" (8, p. 109). His contribution to the field of entrepreneurship is the concept of 'entre-care'. He assumes Nel Nodding's care ethical theory, but also leans toward Martin Buber's relational theories.

Peterson and Westlund (9) argue that entrepreneurial learning is a pedagogical exercise that aims to develop the characteristics of the students that are relevant to entrepreneurship. This can, according to the authors, stimulate attitudes and abilities that increase entrepreneurial spirit. In the UK, a clear distinction is made between the terms "enterprise education" and "entrepreneurship education" (10). Jones and Iredale (11) argue that the most fitting way to construct the concept of "enterprise education" is from an educational point of view. "Enterprise education", according to the authors,

focuses on areas such as the development of personal characteristics, behaviours and attributes that can be used in different contexts to act as an effective citizen, consumer or employee. Furthermore, these entrepreneurial qualities can be used by the individual throughout life. In Europe, three frequently recurring interpretations of these concepts can be seen. The first interpretation involves creating an understanding of entrepreneurship and its role in the economy and society. The other interpretation is based on a focus on the individual, where the central idea is the individual taking responsibility for their own education, career and life. The third perspective aims to teach students more concretely how to become entrepreneurs (12). Similarly, there are different interpretations of the concepts of entrepreneurial learning and enterprise learning in Sweden. A thesis written by Helena Sagar (13), *Teacher Change in Relation to Professional Development in Entrepreneurial Learning*, reveals how reality-based learning increases student interest and motivation. Sagar's study also shows that the learning environment and external partners have a major impact on the desire for learning. Students seem to demand that activities in the school contain more meaningful learning, where they themselves take part in the knowledge formation.

Ahrenfelt's (14) ideas about effective change can be related to Sagar's results (13), particularly when he talks about the first and second degrees of order. The first degree of order, he says, is something that happens within the organisation or the system, which can be said to continue, more or less, in addition to what already exists. The second degree of order can be correlated to the organisation as a whole, and relates to in when the system changes. In short, the second order means that the system is changing, which in turn changes thought patterns. This leads to more proactive policies, and means that previous troublesome problems may no longer exist, because people in the organisation or system act and think in a more solution-focused manner. Other researchers (6, 15, 16) suggest that this approach is a desirable quality for entrepreneurial learning. Our article has its greatest contribution to make in the understanding of when meetings between different partners, who interact in new learning arenas or so-called expanded learning environments, not bounded by the traditional (class) room walls, instead provide new, sustainable knowledge. This focuses the research question: how can cross-border meetings for meaningful learning be understood?

The empirical material and method

This study's empirical material is structured out of two learning environments. The first consists of a research circle at a collegium of representatives from all faculties within Malmo University. The purpose of this research circle was to problematise an area of priority at the university, namely, entrepreneurial learning as part of challenge-based learning. This article should be seen as a contribution to challenge-based-learning (CBL), however the concept of CBL will not be further explored in this article. For further reading on this, see Challenge-based Learning (17). Our research method in this study consists of semi-structured interviews. Each interview with the respondents took approximately one hour, and within that, five different themes were discussed;

participation and peer interaction, meaning of entrepreneurial learning, new ideas about learning, consequences in its own operations and dissemination of knowledge. The characteristic of a semi-structured interview is that the respondent is engaged in a formal interview, together with the interviewer. The interviewer uses an interview guide, in which there is a developed list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation, usually in a particular order. In this study, we have followed our semi-structured guide, but we have also been clear to the respondent about the possibility that the respondent may deviate from the topics (guide) in the conversation when he or she feels that this is appropriate. We found that, according to (18), the benefits of using semi-structured interviews is a) they can be prepared ahead of time, b) they allow informants the freedom to express their views in their own terms, and c) they can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. Since the purpose of this study is to find out the informants' knowledge of and future thoughts on entrepreneurial learning as a part of challenge-based learning, we felt that the semi-structured interview form was the most suitable. The second study consists of a musical collaboration between students, teachers and the surrounding community. The purpose of this collaboration was to explore how this type of process affected the students' desire to learn, both individually and collectively.

The overall method used in this study is action-based learning, which is inspired by David A Colb's theories (19, 20). These theories are based out of a holistic view consisting of a combination of different aspects of learning, for example perception, cognition and behaviour.

