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ORIGINAL PAPER

Achieving Responsible Management Learning Through Enriched Reciprocal Learning: Service-Learning Projects and the Role of Boundary Spanners

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Abstract
Through its focus on deep and experiential learning, service-learning (SL) has become increasingly popular within the business school curriculum. While a reciprocal dimension has been foundational to SL, the reciprocality that is emphasized in business ethics literature is often on the relationship between the service experience and the academic content, rather than reciprocal learning of the service providers (students) and the recipients (organizations and their managers), let alone other stakeholders. Drawing on the notion of enriched reciprocal learning and on Aristotle's typology of modes of knowing, we (1) revisit reciprocal learning by illustrating what kinds of learning occur for server and served in four SL projects from a project course in CSR, and (2) emphasize the role of boundary spanners from the project organizations in making this reciprocal learning happen and translating the various types of student learning in ways that are useful for their organizations. We find that when boundary spanners are particularly engaged at making the projects impactful, they contribute to making the learning experiences of students, managers (including themselves) and sometimes other stakeholders useful, multidimensional, and ultimately rewarding.

Keywords Responsible management learning · Service-learning · Boundary spanners

Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in responsible management learning (RML) in business organizations (e.g. Hilliard 2013; Laasch and Moosmayer 2015; Nonet et al. 2016). This ongoing debate on RML can be traced to traditions originating from the organizational learning stream (e.g. Boyce 2003; Senge et al. 1999) and to a largely teaching-related research stream on responsible management education (RME) (e.g. Fougère et al. 2014; Hibbert and Cunliffe 2015; Solitander et al. 2012). While RML is a stream with its own research agenda (Laasch 2018), focusing explicitly on the interrelation between RML and RME as practice is a promising avenue for realizing the potential of both RML and RME.

In this paper, we take seriously the possibility of a strong connection between RME and RML and we focus on learning that occurs in boundary-spanning practices (Jamali 2006; Laasch 2018) between managers and students in service-learning courses organized by business schools. We aim to illustrate how student projects embedded within business organizations, with a focus on social and environmental challenges (under the label 'CSR', broadly construed) can enhance RML within those organizations, with the potential for further learning of stakeholders of those organizations. This focus is framed in close connection with the conceptualization of RML, defined as "the implicit and explicit learning and unlearning of and about responsible and irresponsible practices, a form of reciprocal learning between managerial and academic practitioners, taking place in the managerial

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and academic communities of practice" (Laasch 2018, p.12). Yet when considering learning between communities, organizations and educators need to consider the long-standing concern that *academic knowledge* might not translate well into management learning (Bartunek 2007; Mintzberg 2004), which puts emphasis on the question of what types of learning occur in the intersections of RML and RME. In this context, we posit that *reciprocal learning* (Henry and Breyfogle 2006) in boundary-spanning practices that envision impacting stakeholders, can extend beyond the learning dyad of the manager(s) and the academic practitioner(s) (whether researchers or students), with implications for both RML and RME studies.

An increasingly common boundary-spanning practice between RME and RML works through the involvement of students in projects with CSR elements, often referred to as *service-learning* (SL), where students are expected to effectively learn by making a positive difference in their community, or in society. In relation to CSR projects with companies, this social impact of SL is usually envisioned through a positive impact on or through key stakeholders. In the SL literature focusing on higher education (e.g., Brower 2011; Pless et al. 2011), studies have predominantly put focus on the enhancement of student learning, through emphasis on student experience, their academic learning and their civic engagement. Comparatively, the *learning of organizations* attempting to act more socially or environmentally responsibly, and the *learning of* their *managers* are often marginalized in this literature (for an exception, see e.g., Roschelle, Turpin and Elias Roschelle et al. 2000). When the reciprocal and reinforcing nature of SL is noted in the literature, the reciprocity that is emphasized is often on the relationship between the service experience and the academic content, rather than reciprocal *learning* of the recipient (community/organization/manager) and the service provider (student(s)), or the learning of other stakeholders that are meant to be positively affected by the project. This is surprising since conceptually and philosophically the goal of SL is "that each party benefits, learns from the other, and teaches the other during the course of the experience" (Godfrey et al. 2005: 317).

Drawing on the work of Henry and Breyfogle (2006), we develop the notion of *enriched reciprocal learning*. In doing so we (1) revisit reciprocal learning, emphasizing that reciprocity should also be about learning from each other; (2) characterize how rich and multidimensional the learning is by drawing on Aristotle's typology of different modes of knowledge, by elaborating on previous uses of this typology in the context of learning encounters (Amann and Goh 2017; Antonacopoulou 2010; Śliwa and Cairns 2009); and (3) emphasize the role of boundary spanners from the project organizations in enabling reciprocal learning and translating various types of student learning in ways that are useful for their organizations, as well as their internal and external stakeholders.

Taking a reflexive approach (Hibbert and Cunliffe 2015), we analyze student projects from a project course in CSR which two of the authors have taught for 8 years at our business school. Within the course, the projects for organizations are explicitly aimed at enhancing the learning of the organizations and their managers, not only that of the students. We here focus on four projects within business organizations from different industries (banking, environmental services, food, and restaurant industry, respectively) and illustrate how social and/or environmental responsibility learning of managers is enhanced through SL projects while exploring the responsible learning consequences for stakeholders beyond the manager-student dyad. We posit that the elusive alignment between RML and RME practices (cf. Bansal et al. 2012; Laasch 2018) can be enabled by (1) envisioning project courses as boundary-spanning intermediary spaces (cf. Bansal et al. 2012; Wright et al. 2008), (2) emphasizing enriched reciprocal learning, and (3) mobilizing boundary spanners, i.e. managers who are able to engage with both the students and their organization to achieve reciprocal learning.

The paper is structured as follows: In the following section we (1) review service-learning literature with an emphasis on the need for enriched reciprocal learning, (2) introduce the typology of learning drawing on Aristotle, and (3) explain what it means to characterize SL courses as boundary-spanning spaces with a key role for boundary spanners, and how this is crucial for rich reciprocal learning. We then proceed to a section describing our data collection and analysis. The empirical section follows, where we illustrate enriched reciprocal learning and the types of learning through the four cases from the project course. Lastly, we discuss our contribution and implications for RML studies and practice.

Responsible Learning in Organizations and Higher Education

During the last decade there have been increased efforts to understand the change imperatives related to sustainable development in relation to organizational learning. As Jamali (2006) points out, the literature on sustainable development and corporate responsibility shares with organizational learning a necessity to foster fundamental change, engage in extensive collaborations, and at times even go as far as to question the core purpose of business. Organizational learning literature (Senge et al. 1999; Lozano 2014) is explicit in establishing clear interlinkages between individual, group, and organizational learning in challenging underlying social assumptions, norms, and objectives. These interlinkages are also very prominent within the literature on responsible management. As Laasch and Conaway (2015) show, responsible management implies a translation of organization-level-focused fields to the managerial level and to managerial practices.

But as Siebenhüner and Arnold (2007) point out, neither management nor organizational learning give immediate answers or deeper insights on what this means for educational initiatives. While Laasch (2018: 14) suggests that RML research should stop focusing on “students, instructors, teaching, PRME, or business schools” and instead focus on managerial practitioners and practices, we posit that in order to understand and conceptualize RML, research needs to take reciprocal learning between managers and students seriously, and investigate what kinds of boundary-spanning practices make such interactions fruitful. Thus, in the following sections we particularly focus on the pedagogical implications of the commitment to reciprocal learning between managers and students. While a focus on pedagogy puts an emphasis on teaching, it does not imply a prelation for student learning, but rather it recognizes the potential of business school courses as boundary-spanning spaces (O’Mahony and Bechky 2008; Zietsma and Lawrence 2010). In these boundary-spanning spaces there is possibility for reciprocal learning between students (as future managers) and currently practicing managers (who also often are former business school students).

