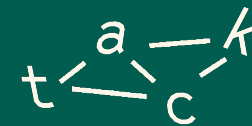


# Engaging with Tacit Knowing: Reflexive dimensions as triggers for innovative design and research

## Teaching Module 9



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 860413.



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# Module aims

To introduce reflexivity in research and design practices — as an active and intentional way of engaging and unfolding tacit knowing.

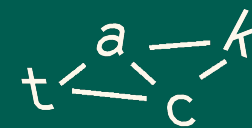
To suggest the broadening and shifting of perspectives and points of view afforded by the reflexive — as a modality of deepening actions.

To understand how different levels of reflexivity can be triggered — with their interdependencies, areas of possibilities and research potentials through several lenses :

- Interweaving discourse contexts
- Workshops as reflexive collaborations
- Exercises that took place during TACK x LUH



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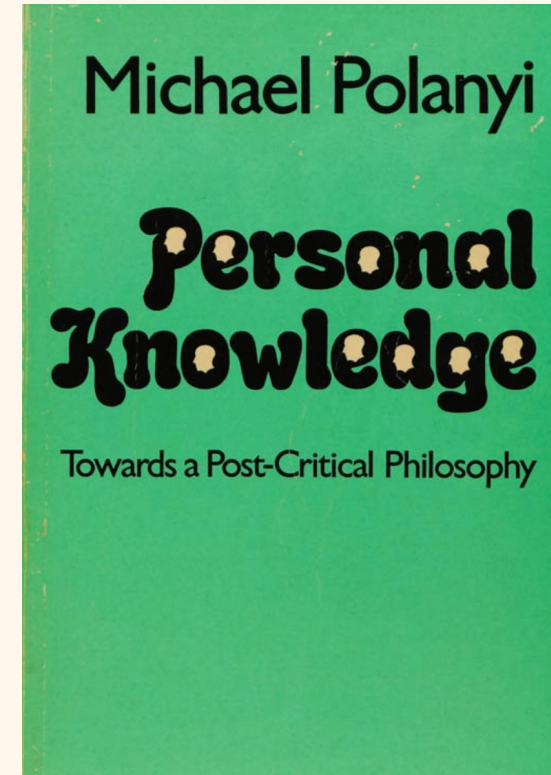


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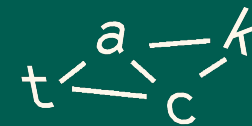
# Personal and Tacit Knowledges

I regard knowing as active comprehension of the things known, an action that requires skills, [...] establishing contact with a hidden reality, a contact that is defined as the condition for anticipating an indeterminate range of yet unknown implications. (Michael Polanyi, Personal knowledge, XXVII).

The tracing of personal knowledge to its roots in the subsidiary awareness of our body as merged in our focal awareness of external objects, reveals not only the logical structure of personal knowledge but also its dynamic sources. (Michael Polanyi, Personal knowledge, 61)



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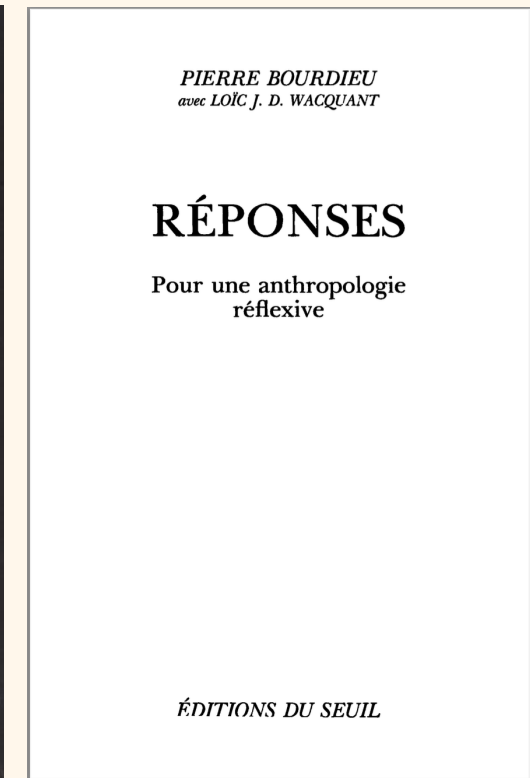
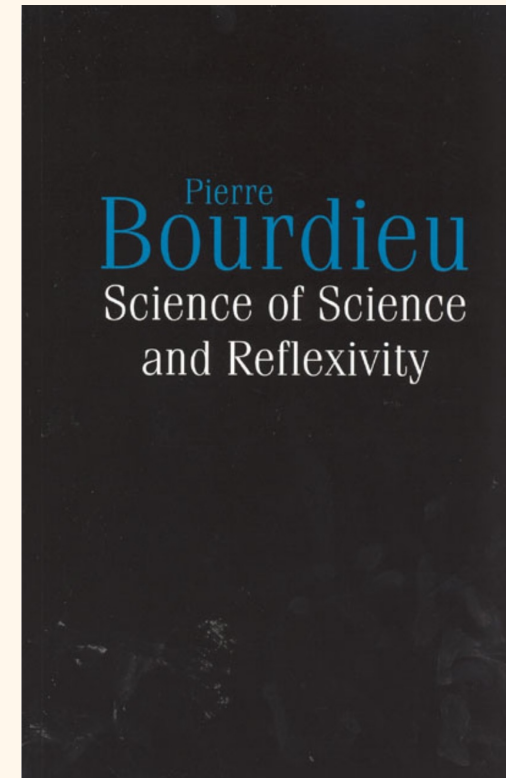


