The changing role of a senior manager in a new organisation:

an emergent process of mutual recognition

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We cannot solve our problems with the same
thinking with which we created them

The only source of knowledge is experience

Albert Einstein

Preface

When I started my PhD research a statement of one our teaching professor was that we – PhD students – stood on the shoulders of giants, meaning that a lot of research had already been done and that we should build on that knowledge. I have read a pile of interesting articles and books and realised that the more you read and learn the more you become aware of how much more there is to learn. During these years of research a lot of people have been willing to listen to my stories, discuss my experiences and reflect on them, which was an enormous source of inspiration.

I want to express my gratitude to all the people who have supported me.

To Herman van den Bosch and Ron Tuninga, who made it possible to work in a life long learning environment of the Open University PhD School and who have made the combination of work and study possible for me and many other students. It was a challenge to work with and learn from "colleagues" at the faculty of Management Science. I was privileged to discuss my work with Doug Griffin, he really helped me to understand the insights of the theory of complex responses processes and connect it to my practice, thanks to his guidance I realise that questions are much more important than answers. Marc Vermeulen, thank you for your willingness to transfer my research to the University of Tilburg, it has given my research an interesting extra dimension.

Special thanks to my colleagues on the Executive Board of the Open Univeristy, Theo Bovens and Fred Mulder, for your confidence and the way we were able to perform in a team, and discover and use our complementary qualities.

Doing research besides a busy job, family and social life was supported by lively discussions and involvement of Frits Simon, Rob Bouman and Walter Bolwerk, members of my learning group, and Thijs Homan and Nol Groot, supervisors of this learning group. I have learned as much from the discussions on their work as of mine. So many people have been involved and have spent valuable time on

helping me. I cannot call them by name, because I have to respect their privacy, but I am very grateful for their contribution and effort, which has made it possible for me to do and finish my research.

Trudi, my companion and love, has supported and stimulated me with her understanding, patience and encouragement and has given the space to practise and study at moments and places one can hardly imagine. Noortje, Lotte and Maarten: looking at your curiosity and entrepreneurial behaviour has often helped me to get over a difficult moment during my research, giving up was never an option! At the end of this fantastic journey I promise you, as we always do when someone of our family passes an exam, to plan a trip together to a beautiful place somewhere on this earth and experience that life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away!

Cees Brouwer

Abstract

In science certain assumptions, philosophies and patterns of reasoning lead to concepts or theories as systems thinking, behaviourism, etc. In the last two centuries, since Kant, our Western world has based education, science and business increasingly on a rational way of thinking where the interdependency of human beings, predictability, planning and control, are dominant in affecting our way of thinking, acting and judging. This has influenced our way of thinking of leadership and strategic management, i.e. the action of senior management, as it has influenced me in both my education and career.

In the eighties of the twentieth century complexity theory entered organisational science (Anderson, 1999; Burnes, 2005). What started with research in natural science models, making clear possibilities of the emergence of self-organising behaviour (Prigogine, 1980), was transferred to a more human complexity approach (Goldstein et al., 2010; Hazy et al., 2007) in which attention was paid to the micro-dynamics of local interactions and the ways global patterns can arise from locally interacting participant behaviour. There are two separate directions: complex adaptive systems and complex responsive processes, both use the concepts of self-organisation, diversity, unpredictability, nonlinearity and emergence. They are used to characterise the organisation and its environment. Where the former is focused on an interventionist approach, the latter denies any form of manageability, i.e. the future is radically unpredictable. The complex responsive processes position (Stacey, 2001; Johannesen, 2009; Mowles, 2011) therefore takes a different and unique perspective on the interaction of interdependent people in their ordinary everyday experience. Through the continuing interaction new patterns of perception and interpretation arise that have not existed before.

The roots of the theory of complex responsive processes are in complexity science (Prigogine, 1980,1996; Prigogine and Stengers, 1988), figurational sociology (Elias, 1970, 2000) and social psychology from a pragmatic view (Mead, 1932, 1934). With that, the theory of complex responsive processes is based on fundamentally

other assumptions than the ones which are the basis for thinking of organisations and change processes. This stands in stark contrast to the dominant view of systematic processes in the organisational world where the future is split off and exclusively focusses on the concepts of vision, simple rules, values and plans, i.e. reducing it to the aspects that can be managed and manipulated to determine the present (Griffin, 2002:207). But organisational development in strategic management is in the theory of complex responsive processes unpredictable. Focusing on the understanding of social processes as one of the core elements of the theory of complex responsive processes is the research and reflection of everyday experience of the organisational practice of senior managers. The managers are the researchers themselves. Research becomes practice, with a focus from "within". Research entails taking all these local interactions and serious to reflect on them, trying to develop an understanding of the complex dynamics involved (Stacey and Griffin, 2005:35). The basic ideas of the theory of complex responsive processes influence research that is consonant within process of mutual dictation, mutual anticipation and meaning making (Mowles, 2011:85).This research method involves the writing of several narratives, case studies based on open interviews, describing experiences of our everyday practises with situations of acting, feeling and thinking - getting feedback, being questioned and having discussions. It involves writing and re-writing, with themes and sensemaking emerging from constructing theoretical statements based on concrete experiences.

The research process contains aspects of describing, categorisation and theming (related to the grounded theory, (Strauss, 1987), studying literature and recognising themes reflexively. This process can be seen as a sensemaking process, constructing theoretical statements from concrete experiences (interactive process as a part of grounded theory approach). This approach shows a strong link with the work methods in management and leadership. In this research taking the perspective of the theory of complex responsive processes as a way of explaining the experience described in narratives and case studies, this theory produces an understanding of emergent processes of mutual recognition for senior managers as social processes between interdependent people, not simply the

choices of an autonomous individual. The move to the central importance of interdependence invites critical reflection on what we are doing together. If one understands senior management roles as emerging complex responsive processes of mutual recognition, the work of effective leaders is not just about techniques for disciplinary power but also the fostering of reflection on what they as leaders are doing in the belief that stability and change will emerge in such reflection.

Introduction

In the first decade of this century the public education sector in the Netherlands often recruited senior managers for universities from the private sector in order to initiate necessary changes in these academic institutions. After a successful career in the private sector, I also changed jobs and joined the Open University as a vice president of the Executive Board. Changes within universities were (and still are) often strongly guided on the basis of a conventional top-down controlled change method guided by senior management. According to their intentions they want the system to work as a whole. In turn, employees tend to respond rationally, which makes it possible to predict the most effective intervention and reach changes to the desirable results (Zhu, 2007). Being appointed as a newcoming senior manager I was supposed to use the same work methods. Although I was familiar with these aspects being core elements of systems thinking, in my own practice I used various ways of participation and possibilities of self-organisation in my prior working environments. Still, I was aware that the aspects of systems thinking give strong guidance to the present way of thinking in our society, in education and research as well as in working environments, in our acting, thinking and judging. Our observations are conditioned by these ideas and assumptions and influence our behaviour and interaction with others (Covey, 1998:22).

In the eighties of the 20th century complexity theory was introduced, which was based on new insights into the self-organising capacity of nonlinear dynamical systems (Nicolis and Prigogine, 1977). One of the important findings was the option complex self-organising behaviour to emerge. The general applicability of Prigogine's theory in organisational theory had important implications for all levels of social systems and thinking about strategy and strategy making. Aspects as unpredictability, autonomous evolution and time dependent success or failure of non-linear dynamical social systems provided an alternative view on organisational change (Burgelman, 2009). Management scholars have attempted to introduce some of the ideas into management science such as organisational becoming (Prigogine 1980) in the role of managerial intentionality (Tsoukas and Chia, 2002) and strategy treating process at macro level (Burgelman, 1983, 2009). The theory of complex responsive processes (Stacey et al. 2000) also built upon ideas of Prigogine, but with a focus on the

micro level of strategy. His focus is on the interaction of interdependent people in their ordinary conversations of everyday life. Stacey stresses that change and organisational development is emerging in a non-predictable and nonlinear way. This cannot be conceptualised as a result of organisational blueprints, change plans, management and control outside the members of the organisation (Zhu, 2009, Mowles, 2011). These are radically different assumptions than the ones which are the basis of systems thinking.

Changing as a senior manager to a public university turned out to be an exciting and inspiring process, but also a process full of surprises and misunderstanding. People reacted differently than I had expected, and, as I came to understand in the course of my research, several colleagues at other universities had had very similar experiences. I interpreted my role at the university based upon my old patterns of behaviour, roles and customs that I was used to (Bourdieu, 1990; Weick, 1995) with very little thought as to whether that was the right course of action in the new context. At certain moments in time I felt hopelessly de-skilled, despite many years of experience. In spite of my craftsmanship, developed over many years of successful functioning in commercial companies, I was surprised that many of my skills and much of my experience was not as helpful in the university context in the way as I intended it. Experiencing that almost everything seemed to be different and that only a (small) portion of my own experience and knowledge could be (re-)used, felt quite uncomfortable.

My research has shown that the observed and experienced dynamics could not be captured in linear plans that were distilled from analysis in these research areas. I (apparently) was part of a self-organising process in which: ". . . *entities are forming patterns of interaction and at the same time, they are being formed by these patterns of interaction* . . . (Stacey, 2010:57)". This made me more aware of the impact of interdependence and creating meaning in (local) interaction (Mead, 1934), and power relations in human behaviour, power struggles within fields (Swartz, 1997; Bourdieu, 2004) and the processes that are associated with inclusion and exclusion (Elias, 2000). The importance of iterations of reflection and adjusting images in interaction with others during research has provided a basis which has been helpful and valuable for the understanding

of others in similar positions. In this process I have experienced a tension between staying true to the behaviour and ideas that I were familiar with and at the same time beginning to think and work with an essentially different approach. I ended up with many reflections on interdependence, emergence, nonlinearity and self-organisation, insights of the complex responsive processes approach (Stacey et al., 2000; Stacey, 2007; Stacey 2012) as another possible analytical point of view.

Recognition of differences in this emerging socialising process of acceptance and rejection has helped to understand what is going on with myself, and others. I experienced that issues around recognition can be a struggle, which I attempt to reveal and describe in reflective narratives in order to open this important world of meaning to others. Narratives and single case studies describe and try to clarify how we enable and constrain each other in these processes of intermingling and recognition. Honneth (1995) draws on Hegelian dialectic in order to identify the mechanics of how this is achieved, as well as establishing the motivational and normative role recognition can play in understanding and justifying social aspects. Following Hegel and Mead, Honneth identifies three 'spheres of interaction' which are connected to 'patterns of recognition'. These are necessary for an individual's development of a positive relation-to-self. Sometimes disruptions are serious enough to cause ruptures in the course of ordinary life, and it is in such moments that the possibility of overcoming misrecognition emerges. The struggle which comes with misrecognition (Honneth, 1995; Schiff, 2009) when taking up a new role is an important aspect, but has proven to be difficult to articulate and talk openly about. On the one hand there is the orthodoxy which attempts to maintain and restore the doxic state of the taken-for-grantedness, and on the other hand there is the heterodoxic existence of competing possibilities (Bourdieu, 1977:169). The differences between the old and new world were so immense that in order to survive I had to open up, learn and change (some of) my basic assumptions and beliefs.

The narratives and single cases describe examples of ways in which human beings organise themselves in relation to one another and provide insights into how things go on in everyday, ordinary life.

In the last synopsis chapter I revisit all the projects once more and reflect on them in a final round. Starting with an "I" perspective and becoming aware of its characteristics I argue that in a process of mutual recognition in which participants really want to recognise the differences, it is possible to build bridges between these differences and reach a "WE" perspective. By opening up a world of competing possibilities - such as the perspective of complex responsive processes - alternative stories about how we organise, and might organise ourselves, heterodox narratives and cases open up the possibility to get a better understanding and explain what we are doing and why we are doing that in the management of the public sector.

This thesis is structured in three sections. As the reader will notice this research method is not common. The research as reported about has been research from a reflexive and personal point of view. This way of doing research is part of the theory of complex responsive processes (Stacey, et al., 2000), developed at the University of Hertfordshire and takes everyday experience as the primary focus of study. Due to the personal point of departure I explain some of my background, my social and working environments and context. The logical consequence of taking everyday experience of living and working in an organisation as a primary focus of study and the fact that the interaction between people is patterned primarily in narrative themes, the first two parts are about narrative descriptions. As such the reader will not find the methodological account, the model and the hypothesis at the beginning of the thesis, since the theory is generated from data and is based on one's actual experience. The first and the second section describe the data (narratives and cases studies) and the third section about the method and the techniques.

The first section consists of two chapters in which I describe my personal development towards senior management positions. The first chapter describes my upbringing and working environments with special attention to my assumptions, ideas and performance as a manager, in order to give the reader an impression of the background and thinking of the participant researcher. In the second chapter a large change project is described of which I thought - in terms of personally familiar ways of (traditional) thinking - to be

successful. Just after ending this change programme I started with my PhD research and in reflection om my experience a surprising addition became clear. In the final section of this chapter I describe how I had to struggle with not being recognised and was confronted with the limitations of my own thinking and perspective.

The second section, the chapters three and four, is focused on the changes related to a senior position in another organisation. In the third narrative, chapter three, I will describe my experience of the interaction with members as part of a process of changing the working relation between the executive board and the workers council, where you as a reader can see what people, senior managers, do all the time: along with recognising and misrecognising the need to become more reflective about that in interaction. In chapter four several experiences of colleagues in similar situations are described. In these stories the reader will see that power relations and relations of recognition, including misrecognition, exist in the movement of dialectical form: one cannot exist without the other. The reader will also see that the complex responsive processes approach stresses the explorative qualities of conflicts, which can emerge in these processes of (mis) recognition, because in the conflictual processes through which we explore the other and ourselves at the same time do this again in any encounter with any conversation partner. This is not a planned process but one of local interaction and continuous communication in which people experience the struggle which can come with misrecognition, where they develop a readiness to recognise, reflect on their own and others' behaviour, i.e. they develop an active understanding of what happens in everyday life situations which can be the basis for reaching mutual understanding.

Section three, the chapters five and six, contains the question of method and researching one's practice and a synopsis of my work. In chapter five the reader will find a methodological account with an explication of the techniques used which fit in doing research within the complex responsive processes approach and the corresponding methodological assumptions. The techniques used are narrative descriptions and single case studies with open interviews. Both are closely connected to grounded theory, as they are helpful in the abductive process of determining theory or concepts from collected data. This chapter closes with a section about trustworthiness and

ethics in relation to (this form of) qualitative research.

Chapter six, the synopsis of the movement of my thoughts, can be seen as a last new narrative, a final cycle of this process of research thinking on theoretical aspects focusing on the processes of recognition, a "WE" perspective where people realise their mutual dependency and where activity emerges in the social interactions between these people. The insights of the complex responsive processes approach return, because they offered an explanation to my questions concerning which the existing research perspectives could not help me anymore. This chapter finishes with an overview of what I think my contributions are to knowledge, and practice and suggestions for further research. The last seventh chapter contains the conclusions of my research.

Section I

Personal development to senior positions

Personal development to senior positions

In this section I will describe my background and the path to becoming and being a senior manager. The described narratives, with experiences and links to emerged themes, are still characterised by a description of performed activities with the idea that I have done all these things according to my own idea and reference, and in the end it felt good working according to these ideas. Some of the descriptions have elements of the manager being right and "others" being wrong, although I had a strong wish to change this attitude. The narratives are by no means a heroic description of the achievements of me as a manager, on the contrary, they show that, despite my successes, I was still to a large degree unreflective at this point of time. Even in interacting with colleagues within the university and I stimulated participation of people, it was still a very naive approach to management and leadership. I now realise that I was taking a lot for granted and that I did not question my own assumptions. At first the narratives had been writen in the present, in the situation, but in the end I changed this to the past tense. I left the narratives in the past tense since I want the reader to see and experience what and how I was thinking then. During the research process, my insights have changed and I have been able to use this knowledge in everyday processes at work. In the synopsis I will return to these narratives and rediscuss them with experience gained knowledge.

2

Personal description

In our lives we are often confronted with change. This change can involve ourselves or the social context we belong to. For most people, the early years of life are characterised by learning and growth. This is an ongoing process during our educational years at education institutions. The acquired knowledge and expertise form us, so that we become increasingly active in forming the world which is forming us. My school experiences were very positive, learning came easy to me and I liked it a lot and my parents encouraged and stimulated me. When I entered the labour market and gained my first work experience, my first impressions were that my skills were mostly adequate, but that it was not enough to understand business practices. I thought there was a lack of involvement of (top) management in operational processes and a limited or absent knowledge on many practical issues. This is, in my view, an important reason why strategy and execution are so poorly interconnected. To me it was clear that knowledge of and relationships between the two were both ingredients of the emerging common solutions. It certainly was one of the drivers to enrich my knowledge alongside my work in the form of an additional study. I had little reference in understanding how (managerial) activities and decisionmaking took place outside the work floor, and how persons acted in this environment. Many aspects were new and unknown.

Van Kalmthout (2010) says that people are influenced by their environment, that they are the product of conditioning processes and are caught in a psychological conditioning and cultural programming. Every human being has his own history, experiences and impressions, in which there is learning, growth and change. At the beginning of my career, my social background certainly played a role. For quite a long time I felt that I wanted, maybe needed, to show what I was capable of. Once I had reached a result or destination there was always a new challenge and insufficient rest to enjoy what I had achieved. In the last decade I have become more aware of my environment. I ask people around me more often to articulate responses and give feedback, and I discuss my own performance when activities lead to unexpected results. I have become calmer and can now enjoy results because I feel there is more balance between ambition and satisfaction with achieved results. Now - after a career of 25 years in the private sector - I am

ultimately responsible for the results of the Open University[1].
The university is facing a changing market and growing competition,
resulting in insufficient growth of revenues related to cost. The
technology becomes obsolete and too much of the experienced
workforce shows little flexibility. Change is necessary, but how to
achieve this remains unclear. Before I attempt to reflexively present
my own experience, I will share a few things with you about my
background.

2.1 Personal background – growing up

In the sixties, I grew up in a working class family. My parents worked
hard for a proper base of life and made it possible for their children
to study. Where necessary, the children made themselves useful,
because 'no one has ever died from work'. Being together and acting
together, while always maintaining enough individual space, stayed
with me. My parents had great respect for people who had a higher
position in society, although they had almost no relations with people
of this group. That the man in the family should earn the money for
living expenses and job security was a central belief. Every weekend
we attended church, in our case the Salvation Army. The methodist
approach particularly attracted me. A happy experience of faith I
could convert directly into actions. Social activities were a structural
part of the organisation, which made participation easy. The practical
activity gave me great satisfaction, because I could express my own
conviction, and I saw a direct effect of my actions. These experiences
have developed my social skills.

At the start of the PhD programme the work of G. H. Mead was
presented. In his book *Mind, Self and Society* Mead (1934) considers
the relationship between self-consciousness of people and the
society they form. His central thesis is that human consciousness
arises from the interaction between people. Looking for a summary
or simpler text, I found an old Open University course
(Verrips-Reuken, 1985) with several pages referring to the topics of
Mead's work. I could not remember anything of this section, although
I had studied this material in the early nineties and passed my exam.
Why I was looking into this old material I cannot recall, perhaps
unconsciously a connection had been established. I now realise that

at the study I was only at the level of gathering and reproducing knowledge. I did not act on the theory, i.e. become reflexive. Mead describes that the realisation of ideas and expectations start with children when they begin to use language to empathise with others. As we age we orient ourselves increasingly on what others ("they") generally expect (*generalised other*) instead of a specific other. Between a gesture and a response to that, a process of sensemaking takes place; in this communication gestures become symbols. According to Mead, people are able to respond to these symbols because they put themselves in each other's position; he calls this temporary empathy *role taking*. Only by continuous role taking people are able to understand each other and deal with each other in a meaningful way. By using language, people can put themselves in positions of others and already evoke in mind the response they expect from others. Continuous role taking helps to reach a self-consciousness, an identity. Mead claims that we are only aware of ourselves as we move in the role of others and understand that those others see us as an individual, of whom they have ideas and expectations. Within self-awareness general social values and norms are taken up, with the behaviour guided by collective attitudes and assumptions.

Now in re-reading Mead I for the first time became aware of the importance of my parental home as determining a part of my identity. The ideas of society that my parents have passed on to me were determined by their own position in society and their experience. My image of working environments was built from that one-sided workman's perspective, with a limited degree of (perceived) freedom. This played a dominant role in decisionmaking in the early years of my career.

2.2 My first positions - looking for structure and security

After my studies in Informatics at a University of Applied Sciences I fulfilled my military service in the same field of expertise. After that period I received an offer to continue this work as a civilian. My wife had repeatedly urged to continue my studies at university. In line with my upbringing a man ought to earn a living, so my choice was focused on work and study came in second. After four years I

transferred to one of the regions of the public KPN[2] where I became consultant for the board. During this period I took a business course in order to complete the study of business organisations and processes and broaden my technical perspective. During this study Minztberg (1979) was discussed, and his discussion of the mechanistic machine bureaucracy characterised KPN well. The organisation consisted of clearly defined sections with solid relationships in a set order. Aspects such as structuring of activities and model-based planning were in line with my technical background. My notion was that by complementing my other skills I could do a better job in that position. My focus was still limited to knowledge and my personal actions.

In the PhD programme we discussed Groot (2007:137) who describes another process of gaining "knowledge" in which a group of people addresses a specific subject simply by starting a conversation about that subject. This is a way of looking actively for hidden, unspoken feelings of involved people and open them to discussion. With this Groot describes a way of acting by which my own uncertainty can be discussed and resolved. I will come back to that in the narratives in the following chapters. In the first decade of my career, in retrospect, my activity was mainly focused on fellow employees and there was a certain reluctance to show myself in the hierarchy. The first jobs offered me the security I had been looking for: a stable employer (the government), a stable organisation in terms of clear procedures and clear benchmarks for work to be performed. I have long held on to the ideas and beliefs that I have inherited from home, mostly because it provided security.

2.2.1 Privatising the public company - experiencing uncertainty

In the late eighties the market in the telecommunications industry changed. KPN became a private company and had to deal with other stakeholders. The technology still determined strategic choices, but the market and shareholder value also played a role. Managers were expected to perform other activities, and we had to prepare for intense competition, but how? One of my own ideas was to move in the value chain with services and I had the opportunity to start with consultancy activities on telematics (TeleConsult). Within a short time five people were employed. This entrepreneurial organisation

2   Short description of the company KPN see Appendix 1

acted as a small, aggressive and innovative organisation, with a loose division of labour and little formalised behaviour, characterised as a simple structure by Mintzberg (1979). The diversity of the consultants and the quick decision process of the small organisation meant that TeleConsult had soon built up an impressive portfolio. Determination of the agency's strategy and realisation of contracts were executed by the same people. This process was supported by weekly group meetings. For me as a manager the daily cooperation with people in the primary process was important in order to connect strategy and practical implementation. I realise that, although I wanted to stimulate and realise participation of my colleagues, these activities were built on presumptions of gaining control of human activity. Groot (2007) states that improvements have to do with human behaviour. His experience was that working in groups, where this behaviour is influenced mutually, scores higher than individual work does. He shows the importance of communities of practice where working, learning and innovations go hand in hand (Groot, 2007:106). Sharing practical experience and involving people from operational levels provides better performance.

In the early nineties, when KPN still oriented more on customer focus and commercial activities, I was made manager in the sales division. The behaviour of my selling staff in particular fascinated me, but in practise I noticed that I did not speak the same language and understood their motives insufficiently. I felt my technical and business knowledge, and experience, were unsufficient to manage them. I started with several modules of organisation psychology at the Open University I interacted with teachers on a regular basis. My goal was to perform better by increasing my knowledge of psychology and sociology. I tried to practise what I had learned and gave feedback on experiences in coaching sessions. The knowledge enrichment helped me in organising my thoughts and introduced new perspectives, and as such theory and practice worked well together. I liked structuring things, so it helped me to get an overview of the playing field and gave me a feeling of control. Eventually I used the required expertise in the interaction with my surroundings, but still with the intention of managing it.

Through my experience in various management positions I have gained more insight in the activities of these roles and my ideas and beliefs have adjusted over time. I have a better understanding of the challenges and issues at management level and how difficult it is to reach decisions. This insight has led me to revise my view of my environment, and the involvement of many more actors in activities. My thinking is nuanced more and more attention is paid to perspectives focused on both implementation as well as management. I experience that filling in a management function provides sufficient degrees of freedom within the given frameworks to reach to a personal style. My initial experience and ideas are of use because I have experienced first-hand what it means to live and work in an operational environment.

2.2.2 Expansion of the private company - even more uncertainty

Unisource Business Networks was a new company that KPN had set up in an expansive period. Old monopolistic rules were changed due to compliance with customer demand with the consequence of changes in the internal processes and necessary technical adjustments in the infrastructure. This choice was made inevitable by the competition. In this turbulent period old and new methods were mixed up, control was performed via old and sometimes new guidelines and there were many personnel changes. For managers, there was much uncertainty: scope and objectives were still in motion, it was not clear if you handled correctly. Although the results of my department were excellent, I felt uneasy about my personal capabilities. A personal assessment gave me a better idea of my strengths and weaknesses. My strengths were creativity, persuasiveness, extraversion and working in a structuredly way. I had a management style where aspects of control and responsibility were strongly present. The primary focus was on preferences for structure, rules, standard practices, methods and techniques of organisation along with control and universal laws. Hatch (1997:14) connects these aspects, if properly designed and managed, to organisations described as systems of action and decisionmaking driven by standards, efficiency and effectiveness for intended purposes. The control aspects are characteristic for modernist organisation theories. I was recommended to use less control and allow space for initiatives. I was aware that I used structuring and planning

(activities and tools) to get an overview, I did not realise sufficiently that my need to structure forced a structure on others and thereby took away space from them. Homan (2005:23) describes this as planned, monovocal behaviour, with one reality structure which is dominant and controlled in a planned and manageable way. He describes how meaning is created in interaction with others and that the local context for actors is influenced by local conditions (Homan, 2005:75). Although I understood this reasoning, I could not explain what apparently was a result of a natural self-organising process on my part and that of my colleagues acting in our organisation. Streatfield (2001) says that as a manager you can be in control and not in control at the same time, which means that you can influence by interventions, but also that others can act according to their own ideas, which does not correspond with your own ideas at the same time. By sharing local interaction and being aware of the power differences in this interaction one can come to interventions with a desired result. A personal challenge was to find a "right" form to achieve a positive influence from my management position and find a new way of leadership.

2.2.3 Focus on business development, more flexibility in thinking and acting

After the privatisation, KPN developed a more market oriented approach. The use of mobile telephony and the Internet grew explosively. A consequence of innovation and expansion was a growing demand for new expertise and flexible capacity in the organisation. There was also a demand for a project-based approach, with the aim to professionalise the discipline of project management and a good control of projects, organised in a separate division. KPN Project Management, a central organisation, took care of all strategic projects for the entire organisation at national and international level. Assignments varied enormously, i.e. research of new technologies, implemention of technical infrastructure, organisational and process changes, staff outplacement. I started to manage a group of professional projectmanagers, and within a year I joined the management team with responsibility of professionalising the expertise area of project management. In the acquisition and implementation of projects I experienced that individual differences in clients and project managers are an important factor in the success

of projects. I was still part-time involved in customer assignments because I personally wanted to experience the professional practice. I was attracted to two additional aspects of this area of work: a. flexibility because it offered me the opportunity to be active in various business units and b. professionalism, because provided me the personal responsibility of delivering a good service. The selection of my projects was always in areas of important change and they gave me the opportunity to connect strategic vision and working applications. The change in topics and contacts provided a challenge in which I could put a lot of my energy and ideas.

The KPN Project Management division had its own academy which offered a set of educational resources where project management methodology, techniques and related skills were key aspects. One of the educational programmes of the academy was about Change Management. In this programme the colour print thinking of De Caluwé and Vermaak (1999) was a central concept. They identified five fundamentally different ways of thinking about change (*paradigms of change*). Each paradigm is characterised by a colour and based on a certain portrayal of change agents with substantial differences between diagnosis, change strategy, the intervention plan, and interventions. Starting point of this approach was that communication about change will only be clear if one is aware of one's own paradigm and that of others. This awareness created a communication approach that was an integral part of the change approach. The colour (coding) model has helped me think about my own role, the roles of others (my customer, colleagues in the profession) and look at activities in change programmes. The blue paradigm fitted me well, although it was – in my opinion – not as extreme as described in its pure form. I nevertheless recognised several of the characteristics, i.e. change is possible by formulating a clear result in advance; making an appropriate roadmap; monitoring the steps and based on that guidance; keeping the process stable and controlled as much as possible, and reducing the complexity as much as possible; looking for the most practical solution, and thinking that the world can be planned and this plan can be realised. However, I found that there are limitations associated with that paradigm and that situations can be observed in other ways. My perspective is only one of them. Looking in a different way at aspects

of other paradigms, things I would not have seen from my own perspective became clear. For each paradigm the writers provided a small language guide with words which characteristically belong to that paradigm. At the time I thought it was very interesting and it was helpful to recognise the usage of specific words in language. Now I see a connection with the ideas of Mead, and the importance of language in sensemaking in processes of gestures and response.

I was in a position to select projects in areas of major change, new business development projects, where new technology from KPN research had to be transferred to the parent company KPN. Kaplan (2007) argues that organisations at the beginning and at the end of the innovative life cycle must be managed differently than in the middle. The focus in organisational strategy and culture differs. For a mature business there is a focus on optimisation, meeting existing customer requirements, analysis and planning: "stick to your business" and act in line with processes and structures. The innovative focus is characterised by anticipating customer needs, discovering what you do not yet know, setting hypotheses and learning, rewarding experimentation, and allowing freedom and flexibility. Each stage in the innovation life cycle has a specific colouring of leadership and also a specific need for the management of projects. Christensen and Rozenboom (1999) describe how companies cannot keep the upper hand in their industry when confronted with certain changes in the market or in technology and they state that the answer to this dilemma of innovation is not better management, i.e. working harder and making fewer stupid mistakes. He also suggests that managers must have the courage to recognise that skills, culture and practices are valuable only in certain circumstances and that other insights are necessary to be in charge of innovations.

I have completed many projects to the satisfaction of my clients, and I have benefited greatly from my affinity with and knowledge of innovation and strategy (formulation) and my practical knowledge of processes and systems at KPN. The project approach gave me room to deviate from the standard method. This led to more involvement of all project team members in preparatory activities, evaluations of project work and discussing experiences with the client. The test

environment made it possible, without pressure from the existing procedures and agreements, to reach an initial solution. Supplemented by a business foundation, the pilot projects could be used to combine existing business with new insights, after all, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating". I also benefited from the education in the academy and my study of Organisational Psychology. I focused on management and leadership in order to perform better. When, unexpectedly, the question arose to change jobs to a board position of the Open University I did not hesitate very long, this was a "one in a life time" opportunity. After a short discussion in the family, I decided to leave KPN and to make the switch to a new environment: the academic world of the Open University.

2.3 Public governance – leaving behind the search for certainty

Before my appointment at the Open University in 2006, my new colleagues of the Executive Board had presented their future vision for the university. They had political and scientific backgrounds and were looking for a board member with business and market experience. The focus of the university should be shifted from product-oriented to market-oriented thinking. Competitors had similar offerings and before the Open University would lose its market, the portfolio and the (technical) infrastructure had to be examined. The relatively older personnel population required attention.

2.3.1 Public governance: a entirely new perspective on leadership and management

Initially, I expected an organisation like KPN Project Management; larger, but still an organisation of professionals, who controlled their own activities, with academic freedom, in Mintzberg's (1979) terminology a professional bureaucracy. In reality the Open University had two administrative hierarchies. The professionals, from whom the primary process was bottom-up and democratic, and the support services (for the secondary and tertiary processes), which could be characterised as a top-down machine bureaucracy. The Executive Board played an important role in the organisational

boundaries between professionals and external stakeholders and had distance to the daily practice, which differed from the leadership roles that I had been familiar with. The immediate involvement and familiarity with the daily operations was much less prominent and present. The transfer to the Open University brought me many changes; I said goodbye to a familiar place where I had been active for 23 years and where I had built a large network and track record, now I started in a world which was new and unknown, I knew hardly anybody and had only a few relationships. That did not prevent me from changing jobs with the inviting prospect of new challenges and a great organisation to become part of. With this transition, however, something special happened to me. In my upbringing a degree of certainty was of great importance, especially when it came to the basic amenities of life. Although through time I changed bits and pieces of my thoughts and behaviour, there had always been some secure position (known expertise, a familiar person or network). With the switch to the Open University I broke with that kind of behaviour, I had to leave behind a great deal of certainty, and look for new anchors and possibilities.

2.3.2 A student at my own university

Because during the week I stayed overnight in the area of the Open University I registered as a student at the Faculty of Arts and Culture to have some distraction for the evenings spent alone. I noticed that I had the opportunity to experience (parts of) the primary process as a customer at first hand and became acquainted with the nature, quantity and diversity of activities that took place. I experienced how colleagues operated in these processes and how they interacted with students. During counselling sessions in my first Bachelor courses, teachers had difficulty in adjusting to our newroles. They were surprised that a senior manager took the role of a student and were very timid at the start. In their daily work teachers had little contact with senior management. Board members were, in their perception, far away from the primary process and were, as I understood, scarcely seen. I had the impression that for them it was not clear for what reason I was around. It occurred to me that they thought I had some kind of hidden agenda and would confront them later. I also noticed that university policy was unknown to most. In faculty work meetings, if there were any, policy was hardly discussed. There were

ideas built about the board which were related to subjects as cost savings, less freedom to act, tight control, and less attention to primary teaching and development. At the same time it turned out that many needs and experiences of people were unknown to members of the Executive Board, including me. While following the study meetings I stuck to my role as student: inquisitive and active in the curriculum. I experienced this attitude lowered the threshold for teachers. Their passion for their specialty and the urge to explain was greater than their trepidation and suspicion. That passion stimulated me in turn, so we met each other in a positive spiral. This experience gave me an insight into the processes of their everyday practice. They had tremendous knowledge of their discipline, had contact with students and were ambassador for the Open University. At several meetings I found that passion was transferred to their students and gave them new energy to continue studying, I respected them for that.

Besides the positive experiences during my studies, I was regularly confronted with errors in the primary process. I quoted both positive and negative experiences as examples and discussed these with teachers and brought them up in management meetings. Errors in the primary process were in my view opportunities for improvement. It took at least one year before I felt that my colleagues agreed with me. Previous experiences in which mistakes were punished had led to a climate of declining confidence and more isolation among staff. My experience is that restoring an open atmosphere, discuss errors, and solving them together costs a lot of time and energy. Negative experiences linger for a long time and one needs a lot of other experiences to create a more positive image.

Members of the support staff of the study centres soon knew that I (also) was a student. We shared our experiences and discussed possible solutions. I came to know them as passionate people who focused on students and their activities. They experienced a great distance between the central organisation in Heerlen and the fragmented study centres around the country. They did not understand well why there was so little attention paid to the region, although most customer contact took place right there. Employees still talked about the consequences of a reorganisation several years

before in which many local jobs and locations haddisappeared. As a student I had the opportunity to have conversations in which employees dared to say what they felt and thought. I was surprised that they had been tied up with the past for so long and could not set themselves free from it. This hindered their investment in the future. Several times they were referring in conversations to "them in Heerlen". When I said that I was from Heerlen too, they told me that the stigma did not apply to me.

2.3.3 Local communities within the university

Homan (2005) indicates that people interact with each other in local communities to construct meaning about the world around them. When a group has been together for a longer period of time, and members have built up a fair amount of shared meanings, the process of constructing meaning will gradually bend to a selection and matching process. First, reality is reduced to relevant issues to the community. Then people compare the information with selected "existing" meanings. When the information fits within the comfort zone of the prevailing local logic, people will experience this as a confirmation of existing definitions of reality. Step by step the perceptual regime will become stable and will lead to a unilateral and less complex picture of reality that makes change and creativity difficult. My view is that the deans play an important role in the creation of these images. One reason is that they want to maintain their own independent position. Stacey (2007:286) states "*the activity of fundamental leadership is conversational*". As a result of my personal presence, I was able to support colleagues and my experience made it possible to talk about practical experience. At the same time I experienced that willingness to look for interaction differs per department and that participation in the communication is blocked. There we are faced with the first goal to tackle: the blockades.

Homan (2006) speaks of the presence of a shadow system behind a dominant reality construction. People in the shadow system interpret signals very differently, but are not (more) willing to ventilate their views. Employees with different perceptions may exhibit behaviour which is not in line with the dominant perception of reality. I have encouraged people in the study centres to come up with their own

ideas with the promise to defend these ideas in management meetings. The three northern study centres have taken up this challenge. They worked together as one team and had ties with the central organisation. Coordination and consultation received more attention and led to further elaboration. My main input was to release already emerging ideas. As senior manager, I sat at the table and was co-constructor of new solutions. Stacey (2007:415) states that "*strategic management is the process of actively participating in conversations around important issues*" and "*small changes can escalate to have enormous consequences*". The launch of ideas and facilitating the self-organising ability of staff supported emerging initiatives, which fitted perfectly in the realisation of the vision on developments of the Open University.

In the past years at the Open University I have noticed that my management job, like any other, has a high degree of openness and visibility. I live so to speak in a glass box. All I do is monitored, my behaviour is taken as an example, and I have many opportunities to meet people. My job requires that I have to take a stance on many subjects of various kinds. In responsibly fulfilling this position, I also notice that employees in the Open University have images of senior managers, and that they perceive distance, as I did at the beginning of my career. Colleagues look at me as a player in the field - as "the boss". I see behaviour that is very similar to what I experienced in my own childhood with my parents. In writing this story of my personal background I can better place Mead's ideas. It offers me points to hold on to and allows me to put my experiences and observations into a context, which provides me directions of explanation I can put into practice. My friends and family tell me that I have changed, become more balanced, confident, but also more inviting. But although I have spent a lot of effort in order to create an equal level playing field, I often do not succeed. There are other situations where I am deliberately excluded. It is my strong desire to find the 'correct' interaction, so I can be of added value and can influence the future of the Open University.

2.3.4 Challenges for the university
Within the Open University different interests and conflicts shape organisational activities in an extreme way. People go after alliances

with others who are willing to provide support in achieving their own purposes. They build informal networks to obtain information, but also give meaning to the things they encounter in their own interest (instead of added value to the university objectives). Thus the university shows characteristics of a political system (Morgan, 2006). Homan (2006) characterises these groups as "Petri dishes", places were confidants seek each other out and, while talking and grouping, try to give meaning to their experience. Elias (1939) in this respect mentions figurations, and Groot (2010) the development of local responsibility. As Christensen and Rozenboom (1999) mentioned, the demands on the organisation to be successful vary by life cycle stage. The emphasis is not on generic differences between the governance and management, but on the specifics of leadership. Important challenges for the Open University are investing in new technology to regain a lead position in distance education and find new markets, because there is an insufficient basis in exclusively academic offerings. But in my view the most important challenge is to change the cultural restrictions that now prevent the existing business of managing, investing and steering in new business. The strategic direction of the Open University was established by an institutional plan. There is a lot of knowledge and potential. By addressing the above challenges the first barriers and resistances can be removed. The broad direction has to rely on consensus, the interpretation and implementation, however, have variations. I think my role as executive manager in this process is crucial, but it is also very difficult being a newcomer in this environment. This is a major focus of my research which I will address in the last section of this chapter.

2.4 Common themes in my career

After writing this personal background at the beginning of my research I recognised two important themes which have been recurring throughout my career. I have added a third theme, the influence of my upbringing. In writing the thesis in retrospect I think that this theme was already present in the original text but had been not given adequate emphasis. In the synopsis I will refer to these themes as parts of my "I" perspective, an insight that emerged through my research process.

