by introducing a combined teaching approach, i.e., the experience-centered teaching approach (ECTA), developed by the authors.

7.2 Overview of the (Harvard) case method and its teaching approach (Author: Jürgen Radel)

Teaching using cases is not a new teaching technique; indeed, it is a very old one that uses cases to teach by example. Case teaching originated in law schools, as Desiraju and Gopinath (2001, 395) stated, but it can also be traced back to the 1800s to psychology, sociology, and medicine (Naumes & Naumes 2006, 4). Nowadays, it "... has been closely identified with the Harvard Business School ..." (Barnes et al. 1994, 34), and is even thought to have originated there (Forman & Rymer 1999, 373). It has become a widely adopted teaching method across many higher education institutions and executive education formats (e.g., Badger 2010; Desiraju & Gopinath 2001, 394). Forman and Rymer went one step further and stated that "... the case method of instruction has such importance for management education that it has been embedded in the facilities of MBA schools themselves; the pedagogy has been permanently institutionalized in highly visible arenas ..." (1999, 373).

In this section, we use the term "(Harvard) case method" (HCM) to show our appreciation for Harvard's contribution to the development and dissemination of this method. Regardless of where the case method originally developed, the basic assumptions behind the use of a case seem to be slightly different in each field of application. One similarity might be the desire to expose the learner to a situation that is as realistic as possible, depending on the field of work the learner is in now or will be in soon. "A case is defined as a factual account of human experience, centered on a problem or issue faced by a person, a group of persons, or an organization (Fisher 1978, 262)" (in: Desiraju & Gopinath 2001, 395). In general, cases are often taught in a Socratic way, »in which students carry the discussion through answers to a stream of questions« (Ellet 2007, 5). It also serves as a tool for reflection on decision-making (e.g., Snyder & McWilliam 2003) and a way to practice problem-solving skills (Forman & Rymer 1999, 378). A case should help learners to take time to analyze the situation, and should serve as a model of reality (Savery 2006) for similar situations that might occur. Those situations are usually management dilemmas or – more generally – scenarios where people interact and must solve a complex problem. The case should be based on a real situation, as suggested by the definition of the North American Case Research Association and other authors (Naumes & Naumes 2006, 9).

Nevertheless, fictional cases are also used for teaching purposes. Essentially, a case is a story or a metaphor (Barter & Tregidga 2014). Based on the discussion with a case teacher (Radel 2013), anything can be a case if it is possible to discuss the relevant matter. Students reflect on the situation they are given and try to find a solution. The prerequisite for mutual reflection is emotional involvement, i.e., empathy, with the people in the case. In fact, Desiraju & Gopinath (2001, 394) suggested using a case to address the problem of lack of emotional engagement with the subject material. However, Radel (2016) stated that it is not easy to achieve all the benefits a case might provide, because of the

participants' emotional detachment from the case and its protagonists. As a participant and facilitator, he has repeatedly noted (2011; 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; 2013; 2015a; 2015b) that traditional, written cases still often fail to fully engage most students emotionally. One way to deal with the emotional detachment to written cases is to use different formats, such as video cases or highly emotional movie scenes (Schuster 2015; Radel 2016). Badger (2010) described the learning experiences that students can have during a case discussion, including problem-solving skills and improving communication skills with a peer group. Besides these possibilities, Snyder and McWilliam (2003) considered experiences in a participant-centered learning session as chances for students to reflect on their own values and their impact on the individual decision-making process.

No matter what individual style or background teachers have, they can use what is known as a "teaching note" (TN) for support in structuring the discussion. TNs are the »recipe« to »cook up« the case in class. They plot how the case can be played between the teacher (playmaker) and the participants. A recommendation by The Case Centre[2] includes the following contents (The Case Centre 2016a):

1. Synopsis of the case
2. Target group
3. Learning objectives and key issues
4. Teaching strategy
5. Questions for discussion
6. Analysis of data
7. Background reading
8. Experience of using the case
9. Multimedia

At first, The Case Centre made TNs optional for publishing a case in their database, but now TN's have become mandatory. Their website specifically mentions this: "You must submit a comprehensive teaching note to accompany your case. (You can also submit an alternative teaching note for another author's case if it covers a new and different way of teaching it and is not simply an ›improved version‹ of the existing note)" (The Case Centre 2016b). The TN contains guidelines and recommendations for broad plans, specific questions, and timing recommendations regarding sequential sections.

This guidance might give instructors security, but it also restricts them. As a case teacher, I (J. R.) use the given structure, but I do not limit myself to it. Not surprisingly, different teachers tend to handle the TN differently. Some say they read every bit that is provided. Others strictly avoid reading the TN altogether. Some see the TN as an anchor when they are not familiar with the topic or the case, and never use (or buy) a case without a TN. Not only does the handling of the TN vary, »[c]asual observation reveals considerable variation in the manner in which faculty conduct … case discussions« (Desiraju &

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2   "The Case Centre is dedicated to advancing the case method worldwide, sharing knowledge, wisdom and experience to inspire and transform business education across the globe" (The Case Centre 2016c).