According to Colb (20), it means action-based learning requires personal involvement and uses the cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects in order to acquire knowledge, skills and/or attitudes. This learning situation is characterised by a high degree of active participation, and is therefore participatory. Lackéus and Savetun (21), which references other researchers including Hoover and Whitehead (22), argue that Colb's experience-based theories of learning can also be expressed as experimental learning. Other methods that have been used in this study are focused interviews with students in grade eight, plus semi-structured interviews with teachers and principals involved.

By highlighting two different contexts in different learning environments, we can see how knowledge in the field of entrepreneurial learning can be understood and strengthened at various levels of education. The choice of these two contexts is justified because they represent meetings between individuals in mutually different environments, in which research and practice are discussed. Furthermore, it is important to combine both working methods and approaches in entrepreneurial learning, and we wanted to show the importance of what scientists see as the possibilities and challenges of work while being in practice, "on the floor", and able to supervise and maintain the research circle, where colleagues from all faculties are involved. We have been able to see in our data processing a knowledge potential in these types of different learning contexts, which must not be underestimated in the understanding of the entrepreneurial learning opportunities.

Each study contains an introduction, methods, results and final conclusions. The article ends with a summary of the conclusions and a discussion.

Theoretical starting-points

Learning is largely about the acquisition of knowledge, and it requires a dynamic relationship between already 'known' knowledge and unknown knowledge. It is when the appropriation of already known knowledge, combined with the unknown, takes place, as we understand it, that entrepreneurial learning takes place (23, 24).

As the following article deals with two different learning environments, we start here with our theoretical interpretative framework. In the choice of theories, we have endeavoured to combine a university and school-educational perspective. We have consciously combined theories which both act as a filter and an educational tool, to modulate the similarities and differences (dynamics and dialectics) in attitudes and processes that have proven themselves in our two learning environments. This means we have taken as our point of motivation the work of researcher Daniel H. Pink (25), and particularly his theories about inner motivation, together with pedagogical researcher Urie Bronfenbrenner's (26) theory on development ecology. The perspective that reality is a social construct supports our analysis and discussion. These theories are based on both the individual and the individual's interaction with the surrounding environment.

Perspectives on learning environments and meeting-places

Bronfenbrenner (26) points out that the individual always develops in a context, and his theory involves the entire context in which the individual lives. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development has proven to be beneficial in providing an insight into all of the factors that play a role in the growth and development of individuals. The Development Ecology model developed by Bronfenbrenner makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of the individual's role and behaviour in relation to the context surrounding them on different levels. When discussing professional development and/or the constitution of subjects, the model is a significant tool for analysing and explaining the forces underlying those developments (27). The choice of development ecology as one of several frames of reference in this study is motivated by the fact that Bronfenbrenner makes a distinction between the contexts of different levels, all of which affect the development of the individual. He also suggests that higher education should be seen in a broader social and societal context. All levels interact through teachers, as they are co-actors, where they both run their own interests and are interpreters vis-à-vis their collegues. Values and positions on the macro level influence other levels, and have direct consequences for the individual's actions. This is especially the case when the same individuals act on several levels (28). In understanding education as part of this context, we can relate to what Fayolle and Kyro (29) describe as the mutual exchange of knowledge between the environment and education. When it comes to entrepreneurship education, they argue that training of this type is closely linked to a learning perspective, where the individual, society and institutions are related to each other. This interaction in the exchange of knowledge is surrounded by culture, and it is in this cultural context that education and entrepreneurial behavior can meet. Bands, meetings and networking are linked to the individual. A further assumption in this study is that reality is socially constructed. Berger and Luckmann (30) reveal that there are different realities –

in that they believe that people can move from one reality to another – but there is always a "dominant" reality, an everyday reality, which can be seen as positive. The assumption of a socially-constructed reality implies a belief that there is an objective reality, independent of human conditions. Each individual constructs reality in different ways, which means that different people perceive it differently. Constructivist pedagogy means that knowledge is constructed in context during the time of learning (31). Already known knowledge is tied together with new knowledge, and constructed in such a way that it develops your own, individual knowledge. Personal experiences are, therefore, important in the learning context. The individual selects and interprets information based on their prior knowledge, and new knowledge is integrated with prior knowledge. Knowledge can, therefore, be created as a result of the activity.