2.4.1 Influence of my upbringing

My childhood and growing up in a working class family and being member of the Salvation Army influenced and directed my thinking immensely. The former because of my parent's strong beliefs on having respect for people higher on the social ladder and their belief that hard work and education would contribute to a better and more successful life and a better society. The latter because the Salvation Army gave me the opportunity to translate a part of my assumptions and beliefs into real social activity, which gave me the opportunity to develop my social skills and awareness of principle values like justice, loyalty, patience, humility and simplicity, and - in my view - their basis for "success". Both influences offer group structures with strong patterns of recognition, which - if you accept and reinforce them - will give you strength and provide potential, but also a certain direction and boundaries to your thinking and acting.

2.4.2 Connecting strategy and operations

I have always wanted to know in what context my work fitted and why choices were made. The knowledge to contribute to a greater purpose with my own activities gave me satisfaction. In addition, I found it reassuring to fit into a larger entity and have a solid structure. I liked the feeling of being part of a team, but learnt to play my own role within the team. Several times I have experienced that the board did not have sufficient knowledge of what happened at the work floor, and that because of that parts of the policy and accompanying guidance were insufficiently organised. My view is that the lack of connection has never been a conscious choice, but was more a result of inadequate connection between strategic thinking and execution. I was determined to achieve a linking of strategy and execution in my own management position as much as possible, but once in such a position, I realised how difficult it is to achieve this goal. I was confronted with many issues and people internally and externally the organisation. In that field of obligations I constantly strove to keep the connection, tried to make contact with people from many parts of the organisation and to get involved in various programmes and projects. In my senior management role I noticed that this university organisation really needed to get used to direct contacts, and that there were situations where I was deliberately excluded. I want to use my experience to research and discuss these

issues and look for insights as to how to handle these questions and cope with the challenges as a senior manager new to the organisation.

2.4.3 Learning and working

At the beginning of my career I benefitted from my technical background. I felt good in an environment where planning and monitoring were part of the work. For me it meant that I had grip on the situation and a good picture of what things were expected of me and when. I brought a clear structure in my work and I had enough discipline to stick to it. These ideas were challenged for the first time when I was manager of salesmen who had their focus more on relationships than on content, and more on flexible interaction rather than on a fixed planned step-by-step approach. Although we exchanged arguments and backgrounds I could not fully understand why they shaped their customer contacts and activities the way they did.

During my studies of organisational psychology, I was confronted with ideas of various schools, which had insights that were very new to me. I picked up ideas from these insights, but at the same time experienced it as difficult to change old assumptions, ideas and behaviour, which still seemed to confirm a traditional way of working and had the potential danger of restricting people around me. Entering the university and becoming aware that old practices were not applicable meant adjusting to new ideas of strategy as a rational choice or intent of some or all members of the university.

2.5 First ideas of research theme

As a newcomer in the academic environment I was interested in the details of the role of a senior manager coping with the challenges which require a major change of the university, and dealing with cultural differences between the private and the public environment I experience in my everyday activities. Knowing that the traditionally known familiar top down approach with rational choices was not successful, brought the research possibilities of new insights provided by the theory of complex responsive processes, and this became transformative for me.

The theory of complex responsive processes focuses on several points (Stacey, 2007:450):

- it directs attention to how intention emerges in local interaction taking the form of ordinary conversation between people;
- it directs the attention to how the irremovable interdependence of people involves the interplay of intentions and it is from this interplay that organisations evolve;
- it focuses attention on diversity and how the amplification of differences is the process of change.

Stacey (2007) provides a compact overview of old system's theories and theoretical concepts based on complex responsive processes[3]. Mead (1934) – as one of the sources of Stacey's ideas - does not believe that our actions are determined by our expectations. Actual behaviour is the result of an internal dialogue with an unpredictable outcome. On the one hand a part of the self ("me") which occurs in the manner described earlier by interaction with others. On the other hand, there is an "I" with its own identity, desires and needs. The outcome of the dialectical movement between the two, "I" and "me", is unpredictable beforehand, and that makes change possible. Society can be regarded as a dynamic process, which includes opportunities for innovation. It allows reconsidering and appreciating previous positions on guiding and managing organisations. Interesting questions for senior managers are how they, in a dialogue, can be part of processes and give direction to the process and to achievement of formulated objectives, but also how they need to change themselves.

The usage of more than one perspective for understanding the same situation helps to stretch the thinking and broadens the number of alternatives for action. The result could be an open and appropriate way dealing with the complexity of the organisation. In the development of my research I want to use the theory of complex responsive process with the goal of gaining creative insights into existing problems and providing new openings for other types of action. I am convinced that other colleagues in comparable situations cope with the same questions and could be helped by sharing my experiences and ideas about the solutions.

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3   see Appendix 2

The narrative method is little recognised as such within the field of Management Sciences. I think relating stories form the experience of

senior executives (of myself and of colleagues) and an important part of my research will be to better understand this as a contribution to the development of science, because a clearer picture of what values, motives and circumstances drive choices and decisions can help to better understand the things we find ourselves doing as senior managers.

3

The changing role required of a senior manager entering an organisation where he is new

At the time of my appointment my board colleagues at the Open University indicated that they were looking for someone with business and marketing experience. They themselves had experience in local government and education, and had high expectations of my commercial experience. They wanted to bring this experience into practice within the Open University in order to focus on the market more. We complemented each other perfectly in knowledge, skills and experience.

The university was faced with a declining market and decreasing sales performance in all faculties, besides that, information systems were outdated and processes inflexible. As a result of that innovations were difficult to achieve. However, the first year showed that we did not have the same ideas on how to follow the path to the future of the Open University. My approach was unknown to them (and probably therefore unpopular). Instead of starting with a number of common principles, I noticed that my colleagues had a strong need for detailed design in advance. My impression was that their attention was focused on obtaining "security" in the process, such as step-by-step decisions on the basis of intermediate results, and the definition of mandates and responsibilities. The change programme offered a great opportunity to deal with change projects in a different way. They were not excited about an unfamiliar rigourous process and they tended to weaken strong process interventions. I had the feeling that they expected of me that I would follow a more traditional top-down management approach, while I was more accustomed to others in the organisation developing their own initiatives. At the same time it turned out that my successful approach of the past could not be used in the same way at the Open University. It made me feel uneasy, because in my view far too little was being done and I felt an urge to move on, but doubted the usefulness of my direct knowledge and experience.

Improvements often focus on changes in the structure, or processes of the organisation, or on people who work in organisations (Zhu, 2007). Rarely the focus is aimed at changing the behaviour and identity of a senior manager. The programme "the student more in the centre" gave me the opportunity to look at my own role as a senior manager on the Executive Board and in a change programme.

First, I present the establishment of the change programme. Then I indicate where patterns of my former traditional style and a new style, oriented to complexity, were in conflict. I will describe some of my observations and experiences during the change programme, and how I responded to others and to myself. A connection is made with types of leadership roles and theoretical organisation perspectives. My experiences are complemented by a surprising reflection by members of my research learning group. I describe aspects of my experience as a traditional management style and then change to a style which is influenced by insights from complex responsive processes theory.

3.1 The process leading to the change programme

In my first year an external research institute (TNO[4]) conducted a survey on customer and related university-wide quality improvement. Based on general social trends and specific developments in education, combined with some unique aspects of the Open University, TNO described a possible future service concept. In this concept the interaction with the student was developed from the context of the student. The final presentation of TNO was well-attended and many colleagues responded that the ideas presented should be taken up in more detail. After this meeting I informed an external programme manager, a former professor at the Open University, that we wanted to start a change programme which was meant to pay more attention to student recruitment, student retention, and the relationship with the student in general. The programme should also cover activities initiated to increase revenue. I was happy; something was going to happen!

At our first meeting we exchanged a lot of information. I liked his directness and something between us 'clicked'. After he had spoken employees from different sectors of the university he gave the following feedback[5]:

- within the Open University there are several different interpretations of the strategic direction, the board and the rest of the organisation are not in line;

4   TNO = Dutch Organisation for Applied Scientific Research
5   071204 Summary report interviews

- the common idea is partly based on the offering (products and services), and partly on the demand (students);
- colleagues differ in opnion on how the strategy should be made concrete.

We came to the conclusion that stakeholders such as the Executive Board, management, staff of the university, and students should share their respective images as a first step in a possible programme. We first wanted to present these ideas to the Executive Board. In several meetings the programme manager and I prepared the Executive Board meeting where approval of the approach and allocation of budget was required. We both thought it was important that deans and directors - in mutual cooperation - took the lead in setting priorities in improving the portfolio offering. With that the management behaviour, including the Executive Board, had to be discussed. The programme manager was convinced that this approach was completely feasible and that there were no doubts that someone of the Executive Board would take the initiative and show the direction. At the same time he confirmed that my position and role were extremely important because nobody else wanted (or would dare) to do this in this way.

3.2 The change programme "The student more in the centre"

In the Executive Board meeting my colleagues recognised and shared the perception that the Open University lacked a sufficiently strong bond with her students, and that was expressed in a large regression with adverse consequences for the students and the Open University. We decided to organise a meeting for managers. The objectives of this meeting were:

- *a phased approach:* the first step will be an exploratory phase to better understand how the relationship between the Open University and student starts and develops;
- *diagnosis:* what is the situation we are in and how did we end up there?
- *sharing ambitions:* what do we want to achieve with the programme?

3.2.1 Controlled decision-making

My colleagues were of the opinion that the Executive Board had to operate at some distance from the operational execution. They deliberately opted for a controlled process where conditions are determined centrally. They were feared that an open approach would lead to a multitude of problems, causing a loss of control of the situation. This was a firmly fixed idea ("this is the way we work around here") but I found it difficult to combine it with my ideas. I resisted conforming to that position and looked for a solution where I might have more freedom to execute my ideas. We ended up in a stepwise approach with open interviews, a collective workshop, and regular feedback to the Executive Board, which my colleagues agreed to. It was decided to present and discuss this in the next management meeting.

3.2.2 Interviews within the university

Prior to that meeting, the programme manager would discuss the outlined approach with executives, managers, employees and (former) students in order to gain more insights in what they thought. My impression was, that employees from the university did not get on board for a long time. The main conclusions of the interviews were[6]:

a. the Executive Board aims for too much renewal at once, leading to a multitude of initiatives, not all known to university staff,
b. priorities are unclear and not shared,
c. there is no data exchange or regulated signalling, ensuring coherence between the proposals and their impact on other parts of the portfolio, or primary and supporting processes, and
d. the student plays a minor role.

The result was that effects in one place led to unintended consequences in another. The interviews showed that many colleagues were focused on pursueing their own interests, directing problems to others and not seeking to find (a share of) the cause of problems within themselves. The main obstacles in improving student orientation that have emerged from the interviews were:

6   080227 Result interviews SMC - reaction plan of action

hiding, not taking into consideration the experience of a student, no prioritisation, fragmentation (no synergy in what is being done, no mutual learning process), but everyone was willing to do something about it.

Although it was a conscious decision for remote monitoring, it is my view that the Executive Board moved too far away from the primary process. Therefore the board members were insufficiently aware of what was happening in these processes and seemed no longer involved in the translation of strategy into activities and got no feedback on the implementation in the primary and supporting processes. For this reason they were always at least one step behind.

3.2.3 Developing a common approach in a management workshop

The interview results showed problems with supervising students and monitoring study results. Some of these questions we wanted to use as examples to discuss in the management meeting. Because of the focus on self-interests we expected tension in the discussion of the implementation of solutions. So, we offered a programme[7], with a possibility of interaction, exchange, and open discussion about the differing experiences. Important at this stage in the programme was to choose a continuing approach not from the problem side (*a problem discourse*), where others were wrong in our view, but to start from places where "good" things happened, and were appreciated (*an appreciative discourse*, Cooperider and Srivasta, 1987).

I participated (as did my other colleagues on the Executive Board) in the programme and took the opportunity to listen to the solutions of others. Participants searched for answers together, and decided themselves, based on their experiences, which local activities could be connected to the overall strategy of the university. Working together on questions released a lot of energy among the participants. They designed a common picture of the situation and established a programme approach consisting of six projects[8], in which anyone who wanted could contribute with ideas and proposals, or activities they already were involved in (to be published on intranet a week afterwards)[9]. I noticed that there were still many questions. The deans and directors were clearly not (any longer) used

7   080407 Programme suggestion Management Beraad 080414
8   080414 Programme proposal SMC - phased approach
9   080518 Publication intranet management meeting 1404

to working together in this way. A recurring story was that past experience of "dealing openly" with each other was associated with bad results: the openness was later used against them. It was understandable that these experiences led to cautious behaviour, but working together was a requirement for a coordinated improvement and innovation within the university. I talked this over with my board colleagues a few times. Their focus was on functional content, so as I saw it we stayed away from the essence, but at this stage my colleagues offered me the space to do things "my way".

3.2.4 The exploration phase

Within one month 35 colleagues and students registered for one of the identified projects and processed them into detailed activities[10]. Participants came from faculties, research departments, and support departments. I did not know about half of the people; they were not visible in earlier projects. I found this encouraging: apparently, the programme had an attraction to them and the subject generated their curiosity. For the management of activities we depended on the self-organisation of the members of the project teams and a small central coordination team (the programme manager and a policy making official). They had monthly progress meetings (sometimes by mail, sometimes face to face), where the teams reported their activities and results [11] [12] [13]. The programme manager contacted me on a weekly basis.

After a few months we issued an evaluation to inform each other about the interim results and the insights gained in the exploratory phase[14] [15]. We had consciously chosen to ask all involved colleagues what they saw as possible solutions. It was nice to discover that this method was close to everyday reality and the commitment of these involved colleagues was becoming very substantial. It was important that these solutions were viable for them, fitted within their experiences, and matched their ideas with the strategy of the Open University. Colleagues felt that their contribution was valued and of substantial meaning to the strategy. Several of their ideas corresponded with my own ideas, but there were also a number of issues which were important for the student and new for me. Still it felt good not to be "in control" for significant parts of the activities. The positive results led to a growing confidence of my immediate

10   080523 SMC - Project instructions 1-6
11   080609 SMC - progression report
12   080908 Communication planning SMC
13   080908 SMC - progression report - continually
14   081007 Midterm review - Kernteam meeting,
15   081008 Midterm review - projectteams discussions

board colleagues; they gave me more space to act in line with my ideas.

3.2.5 The improvement phase

The outcomes of the exploratory phase helped to define additional, tangible improvements for the improvement phase. The preparation of this phase was done by one representative of the deans (faculties) and one representative of the directors (supporting staff), the programme manager and myself, who formed a small "core team". They would share proposals with the other managers of the management team and encourage colleagues in the next phase. In stories about the history of the university a recurring theme was that while (scientific) staff were good at producing new solutions, it always stranded during implementation. The temptation to fall back into a top-down approach, i.e. central decisionmaking on priorities and tight control of the teams from the top, was high. The pattern was one of planned performance with central control. Participation from this perspective could still be seen as participation under the conditions of the programme. Despite the participation of employees at several points in the process, there was still the possibility that a central group (Executive Board or core team) thought in terms of the solutions or set the overall direction.

However, central control can only lead to a learned helplessness, because employees are increasingly dependent on orders from above (Seligman, 1975). Many involved people may think: we are already working on improvements, what's wrong with that? Or: do they not trust us? The central group will steer on: 'how do we get them to do what we have thought out?" Change in organisations is not only originating from and achieved through 'planning from above'. According to Homan (2005), Stacey (2010) and Groot (2010) change occurs in everyday interactions and activities which can become random variations and can lead to turning points. The intention of these authors is not that people have to apply improvements that have been invented elsewhere, but that people think of better, different and easier ways to perform, which I recognise from my own past experience. From my perspective I performed according to these insights in this programme. During the execution of the project, I was unaware that these ideas are closely

related to the theory of complex responsive processes, this became apparent in the PhD programme.

I actively participated in the management meeting[16] because I wanted to understand other's viewpoints. For me that was one of the key elements of success. With my contribution I also wanted to show my personal commitment to the improvement activities, and stand up for the content and process that we wanted to go through together with management. My presentation mentioned what could be improved on the Executive Board and at other places within the Open University and that making mistakes was a normal part of the work. Although my board colleagues were more familiar with my approach and style, and saw the positive results in this programme, they defended their former positions. My experience in the project strengthened my resolve to continue my approach, and where possible involve my board colleagues in this process.

Common awareness of management
The outcome of the management team meeting was to support the need for clear strategic choices and take control. This also applied to fine-tuning, implementing activities, and giving feedback to colleagues outside their own department. This was also recognised as a common interest. A common new approach was focused on:

1. a widening and deepening sense of urgency (actively involved critical mass, and improvement activities above all), and
2. clear vision of the future of the Open University, covering growth in revenue per student, intake of new students, and revenue.

After the management meeting the programme manager completed his task. Each faculty formed an implementation team with faculty staff, colleagues from the support departments, and students to work out the next steps, focused on a better service to the student. Improvement teams delivered a plan of action for their project and started planned operations. Based on a joint assessment (contribution to strategic goals, availability of expertise and of scarce resources)[17] a choice of nine projects was established.

16   081114 approach "kernteam management meeting Instellingsbread"
17   081222 Programme Kick Off

The assignments were discussed as to content, feasibility, and consistency. The core team members came together to tune interpretation, implementation, and progress of the agreed project activities[18].

Influence of existing, entrenched ideas
In a meeting of the core team the issue was raised that many employees knew the troubles of the university, but few have seen the direct link to their own actions. It was not clear what role the individual employee played in achieving mutual success. Many people remain stuck in old ideas and images. A colleague called these myths and vicious circles, which were part of a common standpoint, and determined the dominant way of thinking. An example of such a myth is: "Things are not only turning against us, but to the whole market (the market is still growing, although slower and the relative market shares of others are also growing)". Another example is: "The student wants to stay at a distance because that's just the agreement with the Open University (the student can only gradually discover what she/he wants and the world of education is subject to change)". An example of a vicious circle: "Because we stay at a distance from our students, we do not get to know the students, because we do not get to know the students, we continue to think up solutions that do not work."

We thought it would be good to face these ideas with colleagues of the Open University and discuss issues such as doubt and blaming each other or taking oppositional positions, but also to seek one's own space and the benefits of collaboration. In this respect we could think of a tightened institutional strategy plan, which incorporates the results of the project teams. We could set up a connection of strategic plans with a more individual level and a bottom-up approach. I think improvements are best realised by people who are well grounded in everyday practice and who have been involved in personal improvement.

Implementation of projects and communication
It was a conscious choice that every department or group created and developed its own approach dealing with their selected subject[19], and would only be offered assistance when needed[20].

18   090119 SMC report Kick Off Eindhoven
19   090417 Overview SMC projects v9
20   090420 Issues within SMC projects

In this way a connection was set up between daily activities and the project. This led to the usage of existing knowledge, better solutions and (in most cases) faster delivery. Clients had frequent mutual consultations, and could make their own decisions[21]. My role was functional, for decisions I had a mandate from the Executive Board, so there was no unnecessary delay in the progress of activities. Over a period of several months project members communicated in newsletters, staff magazines and in-depth articles[22][23]. In this respect we were able to think of a tightened institutional strategic plan, which incorporated the results of the project teams. We were also able to connect strategic plans on a more individual level and to a bottom-up approach. A highlight was the "Day of Education"[24], where each project, including the activities was presented to a wider audience within the university. The programme was evaluated after a year[25]. The organisation with the various teams was judged positively. The large participation, cooperation between projects, willingness to share experiences and knowledge were mentioned as the most important aspects. Other very positive subjects were the achieved results, and the method of communicating them.

3.2.6 Complicated situations on a senior managerial level
After the first activities in the project I felt a tension, which I assume could be assigned to my new direct responsibility. As an active board member I felt personally addressed on policy and interview results, even though I had had no involvement in the implementation (of policies) in the preceding period. The Executive Board had final responsibility and should have taken the lead in this process, but there was disagreement with my colleagues about the details of the Executive Board role. To better understand what that difference of opinion may have meant, I will use Senge's (1992) explanation of complicated situations.

3.3 Looking at complicated situations

Senge distinguishes three levels, which explain complicated situations: events, behaviour, and system structure. He looks at 'who is doing what', and, what he refers to as 'system dynamic patterns they cause'. At the event level statements have the format of 'who

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21   090506 Small Group Activity
22   090700 Werkwijzer 07 - page 8-9
23   100200 Werkwijzer 02 - page 8
24   091210 programmebrochure Day of Education 2009
25   100128 Results evaluation session

has done something to whom" and which then leads to the reactive behaviour of managers *(reactive activity)*. Senge indicates that event statements frequently appear in today's society. The level of *behaviour* includes statements that seek a long term trend, and its implications. On that basis, a response may be defined on the variations observed over the long term *(responsive activity)*. At the level of *system structure* Senge looks at positive *(amplifying)* and negative *(dampening)* feedback loops that maintain, or can change those patterns. The importance of the insight of structural explanations is that only this kind of explanation focuses on the underlying causes of the behaviour. Behaviour arises through a certain underlying structure, and the insight into the (underlying) structures can result in behavioural changes. In this sense the insight into structural explanations are by their nature generative *(generative activity)*. These ideas of Senge indicate that managers are too 'reactive' to actual behaviour, that they are not aware of the broader underlying patterns which those behaviours are part of. I realise that within the university it is expected of me as senior manager that I should look more for structural explanation levels and react on the level of generative activities. In the past I was primarily focused on the first two levels, at linear sequence of cause and effect rather than seeing the interrelationships, and snapshots rather than seeing processes of change.

The result of (local) conversations and the corresponding meaning based on my contacts in which different visions and perceptions, socially constructed, come together with my assumptions and prejudices, and limit my 'overview of the entire organisation'. However, there is a danger that I perceive this as 'MY truth' and objectify this subjective picture. I am aware that, in order to get and maintain connection to my environment, I have to be critical of my own ideas, beliefs, assumptions and prejudices, and be prepared to adjust them and as a result of that change aspects of my management style. I think the programme was an opportunity to find out and learn about which aspects I could change in my management style. My choice for this approach of the programme was therefore a conscious one. The phased project approach connected with my experience and gave me some kind of overview and structure. I felt a tension between thinking about

my responsibility in my senior executive role (take the lead in the process, participate actively, and provide guidance), and offer team members more space to bring forward their own ideas (as I have appreciated this during my working career up to the present).

My position on the Executive Board was related to this style of management and ideas of how to manage change in an organisation. Although I noticed that my colleagues had more trust in how these results had been achieved and matched their expectations, they still expected from me a management style based on traditional views. At the same time I wanted to maintain elements of my own style. Based on the previous outcome of the programme I was convinced that a classical way of top-down management was not the right thing to do and that it required another approach, but at the same time it was clear that the new academic environment forced me to change my own way of working, questioning my own style of management, because acting the way I was used to, and using the tools I was familiar with, did not lead to the expected response. For this transition process, I could not ask for a timeout and shut down the daily business. So, the switch of style had to be done during work hours. In that process I met myself and my colleagues on the Executive Board every now and then. Nobody within the Executive Board had control over this process of recognising and being recognised. The outcome of this process was repeatedly negotiated on the basis of outcomes and results of, for example, the programme. In this way I had taken my place on the Executive Board. A new balance of power had arisen, which in turn was the starting point for the following steps in the programme and other activities at the university.

The experiences described above have put me to thinking about the relationship of leadership style, power, identity, and personality. Switching to a different management style is fed from different ideas about what managing actually is. The following questions arose: how has my personality been built up through education, gathering knowledge, and experience of influence on how I act in a leadership role? How can it be that my approach is successful in one environment, and not in another? In what way is (self-) reflection realised in a leadership role? In the next section I will discuss these

questions in reference to literature on (changes in views on) leadership.

3.4 Changing view of leadership roles

3.4.1 The person of the leader

Van der Vlist et al. (1995) gives an overview of research on the person of the leader. After a period of emphasis on *genetic (biological) factors* (Spiller, 1929), more attention is given to personality factors (a so-called *trait approach*) with a focus on distinguishing personal characteristics of leaders such as intelligence, intellectual development, reliability, degree of initiative, sociability, perseverance, and confidence (Stogdill, 1948). Personality alone does not determine success. The following factors affect the behaviour of the manager: the concrete situation in which the leadership takes place, the desired personality in that situation and sociability (pleasant intercourse) which is conditional in all circumstances (Kampermann, 2005). Collaboration occurs whether or not there is a match between the leader and the situation (Bass, 1981). Fiedler (1978) examines the relation between leadership styles and certain characteristics of the groups who are being led. He mostly looks more at the style of the leader and how that style connects to the situation; in this so-called *contingency model* the leader's behaviour should be tailored to the specific situation. The model of Fiedler describes different leadership styles for different combinations of these contingency factors (see also Robbins, 2002). For example, when the leader has a good relationship with the group, there is a clear task structure and relatively high positional power, and then the leader chooses style X.

The results of the research into the effects of leadership are disappointing. Pfeffer (1989) mentions three reasons for the unclear effects of leadership in practical situations:

a. during selection of executives certain criteria are irrelevant (i.e. the most professional, highest seniority);
b. leaders are limited by their surroundings in their alternatives for action (subject to formal and informal rules), and
c. leaders can only influence certain variables.

In practice, a multitude of factors for context may be of importantance. The behaviour of the leader often only has limited influence on these factors.

Therefore it is important to know what happens in the actual context, and how that influences the effects of leadership.

3.4.2 The leader and the context

Changes in environmental factors require different forms of organisation (Van der Vlist, 1995) in which functional separation has been reduced and more cooperation is expected. The education level of employees has risen and the need for intrinsic motivational work has increased. This makes mutual consultation necessary, and requires a participatory setting (Kampermann, 2005). Leaders need to place themselves in someone else's position and deal with the uncertainty of requirements of the environment on their organisation (Burns, 1978; Bryman, 1992).

Verhoeven (1991) speaks of the emergence of a new society and mentions the opportunity to enhance mutual contacts, the elimination of unnecessary dependencies, avoiding one-sided dependency, tackling conflicts and creating lateral connections. Weggeman (1992) argues that the main task of the manager in a professional organisation like a university is creating conditions and a good climate of work. The talent and creativity of professionals should be fully deployed. The professional expects from the leader that the bureaucratic and administrative burden is minimised, and that the focus is aimed at the primary scientific process.

Leadership behaviour in all these leadership approaches is conceptualised in terms of personality traits and the style of behaviour of leaders. Several reviews of this research area have indicated that the output of research based on these assumptions is disappointing, doubtful, or contradictory (Pfeffer, 1989; Knights and Willmott, 1992; Aardema and Homan, 2010). Camps et al. (2008) conclude that managers and leaders struggle with their responsibilities, that their self-understanding is often insufficiently developed, and that managers work around problems without even having noticed this. Their study shows that managerial behaviour is influenced by: personal characteristics (biological and personal

characteristics and leadership styles), organisational characteristics (set up, decision process, and inter-personal relationships), and environmental circumstances (degree of turbulence, competitive market conditions, and the degree of government regulation). Although this research is closer to practice, the focus is still directed at the leader himself and the action pattern that he should demonstrate in order to be successful. It still consists of a unilateral (power) relationship, where the hierarchical manager is the determining actor.

Knowing this, a number of my previous questions are still not answered. The knowledge, experience and familiarity with KPN (its processes, products and services), and the network within the company, were elements that had contributed to the success that I had. My personal strengths such as extroversion, creativity, persuasiveness, and structured approach were of full advantage in such settings, and led to good results for KPN, and were greatly satisfying for myself. My knowledge of the Open University was limited, I had no network within the university, nor in other universities. In the programme I could make use of my dominant qualities and the programme offered me many opportunities to increase my knowledge of the university. During the programme and in the interaction with my colleagues on the Executive Board I noticed a few differences.
Firstly I could not use my 'old' approach within the university. My limited knowledge of the way of working within the university, the habits, relationships and networks made me more dependent on others for acquiring knowledge and doing my job. The decision-making followed a step by step process and more players were involved than I was accustomed to. Secondly, I still had to find my place in the Executive Board. I was convinced of my approach of the programme and shaping changes, but discussions with my colleagues showed that they were not accustomed to this approach. Finding my own place in the Executive Board was a process of constant negotiation, looking for connection with conventional methods. Thirdly, I noticed that the question in my immediate environment to find a fit in style and method triggered a process in me. On the one hand, I wanted to stay true to myself and continue relying upon my own strengths, on the other hand, I realised that

there was a connection between the way I work and the way one had to work within the university, in other circumstances old forces could call up unexpected contrareactions. In addition to leadership style and context other factors - the interaction with and between people - played a role in the final design of my own actions. In what manner is (still) not clear to me, but in my experience it has been a source for my further questioning. The conventional leadership literature mentioned delivers a number of concepts which are recognisable in my own practice, but at the same time these concepts are too abstract and irrelevant to the context to get a deeper insight into my daily experience. I miss the concrete interactive side of my work in this literature, and I want to further elaborate on this interactive aspect of leadership.

3.4.3 Leadership as an interactive process

Knights and Willmott (1992) describe leadership as an interactive process between leaders, guiding people and the context in which their relationship occurs. They use aspects of *phenomenology*, existentialism and structure theory to highlight the dimensions of leadership. The phenomenological dimension includes giving meaning as a central activity of actors when they develop, designing and negotiating the contents of their own interpretive schemes in order to determine their position. The meaning that one gives to a social reality is practically achieved by a process of negotiation. Knights and Willmott note that: "the knowledge or discourse that becomes dominant, or hegemonic, will constitute organisational subjects in its image insofar as it becomes accepted and institutionalised as objective truth, and internalised as subjective reality" (Knights and Willmott, 1992:772). The *existential* dimension concerns the affective and cognitive aspects of social processes. The interaction between people is fuelled by their respective vulnerabilities and "their respective efforts to reconstruct reality in a way that 'realises' their sense of identity cannot sensibly be excluded from the analysis of their interaction" (Knights and Willmott, 1992:775). This existential dimension is either affirmed or denied in the course of the interaction. The *structural* dimension is related to strategic events and dependencies associated with specific roles and hierarchical positions from which a dominant position may be derived. Knights and Willmott focus on leadership

practices and provide new concepts with which new insights (in comparison with conventional literature) can be provided into the dynamics of this practice. Another perspective is that organisations are meaning systems with their own dynamics, which is more self-organising, instead of makeable. Jackson and Carter (2007) define activities in organisations as a jumble of random developing connections, which as a whole, following no logical pattern, can occur in multiple ways to connect everything to everything. Out of this confusion an outcome is defined.

Despite taking a perspective of interactive processes, in this literature the manager still is the "leading" actor. The views are based on a certain makeability of reality. The question remains as to what extent organisations (and organisational change) can be seen as makeable variables, which can be managed and controlled on the basis of rational goals. But this does did not match with my successful acting in my previous working environment did not match within the Open University. In the above I focused on what a leader should do to be successful. Apparently my questions focus less on the characteristics of the leader or what a leader should do, but more on the meaning schemes that leaders have in their heads and the way they use them in interaction. The findings of Knights and Willmott and Jackson and Carter have the interactional side of leadership in common, whereby the interactions between managers and their colleagues create certain dynamics of giving meaning. This theoretical perspective is developed and underpinned by Bourdieu (1971, 1994) and Weick (1995). In the next section the concepts of these two authors will be discussed.

3.5 Organisational theoretical perspectives

3.5.1 Structure theory
Bourdieu (1971, 1994) introduced the concept of *field*, a setting in which participants and their social positions are located with an internal logic, which takes shape in hierarchical relationships based on the distribution of capital. Bourdieu defines *capital* as a resource which is used to differentiate you from others. Participants use different valuation factors for their actions and as fields value different kinds of capital, there is a higher probability that there exist

less or no connections between these fields. Capital can have multiple forms: *economic capital* (money and property), *cultural capital* (knowledge, skills, training) and *social capital* (relationships, networks). According to Bourdieu, the arrangement of a field is determined by the practices of important acting persons who are able to transform or consolidate the field by these actions. In each field, people unconsciously develop a habit, a sustainable way of perceiving, thinking and acting by which they can maintain and pass on in the field *(habitus)*. People who find themselves in a field for a long time have an advantage over newcomers, because they have completely internalised the habitus. The habitus is shaped by the interplay of individuals, in order to adopt structural forms who affect their actions. Bourdieu applied the field concept on society as a whole and the class structure within that society (Hatch, 1997), but also in specific areas such as the academic field where capital, such as academic reputation, number of publications, and scientific prestige is of importance (Bourdieu, 1988). This differs from my background in the private world where economic capital like (making) money and profit was of importance. Since my reference was in that world, I was more familiar with this kind of capital and acted accordingly even within a different world. I have to admit that I did not have much academic capital or knowledge of the academic environment and how to use their capital. So as a newcomer I felt quite disabled.

Within the university I recognised several subfields with their own logic: faculties on one side and support departments on the other. People within the faculties shared the academic background, worked on their academic reputation and attracted students and researchers. At the same time different faculties had their own student population and internal logic. This had led to different structures and patterns within the faculties. The support staff had to deal with governmental rules and bureaucracy, had to deliver data and statistics to underpin, and justify, the public funds. At the same they had to support the primary process. These activities did not have the same logic, and resulted in a delicate balance of processes and relations. In the recent past of the university this was not managed in the proper way (i.e. the inventory at the beginning of the programme). In order to survive and get the work done all kinds of (informal) networks

crossed departmental boundaries and hierarchical levels (Homan, 2005). I had been insufficiently aware of these networks and their impact. A number of informal networks are represented in the programme. At the same time I did not realise that all relationships and networks were represented in the programme. Many people of different subfields have worked together in the programme. The programme subject had strengthened common bonds, and recognisable elements from individual subfields do come back. But my experience was that working together with all faculties and supporting staff in the programme created new relations and through everyone's input a new dynamic with its own meaning started to emerge. The common subjects of projects had created a bond and recognisable elements from their own subfield were visible. Project groups gave new values to their activities, so their significance increased.

3.5.2 Theory of sensemaking

With his theory of sensemaking in organisations Weick (1995) brought social construction into organisation theory. According to this theory organisations exist largely in the minds of organisation members in the form of cognitive maps, or images of particular aspects of experience. People create these maps to help them find their way around the social world. They try to make sense of what is happening both as it occurs and in retrospect, and then act on basis of the understanding that they made in their head *(enactment)*. The environment does not exist independently of the organisation, rather it is socially constructed and reconstructed as people gather and analyse information, make decisions and take action based on their analyses (Van Wezel and Kuperus, 1990). Weick argued that there are no organisations, only organising: through activity striving to give meaning. With this Weick has provided us with some important insights on how people act in everyday practice and shape their actions.

Programmes like "the student more in the centre" can be successful because they give meaning to what people do in cooperation. A danger that can occur is that the project, as a sort of super team, gets a life of its own, separate from the existing organisation. Their own perception is that results are achieved, but

other parts of the organisation stick to their own processes and there is hardly any change.

3.5.3 Combining structure and sensemaking theory

Board (2011) investigated a senior management selection process in which human action takes place under multiple pressures: limited time, patchy understanding and pre-existing commitments to important stakes. Using the (above) concepts of practice (Bourdieu) and sensemaking (Weick) he investigated what happens when executives are selected. As the result of his research Board sketches the following: picture the human agent as a kind of centaur; a Bourdieusian horse fused with a rear-facing, near-Weickian rider. The horse's eyes look forward. They anticipate. To the extent that they can read the field in front of them, the centaur's body is already in action, bending towards certain actions which are 'obvious', shaped by the stakes of the field and the agent's political position within it. The agent's consciousness engages with a small number of choices and interpretation already shaped by *habitus*. The agent acts, perhaps jumping this fence but refusing that one. As it does so, its near-Weickian, backward-looking, sensemaking rider sees in the past an unfolding, interpreted stream of events. It engages in the construction of a post hoc narrative of what the agent has done and what else has happened.

This way of thinking may be more or less helpful. Certainly it cannot be exhaustively insightful (misrecognition), but even if fanciful or arbitrary, this account is a vital constituent of self-making and may facilitate effective action (Board, 2011). In this description of the centaur the horse and man are still separately identified. Both Bourdieu and Weick talk about a social process, both distinguish an inside and outside of the agent's skin (habitus and field, agent and environment). However, they are different in their understanding and explanation. Weick speaks of an individual in interaction with others, but splits the individual from the social. Bourdieu makes a distinction between individual and social processes, but does not split them. Habitus and field always have to be considered together and are the fundamental units of explanation.

This metaphor helped me to understand the habitus of an Open University which was new for me. As a newcomer in the university I

hardly knew the organisation, its customs and habits, and I felt like a novice. How should I fulfil my role as senior executive / leader without knowledge of the university, and work in this new context with my experience on the one hand and inexperience on the other hand? I believe this happens to be a process of recognising and being recognised, a constant change based on negotiation, forming connections and entering into coalitions. In this respect Griffin (2002) speaks about mutual recognition. This can be an inviting starting position to look for new possibilities, to improvise, and try new things. At first I thought this meant a change in my role as a leader, but this only exists if you have changed roles within the same habitus. This situation had more impact, I wanted to be true to myself, and at the same time I had to re-create myself. The people in the university form and are formed by their habitus. My entering the organisation changed (small) bits in this habitus by acting and influencing at the same time. Still, looking at the results of the programme I was proud of what we had reached, and delighted with the opportunities to meet people and work with them, and become part of their networks.

3.6 Surprise from an unexpected corner

During a reflection meeting with fellow students and faculty members this narrative was discussed. To my surprise my story evoked a completely different picture for faculty members of a specific faculty. For them it was not an ideal situation with clear improvement perspectives and results in a reasonable form of harmony. They had the feeling that they were being pressed into a parallel route -initiated by me in their faculty - of (significant) financial cutbacks. This pressure was considered disproportionate, even intimidating. Those involved were so closely involved in the clear demand that in their eyes there was no question of participating in the change programme. The fact that the management of the faculty would execute this nonetheless, has locally led to all sorts of tensions which were not known to me. For them the programme did not invite a new perspective, which had been the case for me. I was shocked by this brief but intense exchange of views, and it put me to thinking. I was confronted with another image of reality. Is this an exception or is it a more common

picture and why I wasn't aware of this?

Firstly, I realise that my active involvement in the programme and in specific areas in the organisation determines subjective perceptions, and perhaps I have transformed those on the basis of an objectified ideal image which is (too) positive. After all, the programme was successful in various fields and the financial savings were achieved. Faculty members partly participated in conversations in formal (according to the organisation structure) and partly in informal networks, in which I did not participate in, so I could not know them. They experienced no attention being paid to their feelings (pain from the cost cuts) so this part was repressed in shadow conversations. Secondly, the nature and degree of involvement are of interest. The consequences of the budget cuts, such as fear of change or loss of work were not sufficiently addressed by me. The reporting manager would conform to our agreement of financial cutbacks and that increased the likelihood that perspectives were not discussed or pushed aside. Staffing of human resources of departments and their active participation in activities of the programme was for me a confirmation of possible solutions and I did not see it as something to worry about. It became clear to me that even if there is active contact, not all information, for whatever reason, was shared with me. A third point is that I have become aware that I, as a senior manager, can only become a member of the networks where other people allow me to be a member. I cannot decide by myself on my role as a leader, but this is formed in social actions and has to be confirmed again and again.

My aim was (and still is) that I wanted to be involved in the organisation, wanted to have contact with people to understand their concerns, and on this basis make connections between practical and strategic issues (see my first narrative). My role as leader also got 'form and content' in conversations where I had no contacts and was not actively involved. The cooperation within the programme was good in my opinion, the progress and results were in line with our expectations. Of course relationships changed with possible effects on the prevailing habitus as the outcome of a new cooperation and the introduction of achieved results. My colleagues on the Executive Board were constantly informed, supported the

programme and listened to me. The process of taking a position within the Executive Board had characteristics of mutual recognition and acknowledgement and it seemed that negotiations took place about the outcome, also with me as a senior manager. Looking from a leadership perspective my own role was focused on what a leader has to do to be successful. My questions focus less on what a leader should do, or on the meaning schemes that leaders have in their minds. They do not all connect enough to the theme of mutual recognition. It is not clear to me how outcomes (in terms of acknowledgement and recognition) are realised, both organisationally and personally. The theory of complex responsive processes provides insights from a different perspective on this changing role of the senior manager and local human interaction.

