AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC WRITING AS A STRATEGIC TOOL IN A MEDIUM-SIZED CONSTRUCTION COMPANY: A STRATEGY AS PRACTICE APPROACH

Henning Grosse[1]

School of Business and Technology, University of Gloucestershire, Oxstalls Lane, Longlevens, Gloucester, GL2 9HW, UK

In this qualitative study, I demonstrate how autoethnographic writing can be used to develop and refine a midsized construction company's business strategy. As owner of a construction company, I am in a unique position to explore a business environment autoethnographically. This includes writing extensive fieldnotes about my experiences and observations as well as reflecting on them. These fieldnotes and subsequent reflections resonate well with a strategy as practice approach. Drawing on a vignette about a conflict demonstrates how autoethnographic writing and a view of strategy as practice helps practitioners to develop and implement a strategy in business practice. This contributes to the debate about practice-relevant research and practitioner research. Using the researcher's thinking, I problematise what I see and gain insights to begin to amend my own strategy. This approach is very similar to insider action research. Utilising personal experiences of business practice demonstrates how ethnographic writing - in other words, qualitative material - can be used to develop and refine a construction company's business strategy. Ethnographic research has been employed to research business strategies in different fields. Yet, neither ethnography nor autoethnography has been applied to develop business strategies in the field of construction management. Additionally, the use of autoethnographic research in construction management is a further contribution to the efforts to relate research to the construction management practice. Although the exploration is limited to a unique case, lessons can be transferred to other companies and offer valuable new insights to researchers seeking collaboration with the construction industry and beyond.

Keywords: Autoethnography, strategy, practitioner research, strategy as practice

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper is the extent to which autoethnographic writing can assist managers in developing and implementing strategies in their respective organisations. This is an issue of personal interest as I pursue autoethnographic research while running my own construction business. To address this question, I initially explored the fieldnotes I had collected previously, while researching autoethnographically in my business. A strategy of practice perspective was used, which has recently gained increased interest. From this perspective, a strategy is a process manifested in the practices of the actors involved. It is, therefore, a research perspective close to

---

[1] hgrosse@glos.ac.uk

managerial practice and is concerned with practice relevance. However, I want to take it a step further and seek to employ it as a managerial tool. Hence, I not only try to understand the micro-processes of strategizing but also to enhance the process of strategizing in my business.

Firstly, this paper is connected with the strategy-as-practice research. Secondly, the process of collecting the autoethnographic material is described, followed by a vignette created from fieldnotes. This vignette is used to demonstrate how the writing had an impact on the strategic decisions and how they were enacted in practice. The paper also considers the micro-perspective of day-to-day decisions and explores the effects on long-term strategies, drawing on further fieldnotes and reflections.

Strategy as Practice

This paper connects to the 'Strategy as Practice' approach outlined by Golsorkhi *et al.* (2010, 2015). This approach focusses on the daily business of managers rather than taking a resource-based approach to strategy. It is "a more comprehensive, in-depth analysis of what actually takes place." (Golsorkhi *et al.,* 2010: 1). It looks at "micro-activities that […] can have significant consequences for organizations" (Johnson, Melin and Whittington 2003: 1) These micro activities manifest to a large extent what organisation are. In this sense "strategy is more than just a property of organizations; it is something that people do" (Whittington 2006: 627). Focussing on "practice as a philosophy" highlights the "value of understanding practice as constitutive of reality" (Orlikowski 2010: 30). The reality of strategizing rests, therefore, on the interaction of the strategist with others - inside and outside of the organisation. To Rasche and Chia (2009), ethnographic methods are better placed to yield insights into organisational activity than interviews and questionnaires.

The study of Sage, Dainty and Brookes (2012) is an example from the construction sector which uses Strategy-as-Practice approach to elucidate how strategic goals and measures are translated and mistranslated in practice. Exploring a lean implementation, they showed how site managers were brought on board by making them "understand why" different practices should be adopted and hence experiencing the "benefits". The strategy-as-process thinking is of particular importance for construction managers since the projects, the people on the project and the respective conditions are continuously changing. A strategizing as process approach is more suitable to the "unfolding" of a project as it progresses as it is adaptable to change (Johnson, Melin and Whittington 2003).