Perspectives on participative and meaningful learning

To achieve genuine inner drive, it is important that there is a feeling of inner satisfaction and meaning (32, 32). Pink (25) argues that there are three ways to describe the driving force behind a person's motivational desire. The first he connects to biological instincts derived from the first "cave man": the driving force for food and the desire to reproduce. This, according to Pink, motivates our actions and, ultimately, it is about how our inner instincts assert themselves. He calls this phase the 1.0. The second driver, 2.0, has its logic in motivational factors supported by external rewards and punishments. In the context of school, the external motivation factor could be explained as grading, which is associated with both punishment and reward. Good grades lead to some kind of reward – for some, short-term, for others, more lasting – while a poor rating can be coated in shame and can also bring about the inhibition of the individual. The third driving force is termed by Pink as 3.0, and, according to him, it is the only sustainable force in the long term. In order for motivation to be meaningful and sustainable over time, it must be based on the internal driving force, he suggests. Here, Pink differs between the internal driving force as something based on instinct, in the form of the more biological aspects, and the driving forces that the individual has conditionally. It must feel worthwhile and give the individual an inner satisfaction both to be able to carry out the task and to achieve the outcome. What is important here is that external rewards like money, grades and praise have no positive impact on the individual, according to Pink (25), as it turns out that this type of external stimuli suppress the impact, rather than increase it. This is because the effect is based on the principle that the individual, as s/he does the same type of work, wants more "payment" to experience a new inner satisfaction – a new flow (14, 29, 31, 32) – so the positive effects of these kinds of external stimuli work only temporarily. Pink (13) distinguishes between performance and learning objectives and believes that regular performance targets encourage the individual to make it easy for themselves, while learning targets, to a greater extent, encourage the individual to perform better. The difference can also be described as the difference between deep and superficial learning.

Gardenfors (33) talks about meaningful learning from the viewpoint of informal and formal learning, where his thesis is about learning to understand, something which is not always done in the formal classroom. Meaningful learning, according to his way of looking at it, gives students strategies and tools, offered by the teacher, so they can see new patterns (34). Or, in other words, teaching is

about showing what is under the surface. So, if we reconnect with Pink's thinking on superficial learning, Gardenfors (33) thoughts help us to say that the deeper the understanding is, the more the individual can generalise their knowledge.

Falk-Lundqvist (35) et al discuss the importance of the learning environment for development and the 'lust for learning' in the book *Entrepreneurial learning in practice and theory*. The message is that a classroom with benches lined up is not a positive environment that would encourage meaningful learning. The researchers argue that a small change, for example, if the participants are placed in a circle where they can see each other's faces, indicates that there are the pre-conditions for dialogue between teachers and pupils, and between pupils. The WWF (World Wildlife Foundation) has been working for many years to support teaching and school development in Sweden and internationally. In the report, *Entrepreneurship and Education for Sustainable Development in School and College* (38), it appears that an important conclusion is that teachers need to be given the time and space to interact with their colleagues and external collaboration partners. This is because entrepreneurship and education for sustainable development requires interdisciplinary collaboration. In addition, the authors concluded that the work undertaken will need to be interdisciplinary and reality-affiliated. From this aspect, the holistic learning perspective contributes to a sense of context that develops the individual's internal motivation.

According to Falk Lundqvist et al (6), Lackéus and Savetun (21), Lelinge (23, 40), Otterborg (39), Sagar (13) and Westlund and Westlund (45), the most successful practices in entrepreneurial learning might be represented in various forms of cooperation with various actors and cooperation in projects where there are authentic problems and challenges and real recipients, and where new meetings are created. In this form, it is also clear that students must take greater responsibility for the process, which brings tangible, immediate value as well as the long-term effects aimed for by professionals. The projects are highly relevant and manageable, and for the participants, its is comprehensible why they do what they do. The working methods/methodology can be likened to a variant of problem-based, collaborative and challenge-based learning, which provides greater flexibility, perceived meaningfulness and better engagement of learners and educators. Such approaches include everybody; all start together and are targets simultaneously.

A value-creating entrepreneurial approach can be traced to the inclusion of what Hattie (41) believes are particularly important factors for success in school, namely, increased motivation, frequent feedback on performance, the use of early knowledge, a sense of inclusion in a positive context, teaching that includes challenges and problem solving, and the potential for participants to own their process.

Result

We will hereby present the two studies, where cross-border meetings can be viewed from two different learning contexts: a research circle and an elementary school. Each study begins with an introduction, methods and results, and ends up with conclusions.