3.7 Introducing a new perspective: complex responsive processes

Within the theory of complex responsive processes, organisations are seen as a pattern of human interaction and not as a thing or person. Local interaction is central to the understanding of organisational and strategic activity. The theory focuses on the following aspects of human interaction (Stacey, 2007:268):

- interaction is always communicative and communication takes place in the exchange of signs which can become symbols. By and in the interaction between people meaning is created;
- in all interaction between people there are power relations, because in a reciprocal relationship at the same time there is a mutual dependency, that leads to possibilities to limit and authorise each other's actions. The power relationship is reflected in exclusion or involvement;
- in every conversation, people make choices based on evaluation criteria based on ideology;
- people bring together experience, conversation patterns, power relations, and ideological choices in a narrative form, but these aspects are also formed by the narrative.

3.7.1 Interaction of people

People tell stories and express what aspects are important to them (gestures); in the response of others meaning is formed. These stories are created by human interaction, but also generate human interaction. People choose their (intended) next act in response to others. In these answers 'resound' their own local principles, based on the history of the organisation, organisational unit, and their own history. In the interaction people show shared activities. This activity is possible because patterns of interaction (emergently) develop in a coherent and meaningful way at both local and population wide levels at the same time. The interaction is formed by inextricably linked aspects such as conscious / unconscious, formal / informal, continuity / spontaneity and the legitimate and shadow organisation. In the continuous interaction in the present, patterns are generated, reconfirmed or transformed, like habits, routines, and standards. At this point there is a difference to ideas discussed in previous chapters. By putting the interaction in the centre and emphasising the emergent nature of it I recognise aspects of the process of mutual recognition, and a modification of my own actions. My acting was visible and had implications on several (local) environments, the behaviour of people in their turn influences my actions again. Within the Executive Board the main focus was to get used to each other's style, the relationships, and finding my place on the board team as a new member. In terms of my portfolio responsibility I had interfered in parts of the university. Looking back now, these interventions have co-determined my actions in the change programme. In this programme I have been closely involved and it became, through my involvement, connected to the Executive Board more. My actions were influenced by my own history, assumptions and beliefs, my former experience, my present responsibilities, the goals of the programme, and the already established relationships (including interests) within the university. All these aspects were - through my own selection - conscious and unconscious reflections and simplifications embodied in a generalised or idealised meaning, with which I understood those interactions as others did in a similar way. In that process paradoxical actions of immersing in acting and abstracting took place simultaneously.

I clearly recognise interactions with colleagues from the Executive Board and people who contributed to the change programme. An increasing number of stakeholders and a diversity of activities in the programme created temporary structures of consultation and organisation and all kinds of relations and dynamics. In order to understand what happened, and try to simplify (again) events, I have grouped them, and indicated relationships between them. The consequence of this so-called modelling is that any relationship with the persons acting in it disappears. Earlier, I indicated that in my acting involuntarily parts can be found of traditional management. It is precisely in this vision of management, giving meaning to my role as a manager to this situation, that this modelling, this form of abstraction, manifested itself. Stacey (2010) indicates that many senior managers follow this practice. This means that (a part of) the relations become visible *(on stage)*. In addition, new relationships arise or existing informal relationships remain unchanged, but with the consequence that the manager will remain an 'outsider' of these.

Change is possible, because with each interaction the same result is never reproduced (Stacey, 2007). Human interaction is not linear. The 'repetition' gives the possibility of small differences, caused by spontaneous or imperfect reproduction. In this way human interaction can lead to new possibilities of future interactions (*transformative causation*, Stacey, 2007:263). In their interaction people construct the future as known and unknown, as their ongoing identity and potential transformation at the same time. The difference to the leadership theory of the classical top-down management type is that in responsive process thinking in the human interaction continuity and the potential changes are constructed *at the same time*. Human identity, human meaning is given form in a similar manner. I will to elaborate on the impact of this thinking and explore the consequences for a senior manager who is new to a situation.

3.7.2 Interdependency of people, importance of social activity

Elias (1939, 1978) states that individuals are interacting with each other in their local situations. He describes the network of human activities in Western civilisation: "*More and more people tend to become dependent on each other for their security and to satisfy*

their needs (Elias, 1978:9)". Western civilisation is not predetermined by a long-term planning or pre-formed intention. It is the interweaving of human impulses and strivings, the emerging social order, which leads to the course of historical change; it underlies the civilising process (Elias, 1939). In the intertwining of activities of interdependent players, no single player can determine the course of the whole game, irregardless the power of the player. This is because the players are interdependent, so that each of us affects others and what they do again affects us. The work of Stacey, Griffin and Shaw (2000) - founders of the theory of complex responsive processes - is amongst others based on the insights of Elias. Interacting individuals are forming patterns of their interaction and at the same time they are being formed as individuals by those patterns of interaction. In this interaction it is inevitable that we at the same time limit and stimulate each other *(enabling constraints)*.

The global impact of interlocking intentions and plans cannot be foreseen by one single person. More than two centuries ago Hegel (1807) already emphasised the essential interdependence of people. For him modes of consciousness were constituted in social activities. An individual is a cultural being and dependent on others. In social processes of mutual recognition, he argues, a sense of self arises. An individual can only recognise himself, as a self, in the recognition of people he recognises. From this perspective individual change cannot be separated from change in groups. The consequences of actions emerge in the interaction of our intentions and lead to further action, which will also emerge and that continues in a never ending process. Human identity, human meaning, is formed in this process. Human identity has two interrelated aspects, namely, individual and collective, what Elias calls "I" and "We". Within the theory of complex responsive processes these aspects are linked inextricably. The autonomy of "We" is more powerful than the plans and purpose of an individual "I".

In line with Stacey and Elias I recognise that I acted and interpreted from my own frames of reference, while I really was not aware that my 'counterparts' acted possibly from very different mind-sets in respondee to my behaviour. So I did not recognise their ideas and points of view. Initially this "interaction game" led me to certain ima-

ges of success. But, also thanks to the reflections, I discovered that the seemingly "harmonious" behaviour was more a front, which included other shades of meaning. This "context" meant that 'trying' things out and 'improvising' was actually searching an incomprehensible 'darkness' to understand what really happens. It is paradoxical that I was seen as "The Boss" so people did not have to expose their double meanings. My own behaviour thus seemed to be especially "grafted" to on-stage reactions of others (Homan, 2005). And gradually I discovered that this might be a 'wrong' assumption, because off-stage there were all kinds of other things going on which were deliberately not shown and therefore unknown.

People within the university belong to social groups, such as the faculty, support staff, the board, a programme, or any other group. In the Improvement Phase teams of a new grouping together implemented solutions in several projects. My observation and (possibly one sided) feedback from colleagues showed that participants of the programme liked the approach. Our personal knowledge and experience could have been better utilised; cooperation brought new insights that led to different solutions to problems which before could not be solved in their own environment. The way people could work together, the way decisions were taken, and maybe many more, elements invisible to me, were noticed by the people. The mutual bond and options to bring forward recognisable elements from their own environment led to a new, local way of working together. It may lead - eventually - to a wider development of global processes within the Open University. It greatly depends on the extent to which employees and managers participate whether there are changes in their own environment. Some therefore will lead - in their own way - to repeated activities and / or behaviour, or their continuation, as to others it will not lead to a continuation. The same thing happened at management level. Cooperation of dean, director, and board members increased mutual understanding and led to personal bonds. The frequent contacts increased confidence in each other and enlarged the chance for further cooperation. By initiating the programme I created opportunities for me to discuss topics of improvement with my colleagues on the Executive Board.

3.7.3 What can the manager do?

Stacey (2010) says that almost all managers in a wide variety of organisations believe in the practical use of the methods and techniques that management consultants use. However, a complex responsive processes perspective changes the understanding of what is practical for organisational change. Methods and techniques are, according to Stacey, useful to present a static picture and deliver a limited control at a distance. They can also easily be used to distract attention from the far less orderly interaction of everyday politics in the organisation. The focus on suspected practical tools conceals the configurations of power, the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, and their impact on identity and how people function in the organisation. Managers can easily become rationally blind to important issues related to ideology. Participation in richer, more complex, forms of conversation is a central proposal of the perspective of complex responsive processes. Groot (2010) pleads that more managers become more a part of local processes. According to his view experienced managers recognise which local processes have more influence on things where those managers are responsible for. From his own management experience his advice is: participate in local activities, initiate and support meetings and interactions, challenge people to give their own opinion, and encourage people to take responsibility, and simplify local participation. He also notes that people who worked in his organisation in teams performed better than those who always work alone and it is the same for management teams in my opinion. Homan (2005) suggests: create opportunities for interaction and take away blockades in interaction networks, safeguard transitional spaces, and support innovative projects. Aardema et al. (2010) state that managers cannot control change. They have to facilitate the effect and interaction with people. They have to create a safe environment where people are willing to exchange the normally unspoken. Show colleagues that you are really present, sincerely interested in their concerns, understand and share with them. In such interaction the leader can participate in sharing ideas and encourage initiatives and intentions, without renouncing his responsibility. The presence of the manager adds power to the discussion (Stacey, 2007).

From the complex responsive processes perspective leadership is looked at in a similar way. Leadership develops in contexts of everyday interaction and the identity of the manager is created in that interaction (Griffin, 2002; Groot, 2010). Acceptance is realised through functionalising standards - the feasible, the expected - so they can become realistic in practice. In that way leadership is spread throughout the organisation and can thus be seen as an emerging dimension of interaction processes. A person "is" not the leader, but leadership must be established with every interaction, especially if a person in a specific social context of existing meaning dares to propose discussion. This leadership originates between people and not within one person. The consequence of this idea is that leadership is no longer connected to a person or a certain (formal) position. This means something for the senior manager and how actions of the senior manager are shaped.

Operating successfully and making use of my knowledge in a meaningful way is only possible in this new environment, and I myself am changing in interaction. For me personally it was important to join and participate in (sub) activities throughout the programme. Stacey (2007:443) speaks of "participating in direct interaction . . . participating means creating further interaction". I will therefore gain more understanding of what happens in and through the processes, more signs of what is really important to people. I had the opportunity to focus more on the intentions of the Executive Board in strategic choices, by which others can better understand managerial issues. This was a process of re-creation. From my own perspective, the results of the project were satisfactory. But the surprising feedback showed that I have to wonder whether I have objectified my personal subjectivity or have made it too abstract. This requires a different attitude of myself as a manager and means that I have to give more space to discussion, listen better in daily interactions, and make more contacts with people who have another opinion (which makes a plurality of vocality more visible). In short it means a change in the daily operations of me as senior manager to a more open approach. In that, I am not in the centre of the activities; I am not in control. Working in a new context and the way I take my (new) position arises from interactions in local environments in which I participate and a process of constant negotiation. This insight

significantly increased my repertoire of responses.

Even more than before, I realise that at the conference table only a very small part of reality is visible, and solid patterns (of meetings) should be broken, and that other mechanisms and ways of interacting must replace them. For me this means that in subsequent improvement or development processes I have to leave my chair at the meeting table and seek direct contact with the people. By actively participating in (programme) activities I can gain a better understanding of what happens in the processes, more signs about what were the real concerns of the people. I have had the opportunity to explain more of the intentions of the Executive Board on strategic choices, making others better understand the managerial aspects.

3.8 To conclude this narrative

The focus on changes in my style of management and identity during the change programme raised a number of important questions. In previous work environments I was an experienced, successful manager with a thorough know-how and knowledge of the organisation. The university was a completely new environment, a new habitus, which I knew little about. This meant that I was both an expert and a beginner (novice) at the same time. In the university there were expectations of the new leader, which meant that I needed to look at my role within the university from a different angle and focus my research on this changing role of the senior manager, and (social) interaction. The theory of complex responsive processes provides insights which make this quest possible. Changes took place during the change programme or "building a plane while flying", and led to working in several worlds. My board colleagues, managers and staff in the university, more or less expected a top-down management position from me, where I had my own, different, style and behaviour, while still using small pieces and elements of this traditional style. I have experienced a tension between staying true to myself and re-creating myself. Influenced by others, I changed my role and I started to approach people in a way that has changed my identity. My start as a senior manager in a new top management team showed that changing the established management style calls

for resistance. I think my experience is very typical in the everyday life of a manager.

Another conclusion is that I created an objectification of the programme according to my own, subjective images. This objectification can lead to another, more abstract perception of reality, which does not take account of other ideas. The reflections of my study group fellows made me aware of this. It provided me a better understanding of what I was doing while I was doing it in my everyday ordinary activities. To my opinion, this kind of reflecting on what we are doing is something we do far too little as senior managers.

Section II

Change to a senior position in another organisation

In this section I will describe experiences after being confronted with a surprising reflection at the end of a - in my idea - successful change programme, which caused a small crises in my thinking. I was confronted with the limitations of my personal perspective and thinking, the awareness of me taking things for granted and not questioning my assumptions, but also with the lack of awareness of perspectives of others. I had to deal with the struggle of not being recognised, not knowing what to do. This misrecognition is not misunderstanding, but it is trying to understand why it is what we do. In the third narrative I will describe a part of my own experience where you as a reader can see what we people are doing all the time: recognising and misrecognising, and (the need) to become more reflexive subjects in interaction. I will also describe several experiences of colleagues in similar situations.

4

A struggle for recognition and the emerging

In the year after my appointment on the Executive Board of the Open University, the Executive Board decided on a number of measures to ensure the continuity of the Open University. The most important reasons were growing competition and increasingly appropriate education offerings in a changing market. A benchmark for universities (ter Hedde and Rosmalen, 2007) showed that the Open University had more overhead in comparison to other universities, even when the typical elements of its distance learning were taken into account. As a person responsible for the finance portfolio, I announced measures such as a freeze on support staff and a spending stop on other expenses - to be recorded in the budgets for the following years. Normally finances were only a topic of discussion among the Board of Trustees and the Workers Council in official documents such as budget and annual reports. Although the consequences of the current measures were primarily financial, they of course had effects on education products and services, research activities, staffing at faculties, research departments, and support services. Representatives of the Workers Council and I wanted to discuss these issues before final proposals were officially offered for advice or approval. The current way of working and exchanging information between representatives of the Executive Board and members of the Workers Council is very formalised and does not facilitate this process. I will briefly outline how the existing relationship in a (formal) consultation structure is arranged. I will then describe two events in the relationship between the Executive Board and Workers Council followed by some reflections to present the key topics of this case study.

4.1 The relationship with the Workers Council

A Workers Council is a participatory and representative body within a company. It consists of elected employees on behalf of the staff to consult with the employer on company policy and staff interests. Every company in the Netherlands with 50 or more employees is required by law to have a Workers Council. The focus of the meetings between members of the Executive Board and members of the Workers Council within the Open University was on the treatment of formal, statutory documents, such as strategic plans, estimates, annual reports, and reorganisations, topics where the Workers

Council has the right to agree or give advice. Besides these meetings there were a few informal meetings per year. The meetings and consultations were conducted in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and only few were openly characterised by high tension. Subjects were discussed in informal meetings and we seemed to come to agreements on them. In the formal meeting, discussions were conducted again, and earlier discussed arguments returned to the table. My colleagues on the board and I experienced this as double, unnecessary work, in which a preliminary informal discussion lost its value. I noticed that the formal meetings were limited to substantive topics. There was hardly any talk on how members of the Executive Board and Workers Council would interact.

Besides the meetings, there was much correspondence. The tone of voice of the topics, questions and comments in the correspondence was significantly more aggressive. The Workers Council members requested to have a larger say in a growing number of points. They indicated more than once that they felt inadequately informed and that they suspected that information was being withheld. The Executive Board members did not share this view. To their understanding all possible and available information was shared, after initial consultation with management. We thought that several members of the Workers Council were too much detail-oriented and seemed to take the position of the chair of managers too often. My impression was that the members of the Workers Council and the Executive Board communicated differently on several occasions with and about each other. I discussed the attitude and behaviour of the members of the Workers Council with my colleagues of the Executive Board, and the desire to change it. However, it did not lead to a discussion with the Workers Council. While this was not openly expressed, I had the impression that several Workers Council members had insufficient confidence in the method of working with board members. Networks of relationship were threatened and the involved parties tended to easily fall back on their own ideas with a greater chance of developing a "we-they" stance, an image of opponents. In my experience, it was a possible signal of a troublesome emerging conflict.

With the huge impact that budgets had for the Open University, I was convinced that some other form of communication with members of the Workers Council could and would be more attractive for both parties. I wanted to propose that the Workers Council increased the number of contacts and I wanted to share more background information and progress of my portfolio of finances with them. My arguments were that sharing of information allowed the members of the Workers Council to be involved in both the problems that must be taken care of, and also use their knowledge and experience to create solutions. After some pressure my board colleagues agreed, but I sensed great reluctance which was fed by their bad experiences with recurrent issues which were discussed several times. More information would only increase the work. They preferred to return to a minimum necessary meeting and consultation structure, where only the legal mandatory matters would be scheduled.

4.1.1 Intensive consultations on finance – recognising expectations

With the commitment of both parties I organised a monthly meeting with the finance committee of the Workers Council. We discussed the existing monthly report, which currently had a strong financial nature and roughly indicated the requests of management for more connection with topics which were of interest in daily management, such as the sales of modules, completed diplomas, and promotions and cost developments. The Workers Council members asked questions about strategic choices, the reason behind certain budgets, and a perceived ambiguity of the origin of numbers. Many questions could be answered directly. It became clear to me they had difficulty establishing a relationship between successive reports and that the meaning and number of amendments was not understood. We concluded that a textual explanation of the figures could help a lot. Where possible, work would be done for future meetings. Two weeks later, one day before the board meeting, I would meet some members of the Executive Committee of the Workers Council on a Monday for a brief consultation about the further procedure and subsequent follow-up actions.

On the Friday before the meeting, the secretary of the board called to my attention that an extensive letter from the Workers Council had

been sent to the Executive Board with questions directed to the Finance Committee. In the letter the Workers Council expressed their dissatisfaction concerning the data provided. The form and content of the report did not meet the requirements of the Workers Council. Much necessary information needed for proper analysis was missing. Besides these points, the letter contained a list of additional requests. The Workers Council wanted swift action being taken on these requests. I knew that the actual findings were correct, but we addressed them in the previous meeting and at that time actions were planned, as agreed.

Firstly I felt uncomfortable because the letter was addressed to the Executive Board and not to me personally. I had invested in meetings and - to my mind - hoped to improve our relationship. This addressing asked for a formal treatment of the letter in the board meeting. I feared that my colleagues would see this as a reason to disapprove of my informal and more time-consuming approach. Each informal opportunity to talk about questions and problems would be eliminated. Secondly, a number of subjects were included which had already been taken care of. I thought the demand for immediate delivery was not realistic. In the previous period much effort was invested improving the information provision, but a number of improvements were limited by possibilities of information systems and applications in order to be combined into meaningful management information, and required investments, which were under pressure because of the budget cuts. I had shared these concerns during the meeting with the members of the Workers Council Financial Committee and there had been no adverse reaction. I had assumed that they agreed with my proposals. The behaviour of members of the Workers Council raised questions for me. Was I wrong to continue with my ideas about more extensive consultation? Was my positive impression of the meeting incorrect and did I miss (important) signals? Did the letter ask for a response, and if so, what kind of response? Was I being treated unfairly in this way? The more I thought about the content the more it struck me personally. At some points I even felt attacked. That feeling was certainly not the right counsellor for a first comment. I decided to take a time out and sleep on it for a couple of nights over the weekend. Important to me was that I wanted to have a different

relationship with the Workers Council, which would offer more opportunities to speak about common subjects concerning the Open University in a form of consultation with open conversation. I wanted the Monday meeting to continue, but deliberately stop it after a few minutes. Our informal discussion would lose its importance in the light of subsequent decisions of the coming Executive Board. I hoped to get a chance afterwards to illustrate my feelings and thoughts in detail.

At the beginning of the informal Monday meeting with the delegation of the Executive Board of the Workers Council, I indicated the consequence of sending a formal letter to the Executive Board and closed the meeting. Visibly shocked, two Workers Council members responded that that had not been their intention. The atmosphere and tone of my meeting with the Finance Committee was appreciated and they were keen on continuing in the same way. The new approach suited their view of a desired collaboration between Executive Board and Workers Council. The remaining meeting time we used to explain to each other what actually happened and why. We discovered that after our former meeting other members of the Workers Council did not understand a number of results and raised other questions. It also became clear that several members of the Workers Council lost confidence in making appointments with the Executive Board because of former negative experiences with Executive Board members. At the end of the meeting we decided that the Chairman of the Workers Council would contact the Chairman of Executive Board immediately to explain the real purpose of the letter, with the request to deal with me as a portfolio owner. A day later in the board meeting it was decided to maintain the informal information exchange on financial matters with the Workers Council. Before I give further reflection on this event, I want to describe a second event and then draw attention to similarities and differences between both events.

4.1.2 Communication via public community – feeling misrecognised

In the following year a new rector with extensive experience at another university was appointed and in the next year the Executive Board started the recruitment of a new president. I frequently had

had, as temporary acting president, informal contacts with the chairman and vice chairman of the Workers Council. Our meetings had transformed into a form of conversation ('just talking') where substantive and personal items were discussed in a natural way. We liked this form of consultation and discussed the way you could pick up issues in your role and the way members of the Executive Board and Workers Council interact. The exchange was exploratory and informative and focused on finding opportunities to help each other.

The Open University entered a lower segment of the higher education market of the universities of applied sciences with two courses, in order to increase its sales. Private parties claimed that the competition of the Open University was unfair and challenged the market entrance in court. After being unsuccessful they filed for higher appeals. A spokeswoman in the Second Chamber of the House of Parliament raised questions about the activities of the Open University, highlighting assumed poor (diploma) results and even questioned the continued existence of the university. The Secretary of State of Education, of the same political party, argued that the university no longer met expectations. Subsequent discussions with the Secretary of State supported by a number of critical signals of an installed review panel made clear that returns on educational performance should increase, synergy in collaboration with other education organisations had to grow, and overheadcost had to decrease. How to achieve this and by what means was not known at that moment in time. The public funding was uncertain, because the ministry announced drastic measures in the area of part-time education. The rector and I made a similar analysis and already planned to take measures on these issues ourselves. The signal of the Secretary of State strongly increased the sense of urgency.

The Executive Board organised a number of meetings with management, the Workers Council and employees to inform them about the known facts and uncertainties. In the informal meetings with the chairman and vice-chairman of the Workers Council we looked for opportunities to act together as Executive Board and Workers Council as much as possible. After one of the employee meetings a Workers Council member, William Counsellor, reported

to the Executive Board through mail: "*Dear <names of board members >, I was disappointed about the content of your presentation yesterday. I missed the bigger picture. I have left a comment on Yammer (internal Open University community site). Sincerely William*". We appreciated the announcement; it fitted our picture of how the Executive Board and Workers Council interacted. Moreover, we shared the importance of discussions among the Yammer community. I reading the Yammer message, however, we were shocked by the content of this message.

Besides the announced disappointment about the concreteness, insufficient capacity, the means of information, and the timelines of possible participation, a number of qualifications were given, which - to our mind - were aimed at us personally. The Yammer community seemed to us not the place to display these feelings. As a first reaction to this statement I mailed William a request for an explanation. The disappointment was confirmed: "*... I agree that my tone is sharp. That was also the idea. We are not here to give hugs and pats on the shoulder. I am a concerned employee and as a Workers Council member it is my task to speak out where others might not dare to do so*". A striking point in the remainder of the reaction was the image from which the work of the Workers Council waspositioned "*.. mind you, a Workers Council is an opposition party..*".

This response hurt me. I thought it was unfair that my colleague and I were addressed in this way. We had spent a lot of effort in a very uncertain time, in which a number of issues between the Open University and the ministry were still open. William used words, such as opposition party, as if we were enemies, opponents. We planned a discussion with a larger delegation of the Workers Council including the chairman and vice chairman and William. In that conversation I firmly indicated that I felt unpleasantly affected by the manner in which an image of the board members was outlined. The response surprised me. William indicated that he was not at all dissatisfied with the relationship that had been established between the Executive Board and Workers Council. Others confirmed this. It was not his intention to give negative signals about persons. The rest of the meeting we tried to explain what happened and why. This exchange primarily took place between me and the chairman and

vice-chairman of the Workers Council, principally on the basis of our past relationship. William was silent and did not participate in the conversation.

4.1.3 Misunderstanding in the relationship between members of the Workers Council and the Executive Board?

In both events, there was a certain way of communicating from the Workers Council, which I experienced as personal, while apparently it was not intended in this way. Can we speak of insufficiently clear positions, or other signals that have led to misunderstandings? Or is this an example of gestures which led in the subsequent interaction, to something else than those intended by the gesture(s)? In retrospect, I argued (too much) and acted from my view that I felt attacked and had, perhaps to defend myself, a strong desire for recognition and acknowledgement of "my position". From that moment we were not talking any more, but I broadcast my own discomfort. We failed to continue the conversation to each other and lost the willingness to question the intentions of the other. Perhaps William could have articulated his intentions differently, but that is no excuse that I did not use the chance to explore his motives. Moreover, it could have given me more background information about his role, motives, and choices. Instead of bridging a distance I, inadvertently, upheld the distance, and acted in an "opponent" - model. What I had not realised is that when I spoke with colleagues of the Workers Council it was not only as a direct counterparts on a peer level, but also – at the same time - as a senior executive, an acting president. In this interaction a - unconsciously deployed - power factor, which was connected to this role, strongly influenced the interaction.

What exactly happens with and between the participants in aforementioned events, how can misunderstandings of this magnitude be explained, can they even be explained? Do conflicts play a role in this process? What does it take to recognise and acknowledge each other's motives and positions? How can I open myself as a senior executive for and to my environment? Initially, I thought that understanding conflicts and managing conflicts would give me answers to the above questions. After an extensive study of the theory of conflict and conflict management, I have come to the

conclusion that this has not been the case. However, the research has helped me to become aware of relevant aspects in organisational interfaces, such as those between the Executive Board and Workers Council. I will briefly indicate how the study of the theory of conflict and conflict management, in particular the model of Brown (1983), has given me insight into the underlying factors for answering my questions. Then I will go into more detail on the ideas of Bourdieu and Honneth, and connect their ideas to the importance of recognition and acknowledgment of individuals in an organisational (social) relationship.

4.2 Conflicts, the management of conflicts and recognition of each other's interests

Conflicts occur in all types of organisations. Traditionally, conflict is thought to arise from opposing interests with regard to scarce resources, differences in goals to be achieved and frustration (Mack and Snyder, 1957; Schmidt and Kochan, 1972; Tjosvold, 2006). Conflict often occurs in relationships where people have both competitive and cooperative interests (Walton en McKersie, 1965, 1991; Kochan en Verma, 1983). The competitive elements produce the conflict; the cooperative elements create the incentives to negotiate to reach an agreement (Deutsch and Krauss, 1962). These traditional ideas show a perception of opposition or incompatibility of involved parties, but also a certain degree of mutual dependence and the possibility of influencing or being involved (Speakman and Ryals, 2010). Conflict management focuses on finding solutions through rational decision processes (Montes et al., 2012). Brown (1983) describes a concept of organisational interfaces which brings together parties with common and conflicting interests. He looks at conflicts in terms of outcomes in these interfaces and focuses on the long-term consequences of events in an interface. Brown argues that interfaces can be analysed in time in a fruitful manner based on four elements:

1. the definition and organisation of the *interface* itself;
2. the interests and characteristics of the (relevant) parties;
3. the impact of the immediate and wider *context*, and
4. the roles and personal characteristics of the *representatives*

Events in an interface are the result of the interaction between these four elements. They can be integrating or disintegrating.

Events in an interface provide a *dynamic* at two levels: a. interpersonal dynamics of perception, communication, and activities of representatives, and b. the long-term interaction between parties, context, and outcomes, which establish the definition and organisation of the interface. In time, interfaces get shaped due to interactions of representatives, changes in the context, and developments in (one of) the parties. In contacts with the Workers Council, I recognise these elements: parties (Workers Council and the Executive Board), their representatives, the context (university and its environment) and the interface itself (the meetings) where the contacts take place. Brown states: "*continued interactions between interdependent social units produce interfaces that are social units themselves* (Brown, 1983:17)".

In the relationship between Workers Council and the Executive Board there were several representatives for each party. Depending on the subject (i.e. finance or strategy) or the type of meeting (informal versus formal, thematic) we spoke in different formations with other representatives from both the Executive Board and Workers Council. The feedback from the Workers Council members made me aware that other executives on the board did not always take the same position on (financial) issues, which were my responsibility. We shared the financial worries, but thought too much focus on financial aspects negatively affected the attention for the scientific content. This duality must have been difficult for the Workers Council. I noticed similar situations in the Workers Council. There were circumstances when I reached an agreement with a representative on a solution or approach (i.e. in the Financial Committee), but other members of the Workers Council did not support this. Both situations provided confusion and mutual irritation. In the past, members of the Workers Council had some bad experiences with former members of the Executive Board. Agreements had not been honoured. These experiences still influence the relationship to this day. The irritation was of such a magnitude, that the most attractive alternative was to meet only for

the necessary formal business issues.

Brown assumes that a conflict *"may be either good or bad, depending on the circumstances and the values of the observer* (Brown, 1983:7)*"*. Conflicts are part of interactions between people and play at the relationship level. Conflicts are then an inherent part of organisational life and a normal part of leadership (Pondy, 1967; Griffin, 2002). The conflict helps in deepening (various aspects of) problems and understanding them better. Perceptions and feelings of individuals reflected in a conflict and interactions between people are recurrent subjects. Conflicts are energising, proof of social robustness and the basis for creating solutions, and strengthen relationships (Tjosvold, 2006; Speakman and Ryals, 2010). A conflict can be seen as *"a part of an on-going process of building relations, creating solutions and preventing that people get stuck* (Groot, 2010:25)*"*.

Watching conflicts in a context of an organisational interface gave me more insight into the interaction between members of the Workers Council, myself, and other members of the Executive Board. However, in the events described several representatives of each group contacted other representatives of another group instead of single organisational interfaces. The dynamics between people and groups of people are insufficiently developed. Brown indicates that the environment has a significant influence, but his analysis does not adequately reflect the influence of the (local) environment of the individual. In my experience the local environment provides the starting position and the actions of an individual, and this may apply even more to a newcomer in a (conflictual) relationship with others. These dynamics between people and groups of people are well presented in the field theory of Bourdieu.

4.2.1 Dynamics between (groups of) people

Bourdieu (Grenfell, 2008) states in his field theory, that the acts of people are not determined by something abstract such as 'society', but by the interaction between people: 'reality is a social concept'. To exist is to exist socially, in relation to others. What is real is relational and everyone defines themselves and the world around him by marking differences between observed phenomena. The modern Western reality, according to Bourdieu, has come into a process of

differentiation of semi-autonomous and increasingly specialised social structures, spheres of action. He calls these spheres fields which are structuring human behaviour mutually and internally and that power relations between and within these fields structure human behaviour. A field is a relatively autonomous force field, in which individuals *(agents)* take positions. This positioning is aimed at the preservation or the transformation of the structure of the relationship of the forces. Within each field a constant (partly unconscious) power struggle is taking place among individuals for scarce resources, which are at stake within that field, i.e. on a football field an attacker will try to score a goal; a defender will try to keep the opponent from scoring.

In each field, people unconsciously develop a certain habitus, a sustainable way of perceiving, thinking and acting, with which people in the field maintain and develop themselves. People, who are in a field for a longer period of time, have an advantage over newcomers, because they have fully internalised the habitus. The habitus is formed by the interplay of individuals, it strengthens itself and takes structural forms which influence subsequent actions. Newcomers will have to learn some manners, which is important in the field to move on. Your own social position is measured by others, where an individual him/herself affects the social norm. According to Bourdieu, individuals do not always agree on the rules of the game. These individuals will take positions aimed at changing the balance of power and try to change the rules of the game to their own benefit. The players, who are trying to maintain the status quo of doxa, will disagree and a conflict will follow. The effect of change leads to different responses of individuals and can cause confusion within the habitus of the field. In the context of an unknown future struggles take place which can end in new opportunities.

The environment of universities has changed rapidly: an emergence and growth of, and change in, information technology, an increasing amount of free digital course material and an increasing self-consciousness among individuals (Wissema et al., 1996). There was an increasing pressure on budgets from the government, tighter agreements and efficiency, which were set out in performance agreements for each university (VSNU, 2011). These changes

triggered changes in the academic field, and as an executive I was responsible for the realisation of these changes in an environment of which I had to learn the rules and had less or no use of my "former capital". In the next section I shall look at several of these changes and their alleged effects.

4.2.2 A changing environment for the university and employee participation

The Open University had a special mission in the higher education system in developing open higher distance education and providing academic education with an open and accessible character. This development task was based on its research and the implementation of a teaching practice with a broad - socially oriented - valorisation function, in which the contribution to the (technological) innovation and accessibility of higher education had a central place. Therefore new technologies were an important part of the offer of the university and students used these technologies intensively. The effect of environmental developments was immediately noticeable in the primary processes. Increased self-consciousness led to a greater need for information and a greater sense of responsibility (Wissema et al., 1996:3) among both students and university staff. Members of the Executive Board and the Workers Council had to deal directly with these changes. Tighter performance-oriented agreements provided a pragmatisation of relationships. Routines increasingly had to meet predefined rules, and were furthermore aimed at achieving specific quantitative targets. Following these guidelines was often at odds with the freedom that the academic professional claims for himself and his surroundings. In their eyes expert behaviour is more intuitive, holistic, and synchronic in nature and transcends structured, context rules (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

This changing environmental context will cause a shift in thinking about employee participation: from *evaluative* participation to *interactive* participation (Wissema et al., 1996). Members of the Workers Council expressed their wish to grow from an evaluative 'into an interactive participation. This way of working would lead to greater involvement of employees in the organisation and better decisionmaking (Van het Kaar and Smit, 2007). In the existing

situation the Workers Council was informed about the relevant issues just before the final decisionmaking in accordance with the legal terms. The Workers Council representatives expressed a growing need for dialogue and early involvement in the decision process: *"the exercise of influence on decisionmaking in companies and organisations by employees in dialogue with management* (Wissema et al., 1996:42) ".

The strategic importance of a proposed new course for the Open University and the associated agreements on performance, forced the members of the Executive Board to discuss more business and economic capital oriented topics with the members of the Workers Council in order to get their agreement. Although we all knew that it was a 'must-do', all participating members experienced the difficulties not being familiar with these aspects of our primary business. The financial situation of the university was (still) fragile. Costs and revenues were in balance, but there were little resources to finance major changes. This meant that from my responsibility for finances I wanted to maintain influence in the choices to be made. Although my new board colleagues were less hostile to changes in the relationship with the Workers Council, their management style was still based on professional verification (evaluating according to rules) and not focused on participatory conversation involved in early planning. Members of the Workers Council and members of the Executive Board had - in my opinion - an interest in decreasing the distance between the administration and operation, and therefore the parties should be seen to be integrating thought and action in an interactive process. Formal bureaucratic ways of working leaning on legal processes with a commitment afterwards should change to a form of cooperation in which co-thinking, common interest and commitment in advance become important.

Homan (1995) has described the change from traditional characteristics of roles of members of the Workers Council, such as reactive posture, conservative and defensive behaviour, negotiating, distrust, short-term focus, little involvement, formal interaction, and internally focused on new characteristics: a proactive attitude, innovative, and teamworking, with openness and trust, strategic insight, good relationship building, and direct communication. An

NCSI study among council members shows that many council members feel that they have insufficient skills to meet the new role (Nauta et al., 2008). In my experience, the characteristics mentioned by Homan can be a reference for executives and can help new executives to look at existing relations within the organisation. The characteristics of new roles also defined for me the expected level for members of both the Workers Council and the Executive Board. Being the temporary acting president and chairman I had a lot of (informal) contacts with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Workers Council. This offered us the opportunity to get to know each other better and get a picture of the issues that were important for each of us. This resulted in a more nuanced shared picture of the similarities and differences in interests, which provide a base for further conversation. Although I was not aware of the changing demand of the Workers Council, I intuitively sensed that a shift had to occur in both content (more information at an earlier stage) and the way consultations about finance were taken up. I could bring in my knowledge and experience gained in other more corporate environments. The decisive factor in building a relationship was a sincere recognition by both parties that their relationship could only improve if they are both responsible for the result. Mutual respect and recognition were a necessary condition. Instead of only meeting to discuss documents placed on the agenda, the exchanges of backgrounds, opinions, and wishes played a larger role. Mutual interests are emphasised in a joint problem-solving (Timmermans, 2007; Brown, 1983). *"With this approach (collaborative approach, CB), it is important to look at the interests of the other party ... and be open about your own interests, so that the opposing party will have sufficient opportunity to offer value proliferating proposals (Broer, 2009:37)"*. In the long term, according to Brown, this will lead toincreased confidence, a more stable relationship, and skills of representatives of parties to offer acceptable alternatives.

In her book *"Changing Conversations"* Shaw (2002) describes conversations as conversating to organising. *"It will be describing and illustrating conversation as a process of communicative action which has intrinsic capacity to pattern itself. No single individual or group has control over the forms that emerge, yet between us we are continuously shaping and being shaped by those forms from within*

the flow of our responsive relating (Shaw, 2002:11)". She distances herself from the urge of managers to "settle" meetings or conversations and define the outcomes. According to Shaw, managers believe that they can (tangibly) create ideal conditions. The problem is that the different qualities of conversation, which we experience as we talk, are exactly that: *qualities* (Shaw, 2002:69). These qualities are emergent properties of interaction. This underpins, following my own experience, the fact that Workers Council and Executive Board members can, and should have, much more conversation with each other in order to get more familiar with each other.

Both events showed signals (confirmed by members of the Workers Council) that the old evaluative relationship no longer fitted, andthere was dissatisfaction with the establishment of the corresponding interface and the form of representation. With the one-to-one performance agreements linked to public payments to universities the government puts more emphasis on the importance of economic capital. With this the government changes the rules for people acting in the academic field. In the football metaphor: the playing style changes from a defensive catenaccio into total football. There is a mismatch between the current and new (not yet altogether determined) way of working and it will take some time (time lag) before both the university and the academic staff have adapted that. As a newcomer with knowledge of and experience in these aspects I took the opportunity to take a leading role in the process. From my point of view a logical step to take, but I forgot that others in the same process used other references and experiences.

With this knowledge I doubted my own actions especially in the second event. Without specifically intending to do so, I had determined the outcome of the meeting. My own experience and feelings were well expressed, I think, but those of my Workers Council colleagues to a much lesser extent. Moreover, I saw events which I did not notice then and which I had not picked up during the events. We were hardly "in conversation", even stronger I got the impression that I treated William with little respect. I began to feel increasingly uncomfortable. The effect of my actions was not in line with my actual intention. I wanted to broaden and deepen the

contacts in order to reach better results for the university. It seemed to me that I had reached exactly the opposite! I decided to ask the person involved if he still would be willing to tell his side of the story.

4.3 Communication via a public community reconsidered

After a briefing of the staff a week later, I spoke with William. After a short explanation of my question, and reasons behind it he reacted positively surprised by my question and said he did not expect to be asked to tell his story. When I asked him to book an hour in the agenda, he responded that he might need some more time, there was much to tell. A few weeks later we had an appointment. I mentioned that I had reflected on my own actions and was interested in *his description* of the event to come to a better understanding of what had happened.

4.3.1 William's story
William came somewhat "loaded" to the staff meeting. In the preceding period, the Executive Board had given – based on his experience – insufficient clarity on a number of reactions of the Workers Council to the draft strategic institutional plan, or as he stated, "we had a picture of a messy, ambiguous approach of the Executive Board". This was the basis for much frustration. The openness, which the Executive Board showed at the meeting, William perceived as positive. It was clear that the proposed direction, which was partly dictated by political pressure, would cost a lot of energy. But William missed a clear vision in this meeting. He asked some questions, but he did not receive in his opinion a satisfactory answer, which strengthened his frustration. To his idea the Executive Board should act more firmly and articulate the position of the Open University at the ministry. He was, as it later turned out in our conversation, unaware of all the conversations with both the ministry and the Board of Trustees on the continued existence of the Open University. He was also not aware of the contents of the intensive contacts I had had with the Chairman of the Workers Council. The confidential content of those conversations was - I think rightly - not shared by both sides with others.