Reciprocal Learning in Service-Learning

SL literature shares with organizational learning literature a focus on deep learning and experiential learning, while emphasizing pedagogy. As a pedagogy it is not solely concerned with more effective learning but also with ethical concepts such as justice, responsibility, and reciprocity (Zlotkowski 1996). SL is also influenced by organizational learning in seeing learning as social participation in the practices of a community that can benefit wider social-ecological systems (Reed et al. 2010). SL connects to responsible management as it provides an effective way for organizations to answer the stakeholder expectations that corporations increasingly take an active role in contributing to environmental and social sustainability (Pless et al. 2011). Through SL projects the organization can prepare their current managers for the demands of responsible leadership both inside and more importantly, outside of the organization (ibid.).

SL approaches have become increasingly popular in business and management curricula (Rands 2009; Young and Nagpal 2013) but also management training programs (Pless et al. 2011). On the one hand, as a pedagogical method it has been framed as an effective method in the context of bringing in new perspectives and broader understandings of sustainability in the business context (Pless et al. 2011); and on the other hand, it has been argued to be a way to reclaim credibility and legitimacy for business school education in the face of critique (Godfrey et al. 2005; Khurana 2010), notably its assumed narrow ‘shareholder primacy’ thinking and broad claims of practical irrelevance (see e.g., Godfrey et al. 2005; Mintzberg 2004). In the context of these criticisms, SL has found a receptive environment, as “service-learning pedagogy… provide(s) a partial solution to the problem of narrowness in business education precisely because the pedagogy blends academic rigor with practical relevance, set in a context of civic engagement” (Godfrey et al. 2005: p. 310). According to Furco (1996) service-learning occurs when there is a balance between learning goals and service outcomes, and that the service enhances the learning and the learning enhances the service. This is also what sets it apart from related experiential learning such as internships and community service programs.

SL is often conceptualized using the work of Barbara Jacoby, who has defined it as “a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development…[r]eflection and reciprocity [being] key concepts” (Jacoby 1996: 5). The notion of ‘reciprocity’ is frequently put forward as a distinguishing feature of SL from e.g., volunteerism and community service (Henry and Breyfogle 2006). As Kendall (1990: 21–22) puts it:

> [r]eciprocity is the exchange of both giving and receiving between the ‘server’ and the person or group ‘being served.’ All parties in service learning are learners and help determine what is to be learned…Both server and those served teach, and both learn.

Jacoby (2003) sees the element of reciprocity as what elevates SL into a philosophy, as SL can be considered as “an expression of values—service to others, community development and empowerment, reciprocal learning—which determines the purpose, nature and process of social and educational exchange between learners (students) and the people they serve” (Stanton in Jacoby 2003: 5). Reciprocal learning, which construes everyone as teachers and everyone as learners, is most visibly emphasized in literature where SL is construed as a philosophy. At the same time, and as the quote reveals, while emphasizing reciprocity the student is established as the primary learner and less focus is put on the co-learning aspects especially beyond the dyad ‘server’ and ‘served’. This is further sedimented in literature on SL as a pedagogy, a literature that is highly influenced by the concept of experiential learning, and most notably the work of Kolb (1984) and his particular reading and modification of Dewey’s (1938) work. It is also through the work of Kolb that experiential learning has become an important foundation in the theory of organizational learning (Miettinen 2000). According to Godfrey et al. (2005, p. 310), SL "finds legitimacy in Kolb's model because service-learning pedagogies assume that significant and important learning takes place by the combined processes of abstract conceptualization, concrete experience, and then reflection on that experience". This grounding of SL applications to business school pedagogy in Kolb's work has important implications, because in Kolb's work reciprocity is not a central element. This is presumably why in SL as pedagogy, reciprocity has come to mean that "[t]he student and the community partner must benefit from the experience" (Wilson 2011: 211). Thus, in much of SL literature the emphasis is less on reciprocal learning and more in terms of mutual benefit and the service outcomes (Furco 1996). This has created a situation where reciprocal learning is "universally touted yet seldom adequately applied" (Kenworthy-U'ren and Peterson 2005: 275).

As Kenworthy-U'ren and Peterson (2005: 275) note, while reciprocity in SL is a conceptual ideal, it is "one of the most difficult principles to convey to management students". The authors stress how inherently difficult it is for reciprocal learning to occur as students struggle to bridge their view of themselves as 'service providers' with the concept of 'partners' with organizational staff. In their critique of the limits of reciprocity in SL literature and practice, Henry and Breyfogle (2006) point out how the set-up in SL is much like a stimulus–response loop in which there are clear binaries between 'server' and 'served', wherein the educational institution provides a service to a community actor, who in turn provides the context for the experiential learning of the students, and "a circuit is completed when the university offers service received by the [partner], which then maintains the [outcome]" (Henry and Breyfogle 2006: 30). Henry and Breyfogle draw on the original works of Dewey, without the mediation of Kolb, to construct what they called an *enriched form of reciprocity*:

> Dewey made clear that understanding stimuli and responses as independent parts in a larger system was an insufficient notion, primarily because in the act of being acted upon, both stimuli and responses were changed as a result of their relationship with one another (Henry and Breyfogle 2006: 31).

They stress how reciprocal learning necessitates a combined commitment to a larger goal and how as outcome of the learning "all stakeholders and their work will be changed as a result of their collective effort" (Henry and Breyfogle 2006: 32). Herein lies what we see as another potential expansion of understanding the potential of RME and experiential learning, transitioning from a dyadic view of SL towards and expanded view on stakeholder learning—involving learning of, for example, employees, customers and/or suppliers of the served organizations. Just as organizational learning literature, SL conceptually recognizes that learning of individuals often occurs through various social interactions with others, and many actors in these networks can learn outside of a strict server-served dyad, but this is seldom in focus or emphasized. In addition, there is, to quote Reed et al. (2010: 4), an increased necessity to "demonstrate a change or understanding that goes beyond individuals or small groups to become situated within wider social units or communities of practice".

Inspired by Henry and Breyfogle (2006), we here use the notion of enriched reciprocal learning to mean experiential SL situations that recognize reciprocal (and responsible) (1) management learning, (2) student learning, and possibly (3) further stakeholder learning. While this distinction recognizes the reciprocal nature of learning in and through a variety of community relations, it does not tell us much in terms of what *kind* of learning can occur in and through reciprocal SL encounters, and this is the question we turn to now.

A Typology for Different Types of Learning

In order to characterize how rich and multidimensional enriched reciprocal learning can be, we draw on Aristotle's ([350 B.C.E]2000: 105–107, 1140b) distinction between five different forms of intellectual virtues, or types of knowing—and which, for the purpose of this paper, we call 'types of learning'.[1] The first of these five types is *episteme*, which was originally understood as scientific knowledge, knowledge established through certain accepted scientific methods, and which in the context of learning from the projects can be used to refer to established academic knowledge. The second type is *technē*, often translated as 'skill' or 'know-how', and which we can relate to the acquisition of an ability to use certain tools or techniques for a certain purpose. The third type is *nous*, often translated as 'intuition', but most relevantly in this context, it refers to an ability that is developed through an unmediated confrontation with 'reality' or 'practice'. The fourth type is *sophia*, often translated as 'theoretical wisdom', and which can be construed in the present context as relating to established ethical principles.

The fifth type, which has been much discussed in RME and CME literature (e.g., Antonacopoulou 2010; Fougère et al. 2014), is *phronēsis*, often translated as 'practical wisdom', and which requires both *nous* and *sophia* as prerequisites since it is always expressed in a certain practical context. Aristotle defined *phronēsis* as "a true and practical state involving reason, concerned with what is good and bad for a human being" (Aristotle [350 B.C.E]2000: 107, 1140b).

[1] We also acknowledge the potential of Angelo's (1991) framework for analyzing reciprocal learning, but here we draw on Aristotle's typology as we find it particularly suitable to make distinctions between different forms of experiential learning that have clear ethical dimensions.

Phronēsis thus entails both reflexivity (Antonacopoulou 2010) and an ethical dimension, as it helps to "distinguish, prospectively or retrospectively, good from bad judgment (practice), and to provide on request some form of reason for the distinction" (Zutavern 2011: 3).