The first study: a research circle

Introduction

Scientists from five different faculties met for four sessions scheduled to discuss their own pre-review articles which were relevant to the concept of entrepreneurial learning. The form of these cross-border meetings consisted of a research circle. The course management was responsible for the process and documentation. The central themes, based on the articles, were: terminology, discourse, power, responsibility, attitude and student active working methods. The aim of the research group was to identify the problems, and to contribute to the development of the university's strategic platform, where entrepreneurial learning is a central concept. The goal of the development was, in addition to defining and problematising the concept, the development of a university teaching course where participants could develop an understanding of what being an entrepreneur can mean in different learning environments. After completing the course, participants are expected to contribute to the development of their faculty, and are given the opportunity to spread their knowledge and experience with colleagues and students.

Method

The course leaders involved in the research circle were characterised by their participatory approach, which in this study meant that participants had to choose a pre-review article that reflected everyone's research focus, with the requirement that the article was relevant to entrepreneurial learning. Data collection consisted of discussions documented by the course leaders, who were made available on a common course platform, on which participants were given the opportunity to submit comments and critical reflections. The research circle ended with the participants presenting an idea about challenge-based learning in each of their specific fields of research. Some examples presented in relation to entrepreneurial learning were: a) business development and change, b) assessment and examination forms, c) motivation and learning, d) innovation and imitation, and e) game development and education.

After the end of the course, a number of interviews were carried out with participants from the research circle, where the following questions were asked: what impact has the research circle had on you regarding entrepreneurial learning? If it has had an impact, how have you used the opportunity to discuss new ideas on challenge-based learning with colleagues? How would you proceed to increase awareness of entrepreneurial learning? The learning form itself, what does it mean? What insight did it you for your understanding of entrepreneurial learning? What would you have needed more of, both to increase your own knowledge surrounding entrepreneurial forms of learning, and also around the pre-conditions for the proliferation of knowledge on entrepreneurial learning?

Result

After studying the accumulated empirical material, a main theme emerged: "Impressions after the research circle". This main theme is going to be processed on three levels: the individual, the collegial and the institutional (organisational).

Impressions after the research circle - the individual

Several respondents highlighted the dilemma between process and product, and how in this dilemma, a challenge lies. The challenge itself is related to the fact that too few students understand the importance of the learning process they are a part of. One of the respondents asked the question: "Is the process more important than the cognitive goal?" The same respondent continued their reasoning, and believes there is a problem in the academic world in that our measurement tools place too much value on the final product and not on the process. Another respondent emphasised how the articles that the participants themselves chose contributed to interesting discussions and ideas, creating a chain of associations. This chain of associations was also affected by their past experiences. One of the respondents explained this association chain as being supportive in structuring the environment, focusing thinking and solving problems in a proven way. One of the respondents believes that: "The research group has created and contributed a number of thoughts, reflections." Another respondent developed this reasoning, and believes that the research circle shows that the importance of entrepreneurial and challenge-based learning is in the need for no boundaries to exist in the non-normative sphere. "The process is in my world, both individual and collective, and I need both to develop professionally," the respondent concluded.

Impressions after the research circle - the collegial

One of the respondents expressed how participation in the research circle "gave me a lamp to bring thoughts on change, nothing new in itself, but for the student it made it possible to reflect on concrete ideas, rather than abstract ideas". The same respondent believes that, after the end of the research circle, reflections are needed around the discussion over whether a theoretical description of challenge-based learning is a prerequisite to connect it with the reality for students. He or she found that it is not a pre-condition to necessarily start from a theory in order to understand the meaning of entrepreneurial learning. Rather, he or she encourages interest in and brings to life the concept of students' lives. Thereby, and in that process, a new theoretical understanding is produced in the meeting between challenge-based learning and established theories.

Impressions after the research circle - the institutional (organisational)

One of the respondents expressed the collegial resistance to entrepreneurial learning at their own faculty as follows: "The willingness to challenge and test new concepts that dispute entrepreneurial learning as a part of challenge-based learning is weak." This lack of interest has affected several of the respondents and their own initiatives to begin and manage institutional discussions. This is because the interest in their own faculties in continuing the debate was relatively low, or even non-existent. The progression that the research circle contributed to the understanding of the concept of entrepreneurial learning was perceived as an isolated phenomenon. In saying this, it is clear that the collegial process that took place in the research circle and the knowledge the participants thus received, cannot be said to have been transferred back to their own faculties.