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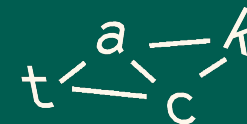
# Reflexivity in Science

Habitus [is] the durable and transposable schemata of perception, appreciation and action that results from the institution of the social in the body. (Pierre Bourdieu/Loïc Wacquant, An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology, 126-127)

[W]hat I call an undertaking of reflexivity, aimed at objectivating the transcendental unconscious that the knowing subject unknowingly invests in acts of knowledge or, to put it another way, his habitus as a historical transcendental - which can be said to be a priori inasmuch as it is a structuring structure which organizes the perception and appreciation of all experience, and a posteriori inasmuch as it is a structured structure produced by a whole series of common or individual learning processes. (Pierre Bourdieu, Science of Science and Reflexivity, 78)



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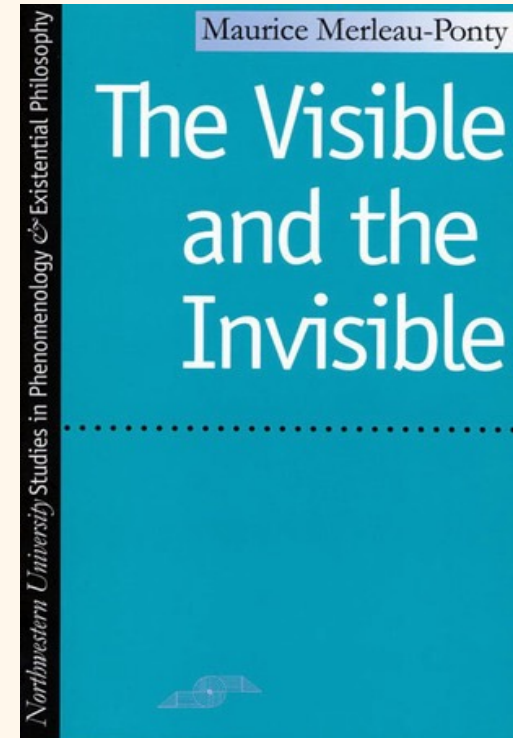


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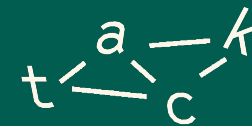
# The Hidden-Revealed

The comparisons between the invisible and the visible are not comparisons, they mean that the visible is pregnant with the invisible. [...] Being is this strange encroachment by reason of which my visible, although it is not superposable on that of the other, nonetheless opens upon it, that both open upon the same sensible world. (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 215)

What we call hyperdialectic is a thought that on the contrary is capable of reaching truth because it envisages without restriction the plurality of the relationships and what has been called ambiguity. (Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 94)



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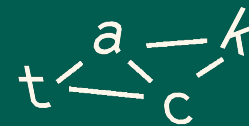
# Reflexive undertakings

How can reflexivity help bring parcels of tacit knowing to the fore ?

- Going beyond the surface of knowing —to its *membrane* (Merleau-Ponty)— implies *indwelling*, that is defined by Polanyi as a form of *interiorisation* that is activated through practices.
- Practices in the analytical field open up, by reflexivity, to creative encounters as: to learn, to experience, to comprehend, to understand, to fathom, or to appreciate and to generate...
- The reflexive can bring in a *plurality of relationships* by harnessing and extrapolating deeper, multi-layered perceptual instances.



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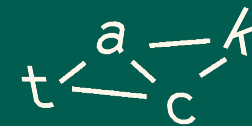
# Reflexive Practices in Architecture

Reflexive design provides the opportunity to step back from specific expectations and requirements, through a high degree of open-endedness. This involves theory construction and a connection to practice, as well as a basic attitude of not necessarily answering questions, but also raising them, of not merely delineating subject areas, but of starting to think about iterative possibilities, to outline and conceptualise innovative formats.

To put it more simply: to think differently about design and research and how they interrelate. (Margitta Buchert, Reflexive Design, 10)



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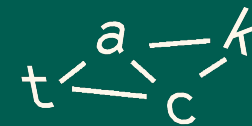
# Heuristic Research Modalities

Reflexive design is about exploring, updating and generating fields of knowledge in architecture, urban and landscape design through an ongoing process of exploration, adaptation and adjustment, as well as about enriching the design of architectural spaces and places. [...]

