

An Investigation into the Phenomenon and Discourse of Working Out Loud.

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Abstract

Working Out Loud is a recent phenomenon that refers to a range of digital and networked practices that purportedly offer a range of benefits to both individuals and organisations. Within the changing context of work, emphasis is placed on digital skills, networks and learning, with individuals increasingly assuming responsibility. Within this, Working Out Loud has been hailed as an essential 21st century digital workplace skill (Hinchcliffe, 2015). Given such claims, and that knowledge of the phenomenon is nascent within the literature, Working Out Loud is deemed a suitable topic of research.

Review of the literature and scrutiny of the phenomenon's claims revealed a number of what might be termed 'structural tensions' that were seemingly presented as unproblematic. Given that the phenomenon is situated in a historically antagonistic relationship of capital and labour, matters of power are implicated. To understand how the phenomenon of Working Out Loud has emerged, what is meant by it and what the implications are for the relationship between individuals and organisations, a genealogical method of discourse analysis inspired by Michel Foucault was adopted to investigate matters of discourse/knowledge/power relative to Working Out Loud.

Analysis revealed that the discourse of Working Out Loud is constructed through unification of a discourse of social business and a discourse of personal development/self-actualisation. By conflating different meanings of the word help across the two discourses, the primary subject position created in the discourse effectively aligns individuals' personal development/self-actualisation with the realisation of business goals. Reconceptualised in the context of business organisations (Fleming, 2014), this study contends that such a position presents Working Out Loud as an expression of what Foucault calls biopower, wherein the everyday life qualities of individuals are increasingly indexed to the needs of the organisation.

Chapter 1 Aims and objectives

Introduction

In an age where professionals are more and more producing knowledge online, Working Out Loud is regarded by some as an increasingly important way to work (Boyd, 2015). Indeed, it is being advocated as an “essential next-generation digital workplace skill” (Hinchcliffe, 2015). Working Out Loud basically means narrating your workflow via social communication technologies. It is thought to be beneficial because rather than viewing work as a ‘final’ product that is published or broadcast to a targeted audience, it seeks to make work visible in process and claims this helps to leverage networks and break down knowledge silos.

It must be noted though that the practices that comprise Working Out Loud can also be described by a range of similar terms, e.g. Narrate Your Work, Show Your Work, Open Work (Bozarth, 2014; de Zwart, 2011; Hinchcliffe, 2011). However, I contend that it is under the term Working Out Loud that the practices implicated are gaining most traction.

Interest in researching Working Out Loud [WOL] is born out of coalescence amongst socioeconomic and technological change with its implications for the future of work. Developments in social communication technologies, together with the increasing importance of networks that these technologies enable are changing the way that individuals and organisations execute their work. Organisations are increasingly looking for more effective, agile, knowledge systems that will allow them to keep abreast of developments and to innovate more quickly, whilst individuals are increasingly taking advantage of opportunities both within the organisation and outside of it to connect and avail of opportunities to learn and advance their professional development. To such ends, working practices increasingly span boundaries of time and space with division between personal life and professional life becoming increasingly blurred. Established working practices, orientations towards knowledge and the relationship between organisations and

individuals is being transformed. It is the desire to understand these developments, particularly in relation to matters of power, and how the practice of WOL is implicated in these developments that presents the central problem of this study. In addition, it would be useful to know more about the contribution that WOL can make to professional learning and its claims towards knowledge.

Interest to research this topic is also prompted by my own lived experience in observing the development of the phenomenon and, to some degree, starting to adopt the practices that it advocates, as well as a desire to continue to develop my theoretical understandings of language and of the practical application of discourse analysis, which was stimulated in an assignment on the MRes programme. This is particularly apposite because it seems to me that language plays a crucial role in the development of the WOL phenomenon. The phrase seems to capture something and the use of what I call benign language seems to aid ‘buy in’ from both individuals and organisations. That is, within what is historically an antagonistic relationship of power, namely capital and labour, the choice of language seems to present WOL as innocuous.

The over-riding rationale for choosing Working Out Loud as a research topic is to be more critically informed about this emerging practice.

Aims

The aim of the research is to answer the following questions:

- How is Working Out Loud and its attributed benefits constructed in discourse?
- What implications does this construction have on relations of power between individuals and organisations?

An attendant aim is to employ genealogy as a method of discourse analysis and evaluate its applicability. The research questions were identified by a gap in the literature and the research method was largely determined by the theoretical framework also identified in the literature, which will be confirmed in the literature review.

Objectives

To help ensure successful delivery of the research aims, it is necessary to determine a series of objectives to guide and measure progress.

To set the parameters of the study the literature review provides some level of context; this focuses on discussions for the future of work and the role of networks and networked technologies in relation to learning for organisations and individuals. The literature review also sets out what is involved in the practice of WOL, enquires into its origins, the attributed benefits and matters of the practice's adoption. Finally, the literature review also investigates the role of language and discourse pertinent to WOL and its role in shaping power relations. Upon completion of the literature review, research questions are identified and a rationale given.

Following on from the literature review, the selected research method is discussed and reasons given for alternative methods that were discounted. Then, to promote trustworthiness within the research, the process of analysis is explained and a worked example given. To ensure that matters of researcher subjectivity are accounted for and made visible, matters of subjectivity are addressed where necessary throughout.

Here it is important to note that because WOL is an emergent phenomenon, identifying sources for the study was not something that occurred in a linear or unidirectional fashion that neatly corresponded with discrete research phases. Indeed, it transpired that a key number of sources reviewed in the 'origins' section of literature came to be seen as constituting relevant data within the context of a genealogical study. Furthermore, analysis of the data necessitated that the interpretation had to be grounded in literature that could not possibly have been anticipated beforehand, and if it had, it would have influenced how the data was read. It is for this reason, as well as to give a sense of the journey of discovery that this investigation turned out to be that some sources of literature are presented with the interpretation.

Chapter 2 Literature review

Having briefly outlined the research topic along with its aims and objectives, it is necessary to undertake a literature review in order to ascertain what is already established about WOL in the literature, to identify a theoretical framework or specific area of focus, identify research question(s) and provide a rationale for the study.

WOL is considered by some as constituting “a known and distinguishable phenomenon” (Sergi and Bonneau, 2015, p.4). Yet despite the advent of indicators such as the publication of a book (Stepper, 2015), Working Out Loud circles, a TEDx talk, online events such as Work Out Loud Week and sustained references in the blogosphere over the past number of years, the scale of uptake is difficult to discern. Therefore, given its very recent emergence and questionable scale, WOL, as an identifiable phenomenon, does not significantly exist in the literature. At the start of 2016, essentially only three studies could be identified as having WOL as the direct focus (Margaryan et al., 2015; Sergi and Bonneau, 2015; Pearce, 2014). However, it must be noted that only one of these studies was published in a peer-reviewed journal, and further that this attached the alternative term of Narrate Your Work, to describe the phenomenon. Supplementing this, in February 2016 the *Training and Development in Australia Journal* (Vol.43:1) published an issue with WOL as its specific focus. However, this primarily consisted of practitioner reports. It is, as the authors of one of the papers outlined above state, that the boundaries of the ‘WOL field’ do not objectively pre-exist this inquiry (Sergi and Bonneau, 2015, p.10). In order to help define this field and advance its study, this review aims to place the WOL phenomenon in its socio-technological and economic context, outline the features of the practice, trace its origins and investigate the attributed benefits together with matters pertaining to its adoption and the effects that this has on the relationship between individuals and organisations. Having reviewed the scholarly literature, and any supporting alternative sources, the review then turns to investigate how the study of language and/or

discourse might contribute to understanding the phenomenon and help the researcher to refine a research question.

Future of work

The world of work is changing as processes of technological, social and economic change intersect to not only transform current working practices and organisational structures but also to produce new business models, new forms of organisations and new forms of work.

Work is becoming increasingly digital and, ostensibly, increasingly centred on social networks. Digital platforms are enabling the development of new forms of work, such as crowd working and online freelancing, in what is being called the ‘gig economy’ (Friedman, 2014). Equally, existing work practices are being transformed. Digitalisation makes information abundant, through the diversification and proliferation of digital devices and applications, communication is possible across boundaries of time and space with set location, and set working hours declining as opportunities to connect become pervasive. Networks configured by digital technologies can completely refashion how work is done as well as the economies in which they operate. Such changes countenance new forms of networked organisations (Castells, 1996) and place great emphasis on the acquisition of digital skills for networked individuals (Rainie and Wellman, 2012).

To address such change and uncertainty, there is much discussion pertaining to the ‘future of work’. In some circles the future of work is positioned as ‘progressive’, carrying with it an implicit criticism of the state of work to date (Boyd, 2015). This investigation takes account of the changes outlined and the possibilities for the future of work engendered by developments in social communication technologies and the increasing importance of networks that these technologies enable as the context in which to investigate the emergence of WOL.

Learning organisations and learning workers

Organisations, to realise and sustain the benefits thought to accrue to a learning organisation (Senge, 1990), are increasingly looking for more agile systems that will enable them to communicate and access knowledge more effectively thus allowing them to solve problems, innovate more quickly and stay relevant. To this end, Clow (2014) argues that organisations need to rethink their hierarchical structures in favour of network alternatives that support new, more agile, ways of working and the management of learning. Often cited are new network structures characterised by the concepts of wirearchy or holacracy (Robertson, 2015; Husbands, 2013), and just recently, teal (Laloux, 2014). Yet even if organisations do not adopt wholesale transformation of this kind, they are increasingly looking to informal or self-organising initiatives, and for individuals to take responsibility for their own learning, to learn continuously and to feed this back to the workplace. The integration of work and learning in this way not only changes the balance of professional learning from being organisationally driven to being individually driven, it also extends learning beyond organisational boundaries allowing individuals to bring their personal, professional and social networks to bear on matters of work-related learning. It also alters the relationships and resources that individuals can draw upon (peers, experts, documents, datasets etc.) (Littlejohn and Margaryan, 2014).

As might be apparent, professional development is now an ongoing requirement that extends over the life-course. As such, the ‘self-as-project’ is becoming an increasingly important aspect in the context of learning and work, and it is one that presents an interesting new dynamic. If meaningful work is, as scholars argue, the job characteristic that individuals value most (Harpaz and Fu, 2002) then, given that individuals have more autonomy over their professional learning, how this will be pursued by individuals and accommodated by organisations seems to be of fundamental importance for the future of work.

Working Out Loud

Within this context, WOL has emerged as a social phenomenon that relates to changing work practices. As such, closer investigation of the phenomenon is thought useful for what it can tell us about WOL's contribution to professional learning and about how its adoption may alter established relationships.

Relevant here is the theory of social constructionism, which centres on how social phenomena, such as WOL, are created. At heart, it contends that knowledge of things, or reality, is jointly created and sustained by social processes (Burr, 2015). That is, individuals rationalise experience by creating models of the social world, which is shared and reified through language. It is upon this understanding that this investigation proceeds.

Practice and behaviours

Williams (2010) identified WOL as being “narrating your work + observable work”: narrating your work is “journaling (blogging, micro-blogging, etc.) what you are doing in an open way”, and making your work observable is “creating/modifying/storing your work in places that others can see it, follow it, and contribute to it in PROCESS”. WOL is an easily accessible practice that can be adopted by any professional in any field across a multitude of working arrangements. However, just because the phrase incorporates the word work, it does not necessarily follow that the practice is enacted at work or under the auspices of a formal organisational policy or practice. Indeed, it is possible to engage in the same practices and ‘Show Your Work’ relative to pursuing a pastime or craft (Bozarth, 2012). As Sergi and Bonneau (2015) attest, “Working Out Loud does not correspond to a single or unified practice, and [...] it can be practiced in many ways” (p.7).

Sergi and Bonneau (2015) further attest that the practice appears to be more informal than formal, and rather than being party to any formal organisational requirement, WOL initiatives are largely taken up by individual employees, or freelancers. Indeed, findings from the study by Margaryan et al. (2015) advocate that these practices should not be prescribed or made mandatory. Yet, Pearce (2014), in his study, contends that WOL can be

formalised and ultimately measured to ascertain its value to an organisation. Indeed, it is reported that organisations are increasingly adopting WOL as constituents of organisational change programmes (Stepper, 2015). There appears to be an interesting tension within the WOL phenomenon.