Conclusions

Based on respondents' experiences of taking part in a research circle around entrepreneurial learning, a number of challenges between process and product

were expressed. We perceive that the respondents in this context stressed that the problems associated with the outcome of the process are seen as a "non-outcome". We perceive that there is a problem in the academic world, in that our measurement tools place too much value on the end product and not the process. We consider that educational development is best stimulated by the process, characterised as that which we have experienced with others. In our interviews with participants in the research circle, it is clear that respondents on the one hand see that there are opportunities to implement challenge-based learning in teaching situations; but on the other hand, one must not underestimate the prevailing structural resistance. Our interpretation is that, from the responses revealed, the following aspects of entrepreneurial learning were particularly prominent in connection with the research group:

a) the meeting as a driving force
b) the diversity of disciplines and definitions
c) entrepreneurial learning as a pedagogical tool.

The interviews reveal clearly that the participants in the research circle believe that there is a built-in collegiate resistance to the concept of entrepreneurial learning at their own faculties. Based on what emerged from the interviews, our interpretation is that more research circles where entrepreneurial learning is emphasised are needed.

The second study: school musical - when learning becomes challenging and visible

Introduction

What happens when four different partners come together to create meaningful learning outside the regular school schedule, and in premises other than their own school? The following study includes two classes in grade eight without any previous collaborative experiences, together with two other partners – a regional theatre and university researchers – all working on the production of a common thing, a school musical.

During an intensive week of school, the normal school environment was replaced by the theatre's premises. From the schools involved, seven teachers representing each school (in total, 15 teachers) collaborated, representing subjects in social and natural sciences, together with a total of fifty students. The theatre contributed with its artistic staff acting as a support filter for both students and teachers. In addition, a researcher from the university had an active role throughout the collaboration process. Along with two key teachers from each school, the researcher was a driving force in the whole process throughout. The theatre invited all students and teachers to two previews (with sample audiences), with a subsequent workshop held by the artistic staff with scientists from the university. As much as possible was done to create the best pre-conditions for a "we"-feeling between students and teachers. In this study, the classroom moves into the theatre's premises, where the artistic, educational and knowledge spheres came together in a so-called borderland (31, 32).

Method

In the following study, three different cross-methods have been used: a) action-based learning, b) focus groups with students in grade eight, and c) interviews with teachers and principals. The action-based learning process in this study meant that the researchers, the teachers from the two schools, the artistic staff and the students were all, both emotionally and in terms of their knowledge, active in the process from beginning to end. In another way, the process was characterised by a participatory approach in which all parties were involved. As part of the action-based method, we decided to involve students from both schools to become a "test-audience" for the theatre when (the actors) they performed the play, *There are no poor children and blessings*. This meant that the students took part in an artistic performance with subsequent workshops and discussions about the message. The discussion was led by the artistic director and researchers from Malmo University. Students also met on two other occasions, in the theatre's premises and under the leadership of its artistic director and university researchers. They discussed the abilities they believed they would develop during the musical week and which group they wanted to belong to (musical, weblog, lights and audio, props, film, dance orchestra and vocal groups). The first meeting with the students was about two months before the actual musical week. – The researcher who collected the data for use in future evaluation and documentation purposes had developed a few issues that the students could relate to and respond to: "What skills do you want to develop in the musical week?" The second meeting was on the second day of the musical week, and then they had to answer the question: "What skills have you worked with during the first two days?" The co-creative teachers and principals, along with the artistic leader of the theatre and researchers, participated in the workshops on both occasions. The aim was to get to know each other and share experiences from previous school musicals. Teachers were able to articulate the abilities they wanted the students to develop during the musical week. After this week, focus groups with students and interviews with teachers and principals were conducted.

Result

The following will present the parts of the empirical material that explicitly concern the effects of cross-border-learning, and knowledge of interrelated processes. This will be based on three inputs: a) students: abilities and relationships b) teachers: abilities and visible learning and c) the new knowledge alliances of cooperation. After processing the focus groups, students' thoughts about the abilities and relationships, and the interview material, we see that the musical work seemed to have an intrinsic value in itself, and a role to play in the Swedish schooling system. In the following three inputs, we intend to look at both actors' own thoughts on how the development of musical week seems to have contributed to their education, and also how this can relate to policy documents and school missions.

