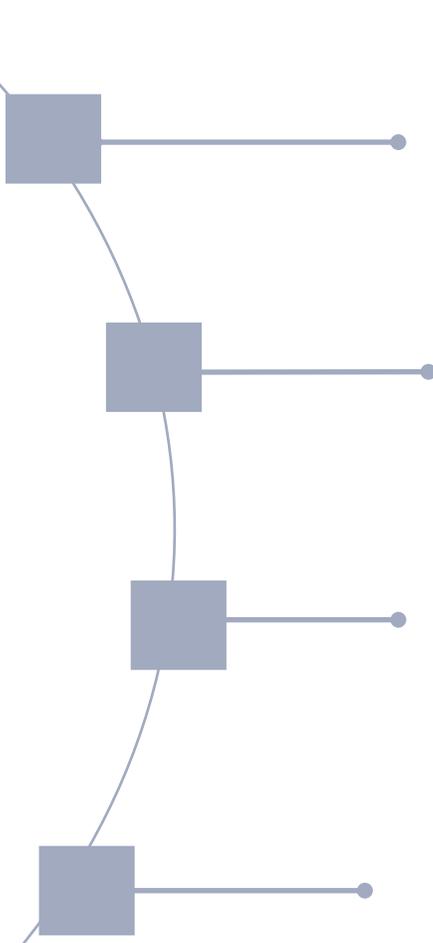




The Travel of Ideas – knowledge brokerage between PLNs and Schools

ICSEI 2019, Livia Roessler
10th of January,

Outlook



Setting the scene: Regional Professional Learning Networks

“Travel of Ideas” – theoretical assumptions

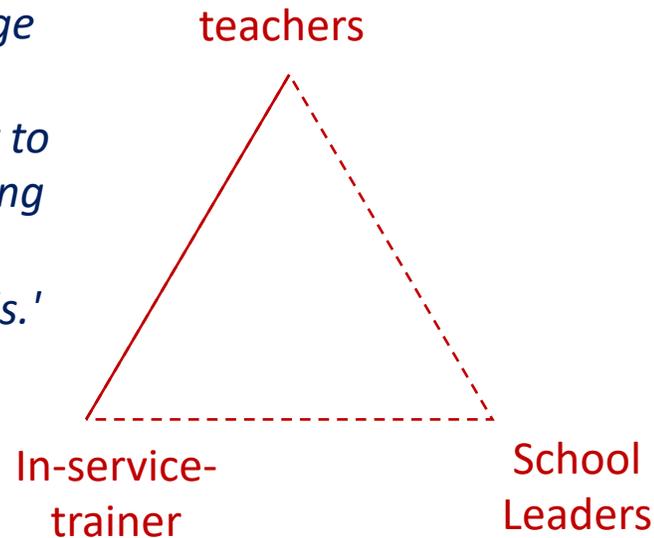
Methodology and Results

Findings and Discussion

Regional Professional Learning Networks (RPLN)

Setting the Scene: History, Structures, Participants

Brown and Poortman (2018) define Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) 'as any group who engage in collaborative learning across networks in order to improve teaching, learning and children's outcomes within and across schools.'



- Regional Professional Learning Networks are a specific type of PLN.
- RPLN were a bottom-up initiative (regional in-service training program was mandatory for all teachers (n=163))
- 1st year: 27 teachers 2nd year :additional 21 teachers in the RPLN
- RPLNs involve groups of teachers coming together from all of the secondary schools in one region.
- Typically facilitated by an in-service trainer from the local teacher training college.
- Teachers will engage with topics linked to the regional in-service training program.
- RPLNs comprise subject specific groups (Math, German, English)

Regional Professional Learning Networks

Factors of sustainability

*Hubers and Poortman (2017) suggest that a number of supporting conditions need to be in place before PLNs can be successful. These conditions include **focus, collaboration, leadership, individual/group learning** and **reflective professional inquiry**.*

reflective professional inquiry.