Sage, Dainty and Brookes (2012: 226) demonstrated how a strategy as practice approach yields practice-relevant knowledge. Cunliffe (2015) urges researchers to share this with practitioners. To this end, she proposes even more in-depth collaboration with practitioners. However, it is difficult to convey research findings to practitioners in an accessible way. Bartunek (2007: 1326) criticizes researchers' methods of communicating to practitioners: "implications are typically suggested in a decontextualized, distant way. Some of the advice would appear to many readers to be contradictory, and some of it is simply hortatory." Antonacopoulou (2010: 222) addresses this problem to academics, whose "research tends to be geared towards the generation of new knowledge, while that of business executives tends to be geared towards resolving a specific (usually short-term) business problem or attending to financial targets."

Yet this concern could be addressed in two complementary ways. The first is through a focus on micro strategizing since it deals with "day-to-day stuff of management. It

is what managers do and what they manage." (Johnson, Melin and Whittington 2003: 15). The second is through more collaboration. Antonacopoulou (2010: 220) suggests "[p]ractice-relevant scholarship promotes 're-search' as a common practice that scholars, business executives and policy-makers all perform in their own way, as well as collaboratively." Bartunek (2007) goes one step further and proposes interchange research and practice. In other words, managers become researchers and vice versa. This approach would undoubtedly take "the dual hurdles of relevance and rigor" and so produce research "that is more penetrating and insightful" (Van De Ven 2007: 35).

Elsewhere, examples can be found in which practitioner-researchers make use of ethnographic approaches as business tools (Denny and Sunderland 2014). Some even demonstrate how to develop and implement strategies (e.g.; Morais 2014). However, to my knowledge, regarding a strategy as practice perspective, research is only pursued from the researchers' perspective and not that of a manager developing and implementing a strategy. This is the case for strategy as practice research in general and particularly for strategy as practice approaches in construction management. This paper offers an alternative perspective to strategy as practice research and construction management research as it is written by the owner of a small construction business.

This paper focusses on single clients and single projects and demonstrates how strategy is adapted and revised. It emphasises the learning and the situatedness of doing strategy and moves away from a formal process (Mintzberg 1994). This is more relevant for smaller business (which make up the majority of construction companies by turnover and employee numbers).

Autoethnography

The autoethnographic approach provides a way of being both research and practitioner. There are few examples of autoethnographies written by managers in the construction industry (e.g. Kanjanabootra and Corbitt 2016, Whaley 2016) and beyond (e.g. Kempster and Stewart 2010, Verkerk 2005). However, it is usually academics writing about their experiences in different contexts and seldom management practitioners writing about their work (Kempster and Stewart 2010). Kempster and Stewart (2010) connect this lack of managers' autoethnographies to concerns about confidentiality or issues surrounding publication and to practitioners' difficulties in reflecting on experiences and related knowledge. I would like to add that managers have to see the benefit for themselves - academic reputation might not be enough. Perhaps research is more concerned with rigour than with practical relevance and this makes it unattractive to practitioners to conduct endeavours? This is probably the reason why practitioners so seldom engage in autoethnographic writing, in addition to the argument of Kempster and Stewart (2010). Therefore, I would like to explore how autoethnographic writing helps managers to develop and implement strategies - to do strategy-as-practice.

I have been writing fieldnotes about managing my own construction company since 2013. The business employs 35 staff members and builds concrete and brickwork structures. The job requires frequent interaction with clients, architects, engineers, suppliers and subcontractors as well as with my own staff. Often, I take brief notes or voice recordings after an interaction (or any other event) and develop it later in the evening into a fieldnote. The writing itself is not a straightforward process but is a meandering (Adams St. Pierre 2002) between the actual event, recollection of earlier events and reflections. For this paper, I explored my fieldnotes (collected in cloud-

based software) about a conflict I had had to manage. I chose this event because it contradicted and questioned my business strategy. During this unfolding conflict, which stretched over almost two years, I frequently sat down in the evenings and wrote fieldnotes. There were, of course, periods when nothing significant happened, followed by a couple of days of intense action. Although, I wrote about what happened in my business on an almost daily basis, this particular conflict reappeared in my fieldnotes whenever something interesting happened.