Service-Learning Courses as Boundary-Spanning Spaces and the Role of Boundary Spanners

For enriched reciprocal learning to occur, prospective learners on both sides of the SL encounter (server and served) need to be actively engaged, and this leads us to paying particular attention to SL courses as 'boundary-spanning spaces' and to the role of 'boundary spanners' in SL projects. The question of boundaries typically relates to distinctions among different groups of people and practices, i.e. shared routines of behavior (O'Mahony and Bechky 2008). In SL encounters the learning parties need to make sure that "they have mutual and interdependent requirements that help attain both institutional goals as well as inter-institutional goals" (Henry and Breyfogle 2006: 32). Especially in the domain of learning for ethics and sustainability, there is a need to move away from individual positions and goals (Henry and Breyfogle 2006), and instead start from the position of collective activity emphasizing systemic change over time. When it comes to practices, RML to some degree requires unlearning of unethical or unsustainable practices (Laasch 2018). This is central also because there has been critique that the goal of SL might not be change at all, but rather maintaining the status quo (Henry and Breyfogle 2006). Pless et al.'s (2011) research on SL programs show that whereas a majority of SL participants increase their knowledge on responsibility and sustainability issues and are able to reflect on these, a much lower percentage of participants feel compelled to act upon this knowledge, show an increased ability to view the world from different angles, or a willingness to serve others. As Zietsma and Lawrence (2010) point out, organizations might become isolated and unresponsive to changes, creating tensions between accepted and normalized practices within an organization and those in broader society.

It is in the boundaries between two identities where "old ideas find new life and new ideas propagate" (Wenger 1998: 255), and to facilitate such a creative learning process, individuals who are able to connect with groups on both sides of a boundary—often called 'boundary spanners'—can make a significant difference. This is why, as Laasch (2018: 10) puts it, "a salient connection between [academic and managerial] communities and their distinct practices, [is] boundary-spanning practitioners", and their role is central to successful reciprocal learning. As a process, boundary spanning simply refers to facilitating meaningful learning exchanges between campus and community (Weerts and Sandmann 2010). Any faculty involved in SL courses can thus engage in boundary spanning by developing spaces for reciprocal learning. However, with 'boundary spanners', we denote actors with identities that interface several social worlds (Gond et al. 2016). Boundary spanners can, through multi-membership in several communities, engage in brokering of learning and connections between different communities (such as the academic/managerial, server/served, campus/community) (Hodge et al. 2011). Boundary spanners in a business school context can be (among others) (1) managers who have boundary-spanning identities (Whitchurch 2008) and involve themselves in partnerships with academia (e.g., as mentors or guest lecturers), (2) professors of practice, (3) other academics with a managerial background who move back and forth between business and academia, and (4) current or former students of the school who are also business managers.

In our reading, what can make reciprocal learning 'enriched' is not only the extension of learning outcomes to stakeholders (Henry and Breyfogle 2006) but also the ability of boundary spanners to translate the value of different types of learning in a useful way in the organizational context – and this is where Aristotle's ([350 B.C.E]2000, 1140b) typology can help us assess whether this works for each type of learning.

Data Collection and Analysis

In the paper we illustrate *enriched reciprocal learning* in the context of our eight years of experience in developing and delivering a project course in CSR offered to M.Sc. students at a business school in Finland. The course is designed as a boundary-spanning process that explicitly aims at bridging student/academic and management/organizational) learning.

On the RME front, the course was first introduced in 2013 with the explicit goal of providing students the possibility to engage in experiential learning by working together with organizations (mainly NGOs and firms, but also some hybrid organizations) to address issues around social responsibility. The course is planned so that it targets students from various majors within the business school who either have working experience in CSR or some prior study credits in CSR. The class size has been between 35–40 students over the last three years (2016-2018). It is part of the mandatory curriculum of two M.Sc. program tracks and an elective in the other M.Sc. programs. The course is also part of a separate module in Corporate Responsibility (CR) that is taken by non-degree students who are either taking other university degrees or reeducating themselves after significant time in working-life and with significant managerial experience. The non-degree students with managerial experience already have a boundary-spanning identity (Bartel 2001; Laasch 2018), which is important as one explicit goal of the course is for students learn from the background and experiences of the other students. The students apply to the course with their CVs and a brief description of their interests with the organizations. The students work on projects with the organizations for 4-5 months.

On the RML front, in the first year there were three organizations involved and in the last three iterations of the course (2016, 2017 and 2018) there have been 12 organizations (usually with a fairly even distribution between NGOs and firms) involved. Several organizations have participated in several iterations of the course. The managers themselves are often working with boundary-spanning identities (Hodge et al. 2011; Whitchurch 2008), as many have either been alumni or other close stakeholders to the business school. This is particularly true for firms—but this is not necessarily by design. The managers provide a context of the project before the course starts, some organizations have more set parameters than others on the issues that the students (in groups of 2–4) will be working with. However, in most cases the managers and the students jointly work out the particular goals and targeted outcomes of the projects. Each organization allocates a mentor (usually a rather senior manager) to the student groups.

The overall aim of the course is to immerse students in questions related to social and environmental responsibility by using, analyzing and solving real-world problems with the project organizations. The role of the teachers is set to support the students to facilitate critical reflexivity towards themselves and the project. Our other explicit goal is in line with SL pedagogy and is to ensure that the perimeters of academic rigor frame the process and final reports. The course also aims to provide opportunities for both organizational and managerial learning, as the managers often look for an outsider-in perspective on either issues that are new to the organization, or CR issues that are too unquestioned in the organization.

For this study we are analyzing four projects representing a variety of industries and sustainability challenges. The projects included in this study were chosen using the following criteria: (1) the organization was a business firm (due to the special issue focus on RML); (2) some explicit impact on some key stakeholders of the firm was envisioned from the beginning; (3) there was an easily identifiable key boundary spanner between the academic setting and the organizations; and (4) there was sufficient continuity of involvement of the boundary spanner in the organization (a fifth project was eventually removed from this analysis because the boundary spanner left the organization before we could conduct a follow-up interview to assess the medium-term effects on management learning in the organization). The different ways in which the boundary spanner was connected to the business school were: (1) as an alumnus from the master's program; (2) as a non-degree student taking the course as part of the external CR module; (3) as a manager in a company that is one of the key partners of the school; and (4) as an executive MBA alumna and alumna ambassador for the school (in the fifth project which was removed). These boundary-spanning identities were not originally identified when the course was planned but rather something we realized when collecting data for this article. But we assume that in fact in a business school setting of experiential learning and SL it is not uncommon for the involved managers to be boundary spanners (Laasch 2018).

The data we use for analyzing the projects include: (1) final project reports of student groups (excluding appendices, the shortest one was 36 pages for Fooder and the longest one was 48 pages for NorBank), (2) individual learning diaries of the involved students, (3) observations and notes taken during academic mentoring sessions with students groups, (4) exit interviews with organizations immediately after the course, (5) follow-up interviews with managers 18 months later where they were asked to reflect on learning for themselves and the retrospective impact on and learnings for the organization in a longer time perspective, (6) formative feedback reports from students to their group members, as well as (7) discussions of the projects and their outcomes with both the organizations and the students, during and after various project presentations. Except for (5), these data were initially collected and analyzed by the first two authors. An emergent coding scheme was generated, connecting the accounts of both students and managers to the five types of learning – we include this coding scheme in Figs. 1 and 2 here in order to do justice to the "untidy emergent aspect" of our study, in line with Locke et al.'s (2015: 371) important insight that in this type of qualitative research we should not only discuss "the systematic and procedural nature of research".

As is clear from Figs. 1 and 2, when we find evidence for *phronesis* in these accounts, we also see this as a symptom for *sophia* (as in, a clear ethical content to the learning, which precedes the ethical, practical wisdom expressed in situation as *phronesis*). Thus, our coding interprets some of the characteristics of the accounts as evidence of both *sophia* and *phronesis*. This does not mean that *sophia* and *phronesis* are not analytically differentiated but that in some cases the empirical distinction between the two cannot be made. *Sophia* and *phronesis* are analytical constructs, not 'out there' as such and the type of qualitative empirical analysis we engage in here is bound to be 'messy'—as Bansal and Corley (2012: 511) note, "representing the messiness" can be understood as a "strength" of qualitative research – and 'untidy' (Locke et al. 2015).