Students: abilities and relationships

Before the musical week, the students wrote which abilities they wanted to develop on pieces of paper. Examples of these abilities were: more confidence, become more brave, dare to cooperate with those we do not know, work under stress, develop creativity, communicate better and increase the disciplinary skills

of the groups chosen. In principle, the students in the focus groups said that all of the abilities that they wanted to develop were achieved. Cooperation and problem-solving skills, plus communication and stress management skills and the development of creativity and initiative, were all repeated in their statements. One student said during the interview that: "In school, you try to get the best grades and if you have projects like this all the time, you grow as a person. You feel happy and strive to perform better next time and feel like you can achieve anything." Another student added: "Yes, and if everyone thinks this, it will be easier to co-operate. For the musical, there were no subjects we learned where some people managed to pick it up better than anyone else and ... well, everyone is on the same level from the start, and fights together until the end." Students expressed that it was exciting, rewarding and motivating to meet new people, not only from other schools but also the staff working in the theatre and the university. When students discussed the importance of the geographical location of the theatre, they said, among other things: "It was nice not to be in my own school", "The old roles disappeared", "The new environment was inspiring" and "It was more fair". Another thing that students returned to, especially from one of the schools, was how differently they experienced the attitudes of teachers and other students towards them by the end of the week. One student said: "On Monday when we came back it was so strange, because more teachers came up to me and congratulated me for a good performance and patted me on the back". Another student said: "The higher grade students were jealous for not having done the same musical." Students felt that the atmosphere in the classroom during the musical week was unlike any other week. One thing they emphasised was how the atmosphere and relationships in the classroom between them and the teachers who participated in the musical week become much more positive and respectful. For some students, learning was clearly visible - they knew where the target was and when it was time to recognise the so-called musical performance, i.e., when the audience came to the show.

Teachers - abilities and visual learning

One of the teachers stated in the interview that the musical week was an entrepreneurial process, which she said led to an exploration of new learning patterns and work across class and school boundaries, as well as the formulation of new questions and interactions with the surrounding community and staff in other social spaces than the classroom. This work, as she put it, describes an action-oriented and value-creating process, where students are encouraged to use their skills and knowledge in a new way. Another teacher pointed out that the process is in its infancy, and comprises an inclusive approach, where the ethical aspects of class and group level and individual acts with ingrained standards are reviewed and given new meanings. She said: "Cooperation requires trust in each other, a belief in your own ability and confidence to give and take." A third teacher talked about the musical project "in real life", that is, where the students experienced how the work has a clear common goal, is driven forward on a broad front, and how they all had their part in the whole. Everyone wants to reach the target. He said that working is part of the success factor, which means that the more visible and clear the goal is, the more included those within the process feel. Musicals, thus, have a high status among the students. One of the principals believes that what happened in the musical week demonstrated basic skills in the

curriculum (42). He thinks that what has been written of norms and values, togetherness, solidarity and responsibility was a recurring element in the musical week: "It's important that teachers pay attention to such things as developing students' abilities and to really emphasise it throughout the week." The principal also said that, after the school musical week, both teachers and students indicated that things that were previously embarrassing, for example, reporting orally to the class, now had become much less stressful. Equally, the discussions and debates were more lively, more people were able to make their voices heard, and respect for each other increased.

New knowledge alliances in cooperation

Several teachers said that, in terms of their own learning, it was a big boost to collaborate with researchers from the university. They also said that the two performances of theatre were inspiring, and helped to contribute concrete ideas for their own personal development. The reflections the teachers expressed had an impact on their planning of courses. When the artistic leader of the theatre described the role the theatre had, the teacher agreed that it served as a gathering venue where students from different schools met to see the theatre itself, and to discuss the artistic meaning and its message. The teacher also said that the theatre served as an arena in which teachers and students together could create themselves, which the musical is a good example of. The researchers (authors) from Malmo University believe that an important element in this process is how clearly all parties involved could be seen as the winners in this joint project. No one was excluded and no one was better than anyone else. Everyone starts at the same time and everyone will score at the same time. The above statements describe how the students experienced meaningfulness, where empathy and positive encouragement from teachers and peers seem to be a central platform for stimulation, motivation and learning. What also appears to be important for the students is their experience of the teachers' attitudes, and how they do not "complain" about them. Rather, students are seen as equals, and perhaps even as champions. The students' statements are also about empowerment and advocacy opportunities, for real – their ideas are taken seriously, not only by their closest companions, but also by peers from parallel classes, and by the teachers: "We think more (better) together, every one of us".