These fieldnotes were studied and put together in order to create a narrative which was, of course, revised and edited. Within this process, details were added from memory where it seemed appropriate and omitted if regarded as irrelevant. This is not a straightforward process but a back and forth between writing, reading, and rewriting. This produced the following vignette:

Spider's web

One day I got the message that there were cracks in the other face of a building we were about to hand over to the client within the next days. During the months before, we had built a detached house in the northern suburbs of Berlin. It was a reasonably simple and robust construction of concrete and sand-lime bricks. The house had been insulated with a so-called "external thermal insulation composite system" - a layer of insulation panels fixed with mortar to the walls, reinforcement mesh and finishing plaster. My workers had fixed the insulation boards to the walls' months before, and a subcontractor had done the reinforcement layer and the finishing.

A couple of days before, all had looked perfect but now the finishing was full of cracks and was hollow underneath.

None of the parties involved could understand why this had happened. However, since this was quite an expensive insulation system, everybody knew that this would be very costly in the end. As we started to investigate the problem, otherwise hidden issues came to the surface. We had used the right material, but it was sold under a different trademark, the way the insulation was fixed to the wall wasn't in complete accordance with the technical approval, furthermore the approval hadn't covered the particular finishing (colour and type of mortar). A technical consultant of the producer had given some wrong advice. Yet, none of these inconsistencies proved to be the ultimate reason for the fault.

It was terribly messy. The client was understandingly disappointed. The supplier with whom I had worked for years had bought a system from the industry which did not work and had sold it to me. A small and long-known subcontractor did the finishing that now looked like a spider's web. And we (my site-managers and me) had failed to fulfil our due diligence.

There was no single right way forward.

At first, when we started to investigate the issue, the mood was quite friendly - given the circumstances. Although we hoped to get an answer, the investigations from the producer's laboratory and an expert for external thermal insulations (which we jointly called in) did not determine the cause of the cracks in the facade. Both producer and expert were similarly perplexed. They said they did not know why the system had collapsed and, hence, would not recommend using the same product again because "as long as we don't know what went wrong, we don't know how to do it right."

However, I had promised - by signing the contract - to deliver this system. It was clear that the client could insist that I deliver what I promised, and if I wouldn't deliver, he was entitled to claiming damages. So, the client was - from a contractual perspective - in a rather comfortable position. Yet, everyone else was not. Nobody knew who was accountable and what proportion of the bill each had to carry.

As the investigation went on, we sought to convince the client and the architect to use another insulation system. We negotiated about different options and about possible compensations, but still we couldn't get their approval, and no progress was made. At that point, I saw no other option than to instigate a court-ordered examination by an expert witness, which is the first step in litigation. Taking this step surprised and upset some parties involved.

Again, plodding progress and the examination, only yielded inconclusive results. At a time when I had already lost faith finding a settlement, the architect made another attempt. After long negotiations with the different parties, we reached an agreement without going into formal litigation.

Reflections

Going through the fieldnotes, I found shifting interpretations of the different actors in this game. At first, I had some sympathy for one person; later I believed this person to be responsible for undermining a possible solution and in the end, when the solution was found, I changed my mind again. Along with these shifts in interpretation of each individual's actions, my emotions towards these actors changed too. This all had an impact on the strategy which governed my actions. And seeing myself changing my mind about a person can cause a fair deal of self-doubt. It is this doubt about myself, my strategy and its implementation which led me to pick this event among others.

My lawyer and I agreed that this was not the only example where the wrong person was accountable for the problem. Developing and executing a strategy is marked by not knowing, by assumptions and interpretation. These assumptions and interpretations are based on partial vision, on limited sources, and selective perception. Hence, they are always incomplete. Incomplete to an unexpectedly large extent. It is as if understanding and so-called "truth", slip through one's fingers.

Strategy as Practice

Within this shifting understanding, I see part of my company's strategy as acting as a reliable partner to clients, design teams, suppliers and subcontractors, as well as staff members. Yet this situation was messy and unfathomable and, furthermore, quite significant losses were looming. In this situation, I felt the urge to act in self-defence which would mean letting someone down. Instigating formal court proceedings did not go down well with anybody involved. However, I pursued this path, based on the interpretations I made at the time. Formulating and implementing my strategy involved a constant learning process (Mintzberg 1994).