After one round of reviews, the third author was invited to join and contribute with their own analysis of the data—to validate the first two authors' interpretations—and with conducting two of the three follow-up interviews, with Rose from Fooder and Restoplus and with Nicholas from

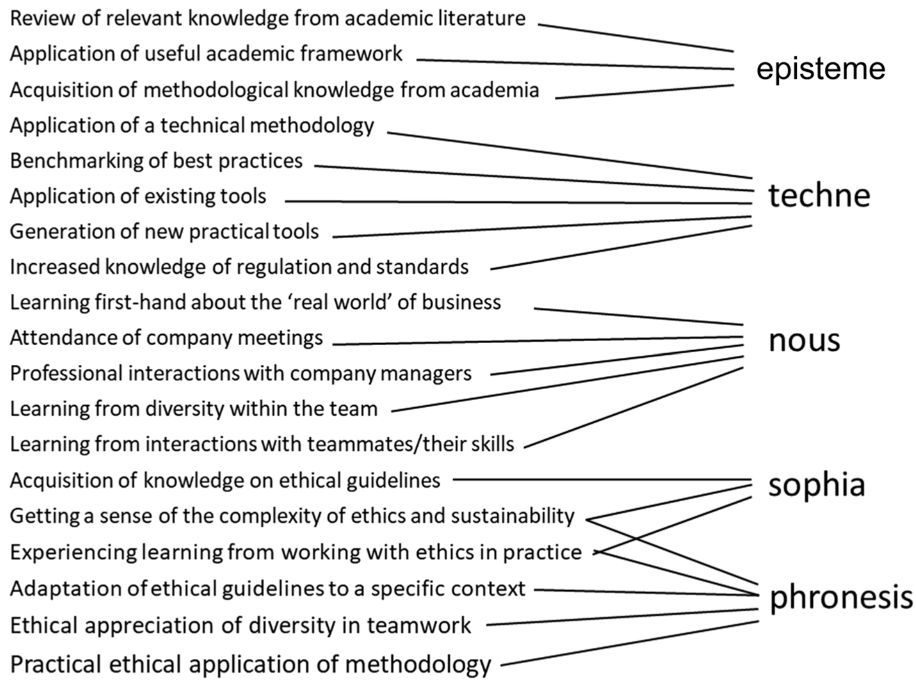

Fig. 1 Coding for the five types of learning, applied to student learning

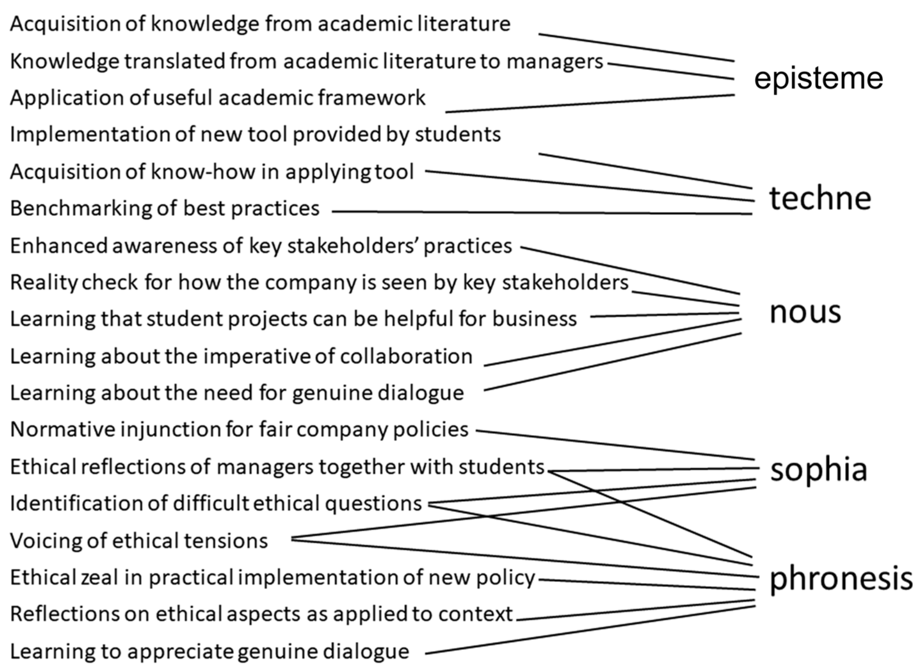

Fig. 2 Coding for the five types of learning, applied to management learning

NorBank. The follow-up interviews were transcribed and analyzed separately by all three co-authors, using the previously generated coding scheme (Figs. 1 and 2), so as to come to conclusions about what evidence there is of the five different types of learning in relation to both management learning and stakeholder learning. Students produced all material in English, and all the interviews were also conducted in English.

Enriched Reciprocal Learning Through a CSR Project Course

In this section we organize the findings project by project looking at the enriched reciprocal learning in terms of student learning, responsible management learning, and responsible stakeholder learning in four organizations based in Finland: Enviro, Fooder, NorBank, and Restoplus. All names of organizations, managers and students have been changed.

Enviro

Enviro is a high-tech Nordic manufacturing company which sells products and services to various types of organizations and operates in 16 countries. The company's very core activities relate to sustainability issues, for example in helping to save lives, reduce environmental impacts, or increase the use of renewable energy. While chiefly a technology-driven company, Enviro is recognized as an actor paying serious attention to sustainability in terms of stakeholder engagement, and they are attentive to how their values are discussed with and presented to their employees, customers, suppliers, and investors. The key boundary spanner in this case is the sustainability manager in charge of the project from the organization's side, whom we call Eric. He is a former student in the business school's master's program, who completed his degree about ten years ago (under the supervision of one of the authors) and has been active since then both in alumni networks of the school (participating in a number of sustainability-related events and projects with us) and in national and regional networks of sustainability professionals.

When the project was conducted in 2017, Enviro had almost 500 direct suppliers mainly located in developed countries in Western Europe and North America. Enviro considers it crucial to actively engage their suppliers in improving the sustainability of the suppliers' practices. In order to align their sustainability efforts with their suppliers, Enviro developed in recent years (prior to the 2017 project) a supplier code of conduct and a supplier scorecard - the latter through a previous project from our course.

Developing this supplier sustainability alignment strategy further, the 2017 project for Enviro was aimed at updating the company's Supplier Sustainability Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) based on new regulations, policies and current trends in the industry, in order to be able to measure the suppliers' performance on sustainability. The parameters and expected outcomes of the project were in this case well-defined by the organization, while the project itself was drawing on a previous student project from the course.

Student Learning Initially the students worked on this project through a literature review on supplier sustainability assessment, then by developing the SAQ through benchmarking, semi-structured interviews, and finally pilot-testing the SAQ.

The students' project diaries show that all students involved in this project consider that they learned a great deal from the experience in a variety of ways. In terms of *episteme*, Elisa finds that the project provided "a balanced combination of literature and real business practices as it involved both broad literature review as well as benchmarking with best practices" (El),[2] while Emma notes that she "learned very much by reading through the literature, the legislation and the directives" (Em). For Erica (Er), however, "finding relevant literature and linking the literature about CSR, Supplier Sustainability, and Sustainability Assessment with the empirical part of the project" was one of the main challenges. By nature, the project was not very theoretical but the students still found a way to connect its practical aspects with relevant academic literature. Unsurprisingly in this applied context involving benchmarking, all three students emphasize most explicitly their *techne* learning: Erica notes her high satisfaction in "know[ing] one more tool for assessing suppliers' sustainability [SAQ], which will help [her] in the future when working in procurement department" (Er).