WOL can be practised in either open networks via the internet or within organisational networks facilitated within enterprise social network platforms [ESNs]. The former presents an expression of Web 2.0 (O'Reilly, 2005) in which networked individuals use social media and social networking capabilities to connect, consume, generate and share content, whilst the latter presents the merging of these social technologies with traditional groupware technologies familiar within most large organisations. It is presumed that the addition of these social tools will encourage employees to share information, help locate expertise more efficiently and will give rise to effective collaboration, all the while ensuring that these activities remain behind the organisation's protective firewall. However, given that employees increasingly have access to personal smartphones at work, it is becoming increasingly easy for employees "to make their work behaviours, their expertise, the information they possess and the activities they conduct visible and known to others inside or outside their organisation" (Sergi and Bonneau, 2015, p.5). Consequently, the practices that comprise WOL are distributed and heterogeneous in nature and most interestingly, given that they span both open and proprietary technologies, present two very different worldviews.

Origins

In order to understand more about WOL, it would be apt at this point to provide some context regarding the emergence of the phenomenon and of the phrase itself.

New norms of knowledge sharing developed within the software development community are generally regarded as instigating the development of WOL as a separate and identifiable phenomenon (Public Learning, 2012). Software developers are a highly connected community that readily seek and provide answers so that coding problems can

be swiftly fixed. Further, the transitioning of the internet from primarily broadcast and content provision to participation and content creation in the first decade of the century lead many technology commentators to blog and publish books speculating on the possibilities that these new capabilities might have if applied to business (Tapscott and Williams, 2010; McAfee, 2009). These ideas were disseminated and discussed further at trade conferences and in blogs, giving rise to phrases such as ‘Work-In-Progress’ (Idinopulos, 2008) and ‘Narrate Your Work’(Winer, 2008).

Alongside these ideas, other commentators started to make comparisons between work in the pre-industrial era and work in the present day: that is, knowledge work supported or enabled by the use of digital communication technologies. In a keynote speech, John Udell (2009) remarked that work and education in the pre-industrial era were both observable and connected and that these features had largely been lost. This notion was given weight soon afterwards when management consultant, Jim McGee (2010) asserted in his blog that knowledge work is best understood as ‘craft work’ and that one unintended consequence of the digitisation of knowledge work “has been to make the execution of knowledge work essentially invisible, making it harder to manage and improve such work”. He continued, “the benefits of visibility are now something that we need to seek mindfully instead of getting them for free from the work environment”.

The terms “Narrate Your Work” and “Observable Work” came to unite around this topic, and were increasingly associated with the concept of Enterprise 2.0 (Lloyd, 2010). Both terms were referred to in presentations at the 2010 Enterprise 2.0 conference (Tullis, 2010; Crumpler cited in Williams, 2010), and were supplemented in discussions with that of ‘Working Out Loud’ (Pearce, 2014). These terms were used interchangeably to represent the kinds of open sharing behaviour thought necessary for individuals to adopt in order for business to realise the full benefits of the 2.0 phenomenon (Pearce, 2014). Williams (2010) synthesised this to produce the original definition of the phenomenon. The definition of the dual-features of narration and observable work, plus the implied

benefits WOL is thought capable of delivering, resonated with many advocates of Enterprise 2.0 and the phrase, Working Out Loud, was quickly taken up and used to explain the phenomenon to an ever-widening audience.

In 2014, John Stepper, who had been blogging for a number of years about the adoption of WOL advanced another definition. This development will be taken up in a later section that investigates the adoption of WOL as a practice.

Benefits and adoption

In the course of its emergence, many benefits have been attributed to WOL. However, as Pearce (2014) notes, “little research has been done on whether the benefits attributed to it really exist” (p.4). That being said, it would still seem worthy to investigate the attributed benefits and distinguish to whom these benefits purport. This might go some way to defining, or consolidating, the WOL research field and contribute to refining a research question.

As might be deduced from the origins outlined earlier, a key driver promoting the adoption of WOL is the desire by some in business to realise the potential of Enterprise 2.0. The way to bring this about is chiefly thought to be through the introduction of the requisite integrated technology platform i.e. the ESN, or as Leonardi et al. (2013) call it, the integrated enterprise social media platform [ESM]. For which they offer the following definition:

“web-based platforms that allow workers to (1) communicate messages with specific co-workers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organisation; (2) explicitly indicate or implicitly reveal particular co-workers as communication partners; (3) post, edit, and sort text and files linked to themselves or others; and (4) view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organisation at any time of their choosing” (p.2).

Margaryan et al. (2015) identify such platforms as presenting “a new knowledge-sharing paradigm with very low barriers of entry” (p.393).

It is clear from this that such platforms not only facilitate a range of uses for both individuals and organisations, but they also represent a new dynamic between them with regards to knowledge sharing practices.

In today's economy, swift access to knowledge and expertise is vital for gaining business advantage, yet often this is difficult to locate because it has become siloed through the course of traditional working practices within the architecture of traditional organisational knowledge management systems. It is thought that utilising the social features of the ESN through WOL will help break down knowledge silos. However, as Seebach (2012) makes clear, there is scant research into the use of social technologies to leverage effective knowledge management in internal organisational settings.

In addition, it is thought that WOL fosters collaboration and enhances team performance, but again very little research has been done into the impact of social tools and new sharing practices in this area (Richter and Riemer, 2009).

It is increasingly common for work today to be conducted within distributed or virtual teams. Yet, as Bietz (2013) identifies "distributed work also creates challenges for organisations, by hindering interactions and knowledge flow and shifting the relationships between people and organisations" (p.391). Effective knowledge sharing is recognised as a very important element for distributed teams (Belanger and Allport, 2008). Within this context, Margaryan et al. (2015) recognise WOL practices as legitimate for sharing and transferring knowledge, and identify its ability to enhance connectedness as playing a crucial role.

Although increasing connection is important, in order to reap the benefits of participating in networks, it is a sense of connectedness that is seen as crucial in order for knowledge sharing to occur. Coakes et al. (2008) identify connectedness as being the amount of social interaction and the social relationships that take place between members. Further, a sense of connectedness is important because it promotes more open

communication, increases rapport and support and provides greater visibility to others within the network.

Ardichvili et al. (2003) note that sharing personal experiences is an important way to communicate tacit knowledge. Indeed, both Margaryan et al. (2015) and Sergi and Bonneau (2015) agree that such sharing practices through WOL could potentially ‘improve the use’ of tacit knowledge embedded in everyday work, transforming it into explicit knowledge resources from which others might learn.

The benefits of increased team performance and agile, innovative solutions through enhanced knowledge sharing practices have been highly promoted by vendors of ESNs and organisations have invested heavily in them, yet it is widely reported that the deployment of such technologies have largely failed to deliver the benefits thought possible (Boyd, 2015).

It may be that these technologies have largely been introduced and implemented from a top-down perspective, which often does not sit well with employees or integrate well with established practices (Margaryan and Littlejohn, 2008). However, resistance to the adoption of new practices within an ESN may have nothing to do with the way in which they were implemented or with their usability. It may also be that there are “individual tensions [...] in balancing personally comfortable levels of visibility, engagement, and sharing against what the organisation is calling for” (Pearce 2014, p.34).

Pearce (2014) makes the point that much of the difficulty in determining adoption lies in the ambiguity over what exactly it is that is being adopted, by whom and at what level within the organisation. After all, it is possible to adopt practices on an individual level (personal/social or professional), on a team level or at organisation level.

Over all, it would seem, as many have come to recognise (Stepper, 2016; Pearce, 2014) that the focus on technology adoption has been misplaced and that attention to the adoption of the requisite employee behaviours is ultimately what is needed if businesses are to succeed in leveraging the benefits that social technologies promise. Concomitant

with this realisation, the phrase ‘social business’ has come to replace Enterprise 2.0 as the primary descriptor. It must be remembered though that the adoption of these behaviours, and the practice of WOL, is not solely confined to ESN technology or that those adopting them are necessarily part of an organisation.

Despite the general availability of both personal and enterprise social tools, and a relatively simple definition that identifies the constituent parts of WOL, John Stepper claims that “people do not know what to do” (Stepper, 2014). To remedy this he developed a further definition, or rather, general description:

“Working Out Loud starts with making your work visible in such a way that it might help others. When you do that – when you work in a more open, connected way – you can build a purposeful network that makes you more effective and provides access to more opportunities”.

He also identified five elements of WOL: relationships, generosity, visible work, purposeful discovery and a growth mind-set, which he later explained more fully (Stepper, 2016). The explanation of each of these elements addresses the individual directly and is framed in terms of selfless behaviours and the benefits that might potentially accrue to someone with this outlook: e.g. “you can make contributions in a way that feels good and genuine knowing that, over the entirety of your network, there will naturally be a benefit to you too as others reciprocate”.

A benefit thought to accrue to an individual who adopts the practice of WOL is that of enhanced reputation. Sergi and Bonneau (2015) contend that WOL via Twitter helps individuals construct their professional identity and allows them to become better recognised for the professional that they are. In addition, working in this way amplifies aspects of an individual’s work and, in effect, extends what is possible for them to achieve.

It is contended that to be successful, WOL is not only the adoption of a set of behaviours that requires a particular mind-set, but it must also become a habit. To this end, John Stepper and associates developed Working Out Loud circles and produced a series of guides to facilitate their successful implementation (Stepper, 2015a). A circle comprises

four to five people and meets for one hour per week for twelve weeks. Circles combine peer support with self-paced practice. Each circle member works towards an individual goal; they are supported by their peers to build a network of relationships outside of the circle that can help them achieve that goal. It is thought that this process will help form the practice of WOL into a habit. The addition of circles to the WOL phenomenon appears to be helping increase awareness and adoption of the practice (Ockers, 2016).

Structural tensions

Given the review above, it would seem that the WOL phenomenon comprises a number of what might be termed ‘structural tensions’. That is, the WOL phenomenon seems to speak equally to a number of themes and their generally dichotomous counterparts. Against a backdrop of change and imagined work futures, the boundary between personal and professional; the contradictions between formal and informal practices, the different orientations towards open and proprietary technologies/practices and matters of power within organisations and between individuals and organisation are, largely, rendered indistinct and unproblematic.

This prompts one to wonder by what power the future of work is determined and what role WOL might play in it. How exactly can WOL transform work practices going forward, if indeed it can, especially when we do not always know precisely what aspect of the phenomenon is being referenced by the term? Moreover, how is it that we can talk of a phenomenon called WOL in the first instance, and to what ends when we do? In order to further this investigation, it would seem useful to consider the WOL phenomenon in relation to discourse and power. Such a move would lead us to consider the role that discourse plays in constructing the phenomenon and to enquire into issues of power that are brought to bear.

Discourse and power

Although discourse can be theorised in a number of ways, as can power, it seems that the work of French social philosopher Michel Foucault is particularly useful here. Along with ideas about the function of knowledge, Foucault draws ideas of discourse and power into a triad that might be meaningfully used to understand the WOL phenomenon. Here, it is important to note that although the concept of discourse that Foucault puts forward is about the production of knowledge through language, or where meanings come from, it is not a linguistic concept per se rather it is concerned to distinguish between what one says and what one does. As such, it is about the language of a discourse and attendant practices.

Akin to a body of knowledge, or system of representation, Foucault conceptualises discourse as consisting of “groups of related statements which cohere in some way to produce meanings and effects in the real world” (Carabine, 2001, p.268). Foucault (1977; 1980; 1981 cited in Parker, 1992) contends that we can only have knowledge of things when ‘things’ have meaning, and meaning is constructed within discourse. Therefore, it is discourse that produces the objects of our knowledge; they are constitutive in that they “systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, p.49). Moreover, discourses not only constitute the objects of our knowledge but they constitute a particular version as real, governing the way in which the object can and cannot be talked about at a particular moment in history.