In the book *How to illuminate enthusiasts*, Westlund and Westlund (45) write that, in practice, young people like challenges, and a pre-condition for development is the understanding that there is a clear difference between an obstacle and a challenge. Likewise, there is a difference between a task and a challenge. A barrier or obstacle, according to Westlund and Westlund (45), can be defined as follows: "During the afternoon, I should work independently with the glossary. But I need to stay in the classroom. I cannot leave here until the teacher is back and I report what you and I have done in the meantime." This kills creativity and the desire to use their own experience and knowledge. The musical reflected how teachers and students can trust each other when learning rooms are more mobile. The musical is felt and perceived as something new, which created opportunities to experience old and new knowledge in new forms. Westerlund and Westerlund (45) also argue that those who get involved in a process that is entrepreneurially influenced often stop skipping school or behaving

badly; when students are allowed to own their learning process, constructive experiences are often created (7).

Conclusions

A central aspect of learning is that it provides real value, not just for the person him or herself, but also for colleagues and other actors outside school. What one can see clearly in the tracks musicals leave behind is that pride and self-esteem grows, and the students' belief in themselves and others increases. It also seems important in students' perceptions of teachers, giving genuine feedback to them for their achievements, efforts and cooperation. This seems to be a platform for further stimulation, motivation and learning. The value creation activities emerge as the single most important contribution that entrepreneurial learning can bring to the school, where a lack of motivation, desire and interest is otherwise a recurring problem.

Although several researchers, in addition to the above, highlight the importance of the students having strong ownership of the project and its results, it is important that the challenge is "just hard enough" to not give up and lose motivation. So, the higher the perceived self-control and meaningfulness, the stronger the feelings of pride and joy experienced (21).

In the above musical week, we have seen how important it seems to be that the entrepreneurial education includes a project and entrepreneurial learning as a part of challenge-based learning, where utility, purpose and ownership of the process – but also, a care ethical perspective – are important building blocks. In the latter, the importance of the student getting the opportunity to develop various democratic values, and to practice their empathic abilities to achieve greater communication skills, can be seen.

In the above-mentioned musical projects, we learned about the existence of a strong focus on action-based (participatory) learning, as well as the importance of student participation. It also showed how an individual can initiate and plan activities that support the creation of knowledge, skills and experience, which make it possible to take part in the so-called entrepreneurial value-creation processes. The opportunity to work with projects that are characterised by a utility, something that is real, seems to stimulate students' motivation and desire to create. Even for the teachers, artistic staff and researchers from Malmo University, a participating and collaboration together in a positive context meant that they could feel the formation of knowledge alliances and feel a strong pride in the creative work. We can conclude that when the entrepreneurial learning care ethical aspects are built into the school, everybody gains.

Summary of discussion and conclusions

In this article, we have shown how knowledge can be understood in entrepreneurial learning from two different learning contexts: a research circle and an elementary school. What we have seen is that the cross-border meeting in different learning environments develops people's action competence, and therefore their ability to contribute to change. We have seen in these contexts that an acceptance of new knowledge can be built in permissive, collective rooms,

but not without healthy resistance. Through meetings, participants develop a solution-focused approach and an understanding of the role of the process in idea generation. The two studies have made this clear, and have shown the universal importance of developing the skills to see opportunities, take the initiative, and deal with resistance both individually and collectively (32, 35, 42). In this type of learning environment, opportunities and incentives for creativity are focused and challenged, to deliver solutions rather than obstacles. What we can see in our two sub-studies is that they reflect a learning process which involves meetings and interaction on different levels, where the organisation's ability to manage change plays a major role in its learning processes. Personal meetings are essential; it is through dialogue and interaction that learning processes and knowledge acquisition can take place. In our study, the sum of personal meetings, a knowledge alliance, is rooted in the perception of the "other", i.e., respect for the other's ideas, thoughts and experiences, which is a central concept and process-driven. We believe that our different studies have shown the importance of cooperation and competition (co-opetition) as a necessary condition for learning. This learning impact does not embrace limitations; rather, it sees diversity and resistance to change as learning opportunities. Challenge-based and entrepreneurial learning is, in our article, largely about meetings and interaction on different levels: individual, organisational and societal. Knowledge exchange, which the research circle and school musical were both characterised by, requires the mutual interest of all parties involved – and it also includes resistance in the sense that "We can not see it" or "We have not done it in that way before."