and

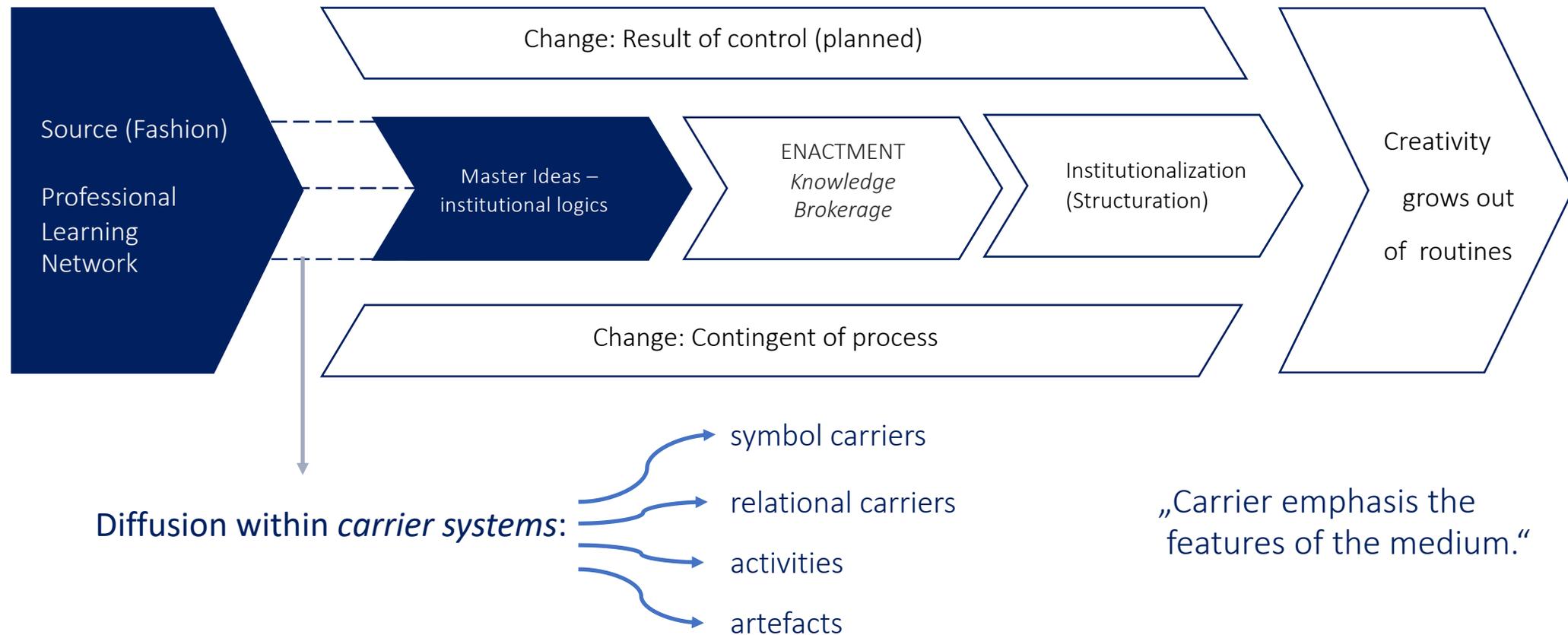
Woods et al. (2006):
a **clear strategy**; a **strong organisational structure** including sufficient staff to support the activity; and both **flexibility** and **reflexivity** to adapt to shifting circumstances and new developments as factors for sustainable collaborations.

strong organisational structure

How do ideas or knowledge 'travel' from PLNs to each school and what mechanism are used?