By explicitly striving for clear and free awareness of intentions and embeddedness and by stimulating distant viewpoints, an uncovering of the interplay of the explicit, the implicit and the unknown is possible. (Margitta Buchert, Intentions of Reflexive Design, 30)



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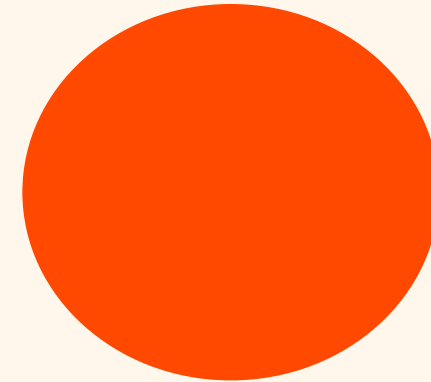
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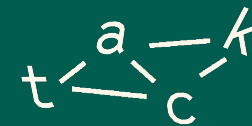
# Expanding practices in architectural design and research

How can reflexivity become productive for architecture ?

- Reflexive design provides stimulus to expand knowledge and generate something new: new cognition, new tools, new shapes, new positionings.
- *"Tools of design" [and research] are [also]mental abilities: Perception and memory, imagination and sense of form, reasoning, invention and judgement (Christian Gänshirt, Werkzeuge für Ideen, 99).* Such modes of thought can be more intentionally sparked by reflexive design approaches.



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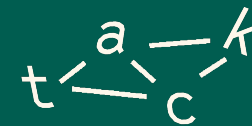
# The Workshop — Bourdieu's take

In the aforementioned books, Bourdieu describes what he considers important workshop settings, for example:

- Collaborative stances are essential for reflexive work. In the workshop, the unfinished, the in-progress, the encountered difficulties can be grounding for new experiences — new questionings and new ideas, by exchange and growth.
- Using reflexive undertakings as 'pense-bête', as constant reminder to take action in more open-ended ways.
- The ability to draw out self analysis that situates the researcher between the detailed and focused point of view and the overarching, constellated 'bird's-eye view'.
- Going beyond habits of thought requires such shifts
- Choosing at least two research objects that have little to do with each other is one way of avoiding closed-mindedness.



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# TACK x LUH: On the door, on the table... on the screen

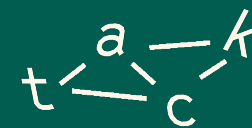
## 3 lenses to stimulate reflexive approaches

Workshops can spark a variety of alternative perspectives. The threefold workshop format developed during the TACK gathering in Hanover can provide stimulus for broadened outlooks by:

- Position [ Com-position — Re-composition ]
- Revision [ Mindful re-integrating of probing actions ]
- Perspective [ Embodied and socially shared shifting ]



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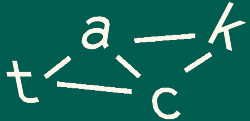
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# On the door, on the table... on the screen



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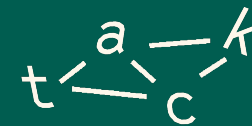
Door \_\_\_\_ Taking-in reflexive dimensions to gain clarity of structure with cohesive content and outcomes.

Tacit knowing comes to the fore tentatively and iteratively through *com-position*. A first exercise proposes working and re-working content structures of research projects through collaboration and in-depth discussions.

During a short timeframe, Din A5 papers with a maximum of 3 words on the individual topics on each sheet are assembled on different *doors* across the workshop area. The next steps involve guiding colleagues through the assemblage of terms, testing out how well they translate the overarching aims and smaller questions of the research. As sounding-board, the discussions bring out new perspectives and reinforce clarity of the work.



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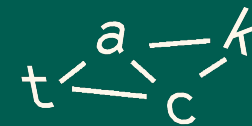
## Table \_\_\_\_ Exploring and probing concepts to stimulate new and varied points of view by Re-vision

The reflexive engages several senses and approaches: thinking by making becomes a central part of the workshop back-and-forths.

Laying out (extracts of) all the research produced up until now, *the table* becomes a centre of activity: juxtaposing, re-ordering, revaluing and exchanging research angles generates new sequences and relations for the projects. The actions involve discussing the work at multiple scales: focusing on important details, drawing out new connections, uncovering and enriching overarching research ambitions and contents in the work.



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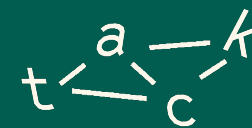
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Perspectives \_\_\_\_\_ Practising shifts in perspectives, between the detailed and the overarching.



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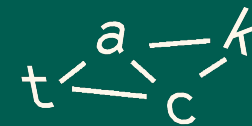
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# Figures

Photographs: taken by a\_ku



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