Foucault contends that in any given historical period what we think we ‘know’ about a topic is subject to the discursive formation that sustains it as a ‘regime of truth’. Discursive formations are the same discourse appearing across a range of texts and a range of institutional sites at a specific historical period, they provide the “mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned, the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true” (Foucault, 1980, p.131 cited in Hall, 2001). Foucault (1990, 1991) argues that knowledge

is produced through discourse; therefore, relative to determining what counts as knowledge, discourse involves relations of power.

Furthermore, Foucault argues that discourse not only constructs objects, but it also constructs subjects. That is, discourses create subject positions that individuals can accordingly take up, in effect specifying ways of seeing and being in the world (Hall, 2001). Such a conception has implications for individual agency. Foucault (cited in Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008) also argued that institutional discourses prevail over human agency. He considered institutional discourse to always bear power, and that the production of knowledge can never be separated from institutional discourses and their practices, which regulate, order and administer aspects of the social life. Given these ideas, there is an understanding within Foucault's discourse theory that individuals are compelled to subscribe to the reasoning signalled in a statement in order to become the speaker of that statement.

As Powers (2013) summarises, discourses have a history, proceed in a systematic fashion, and serve to control professional practices and defend them from alternative expressions of power (p.6).

Biopower as work related technology of power

In order to gain an understanding of how control is exerted over professional practices and how power relations relative to organisations are subject to change over recent times, it might be useful to consider Foucault's concept of biopower.

In relation to nation states, Foucault conceptualises biopower as a technique for the governance of populations. It literally means having power over bodies; it is "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation's of bodies and the control of populations" (Foucault, 1990, p. 140). First introduced in relation to sexuality, Foucault went on to develop the concept alongside that of 'governmentality', the process in which governments try to produce citizens capable of fulfilling their policies (Burchell et al.,1991). Towards the end of his career Foucault increasingly came to see the concept in

relation to the newly emerging economic system of neoliberalism and its implications for ‘human capital’ or ‘human resources’ (Foucault, 2008). In this context, biopower emphasises how our life abilities or qualities previously thought extraneous to the productive process (our bios or ‘life itself’) have become important objects of exploitation, since power can after all be understood as operating in infra-political ways that enlist our wider life practices or interests and our social and personal aptitudes and abilities.

Contemporary scholars, observing changes in how work gets done today, have started to take up the idea of biopower relative to organisations and how work is managed (Dowling, 2007, Fleming, 2014). In contrast to other modes of organisational control, such as bureaucracy, cultural management and disciplinary power, they put forward the term ‘biocracy’ as incorporating the workplace correlate of Foucault’s biopower and as an organisational level lens through which to interrogate work related practices that are symptomatic of it (Fleming, 2014, p.876). It is defined as “the instrumentalisation of life attributes that were previously considered exogenous, irrelevant or detrimental to formal organisational productivity” (Fleming, 2014, p. 885).

Research question

As the review makes clear, a phenomenon has emerged that we can now talk of with some level of meaning when we use the term Working Out Loud, even if it has evolved to encompass two definitions. Moreover, there appears to be an implicit assumption that the adoption of practices advocated by WOL is somehow beneficial or presents some kind of advancement to the realm of work. However, claims for those benefits are largely unsubstantiated. Besides, it is unclear precisely what those benefits are, or are supposed to be, how they accrue, or are meant to accrue or who they are supposed to benefit exactly.

Within the context of new work futures and the attendant perception of the need for new forms of organisation and transformed work practices, it prompts one to ask by what mechanism change is brought about; how the WOL phenomenon is implicated in this and what effect would this change have on the relationship between individuals and

organisations. It has been argued that enquiry into such matters might be well served by considering the role of discourse and power.

Consequently, the questions that this study seeks to answer are:

- How is Working Out Loud and its attributed benefits constructed in discourse?
- What implications does this construction have on relations of power between individuals and organisations?

Chapter 3 Research method

This chapter discusses discourse analysis [DA] as a research approach and justifies genealogy inspired by the discourse analysis of Foucault [FDA] as the selected research method. Furthermore, it locates this relative to its epistemological and ontological position. The chapter then continues with discussion of the sampling strategy, which further extends to include discussion of ethical issues and criteria for evaluation.

Research approach – discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of language; moreover, the study of language in ‘use’. It is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of theoretical and analytic approaches, each of which has its own assumptions, methodologies and forms of analysis. Regardless of the tradition, DA is unified in seeing language as a form of social action and not some neutral force mediating between people and the world. That is, rather than reflecting the world or making representations, DA contends that language is constructive and it is the mediation of meanings through discursive resources that brings the world into being.

FDA focuses on the “availability of discursive resources within a culture” so that a culture, through something akin to a “discursive economy” of meaning, can construct a social phenomenon like that of WOL (Willig, 2013, p.130). Moreover, FDA considers how the construction of a discourse can enable or constrain what can be said, as well as who can

say it, where and when. Therefore, FDA centres on the concept of power. Furthermore, FDA offers macro-level analysis in that it seeks to position a discourse in its social and historical context thus enabling description and/or critique of how things have come to be the way they are.

To summarise, FDA seeks to discover how a phenomenon is constructed through discourse and how power relations within that phenomenon are established and maintained. Such a purpose aligns with the aim of this study as it seeks to understand the development of the WOL phenomenon and any effects it could have on the relationship between individuals and organisations. It is for this reason that FDA is deemed a suitable approach.

However, considering that power forms the focus of this study, it might be wondered why critical discourse analysis [CDA] was not selected as CDA also focuses on issues of power. By combining linguistic analysis and ideology critique, CDA looks to address issues of power that result in social inequality; thus it investigates “a social problem with a semiotic aspect” (Fairclough, 2001, p.236). CDA often takes an *a priori* position that infers criticism. Even though Foucault’s work is also a social critique and WOL is situated within a power relationship of capital and labour, it seems unfair to judge it as presenting a ‘social problem’ when so little is known of it as a distinct phenomenon. Therefore, I would prefer, for now, to consider WOL as a discursive phenomenon with material consequences and, as FDA allows, enquire into its historical formation to discover the implications that these material consequences may have for individuals and organisations within the future of work.

Research paradigm – critical realism

FDA derives from a social constructionist view in which language is seen as constructive. That is, rather than reflecting the world, language constitutes the social world. The idea that discourse constructs reality is, for many, a radical claim that has allowed social constructionism to become associated with a relativist position. This means that

FDA can help draw attention to the ways in which different versions of reality are constructed through language (Willig, 1999). However, although it is widely agreed that 'reality' is mediated by discourse, there is considerable challenge as to the extent to which discourse can account for the 'extra-discursive', or material, aspects of social life and provide understanding of the underlying mechanisms that produce the conditions for discourse to emerge (Parker, 1992).

In order to avoid an analysis of discourse that aligns with a relativist position and suggests that discursive constructions are entirely independent of the material world, a critical realist approach within FDA is advocated (Willig, 1999; Parker, 1992). Such an approach combines epistemological relativism with ontological realism. It acknowledges that our knowledge of the world is mediated by and constructed through language (i.e. epistemological relativism) whilst simultaneously holding to the idea of material constructs that produce phenomena, versions of which we then in turn construct through language (i.e. ontological realism). To connect and facilitate an analysis of discourse with studies of institutions, practices and power, Parker (1992) draws on the work of Foucault to set out criteria that can define and help interrogate an analysis of discourse within this tradition.

Research method – genealogy

In order to explore the interconnected discourse/knowledge/power triad, Foucault developed the research method of genealogy. "Genealogy is concerned with describing the procedures, practices, apparatuses and institutions involved in the production of discourses and knowledges, and their power effects" (Carabine, 2001, p.276). Such an approach presents significant benefit to this study, as it not only provides a way to identify the discourses from which WOL is being drawn but also how and by whom they are being taken-up and, possibly, what the material outcomes might be. The appositeness of genealogy to this study is reinforced further in that the approach supports a historical perspective. "Genealogy is about tracing the history of the development of knowledges and their power effects so as to reveal something about the nature of power/knowledge in

modern society” (Carabine, 2001, p.277). Although the genealogical work of Foucault spanned significant historical timeframes, it is possible to use genealogy to investigate a discourse at a particular moment in time, and so provide more of a ‘snapshot’ (Carabine, 2001). As an aim of the research is to uncover how the WOL phenomenon has been discursively constructed over time, albeit over a relatively recent and short space of time, it is for this reason that a genealogical approach akin to a historical ‘snapshot’ is considered apposite for this study.

However, as Carabine (2001, p.276) points out, “Foucault’s genealogy is more about methodology than method”. That is, it offers a lens through which to consider DA and to read discourses, but it does not provide any ‘hard and fast’ rules setting out procedural steps that must be adhered to. As such, genealogy can be applied by researchers in a variety of ways. To ensure fidelity and rigor when undertaking genealogy, it is incumbent on the part of the researcher to state which of Foucault’s concepts they are drawing on as their lens and to discursively read, and subsequently analyse, their data in accordance. In this study, I aim to investigate the discursive formation that makes the construction of WOL as object and its consequent subjects possible, to discover by how this operates and to what ends regarding the individual and organisation relationship.

Genealogical research requires, for the purposes of analysis, the construction of a data archive. In this study, the archive comprises of a series of texts.

Research sample – reputational case

The process of selection accounts for how texts become data within the archive; the selected data represents a sample of the total that it is possible to select from, i.e. the population. Aiming to establish an archive representative of the population, the strategy for sample selection employed in this study is a purposive one (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). That is, on the premise of reputational case sampling (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.175; Teddlie and Yu, 2007), the texts were ‘hand-picked’ according to my ‘expert’ sense of their representativeness and their ability to capture the key features and connections of the WOL

phenomenon as it has emerged over time (Appendix 1). Construction of the archive and data collection will be explained more fully in Chapter 4.

Ethics

Ethical considerations are implicit within research, especially that which involves human participants. Such ethical considerations can be summarised as “harm, consent, privacy and confidentiality of data” (Punch, 2005, p.277). Within the context of this study, it must be stressed that documents available in the public domain comprise the data and not human participants. It is not the words of the documents’ authors that are being analysed, rather it is the discursive resources available to them and how they are deployed that is being analysed. To confirm that this study presents no risk to humans, the study was checked by the OU Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Therefore, anonymisation of sources is not necessary.

Trustworthiness

As well as adhering to ethical standards, research must also adhere to evaluative standards of scholarship, the criteria for which is conventionally considered to be that of validity and reliability. However, as these concepts are rooted in a positivist paradigm, they are thought to be unworkable when applied to DA (Potter, 1996). As such, matters of quality and scholarship within this study are addressed from an anti-positivist, or interpretivist, position.

Validity signifies that a research account accurately represents “those features of the phenomena that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise” (Hammersley, cited in Winter, 2000, p.1). In an interpretivist paradigm, Lincoln and Guba, (1985) suggest that ‘trustworthiness’ is a more fitting concept, and for the successful realisation of which they identify credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as key criteria.

Credibility relates to whether the explanations given to a set of data can actually be sustained by the data. The extent to which credibility is achieved in this study largely

hangs on face validity, i.e. the investigation and its findings can be taken at face value, plus the degree of congruence, or internal validity, achieved between the theoretical and methodological constructs that underpin FDA and the resultant analysis. In this respect, when presenting my analysis, I endeavoured at all times to discuss whatever had emerged strictly in terms of Foucauldian understandings of discourse and the Foucauldian theoretical concepts pertinent to this study.

A common criticism of studies such as this is that of subjectivity and selectivity. That is, the researcher constructs the archive based on their subjectivities and selects extracts from the texts that support their favoured argument. How far can, or should, the researcher be separated from research? In line with its epistemological position, this study acknowledges that the findings are situated and partial and have the status of being just one analyst's interpretation. Carabine (2001) advocates that a way of checking the likeliness of a sound interpretation is for the researcher to situate their interpretation within other accounts and analyses of the time as this will help them to capture and contextualise the discourse and culture and will provide something of a yardstick for comparison. This I endeavoured to do. Furthermore, in order to surface any matters of subjectivity and selectivity and advance effective evaluation, or confirmability, I embraced the concept of reflexivity.