William wrote columns in a university magazine on behalf of the Workers Council. He used a critical and sometimes sharp writing style. In the evening he came home, still in an irritated mood and wrote, in his own name, a text on Yammer in his familiar writing style. In our interview, William explained that on Yammer everyone is equal and that this platform is ideally suited for openness. Anticipating the openness of the Executive Board, William wanted to continue that on Yammer. Important for William was that a message on Yammer stays internal in the community of the university. William's personal drive was that the Workers Council had to articulate cases and channel criticism. William's assessment was that his faculty membership provided him a relatively safe position (I share this with him). Somewhat later in time William realised that his text had been too sharp on some points and he decided to send a short text message to me and the rector. The message was intended as an announcement but turned out to be very short. To William's own understanding afterwards the intention of the message was hardly recognised. For me it was absolutely no problem that William had expressed his disappointment and confirmed his involvement in the process. For him it was important to give special attention to my appeal for joint action. His interpretation of a joint action by Workers Council and Executive Board was not (and could not be) based on the informal contacts with the chairman of the Workers Council. His response was therefore not in line with the nature and content of these contacts.

In order to clearly indicate that the Workers Council was not dependent on the Executive Board, but had its own position, William used the term "opposition party". Power requires appropriate contradiction is the idea behind this. William assumed the Workers Council has little power, the Workers Council could only influence by expressing the state of mind (the likes and dislikes). William did so from a critical loyal attitude, without the intention of creating a negative mood. In this way you (together) serve the interest of the university. In the conversation we discussed the fact that his deviating signal on Yammer in relation to the informal conversations with the chairman confused me. Did the Workers Council modify its strategy? The context of an opposition party could be interpreted as: the opposition seeks power at the expense

of the party in power, the Executive Board. William had never had this intention. He was aware that he, together with other Workers Council members, ended up in an acceleration which went out of control and as a result of developments they had little remaining grip on the situation. William experienced the meeting with me as very intimidating, especially because I experienced it as a personal attack. He was not aware of things that had occurred outside of his awareness. Others in the organisation had misused the published text of William as such a personal attack, which later to William explained my attitude. My reaction had a great impact on William and the other present members of the Workers Council. William indicated in the meeting that it had not been his intention to hurt me personally. The impact of my reaction was so overwhelming for him that he remained silent the rest of that meeting. William discussed my strong reaction after the meeting with several people. One of the comments towards William was: "if management has no substantive reply then you will receive a personal attack. You now experienced the hard side of the political game and in that sense you have had a baptism of fire".

After the meeting, William wondered whether he had crossed a line, or had used the wrong style or had not sufficiently legitimised it with reasons. William found himself in an uncomfortable position. He considered it a privilege to discuss policy issues with the board from a Workers Council position. In this role he would get a lot of insights in how decisions were made. The role offered him the opportunity to put issues on the table. William saw that as a task of a Workers Council member. His involvement in the university was great and he enjoyed the "game". However this event raised the question: what freedom of criticism is there and what should I do to consider others? Can what needs to be said still be said? Criticism is part of it, especially for Executive Board members, and when it happens it will happen publicly.

4.3.2 Giving meaning to what has happened
After William's story a lot became clearer to me. I experienced William's intentions as sincere. I appreciated the signals to the Executive Board and that the board could be criticised. Through sharing my ideas and interpretations I noticed that William, if he

had known this, would have expressed his opinion in a different way. I was glad we had talked together and had relived the event. The beginning of the conversation was mainly William's story, as time progressed, we got more and more into conversation, sometimes speaking from our own perspective, then associative or explorative in relation to other topics. With the exchange of images and experiences we both developed a good feeling. Shotter (1993) emphasises a *feeling of tendency*, with which he indicates that conversation is not only an intellectual activity. In his view we are in a conversation embedded in a sensitive stream of patterns of feeling, a kind of ethos in which words have the power to move in speaking and fascinating us and thus shift our perception. I think, William and I have thus rewritten part of our history, not the events themselves, but the interpretation we had given to it. I also think that we created opportunities to continue working together. We had discovered that we had some ideas in common, and we had agreed that we could, no we have to address issues. Conversations like the aforementioned do not always deliver the intended or planned outcomes. The outcome is the result of a joint action. Shotter states: "*the processes of joint action in which and by which people construct between themselves "organisational settings" of enabling-constraints "into" which to direct their future actions and how it is that sometimes those settings become more constraining than enabling* (Shotter, 1993:79)".

William was convinced that the Executive Board had power and the Workers Council only had influence. A fellow PhD student, Workers Council member in another organisation, said that in his experience Workers Council members are very aware of the hierarchy in the relationship with the board. They do not see this as a similar peer-to-peer relationship. As Executive Board member, I would like this to be so, but it takes two to tango. The outlined approaches indeed offered new insights in organisational interfaces, development in employee participation, and the link with field, habitus, and capital helps a new executive to understand how and why people form relations and give it a specific meaning in the Open University. Recognising these relations it helps the newcomer, as it did for me, to be more aware of the aspects which determine his own position. The model of Brown is implemented in accordance

with predetermined steps with the expectation that the projected results will be achieved with the chosen actions (interventions). The emphasis is on individual action of the manager, as if he is the only one who determines and executes interventions. In the reality of everyday life involved individuals of both the Workers Council and the Executive Board have a network of relationships within their own party, with other parties and others in the surroundings. Each of these relationships has a dynamic and is the source of unique experiences within that interface. Shotter (1993) makes clear that interventions always have to fit or connect with the local setting. This makes it so difficult if not impossible to use a model which includes only a selected number of variables of a concrete setting. Wissema pays much attention to a solution in which the participation of the employee is centralised. In the elaboration he falls back to a plan of action, which focuses too much on one party and the interests they have (in this case the Workers Council), and secondly has a linear, sequential character, a path once chosen is maintained.

In all the described stories there is a method which is too simple, because they do not consider the fact that a relationship between people characterises complex interaction with innumerable variables. These stories do not address the complexity that I have experienced at both events. I would like to explore why it is so hard for me to build other relations between the Workers Council and Executive Board members. Changes have implications for the parties, their representatives, and the interface between them. The context has great influence including the political processes of human organisation. Changes therein can be interpreted as changes in existing power relations. I want to develop my thoughts on relationships of mutual recognition and power against this background, and how they can be both restrictive and stimulating in the processes of becoming a (recognised and recognising) member of a new community of people. I will reflect on my own role as an executive in a university environment, in which I am arguing for a less mechanical concept of management.

4.4 Processes of human organisation

4.4.1 Group behaviour, recognition and self-realisation

The way people 'organise' themselves can be seen as an in essence social process, but also a process that entails political activity (Stacey 2007, 2010; Mouffe, 2005; Griffin, 2002). Elias (1970, 2000) argues that we live as human beings within patterns of interdependencies, which he calls *figurations*. His empirical research shows that social functions in the history of the past two centuries have become increasingly differentiated under competitive pressure (Minningh, 2010). The individual in all his actions became increasingly dependent on other people. The separate action of each individual in a society with growing and far-reaching interdependence chain will need rigourous mutual alignment. In this alignment power is not an attribute or possession of a single person, but it is a characteristic of human relating, an ongoing negating of power, including inequalities of power. To sustain a relation to another person is to actively engage in a jointly created process of mutual constraint that affords each of us opportunities while at the same time limiting us (Elias and Scotson, 1965/1994). In the process of power relations in the local social interaction, the identity of the individual and the identity of the group emerge (Groot, 2007). One's identity is closely linked to the "we" and "them" relationships in a group. The most obvious way we experience power relations at work is the way we act to include and exclude ourselves and others and experience ourselves as being included and excluded. *"In local interactions the potential to shift the way we recognise and feel recognised as persons in social realities arises* (Shaw, 2002:74)*"*. Although it seems that the boundary between insiders and outsiders is strong and stable, it is not so easy to draw a line. Individuals continuously negotiate and compete about this dividing line. It is possible that the individual intentions, and deeds repeat a certain power configuration, and its rules and this may paradoxically change at the same time. The meaning that individuals have of themselves affects the contribution of individuals in a figuration. Honneth (1995) argues that the perception and the meaning that you have created of yourself is achieved within social relations of recognition. Recognition is, according to Honneth, a prerequisite for building and maintaining practical relations to yourself, which is an essential condition for

self-realisation or identity formation.

4.4.2 Self-realisation in social context

Honneth argues that every social conflict is based on a struggle for recognition. In situations of frustrated acknowledgment by forms of disrespect, negative emotional reactions can emerge. Instead of a passive suffering an active struggle for recognition is initiated (Honneth 1995: 135). This struggle for recognition takes place on personal and social levels, and can occur in varying degrees. He develops an evaluative standard, a formal conception of ethical life, a figuration of living together, which provides insight into social structures whether individuals obtain the space and are stimulated to develop themselves as fully autonomous and free individuals by entering relationships of recognition that are not imposed: self-realisation. Honneth speaks of three types of 'practical relations-to-self' which are realised in three spheres through mutual recognition: self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem. The relationships to yourself are realised in that sphere and are hierarchical in nature, in the sense that the previous relationship is a prerequisite for, and continue working in the following. The practical relations to yourself each have a private area in which recognition can be established: for self-confidence the corresponding area is the sphere of love, self-respect is the sphere of rights and self-esteem, that of solidarity. Development of self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem is created and maintained only through recognition of others who are also acknowledged by yourself. These basic conditions for identity formation can only be fulfilled intersubjectively, and maintained in these three interrelated spheres of recognition.

I see a number of relationships between the described events. Some members of the Workers Council, including William and the chairman, indicated that they wanted to change the position of the Workers Council, and wanted to change the focus of their activities from control to participation. This evolves from a strong commitment - articulated by William - to the Open University and forms feelings of being a representative of employees, who increasingly wanted their individual interests to be met. Another reason was that they wanted to be connected to the rapidly changing aspects of their own

habits where the effects of changing (power) relations also affected their own identities. The change gave William – as well as me as a new executive – the possibility to influence developments and (re) settle new relations in which our own needs could be satisfied in line with our self-realisation. It was doubtful whether all Workers Council members understood this change or dare to change. I experienced that with my different approach in limited areas as the programme and activities with the Workers Council my colleagues as well as other members of the Workers Council showed their reservations and preference for familiar styles of behaviour, and at the same time realised that "new times" ask for changes. In other words, in the Workers Council it could start various processes of reconciliation. In the Workers Council a power dynamic between members was going on, from which certain "collective" behaviour would emerge. These behaviours were not limited to representative members, as Brown (1983) and Walton and McKersy (1965, 1991describe in their interface. Each Workers Council member "represented" the Workers Council in local areas where it operated. Thus, we could speak of a somewhat "unorganised" interface looking for a new balance and the conflicts described in both events express the tensions which are common with the search for such a new balance. At the same time the Executive Board still had a strong tendency to reduce the number of meetings and rely on an exchange of information and documents, which legally met the requirement. This created even more distance between both parties. In the Executive Board several times we discussed my – according to my colleagues too intensive – collaboration with several Workers Council members. They made it clear to me that they were not (yet) willing to adopt this way of working.

In meetings with the Workers Council there was too much emphasis on purely financial aspects. My interventions in the field of finance had resulted in a budget neutral operation, and these were carried out to the satisfaction of the Board of Trustees. They supported the financial interventions, so I felt supported as an individual as well as the person responsible for my portfolio. The emphasis on the financial aspect had become so extensive in the recent years that (almost) all decisions mainly took place on the basis of financial considerations. As a result of this dominance the attention to the

scientific content, an important aspect in the academic field, was pushed to the background. The rector, my colleague on the Executive Board, was repeatedly faced with the reserved and at times dismissive response of her own faculty constituencies. Examples included maintaining existing practices and staff and adherence to the existing portfolio. In this way they wanted to preserve their local dominant positions in the academic field. Moreover, some deans felt that the faculties did not have sufficient financial resources. On the Executive Board, I deliberately sought the confrontation with my colleagues, because I wanted to avoid being confronted with different ideas outside the Executive Board.

In retrospect, I have to say that I have insufficiently explored what are important issues for my colleagues (relation with Senge's generative activity). Outside the official meetings with scheduled documents we rarely met each other which definitely influenced the knowledge and understanding of each other's ideas. For both parties I saw, despite some of the incidents mentioned, that the members of these parties were becoming more attached to their own ideas. One consequence was that there was little conflict and no debate at all about the background of disputes and the link with the environmental developments (and the impact on identities). In my experience, the conflict had not disappeared, but rather been relegated to avoidance or being ignored. Avoiding or ignoring the social aspects that play a role in the interface and the cooperation relationship contributed to an even more diminished mutual recognition. As a result the distance between the parties increased and this reduced chances of emerging understanding.

In the interface between the Executive Board and the Workers Council, I think there are two different dynamics, which happen simultaneously. The first dynamic is intended to try to come to an agreement on substantive policy issues. An element of the i nteraction is "pulling and pushing" each other to defend our own views. Each party hopes to convince the other party of its position. In the background the associated relational and power dynamics play a role. It also covers a second dynamic, a process of identity development, in which the need for a human to be recognised plays a role. This process involves all actors. The membership of

the Workers Council provides opportunities for Wiliam for self-realisation, as it does for me in the role of executive of the Open University. I am familiar with the subject and I also have the idea that my activities contribute to the Open University. I recognise a difference between formal and actual situations. Formally, there are meetings and agreements on agendas, all in accordance with hierarchical dependencies and legal frameworks. In the present broadly accepted thinking of managers similar "formal" ideas exist on the way recognition is used in an instrumental way as if it were a tool (Ventrice, 2009; Gostick and Elton, 2007; Daniels, 2000). The underlying idea of managers is that if they use recognition in the right way there will be less conflict, individual employees will fit to the organisation's goals better and employees will be more motivated to achieve the vision of the organisation. This thinking is in line with the interventions and methods of the approaches of managing a conflict as previously described (Walton and McKersie, 1965, 1991; Brown, 1983; Wissema et al., 1996). Mastering the technique of approval seems important: goals are easier to achieve and staff feel better. By presenting recognition this way it is only a small step to think about recognition as a technique that managers can learn and apply (Wenzel, 2011:123) in order to accomplish what managers want. In this way of thinking, ambiguity, uncertainty and paradox are removed in favour of thinking like a designer. However, this way of thinking separates thinking from action, and reflection from experience (Shaw, 2002:30). In reality plenty of other things are happening in addition to the formal business. Formal relations state little about how things actually work. Homan (2006) speaks in this connection of the outside (formal agreements, appropriate interventions) and the inside (dynamic between management and employees) in change. It is exactly this inside that is problematic for newcomers because they do not know "the way of working around here", the habitus. I especially want to look at concrete action and how things actually get done. I n the complex responsive processes approach this becomes central. I am hoping to gain new insights from this.

4.4.3 The dialectic of recognition and power

Elias (1970) argues that humans are dependent beings who paradoxically limit and give each other opportunities at the same time. People convincingly bring in with their personal goals in local

interaction, and an overall pattern emerges by the mixing of many individual intentions and deeds. Stacey et al. (2000, 2005) and Stacey (2007, 2010) used for this the terms "local" and "global" which cannot be separated, and where conflict and harmony are linked so inextricably, it is important not to end in a dualistic thinking of right and wrong. Wenzel (2011) argues that power relations and relations of recognition exist in a dialectical form: one cannot exist without the other. I want to take up his argument here, in which he gives an important reason for an explanation for the paradoxical elements in human relationships: *"Here I want to take this view one step further to argue that power relations can be conceptualised as processes of (mis)recognition. This will be an important aspect for an explanation which upholds the paradoxical elements of human interrelating* (Wenzel, 2011:129)*"*. Power relationships are built through interdependencies (Stacey, 2007, 2010). In social and communicative interaction, people are not always free to do what they want. Others hold them accountable for their actions and vice versa. *"Of particular importance in these conversational processes is the emergent reproduction of themes and variations that organise communicative actions into membership categories. These tend to be themes of an ideological kind that establish who may take a turn, as well as when and how they may do so. … the result is categories of conversational participants in which some are included ... and … [others] are excluded*(Stacey, 2010:184)*"* .

Elias points to an unconscious dynamic, in which the "established" and the "outsiders" are dependent on each other. The dominant "established" are not only dominant because they conceptualise themselves in that way, just as important is the fact that the "outsiders" recognised the "established" as superior. Without such recognition there would exist no inside or outside. In order to be inside or outside, it is necessary to be recognised as such and to recognise it yourself. At this point, the positions of Elias and Bourdieu on newcomers match, both indicate that it is difficult for a newcomer to join the "established", adapt to the habitus of the existing (academic) field. Necessarily the newcomer (myself as a member of the Executive Board at the university) has to adapt to the existing social structure. It is exactly in this way that the process

of recognition / misrecognition shapes identity.

4.4.4 Misrecognition and conflict

Previously I described that a conflict can be seen as an intrinsic element of human cooperation in which our thoughts move and power differences fluctuate. A basic idea in the recognition or misrecognition of others is a good understanding of a continuous exchange between self and other. If representatives of the parties want to achieve a common goal together it is important that you talk to each other and are involved in the local interaction. In my experience the described events are consistent with the findings of Shaw, where extensive conversation ("just talking") delivers many additional images and knowledge about the other representatives. It contributes, in any case, to the way subjects can be viewed from multiple perspectives. These seem necessary to achieve a better understanding (and recognising) of each other's assumptions, intentions, and aspirations for the future: a starting point for mutual recognition. In the description of the events I learned to know myself in a better, yes even in a different way. The fact that I was surprised in events made me think about my own role and identity. *"While we try to become recognised by the other and open ourselves up, we still try to maintain a basic sense of self in order not to disintegrate and to remain able to negate the other. When engaged in this psychological process, we do not stay in the other, however, but we repeatedly return to ourselves only to reiterate the process. We come to recognise our self in and through the other* (Wenzel, 2010:62)*"*.

Honneth describes how relationships to yourself can be broken by forms of disrespect. The destructive character of disrespect is not in the fact that disrespect impairs subjects or limits their freedom, but in the fact that the subjects are not allowed to relate positively to themselves. For Honneth disrespect is an activity that is done by others, but it is likely that a more passive lack of recognition can be seen as a form of disrespect. The lack of recognition in the form of emotional support (atmosphere of love), cognitive respect (sphere of rights) and social status (spirit of solidarity) can itself be a form of disrespect. To a large extent, this will depend on the extent to which the acknowledgment is expected.

4.5 Concluding thoughts

When people are involved in interactions between parties with different interests knowing that they are focused on maintaining their self-image a tension will occur: someone with frantically cling to his own identity or with moving in his self / identity. Both extreme positions in this dimension (holding tight versus dramatic movement) do not work in my opinion. I have discovered that I have built ideal images in my own thinking. These are formed by my own upbringing and development, and come forward in the reflection on the events described. One of these images is that you stick to what you agree: a deal is a deal. However, events have shown that as representative you can make such a heartfelt commitment, whereas everything can happen in such a way that the intention cannot be performed with those with whom you are interacting locally. That fact was visible in several ways: the discussions in my own Executive Board on agreements which were in conflict with other interests, and regularly recurring issues with the Workers Council because those making up their power base had other ideas or other interpretations of events. In this process of discovering myself in and through others, I constantly negotiate aspects of myself. With what groups of people do I identify myself and how do I feel accepted by such groups. As a newcomer to university, I also had to deal with a whole new (academic) field and a prevailing habitus. In order to keep me up, I had to adjust. I had to constantly negotiate aspects of my identity and that carries a high potential for conflict.

The complex responsive processes approach adds to that understanding the stress on explorative qualities of such conflict. It is in conflictual processes through which we explore the other and ourselves at the same time, and repeatedly inany encounter with any conversation partner. I have experienced that this is not a planned process, as I was accustomed to in previous work environments. It is a process of local interaction between people with their own assumptions, ideas, prejudices, and needs, which are fed by their own background and contacts. There are also processes in which people need recognition of their action, something I have found not so easy to recognise. The second shows that incidental contacts are not sufficient, after every single contact point each actor is building

on his experiences and adds private associations, creating a new setting for the next meeting. This demonstrates the importance of continuous communication, never diminishing involvement, and attempting to achieve as much participation in local networks as possible. In these contacts it happened to me that I, completely unintentionally, showed disrespect to a colleague. That raised, understandable given the statements in the theory of Honneth, an aggressive response, because my act directly affected the aspects which were important for the self-realisation of the involved person. In my activities, I still too much involved in my own business instead of seeking to clarify the images and motives of others. Therefore it is not only important to have patience with others but also with myself and consider my own and other people's insecurities and weaknesses with modesty. We accept that we are people who tell stories, because the shortest path to oneself is through the other and even the shortest route takes time.

5

The differing experience of colleagues involved in changes in other organisations

During the writing process of my experiences I have discussed aspects of my research work with several colleagues in similar positions. They were, without an exception, curious about my way of working, experiences and findings and how I would position my research in the field of management practice. Several of these colleagues had recently also made the transition from a private working environment to the public environment of higher education, so I carefully listened to them asking myself whether they might be prepared to have a conversation with me about their experiences with their own transitions. Five of my colleagues whom I approached, enthusiastically agreed to participate. Before I describe their stories I have to mention some backgrounds of me changing universities for doing my research.

5.1 Changing environment and conditions

In 2011 an incident which became known as the Stapel affair shocked the academic research world in the Netherlands. Academic staff members were accused of falsifying collected research data and copying works of others (or themselves without referencing it). One of the consequences was a sharpening of the rules around gathering and storing research data and recommendations were made in order to prevent fraud (Commissie Levelt, Commissie Noort, and Commissie Drenth, 2012, VSNU 2012). It was suggested that a core value for academics was to create learning and research environments which represented a professional culture where fraud on the part of scientists was excluded. Specifically it was recommended to arrange strict management and control of research data, which should help to restore the basic trust in research in general and the intentions of researchers in particular. For my colleagues at the board of the Open University this was an important reason to discuss my PhD research being done within a faculty of my 'own' university where I was a member of the board. I understood the social and political tension and agreed to find a solution in transferring my PhD research to another university. One of the Tilburg professors was familiar with work of a PhD student at his university writing about his own experience as a basis of PhD research. We worked on coordinating my way of working in the PhD school - writing narratives about our own experience, learning sets to

reflect onthose narratives, finding relevant literature from traditional as well as literature related to the theory of complex responsive processes - especially work being done under professor Ralph Stacey of the University of Hertfordshire in England - as a basis to work on a solution in finishing my doctoral research in another environment where I could still use the previous research I had done. At the same time we looked for a possibility to fulfil the demand not to restrict my research to my own experience but extend it with experiences of colleagues in a similar situation.

In the previous chapter I introduced the work and thinking of the critical social theory of Honneth. He argues that the perception and the meaning that you create of yourself is achieved within social relations of recognition. Recognition is a prerequisite for building and maintaining practical relations to yourself, which is an essential condition for self-realisation or identity formation (Honneth 1995:1-2). He states that in situations of frustrated acknowledgment by forms of disrespect, negative emotional reactions can emerge. Instead of a passive suffering an active struggle for recognition is started (Honneth 1995:135). I felt relieved my colleagues they agreed because I realised that talking over and discussing subjects with my colleagues "as a colleague" was not the same for me as having a conversation with them "as a PhD student". I wanted to test and reflect on being not only an experienced colleague, but also talk with them as a researcher. I was especially interested in being recognised not only as a fellow executive, but I also wanted to be recognised as a serious researcher with a specific method and interesting topic. Still, it was a good, exciting feeling that they were prepared to spend time and energy on our conversation and my research.

5.1.1 Conversations with colleagues
Before I had conversations with colleagues about their experiences of changing to a public organisation from a private environment I had sent them a few mails and documents[26][27][28] in which I explained the purpose of my research, my way of working and the importance of narratives and reflections in relating our narratives. With all of them I agreed to have a 1-to-1 conversation with an open structure in order to give them the opportunity to tell about experiences of their own choice in their own words. I was allowed to tape the conversation so

26   13111 Invitation conversations (UK) - v2.1
27   131205 Additional information for conversation with colleagues Higher Education
28   140104 Ethic Rules in Qualitative Research

I had the opportunity to listen to it at a later stage (all conversations are also transcripted, note CB).

The first part of every conversation was spent - as an introduction - on the background and previous position(s) of every colleague, and possibly the expectations of the change of positions and differences between the two positions if they were recognised as such. All colleagues(recently) had changed directly or via an "intermediate step" to executive board positions of universities or universities of applied sciences from the private sector. In the text I will refer to them as universities. In the remainder of this description, I will use – for privacy reasons – a letter-digit combination for each participant to be able to identify and recognise them in the text. Some of the participants are female, some of them are male. For the same reasons of privacy I will only use the male form. The conversations had a length of approximately two hours and were so rich in their data and examples that I had to make a selection of what to use. The limitation is guided by my main research issue: emerging processes of mutual recognition.

5.2 The participants and some of their stories

5.2.1 Participant 1 (P1): on teamwork in a safe environment and connecting content and funding

After a study economics and graduation in public finance P1 had several management and advisory positions in the areas of finance and business management in local government, a consulting firm, and a healthcare organisation. During the consultancy period P1 was focused on assignments in public organisations. Although the healthcare organisation was a public organisation, their activities were in the private-public domain. In these positions P1 became familiar with public organisations and their decisionmaking processes. In the period P1 was active in a consultancy firm, he gained much experience in decisionmaking processes in the public sector. The switch to a university was a logical carreer step, so P1 expected to come across recognisable matters in the new environment.

The experience of asking yourself: 'I am not crazy, am I?' as extreme misrecognition

The university of P1 worked with covenants and performance indicators that are derived from their strategy, on that basis faculties reported to the Executive Board. This was a familiar way of working for P1. However, P1 noted that the policy was about the content and the budget, but there was no connection between the two. Objectives were not defined in a SMART way i.e. link of content and money. P1 and his two colleagues had recently started almost simultaneously at the Executive Board of the university. Members of the previous board worked in a period with a lot of (interpersonal) tension and were forced to withdraw from their positon. In the last months of their employment they were not really in charge anymore. The newly appointed board members were still in the middle of the process of becoming accustomed to their position and – knowing that the faculty already had a lot of autonomy – had difficulty gaining a grip on situations. P1: *"You can imagine that if the Executive Board is no longer in control, and when it passes decisionmaking to lower management levels, the balance is quite shaky and that you end up in a kind of power vacuum. For the first time in my life I worked in an organisation with unbalanced governance. I had not realised that, until it was expressed in a faculty which wrote red numbers - and that is actually very interesting, because in telling you the story several things become clear to me too -. My reference in my former company was: if you book negative results for two consecutive months, you would have severe problems. Then you would simply receive a slap in the neck and then you would be gone. It was a very unsafe culture, so you managed your 'profit and loss' very tightly, to the point of becoming ridiculous. You just knew: I have to have it under control, otherwise I will definitely have a problem, and I will lose my freedom in other areas".[29]*

Confronted with the bad results of one of the faculties, P1 planned a meeting with the dean and the financial manager of this faculty and - reasoning from his own background and experience - P1 mentioned in the meeting: *"You have a problem"*. When the manager literally answered: *"Oh, what exactly is the problem, there has never been a bankruptcy of a faculty"* and the dean added that *"he did not have much sense of numbers, and he was not willing to*

give it a lot of attention", P1 thought: "*I do not know what is happening here but this cannot be true*". Later, after the meeting P1 thought: "*I do not know what the intervention should be. Are we going to fire the dean? That had never happened before in this university*". P1 was convinced that the dean was not in control, but this had never been discussed with management. P1 was also convinced that he would not approve the financial estimate and realised that at some point power would come into play. P1: "*So first we had a conversation among the three of us* (the Executive Board members) *and I had to convince them of my claim that they* (the faculty) *were not in control. Well, my colleagues had never spoken about being in control. Money and a financial budget, are necessities, but what matters is science and education. The common decision was: the board will not approve the estimates, a unique situation, which had never happened before*". An interesting dynamic followed, where each member of the board acted from their specific knowledge. One of the members had mediation experience; another had knowledge of educational aspects, which helped to create awareness with the dean that something had to happen within the faculty. Both supported the position of P1 that, only with necessary changes would there be an approval for the budget. The faculty started to mutiny and at a certain moment the dean wavered, even physically. He almost could not take the pressure anymore and acted unexpectedly.

P1: "*The dean informed me that he had changed several rules to his advantage, because in that way he could achieve the required changes, but he was very consistent in doing this in his own way. His message was: I am going to set up a committee which will advise me and if you want, you can sit on that committee. And with that he suddenly turned the power game we were playing by 180 degrees*". . . . "*I can well remember that I called together my colleagues and said, boys, this is the hour of truth. Do you support me or not? Are you with me or not? And let us talk about what is the right action now. When I look back at this event, this was one of the moments in which governance is critical. Because if they did not support me, if they had not said this is the way we are going to do it, then I would have left*".

Ultimately, the dean got more space to address the changes according to his ideas. The relationship with P1 improved and now - in retrospect - they were both happy with the initiated changes. Reflecting with P1 on this situation P1 said: *"in these kinds of situations several things happen to me. First I ask myself: 'Am I crazy?' or 'is this a normal situation'? I am not crazy, this simply is not possible. Well, that is very important. Secondly it helps if you (can) be over the situation and see it as a game to change, but I realise that this is only possible in a safe environment with colleagues you can trust. It is not just about power and doing the things your way, but to be taken seriously and to achieve results. Then for me it is also possible to move into the direction of the other"*.

First reaction - Misrecognition and the expectation of expectations

P1 was used to a specific environment with specific (firm) rules concerning profit and loss, and a clear relation between budgets and activity. This way of thinking and acting formed (a part of) his identity, so his first thought assessing the position of the faculty was: you have a problem. Facing an opposite view of behaviour, and the experience of his own expectations not being met, P1 felt uncomfortable and as if he were not taken seriously. After asking himself whether he "was crazy" - as an extreme form of misrecognition - P1 at first tried to get more understanding of the (local) situation, of the misfit with his own ideas and talked this over with his colleagues on the board. This way he began to build up more insight into the current state of affairs, the existing rules within the academic environment and in doing so developed new expectations about his own expectations, understanding the temporality acting self in (in regard to this I will be looking at Ricoeur, 1992), and also found support for his own needs and requirements. The awareness that several things had to change, also for the dean, and the fact that the dean could achieve the desired results in his own way, meant for P1 that he could influence the situation but he was also influenced to adjusting his own ideas of how to handle it. Here one can see the potential of misrecognition. When involved people are prepared to pay attention to the mistake of misrecognised issues a solution for both is possible.

5.2.2 Participant 2 (P2): on clarity, directness and cooperation. Looking at the distinction between mistakes and misrecognition

P2 has a background in Language, Literature and Business. P2 has extensive experience in the area of commerce and management in the retail and private banking finance branch, and has occupied many positions in a large financial company. After a long period of working in this company P2 had the choice to continue a career within this company or look for a challenge in another environment. Deciding for the latter, P2 resigned and took a longer period of time out in order to figure out what to do next. The interest in the education sector clearly emerged when P2 read about a scandal in an institute for higher education and problems were described in which P2 had expertise. In his previous organisation P2 was used to setting clear goals which were derived from the strategic plans. Based on a clear direction roles and responsibilities were defined, and it was clear what activities should be done and by whom, so implementation followed the planning in classic management style. Colleagues were accountable for their contribution, and responsibility, and acted from a common interest.

Entering the university P2 had had many conversations in order to find out what was going on and also consulted a former dean, who knew the organisation and the people working in the university very well and discussed many questions and ideas with the dean. In addition there were several contacts with colleagues of other universities in order to exchange and talk about differing experiences. What P2 noticed was that within the university a lot of attention was paid to making (strategic) plans and discussing them over and over, but there was no concrete follow-up in the form of an implementation. P2: *"inventing and making plans is different from coming to execution ... many plans are not sufficiently thought through here. It is all about the debate, the exchange of arguments, that is what people are enthusiastic about"*[30]. P2 characterised the university as a place where little is shared and cooperation is rare, *"an area with much history that incites many people to act proactively"*. The speed of change was much lower than P2 was used to, as was also the way of giving a (pro-active) response.

30   140116 Transcript conversation P2 based on 1389884806.242378 - audio file conversation P2

An experience: assessing people, recognising different ways of working

In P2's former company the assessment of people consisted of a manager shared his own assessment with his superior a short period before the assessment meeting. The superior added his opinion to the document and shared the complete document a few days before the assessment meeting with the manager. So both could prepare themselves for the conversation. In the university way of working there was an annual assessment interview with input from those with whom you alone talked at the moment of the conversation. Very often there were no, or at least unclear, agreements on results to be achieved. "*Within the university I (P2) had conversations with two directors throughout the whole year concerning the performance of the service, and talked about how you can make things better, etc. . . . In this case for these two people the result of my assessment was an 'almost sufficient', not an "insufficient", because an "insufficient" judgement does not exist in our university system, that's so special, not an "almost sufficient" judgement. Well, these persons were quite upset, could not sleep and they took this personally. . . . No, I actually was thinking of an "insufficient" performance, but it was not there. Special was that - if you gave such an assessment to someone with my previous employer this would immediately lead to financial consequences, but, that is not the case here*".

"*I (P2) see the relation 'employer – employee' as a business relationship. So I try to realise a more businesslike approach between the way services are provided and the service provider: what are the arrangements; what are you going to do? Here this was not done and it is still not being done. They all work hard, really hard, but are highly driven by input. I was struck by his saying: what do we want to achieve, what are we going to do about it, and what can I do about it*". . . "*I think I had made a mistake and that I had "very bad" conversations with those people. I was tempted to run the process of assessments in the existing way but because the content is very different, it could not be done in the same way. They thought it was unsafe with me and I thought they would be fired. That was not the intention*".

After this experience P2 discussed this experience with colleagues on the Executive Board and said that the procedure should be changed. During the year, P2 would have conversations with his managers to coach them and discussed how they could achieve the (business) arrangements, making clear and explicit what to do, and what to accomplish (P2 called this the "must win" battles) in order to prevent a surprising confrontation in the annual assessment session. Looking back on these experiences P2 stated: *"stay fresh, because that is your added value, accept that change takes more time than you want to, and that you are very dependent of what others say and do".*

First reaction - The readiness to recognise misrecognition
P2 started the assessment process of two directors with a reference to his previous job with an open mind and discussion, having the opportunity to talk over issues of dissatisfaction with an assumed clearness in job performance. With that expectation and acting he used basic rules and understanding from another environment which had reflected another set of rules and processes. Recognising that this approach was not the right one in this environment – this habitus – and qualifying this as a mistake meant that P2 had a basic understanding of acting (in a way familiar to him) the mistaken way which led to not recognising what he was aiming for in the assessment: a misrecognition of his (well meant) intervention. The readiness to accept this not being recognised (is misrecognition) was a starting point of thinking the next action points. *"Although I may be able to anticipate something of the kind of response you may give, I can never be sure because I can never know your entire life history in full … The possibility of miscommunication is thus substantial and can only be dealt with in ongoing conversation as we try together to clarify what we mean* (Stacey, 2007:273)*"* . After all, P2 was convinced that the basis of the assessment process of his old working environment was correct. In order to stay close to this belief he was aware of that discussing a change in the existing process was necessary to achieve the aim of the assessment, and he wanted to introduce a more proper (and changed) process which fitted this purposes far better. So on one hand the intervention of P2 formed the new assessment environment and at the same time P2 was formed by their actions, experience, and the results of the process.

"The fact is that we paradoxically recognise our own selves in recognising the other and recognise the other in the manner we recognise ourselves (Griffin, 2002:197)". The cycle of recognition is the very emergence and measuring of identity.

5.2.3 Participant 3 (P3): on clarity, directness and cooperation

P3 had worked in management positions in the recreation / hotel branche for a long time. P3 characterises that work as "24/7" jobs with a great awareness for all staff of the importance of their personal added value to the (end)result, to serve the customer and deliver customer convenience. In this commercial business target setting is very common and because there are very small margins everybody is focused on efficiency in the daily (primary) processes which are all aimed at delivering service to the guest. P3: "After a period of hard work and long hours I was looking for a new challenge in a dynamic environment that focused on business operations".[31] Before starting as an executive on a board of a university P3 was a manager of business operations at one of the universities of applied science.

The experience of cultural differences and personal adaption as factors in misrecognition
P3's first assignment as manager was *"to change business operations departments in more service providing departments to become more businesslike"*. P3 experienced several differences from his former environment: *"When it comes to the business operations within the university I could be less efficient and straightforward than in the hotel branch, because the supporting staff is not directly connected with the primary process and the business is recognised in a very different way. It is remarkable that many, too many, people have a say on issues that are not their responsibility, they participated in many debates constantly negotiating the limitations of boundaries. Another remarkable topic is the sense of money, costs, and expenses. My reference was that there was a lot of money to spend while staff complained of a tight budget. That was really shocking, but how do you bring these two worlds together?"*

31   140218 Transcript conversation P3 based on 1392722964.964090 - audio file conversation P3

Other striking observations of P3 were the inefficiencies in the processes and the disconnection between support and primary

processes, the slowness of decisionmaking and the fact that a lot of issues were referred back to the hierarchy. P3: *"I became very aware that if you want to make changes in an educational organisation that it is not possible with such a tight hand as I was accustomed to. I then deliberately started looking for something that could help me and came up with 'creating in a project way'* (a project management method, note CB). *I have introduced this to involve people with their professional input in the decision process. I notice that a route where all kinds of people can join the discussion very slowly comes to a decision, and requires a lot from me"*. Looking back P3 said: *"It surprised me that people could think that way, I found that bizarre". But I think the informal part of the educational organisation is much stronger. There are other cultural factors and in order to really change that, and let people participate in these changes, it takes more time"*. In time P3 changed the way of working but still is *"focusing on the things which make the difference"*. P3 can let processes go their way and take more distance to the detailed process, concerning himself only with the big picture. P3: *"Yes, I have developed my skill to have more patience. We now talk over about scenarios, and pros and cons, and we debate the arguments. This communication is very crucial for me"*.

First reaction - Recognising misrecognition
P3 was already familiar with the cultural aspects of the university because of his previous managerial activities before entering an executive position. Knowing how important a close connection with the existing academic environment was, he adapted his own personal behaviour in a certain way without losing some of the important service minded subjects which he thought were important. So, in recognising important aspects of the new environment and being aware of the differences between both environments, (partly) following the existing rules, it was possible to address and discuss subjects which P3 thought were of interest, but did not fit in the existing rules. In this way, a process of recognising P3's ideas was also initiated, which ended up in a newly balanced situation of mutual recognition, and a changed way of providing

service. Crucial in this process is the understanding of each other's position, and being involved and detached at the same time (Elias, 1956).

5.2.4 Participant 4 (P4): core values as a basis for behaviour

P4's background is business economics and management information. He has worked in a large ICT company in management and consultancy positions for a long time, nationally and internationally. After being CFO for several years P4 changed to another company in the travel branch, where he gained extensive knowledge and experience in cost reduction activities. P4's interest in getting final responsibility in an organisation with a social interest grew, and he took the opportunity of changing positions to a university.