All students emphasize how they have learnt simply from being exposed to real company interactions and meetings about concrete issues to be addressed, suggesting learning in terms of *nous*. Erica points out that she "got to know how the meetings with the companies are organized and acquired new skills in teamwork and professional cooperation with the company" (Er), while Emma notes how she learned "about the trends in CSR and self-assessment and how they are tackled by companies in daily work" (Em). All three students also display some reflexivity in their diaries, and this can be interpreted as some learning in terms of *phronesis*: for example, Emma notes that "[she] feel[s] [she] understand[s] more about the whole process of sustainable sourcing and this can help [her] in looking for work in the field of CSR, [and] [a]t the same time, [she] see[s] that there is so much more to learn and viewpoints to understand in the complex field of corporate sustainability" (Em), showing that she has developed a sense for how much more she will get to learn while working with CSR practically. The only form of learning that seems comparatively absent from the accounts is *sophia* (except for as a basis for *phronesis*), as the ethical and normative aspects of the project are rather downplayed by the students.

Management Learning The development through the project from a management perspective was very focused on a specific tool, the SAQ. The Enviro sustainability manager disclosed that the company had learnt a great deal from the previous year's course project, as a result of which the supplier scorecard had been implemented. As a continuation of that project, the SAQ project also led to significant

[2] For each student, the first two letters of their fictitious first name stands for a reference to their diary.

management learning as the new SAQ was adapted to new regulations and trends in the industry.

Based on the student's diaries and on discussions with Enviro's boundary spanner (Eric), including a follow-up interview 18 months after the project, we know that the company decided to implement the SAQ after the successful pilot. In this sense the company received a new tool, updated based on recent academic literature and benchmarking on recent trends in the industry. As Eric made clear in the follow-up interview (EFUI), as part of the project they got access to "a really good benchmark from a major electronics company" thanks to his networks, and this was extremely helpful to understand "how to analyse results". The main management learning can be framed as *techne*, because the deliverable was a cutting-edge tool for assessing supplier sustainability-related behavior, and know-how was acquired in relation to this tool, especially among "the sourcing guys". In order to make this happen, Eric organized "a whole day training with the sourcing organization" (EFUI). Thus, other forms of learning are also present, as (1) those managers involved in the project had to engage in reflection together with the students on how to improve the SAQ – this happened twice and "the reiteration led to a high-quality standard" (EFUI); and (2) the sourcing managers had to "reflect, fill in the questionnaires themselves in groups and identify the difficult questions" (EFUI), which led to "questioning and more tension than was expected" (EFUI) as some of the sourcing professionals felt the standard might be too challenging for some of the smaller suppliers. This implies a strong *sophia* and *phronetic* dimension, involving the voicing of ethical tensions, reflection, and dialogue leading to a pragmatic solution.

As the learning was also based on some of the academic literature the students reviewed, it was also characterized by *episteme*. In addition, the new SAQ certainly has led to managers being more aware of the practices of their suppliers, which implies enhanced *nous*. For example, key realizations coming from the responses to the questionnaire include (1) that "you cannot hold software companies to the same standard as other partners or suppliers" (EFUI), because they score very low on the SAQ, and (2) "that it is hard to make small US suppliers fill in an SAQ because they'd rather report only what is legally mandated, as they're more scared of liability [than European suppliers]" (EFUI). Finally, a key additional learning that was lifted up by Eric during the follow-up interview was that this very format of student project can lead to very useful tools for the company, and that participating in these projects pays off for companies, as it is far less internal resource-intensive than a fully internal project and it is far less costly than going through a professional consultancy, with a high level of quality.

Stakeholder Learning Since the project was focused on suppliers, the main stakeholder learning envisioned by the project is that of suppliers. The CSR logic through which this learning occurred could be characterized through the UN Global Compact (UNGC) concept of 'spheres of influence' (UNGC Principle 1), more specifically the *closest sphere of influence*, i.e. the supply chain (UNGC 2004, p. 17). As companies are expected to influence their supply chain and seek to manage risks in relation to their suppliers, they attempt to raise both the awareness of sustainability and the sustainability performance of their suppliers through tools like SAQs, which entails significant learning for suppliers (Reuter et al. 2010). Here, the learning is mostly of a *techne* nature, but other forms of learning are entailed, such as, perhaps surprisingly in relation to the students and the managers, s*ophia*. The SAQ can be seen as an ethical injunction to the suppliers. In his follow-up interview, Eric confirmed receiving feedback of learning from suppliers, notably during the "supplier days" organized by Enviro, where "a world cafe workshop with the theme of sustainable business was organized to discuss the SAQ" (EFUI). Eric elaborated on the vision for stakeholder learning by explaining that "when CEOs are engaged in [learning about sustainability] through the supplier days, [Enviro managers] hope it will cascade down in their organizations" (EFUI).

Fooder

Fooder is a large Nordic company that produces industrial food and provides various additional food services, with operations in the Nordic countries, Baltic states and Russia. It is a large employer which recruits over 2000 people annually—almost half of these recruitments are seasonal employees who work in production units or in restaurant kitchens. Fooder wants to make the recruitment of marginalized people, such as people with a migrant background and people with disabilities, a priority in its corporate responsibility policies. The key boundary spanner in this case is the senior manager in charge of the project from the organization's side, whom we call here Rose. Fooder has historically been a key donator to the business school, as well as one of the most important 'key partners' in the school's formal partnership program, which itself acts as a boundary space between the school and key corporations. Rose is widely recognized as one of the most experienced CSR managers in the country.

This project which was conducted in 2016 aimed to look for ways to develop and improve existing recruitment practices and to manage diversity at workplace, highlighting different minority-specific aspects that the company should consider in their recruitment and HR practices. The focus of the project was on marginalized groups, initially people with immigrant backgrounds, and then later through student input an equal emphasis on people with disabilities. Both groups have particularly high unemployment rates in comparison the Finnish population overall. While parameters of the project were set by the organization as “employing those with difficulties of being employed”, the students were actively involved in negotiating and setting the expected outcomes. Of the four students one had extensive experience with working with disability advocacy organizations, and one self-identified as an immigrant.

Some of the project outcomes included suggesting measures such as “anonymous recruitment, job-adjusted language requirements, language accessibility of job advertisements, international education accreditation…bureaucracy and legality checks [as well as] language training in the workplace and alternative payment tools” (Fooder student report), final report was also seen as input for the relaunch of the company’s equality plan the following year.

Student Learning Students were initially involved in discussions and later, semi-structured interviews with various managers from Fooder’s sustainability and HR department, respectively, they then carried out a literature review that included CSR-related literature on diversity management and hiring but was more focused on various national and international directives and guidelines, with a strong *sophia* element. The group also interviewed a person granted refugee status to get further insight into the situation of marginalized immigrant people, and finally benchmarked against nationally identified recruitment best practices.

When reflecting on their learning, the students reported a combination of academic learning (*episteme*) through familiarizing themselves with literature that combined HR and responsible recruitment. They also reported increased knowledge on practical aspects, involving *techne* through new technical knowledge of legislation and national guidelines, *sophia* through getting acquainted with ethical guidelines, and *phronesis* through the need to come up with practical tips in the specific context studied. This learning about the context is well described by Fabiola: “I can [now] understand [people with disabilities] on a completely new level and will continue working for their sake in the future. The things I learned about the bureaucracy around both them and people with immigrant backgrounds will definitely be useful for me in the future, as well.” (Fa).

In addition to this topic-specific learning, the *nous*, *sophia* and *phronesis* forms of leaning were also implied to have been enhanced through the teamwork process itself: “Ways to work persistently in a team, communication, practical tips about recruitment, both conscious and unconscious factors in recruitment, difficulties people different from myself face on daily basis… I want to point out the most important one: us. A team with one with [a disability], one with an immigrant background, one [from a national language minority] and one younger [of the national language majority] showed that diversity really is the formula for something great. It is the key ingredient when one wants to achieve more than just average, something better. This idea is the core of our message to [Fooder], as well.” (Fabiola). The students were initially apprehensive about the motivations driving the relaunch of the equality policy and doubtful of the willingness for more radical change to the recruitment procedures, and some even expressed fear for being coopted to paint the company in a better light than their experience indicated. However, as the project progressed and the student saw more of their ideas being accepted and diffused these fears were abated.