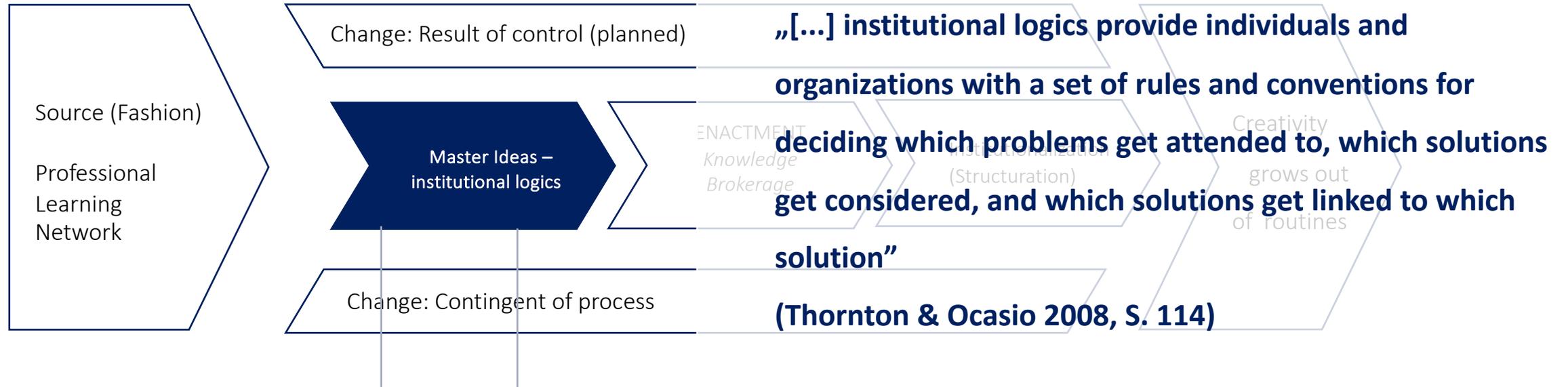
Brokerage of knowledge

Travel of ideas



Brokerage of knowledge

Institutional logics



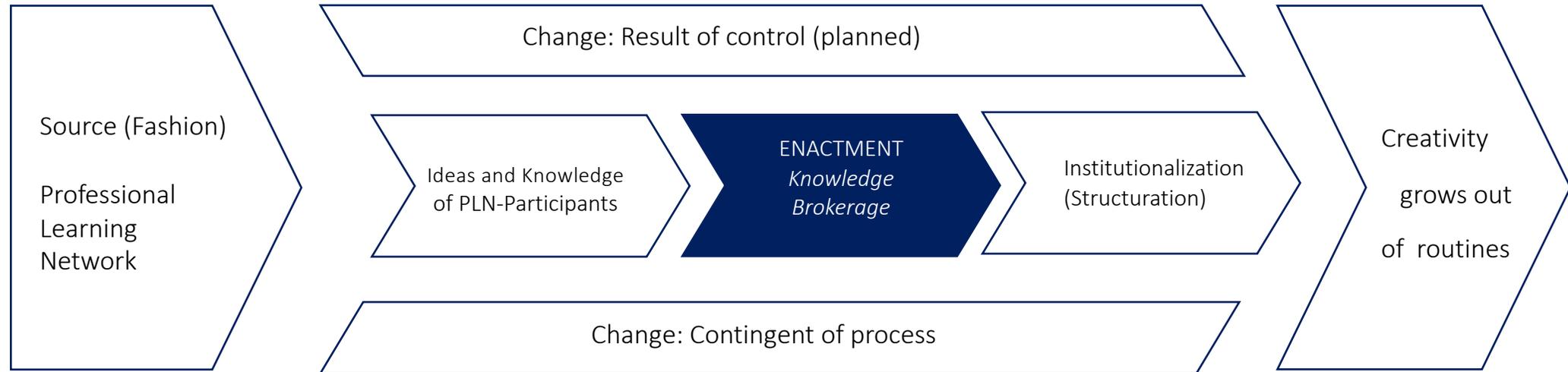
exogenous effects

endogenous effects: of change

- Different institutional logics
- Contradictoriness of institutional logics
- from abstractions to actions

Brokerage of knowledge

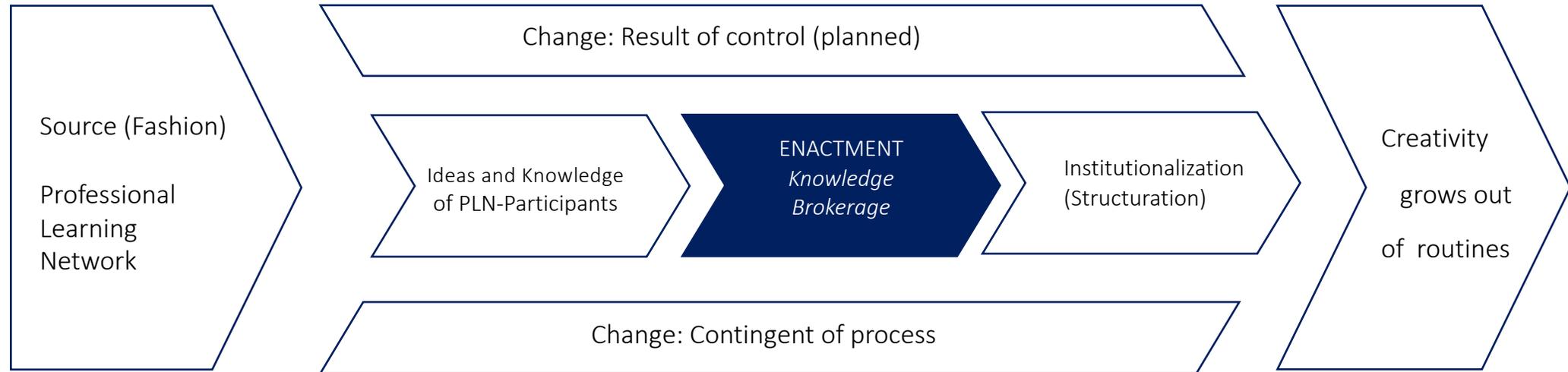
Mechanism of translation



„**Bricolage** can be defined as the use of existing resources for new purpose. It is a creative approach to problems in which resources play a fundamental role. [...]It is viewed as a form of practical intelligence, in the sense that it manifests itself in how people organize their everyday activities to achieve their goals and how (re)organize to adapt when something goes awry [sic!]’ (Cunha & Cunha, 2018, p. 52)