Studies of discourse are often criticised for not being generalisable. That is, the degree to which findings can be generalised to the wider population. Generalisability is problematic in DA because the overwhelming concern is with the situatedness of the phenomenon and its interpretation. However, as Cheek (2004) sweetly points out, "generalisability itself can be viewed as a discursive construct that draws on particular understandings of what it means to generalise, such understandings are largely constructed by discourses drawn from mathematics and science" (p.1147). Then, as Talja (1999) points out, it may be that "research results are not generalisable as descriptions of how things are, but as how a phenomenon can be seen or interpreted" (p.472).

Moreover, if generalisability is understood in terms of transferability, that is the extent to which it resonates or provides relevance across contexts, then generalisability, in the sense outlined here, is also possible. What is more, the onus for establishing this is switched from the researcher to the reader (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). It is left to the reader to determine if sufficient within the account resonates with them to permit transfer of findings. However, in order for the reader to evaluate the findings, sufficient information has to be presented. That does not just mean from the selected text but also includes some insight into the researcher's process of analytical judgment. It is in terms of its resonance and/or relevance that this study seeks to establish favourable transferability.

Reliability is often regarded as an essential affiliate of validity, equating essentially with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) principle of dependability; it is concomitant to the idea of replicability within research. However, this view stems largely from its significance in matters of measurement, which does not fit with an interpretivist outlook; subsequently the notion is contested when applied to much DA research. It is problematic as FDA approaches are generally premised on the uniqueness of the study, which rests on interpretation. Realistically, an enquiry such as this cannot be replicated in the sense that it will return identical results. Even so, the researcher still has to account for their methods and provide sufficient detail so that others can follow them and apply them. This is not with the intent of achieving uniformity; rather, it is with the intent of providing alternate, credible, accounts that illustrate the co-existence of several versions of 'reality', seeing as reality is multi-layered. In order to promote transparency and facilitate the principle of replicability within this study, I developed and utilised a series of discursive reading prompts for data collection and was guided by a phased process of analysis (Appendices 2-5), which I set out in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 Data collection and analysis process

In order to ensure trustworthiness of findings and dependability of methods, the purpose of this chapter is to explain how the archive of texts (Appendix 1) was constructed and to make clear how the process of analysis was operationalised. In order to expedite this, the chapter provides a rationale for the archive of texts identified for genealogical analysis, outlines a series of tools and guidelines used to carry-out the analysis and, to account for my influence within this process, it offers a statement of my reflexivity.

Data collection – constructing the archive

The starting point for constructing the archive of texts, or data sample, within this study was the text that represents the first time I recall hearing of the concept of WOL. It was June 2012, in an online workshop about Personal Knowledge Management. From this text, I listed all the other texts that were cited or hyperlinked. Then, in these and subsequent texts, I continued to map, up until early 2016, most of the texts that were cited or hyperlinked, until I had a list of over 100 texts implicated in a ‘network of meaning’ relative to WOL. Proceeding from the original text, I selected texts to analyse in a systematic fashion, following the layout of the archive. However, mindful of time constraints and in the interest of eliciting insights most suited to answering the research question, I used my judgement as to which texts to select for analysis and which texts to ignore. For example, some links or citations were to whole books or hashtags and were thus too dense to analyse in the context of this study and others were to web pages that did not sufficiently implicate WOL to be of value. Although a text does not just relate to the written word, and even though some blogposts within the archive contained images, I chose only to analyse written text. I did not consider the analysis of images would necessarily add much value to the study. After having analysed almost 30 texts in detail, it seemed that a clear pattern, or discursive formation, was emerging. From that point onwards, I analysed another 20 or so texts but now in a less comprehensive fashion. I

engaged in what might be called ‘good enough’ reading, and when I encountered a text that seemed to offer something different, I returned to detailed analysis. The texts analysed are highlighted in the archive (Appendix1).

Reflexivity

In carrying out interpretive research such as this, researchers must acknowledge their own experiences and subjectivities, as well as their influence in the research process. In selecting, organising, analysing and interpreting the data, choices had to be made. Since data and interpretation are inextricably linked, this raises the possibility that my experience and subjective views may lead to an unrepresentative data set and an unrepresentative interpretation being placed upon it (Cohen et al., 2011). Reflexivity is an important concept used to address this, particularly when you consider, as Atkinson and Hammersley (2007) suggest, that data analysis of the sort presented here is itself a constructed interpretation. Consequently, a meaningful point to reflect on here is how ‘invested’ I consider myself to be in the WOL phenomenon and what effect this had on data collection and its subsequent analysis.

Firstly, I encountered the concept in the course of my own self-determined professional development participating in open or networked learning opportunities, and although I knew WOL was rooted in the context of business, I largely equated it with the concept of learning out loud in open learning environments, which I was already familiar with. As such, I did not fully engage in following the development of the phenomenon; neither did I invest time participating in activities that can be fully attributed to it. Nonetheless, I have been aware of the phenomenon since around 2012 and have casually read blogposts when I saw them retweeted by members of my personal learning network [PLN]. In June 2015, in a spontaneous moment initiated through my network, I agreed to join a WOL circle. Although the series of circle guides was not fully developed then, the experience proved useful and I could see how the process might help individuals who had not by themselves acquired the skills to connect and develop a PLN; thus, within this

context, my lens for viewing WOL stems from the position of self-determined learning for professional development.

Following on from this point, it is also worth noting that I cannot claim to have a vast amount of experience working in a large organisation to which much of the WOL phenomenon relates. I have experience of business in small-to-medium sized enterprises in the service sector followed by experience in FE/skills training and community education. It is reasonable to assume that this has implications for how I read and interpreted the data. Nonetheless, I believe I am sufficiently aware of organisational practices and cultural norms to faithfully interpret the context and conscious at all times as to how I was taking meaning from the texts and making meaning in my interpretation.

Data analysis – discursive reading

To assist analysis within FDA informed research, a number of procedural guides have been produced (Powers, 2013; Willig, 2013; Carabine, 2001, Kendall and Wickham, 1999, Parker, 1992). However, that being said, Potter and Wetherell's observation that "there is no analytical method" (1987, p.167) attributed to FDA is widely recognised. Indeed, Foucault actively resisted developing a discrete method for analysis, rather it is through the application of his theoretical work that data must be considered and analysed. Mindful of this, Parker (1992, p.6-20) identified a series of criteria that can be utilised to facilitate such informed analysis. However, he too cautions that it does not constitute a method and that the criteria need not be employed sequentially. Indeed, Langdrige (2004, p.131) advocates that these steps need only offer guidance and that it is possible to take just the 'essence' of Parker's steps in order to carry-out effective analysis in a Foucauldian sense. Carabine (2001) further explains, "it is difficult to identify the different stages step by step as though following a recipe, because in practice, some processes occur simultaneously and at other times different bits of information get added to the picture later on. [...] analysis is often a dynamic process of interpretation and reinterpretation" (p.285).

With this in mind, and in order to carry out a genealogy as ‘snapshot’ approach (Carabine, 2001, p.280), as well as to effectively address the question relative to the knowledge/power relationship between individuals and organisations, I adopted the analytic process set out by Carabine (2001, pp.280–281). This approach was underpinned ‘in essence’ by the criteria identified by Parker (1992, pp.6–20), thereby in accordance with the critical realist position within FDA outlined earlier (Appendices 2 and 3).

To promote effective and consistent analysis faithful to the ‘hybrid’ process identified above, as well as to promote transparency and rigor, I devised a set of discursive reading prompts, which I used to identify salient features of the WOL discourse (Appendix 4). Formulation of the reading prompts was informed in part with reference to Rawlinson’s three axes of analysis and organised accordingly (Powers, 2013). Data gathered from the discursive reading process was pulled together into an overall summary and further analysed to consolidate. The phases are shown in Appendix 5.

The process outlined above does not require data to be coded in the way that one might commonly assume for qualitative research. In this case, instead of fragmenting the text by attaching codes, analysis was more concerned to advance a holistic approach. By using discursive reading prompts, analysis was concerned with enabling the analyst to build up a picture across the whole archive and to identify how it coheres as a discourse to produce both meanings and real world effects (Carabine, 2001). Potter and Wetherell (1987) refer to such loosely defined analytic practices as ‘craft skills’ (p.148). To negate, as far as possible, any inherent opacity in such a process of analysis and to promote face validity, a worked example of my discursive reading is provided (Appendix 6).

Chapter 5 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis of the type involved in this study is often distinguished by the merging of data collection with data analysis and also by the merging of data analysis with interpretation (Gibbs, 2008, p.3). The process is an iterative one, requiring the

researcher to constantly move back and forth through their data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.251), as was the case within this study. However, in order to facilitate a clear recount of the analysis and provide an accurate depiction of how discourses operate, this chapter takes a systematic approach and presents the analysis according to the logical order of the Rawlinson's three axes of analysis: genealogy, structure and power (Powers, 2013).

Genealogical analysis

Key questions that genealogy seeks to answer are how does a discourse harness the power to be heard and how does it come to have the right to pronounce truth in some region of human experience? To such end, it is necessary to identify within the historical context how the discourse pertaining to WOL emerged, describe how it has told a story and identify any changes or resistance.

From amongst a raft of similar or interchangeable terms, the WOL phenomenon emerged because it was able to pull together various strands, or discourses, and create a coherent and continuous narrative that formed into a distinct and separate discourse whose meaning was readily taken up. It was able to develop what might be thought of as a 'semiotic chain of meaning' (Stein, 2007).

The origins of the WOL discourse can be found in the early days of the internet when it was thought that new possibilities for conversations amongst consumers and between consumers and companies could open up new business opportunities and that this would transform traditional business practices. As text 2 in the archive highlights, markets came to be viewed as conversations, and in order to leverage this effectively, the networked marketplace needed to become connected to the networked intranet of the organisation so that full communication between them became possible.

In addition, the origins of the WOL discourse can also be found amongst the innovative and "generous" or "unselfish" practices of the software community as they sought to help each other solve coding problems, and where other valued qualities included

a commitment to the process of iteration and to “learning in public” in order to make the “public better” or to “improve the public” (text 7).

The WOL discourse emerged because it was able to coherently bring these two strands together. It would seem that this was achieved in part because the phrase ‘Working Out Loud’ not only spoke of a new way of working but together with the definition offered by Williams (text 17) captured something of this history. That is, through reference to work “in process” and “observable work” it preserved links, or semiotic chains of meaning, to the valued practices that had been developed in the software community, and which had been much discussed within the networked spaces of those interested in enterprise technology (e.g. texts 1; 21; 22; 26). The WOL discourse at this stage was heavily aligned with the discourse of social enterprise technology adoption (e.g. texts 9; 11; 12; 14; 19) which, it seems reasonable to assume, had developed in order to effect markets as conversations.

The constructed archive together with the associated literature in the literature review presents the emergence of WOL as a coherent narrative that is continually being reinforced through repeated references and/or hyperlinks to the same or associated discourses (Appendix 1). However, having become established as a distinct phenomenon, and advocated as an ‘essential next-generation digital workplace skill’, an important change occurred within the WOL discourse; namely, it became more focussed on matters relating to the practice or individual behaviours required for successful technology adoption (texts 9; 45; 53; 87). To mark this, a further definition was offered (text 28). Yet notwithstanding this development, it seems that in people’s minds a range of behaviours and connotations can be placed under the WOL umbrella. As texts 83 and 62 demonstrate:

“The form of working out loud will differ for each individual depending on their work, their comfort in sharing, their expertise in social tools and their network. There are few formulas that can be prescribed that are generally applicable.”

“Not long ago I called it “blurting”, I’ve called it learning out loud (LOL - lol!) or just life really. It’s less about the label or a ‘thing’ and more about an attitude or a way of working.”

Hence, WOL is a signifier term that also acts as a shortcut to a range of meanings. It signifies a mind-set or attitude towards notions of sharing, openness and collaboration and locates this within a discourse of its own.

Despite the fact that the WOL phenomenon has two definitions and that these definitions largely invoke a different set of behaviours, or that WOL means somewhat different things to different people, they still form part of the same coherent discourse. A discourse that has the same underlying structure and is working to achieve a purpose, a purpose that is derived through the power it wields from its ability to leverage knowledge and pronounce what counts as ‘truth’ in relation to WOL.

Within the archive, there was very little evidence of resistance, or indeed scrutiny of WOL. Text 61 perhaps comes closest when it says relative to WOL “that the network is fickle.”