Management Learning The targeted management practices in the project were clearly set as improving recruitment and HR practices in order to integrate certain minorities better in the company, with benefits expected both for the prospective employees and for the company as a whole. Implicit targets included better working relations and information flow between the HR and sustainability departments, respectively. Students reported some initial tension between sustainability department who had initiated this project and HR, who usually handled recruitment policy matters.

Many recommendations that the students proposed were included and some eventually visible in the revised equality plan, and the managers from Fooder claimed they learned very much on various possibilities for them to implement the new policy. While *techne* might again have been the main form of management learning, based on the student search for best practices and benchmarking, providing a reality check and some *nous*, *episteme* cannot be neglected here, as many of the inspirational studies were academic studies. In addition, while *sophia* was not explicitly emphasized, it is inherently present throughout this project, as there is a strong normative injunction to have fair policies for disabled people and other minorities. The managers found the report inspirational also because of what they perceived to be its strong ethical grounding. They not only implemented most of the suggested tips in their new HR and recruitment policies, but were so proud of these new policies that they showcased them in a high-profile industry event to inspire other companies to follow their lead. Reflexivity on previous practices was also visible in our discussions after the course with the managers, and a strong sense of *phronesis* driving further practical action, such as an almost activist stance leading to the launch of the equality policy at a major political event.

The follow-up interview with Rose (RFUI) made it clear that the most important learning can be framed in terms of *nous* and *phronesis*: using a student group for this work was an excellent opportunity for the organization to ‘open its eyes’ to perceptions from external stakeholders:

…the best input [we got from the project] was probably through the recruitment process…and understanding what kind of picture and image we create to the people who for example go to our website, what kinds of things they find out and how diverse or not diverse we are, when you go in there, and are we setting limits that prevent people from applying for a job in our company…The other part of the work is then to consider the people who are already here working within the company, but in my view, that was the biggest learning, to understand that [an image of diversity and inclusion in the] recruitment is really, really important. (RFUI).

Thus, being exposed to how Fooder is seen from the standpoint of 'an external reality' was particularly valuable, as it led to "eye-opening" realizations. In particular, phronetic learning was achieved in relation to (1) "the requirements we have on language, we require probably too much from people, this way we limit the potential of people we can recruit", and (2) "we are also too hesitant to go for disabled people who have limited capacity to work, we had kind of a generic thinking that it's very difficult, but now that we have done it, we can see that no it's not, so there was this kind of bias" (RFUI).

Stakeholder Learning In the Fooder project, the CSR logic that might lead to further stakeholder learning is largely one of *CSR benchmarking*. The measures recommended by the students not only were incorporated by Fooder in its recruitment and HR practices, they also were fully integrated in their explicit CSR policy, made publicly available and thus they were meant to work as further inspiration for other organizations—competitors, companies and stakeholders who are interested in how this organization acts as a role model through its CSR, etc. As Rose puts it, "the projects have been mentioned in presentations, examples we have been able to share with the stakeholders, we have been working on these topics, part of the CR agenda, stories to share with the stakeholders [and that has led to a] benefit for the stakeholders and also for us" (RFUI). The new recruitment and HR practices were publicized as a best practice in at least one high-profile industry event, where they attracted some media attention. We would say that stakeholders at the industry event might have mainly learned in terms of *sophia* (a change to more ethical practices) and *techne* (a focus on concrete HR and recruitment practices)—although we have no direct evidence for such learning here.

Rose also lifts up that what "has been more eye-opening [has been] what [Fooder's recruitment practices] look like from outside, for our own employees and potential employees [as] the main stakeholder groups" (RFUI). It is clear that through the change in recruitment policies and strategies driven by the project, managers are hoping that more potential employees will feel encouraged to apply for jobs at Fooder.

NorBank

NorBank is a major retail banks in the Nordic region. It had launched a sustainability strategic initiative the same year as the course, building on previous sustainability commitments, such as the United Nations Environment Programme - Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI). As the students note, "the new strategic initiative is designed to embed sustainability development to the bank's processes and the daily work of employees [entailing] (1) implementing sustainability in client risk analysis, (2) enabling relationship managers to engage in sustainability discussions in strategic dialogues with clients, and (3) adding more sustainable financial products, such as green bonds, into the bank's product portfolio" (Student report, NorBank project).

At NorBank the key boundary spanner, Nicholas, was both a (more junior) manager in the organization and a prospective student for the course. As an external student taking the CR module, he got interested in the course and suggested both to us and to his supervisor at NorBank ('Nadia') that NorBank could have a project in order to address its learning needs. For later iterations of the course (2018–2019), Nicholas was promoted into a significantly more senior role and he is now acting as the organizational project manager.

As a subproject of the Sustainability Strategic Initiative, the project addresses two key areas: risk analysis and discussions with corporate clients. It focuses mainly on senior bankers who are the link between large corporate clients and the bank's credit department. The purpose is to help them in their task of assessing environmental risk by creating a specific tool: speaking notes. This industry-specific tool is meant to enhance the senior banker's environmental knowledge. The knowledgebase for the speaking notes is the framework of planetary boundaries (c.f. Rockstrom et al. 2009). The ultimate intention is to encourage senior bankers to engage in conversations about environmental sustainability with clients, with the main 'business case' purpose to reduce the impact of environmental risk to the bank, but with additional positive learning implications too.

Student Learning The students started with a literature review of previous studies on CSR in the finance industry and (environmental) risk management in banks, then conducted and analyzed semi-structured interviews with six senior bankers and a credit officer. They then analyzed sustainability reports within the real estate, clothing, and pulp and paper industries, based on which they wrote industry-specific speaking notes for the senior bankers, including "an instructions page, a summary of the planetary boundaries, and a framework for presenting key industry-specific environmental concerns in the chosen industries (Student report on the NorBank project).

In their diaries, the students emphasize several dimensions of learning, as they came into the project from quite different backgrounds: This is the project in which students make the strongest claim to have learnt from each other. One of them (Nicholas) already has had several years of experience in the banking industry, which meant that the other students learned a lot from his expertise. But at the same time, Nicholas himself claims to have learnt a lot from the other students too, especially from Natalia, to whom he gives credit for guiding him on more academic framing. The third student in the team, 'Ned', confirms this cross-fertilization: "Our team combination is one of the best things of the project. Nicholas has a deep understanding about the bank, financing and risk of the bank while Natalia is very detailed-oriented" (Ne).

This project may be the most *episteme*-driven, as the 'planetary boundaries' framework has been developed in academic literature (Rockstrom et al. 2009) and it constituted not only a theoretical inspiration for the students but also the foundation for the very content of the speaking notes: "In terms of academic knowledge, we use the "Planetary Boundaries" as a framework for the project's deliverables. The "Planetary Boundaries" is a new concept for me so I gather a lot of sustainability knowledge, especially environmental issues during the project. The term is newly presented and is becoming more popular in the field of environmental sustainability. Therefore, after the project, I have some very updated knowledge." (Ne) Beyond this grounding in academic literature and the various *techne* methodological tools (including the speaking notes themselves) mobilized for the project, Nicholas has also experienced the project as an opportunity for deep reflection: "I have learnt to understand that CSR can be regarded both from a risk perspective as well as a from an opportunity perspective. The project we did for NordBank made me understand that the Bank's starting point, at least now, is reputational risk. In line with my expectations, I also learned more about CSR issues that the Bank's clients face." (Ni) Thus, both *nous* and *phronesis* seem to have characterized Nicholas's learning.