Everyone involved proclaimed to be searching for a way out of the impasse, but then meetings got cancelled at the last minute with no explanation, aggressive emails circulated, and everyone started blaming others for the failure. I perceived contradictory information and confusing cues from all angles, and it seemed impossible to understand the aims of all the parties. And, I was no exception - my actions also contradicted what I had said and done before.

Micro view

Autoethnographic writing helps to understand these processes. As Johnson, Melin and Whittington (2003: 4) write, "sustainable advantage must lie in micro assets that are hard to discern […]. Profit, not only the devil, lies in the detail." The micro assets were my notes and the reflections on the events as they unfolded. There was a clear aim: getting the issue settled at the lowest cost (for everybody involved). Yet the way to get there was not clear at all. For a long time, I could not decipher the interests of the various actors. Hence, the strategy that I employed had to fit an unfolding understanding. Yet, even in retrospect, I do not know whether these decisions were the best decisions I could have taken, although we reached the desired agreement in the end. Writing fieldnotes was "action research for the individual [manager]" (Ellis 1999: 677). This notion resonates with Cunliffe's call for intersubjectivist research on strategy as practice - for "action-research and collaborative and co-constructed methods" (2015: 443). Autoethnographic writing - in one or the other form - addresses this call.

Yet, Cunliffe wants ethnographers to observe and write "in an unmediated and unfiltered way" (2015: 443). In doing so, they "can focus on their personal sense of what is significant." (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 2011: 24). Most managers gain some experience in their job, so in contrast to conventional ethnographers, as described by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 79) they are not "necessarily a novice". When I started writing fieldnotes, I had been in business for 14 years. I had already formed an understanding of how the construction industry works. Still, I sought to write about everything I encountered. Nevertheless, conflicts and often negative experiences grabbed my attention (Illouz 2015). My writing is therefore probably not so much theoretically as emotionally and economically filtered because I write about things that touch me and impact my business. The vignette above is just one example among many that I find in my fieldnotes.

This may lead some to claim autoethnographic research may amount to "naval gazing" (Allen-Collinson 2013: 282) and is "self-indulgent" (Sparkes 2002: 210). Yet, it can make strategy as practice more accessible to managers reading such work because it offers an engaging account (Richardson and Adams St. Pierre 2005). It is essentially "a narrative account of [my life] to make a point." (Wolcott 1999: 174).

During the conflict described above, I was - as Cunliffe describes - "making sense of the situations from within the activity itself." (2002: 40). I could only see the business owner's perspective. The writing offered me a way to capture these thoughts and process them. I wondered why the architect acted in such a way and I wondered what his intentions were. To some extent, I could distance myself. This was not of course, a detached view but was a slightly different perspective - a review of my actions, experiences, and how my strategy had worked so far. But the risk remains that one might "become so involved as to make observation itself virtually impossible" (Wolcott 1999: 48). One may argue that co-created or collaborative ethnographies offer an additional reflexive lens which a single researcher-practitioner by default cannot offer. Nevertheless, as a sole researcher, I discussed my understandings with professional and academic peers. These conversations forced me to reflexively examine my views and interpretations and helped me to produce a less tainted view of the events. Still, it is not going to become unbiassed account. It should, therefore, be judged on whether it is reflexive and credible representations of my research (Richardson 2000).

Writing as a Tool

I initially only wrote in the interests of research, but I soon realised how powerful this tool was. I could examine what I was doing as a manager and assess my strategy. Yet the uncomfortable truth was that I saw myself compromising my own principles. I wanted to act like a reliable partner, but I felt the need to defend myself - hence, commencing a court-ordered investigation. My own strategy is not what I say I do but what I actually do. Hence, the problem here is probably best described by notions of "espoused theory" and "theory in use" (Kemmis and Mctaggart 2005: 561). What I proclaimed to be my strategy was one thing: but what I actually did was wholly different. Instigating legal procedures compromised the picture of a reliable partner that I wanted to convey.