Gopinath 2001, 394), even when some case teachers agree to teach a case in exactly the way proposed by and laid down in the teaching note. As one case teacher commented,

> Before each class – we all teach the same case – we meet [five case teachers, J. R.] and discuss our teaching strategy for the coming session. The meeting usually ends with an agreement on how to teach the case. However, [smiles, J. R.] it does not work that well. Not because we do not want to, but more because you get a great idea, right at the beginning of a class or the situation just seems to demand a change of the plan we [had] agreed on a couple of minutes earlier. (Radel 2013)

Forman and Rymer explained that "… [t]he oral analysis in class discussion is characterized as a democratic event in which the instructor serves as a facilitator and equal partner with all the students" (1999, 379). Charan stressed that teaching with cases "… demands a unique approach to classroom technique" (1976, 55). He mentioned three different aspects that can be found in most teaching notes nowadays: the course design (ibid., 55), ways to use the blackboard and opening questions (ibid., 56), and the preparation for class, meaning that the teacher should know the class and the case – including the teaching note – inside out (ibid., 56).

This tension between open discussion and a structured, guided discussion, according to aspects that seem to be important from the perspective of the teacher or the author of the teaching note, requires a high level of reflection on the part of the case teacher, who has to walk a fine line. The discussion about the qualities of a good teacher is ongoing and controversial. Critical reflection about the questions (a) What do I do? (describing), (b) What does this mean? (informing), (c) How did I come to be like this? (confronting), and (d) How might I do things differently? (reconstructing) had been brought to attention by Smyth (1989, 2). Gipe, Richards, Levitov, and Speaker concluded that the ability to reflect is an important ability for a (case) teacher. They thus followed an argument by Charvoz, Crow, and Knowles, who stated that the development of self-reflective attitudes is a specific aim of inquiry-oriented teacher education programs (1988, in: Gipe et al. 1991, 914). Gipe et al. differentiated a reflective prospective teacher from a non-reflective one (1991, 916) and tried to divide these groups by analyzing "… certain psychological and personal characteristics of prospective teachers …" (ibid., 916). Although they found confirmation of the existence of a two-group cluster (ibid., 917), they noted that the sample size of 16 people might be too small and should be interpreted with caution (ibid., 917). Hattie (2009) mentioned that the "… mantra, that the teacher makes the difference, is misleading. Not all teachers are effective, not all teachers are experts, and not all teachers have powerful effects on students …" (ibid., 108). An important aspect in terms of effective teaching, in his view, is the positive relationship between the students and their teacher who should "… be concerned about the nature of their relationship …" (ibid., 128). Obviously, the wide range of personalities and expectations in a learning setting creates a challenge for the teacher to adapt to and manage.

Therefore, the questions of what makes a good case teacher and what makes a good case are probably not easily answered: "The characteristics of teachers are diverse, so is their teaching style" (Kothari & Pingle 2015, 19). The community tried to answer these

questions through case awards.[3] One case teacher commented, e.g., that cases should be "about a hot company. Per definition a company that would hire our students" (Radel 2015a). In sum, a single definition of a good case as well as of good case teaching might not be possible at all, and the title of Naumes and Naumes' book might be the best way to describe it: "The *Art & Craft* of Case Writing" (2006, italics by J. R.).

According to the synopsis above, the (Harvard) case method revolves around issues regarding case selection and developments, case-related teaching approaches, and whether or not to use "recipes," i.e., teaching notes. Even if a case discussion or case teaching could be influenced or modified to deal with more up-to-date scenarios, the (Harvard) case method itself implies a discussion about a distant situation – the case – and its relationship to others, namely the protagonists within the case. However, to my knowledge (J. R.), the (Harvard) case method does not explicitly facilitate reflection on the here and now of the teaching situation. Nonetheless, the distance of the concept makes it suitable for groups that are not used to reflecting deeply on their own behavior. This, in turn, can help students take their first steps toward the more emotionally challenging reflection facilitated by the group dynamics (GD) approach. The following chapter therefore examines the (Harvard) case method from a group dynamics perspective.

7.3   The (Harvard) case method from a group dynamics perspective

From a group dynamics perspective, there may be blind spots associated with the (Harvard) case method. The term "blind spot" refers to the place where the optic nerve passes through the retina (Rookes et al. 2007, 8). This aspect of human visual perception[4] can only be recognized by putting the viewer in a certain setting (Fig. 35).

Fig. 35: Visual exercise to reveal the blind spot of the human eye.

Close your right eye. Hold the image about 20 inches [50 cm, approx. arm's length] away. With your left eye, look at the black dot. Slowly bring the image closer while looking at the black dot. At a certain distance, the black beam will appear solid. For the right eye turn the page 180° and close your left eye. (Chudler, E. 2016)

Metaphorically, the term »blind spot,« as applied to individual (psychological) and/or social systems, means that – in the here and now – what is unconscious cannot become conscious (Schuster 2016b, 11, 17).

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3   One case teacher suggested to Radel (2015b) that there might be a bias in the awarded cases. Women are usually underrepresented in written cases, as well as small and medium-sized European companies. This could just be a reflection of the real world (fewer women in CEO positions, more companies outside the EU etc.) or a real bias. This is a question that cannot be discussed here in detail, but is worth looking at in future research.

4   It cannot see what cannot be seen.