Management Learning What is particularly interesting here in relation to the other projects is that this is the only project where *episteme* seems to be the main envisioned learning for management: the senior bankers are to be acquainted with the academic framework of 'planetary boundaries' through the speaking notes, and they are meant to develop a certain additional expertise when advising clients on that basis. Another interesting aspect is that a student (Nicholas) could retain ownership of the project in the organization, and follow up on how it has affected the organization. In his follow-up interview (NFUI), Nicholas claims that if anything, managers in the bank "were surprised by the good quality of the students from [the school] and the quality was so good that it can actually be used for new learnings" (NFUI). Crucially from the perspective of reciprocal learning, his assessment is that:

> …sometimes when you work with student groups it's like, who is it actually that should learn, is it the students or the organization? Ideally of course, both, but the balance could be that students learn a lot, the organization doesn't really gain so much…in this instance I believe that the big learning was that this can be used for something that can be helpful for the organization as well. (NFUI).

The speaking notes, however, have not been systematically used by advisers. Far from considering this a failure of the project he worked on, Nicholas implies that a lot of reflection and phronetic learning was elicited by the project in the organization, notably among advisers of corporate clients:

> …we weren't mature enough so it helped us along the way in building our own understanding…it was used in presentations to management and so forth and to the people who are intended to be the users of it, so it has certainly sparked discussion, it has sparked curiosity, interest, and hopefully also helped in maturing the organization. (NFUI).

Stakeholder Learning The main objective of the project was framed in terms of protecting the bank against environmental risk, by making the senior bankers more aware of these types of issues. Thus, the transmission of knowledge by the senior bankers to the clients was not framed as the primary objective. However, it does come as a significant side impact of the project, since the idea is to enhance the environmental awareness and knowledge of the clients too, through the advisory role of the senior bankers. Thus the enhanced expertise of the advisers has an impact not only on the behavior, but also on the learning, of the advised. The CSR logic that is mobilized here could be characterized as one of *advisory chain*: spreading knowledge through formal advisory roles to clients.

However, there is not much evidence that this further stakeholder learning has indeed happened:

> …the idea was that the people who cover large corporate clients would be able to use it in their dialogue with clients, and, whether that has happened or not… it's been presented to basically all of the client executives so hopefully they learned something from it and hopefully it has supported them in the dialogue with clients, but I have no evidence showing that that

> has happened. But [the clients] would have been the major stakeholder [meant to learn from this]. Hopefully. (NFUI).

Restoplus

Restoplus is a company from the restaurant industry (part of the larger Fooder group), mainly known for its lunch restaurants inside organizations. It has operations in three of the Nordic countries and runs over 1000 lunch restaurants. Here, the project is focused on one unit, the restaurant of a client company which we will call Baratos. The senior managers at both Restoplus and Baratos are very experienced and established CSR managers. Restoplus is part of the Fooder group, and thus Rose is the key boundary spanner for this project as well. The boundary-spanning element is also increased by Restoplus running the lunch restaurant at the business school. Baratos is the only organization among the case companies that had no prior strong link to the school either through its manager or the organization itself.

Restoplus wishes to develop Baratos' restaurant into a 'closed loop' one, thus the project aimed to generate concrete innovative ideas for a closed-loop restaurant that could subsequently be scaled to operations elsewhere.

Student Learning The students dealt with the project through, first, a review of existing literature on circular economy and food waste reduction, second, semi-structured interviews with three employees of Restoplus and Baratos, and third, the study of multiple case examples. As the students put it, "the solutions for reducing waste and closing the loop were developed after identifying challenges regarding food waste in [the particular restaurant]" (Student report, Restoplus project). The findings include five main suggestions for reducing waste, and three main suggestions that attempt to close the loop.

Rich learning was experienced by all three students working on this project as they described strong elements of academic learning (*episteme*) through literature on the circular economy and the closed-loop economy. The students also reported increased knowledge on *techne* (tools) especially the constraints and challenges set by the high regulation of food waste and recycling of food in the EU, and *phronesis* through the need to come up with practical tips in the specific context studied. For example, one of the students, Rama, claims that the project "enhanced my knowledge about circular economy and been able to put the theory in the context of a restaurant and [national] corporate perspective. Since we needed to generate practical solutions for reducing food waste and closing the loop, I got to find a lot of practical information through studying multiple cases" (Ra).

This project also showed the clearest learnings in terms of *nous* and *sophia*. The students frequently reference the shock of being exposed to the realities of the severity of the food waste problem. Here is an excerpt from Riley's learning diary: "I have learned a lot about it from a food waste point of view through getting an understanding where and in how many places waste is created. I realized how huge the problem of food waste is, both environmentally and in an economic way…I also got a better understanding for what a closed loop would be like and what it requires (such as innovation and networks)…I am sure that our suggestions would have been different if we would not have identified the challenges through the interactions. In this way, the suggestions became more relevant" (Ri).

Management Learning The management at Restoplus reported increased knowledge in terms of *episteme* from being exposed to new academic concepts and framing of food waste. The managers had a fairly good grasp of *techne* around food waste from earlier times, but were especially pleased with learning about practices from different cases and insights of how novel solutions around food waste had been implemented elsewhere. Some of the suggested ideas by the students were immediately implemented into the pilot with Baratos, and Restoplus later took some key suggestions from the pilot project with Baratos to be tested company-wide.

As boundary spanner in this case too, and with hindsight in her follow-up interview 18 months after the project, Rose found that in this project the most valuable learnings, beyond what she calls the "tools and toolbox" (RFUI)—implying learning in terms of *techne* – were reality checks that were largely of a practical nature. The realities that this project helped the managers to see (thus enhancing *nous* and *phronesis*) were, first of all, the need for collaboration:

> …the learning was that…if you want to limit the food waste, you have to discuss with your client, and go for client- or customer-specific solutions, the tools and the toolbox can be the same, but you cannot decide alone, so collaboration, collaboration and collaboration are the learnings we got from that. (RFUI).

Secondly, from an operational perspective, the implications for sourcing practices were particularly eye-opening:

> [What] was really eye-opening for me was that our sourcing practices can be such that we are really sourcing huge amounts of raw materials or food stuff in the restaurants, and then it's difficult for them to use, because the size of the packages that our sourcing [is] delivering are way too big, and that causes the challenge that there can be storage waste (RFUI).

Thus, Rose makes it clear that for such eye-opening outcomes, an active, relentless engagement in collaboration and dialogue with the client organization (thereby providing opportunities for *phronesis*) is what makes the learnings possible, together with the multiple case illustrations brought forth by the students.

Stakeholder Learning The pilot project from Restoplus explicitly meant to serve as an innovative, inspirational model for other restaurants from the company and create heightened awareness in customers and employees in the client company (Baratos). Managers and students reported on various combinations of learnings based on *episteme* in the form of increased conceptual knowledge about food waste, *techne* in the form of particular tools for reducing food waste such as a visible scale measuring daily waste visible to customers, and *phronesis* through the practical engagement with Restoplus in the project. The managers at Baratos became very inspired by the outcome of the project, and the students reported that "Barratos has a team called 'Champions' that will turn some of our suggestions into further action." (Riley) This also shows how ideas are diffused, cascaded and operationalized through a logic of shifting responsibility to individual employee champions. Baratos's sustainability report that released a year after the project course reports that the Champions group selected "the suggestion to use the soil formed by the biowaste in the restaurants to create herb-gardens in the premises of Baratos that would be upkept by Baratos employees. This will combine doing things together as recreational activities with a concrete way of doing CSR by engaging the employees" (Baratos CSR report 2017).

When it comes to whether the takeaways from this project have been implemented in other Restoplus restaurants, Rose notes that "[the takeaways] have been shared, but different restaurants work in different ways" and that she does not know "how well they are implemented, how well they are working" (RFUI). However, she asserts that an improvement that has come from this project has been "the information sharing, in the restaurants you have to remind people all the time about the food waste, sharing information" (RFUI), i.e., also with employees eating at restaurants, which suggests clear possibilities for further stakeholder learning.

In Tables 1 and 2, we summarize the learnings in the five projects across five dimensions, in relation to student learning and management learning, respectively.

