

## Interacting

### Coordinating text understanding in a student theatre production

Stage actors' involvement in a theatre production encompasses talk- and action-in-interaction. Typically, a theatre production includes artistic shaping of a particular drama text into a stage text. The present dissertation explores such a process seen as a learning arrangement in an upper secondary school in Sweden. The aim is to explore how text understanding evolves collaboratively as the participants prepare for the upcoming performances of Molière's *The Affected Ladies*. The investigation of the participants' two-semester process from page to stage seeks to answer by what interactional and cultural means they pursue their objective. Analytically, the aim is pursued by employing sociocultural and dialogical approaches to meaning making, creativity and learning.

The results illustrate the situated, interactional ways in which the participants progressed from a position as newcomers to the drama text into a position of mastering the stage text. The findings show that anchoring text understanding in experiences in the material world developed the student's perspectives on the text and expanded their action possibilities. They also show that the students' informal, collaborative and playful role-playing provided unique spaces for learning about the character of the characters. One of the productive features was the dynamic, laminated interaction, including hybrid role-taking, in which substantial student agency surfaced.

The dissertation can be read against a background of the role of arts education and reading of literary texts in the neoliberal educational landscape that favors measurable effects of individual achievements. To reduce learning arrangements to what seems efficient to reach measurable goals for the individual appears ill-judged considering the educational potentials of collaborative, creative, explorative and transgressive forms of learning illustrated in the present research.



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