If I want to go faster, I will experience being alone

Entering university P4's main goal was to improve professionalism in cooperation between people within the university. Although P4 met very motivated and committed people with a lot of knowledge (within their profession) P4 noticed several major differences with previous job environments. P4: *"people don't live up to their responsibilities, they don't address issues, the game is not played hard, the discipline of the market is lacking. The human- oriented culture has gone too far, people do not have to worry about the future because they have a lot of job security".[32]* One of P4's findings was a fragmentation of roles and responsibilities, an unclear (organisation) structure, which led to an unclear arrangement of procuration and dysfunctioning of many people. P4 chose a small focused approach in the financial position, with many relationships in other processes. P4: *at corporate level we (the Executive Board) started with a "culture programme" in which we defined the core values of the university. Our idea was that people's behaviour should be consistent with these core values. Behaviour was not something you talked about. It was necessary to mostly talk in terms of structure, but it was necessary to determine the size of the playing field. Having a stable base our aim was to give supporting and professional staff ownership and decisional authority as much as possible".*

32   140127 Transcript conversation P4 based on 1390829628.578534 - audio file conversation P4

The management team started to act in a very formal and politically correct way in the following meetings. Directors looked at the agenda topics that were addressed by the Executive Board and reacted in a very political way. P4: *"I guess they did not know how to deal with it. We have fought hard with the management team on*

highly emotional events. We immediately discussed issues as they arose. This clarified many issues. In the end we had to immediately address questions as they arose, we ought to communicate clearly and agreed that model behaviour is important". . . . "this programme has taken several years, and now I realise that this was necessary within this environment. At several moments I was very aware of the maximum possible speed in the programme: if I want to go faster then I will be the only one! But at the end of the (change) process you really have a changed situation, where behaviour has changed, and we can talk about all kinds of issues and decide what to do about it".

First reaction - experience of misrecognition: a negative reflection of earlier experience with potential for creating the new
P4 was very aware of all the differences with his previous working environments. According to his assignment, entering the university, P4 was convinced that rigid changes in professionalism had to be realised. Experiencing the highly emotional negative reactions of members of the management team P4 felt not understood, not recognised. A main issue was the speed of the proposed changes. P4 could have left it as it was and push his ideas forward, or work with the differences and pick them up as a potential for new creative ways of working together.

5.2.5 Participant 5 (P5): working amidst a huge amount of regulations
P5 worked for a large mail company and in several areas of healthcare. In the period that P5 worked for a consultancy firm as a senior manager P5 was responsible for part of the business. When the question came up, of continuing this management position for a new period P5 thought of it as a 'now or never' time to change positions. With the help of search agencies P5 found the present executive position of a university.

An experience of paying attention to processes of interdependent social action first of all simply as processes of interaction

P5 has a background in consultancy in the public domain, mainly business operations in hospitals. Although he did not formulate his expectations upfront, the responsibilities within the university, IT, real estate and housing were, in retrospect now, in line with his experiences. To his surprise *"a lot of things were quite different than I had imagined. I understood much later that universities actually are modulated in the same way as municipalities. Local government (mayor and council) are located above the organisation, just like the senior executive in the Executive Board of a university and that was something I did not realise at all. Knowing that, you have to look what it exactly means and where you can become effective. Another thing, which I could have known, is that members of the Executive Board are representatives, 'hot shots', both inside and outside the organisation, and the importance of this role in the university, the city and the region. An amazing and surprising aspect is the enormous set of rules and laws to which a university - as a public institution but also an open institution - has to adhere. So for everything you do there are rules and regulations for public activity, everybody looks over your shoulder and it is possible to object to almost every single subject. It is almost a miracle that universities can function"*. [33]

P5 mentioned a few other differences which matter. *"In a consultancy bureau management and processes are much more closely organised, as an executive you have direct contact with participants, such as customers and users in several processes. Within the university there is a particular circuit in and around the ivory tower and you must not have the illusion that you see the whole game. There is a network of professionals who do their (own) thing, they like to avoid (guidance by) management, and one faculty is not the same as another. There is a large plurality and within this plurality you have to act in different ways"*. P5 coped with these differences in several ways: understanding the system and processes, orientating on professionals and asking questions. P5: *"I have learned to try to understand how the system(s) is/are functioning and to pay a lot of attention to processes of interaction. I have learned to do that in*

33   140114 Trnascript conversation P5

previous often changing working environments and I think I do pretty well, and in becoming familiar with the (new) system I think of what possible interventions are suitable in that system. A second aspect is the orientation on professionals: what helps me when I help the other. I divide my interventions into what has to be done and what is less important, and let people take their own responsibility within their autonomy. A last aspect is asking many, many questions. By asking questions you 'force' people to think whether what they do is logical and how it contributes. And if the answer is: 'because we have always done so they start to realise that that could be not the right answer".

First reaction - processes of misrecognition which are seen as such later in reflection on the experience of misrecognition
P5 had many experiences in working with professionals and learning how to pay attention to processes of interaction. His first idea was that a lot of things would be familiar and more or less the same as he had known. Knowing that his job experience was in line with his new responsibilities P5 did not formulate any expectations upfront. Still a lot of things appeared to be different from what they had expected and P5 was confronted in reflecting on his reflections and surprises with an actual way of working which he was not aware of, which he had not recognised at first.

In the described stories about the experiences of my colleagues not only aspects of a struggle for recognition (related to Honneth) are visible, but also that my colleagues get and take the opportunity to tell their stories, and shape the concept of time with their stories and make, in telling, thinking over and reflecting on that what is told, sense of what happened. Here is a link to ideas of Ricoeur who examines a relationship between recognition and identity.

5.3 The relation between recognition and identity - Ricoeur's theory of identity

Ricoeur (2005) states that humans shape their concept of time - or rather the human experience of temporality - with stories. The story as a narrative in and about time and time as experience as a whole (yesterday, today, tomorrow) complement each other in a way that we

make sense of our lives through and in time. This leads to a relationship between time and identity: we understand ourselves and our place in the world by the story that we tell about our "self" and, according to Ricoeur, we become the story that we experience as our lives and continually interpret and rearrange (De Leeuw, 2013). In the development of this "narrative identity" we again become aware of who-we-are and what-we-stand-for. This self-testimony is the core of Ricoeur's theory of identity. Ricoeur (2005) states that the term recognition (reconnaissance) is important in philosophy and lays out three concepts (Carr, 2007, Blanchard, 2007) which are "recognition as identification", "recognising oneself," and "mutual recognition" of which he believes they form a meaningful succession. The first - recognition as identification - is to identify something in general, identifying an object or a person, and to identify is to take it to be the same as it was before or on other occasions and to distinguish it from other things. The second - recognising oneself -, one's self-identity - encompasses self-knowledge, self-consciousness, self-awareness, self-esteem, self-attestation, and even self-assertion. Coming to know oneself and be oneself is the phenomenon that Ricoeur primarily has in mind. For Ricoeur coming to know oneself is primarily not a cognitive but a practical matter, an emergence of capacities, abilities, and know-how. The third – "mutual recognition", is the most important.

In understanding ourselves by telling our (life) story, we give meaning to the events in our lives. The dissonant elements also have their place in the configuration of the story and are thus also forming our identity. Ricoeur situates human actions in a practical field, i.e. our working environment, and points to the interactive nature of our actions in a context of cooperation, competition or conflict, which in the telling give meaning to these acts. The actions are understood and recognised, or they are not recognised and lead to non-recognition (misrecognition), which has implications for our identity. After describing opposing forms of "dissymmetry" between self and other, Ricoeur moves to recognition in the form of Hegelian *Anerkennung*. His focus is on Hegel's response to Kant, Hobbes and Fichte (and Honneth which I have mentioned in my previous narrative). Ricoeur objects to the idea that reciprocal recognition must be the outcome of a struggle and prefers to speak of mutual

rather than reciprocal recognition. Ricoeur seeks models more in the context of family and a notion of society that does not rest on the fight for survival, but on the notion of the gift, the gift giving, and the return gift.

Both Honneth and Ricoeur indicate that the reference to (at least) another person is necessary for recognition. Despite the same constitution as humans, we are still irreducibly different from each other. Although this common constitution requires a mutual recognition, the vulnerabilities and differences are never eliminated so we must constantly struggle to achieve it (De Leeuw, 2013). This is a struggle against misrecognition of others at the same time that it is a struggle for recognition of oneself by others (Ricoeur, 2005:258).

5.3.1 Reflexive conversations and processes of misrecognition

Looking at the experience of my colleagues I see several aspects (of processes) of not understanding, not recognising, misrecognising other's behaviour in the new environment of the university. First of all, I distinguish the 'readiness to recognise misrecognition' (P2). One has to have a basic awareness that in the process of interaction with colleagues in the new academic environment there can or will be misunderstandings which can easily affect one's own identity. In this respect Ricoeur's connection of the three concepts "recognition as identification", "recognising oneself," and "mutual recognition" becomes meaningful and helpful to become aware and recognise dissymmetries between self and the other (Ricoeur, 1992, Marcelo, 2011). Having a readiness one can pay attention to (factors of) "the recognition of misrecognition". In the case of P1 the expectation of expectations and in the case of P3 personal adaption was mentioned. Recognising the misrecognition of others is at the same time a struggle for recognition of oneself by others (Ricoeur, 1992, Honneth, 1995). Here is a relation with an important aspect in the thinking of Bourdieu: we have pictures of others (and others of us) and we take them for granted and act upon that picture (but the picture of a person is not the person). We see that other people internalise that acting, like we do (because they start to believe that they are like the person of the picture instead of who they really are), which can lead to a struggle for recognition. Another factor of 'the recognition of misrecognition' is thedifference between

environments, another context, another way of working and other rules, where Bourdieu speaks of habitus (Grenfell, 2008). Working with these differences is mentioned by all my colleagues (see Box 1).

Box 1 - Experienced differences

In the introduction of the conversation we briefly discussed the previous and present position of the participants. At that stage I asked what, in their perception, were the most significant differences between the two positions, respectively the different environments.[34]

A difference mentioned by four participants is the highly informal organisation of the university with only little hierarchy (P3), no clear roles and responsibilities (P2, P3) where it seems to be difficult to take responsibility (P4, P5) and with little self-organisation (P2). P2 even questions whether the university is a professional organisation. Several managers I spoke with, link this aspect to their observation that there is a lot of debate in the organisation (P2, P5), a lot of participation in the discussions (P3), even if people are not directly involved. Mostly these interactions concern a negotiation of the boundaries (P3), regardless of the subject. With the discussions comes a lot of paperwork often for the sake of the paperwork (P2) and not for making a decision. The debates and endless participation take time, a lot of time, so change becomes a slow, very slow, step-by-step process (P1, P3, P4).

Sometimes people are so stuck in their own habits, their way of working and beliefs that they are not prepared to change (P1). P5 mentioned the large plurality with different acting patterns within the university, even with all kinds of groups of individuals who act according to their own interests (P2), which leads to internal competition (instead of co-operation and fighting the external competition outside the organisation). P4 calls this a lack of market orientation and refers to the – in his eyes – excessively protected position of people and the difficulty of changing the things they have been doing in the same way for a long period of time.

34   140104 Possible script elements for questions conversations

In comparing old and new working environments and focusing on (the experience of) negative aspects of the new environment one has several options. One of them is to stick to the negative, another one is to pick up the differences and use them as possibilities to be creative and look for new solutions. A prime factor of influence is 'having expectations'. Almost all my colleagues had expectations of their new position and how they would perform in their new role (see Box 2). One can argue that not having expectations is also a form of expectation.

Box 2 - Expectations of participants
In three conversations a colleague explicitly mentioned his expectations before entering the new university. P2 read the strategic plans of the new organisation upfront and thought, like in P1's former organisation, that these were clear plans and targets with the commitment of the board and management team after several strategic conferences. His expectations were that there would be a clear understanding of the plan and the execution of the plan and not - as he experienced - a gap between the plan (the thinking) and the execution (the doing). Coming from a branch - where every earned penny is important - P3 had the expectation of a public (educational) organisation working with public money that he would find an organisation focused on efficiency and service, and a goal of spending as little money as possible on performing. His experience was quite the opposite: there was a thinking that there was no lack of money at all and it seemed to him that people were not cost-conscious. P1 stated that within his university *"people were not oriented toward money and profit, but toward work, and how to solve educational and research problems with a focus on content"*. P5 said that *"a lot of things were not as expected, for instance the importance of the organisation for the region and a much more complex relations than anticipated with other local organisations working in healthcare"*.

All the involved colleagues used aspects of their previous position(s) and their former experience to build expectations for the new organisations. According to Mead (1934) this (historical)

knowledge and experience will play a role in the interactions in the new organisation and will form and shape the participant to function in this environment.

In all cases we can read that expectations had to be adjusted. In one of the cases (P1) – where an extreme form of misrecognition is described – during the process of which my colleague (had to) reformulate(d) his expectations, before there was a renewed readiness to recognise the misrecognition again. In this case the struggle for recognition from both sides – the dean and the executive – was visible. Sometimes we are not aware of the not recognising and we discover these misunderstandings in reflections (P5) or even in a later stage in conversations looking back on events like I did with my colleagues. In telling their stories and structuring the events and their experiences they got more understanding of themselves and others, and gave meaning to these events, and with that they developed their identity (Ricoeur, 1992).

5.3.2 Unexpected situations entering a new organisation
Changing position to a university was not what colleagues had expected. Confronted with a new academic environment they were surprised, astonished, annoyed, upset and / or relieved. Apparently the new situation did not match their former experiences, expectations or ideas. In entering a new university environment one is often hardly aware of the habits, the playing rules, and the ways of working of this environment, which feels like being a novice. In order to get familiar with people, processes, structure and rules one starts with activities to learn more about this environment. My colleagues read documents, strategic plans, had insiders like mentors to guide them, participated in tailor-made introduction programmes and talked to a lot of people in the university in order to get an impression of their new working environment. Every person coped with this entrance in their own way using different forms of inquiry which fitted his personal needs best. But what does it really mean to enter a new business environment? Why is it not possible to use much of your former knowledge and experiences without adjustments? How do you learn what is going on, what is important, and what not? How do you get to know who is who, and with whom to relate in order to do your future job?

In order to reflect on these questions I want to first make several links to – the taken for granted – mainstream answers in the following paragraphs. I will firstly describe some research of what companies offer newcomers in socialisation programmes and what the shortcomings of these programmes are. Looking at how people cope with entry experiences I will make a link with how people cope with everyday situations and link this with ideas of Mead (1932, 1934) who describes people's response to the social world around them. Then I will (again) discuss 'mutual recognition' using insights of Honneth and Ricoeur and Bourdieu which can be of help in the understanding of what aspects are influencing human relations within a particular area such as higher education.

5.4 Entering a new organisation - recognising and being recognised

The entry into a new organisation for an individual person is a period where the amount of new information could easily become a sensory overload with no gradual exposure where it is not possible to process all the data a little at a time (Holton and Russell, 1999). In this process one can experience some degree of disorientation (or difference when linked to misrecognition, note CB), and there is a strong need to make sense of the new environment and one's place within it (Allen, 2006; Louis, 1980). The newcomers aim is to 'learn the ropes', get information about the history, and new organisation, and what to expect (Holton and Russell, 1999), develop relationships in order to become embedded in the field or interdependent force of this organisation (Allen, 2006) and structure the psychological field of the new organisation in order to reduce personal uncertainty (Louis, 1980). These aims are defined from the viewpoint of the person who enters the new organisation. It is about recognising what is happening in the organisation, but also becoming recognised as an individual with capabilities which can be of value for the organisation. Organisations however focus their organisation entry processes mainly on their own advantages such as a successful socialisation which leads to the likelihood that employees will achieve targeted levels of performance, and that they will stay in order to reduce costs of withdrawal or turnover, achieving

performance and satisfaction levels, reaching organisation commitment and person-job congruence.

5.4.1 Socialisation programmes

Researchers have developed models that describe aspects of the entry processes newcomers participate in, pre-employment interventions, newcomer tactics and organisation socialisation tactics (i.e. training classes, providing information, offer role models, monitoring and providing support by experienced organisation members) to support gaining further knowledge about these interests of management. Most of the developed models are therefore described from the standpoint of the organisation and the benefits to be derived there, and pay attention that activities to help acquire the desired attitude, behaviour and knowledge for the organisation. In their effort to capture all possible aspects there are even models which claim to describe and investigate combined effects of individual readiness, organisational tactics, individual tactics, entry process perceptions, perceived job characteristics, learning, expectations, and coping responses on subsequent turnover and job attitudes of newly employed people (Holton and Russell, 1999). Although the researchers tried to fit in some individual tactics (like seeking feedback and active relationship building) the main focus of their models is on goals of (the management of) the organisation. One may wonder whether it is possible to place all aspects in a model and predict outcomes such as: organisation attachment and commitment, work motivation, job involvement and psychological success as these researchers (try to) do (Holton and Russell, 1999). Besides the rather mechanical way of defining variables for a rather complex process, it is almost impossible to give every aspect the 'right value': corresponding with a real setting.

5.4.2 How to cope with entry experiences?

In order to understand how individuals in organisational settings cope with entry experiences, we must ask how people, anywhere, cope with normal everyday situations (Louis, 1980). In familiar, non-surprising situations people seem to operate in a kind of loosely pre-programmed, unconscious way guided by cognitive scripts or schemes (Abelson, 1976; Weick, 1989; Covey, 1998; Senge,

1992). In these constructs conscious thought is not a very large part of our everyday mode of operation. Most of the everyday decisions are made 'off the top of our heads'. Scripts provide individuals with predictions of events. On entering a new organisation the newcomer will be confronted with a lot of (new) impressions, which come as a sensory overload and could lead to a degree of disorientation or surprise. So the question for those thinking in this mode is how to cope with this? Individuals form unconscious and conscious anticipations and assumptions which serve as predictions for the future, whereby discrepant events or surprises trigger a need for explanation. In this process of sensemaking one's own past experience with similar situations or surprises plays a role, along with personal characteristics. In the sensemaking process, information and interpretations of others (like experienced organisation members) are taken into account. Another element is the individual's interpretive scheme, the internalisation of context-specific dictionaries of meaning. To attribute meaning to this process of sensemaking newcomers need to know what is expected of them, know sufficient history of the setting to interpret activities more accurately, and when surprises arise, and sensemaking is (most) necessary, one has other insiders to compare perceptions and assumptions. Every person has his own paradoxical originality: we are the result of ongoing interactions within environments, where we grew up, lived and worked, building up knowledge and experience, and the way we are who we are as unique persons at the same time. Together they form our human identity and human consciousness.

5.4.3 Identity and a theory on the emergence of an internal self

For Mead (1934) human consciousness and human identity arise during an internalisation process. The individual's response to the social world is active, the person decides what he will do in the light of the attitudes of others. The human mind and identity arises from the interpersonal acting. A (hu)man becomes conscious of others, takes their attitudes, their expectations, standards and practices. In this way a 'society in a human' is created, a set of internalised roles, which derive from symbolic processes as linguistic interaction, playing, gaming and acting in a new environment. Mead also speaks about 'taking the attitude of the other' and 'the generalised other'. This whole of internalised roles Mead calls the "me", which is the

social self (Mead, 1934:178). There is also an aspect of the identity which is not realised through internalisation: the "I", which is the capacity to internalise and to react on what has been internalised. It is the creative component of the human which makes initiatives possible. When they conflict with each other one can speak of struggle (see also Honneth in the next section). Looking at entry processes in organisations as described so far, it looks like a sort of re-socialising in order to form people into a new environment. However, for newcomers acting in a new environment this feels like being a novice, not yet knowing how to act in that environment. For the time being they can only act on the basis of their own background, experiences, knowledge, and ideas. In the interaction with members of the new organisation the person will recognise their expectations, attitudes, practices, and from this consciousness will take (parts of) the attitude of the other. For the individual it is important in the internalisation process. However the described processes of socialisation for newcomers focus strongly on becoming familiar with their way of working according to their rules in which there is little attention for the individuals' view. When a person is not acting according to the (unknown) rules, as my colleagues and I as newcomers did, it can easily be seen as a mistake and acting which feels like not being recognised will not be taken seriously. Therefore it is necessary to see it as a process of forming and influencing, while at the same time being formed and influenced in which the individual and the social cannot be split but where social action emerges.

5.5 Coming back to mutual recognition

Honneth and Ricoeur both treat societies whose members are duly recognised, but they do so in radically different manners. Whereas Honneth's model must be politicised in order to become relevant to social change, Ricoeur envisages social change in a pure ethics of recognition (Marcelo, 2011). Ricoeur (2005) emphasises the limits of a market-based approach and argues that the respect we owe to persons must be placed above the respect for the law and he insists that each person is irreplaceable. Ultimately, for Ricoeur, ethics is above morality, maybe even above politics, and he makes ethical engagement the root of intersubjective relationships. In putting his emphasis on capacities he is focusing more on the recognition of

capacities, rather than recognition of identities. Ricoeur states that the self is intrinsically relational, but he approaches intersubjectivity first and foremost from the individual standpoint. That's the reason why "recognition of oneself" for him comes before "mutual recognition". Ricoeur's philosophy emphasises individual human agency, one cannot be understood without the other, but being in relation with others, even if this is an essential relation that constitutes us, does not erase our particular identity. It forms it, to be sure, but my thick identity and my access to my own consciousness remains what it is: mine (Marcelo, 2012). So, mutuality is never some sort of state of fusion, Ricoeur's framework is still a web of individuals, where the significance of thick identities are narratively constituted. Honneth re-actualises Hegel's concept of Anerkennung providing a tripartite model of recognition. Recognition unfolds in the spheres of love, rights, and solidarity, and in each of these spheres, one is able to develop a positive relation to self, respectively self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem.

5.5.1 Similarities and differences between Ricoeur and Honneth on recognition

Both authors take "thick identities" into account and both are opposed to excessive procedures of formalisation. Individual identity is always dependent on intersubjective interaction, where thick identities form a web of intersubjectivity. Both authors make suffering a central topic in their reflections. Honneth analyses the many forms that the lack of recognition can assume (like disrespect, humiliation, social invisibility, denigration), and Ricoeur describes the "acting and suffering" human being. In this respect, the "negative" moment is essential in any conceptual or historical development of recognition and the mobilising power of the negative, as a defiance and a call to the action of the capable human being, is very important.

Honneth is more radical than Ricoeur. According to Honneth, recognition is an overarching concept whereas for Ricoeur recognition is a fundamental concept, but it is by no means an overarching concept. This can be illustrated by an example how both authors envisage the relation of forces between knowledge and recognition. Ricoeur is placing recognition as identification (literally,

re-cognition) conceptually before recognition of oneself and mutual recognition. For Ricoeur, we can only recognise (in the sense of identifying) what we already knew beforehand. Honneth goes so far as stating that recognition precedes knowledge, insofar as any purely detached cognitive relation to an object is only possible after an already recognitional primary relation to one's surroundings has already been established.

A major point of disagreement between Ricoeur and Honneth concerns mutual recognition. For Ricoeur moral motivation of struggles for recognition is not illusory, because we can attest that actual experiences of mutual recognition exist, in the form of clearings and therefore we know that we are not struggling for an empty ideal and because we can assume that it is possible to expand them. This indicates a horizon of reconciliation (Ricoeur, 2012:217-218). For Honneth, we have an ideological use of recognition each time there is a promise of recognition (on behalf of a person, an enterprise or an institution) that cannot or will not be fulfilled, when recognition is used as means of social domination. According to Honneth, the problem of these unfulfilled promises of recognition is that they are merely symbolic. They do not provide the material conditions for real recognition. So, for Ricoeur recognition is of the order of the symbolic gesture, for Honneth, it pertains to effective material realisation. Ricoeur is emphasising the importance of the persons engaging in concrete interaction, and is recalling the small gestures of recognition present in our everyday lives. These are the proof that the struggle for recognition really strives for something that exists. Instead of striving for the recognition of my identity, what one should do is simply recognise others. By insisting that identity has a narrative changing character, and also that which we should strive for is the recognition of capacities, the ideas of Ricoeur help us to get rid of reified forms of identity. Both authors have an inbuilt normative character, they both reflect a set of already-existing social practices and senses of justice in our lives. They both envisage social change (they condemn injustice and conceptualise the need for recognition) and they have the normative expectation of an expansion of those already-institutionalised practices.

The experiences of my colleagues link more to the ideas of struggle of Honneth which comes from conflicts of different ideas and values, (unmet) expectations, and interests. P3 experienced that when going too fast he would lose contact with his environment, and P1 experienced extreme doubt on his own ideas (with references to previous experiences). In all the described experiences we see examples of not understanding (misrecognition) and that the concept of misrecognition does not refer to individual misunderstanding but to social action. With P2 one sees the readiness to recognise misrecognition and this results in a distinction of mistakes from misrecognition. Persons are not right or wrong but act differently, they act from a different perspective. Not knowing that perspective is a form of mis-recognition. P3 realises in telling his experience that cultural differences and personal adaption are factors in this conceptualisation of recognition (and with that recognises the misrecognition). In the story of P4 we can see that the experience of misrecognition really is a struggle, but also that a negative reflection of earlier experiences can be or become a potential for creating novel recognition. In the conversations during this research, P5 became more aware of processes of misrecognition which he saw as such in reflection, looking at simple processes of interaction which became understood more as processes of interdependent social action. In all the experiences the conflicts are a possibility to talk about differences (Griffin, 2005).

5.5.2 Misrecognition and the importance of interests

Misrecognition is a key concept in Bourdieu's thinking where he questions the harmonious and familiar aspects of mutual recognition tied to a strong claim that all actions are interested actions. In his theory of action he describes spheres of action, different cultures and offers a way of understanding recognition in processes concerning customs and behaviour, rules, relations and power balances between people (in a new context or organisation).

Bourdieu argues that reality – with the dynamic (of groups) of people – is a social concept. To exist is to exist socially, in relations with others. In order to understand how humans (in a field like the academic environment) behave it is important to understand in what kind of power relations they take part in spheres of action called

fields (Swartz, 1997). This activity in a field works like a market in which actors compete for the specific benefits associated to it. This competition defines the relationship between participants through the volume of the knowledge, skills and qualities (capital) they contribute, their ability to adjust to the rules inherent to the field or their (successful) history within the field. For Bourdieu misrecognition is tied to a strong claim that all actions are interested. Misrecognition denotes "denial" of the (economic and political) interests present in a set of practices. The logic of self-interest underlying all these practices are misrecognised as in the logic of "disinterest". Capital is a form of power that is not perceived as power but as legitimate demands for recognition, defence, obedience or the services of others (Swartz, 1997:90). Capital represents a way of talking about legitimation of power relations through symbolic forms. Action occurs as if actors pursue their self-interest for this is the way it appears to an outsider, since action occurs through time and largely at a tacit, taken for granted level, actors misperceive the objective consequences of their actions (Swartz, 1997:91). One important consequence of the competitive logic of fields and the rules within these fields is that they help create the conditions for the "misrecognition" of power relations and thereby contribute to the maintenance of the social order. An unintentional consequence of engaging in field competition is that actors, though they may contest the legitimacy of rewards given by the field, nonetheless reproduce the structure of fields. New arrivals to fields must pay the price of an initial investment for entry, which involves recognition of the value of the game and the practical knowledge of how to play it.

5.5.3 Disconnection between social and the self, the lack of emergence

The examples of my colleagues described show that the behaviour in these situations has not been invented or pre-planned, but arises in the interaction with others at that particular moment. We humans interact in everyday life with each other and react towards other people. However, the models outlined in socialisation start from targets, often tailored to the interests of the organisation and an associated pre-conceived roadmap or particular programme to achieve those targets. Such a deterministic approach does not fit so well with our actual behaviour, and it also has a fairly one-sided focus.

My colleagues give examples of how they socialise as executives, each in its own way and make use of their knowledge and experience in social action with people in their new working environment. This socialisation, as shown in the examples, takes place in a field of interests and power differentials, "a political arena." On this point the field theory of Bourdieu provides some clarification. He describes the importance of power and how that comes about in a field (such as a university). But Bourdieu also does not go beyond a deterministic approach. The way in which power and capital are described and their use in the field, as well as the behaviour of the actors make these aspects to an object that is outside the dynamic between individuals and ignores the emergence in this dynamic.

In the examples described above and by looking back to these experiences and reflect on them in the conversations, I felt that my colleagues came to some understandings of what had happened to and with them. Mead considers a person as an emergent phenomenon, participation in social action is a basis for the emergence and development of the identity of individuals. His ideas focus on an understanding of the individual in terms of social processes in which forming and being formed occur at the same time, instead of assuming an autonomous individual with innate capacities. Linking this with the concept of misrecognition, he refers to social action and not to individual misunderstanding. We cannot experience ourselves as selves, we have to take the attitudes of others. The described I - me dialectic makes it possible that humans have a capacity for self-consciousness and this is the source for spontaneity, creativity, and freedom. Mead points out very clearly what people experience when they become a new member of a group: "*as a man adjusts himself to a certain environment he becomes a different individual; but in becoming a different individual he has affected the community in which he lives. It may be a slight effect, but in so far as he has adjusted himself, the adjustments have changed the type of environment to which he can respond, and the world is accordingly a different world* (Mead, 1934:215)".

Newcomers have to learn what is important in the field, what the manners are, what the power relations are in order to occupy a desired positon in the field. "*New arrivals to fields must pay the*

price of an initial investment for entry, which involves recognition of the value of the game and the practical knowledge of how to play it (Swartz, 1997:126)". For newly appointed executives who feel like a novice because of their lack of knowledge and relations, building links with other people and getting a perception of how to fit in this new organisation is important (Mitchell et al., 2001; Wanous et al., 1992). This process of re-socialising, of familiarisation, and getting embedded in the new organisation is already described as a process of forming and influence, in which not following the rules can easily be explained as behaviour not being taken seriously which feels like misrecognition. However, it is not possible to change yourself without others. The theory of complex responsive processes of relating takes a more emergent position, where we have a role and we influence our environment as we are influenced by our environment. This theory is a way one can try to form through interaction and emergence and can be seen as a critique to the theory of field of Bourdieu.

5.6 A different theory: complex responsive processes of interdependent relating

Stacey and his colleagues (Stacey et al., 2000; Stacey, 2001) draw upon particular work in the nature complexity science as a source of analogies for human action. These analogies are understood in terms of human society and human psychology in line with the thoughts of Mead and Elias to formulate a theory of organisation and management, called complex responsive processes of relating. These complex processes of relating are temporal processes of interaction between people in the medium of symbols patterning themselves as themes in communication. These themes can take many forms, like narratives. They are continuously emerging and potentially being transformed in the process of social action itself (Stacey, 2007). In the themes of communicative interaction people construct patterns of power relations and leadership reflecting their ideologies and constructing their identities. In this everyday activity of ordinary politics of organisational life people are making choices selected by their prejudices and ideologies. It is in the action of persons who form and are formed by these themes. Together they are engaged and pre-occupied in "the game, the habitus" of

everyday life (Stacey, 2010).

Communicative action presented as narrative and propositional themes sustain power relations and leadership positions thereby giving rise to dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. Power relations and leadership positions shift as changes emerge in the thematic patterning of communicative interaction. No theme can be stored anywhere, but is continually reproduced and potentially transformed in the ongoing process of relating between people in the living present. Different themes are often contradicting and conflicting, they can serve different purposes. Coming into an environment as newcomer where previous patterns of communication have been reproduced with little variation one will experience a relativel stabilised environment in which power relations are sustained and become the official ideology. Shadow themes may express unofficial ideologies which undermine the official ideology and so threaten current power relations. The entrance of (a) new executive(s) could lead to new power relations or changes which are potential for conflict. *"The fact is we paradoxically recognise the other in the manner we recognise ourselves. If we are continuously recreating identity without the struggle of entering into conflict we end up only recognising the shell of identity we were before* (Griffin, 2002:197)*"*. The cycle of recognition is the very meaning of identity; tensions and conflict are a structural feature of all development. So it is not a dynamic of mainly accidental tensions and conflicts, but it is a matter of *"structured conflicts and tensions* (Griffin, 2002:198)*"*. Mead and Elias also draw attention to the key factor of conflict. They mentioned two alternatives we encounter in our everyday lives:

1. we can collude in activity denying difference and affirm identity with no change;
2. we can do the opposite and seek through conflict the active recognition and at the same time recreate and possibly transform our identity.

In this way we can instrumentalise conflict itself as a form of conflict to achieve the goals of a person. One has to take the struggle for recognition which comes with it, for granted.

5.7 To conclude this narrative

For Mead the leader, a (new) senior executive, is capable of entering into the attitudes of other members which makes communications between (separated) groups possible (Mead, 1934:256-257). Leadership themes emerge in the ongoing ordinary, everyday processes of group interaction in which personal and collective identities are iterated. Leadership is the recognition of activity dealing with difference and leadership themes emerge over time and may have potentially unlimited meaning for a group. All participants, also in other related roles to that of leading as student, partner or employee, are continuously recreating their identity as they construct their future in the living present of the enabling constraints of the past. As Griffin (2002:217) states: *"Groups tend to recognise the leader role in those who have acquired a greater spontaneity, a greater ability to deal with the unknown as it emerges from the known context. But the complexity also has to do with embodied human beings with strong emotional themes, which emerged in their past and constitute the enabling constraints that are structures of the living present"*. As the size of the group / organisation increases along with the complexity in the interdependency of people it becomes icreasingly impossible to manipulate patterns.

The theory of complex response processes of relating helps (new) executives to focus attention on everyday interaction between people and their local interaction in the present. It is in those interactions that roles emerge, including the role of the leader. Leadership emerges in the recognition of leaders by others. The narratives of colleagues provide detailed accounts of local situations. In this way the narratives are not rules about "how to do things" but examples of how to achieve understanding of what *can* happen in everyday life situations.

Section III

The question of method and researching one's practice

Section III is about methodological accountability on the specific type of research described in this thesis. The everyday experience of living and working in an organisation for a (newly appointed) senior manager is the primary focus of study and stories told about these experiences are the basis of the research process. In this research as a practice the whole (research) process contained aspects of describing, categorisating and theming, studying literature on the recognised themes, self-reflection, getting feedback, questions and discussions in learning sets, writing and rewriting my narratives, and defining emergent insights in my own - the researcher's - practice, each time triggering new experiences and insights.

In the following synopsis in this section I will describe my movement of thought during this process, also describing the changed and detailed insights which emerged during the research.

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The question of method and researching one's practice

This chapter on methodological accountability is positioned in the middle of this thesis and differs from most dissertations where this chapter is positioned at the beginning of the thesis, but I want to argue that, for the specific type of research described in this thesis, this is the place where it would emerge. Taking the everyday experience of living and working in an organisation which is new to a senior manager as a primary focus of study and the fact that the interaction between people is patterned primarily as narrative themes, attracted me from the start. I like to tell stories and express what aspects (in human relating) are important to me and how in the response of others meaning is created. In this sense stories are not only created by human relating, but at the same time generate further human relating. At the start of my research I did not have and could not have an idea of what it meant to participate in such a research programme. In my enthusiasm I built up all kinds of expectations on concerning what experience could be of use and how to write about them. In the end almost none of my expectations have become true. The research was instructive and delivered many unexpected emerging aspects, and also represents a difficult process of struggles with myself and others. The written narratives were my daily experiences, the living present, and this was taken as the point of departure for the research. Narratives offer possibilities of contextuality and reflexivity, to express purposes and motives, and to be sensitive to temporality (Tsoukas and Hatch, 2001; 2012).

6.1 Research as a practice

People bring together their daily experience of the social processes in which they are involved, patterns of conversation, power relations and ideological choices in a narrative form. Very importantly, these aspects are also formed by the narrative. These are basic ideas of the theory of complex responsive processes and, taken as a fundamental point of departure, this theory grounds doing research. The theory of complex responsive processes is based on fundamentally different assumptions than the ones which are the basis for systems thinking which dominates the world of organisations and management. In appendix 4 I will explain more of the relation towards systems thinking. Working with the ideas of the theory of complex responsive processes implies a way of understanding social reality as something

that reality evolves. In this respect Mowles (2011:85) states: "*What is required to research organisations … are methods that are consonant with the continuous processes of mutual adaptation, mutual anticipation and meaning making that occurs when people come together to achieve things.*"

In my research the whole (research) process contained aspects of describing, categorising and theming, studying literature on the themes recognised, self-reflection, getting feedback, questions and discussions in learning sets, writing and rewriting my narratives, and defining emergent insights in my own - the researcher's - practice, each time triggering new experiences and insights. Writing about my own experiences so that others could understand what I meant was not as easy as I thought it would be. In order to clarify what I meant I had to specify and detail descriptions of my experiences, thoughts, and findings. Some texts raised questions about unclear writing, assumptions made, and beliefs which could be of influence on things I wrote. I have become aware of taking things for granted where I should have questioned them, which shocked me quite a lot. But the writing of new conceptual versions which these insights resulted in more in-depth explanations, a better understanding of what really was happening or had happened, and a prospect of how to act in the future and, it also raised new questions, in expectation of another cycle of thought and reflection, a process which never stops. This research process can be seen as a sensemaking process constructing theoretical statements out of concrete experiences by ordering relationships amongst elements that constitute my focus of attention as a researcher. The 'unit of analysis' is the experience of interacting with others in local settings, the thought and method emerged in doing research. I see a strong link with the way of working in management and leadership. Most of the inquiry was done on the job. While I was managing new thoughts and ways of working emerged.

I experienced that theory and method where inextricably linked and I realised that - contrary to traditional science - ontology and epistemology are almost inseperable. I am aware of this rather different point of view and its consequences for my research work. In my narratives I simultaneously reflect on subjects being researched

and the way of doing research as such. With this way of working it becomes a contribution to research in a special way: research as a practice.

In this chapter I will explain why this way of working can be fruitful and of importance for senior management in general as well as for new senior managers specifically, and why experience and writing about it in narratives, and reflecting on them is of importance. Firstly I will explain some basic ideas of the theory of complex responsive processes and their influence on doing research in the next paragraph.

6.2 Basic ideas on the theory of complex responsive processes and the consequences for a different scientific discourse

Within the theory of complex responsive processes an organisation is thought of as "… an evolving pattern of interaction between people that emerges in the local interaction of those people, with its fundamental aspects of communication, power and ideology, and evaluative choices" (Stacey and Griffin, 2005:19). Focusing on the understanding of group and social processes in organisations, the complex responsive process research encourages researchers to take their daily experience of the social processes in which they are involved in their own organisations seriously (Stacey and Griffin, 2005:35), using qualitative narratives, developing reflexive inquiries and arguments. In every narrative and in single case studies basic ideas of the theory of complex responsive processes have been grounded in order to find answers to questions which could not be researched by using dominant theories, i.e. local interactive sensemaking and understanding everyday experiences with consequences for the position of the researcher and the choice of techniques to influence the movement of thought.

6.2.1 Local interactive sensemaking, interdependent people
Taking up the complex responsive processes perspective, local interaction is central to the understanding of organisational and strategic activity. Interaction is regarded as the exchange of signs which can become symbols. In the interaction between people

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meaning is created. In this interaction people show shared activities, which is possible because patterns of interaction emerge in a coherent and meaningful way to both local and wide population levels at the same time (Homan, 2005). It is assumed that fundamental human reality is the interaction between human bodies which means that higher order concepts of wholes and realities outside of the interacting individuals (i.e. the social context, the organisation, the culture, the system) are assumed to be imaginative constructs, arising in local interaction. In turn these emerging 'global concepts' can be folded back in local interactions where they are reproduced and particularised, being influenced by the local habitus. Local interaction taken up in this sense as processes thus are not themselves assumed to produce higher level phenomena, but only lead to further (local) human interactions. By sustaining all human interaction, people are at the same time limited and enabled to act.

In the complex responsive processes perspective the concept of complexity does not refer to an organisational reality 'out there' but to the dynamic properties of interaction between interdependent people. Human beings are approached as thoroughly social beings, whose identity evolves out of processes of social interactions, and who unavoidably depend on each other. To understand what an organisation is, is to understand what people in that organisation are doing and understand how people respond to each other in ongoing processes of relating. People bring together experience, conversation patterns, power relations and ideological choices in a narrative form, but again most importantly, these aspects are also formed by the narrative. In the continuous interaction in the present patterns are generated and reconfirmed or transformed, such as habits, routines and standards. In these ongoing interactions the organisation has its history which changes at the same time (transformative causality, Stacey, 2010; Stacey and Griffin, 2005). In the ongoing interactions people change and in this way how these people define themselves as an organisation changes.

As said before, the 'unit of analysis' is the experience of interacting with others in local social settings. Here the concept of complexity is used as a fundamental attribute of the quality of the interaction of

interdependent humans (Stacey, 2003). I recognise the emergence of thematic patterns in local conversations, and their change and transformation in interactive power-related processes. History and earlier experiences are both repeated and potentially transformed in the present, building on expectations of the future. Griffin argues: *"the ethical interpretation of our experience is then found within the experience itself as new points of view that emerges in the conflictual interaction in which the future is perpetually being created* (Griffin, 2002:203)*"*.