Structural analysis

Parker (1992, p.16) claims that the story a discourse tells often refers to things that were always there to be discovered. Therefore, in order to learn what it is that has ‘always been there to be discovered’ it is necessary to undertake structural analysis and look closely at how the WOL discourse functions.

The key technique used to achieve this is the identification of discursive strategies deployed to give WOL its meaning. A discursive strategy is the means by which a discourse is given meaning and force, and through which the object is defined; it is a device through which knowledge about an object is developed (Carabine, 2001, p.288). In this study, it is a device through which WOL is put into discourse. To help identify discursive strategies, implicit and explicit references to WOL and any of its constitutive parts were systematically identified within the texts and then examined to discover what it was that was giving meaning and force to our understanding of WOL. The discourses invoked within this process were noted and any inter-relationships looked for. Countless discourses exist within the archive and different ones may be brought to mind depending

on the cultural repertoire and subjectivity of the individual undertaking the analysis. In this study, when taken as a whole over the discursive formation of the archive, two distinct discourses, which I identify as a discourse of social business and a discourse of personal development/self-actualisation, build-up with their inter-relationship becoming increasingly unified and solidified to form the WOL discourse. Within this, my analysis reveals that as a discursive strategy, it is the concept of ‘help’ that substantively gives meaning and force to the WOL discourse. The concept of providing help entails positive association and the impression is given of WOL as something positive, or as a force for good. This is further reinforced with frequent use of a range of other positive concepts such as generosity, sharing and support (texts 44; 76; 65). It is by conflating the many meanings of help that the two discourses are bound together and it is through this conflation that the WOL discourse functions. Evidence to support this analysis is set out below.

The identified discourse of social business serves to promote the attributed benefits of WOL indicated in the literature. The following quotes, through petition to a variety of discourses running through the WOL discourse, capture much of the benefits thought to accrue to business.

Discourse of efficiency:

“Organisational silos form because we don’t know what the teams across the hallway are working on leave alone being aware of what other business units and divisions are doing. Thus not only do we lose out on diverse inputs and knowledge, we also proverbially reinvent the wheel [...] and feed into systemic inefficiency. An organization that shares openly –successes and failures, learnings and insights, explicit and tacit knowledge – learns faster, builds an ambient awareness and paves the road for serendipity” (text 63).

Discourse of success:

“The best successes are when people across the firm start working like we do on the Internet, such as searching to tap into the collective intelligence of the firm. Or when they capture their knowledge online in a way that’s useful to other people [...]. And when they form online communities focused on solving problems, improving skills, and advancing a given practice” (text 64).

Discourse of value:

“The best posts were more than simply summing up what one did or accomplished; good narrations also showed some of the lines of thinking of the narrator, or issues that he/she

encountered. This often drew helpful responses from others [...], and this is where some additional value [...] lies” (text 11).

Discourse of benefit:

“Part of the benefits are [...] a growing network of complementary minds packed with knowledge (explicit and tacit), hands-on experience and many different perspectives” (text 89).

A social business, according to Kim (2012) “harnesses fundamental tendencies in human behaviour via emerging technology to improve strategic and tactical outcomes”. It is through enlisting a discourse of personal development and appealing to the idea of self-actualisation, the highest of Maslow’s (1943) psychological and developmental needs and in which the individual realises their full potential, that the discourse of WOL is in part constructed.

In terms of personal development, it is thought that individual reputation can be enhanced by WOL:

“It lets others discover what you know and what you’re good at [...] it builds your personal reputation and ‘brand’” (text 9).

It is also thought that WOL affords purpose and helps individuals to achieve their personal goals. However, it is often difficult to distinguish the line between personal and professional goals, and indeed, organisational ones:

“I’m not going overboard here: #wol really helps me literally everyday to focus on my goals and achieve them easier” (text 89).

“Since there’s an infinite amount of contributing and connecting you can do, you need to make it purposeful in order to be effective. (Goals might be as simple as [...] “I’d like to explore opportunities in another industry or location”) (text 28).

WOL is perceived as being fun and generally of benefit:

“It’s fun and makes my work more purposeful and me much more efficient” (text 87).

“Using these tools to “work out loud” makes people enjoy work more. When people leverage collaboration platforms to contribute and build relationships, that appeals to their intrinsic motivators of autonomy, mastery, and relatedness. The relationships they form provide access to learning and opportunities. They have a greater feeling of connection to the firm and people in it, in a way that’s under their control as opposed to that of a manager or, worse, a process” (text 63).

The following quotes give an indication of how WOL and WOL circles can be seen as helping individuals to realise self-actualisation:

“I also believe it helped my creativity and I was less risk averse. I had nothing to lose anymore” (text 91).

“It’s one thing to be able to put your work into the world, it’s quite another to know you have at least 3 other people that are watching and supporting and not judging — simply holding you up to be your best self”(text 94).

The two discourses of social business and personal development have become increasingly unified and solidified, as the following quotes demonstrate:

“I want to demystify working out loud and highlight the organizational as well as personal growth that accrues from the practice” (text 63).

“Perhaps most importantly however is that the key to unleashing agility using digital networks is it automatically collects institutional knowledge and critical methods, [...] frees up your knowledge to work for the organization continuously while still ensuring your contribution is recognised” (text 51).

“The autonomous and personalized actions and interactions of people, facilitated by technology, can be a great benefit to the enterprise, because this work creates new knowledge and fosters novel connections [...] Here are some recommendations about how to use these tools to simultaneously advance your own work, make your existence and expertise better known throughout a digital community, and benefit the organization as a whole” (text 19).

Within the archive, there is much use of the word help. This is a potent choice as it carries many meanings, not least of which is who is being helped and what are the reasons and the outcomes. Within a discourse such as WOL, where the relationship between two discourses is so intertwined, it is not easy to make this distinction. The following quotes are offered to identify the use of the word help and the conflation of who is giving/receiving help in the discourse. However, it is not in isolated instances that the word carries its power; it is in its aggregation across the heavily entwined discourses from which WOL is fashioned.

“To help the people working in our large enterprises, we have to go beyond just connecting them. We have to make our enterprises much more efficient and effective” (text 16).

“WOL helps me become a better social business consultant by getting more often performance feedback and from more people which creates a more truthful representation of my personal performance” (text 89).

“It also makes you easier to find, and so increases the chances you can be a helpful colleague to someone” (text 19).

“How people used the tools to shape their reputation and connect with other people who could help them” (text 15).

“Use them [ESN voting tools]; they help provide structure to the community as a whole and let people know where the good stuff and real experts are. They also make you more popular” (text 19).

“To respect and trust, to be willing to be vulnerable and ask for help. I’ve written on vulnerability; when you have the opportunity to really experience it, and be held in it, it’s transformative” (text 94).

What is of further significance is that the word help derives from a discourse of humanity. The connection between WOL and humanity is highlighted in the following quote:

“While the practice may seem novel, it actually taps into the basic human nature of sharing, learning and collaborating – aspects of humanity that traditional organisations suppressed in the name of efficiency, economy of scale and productivity. What working out loud requires is for us to collectively go back to the days when we swapped stories sitting around a fire, the only difference being that the fire has been replaced by [...] a social collaboration platform, communities of diverse individuals and a global mindshare” (text 63).

The following quote, which forms the strapline of a blogpost author, also supports the emphasis placed on humanity within the network of meanings that construct the WOL discourse. It states the author’s purpose as:

“Making the future of our work and organisations more human through innovation, collaboration, leadership and learning. These four capabilities are at the heart of great customer experience, culture and performance” (text 83).

It would seem that the WOL discourse is making a direct appeal to the individual through their humanity, which of course, begs the question to what end is this appeal.

Power analysis

As stated earlier, discourses have a history, function in a particular way and, through expressions of power, serve to control professional practices. Hence, the third and final part of analysis is concerned to examine the relations of power between the individual and the organisation that the WOL discourse seeks to promote.

Structural analysis of the WOL discourse reveals a process of unification between a discourse of business and a discourse of personal development/self-actualisation. Such a union is presented as being mutually beneficial, and is encapsulated in the statement “Working Out Loud: better for you, better for the firm” (text 64). The discursive construction of WOL, as a mutually beneficial union, serves to achieve an alignment between the interests of individuals and those of the organisation.

With achievement of this alignment, it is necessary to consider what can be said and done. With this in mind, Parker (1992, p.9) makes the point that discourses are hailing us and asking us to listen as a particular kind of person. Here, it would seem that we are being asked to listen as an individual seeking personal development and who is being given insights as to how to proceed and achieve self-actualisation. Moreover, we are being asked to listen by calling on our humanity and to offer help to others as a means of achieving self-actualisation. All the while, the process of self-actualisation is facilitated within the context of work and organisational purpose. It is very difficult to resist such an entreaty as the WOL discourse has been constructed in a manner that is overwhelmingly positive and inextricably binds the discourse of self with the discourse of business.

A central feature in the analysis of power is identifying whose interests are served by the discourse. At this point, it is important to draw attention to an observation made by Cohen et al. (2011); namely, that the researcher is part of the world they are researching and as such bring their own culture, histories and values to bear on the process. The issues of projection and counter-transference that this raises are important as “analysis may say as much about the researcher as about the texts being analysed” (p.575). Reflexivity is the means by which this may be made transparent. For that reason, I shall make it known that I view the world principally from a socio-cultural or socio-economic perspective. At heart, I see the world in terms of class struggle and thus identify for the most part with the classic critique of capitalist society espoused by Marx. This factor cannot be overlooked when accounting for how I read and analysed the relations of power that the discourse of WOL

seeks to embed. Consequently, it seems to me that the discursive construction of WOL that has been identified seeks to perpetuate the traditional power relations that exist in a capitalist system, but they now wish to enlist aggregate life resources, or human capital, in order to secure its continued existence, as indicated in the following quote:

“What is possible when our personal purpose and the organization’s purpose intersect? Can we access that possibility if we aren’t able to connect with our personal purpose in a way that represents our whole self?” (text 109).

Results of analysis relative to the research questions

Results of the analysis are now summarised relative to the research questions of the investigation.

The genealogical and structural analyses help to answer the first research question: namely, how is Working Out Loud and its attributed benefits constructed in discourse? Together, the analyses show that WOL emerged as a distinct phenomenon because it was able to create a coherent and continuous narrative that combined two different definitions, or characterisations, that had emerged: namely those of the narration and observation of work practices and the individual behaviours required for successful technology adoption. However, it transpires that WOL is an ambiguous phenomenon as it means different things to different people; essentially, it signifies a mind-set or attitude towards notions of sharing, openness and collaboration. Moreover, the benefits attributed to WOL are largely unsubstantiated and go almost completely uncontested. This suggests that the discourse has been able to leverage knowledge as a form of power in order to create and sustain such a situation. The WOL discourse is constructed through uniting a discourse of social business with a discourse of personal development/self-actualisation. In what seems like a direct appeal to one’s humanity, the word ‘help’ is used repeatedly across both discourses and it is by conflating the meaning, or intent of who is being helped, that the WOL discourse exercises its power.

This brings us to the results of analysis specific to power and the second research question: what implications does this construction have on the relations of power between individuals and organisations?

As we have seen, the WOL discourse is presented as being mutually beneficial to the individual and the organisation. Effectively, the discourse aligns individuals' personal development/self-actualisation with the realisation of business goals.

In order to help make sense of, the results of analysis, or indeed expand them, it is necessary to provide an interpretation. This is provided in the following chapter.

Chapter 6 Interpretation

For an interpretation to be of value it needs to be positioned relative to current knowledge and theoretical understandings, and provide new insights. The implications of these new insights can then provide the basis for ongoing discussion and further research. I present my interpretation and subsequent discussion in response to the research questions.

First, I shall expand upon the analysis of how WOL as object has been constructed in discourse and the significance that this has in terms of the individual and organisation relationship. To counteract issues of subjectivity and accusations that the interpretation is 'just one person's account', I take heed of Carabine's (2001) advice and situate my interpretation within the relevant power structures, both contemporary and historical. I then proceed to discuss the implications of such findings relative to the field of professional learning going forward and the attendant discourse relating to the future of work.

