Reconsidering Reflecting Processes: What makes a reflecting team reflecting processes

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The Reflecting team has drawn much attention from all over the world since Andersen introduced the process in 1987. Also in Japan some practices of reflecting teams have started recently, yet there are still only few studies to explore the theoretical implications of the reflecting processes. Andersen preferred to minimize the use of the term "reflecting team", because that term represents only one of almost infinite methods of organizing "reflecting processes" which means the shiftings between being engaged in talking about an issue and thinking about the talking about the issue. Therefore we must avoid the danger of its being reduced to just a technique, a novel "how to" in the manual of therapeutic practices. Such a reduction would be the loss of the philosophical richness of the ideas behind the concept, and the ways in which the ideas can be further developed.

This paper attempts to examine the theoretical implications of the reflecting processes by applying Luhmann's theory of observation, as a theory of distinction. Luhmann has defined the concept of observation abstractly, so that it can be applied to psychic as well as to social operations. In addition, to explore the essence of reflecting processes we utilized three illuminations that glow by themselves while at the same time reflecting other lights. The first was the metaphor of mirror by Luhmann, that makes distinction to illuminate second-order observing systems. The second was "transversalite" by Guattari that makes distinction to indicate the concept of heterarchy. The third was the ancient Japanese linguistics by Sakabe that makes distinction to indicate "hanashi". These illuminations enable effectively our exploration about the theoretical implications of the reflecting processes.