In the complex responsive processes perspective there is no clear separation between the individual and the social, which is a non-dualistic stance. In this stance a subjective autonomous individual nor a limited agency is not determined by local social or macro institutional influences. Johannessen (2013) speaks of adopting a radical process perspective on human development espousing the development of mind, consciousness, self-consciousness and action as an ongoing social process in interaction with interdependent others. By putting the interaction in the centre and to emphasise its emergent nature I recognise aspects of the process of mutual recognition and acknowledgment, and adjust my own actions.

6.2.2 Everyday experience and understanding

Using the everyday experience of living and working in an organisation as a 'unit of analysis' is another important aspect of the complex responsive processes perspective. Weick (1974) pleads for a similar kind of research advising the study of everyday events, everyday places, everyday questions and micro-organisations and Silverman (2013:1 and 17) states: *"slow down and look around rather more attentively . . . and identify what is remarkable in everyday life"*. Brinkmann (2012) called this kind of research *"qualitative inquiry in everyday life"*. This everyday experience can be characterised as highly active, experiential, local, and conversational. During local conversations features of the experience in that situation are interactively emphasised, 'facts' and 'data' are selected and constructed together with emerging interpretive categories. Thus the meaning of facts and data emerges as significant symbols in chains of gestures and responses (Mead, 1967). In this kind of

research the researcher tries to become aware of how local thinking, feeling and interacting guides historically and socially constructed action, and also becomes aware of understanding the meanings which (temporarily) organise the local interaction. Taking the living present as the point of departure has radical consequences for the position of the researcher. In a dynamical and process-oriented approach to organisational reality, there is no outside position. There is only an insider's position, a position "with-in", a position in which the researcher participates and observes, and which enables him to reflect upon his own experience and in the end to share it.

6.2.3 A "from within" position: practitioner-researcher
Stacey and Griffin (2005:9) state, that "*one can only really understand an organisation from within the local interaction in which global tendencies to act are taken up*". The most direct way of researching understanding is from a "with-in" position that offers 'access' to the experienced thoughts, emotions and tendencies to act in oneself and others present, and to the ways in which meaning is produced about this experience. For me this was an important point in becoming enthusiastic about at the beginning of my research, because besides the success stories and good to–do lists available in lectures and literature there is little attention paid to shared experience and the understanding of what really happens in the work of managers. Bate (1997:1165) calls this a co-interactor / actor position allowing the social phenomena to be studied in their natural state (Alvesson, 2009:158) paying attention to naturally occurring situated interaction (Silverman, 2013:47). The co-interactor / actor-research position with insight from the inside is labelled in a similar way as 'witness thinking' (Shotter, 2006), inquiry from the inside (Evered and Louis, 1981), understanding life from the inside (Brinkmann, 2012) and insider academic research (Coghlan and Brannick, 2007).
This "with-in" stance implies that the insights of the research must arise in the researcher's reflection on the micro detail of his own experience of interaction with others (Menard-Warwick, 2011), being an abductive translation (Thomas, 2010; Peirce, 1992) between the participant/researcher's first person view towards an audience's third person view (Agar, 2013:80). Abduction is based on a way of working where the development of explanatory ideas results from closer

examination of a particular case (Hammersley, 2007). The 'knowledge' gained from this kind of research - the locally emergent themes and meaning patterns - includes understanding as well as empirical and theoretical viewpoints that are successively developed, adjusted, and refined. In analysing, discussing and reflecting upon my experiences I began to understand what I was doing; not only during the research, but also doing reflexively in my work. According to Flyvbjerg (2004) the knowledge of a person processing practical wisdom (or phronesis) of how to manage in particular circumstances can never be equated with or reduced to knowledge or general truths about managing. Because of its focus on the variable context dependency and the number of influencing factors it cannot be encapsulated by universal rules (Flyvbjerg, 2001:288; Thomas, 2012:31). So, the (epistemological) quality of this kind of knowledge is less about universal laws, invariable in terms of time and space (episteme), nor about technical and practical knowledge providing rules, instructions to solve problems and procedures to realise goals (techne). The researcher - being also a participant - has, paradoxically, a detached involvement and involved detachment at the same time.

6.2.4 Subjective research
The complex responsive process research perspective can be characterised as subjective (Saunders et al., 2009) with the point of departure that the lived experience of the organisational world is regarded as conversational local experience and accomplishment, and NOT as a separate and stable reality independent of human action and interpretation. This implies the existence of many different locally experienced and constituted 'realities', which may become interwoven in more global patterns and interactional themes. Organisational experience is a local and plural experience. Sensemaking is assumed to be a social and conversational process. However, meaning is not socially constructed about a reality, but meaning and reality are assumed to emerge at the same time (Johannessen, 2013). In local interactions more or less shared constructions of 'reality' (local 'truths') can emerge as a result of negotiations about the meaning of the experienced reality, as 'our reality', 'our truths' (Stacey and Griffin, 2005:20).

In the above I have explained several characteristics of the theory of complex responsive processes and the methodological assumptions, which are at the basis of doing my research. I am aware that Stacey, his colleagues (Stacey and Griffin, 2005:22-27), and their doctoral students wrote about their research methods quite a lot, but that mainly concepts and frameworks from the complex responsive process approach were used - as developed by Stacey himself (Homan, 2014). At several places I made some connections with other intellectual scientific traditions on specific items, but at the same time I was very reserved in doing so. The main reason was that other traditions needed to be explained extensively before they could be referenced to in order to understand the link and the arguments. I hope I have made clear that working with the theory of complex responsive processes means working form another scientific discourse.

6.3 A different scientific discourse

Deetz (1996) emphasises that different scientific discourses have their own way of articulating arguments, engaging in research practices and providing results on the orientation of organisations - a way of constituting people and events in them and a way of reporting on them. He argues that in the existing scientific discourse the " subjective-objective dimension" plays too dominant a role (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) and is for alternative research programmes in management science too one-sided. The theory of complex responsive processes can be positioned at the "local-emergent" side of Deetz' meta theory of representational practices (Deetz, 1996:198). As said both in the theory of complex responsive processes as well as in everyday practical experience, theory and method are intertwined, so you cannot speak of one without the other. I have experienced theory and method as inextricably linked, and I have realised that the choice of methods is motivated by the basic principles of the theory of complex responsive processes as well as by new insights while doing the research to involve the experience of colleagues in the research. In analysing, discussing, and reflecting upon my experiences I started to understand what I was doing; not only in doing the research, but also in my work. In this respect Thomas (2012:38) states: *"we have to understand that different sciences take*

different routes". Methods must emerge from questions and they should not be prescribed in advance. Methods should be *"…forged around questions; the methods … (should be) the servants not the executive directors. It is the questions that are important (*Thomas, 2012:38)*"*. Otherwise, methods become the predominant factor in research. Social scientists are interested in the specifics and these are understandable only in terms of their practices (Kundera, 1984; Thomas, 2011). This understanding is drawn from and assessed in the context of one's own experiences and the experience of others (Thomas, 2012:30). The 'representations' of the research findings do not intend to capture the 'true' and factual reality as experienced. Rather the authors in this tradition seek to capture experiences, images, and other representations which symbolise their own interpretive reading of the local experiences which highlight salient (in relation to the research domain) characteristics of the experienced and interpreted local processes by the researcher. The complex responsive processes perspective proposes that interaction between living bodies is patterned primarily as narrative themes. As these narratives are the results of the interpretation of the researcher, they are a systematic reflection in order to prevent subjective interpretations, which makes up for a main part of my research. In the next section I will describe both of them.

6.4 The importance of narrative themes

The complex responsive processes perspective proposes that interaction between living bodies is patterned primarily as narrative themes. Experiences, described in a narrative form, are a central element in the research methodology of the PhD complexity programme[35] and can be described as a description of personal experience of one's own practice that forms the inquiry (of raw material) from which patterns and themes emerge for further reflection and research. In this research *"the researcher takes his own experience seriously by the activity of articulating and reflecting upon these themes*(Stacey and Griffin, 2005:23)*"*. Stacey argues that one can only describe these local realities from a participant perspective. Thus the narratives are written from a first person perspective and consist of personally observed and lived through

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social actions, in addition to experienced feelings and thoughts (Ellis, 2007). The researcher is both involved and detached at the same time: involved, because he is in the midst of engagement with colleagues and with that an integral part of a social community, in which facts are emerging and treated as though they are 'true'; detached, through reflecting with others on the emergent themes. Research, then, is an examination of the micro-practices involved in such local interactions. The narrators/researchers are inevitably personally and emotionally involved in their interaction with others, and thus inevitably experiences (identity) shift while influencing the situation through their own participation (participant and researcher). Narrative descriptions are perhaps our most fundamental form for the making sense of experience.

Abott (1992) and MacIntyre (1977) provide us with a forward glance, helping us to anticipate situations even before we encounter them. This can only be taken seriously if people who tell these stories keep close to their feelings, values, and beliefs, so we can understand the story from "within". This is one of the reasons why local practice cannot be captured in rules. Flyvbjerg (2006:228) states that formal generalisation is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas "the force of examples" is underestimated. Narratives could be compared with 'thick descriptions' (Denzin 2001:99-103) describing a researcher's selections and impressions of what he thinks is important and relevant to write about. The narrative described from a "with-in" perspective is intended as a different kind of subjective reflection of the researchers experience giving the reader an impression of having truly been there and having close contact with the local conversational experience. A willing reader can experience the text through his own assumptions, feelings, and thoughts which could lead to a shared subjectivity and 'natural generalisation' (Denzin, 2001:99). In this way of working 'facts' are regarded as being socially constructed in a social community (Chia 1996) and 'knowledge' is value-laden with truth grounded in everyday life, involving social interactions amongst individuals (Hatch 1997; Flyvbjerg, 2004; Thomas, 2010).

Reflexivity

The narratives with their concrete experience content are the results of the interpretation of the researcher. In order to prevent that the subjective interpretations will be de-familiarised, and not steered blind on past and locally taken-for-granted understanding, a systematic reflection on the experienced daily events is necessary (Brinkmann, 2012; Stacey, 2012; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009; Donaldson, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Bruner, 1991). Schön (1991:241) describing reflexivity as being: "*on-the-spot surfacing, criticising, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena. Often it takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation*". Characteristic for a reflexive professional is the ability to explicitly look back on and think about their own actions as a professional, which can lead to an improvement of their own work.

I would never have thought that reflection (during the learning sets) on my writings would have such an impact as it has had in the period of doing this research. After a process of writing and re-writing my experiences I actually was quite satisfied with what I had written down. I thought I had described my activities, thoughts and feelings in a detailed way, and that my story expressed what had happened very well. The links with theoretical items satisfied me and made me understand better what happened. However, in discussing my writings my fellow students and faculty members started to ask me questions about the (limited) perspective used, the details behind some explanations, and their interpretation of what they had read did not match my experience. It took me a while to accept this and see the value of discussing the subjects and issues raised. Now, looking back, I can confirm the great value of going back to your own thought repeatedly, deepening descriptions every time more and more and the value of the insights which came to the surface and became to life.

Stacey and Griffin (2005:23) suggest that "*the narrative as research method is … importantly reflexive in a social sense. Social reflexivity requires the narrator to explicitly locate his way of thinking about the story being told in the traditions of thought of his society, differentiating between these traditions in a critically aware manner. . .The literary story leaves interpretation of meaning largely to the reader, while the narrative method of research*

rigourously sets out the writer's assumptions (Stacey, 2010:222)".

The whole process of describing, categorising and taking up themes means studying literature on the recognised themes, self-reflection, having responses, questions and discussions in the learning sets, writing and rewriting the narratives and defining emergent insights in the researcher's own practice, each time triggering new experiences and insights, can be seen as a sensemaking process constructing theoretical statements out of concrete experiences by ordering relationships amongst elements that constitute the researcher's focus of attention. This can be linked to the concept of 'theorising' (Weick, 1974, 1989) where Weick states that theorising is a developmental process of selecting more 'competent' (interesting, plausible, non-obvious, surprising) social constructions as 'believable' explanations while absurd, irrelevant or obvious outcomes are dropped (Weick, 1989: 525).

To provide the reader with an understanding of the subjective insights of the researcher, the researcher might reflect on his role in the narrative description, the influence and effect of his background and pre-understandings and the effect of social environment and local rules (habitus of the researcher) on the research process (Homan, 2014). This is why the first chapter with my personal background is of importance. The (following) narratives describe situations with local meaning as it emerges in interaction and a reflection can take place on the effects of interactions on the (power) relationships between the researcher and participants and the 'construction of data' (Hall and Callery, 2001), what colleagues will do and how they will react to the research once it is written down. The reflexive activities are about deepening the researcher's understanding and challenging grand narratives or one-sided explanations of complex interactive processes. Placing him in the middle of concrete experienced situations, the researcher tries to explicitly explain and develop his own interpretation and theorise about these situations (Creswell, 2013). This leads to 'exemplary knowledge' through which the understanding problems in comparable contexts becomes possible (Thomas, 2010). Resulting from the understanding drawn from and assessed in the context of one's own experience, other people can recognise this experience in

their own everyday environment.

During the writing on my experience I discussed aspects of my research work with several colleagues in similar positions. They were, without an exception, curious about my way of working, my experiences and findings about the subject of recognition and misrecognition, and how I would position my research in the field of management practice. Several of these colleagues had recently also made the transition from a private working environment to the public environment of higher education and were prepared to enter into a conversation about their experience in their own transition.

I decided to use single case study research to collect basic data of the experiences of my colleagues with changing working environments as senior executives. With each of them I arranged an hourly of conversation which had the form of an open interview.

6.5 Case study research

Case study research is a strategy of inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) and involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases (Stake, 2005), in which the investigator explores a bounded system (i.e. a setting, a context which means focus) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving sources of information (i.e. life histories, participant observations, in-depth interviews (Berg, 2009; Yin, 2009; Hagan, 1993)), and reports a case description and case-based themes. Case study methods involve systematically gathering enough information about a particular person and social setting to permit the researcher to effectively understand how it functions. Case study research has its roots in anthropology and sociology. Brown (2008) reviewed the literature on case study research intensively, and she considers Merriam, Yin and Stake as foundational writers in the area of this kind of research. Yin (2009) - a methodologist - provides an extremely comprehensive and systematic outline for undertaking the design and conduct of a case study. The conduct of the study includes preparing for data collection, collection of evidence, analysis of the evidence, and composition of the case study report. Merriam (1998) advocates a general approach to qualitative case studies in the field of education.

She summarises the choice of case study design as a way to gain understanding of the situation, where the process of inquiry, rather than the outcome of the research, are of interest to the investigator. Stake (1995:19) believes that "*case studies are useful in the study of human affairs because they are down-to-earth and attention-holding*" and the most important role of the case study researcher is that of interpreter. His vision of this role is not as the discoverer of an external reality, but as the builder of a clearer view of the phenomenon under study through explanation and descriptions and provision of integrated interpretations of situations and contexts. This constructivist position "encourages providing readers with good raw material for their own generalising" (Stake 1995:102).

During the first years of my research, I discussed aspects of my research work, including the specific research process and the managerial subjects, with several colleagues in similar positions. After I had written the third narrative and became aware of the importance of mutual recognition and a possible struggle which comes with changing jobs, the idea came to include the experience of colleagues who also had recently made the transition from a private working environment to the public environment of higher education in my research. Several of them were prepared to cooperate. Stake's approach (1995) best fits with my own research and provides enough space for each "case" of my colleagues in the light of the research topic.

6.5.1 Single case studies and the procedure used
Stake (1994, 1995) classified cases in several types: two of them are the single and collective case study. A single case study is aimed at providing insight into an issue or a problem. In a collective case study a number of single cases are jointly studied in order to understand a phenomenon, population or general condition. One issue of concern (mutual recognition) is selected, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate this issue. Often the inquirer purposefully selects multiple cases to show different perspectives on the issue.

The procedure used for conducting the collective case study included five separate steps, which I will describe briefly[36]. The first step was to judge whether the collective case study approach

36   For a detailed description see Appendix 5

offered me as researcher clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and the possibility of an in-depth understanding of the cases. The second step was to identify colleagues who had changed jobs, and had recently made the transition from a private working environment to the public environment of higher education. I wanted to inquire whether they were willing to participate. The result was that five colleagues were pleased to join the research. The third step was the preparation of the meetings and the collection of the data. My intention was to have an open interview (actually one could say that I had only one question: can you tell me something about your experience in the form of a conversation of 1½ - 2 hours?) The fourth step was the conversation itself. During the conversation I hoped a process of involvement and attachment would develop, and in this way both participants (including the researcher) would get into the story told. The fifth step is the analysis of the data, where I could focus on key issues of mutual recognition, not for generalising beyond the case, but for understanding its complexity. I had permission to tape the conversations, made transcriptions of them, so I could listen to them afterwards, and analyse them as often as I wanted. In the last step, I reported the cases in a similar process as I did with my own narratives: describing, sensemaking, theorising, analysing, and reflecting the themes of mutual (mis)recognition and the experience described.

6.5.2 Added value of doing narrative and single case study research

Narrative research and case study research are very similar when the unit of analysis is a single individual, but they differ in the types of data one would collect and analyse (Creswell, 2007:78-79). In narrative research the researcher focuses on the stories told from the individual's perspective and arranges these stories in logical order. In case study research the single case is typically selected to illustrate an issue and the researcher compiles a detailed description of the setting for the case. As Yin (2009) comments: *"You would use the case study methods, because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions - believing that that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomena of study"*. The narrative approach or a single case study is recommended because ethnographic research provides a much broader picture of the

culture. When comparing a narrative study and a single case to the study of a single individual, the narrative approach can be seen as more scholarly, because narrative studies tend to focus on the single individual whereas case studies often involve more than one case. In this way doing the single case studies after writing the narratives has an added value because insights from a with-in perspective of my own experiences can be mirrored against the experiences of my colleagues in other universities.

6.6 Grounded theory

In my research study I examined people's everyday experience including my own behaviour as a participant observer and generated data by a series of observations. This research can be linked with the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which is particularly suited to the study of (explaining) human behaviour, gaining knowledge about socially shared meaning that forms this behaviour, and the reality of the participants being studied (Goulding, 2002; Milliken and Schreiber, 2001). Grounded theory is rooted in the pragmatism of theorists like Dewey and Mead (Strauss, 1987). The approach behind this grounded theory is to take in a process of both inductive and deductive thinking (King and Horrocks, 2010) the interpretation of meaning in social interaction seriously, and study the relationship between meaning in the perception of the participants and their everyday activities. The inductive part is reflected in the open and flexible research structure, the data collection is in the natural everyday life environment and data analysis, which starts from raw unstructured data. The deductive part is visible in the tendency to systematics, and verification as the formation of theory.

In the PhD programme researchers write a series of narratives, as I have done. Each of these narratives consists of a particular personal puzzling and unexpected situation in which one was involved, describing what others and I do in that situation, saying, and (as an author) thinking and feeling. This narrative is my "raw material", which serves as a basis for reflection. This reflection has several emphases: the first is recognising the identification of important themes (what is the narrative about?), and secondly an extensive and

critical search about what is known about these themes, i.e. what is going on in the narrative (connected with a first inductive step in grounded theory: a cycle of data collection, data analysis and reflection). It helped my thinking in that it was an extensive and critical scientific literature search about the themes turning back to the narrative itself, maintaining the link with the concretely experienced social situation. This can be seen as a whole process of reflection. It was an ongoing interaction process (within the learning sets) in which new meaning emerged continuously (which corresponds with the data comparison of grounded theory). The writings of myself (the researcher) and the re-writings were based not only on the discussions in the learning set but also on the basis of continued experiences, and discussion in my own practice. In these refelctions new patterns of meaning emerged in which I found the concept of (mis)recognition. This is related to the development and deepening of concepts, which are discovered during the data analysis, an ongoing comparison of the data and reflection in grounded theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that knowledge can be found in empirical interactions and / or actions can be 'discovered' by the researcher. The researcher can - with his scientific 'eye' - discover systematics and then develop a concept about that. It is possible to show what 'readings', 'explications', might be seen as social processes or phenomena. In a specific new narrative, the synopsis, I use the opportunity to reflect on and document 'my movement of thought' as a final cycle of my thinking, and provide insight into the decisionmaking process which lead to the development of the concept of processes of recognition as a pattern emerging out of my experiences. The whole research process of (re) writing, literature search, discussions, and new experiences I see as a process of increased objectivation (deduction) where I as researcher become more attached, while at the same time allowing myself to become immersed more deeply in my experience. Reflexivity involves a sensemaking process for myself as researcher.

With their grounded theory approach Glaser and Strauss showed what I experienced during my research, i.e. that qualitative researchers do not just work intuitively, but that a systematic way of working can lead to interpretative statements and "theory", as was the case in my research approach based on the theory of complex

responsive processes.Grounded theory is not perfect. By its nature it's 'messy' and it felt in all the steps like going forward and backward, throwing away work which in the end did not fit. It helped me to develop a tacit knowledge of, or intuitive feel for, the data, my own experiences. I agree with Suddaby (2006) who argues that *"the seamless craft of a well executed grounded theory study, however, is the product of considerable experience, hard work, creativity and occasionally a healthy dose of good luck (Suddaby, 2006:639)"*.

6.7 Critics

There are some strong critics (Parry and Boyle, 2009; Vickers, 2007) from other research traditions stating that someone's personal experience can not be a basis for generalisation, because personal experience is particular, local and context dependent. Furthermore narratives and single case studies focus on subjective emotive and intuitive data instead of an objective set of data. The focus on the rational, the objective and the general is based on several assumptions, which are not the same as those of the theory of complex responsive processes. It is exactly because of another positioning as Deetz does in his meta theory of representational practices (Deetz, 1996:198) that it is not justified to judge any scientific discourse with arguments from other discourses. Let me mention a few important assumptions which differ.

The first assumption made is that autonomous individuals can stand outside of processes such as strategising, and shape them, i.e. use another process to shape a process, which means that one separates one's own reality from the objective reality, and autonomous individuals are parts of a system, and which can be thought of as having subsystems, such as mental models. Within the theory of complex responsive processes people are interdependent human persons and there is no doubling of processes since there is only the process of human interaction, and no one can take an external vantage point.
Secondly focusing on experience a person can make use of tools and techniques to make decisions and act. This is not connected with historical and societal developments. Within the theory of complex responsive processes experience is seen as social processes of

consciousness with a history and self-consciousness in interaction with others and time as the living present in which both accounts of the past and expectations for the future are formed in the perceptual construction of the future in the present.

Thirdly there is an ethical issue: involved people can (easily) be recognised in an uncomfortable or unwanted position and have to face the consequences which follow from the narratives. This point can be addressed with proper measures or agreement with participants. One specific aspect I want to mention here is careful interpretation. This is a basic characteristic of reflexive research (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009:9). Careful interpretation implies that all references to empirical data (the observed phenomena of the narrative and case study) are the results of interpretation. So facts are always theory biased (Hanson, 1958) and can be seen as inseparable from the perspective (Wittgenstein, 1953). This challenges the idea of scientific knowledge being seen to be objective, interpretation free, and theory neutral. The personal, giving attention to the particular does not mean complete autonomy or uniqueness. Our own experiences and interpretations must be placed in a context. Besides that, in social inquiry there is a need for an inquiry that accounts for questioning and surprise, particularity and contextual "sensitivity". Narratives in general, thus also my own narratives, potentially enable readers to compare it with their own experience, practice and theory and they recognise situations and events. This recognition can lead to new sensemaking about their own experiences. So narratives are particular and personal at the same time. They are "everyday generalisable" and "offer an explanation of a generalisation retrospectively" (Thomas, 2012; 2011).

In my research I tried to get an understanding and explanation of my own practical findings and share my shift(s) of view and change of mind. It then becomes essential to focus on the minutiae, *"the primary human reality [of] persons in ordinary everyday conversations* (Griffin, 2002:134)*"* . This does not exist on the level of "what works" questions, but at the level of personalised questions posed locally in the dynamic of the manager's work and everyday judgement. The process of writing, sensemaking, theorising, analysing, reflecting, and reflexion entails that the process of theorising is seen as an interactive process, involving all kinds of

feelings as taken-for-granted assumptions of the researcher. He and the people he works with are thoroughly questioned (Menard-Warwick, 2011:7). This research process is not taken as a linear, distant and isolated rational process, but as complex responsive processes, and can be labelled as a 'research journey' (Cole et al., 2011:142). In this process the researcher can discover - as I did several times during this research - that the self-knowledge is incomplete, ambiguous, and limited (Sparkes, 1996:470). The research products can be characterised as interactively emergent interpretations of the researcher: how do I understand my daily experience with regard to my research domain after I have gone through the whole research journey? This is intended as situational relevant products with possible natural generalisations to other comparable situations. These research products can provide guidelines for action in a certain class of situations but can also provide new theoretical insights, new 'theorisations' contributing to existing academic knowledge. This implies that the criteria used have to be relational and reflexive, validating the relationships which specific communities have with this kind of research. This implies that this kind of research is assumed to mean different things to different communities (Flyvbjerg, 2006:23). Homan (2014) recognises several of these communities: the inquiry community of scientists and knowledge producers (scientific quality), the community of users of this kind of research (pragmatic quality), the community of readers (performative quality), the researchers themselves (their own movement of thought), and the colleagues of the researcher. Furthermore the criteria used and the evaluations done with these criteria are no fixed external objective reference points, but become a matter of critical reflection, interaction and discussion, going on in (and possibly amongst) these 'communities of interpretation' (Lincoln, 1995:278) evaluating this research. In the next paragraph I will look at several parameters to ensure the trustworthiness of qualitative research projects similar to my research.

6.7.1 Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects

Shenton (2004) states that although many critics are reluctant to accept the trustworthiness of qualitative research, frameworks for ensuring rigour in this form of work have been in existence for many years. The purpose of trustworthiness in qualitative research is to

support the argument that the inquiry's results are 'worth paying attention to'. This is quite different from the typical experimental precedent of attempting to show validity, and significance. The ideas of generalisability, internal validity, reliability, and objectivity are reconsidered in qualitative terms and substituted by transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Guba, 1981).
By addressing similar issues, Guba's constructs correspond to the criteria employed by the positivist investigator:

a. transferability (in reference to external validity/generalisability);
b. credibility (in reference to internal validity);
c. dependability (in reference to reliability);
d. confirmability (in preference to objectivity).

Trustworthiness could be considered as the way in which qualitative research workers make sure that these substituted terms are evident in their research.

Transferability means the level to which the readers, the audience, have the ability to transfer the findings to a different situation than that of the researcher of the initial research. In this research I have done so by giving adequate information about myself (the researcher as instrument) and about the research context and its boundaries, processes, members, and researcher-participant connections to make it possible for the reader to decide how the findings may transfer. The importance of an adequate 'thick description of the phenomenon under study (mutual recognition) - shown in the narratives and single cases studies - allow the readers to get an understanding of it, thus enabling them to compare the instances of the phenomenon explained in the research document with those emerge in their own situations.

Credibility refers to the concept of internal consistency, where the core issue is how we ensure rigour in the research process and the way we communicate to other people that we have done so. Credibility is accomplished by prolonged engagement with people, extended participation and continual observation in the field, utilization of peer researchers, usage of well-established research methods (narratives and case studies), researcher reflexivity; and

participant checks. Additionally it is increased by a thorough description of source data and a fit between the data and the emerging analysis in addition to 'thick descriptions'. Credibility in research is an assessment of whether or not the research findings represent a 'credible' conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data. The above provisions also used in this PhD reserach, support research workers to promote confidence that they have correctly recorded the phenomena being studied.

Dependability relates to the primary challenge that *"the way in which a research is carried out needs to be consistent across time, researchers, and analysis techniques* (Krefting, 1991)*"*. The procedure by which results are produced must be explicit, as explained in chapter 6 and appendix 5. This is achieved by means of meticulously monitoring the emerging research design and through keeping an audit trail, i.e. an in depth chronology of research activities and processes, influences on the data collection and analysis, emerging themes, classifications, or models, along with repetitive observations and the usage of fellow workers and faculty staff to examine the research plan and execution in the learning sets and analytic writings.

Confirmability in qualitative research is founded on the acknowledgment that research is never objective. It deals with the main issue that findings should signify, as far as possible, the specific situation being investigated as opposed to the beliefs, pet theories, or biases of the researcher. Triangulation of multiple methods, data sources, and theoretical perspectives checks the potency of the researcher's concepts. Reflexive analysis as done in this research is helpful to make sure that the researcher was aware of his possible influence on the data. The integrity of results is based on the data and that the investigator must properly tie together the data, analytic processes, and findings in a manner that the reader is in a position to confirm the adequacy of the findings. Even though many critics are unwilling to accept the trustworthiness of qualitative research, frameworks for ensuring rigour have been around for several years.

6.8 Ethics

Working at the university and writing about experiences within that same university makes it – even when you use pseudonyms – almost impossible to avoid that people know about whom you are writing. Writing about real-life situations at work, and the people involved, raises the question of how to research in an ethically responsible way. My way of working does not make it possible to determine in advance who will be involved in the research or how to engage them.

In general my idea is to request permission to describe the part people and colleagues in my research. I have personally informed individuals about my writing. The unanimous reaction has been positive. On several occasions I have presented my findings, which has led to recognition and respect concerning what was written and discussed about the facts and insights which have shaped my narrative(s). The conversations were held on terms of confidentiality, each person's privacy was secured.

The following aspects had to be addressed at the start of the conversation:

- the conversations were recorded, nothing of the recorded data will be shared with others without the knowledge and permission of participants;
- promoter and co-promoter were allowed to listen to the audio files in order to help the PhD student to analyse and interpret what was said;
- possibility for the supervisors to listen to and read the materials;
- possibility for participants to listen back to their recordings, offering them the opportunity to skip parts of the recordings;
- recordings have been stored in archives according to privacy rules for academic data (new policy in the Netherlands);
- following the rules stated in Position Statement on Qualitative Research (2006).

One of the basic ideas of doing this kind of research is not to find whether something is right or wrong, but by describing, questioning, and discussing different things one can come to an understanding of why something is done or has been done as it was presented. Having this in mind any description of acting and experience is desirable and valuable to get a better understanding of what it is that we and others do in organisations.

7
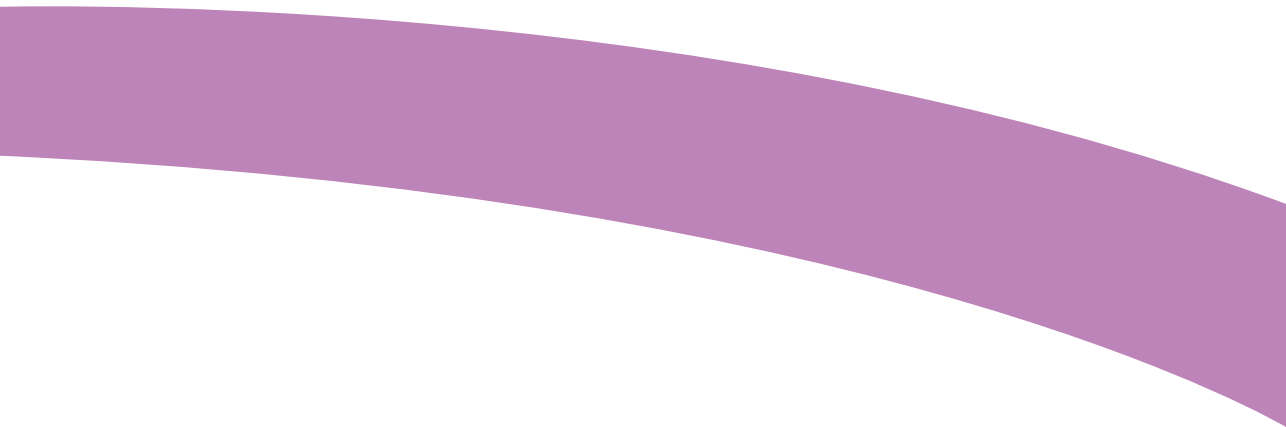
Synopsis of the movement of my thought

This synopsis can be seen as a new narrative argument and final cycle through this process of research, thinking over all theoretical aspects focusing on processes of recognition and paying attention to a "WE" perspective where people realise their mutual dependency and where activity emerges in the social interaction between them. I will again reflect on my experience, because in the period since the writing of the narratives and thinking about my experiences time has gone on and so has my thinking about what happened and how that can be understood. During my research, and reflecting on the thoughts of others on what I have written, and reflexively taking up again my own experience, I came to the conclusion that a part of this (re)search is concerned with (my) assumptions, ideas, etc. as a participating individual. I have become aware of the things one picks up in life, expressing them, and reflecting on them. This gives (more) understanding of what it is one does and why he does it, which offers the opportunity to do something with this knowledge, as I have done. At the same time I have become more aware of the way how the environment, the world around me in which I have grown up, lived and worked, and am still working in, has had an impact on me, and how my acting has impacted others. Especially looking at interactions with people in these environments with another perspective, and not being taken for granted, has given me new insights and understanding of what is really happening.

My central argument is that the intentions of senior managers, like myself, emerge in local interactions taking the form of conversations, where they are part of the construction of these local interactions. In any relation in a new environment (processes of) recognition and misrecognition are essential. In these processes of (mis)recognition we have to cope with the complexity of really listening, which we have trivialised as simple and easy to control, while it is actually very difficult and which needs other patterns of social action and skills. This research is offered as an invitation to my peers to reappraise the role of a senior executive when entering a new organisation - like a university - taking a different view - the theory of complex responsive processes - where patterns of engagement are thought of self-organising, emerging in predictable and unpredictable ways through ordinary daily conversations in processes of local interaction. The foundational concepts of the theory of complex responsive

processes originated in the complexity sciences (Prigogine, 1996; Prigogine and Stengers, 1988), figurational sociology (Elias, 1970, 2000), fractal geometry and computer simulations. Social psychology from a pragmatist's point of view (Mead, 1932, 1934) helped to develop some understanding about what is happening in organisational life. These three foundational concepts together underpin the approach to organisational dynamics as conversational processes of interdependent persons. However, not only as a conversational process, but also as a social process of self-organisation which evolves in an unpredictable way out of which new developments emerge.

In the previous four narratives several themes have been described and topics emerged of which one can think that they are stand-alone as independent theories (i.e. leadership, change management, conflict management, field theory, recognition) and that there is no relation between them. These narratives tell of both the connections that unify multiple actions performed over a span of time and the connections that link multiple viewpoints on and assessment of those actions. De Leeuw (2013) argues that we see ourselves and our place in the world through the stories that we tell about ourselves. We even become the story that we experience as our life and rearrange and reinterpret this story again and again. The emergence of the themes and subjects did not happen spontaneously, but is the result of the interplay between members of faculty, other PhD students, supervisors, and (many) others inside and outside the university with whom I discussed draft writings of the narratives. Talking over what was meant by what was written, and discussing the questions raised in every new version the understanding of what was really happening with me as a newcomer and with (the people in) the organisation opened up my perspective more and more. With the different perspectives we / I deepened our / my insight into possible answers to these questions. The insights of the theory of complex responsive processes offered me a completely different perspective with unfamiliar assumptions to look at and research questions which could not be answered with the principles of existing research theories based on systems thinking.

The aim of the synopsis is:

- looking back at the four narratives and single case descriptions written in their original form (except some shortening of the texts) and reflect on them with the knowledge and experience built up during the whole research process. By reflecting on them again I can exemplify the movement of my thought during the process of writing these narratives starting from acting and interpreting situations from my own frames of reference to take a perspective where control is seen as control enabling people to give meaning to their lives and organisations as continuously emerging in social interaction and where people can recognise others and be recognised by others in daily processes of conversation;
- providing a more coherent and consistent presentation of the theoretical themes and subjects of my research as a whole, bringing together the separate parts of my own and my colleagues' experience described in the narratives in order to develop and support my argument.

7.1 The awareness of an "I" perspective, one's own beliefs, ideas, and assumptions

7.1.1 The importance of awareness of childhood, growing up and work environments

The reflexive nature of inquiring at the core of the research method of this PhD programme requires starting this process with an exploration of major events and ideas which have led me to think and work in the way in which I now find myself thinking and working. In writing this narrative, this 'life story', I have become more and more aware of the process of seeking coherence through time in relation to the process of becoming aware of what I stand for in life. My childhood and growing up in a working class family and being a member of the Salvation Army gave me awareness of principle values like justice, loyalty, patience, humility and simplicity, and - in my view - their basis for 'success' along with group structures with strong patterns of recognition, which - if you accept and reinforce them, as I have done - give you strength and potential. Identity emerges in these patterns of recognition: it is who I am.

In my career I have always combined learning and working and have tried to practice new insights stimulate colleagues to participate. I wanted them to be part of that. Like all my colleague managers at that time, I was highly involved in activities concerning Management by Objectives, Total Quality Management, Knowledge Management, Empowerment and Change- and Project Management and as a 'true believer' I followed the strategic guidelines of the company in executing these thoughts without questing them in my department(s). At the same time I tried to stimulate my colleagues to participate and invest with them in building relationships and structures to help execute our objectives as a team. During my career responsibilities and targets were described in terms of commercial results and performance targets (pragmatic values) and, strangely enough, not in terms of basic values. I never questioned that, and apparently took this for granted, until my draft narrative was discussed and a faculty member asked me: *"You have studied a lot and have had an ideal beautiful career, but are not these things which you have done based on similar ideas. Didn't you go with the flow? You find yourself on a fast flowing river, but do you know where the river ends? Is it in a delta or a waterfall"?* I could not answer this question, but it kept puzzling me. At that moment my research journey really started: questioning what I was doing in organisations and society, trying to understand this, and making sense of it by reflecting on experience as taken-for-granted ideas and values - starting with my own.

7.1.2 Representing a person's perception

The idea to represent a person's perception is described in a variety of ideas on mental models (Craik, 1943; Borgman, 1986; Johnson-Laird 1983; Norman, 2002; Johnson-Laird 2006). Senge (1992) describes a mental model as deeply held internal images of how the world works. They are images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting. Very often, we are not consciously aware of our mental models or the effects they have on our behaviour, as I was not aware of the influence of my upbringing and the Salvation Army. Prejudices or presuppositions can, and do, set limits on our interpretative endeavours (Gadamer, 2004). Humans accumulate and assimilate concepts, rules, and relationships as they perceive them making sense in the moment. These can, and do, change over time,

but often original perceptions and beliefs persevere even in the face of contradictory evidence.

Weick (1995) states that humans use a 'map' to make sense of what they are doing after they have done it, and this sensemaking is both an individual and a social activity. Sensemaking is grounded in identity construction, where identities are constructed in the process of interaction as processes of relating in which people can co-create (enact) their environment. I recognise myself using drawings to explain what I mean and make the subject - to my view - more accessible and understandable for others. An important result of the first narrative for me and for my readers was the insight into an "I" perspective and how it affected my acting and the awareness that this is similar to all the people around you. Being aware of the differences and not talking about right or wrong, but exactly what they are: differences. And the only way to really get to know them is asking other questions - taking the perspective of the theory of complex responsive processes with its different assumptions - and listening to the answer in order to understand why they are different, which could be the basis for social action.

7.1.3 Change (shared) mental models
We not only create mental models, but also share them. In this way organisations, like universities, have shared mental models which shape and guide their strategies and internal ways of working, but because these models are not perfect one of the effects is that they block and distort information, resulting in opportunities being missed and threats ignored. Both Argyris and Senge focus on blocking behaviour and defective models of learning in which individuals have become aware of their 'defects' and change them. Argyris (1977, 2002) described a process of changing a mental model as a process of learning. Learning, he states, is a process in which feedback loops can be illustrated. A double-loop process includes a shift in understanding, from simple and static to broader and more dynamic, such as taking into account the changes in the surroundings and the need for expressiing changes in mental models. Senge (1992) focuses on groups solving problems and on the openness needed to unearth shortcomings in perceptions along with developing skills of (groups) of people when they look at the

larger picture of the processes in their organisation. People receive feedback and use this to learn new skills and develop new orientations (and change their mental models).