Productive ambiguity and regime of truth

Analysis identified that WOL is not a singularly identifiable set of behaviours or practice. Rather it is a signifier term that denotes a mind-set or orientation towards a new way of working, one that is constructed as being mutually beneficial to individuals and organisations. The WOL phenomenon might be considered an example of semantic

ambiguity, i.e. something that has multiple meanings and can mean several things at once (Abbott, 1997). It may well form what Belshaw and Higgins (2011) term productive ambiguity; that is, the ambiguity, or inexactitude, within the phenomenon serves a useful purpose. Despite having no precise overall meaning and benefits attributed to it that are for the most part unsubstantiated, WOL appears to mean something to some people and the benefits appear to them to exist as real. The WOL phenomenon can possibly be likened to the discourse regarding digital natives (Prensky, 2001), in that the concept (WOL) has taken hold in discourse and popular consciousness, but does not stand up to hard scrutiny. This would suggest that a ‘regime of truth’ has been established relative to WOL; that is, it is a “discourse [that society] harbours and causes to function as true” (Foucault, 1979, p.46).

Whole self help

Furthermore, within such, the discourse, or ‘regime of truth’, serves to construct subject positions that function to regulate what can be said and done. Discourses afford positions for speakers to take up. Such positions not only provide a discursive location from which to speak but they also work to control practice, in the ways it is possible to act. It is by constructing particular versions of the world, and by positioning subjects within them in particular ways that discourses regulate what can be said and done, and by whom.

The primary subject position afforded within the WOL discourse sees the individual manoeuvred into adopting a position that binds their personal development and pursuit of self-actualisation together with the successful realisation of business objectives. Here, congruence can be detected in the premise offered by Frederic Laloux (2014), that organisations will be reinvented based on the next evolutionary phase of human consciousness (referred to as ‘teal’) and that this will beget more effective ways of collaborating. Through what Laloux refers to as ‘wholeness’, such a scenario inherently links to ideas of individual meaning and purpose found in Maslow’s concept of self-actualisation.

The question arises, what can be actioned from the primary subject position afforded within such a discourse. As analysis shows, the WOL discourse is expressed as inherently positive and in accord with our quintessential, most perfect embodiment of human nature. Consequently, an individual operating from this position is strongly compelled to answer the call for help that is embedded in the discourse.

Working Out Loud as expression of biopower

The functional aim of a discourse is to deliver an expression of power that serves to control practices. Therefore, instead of accepting the mutually beneficial construction of WOL at face value, it is incumbent to ask what the structural reasons behind this call for help and the desire to make work ‘more human’ might be. Moreover, can we identify and further our understanding of the expression of power at work within the WOL discourse? In order to permit such a development, further interpretation is of necessity located within literature previously unreviewed within this study.

The de-humanising of work is a defining element of the office and the factory within the classic studies by Weber and Marx when it was thought that the qualities that make us human were extraneous to productive requirements. As work processes have become more focussed on the customer and value-added productivity derived from personal and social aspects of the workforce, organisations can no longer rely on command and control methods to enforce separation between workers’ roles and life in general. Nor can they rely on their ability to abrogate the alienating workplace through processes of ‘culture management’ designed to foster a sense of belonging and company allegiance (Peters and Waterman, 1982).

Thus, emerging in the mid 1990s under the banner of ‘Liberation Management’, the solution advocated the ‘whole person’ into the workplace (Peters, 1992). Peters, whose insights Gee et al. (1996) identify as “all pervasive in the fast capitalist literature” (p.42) of the time, goes on to say it would be more advantageous for organisations to tap the pre-

existing and unique social capabilities of the workforce, rather than try to coerce them into an identikit company image. As Fleming and Sturdy observe:

“when employees can authentically ‘be themselves’ they are more likely to voluntarily enact the ‘buzz of life’ in tasks that increasingly require interpersonal virtuosity, authenticity [...] and self-organized knowhow” (cited in Fleming, 2014a, p.878).

Moreover, with the advent of mobile and social technologies, the call to be ourselves, or bring our whole selves to work, has further significance because work, or productive labour, might today just as easily take place in non-work environments. There is what Fleming (2014a) identifies as a qualitative shift taking place as the professional and non-professional, or rather work and life, become increasingly entwined, with the organisation increasingly seeking to tap aspects of life itself and use them for its productive ends. What it means to be human, that is our psychological needs and desire for self-actualisation and our willingness to share, to help and to get the job done through our social conscience and plain humanity, for the sake of our colleagues and ourselves, now appears to be the central value-adding resources that organisations require (p.881; p.886).

The question is how do organisations draw on our humanity etc. and harness the whole person for their productive ends? Fleming (2014; 2014a) posits that the concept of biopower, advanced by Foucault in ‘The Birth of Biopolitics’ (2008), provides a useful concept to answer this and to understand the expression of power in operation here. Biopower provides an alternative way of viewing the self-actualising, or liberating, benefits that the WOL discourse seeks to deliver.

Biopower is distinct from sovereign power and what Foucault earlier identified as ‘disciplinary power’, which relies on spatial containment of the individual and the internalisation of surveillance (Foucault, 1991). Rather, biopower seeks to capture the subject as it exists already; it does not seek to constrain the individual or separate him/her from non-work aspects of their life. This comes from the realisation that it is now “life [...] that] infuses and dominates production” (Hardt and Negri, 2001, p.365) and that value

is produced outside of and prior to the productive processes of the organisation. Thus, biopower works to index our everyday life qualities, our bios, to the needs of economic production; ‘life itself’ is put in service of work. As Foucault (2008) states,

“Generalising the “enterprise” from within the social body or social fabric [...]. The individual’s life itself [...] must make him into a sort of permanent and multiple enterprise” (p.241).

Biopower represents a highly embodied form of regulation that is especially effective when the boundary between the personal and professional is becoming increasingly indistinct; work is increasingly defined not as something we do, but as something we are. Indeed, biopower equates to a form of self-exploitation that is virtually irresistible because it connects to our affective and emotive sensibilities. Accordingly, analysis identified the WOL discourse suffused with positive human qualities and forming a direct appeal to our humanity. Fleming (2014) similarly identifies this correlation. He notes an increase in publications that reference terms like: supercooperation, the gift and altruism, which he views as “part of the arsenal with which a wounded neoliberalism is waging a new war – to save both itself and mollify an increasingly unhappy 99%” (p.18).

What is being referenced here, other than the alarmingly unequal distribution of wealth in the world, is the difficulty that present-day neoliberal capitalism has in organising or reproducing itself on its own terms; that is, within the principles of individualism, competition, and private property only. To make up for its shortcomings, neoliberal capitalism today requires both autonomous living labour and access to what might be thought of as the social commons (Fleming, 2014), the very things that it has historically sought to control and keep detached. In order to realise this on its own terms, it has turned to biopower as a form of organisational control, expressions of which are thought to be increasingly in evidence in the scholarly literature (Fleming, 2014a, p.885), and which I contend the WOL phenomenon provides a further example.

Critical questions

If the above interpretation is deemed credible then it surely follows that the advent of biopower as a technology of organisational control and the ability of vested interests to create discursive regimes of truth presents some challenging questions for the scholarly field of professional learning going forward, particularly as life and work, the personal and the professional, are set to become increasingly fused together. What role can the field play in helping individuals to become critically reflective about their practices whilst also developing learning innovations for the purposes of business?

One of the major themes within the deliberations about the future of work relates to how to weave in matters of individual meaning and purpose (Boyd, 2015). Indeed, the scoping study by Halford et al. (2016, p.3) says that understanding the impending 'subjectivities of work' are thought to be an important area of future research. This is an acute point, given the realisation that business is seeking to find ways to channel the subjectivities and pursuit of meaning of its new found autonomous living labour back into the productive cycle (Fleming, 2014).

If discourses create realities and attendant subjectivities, then technologies and practices work to embed their ideologies. "When you adopt a tool, you also adopt the management philosophy embedded in that tool" (Shirky, 2012), similarly when you adopt a practice, you assume the ideologies embedded in that too. Related to this, it is important to note that the popular literature produced by business consultants and analysts are what might be thought of as 'projective' or 'enactive' texts (Gee et al., 1994). For the most part, they represent a vision of the world that has yet to come into being. It also seems that this vision presented represents a rather restricted or determinist version of the future, one in which the individual is largely at the mercy of the forces of economic and technological change and is afforded little agency. The question is how can individuals imagine an alternative future and exercise their agency?

This study has revealed an interesting relationship between scholarly and popular literature and how knowledge is both developed and valued differently between the two. This seems to raise fundamental questions relating to matters of audience and purpose and the possibilities for what futures will ultimately be enacted.

Chapter 7 Findings

Summary

The aim of the study was to investigate the newly emergent phenomenon of Working Out Loud [WOL], and discourse and power was identified as a promising way to develop understanding. Consequently, the study was influenced by discourse analysis [DA] and Michel Foucault's ideas about the triadic relationship of discourse/knowledge/power.

The first research question sought to answer how the phenomenon of WOL and its attributed benefits were constructed in discourse. Despite changes over time, the discourse of WOL has been able to create and sustain meaning. Even though that meaning is vague and ambiguous and the benefits attributed to it are largely unsubstantiated, WOL has nevertheless been able to create a 'regime of truth' so that it not only means something to some people and exists as real, it functions as if its claims were true.

The WOL discourse has been constructed by uniting the discourses of social business and personal development/self-actualisation. It is by conflating the different meanings, or different intent, of the word help across these two discourses and by appealing to our humanity to answer that call that WOL derives its power: power to influence the relationship between individuals and organisations relative to their working practices.

The successive research question accordingly focusses on the implication of WOL's discursive construction concerning this relationship. To this end, as has been acknowledged, discourses not only construct objects (e.g. WOL), they also construct subject positions for individuals to take up. The primary subject position within the WOL

discourse sees individuals' personal development/self-actualisation increasingly aligned with the realisation of business goals. It is through notions such as 'wholeness', identified in the study, that the idea of individuals deriving greater meaning and achieving self-actualisation through work can be seen, and which resonates with contemporary calls to make work 'more human'.

The recent emphasis on human aspects of work can be regarded as a sign of the new ways in which organisations are seeking to secure within their workforce authentic individuals with the requisite life skills and sense of social responsibility. This is because work today generally requires more capabilities that by and large are developed extraneous to the site of production. As such, the emphasis on human attributes, or rather human capital, represents the latest phase within the historical struggle between capital and labour.

In this context, the study contends that WOL represents an expression of what Foucault calls biopower. Within the changing work relations outlined, biopower is an important technology of organisational power that works to index the bios, or everyday life qualities of individuals, to the needs of the organisation or economic production. It is a highly embodied form of regulation, or self-exploitation if you will, that is especially effective when, as is increasingly becoming commonplace, the boundary between the personal and professional are made indistinct and work is not so much what we do, but who we are.

Such findings, if they are thought credible, present some challenging questions for the field of professional learning and its position regarding criticality.

Limitations

The Foucauldian inspired method of genealogy as snapshot used in this study is undoubtedly a challenging research method. Ambiguity and opacity around the stages of analysis meant that analysis was fraught with anxiety and that interpretation is open to claims of subjectivity. Limitations pertaining to the study have been widely discussed within the relevant chapters and the action taken to negate these claims highlighted. To

defend against the charge that the findings are simply the result of a single method and a single investigator's partialities, triangulation of data sources is commonly advocated. However, given the time constraints under which this research operated, a single method study was largely inevitable. Yet within this, concerns over subjectivity could have been allayed through the use of a peer debriefing strategy, which might have served to offset any limitations of subjectivity. Here, an impartial peer would review the method, analysis and interpretation and provide feedback, thus enhancing the credibility and validity of the study.

It is possible that the study contains further limitations that I, as the researcher and research designer, unwittingly or unavoidably advanced, particularly in relation to the data sample. As Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) state, "the researcher may not be correct in estimating the representativeness of the sample or their expertise regarding the information needed" (p.114).