The link to strategizing is that repeated problem-solving leads to a wider view - one can zoom out and understand the bigger picture. Managing a construction company with its daily ups and downs puts strategy to its practice test. Writing about managing is recording or capturing personal experience. This is not doing numbers but making meaning of a strategy. What is lying beneath the problem one is faced with? Usually, autoethnography is very much focussed on detail. The autoethnographer has to step back. The researcher needs to deliberately enter the meta-view in order to understand. Yet repeated entrance into the meta-level and again submerging into the daily business - this being thrown (Heidegger 1927) into managing construction projects over and over again - made it possible and necessary to constantly reformulate my understanding and subsequently my strategies. Hence, autoethnographic writing does neatly fit the notion of strategy-as-practice. It is an ongoing hermeneutic process of creating and recreating an interpretation. Following Orlikowski (2010), autoethnography as a research strategy constitutes the social reality it seeks to explore.

What follows is a deeper questioning of professional practices. Reflection then departs from simple problem solving - or single loop reflection - to a deeper questioning or multiple loop reflection. It might be interesting to ask how to solve the conflict above - that is the obvious question for the practitioner. However, adopting the researcher's way of wondering (Antonacopoulou 2010) and beginning to search for the problem behind it, is even more fruitful. Why am I unable to understand what is going on? Is it really a problem not to know the hidden agendas of the other parties involved?

Long term impact

My autoethnographic writing always considers myself as an entrepreneur. It clarifies what I am able and willing to implement as strategy. It captures and seeks to explain subjective issues which may otherwise be neglected, such as how I felt about certain events and decisions. Autoethnographic writing made me reflect on my strategy and its implementation. This manifest itself in my shifting interpretations and the subsequent actions. This insight was only possible through continuous fieldnote writing about events. Slowly but continuously, writing about oneself and one's experiences makes a difference. It shifts attention. One draws on previous interpretations to make sense of newer experiences. One develops routines not known before and becomes more aware of the questions beneath the surface. For instance, do I appear as reliable as I would like?

I found one particular reflection in the fieldnotes, regarding another dispute I had lived through and written about years before. I wrote that I felt much calmer and more distanced about the 'spider's web' than in the conflict years before. I had learnt to

distance myself. Hence it made it possible for me to detach myself, to have a look at the problem from a distance and to not be too emotionally engaged. I was better able to manage this conflict and to develop a strategy than before. Conflicts are recurring; they come back again and again. Autoethnography is a means to deal with them as an action-orientated method and so to learn from problems and issues.

SUMMARY

This paper attempts to explore how autoethnographic writing can assist managers in developing and implementing strategies. It shows how autoethnographic writing is a way to improve strategic practice. For one, it made me aware of the nitty-gritty details when trying to solve a conflict. I cannot say that I made one particular, outstanding decision. I did not pivot; there was no single game-changer. Instead, there were numerous little conversations, actions and moves that apparently led to the desired outcome. This resonates well with the strategy as practice approach. It also demonstrates how local adaptation (Sage, Dainty and Brookes 2012) of a company's strategy unfolds. Hence, on the micro-level, autoethnographic writing helped - it assisted me in solving this particular conflict. Avoiding lengthy and costly litigation certainly had an impact on the mezzanine level. Finding a compromise and hence maintaining reasonably good relations with the parties involved also count on this level. Therefore, "micro-activities" (Johnson, Melin and Whittington 2003: 1) had an impact on the implementations of my strategy.

On a macro level, big changes (e.g. significant technical innovations or rapid economic changes) are beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, autoethnographic writing rarely has an immediate effect on the long-term strategy of an organisation. However, long-term learning about oneself and one's business environment has a significant impact on developing and implementing strategy. It demonstrates from a practitioner's perspective how strategy is lived and done (Whittington 2006). Writing fieldnotes raises the questions practitioners often avoid asking. Perhaps, this could be a motivation for managers to engage in one or the other form of autoethnographic or journal writing.

REFERENCES

Adams St Pierre, E (2002) Circling the text: Nomadic writing practices, *In*: Y S Lincoln and N K Denzin (Eds.) *The Qualitative Inquiry Reader*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Allen-Collinson, J (2013) Autoethnography as engagement of self/other, self/culture, self/politics and selves/futures, *In*: S L Holman Jones, T E Adams and C Ellis (Eds.) *Handbook of Autoethnography*, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 281-299.