Despite the many changes within KPN and my studying I stayed close to my original thinking and beliefs. More than once I was confronted with a personal annual review stating that, although I was loyal to the company and capable of doing my job, I was not a culture conforming person, which meant that I stuck to my own behaviour which did not fit completely within the way of working within the company. So at that time, I apparently was not prepared to change important aspects of my own perspective. Participating in the PhD program, realising previous skills and knowledge were of less value in this new working environment and coping with questions struck me and made a challenging mess of my thoughts. Assumptions and beliefs were discussed and I was fighting the uncertainty, not knowing what to think or what to feel. To my idea this was very similar to the approaches of Argyris and Senge, because there was a kind of thinking in terms of right and wrong, of fixing 'wrong' thinking. Instead, the theory of complex responsive processes implies a way of understanding organisational reality as the way organisational reality evolves with a focus on continuous processes of mutual adaptation, mutual anticipation and meaning that occur when people come together to achieve things. The differences are of importance because the way one perceives has consequences for what you see, and what you see has consequences for what will be (Mowles, 2011). In time, becoming more familiar with new perspectives and other assumptions I realised it was not a question of right or wrong, but (a recognition of) a different understanding of differences, which gave me in the end a new dynamic.

One of the basic ideas of these cognitive approaches (Borgman, 1986:48; Norman, 2002:38) is that people think in systems and when they have an overview of the whole system they are capable of changing elements of this system. When people heard about these ideas they became excited about them, as I did, because they thought they would explain how organisations work and how they change. In their thinking people treat other people in organisations in a very mechanistic way as if they are objects (reified like things) and

systems which can be changed and manipulated. In this powerful theory the common discipline is that people simply say yes, giving up their own individuality and with that giving up (a part of) their selves to be part of the (learning) organisation. That is how people talk about what organisations are, and where changing the models resulted in a cultural change of the organisation. The aim is focused on organisations or "cultures" with improved system outcomes in which human beings can comprehend, explain, attribute, extrapolate, and predict. But culture cannot be manipulated; culture is not a thing; we are all involved in it. As a reaction to these ideas Elias (1978) describes 'habitus' as the habits and structures created by social structures that bind people into groups, including unspoken habits and patterns of behaviour as well as styles and skill in body techniques. Later Bourdieu (1990) re-elaborated the notion of habitus by explaining its dependency on history and human memory. For instance, a certain behaviour or belief becomes part of a society's structure when the original purpose of that behaviour or belief can no longer be recalled and becomes socialised as the individuals which make up that culture. That is what I experienced entering the new academic environment of the university which was so different from the environment I had known and had been part of for so long. In the next section I want to reflect on my second project and link this with ideas of Bourdieu about recognition.

7.2 What is happening, am I wrong?

In this project I describe the tough discussions with my colleagues on the Executive Board. Despite the existing (conventional) top-down controlled change method both my colleagues gave me the freedom of acting according to my own references using ways (familiar to me) to let people participate in programme activities and decisionmaking. As I described my way of working in the second narrative it looked like I had been successful. I was satisfied with the result and was convinced I had made use of (some of) my knowledge and skills, which led to it all the more surprising that one of the faculties did not participate in the programme and did not change their ways of working. I could not imagine that this was really true and questioned myself: what is happening, and am I doing something wrong and if so, what? I felt de-skilled and thinking back on the

question of where the fast flowing river, continuing like this, would end either in the delta, getting lost, or in the waterfall and making a huge crash. Both were very unpleasant prospects, which I did not want to happen. My conclusion at that moment was: *"this has to change, I have to change"*, but I had no idea of how to do that; it felt like I had to 're-invent' myself. In this period I experienced the importance of a mentor and fellow students helping me to reflect: asking questions about the meaning and background of my writing, giving me the possibility to again take a reflexive standpoint which was an essential part in my capacity for practical judgement, asking myself what I / we were really doing. In conversations with my colleagues, talking over my experiences, we realised that we as senior managers do not often or never talk about our experience, and learn from ourselves and others.

Now, looking back, I have to admit that I acted and interpreted from my own reference. Being paradoxically an expert and a beginner (novice) at the same time I realised the effect of interpreting my role at the university based upon my old patterns of behaviour, roles ("I" perspective) and things that I was used to (Bourdieu, 1990; Weick, 1995) with very little thought as to whether that was the right course of action in the new context. Within the theory of complex responsive processes the notion of unpredictability of human behaviour is taken up based on the work of Mead and Elias. In the work of the social psychologist Mead (1934) responsiveness is central. Mead describes human consciousness as arising from the interaction with each other. We are only aware of ourselves as we mentally represent the attitudes of these others in ourselves, trying to understand that others see us as individuals, of whom they have ideas and expectations. Meaning is created in interaction with others, and the local social context for actors is influenced by local conditions (Homan, 2005; Stanley, 2009). One must realise that what the persons involved are making of it, is not a matter of rational and deliberate design. Although persons involved may qualify their behaviour as rational and deliberate, one could say that the social emerges behind the scene of those involved. For this perspective on social processes the work of Elias is at the core within the theory of complex responsive processes. All my colleagues, as I came to understand later, had had similar experiences, even when allowing

for differences in their previous professional positions. I was not an isolated person, not only positioned as an "I", but part of an environment with 'counterparts' acting from their own, very different mind-sets, of which I was not sufficiently aware and wherein I responded to their behaviour on this basis of such misrecognition (Bourdieu, 2004; Schiff, 2009).

Bourdieu (2004) portrays individuals and groups as occupying positions in an environment, for instance the university. And in being a beginner I had a weak position, despite being the vice-president of the university. In order to better understand differences between environments, the behaviour of people in these environments and a first link with processes of (mis) recognition, I want to further elaborate on the subject of (mis)recognition within the theory of Bourdieu.

7.2.1 Pierre Bourdieu and (mis)recognition
Bourdieu states that reality - with the dynamic (of groups) of people - is a social concept: the acts of people are determined by the interaction between people (Swartz, 1997; Grenfell, 2008). To exist is to exist socially, in relation to others. Humans structure their behaviour mutually in social structures, spheres of action (*fields*). All practices within these fields are fundamentally 'interested', whether directed to material or symbolic items to enhance social distinctions. The struggle for distinction, whatever its symbolic form, is for Bourdieu a fundamental dimension of social life, and therefore of the power relations among people. Groups and institutions are of great importance and at the heart of all social life.

In order to understand how humans (in a field like the academic environment) behave, it is important to understand the kind of power relations they take part in. These power relations define the relationship between participants through the volume of capital (the knowledge, skills, and qualities) they contribute, their ability to adjust to the rules inherent to the field or their (successful) history within the field. In each field people unconsciously develop a certain habitus, a sustainable way of perceiving, thinking, and acting by means of which people in the field maintain and develop themselves. Within the Open University the habitus of an academic community is formed

by the interplay of individuals at which most have worked on average for more than 25 years, from the start it becomes the structure of the university, and takes forms which influence subsequent actions. Within the theory of complex responsive processes an organisation is as an evolving and social pattern, and exists because of the ongoing interactions of people involved, construing and thereby establishing and sharing a mutual understanding of what they are doing and to what purposes. People who find themselves in a field for a long time have an advantage over newcomers, because they have to a much greater degree internalised the habitus. The surrounding reality and the place of the individual in the field will be perceived as the way the world works and individuals will tend to reproduce their thinking, judging and acting. Newcomers will have to learn these customs and this is important in moving further in the field. One's own social position, also the one of the senior manager, is measured by others.

The position of actors is also determined by the rules of the game (set of tacit presuppositions - Grenfell, 2008:120; a set of fundamental beliefs - Bourdieu, 1990:16) which individuals in the same field will tend to share. People live according to these rules; they follow the rules and they ARE the rules. The resources you have form the basis for the legitimate demands for recognition, obedience, defence, or the service for others. The stronger the resource(s) you possess, the better is your position in the field. Entry into a field requires the acceptance of the rules of the game, meaning the specific forms and terms of what is considered legitimate professional procedure and the integrating logic of competition (Swartz, 1997:126). But exactly that is problematic for newcomers, as I experienced entering the Open University. Newcomers do not have many 'fitting' resources for usage in this new environment with its different rules and unknown (power) relations. In order to obtain them you need to join the game and in playing it you have to learn the rules in a novice-like position and collect valuable resources to gain a better position. At the same time you struggle with yourself because entering a new environment asks for adaption and this of course means a change of ideas and beliefs in your own thinking. The struggle has therefore several sides: a struggle with yourself and one with others in the new organisation.

My research showed me that the observed and experienced dynamics could not be captured in linear plans. I (apparently) was part of a self-organising process in which: ". . . *entities are forming patterns of interaction and at the same time, they are being formed by these patterns of interaction* (Stacey, 2010:57)". This is related to one of the insights of the theory of complex responsive processes: there is no logical conclusion or solution but in local processes of self-organisation a temporary order emerges in the interaction of those involved. An organisation is thus approached as a conversational phenomenon, which emerges as a pattern and is produced and sustained in local communicative interactions between interdependent people. As such what happens is uncertain and unpredictable, due to the ongoing interactions and their constructive impact. This made me more aware of the impact of interdependence and power relations in human behaviour, power struggles within fields. These are the (conflictual) processes that are associated with inclusion and exclusion (Elias, 2000). Griffin argues that *"we can seek through conflict the active recognition of difference and thus at the same time recreate and possibly transform our identity* (Griffin, 2002:198)". There is a chance for the new senior manager at the start of his job when he has not - and cannot have - grown into the new environment to still be in the position to notice differences and to raise these topics for discussion in a process of recognition and being recognised. This means constant change on the basis of mutual recognition forming connections and entering into coalitions. Although it seems simple to invest in conversing and recognising others, the everyday experience may differ so much as a result of different assumptions, beliefs, and feel so conflictual that it can result in a struggle with yourself and between oneself and one's environment. I have described this kind of situation in the third narrative.

7.3 Recognising the other(s) in the relation

In the third narrative I described the efforts to improve the relation between the Executive Board and the Workers Council in order to establish a more participative way of working which to my understanding was successful. I think it was because of this progression that I was very disappointed by the direct

intervention of my Workers Council colleague and felt personally attacked by his intervention. By not recognising my (to him at that moment unknown) efforts he had not only hurt my feelings, but his acting affected my identity. First I was angry with William, but after a while I became angry with myself for loosing contact with him, being selfish (acting from an "I" perspective focus) and only reasoning from my own position, at that moment not conscious of the misrecognition I must have experienced. Afterwards I realised how much that contact which was broken now meant for me. A natural reflex to stay close to your own ideas is understandable when things become personal and when it touches your identity. Differences in opinions often manifest themselves in conflicts, which are part of the interactions between people, and an integral part of organisational life and part of leadership (Pondy, 1967; Griffin, 2002). But conflicts can help in deepening (various aspects of) these problems and understanding them better. Perceptions and feelings of individuals reflected in a conflict and interaction between people are recurrent subjects, and "*depending on the circumstances and the values of the observer may be either good or bad* (Brown, 1983:7)".

7.3.1 Recognising William by writing his story

Referring to my experience, writing William's story of what had happened between us meant much more for me than interacting with him about subjects on which he had a different opinion. In writing his story I had to take his position, recognise and understand his ideas, beliefs, and assumptions which he had formed based on his history and his experiences and made him do what he had done, also acting from his "I" perspective. By recognising this background the exchange of experiences and images became meaningful and less difficult to understand, and in acting like that I felt recognised, although our differences were still the same. Asking William to write his version of the (same) story was a good thing to do and made me aware of - no matter how difficult it was - taking advantage of the possibility to change my own behaviour, and even assumptions, or beliefs. Shotter (1993) speaks of a 'feeling of tendency', indicating that conversation is not only an intellectual activity. In a conversation we are in his view embedded in a sensitive stream of patterns of feeling, a kind of ethos in which words have the power to move in speaking and fascinate us, and thus shift our meaning.

Now I realise that in discussing both sides of the story both of us became aware of the presence of 'the other side', the other "I" perspective and that another person is recognising you in a dynamic inter-action, which is in contrast with many static research approaches that are focused on causality and linearity of activities and interventions in these processes. Shaw states that *"in local interactions the potential to shift the way we recognise and feel recognised as persons in social realities arises* (Shaw, 2002:74)". However, I think that conflict based on my experience is not the starting point of not recognising each other, but it is the other way around: not recognising the other is the cause that conflicts arise. Recognising the other and being recognised by the other (mutual recognition) affects my / our self-realisation which is dependent on social action and a lack of mutual recognition will affect self-realisation in a negative way. The concept of recognition becomes therefore an important concept in understanding people's behaviour in general, but even moreso with people entering new organisations. Therefore I want to explore this concept of recognition further.

7.3.2 Concept of recognition – a vital human need

Recognition has normative and psychological dimensions. If you recognise another person with regard to a certain feature you do not only admit that this person has this feature but you also embrace a positive attitude towards him for having this feature. This implies that you recognise a specific normative status of the other as an equal and free person, that you bear obligations to treat him in a certain way. Recognition is also of psychological importance. Most theories of recognition assume that in order to develop a practical identity, persons fundamentally depend on the feedback of other subjects which underlines its psychological importance. Those who fail to experience adequate recognition will find it much harder to embrace themselves and their projects as valuable. Misrecognition thereby hinders or destroys persons' successful relationships to their selves. Thus, recognition constitutes a 'vital human need' (Taylor 1995:26). Ricoeur grouped different usages of the notion 'to recognise' under three main categories, namely recognition as identification, recognising oneself and mutual recognition (Ricoeur, 2005:5-16). Mutuality has always served as the explanatory and normative core of the concept of recognition. Most theories draw on Hegel (1991)

who expressed the idea that only by understanding that the other's actions are intentional can we grasp our own actions and utterances as expressions of an intentional self. This idea leads Hegel (1991) to consider the importance of different forms of mutual recognition, Adequate recognition can only be achieved within an institutionalised order of rights that secures genuinely mutual recognition (Williams 1997:59-68). Hegel develops this thought in relationships and implicit norms of the three spheres, firstly love within the family, secondly, contractual respect within civil society and thirdly, solidarity within the state. He assumes that these are supposed to be necessary in order to actualise individual autonomy, in the sense of 'social' freedom, which he connects with spheres of love (family), respect (civil society, environment), and solidarity (individual autonomy), respect for individual 'social' freedom. These spheres allow the subjects to feel at home within the ethical life of their community because it provides the subjects with the meanings necessary for a fulfilling individual life that they can embrace. Honneth (1995) mentioned genealogically distinct stages by which individual persons gain self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem (see also appendix 6).

In the theory of complex responsive processes there is no logical conclusion or solution for a situation, but in local processes of self-organisation a temporary order emerges in the interaction of involved people (Groot, 2010), also the newcomers. There is no prescribed thing such as a system which more or less exists independently of the interactions of the people involved, but it is the participation in the conversation which is highly important. In this process of self-organisation of which everyone is part you can influence and be influenced at the same time (and with that be part of it).

7.3.3 Why recognition can be seen as a struggle
Most theories of recognition argue that the social practices of recognition in which subjects live already provide them with all the normative resources needed to criticise and transcend these practices. Because we are socialised into a specific recognition order we also internalise through interaction with the 'views' of others (historical) reasons that shape our practical identity and our

normative expectations springing from this identity. This is also supposed to explain the close connection between the normative and the psychological dimension of recognition. On account of our intersubjectively acquired identity we have a psychological need to be recognised as having the normative status we deem ourselves to deserve. Sartre (1966) stated that individuals are reified by every kind of recognition because even the affirmation of others freezes the subjects in their present state and in doing that denies their potential for change, their freedom. We suffer from the fact that we are held captive within a specific pattern of socially mandated recognition. Relationships of recognition are always also relationships of power (Brink and Owen, 2007) and within these relationships values and norms - being products of human thoughts and attitudes - can express disrespect even if those who follow them are not really aware of this.

Recognising myself by describing (part of) my background, upbringing and activities in working environments, talking them over and reflecting on them in order to become (more) aware of my own assumptions, beliefs, norms and values, as Ricoeur indicates, was important to do as the first narrative of this thesis. Also describing, narratively, the experiences of others and getting back their (unexpected) responses in interaction and reflecting on that, made me more aware of myself as a participant in social action with others but also that being recognised by these others is a part of your own identification. Therefore it is important to participate in local activity and conversations as much as possible, and observe and listen to the responses of people reacting to your interventions, and really try to understand what they mean and with that give meaning to what we both are doing. When you are capable of giving each other respect, as William and I did, there is a common basis to discuss differences or misunderstood behaviour, which will happen to you very often as a newcomer, as was the experience of myself and my colleagues. I also think, referring to my own narratives and those of my colleagues, this is problematic for all senior managers. Too often they have targets to meet and a fixed plan in order to reach them, no time and space to talk over the consequence or interpretation of others, using their power in order to execute what was originally thought and planned, and fitted with their own

perspective of reality. When people object it becomes a struggle for recognition for yourself as senior manager and it has probably already been a struggle for recognition for the people in your organisation. The insights of the theory of complex responsive process offer the possibility to look at your own acting and context from a completely different perspective. They also offer other insights into understanding each other and give meaning to what we do as a basis for mutual recognition,not in terms of right and wrong, changing perspectives in "good" ones, but taking the unpredictable seriously and giving self-organisation and emergence a 'voice' in exploring the differences.

There is also an opportunity for a newly arriving manager, because as a novice, in order to become part of the new (academic) environment one has to look much closer at existing relation patterns, habits, and processes of interaction, and give more people throughout the organisation the possibility to show and tell their ideas. Recognising yourself is a necessary precondition of being able to recognise another.

7.4 Mutual recognition

One could argue that people act on the basis of reasons and they engage in reasonable forms of behaviour. Once we have found reasons for a coherent set of principles governing a series of actions we are able to see a pattern (detached way of thinking, Elias, 1956). Bourdieu, however, contrasts this idea of reasonable persons to saying that persons act on the basis of interests. People are engaged in a game with their ordinary everyday activities, which they take very seriously, in which they invest and take positions (in relations) to protect and enlarge these interests.

7.4.1 Coming back to Bourdieu and Honneth on recognition

Bourdieu relates this game to the habitual social customs and ways of thinking of people into which they are born. People's minds are structured by this social experience, which is imprinted in their bodies as a feel for the game. Acting is unconscious as participants embody schemes of perception and recognition on the basis of which they act rather than setting objectives for what they do.

According to McNay (2008) Bourdieu offers a structural understanding of power and the place of power relations in the relational world. Habitus, for her, is similar to the 'dialogical' conception in recognition theory but is located more securely within a sociological account of power. But power in Bourdieu's work is embroiled and active in the process of subject formation, whereas in recognition theory, it is always secondary to this process. In other words, the conceptualisation of subject formation cannot be defined apart from relations of power. In line with Elias the theory of complex responsive process describes power in terms of a figuration or patterning of competitive and co-operative relationships between people that reflects their interdependence. As seen in my experience with William, as in the experiences of all my colleagues, no one possesses power as a thing, because power is an aspect of every relationship in the sense that all parties in a relation constrain and enable each other. Honneth's relational view of self-formation and social conflict negates more structural understandings of power, which is a potential weakness in his theory. I argue that awareness, respectively knowledge, of a (form of) relation(s) is crucial to understanding processes in groups of people, communities or organisations, and the related processes of in- and exclusion (Elias and Scotson, 1965).

Honneth's view on Bourdieu's work is that Bourdieu's interpretation is inadequate in terms of moral philosophy. The phenomenon of the moral does not play a significant role in Bourdieu's sociological explicative frame (Basuare, 2011). His thinking and understanding of social action is guided by utilitarian motives and a strategic economic perspective (based on interests), and the concept of habitus is, therefore, its logical extension (Honneth, in Robbins, 2005). In Honneth's view Bourdieu ignores the normative structuring of social life. In the description of the narratives it becomes clear that one has to take the emotional strength of organisational, communal and family ties as I have described very seriously. Individuals have - as Honneth states - a strong need for acknowledgement, recognition and respect from peers, families and communities which is in my view a strong intersubjective affective domain that could feasibly operate as a mediator of Bourdieu's embodied habitus.

7.4.2 Mutual recognition . . .

Honneth (1995) states that positive experience in each of the spheres of recognition self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem are also related to a specific form of negative moral experience. In each of these spheres exists a component of the personality that is threatened where negative moral experiences effectively take place: physical integrity, social integrity, and lastly honour and personal dignity. In the narratives the theme of recognition came to the foreground and also the effects of negative experiences related to entering a new environment. In the first narrative I described my perception of the surrounding world - an "I" perspective. In the following narratives examples experiencing being a newcomer, I started to recognise that there are 'other sides' in a relation to other perspectives, but also that the other person(s) has / have recognised you and as a result of that an (the beginnings) understanding of what was really happening. I have shown in the conversations with my colleague's examples of recognising at different moments in the process of recognising. Starting with an example of extreme misrecognition (P1)[37], where the expectation of expectations was not met and one questioned his own acting (as I experienced in the change programme), finding out whether there had been a mistake made (if you have the same references and perspective), or recognised that there was a difference in thinking (other perspectives) and built up a readiness to recognise misrecognition (P2 and my own experience with William). The meaning you create of yourself is embedded in the social relations of recognition. As we see in the stories of my colleagues a possible miscommunication can only be dealt with in ongoing conversations as we try together to clarify what we do. When we become more part of the context of everyday interaction, the local processes, we create opportunities for interaction and conversations with others about the existing habits, the differences with one's own perspective, and in addressing these differences we talk them over and thus understood what had happened and why.

Stacey (2012:36) states that we have the capacity to become aware of pre-occupation with the game, to reflect upon our practical action, which expresses the habitus in which we live, in an effort to make conscious sense of what we are doing. In this way we can pay

37   The interviews with participants are described in chapter 4

attention to the (factors of) misrecognition, the experience of cultural differences and personal adaption, in order to recognise the misrecognition (P3) and take seriously (P1, P2). We recognise ourselves in recognising the other, and recognising the other in recognising ourselves. By this understanding, questioning, discussing, and arguing parts of ourselves, our identity is changed in order to connect with the new environment and its participants. Recognition is a prerequisite for building and maintaining practical relations to yourself, which is an essential condition for self-realisation or identity formation (Honneth 1995:1-2). In the cycle of recognition tensions and conflict are a structural feature of development and we experience misrecognition. A negative reflection of earlier experience has however the potential of creating the novel (P4). Being a member of a new environment also changes this environment, that is to say, actions of forming and being formed taking place at the same time. New thoughts of our own experience and knowledge can be brought into discussion. Carefully paying attention to processes of interdependent social action is first of all simply seen as processes of interaction (P5). Processes of misrecognition can be seen as such later in reflection on the experience of misrecognition (P1, P2, P4 and P5).

Writing this synopsis, and reading the narratives and cases again I realise that all of them are still cases of 'simple' recognition, one person recognising the other and vice versa even if these processes happen at the same time. Honneth states that processes of recognition and explanation of motives of subjective action are at the heart of social struggle and conflicts which are not simple at all. In these processes expectations of behaviour are based on values and beliefs anchored in intersubjective structures of mutual recognition that underlie the individual development. The lack of recognition can cause negative moral feelings which influence one's identity and can be linked to the "I" perspective mentioned. For a newcomer it is very difficult to know these anchored aspects (not being familiar with the habitus of the new organisation). By participating in processes and relations one experiences reality and the 'mutual' becomes more and more visible in the exchange of (parts of) stories and the conversation about these stories. The conversations offered an opportunity to reach common

understanding of what had happened, and why we did what we did. My discussion with the member of the Workers Council is an example of such a very dynamic struggle and in coping with this struggle by becoming aware of each other's ideas, values, and reasons to act and react as we did, we came to a level of real mutual recognition. In discussing their experiences participants came back to their experience(s), and by reflecting on them details opened up. Opening up to recognition automatically involves struggle because in intensifying our experiences the differences and the reasons behind this behaviour become more visible. This was also the case with my colleagues. During the conversation they realised that they were rethinking their experiences again. (quote P1: *and that is actually very interesting, because in telling you the story several things become clear to me too*).

7.4.3 . . . and the struggle which comes with it
During the time I wrote my narratives subjects and themes became clear which were useful to explain and understand the described experiences. In every following narrative this was the starting point and the next described experience led to a more detailed idea of what was really happening (from leadership via conflict management towards processes of recognition). Theoretical insights of Elias, Mead, Bourdieu, Weick, Honneth and Ricoeur helped to understand certain aspects of my experiences but at that time I had difficulty in making the connection. Now, at the end of this research process, the subject of (mutual) recognition appears to be a key element which comes to the foreground and is assumed to be a starting point at the basis of other previously identified relevant topics, i.e. out of a process of recognition conflicts can result. In every description I tried to get a better understanding based on insights of the theory of complex responsive processes. I have to admit that although I read a lot literature about this theory during my work on the first projects, I still had a lot of difficulty putting aside my belief in the basic principles and assumptions which were still related - as I understood during this research process - to the stream of 'applying' systems thinking to human behaviour. Changing these ideas for other quite different thinking about these ideas and understanding what this meant, was what this required. During the second and the third project my knowledge of and capability to work with the principles

of this theory grew but were still limited and my reflections in these projects at that time clearly show how difficult it is to step back, and accept, and work from other principles. When I spoke with my colleagues and had to explain the basics of the theory of complex responsive processes I developed - for the first time - an idea of how to understand its basics and impact. Being confronted earlier with the question of the river either ending in the waterfall or the delta - and not knowing the answer - it puzzled me for a long time and I felt quit uncomfortable not knowing the answer and I admitted that I did not know the answer. My supervisor waited a while, looked at me and said: "I have got a second question for you, is there another river?" and left me alone, surprised and confused.

Starting the process of writing the synopsis, and reflecting and thinking over all my previous work again this question opened up, and I realised that maybe my answer was more true than I could imagine: we do not know where we end, because we cannot know, but to understand that you have to change your basic, fundamental assumptions. Now, looking back, I realise that in doing that we made a move from an "I" perspective thinking towards a, what I would call, "WE" perspective thinking, and in that process we became aware of our dependency, and were both forming and being formed in the process of interaction. During this process (new) meaning and understanding emerged, respect and esteem for the other grew, and a special bond of connectedness arose. Struggles for recognition will always remain, because they are at the heart of relating and processes of interaction.

Recognition theory does not only illuminate the complexity of our normative thinking but also provides a strong argument that such normative considerations are a deep-rooted part of our social world. Butler (1997) has stated that norms never remain valid by themselves but need constant reaffirmation, which opens up possibilities of 'reconfiguring' the dominant norms and changing one's own identity (Butler 1997:13, 40–41). One should question struggles for recognition as to whether and to what extent they increase spaces of freedom to think and act differently (Tully, 2000:469). This work highlighted the motivational problem of all resistance to the established recognition order (Bourdieu's concept of misrecognition): How can you reject exactly those categories that

constitute your identity, and at the same time try to change them?

It is helpful to consider the reasons I have put forward as theories and concepts but there are assumptions made which cannot help to understand and explain all my experience. Bourdieu poses an opposition between a preoccupation as anticipation immediately present although not yet perceived, and a plan as a design for the future requiring the mobilisation of actions to bring this future about. We are absorbed in the affairs of the organisation in our local interactions, conducting skillful performances which give us some mastery of organisational change and continuity. However, we could be covering over the limitations to such mastery by focusing attention only on the design. Bourdieu is contrasting some kind of abstract, rational thinking about human action with the ordinary process of action (Stacey, 2010:107). He contrasts rational planning and pre-occupation in the game. Bourdieu seems to imply that the rational planned approach is what is publicly proclaimed while people actually do something else. His notion of pre-occupation seems close to Elias' concept of involved thinking. Bourdieu proposes a duality with the pre-occupied mode on one side and the rational planned mode on the other side, with a preference for the former. But people do make plans and at the same time they are occupied in the game, acting the habitus in which they live. It is this paradox where both involved-preoccupied and detached-planned are practised at the same time. Important in the previous narrative writings is that I stayed close to my experience which provided descriptions of daily local interaction itself and required interpretation in particularly contingent situations.

At the beginning of my research one of the key motivations was that new ideas might emerge from seeing complexity thinking as an alternative way of talking and writing about management and that it might help to form new ideas of coping with my struggle. The theory of complex responsive processes focuses specifically on human thought and communication and describes a new way of making sense of human interaction (Stacey et al., 2000; Stacey, 2001). With an interdisciplinary basis including, among other sciences, anthropology, philosophy, politics, sociology, and group analysis, and especially the complexity sciences, it offers a powerful new

description of how patterns form in the thinking, feeling and behaviour of both individuals and groups, and how both continuity and novelty emerge spontaneously in those patterns as a result of self-organising processes without anyone's intentional design or control. Reasoning with the principles of the theory of complex responsive processes.[38] I had to go back to my assumptions, beliefs and values, and realise on what ideas they were based (my "I" perspective), and realise how much this had been influencing my thinking and acting, and - where possible - take another standpoint based on other new and radical assumptions in order to explain and understand my experience. The dynamics of non-linearity or complexity in the self referential feedback loops of iterative interactions as gestures evokes responses, and at the same time, responses alter the meaning of gestures. Individuals are understood as thoroughly social. Patterns can propagate themselves, and also small differences can be amplified to become transformative patterns. Responsiveness, diversity, associative capacity, and the rules of interaction are all critical attributes affecting the flow of conversational process and its potential for producing novel patterns of meaning.

7.5 Contribution to knowledge and practice

7.5.1 We are the organisation

The theory of complex responsive process has implications on how one works in and with an organisation (Suchman, 2002). It will not only change the assumptions about the role of the executive within an organisation but aslo is important for understanding the dynamics involved in entering a new organisation, especially in a senior executive's position. Firstly thinking in terms of complex responsive processes shifts the focus of attention to *micro interactions* taking place in the ordinary every day present between humans in organisations. The insights of the theory of complex responsive processes shed light on the way we understand the practical judgment exercised by (new) leaders and managers to deal with unique and uncertain situations, and how to deal with the paradox of stability (continuity) and instability (change). Secondly, this theory takes a view in which *interdependent* people are interacting with each other locally and the interplay of plans and intentions gives rise

38   Extended explanation of insights: see Appendix 4

to emergent patterns across a population. We are discovering together, in conflict and difference, what to do, and thinking together about what we are doing and why we are doing it, which seems to be the only way to produce reasonable and lasting next steps in what we do. Thirdly, in the theory of complex responsive processes the activities of communication, power relating and ideology based intending, choosing and acting human agents are *capable of reflexivity*. In addition to understanding the nature of ordinary local interaction, we need to understand the wider social background which is being reflected in this ongoing interaction. So, besides reflecting on ourselves ("I" perspective) we also look towards others and the common context. The theory of complex responsive processes describes how ideologies emerge and evolve, and how they are always reflected in the choices people make and the actions they take in their local situations. These ideologies both sustain and challenge current patterns of power relations. Social processes in which what is generalised as norms and idealised as values ("WE" perspective) is made particular and functional in a specific situation at specific times involving specific people, so the new executive has to participate in all kinds of ordinary everyday conversations of interest to him to become part of the (new) environment. Finally, the theory of complex responsive processes denies the possibility of the external observer, arguing that no one can get outside their experience of interacting with others.

7.5.2 Mutual recognition for (new) senior management in organisations

This theory of complex responsive processes produces an understanding of emergent processes of mutual recognition for senior managers entering a new organisation as social processes between interdependent people, not simply the choices of an autonomous individual. This move to the central importance of interdependence invites critical reflection on what we are doing together. If one understands (senior) management as roles arising in complex responsive processes of mutual recognition, the work of effective leaders is not just to use techniques of disciplinary power but also to foster reflexivity on what they as leaders and others are doing together in the belief that stability, change and the sustaining of disciplinary power all emerge in such reflection. *"The part leaders*

can usefully play in these ordinary processes lies in the manner in which they themselves participate in the ordinary processes through questioning attitudes so as to open up further conversation (Stacey 2012: 77)". Newly appointed senior managers, like everyone else, also engage in local interaction. It is in the conversations and negotiations with colleagues and constraining groups both inside and outside a particular organisation that senior managers take their positions, produce statements of vision, directions, and new values. These are necessarily generalised, simplified and abstract statements which constitute intended powerful gestures to large numbers of people. However, what then happens depends on how these abstractions are taken up in the response of people to many local interactions. All, powerful and weak, are completely caught up in sustaining disciplinary society over which none have absolute control because the controllers are themselves being controlled as they live out the power of discipline (Foucault, 2004). The theory of complex responsive process highlights qualities of responsiveness, associative capacity and diversity as crucial to the emergence of novelty. These qualities are themselves themes forming and being formed by the conversation in the organisation about the nature of its own conversation and patterns of relating. Such patterns of relating are often reified and referred to as organisational cultures, giving the impression that the organisational conversation takes place within the milieu of a culture. But in fact the culture is the conversation: self-organising patterns of power relations and meanings that are continuously created and recreated in the living present. These themes organise the experience and behaviour of the participants who, themselves, form and constrain these themes.

7.6 Possible future research

Conversations give people a voice and in telling one's story one (can) develop understanding and enter the world of (giving) meaning. Entering into a new organisation is entering another world of meaning. A senior manager entering a new organisation can be a powerful source of experience and information, certainly because he is capable of telling stories with an awareness of an overall context and - as my conversations with my colleagues showed - they are willing to talk about their experiences. I argued that the self is

(necessarily) included in the social context, people are interdependent and the social (in local interactions) makes you what you are. People learn by doing, it is essential being human and social and this learning emerges in our activity. One can improvise only when one is experienced and to become experienced one has to learn the rules (of the game) and at the same time it is necessary that one becomes increasingly able to play with the rules and stretch them. The theory of complex responsive processes offers opportunities to take a different perspective on the things we do in organisations and why we do them in this way. During an entrance of newcomers differences are even more visible and experienced more as such differences. In the complex responsive processes theory there is attention to interdependency, local interaction, and emergence. We become individuals through socialisation and processes of recognition (of differences) are essential in this socialisation process. The complex responsive processes theory does not pay attention to the subject of recognition processes, although this would be an interesting field to explore. To move into the unknown without losing yourself is a struggle: what is it like to be in new situations? Honneth stresses the importance of social relationships in the development and maintenance of a person's identity. Relations of mutual recognition are in his view preconditions for self-realisation. In my research I made a first attempt to connect aspects of Honneth's theory of recognition with the complex responsive processes theory. Much more work and investigation has to be done in this area in order to find valuable relations between social patterns of recognition and individual pre-requisites for self-realisation.

During my research I noticed how important peers, senior managers in other universities valued spending time to tell about their own experience and reflexively took up with these stories in conversations, finally writing their findings as small single cases. During our conversations we concluded that for all of us this was the first time we spend time and effort to explore our experiences in this way and that we had all benefited by it. None of us could remember a similar initiative and without an exception we all thought that this was a pity. In telling one's own stories we became more and more aware that you get to know yourself through the other and taking

time to think over what happened with ourselves and others in our (new) environment helped to understand our (managerial) acting and provided insights to act. It would be good to collect new stories with experiences of senior managers who changed jobs towards or inside the public education sector in the past and to also use their stories for discussions on how to organise working together in our institutions.

Conversations give people a voice and in telling one's story one can develop and greatly deepen one's understanding. But for that we need to listen carefully. We, as senior managers, are focussed on action plans, because we think that's why we are there. Too often the action is only for the sake of action and we are not listening at all to each other or to our staff. Leaders and (new) senior managers tend to think: I am successful, so I am a good listener. But is this really true? How is it that we think in this situation, and what does it mean to be a good listener? The 'concept' of really good listening is actually very difficult, although it seems so trivial. We think we can control it, but we cannot. In my thesis this subject comes up again and again as a theme and I have described how it disabled me where I thought I could control it. I argue that we need to understand more of this concept of really listening, and the paradox between listening and recognising. This concept of listening has to pay enough attention to recognising yourself and others, and we need to understand it more. We need to have more education and this has to be a different kind of education.

The theory of complex responsive processes offers new possibilities thinking about doing things where the focus is on recognising who and what a person is (I am, we are) which is different from a simpler form of recognising achievement. Recognising what you do, and understanding more of what is expected by others needs a different pattern of doing things and also needs other skills to talk about it. Because we as senior managers think we already know the answers, we forget the most important part in our conversations: ask questions! And we need the questions to get ahead. In my thesis I found a way to open up, and raise and ask questions, which tro my idea had actually been closed. And I experienced that it was not the answers but the questions; that

became important in describing my own experiences and those of several colleagues.

There is still a lot to be researched and communicated as 'good education' to understand what is expected in order to do things differently and to find out what kind of skills are needed for (new) senior managers to become good listeners and reconsider what they think is the search for truth within their perception of what science is.

8

Conclusion

In entering a new organisation as senior manager and describing my own and my colleagues' experiences in narratives my first thoughts were looking for understanding, explanations, and solutions in (known) areas of knowledge such as leadership, conflict management, or socialisation processes for newcomers in organisations. During the reflection sessions in this research programme I have become more and more aware that these subjects are helpful, but only in a secondary way, because these subjects are (intermediate) results of a proceeding overarching process which concerns the subject of recognition.

I argued that in processes of recognition one can distinguish several aspects, which depend on time and content. The first one seems a very simple, trivial one, but our own practice shows this is actually not so easy: one has to recognise that one has to recognise. You have to be prepared to have an open basic attitude to pick up signals of people in your environment and be open for those signals regardless of whether you want to do something with it or not. I see a relation with what I experienced as (a concept of) really listening, where senior management is actually not listening carefully at all, as described in the narratives where the topic comes up again and again as a theme and how this struck myself and my colleagues. Too often senior managers have an action plan orientation - because they think that is why they are there, i.e. for the sake of action, but they often forget to listen to others. What seems so simple and so trivial is much more difficult. We trivialise listening and with that deny its complexity because we think we can control it, but we cannot. Secondly, as a newcomer, you have to have an open mind for what to recognise, similar aspects and characteristics of a new environment, the habits and the rules, getting familiar with the processes and the existing networks of relating and "the way we do things around here" with all its underlying assumptions and prejudices. It also means becoming involved in this environment and being willing to work with the differences you recognise. At the same time this will mean you (have to) come back to yourself and "recognise" who you are, what your own assumptions are; your prejudices and beliefs (your "I" perspective). This self-awareness, this self-recognition, is of importance because it makes clear how this perspective influences one's way of perceiving the (social) environment and

looking at others and limits us to familiar ways of thinking and acting. Recognising who and what you are, and reaching a state of recognising yourself and others is different from recognising achievements. Thirdly, it is because of the complexity of listening and the paradox between listening and recognising that we need different patterns of doing things and need other skills to understand more of what is expected of us to do and talk about as senior managers. In becoming involved in a new environment we have the possibility to recognise the differences and the opportunity to work with these differences. One of the consequences could be that you have to break with your own patterns of thinking and at the same time try to sustain your identity. Fourthly, we have to recognise that we can make use of other perspectives on organisations and managerial acting. What people do in organisations to understand whatreally happens is different from the mainstream discourse because, as related in the reflections of my narratives, this way of thinking cannot answer all the questions which were raised as an outcome of the narratives.

I argue that the ideas of the theory of complex responsive processes can be used as another way of thinking to answer these questions. This theory argues that organisations and people working in them are confronted with a fundamental unknowability of unfolding dynamics over time and that there are a lot of ambiguities and uncertainties emerging from these which are unforeseen and unpredictable. In a world that is constantly emerging, we cannot know that world simply through planning and prediction. These activities seem less important than we thought. Reliance on forecasting and modelling of cause-effect relations is not a sufficient way of dealing with these changes. In my view this choice is also an important process of recognition because a lot of the assumptions of this way of thinking differ radically from those of the dominant way of applying (systems) thinking to human activity with which I was familiar in my education as well as in the practice of management over more than 25 years. It appeared to be very tough for myself as it was for faculty staff to break with familiar patterns of thinking and re-assess basic assumptions in our thinking. As senior managers we think we (already) know the answers, too often without even have asked questions.