In Falk Lundqvist's book *Entrepreneurial Learning* (36), it is basically stated that motivation and creativity are about a balance between control and freedom: "Control of an entrepreneurial approach involves giving feedback and creating interest among students to progress in their development...To know what other people think and feel about the services they perform is critical to the desire to continue" (36, pp 109). In our opinion, the opportunity for students to gain and share their factual knowledge – and knowledge experiences – needs to be upgraded. We can see how the musical work in our reported material was very much about creating value for all parties involved. Students felt good because they got positive attention and feedback, and the teachers were boosted by both researchers and the artistic staff of the theatre. Based on the informants' statements, we can conclude that more learning in this mould would be desirable.

An important conclusion of our study is that when cross-border interaction occurs, resistance – if handled correctly – can represent a very important driving force in getting people to see new opportunities. Resistance – a "no" towards change – therefore needs to be given the same legitimacy as a favourable approach, or a "yes" to change. According to Bronfenbrenner (26), the starting point in learning is the individual's interaction with their environment. This interaction takes place on different levels, and in the cross-border meeting, these levels are seen as individual, organisational or institutional and societal. Our study also shows that it is not just about *what* kind of knowledge is created, but also to a large extent *how* it is created, *where* it was created and between *who*. Something happens in the meeting; a free space is created for thought, and the obstacles and structural difficulties faced by the participants in everyday life are not visible. Here, it becomes relevant to raise questions like: *what are we bearers of? What do we represent?* Johansson (46) believes that the chance to get new

ideas increases significantly if one brings together different influences and combines diverse fields, such as different disciplines (12, 16). When the intersections are created in an encounter between individuals from different disciplines, and in a permissive climate (with some so-called 'truths' not in focus), a 'knowledge alliance' of diversity is established, which probably would not have arisen without the physical meeting. In order to get breakthrough ideas and discoveries, beliefs and ideas have to meet and collide (45).

In an entrepreneurial learning environment, students are encouraged to think of their own solutions, often in groups, for problems that are similar to "real" missions that they may face in the workplace or society. The students' self-confidence grows when they feel that their ideas are important (11, 22, 27, 29). In the Sagar dissertation (13), we see how important the support of colleagues is for individual teacher development and change. Similarly, collegiate approaches make it harder to promote a culture of resistance, although the school management morally supports teachers who want to bring about change. It may therefore be of great value in school improvement to contemplate the teaching team composition based on a holistic approach to skills and personal aspects, rather than solely on teachers' subject knowledge (13). Allowing individuals to come together in new constellations, and thus to reflect on and discuss their own established beliefs about entrepreneurship and terminology, will create value in several ways in challenge-based learning. It seems that the identification of what is common, by finding intersections, can contribute to lasting knowledge. To see the benefits of bringing together people with different experiences and frames of reference in new constellations is an important contribution to knowledge, regardless if researchers or practitioners meet. This is an expression of a constructivist approach to teaching based on the student, on learning in groups and on common knowledge (30). It is not enough to only experience the meeting, it also requires a certain attitude from the individual who wants to dare to break the habit, and who wants to try not to see the primary problem as being without opportunities. Our ambition has been to show how two different contexts of knowledge-based meetings could contribute to the thirst for knowledge. We can conclude that the added value given to the participants about the process was characterised by a participatory approach that contributed to positive knowledge satisfaction, perhaps the main challenge in learning, providing value-creating synergies and lasting knowledge for all parties involved. We have to both bring research to the schools and practical experience back to university. By doing this, the pupils and the teachers can reach a deeper understanding and insight into the success factors in school, and the students can get a teacher trainer/researcher who is able to connect practice and theory.

Our main conclusion is that there seems to be knowledge potential when different players with no previous experience of cooperation meet. A prerequisite for the development of this knowledge, which can be developed and can then contribute to new thinking, seems to be closely connected with the existence of a participative approach. The two studies demonstrated a key aspect of change in how resistance is handled, when it initiates and encourages both individual and collective action competence. Consensus in disagreement is seen as a driving force behind knowledge acquisition. In a safe and respectful environment, there can be disagreement on the substance of a meeting, and yet partcipants can take on the

challenge and reach a conclusion, albeit a temporary one. How can we discuss our surrounding society if we are not in it?

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