Antonacopoulou, E P (2010) Beyond co-production: Practice-relevant scholarship as a foundation for delivering impact through powerful ideas, *Public Money and Management*, **30**(4), 219-226.

Bartunek, J M (2007) Academic-practitioner collaboration need not require joint or relevant research: Toward a relational scholarship of integration, *The Academy of Management Journal*, **50**(6), 1323-1333.

Cunliffe, A L (2002) Reflexive dialogical practice in management learning, *Management Learning*, **33**(1), 35-61.

Cunliffe, A L (2015) Using ethnography in strategy-as-practice research, *In*: D Golsorkhi, L Rouleau, D Seidl and E Vaara (Eds.) *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice 2 Edition*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 431-446

Denny, R M T and Sunderland, P L, (Eds) (2014) *Handbook of Anthropology in Business*, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Ellis, C (1999) Heartful autoethnography, *Qualitative Health Research*, **9**(5), 669-683.

Emerson, R M, Fretz, R I and Shaw, L L (2011) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes Second Edition, Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing and Publishing*, Chicago, Il: The University of Chicago Press.

Golsorkhi, D, Rouleau, L, Seidl, D and Vaara, E, Eds (2010) *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Golsorkhi, D, Rouleau, L, Seidl, D and Vaara, E, Eds (2015) *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice Second Edition*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hammersley, M and Atkinson, P (2007) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice Third Edition*, New York: Routledge.

Heidegger, M (1927) *Being and Time*, Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Illouz, E (2015) *Why Love Hurts: A Sociological Explanation*, Cambridge, UK: Polity, Press.

Johnson, G, Melin, L and Whittington, R (2003) Micro strategy and strategizing: Towards an activity-based view, *Journal of Management Studies*, **40**(1), 3-22.

Kanjanabootra, S and Corbitt, B (2016) Reproducing knowledge in construction expertise: A reflexive theory, critical approach, *Construction Management and Economics*, **34**(7/8), 561-577.

Kempster, S and Stewart, J (2010) Becoming a leader: A co-produced autoethnographic exploration of situated learning of leadership practice, *Management Learning*, **41**(2), 205-219.

Mintzberg, H (1994) The fall and rise of strategic planning, *Harvard Business Review*, **72**(1), 107-114.

Morais, R J (2014) In pursuit of strategy: Anthropologist in advertising, *In*: R M T Denny and P L Sunderland (Eds.) *Handbook of Anthropology in Business*, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 247-265.

Orlikowski, W J (2010) Practice in research: Phenomenon, perspective and philosophy, *In*: D Golsorkhi, L Rouleau, D Seidl and E Vaara (Eds.) *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 23-33.

Rasche, A and Chia, R (2009) Researching strategy practices: A genealogical social theory perspective, *Organization Studies*, **30**(7), 713-734.

Richardson, L (2000) Evaluating ethnography, *Qualitative Inquiry*, **6**(2), 253-255.

Richardson, L and Adams St Pierre, E (2005) Writing: A method of inquiry, *In*: N K Denzin and Y S Lincoln (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research, Third Edition*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 959-978

Sage, D, Dainty, A and Brookes, N (2012) A 'strategy-as-practice' exploration of lean construction strategizing, *Building Research and Information*, **40**(2), 221-230.

Sparkes, A C (2002) Autoethnography: Self-indulgence or something more? *In*: A P Bochner and C Ellis (Eds.) *Ethnographically Speaking: Autoethnography, Literature and Aesthetics*, Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 209-232.

Van de Ven, A H (2007) *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Verkerk, M J (2005) *Trust and Power on the Shop Floor: An Ethnographical, Ethical and Philosophical Study on Responsible Behaviour in Industrial Organisations*, Delft, The Netherlands: Eburon Academic Publishers.

Whaley, A (2016) Why Claims Fail: An Autoethnographic Investigation of Claims Management under GCC Construction Contracts. *In:* Chan, P W and Neilson, C J (Eds.), *Proceedings 32nd Annual ARCOM Conference*, 5-7 September 2016, Manchester UK. Association of Researchers in Construction Management, 217-225.

Whittington, R (2006) Completing the practice turn in strategy research, *Organization Studies*, **27**(5), 613-34.

Wolcott, H F (1999) *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing*, Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.