In my thesis, I think, I found a way to open up and raise questions, which previously had been harly asked by senior maangers anymore, as if they were 'closed' (what is it what we are doing, and do we understand it?). Senior managers need the questions, as I did, to move forward and that is one of the things we have forgotten to look for anymore, which has led to very destructive situations as we have seen in several narratives of relationships and business. In our (senior) management activities and leadership we presumed certainty and predictability which was not present. In those situations the questions became important, not the answers. I have argued that the world around us is unknowable and meaning comes not through knowing that is going on but through making sense of what is going on, it is the best we can do!

Sensemaking is a social act and requires interaction and these interaction processes of recognition can lead to a common understanding of what the situation is, who we are, why we are here, and what is going on around us. In this process of (mutual) recognition we are aware of our own attributes, reflexes, and unconscious blind spots, but also aware of what others are doing, what they contribute, how they talk, and what makes them tick. In this process of recognition we experience subtle changes in the expectations of participants, which potentially can lead to frictions which will always be there and the results of the frictions can as such come to be accepted as "normal" aspects of this everyday social (inter)action. If one understands organisations in terms of non-linear dynamics, self-organisation, emergence, and coevolution the entrance process (of a senior manager) will be a process of looking for recognition and being aware of the difficulty of working with differences and understanding each other's position.

I do not want to, and cannot, produce a to-do list or a "best practice" example in an unknowable, unpredictable world, but there are several learning aspects to share which are based on the strong belief that all people in organisations (including senior managers) are interdependent of others and they interact with each other sharing everyday experience.

My insights and the conclusions I have drawn include:

1. **Sensemaking is more important than decisionmaking**
   In a world that is constantly, paradoxically, staying the same and changing at the same time we can hardly control through planning and predicting. Meaning does not occur through exactly knowing what is going on, but an understanding and making sense of what is going on. In general, not only for newcomers, managers in organisations can create time for people to pay attention and to interpret the events around them, and they can facilitate more and different ways of paying attention and interpretation in which heterogeneity – bringing together differences – is of great value in order to reach agreement on working together (Glick, Miller and Huber, 1993);

2. **The capacity to learn is more important than knowing**
   As nonlinearity is a characteristic result of interaction processes in our organisation it is quite important to enhance our capabilities to act in the face of an uncertain unfolding of its co-evolutionary space. "*The most important learning we do flows from the trial and error action we take in real time and especially from the way we reflect on those actions when we take them* (Stacey, 1995:17)". For the manager there is an opportunity to facilitate / offer an environment where people can listen to each other and value each other's insights;

3. **Allow improvisational behaviour and use intuition, in such a way that people become good at working with ambiguity**
   Uncertainty is an essential ingredient of progress and requires improvisational behaviour (Crossan and Soretti, 1997:156). We will have to live with ambiguity, so it will become necessary to have (skills to deal) with the surprise (McDaniel, 1997) and everything that coming with it. This requires us to become improvisers and make use of our intuition (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1998) instead of relying on detailed analyses of routine and habit;

4. Frame the world as people enacting reality through patterns of action

People in organisations are interconnected and they construct through co-evolutionary social processes a significant part of the environment they see (Weick, 1995). Their choices are reflected in the way they frame the world as they enact reality through patterns of action (Anderson and McDaniel, 1999). Learning people in a university are students researching questions, and they refer to things as problems and opportunities. We cannot rely on the forecasting and modelling of cause-effect relations anymore because of the emergent character of our environment and organisation. Managers can facilitate the development of capabilities for dealing with uncertainty. This will bring people in the position of "what can I create from what I have" instead of: "what do I need to do what I want to do" (McDaniel and Driebe, 2001:27). This would be a good addition to the induction programmes for newcomers. In this way you can combine existing and new creative ways of dealing with (mixed up and confusing) situations;

5. Dialogue is a major component for collective inquiry

Recognising the dynamic non-linear nature of organisational evolution, managers will understand that they need to focus on taking action in circumstances which occur (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1998). Action will lead to learning and learning leads to the ability to cope with unpredictable situations. Learning in an environment where you have to work with differences can be stimulated by relationships in which a dialogue between people of different areas (i.e. heterogeneity in induction programs for newcomers) can support a sustained collective inquiry into processes, assumptions, and certainties that compose everyday experience (Isaacs, 1993:25). Managers should be aware of the importance of (inter)action in the local environment, and develop an understanding that a person's range of influence can be very wide even though the range of interactions is relatively small. Managers can and must help develop skills at paying attention to actions in their local environment and if possible participate themselves.

6. Become good listeners - to recognise yourself and others
In order to recognise yourself and others we need to reach a setting of constructive situations to form relationships, to educate and to do business. To understand what is expected of us to do as senior management, we need different patterns of thinking about doing things (i.e. complex responsive processes) and other skills to talk about it (asking questions, telling stories). Leaders often think that because they are successful they are good listeners, this is not true. Therefore we have to find out how we think in these kinds of situations and what it means to be a good listener;

7. Solve the transfer problem: connect with the experienced
The theory of complex responsive processes challenges the basis for these assumptions that leadership can be thought of in terms of behaviourism and systems thinking, and therefore cannot be simply taken over in management thinking (Stacey, 2010). Our everyday life experience is of importance, so a next step is to bring the discussion back to common practice and in doing so also to focus on the struggle in order to understand it. In order to really study this, a grounding of experience in practice which is of essential importance. So researchers must beware of spending too much time in their laboratories, the business schools, and get out more often into the world. In this outside world a lot of managers still are at the level of unexperienced students: they do not ask questions and increasingly see their world as fixed. As I showed, managers are willing to talk about their experiences and reflect on that, but it will take time and effort to find opportunities and new ways to tell their stories, reflect on them, and make sense of them. For academic education there is a very difficult task of applying this experience to those who still have no experience at all. We need to make use of the experienced managers and let them share their experiences with the inexperienced (Dewey, 1959; Wong, et al, 2001; Colapietro, 2011);

8. Developing the ability to work with difference

People in organisations must handle unforeseen situations in ways that work, so they need the "capability to induce a rich awareness of discriminatory detail", they need to work with differences and a capacity for action. Managers need the ability to sense problems at local levels while maintaining the ability to coordinate action. Induction programmes for newcomers and induction periods are great opportunities to sense differences of opinion and extract valuable ideas for change. (New) managers must keep in mind that their conscious understands that they are not external observers, but they are themselves people in the organisation whose behaviour is a fundamental part of nonlinear actions that are causing emergent behaviour (Stacey, Griffin and Shaw, 2000).

As a (new) senior manager you have to have a well-developed sensitivity for plurality (working with differences), and use or develop antennas to pick up all kinds of signals with an inquiring mind when participating in local everyday activities, postponing your judgement, with a more and more keen reflexivity as to your own initial presumptions (do not jump to conclusions). Show in your daily interactions and participation that you are trying to understand the issues that are important to others (the areas of relevance). As managers it is of radical relevance to have skills in networking, experience in exchange on the basis of good social skills. Focusing on collaboration, support, and facilitation as part of everyday work activities and being increasingly involved in what people can accomplish together will all affect the interactive interplay between various persons, one of whom is the manager himself, which can lead to real mutual recognition.

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1 _____

Nederlandse samenvatting

In de wetenschap leiden bepaalde veronderstellingen, filosofieën en patronen van redeneren tot concepten of theorieën, zoals systeemdenken, behaviorisme, enz. In de laatste twee eeuwen, sinds Kant, is in onze westerse wereld het onderwijs, de wetenschap en het bedrijfsleven in toenemende mate gebaseerd op een rationele manier van denken, waar de onderlinge afhankelijkheid van de mens, voorspelbaarheid, planning en controle, dominant zijn in onze manier van denken, handelen en oordelen. Dit heeft ook de manier van denken over leiderschap en strategisch management beïnvloed, bijvoorbeeld de activiteiten van senior managers, zoals het mij heeft beïnvloed in mijn opleiding en carrière.

In de jaren tachtig van de twintigste eeuw werd de complexiteit theorie geïntroduceerd in de organisatiekunde (Anderson, 1999; Burnes, 2005). Wat begon met het onderzoek in natuurwetenschappelijke modellen en de opkomst duidelijk maakte van zelf organiserend gedrag (Prigogine, 1980), werd overgebracht naar een meer menselijke complexiteit benadering (Goldstein et al, 2010; Hazy et al., 2007), waarin aandacht werd besteed aan de micro-dynamiek van lokale interacties en de manieren waarop globale patronen het gevolg kunnen zijn van dat lokale interactie gedrag van deelnemers. Er bestaan twee verschillende richtingen: complexe adaptieve systemen en complexe responsieve processen, die beiden gebruik maken van concepten van zelforganisatie, onvoorspelbaarheid, diversiteit, niet-lineariteit en emergentie. Ze worden gebruikt om de organisatie en de omgeving te karakteriseren. Waar de complexe adaptieve systemen benadering is gericht op een interventionistische aanpak, ontkent de complexe responsieve processen elke vorm van beheersbaarheid, ofwel de toekomst is radicaal onvoorspelbaar. De complex responsieve processen benadering (Stacey, 2001; Johannesen, 2009; Mowles, 2011) heeft daarmee een ander en uniek perspectief op de interactie van onderling afhankelijke mensen in hun gewone dagelijkse ervaring. Door de voortdurende interactie ontstaan nieuwe patronen van perceptie en interpretatie, die niet eerder hebben bestaan. De oorsprong van de theorie van complexe responsieve processen ligt in de complexiteit wetenschap (Prigogine, 1980,1996, Prigogine en Stengers, 1988), de figuratie sociologie (Elias, 1970, 2000) en de sociale psychologie vanuit een

pragmatisch gezichtspunt (Mead, 1932, 1934). Daarmee is de theorie van complexe responsieve processen gebaseerd op fundamenteel andere uitgangspunten dan die die theorieën, die nu de basis zijn voor het denken van organisaties en veranderprocessen. Dit staat in schril contrast met de dominante visie van systematische processen in de organisatorische wereld waar de toekomst wordt afgesplitst en men zich uitsluitend richt op de concepten van visie, eenvoudige regels, waarden en plannen, dat wil zeggen het beperken tot aspecten die kunnen worden gemanaged en gemanipuleerd om het 'nu' te bepalen (Griffin, 2002:207). Echter, organisatieontwikkeling in strategisch management is in de theorie van complexe responsieve processen onvoorspelbaar.

Het onderzoek en de reflectie van de dagelijkse ervaring van de organisatorische praktijk van senior managers is gericht op het begrijpen van sociale processen, als één van de kernelementen van de theorie van complexe responsieve processen. De managers zijn zelf de onderzoekers. Onderzoek wordt de praktijk, met een focus van "binnenuit". Onderzoek houdt in dat al deze lokale interacties als uitgangspunt worden genomen en dat daarop serieus gereflecteerd wordt voor een beter inzicht in de betrokken complexe dynamiek (Stacey en Griffin, 2005: 35). De basisideeën van de theorie van complexe responsieve processen beïnvloed het doen van onderzoek dat zich permanent bevindt in een proces van wederzijdse dicteren, wederzijds anticipatie en betekenisgeving (Mowles, 2011: 85).Deze onderzoeksmethode omvat het schrijven van een aantal verhalen, case studies gebaseerd op open interviews, het beschrijven van ervaringen van de dagelijkse praktijk met handelingssituaties, de daarin spelende gevoelens en gedachten en het daarop krijgen van feedback, het daarop bevraagd worden en daarover discussiëren. Het omvat het schrijven en herschrijven, waarbij thema's en betekenisgeving ontstaan uit theoretische verklaringen, die zijn gebaseerd op concrete ervaringen.

Het onderzoeksproces bestaat uit aspecten van het beschrijven, categoriseren en thematisering (gerelateerd aan de grounded theory (Strauss, 1987)), het bestuderen van literatuur en het op basis van reflectie herkennen van thema's. Dit proces kan worden beschouwd als een betekenisgevingsproces, waarin theoretische verklaringen

van concrete ervaringen worden geconstrueerd (interactief proces als onderdeel van gefundeerde theoriebenadering). Deze aanpak blijkt een sterk verband met werkmethoden in management en leiderschap. In dit onderzoek is het perspectief van de theorie van complexe responsieve processen gekozen als een manier om de ervaring die beschreven is in verhalen en case studies uit te leggen. Deze theorie levert een goed begrip van emergente processen van wederzijdse erkenning voor senior managers als sociale processen tussen onderling afhankelijke mensen en niet alleen als de keuzes van een autonoom individu. De beweging naar het centrale belang van onderlinge afhankelijkheid vraagt om kritische reflectie op wat we samen doen. Als men senior management gaat begrijpen als emergent complexe responsieve processen van wederzijdse erkenning, dan gaat het werk van de effectieve leiders niet alleen over technieken voor de disciplinaire macht, maar ook het bevorderen van reflectie op wat zij als leiders aan het doen zijn in de overtuiging, dat de stabiliteit en verandering emergent zullen ontstaan in een dergelijke reflectie.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Descriptions of private company Koninklijke KPN and public university Open University Netherlands

Koninklijke KPN

KPN (in full Koninklijke KPN N.V., also Royal KPN N.V.) is a Dutch landline and mobile telecommunications company. The company is based in The Hague.

The company was formerly called Koninklijke PTT Nederland, and prior to that 'Staatsbedrijf der Posterijen, Telegrafie en Telefonie' or 'PTT' and was the publicly owned fixed-line operator of the Netherlands. Before the spin-off of TPG, the company also controlled the national Dutch postal services. The Dutch government progressively privatised KPN beginning in 1994, reducing its stake to 6.4% in 2005, and finally completed the process in 2006, giving up its golden share veto rights.

In the Netherlands, KPN has 6.3 million fixed-line telephone customers. Its mobile division, KPN Mobile, has more than 33 million subscribers in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, and Spain under different brand names. Through its ownership of several European Internet service providers, KPN also provides Internet access to 2.1 million customers, and it offers business network services and data transport throughout Western Europe.

In 2004, KPN also started offering digital terrestrial television in the Netherlands as part of its multi-play services via its subsidiary KPN Digitenne. Since the 1st of May 2006, KPN offers Interactive Television, an IPTV service based on their DSL service, with the ability to receive Video On Demand and replay your missed TV episodes besides regular TV programming.

KPN Retail is a Dutch subsidiary that owns retail stores under the brands of kpn winkel, Hi Stores and KPN Business Centre.

Open University Netherlands

The Open Universiteit Nederland is a Dutch university for distance learning for higher education at university level (both professional and scientific). This means that students do not attend classes but

study at home. The Open Universiteit uses a variety of methods for distance learning, including written materials, the internet, and occasional evening seminars or day sessions.

The Open Universiteit Nederland was founded in 1984, welcoming its first students in September 1984. It is an independent government-funded institute. The administration is based in Heerlen in the very south of the Netherlands. Dispersed over the Netherlands, the Open Universiteit has 12 study centres and 3 support centres, as well as 6 study centres in Dutch-speaking Flanders (Belgium) and 1 study centre in the Netherlands Antilles.

About 30,000 students are enrolled at all study or support centres in the Netherlands and Flanders, including students who live in other parts of the world. Since the Open Universiteit had been founded, over 250,000 students have taken part in its courses.

The Dutch government's purpose in founding the Open Universiteit Nederland was to make higher education accessible to anyone with the necessary aptitudes and interests, regardless of formal qualifications.

The Open Universiteit identifies four further aims:

- to create a cost-effective form of higher education;
- to encourage innovation in Dutch higher education, in terms of both curriculum and teaching methods;
- to reduce the teacher shortage in Dutch primary and secondary schools, and
- to be a recognised player in (commercial) distance and e-learning training programmes and consultancy.

The Open Universiteit offers three types of study programmes:

- Bachelor and Master degree programmes. The Open Universiteit offers fully accredited Bachelor or Master degree programmes in Law, Economics, Business and Public administration, Engineering, Environmental science, Cultural studies, Psychology and Education. The university converted its programmes to the

Bachelor-Master structure in September 2002;

- Short programmes. Students can also follow short programmes. These include short vocational training courses, postgraduate courses and short undergraduate programmes, which are developed in co-operation with universities of professional education, academic universities, professional bodies or commercial companies;
- Courses. Besides these academic programmes, students can choose from over 300 modular courses. This modular course system implies that student can enrol either for full-length degree programmes or choose to study one of over 400 individual courses.

Appendix 2: Insights of the complex responsive processes

In this appendix a number of basic insights of the theory of complex responsive processes is described and the differences with systems thinking.

A2.1 Insights of complex responsive processes

A2.1.1 Patterns of meaning in conversation

One of the main characteristics of complex responsive processes is the focus on the interaction of (interdependent) people in their ordinary and political conversation of everyday experience. Through the continuing interaction, new patterns of perception and interpretation arise that did not exist for any of the participants before their conversation had taken place, and that none of them would have created on their own. Over time, a pattern of perception and meaning emerges through conversation that can take any of three general paths (Suchman, 2002): it can reinforce and perpetuate itself, a pattern can gradually evolve or a pattern can exhibit sudden dramatic changes. Patterns of meaning and relating in each moment of the conversation arise from the interaction of the themes that were present in the immediately preceding moment and from other elements that are also present such as themes from other conversations and life experiences. As they interact, some of the themes cohere to constitute a new pattern of meaning. The new form combines intention and accident, consistency and novelty, order and mess, and results in something recognisable yet also unique and irreproducible. Human interactions, as complex responsive processes, weave together sensations, feelings, thoughts, memories, and patterns of interaction into coherent clusters of meaning, but there is no fixed finished product, no reified 'thing'. What we experience as reality – our individual and collective aggregations of themes, patterns and meanings – is continuously under construction "in the living present" with continuity and novelty endlessly emerging as each moment flows into the next (Stacey, Griffin, and Shaw, 2000). The description of interpersonal or public conversation applies equally well to the private conversation that constitutes the human mind. Mind represents the internalisation of conversation; it depends upon language –

symbols that make possible the ability to hold, manipulate and communicate meanings in the absence of that which is signified (Mead, 1967). The private conversation of one's thinking is constituted of the same self-organising processes as public conversations, iterative interactions of symbols in which patterns of meaning emerge, propagate, evolve and are transformed.

A2.1.2 Novelty, responsiveness and associative capacity

The emergence of new patterns in a conversation depends first upon the responsiveness of its participants - their capacity to be aware of each other's ideas and emotions and to have that awareness influence (enable or constrain) their responses (which is crucial for new executives). Self-organising conversation constrained by mutual awareness gives rise to an interaction in which there appears to be a thread of connection between each act of communication, between each gesture and its response (Mead, 1967). If the participants were acting totally without awareness or consideration of each other's gestures – there would be no true responses and it could scarcely be considered a conversation. Nor would it be a conversation if the participants were fully aware of each other but enacting a prescribed, predetermined sequence of behaviours without any flexibility to adjust or modify their gestures (following a script, for example). Thus, responsiveness (as a first factor) is a precondition for novelty, a possibility for a newcomer to learn about the new environment and the possibility to bring in his own different insights, thus also a precondition for recognition. The capacity of the participants to form new associations between themes also affects the emergence of novelty. Although a gesture originates in a particular meaning and intention on the part of the gesturer (relation with the "I" perspective), the way it is perceived and interpreted depends upon much more than the nature of the gesture itself. Characteristics of the responder such as personal history, aesthetic sense, responsiveness, concreteness, imaginative capacity and current psychological and emotional state (also an "I " perspective) affect the associations that will form in the complex responsive processes of his mind. In addition to understanding the nature of ordinary local interaction, we need to understand the wider social background which is being reflected in this ongoing interaction (Stacey, 2012). Patterns and themes already established

in his thinking may favour associations that fit into the existing patterns and contribute to their stability, but it is also possible for new associations to be formed. The response, in turn, can reflect back on the original gesture and modify its meaning. The response will also influence the meaning of all subsequent gestures and responses, and, potentially, of the whole conversation. A third factor affecting the emergence of novelty is diversity. If everyone in a conversation holds similar views, the conversation will be free of conflict, but its unlikely to produce any new patterns of understanding. The wider the variety of themes that can be introduced into the conversation the greater is the opportunity that exists for new associations to form and propagate into new patterns of meaning. Differences of age, personal background, and experience (of previous work environments) can provide for more diversity in the perception and interpretation of gestures (an opportunity for the new coming executive). However, the more widely divergent the views or backgrounds of the participants in a conversation, the harder it may be for them to hear or understand one another, the more difficult it will be to establish mutual understanding. There are also limits to novelty: to be acknowledged and evaluated, the emerging response must have some recognizable degree of connection with meanings already present (mutual recognition in the existing habitus). Lacking that, a response would appear to be nonsensical or wouldn't be recognised as a response at all and could lead to exclusion of the newcomer.

A2.1.3 Unpredictability, constraints of the reciprocal influence

The gesturer cannot predetermine or control the ultimate meaning of the gesture. Instead, he acts with an intention and then observes and responds to the response his gesture elicits. The response itself evokes the gesturer's own idiosyncratic perspective (the gesturer is now the responder to the responder's gesture). Over the course of the interaction, patterns of meaning form the iterative interactions of gesturing and responding. The original gesture helps to form the pattern, but the pattern also establishes or completes the meaning of the original gesture. The theory of complex responsive processes takes a view in which interdependent people are interacting with each other locally, and the interplay of plans and intentions give rise to emergent patterns across a population (Stacey, 2012). The

ongoing looping process of interaction of interdependent persons forms the social while at the same time the social forms them in terms of selves and identities (transformative causality). The iterative interactions of this dynamic create the potential for small differences, disturbances or accidents to be amplified rapidly into new transformative patterns. Which small changes are damped out, which are amplified, and what patterns they will give rise to are all entirely unpredictable. But the newly emerging patterns are also constrained. Thus we see in conversational process two properties - the amplification of difference and bounded instability – that are the hallmarks of non-linear dynamics or complexity.

A2.1.4 Intentionality and paradox

The individual participants in conversations are usually unconscious of the process by which meaning emerges – the way in which themes are organising their consciousness awareness. The theory of complex responsive processes describes how ideologies emerge and evolve, and how they are always reflected in the choices people make and the actions they take in their local situations, and these ideologies both sustain and challenge current patterns of power relations… social processes in which what is generalised as norms and idealised as values is made particular and functional in a specific situation at specific times involving specific people. (Stacey, 2012: 33).

However, this is not always the case. Individuals may consciously and intentionally seek to influence the evolving patterns of meaning, to direct them towards a pattern they desire (related to power in Bourdieu's field theory). Here arises a paradox: although they may perceive themselves as acting upon the process from outside, they are always within it – it can never be otherwise! But by the same token, the understanding that the very urge to act in this way is itself a product of the complex responsive processes in which the individuals are participating does not alter either their experience of having and acting on that urge, or the potential of those actions to actually influence the process. In the complex responsive processes of a conversation, themes are self-organising. The conversation's course is not planned, directed or pre-determined, but neither is it random. Self-organisation and the emergence of both stable and novel patterns occur at the boundary of order and disorder. The

disorder is present in the form of diversity, and the idiosyncratic and unpredictable nature of responses to gestures, and unanticipated disturbances in the environment. The order (or constraint) is provided by implicit underlying "rules" of interaction (which themselves are patterns of relating propagated from earlier moments in the conversation into the present).

There are general cultural rules and conventions of conversation (i.e. use of the grammar and vocabulary of the language, etiquette, conventions for the expression of aggression), and local rules specific to a given subculture (a group of friends, a department or institution, the "doxa"). Both sets of rules shape and are shaped by the power dynamics and role structures embedded in the relationships between participants, and have important implications for the degree of diversity and difference that can be expressed within the group. The rules of interaction are thus important constraints on the conversation, so changing the rules of interaction significantly alters the potential for what new patterns of meaning and relating can emerge. The rules, habits and routines are not disembodied and abstracted from people but focused on the experience of (bodily) interaction between people. The dynamics of non-linearity or complexity in the reciprocal feedback loops of iterative interactions as gestures evokes responses, and at the same time, responses alter the meaning of gestures. Individuals are understood as thoroughly social. Patterns can propagate themselves, and also small differences can be amplified to become transformative patterns. Responsiveness, diversity, associative capacity and the rules of interaction are all critical attributes affecting the flow of conversational process and its potential for producing novel patterns of meaning.

A2.2 Relation towards systems thinking

The theory of complex responsive processes is based on fundamental other assumptions than the ones who are the basis for systems thinking (see also table 1). One important aspect is the notion of the living present, which has its own time structure. According to Griffin (2002) the movement of the living present is experience, having a circular time structure that arises simply because humans have the capacity for knowing what they are doing.

This notion of the living present differs from another way of focusing on the present, which is described as liberation from worrying about the past and from feeling anxious about the future ignoring both. The notion of the living present is one in which the future, as expectation and anticipation, is in the detail of actual interactions taking place now, as is the past in reconstructions in this process of memory. "*This stands in stark contrast to the dominant view of systemic processes in the organisational world where the future is split off and exclusively focused on in the form of vision, simple rules, values and plans, so distracting attention from the present and reducing the future to simple aspects that can be manipulated to determine the present* (Griffin, 2002:207)".

A consequence of this way of thinking means that emerging global patterns are not constituted as higher levels linearly acting back on local levels. Only local interactive power-invested dynamics between reflective bodies are assumed in which individuals, individuality and identities are formed in local interactions, and are in turn being formed by these patterns at the same time. When one becomes involved in a certain group or environment, the individual's cultural background, habitus (Bourdieu, 1984) and social forming will inform the individual's behaviour. Yet the specific and local identity of that individual emerges in the interactions with the others present. Change and organisational development are not conceptualised as a result of a dominant agency (organisational blueprints, change plans, management or control) outside of the interacting members of the organisation (Zhu, 2007; Mowles, 2011).

Organisational development is emerging in a non-predictable, non-linear way through transformative causal dynamics where amplification of small differences can break existing patterns and symmetries (Stacey, 1995). A core element of the complex responsive process research is the personal reflection on ordinary everyday experience of organisational practise of the researchers. Experience is defined (Stacey and Griffin, 2005) as the meaningful engagement in interacting with others and oneself as we do our everyday work. In this interaction themes and patterns may emerge. Research then entails the taking of these local themes and patterns seriously, and reflecting on them, trying to develop an understanding of the complex dynamics involved.

	Systemic processes	**Responsive processes**
Entity	Parts of a system, which could be individuals or routines and which can be thought of as subsystems, such as mental models. Psychological assumptions are those of the individual centred cognitivism	Embodied interdependent human persons. A social, relational view of human psychology is taken
Process	Interaction of parts	Responsive acts of mutual recognition by persons
What is becoming	The system, bounded whole which exists at that higher level than the parts, has properties of its own and acts causally on the parts	Coherent patterns of interaction of the process itself. Patterns of interaction produce further patterns of interaction and nothing else. These constitute individual and collective identities
Causality	Dual causality of the rationalist, objectively observing the autonomous individual and the formative cause of the system unfolding a mature form of itself imputed by the observer	Transformative causality in which continuity and potential transformation emerge at the same time. The potential for transformation arises in the capacity of non-linear interaction to amplify different and in the inherent possibility of spontaneity in human agents
Theory of time	Linear view of time where past is for factually given and future is yet to be unfolded in developmental stages	Time as the living present in which both accounts of the past and expectations for the future of formed in the perceptual construction of the future in the present
Conceptual space	Spatial metaphor of parts inside the system and the system outside the parts	No spatial metaphor in that human action itself is not inside or outside of anything. So there is no society or organisation at a level higher than human interaction.
Emergence	Not central to the process and were used equated with chance happenings as the opposite of intervention	Central to the processes of human interaction where emergence is understood in terms of the interplay of human inventions. Emergence is not seen as the polar opposite of intention and what emerges does so because of the interplay of what people intend to do, not by chance
Doubling of processes	Autonomous individuals can stand outside the process, such as strategizing, and shape it, that is use another process to shape a process	No doubling of processes since there are only the process of human interaction and no one can take an external vantage point in relation to this
Practise	Practise is a system of routines	Practise is the local, social activity of communication, well relating to evaluative choice
Experience	The use of tools and techniques to make decisions and act	Historical social processes of consciousness and self-consciousness in interaction with others. The world we together create in our thought
Organisation	A thing to be moved around	Patterns of relating in which one can only participate

258   Table 1: Differences between systemic process and responsive processes
(Stacey, 2007:265)

Appendix 3: Relevant list of documents of the change program: The Student in the Centre

071204 Summary report follow-up proposals
080227 Result interviews SMC - reaction plan of action
080407 Programme suggestion Management Beraad 080414
080414 Programme proposal SMC - phased approach
080518 Publication intranet management meeting 1404
080523 SMC - Project instruction - Campagnes 1
080523 SMC - Project instruction - Doorzetters 2
080523 SMC - Project instruction – Kennis en Ervaring Delen 3
080523 SMC - Project instruction - Quick Wins 4
080523 SMC - Project instruction - Registratie Feedback 5
080523 SMC - Project instruction - Starters 6
080609 SMC - progression report
080908 SMC - progression report – continued
081007 Midterm review - Kernteam meeting
081008 Midterm review – project teams discussions
081114 Approach kernteam management meeting Instellingsbe
　　　 raad 1411
081222 Programme Kick Off
090119 SMC report Kick Off Eindhoven
090417 Overview SMC projects v9
090420 Issues within SMC projects
090506 Small Group Activity
090700 Werkwijzer 07 - page 8-9
100200 Werkwijzer 02 - page 8
091210 Programme Brochure Day of Education 2009
100128 Results evaluation session

Appendix 4: Relevant list of documents of conversations with colleagues of other universities

131111 Invitation conversations (UK) - v2.1

131205 Additional information for conversation with colleagues Higher Education

140104 Ethic rules in Qualitative Research

140128 Transcript conversation P1 based on 1390897169.461043 – audio file conversation P1

140116 Transcript conversation P2 based on 1389884806.242378 – audio file conversation P2

140218 Transcript conversation P3 based on 1392722964.964090 – audio file conversation P3

140127 Transcript conversation P4 based on 1390829628.578534 – audio file conversation P4

140114 Transcript conversation P5

Appendix 5: Research methodology: procedures used for conducting research

PhD complexity programme
The whole process of describing, categorisation and theming, studying literature on the recognised themes, self-reflection, having feedback, questions and discussions in the learning sets, writing and rewriting the narratives and defining emergent insights in the researcher's own practise, each time triggering new experiences and insights can be seen as a sensemaking process constructing theoretical statements out of concrete experiences by ordering relationships amongst elements that constitute the researcher's focus of attention. This can be linked to the concept of 'theorising' (Weick, 1974, 1989) where he states that theorising is a developmental process of selecting more 'competent' (interesting, plausible, non-obvious, surprising) social constructions as 'believable' explanations while absurd, irrelevant, or obvious outcomes are dropped (Weick, 1989: 525).

The process of writing, sensemaking, theorising, analysing, reflecting and reflexion entails that the process of theorising is seen as an interactive process, involving all kinds of feelings as taken-for-granted assumptions of the researcher and the people he works with are thoroughly questioned (Menard-Warwick, 2011:7) and is not taken as a linear, distant, and isolated rational process, but as a complex responsive process itself and can be labelled as a "research journey".

Procedure used for conducting the collective case study
The first step was to judge whether the collective case study approach offered me as researcher clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and the possibility of an in-depth understanding of the cases. When I would focus on colleagues who, just as I did, had changed jobs from a private to public environment and when I could create a setting where they could openly tell about their experiences of changing jobs, I would have several individual stories form a collective case study where I could focus at experiences with (a lack of) mutual recognition. Doing the collective case study after writing about my own experiences in narratives would have an added

value, because insights form a with-in perspective of my own experiences can be mirrored against and completed with the experiences of my colleagues in other universities.

The second step is the identification of the cases. In the first two years I had discussed aspects of my research work with several colleagues in similar positions. They were, without an exception, curious about my way of working, experiences and findings and how I would position them in the field of management practise. Several of these colleagues have recently also made the transition from a private working environment to the public environment of higher education, so I carefully probed them whether they were prepared to have a conversation with me about their experiences within that transition. Five of my colleagues met the requirements and they all enthusiastically agreed to participate. My aim was to invite them for an open setting among professionals (experienced senior managers) who had the same profession to share experiences and where my colleagues could tell their own stories and experiences of changing jobs to a public education environment. My intention was to start our conversation with one open question: can you tell me about your experiences, and see what would happen.

The third step is the preparation of the meetings with my colleagues. In order to give my colleagues an impression of my PhD work I sent them additional information in an introduction letter with a brief description of the purpose of my work , my research subject and the way I performed my research (Brouwer, 2012). In order not to influence my colleagues any further with my own experiences I did not send copies or extracts of my own experiences written down in my narratives. The possibility to talk to several colleagues gave the opportunity to show different perspectives on the questions I want to portray (called "purposeful maximal", Creswell, 2005).

The fourth step is the collection of the data in 1½ - 2 hours during conversations. I made the choice for a 1-to-1 conversation in an open interview in order to give my colleague full opportunity to talk about his experiences and where I could take account of privacy and anonymity. Starting with only one open question meant that I did not know how the conversation would develop, so I had to let it go and

listen to the other (and build up sympathy for what is told and the context in which it is told). I was fully aware that the conversations could go any direction (dependent on the subjects and answers), so I asked permission to tape the conversation which gave me the opportunity to listen to the conversation again as many times as I liked and was required in a later stage. During the conversation I did not work with an interview scheme or template, although I prepared myself making up a reference list with questions just in case the conversations would get stuck. I hoped a process of involvement and attachment would develop and in this way both participants would get in the story and become enthusiastic, explore questions and experiences by discussing them (just like I had done in my learning sets) and reach a sphere where data emerges in the conversation and things can happen in the process of reflection which have never happened before (this process also contains aspects of recognition or misrecognition). I was aware of the difficulties of being participant in the conversation and observer, but taping the whole conversation gave me the opportunity to really participate in the conversation without taking (too many) notes and to work the data out afterwards.

The fifth step was the analysis of the data. Through the data collection a detailed description of the case emerges (Stake, 1995) in which the researcher detailed such aspects as a day by day rendering of the activities of the case, its history and a logical order of events. With this "relatively uncontested data" (Stake, 1995: 123) I focused on key issues (of mutual recognition) not for generalising beyond the case, but for understanding the complexity. Several detailed descriptions of individual cases and themes within the case, a with-in case analysis was performed, followed by a thematic analysis across the cases as well as assertions or an interpretation of the meaning. In order to do the analysis on this detailed level every taped conver-sation was transcripted wordly, so it was possible to take quotes of participants in the description of the individual cases.

In the last step, I made (several) descriptions of the case(s) and its meaning which is a similar process as with my own narratives: sensemaking, theorising, analysing, and reflecting the themes of (mis) recognition and the described experiences.

Appendix 6: Recognition

Forms of recognition

Elementary recognition

Human beings are embedded in holistic webs of meanings which they jointly reproduce. Philosophers mention several forms of elementary recognition such as empathy with other persons (Cavell, 2002), proper use of language and processes of mutual recognition by which the world is always (re)constructed cooperatively by human agents (Engelhardt and Pinkard, 1994; Pippin 2008; Ikäheimo and Laitinen 2011). Only mutual recognition that grants others the authority allows us to construct a normative space of reasons. The elementary form of recognition shows that recognition is not only needed for the creation and preservation of a subject's identity, but that it also denotes a basic normative attitude. "To recognise someone is to take him to be the subject of normative statuses, that is, of commitments and entitlements, as capable of undertaking responsibilities and exercising authority" (Brandom, 2007:136). From our basic capacity of recognising a first form of recognition quit naturally comes forward: equal respect.

Respect

Assigning equal dignity or respect is commonly thought to be the central dimension of recognition since the idea of universal human rights has been established in modernity. According to Scanlon respect expresses the foundation of morality as such, because the "contractualist ideal of acting in accord with principles that others (similarly motivated) could not reasonably reject is meant to characterise the relations with others the value and appeal of which underlies our reasons to do what morality requires. This relation […] might be called a relation of mutual recognition. Standing in this relation to others is appealing in itself - worth seeking for its own sake" (Scanlon 1998:162). We can differentiate "recognition respect" or what it means to recognise the other as equal (the humanity in each person) and "appraisal respect" (Darwall, 1977) a certain respect for the (moral) qualities of a particular person's character or conduct (value of particular properties of a person). I will use the term "respect" to denote the attitude of "recognition respect" with regard to the equal moral standing of persons and their demands.

Esteem

In many present social struggles persons or groups demand recognition of specific aspects of their identities which are neglected or demeaned by the dominant value and norm system of their society. These phenomena are addressed as a "politics of recognition" and trie to answer the question whether we owe such recognition to the affected as subjects with equal moral status or because we should esteem their specific properties as valuable? The former allows only a context-sensitive form of respect. In order to arrive at such context-sensitive laws, regulations and agreements the affected people have to participate or include in processes of decisionmaking (Habermas, 1994). The latter claims that we should value particularity in itself. Such a politics of difference is concerned with the esteem for specific characteristics or entire identities of individuals and groups. According to some accounts, esteem should play no role in public politics whatsoever: it is sufficient for individuals to be respected by all and to be esteemed by only some significant others, for example, by their family and friends. Others claim that simply neglecting the dimension of esteem does not do justice to our everyday experiences: we have a need to be esteemed by \organisations or society "as such" in order to (optional: have a judgement of his worthiness) be able to appear in public without shame. Bourdieu points to the pervasiveness of evaluative patterns and distinctions determining social status and class (Bourdieu, 1984).

The idea of a common "ethical life" is important for those who think that we can only flourish if we act in meaning-bestowing relationships of mutual recognition, where people experience the needs, desires and goals as furtherance's of their own "social" freedom. The individual can only experience his deeds as really his in living and (social) acting with others and feeling at home in his own organisation or more general in society's institutions. Here recognition is not only a precondition for valuing one's own contribution but is itself an integral part of social efforts and do we face a lack of freedom where such relationships of mutual recognition are not fully realised. Here is a close relation with generalising experiences drawn from the intimate sphere of loving relationships.

Love and Friendship

Within recognition theories relationships of loving care are deemed important because emotionally fulfilling interactions display the first form of recognition of human's experience (Benjamin, 1998; Honneth, 1992). Most of those who endorse the relevance of love and friendship also stress the importance of the affective dimension for all subsequent forms of recognition. It can be discussed whether love and friendship are purely private phenomenan and therefore not constitute a sensible subject of public contestatia (Taylor, 1995:37). I think a few aspects are of importance. Firstly, following the idea that recognition should always affirm certain aspects of the other person, the relationship (with the other) creates a value that is worth caring for. Secondly, some of the social conditions that make it more challenging to succeed in intimate relations can be improved by organisations and politically (i.e. working hours, child care). And finally the trust in one's environment is not forcibly destroyed from outside. In that solidarity is not only a task of families or close friends but of larger communities, like organisations or even entire societies. In this way these larger communities, although they are not directly responsible for this form of recognising concrete individuality, have indirect possibilities to protect and to shape its basic conditions.

Spheres of recognition

Confidence in the sphere of love - confidence is a basic trust in experiencing and expressing your own needs, without the fear that you will be left alone. Recognition in the sphere of love is a double process in which both the other and oneself as independent individuals exist and by the love-relationship are also attached to each other because they care. Only by experiencing love can an individual confidence be built and maintained (Honneth 1996: xiii, 118, 129, 173).

Self-respect in the sphere of rights - people are able to act, on the basis of reason, as an autonomous subject, in the light of political and moral laws to which they themselves are subject and are entitled to the same status. Recognition to fully develop self-respect is recognition of the right that you are an autonomous and morally responsible agent (Honneth 1996: xiv-xv, 18-121).

Self-esteem in the spirit of solidarity - to develop the practical relation to yourself in the form of self-esteem it is important to consider what distinguishes the individual himself from others. It should involve something that relates to individual particularity and that is 'valuable' (Honneth 1996: 129). Here we can speak of a normative context in which intersubjective recognition is established on the basis of the valuation of properties and performance of subjects. This valuation represents according to Honneth a contribution to the achievement of social goals, described as culturally defined values (Honneth 1996: xvi-xvii, 164, 173).