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Power Games in Strategy Formation Processes – A Performative Interpretation**

Abstract – The article approaches an understanding of power within strategy formation processes established by verbal and bodily communication. On this note, we examined concepts of power constituted by hierarchy and developed a conceptual framework for a performative interpretation of power. In line with Austin's (1962) and Butler's (1990, 1993, 1997) concept of performativity as well as strategy-as-practice research (Balogun et al., 2007; Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009) we ask: How is persuasion achieved by strategic actors during strategy formation processes? To explore verbal and bodily communication empirically we developed an experimental setting in a small high-tech company located in Germany in December, 2012. The Results indicate that (1) during critical incidents – when perspectives clash – actors use arguments to gain persuasion. (2) The data illustrates that independently of their hierarchical position within the company, strategic actors show an equal distribution of argumentative techniques.

Keywords: **Arguments, language, nonverbal behaviour, performativity, political processes, strategy formation processes**
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