Discussion and Contributions

In this paper we have proposed that there is a need to emphasize the reciprocal learning nature of SL encounters. We have argued that SL literature generally has paid less

Table 1 Student learning in the 4 projects across 5 dimensions

	Episteme	Techne	Nous	Sophia	Phronesis
Enviro	Literature review on suppliers' sustainability issues	Tool for assessing suppliers' sustainability	Exposure to company meetings about concrete issues to be addressed	Implicit ethical principles in the SAQ	Reflecting on learning and how much more there is to be learnt
Fooder	Literature review on HR and responsible recruitment	Knowledge of actionable legislation and national guidelines	Exposure to diverse backgrounds in teamwork	National and international directives and ethical guidelines	Coming up with practical tips in specific context
NorBank	Review of planetary boundaries framework	Speaking notes as useful tools	Within team, exposure to diverse, new realities	Ethical dimension in planetary boundaries framework	Deep learning on CSR as risk and/or opportunity
Restoplus	Review on the circular economy and the closed-loop economy	Constraints set by high regulation of food waste and recycling of food in the EU	Shock of being exposed to the realities of the severity of the food waste problem	Ethical injunction when exposed to severity of food waste problem	Studying multiple cases to generate practical solutions in specific context

Table 2 Management learning in the 4 projects across 5 dimensions

	Episteme	Techne	Nous	Sophia	Phronesis
Enviro	Partly based on academic literature review	Tool used by the company, with analysis methods	Learning about the reality of suppliers	Implicit ethical principles in the SAQ	Voicing tensions, reflecting, dialogue leading to pragmatic action
Fooder	Partly based on academic literature review	Recruitment policy implemented by company	Learning about the reality of web site visitors, (potential) recruits	Strongly based on appropriate ethical guidelines	Outside view as eye-opening, reflexivity on disability bias and better understanding of language issue
NorBank	Based on academic planetary boundaries framework	Tool assessed by the company, but not used systematically	Learning about the quality of student reports	Ethical dimension in planetary boundaries framework	Dialogues helping understanding, 'maturing' the organization
Restoplus	Mainly based on academic literature review	Tools and 'toolbox'	Learning about the need for collaboration	Mainly framed as operational issue, but ethical too	Eye-opening in implications for sourcing and relations with partners

attention to reciprocal learning aspects, instead focusing mostly on student learning and the value of the service for those served. We have illustrated reciprocity in each of the four studied projects, illustrating the various ways in which responsible student learning and responsible management learning have occurred—and all five Aristotelian types of learning—*episteme*, *techne*, *nous*, *sophia* and *phronesis*—can be seen on both sides of the academic-management boundary. Importantly, each of these learning types comes from the experience of active project work, whether as a student or as a boundary spanner. Students acquire these different types of learning through (1) writing academic literature reviews (a useful experience for their later academic endeavors), (2) developing and applying operationalizable tools, (3) confronting themselves to the realities of the project organizations and their stakeholders, (4) studying, selecting and endorsing ethical guidelines, and (5) enacting practical wisdom drawing on all these other learnings. Boundary spanners acquire these different types of learning through (1) accompanying the students in their search for relevant academic literature and learning from their literature review, (2) learning about and operationalizing the tools in their organizations, (3) confronting themselves to the possibilities of learning from student groups and to the realities of their targeted stakeholders, (4) selecting, endorsing and applying ethical guidelines, and (5) developing practical wisdom in their organizations through engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

We have also proposed a necessity to go beyond reciprocal learning as a dyad between server and served by recognizing the potential of spillover learnings to wider networks of stakeholders, although we have less direct evidence of stakeholder learning here, and therefore mainly call for further research to investigate this aspect. We believe this is in line with some underlying inspirations of SL literature, most notably the original works of Dewey (1896) who underlined that seeing "stimuli" and "responses" as independent parts in a larger system was an insufficient notion, as both stimuli and responses are changed as a result of their relationship with one another.

Our findings suggest that the roles of managers acting as boundary spanners are key in facilitating learning that is useful for both the students and the organizations, as well as envisioning a positive sustainability impact on/through stakeholders. The formal organizational partners in the project course are in most cases the key boundary spanners – the only exception among the four projects here is NorBank, where the boundary spanner who took full ownership of the project outcomes was one of the external students working on the project, Nicholas. To make the role of formal organizational partners as fruitful as possible for enriched reciprocal learning, it is paramount that the partners be very engaged in (1) the initial meeting with the student group where both sides match expectations across the students-organization boundary, (2) planning in the organization, thinking about who from the organization should be involved and when, and how often it will be necessary to meet with the students, and (3) implementing the outcomes of the project, reaching out to the appropriate internal and external stakeholders, which often involves showcasing the delivered project outcomes in internal and external events.

Thus, there are a number of challenges that boundary spanners need to navigate in order for enriched reciprocal learning to be possible. Based on the four cases and particularly the follow-up interviews, we identify five main challenges which may act as hurdles to enriched reciprocal learning. At the same time, when these challenges are successfully identified and dealt with, through the specific skills of the boundary spanners, there can be excellent possibilities for enriched reciprocal learning. Our main contribution to the theoretical argument emphasizing the role of boundary spanners in relation to reciprocal learning, below, lies in identifying these challenges and the corresponding need for particular skills of boundary spanners.

First, the *availability challenge* simply refers to how a certain amount of time devoted to the coordination of the project is needed from the manager in order to ensure that the project can be valuable—this condition was met in all projects, but several managers have pointed out in follow-up interviews that devoting so much time is very challenging. Second, the *boundary challenge* refers to the difficulty of having to meet different kinds of objectives on both sides of the academic-management boundary, notably how not only instrumental organizational objectives need to be taken into account but also thinking in terms of social impact and learning—all the interviewed managers have alluded to this challenge but also their own 'boundary skill', notably by asserting that their colleagues understand less well than them what kinds of expectations can be had from the projects. Third, the *continuity challenge* refers to how the individual ownership of a project becomes a problem when the manager leaves the organization or unit before the project has borne all its fruits, as in the fifth (removed) case, where the manager left her position soon after the project was completed and the project seemingly did not fulfill its very promising potential for the organization. Fourth, the *decoupling challenge* refers to the incentive that some boundary spanners have to work more on the project than their organization is made aware, thus creating a decoupling between what is done and what is reported (for the project to reap its full benefits) – this was a particularly interesting insight from Eric, who claimed that in order to maximize the value of the projects for the organization and management learning, he "had to do some of it a bit undercover [laughter], without saying 'oh, I'm using this and this much out of my week now to manage this project'" (EFUI). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the *epistemic challenge* refers to how knowledge generated by the student group for the project can be translated in a useful and actionable way for the organization. Here too, successful projects rely on excellent epistemic skills from the key boundary spanners, and Eric and Nicholas, who have both managed to keep in touch with their academic identities, emphasize how important this is. This is the additional, important meaning that we believe needs to be attached to *enriched* reciprocal learning: a learning that, thanks to the skills of boundary-spanning managers, can be expressed in all its different, relevant types (*episteme*, *techne*, *nous*, *sophia*, and *phronesis*), in ways that are useful and actionable for the organizations.

The challenges discussed above entail a number of implications for RML, SL and CSR. First, our focus on boundary spanners is all about understanding how the possibility for RML from SL courses can be enhanced – we would here argue that these courses hold excellent promise for RML *if* committed boundary spanners navigate the five (availability, boundary, continuity, decoupling, and epistemic) challenges well. Second, what is at stake in SL is also enhanced student learning, and committed boundary spanners from the organizations are here to see to it, together with course organizers. What is needed to achieve rewarding student (and possibly other stakeholder) learning is a true partnership, looking after different stakeholders across boundaries—in the first instance students and employees, but depending on the project, other stakeholders too. Third, these efforts are also all advancing CSR—if the course examiners *and* the boundary-spanning managers were not all passionate about CSR and ethics, they would not invest so many efforts into developing these projects. But because they are, these projects are particularly rewarding in terms of RML, student (and possibly other stakeholder) learning, and ultimately, better informed developments for CSR.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest Nikodemus Solitander, Martin Fougère and Sanchi Maheshwari declares that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and national research committees and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Research Involving Human and Animal Participants This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any of the authors.

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