So far, discussion of limitations has focussed on the implementation of the study and the researcher's skill and subjectivity; however, on reflection, it would seem that there may similarly be limitations at the conceptual level too. Foucault's work provides one of the theoretical frames used to inform and shape studies using DA. Yet, rather than developing a method for conducting DA, it is Foucault's theoretical understandings that underpin both the framing and the way in which the research is carried out. On this point, Cheek (2008) sounds a word of caution: not only is the researcher obliged to clearly articulate the Foucauldian theoretical frame supporting the analysis but, because the foci and concepts of Foucault's work changed and evolved over time, it is necessary to situate such understanding in the specifics of Foucault's work (p. 6). It is therefore possible that the rationale for a genealogical study is misguided and therefore presents a limitation to the study, as is the fact that the concepts of genealogy and biopower have been modified from either their original context or their original conception.

That being said, I believe that the study's original approach has advanced knowledge of contemporary developments relative to learning and work and that it provides a genuine and thoughtful contribution.

Future Research

Building on from this study, it is possible to conceive of further original opportunities for future research.

Although, research into WOL as a distinct and identifiable phenomenon is nascent in the literature, and it would be perfectly feasible to study it through established theoretical lenses such as Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) or Boundary Crossing (Akkerman and Bakker, 2011), or indeed test some of the benefits attributed to it, I believe that this investigation, through the notion of whole self, has highlighted the role of 'subjectivities' and 'meaningful work' as an emerging area of important study. The scoping study by Halford et al., (2016), 'The New Dynamics of Work', would seem to substantiate this claim.

Furthermore, it would seem that using web-based documents for a genealogical study offers interesting opportunities not available in Foucault's era. The advent of the hyperlink means it is possible to investigate networked and relational aspects of documents in combination with the interpretive data of discourse analysis, i.e. combining social network analysis [SNA] with Foucauldian discourse analysis [FDA].

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Archive of Texts

Selection criteria.

In accord with reputational case sampling, I selected texts based on the following criteria:

- Authored by industry commentators that I recognised.
- Authored by individuals who use WOL in their professional practice.
- Texts I recognised as being important within the context of WOL.
- Texts I thought knowledgeable on the WOL phenomenon, or had knowledgeable opinion about something related to WOL.

- Texts that were too whole books or hashtags were not selected as the text was too dense to analyse or would have required a further selection criteria to narrow it down.

Texts analysed are highlighted

NB: some texts appear than once as they were cited or hyperlinked in a number of texts.

Date	Title of text	Author	Texts referenced or hyperlinked	Author	Date
June, 2012	1. Narration of Enabler of Change.	Harold Jarche	2. The Cluetrain Manifesto http://www.cluetrain.com/	Weinberger, et al.	2000
			3. Network design. bit.ly/1TcRUTd	Esko Kilpi	15 th April, 2012
			4. Only 14% think that company training is an essential way for them to learn in the workplace bit.ly/27rIN5k	Jane Hart	12 th April, 2012
			5. Why Google Isn't Making Us Stupid ... or Smart bit.ly/1TcQmIH Reprinted from <i>The Hedgehog Review</i> 14.1 (Spring 2012). bit.ly/1TcQmIH	Chad Wellmon	2012
			6. PKM Workshop: learning out loud. bit.ly/1TcRI6l	Harold Jarche	18 th April, 2012
			7. Public learning. bit.ly/1rP9Eb1	David Weinberger	May 29, 2012
			8. Help us find the new way of working and learning. bit.ly/1WAIG47	Christian Kuhna	29 th May, 2012

			9. “Working out loud”: Your personal content strategy. bit.ly/1eYI1yc	John Stepper	26 th May, 2012
			10. Three Principles for Net Work. bit.ly/2569Sw0	Harold Jarche	15 th April, 2016
			11. Reflecting on the “Narrating Your Work” Experiment. bit.ly/1XeU7Nr	Hans de Zwart	19 th July, 2011
18 th Mar, 2011	12. The “Narrating Your Work” Experiment. bit.ly/255HrOU	Hans de Zwart			
26 th May, 2012	13. “Working out loud”: Your personal content strategy. bit.ly/1eYI1yc	John Stepper	14. Why are banks so interested in collaboration platforms? bit.ly/1TgNbuo	John Stepper	12 th May, 2012
			15. Teaching reputation: How to get recognition for your work. bit.ly/27s0q54	John Stepper	5 th May, 2012
			16. What’s it worth? bit.ly/24UZQuq	John Stepper	31 st Mar, 2012
			17. When will we Work Out Loud? Soon! bit.ly/1TgNJjJ	Bryce Williams	29 th Nov, 2010
			18. Narrate Your Work. bit.ly/27rWT6N	David Winer	9 th Aug, 2009
			19. Do’s and Don’ts for Your Work’s Social Platforms. bit.ly/1rPm3Ma	Andrew McAfee	28 th Sept, 2010
			20. Working Out Loud: Make Work Open To Make It Better. bit.ly/1LOoaZq	Stowe Boyd	1 st Aug, 2011
1 st Aug, 2011	21. Working Out Loud: Make Work Open To Make It Better. bit.ly/1LOoaZq	Stowe Boyd	22. Open Work: Using Social Software To Make Our Work Visible Again. bit.ly/1eZp0CCn	Dion Hinchcliffe	20 th July, 2011
			23. Giving enterprise software practices an 'angioplasty' zd.net/1RwjPG7	Dion Hinchcliffe	25 th Feb, 2006
			24. Social business (broken link)		
29 th Nov, 2010	25. When will we Work Out Loud? Soon! bit.ly/1TgNJjJ	Bryce Williams	26. Patterns of Observable Work. bit.ly/1NvIS1n	Brian Tullis	13 th Oct, 2010
			27. Narrating Your Work. (blogpost removed)	Joe Crumpler	
4 th Jan, 2014	28. The 5 elements of Working Out Loud. bit.ly/1hf470H NB: This post ultimately	John Stepper	29. Working Out Loud: For a better career and life (book). amzn.to/1ZYneDI	John Stepper	10 th June, 2015
			30. When will we Work Out Loud? Soon! bit.ly/1TgNJjJ	Bryce Williams	29 th Nov, 2010

	became a book, published in June 2015.		31. “Working out loud”: Your personal content strategy. bit.ly/1eYI1yc	John Stepper	26 th May, 2012
			32. Never Eat Alone: And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time. amzn.to/1qoeUB4	Keith Ferazzi	22 nd Feb, 2005
			33. Working Out Loud: the 12-week program. bit.ly/1Yw9MXp	John Stepper	23 rd Nov, 2013
23 rd Nov, 2013	34. Working Out Loud: the 12-week program. bit.ly/1Yw9MXp	John Stepper	35. “Working out loud”: Your personal content strategy. bit.ly/1eYI1yc	John Stepper	26 th May, 2012
			36. Working out loud: Getting started. bit.ly/1WB03BY	John Stepper	26 th Jan, 2013
			37. Working out loud when you’re looking for a new career. bit.ly/1sj4sMB	John Stepper	13 th April, 2013
			38. If someone offered you free career insurance, would you take it? bit.ly/1sj584y	John Stepper	17 th Nov, 2012
			39. “Building a purposeful social network” – a course update. bit.ly/1Tk1IYk	John Stepper	28 th July, 2012
			40. When you’re not sure what you have to offer. bit.ly/1OfifKr	John Stepper	29 th June, 2013
			41. Working out loud: leveraging other networks. bit.ly/1Tk2nZQ	John Stepper	15 th Dec, 2012
			42. Touching the treadmill. bit.ly/1ssmJHK	John Stepper	2 nd Nov, 2013
			43. The most successful person in Babylon. bit.ly/1WB0agS	John Stepper	12 th Jan, 2013
			44. The best approach to building relationships. bit.ly/1TiyNoF	John Stepper	2 nd June, 2012
22 nd May, 2015	45. Working Out Loud 101 Some Thoughts. bit.ly/1rPBhAL	Sahana Chattopadhyay	46. Working out Loud and Serendipity. bit.ly/1WBGk4k	Sahana Chattopadhyay	21 st Nov, 2014
			47. Personal Learning Networks: Learning in a Connected World. bit.ly/2bZ0sKc	Sahana Chattopadhyay	29 th Jan 2015
			48. Why PKM? bit.ly/1V6uBty	Harold Jarche	27 th Apr, 2014
			49. John Stepper: Working Out Loud Blog. http://johnstepper.com/	John Stepper	
			50. The 5 elements of Working Out Loud. bit.ly/1hf470H	John Stepper	4 th Jan, 2014

			51. What are the required skills for Today's digital workforce? bit.ly/257hCOD	Dion Hinchcliffe	17 th Feb, 2015
21 st Nov, 2014	52. Working out Loud and Serendipity. bit.ly/1WBGk4k	Sahana Chattopadhyay	53. Work Out Loud because Everyone is figuring out their Job. bit.ly/1rPPRbx	Rawn Shaw	20 th Nov, 2014
			54. #WOLWeek Twitter hashtag bit.ly/1TT5cOw		
			55. Show Your Work. bit.ly/18kirS3	Austin Kleon	6 th Mar, 2014
			56. The 5 elements of Working Out Loud. bit.ly/1hf470H	John Stepper	4 th Jan, 2014
26 th May, 2015	57. 7 Strategies to Facilitate "Working Out Loud". bit.ly/1NvXmOP	Sahana Chattopadhyay	58. Working Out Loud 101 Some Thoughts. bit.ly/1rPBhAL	Sahana Chattopadhyay	22 nd May, 2015
			59. Talent communities must go beyond hiring. bit.ly/1Xvg3nL	Abhijit Bhaduri	28 th April, 2015
			60. L&D's New Hatrack bit.ly/1ZYNHkG	Sahana Chattopadhyay	1 st Feb, 2015
			61. Working out loud week lesson: Ignore the network. bit.ly/1XvhdQL	Jeff Merrell	14 th May, 2015
			62. When Working Out Loud isn't really WOL. bit.ly/1WB1MqJ	Nigel Young	21 st May, 2015
23 rd Oct, 2015	63. Demystifying Working Out Loud. bit.ly/1TFfodK	Sahana Chattopadhyay	64. Working Out Loud: Better For You, Better For The Firm. onforb.es/1OxDRFG	Joanna Belbey	15 th July, 2015
			65. Working Out Loud Facebook Public Group. bit.ly/1NvZINx		
			66. What are the required skills for Today's digital workforce? bit.ly/257hCOD	Dion Hinchcliffe	17 th Feb, 2015
17 th Feb, 2015	67. What are the required skills for Today's digital workforce? bit.ly/257hCOD	Dion Hinchcliffe	68. The enterprise technologies to watch in 2014. http://zd.net/1V9SvnV	Dion Hinchcliffe	1 st Mar, 2014
			69. Gartner's 2014 Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies Maps the Journey to Digital Business. gtnr.it/1swZR7r	Conn Stamford	11 th Aug, 2014
			70. Musing on Twitter bit.ly/1U039vd	Dion Hinchcliffe	17 th Feb, 2015
			71. Even Sweatshops are Getting Automated. So What's Left? bit.ly/1szv38R	Andrew McAfee	May, 2014

			72. Enterprises and Ecosystems: Why Digital Natives Are Dethroning The Old Guard. bit.ly/1rUBmmQ	Dion Hinchcliffe	26 th Feb, 2012
			73. Consumerization in 2012: Cloud and mobile blurs into other people's IT. zd.net/1Tg9eXg	Dion Hinchcliffe	24 th Jan, 2012
			74. Ten strategies for making the "Big Leap" to next-gen mobile, social, cloud, consumerization, and big data. zd.net/1WDhmCq	Dion Hinchcliffe	16 th Nov, 2011
			75. Understanding "New Power" bit.ly/1ylzTmF	Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms	Dec, 2014
17 th Nov, 2015	76. Why This? Why Now? "Working Out Loud". bit.ly/1siZCPj	Shannon Tipton	77. International Working Out Loud Week: Interviews. bit.ly/23VkesU		
			78. John Stepper: Working Out Loud Blog. http://johnstepper.com/	John Stepper	
			79. Working Out Loud: For a better career and life (book). amzn.to/1ZYneDI	John Stepper	10 th June, 2015
			80. Show Your Work amzn.to/1WB1Qqu	Jane Bozarth	5 th May, 2014
			81. The 5 elements of Working Out Loud. bit.ly/1hf470H	John Stepper	4 th Jan, 2014
			82. Feel like a fraud? bit.ly/1gH4JOs	Kirsten Weir	Nov, 2013
			83. You Can't Predict the Value of Working Out Loud. bit.ly/1TTfvIL	Simon Terry	5 th Aug, 2014
			84. Reagan at Brandenburg Gate - "tear down this wall" bit.ly/1Xgizhg	Ronald Reagan	June 12, 1987
			85. #WOL Week Tool bit.ly/1sjDc0v	Helen Blunden	16 th Nov, 2015
8 th May, 2015	86. A Realisation on Working Out Loud. bit.ly/2bW1oPC	Helen Blunden			
17 th Nov, 2015	87. International Working Out Loud Week. Interview bit.ly/25aF8Kx	Katharina Perschke			
17 th Nov, 2015	88. International Working Out Loud Week. Interview bit.ly/1rRZDtJ	Susan Basterfield			
19 th Nov, 2015	89. International Working Out	Bert Vries			