Brokerage of knowledge

Mechanism of translation

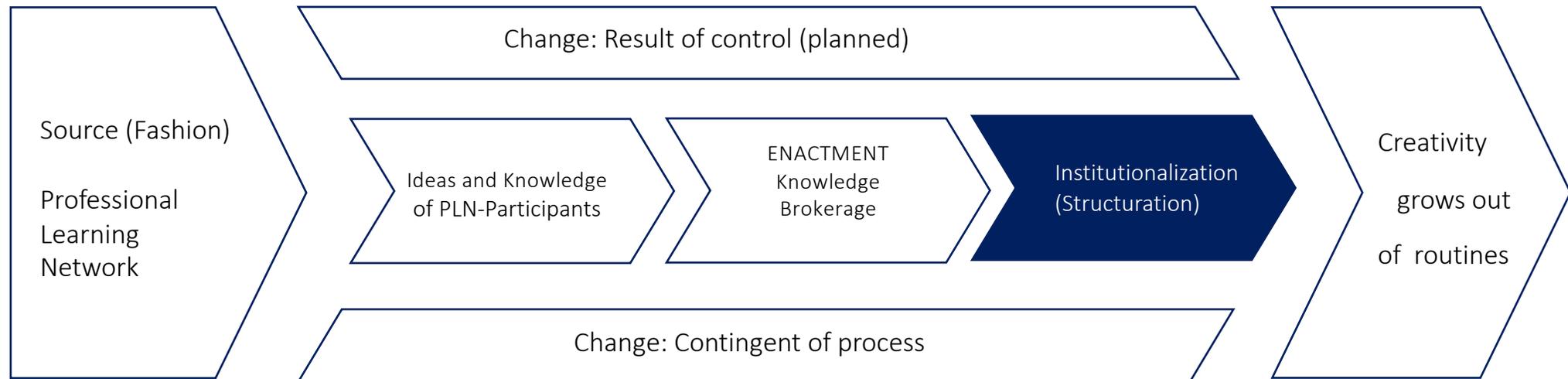


Translation and Enactment

Campbell (2004) defines this process as the combination of new elements and already existing practices and principles. He stresses out that the more external elements are added the more revolutionary will be the change process.

Brokerage of knowledge

Mechanism of institutionalization



“Key element in the process of bricolage [and enactment] are creative and innovative people.” (Campbell 2004, p.74)

BUT

„ [...] the institutions in which actors are embedded constrain them insofar as they limit the range of innovations they can envision and create.” (Campbell 2004, p. 75)

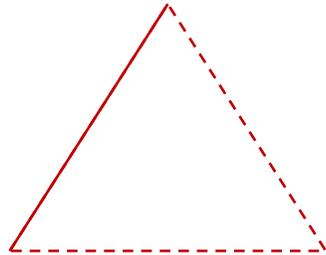
AND

leaders play an important role in the whole process

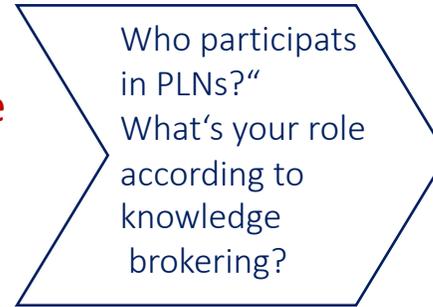
Methods and Results

observations and interviews

teachers



facilitators /in-service
trainers of PLNs
(n=3)



"Right at the moment we experience that especially the young teachers are really open for these PLN formats, Some of them do attend more than one"
(AT: facilitator#1)

'Actually I haven't really had an idea about my role within the work in the schools?! I was only focussing on the PLN work"
(AT: facilitator#2)

In-service-trainer
interviews

School Leaders
focus group discussion

observations
of PLN work
(n=2)



New ideas were brought within symbolic and relational carriers.

„I realized that the team dynamics changed, the staus of the PLN members changed.“ (leader #5)

„New meeting structures were required.“ (leader #4)

school
leaders
(n=7)



teachers
(n=10)



'It is very helpful, that we use team teaching methods in our school type. Me, for example, I show my tandem partners, what I developed within my PLN work and ask them if they like to try this new approach as well – and in the end we reflect together – that brings in a lot of new views of my work as I do have 4 different team teaching partners (AT: participant#4)

Enablers and Obstacles

for sustainable knowledge brokering

Enablers

- if teachers or leaders have extensive ties to people beyond their close environment, they have a broader repertoire of institutional logics they can re-combine (cf. Campbell 2004, S. 74)
- Common sense of the institutional logics and a clear vision
- Structures, where bricolage or enactment becomes visible
- Variation of carrier mechanism: providing a multi channel setting)
- Connections between school leaders and PLN facilitators

Obstacles

- If teachers or leaders have a lack of connections or find themselves cut off from knowledge (cf. Campbell 2004, p. 75)
- Misused relational carriers (hidden structures within the faculty e.g. age-hierarchies → team teaching;)
- Mismatching or individual enactment strategies
- Missing awareness of the local resources (practices and principles)

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Thank you for your attention!



Livia.Roessler@uibk.ac.at

www.uibk.ac.at