	Loud Week. Interview bit.ly/2071Qig				
11 th Nov, 2015	90. Working Out Loud Interview- 3 fun ways to work out loud for WOL week. bit.ly/1OKljSC	Simon Terry			
11 th Nov, 2014	91. International Working Out Loud Week. Work Out Loud in Action bit.ly/1WBwrEg	Helen Blunden			
19 th Nov, 2015	92. International Working Out Loud Week. Work Out Loud in Action bit.ly/2bRoKII	Scott Ward			
19 th Nov, 2015	93. International Working Out Loud Week. Work Out Loud in Action bit.ly/2brENw0	Ragnar Heil			
9 th Mar, 2016	94. Emerging into Teal through Working Out Loud part .1 bit.ly/1Xz04VG	Susan Basterfield	95. Meetup Teal NZ – Reinventing Organizations and Holocracy bit.ly/1Tf8UYS		
			96. Fixed vs. Growth: The Two Basic Mindsets That Shape Our Lives bit.ly/1OjG8mc	Maria Popova	29 th Jan, 2014
			97. Reinventing Organizations. bit.ly/1kWMbx8	Frederic Laloux	9 th Feb, 2014
			98. Working Out Loud bit.ly/1Lxx62C		
			99. Reinventing Organizations Wiki – Fundamental Assumptions. bit.ly/1TnoEY1		
			100. Bring All of Who You Are to Everything You Do. bit.ly/1Xz2sMr	Susan Basterfield	10 th Nov, 2015
			101. An Extroverted thinker in an (distributed) Introvert’s world. bit.ly/1sqsnCO	Susan Basterfield	6 th Mar, 2016
			102. John Stepper: Working Out Loud Blog. http://johnstepper.com/	John Stepper	
			103. No more yes. It's either HELL YEAH! or no. bit.ly/1mkNKtv	Derek Sivers	26 th Aug, 2009

			104. The Essence of Vulnerability (virtuous cycle). bit.ly/1TgUDXF	Susan Basterfield	4 th Nov, 2015
			105. Show Your Work. bit.ly/18kirS3	Austin Kleon	6 th Mar, 2014
			106. Harold Jarche's blog. http://jarche.com/	Harold Jarche	
			107. Emerging into Teal through Working Out Loud Part 2— Wholeness. bit.ly/1Xz5dNF	Susan Basterfield	15 th Mar, 2106
			108. Working Out Loud Independent Circles. bit.ly/1sxCkGj	Powercrowds	
15 th Mar, 2106	109. Emerging into Teal through Working Out Loud Part 2— Wholeness. bit.ly/1Xz5dNF	Susan Basterfield	110. Reinventing Organizations Wiki – Self-management. bit.ly/1TnoEY1		
			111. Working Out Loud bit.ly/1Lxx62C		
			112. Purpose-Led Leadership: The Three Adventures. bit.ly/1szgKBb	Sarah Rozenhuler	4 th Feb, 2016
			113. Is your office making you ill? Why open-plan spaces aren't good for our health. bit.ly/1OK2grF	Mary Cooke	4 th Mar, 2016
29 th March, 2016	114. Emerging into Teal through Working out Loud Part 3: Evolutionary Purpose. bit.ly/25aZT8Y	Susan Basterfield	115. Rumi. bit.ly/24FXbEE	Good Reads	
			116. Reinventing Organizations. bit.ly/1kWMBx8	Frederic Laloux	9 th Feb, 2014
			117. Purpose-Led Leadership: The Three Adventures. bit.ly/1szgKBb	Sarah Rozenhuler	4 th Feb, 2016
			118. Enspiral. http://www.enspiral.com/		
			119. Working Out Loud bit.ly/1Lxx62C		
			120. Wikipedia - Tangata whenua. bit.ly/27AQiaa		
			121. Working Out Loud Independent Circles. bit.ly/1sxCkGj	Powercrowds	

Appendix 2 - Analytic Tool 1

Guide to Doing Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Carabine, 2001, p. 281).

1	<i>Select your topic</i> - Identify sources of data
2	<i>Know your data</i> – read and re-read. Familiarity aids analysis and interpretation
3	<i>Identify themes</i> – categories and objects of the discourse
4	Look for evidence of <i>inter-relationship</i> between discourses
5	Identify the <i>discursive strategies</i> and techniques that are employed
6	Look for <i>absences</i> and <i>silences</i>
7	Look for <i>resistances</i> and <i>counter-discourses</i>
8	Identify the <i>effects</i> of the discourse
9	Context 1 – outline the background to the issue
10	Context 2 – contextualize the material in the power/knowledge networks of the period
11	Be aware of the <i>limitations</i> of the research, your data and sources

Appendix 3 - Analytic Tool 2

Distinguishing Discourses - 'Essence' Criteria (Parker, 1992, p.6-20, abridged).

Criteria and Steps
<p>Criteria: A discourse is about objects</p> <p>Step: Asking what objects are described and referred to, and describing them</p> <p>Step: Talking about the talk as if it were an object, discourse</p>
<p>Criteria: A discourse is a coherent system of meanings</p> <p>Step: Mapping a picture of the world this discourse presents</p> <p>Step: Working out how a text using this discourse would deal with objections to the terminology</p>
<p>Criteria. A discourse is historically located</p> <p>Step: Looking at how and where the discourse emerged</p> <p>Step: Describing how they have changed, and told a story, usually about how they refer to things which were always there to be discovered</p>
<p>Criteria. Discourses support institutions</p> <p>Step: Identifying institutions which are reinforced when a discourse is used</p> <p>Step: Identifying institutions that are attacked or subverted when a discourse appears</p>
<p>Criteria. Discourses reproduce power relations</p> <p>Step: Looking at which categories of person gain and lose from employment of the discourse</p> <p>Step: Looking at who would want to promote and who would want to dissolve the discourse</p>

Appendix 4 - Discursive Reading Prompts

Genealogy Analysis

GA1. What other discourses and/or events provided models or ideas that influenced the functioning of the WOL discourse and in what ways?

GA2. By what processes did the discourse construct the right to pronounce truth? How did the first/early instance(s) of the discourse come about? Who performed this action? Why? What were the immediate consequences?

GA3. Was there competition from other ways of talking about the same phenomenon?

GA4. What is it that guides this discourse? Why was this discourse created in the first place?

GA5. Has anything changed in the discourse since its inception?

Structural Analysis

SA1. How is WOL being constructed? What statements give knowledge about WOL?

SA2. What discursive strategies are being employed to put WOL into the discourse?

SA3. What discourses does WOL draw upon? What are the inter-relationships?

SA4. Are there any absences, silences or instances of resistance or counter-discourse?

Power Analysis

PA1. What do the discursive constructions of WOL achieve? What can be said and done?

PA2. In whose interests is the construction and advancement of the WOL discourse? Who benefits?

PA3. Whose interests are ignored/and or rejected in the construction and advancement of the WOL discourse? Who would not benefit?

PA4. What types of organisations are reinforced in the WOL discourse?

PA5. What types of organizations are attacked or subverted in the WOL discourse?

Appendix 5 - Phases of Analysis

Phase 1	Familiarisation –skim reading over the texts in the archive to get the gist.
Phase 2	Analytic Notes –using the tools outlined above, selected texts were read discursively and analytic notes were made. This required paying particular attention to every time that Working Out Loud was mentioned in the text, either directly or indirectly, as well as individual aspects of the practice or attributed benefits.
Phase 3	Analytic Summary –an analytic summary was produced that consolidated the series of analytic notes. Preliminary themes and patterns were identified relative to the criteria, steps and question-prompts outlined above.
Phase 3.1	Summary Analysis of Genealogy - aspects of the analytic summary pertinent to the history, or emergence, of the WOL discourse were summarised.
Phase 3.2	Summary Analysis of Structure - preliminary themes, or discourses, were consolidated and discursive strategies identified.
Phase 3.3	Summary Analysis of Power - aspects of the analytic summary pertinent to the effects of the WOL discourse were summarised.
Phase 4	Interpretation –dominant discourses and discursive strategies were identified and then ,within the three axes, were subjected to interpretation and discussion. The interpretation was situated within the relevant power relations, both historical and contemporary.

Appendix 6 - Worked Example of Analysis

Structural Analysis:

Work Out Loud because everyone is figuring out their job (text 53)

SA1. How is WOL being constructed? What statements give knowledge about WOL? (shaded in text)

SA2. What discursive strategies are being employed to put WOL into the discourse? (bold in text)

Sharing

Openness

Visibility

Experience (expertise)

SA3. What discourses does WOL draw upon? (underlined in text)

Professional development

Mastery

Working with others (implied by context and examples)

Helping others

It's been declared to be International Work Out Loud Week this Nov 17-24th. It doesn't matter who declared it; it is still an interesting idea. The goal is to seed the idea of **sharing** how you work and what you do to help draw people into more **openness** about what they actually do.

One of the sayings I see float around the Interwebs every so often feels so relevant:

"Don't worry...everyone else is also figuring how to do their job too."

It does away with feelings of insecurity or inadequacy you might have about doing your job. You don't have to admit it to anyone but yourself.

While I haven't taught martial arts for about a year now, I had done so for over a decade to people of all ages. One thing that I feel holds true as I have raised students and other instructors is the notion of "Mastery as a destination" is a mirage. Dan Pink speaks of Mastery as one of the core components of what drives and motivates people, but again, here it is the search for mastery that is the motivator. You always find it further ahead of you.

Personally, I remember when I was a 2nd degree black belt in Japanese swordfighting for some time, feeling such angst that I deserved to be higher. I was better than most: I could make complex cuts of target with my sword almost 90% of the time. I was much faster in swinging the sword. I made it look so easy, it looked trivial and almost

boring...until other students actually tried it. I deserved more which I felt would come if I only got that next belt already.

Well it didn't.

I did get that next belt and the next, but it didn't really change things for me on a personal level. What did happen was that I could notice things more, both in myself and in others. I could see more into techniques because I had the practice and experience to know the sequence of what happens, and the possibilities or choices that could follow, and their level of effectiveness versus just ideas in concept. [Believe me, sword students think so many things are easy and possible until they really try it.]

In the American culture, we like to think of distinct levels of progressions. Hence all the colored belts in martial arts progressing towards a black belt, are seen as having earned something. How else do you understand competency when meeting or working with someone? The same goes for certification in job skills, as well as gamification in enterprise collaboration. I won't say it is hogwash because it isn't. Instead it is a cultural guide to help people understand others faster. In turn it encourages the basic human spirit of competitiveness.

What does this have to do with Work Out Loud Week?

Experience matters. Certification, belts and scores are simply tools to help us understand the experience levels of people faster. Without them, we need much more context to understand the experience level of others. A second instrument is peer reputation, and who you interact with. It is a transitive instrument. If you know someone who you already accept is knowledgeable and experienced in an area, then others they interact with may likely have similar experience.

Working out loud makes **individual experience** more **visible**, but you have to have that from each person. Reading the #WOLweek stream on Twitter may not help you understand specific individual people you want to know better, because it mixes all the conversations together into the stream. I see the purpose of the stream is more to help make the practice itself socially acceptable. (This is a third instrument in how we understand others).